

Cabinet

15 July 2020



Working in partnership with **Eastbourne Homes**

Time: 2.00 pm

PLEASE NOTE: This will be a 'virtual meeting', held remotely in accordance with section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and section 13 of the related regulations.

Members of the press and public can view the meeting by clicking on the link provided on the agenda page on the Council's website or by calling the number provided.

Instructions for members of the Cabinet, officers and other participants to join the meeting have been circulated separately.

Membership:

Councillor David Tutt (Chair); Councillors Stephen Holt (Deputy-Chair) Margaret Bannister, Jonathan Dow, Alan Shuttleworth, Colin Swansborough and Rebecca Whippy

Quorum: 3

Published: Tuesday, 7 July 2020

Agenda

- 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2020 (Pages 5 - 8)**
- 2 Apologies for absence**
- 3 Declaration of members' interests (Please see note at end of agenda)**
- 4 Questions by members of the public**

On matters not already included on the agenda and for which prior notice has been given (total time allowed 15 minutes).
- 5 Urgent items of business**

The Chairman to notify the Cabinet of any items of urgent business to be added to the agenda.
- 6 Right to address the meeting/order of business**

The Chairman to report any requests received to address the Cabinet from a member of the public or from a Councillor in respect of an item listed below and to invite the Cabinet to consider taking such items at the commencement of the meeting.

- 7 Financial assessment of Covid-19 update** (Pages 9 - 30)
Report of Chief Finance Officer
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Stephen Holt
- 8 Recovery group update** (Pages 31 - 36)
Report of Director of Tourism and Enterprise
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Margaret Bannister
- 9 Corporate performance - quarter 4 - 2019/20** (Pages 37 - 62)
Report of Director of Regeneration and Planning
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Colin Swansborough
- 10 Downland Whole Estate Plan Approval** (Pages 63 - 132)
Report of Director of Regeneration and Planning
Lead Cabinet member: Councillor Jonathan Dow

Information for the public

Accessibility: This agenda and accompanying reports are published on the Council's website in PDF format which means you can use the "read out loud" facility of Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Public participation: Please contact Democratic Services (see end of agenda) for the relevant deadlines for registering to speak on a matter which is listed on the agenda if applicable.

Information for councillors

Disclosure of interests: Members should declare their interest in a matter at the beginning of the meeting.

In the case of a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), if the interest is not registered (nor the subject of a pending notification) details of the nature of the interest must be reported to the meeting by the member and subsequently notified in writing to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

If a member has a DPI or other prejudicial interest he/she must leave the room when the matter is being considered (unless he/she has obtained a dispensation).

Councillor right of address: Councillors wishing to address the meeting who are not members of the committee must notify the Chairman and Democratic Services by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

Democratic Services

For any further queries regarding this agenda or notification of apologies please contact Democratic Services.

Email: committees@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

Telephone: 01323 410000

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Working in partnership with **Eastbourne Homes**

Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held remotely on 3 June 2020 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)

Councillors Stephen Holt (Deputy-Chair), Margaret Bannister, Jonathan Dow, Alan Shuttleworth, Colin Swansborough and Rebecca Whippy

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Homira Javadi (Chief Finance Officer), Ian Fitzpatrick (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning), Catherine Knight (Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services), Tim Whelan (Director of Service Delivery), Peter Finnis (Assistant Director for Corporate Governance), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance) and Simon Russell (Committee and Civic Services Manager)

Also in attendance:

Councillor Robert Smart (Shadow Cabinet Member)

67 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2020 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

68 Apologies for absence

None were reported.

69 Declaration of members' interests

Councillor Shuttleworth declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7 (Council's response to Covid-19) as Chair of the Langney Community Library Trustees, who had received funds from the Small Business Grant Fund for retail, leisure and hospitality as part of the government response to Covid-19. He remained present and took part in discussions during this item.

70 Council's response to Covid-19

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, updating them on the establishment and operation of a Community Hub and other changes in business operation to respond to community needs as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Cabinet paid tribute to council staff, councillors, the business and voluntary sector and wider community for their response to the pandemic.

An array of council schemes had been rapidly implemented with positive impact for residents and businesses, such as setting up a community hub to distribute thousands of food parcels to vulnerable people, the Business Grants Portal going live and undertaking daily welfare calls to tenants in sheltered accommodation and calls to all tenants over the age of 69.

The Director of Service Delivery updated the Cabinet, confirming that at present, 1,444 businesses had taken advantage of the small businesses grant scheme, equating to over £18 million. In addition to this, £25 million of business rate relief had been delivered to businesses since March.

Further details of the response, including support for council staff and redeployment during the pandemic were contained in the report.

Thanks were conveyed to the District Councils' Network and Local Government Association for their continued representation to central government on behalf of local authorities across the United Kingdom.

Councillor Shuttleworth declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item. He remained present and took part in discussions during this item.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

To note the report

Reason for decision:

The Community Hub has been an important part of the council's response to the Covid 19 pandemic locally and the report updated the Cabinet on progress, performance and next steps in this work. The report also provides a summary of the impact of the pandemic across the council's business, focusing on the support provided to staff and on those areas most affected by current circumstances.

71 Initial financial assessment of Covid-19

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer, updating them on the initial financial impact of Covid-19 and associated budgetary implications.

Visiting member, Councillor Smart, addressed the Cabinet on this item.

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report and made reference to the Council's latest submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), appended to the report.

The budget for 2020/21 was approved by Full Council in February 2020. The budget took into consideration that the Council no longer received any Revenue Support Grant and had to meet the cost of its services through locally generated income.

In addressing the economic slowdown last year due to factors such as the uncertainty over Brexit and increased demand for key services such as homelessness and housing need, the Council came up with further efficiencies, savings and income targets that formed part of the agreed budget for 2020/21. Although the targets set were challenging and robust, several reviews and risk assessments were carried out to ensure the budget set was fully tested and sustainable.

During the initial phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council implemented a wide range of initiatives in order to support the most vulnerable in the Borough, working in partnership with the voluntary sector. Emergency response funding from central government to date had totalled £1.09 million.

The Council's increased spending in response to the crisis and projected loss of income due to the pandemic had significantly impacted on the savings targets set in February. It was estimated that additional costs, including delayed savings programmes, arising from Covid-19 could be as high as £300,000 per week, should the lockdown continue and result in a long term economic downturn. It was stated that this was an approximate impact and worst case scenario.

The Chief Finance Officer re-assured the Cabinet that in terms of cash flow, the Council was currently in a robust and sustainable position. Subject to revised government measures being put in place, the council should avoid the need to borrow to support cashflow until the end of August at the earliest.

The Council would continue to internally review and closely monitor the financial position and look at ways to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and engage with the MHCLG in partnership.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

- (1) To note the initial financial impact of Covid-19 and associated vulnerability of the authority's budget.
- (2) To note the assumptions being made about the ongoing financial impact of Covid-19.
- (3) To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of Council, Cabinet member for Finance and the Chief Finance Officer, to make use of monies held in the Council's Reserves as he believes most appropriate in order to continue essential service delivery and/or to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 emergency on residents and/or service users.

Reason for decisions:

The Council's response to Covid-19 has been and continues to be fast paced. Budgetary assumptions are liable to change and are only given as an indication. This report provides a position statement at this time to keep Cabinet informed.

The meeting ended at 3.06 pm

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)

Agenda Item 7

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	15 July 2020
Title:	Financial assessment of Covid-19 update
Report of:	Homira Javadi, Chief Finance Officer
Cabinet member:	Councillor Stephen Holt, Deputy Leader of Council, Cabinet member for finance
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To update on the financial impact of Covid-19 and associated budgetary implications – June update
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	1) Cabinet notes the initial financial impact of Covid-19 and associated vulnerability of the authority's budget 2) Cabinet notes the assumptions being made about the ongoing financial impact of Covid-19
Reasons for recommendations:	The Council's response to Covid-19 has been and continues to be fast paced. Budgetary assumptions are liable to change and are only given as an indication. This report provides a position statement at this time to keep Cabinet informed.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Homira Javadi Post title: Chief Finance officer Email: Homira.Javadi@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

1 Background

Cabinet received an initial COVID19 financial impact assessment at its meeting on 3rd June 2020. This was shortly after receiving a share of the second £1.6bn emergency funding allocation. The Council's share was £1.026m bringing its total amount to £1.09m.

- 1.1 The very large increase in allocation between the first and second tranches for the Council was reflective of a similar increase for districts and boroughs. The split between county and district authorities was 65:35 in comparison to 98:2 for the first tranche. This was following provision of financial analysis of impacts by councils, and Officer lobbying through bodies such as District Councils' Network (DCN), Society of District Council Treasurers (SDCT) and political lobbying.
- 1.2 Following the earlier financial submissions in April and May, the Council is continuing to monitor the impact of COVID19 on its budgetary provisions and financial assumptions. Still a complex and hard to predict assessment with much depending on factors outside the authority's control, the Council's June's submission has been prepared based on available information to date and the developing picture including an assumption of an

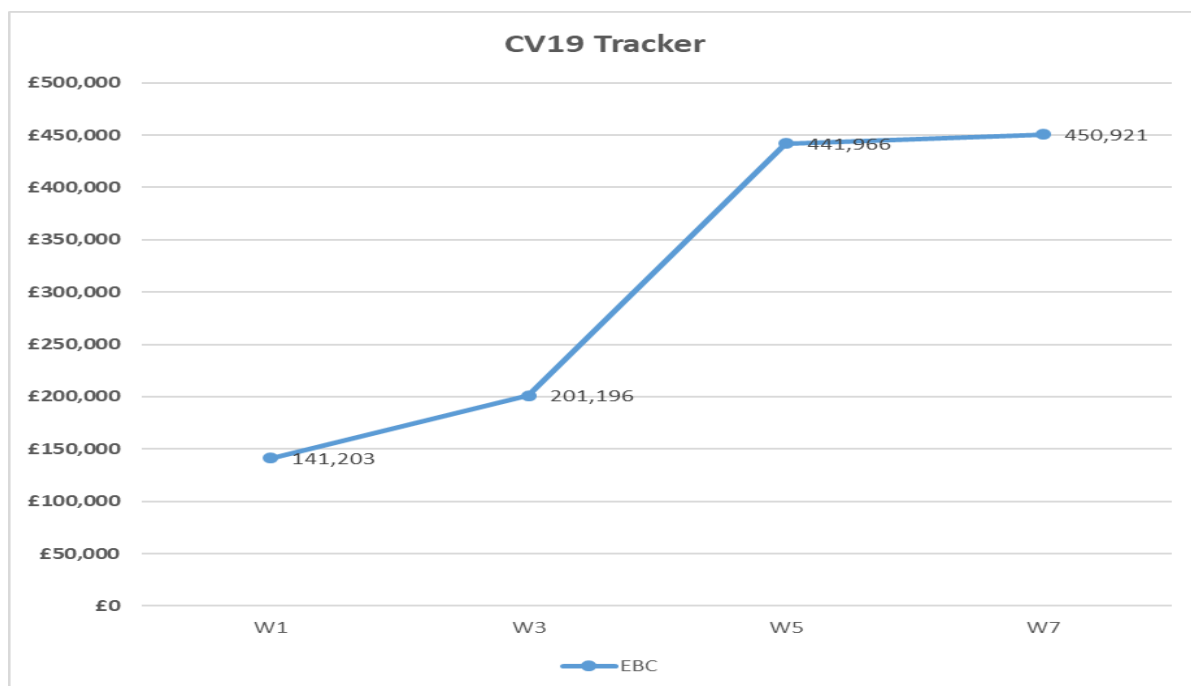
economic bounce back after July and easing off of some social distancing and COVID19 restrictions.

- 1.3 As previously reported, the Budget set in February 2020, does not take into account the financial impact of the COVID19 response and its financial impacts.
- 1.4 The Government had stated that it intends to fully compensate councils for the impact of COVID19, however, the current view is indicative of a shared burden proposition whereby councils and government jointly manage the financial impacts on the councils' resources. To date, relative to the scale of impact the Council has received very limited financial support from central Government to offset impacts on its budget.
- 1.5 Whilst the current level of additional funding received to date is welcomed but it still falls significantly below what is required to mitigate the anticipated financial impact of the COVID19 on the Council's resources and key services.

2 Emergency Response

- 2.1 Officers are continuously tracking the emergency response costs of COVID19 on the Council. Additional codes have been set up to identify COVID19 expenditure and a financial model has been set up to assess the financial impacts on the Council across a range of pessimistic to optimistic scenarios with respect to length of lock down. An account of COVID19 related expenditure has been kept so that the items are readily identifiable and weekly updates are presented to the Corporate Management Team to ensure ongoing monitoring.

The following chart provides an overview of the costs directly relating to the Council's emergency response over the last 7 weeks.



The chart shows that to date about half of the emergency funding allocation has been directed at various response and community hub activities.

3 Covid19 impact the budgetary provisions

3.1 The COVID-19 crisis has seen the financial challenges placed on local authorities grow at unprecedented pace and scale. These challenges are only likely to deepen as the financial year goes on. It is currently uncertain as to how long the impact of current restrictions or 'lockdown' is likely to last. However, since the relaxation of the lockdown rules, we have been able to revise down some of our earlier assumptions in addition to introducing a number of cost reduction and saving measures such as:

- Revising down the impact on housing need and homelessness
- Re-introducing a program of savings to meet as many targets assumed within the approved 2020/21 budget;
- Re-start a program of delivery to meet as many income targets assumed within the approved 2020/21 budget;
- Reduce as many additional (recurring and one off) growth items included in the approved budget; and
- Review of capital programme and financing implication

3.2 The above assumptions are being kept under regular review and any changes will be reflected in the Council's future submissions.

A summary of key assumptions included in the June's MHCLG submission relating to additional spend and loss of income is shown in the following table.

• Homelessness & Housing	£1.0m	
• Unachieved new savings and income	<u>£2.3m</u>	
	£3.3m	
• Collection fund impact		£0.8m
• Loss of income from leisure	£1.2m	
• Loss of Car parking income	£0.3m	
• Planning income etc	£0.1m	
• Other Income	£0.6m	
• Tourism	£2.4m	
• Income from Corp Landlord	<u>£1.8m</u>	
	£6.4m	£7.2m
Figures in Red include loss of collection fund income	£9.7m	£10.5m

The assumptions are based on a July bounce back – however the CV19 impact on many of income streams will be long-term and long lasting.

3.3 The potential combined loss of income and additional costs being incurred are material to the Council's budget and financial position. It can be seen that COVID19 financial impacts are greater on the income side than the expenditure side. This is also reflective of districts and boroughs, which tend to rely on fees and charges income for a greater portion of their budget. As a result districts and boroughs are likely to be proportionately hit harder by COVID19.

4 An estimate of the likely impact

The Council's Net Budget requirement for 2020-21 is £13.5m. As a percentage of the net budget requirement the potential combined loss of income and additional costs could be 73%.

The Net budget requirement for 2020-21 has clearly changed since the budget was set in February 2020. Although the government has made two grant allocations, it is critical that the severity of COVID19 impact on the authority's resources and services is recognised and further government support is made available to address immediate and longer term financial requirements in order for the Council to continue to deliver its key services.

5 Summary of overall position

The Council's finances continue to be very vulnerable in the current situation. Based on our current experience, the Council estimates that the additional costs arising from the pandemic so far, including delayed savings programmes, could be of approximately £190k per week. This is an approximate impact which takes into account significant loss of income, additional costs including increased demand in homelessness and housing need.

5.1 The Council's capital programme was carefully developed to address the housing, economic and environmental challenges in the Borough. The delivery of the Programme is critical to any post COVID recovery and restarting the local economy. For any recovery plan to be sustainable, it has to include measures which will increase economic activity, employment opportunities and improve housing provision. Conversely, if businesses and households continue to experience lower incomes then lower Council Tax, Business Rates and other income to the Council will remain below those anticipated in the Budget.

5.2 These longer term risks emphasise the importance of additional government financial support to local authorities as a consequence of the pandemic and the extra vital work we carry out in supporting vulnerable households and local businesses. These matters will be monitored closely and we continue to provide regular updates to members.

5.3 It is also of considerable concern that the financial impacts on taxation, business rates and fees incomes could take a considerable amount of time to recover, giving rise to a significantly greater medium and longer term financial impact.

5.4 The Council will need to consider and have robust plans in place in managing the interim and longer term impacts of COVID19 by September and in preparation for formulating its Medium Term Financial Strategy. Members will be updated on an ongoing basis and as plans develop further.

6 Options for Mitigation of the financial impacts on the Council

The main options for mitigating the financial impacts of COVID19 include:

- A) Continue to lobby central Government for additional funding in recognition of the impacts on Councils and their ability to deliver services. The Council is continually to actively work with other councils to lobby hard for additional funding
- B) Make offsetting savings and efficiencies where possible including extending remote working, greater use of technology, review of capital programme and financing costs.
- C) Revisit saving and income generating targets – aimed at delivering as many of the targets as possible
- D) Explore options to apply capitalisation to some of the costs and financial impacts to enable the Council to borrow and fund on a long term basis.
- E) Lobby government to agree to supported borrowing and annual contribution towards meeting the revenue payments
- F) Temporary use of Reserves to close the gap. The Council has very limited capacity and can only make limited allocation from its reserves.

Although above is not a full list of actions but it provides a sound starting point in putting in place a sustainable financial solution to tackle an unprecedented health, economic and social challenge.

7 Financial appraisal

- 7.1 The Council's financial appraisal remains the same as last report and continues to be that without adequate government financial support, Eastbourne like many other councils will find it impossible to manage the immediate and longer-term financial impacts of Covid-19 relying solely on its own limited resources.

Officers will bring regular update reports to Cabinet. It is at least possible that urgent use may need to be made of monies in reserves so as to continue essential service delivery and /or to mitigate the worst impacts of the Covid-19 emergency on residents and service users.

8 Legal implications

- 8.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

9 Equality analysis

- 9.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

10 Appendices

Appendix A – MCHLG Submission

11 Background papers

Initial financial impact assessment – 3rd June 2020

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Covid-19 LA financial monitoring - June

COVID-19 local authority financial management information

You are reporting on behalf of:

Eastbourne Borough Council

Billing or precepting authority:

Billing authority

This is Round 3 of a data collection designed to help departments across central government understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local authority finances. This collection is for planning purposes; to help us identify where the greatest pressures are likely to be going forward and to inform our ongoing assessment of likely future costs. The information you provide will not be used for monitoring or auditing purposes. We will share a summary of the findings with you in due course. We may also publish, as a management information release, selected results at national, class-type, and potentially local authority-level. Please note that information provided could be the subject of a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

As outlined in previous rounds, we recognise that the situation your authority faces is continually changing and we will continue to repeat and refine this collection on a regular, rolling basis. For Round 3, you are asked to restate your May 2020 estimates based on actual/outturn data where available, alongside projected estimates for June 2020 and the full 2020-21 financial year (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021).

Where full financial year estimates are requested, please estimate these assuming COVID-19 related costs up until the end of July 2020 based on the indicative timings as set out in the latest available Government advice and thereafter use your authority's own current planning assumptions for longer term annual impacts. You may wish to refer to the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>

We appreciate that you might not have precise figures, but your estimates are extremely useful in the absence of robust data. However please ensure to exercise accurate, professional judgement when submitting your estimates. All submissions should be agreed by your authority's S151 Officer but do not require official certification.

As with previous rounds, you may need to liaise with relevant colleagues in your authority in order to complete the form.

Please submit your response though DELTA by **11pm on Friday 19 June 2020**. We cannot accept returns after the closing deadline. You must hit submit on completing the form otherwise your return will not be counted.

For enquiries, please use the contact details below:

For DELTA registration and collection access enquiries: DELTAadmin@communities.gov.uk

For general enquiries relating to this collection: lgfcoviddata@communities.gov.uk

Section A: Allocation of £3.2bn grant funding by service area

On 19 March 2020, £1.6bn emergency funding was announced to help local authorities respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. On 18 April 2020, a further £1.6bn funding for local authorities was announced. This section relates specifically to your combined allocation from this £3.2bn funding and not any other additional funding which your authority might be receiving to respond to COVID-19.

Of this £3.2bn funding, your authority has received:

£ 1,090,507

Question A1: What proportion of your grant funding have you allocated to the following service areas?

We recognise that some COVID-19-related activities may be cross-cutting, and that you may not have formally allocated the additional funding separately across service areas. However, please provide updated estimates as best you can. This should be done using notional allocations to reflect your priority areas of spending pressure if you do not yet have more reliable data or formal allocation plans available. You should only populate the 'Not yet allocated' category if you are certain that your authority does not have plans to use this funding.

Please ensure the following areas of funding are recorded under 'Other' instead of specific service lines: Forgone savings and delayed or stopped projects, all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) excluding that which falls under Adult Social Care (ASC), and Shielding.

Please provide percentage figures for each service area ensuring that they sum to 100%. If your authority does not provide a service or has not allocated any of this grant funding to a particular service area, you must enter 0%

You may wish to refer to your Round 2 May submission which can be found in the DELTA datastore.

For additional guidance and information, where available, please click the information (i) button.

The summary RAG rating asks for your assessment of the confidence you have in the accuracy of the figures provided. This uses a standard RAG rating system where red reflects estimates based on limited evidence/weak assumptions, and green reflects strong evidence and clearer assumptions.

Service Area	Estimated proportion of grant funding likely to be deployed in this area (%)
1 - Adult Social Care – additional demand	0.0 %
2 - Adult Social Care - supporting the market	0.0 %
3 - Adult Social Care - workforce pressures	0.0 %
4 - Adult Social Care - PPE	0.0 %
5 - Adult Social Care - other	0.0 %
Adult Social Care - sub total	0%
6 - Children's Social Care – workforce pressures	0.0 %
7 - Children's Social Care – residential care	0.0 %
8 - Children's Social Care – care leavers	0.0 %
9 - Children Social Care - other	0.0 %
Children's Social Care - sub total	0%
10 - Education - SEND	0.0 %
11 - Education - home to school transport	0.0 %
12 - Education - other	0.0 %
Education - sub total	

	0%
13 - Highways and Transport	0.0 %
14 - Public Health	0.0 %
15 - Housing - homelessness services	3.5 %
16 - Housing - rough sleeping	1.5 %
17 - Housing - other	5.0 %
Housing - sub total	10%
18 - Cultural & related - Sports, leisure and community facilities	0.0 %
19 - Cultural & related - other	0.0 %
Cultural & related - sub total	0%
20 - Environment & regulatory - cremation, cemetery and mortuary services	0.0 %
21 - Environment & regulatory - waste management	0.0 %
22 - Environment & regulatory - other	0.0 %
Environment & regulatory - sub total	0%
23 - Planning & development	0.0 %
24 - Police, fire and rescue services	0.0 %
25 - Finance & corporate - ICT & remote working	25.0 %
26 - Finance & corporate - revenue & benefits	45.0 %
27 - Finance & corporate - other	0.0 %

Finance & corporate - sub total

70%

28 - Other - shielding

14.0 %

29 - Other - PPE (non-Adult Social Care)

3.0 %

30 - Other - unachieved savings/delayed projects

0.0 %

31 - Other - excluding service areas listed above

3.0 %

Other - sub total

20%

32 - Not yet allocated

0.0 %

Total Percentage Check

100%

Confidence in accuracy of allocation estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

Question A2: You have allocated funding to 'Other services' or a specific service area suffixed '-other', excluding the subcategories listed (i.e. shielding, PPE, forgone savings/delayed projects), please specify what this represents.

Additional security costs associated with a development site currently on hold and additional housing benefit costs

Section B: Additional spending pressures due to COVID-19

Question B1: Compared to what you had budgeted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, please estimate how much additional money you have spent, and plan to spend, on the following service areas due to pressures caused by COVID-19.

Your additional spending should be reported:

- 1) Gross of any additional funding you have received - do not deduct any grant funding for COVID-19 costs or any other payments e.g. Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) reimbursement
- 2) Net of any savings arising from changes in activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic e.g. due to use of the furlough scheme.

As in Section A, we recognise that COVID-19 activities may be cross-cutting across service areas, and it may not be possible to apportion additional spend due to COVID-19 with complete accuracy. However, please estimate as best you can.

Please ensure the following areas of expenditure are recorded under 'Other' instead of specific service lines: Forgone savings and delayed or stopped projects, all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) related spend excluding that which falls under Adult Social Care (ASC), and Shielding.

You should report your additional spend estimates in millions, though you can provide figures to the nearest thousand pounds (up to 3 decimal places) if you are able to do so. If your authority does not provide a service or you have not spent any more as a result of COVID-19, you must enter 0 (zero).

If submitted, you may wish to view your Round 2 May form which can be found in the DELTA datastore. For Round 3, please use actual expenditure/outturn-based estimates where possible for May.

Where full financial year estimates are requested, please estimate these assuming COVID-19 related costs up until the end of July 2020 based on the indicative timings as set out in the latest available Government advice and thereafter use your authority's own current planning assumptions for longer term annual impacts. You may wish to refer to the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>

For additional information, where available, please click the information (i) button.

Service Area	Estimated additional spending pressure due to Covid-19		
	May 2020 (£m)	June 2020 (£m)	Full financial year 2020-21 (£m)
1 - Adult Social Care – additional demand	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
2 - Adult Social Care - supporting the market	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
3 - Adult Social Care - workforce pressures	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
4 - Adult Social Care - PPE	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
5 - Adult Social Care - other	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
ASC sub total	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
6 - Children's Social Care – workforce pressures	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
7 - Children's Social Care – residential care	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
8 - Children's Social Care – care leavers	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
9 - Children Social Care - other	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m

CSC sub total			
10 - Education - SEND	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
11 - Education - Home to school transport	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
12 - Education - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Education sub total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
13 - Highways and Transport	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
14 - Public Health	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
15 - Housing - homelessness services	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.030 m	£ 0.030 m	£ 0.350 m
16 - Housing - rough sleeping	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.012 m	£ 0.012 m	£ 0.150 m
17 - Housing - other (excluding HRA)	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.050 m	£ 0.050 m	£ 0.500 m
Housing sub total (excluding HRA)	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.092 m	£ 0.092 m	£ 1.000 m
18 - Cultural & related - Sports, leisure and community facilities	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
19 - Cultural & related - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Cultural & related sub total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
20 - Environment & regulatory - cremation, cemetery and mortuary services	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
21 - Environment & regulatory - waste management	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

22 - Environment & regulatory - other

Environment & regulatory sub total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

23 - Planning & development	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

24 - Police, fire and rescue services	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

25 - Finance & corporate - ICT & remote working	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

26 - Finance & corporate - revenue & benefits	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

27 - Finance & corporate - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

Finance & corporate sub total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

28 - Other - shielding	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

29 - Other - PPE (non-Adult Social Care)	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

30 - Other - unachieved savings/delayed projects	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.200 m	£ 0.200 m	£ 2.300 m

31 - Other - excluding service areas listed above	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

Other sub total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.200 m	£ 0.200 m	£ 2.300 m

TOTAL ESTIMATED SPENDING PRESSURE (General Fund)	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.292 m	£ 0.292 m	£ 3.300 m

Additional Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Pressures:

32 - HRA - workforce pressures	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

33 - HRA - supplies and materials including PPE	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
34 - HRA - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
HRA total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m

Question B2: You have allocated spending pressures to ‘Other services’, excluding the subcategories listed (i.e. shielding, PPE, forgone savings/delayed projects), please specify what this represents.

Additional housing benefit costs

Question B3: Using the RAG rating below, please assess the confidence you have in the accuracy of the additional expenditure figures provided. This uses a standard RAG rating system where red reflects estimates based on limited evidence/weak assumptions, and green reflects strong evidence and clearer assumptions.

Confidence in accuracy of spend pressure estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

Question B4: Not applicable

Question B5: Not applicable

Question B6: Not applicable

Section C: Income reductions due to COVID-19

Question C1: Compared to what you budgeted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, how much have the following sources of income been reduced due to pressures caused by COVID-19?

As with Spending Pressures, please provide income loss estimates as best you can. You should report your losses in millions, though you can provide figures to the nearest thousand pounds (up to 3 decimal places) if you are able to do so. Please report your loss estimates using positive figures. In all cases, losses should be reported as the difference between the actual/projected amount to be collected post COVID-19 (including the impact of the business rate measures announced at and since Budget 2020) compared to what was originally expected to be collected prior to COVID-19 and prior to Budget 2020.

If your income has not been affected by COVID-19, you must enter 0 (zero). Additionally, if you are a Precepting authority (shire county in a two-tier area), you do not have to enter your share of Business Rates and Council Tax losses as these will be reported by the respective Billing authority. Billing authorities should show all council tax and business rates losses, including those that will be attributable to preceptors and the central share.

If submitted, you may wish to view your Round 2 April form which can be found in the DELTA datastore. However, please note that the format for this section has changed. Please use actual outturn-based income losses where possible for May 2020.

Where full financial year estimates are requested, please estimate these assuming COVID-19 related costs up until the end of July 2020 based on the indicative timings as set out in the latest available Government advice and thereafter use your authority's own current planning assumptions for longer term annual impacts. You may wish to refer to the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>

For additional information, where available, please click the information (i) button.

Note: The value of your additional Business Rates reliefs for 2020-21, as reported in the NNDR data collection published in May 2020, is shown to the right.

NNDR published BR reliefs 2020/21:

£ 24.753 m

The figure you submit below for your 2020-21 financial year business rate losses attributable to reliefs should be the same or close to this published value.

As a billing authority you should show all council tax and business rates losses, including those that will be attributable to preceptors and the central share.

