

High Weald AONB Unit Report

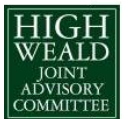
www.highweald.org



Community and Outreach Events Report

Field Systems in the High Weald

March 2017



Historic England



The High Weald: an outstanding medieval landscape

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Key audiences	2
3. Events summary	3
4. Appendix A: Perception of Fields in the High Weald	7
5. Workshop for testing the assessment method: Agenda	22

1. Introduction

A series of events were held in the summer of 2015 to launch the project to key audiences and explore current perceptions of fields and how they are considered in decision making. The results of this baseline audience study - 'Perception of field systems in the High Weald' - informed production of the Communication Plan (P12) and are attached at Appendix A.



Further discussion groups and workshops were held at key stages in the project primarily with local authority representatives as the key audience to test progress and trial approaches to field systems assessment.


2. Key audiences

- Local authority planning and landscape officers who are involved in making strategic planning or development control decisions about fields.
- Planning agents, developers and landscape/ design consultancies who are advising clients about the potential for development on fields, the capacity and economics of development on fields, and site design.
- Neighbourhood planning committees looking at the potential of green fields to provide sites for housing development or economic uses;
- Land owners or land managers who manage fields and/ or seek alternative uses for them;
- Government bodies and other organisations that provide advice and/ or grants for field management or change of use.

3. Events summary

Event type	Location/ event	Date	Number and type of participant in addition to project team	Evidence/ link to event report
Focus Groups	West Sussex	29/07/2015	8 - Local authority planning and landscape officers	See Appendix B Perception of Fields in the High Weald Interim Report
	Kent	30/07/2015	5 - Local authority planning and landscape officers	See Appendix B Perception of Fields in the High Weald Interim Report
Site meetings	Earlye Farm	15/09/2015	2 Land owners + steering group	https://highwealdfieldscapes.wordpress.com/
	Little Scotney Farm	12/10/2015	4 - National Trust and Tenant Farmer	https://highwealdfieldscapes.wordpress.com/
Community Walk	Northiam (Great Dixter)	9/10/2015	10 – Local people	https://highwealdfieldscapes.wordpress.com/
Landowner interviews	Various locations	29 – 31/07/2015	5 – Individual landowners	See Appendix B Perception of Fields in the High Weald Interim Report
Meeting	Flimwell	20/05/2015 & 9/11/2015	3 – Grassland specialists	https://highwealdfieldscapes.wordpress.com/
Presentations	Kent Landscape Group	22/05/2015	17 - Local authority planning and landscape officers	https://highwealdfieldscapes.wordpress.com/
	HER Meeting	18/06/2015	3 – County HER officers (in person and by email)	https://highwealdfieldscapes.wordpress.com/
	High Weald Officers’ Steering Group	30/09/2015	12 - Local authority planning and landscape officers	Powerpoint presentation: Introduction to the project (appended)
	High Weald Officers’ Steering Group	10/02/2016	12 - Local authority planning and landscape officers	Powerpoint presentation: Introducing fields assessment method (appended)

Workshops	High Weald Joint Advisory Group	6/11/2015	12 – Local authority members	 <p>Chairman and Vice-chairman of the High Weald AONB Partnership taking part in a field systems sensitivity assessment exercise, Great Dixter, East Sussex 6/11/2015</p>
	High Weald Unit staff and consultants	9/03/2016	6 officers and 2 ecological consultants	Powerpoint presentations: Assessment method review A&B (appended)
	OSG Review Group meeting	8/06/2016	Chair of OSG and 4 local authority officers	Testing the character statement and assessment method https://highwealdfieldscapes.wordpress.com/
	Eastern High Weald planning officers workshop	4/07/2016	11 local authority officers	 <p>Forward planning, development control and landscape officers from Rother, Wealden and Tunbridge Wells district councils, and West Sussex county council consider and trial the field character statement and assessment method</p> <p>Powerpoint presentations appended</p>

	Western High Weald planning officers workshop	6/07/2016	5 local authority planning and landscape officers	 <p>Forward planning and landscape officers from Mid Sussex District Council and East Sussex County Council consider and trial the field character statement and assessment method</p> <p>Powerpoint presentations appended</p>
--	---	-----------	---	---

Launching the project

Fifteen events, involving 81 individuals and the project team, were held to engage target audiences with the project. The aims of the events were to introduce or ‘launch’ the project to specific audiences and gain an understanding of audience perceptions of fields and the issues they face in order to inform the communication plan.