Income source	Estimated income losses £m pressure due to Covid-19		Full financial year 2020-21 (£m)
	May 2020 (£m)	June 2020 (£m)	
1 - Business rates losses- COVID-19 Reliefs	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 24.753 m
2 - Business rates losses - Deferrals	May 2020 £ 0.000 m	June 2020 £ 0.000 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.000 m
3 - Business rates losses - other	May 2020 £ 0.150 m	June 2020 £ 0.150 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 1.750 m
Business Rates losses subtotal (cash receipts)	May 2020 £ 0.150 m	June 2020 £ 0.150 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 26.503 m
Business rates losses subtotals (after reliefs)	May 2020 £ 0.150 m	June 2020 £ 0.150 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 1.750 m
	May 2020 £ 0.050 m	June 2020 £ 0.050 m	Full year 2020-21 £ 0.400 m

4 - Council Tax receipt losses - working age LCTS			
5 - Council Tax receipt losses - payment failure	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.050 m	£ 0.050 m	£ 0.300 m
6 - Council Tax receipt losses - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Council Tax receipt losses total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.100 m	£ 0.100 m	£ 0.700 m
Collection Fund Losses - Total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.250 m	£ 0.250 m	£ 2.450 m
7 - Highways and Transport Sales, Fees & Charges (SFC) - Parking services losses	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.050 m	£ 0.050 m	£ 0.300 m
8 - Highways and Transport Sales, Fees & Charges (SFC) losses - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
9 - Cultural & Related (SFC) - Recreation and sport losses	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.025 m	£ 0.025 m	£ 1.200 m
10 - Cultural & Related (SFC) losses - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.700 m	£ 0.700 m	£ 2.400 m
11 - Planning & Development SFC losses	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.010 m	£ 0.010 m	£ 0.100 m
12 - Other SFC income losses	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.080 m	£ 0.080 m	£ 0.575 m
Sales, Fees & Charges income losses total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.865 m	£ 0.865 m	£ 4.575 m
13 - Commercial income losses	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.150 m	£ 0.150 m	£ 1.800 m
14 - Other income losses	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Non-collection Fund Losses Total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 1.015 m	£ 1.015 m	£ 6.375 m
TOTAL ESTIMATED INCOME LOSS	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 1.265 m	£ 1.265 m	£ 8.825 m

Additional Housing Revenue Account (HRA) losses:

15 - HRA - residential rent arrears	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.060 m	£ 0.060 m	£ 0.800 m
16 - HRA - commercial rent arrears	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
17 - HRA - losses from voids	May 2020	May 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.010 m	£ 0.010 m	£ 0.400 m
18 - HRA - other	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
HRA total	May 2020	June 2020	Full year 2020-21
	£ 0.070 m	£ 0.070 m	£ 1.200 m

Question C2: Not applicable

Question C3: You have recorded income reduction under 'Other' or a specific income loss line suffixed '- other' please specify what this represents.

Losses relate to drop in business rates income, tourism income, licensing and land charges.

Question C4: Using the RAG rating below, please assess the overall confidence you have in the accuracy of the income reduction figures provided. This uses a standard RAG rating system where red reflects estimates based on limited evidence/weak assumptions, and green reflects strong evidence and clearer assumptions.

Confidence in accuracy of income reduction estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

Question C5. We are interested in understanding income losses which are irrecoverable and you know will impact on your financial position. Of the income losses specified below (and as you have reported in C1), what proportion is already known/deemed to be irrecoverable in that it will permanently impact on your financial position?

Please express your estimate as a percentage of the given source of income loss. For each income type, your loss as reported in C1 is shown below, and the equivalent amounts deemed irrecoverable and recoverable have been calculated as a guide.

Sales, fees and charges	May 2020 (£m)	June 2020 (£m)	Full financial year 2020-21 (£m)
Proportion of Sales, fees and charges income deemed irrecoverable	90.0 %	90.0 %	90.0 %
Total sales, fees and charges loss	£ 0.865 m	£ 0.865 m	£ 4.575 m
Irrecoverable sales, fees and charges losses	£ 0.779 m	£ 0.779 m	£ 4.118 m
Recoverable sales, fees and charges losses	£ 0.087 m	£ 0.087 m	£ 0.458 m

Commercial Income	May 2020 (£m)	June 2020 (£m)	Full financial year 2020-21 (£m)
Proportion of commercial income deemed irrecoverable	90.0 %	90.0 %	90.0 %
Total commercial income loss	£ 0.150 m	£ 0.150 m	£ 1.800 m
Irrecoverable commercial income losses	£ 0.135 m	£ 0.135 m	£ 1.620 m
Recoverable commercial income losses	£ 0.015 m	£ 0.015 m	£ 0.180 m

Other Income	May 2020 (£m)	June 2020 (£m)	Full financial year 2020-21 (£m)
Proportion of other income deemed irrecoverable	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Total other income loss	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Irrecoverable other income losses	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m	£ 0.000 m
Recoverable other income losses	£ 0.015 m	£ 0.015 m	£ 0.180 m

Confidence in accuracy of irrecoverable loss estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

The government recognises that there might be a limited number of cases in which it is appropriate for local authorities to furlough workers and claim funding through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). This would be in exceptional cases: where staff salaries are largely funded by sales, fees and charges, where there is a significant reduction in these revenue streams which are not already offset by additional grant funding from central government, where these staff cannot be redeployed, and where the alternative would be redundancy.

Question C6: If you are considering, or have already furloughed staff and made a claim through the CJRS, please include an estimate of the extent to which a reduction in sales, fees and charges are expected to be offset by the CJRS funding you will receive.

You should report your figure in millions, though you can provide figures to the nearest thousand pounds (up to 3 decimal places)

£ 0.000 m

Section D: Council Tax payment plans and Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)

Question D1: How many households – if any – has your authority agreed alternative council tax payment plans with in 2020-21? Please estimate your responses in this section as best you can.

0

Question D2. If you have agreed alternative arrangements, please also provide further detail on what the alternative payments plans look like. This could include, for example, arrangements to defer payments or to vary the amounts of payments to be taken over different months.

Unable to identify alternative payment plans as there is no flag in our system set to flag COVID related arrangements. Alternative plans will have been set by re-profiling monthly instalments and could have been agreed for reasons other than the pandemic. Not agreed any alternative payment schemes for customers i.e. payment holidays. As a general rule each case will be assessed on it's individual circumstances and where appropriate mutual agreements will be put in place.

The following question relates to your Local Council Tax Support (LCTS).

Question D3. Please estimate the total number of working age LCTS caseload and compare this against the authority's expectations for 2020-21, as set out in pre-COVID -19 budget calculations.

	As at 31 May 2020	As at 30 June 2020	Average of quarterly snapshots across the full Financial Year 2020-21
Total number of working age LCTS caseload	4,450	4,610	4,500
Total <i>expectation</i> of working age LCTS caseload (as set out in budget calculations pre COVID-19)	4,280	4,180	3,950

Confidence in accuracy of LCTS caseload estimates (RAG rating)

RED

Section E: Allocation of £500m Covid-19 Council Tax hardship fund

Please estimate your responses in this section as best you can. However, if for any question in the section you are unable to provide a rough working estimate, you can leave the box blank and continue to the next question.

The Government has made COVID-19 Hardship Fund payments totalling £500m to local authorities.

As stated in the Hardship Fund guidance, published on 24 March 2020, it is expected that billing authorities will use the fund to provide all recipients of working age local council tax support ('LCTS') during the financial year 2020-21 with a further reduction of £150 in their annual council tax bill.

Where a taxpayer's liability for 2020-21 is, following the application of council tax support, less than £150, then their liability would be reduced to nil. Where a taxpayer's liability for 2020-21 is nil, no reduction to the council tax bill will be available.

Having allocated grant to reduce the council tax bill of working age LCTS recipients by a further £150, billing authorities should establish their own local approach to using any remaining grant to assist those in need.

Of this funding, your local authority allocation is:

£ 0.918 m

Question E1: To date, how many Hardship Fund discounts have been applied to council tax liabilities of Working Age LCTS claimants?

4,616

Question E2: What proportion of your working age Local Council Tax Support caseload does your answer to E1 represent?

Please express as a percentage.

100.0 %

Question E3: To date, how much of your council's allocated hardship fund has been earmarked to current recipients of LCTS?

Please express in £m, up to 3 decimal places.

£ 0.680 m

As a percentage of your allocation, this accounts for:

74.1 %

Question E4: What proportion of your grant funding have you allocated towards other council tax reductions or support outside of the council tax system?

Please express as percentage.

25.9 %

Question E5: How many households have received support as set out in E4 in this way to date?

20

Question E6: If you would like to provide some additional commentary on your authority's use of the Hardship Fund, please do so here.

We are also using the fund to partially offset the loss of CTR due to the increase in Working Tax Credits.

Section F: Availability of reserves and cashflow difficulties due to Covid-19

In order to help us understand the impact of COVID-19 on financial sustainability, and on the basis of the funding provided to date, we would like you to provide us with some information on how you anticipate the shock will affect your authority's reserve levels and wider financial strategy.

Please provide information that is consistent with your input on income and expenditure.

Question F1: Please provide a provisional estimate of your unringfenced reserves balance as of 31st March 2020? Please separate between unallocated and earmarked reserves.

Note: The fields below have been pre-populated with estimates of your unringfenced reserves balance from the 2019/20 Revenue Account data, please update with provisional outturn data if available

You should report your estimates in millions, though you can provide figures to the nearest thousand pounds (up to 3 decimal places) if you are able to do so, with a RAG rating for confidence in estimates.

Unallocated financial reserves - 19/20 RA

£ 2.568 m

Other earmarked reserves - 19/20 RA

£ 4.683 m

Unallocated financial reserves

£ 2.300 m

Other earmarked reserves

£ 2.900 m

Unringfenced reserves as at 31st March 2020

Confidence in accuracy of reserves estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

Question F2: What percentage of your unringfenced reserves as reported in F1 are programmed for expenditure within the next three to four years within your Medium Term Financial Strategy and are therefore internally seen as unavailable for unforeseen circumstances?

Please separate between unallocated and earmarked reserves.

Percentage of unringfenced reserves as at 31st March 2020 seen as unavailable for unforeseen circumstances

Unringfenced reserves as at 31st March 2020 seen as unavailable for unforeseen circumstances

Unallocated financial reserves

90 %

£ 2.070 m

Other earmarked reserves

70 %

£ 2.030 m

Confidence in accuracy of reserves estimates (RAG rating)

AMBER

Question F3: If, in the event, you are required to deploy reserves to meet COVID-19 pressures in 2020-21, what impact would using unallocated reserves and/or other earmarked reserves have on your wider financial strategy?

Please select all that apply

- It would require you to add to reserves in 2021-22
- It would delay planned savings/improvement plans
- Other

Question F4: If you have selected Other, please specify.

Question F5: Do you anticipate any difficulties in meeting cash flow requirements over the next three months as a result of pressures caused by Covid-19?

We are interested in any difficulties in meeting ongoing costs from your existing resources or through normal treasury management activity such as short-term borrowing. Please use the drop-down list provided.

No

Section G: Additional commentary

Question G1. If you would like to provide some additional commentary on how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting your authority's finances and how you are responding, please do so here.

Many thanks for completing this form, please remember to click submit when you have finished each section and have S151 officer agreement.

Agenda Item 8

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	15 July 2020
Title:	Recovery group update
Report of:	Phil Evans, Director of Tourism and Enterprise
Cabinet member:	Cllr Margaret Bannister, Cabinet member for tourism and leisure services
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To inform and seek support for the initiatives recommended and facilitated by the Eastbourne Recovery Group
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	Cabinet is recommended to note the report and in particular; (1) Work to establish a PPE Buying Consortium (2) East Sussex Colleges Group Million Pound Pledge to provide accredited Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications (3) Provide an online shopping platform for independent businesses in Eastbourne (4) Develop a COVID Ready Quality Standard (5) Develop a Love Eastbourne destination marketing campaign
Reasons for recommendations:	The Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown has resulted in a significant downturn in the local economy, especially on the tourism and retail sectors and has had a subsequent impact on local people. This report sets out what actions are being taken by the Recovery Group in Eastbourne, including representation on the group by Eastbourne Borough Council
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Phil Evans Post title: Director of Tourism and Enterprise E-mail: philip.evans@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01323 415411

1 Introduction

1.1 The Recovery Group was set up in the early days of the lockdown and principally includes: the Eastbourne Business Improvement District, the Eastbourne Unltd Chamber of Commerce, the Eastbourne Hospitality Association and Eastbourne Borough Council. The purpose of the group is to recommend initiatives and where necessary, help facilitate the delivery of programmes and schemes to support the recovery of Eastbourne.

1.2 This is a cross party group, chaired by Cllr. Stephen Holt (Lib Dem), with Cllr Jane Lamb (Cons) acting as deputy chair. Members include:

- Miles Berkeley (Tech Resort and Eco Area Action Network)
- Adam Chugg (3VA)
- Mark Cottman (Eastbourne Hospitality Association)
- Yvette Cowderoy (Eastbourne Hospitality Association)
- Phil Evans (Eastbourne Borough Council)
- Christina Ewbank (Eastbourne *unLtd* Chamber of Commerce)
- Harry Farmer (Eastbourne Cultural Group)
- Nicky Fisher (Eastbourne *unLtd* Chamber of Commerce)
- Leanna Forse (Edeal)
- Denise Harwood (Eastbourne Enterprise Centre)
- Kristian Hayter (Eastbourne Hospitality Association)
- Roger Howarth (Age UK)
- Luke Johnson (Town Centre Management)
- Shoes Simes (Your Eastbourne BID and Night Time Economy)
- Joanna Rodgers (East Sussex College Group)

Paul Corney (Knowledge et al) and Vicky Kostiou (Gr/eat) provided additional support to help establish the group.

In the opening weeks, organisations met to discuss the key challenges presented by their sector and complete detailed SWOT analysis, as well as making recommendations for some of the activities that could be undertaken. This is an evolving, and ongoing process which is constantly under review.

2 Proposal

2.1 Activities

At present, the group is supporting a number of schemes initiated by the organisations represented:

a. PPE Buying Consortium

Established by the EHA, with the support of Your Eastbourne BID, the Eastbourne *unLtd* Chamber of Commerce and TechResort a PPE buying consortium was established to support businesses and individuals into purchasing locally sourced PPE items. The benefit of this consortium is that businesses are receiving wholesale prices even for low quantities.

Delivered locally by the EHA, customers simply need to log onto <https://www.visiteastbourne.com/eastbourne-hospitality/shop> to purchase items including hand sanitizers, gloves, masks and physically distancing stickers. So far, 65 businesses have utilised the service, spending over £7.5k.

This scheme was funded by a grant of £500 from the Devonshire Ward Devolved Budget, as many hotels and businesses are located in the Devonshire area.

b. East Sussex College Group Million Pound Pledge

Stephen Burkes from East Sussex Colleges Group made a presentation to the panel to enable them to discuss the £1m pledge to provide accredited Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications:

The fund can be used to deliver accredited Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications across a very broad range of sectors.

The fund can also be used to make up bespoke non-accredited training, however, this is subject to identifying enough demand. The group is working with the College to engage with businesses and the voluntary sector to ensure the courses are relevant to the local need.

c. 1EBN

The group is supporting the efforts of TechResort to provide an alternative online shopping platform specifically for independent Eastbourne businesses.

d. COVID Ready Quality Standard

Working with the team at Trading Standards, the group is establishing a COVID Ready quality standard to unite the business community in sharing a common set of standards and to reassure the public (residents and visitors). This is unique from other offerings as it is multi-sector, utilising the skills of the Eastbourne Business Alliance (Eastbourne Hospitality Association, Eastbourne *unLtd* Chamber of Commerce, Your Eastbourne BID and Visit Eastbourne) and supported by the primary authority.

Businesses that sign up will subscribe to:

- Operate responsibly within the guidelines set out by Government
- Implement effective controls for robust safety planning
- Be alert and ready to implement changing guidelines
- Observe physical distancing within business environments
- Reassure visitors and residents that their safety is the number one priority

This scheme will be free to enrol via the Visit Eastbourne website with business packs assisting in risk management, templates and contact details of key organisations. The scheme is self-regulating, but EHA inspectors and BID ambassadors will be used to investigate any feedback from the public.

Eastbourne Borough Council have agreed to fund this proposal using the money from the ERDF Re-Opening of the High Streets campaign, along with a contribution from Your Eastbourne BID.

e. Love Eastbourne

The COVID Ready quality standard is complemented by a marketing campaign to capitalise on Eastbourne's unique assets and to promote the buy local, shop local, visit local campaign. The EHA, Visit Eastbourne and Your Eastbourne BID will be working in partnership with members of the recovery group to promote this positive message.

2.2 Next steps

The recovery group continues to meet regularly to discuss other initiatives identified and to find solutions to problems. Regular updates are given by each of the organisations represented and where necessary assistance or support will be offered by the group.

3 Outcome expected and performance management

3.1 Throughout the lockdown period, close attention has been paid to performance data to enable us to judge the effectiveness of the interventions the council has been making, such as the Community Hub helpline, the provision of food, the payment of business grants, processing of benefit claims, etc. The focus on using data will be applied to the Recovery Group in areas such as measuring the success of campaign marketing and take up by businesses in various elements of the scheme.

3.2 Collection of data will continue through the life of the Recovery Group and will be analysed to measure success outcomes.

4 Financial appraisal

The direct costs/revenue consequences arising to the Council as a direct result of supporting the Recovery Group's plans and any other costs associated with the report's recommendations are to be funded from the previously allocated resources for tourism marketing.

5 Legal implications

There are no substantive legal implications arising from this report, as the contents are purely for noting.

6 Risk management implications

It should be noted that many of the issues related to Covid-19 and the lockdown are beyond the direct scope of the council to address alone and therefore a partnership approach will be essential to achieve significant impact.

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Agenda Item 9

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	15 July 2020
Title:	Portfolio Progress and Performance Report 2019/20- Quarter 4 (1 January-31 March 2020)
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Colin Swansborough, Cabinet member for place services and special projects
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	To consider the Council's progress and performance in respect of key projects and targets for the fourth quarter of the year (January- March 2020) as shown in Appendix 1.
Decision type:	Non-key
Officer recommendation(s):	Note progress and performance for Quarter 4
Reasons for recommendations:	To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the Council's progress and performance.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Millie McDevitt Post title: Projects and Performance Lead E-mail: Millie.McDevitt@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 01273 085637 / 01323 415637

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The performance of the Council is of interest to the whole community. People expect high quality and good value for money services. Performance monitoring, and a strong performance culture helps us to ensure we continue to deliver excellent services and projects to our communities in line with planned targets.
- 1.2 This report sets out the Council's performance against its targets and projects for the fourth quarter of 2019/20 (1 January- 31 March 2020).
- 1.3 The Council has an annual cycle for the preparation, delivery and monitoring of its corporate and service plans. This cycle enables us regularly to review the Council's work, and the targets it sets for performance, to ensure these continue to reflect customer needs and Council aspirations.

2.0 Themes and Priority Visions

2.1 The Corporate Plan was developed with four themes to focus delivery of improvement activity for the borough. Each of these themes had its own priority vision for how the authority and its stakeholders wanted Eastbourne to develop. Performance is measured against these themes and objectives.



3.0 2019/20 Q4 Performance Overview

3.1 Appendix 1 provides detailed information on progress and performance for Members' consideration. Where performance or projects have not achieved target, an explanation is provided, together with a summary of the management action that has been taken to address this.

3.2 At the end of this quarter, the Covid-19 pandemic affected the town and lockdown measures were introduced by the Prime Minister. Performance out-turn was affected by this to some degree, however for the most part, services were able to maintain their performance levels. This was achieved whilst at the same time quickly rolling out new procedures to support the district's communities with the impact of Covid-19.

How this authority responded to Covid-19 and supported the community was reported at the Cabinet meeting of 3 June. Some of the headline achievements include:

- In partnership with the voluntary sector, setting up a Community Hub to help connect people with local voluntary and community organisations;
- Supporting local food banks and other organisations to provide food;
- Establishment of a Coronavirus helpline and increased the number of customer service staff to ensure a prompt and high quality service

- Redeploying 110 staff to provide additional support in business critical service areas which came under pressure including benefits assessment and business grants;
- Increased support for our tenants including daily welfare checks;
- Rough sleepers in Eastbourne were provided accommodation by 29 March.

4.0 Community Ward Projects - Devolved Budget

4.1 The last section of Appendix 1 details the devolved budget spend by ward and the projects that have been supported through this scheme so far this year. Each ward has a total of £10,000 available to spend each year on schemes requested by the local community.

5 Financial Appraisal

5.1 Project and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements are contained within existing estimates. Corporate performance information should also be considered alongside the Council's financial update reports (also reported to Cabinet each quarter) as there is a clear link between performance and budgets/resources.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 Comment from the Legal Services Team is not necessary for this routine monitoring report.

7 Risk Management Implications

7.1 It is important that corporate performance is monitored regularly otherwise there is a risk that reductions in service levels, or projects falling behind schedule, are not addressed in a timely way.

8 Equality Analysis

8.1 The equality implications of individual decisions relating to the projects/services covered in this report are addressed within other relevant Council reports or as part of programmed equality analysis.

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Portfolio Progress and Performance Report (Quarter 4 2019/20)

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Appendix 1

Eastbourne Borough Council Corporate Performance Report Q4 2019-20

1. Growth & Prosperity

- 1.1 Growth & Prosperity Projects & Programmes
- 1.2 Growth & Prosperity Key Performance Indicators

2. Housing

- 2.1 Housing Projects & Programmes
- 2.2 Housing Key Performance Indicators

3. Thriving Communities

- 3.1 Thriving Communities Projects & Programmes
- 3.2 Thriving Communities Key Performance Indicators









4. Quality Environment

- 4.1 Quality Environment Projects & Programmes
- 4.2 Quality Environment Key Performance Indicators

5. Best Use of Resources






- 5.1 Best Use of Resources Key Performance Indicators

Community Projects – Devolved Ward Budgets Q4

Key			
	Performance that is at or above target Project is on track		Performance that is below target Projects that are not expected to be completed in time or within requirements
	Project has been completed, been discontinued or is on hold		Performance that is slightly below target but is within an acceptable tolerance Projects : where there are issues causing significant delay, changes to planned activities, scale, cost pressures or risks
	Direction of travel on performance indicator : improving performance		Direction of travel on performance indicator : declining performance
	Direction of travel on performance indicator : no change		Data with no performance target

CPR Ebn 1 Growth & Prosperity 2019/20

1.1 Growth & Prosperity Projects & Programmes



Project / Initiative	Description	Target completion	Status	Update
Sovereign Harbour Innovation Park (SHIP)	New contemporary business premises at Sovereign Harbour Innovation Park to be delivered by Sea Change Sussex.	Q4 2021/22		Sea Change Sussex have offered a three month rent free period to the occupiers of Pacific House to help with the financial impacts of Covid-19.
Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme (Town Centre Public Realm Improvements)	Significant improvements to the pedestrian environment in Terminus Road, Cornfield Road and Gildredge Road to be delivered alongside the extension to the Arndale. Joint Partnership Project with ESCC.	Dec 2019		Scheme is complete and snagging works have been undertaken. Signage nodes have suffered from water ingress. Works to remedy this will be carried out once maps have been updated with new location of TIC which is expected after lock down.
Devonshire Park Redevelopment	Significant investment to establish Devonshire Park as a premier conference and cultural destination to include: New welcome building; Restoration of Congress, Winter Garden and Devonshire Park Theatres; Improving Accessibility; Improving tennis facilities; New Conference/exhibition Space & Cafe; Public realm improvements	Q4 2020/21 (previously Q3 2020/21) due to outstanding works and defects that will need to be addressed following end of liabilities review in July		<p>End of liabilities report underway in advance of July 2020 deadline.</p> <p>Final account review on-going.</p> <p>Winter Garden: kitchen design established. Scoping of refurbishment work on-going. Clearance of Floral hall and Racquets Court underway.</p> <p>Outstanding works include external signage foundations, M&E issues, display monitor installation, access controls, public realm items etc (on hold due to Covid).</p> <p>O&M manuals under interrogation; several issues arising to be raised at end of liabilities review. Development of a SLA underway between operations and Property/Facilities teams.</p> <p>Additional court drainage to be developed.</p> <p><i>Project end date amended to Q4 2020/21 due to outstanding works and defects that need to be addressed following end of liabilities review in July 2020.</i></p>
Sovereign Centre Review	Construction of new leisure centre on existing Sovereign Centre car park. Project also includes reviewing options for site of existing facility.	Q4 2019/20		Design and costings under review.
Hampden Retail Park	The acquisition and development of Hampden Retail Park as part of the Property Acquisition and Investment Strategy (PAIS).	Q2 2019/20		Cabinet made decision to proceed with reduced scope scheme in March 2020. However, impact of Covid-19 needs to be understood before proceeding and therefore further internal discussions to take place over next few weeks.

1.2 Growth & Prosperity Key Performance Indicators

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Status	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
Town centre vacant retail business space	10.4%	5.35%	7.3%	7.92%	TBA	10.4%	?	?	TBA	?	No data provided by the Chamber of Commerce for Q4 due to the lockdown in mid March. Performance for the year for Q1, Q2 and Q3 within target.
Increase numbers of bandstand patrons	43,000	18,555	60,251	5,088	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	83,894	✓	The Bandstand is always closed to the public in Q4 however enjoyed a successful extended Q3 season as they remained open in October for Tribute Shows. Performance for the year was excellent and far exceeded the target.
Percentage of Council Tax collected during the year - Eastbourne	97.06%	28.38%	54.89%	81.90%	96.52%	97.06%	⚠	⬆	96.52%	⚠	Collection is below target in Q4. Overall collection has been maintained as is only slightly down by 0.11% on the 2018/19 collection rate of 96.63%.
Percentage of Business Rates collected during the year - Eastbourne	98.50%	28.68%	53.73%	79.05%	95.82%	98.50%	⚠	⬆	95.82%	⚠	Collection is below the target. This is largely attributable to the impact of the downturn in the high street nationally. There is £519,175 of outstanding business rates in respect of 18 retail companies.
Number of visitors to Eastbourne (day visitors and staying trips) Annual	5,066,000	Not measured for Quarters		Not measured for Quarters							Awaiting data- due by end July
Total tourist spend in Eastbourne (Annual)	£357,442,000	Not measured for Quarters		Not measured for Quarters							Awaiting data- due by end July
Total day visitor spend in Eastbourne (Annual)	£145,747,000	Not measured for Quarters		Not measured for Quarters							Awaiting data- due by end July
Total holiday accommodation spend in Eastbourne (Annual)	£211,695,000	Not measured for Quarters		Not measured for Quarters							Awaiting data- due by end July




CPR Ebn 2 Housing 2019/20


2.1 Housing Projects & Programmes

Project / Initiative	Description	Target completion	Status	Update
Housing Development Programme - Ebn	Deliver an ambitious programme of housing development and refurbishment that provides homes and makes a positive contribution to Eastbourne's economic future	Q4 2019/20		A number of development schemes continue to be progressed. The largest development at Bedfordwell Road was presented to EBC Cabinet in Q4 and was given approval to progress site remediation works and a planning submission for 96 homes. Discussions with South East Water are underway regarding design. Covid-19 may have an impact on resources availability.
Rough Sleeping Project	Reduce homelessness	Q4 2019/20		Verified Rough Sleepers as of the end of March: total = 18 (Male 15, Female 3) - unknown connection = 12 The project continues to expand with weekend support provision being explored in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership. Funding for the project is until March '20. The MHCLG are currently reviewing the RSI alongside sister projects - RSI2 and RRP.





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2.2 Housing Key Performance Indicators

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Status	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
Number of new affordable homes	30	0	12	17	0	30			29		29 affordable homes have been delivered over the year. One further scheme was programmed to be completed in the 4th quarter, but rising build costs have meant a re-design was required, and a new planning application.

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Status	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
(Annual) Net additional new homes provided	274								200		<p>In 2019/2020, a total of 200 net additional dwellings were completed across 54 sites. The Eastbourne Core Strategy sets a target of 5,022 dwellings to be delivered between 2006 and 2027. As at the end of 2019/20, a total of 3,032 dwellings have been completed since 2006, leaving a further 1,990 dwellings required over the seven remaining years of the plan period, at an average of 284 dwellings per annum.</p> <p>Housing delivery is impacted by a lack of land availability, particularly due to significant flood risk constraints across much of the borough. Development sites tend to be mainly small sites on previously developed land where there are higher existing use values and often remediation issues, both of which severely impact on financial viability. Such sites do not generally appeal to larger scale developers, and therefore the development of these sites is reliant on small and medium sized operators who rely on different business models to larger developers. The small scale of development and the lower margins associated with this means that the cost of development finance takes up a larger proportion of the developers return. Therefore they are less willing to borrow in order to fund development and are reliant on re-investing returns from other development in order to start the next site. As such, the build-out rates of sites that have been granted permission is slow. This issue is further exacerbated by a continuing fall in the number of local builders operating in the area.</p> <p>At the end of 2019/20, there were 1,049 new homes granted permission across 137 sites, of which 376 homes (43 sites) are currently under construction.</p> <p>In February 2020, the results of the Government's Housing Delivery Test were published, which saw Eastbourne score 38%. The Housing Delivery Test measures the number of homes delivered against the number of homes required. Due to the Eastbourne Core Strategy being more than five years old, Eastbourne's housing requirement is the Local Housing Need figure calculated using a Government published standard methodology. Currently, the Local Housing Need for Eastbourne is 675 homes per year. Due to the lack of land availability and delivery issues identified above, the full Local Housing Need is not deliverable within Eastbourne, which is a significant reason for the low Housing Delivery Test result. A Housing Delivery Action Plan was prepared and published on the Council's website in August 2019.</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Status	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
DFGs - Time taken from council receiving a fully complete application to the council approving the grant	28 days	3	1	1	1 day	28 days			2 days		The Occupational therapists and advisors have completed their first year working within the borough which has resulted in a great throughput of grants, procedures have been streamlined and processing times have been reduced.
Number of Licensed HMO's Inspected per Quarter	50	12	19	15	11	12.5			57		The number inspected was 1.5 below target. Two visits were booked in for the last two weeks in March but were postponed. However the HMO managers were contacted and all the necessary certificates were collected electronically. Annual update: 292 licensed HMOs in Eastbourne and 10 new ones registered in 2019/2020.
Taking everything into account, percentage of tenants satisfied or dissatisfied with overall Homes First service	90%	81%	87%	93%	83%	90%			86%		A lower response rate than usual has impacted on the overall result across a number of measures during Quarter 4. Annual outturn of 86% is within tolerance but clearly we look to each and every complaint and expression of dissatisfaction as an improvement opportunity and follow up all comments we receive with individual correspondents.
Rent arrears of current tenants (expressed as a percentage of rent debit) (E)	2%	3.84%	4.07%	4.61%	4.66%	2%			4.66%		EBC started the 2019/20 financial year with an arrears position of 3.22% and closed the financial year with an arrears position of 4.66%. The rent arrears were continually increasing each month up until November 2019 when the 4.84%. Plans were put in place and the rent arrears decreased monthly to the end of financial year arrears figure. This arrears figure would be significantly lower, but due to the weekly charges being loaded for the last week of March and the 1st April 2020 being a Wednesday, this means the Direct Debits for the 1st of the month would be taken from tenants accounts and posted in the following week. At this time it was too early to see any real impact of Covid-19 on Rent Collection, although the expectation is that over the next few months it will have an impact, but we will continue to collect the rent arrears and where appropriate continue to serve rent notices
Average void relet time	20.0	17.8	15.2	18.2	20.4	20.0			17.8		Q4 and annual update : The re-let time for the first quarter started off well above target in

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Status	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
key to key (month & YTD) (E)											<p>January but then improved over the following two months, resulting in an overall quarterly re-let figure of 20.4 days.</p> <p>The overall figure for the quarter is just over target. We continue to monitor void and lettings during weekly meetings and this will continue in order to closely manage performance going forward. However the overall annual target was exceeded with a turnaround time of 17.8 days against a target of 20.</p>
Page 44 Number of households living in emergency (nightly paid) accommodation (E)	Data only	158	181	158	148	Data only			148		<p>The team ended the performance year with a 17.3% reduction in households in emergency accommodation (EA) - down from 179 in March 2019 to 148 in March 2020.</p> <p>The overall number of households in EA has been on a downward trend since the start of the year and was expected to reduce further. However, the Coronavirus pandemic has impacted the service greatly and limited the team's ability to move households out of EA into more settled accommodation.</p> <p>Despite the enormous challenge of C19 the team have been able to maintain current levels of performance.</p> <p>The reduction of households in EA is the result of a number of improvements made across service over the 12 months. This included re-aligning Housing Needs and Standards, reviewing the service's ways of working and introducing a range of operational improvements.</p> <p>The changes have also seen increases in the number of households prevented and relieved from homelessness, which was noted by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in a visit in February 2020.</p>

CPR Ebn 3 Thriving Communities 2019/20











3.1 Thriving Communities Key Performance Indicators

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 2019/20	Q2 2019/20	Q3 2019/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Trend	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
Average days to process new claims for housing/council tax benefit	22	22	19	19	21	22	✓	↓	20	✓	The annual out-turn has improved over the last two years: two days better than the 2018/19 figure and four better than the 2017/18 figure.
Average days to process change of circs (housing/council tax benefit) (E)	8	9	8	7	5	8	✓	↑	8	✓	Performance on target for the year.
Improve our ranking compared to similar authorities in relation to all crime - Eastbourne	In top 5	1	1	1	4	5	✓	↓	4	✓	Crimes per 1,000 population haven't changed significantly but other areas have seen a reduction leading to our changed ranking.







CPR Ebn 4 Quality Environment 2019/20







4.2 Quality Environment Key Performance Indicators




KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Trend	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
Percentage of local searches that are returned within 10 working days of receipt	80%	98.69%	98.49%	100%	99.54%	80%			99.2%		Performance throughout the year remained above target.
Increase the percentage of Major Planning Applications processed within 13 weeks	65%	100%	67%	100%	80%	65%			83%		Performance for Q4 remains above target. Annual performance has exceeded target for the year with a total of 10 out of 12 major applications processed within 13 weeks.
Increase the percentage of minor planning applications processed within 8 weeks	75%	82%	90%	79%	78%	75%			82%		Performance for Q4 remains above target. Annual performance has exceeded target for the year with a total of 155 out of 188 minor applications processed within 8 weeks.
Increase the percentage of other planning applications processed within 8 weeks	75%	90%	96%	100%	94%	75%			95%		Performance for Q4 remains above target. Annual performance has exceeded target for the year with a total of 314 out of 332 other planning applications processed within 8 weeks.
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	38.00%	35.45%	36.69%	35.51%	30.85%	38.00%			34.69%		January (31.70%) and February (30.9%) show a decrease due to the reduction in garden waste collected at this time of year. March's recycling rate (32.64) is an improvement and the team continued to maintain all collections in the month, and the collection rate is 0.79% higher than March 2019.
Total number of reported fly-tipping incidents	480	127	117	155	127	120			526		Q4 & annual update: Although annual performance missed the target, the number of reported fly-tips for Q4 decreased from Q3 with March performance being the lowest since SEESL took over the waste contract in

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Trend	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
											July 2019. The Neighbourhood First teams have been using the new Keep Britain Tidy campaign material 'Crime not to care' mobile CCTV cameras at key sites and providing evidence for prosecutions.
% Container Deliveries on Time	100%		28.45%	49.03%	n/a	100%			36.4%		The total number of containers delivered across the quarter was much higher than usual with 832 bins delivered plus an additional 512 for new garden waste customers. In the main the SLA of containers delivered on time has been met but no figure is recorded as it will be unfairly skewed by the high number of customers who joined the garden waste service in Feb / March having their bins delivered at the end of March ready for the 1st of April start.
Number of missed bins (per 100,000)	100		40.5	36.33	32.67	100			36.5		Good performance for the year remaining within target each month. Performance in Q4 improved on Q3 and Q2.
Missed Assisted Collections	0%		0.12%	0.09%	0.07%	0%			0.07%		Improvement from Q3.

CPR Ebn 5 Best Use of Resources 2019/20

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Trend	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
Number of new sign-ups to the Councils' social media channels	600	471	442	532	280	150			1,725		Q4 and annual comment: Our social media channels have continued to grow in popularity over the last 12 months, with a particularly large number of people following us around specific events such as bonfire night. Social media has proved an efficient way for customers to contact the council and for us to quickly and easily disseminate information to a wide audience.
Increase the percentage of calls to the contact centre answered within 60 seconds - Ebn	80%	47.33	86.05	76.48	87.22%	80%			73.36%		<p>Although Q4 sees some of the busiest periods for Customer Contact, including January's return from Christmas Break and March's Annual billing which sees over 250K pieces of correspondence sent in few days, we still managed to achieve our target in each month of the quarter.</p> <p>As the COVID-19 situation started to become more serious during March and the guidance on home working more apparent, Customer Contact began to quickly adapt its approach and resources.</p> <p>With Customer Advisors not having access to laptops and phone equipment, we were able to quickly secure and deploy 8 laptops to Customer Advisors who were most at risk and being advised to stay at home. With these 8 Advisors safely working from home answering calls, we then turned our attention to other work that could be completed at home by our vulnerable staff members and to minimise work travel. We increased the amount of licenses we had for our Webchat service which now sees anything between 10 and 15 advisors being available for live chat using their own PC equipment at home.</p> <p>In addition to this, we have also been given a list of around 3000 council</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Trend	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
											<p>tenants who may be classed as vulnerable and they now receive a weekly call from a customer advisor who is working from home – they will be checking our tenants are ok and ensuring that any needs are met by offering support or sign posting them to relevant charities and organisations.</p> <p>As we enter Q1 for 2020/2021' our focus continues to remain on supporting those in our communities who are most vulnerable and in need of our support due to the impact of COVID-19. In addition to covering our normal duties on the phone lines, webchat, emails and post and with reduced staffing present, we have also been aiding in covering the Community Hub lines where residents who are most vulnerable have been contacting us for assistance. We will continue to evaluate our available resources on a daily bases and ensure that those most in need are able to contact us quickly and effectively, whilst encouraging those that are able to self-source information on our website or use of the Webchat facility.</p>
Reduce the numbers of abandoned calls to the contact centre	5%	21.64	3.25	6	2.96	5%			8.99%		Target was met in every month of the quarter. For more detailed commentary see above PI.
Average days lost per FTE employee due to sickness (J)	8.0 days	2.2 days	2.1 days	2.72 days	2.52 days	2.0 days			9.54 days		<p>2.52 days represents a slight increase for the quarter from last years' total of 2.47 days but a reduction from the Q3 total of 2.72 days. 5 employees were off for the whole of Q4 which is a reduction of one from Q3, and we also experience some CV-19 absences in this final quarter.</p> <p>HR Business Partners continue to support managers and staff in managing attendance issues.</p> <p>Annual comment: The target for 19/20 was 8 days and the final figure is 9.54 days which is an increase on last year's figure of 8.96 days per FTE.</p> <p>Although over target it's important to note that this includes LDC Waste services, which by nature of the work has higher levels of sickness absence than other areas.</p>

KPI Description	Annual Target 2019/20	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 2019/20				2019/20 Value	Annual Trend	Latest Note
					Value	Target	Status	Trend			
											If we take Waste Services out of the figures the total is 8.46 days. In addition Homes First staff had higher levels of absence than previous years peaking at 4.03 days in Q1 when they had a number of staff on long term sick.
Social media responsiveness rate	80%	89.67%	87%	87.33%	84.33%	80%			87.08%		'Response rate' is the percentage of new messages received via our Facebook page that we respond to on the day the message is received.

Devolved ward budget scheme 2019/2020 – Year end summary by ward

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
Devonshire	Allchorn Pleasure Boat	Restoration of Allchorn Pleasure Boat	£1,250.00
	Friends of Prince Park Fun Day	Funds to provide gazebos and entertainment for the annual Friends of Prince Park Fun Day	£750.00
	Community Stuff	Funding for a gazebo during rainy days for Community Stuff's holiday activities.	£631.94
	Pride 2019	Funding towards Eastbourne Pride event (20th July 2019), the annual march and party to be held in Princes Park.	£2,000.00
	Holding Space	Holding space will provide a safe and support space for families whose child has mental illness. There will be access to support treatment, information and therapies. Holding Space will educate and empower children and their families to manage their mental health.	£1,000.00
	Friends of Seaside Rec	The money will assist with the cost of a security door on the proposed café area.	£1,000.00
	Trees	Replacement tree at Tideswell Road	£250.00
	Salvation Army	Money towards canopy at Rebourne Café, Salvation Army	£1,000.00
	Vinyl	Vinyl wrap installation at Langney Road	£1,000.00
	Tree Planting	Replacement tree planting on Seaside.	£1,000.00
	Tree Planting	Memorial tree planted at Princes Park	£118.00
Total spend for the year:			£9,999.94
Hampden Park	Trees Community Association Summer Fun Event	An event that aims to offer a low cost and fun event that grows community spirit and hopefully raise some funds for volunteer-led community activities.	£700.00
	Age Concern	New asset in Brassey parade of a shed project run by Age Concern	£1,800.00
	Defibrillators	Up keep of Defibrillators in Hampden Park	£300.00
	Trees	To plant 8 trees and create a bee friendly flower bed at the top of Lottbridge Drive.	£2,000.00
	Bear Workshops	Parenting classes	£350.00

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
	Age UK	Improving the quality of life of our aged population with various courses provided at the local community centre.	£2,000.00
	Friends of Tugwell Park	Funding to help local schools to grow their own flowers and vegetables	£700.00
	Creative Force	Intergenerational project aimed at getting over 65's playing with the under 12's.	£1,111.00
	The Trees Community Association	Redecoration of local community centre	£639.00
	Duke of Edinburgh	Duke of Edinburgh's Open Award Centre, Eastbourne. Equipment for various activities.	£400.00
Total spend for the year:			£10,000
Langney	Diversionsary Sports	Funding for Shinewater Diversionsary Sports Summer 2019. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday through school summer holidays from 23rd July to 31st August 1pm – 3pm. Encouraging youngsters to participate in sports activities.	£1,500.00
	Shinewater Woodland Project	Woodland Adventurers at Shinewater Primary School. Outdoor Learning Project. This includes a Woodland Tots programme for pre-school children and their parents from the Shinewater wider community to join in. Woodland site is used every day. Funding will go towards purchase of woodchips.	£440.00
	Theatre Project	Opportunity for schoolchildren from Shinewater Primary School to visit Royal Hippodrome for a Christmas performance of family show "The Lost Toys Big Christmas Adventure". Access to the arts for children who may not otherwise get the opportunity to experience live theatre.	£500.00
	Community Garden	Community Garden at The Causeway School. To develop wider community involvement and make the area adapted for disability friendly especially for pupils from Hazel Court school.	£1,000.00
	Defibrillators	Replacement pads and batteries for Langney defibrillators.	£500.00
	Tree Planting	Funding for tree planting. Due to the Climate Emergency and the change of route to	£2,000.00

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
		Stagecoach buses now using Foxglove Road, we need to offset the Carbon Emissions.	
	Shinewater Hub	Funding for Shinewater Hub. Fire, Health and Safety. Fire extinguishers Emergency, lighting and signs.	£312.10
	Langney Community Hub	Langney Community Hub. For financial help towards the building of a kitchen and toilet for the use of disabled and child changing service.	£3,000.00
Total spend for the year:			£9,252.10
Meads	Eastbourne Heritage Centre	Funding towards the 2019 exhibition	£600.00
	Little Chelsea Traders Association	Funding towards Little Christmas 2019	£1,000.00
	ROMPA Defibrillator	External cabinet for defibrillator at ROMPA tennis club to enable public access 24/7.	£595.14
	Silver Sunday	Silver Sunday event 6th October 2019: National initiative on social prescribing through Lighthouse Medical Practice who will nominate 100 of their patients to participate in a special afternoon to appraise them of a wide range of activities in which they might participate to combat social isolation.	£200.00
	MCA Christmas Lights	Additional Christmas light for Meads St.	£150.00
	Just Friends	Just Friends Christmas lunch for people living alone	£250.00
	Meads Village Allotments	To assist in the purchase of the Meads Village Allotments by a Community Interest Company to preserve the allotments for the residents of Meads in perpetuity	£4,000.00
	Helen Gardens Defibrillator	To install a defibrillator at Helen Gardens through the EBC Seafront Office	£500.00
	A Band of Brothers	To help the "Band of Brothers" in Eastbourne with their rites-of-passage mentoring programme (Quest) to young men involved with the Criminal Justice System	£2,000.00
	Eastbourne Society	The Eastbourne Society need a high quality wireless radio microphone.	£470.00
Total spend for the year:			£9,765.14

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
Old Town	Pashley Down Infant School	Pashley Down, a vibrant and popular community school here in Old Town, are seeking funding to replace elements of their outside learning space.	£500.00
	Noah's Ark Playgroup	Noah's Ark is a longstanding playgroup in Old Town that runs weekly during term time for children up to school age. They use their premises free of charge, but much of the play equipment is tired and well beyond its useful life. A small amount from the devolved budget would have a large impact on the enjoyment of the children and the range of equipment able to be offered.	£250.00
	Bear Workshops	Bear Workshops – a specific resource for soon-to-be-dads to allow them to be trained and prepared for fatherhood and the birth of their baby. The places on the course funded by this application to the devolved budget will be reserved for dads who live in Old Town who otherwise wouldn't be able to attend such a course. In this way the project will enhance community facilities and accessibility in the ward. There are very few courses that specifically address dads and what they can do and the part they can play in the arrival of a baby and the months after.	£250.00
	Tree Planting	Tree planting on Greenfield Road, near the junction of Greenfield Road and Green Street. The aim is to replace recently removed trees, due to disease.	£250.00
	Tree Planting	Tree planting on the grass verge outside of 238 Victoria Drive. Many trees have been cut down recently following Dutch Elm disease and Old Town Councillors are keen to replace where possible. The grass verge outside number 238 is also used for parking and this has churned the verge up. Tree planting here would help restore the pleasing visual nature of the area.	£250.00

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
	Tree Planting	Tree planting outside of 47 Summerdown Road.	£250.00
	St Mary's Church	<p>The project will encourage wildflower growth in the churchyard at St Mary's Church, Old Town, and specifically ensuring public engagement with this project. The project will also encourage interaction with the heritage of the site through participation and research. The funding will provide discrete, accessible signage to inform the public of the project.</p> <p>There will also be nesting boxes to encourage growth in the colony of Swifts that currently breed in and around the churchyard.</p> <p>Funding will also provide for a 'festival of nature and heritage' at the Church to encourage public engagement with their local environment and explain the importance of encouraging biodiversity within our Towns as well as in the Countryside.</p>	£1,000.00
	Replacement Trees	<p>Sixteen replacement trees for Old Town. Two trees to be sited at or near the junction of Okehurst Road and Green Street, an area that has recently been affected by tree felling. Other locations at LM's discretion, but should be on-street locations within the Ward. Aim is to replace recently removed trees, removed due to disease.</p>	£4,000.00
	Woodcraft Folk	Funding for the Eastbourne branch of Woodcraft Folk, providing a fund allowing members from Old Town to attend events when they otherwise would not be able to afford to go.	£500.00
	Brownies	Funding for 10th Eastbourne Brownies, based in Old Town. The funding will subsidise those who otherwise would not be able to afford it to attend a specific outward bound course.	£500.00
	Motcombe Gardens	Funding for two trees sited within Motcombe Gardens.	£500.00

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
	Compass Community Arts	Funding for Compass Community Arts, a grass-roots based local group supporting people with learning disabilities. The funds will go towards outreach costs within the community and to provide materials for specific courses.	£400.00
	Old Town Rainbows	Funding for the Old Town branch of Rainbows, providing much needed camping equipment.	£500.00
	Victoria Baptist	Funding for sensory equipment at Victoria Baptist Church.	£400.00
	Boys and Girls Brigade	Funding for the Old Town branch of both the Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade. This will help provide a fund for members from Old Town to attend activity courses when they otherwise would not be able to do so.	£350.00
	Junior Netball	Eastbourne Junior Netball Club. Many members come from Funding to provide suitable warm team clothing for the members.	£100.00
Total spend for the year:			£10,000
Ratton	Ratton School Garden	Funds allocated to make a garden for local residents to sit in	£400.00
	Westlords	To establish changing rooms and a small community room on Westlords site. For use for sports teams. This money is for the moving of mobile buildings (a part of it)	£9,600.00
Total spend for the year:			£10,000
St Anthony's	Defiant Sports	Funding assistance for the delivery of outreach sports opportunities provided via 'Defiant Sports', specifically the provision of an adult football group and the Children with SEND football sessions.	£250.00
	Tree Planting	Tree replacement outside of 40 Hunloke Avenue	£250.00
	Langney Triangle	Geophysical Survey at Langney Triangle, as a precursor to planting work at the location	£300.00
	St Catherine's College	Funding for play area markings.	£1,000.00

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
	Langney Community Garden	Funding for Langney Community Garden	£3,000.00
	Tree Planting	Tree planting at The Rotunda	£250.00
	Heritage Project	In advance of the creation of a local public garden and following geophysical investigation of the site, this project will undertake a community archaeology project to better understand the significance of any archaeological features. Heritage Eastbourne will provide opportunities for members of the local community to tangibly get to grips with their heritage through participation and engagement throughout the two week project. Volunteers will work alongside professional archaeologists and heritage staff in both the excavation, finds processing, recording and post-excavation processes	£4,950.00
Total spend for the year:			£10,000
Sovereign	Defiant Sports	Purchase heating for multi sports hall and funding towards electrical materials for Defiant Sports	£1,000.00
	Eastbourne Sea Cadets	Replacement of Dingy Sails for Eastbourne Sea Cadets Corps	£500.00
	Memory Lane	New Printer for Memory Lane Eastbourne with refillable tanks for printing newsletters.	£229.99
	The Haven	Environmental Impact for Outside Learning at the Haven	£8,270.01
Total spend for the year:			£10,000
Upperton	Holding Space	"Holding Space" provides a safe space for families caring for a child with mental illness. They provide advice, support and information.	£500.00
	Memory Lane	"Memory Lane Eastbourne" provides social activities for people with dementia and their carers	£200.00
	Community Wise	Upperton Neighbourhood Panel - Empowering the community giving people the help needed to manage their own community. To meet four times a year at Community Wise.	£100.00

Ward	Project	Description	Project Spend to Date
	Heart Beat Fund	Eastbourne Defibrillator Partnership - "The Heart Beat Fund" - Replace Electropads and Batteries in four public access defibrillators in Upperton	£500.00
	Children's Climate Library	Funding for books and trolleys to take to creative sessions and events.	£150.00
	Heart of Eastbourne Project	Bringing life to the "Heart of Eastbourne" Project. This will encourage wildflower growth, providing nesting boxes for swifts, encourage biodiversity.	£1,000.00
	Tree Planting	Tree planting around the Upperton Ward	£2,000.00
	Tree Planting	Additional tree planting around Upperton Ward. (4 in Upperton Road, 2 near on in St Thomas A Beckett School and 2 in Le Brun Road)	£2,000.00
	Flood Path Repair	Contribution towards a permanent fix for flood prone pathway at Hartfield Square	£1,000.00
	Gildredge Park Forest School	Creation of Gildredge Park Forest School within the grounds of Tennis in the Park, to provide a safe and non-threatening environment.	£1,000.00
	The JPK Project	Upgrading and enlarging disability accessible facilities at JPK Project to allow "Access for all"	£550.00
Total spend for the year:			£9,000

Number of schemes for the year:	79
All wards total spend for the year:	£88,017.18

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Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	15 July 2020
Title:	Downland Whole Estate Plan Approval
Report of:	Ian Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning
Cabinet member:	Councillor Jonathan Dow, Cabinet member for climate change
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of report:	For Cabinet to agree adoption of the final Downland Whole Estate Plan and prioritisation of possible future projects.
Decision type:	Non-Key Decision
Officer recommendation(s):	<p>(1) To agree adoption of the Downland Whole Estate Plan, as attached at Appendix A, noting the summary of main changes to the document outlined at Appendix B;</p> <p>(2) To agree prioritisation of future possible projects outlined within the Downland Whole Estate Plan, as attached at Appendix C;</p> <p>(3) To agree that initial work should focus on changes to the Beachyhead Countryside Centre and re-purposing redundant farm buildings at Black Robin Farm to reflect the Downland Whole Estate Plan priorities, subject to a business case.</p>
Reasons for recommendations:	Public consultation on the Downland Whole Estate Plan has completed and the Plan is now in its final form. The Plan requires formal adoption by the Council prior to endorsement by the South Downs National Park Authority.
Contact Officer(s):	Name: Mark Langridge-Kemp Post title: Head of Property, Delivery and Compliance E-mail: mark.langridge-kemp@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk Telephone number: 07900 057102

1 Introduction

- 1.1** The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) is seeking to collaborate with landowners across the National Park in the development of Whole Estate Plans

(WEPs), a non-statutory plan that seeks to protect the Park and demonstrate the aspirations of its landowners. The Whole Estates Plan process seeks to assist SDNPA and large estate organisations to work together in delivery of this vision.

- 1.2 In June 2019 Cabinet agreed the vision for the Council's Downland WEP which focussed on conservation and preservation of the estate, supporting the tenant farmers and enabling a self-sustaining, financially resilient Estate. Following further consultation events in 2019, February Cabinet then agreed the draft WEP subject to public consultation. The public consultation ran for 8 weeks until early April and around 70 responses were received including those responses that were delayed as a result of the impact of Covid-19.
- 1.3 Cabinet had delegated final agreement of the WEP to the Director of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change , however, the matter is being brought before Cabinet in order to additionally approve an initial project to make changes to the existing Beachyhead Countryside Centre as well as a prioritisation of possible future WEP projects.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 Officers have continued to work closely with SDNPA in production of the WEP which has been produced in accordance with the guidelines set down by SDNPA. There are four main sections of the plan:
- Vision: this was agreed by Cabinet in June 2019;
 - Asset Audit : this audit establishes a complete picture of all of the assets on the Downland;
 - Ecosystem Service Analysis: this includes a SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the many eco systems on the Estate which provide life's essentials such as clean air and water, food, fuel and raw materials and opportunities for improved health and wellbeing.
 - Action Plan: this takes the opportunities and threats identified in the Ecosystem Services Analysis and identifies the actions required and the specific projects attached to achieving those actions.
- 2.2 The final draft version of the WEP is attached at Appendix A (please note that the Historic Environment Record will follow and be appended to the final version of the WEP and final formatting will be undertaken) and a high level summary of the main changes in the document are outlined in Appendix B. It is intended that WEP remains a live document and as such further refreshes will be possible in order that it remains current and continues to reflect policy changes and priorities.
- 2.3 The Action Plan outlines the range of future possible projects that could be undertaken across the Downland in support of the WEP priorities. Appendix C proposes a prioritisation list of these projects from High to Low, this is not say that projects identified as medium or low are not important, but merely a way of attempting to ensure the identified outcomes of the WEP are presented in a manageable way for future focus. Cabinet is not being asked to make a

commitment that all the projects should be taken forward, just to give approval to an initial prioritisation of them. Some projects are already being undertaken to an extent as part of current management of the Downland and others are being investigated; officers will report back to Cabinet with a full business case on any projects where there are any financial implications.

- 2.4 Noted as a high priority, officers would like to initially progress proposals around two linked projects, subject to a future business case being presented to Cabinet:
- changes to the Beachyhead Countryside Centre: the Centre is identified as a key element in the WEP due to the central role it can play in signposting activities, promoting the Downland and supporting education and volunteering initiatives.
 - re-purposing redundant farm buildings at Black Robin Farm to reflect WEP priorities around increasing education and income opportunities.
- 2.5 Subject to agreement from Cabinet, SDNPA will consider endorsement of the Plan in September.

3. Corporate plan and council policies

- 3.1 This proposal meets the following aspirations of the Corporate Plan 2020-2024:
- Quality Environment: supporting a low carbon and sustainable open space;
 - Thriving Communities: promoting physical health and mental well-being
 - Best Use of Resources: increasing revenue and generating social value;
- 3.2 Cabinet adopted the Corporate Asset Management Plan (AMP) in 2017. The AMP focuses on 4 key areas:
- Improving yield from the investment portfolio.
 - Reducing maintenance costs and liabilities.
 - Delivering efficiencies through smarter procurement.
 - Increasing the capital value of the Council's asset base.

The Whole Estate Plan sets out a strategy to support these aims.

4. Financial appraisal

- 4.1 The recommendations are to agree adoption of the final Downland Whole Estate Plan, prioritisation of future possible projects and that initial work should focus on changes to the Beachyhead Countryside Centre. There are no immediate direct revenue consequences arising to the Council as a direct result of this report, and any other future costs associated with the report's recommendations will be contained within a future report to Cabinet.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

25 February 2010 Ref: 008974-LDC-MR

6. Risk management implications

- 6.1 Producing a WEP is the best way in order to ensure that the Eastbourne Downland Estate is protected, meets future environment priorities and is enhanced for future generations. Once adopted, the Council will have a clear action plan setting out its future commitments to the operation of the Estate that stakeholders can help support and take forward.

7. Equality analysis

- 7.1 An equality screening has been undertaken and has assessed that an Equality Analysis is not required for this report. Further equality screening will be undertaken on future projects arising from the Action Plan.

8. Environmental impact analysis

- 8.1 The WEP by its very nature seeks to conserve and preserve the Downland Estate and the Action Plan sets out workstreams that will help support the Council's ambition for a carbon neutral town by 2030.

9. Appendices

- Appendix A –Eastbourne Downland Whole Estate Plan;
- Appendix B – Summary of Changes
- Appendix C – Action Plan Prioritisation

10. Background papers

- Cabinet report 5th February 2020 'Downland Whole Estate Plan'
<https://democracy.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/documents/s13462/Downland%20Whole%20Estate%20Plan.pdf>

EASTBOURNE DOWNLAND ESTATE

DRAFT WHOLE ESTATE PLAN



The Vision for the Eastbourne Downland Estate over the next 25 years

Conserve the iconic downland landscape and cultural heritage of the Estate, so that these special qualities can be enjoyed, understood and valued by the public, with access for all, contributing to Eastbourne's sense of community, wellbeing and belonging and instil a strong sense of public stewardship that encourages visitors and people from all backgrounds to actively care for the Estate and invest in it.

Maintain and enhance the 'natural capital' of the Estate, so that high-quality, well-managed habitats are resilient and adaptable to climate change, pests or disease; support wildlife networks throughout the landscape; and continue to deliver the widest range of ecosystem services into the future.

Ensure that these ecosystem services are enjoyed, valued and understood by the public, with all Eastbourne residents feeling they are beneficiaries of the Estate – not just those who are able to visit regularly.

Ensure that our farmers are supported and valued as stewards of our land, its soils and its wildlife, with sustainable and profitable businesses that can continue to flourish and innovate.

Protect the Estate for future generations, ensuring that it is self-sustaining and financially resilient, built on diversified income streams, promoting innovation, craftsmanship, rural creative industries, and high-quality visitor experiences, supporting tourism and local communities.

Introduction

Background

The Eastbourne Downland Estate extends to approximately 4,174 acres, of which 2,963 acres is mainly farmed (the Council leases four farms and a smallholding) and 1,211 acres is open access land; it lies at the easternmost end of the South Downs National Park. The Estate was bought by the local authority with compulsory purchase powers under The Eastbourne Corporation Act of 1926 and it is currently owned and managed, on behalf of the public, by Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC).

The Council is committed to the conservation and enhancement of the Downland Estate to preserve it for future generations and it has developed a Whole Estate Plan (WEP) to help guide the longer-term management of the Estate. The Council's priority is the preservation of the Estate's special qualities and the ecosystem services it provides. The WEP is not intended to be a detailed management plan, and does not supersede the Eastbourne Downland Management Plan 2015-2022; instead, it is envisaged as a 'live' document that will help provide a long-term strategy within an informed context and as such will be subject to review and refresh to ensure it continues to reflect policies and priorities.

WEPs are an initiative from the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) in order to enable "...collaboration between individual estates and the National Park Authority to achieve the ambitions of the organisation and the purposes of the National Park". The SDNPA Local Plan is landscape-led, with the concept of ecosystem services (the many and varied well-being benefits that humans freely gain from the natural environment) and natural capital (the earth's natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things) the core focus of the approach. It recognises the significant influence of the estates and farms across the National Park, and the impact the management activities of these estates has in the short, medium and long term. It also recognises the challenges faced by those who own and operate these estates to manage the land profitably while maintaining some of the most significant cultural/heritage assets within the National Park. By providing a degree of flexibility when considering development proposals on estates which have

prepared an endorsed WEP (Strategic Policy SD22: Development Strategy) it is hoped that balance can be achieved. However, this can only be done within an informed context which clearly sets out the longer-term role of a development proposal within the overall ambition of the organisation and its contribution to the conservation and enhancement of the National Park, its special qualities and the ecosystem services it provides.

The WEP itself follows the format set out in the *Whole Estate Plans Preparation Guidelines*, issued by the SDNPA (Revision B, published 22.05.2017). The simple form of the content is: **Vision** (Section 2); **Asset Audit** (Section 3); **Ecosystem Services Analysis** (Section 4); and **Action Plan** (Section 5). In line with the SDNPA Local Plan, the concept of ecosystem services and natural capital is the core focus of the approach.

Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

The Natural Capital Committee (NCC) is an independent advisory committee to the Government and defines natural capital as "*the elements of nature that produce value or benefits to people (directly and indirectly), such as the stock of forests, rivers, land, minerals and oceans, as well as the natural processes and functions that underpin their operation*"¹. More simply, natural capital is the stock of assets provided by nature with the



Source: Natural Capital Committee

¹ Natural Capital Committee (2013) The State of Natural Capital: Towards a framework for measurement and valuation. A report from the Natural Capital Committee [online] available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/516707/ncc-state-natural-capital-first-report.pdf (last accessed 06 July 2019)

capacity to generate goods and services, often called ‘ecosystem services’, over time.

These services, often in combination with other forms of capital (human, manufactured, social and financial) contribute to the economy and human wellbeing directly and indirectly in many different ways. They provide products that:

- are sold directly, such as timber or agricultural crops;
- supply inputs to the production of goods, such as water; support landscapes and wildlife that promote tourism and recreation; and
- deliver the wider conditions that underpin a well-functioning economy, such as a healthy environment that supports a productive workforce, and natural infrastructure that reduces exposure to climate-related impacts such as floods, landslides, or fires.