A consultant Historic Geographer, Eugenie van Heijgen, with expertise in human landscape perception was engaged to prepare a rapid method to explore the perceptions of fields amongst target audiences prior to commencement of the project. Two focus groups with planning and landscape officers and five landowner interviews were held and the results analysed. An on-line questionnaire based on the findings was launched in early 2016 to extend the perception study to a wider audience including planning and development consultants, environmental agencies and the public. The results were used to test focus group finds and further enhance the approach to communication outputs particularly the terminology and images used; and the method and timing of communications.

Events were designed to be appropriate to the audience concerned. Interactive presentations were targeted at local authority officers and members. Landowners responsible for case study sites at Benenden, Earlye Farm and Little Scotney met with the project team informally and were invited to join surveyors on site. Other landowners were invited to participate through a structured questionnaire undertaken on site. A themed walk was held at Northiam for the local community.

Testing the character statement and fields assessment method

A sub group of the High Weald Officers' Steering Group met in June to review progress on the character statement and field assessment and develop workshops with a wider audience to test the assessment method approach. Workshops were held in Rother and Mid-Sussex early in July 2016 to discuss landscape character and fields, the accessibility of relevant data and to review the approach to assessing the significance of fields. Presentations are attached – Introduction to fieldscape character, Fields and landscape character, Fieldscape data.

The following summarises observations from the participants:

- Most local planning authorities recognise the importance of the historic environment but do not use HLC themselves or request it from external experts.
- Where HLC is used it is used as a static data layer. Clarity on what is significance and how HLC could be used to assist this would be welcome.
- HLC is not visible in consultant reports on archaeology or the historic environment.
- If HLC were available most do not have mechanisms to utilise the raw data. Interpreted easily accessible data layers are preferred.
- There are myriad assumptions around the meanings of regularly used terms such as landscape, landscape character and natural beauty. Defining terms is important.
- Officers and members do not have time to build an understanding narrative around landscape data that will help to set the context for decision making. Anything which assist with this is welcome.
- Most planning authorities no longer have access to in-house archaeological, ecological or landscape specialists and will not have a budget for external experts. Guidance needs to be simple, concise and relevant with fully interpreted data layers.
- Blank areas outside of selected HLC fields system types or periods need explaining.
- Tendency to colour significant fields in green should be avoided as it subconsciously suggests 'Go'.
- Field system assessment methods should be simple, concise and prescriptive with supporting background information available separately.
- Promoting the assessment method through proactive engagement with individual local authorities and individual officers led by an experienced planning officer and drawing on specialist knowledge where needed would be welcomed.

APPENDIX A

Perception of field systems in the High Weald



A contribution to the High Weald Fieldscapes project

Funded by Historic England and the High Weald AONB Partnership

Eugenie van Heijgen, 09-09-2015



Introduction

This study is part of the Field Systems in the High Weald Project, funded by Historic England and the High Weald AONB Partnership. The project aims to identify the most beautiful and historically significant fields in countryside facing considerable change either through development or agricultural modification. The Project Team will be using historic mapping, archive research, field survey, drone flying, interviews and questionnaires to investigate case study areas in order to produce a field systems character statement and a rapid assessment method to determine the significance of fields.

Method

The aim of this study is to investigate the value of fields to people focusing on two key audiences who take day to day decisions affecting fields – local authority planning and landscape officers, and land managers.