The Government has aspirations to improve the environment within a generation and have launched ‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan To Improve The Environment’², which is based on a natural capital approach. The NCC has recommended that *“Local authorities and major infrastructure providers should ensure that natural capital is protected and improved, consistent with the overall objective of the 25 Year Environment Plan”*³. The Plan emphasises the natural capital approach as an important tool in decision making and a means of addressing past failures to *“understand the full value of the benefits offered by the environment and cultural heritage”*. By using a natural capital approach, *“we give the environment its due regards as a natural asset – indeed a key contributor – to the overall economy, [and] we will be more likely to give it the value it deserves to protect and enhance it”*. Understanding the natural capital of the Estate is therefore a key objective of this Whole Estate Plan.

² HM Government (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf (last accessed 21 Jan 2020)

³ Natural Capital Committee (2018) Annual Report 2018. Fifth Report to the Economic Affairs Committee [online] available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677873/ncc-annual-report-2018.pdf (last accessed 06 July 2019)



Developing the Vision

Visitor Data Analysis

A desktop analysis of visitor numbers was undertaken using the Outdoor Recreation Valuation Tool (ORVal), which was developed by the University of Exeter for Defra. ORVal is an online tool that allows users to explore the recreational use and welfare value of accessible open spaces, trails, and beaches in England and Wales. It has recently been incorporated into the UK Treasury's Green Book – the government's guidance for project appraisal and evaluation (H.M. Treasury 2018)⁴ – and features in the Government's 25-Year Environment Plan (H.M. Government 2018). ORVal estimates that 940,911 visits are made to the Eastbourne Downland Estate each year, and that these visits are associated with recreational values of £2.3 million per year. Analysis of visitors' walking routes across the Estate suggest a very strong link with the National Trust owned Birling Gap and the Seven Sisters, via the South Downs Way. This testifies the place the Estate has as a gateway for recreational walkers in the South Downs National Park. Far fewer visitors explore the rest of the Estate, and those that do tend to be local Eastbourne residents.

Consultation with the National Park

The following key priorities were identified for the Estate through discussions with SDNPA officers:

Improving connections between Eastbourne residents and the Estate – particularly those in the town who are not currently engaged with the Downland. The Estate should be seen as a place that everyone can enjoy, helping to build a sense of place and develop relationships with their community and the land. The contribution the Estate can make to residents' health and wellbeing should be emphasised.

⁴ HM Treasury (2018) The Green Book: Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation [online] available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685903/The_Green_Book.pdf (last accessed 09 Dec 2019)

Promoting the Estate as an educational resource, encouraging young people to enjoy it, care for it, value it, and understand how its special qualities and habitats should be managed.

Investing in natural capital and ensuring that ecosystem services are embedded in decision-making and management principles.

Identifying opportunities for strategic investment in habitat creation and restoration, to help extend, buffer, and join up ecological networks across the South Downs.

Looking for added-value opportunities from the significant visitor footfall. Eastbourne and the Estate are an important gateway to the National Park, and there is also enormous potential offered by the south coast Heritage Trail and the South Downs Way.

Encouraging and incentivising good environmental land management. The UK's departure from the Common Agricultural Policy, and the formulation of a new subsidy regime based on public payments for public goods, can help to deliver the step-change required to mainstream the environment into the way the Estate is managed and farmed.

Exploring 'payments for ecosystem services' schemes. There are potentially opportunities to deliver revenue returns and reduce costs by crystallising the value of ecosystem services delivered by the Estate – from soil carbon sequestration (the long-term storage of carbon in plants, soils, geologic formations, and the ocean) and air pollution mitigation, to water filtration and flood attenuation.

Managing woodland and chalk grassland on the Estate, and restoring and re-creating priority habitat that has been lost to scrub encroachment.

Consultation with EBC Councillors

Internal stakeholder workshops with EBC Councillors identified the following key priorities:

Maximising the social value of the Estate. Maximising the social and cultural value of the Estate, specifically:

- The Estate's contribution to Eastbourne's sense of community and belonging;
- The Estate's role in building connections among people that helps to ensure community cohesion and mental and physical wellbeing;
- The importance of instilling a sense of community ownership and involvement in decision-making;
- The Estate's role providing opportunities for communities to take part in a full range of cultural, sport, leisure, creative activities and events;
- Promoting health and wellbeing through the environment;
- The Estate's role in providing high quality recreational and open space;
- The Estate's role as an important educational resource.

Enhancing the natural value of the Estate. The importance of investing in the 'natural capital' of the Estate – its habitats and natural features – to maintain and enhance its special qualities, its iconic landscape, its wildlife, and the ecosystem services that flow from it.

Improving the visitor experience and capturing the benefits of tourism. The potential the Estate offers as a 'gateway' to the South Downs National Park, its iconic downland landscape and historical significance, and the significant number of UK and foreign visitors. Promoting and improving the visitor experience, with added-value tourism ventures, and capturing more of the visitor spend on the Estate.

Seeking opportunities to realise revenue returns. Exploring income opportunities beyond agricultural rental income, and working with the farm tenants to capitalise on other potential opportunities – including different farming systems (such as viticulture – the cultivation and harvesting of grapes), renewables, leisure and tourism enterprises, 'habitat banking', and emerging 'payments for ecosystem services' schemes. Reducing

ongoing costs associated with maintenance of the water infrastructure on the Estate is a priority.



Consultation with public stakeholders

Consultation with public stakeholders identified the following key priorities:

Maintaining and enhancing the heritage assets on the Estate. All of the downland should be treated as archaeologically sensitive, and it should be recognised that the Estate forms an integral part of the wider downland landscape. The Estate should be conserved "as it is".

Using phone apps and digital media to educate visitors about the special characteristics of the Estate, such as historical field systems, to direct them away from the tourist 'honeypots', improve the historical interpretation of the land, and expand their knowledge and appreciation of the Estate.

Preserving dew ponds and historical buildings that tell the story of historical farm practices, and the potential to build a visitor experience around traditional farming skills and crafts.

Ensuring all Estate buildings are maintained and preserved, not just those that are scheduled / registered / listed.

Emphasising the war-time heritage of the Estate, and the connection to famous authors such as Kipling and Orwell.

Improving transport links and accessibility. Address inadequate public transport links between Eastbourne and the Estate which particularly penalises the young, the disadvantaged and the isolated who do not have the use of a private vehicle; improve car parking space; prioritise investment in public rights of way and access land, with the aim of greater accessibility for all to the downland for walking and quiet enjoyment.

Nature conservation. Chalk grassland habitat should be a priority for protection and enhancement, along with the potential for arable reversion (reverting cultivated land to natural habitat) to increase the extent of chalk grassland on the Estate – with the aim of increasing biodiversity, particularly for rare, iconic chalk-downland species. The role that habitats play in the provision of ecosystem services, particularly public amenity and water filtration should be recognised. The chalk aquifer underneath the Downland Estate should be recognised as particularly important, along with the links between artificial chemicals applications, diffuse pollution, and water quality, and the role that natural systems play in filtering and protecting water sources.

Educational resource. The potential of the Estate as a learning resource should be enhanced, and links with schools and colleges improved.

Encouraging visitors to act responsibly. Encouraging dog owners to keep their animals under close control, and to pick up after them. Discouraging walkers from straying beyond the rights of way and open access land by raising awareness of the Countryside Code.. The very large number of day visitors, particularly from overseas, puts pressure on the ecology of the honeypot locations. Information boards or mobile phone apps could be used as means of educating visitors and encouraging them to care for the Estate, potentially including the opportunity to make voluntary financial contributions.

Consultation with tenant farmers

The tenant farmers are key stakeholders in the delivery and supply of many of the ecosystem services on the Estate. Ideas from them included:

More opportunities for New Entrants. Issues around business succession / routes into farming / opportunities for new entrants should be recognised as important. New entrants to the agricultural sector face significant hurdles; the price of land has increased over the last fifteen years so that it is almost impossible for conventional new entrants to start out in farming by purchasing their own land. An alternative route to enter farming is by taking a tenancy; tenancies effectively separate the farming business from the land as an underlying asset, making it cheaper to become established as a farming business. Tenancies on council farms have historically provided many new entrants with a route into the industry, most recently at Black Robin Farm in 2019. Established farmers have an advantage over new entrants in securing whatever land does come onto the rental market, as they are more likely to be able to offer higher rents. New entrants can also often struggle to show sufficient track record, skills and financial security.

The conservation / stewardship ethic. Recognising the role the farm tenants play as stewards of the iconic downland landscape and its special qualities. The farmers highlighted their motivation by a strong conservation and stewardship ethic.

Importance of the farmed environment. - Farmers take pride in their role as food producers as well as good stewards of the land. There are

concerns to the extent to which managing land primarily for environmental outputs might mean more than just a shift in the use of the land to favour certain ecosystem services over agriculture, and potentially an absolute move away from agriculture towards 're-wilding' of the land. It needs to be recognised that the same farm and same farmer can produce both food and ecosystem services, and that many of the Estate's most valued habitats are a function of historic farming practices, with farming still integral to their maintenance in many cases. Cattle grazing is generally considered to be more beneficial for the restoration and maintenance of downland habitats than sheep grazing; sheep have a reputation for over-grazing, and are much more selective grazers than cattle, targeting flowering plants which can have a negative impact on species diversity; they also find it harder to graze longer, coarser vegetation. Grazing by cattle in the early spring and late summer can reduce the cover of coarser, more unpalatable grasses or scrub encroachment, as cattle are less discriminating in their grazing than sheep.

Encouraging visitors to act responsibly. Helping to reduce irresponsible dog walkers who often stray beyond the public rights of way or open access land, dog fouling, sheep worrying, and leaving gates open. Educating the public of the work of the farmers and encouraging them to actively care for the Estate and its farmed landscape.

Formal consultation

A draft WEP was put out to formal consultation in February 2020 for an 8-week period. The consultation was widely publicised in the local press, on the Council website, and at stalls in the Beacon Shopping Centre.

Alongside public responses, further stakeholder feedback was provided by the SDNPA, County Archaeology, Wealden Council, Public Health, CPRE, Sussex Wildlife Trust, and the Downland Forum Group. A meeting of Council officers was also held. The final WEP incorporates this feedback, and in particular it gives greater consideration to the cultural heritage of the Estate and its archaeological resource; the visitor profile; the Heritage Coast Strategy; access and transport; the educational resource; volunteering opportunities; chalk grassland restoration and the lessons of

the Changing Chalk project; public health; and the sustainability of buildings and operations.

Policy Context

Council Corporate Plan. The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 sets out the priority aims in order to help make Eastbourne the best place to live, work and visit. Underlying all the work in the Plan is the climate emergency which the Council declared in 2019 and the aspirations to achieve a zero carbon town by 2030. As well as a Customer Charter, the Plan is divided into five priority themes:

- *Growth and Prosperity* - "We will have a prosperous, thriving and sustainable economy which provides opportunities for businesses to grow and invest, supports employment and skills, invests in housing and regeneration along with the infrastructure to support economic growth. Eastbourne will continue to be an outstanding destination for tourism, arts, leisure, heritage and culture." Priority aims include an exciting arts and events programme, protecting and enhancing the heritage environment, continuing to improve the public realm, continuing to deliver a pipeline of projects through partnerships and exploring the development of a micro-brewery.
- *Housing and Development* - "We will work alongside residents to deliver decent, safe and well managed housing, meeting the needs of residents by: investing in our homes, creating communities that work, helping our tenants with their energy bills as we take steps to make council homes more environmentally sustainable, and responding to homelessness and housing needs through maximizing the provision of new affordable housing." Priorities include addressing homelessness, promoting homes that sustain health and wellbeing, additional housing and regeneration. This is a general vision for Eastbourne as part of the Corporate Plan priorities, and there are no aspirations for any new-build housing as part of the WEP.
- *Quality Environment* - "We will have a clean and attractive zero carbon town, producing less waste with better air quality than before. The town will have a high quality built environment, excellent parks,

open spaces and be served by a number of good transport options.” Priorities include enhancing the biodiversity of public and open spaces, planting more trees, implementing an air quality strategy which is ambitious but achievable, improved transport infrastructure, a comprehensive Downland strategy, and measures to promote Eastbourne as the eastern gateway to the South Downs National Park.

- *Thriving Communities* - “Our vision is for strong communities where individual residents and their different organisations and support networks have the resources they need to be healthy, feel safe, and thrive. Key to this is our work with partners through the Eastbourne Youth Partnership and the Community Safety Partnership, and with partners in the police, health services and East Sussex County Council. We will also promote equality and foster positive relationships.” Priorities include promoting inclusion and addressing deprivation, promoting physical health and mental well-being, actively engaged communities and safe communities and residents.
- *Best use of resources* - “EBC will ensure the best possible use of its limited resources to deliver high quality customer services. Whilst doing so, we will embed sustainability into our procurement practices and make considered purchasing decisions such as finding alternatives to single-use plastics. We will also become more efficient in our use of energy at our sites, making targeted improvements where cost effective to do so.” Priorities include commercialisation and increasing revenue, delivering high quality customer services and generating social value.

Corporate Asset Management Plan. While the key corporate objectives and priorities for Eastbourne are outlined in the Corporate Plan, supported through the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the Asset Management Plan is the primary tool to deliver the property elements of the corporate objectives. It sets out how the Council plans and manages its corporate property portfolio.

The Asset Management Plan provides the strategy framework for the Council to manage and maximise the potential of its property portfolio and ensure that it is managed and operated in accordance with the Council's

Corporate plan and priorities and Medium Term Financial Strategy. It focuses on improving yield (income), reducing the Council's maintenance costs and liabilities, delivering efficiencies through smarter procurement, and increasing the capital value of the Council's assets. The Downland Farms are recognised by the Council as being an under-performing asset, producing an income yield of less than 2% per annum.

Reducing on-going maintenance costs is therefore critically important if the Downland Estate is to provide a positive revenue return, as well as generating alternative income streams. Income opportunities extend beyond food production and include:

- Energy
- Forestry
- Diversification and non-farming opportunities, including leisure and tourism enterprises
- ‘Natural capital’ assets and the developing market for payments for ecosystem services from both public and private buyers
- Property rental from residential and commercial assets

There may also be opportunities to generate capital returns through change-of-use or small scale development of redundant agricultural buildings, and this WEP helps to provide an informed context which clearly sets out the longer term role of any development proposal within the overall ambition of the Council and its contribution to the conservation and enhancement of the National Park, its special qualities, and the ecosystem services it provides.



Climate Emergency. The Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to making Eastbourne a carbon neutral town by 2030. The WEP sits alongside this commitment in recognising the important role that the Estate has to play in meeting this commitment.

National Policy Context. The Corporate Asset Management Plan notes that, against a backdrop of the UK's decision to leave the European Union, the Council's property assets need to work harder than ever before to sustain not only the Council, but support other services. The Agriculture Bill, which brings forward proposals for a new Environmental Land Management system, heralds a new era in the rural economy, challenging everything from tenancy arrangements to supply contracts.

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan recognises the enormous contribution that nature makes to wellbeing and the economy. The Government's overriding ambition expressed in the 25 Year Environment Plan is to "leave our environment in a better state than we found it". The Plan sets out a number of priorities that will need to be reflected in the WEP. Those of most relevance to the Downland Estate are:

Using and managing land sustainably

- Embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development, including housing and infrastructure

- Improving how we manage and incentivise land management
 - i. Designing and delivering a new environmental land management system
 - ii. Introducing new farming rules for water
 - iii. Working with farmers to use fertilisers efficiently
 - iv. Protecting crops while reducing the environmental impact of pesticides
- Improving soil health
- Focusing on woodland to maximise its many benefits
 - i. Supporting larger scale woodland creation
- Reducing risks from flooding and coastal erosion
 - i. Expanding the use of natural flood management solutions
 - ii. Putting in place more sustainable drainage systems
 - iii. Making 'at-risk' properties more resilient to flooding

Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes

- Protecting and recovering nature
 - i. Publishing a strategy for nature
 - ii. Developing a Nature Recovery Network
 - iii. Providing opportunities for the reintroduction of native species
 - iv. Exploring how to give individuals the chance to deliver lasting conservation
 - v. Improving biosecurity to protect and conserve nature
- Conserving and enhancing natural beauty
 - i. Reviewing National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Respecting nature in how we use water
 - i. Reforming our approach to water abstraction
 - ii. Increasing water supply and incentivising greater water efficiency and less personal use

Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing

- Helping people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces
 - i. Considering how environmental therapies could be delivered through mental health services
 - ii. Promoting health and wellbeing through the natural environment
- Encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school
 - i. Helping primary schools create nature-friendly grounds
 - ii. Supporting more pupil contact with local natural spaces
 - iii. Helping children and young people from all backgrounds to engage with nature and improve the environment.
- Greening our towns and cities
 - i. Creating more green infrastructure
 - ii. Planting more trees in and around our towns and cities

The **Agriculture Bill** will move agricultural subsidies away from the current flat rate, area-based Basic Payment Scheme under the Common Agricultural Policy, towards a new system of paying farmers 'public money for public goods'. The principal public good the Government wants to invest in is environmental enhancement. This new Environmental Land Management system (ELMs) is intended to incentivise and reward land managers to restore and improve natural capital and rural heritage. It will also provide support for farmers and land managers as the UK moves towards a more effective application of the 'polluter pays' principle (whereby costs of pollution lie with those responsible for it). New and innovative funding and delivery mechanisms will be explored as part of ELMs, which may include private payments for ecosystem services, reverse auctions and conservation covenants.

The **Eastbourne Local Plan** does not cover the estate, with the SDNPA being the planning authority rather than EBC. However, the downland is inseparable from, and contributes much to many issues that the plan addresses, including the town's environment, recreation, visitor offer, health and wellbeing, and achieving carbon-neutrality.

Active Eastbourne Strategy 2017-22, and the county's **Health & Wellbeing Plan**. There is significant and growing evidence on the physical and mental health benefits of green spaces. Research shows that access to green space is associated with better health outcomes and income-related inequality in health is less pronounced where people have access to green space. Increasing the use of good quality green space for all social groups is likely to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities. It can also bring other benefits such as greater community cohesion and less social isolation.

South Downs National Park Vision. The SDNPA has a Vision for the National Park as follows:

By 2050 in the South Downs National Park:

The iconic English lowland landscapes and heritage will have been conserved and greatly enhanced. These inspirational and distinctive places, where people live, work, farm and relax, are adapting well to the impacts of climate change and other pressures

People will understand, value, and look after the vital natural services that the National Park provides. Large areas of high-quality and well-managed habitat will form a network supporting wildlife throughout the landscape

Opportunities will exist for everyone to discover, enjoy, understand and value the National Park and its special qualities. The relationship between people and landscape will enhance their lives and inspire them to become actively involved in caring for it and using its resources more responsibly

Its special qualities will underpin the economic and social well-being of the communities in and around it, which will be more self-sustaining and empowered to shape their own future. Its villages and market towns will be thriving centres for residents, visitors and businesses and supporting the wider rural community

Successful farming, forestry, tourism and other business activities within the National Park will actively contribute to, and derive economic benefit from, its unique identity and special qualities

Sussex Heritage Coast: A Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2020.

Heritage Coasts were established to protect and conserve the best stretches of undeveloped coast in England. In 1973, the Sussex Heritage Coast was the first to be defined, stretching from Eastbourne, along the iconic chalk cliffs of Beachy Head and the Seven Sisters, past Cuckmere Haven to Splash Point at Seaford.

The Strategy and Action Plan for the Sussex Heritage Coast sets out a number of key principles and actions under seven themes: natural resource management, sustainable cultural tourism and recreation, access, heritage, interpretation, communities, and planning. Of particular relevance to the long-term management of the Estate are the actions around conservation grazing; agri-environment funding; developing a narrative around the special qualities of the estate; Eastbourne as a gateway; marketing initiatives; local outdoor education networks; highways and sustainable access; understanding, conserving and enhancing heritage and archaeological features; resourcing visitor facilities; engagement and training for volunteers; and funding for green infrastructure projects.

Explaining the Vision

The Vision Statement is dissected below to explain the reasoning behind it referencing the consultation input and local and national policy context,

“Our Vision for the Eastbourne Downland Estate over the next 25 years is to...”

25 years is generally taken to be the span of a generation, and this timeframe aligns with the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan. Mirroring central government’s commitment to be “the first generation to leave the natural environment of England in a better state than it inherited...”, EBC is determined to hand on the Estate in a better condition to future generations.

“Conserve the iconic downland landscape and cultural heritage of the Estate...”

- Public consultation showed a strong consensus for conserving the Estate “as it is”. The reality is that natural systems are dynamic, and there is a general recognition that business-as-usual in the way land is managed is not going to reverse the downwards trends seen in key indicators of biodiversity over the last 50 years. However, it would seem sensible to allay concerns that any future management might result in changes to the special characteristics and iconic landscape that the public cherish.
- Sheep-grazed downland is the iconic habitat of the chalk landscape, and this ‘special quality’ as recognised by the National Park was emphasised during public consultation. Well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage is also seen as a special quality of the National Park as a whole, but particularly the Estate with its dew ponds, association with well-known writers, and historic landmarks. This landscape is one that has been shaped for thousands of years by man, from monument building and woodland clearance in the early Prehistoric period to the emergence of farmed landscapes from the Bronze Age and beyond. The Estate is itself a legacy of the early 20th century conservation movements to protect the iconic cliffs and Downs, giving it a special place in history.

“...so that these special qualities can be enjoyed, understood and valued by the public, with access for all, contributing to Eastbourne’s sense of community, wellbeing and belonging;...”

- Makes specific reference to those ‘special qualities’ of the National Park that are most relevant to the plan. ‘enjoyed, understood and valued by the public’ reflects wording in the SDNPA’s Vision. Helping the public to understand and value the Estate can make it an important educational resource, especially for local children. This reflects the Government’s aim of ‘encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school’. ‘Access for all’ is a priority for the Council.
- ‘Contributing to Eastbourne’s sense of community, wellbeing and belonging’ reflects the Council’s Corporate Plan Vision of ‘Thriving Communities’; it reflects the SDNPA’s priorities and EBC Councillors’ wishes to maximise the social value of the Estate, whilst also reflecting

the Government's commitment to connect people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing.

“...and instil a strong sense of public stewardship, that encourages visitors and people from all backgrounds to actively care for the Estate and invest in it.”

- Public consultation has shown that there is enormous interest in safeguarding the future of the Downland Estate. ‘A sense of public stewardship’ reflects the Government's aim of improving connections between people and their environment, and the SDNPA's vision that ‘the relationship between people and landscape will enhance their lives and inspire them to become actively involved in caring for it and using its resources more responsibly’.
- Caring for the Estate, and investing in it, reflects the Government's commitment to help people ‘from all backgrounds to engage with nature and improve the environment’.
- This also reflects the reality of securing funding for the maintenance and conservation of the Estate, and one of the key over-arching corporate objectives that the Council has set for its property portfolio: ensuring assets can be self-sustaining. This might include, for example, some form of visitor payback scheme or opportunities to make voluntary contributions.

“Maintain and enhance the ‘natural capital’ of the Estate...”

- This reflects the SDNPA's guidance that recommends the concept of ecosystem services and natural capital should be the core focus of the approach.
- The natural capital approach is a central tenet of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. It is extremely important in public policy terms, and it is a phrase that the public are becoming more familiar with.

- It is important that the Vision goes beyond ‘business-as-usual’ and is aspirational about enhancing natural capital, rather than just conserving or maintaining it.
- Enhancing natural capital and delivering ‘net gains’ for biodiversity is embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework and the 25 Year Environment Plan.
- ‘Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes’ is one of the priorities in the 25 Year Environment Plan, and the Government advocated ‘natural capital investment plans’ as part of their strategy for nature. These plans will be aligned with the 25 Year Environment Plan (ensuring a clear line of sight to national government) but be particularly relevant to the local area or geographies within them.



“...so that high-quality, well-managed habitats are resilient and adaptable to climate change, pests or disease”

- There is growing recognition that the quality or condition of habitat is critically important for biodiversity, rather than just the extent of that habitat.
- The SDNPA Vision refers to ‘large areas of high-quality and well-managed habitat’.
- Resilience to climate change is important and is referred to in the SDNPA vision, and is one of the conservation principles that informs where we should invest in strategic habitat restoration and creation. It supports the Council’s climate emergency declaration.
- Adaptation to pests and diseases, such as Ash Dieback, and the fact that natural systems are dynamic, was emphasised in the consultation with the National Park.

“...support wildlife networks throughout the landscape,”

- Ecological networks are a major focus of conservation efforts. The scientific consensus is that ‘fortress conservation’ does not work effectively, and wildlife need to be able to move throughout the landscape in order to avoid genetic bottlenecks, mitigate the risk of local extinction, and adapt to a changing climate and other pressures.
- The importance of wildlife networks was laid down in Professor Sir John Lawton’s ‘Making Space for Nature’ report – the ‘Lawton Review’⁵ – which was launched in 2009 to look at England’s collection of wildlife areas and whether they were capable of responding and adapting to challenges such as climate change. It concluded that a more coherent and resilient ecological network was needed to help wildlife cope with change: bigger, better, and more joined up.

⁵ Lawton, J.H., Brotherton, P.N.M., Brown, V.K., Elphick, C., Fitter, A.H., Forshaw, J., Haddow, R.W., Hilborner, S., Leafe, R.N., Mace, G.M., Southgate, M.P., Sutherland, W.J., Tew, T.E., Varley, J. & Wynne, G.R. (2010) Making Space for Nature: a review of England’s wildlife sites and ecological networks. Report to Defra.

- The SDNPA refers to ‘a network supporting wildlife throughout the landscape’.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan commits the Government to developing a ‘Nature Recovery Network’ to ‘protect and restore wildlife, and provide opportunities to re-introduce species that we have lost from our countryside’. The aim is to provide 500,000 hectares of additional wildlife habitat, more effectively linking existing protected sites and landscapes, as well as urban green and blue infrastructure. Such a network will deliver on the recommendations from Professor Sir John Lawton: recovering wildlife will require more habitat, in better condition, in bigger patches that are more closely connected.

“...and continue to deliver the widest range of ecosystem services into the future.

- As well as helping wildlife thrive, the Government foresees the Nature Recovery Network delivering a wide range of additional benefits: greater public enjoyment; pollination; carbon capture; water quality improvements and flood management.
- This reflects the SDNPA’s guidance that recommends the concept of ecosystem services and natural capital should be the core focus of the WEP approach.
- It also reflects the wording of the SDNPA’s own Vision: “People will understand, value, and look after the vital natural services that the National Park provides”.
- The SDNPA encouraged us to ‘stress test’ the Vision statement for longevity and ensure that all aspects will remain relevant, ambitious and sustainable for the timeframe in mind. Pledging to deliver the ‘widest range of ecosystem services into the future’ is a critical aspect of future-proofing, and helps to contribute to inter-generational equity and fairness.



“...Ensure that these ecosystem services are enjoyed, valued and understood by the public, with all Eastbourne residents feeling they are beneficiaries of the Estate – not just those who are able to visit regularly”.

- This emphasises the public benefits that the Estate provides for everyone, including those who don't visit but who are still beneficiaries of (for example) its clean water, biodiversity or iconic landscape.
- There may be Eastbourne residents who do not feel able to visit the Estate regularly, for reasons of poor mental health, anxiety, or cultural

or social barriers, and who need extra encouragement or support to enjoy, value and understand the ecosystem services it provides.

“...Ensure that our farmers are supported and valued as stewards of our land...”

- This reflects the input of the Estate's agricultural tenants, who are motivated by a strong conservation and stewardship ethic, and who take pride in their responsibilities as stewards of the farmed environment.
- 'Support and value' should come from both the Council, as landlord, and members of the public, who should be encouraged to understand how the Estate is managed and the role that farming plays in that.
- This also reflects the Government's ambition in the 25 Year Environment Plan to improve how we manage and incentivise good land management.
- The SDNPA sees farming as an integral part of the South Downs landscape, with successful farming businesses actively contributing to its unique identity and special qualities.

“...Its soils and ...”

- 'Improving soil health' is one of the priorities set down in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Government wants to ensure healthier soils by addressing factors in soil degradation such as erosion, compaction and the decline in organic matter, and it wants to work with farmers to achieve good soil management practices, including appropriate tillage choices, reintroducing grass leys into arable rotations and the use of cover crops.
- Wildlife-friendly farming is a priority for the Government and the SDNPA, and it is something that the Estate's farm tenants take pride in.

“...with sustainable and profitable businesses that can continue to flourish and innovate.”

- This reflects the issues around business succession / routes into farming / opportunities for new entrants that were particularly salient in the minds of the Estate’s tenants.
- It reflects the SDNPA vision of successful farming business activities within the National Park actively contributing to, and deriving economic benefit from, its unique identity and special qualities.
- It also reflects the Council’s corporate objectives for the let agricultural portfolio, which should at least ‘break-even’ and pay for itself. Profitable farm businesses will sustain higher rental yields for the Council.
- It recognises that farming will need to innovate to remain profitable, anticipating significant changes in the industry once the UK leaves the Common Agricultural Policy, with the Agriculture Bill likely to usher in a new era in the rural economy, challenging everything from tenancy arrangements to supply contracts.

“Protect the Estate for future generations, ensuring that it is self-sustaining and financially resilient...”

- Reflects the Government’s overriding objective of “leaving our environment in a better state than we found it” over the course of a generation.
- Reflects the Council’s corporate objectives in the Asset Management Plan

“...built on diversified income streams, promoting innovation, craftsmanship, rural creative industries, and high-quality visitor experiences”

- Reflects Asset Management Strategy theme 4, ‘Seek opportunities where key strategic assets could realise significant capital and/or

revenue returns in order to reinvest in the retained operational portfolio’.

- Reflects EBC Councillors’ aspirations to explore income opportunities beyond agricultural rental income, and to work with the farm tenants to capitalise on other potential opportunities – including different farming systems, renewables, leisure, and tourism enterprises.
- Reflects the Council’s Corporate Vision for growth and prosperity: “a prosperous, thriving and sustainable economy which provides opportunities for businesses to grow and invest, supports employment and skills, invests in housing and regeneration along with the infrastructure to support economic growth. Eastbourne will continue to be an outstanding destination for tourism, arts, leisure, heritage and culture”.
- Reflects the SDNPA’s Vision of successful farming, forestry, tourism and other business activities within the National Park.

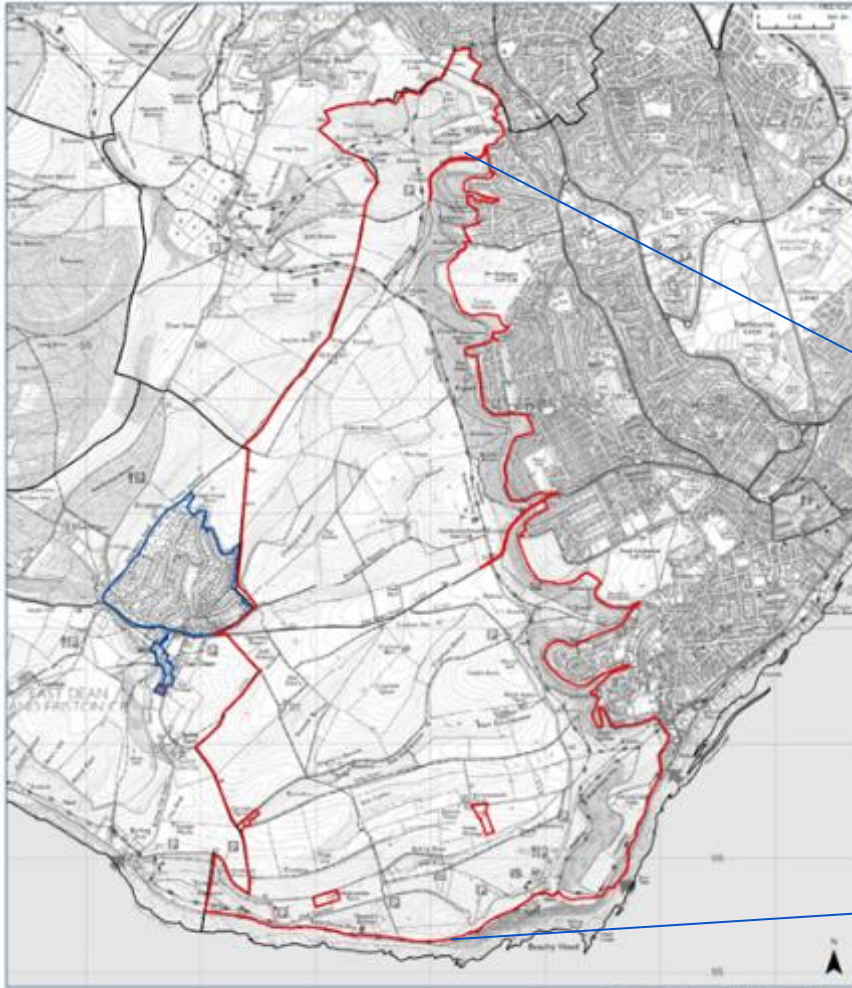


Asset Audit: The Downland Estate's Special Qualities

Overview

This chapter sets out the assets and activities on the Estate in their context: locally, within the National Park; and nationally / internationally. This 'Asset Audit' allows everyone involved in the stewardship of the Estate and the National Park to see the context and connectivity of the whole Estate and all of its activities, rather than just individual elements. Particular attention is paid to those 'special qualities' of the Estate which the Council has committed to conserving, maintaining and enhancing in the Vision Statement.

The Estate extends to approximately 1,689 hectares (4,174 acres), of which 1,199 hectares (2,963 acres) is predominantly farmland and a golf course, and 490 hectares (1,211 acres) is open public access land. This open access land includes the land around the internationally famed Beachy Head beauty spot and Belle Tout Lighthouse, and comprises coastal chalk cliff, chalk heath, calcareous grassland, scrub and woodland.



Location

The Estate is situated at the easternmost end of the South Downs National Park in East Sussex. It extends from the English Channel at its south end to the village of Willingdon at the north end with the scarp overlooking the urban area of Eastbourne to the east. Beachy Head is the southern-most headland of the East Sussex coast and the countryside formed of this headland is a complex mosaic of grassland, scrub, woodland and farmland.

A large proportion of the land sits within the Seaford Head to Beachy Head Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is of high ecological, geological, educational and amenity value. Inland are three further SSSIs at Bulling Dean, Long Down and Combe Hill above Willingdon.

Eastbourne, which lies underneath the eastern scarp of the Estate, is a seaside resort town with a population of approximately 100,000 people.



History

The land and property comprising the Estate was acquired from a number of private estates, and principally the Cavendish and Gilbert families, by way of compulsory purchase powers conferred under the Eastbourne Corporation Act 1926. The Eastbourne Corporation was the local authority of the municipal borough of Eastbourne, incorporated in 1883. The late 19th century had been a period of rapid growth for what was essentially a new town, transforming an area of small rural settlements into desirable seaside resort. The population grew from less than 4,000 people in 1851 to nearly 35,000 in 1891. Four villages or hamlets occupied the site of the modern town: Bourne (or, to distinguish it from others of the same name, East Bourne), which is now known as Old Town, surrounded the bourne (stream) which rises in the present Motcombe Park; Meads, where the Downs meet the coast; South Bourne (near the town hall); and the fishing settlement known simply as Sea Houses, which was situated to the east of the present pier.

This period of growth and development continued throughout the early 20th century, and coincided with rapid social change. The Eastbourne Corporation Act 1926 was a landmark piece of legislation, and it reflected an emerging inter-War consensus around the importance of public access rights, leisure opportunities, and preserving scenic and historic landscapes. This was the same year that the Society for the Preservation of Rural England was launched, at the London offices of the Royal Institute of British Architects, with the aim of arresting *“the growing destruction of the beauty of the English countryside... to preserve beauty and to see that what is added to the face of the land is not unbeautiful”*. There were particular concerns at the time about the *“Sussex Downs near Eastbourne [being] threatened with a rash of bungalows”* and the *“unregulated chaos of architecture in building schemes”*.⁶

The Eastbourne Corporation Act 1926 empowered Eastbourne Corporation to raise local taxation to fund the compulsory acquisition of the Downs. Until this point, governments had been reluctant to grant such powers as part of town planning schemes, because it was thought that

⁶ Editorial (1926) Preservation of Rural England: war on ugly buildings: watching growth of suburbs, *The Guardian*, London, 3 September.

public opinion “*is not yet sufficiently advanced for such an interference with private rights*”. This Act was a turning point, and was held up as a good example of enlightened action by a local authority; as such, it can be considered a harbinger of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 and the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

The purchase was completed between 1927 and 1929 at a price of £91,291, 1s, 7d. Restrictive covenants on the land were included in the conveyance. Restrictive covenants are binding obligations on freehold land and were created for the benefit of neighbouring land (including retained land owned by the Cavendish and Gilbert families). They are ‘negative’ – i.e. they are a promise *not* to do something (a restrictive obligation), rather than a promise to do something (a positive obligation). Two examples of restrictive covenants on the Estate are:

‘The Transferees will not do or permit to be done any act or thing on or about the property hereby transferred which shall be or may be or grow to be an annoyance nuisance damage or disturbance to the Transferors or the owner or occupier of any adjoining land and premises.’

‘Not without the previous written consent of the Trustees (such consent not to be unreasonably withheld) to erect or build or suffer to be erected or built upon the premises any new or substituted building nor to alter the exterior of or add to the buildings for the time being on the premises’.

Consequently, land use on the Estate is very strictly controlled: not only is it subject to the usual planning restrictions and statutory and non-statutory designations, there are also established public open access rights dating right back to at least 1929, as well as restrictive covenants that are enforceable at common law.

Eastbourne Borough Council is the successor authority to the Eastbourne Corporation, and is the freehold owner of the Estate today.

‘Natural Capital’

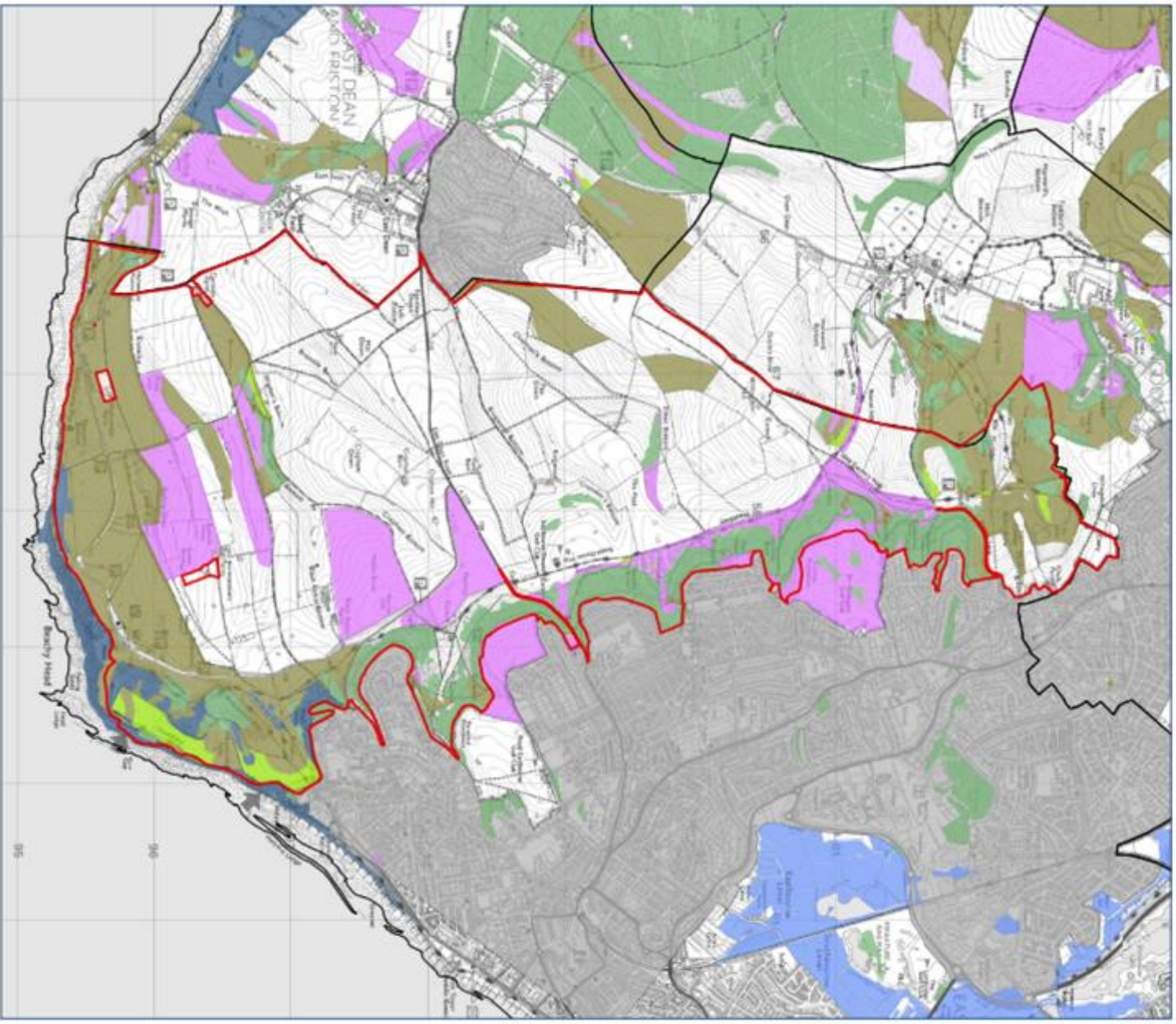
Overview.

The Estate is of high ecological, geological and archaeological value. The number of statutory designations covering the Estate are testament to this:

- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - Willingdon Down SSSI
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – Bulling Dean SSSI
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – Long Down SSSI
- Sussex Heritage Coast
- RIGS (Regionally Important Geomorphological Site)

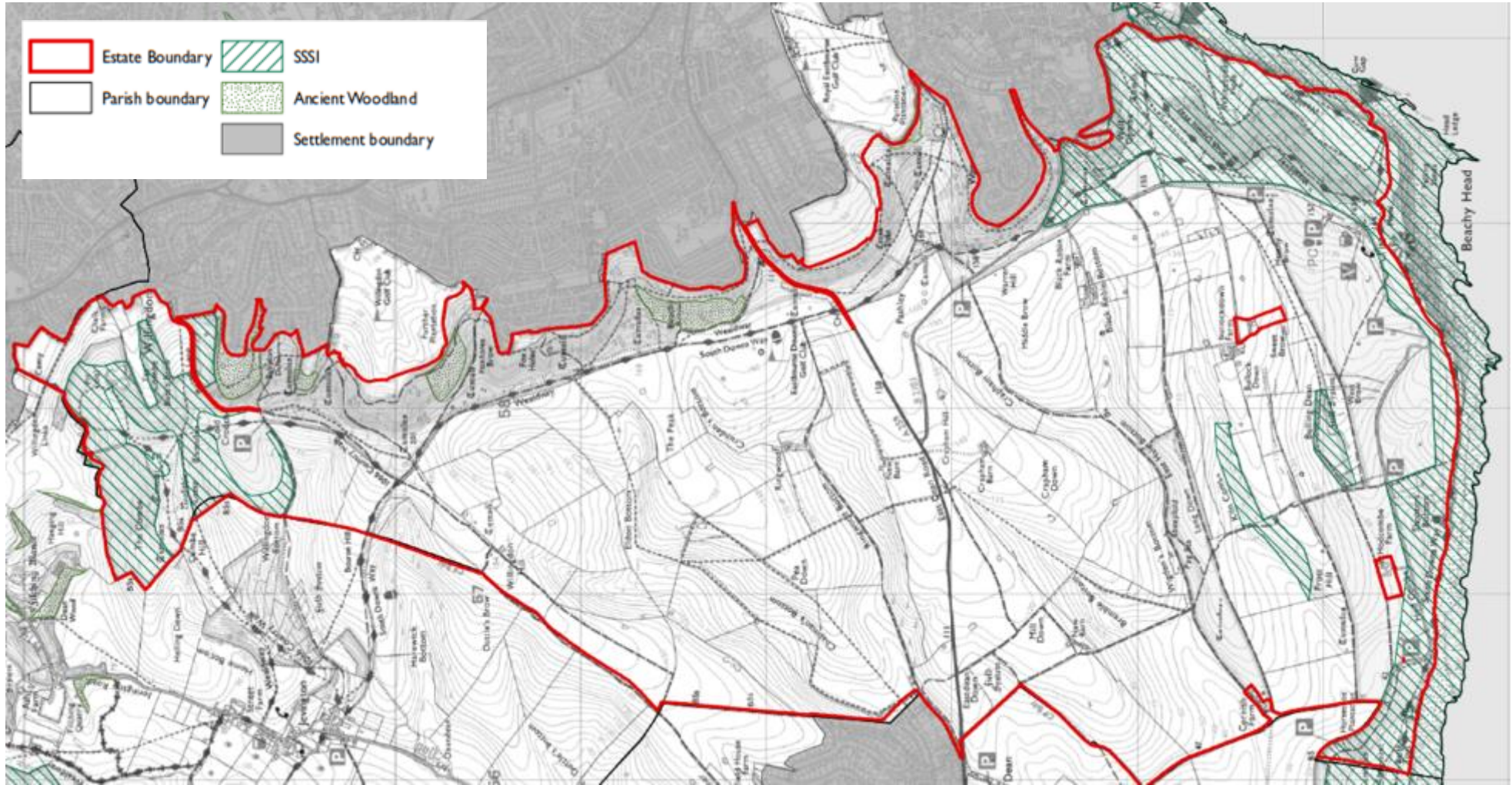
Woodland. Woodland habitat on the Estate extends to approximately 145.8 hectares (360 acres), much of it running north-south along the steep scarp slope on the eastern edge of the downs. This scarp woodland provides a backdrop to much of Eastbourne and is a defining feature of the wider landscape character. There are also some smaller woodland parcels on the plateau. The woodland habitat is primarily secondary semi-natural woodland, with a number of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland components forming the core of the main woodland areas. These ancient woodlands are comprised of mature Ash, Beech, Sycamore and Oak hanger woodland, with sporadic Lime, Elm, Sweet Chestnut and Cherry throughout. The area of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland extends to approximately 29 hectares (71.7 acres). The secondary woodland that makes up the majority of the woodland resource is Ash dominated, semi-mature (generally 30-40 years old) with a sycamore understory. Shrub species include hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood, wayfaring tree, elder, field maple and hazel.

Calcareous Grassland. There are large areas of lowland calcareous grassland across the Estate. The total area is approximately 650 hectares (1,606.2 acres). This is the key feature of the Estate’s SSSI designation at Beachy Head and above Willingdon. The species rich calcareous grassland provides a diverse resource of herbaceous vegetation which supports a rich invertebrate assemblage.



- River boundary
- Parish boundary
- SONPA boundary
- Settlement boundary
- Priority Habitats Boundary**
- Coastal and floodplain grass marsh
- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi-improved grassland
- Lowland calcareous grassland
- Lowland heathland
- Lowland meadow
- Pasture off and along
- Traditional orchard

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 Survey: Natural England
 Scale: 1:25,000

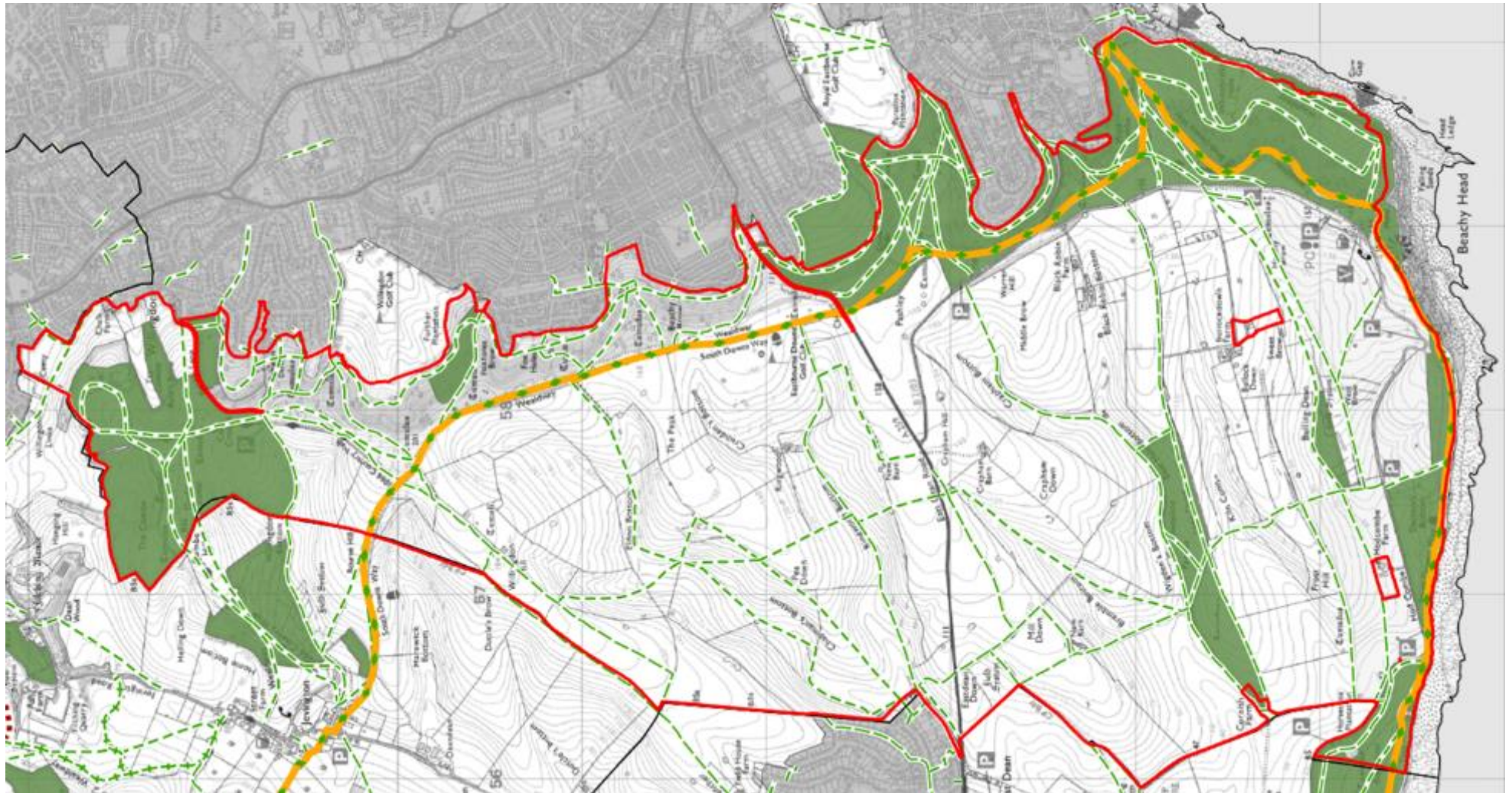


SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

Eastbourne Downland Biodiversity



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Source: Historic England



SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

Eastbourne Downland Public Rights of Way and Open Access



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Source: East Sussex County Council

The calcareous sward can also be an important pollen and nectar resource and the bare ground present within the nutrient poor soils provides nesting habitat for ground nesting bees, wasps and ants.

The most species-rich calcareous grassland occurs as a narrow strip along the cliff edge, at Shooters Bottom, around the Belle Tout, Willingdon Down, Bulling Dean, and Long Down.

Neutral Grassland. The grasslands in this broad habitat have swards (areas of land covered in grass) consisting mainly of Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*. These swards vary in height according to grazing regime. Ungrazed or little-grazed swards are taller, and are most commonly species-poor. More grazed swards are shorter, with a more even mix of the grass species listed above, and commonly with an abundance of herbs. This grassland resource is not only important for vascular plants (those that conduct water and minerals throughout the plant) and invertebrates, but provides habitat for ground nesting breeding bird species such as skylark, and is an important resource for insectivorous migrant birds (those that feed on insects, worms and other invertebrates). The total area of neutral grassland on the Estate is approximately 313 hectares (773.1 acres).

Chalk Heath. There is a very small area (approximately 0.8 hectares) of chalk heath on the southwestern-most boundary of the Estate.

Scrub. There are pockets of scrub across the Estate. On the chalk, species rich chalk scrub occurs, and off the chalk a more species poor scrub is present. Gorse scrub is present on acidic soils particularly on some of the higher summits.

Enclosed Farmland. Farmland in arable cultivation or short rotational grazing extends to approximately 495 hectares (1,223.1 acres).

Amenity grassland. Includes the Downland Estate Golf Course and recreation ground.

Standing freshwater is represented by a series of dew ponds throughout the Estate, some of which have been restored and maintained, but the

total area of freshwater on the Estate is minimal. The permeable nature of the chalk prevents the development of surface streams, although low on the eastern scarp there is a spring line. The base of the sea cliffs often exhibits chalybeate (fresh or brackish water) springs in the section between Holywell and Falling Sands.

'Built Capital'

Residential and Agricultural Dwellings. There are a number of dwellings on the Estate, some of which fall within the agricultural tenancies, some of which are sub-let, and some of which are managed directly by the Council:

Dwelling	Occupation
Black Robin Farm House	With EBC, future holiday let possibility
1 Black Robin Farm Cottages	With EBC; future holiday let possibility
2 Black Robin Farm Cottages	With EBC; future holiday let possibility
3 Black Robin Farm Cottages	With EBC; future holiday let possibility
4 Black Robin Farm Cottages	Falls within Black Robin Farm Business Tenancy
Stables Flat	With EBC; future holiday let possibility
Ringwood Cottage	Falls within Black Robin Farm Business Tenancy
1 Bullock Down Cottages	Falls within Bullock Down Farm Business Tenancy
2 Bullock Down Cottages	Falls within Bullock Down Farm Business Tenancy
Bullock Down Cottage	Falls within Bullock Down Farm Business Tenancy
Bullock Down Farmhouse	Falls within Bullock Down Farm Business Tenancy
1 Chalk Farm Cottages	Falls within Chalk Farm Agricultural Holdings Act Tenancy
2 Chalk Farm Cottages	Falls within Chalk Farm Agricultural Holdings Act Tenancy
3 Chalk Farm Cottages	Falls within Chalk Farm Agricultural Holdings Act Tenancy
Chalk Farmhouse	Falls within Chalk Farm Agricultural Holdings Act Tenancy
3 Cornish Cottages	With EBC; future holiday let possibility
Beachy Head Bungalow	Falls within commercial lease of Beachy Head buildings

1 Halfway Cottages, East Dean	Sub-let
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Farm Buildings

Building	Description / Occupation
Black Robin Farm Buildings	Falls within Black Robin Farm Business Tenancy
Crapham Barn	Falls outside Black Robin Farm Business Tenancy
Ringwood New Barn	Falls outside Black Robin Farm Business Tenancy
Ringwood Farm Buildings	Includes a big steel frame building used for machinery, hay storage; dutch open barn at back used for livestock handling, sussex barn. Adjacent to the barn, as a lean to, is Ringwood farm pumping station. Up to 17 buildings in total.
Bullock Down Farm Buildings, including Sweetbrow fold	Bullock Down FBT. 14 main buildings in total within farm buildings. Sweetbrow fold is a flint shepherd hut used for lambing. One of the farm buildings is used half for EBC arboricultural operational.
Cornish New Barn complex	Bullock Down Farm Business Tenancy.
Summerdown Farm building	Former grain store
Chalk Farm Buildings	Within the Chalk Farm Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy
Old open sheepfold	Within the Chalk Farm Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy
Cornish Farm Buildings	Split into two parts separated by yard. One side EBC operational use – Specialist Advisor and team use for storage of vehicles and materials mainly, three storage areas used by Tourism.

Beachy Head Buildings. The building complex at Beachy Head replaces previous structures which had been gutted by fire. The buildings now comprise The Beachy Head Hotel, the Countryside Centre, and the Chaplain's facilities.

Youth Hostel. Let to the Youth Hostel Association, operating as Youth Hostel Eastbourne.

Downs Golf Club House. Built in the early 1970s, this is the main club house for the Eastbourne Downs Golf Club. The Golf Club was founded at the beginning of the 20th century, at a time when golf was a very exclusive pursuit, for the ordinary working people of Eastbourne. It continues to provide a popular facility, promoting health and wellbeing for residents and affording a valuable service for the town.

Car parks. There are a total of 9 car parks serving Beachy Head and the Open Downland, and an additional car park at Butts Brow.

Reservoirs and Holding Tanks. These comprise:

- Reservoir at Beachy Head
- Ringwood Farm Holding Tank and pumping station
- Chalk Farm Reservoir and Holding Tank
- Downs Reservoir, above priory heights
- Paradise Woods Reservoir

Miscellaneous Assets. These include the Bird Ringers Hut, three boreholes, pumping stations, Emergency Repeater Station at Butts Brown, an abandoned ROTOR bunker at Beachy Head, the Lloyds Watch Tower, and Public Conveniences at Beachy Heat.

Public Rights of Way and Access

Public Rights of Way and Open Access land are shown at Plan 4. The Estate provides some of the most easily and widely accessible countryside in the South Downs. There are 24 miles of public footpath and 26 miles of public bridleway across the Estate.

Most of the coastal area within the SSSI is open access, whereas on the farmland, access is mainly confined to public footpaths and bridleways except where there are some smaller open access areas.

Open Access Land includes that considered open access by the Borough Council and that designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW). Most of the open access land is either coastal or follows the escarpment north from the coast to Willingdon. In the north, part of Chalk Farm is open access (CROW) as is a small area of woodland on the

margin of Willingdon Golf Course. Two more small areas occur just inland of the coast at Long Down and Bulling Dean. Both of these are designated under CROW and lie within tenanted farms.

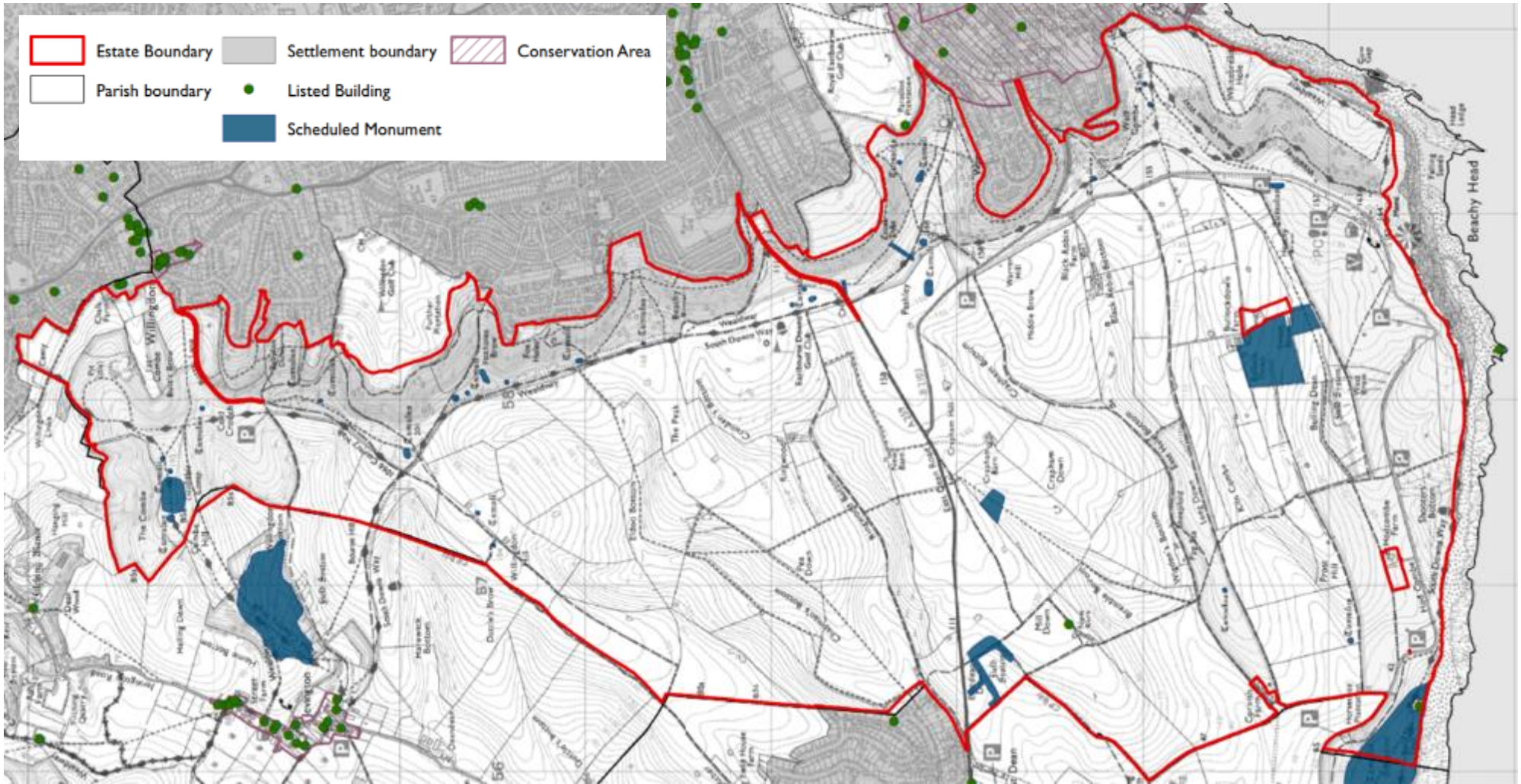
Near the summit of Beachy Head, opposite the main car park, is the Peace Path. This is an accessible surfaced path that takes a short circular route to a coastal viewpoint and Bomber Command Memorial.

The South Downs Way (SDW) crosses the Eastbourne Downland via two different routes. The SDW with a public footpath designation enters the Borough on the cliff tops just west of Belle Tout lighthouse and follows the coast to the start of Eastbourne's urban seafront at King Edward's Parade. A second route designated as public bridleway enters the Borough further north having come up a track from the village of Jevington and then follows the crest of the Downs southward to join the other route at the seafront.

The new national trail, the England Coast Path, should be open and being promoted by the end of 2020.

Research shows that access to green space is associated with better health outcomes and income-related inequality in health is less pronounced where people have access to green space. The public health benefits which flow from the open access and rights of way resource on the Estate are considered in more detail as part of the Ecosystem Service Analysis below.





SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

Eastbourne Downland Historic Environment



0025879
Source: Historic England

Heritage Assets

There are a significant number of buildings of heritage interest on the Estate. They are mostly agricultural buildings, including farm houses, barns, cottages, field walls and stock yards. All are constructed of traditional materials: flint, brick and tile. They are of varying condition, ranging from well-maintained to ruins. All contribute positively to the landscape to some extent, and are valuable reminders of the farming history of the Downs. However, because they are mainly of nineteenth century date, with the exception of one small shepherd's cottage, none are listed.

A summary of the built heritage assets has been compiled by the Eastbourne Downland Group and is reproduced at Appendix 1.

There are also a number of dew ponds across the Estate. While the concrete linings are understood to date largely from the 1930s, they are all



on the site of traditional clay-lined dew ponds, which can be found on the detailed OS maps from the late 1860s/1870s (and a few on earlier tithe maps from the 1840s).

It is important to recognise that heritage assets comprise far more than standing buildings: the landscape itself is a heritage asset; the stories behind the landscape, the buildings and the farms are heritage assets; the folklore and culture of the downland are heritage assets. They are what makes the landscape 'special' and give the Estate its own unique sense of place. For the purposes of this Asset Audit, these more experiential assets are considered in more detail as 'Cultural Assets'.

Archaeological Features and Cultural Assets

The South Downs are extremely rich in archaeological features created during several millennia of human occupation, and the Eastbourne downland is no exception to this. Archaeological sites, buildings and historic landscape features such as fields and tracks endure from the past and with the geology and topography they give the Estate its own, unique evolved character; a distinctiveness that makes it possible to understand a 'sense of place'. The Estate encompasses a vast archaeological resource comprising both 'designated' and 'non - designated' heritage assets dating from the Palaeolithic period to the modern era. Indeed, many parts of the estate have been assigned as Archaeological Notification Areas, as they are of a known or potentially archaeologically sensitive nature. Crucially, a large proportion of these heritage assets are either archaeological find spots or monuments (the latter often being earthworks). EBC has a management agreement with Historic England that applies to 28 scheduled monuments. These range from relatively large expanses of ancient field systems to individual tumuli (burial mounds). Beyond this, the whole landscape has archaeological potential and could itself be viewed as a vast monument to the impact of nature and man on the Downland.

Human occupation probably extends back to not long after the end of the last ice age around 10,000 years BC. By around 4,000BC there is some evidence of limited cultivation and stock farming. Between about 2,500 and 600BC small ploughs appear to have been used in cultivation, and much of the open downland as we know it today is the product of Neolithic

and Bronze Age clearances. Large farms weren't established until after the end of this period. During the Roman period between about 40 and 400AD perhaps 80 percent of the downland was under arable use. In the period either side of the Norman invasion it appears that farming split about 50:50 into arable and stock-rearing. From around 1400 larger farms began to be formed and, as well as livestock, oats and wheat were cultivated. The Eastbourne Downs were split between a number of farms and owners with Shepherds often managing large flocks with sheep owned by numerous people. By the 19th Century around 40 percent of the downland was grazed by sheep. Oats and wheat were also still grown and several windmills, including ones formerly located on Willingdon Hill and at Pashley Down, were built to process these cereals.

While 28 monuments, mainly conspicuous features such as tumuli, are statutorily protected by scheduling, many remains are not so visually obvious, and there will be many important remains that are currently unknown, none of which are currently protected. The planning system includes requirements for archaeological assessments when development is proposed; these ensure that unscheduled remains are identified and, where necessary, excavated and preserved. However, agricultural activities are largely outside planning control and so archaeological remains could be vulnerable to farming activities, including ploughing, excavating post holes, drainage and pipe laying and construction of farm roads and buildings.

Appendix 2, which is reproduced by permission of the Eastbourne Downland Group, shows the contrast between the number of scheduled monuments and the many other known but unprotected remains included in Historic England's Historic Environment Record. The full Historic Environment Record is reproduced at Appendix 4. It comprises many archaeological finds from the Estate which are now housed in museums, ranging from flint tools to Roman pottery to Saxon brooches. These tell a story about the landscape stretching over millennia.

Economic Activity

Farms. There are four main agricultural holdings on the Estate: Black Robin Farm, Bullock Down Farm, Chalk Farm, and Cornish Farm. These

holdings are let by the Council to farm tenants. The tenants are responsible for the day-to-day management of the land within their tenancies and the conduct of their business, and they pay a rent to the Council. Agricultural landlord and tenant relations are governed by one of two statutory schemes of protection: Black Robin, Bullock Down and Cornish farms tenancies are all governed by the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995, and the Chalk Farm tenancy is governed by the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986. These Acts provide the framework for agreement between landlord and tenant, conferring protection to the tenants in respect of rent, security of tenure, repairing obligations, etc.

Commercial lettings. The Council let the Beachy Head buildings to Mitchells and Butlers plc, which runs The Beachy Head Hotel as a gastropub. The Countryside Centre falls within this lease, and is run by volunteers. The Beachy Head Youth Hostel is let to the Youth Hostel Association, which operates as YHA Eastbourne. About 21 acres of the Downland Estate is leased to the Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, and Whitbread Hollow is leased to St Bede's School as a playing field.

EBC directly managed property. The Eastbourne Downs Golf Course is an 18-hole golf course, managed by the Council. It is run as a members' club, but visitors are welcome and it offers men's, ladies', seniors' and juniors' competitions. The clubhouse was opened in 1974, and offers refreshments, catering and room hire, there is also a golf shop.



Ecosystem Service Analysis

What is an Ecosystem Service Analysis?

The Partnership Management Plan and Local Plan for the South Downs National Park is based on the concept of the SDNPA and landowners' combined stewardship, enabling the National Park to continue providing the many ecosystems services which provide us with 'life's essentials': clean air and water, food, fuel and raw material, climate regulation, flood management, pollution filters and opportunities for improved health and wellbeing.

The Ecosystem Services Analysis is essentially a tailored SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) Analysis, which is a simple but effective tool to understand current and future issues and opportunities. By prioritising what is identified, the greatest opportunities for positive impact can be identified.

Natural Capital Accounting

Natural capital accounting is the process of calculating the total stocks of natural resources, and flows of ecosystem services, in a given area. It is an approach that has been developed by Defra and the Natural Capital Committee to measure the changes in the stock of natural capital, and the ecosystem services it provides, in monetary terms and to integrate the value of ecosystem services into accounting and reporting systems. The development of natural capital accounts and accompanying assessment approaches have been flagged by the Natural Capital Committee and the UK National Ecosystem Assessment as a fundamental activity that is necessary if natural capital is to be mainstreamed in decision-making.

Natural capital assessments aid in the effective and sustainable management of natural capital by combining information on its extent, condition, and value in a structured and systematic way that can be used to identify actions that can achieve higher (long-term) benefits while minimising costs.

These assessments produce information on the presence and condition of natural capital assets, the flow (or annual quantity) of ecosystem services they provide and the value of those flows in monetary terms. This information can be used by the Council to monitor, measure, and communicate the value and health of the natural capital it owns and manages. It can also be used as an assessment tool, for example to quantify and monetise impacts to natural capital that might arise from developments or project and policy decisions, and the associated impacts to the value of services they provide.

Although a relatively new framework and approach, natural capital assessments have already been developed and used by public and private organisations as a tool to make strategic and business decisions about the future management and development of their natural capital.

Natural Capital Accounts provide a structured and transparent way of recording the extent and condition of habitats within the Downland Estate, the value of the ecosystem services that flow from these and the impact of the Estate's habitat management. Crucially, these accounts reflect both value to Eastbourne Borough Council (private value) and wider society (external value), providing a broader perspective than financial reporting.

Asset Register

This is an inventory of the extent, condition and location of natural capital assets. Changes in these metrics over time assist in understanding the capacity of the Downland Estate to produce benefits into the future. The asset register can be used as a tool in its own right to monitor trends in natural capital asset status.

Using an asset register to map habitat types to natural capital/ecosystem services can be an important step in engaging stakeholders with the natural capital concept.

The key objective of the asset account/register is to provide indicators of the extent and condition of ecosystem assets in order to allow monitoring of the capacity of these assets to provide ecosystem services over time. Defra and the Office for National Statistics have issued guidance on a number of indicators of ecosystem condition under five broad categories:

biomass/carbon; biodiversity; soil/water quality; accessibility; and conservation status.

The Asset Register shown below is the starting point for the Estate's Ecosystem Service Analysis. It captures the extent and the average condition of the main habitat categories on the Estate. Note that we have used JNCC Phase 1 habitat classifications; we show how these relate to UK NEA Ecosystems at Appendix 3.

Most of the habitats are deemed to be in good or moderate condition, and management actions undertaken by the Council (for example, scrub clearing) are helping to maintain this. However, some of the woodland habitat is in poor and declining condition, with low species diversity and with the impact of Ash Dieback becoming very severe: a transition to a sycamore monoculture is likely without management intervention.

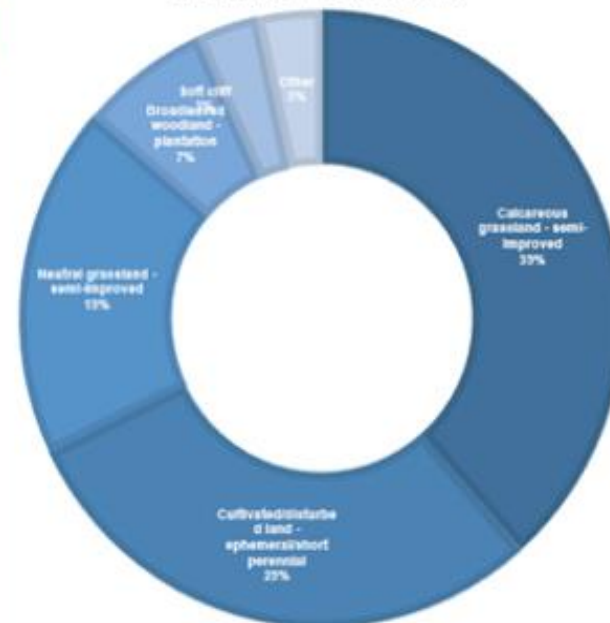
Name Natural Capital Account - Eastbourne Downland Estate
Reporting year 2018/2019

Baseline year (2018/2019)				
Phase 1 Habitat Types	Area (ha)	Condition	Trend	Designations
Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural	29.4	Moderate	Maintaining	
Broadleaved woodland - plantation	116.4	Poor	Stagnating	
Calcareous grassland - semi-improved	650.0	Good	Maintaining	
Coastal heathland	0.8	Good	Maintaining	
Neutral grassland - semi-improved	313.0	Good	Maintaining	
Soft cliff	56.5	Good	Maintaining	
Scrub	28.0	Moderate	Maintaining	
Cultivated/disturbed land - ephemeral/short perennial	495.0	Good	Maintaining	
Total	1689.0			

Asset register summary report outputs

Baseline year (2018)			
Habitat type	Total extent (ha)	Average condition	Average trend
Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural	29.4	Moderate	↔
Broadleaved woodland - plantation	116.4	Poor	↔
Calcareous grassland - semi-improved	650.0	Good	↔
Coastal heathland	0.8	Good	↔
Neutral grassland - semi-improved	313.0	Good	↔
Soft cliff	56.5	Good	↔
Scrub	28.0	Moderate	↔
Cultivated/disturbed land - ephemeral/short perennial	495.0	Good	↔
Total	1,689.0		

**OVERVIEW OF NATURAL CAPITAL STOCK
BASELINE YEAR 2018/19**



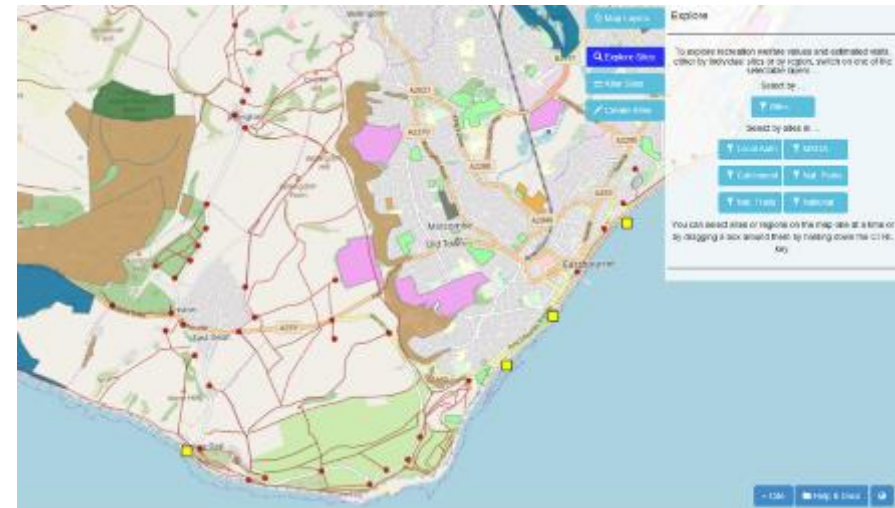
Physical Flow Account

The Physical Flow Account records the volume of ecosystem service flows from the habitats on the Downland Estate. It can cover both market and non-market goods and services.

We have scoped out those ecosystem services that are unlikely to be significant and/or lack a robust method of quantification, and we have had particular regard to those ecosystem services that were prioritised by stakeholders and participants at the workshops: the provision of recreation and benefits to physical health; carbon sequestration; and air quality regulation.

Name	Natural Capital Account - Eastbourne Downland Estate	
Year	2018/2019	
Ecosystem service	Annual quantity	Units
Recreation	940,911	Visits per year
Physical health		
Active visitors	1,065	Active visits per year
QALYs gained	36	QALYs gained per year
Biodiversity		Biodiversity units
Carbon		
Carbon stock	97,285	tCO ₂ e
Carbon sequestr	871	tCO ₂ e/yr
Food	495	Ha of arable land
Air quality		
SO ₂	1,587	kg per year
O ₃	16,385	kg per year
NO ₂	2,658	kg per year
NH ₃	813	kg per year
PM ₁₀	812	kg per year
PM ₂₅	474	kg per year

A desktop analysis of visitor numbers was undertaken using the Outdoor Recreation Valuation Tool (ORVal), which was developed by the University of Exeter for Defra. ORVal is an online tool that allows users to explore the recreational use and welfare value of accessible open spaces, trails, and beaches in England and Wales. It has recently been incorporated into the UK Treasury's Green Book – the government's guidance for project appraisal and evaluation (H.M. Treasury 2018). ORVal estimates that 940,911 visits are made to the Eastbourne Downland Estate each year.



We have used peer-reviewed studies⁷ to estimate the frequency and intensity of visits to nature involving physical activity. Assessment of the health implications of visits focused on those individuals who met recommended physical activity guidelines either fully, or partly, in natural environments.

Habitats sequester – or lock away – atmospheric carbon dioxide, holding it as soil organic matter or carbon in plant biomass. Different habitats

⁷ White, M.P.; Elliott, L.R.; Taylor, T.; Wheeler, B.W.; Spencer, A.; Bone, A.; Depledge, M.H.; Fleming, L.E. (2016). Recreational physical activity in natural environments and implications for health: a population based cross-sectional study in England. Preventive Medicine. Vol 91, pp. 383-388. Available online: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2016.08.023>

sequester carbon at different rates. We have referred to a number of academic papers which examine sequestration rates for those habitats on the Estate, and set these out at Appendix 3. The Flow Account shows that nearly 900 tonnes of atmospheric Carbon Dioxide equivalent is sequestered by habitats on the Estate every year, and this is something the Council is particularly mindful of given its commitments to make Eastbourne carbon neutral by 2030.

Vegetation also plays an important role in regulating air quality. Eastbourne is susceptible to poor air quality owing to its geography, with particulate air pollutants blowing in from both shipping traffic to the south and London to the north. The Physical Flow Account draws on data from the ONS⁸ to calculate the amount of different air pollutants removed by habitats on the Estate: SO₂ (Sulfur Dioxide) O₃ (ozone) NO₂ (Nitrogen Dioxide) NH₃ (Ammonia) PM₁₀ (coarse particulate matter) and PM 2.5 (fine particulate matter). This pollution removal obviously has significant value in avoided health damage costs.

Monetary Flow Account

This is where the annual value of the goods and services flowing from the natural capital on the Estate is reported. Although many ecosystem services are not traded in the market place and do not therefore have a price, they do still have significant *value*; the aim of natural capital accounts is to capture this value, providing a broader perspective than conventional financial reporting. The key points are as follows:

- The 940,000+ visits to the Estate each year are associated with recreational values of approximately £2.3M per annum;
- The direct and indirect costs of inactivity avoided because of this natural resource on Eastbourne's doorstep is nearly £500,000 per annum;
- Welfare gains (increased 'quality-adjusted life years', a generic measure of disease burden, including both the quality and the quantity

Name	Natural Capital Account - Eastbourne Downland Estate
Year	2018/2019

Benefit	Annual value	PV
Recreation	£2,293,446	£39,122,445
Physical health		
Avoided direct and indirect costs of inactivity	£473,353	£9,954,805
Welfare gains (increased QALYs)	£726,021	£15,268,519
Biodiversity*		
Carbon		
Carbon stock**	£6,429,133	-
Carbon sequestration	£57,549	£1,362,195
Food	£122,315	£2,086,486
Water quality		
Air quality	£11,676	£245,553
Total	£10,113,493	£68,040,002

*Monetary estimates for the changes in physical flow of biodiversity units can be incorporated as annual net changes are calculated in future.

**Carbon stock does not represent an annual flow.

Discount Rate (0 -30)	3.5%
Discount rate (31 - 75)	3.0%
Discount rate (76 - 100+)	2.5%
Time horizon (years)	25

Health Discount Rate (0 -30)	1.5%
Health Discount rate (31 - 75)	1.3%
Health Discount rate (76 - 100+)	1.1%

⁸ ONS (2018). UK air pollution removal by vegetation (geopackage).

of life lived and used in economic evaluation to assess the value of medical interventions) are valued at more than £700,000 per annum;

- The volume of carbon sequestered by habitats on the Estate is valued at more than £50,000 per annum;
- The value in avoided health damage costs as a result of air pollution removal by vegetation on the Estate equates to more than £10,000 per annum.



Strengths

Amenity, Tourism and Recreation Resource. Beachy Head and the chalk cliffs between Eastbourne and Seaford are a widely recognised and very important visitor attraction. The area is internationally famous and has appeared in numerous films and television programmes. The stunning natural beauty of this part of the Sussex coastline draws in hundreds of thousands of visitors each year and the Estate is one of the most popular countryside visitor attractions in East Sussex.

The Estate is also important for local amenity and education due to its urban fringe location. The Estate provides an important educational resource for local schools and universities in the south-east England area. The residents of Eastbourne and from other towns in the region such as Hastings, Bexhill and Seaford form a large proportion of the visitors. It is popular for dog walking, hiking, bird watching, photography and paragliding.

Most of the coastal area within the SSSI is open access, whereas on the farmland, access is mainly confined to public footpaths and bridleways except where there are some smaller open access areas. The South Downs Way (SDW) crosses the Eastbourne Downland via two different routes. The SDW with a public footpath designation enters the Borough on the cliff tops just west of Belle Tout lighthouse and follows the coast to the start of Eastbourne's urban seafront at King Edward's Parade. A second route designated as public bridleway enters the Estate further north having come up a track from the village of Jevington and then follows the crest of the Downs southward to join the other route at the seafront.

Cultural Heritage. The Estate benefits from many heritage assets and archaeological features, with a rich history that stretches over several millennia. The rich archaeology of all periods found across the estate has a huge potential to contribute significantly to visitor enjoyment and engagement, education initiatives and local business plans. The changing farming systems and social structures over this period are etched in the landscape. Many recent historical episodes have left their mark on the Estate: for example, the bunkers and radar stations from the Second World War and Cold War. The Estate itself, being born out of the

Eastbourne Corporation Act 1926, is a legacy of the back-to-the-land movement of the 1920s, and testament to enlightened action by a local authority. Its acquisition by the Eastbourne Corporation in 1929 heralded a new era in town planning and environmental protection.

Public Goodwill. There is enormous public interest in the management of the Estate, and a committed group of stakeholders who are motivated by a strong conservation and stewardship ethic and who hold a significant body of knowledge about its special qualities.

Grassland species diversity. These grasslands are located within the most heavily visited parts of the Estate and provide an important amenity and educational resource.

Tenant farmers. Much of the Estate is let, and the Council benefits from agricultural tenants who are conscious of their role as stewards of this iconic landscape and its special qualities.

Human Capital. The Council benefits from an in-house staff resource with an enormous body of knowledge about the Estate and specialist expertise – a resource which can be directed to achieving the actions set out in this WEP. The experiences and insights of Council staff and volunteers are critically important, not just at a practical or operational level but as a source of analysis and ideas about how the Estate should be managed for the public good over the long term.

Weaknesses

Woodland species diversity. Whilst some of the older plantations are highly diverse, the majority of the woodland resource is comprised of Ash and Sycamore. The result of this is being felt now, with the impact of Ash Dieback becoming very severe. A transition to a sycamore monoculture is likely without management intervention (selective felling and restocking with a view to increasing species diversity).

Dense continuous blocks of scrub. In parts of the Estate, dense, continuous blocks of scrub have become established. In these locations, scrub has succeeded valuable grassland habitats, and the build-up of

scrub litter will have enriched and changed the underlying soil, making it difficult to restore grassland here. Scrub encroachment also presents risks to archaeological features.

Transport links with Eastbourne. Public transport links with Eastbourne have been identified as a weakness by a number of stakeholders, making it the Estate particularly difficult to access for people without private vehicles, young people, disabled people, people who are lonely or isolated, and people with complex social needs which affect their wellbeing. Research by CPRE in 2019 showed that transport is one of the main barriers making it difficult for people to visit National Parks and AONBs, and 93% of visits to National Parks were made by car.



Visitor Profile. The visitor profile is a function of more than just transport links: there are other barriers to engaging new audiences, such as the provision of appropriate information, the facilities available and ensuring there is publicly available information about the Estate in the town.

Water supply infrastructure. There is a private water supply system on the Estate, owned by the Council. This system is very old and costly to maintain, and there is the risk of insufficiency due to leaks on the system,

Visitor offering at Beachy Head. There is currently no high-profile visitor centre or 'hub' to which visitors are drawn. Beachy Head is a major tourist attraction, bringing in hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Estate, but lacks a strong sense of arrival or a place to which visitors are drawn in order to understand the Estate and enhance their experience of it. The Countryside Centre performs a critical role disseminating visitor information at the point of need, but there is a need for more exhibition space, an educational and meetings venue, and a hub to co-ordinate and



provide direction to experiences and activities elsewhere on the Estate.

Public cliff safety for all visitors. Many visitors attending take risks on the eroding cliff edges, despite cliff safety warnings.

Opportunities

Change of use for redundant buildings. There are a number of building assets on the Estate that are surplus to the requirements of modern agriculture, but due to their architectural merit are worthy of retention and need a new economic viable use. Many of these buildings are structurally sound and capable of sensitive conversion, and could be re-purposed to alternative uses while retaining their character and heritage interest.

Post-Brexit Agri-Environment Schemes. Both the Council's tenant farmers, and the Council in its own right, are party to agri-environment schemes. These schemes provide funding for habitat management and particular farming practices under Pillar II of the Common Agricultural Policy. The Estate's tenant farmers can also access an area-based subsidy, funded under Pillar I of the Common Agricultural Policy, called the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS); the Council does not qualify to access this. Once the UK leaves the EU, existing agri-environment and subsidy schemes will be phased out, to be replaced with a new Environmental Land Management system (ELMs) based on the principle of 'public payments for public goods'. This presents a significant opportunity for the Council and its tenant farmers, given the value of public goods and ecosystem services delivered on the Estate. Under proposals outlined in the Agriculture Bill, it is envisaged that farmers and land managers will enter into contractual agreements with the government to undertake certain land management practices for the delivery of ecosystem services, and receive payment as a result. The idea is for these to be straightforward to understand; have a streamlined application process to lower the barriers many farmers faced to participation in past schemes; and minimise bureaucracy to encourage wide participation. Furthermore, it is proposed that ELMs schemes will be open to nearly all land managers who wish to enhance the natural environment, they therefore present an opportunity for additional funding on the land that is managed by the Council.

Payments for Ecosystem Services' Schemes. There are a number of emerging private 'Payments for Ecosystem Services' (PES) schemes where beneficiaries of certain ecosystem services contract with 'suppliers' of those services – i.e. farmers and landowners – to maintain or increase their provision. The water and sewerage sectors are considered thought-leaders in the field of PES and are acutely aware of their dependencies on ecosystem services. The utilities sectors increasingly wish to offset emissions, and to value and enhance their natural assets. Sustainable materials are being more often used in the construction sectors and there is some awareness that protecting ecosystem services can enable construction (e.g. nutrient offsetting in Poole Harbour). There is increasing awareness of the benefits of Biodiversity Net Gain, which is driving a demand for biodiversity offsets and habitat banking (discussed in more detail below). In the transport sectors some companies are electively using woodland carbon sequestration to reduce net carbon emissions, or providing options for their customers to do so on a voluntary basis, but there is little evidence of investment in ecosystem services to protect infrastructure or awareness of this potential. Businesses in the travel,



accommodation and sports and recreation sectors have been involved in Visitor Payback Schemes (VPS) and have invested in carbon sequestration, whilst PES has been used to improve recreational fishing (e.g. West Country Rivers Trust, 'Angling Passport'). The wholesale, retail, and food and beverage service sectors are concerned about carbon and water supply chain impacts, especially amongst those with obvious links to ecosystem services (e.g. wood products). Consumers are increasingly interested in the provenance of their food and its ecological footprint, and retailers are sensitive to this.

Overall, these trends present potentially significant opportunities for the Estate. Probably the opportunities most likely to emerge over the timeframe of this Plan include:

- Payments for carbon offsets verified under the Woodland Carbon Code. This is becoming increasingly important as the UK moves towards a 'Net Zero' target.
- Payments from water companies for land management that improves water quality. Under the current price review ('PR19' – the process through which Ofwat regulates to set the price, investment and service package for customers), Ofwat is proposing higher rewards for water companies that deliver innovative and stretching outcomes, including for environmental performance. Ofwat also expects water companies' business plans to embed natural capital approaches at catchment scales. These incentives could spur a shift towards significant innovation in delivering more environmental benefits, supported by private capital.
- Payments from developers who are looking to offset their impacts on biodiversity and the environment (see below);
- Visitor Payback Schemes.

Biodiversity and Environmental Net Gain. Recent updates to the National Planning Policy Framework make it incumbent upon local authorities and developers to deliver measurable gains for biodiversity and the environment, driving demand for biodiversity offsets and habitat banks. Proposals outlined in the Environment Bill to mandate net gain for most

development schemes are further bolstering this demand. There is an opportunity for landowners to offset the impacts of development elsewhere, channelling funds from developers into habitat restoration and creation.

Educational Resource. The Estate provides enormous scope for learning outside the classroom in the natural environment, which has been shown to deliver improvements for pupils in terms of health and wellbeing, behaviour, attainment, social skills, and connection to nature.

One of the limiting factors in the provision of learning outside the classroom is access to somewhere with toilet facilities, indoor/covered space for bags, lunches, and somewhere to retreat to in adverse weather. A potential solution could be found in working with the YHA. It is understood that two other local YHAs (YHA South Downs and Truleigh Hill) have developed interesting models where the YHA provides accommodation and a local education provider (So Sussex) provides the learning experiences for young people. Both are actively promoting the John Muir Award in their delivery. SDNPA has piloted the use of the John Muir Award as an intervention for pupils who are at risk of exclusion in Eastbourne Schools; the Downland resource could be promoted as a venue for this activity.

The rich cultural heritage also provides an important educational resource: heritage and cultural assets provide an opportunity to tell stories about the landscape, and there is the potential for partnership with recognised specialists and museums on the development of site-specific interpretation. Heritage Eastbourne currently has no permanent venue and therefore there may be opportunities to link this to plans for improving the visitor offering. This would support the Council's broader initiatives around education and public engagement.

Eastbourne as a Gateway to the South Downs. Beachy Head is an established visitor destination, and there is an opportunity to strengthen the Estate's place as a flagship gateway to the Heritage Coast and the South Downs National Park more widely.

'Mega-Trend': Environment and sustainable living. In recent years, the level of interest in sustainable living has rocketed and this is seen as a

growth area, with many farm businesses already setting up sustainable diversification projects. Surveys by Booking.com show that 86 per cent of respondents would be willing to spend time doing activities that counterbalance the environmental impact of their stay. Equally, increased public awareness of the problems associated with food waste, climate change and the need to reduce carbon footprints presents an opportunity for farm businesses to create environmentally friendly diversification projects. Farms are increasingly having to think about the link between the farm's natural environment – landscape, biodiversity, soils, water and trees (natural capital assets) – and potential projects.

'Mega-Trend': Experience over possessions. Increasingly, consumers are drawn to experiences rather than material goods. According to Mintel research, 65 per cent of adults say they would rather spend money on experiences than on possessions and this increases to 72 per cent with millennials (those born between 1977 and 1994).

In the tourism sector visitors are demanding authentic experiences in a stunning setting or embedded within a community or place. These can include butchery workshops, guided nature walks, cheese-making or foraging. The Estate is well placed to take advantage of these growing trends.

Linked to this is an emerging 'micro-volunteering' trend, with growing opportunities for people to give small amounts of time to a common cause. Many of the 170 organisations in the SDNP Volunteer Network are also developing new opportunities for younger people to volunteer. With the establishment of South Downs Youth Action, there are opportunities for volunteer activities that would contribute to habitat and heritage management and provide young people with valuable experiences.

'Mega-Trend': Wellness and Healthy Living. There is a growing global interest in wellness and healthy living, and the Estate is well placed to provide a range of activities that promote wellness.

The Global Wellness Institute estimates that wellness tourism is a £500 billion global market and is growing twice as fast as other types of tourism. The forecast is for continued growth in this area and, importantly, these tourists are typically high-spending, high-yield individuals.

In addition to wellness tourism, the idea of social prescribing is gaining the attention of the medical profession with doctors prescribing time getting back to nature in the countryside to their patients.

Social Prescribing. The NHS Long Term Plan states that personalised care will become ‘business as usual’ across the health and care system. ‘Social prescribing and community-based support’ is one of the key components of the NHS Comprehensive Model of Personalised Care, and it is based on emerging evidence that this sort of intervention leads to a range of positive health and wellbeing outcomes for people – such as improved quality of life and emotional wellbeing – and reduces pressure on NHS services and GP attendances.

Social prescribing enables all local agencies to refer people to a link worker. Link workers give people time and focus on what matters to the person as identified through shared decision making or personalised care and support planning. They connect people to community groups and agencies for practical and emotional support; they collaborate with local partners to support community groups to be accessible and sustainable; and they help people to start new groups. There are many projects elsewhere that attract funding for social prescription, and which highlight the scale of the opportunity for Eastbourne. For example, ‘Community Navigation’, Brighton’s primary care social prescribing service, recently secured three-year grant funding from the Department of Health and Social Care to provide more support to patients experiencing health inequalities, and to connect people experiencing isolation. ‘Mental Health Concern’ is a social prescribing scheme covering Newcastle and East Gateshead, and provides funding for physical activity, access to green space, social inclusion, access and transport, and events publicity, with the main focus on tackling low mood and depression.

NHS England recognises that social prescribing works best ‘when local partners work together to build on existing community assets and services’; the Estate is just such a community asset for Eastbourne. As demonstrated in the Ecosystem Service Analysis, it provides massive public benefits in terms of recreation and physical health. There is an opportunity to improve this further, particularly for those people who need support with their mental health, who are lonely or isolated, or who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

There are different ways that local commissioners can provide funding to properly embed social prescription:

- develop a ‘shared investment fund’, bringing together all local partners who can provide funding to charities and community groups, including the private sector;
- commission existing, staffed voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, which provide services such as welfare benefits advice and befriending, to deliver social prescribing;
- provide small grants for volunteer-led community groups providing peer support and activities, such as walking groups, conservation groups and art classes;
- micro-commission new groups where there are gaps in community provision - which may be in the form of a start-up grant and development support;



- enable people to use their Personal Health Budget (PHB) to pay for support in the VCSE sector.

Threats

Pests and disease. Current threats from pests and disease include:

- Ash Dieback currently presents a severe safety risk within the woodlands, which are all publicly accessible (with Ash being the principle species in the majority of compartments). Felling operations will be needed to mitigate the risk to public health and safety.
- Dutch Elm Disease. Elm is present within a number of the woodland compartments, particularly at the foot of the scarps. Generally these are immature, although some mature specimens are present in older plantations.
- Deer are currently not regularly present in the woodlands, although there are populations nearby. The exceptionally high level of public access makes most of the Estate woodland poor habitat for any large number of deer.
- Grey squirrels. Squirrels can cause serious damage to trees and may be a threat to the successful establishment of native trees on the Estate, but they are currently causing little visible damage in the woodland.
- Invasive species. Invasive cotoneaster is present on some woodland edges and areas of chalk grassland adjacent to woodlands. This is controlled and removed through on-going management under a HLS scheme.

Visitor pressure. The sheer number of visitors to the Estate presents a threat to natural capital and heritage assets, through erosion, nitrogen and phosphorus deposition from dog faeces, littering, and physical damage.

Coastal erosion. This has led to the cliff edge being very near to the road at Hod Combe, and a cliff fall here could result in its closure at any time. This poses many public safety risks, restricting safe walking space for

visitors and also providing very quick access to cliff edge. Visitor fatalities have occurred as result of these risks. Future erosion will increase these safety risks.



Scrub Encroachment. Scrub poses a significant threat to the grassland communities. If left without management the majority of the grassland within the site will by natural succession become dominated by scrub and eventually woodland. The ecological value of the nationally scarce chalk grassland and chalk heath communities will be lost if this is allowed to happen, so scrub control is one of the key priorities for the management of the Downs.

A number of areas of grassland within the Estate have been under-grazed or undergone a period of minimal management. These areas are threatened by serious scrub invasion, especially bramble, and are within an early successional development to scrub. In terms of scrub control these are the highest priority areas as the greatest gain for grassland restoration can be made within these areas by appropriate management to

eradicate bramble and scattered scrub from the sward via grazing/cutting/weed wiping with herbicide.

Soil erosion. Soil erosion is likely on the scarp slopes following felling operations. There is also a risk of soil degradation as a result of some agricultural operations, as a result of extreme precipitation events, and as a result of heavy footfall in 'honeypot' locations on the Estate.

Pollution. There is the threat of specific pollution incidents – such as spillage of agricultural fertilisers or chemicals – as well as the effects of diffuse pollution from agricultural operations on the Estate, the poor storage of manure and slurry, or the spreading of manures, slurries and mineral fertilisers. There is also the threat of dry deposition of nitrogen oxides from air pollution, which has the potential to eutrophy and acidify low-input calcareous grasslands. The effect is to favour productive grasses at the expense of fine-leaved grasses and wildflowers, reducing species diversity.



Transitioning away from the current agricultural subsidy and trading regime. The Council's agricultural tenants currently receive an area-based subsidy under the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) of the Common Agricultural Policy. BPS payments underpin the profitability of many farm businesses.

Once the UK leaves the EU, the Estate's tenant farmers will see BPS funding phased out and new agri-environment funding rolled in over a seven-year transition period under proposals outlined in the Agriculture

Bill. BPS money will be reduced in stages from 2021-2027, with none available in 2028.

It is likely that the overall funding available during the transition and beyond will be reduced from the current BPS rates, which could lead to lower subsidy receipts for the Estate's tenant farmers. The loss of subsidy income is a significant risk. It is also currently unclear what trading relationship the UK will have with the EU post-Brexit, and tariffs on agricultural commodities could apply. This could reduce the competitiveness of UK agricultural exports, posing a risk to farm businesses. Any negative impacts on the profitability of the Estate's farm businesses will impact on the Council's rental income.



Action Plan

What is the Action Plan?

The Action Plan takes the opportunities and threats set out in the Ecosystem Services Analysis and identifies the actions required and the possible specific projects attached to achieving those actions. It is an opportunity to clearly articulate the activities which will take the Estate forward in its role as a steward within the National Park and as an individual organisation. It allows the National Park Authority to see individual projects within the context of a wider set of actions. This is particularly important for development management activities where individual requests for planning consent may need to be understood within the context of the collective stewardship of the National Park.

Actions are split between short term and those that could be achieved over a longer timeframe, with specific projects and further actions developing over the lifespan of the WEP. The Council will, working with stakeholders and other partners where appropriate, help support delivery of the actions below.

It is important to note that this Action Plan does not by-pass the normal decision-making process of the Council, and each of the actions would need to stand up to detailed scrutiny, costing, monitoring and review. The WEP is not intended to be a detailed management plan, and does not supersede the Eastbourne Downland Management Plan 2015-2022; instead, it is envisaged as a 'live' document that will help provide a long-term strategy within an informed context.

Actions in the short term

Opportunities for public recreation, education and improved well-being through access to **safe and sustainably managed woodland**. As has been identified in the Ecosystem Service Analysis, Ash Dieback is a serious threat to the Estate woodlands. Ash is the most common species in the woodlands, and Ash Dieback is beginning to have a severe impact,

already resulting in mortality in young and semi-mature Ash. Progressive dieback in the crowns is resulting in large volumes of aerial deadwood, and more vulnerable trees are also beginning to suffer failure due to decay in the root collar in combination with severe dieback.

All of the woodlands are accessible to the public, being either designated as access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 or having numerous rights of way and / or permissive access. The combination of factors listed above means that the likelihood and magnitude of the safety risk posed by Ash Dieback is high.

To mitigate this, a series of felling interventions will be necessary, some of which has already commenced. Felling of all Ash (other than healthy specimens without significant loss of crown or presence of basal lesions) within falling distance of key access routes, public rights of way and woodland rides will be necessary over the short – medium term. Elsewhere, a 'minimum intervention' approach will leave the majority of Ash, but with appropriate signage to ensure public awareness of the risks posed by tree failure.



Continue with a programme of **scrub control**. The Council's objectives for scrub management on the Estate are as follows:

- Restore grassland under threat of scrub invasion via grazing/mechanical control/herbicide treatment.
- Ensure blocks of continuous scrub do not expand into areas of species-rich grassland.
- Within a grassland/scrub mosaic ensure small scale removal around grassland patches so scrub does not coalesce into continuous blocks thus decreasing the amount of species-rich grassland.
- Improve grassland/scrub ecotone by creating scallops into scrub edging paths and by coppicing the edge of woodland.
- Ensure species rich grassland and features of archaeological interest are not damaged by scrub management.
- Ensure that there is a programme of rotational coppicing.



Work with East Sussex County Council, neighbouring Local Authorities, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust and VCSE partners to **explore opportunities for social prescribing schemes on the Estate**. Social prescribing is a means of enabling health and care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services to address people's needs in a holistic way. It also aims to support individuals to take greater control of their own health.

Under the NHS's Comprehensive Model for Personalised Care, over 1,000 trained social prescribing link workers will be in place by 2020/21, rising further by 2023/24, with the aim that over 900,000 people will be able to be referred to social prescribing schemes by then. The Department of Health and Social Care provides grant funding for social prescribing schemes and community-based services that include, for example, improving access to green space, the natural environment, physical activity, and social inclusion.

A lot of the day-to-day management activities on the Estate – whether that is scrub control, coppicing, maintaining footpaths and stiles, or maintaining and restoring dew ponds – provide opportunities for greater community involvement. It is easy to envisage social-prescription-link-workers recommending and introducing people to a range of participatory and volunteering activities and opportunities to support conservation on the Estate, encouraging people, their families and carers to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence, and fostering that sense of public stewardship envisaged in the Vision Statement. There is clear potential for diversifying the visitor profile, and the Council will actively promote a welcoming Downland environment for everyone – in line with the Glover aspirations of 'National Parks for everyone'. The Council will also look to work more closely with South Downs Youth Action, and to promote opportunities for volunteering more generally.

Work with local stakeholders, including East Sussex Public Health and the existing East Sussex Coastal Suicide Prevention partnership, on a communication strategy that ensures all public communications present the Downland Estate as a positive and safe place. The aim is to focus on the Estate as a place for recreation, wellbeing and community use. The Council envisages this as part of a wider wellbeing campaign, promoting

positive activities that can improve wellbeing on the downlands, as well as offering safety advice and signposting support.



Work with the Estate's tenant farmers to **prepare for the transition away from the current subsidy regime**. The UK's exit from the EU presents both risks and opportunities for the Estate. The Estate's tenant farmers will see Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) funding phased out and new agri-environment funding rolled in over a seven-year transition period under proposals outlined in the Agriculture Bill.

BPS money will be reduced in stages from 2021-2027, with none available in 2028. The cuts have been announced for 2021 but no figures are available beyond that. Businesses receiving up to £30,000 in BPS will face a reduction of up to 5%, with those receiving £150,000 or more seeing a reduction of 25% in 2021. The new Environmental Land Management system (ELMs), also referred to as Environmental Land Management

scheme, began its test and trial period in 2019, with pilots planned to run from 2021.

Defra's ambition is for 1,250 businesses to enter the ELMs pilot scheme in 2021, building to 15,000 by the end of the pilots in 2024. The Council will liaise with its tenant farmers with a view to taking part in these pilot schemes, where appropriate. The Council will also explore how its tenant farmers can make the most of the opportunities these pilots present, and see what support it can give.

Work with the SDNPA and Catchment Partnerships to **promote best practice in sustainable land management to protect the aquifer**, and promote the Estate as a priority for investment in catchment sensitive farming (CSF). CSF is a partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England working with farmers and a range of other partners to improve water and air quality in high priority areas offering free training, advice and support for grant applications.

Increase opportunities for holiday lettings. Agriculture accommodation property will be brought back into use where possible in order to support increasing tourism vacations in the heart of the Estate through high quality holiday lets.

Actions in the medium and longer term

Creation by the Council of a group or body to help fundraise and take projects forward Recognising the Council's limited finances and capacity to take on additional pressures, the group/body would act as the main fundraiser and partnership link for the Estate to deliver the majority of the Action Plan priorities. This could over time be developed into a separate legal entity with charitable purposes (e.g. a charitable trust or a charitable company). A separate charitable entity could help attract external funding not open to local authorities and also benefit from the fiscal advantages available to charities (tax reliefs).

Prepare for the rollout of the new Environmental Land Management system. Once the pilot phase of ELMs comes to an end in 2024, the new subsidy regime will be rolled out and replace BPS and Countryside

Stewardship from 2025 – 2027. It will pay farmers for environmental services and benefits, with pricing based on a natural capital valuation approach. The underlying principle is ‘public payments for public goods’. These public goods include: improved air, water and soil quality, increased biodiversity, climate change mitigation, cultural benefits and better protection of historic environments – all of the things that the Estate is already doing, and all of the things that have been considered as part of the Ecosystem Service Analysis within this document. The Council and its



tenants are therefore already well placed to capitalise on this, having identified those opportunities on the Estate to increase the provision of public goods.

Maximise the biodiversity and amenity value of the Estate woodlands. Due to Ash Dieback, there is a risk that sycamore will come to dominate a substantial component of the woodland, reducing light penetration of the forest canopy over the next few decades. Accessing the

steep escarpment makes felling interventions very difficult, so – to ensure that ground flora is not crowded out – a series of wide access ways could be established along the main footpaths, linking up open areas. As the Jubilee Way demonstrates, there is the potential to upgrade some of these footpaths along the escarpment to tracks that are more suitable for disabled access.

Such tracks and rides could offer the walker a series of places and experiences. ‘Box junctions’ could be created where these rides cross, and it could be explored whether these could offer walkers particular experiences – such as viewing points, picnic areas, or venues for foraging and folklore courses. For example, viewing points from the escarpment over Pevensey Bay, with story boards telling of the Norman invasion, or the skyscape where the Battle of Britain unfolded. Landscape art could be incorporated. Or perhaps individual veteran trees could become focal points; these trees could be tagged and an inventory kept of such trees, as well as ‘future’ veterans, with regular surveys to ensure this valuable and rare resource is protected.

Upgrading these public access routes through the woodland and along the escarpment from Butts Brow to Beachy Head would be an additional reason to include Eastbourne in a cultural tour of East Sussex, as well as something for local residents to enjoy and connect them more closely to the downs. They would help to draw people along certain routes, and could help direct them away from other parts of the woodland – which may be important for European Protected Species, or include features such as badger setts, or retained standing deadwood, or deadwood habitat piles. Thinning will need to be undertaken within the older plantations, where the slope permits access. This will allow a more varied ground flora and shrub layer to develop. Thinning will be undertaken selectively with a view to retaining the best stems, as well as trees of high biodiversity value (such as those with a potential for bat roosting).

Planting interventions to improve diversity and resilience to pests, disease and climate change also provide an opportunity for members of the public to ‘adopt’ or sponsor a tree or group of trees. This would help to build a connection between people and particular locations, instilling a sense of public stewardship as expressed in the Vision Statement, and encouraging people to actively care for the Estate and invest in it. Technological

developments make this even easier, with the emergence of mobile apps such as 'GPS OS Grid Reference' that allow people to position themselves accurately at their 'own spot' on the landscape.

The programme to remove the diseased ash gives an unprecedented opportunity to restore ancient habitat or create a more vibrant mixed wood pasture mosaic habitat. In older plantations it may be possible to avoid re-planting, as natural regeneration may work in combination with free-ranging grazing animals: for example, cattle are particularly important vectors of seeds, with studies showing that they can transport up to 230 species of plants around a landscape through their guts, hooves and fur. This approach could result in a mosaic of open areas and scrubby regrowth which is far more beneficial for wildlife than a closed canopy woodland.

It may also be possible to get highly valuable chalk grassland returning to areas of secondary woodland that has been cleared, particularly in locations adjoining open downland. The existing open downland in many areas has been simply mown for a number of years, resulting in a low diversity of species: conservation grazing could improve the diversity, and



it would help to re-connect the public with the animals that played such an important role in shaping the landscape in the first place – although the problems of managing grazing livestock on these sites to avoid conflict are noted.

Contribute to a Nature Recovery Network. Helping to identify opportunities for habitat restoration and creation on the Estate that will contribute to the government's vision of a national Nature Recovery Network. The idea is to more effectively link existing protected sites and landscapes, as well as urban green and blue infrastructure. Such a network will deliver on the recommendations from Professor Sir John Lawton: recovering wildlife will require more habitat, in better condition, in bigger patches, that are more closely connected.

Maps could be developed showing where actions to improve and restore habitat on the Estate would be most effective in the context of this Nature Recovery Network, engagement undertaken with neighbouring landowners, with findings drawing on the lessons of initiatives such as Nature Improvement Areas or the farmer clusters which have been co-ordinated by Natural England and the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust.

Explore opportunities on the Estate to deliver **Biodiversity Net Gain for Eastbourne**. The Government has committed to embedding 'Biodiversity Net Gain' in the planning system, and in 2019 proposed making this a mandatory planning requirement for most development schemes. Provisions in the Environment Bill mean that developers will need to leave wildlife habitats in a measurably better condition than they were before development started. The key elements of the requirement are as follows:

- Impacts on wildlife habitat have to be measured, using a metric developed by Natural England. This metric takes account of the distinctiveness of the habitat (i.e. how rare or how common it is), the area of habitat affected, and the condition of that habitat. Assessing habitat using this metric gives a score, in 'biodiversity units'; developers must aim for an overall increase in this score once the development scheme is built out. They need to understand the biodiversity unit score before development commences, and use their design plans to calculate the biodiversity unit value of the habitats to be retained after works finish, together with the value of any enhanced or newly created

habitats. The change in biodiversity is calculated by subtracting the total number of projected post-intervention units for the site. The figure arrived at should show a net gain of at least 10 per cent to be maintained for at least 30 years.

- If the development scores less than 10 per cent, then a revised design may be needed. There may be circumstances where it is simply not possible to achieve this 10 per cent gain within the red line of the development boundary; in these circumstances, the developer may be able to bring in 'off-site' compensation to the calculations. According to the Natural England rules, losses of habitat must be compensated on a 'like for like' or 'like for better' basis.
- Third-party landowners may offer to deliver this habitat compensation on their own land, in return for a payment from the developer. So there may be a loss of biodiversity at the development site, but a much larger increase in biodiversity at the compensation site, resulting in an overall net gain in biodiversity.
- Developers who are unable to mitigate biodiversity net loss or purchase biodiversity units locally, will be required to pay a cash tariff on their shortfall against net gain obligations. The tariff system will strongly incentivise protecting existing habitats and creating local habitat creation by imposing a fixed charge of between £9,000 and £15,000 per biodiversity unit (subject to review), which will be used to fund compensatory habitats.

Biodiversity Net Gain requirements will come into effect during a two-year transition period which begins when the Environment Bill receives Royal Assent. Before then, there is much detail to be settled, and the Council will need to prepare for its implementation across the Borough. The following steps could be considered:

- (1) Working with Natural England and the SDNPA to improve environmental mapping across the Borough, and develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The LNRS will include a statement of biodiversity priorities for the Borough, as well as a local habitat map. This will reflect the priorities identified in the Nature Recovery

Network, and will inform planning decisions and underpin local action to protect or enhance biodiversity.

- (2) Looking into whether Supplementary Planning Guidance on biodiversity net gain is required to give further clarity for developers in the Borough.
- (3) Looking into the feasibility of setting up a habitat 'bank' on the Estate. The areas that are earmarked for habitat restoration and creation under a Nature Recovery Network could provide off-site compensation for developers elsewhere in the Borough who are unable to meet their net gain obligations within the red-line of their developments. Overall gains for biodiversity could be achieved either by increasing the extent of this important habitat on the Estate, or by improving its condition. This would be a means of channelling developer contributions towards habitat restoration and creation on the Estate, generating a new revenue stream for re-investment. It would also give developers across the Borough access to a more streamlined, cost-effective compensation solution than relying on them to negotiate their own biodiversity offsets.
- (4) Investigating the most appropriate planning mechanism to pool developer contributions to such a habitat bank. Most local authorities do this by way of either a planning condition on development or through s.106 Agreements. Community Infrastructure Levy is not generally deemed an appropriate mechanism for delivering biodiversity net gain. Off-site habitat compensation falls outside the definition of 'infrastructure', and by definition they are designed to deal with the impact of development, rather than supporting the final development. Furthermore, biodiversity offsetting specifically aimed at Biodiversity Net Gain will not generally meet the definition of 'open spaces' – unlike Suitable Alternative Greenspace (SANGs) which have a specific purpose for human recreation. However, because CIL regulations do not apply, habitat banking can circumvent regulation 123 – which would ordinarily restrict the number of s.106 obligations that can be pooled to fund any one project. This means that developer contributions from across the Borough could be pooled to fund habitat restoration or creation on the Estate.

The Council would work closely with the SDNPA in this: Eastbourne Borough Council is not actually the planning authority for the Estate, SDNPA is. However, there is a duty to co-operate in planning matters, and the delivery of biodiversity net gain on the Estate would be deemed sufficiently local to development within Eastbourne.

The Council is mindful of concerns that this approach to delivering biodiversity net gain could become a 'licence to trash'; in order to allay those concerns, the Council, as planning authority, would ensure strict adherence to the mitigation hierarchy, so that developers are obliged to first of all avoid impacts where possible, then reduce them, then mitigate them, and only as a last resort compensate for them. Irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland, or ancient and veteran trees, remain out of scope of the biodiversity net gain approach, and will continue to be protected by requirements of existing law and policy.

It is important that any compensatory habitat created and/or restored on the Estate will be maintained in the condition necessary to deliver net gains for biodiversity. The government has committed to bringing forward new legislation that would give effect to 'Conservation Covenants' – legally binding obligations that run with the land and commit the landowner to 'positive', proactive management, instead of the purely restrictive or 'negative' covenants that exist in English law today. As we have seen in the Asset Audit above, the Estate is currently subject to restrictive covenants; positive Conservation Covenants could be a powerful 'double lock' to guarantee a net gain legacy over the lifetime of this Plan and beyond.

Whether it is through ELMs, woodland management plans, nature recovery plans or biodiversity net gain strategies, **calcareous grassland should be a focus of restoration efforts**. The extent of calcareous grassland restoration and creation will be informed by emerging habitat network mapping across the Estate, and the priorities identified through the *Changing Chalk* project. The Council appreciates just how valuable this habitat is, being home to an incredibly rich and diverse range of plant and insect life.

In order for chalk grassland to reach a target condition of 'good', Defra guidance on delivering Biodiversity Net Gain suggests 25 years is a

realistic timeframe. The Council is committed to seeing its existing chalk grassland resource reach 'good' condition status over the lifetime of the WEP, and will work with its tenant farmers to target restoration and creation efforts across the let land.



Improving the Visitor Centre offering at Beachy Head. Beachy Head is a major tourist attraction, bringing in hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Estate every year. The Council believes there is a strong argument for a higher profile visitor centre here, fulfilling the following roles:

- Providing visitor information at the point of need
- Inspiring and make people want to visit and stay for longer on the Estate
- Promoting opportunities for understanding

- Generating funds to support operating costs
- Educational and meetings venue
- Exhibition space
- Hub from which to run guided visitor experiences of the Estate

A visitor centre could serve as a 'gateway' to the Estate and part of a better integrated network of visitor centres across the South Downs National Park. It should function as a place to which visitors (and local people) are drawn in order to understand the Estate and enhance their experience of it. There is potential to deliver a sufficiently high quality of experience to generate visits in its own right, and to be talked about and positively recommended. It presents an opportunity to engage more closely with the public, by connecting visitors with compelling stories of the Estate's history (economic, social and cultural), the built heritage, natural environment, environmental management and future challenges. To achieve this, the centre would need:

- A strong sense of arrival and good first impressions;
- Distinct qualities, including uniqueness, sense of place, location, reputation;
- A focus on delivering a high-quality customer experience, which is supported by appropriate catering and potentially retail offers;
- High standards of service by customer-focused, on-site staff;
- Regular reinvestment to refresh the visitor experience;
- Emphasis on entertaining the guest through activities, events and animation. As the experience develops there could also be focus on income generation in addition to 'free' experiences – for example, cycle hire.

The Council envisages this centre as a 'hub' to co-ordinate and provide direction to experiences, activities, and specific offers elsewhere on the Estate. In bringing forward this project, the Council would be able to draw on the expertise of its own officers, and relevant experts within the County Council, who have delivered exhibitions and public programming based on material culture collections.

The Council also recognises that it would make a significant positive difference if appropriate disabled access toilet facilities, such as Changing

Places provision, are included in any development of visitor infrastructure over the medium term.



Improving the educational offering. The visitor centre could provide an education space for school groups, and the educational offer on the wider estate could also be improved. Days out and trips to the Estate could form a key part of the curriculum for Eastbourne schools in particular, as well as schools from further afield with the feasibility of paid-for school visits and ranger led activities being explored. The Estate provides multiple opportunities for learning outside the classroom in the natural environment, which has been shown to deliver improvements for pupils in terms of health and wellbeing, behaviour, attainment, social skills, and connection to nature⁹. More educational packages and courses in the natural environment, including practical environmental conservation work, and ecological, geographical and environmental fieldwork could be

⁹ Natural England Commissioned Report NECR215: Natural Connections Demonstration Project, 2012-2016: Final Report

developed. Outdoor learning sessions could help to develop self-confidence, self-esteem, communication and team building skills. Courses could be linked to curriculum delivery in a wide variety of subjects, with knowledge and skills gained practically applied in fieldwork, conservation and construction projects. Learning experiences might range from short, in-school sessions, to structured programmes which could last for a school term. Over the Easter school holidays, May half-term and the summer holidays, a programme of daily ranger activities could be introduced to create an additional reason to visit. These could run for 2 to 4 hours each day, and might include, for example, pond-dipping, bushcrafts and wildlife walks.

Diversification and re-purposing of redundant farm buildings.

Opportunities to re-purpose some of the Estate's built assets could be explored as part of efforts to improve the overall offering to visitors and locals. It is possible to envisage the visitor centre serving as a focal point or hub for an integrated, dispersed visitor experience that includes Black Robin Farm, Crapham Barn and New Barn.

The buildings at Black Robin Farm include Victorian barns, milking parlours and stables that are no longer suitable for modern farming systems and which could potentially be used (subject to planning) to host local artisans, craftspeople, and business start-ups. The Council could work with these third-parties to develop and operate specific elements of the visitor experience - for example, the catering and retail offer. The business case for a farm shop could be explored, which could showcase artisan producers from the local area, and which could be a retail outlet for lamb and beef produced on the Estate. Black Robin could also be the venue for running courses on local and traditional crafts, cooking, arts, wellbeing, history or archaeology. With the closure of Stanmer Park Farm and the Seven Sisters Sheep Centre, there does appear to be an opportunity for a genuine working sheep farm that would continue to manage the land traditionally while providing greater access to the public – both generating income and providing educational benefits.

Crapham Barn and New Barn could form part of this offering, being vernacular buildings of a style that is characteristic of the Estate and the local area. Open-air museums provide a three-dimensional setting for explaining historic way of living or working; Crapham Barn and New Barn

could give context to the techniques, equipment, furnishings, clothes and art of the Victorian period. Although these buildings are not listed, the Council sees them as valuable reminders of those historic farming systems which shaped the Downs, and recognises that they contribute to the special qualities of the Estate. The Council would like to explore ways of stimulating public awareness and interest in the built environment and historic farming practices on the Estate. It might be possible to come to some arrangement with the Weald and Downland museum, whereby some of their resources are utilised to deliver public engagement activities at one of these locations. Alternative uses for these buildings that preserve their special qualities for the future could be considered: this might include venue hire, a facility for events (especially in the low season and involving local communities) and a meeting space for schools and other groups. Energy efficiency and renewable energy systems could be incorporated into any re-purposing programme.

Notwithstanding these ambitions, the Council is mindful that Crapham Barn and New Barn are in exposed settings, and any proposals must be careful not to lose the rural and historic character that makes these locations so special. The associated development which comes with such changes of use, such as car parking, can be difficult to successfully assimilate into such open settings. If space at Black Robin Farm could be used for public engagement, this would enable the Council to deliver some immediate improvements to public engagement and provide a platform for ongoing engagement / testing of learning opportunities to feed into longer-term ambitions.



Providing more tourist accommodation. Given the potential alternative uses for the Black Robin farm buildings, there is also an opportunity to accommodate visitors on residential courses out of season. There may be scope for a high quality 'glamping' offer, and exploring the possibility of developing the Eastbourne Downs Golf Clubhouse in order to provide hotel accommodation. The Clubhouse occupies a unique location on the eastern scarp of the Estate that offers extensive views over Eastbourne and beyond, and it could serve as a wedding venue, offer conference facilities, or even operate as a spa alongside its clubhouse function. The current building is prominent in views from the east, as the site was regrettably opened up by quarrying in the 1960s, but its design is inappropriate to its setting, and could be developed more sensitively.

Improving the provision of public transport. If the Estate – and indeed the wider area between the Ouse, the A27 and Eastbourne – is to become an integrated, dispersed tourist destination, the Council wants to avoid that

being based on the use of private cars. Options with local bus operators to make public transport more readily available and flexible could be explored including an improved, more frequent service on Beachy Head Road, and additional services to Butts Brow or points at the foot of the escarpment. It is also possible to envisage a much more flexible service for tourists, based on a fleet of minibuses, responding to requirements of passengers for a fixed daily fee, ferrying them to the nearest trunk route or picking them up from a stop on such a route – so not a direct service over longer routes, but a responsive one.

The Council will also explore ways of better connecting the Estate with the town by way of upgraded walking and cycling routes from the town centre and station (including, for example, by incorporating the start of the South Downs Way) and raising the profile of the Estate within the town (for example, through the provision of information boards in the town and along the seafront, to encourage people to explore it further).

Encouraging a transition away from private vehicle use on the Beachy Head Road. The Council estimates that there are 800,000 vehicle movements a year on the Beachy Head road. In parallel with moves to increase the provision of public transport, it will explore means of reducing dependence on private cars to access Beachy Head, as part of a wider visitor management plan being developed with Sussex Heritage Coast partners, and in line with the ESCC Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026. The ultimate aim is to help manage the movement of people through this part of the Estate safely and sustainably. The Council is also mindful of just how close the road at Hod Comb is to the cliff edge, and the risks posed by erosion; encouraging through traffic is not desirable. The solution may involve road infrastructure changes, and will go hand in hand with public safety interventions to identify people at risk. Access-charging for non-locals on the Beachy Head Road is one idea that was suggested as part of the stakeholder engagement process, although EBC is sensitive to the concerns about this raised during public consultation. Such a charging system would produce an immediate and substantial cash inflow which could be ring-fenced to maintain the upkeep of the downs for wildlife and tourists – however, there are many practical challenges, and this idea would not be explored further without much more extensive public consultation and clear support from local residents. The emerging Heritage Coast Visitor Management Plan will consider a wide range of evidence on

transports matters, and will be guided by the principles set out in the Heritage Coast Strategy.

Maintaining and, where possible, restoring the Estate's dew ponds.

The Council recognises that dew ponds are one of the Estate's unique qualities, to be enjoyed, understood and valued by the public. They are a reminder of historic farming systems that helped shape the downland, and since they hold the only surface water on the chalk, they are potentially of great value for wildlife. However, the general picture of the condition of the (with one exception, concrete) dew ponds across the Estate is a gradually deteriorating one, and a targeted programme of management and restoration is required to provide these heritage assets with a new lease of life. The Council envisages the dew ponds forming part of the Estate's educational offering on the historic farming systems and the natural environment.

Putting the Estate's water supply network on a more sustainable footing.

There is a private water supply system on the Estate, owned by the Council. This system is identified in the Ecosystem Service Analysis as a significant weakness; any issues impacting on the water supply are considered an extremely high priority by the Council, and the system may need to be future-proofed with additional boreholes and/or reservoirs to avoid insufficiency. There would certainly need to be significant upgrading of the system as part of the proposals to re-purpose farm buildings on the Estate, and water supply to troughs on the downland would make it much easier to graze livestock here. Engagement with South East Water and other providers to explore the adoption of the supply pipes and infrastructure, thereby spreading the cost of repairs and maintenance more equitably, could be explored, possibly as part of an overarching agreement whereby the Estate undertakes to safeguard the water catchment through more catchment-sensitive farming.

Encouraging visitor donations. A number of specific, small-scale projects on the Estate could be identified and actively promoted, with visitors encouraged to make donations to part-fund these projects through online, contactless and traditional means. The growth of digital connectivity allows many visitors, especially Millennials, to bypass conventional information centres, and opportunities to donate could be developed as

part of an online offering that provides information about the Estate. This might include a mobile phone app, perhaps linked to QR codes (a type of matrix barcode) on posts at certain locations on the Estate. Such an app could effectively serve as a virtual guide to the Estate; this has been piloted at some National Trust properties, where QR codes at different locations link to the web urls of short, informative YouTube videos, giving an extra level of engagement with the property for those who are capable of, and choose to, use it.

Help to build a **value-added brand for produce from the Estate.** A distinct brand based on the special qualities of the Estate could add value to their produce. Consumers are increasingly interested in the provenance of their food and its ecological footprint, and retailers are sensitive to this. The Council values the role of its tenant farmers as stewards of the important habitats and ecosystems on the Estate, and it is hoped that discerning consumers will also value this.



APPENDIX 1: HERITAGE ASSETS

Compiled by the Eastbourne Downland Group

<p>Willingdon Hill</p> <p>Description Flint/brick walls of former barn and other connected walls/outbuildings, reduced in height to approx. 2.5m.</p> <p>Condition Ruin. Walls only remain, but appear well maintained and quite sound. Roofless. Augmented by fencing and used as a livestock compound.</p>
<p>Eldon Bottom</p> <p>Description Flint walls of probable shepherd's cottage and attached yard.</p> <p>Condition Ruin. Walls only remain. Roofless. Overgrown.</p>
<p>Ringwood</p> <p>Description Barn: flint with brick dressings; half-hipped roof.</p> <p>Condition Good.</p>
<p>Ringwood</p> <p>Description "Napoleonic" flint walls to fields and farmyard.</p> <p>Condition Good.</p>
<p>New Barn (N of Halfway Cottages)</p> <p>Description Barn, flint with brick dressings; yard adjoining to east with wall to N and E, open stalls to S. Dew pond to N.</p> <p>Condition Fair. Barn rendered to S and W elevations, and modern tiled roof. Outbuildings with asbestos roofs. Wall damaged by entrance to yard. Dew pond concreted and dry.</p>
<p>Crapham Barn</p> <p>Description Barn with outbuildings. Appears similar to New Barn (Mill Down) in size, design and layout.</p> <p>Condition Barn has tiled roof. Outbuildings with asbestos roofs.</p>
<p>New Barn (Mill Down)</p> <p>Description Barn with half-hipped roof. Yards to W and E. Wall along S side. Open stalls to N and E. Smaller barn/store to E. Flint and brick walls. Roofs with pegged, handmade tiles throughout, other than slates to E stalls. Dew pond to north.</p> <p>Condition Very well maintained. All maintenance/restoration has been sympathetically carried out.</p>

Shepherds cottage (Mill Down)**Description**

Small shepherd's cottage close to New Barn. Flint, brick and tile.

Condition

Very well maintained and retaining original features.

Listed, grade II

Black Robin Farm**Description**

Victorian (c1870) red brick farm house and outbuildings.

Complex of farm buildings comprising barns, milking parlours, stables and stock yards; Mainly flint, brick, tile.

Condition

Farmhouse: in fair condition.

Farm buildings: fair; modern asbestos barn incorporated within the complex.

Cornish Farm**Access**

Within access land

Description

Two flint farm buildings, two storeys. Probably stores/workshops. Dew pond to S.

Condition

Partially rendered, with modern doors and windows.

Sweet Brow**Description**

Flint shepherd's cottage, open stalls with enclosing walls to south. Stalls with modern walls and roof.

Condition

Fair

Frost Hill**Description**

Ruined remains of small flint building.

Condition

Only two walls partially survive. These seem to have been maintained/restored as a ruin and appear stable.

Halfway Cottages**Description**

Row of two-storey, gabled Victorian houses. Flint with brick dressings to front, rendered to rear; slate roofs.

Condition

Occupied and well maintained, but windows replaced with uPVC.

Bullockdown Farm**Description**

Flint and brick livestock stalls.

Condition

Good, but with modern roofs.

Bullockdown field walls**Description**

"Napoleonic" flint walls round field NE of farm buildings. Additional length of flint wall beside farm access road adjoining Beachy Head Road.

Condition

Field walls in good condition. Wall by access track appears to be a survival of a longer run.

Lloyd's signal station**Description**

Small octagonal building constructed as lookout/signal station by Lloyd's of London. Roof removed, walls reduced in height and converted for seating. Several commemorative plaques attached to walls.

Condition

Good, although much of the structure has been demolished.

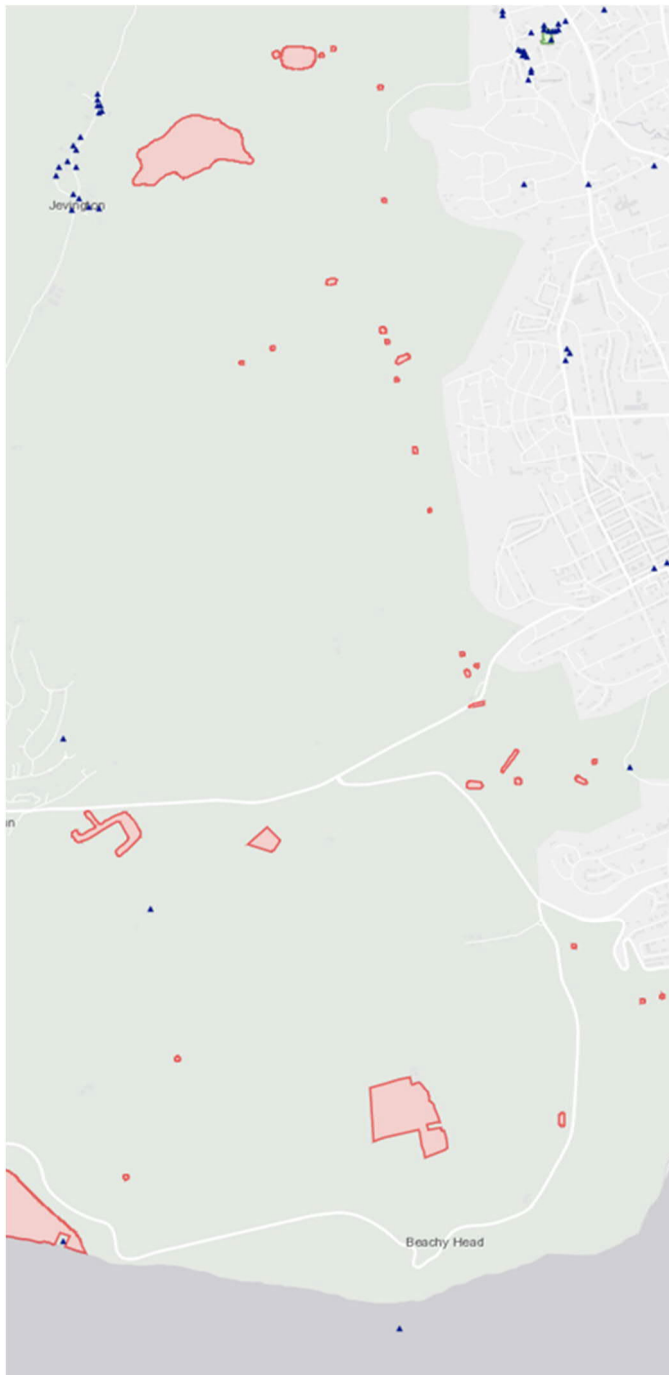
Beachy Head public conveniences**Description**

Flint with brick dressings and tilework; half-hipped roof. 1930s

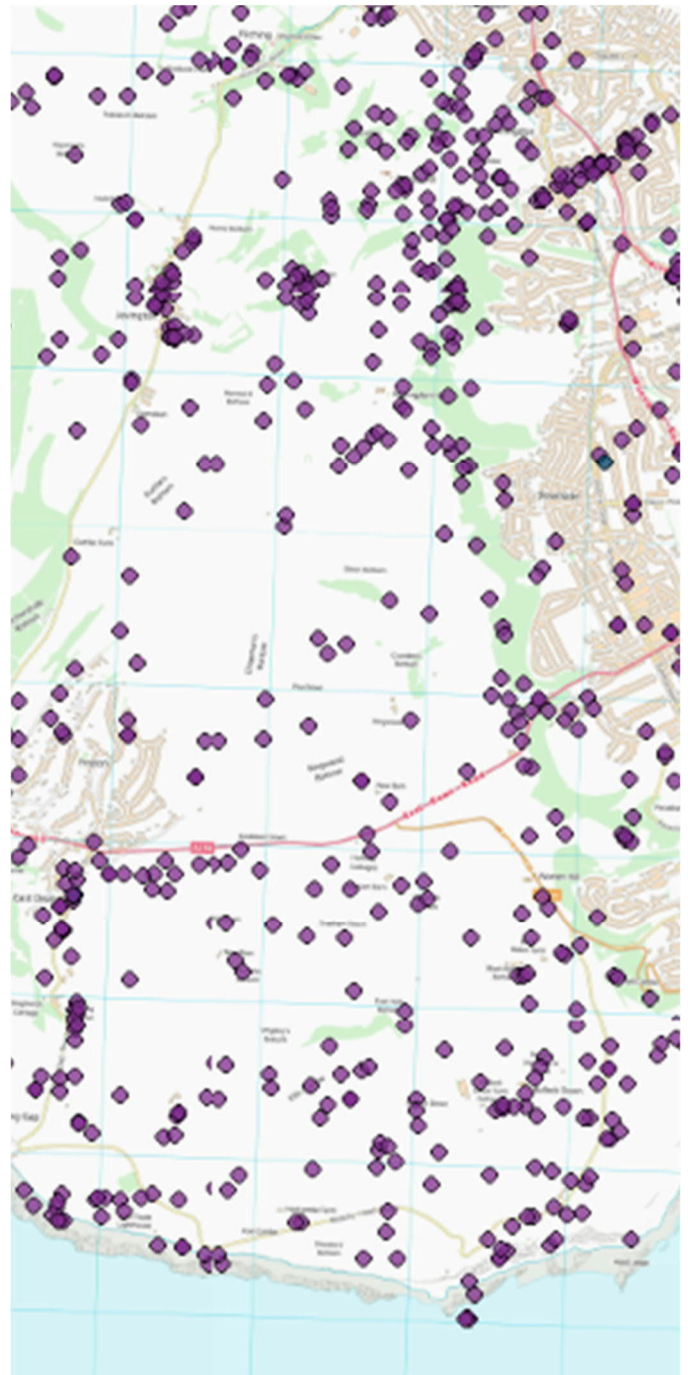
Condition

Well maintained.

APPENDIX 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS



Ancient Scheduled Monuments (in red)



Historic Environment Record

Numerous archaeological remains are logged in the East Sussex Historic Environment Record, but only a relatively small number of monuments are protected by statutory scheduling on the Estate.

Source: Historic England and East Sussex County Council

Compiled by the Eastbourne Downland Group

APPENDIX 3 NATURAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS Methods and assumptions

Physical Health – Monetary Flow Account

Notes	Source	Values			
		Cost (£2004)	Cost (£2018)		
Total annual direct and indirect costs of inactivity in England	Department of Health (2004). At least five a week: Evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health. Available online: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalassetsset/dh_4080981.pdf	8,200,000,000	11,118,822,023		
Consumer price index (CPI) inflator	ONS (2019). Consumer price inflation tables. Available online: https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/datasets/consumerpriceinflation	2004/2005	2018/2019	Inflator	
		100	135.60	1.36	
Population of England	ONS (2018). England population mid-year estimate. Available online: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/timeseries/enpop/pop	55,619,400			
Inactivity rate of England (percentage of adults achieving less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week)	Public Health England (2015). Public health profiles data explorer: physical activity. Available online: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity/data#page/3/gid/1938132899/pat/6/par/E12000004/ati/102/are/E06000015/iid/90277/age/164/sex/4	28.7%			
Estimated number of inactive people in England	Population of England multiplied by the inactivity rate	15,962,768			
Estimated cost of inactivity per inactive person (direct and indirect costs to society)	Direct and indirect cost of inactivity divided by the number of inactive people in England	£697			

Estimated annual avoided healthcare costs	Cost of inactivity per inactive person multiplied by the number of people who achieve physical activity guidelines fully or in part through visits to Eastbourne	£473,353			
		Self-reported exercise a week	Active visits last week	Number of active visitors	Proportion of weekly guideline exercise undertaken in Estate * the avoided cost of inactivity
		≥5 x 30 mins	1	313	£43,538
			2	150	£41,739
			3	83	£34,883
			4	58	£32,582
			5	335	£233,326
		<5 x 30 mins	5	125	£87,285
		Total			£473,353
£ per QALY in England	As cited in White et al. (2016): National Institute of Health & Care Excellence (2013). Judging whether public health interventions offer value for money. Available online: https://www.nice.org.uk/advice/lgb10/chapter/judging-the-costeffectiveness-of-public-health-activities	£20,000			
Annual welfare gain (£)	Number of QALYs gained multiplied by the value of a QALY.	£726,021			

Recreation – Monetary Flow Account

Baseline	2018/2019	Units
Recreation welfare value	£2,293,446	per year
Recreational welfare value by SEG	AB: £719,072	per year
	C1: £806,397	per year
	C2: £418,816	per year
	DE: £349,161	per year
Method and assumptions		
Notes	Source	Values

The Outdoor Recreation Valuation Tool (ORVal) (Day & Smith, 2018) was used to identify and isolate the Estate's natural capital. The tool then presents the associated estimated number and value of visits to the Estate per year, and also provides a breakdown of values and visits by socio-economic group.	Day, B. H., and G. Smith (2018). Outdoor Recreation Valuation (ORVal) User Guide: Version 2.0, Land, Environment, Economics and Policy (LEEP) Institute, Business School, University of Exeter.	As reported above
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Air pollution – Monetary Flow Account

Baseline	2018/2019	Units						
SO2	14	£/yr						
O3	605	£/yr						
NO2	537	£/yr						
PM25	10,520	£/yr						
Total	11,676	£/yr						
Method and assumptions								
Notes	Source	Values						
	ONS (2018). Pollution removal by vegetation in residential urban and rural areas - supplementary information.	Region	Size of area (ha)	Population	£/kg SO2	£/kg O3	£/kg NO2	£/kg PM25
		East Sussex	171269	544064	£0.01	£0.04	£0.20	£22.19

Carbon Sequestration – Monetary Flow Account

Baseline	2018	Units					
Habitat	Value of stock t/CO2e	Annual value of flow per year t/CO2e/yr					
Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural	£790,769	£9,656					
Broadleaved woodland - plantation	£3,130,801	£38,231					
Calcareous grassland - semi-improved	£488,264	£17,053					
Coastal heathland	£1,292	£35					
Neutral grassland - semi-improved	£235,118	£8,212					
Soft cliff	-	-					
Scrub	£21,033	£735					
Cultivated/disturbed land - ephemeral/short perennial	£1,763,202	-£16,356					

Total	£6,430,478	£57,566					
Method and assumptions							
Notes	Source	Values					
As forecasted carbon prices are not available beyond 2100, the price is assumed to remain constant.	BEIS (2017). Green Book supplementary guidance: valuation of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions for appraisal.	Table 3: Carbon prices and sensitivities 2010-2100 for appraisal, 2017 £/tCO2e					
		Traded			Non-traded		
	Year	Low	Central	High	Low	Central	High
	2010	14	14	14	29	59	88
	2011	12	12	12	30	60	89
	2012	6	6	6	30	60	91
	2013	4	4	4	31	61	92
	2014	5	5	5	31	62	93
	2015	6	6	6	32	63	95
	2016	4	4	4	32	64	96
	2017	0	4	5	33	65	98
	2018	0	4	7	33	66	99
	2019	0	4	8	34	67	101
	2020	0	5	10	34	68	102
	2021	4	12	21	35	69	104
	2022	8	20	32	35	70	106
	2023	12	27	43	36	71	107
	2024	16	34	54	36	73	109
	2025	20	42	64	37	74	111
	2026	23	49	75	37	75	112
	2027	27	57	86	38	76	114
	2028	31	64	97	39	77	116
	2029	35	72	108	39	78	117
	2030	40	79	119	40	79	119

APPENDIX B

Summary of main changes to the WEP following public consultation

1. We have stressed that the WEP is not intended to be a detailed management plan, and does not supersede the Eastbourne Downland Management Plan 2015-2022; instead, it is envisaged as a 'live' document that will help provide a long-term strategy within an informed context and as such will be subject to review and refresh to ensure it continues to reflect policies and priorities.
2. We have drawn much stronger links to the Heritage Coast Strategy and the emerging Visitor Management Plan.
3. We have noted the policy implications of the updated Corporate Plan, Corporate Asset Management Plan, Eastbourne Local Plan, Active Eastbourne Strategy 2017-22, and the county's Health & Wellbeing Plan.
4. We have emphasised the wealth of public rights of way across the Estate, including the South Downs Way and the new England Coast Path National Trail, and the importance of access to the estate has been strengthened throughout the WEP.
5. We have put more emphasis on connecting the Downland estate with the town, with better walking and cycling links from the town centre and station including incorporating the start of the South Downs Way.
6. We have emphasised the cultural heritage on the Estate, we have set the landscape within the context of 'deep time', and we have brought into the asset audit the more experiential aspects such as landscape inspiration, landscape heritage, views and vistas, myths, stories and folklore. We have placed more emphasis on archaeological remains and their value.
7. We have incorporated the idea of partnering with the YHA and the John Muir Award in the educational offering of the Estate.
8. We have referred to the Glover aspirations around National Parks for everyone and we set out the opportunity to diversify the visitor profile.
9. We have placed more emphasis on volunteering opportunities.
10. We have referred to the Changing Chalk project and placed more emphasis on chalk grassland restoration and creation.
11. We have clarified the fact that the SDNPA is the planning authority for the Estate, not Eastbourne Borough Council.
12. We have noted that any re-purposing of redundant agricultural buildings must be done without blighting the rural / historic character that makes these locations so special.

13. We have identified the strengths of having an in-house staff resource with an enormous body of knowledge about the Estate and specialist expertise.
14. We have emphasised public cliff safety for all visitors, and we have noted the risks posed by coastal erosion.
15. We have included a commitment to work with local stakeholders, including East Sussex Public Health and the existing East Sussex Coastal Suicide Prevention partnership, on a communication strategy that ensures all public communications present the Downland Estate as a positive and safe place.
16. We have emphasised the potential of a management group or body that could act as the main fundraiser and partnership link for the Estate to deliver the majority of the Action Plan priorities and the reasons why it may be beneficial to develop this further into a Trust.
17. We have amended the suggestion around access charging on the Beachy Head road and instead emphasised the importance of transitioning away from private vehicle use, in the context of improved public transport and connections with Eastbourne, and as part of a wider visitor management plan being developed with Sussex Heritage Coast partners, and in line with the ESCC Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026.

APPENDIX C
Downland Whole Estate Plan
Action Plan Priorities

Project	Commenced?	Will funding be required - by Council or externally?	Benefits income generation for the Downland	Benefits tourism	Benefits Education	Benefits Health/Safety	Benefits Sustainability	Prioritisation Level	Comments
Beachyhead Visitor Centre - new centre serving as the gateway to the Estate	Yes - investigating initial proposals to improve the existing centre. Future work may include a new centre.	Yes - but minimal initially and from existing resources. If a new centre was built in the future then this would require additional funds, but this could be through a variety of sources, including crowd-funding.	Yes - would be the gateway to the Downland, signposting opportunities and education.	Yes - would be the gateway to the Downland, signposting opportunities and education.	Yes - would be the gateway to the Downland, signposting opportunities and education.	Yes - would be the gateway to the Downland, signposting opportunities and education.	Yes	High	Project likely to start with changes to the design, interpretation and content of the existing centre within the realms of the current infrastructure, but future development opportunity too.
Re-purposing redundant farm buildings - artisans, craftspeople and business start-ups, farm shop and courses/hub at Black Robin Farm	Yes - investigating initial proposals for Black Robin Farm as a hub. Future proposals could build on this.	Yes - although existing funding may be available for initial set-up of a hub at Black Robin Farm, future projects likely require additional funding, although this could be from a variety of sources.	Yes - helping to create new destinations for tourists and income opportunities for the Downland.	Yes - helping to create new destinations for tourists and income opportunities for the Downland.	Yes - helping to create new education initiatives.	Yes - provides additional opportunities for health activities.	Yes	High	Initial project for education hub at Black Robin; future projects would need to be developed.
Improving the educational offer - through a new visitor centre, ranger and outdoor learning activities	Would run through a number of projects including proposals for the Countryside Centre and Black Robin education hub.	Yes - although some offer could be made from within existing resources or supported through circular income generation.	Yes - through charges for opportunities and events.	Yes - could become part of the tourism offer.	Yes - would be central to an increased education offer across the Downland.	Yes	Yes	High	Central to the WEP is the aspirations to increase the education offer across the Downland.
Creation of a group to help fundraise and take projects forward	Likely to be a gradual progression starting with a 'friends of' type body initially.	Not for the set up of the group.	Yes - through bringing in funds/resources to support future projects.	Yes - group would focus on bringing priority projects in the WEP to fruition.	Yes - group would focus on bringing priority projects in the WEP to fruition.	Yes - group would focus on bringing priority projects in the WEP to fruition.	Yes	High	Formation of group will be key to the progress of future schemes.
Safe and sustainably managed woodland - felling interventions to address Ash Dieback	Yes - initial felling completed 19/20.	Initial works funded largely from Downland reserves and some open Downland woodland budget. Income from timber sales will reimburse proportion of that spend enabling finance of further works.	Yes - Helping to maintain an attractive and safe environment for tourists and generate spend.	Yes - providing a safer environment and linking to the 'green tourism' agenda through development of a more diverse environment accessible along well maintained access routes.	Yes - public information distributed during the works generated lots of interest in the history of the woodlands and schools/colleges might eventually be involved in some replanting or ongoing maintenance.	Yes - providing a safer environment and therefore continuing to encourage people to use the area for exercise and recreation.	Yes	High	Prioritised due to Health and Safety
Continued Scrub Control in line with the Council's objectives	Yes	No - existing resources being used.	Yes - Helping maintain a diverse environment linking to the 'green tourism' agenda.	Yes	Yes - feeds into a wider education topic about management of the Downland.	Not particularly.	Yes	High	Work already being undertaken as part of ongoing management of the Estate
Prepare Farmers for the transition away from the current subsidy regime	Strutt and Parker are the agents appointed for managing the farm tenancies and will help support farmers through the transition; discussions have already commenced with farmers and these will be ongoing.	Yes - subsidy would see requirement for external government funding to replace current EU subsidy.	Not directly, but does generate income for the farmers enabling them to continue farming to a high standard.	Yes - ensuring the land is maintained and can continue to be farmed appropriately.	Yes - feeds into a wider education topic about management of the Downland.	Yes - ensures that the farms are farmed in accordance with strict outputs	Yes	High	Discussions have already commenced with the farmers and will be ongoing. Strutt and Parker will be available to help support the farmers and their agents during the transition
Increase opportunities for holiday lettings	Yes - initial work commenced 19/20. Holiday lettings being explored at 3 Cornish Cottages and Black Robin Farm. Could form part of support for hub at Black Robin Farm.	Yes - Council has already earmarked £30k to the project across four properties.	Yes - either through the GF to support EBC general income, or if agreed, to directly support hub at Black Robin	Yes - by increasing the available accommodation across the Downland.	Yes - could help support running education hub.	Potentially - works to the properties will ensure they are statutory compliant and improvements to safety will be made where relevant.	Yes	High	Work has commenced. Possible issues with 3 Cornish Cottages needing a full rewire, so focus may need to be on Black Robin properties initially.

Prepare for the rollout of the new Environmental Land Management System (Open Downland)	Officers are already understanding about how ELMS may impact the open downland and will continue to ensure the Council is well placed for applications to support managing the Estate. Strutt and Parker will also be able to provide any necessary advice and support.	Yes - subsidy would require government funding.	Yes - enables the Council to carry on managing the open downland to a high standard.	Yes - ensuring the Downland can continue to be managed appropriately.	Yes - feeds into a wider education topic about management of the Downland.	Yes - ensures the Open Downland continues to be managed in accordance with strict outputs.	Yes	High	Ongoing.
Explore biodiversity net gain opportunities through planning requirements (Incl. Local Nature Recovery Strategy, habitat banking)	Yes - a draft biodiversity strategy is in its early stages. The Core Strategy contains Key Spatial Objective 7: Green Space and Biodiversity but the upcoming Eastbourne Local Plan will formalise this more	Yes - but likely through funding from offsetting on developments	Yes, potentially.	Yes, potentially.	Yes, potentially if it was tied into an education offer	Yes	Yes - depending upon the specifics of the habitat loss at the sacrificed site.	High	Further work to be undertaken on the biodiversity strategy. Eastbourne Local Plan in early stages.
Communication Strategy to ensure the Downland is presented as a positive place for recreation well-being and community use, particularly for those experiencing mental health issues.	Yes - the Downland WEP will play a key part in the strategy as the positive catalyst for other projects. A full strategy needs to be developed working with public health and the coastal suicide prevention partnership; it is envisaged that the Countryside Centre could play an important role in this.	Potentially - however, it is hoped that the majority of coms could be undertaken within existing resources.	Yes - promoting the Downland better will help to support the circular economy for the estate.	Yes - helping to create new destinations for tourists and income opportunities for the Downland.	Yes - the benefits of education could be promoted through the strategy.	Yes	Yes	High	Developing a positive communication strategy is likely to help support change for those experiencing mental health problems, whilst also promoting the wider benefits of the estate.
Creating more tourist accommodation - glamping at Black Robin, development of Eastbourne Downland Golf Course	No - focus currently on holiday lettings.	Yes - business case would need to identify funding avenues.	Yes - helping to create new destinations for tourists and income opportunities for the Downland.	Yes - helping to create new destinations for tourists and income opportunities for the Downland.	Potentially if it was tied into an education offer	Yes	Yes	Medium	Likely to be a later phase of accommodation planning across the Downland.
Maximise the biodiversity and amenity value of the Estate woodlands - establish new wide access ways, upgrade existing, provide walker experiences (incl. viewing points, tag and monitor old trees, tree sponsorship), selective thinning and planting interventions.	Yes - some through works already underway across the Downland.	Yes - existing resources not sufficient for some of these types of improvements. Current budget supplemented by stewardship grants that are due to expire in April 2022.	Yes - helping to maintain an attractive and safe environment for tourists and generate spend.	Yes - providing a safer environment and linking to the 'green tourism' agenda through development of a more diverse environment accessible along well maintained access routes.	Yes - feeds into a wider education topic about management of the Downland.	Yes	Yes	Medium	Requires additional funding for the larger scale improvements.
Contribute to a Nature Recovery Network - identify areas for habitat restoration and creation.	Yes - Habitat restoration and recovery are part of ongoing works under existing stewardship arrangements but not formally linked at this time to the Nature Recovery Network.	Potentially depending on the restoration/improvement.	Yes - as part of the overall initiatives to help maintain an attractive and safe environment for tourists and generate spend.	Yes	Potentially if it was tied into an education offer - and/or continued or expanded existing use of volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds.	Yes	Yes	Medium	Individual projects would need to be worked up. Funding would need to be secured.
More sustainable water system network	No - although there have been historic conversations with the local water company which required substantial investment before any transfer of the supply.	Potentially	Potentially - through reducing the Council's liabilities	Potentially - by enabling future development opportunities.	Potentially - by enabling future development opportunities.	Potentially - by enabling future development opportunities.	Potentially	Medium	Discussions with South East Water or an alternative water company required.

Explore opportunities for social prescribing schemes on the Estate through participatory and volunteering opportunities.	Yes - Volunteers are already used for some habitat management and maintenance of access routes and infrastructure. Former 'Story of Eastbourne' team ready to provide support in running projects, workshops etc. It is known that social prescribing is practiced by some doctors in Eastbourne and contact has been made with volunteer leaders of mental welfare groups.	Possibly, depending on the volunteering opportunity	Yes - If NHS or voluntary health sector assist with payment for walk/activity leaders employed by EBC.	Potentially	Yes	Yes	Yes	Medium	Already being explored as part of current management of the Downland estate
Improving public transport and encouraging a transition away from private vehicle use	No	Potentially - depending on what the improvement was	Potentially - by increasing ease of access	Yes	No	Yes - could encourage visitors	Yes - would need to be a sustainable element to any changes	Medium	Would need to be explored with partner organisations
Promote best practice in sustainable land management to protect the aquifer	No	Possibly external funding	No - Not directly but could be a catalyst in helping explore more sustainable water supply	No	Potentially	No	Potentially	Low	Would need to be explored with partner organisations
Encouraging visitor donations	No	No	Yes	Yes	Potentially if it was tied into an education offer	Potentially - depending on how donations are used	Potentially - depending on how donations are used	Low	Likely to be an offshoot of future projects developed on the Estate. The Council already has committed to a heritage contribution through sales of ticketed events (theatres/bandstand etc.)
Build a value added brand for the Downland	No	Potentially	Yes	Potentially	No	No	Potentially	Low	This is likely to start coming together once projects are delivered.
Maintaining and restoring dew ponds	Yes - Some ongoing maintenance and restoration work.	Potentially - depending on what the improvement/restoration was	No	Potentially	Potentially if it was tied into an education offer and/or volunteering opportunities.	No	Yes	Low	Further works could be undertaken through volunteers or as part of an education package.

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