Two focus groups were held with Local authority planning and landscape officers in which three main issues were explored: Which terms, phrases and subjects can we best use to communicate with decision makers on fields? What is the best way to provide information to decision makers? How do people value field systems? In addition, 5 semi-structured interviews were held with landowners and land managers in which the following questions were explored: Which terms, phrases and subjects can we best use to communicate with landowners and land managers? How do people value field systems? The insights gained from this study will allow the project team to tailor communication outputs – events, information and guidance - more effectively to the audience helping to ensure that fields are properly considered in decision making.

Focus groups were used to facilitate organised discussion between a number of individuals from the target audience in order to gain information about their views and experiences of fields in their day to day work. Participants understood they were contributing to a project about fields but no detailed information was provided about the project prior to the event in order not to skew responses. Open ended questions and images were used to stimulate discussion. A ‘Moderator’ introduced planned questions and prompted interaction between participants and discussion when appropriate. An audio recorder was used to capture the discussion and check key points made by the ‘Observer’ during the meeting. The housing allocation planning exercise was carried out in groups and the discussion recorded.

The report represents a summary of the responses of both audiences to 6 questions and the local authority planning and landscape officer responses to question 7, an interactive housing allocation planning exercise. Observations and comments relevant to the project’s Communication Plan made subsequently by the Moderator and Observer are included.

The project team is grateful to Jennifer Hollingum, Mid Sussex District Council and Ruth Childs, Kent County Council for hosting the focus groups; focus group participants and landowners for giving their time to contribute to the study.

Question 1: Words that come to mind when hearing the word 'field'

	Planning focus group 1 (8 participants)	Planning focus group 2 (5 participants)	Landowner Interviews (5 Interviewees)
Delineation	Boundaries Hedgerows Hedges Enclosure Enclosed by hedges	Boundaries Hedgerows Hedges Enclosure	Enclosed
Utility	Farmland Arable Crops Countryside Grassland Pasture Farming	Farms Drainage Paddock Crops Cattle Agriculture Use such as arable/grazing Gardens Pasture Horses Woodland Grass	Part of my business - A compartment you treat as a tool. Hay Pastures Grazed Cropped Good management
Vegetation and wildlife		Trees Flora & Fauna	Flowers Habitat Meadow Wildlife Wild flowers Rewilded
Buildings		Traditional Cottages	Small holding residential
Perceptual qualities	Tranquillity Open Green Enclosed	Open Openness Landscape Character Enclosed	Characteristic Personal Open area of land Enclosed Flat area
Structures	Patterns Typology	Texture patterns	
Landscape history	W.G. Hoskins		English Historical 'this is something that has been there a long time'









Comments from the Moderator and Observer:







- The planning focus group participants tended to focus first on the means of enclosure - predominantly hedges - rather than the fields themselves in contrast to landowner interviewees who emphasized first the utility of the field. This may be explained by the fact that planning officers make decisions based on spatial criteria using maps and aerial photographs to support decision making. From a historic environment perspective it is worth noting that both the Monument Type Thesaurus (MTT) and Historic Characterisation Thesaurus (HCT) focus on field systems or enclosure descriptions that relate to the origin or shape of the fields themselves. The HCT contains no terms relating to

boundary features (although it does deal with other linear features) and the MTT deals with hedges not as a monument in itself but as a related term to boundary earthworks or administrative boundaries. This mismatch in terminology may go some way to explaining why some documents such as the Hedgerow Regulations may immediately appear more relevant for planning purposes in relation to fields than others.

- All the interviewees associated fields with human use, maintenance and farming;
- Openness was the most frequently cited term relating to perceptual qualities;
- The term ‘meadow’ was only mentioned by 2 of the landowner interviewees and no planning focus group participants despite the prevalence of the term in wildlife and conservation related literature and marketing;
- Landowner interviewees more readily associated the term field with habitat- scale features such as grass, wild plants and insects. Whether this reflects traditional land management or more recent contact with agri-environment schemes was not tested.

Question 2: Visual perception assessment – Describe the field you see in the image?

<p>1. Habitat, wildlife, endangered, vegetation, pollination, thistles</p>	<p>2. Cabbages, farming, productive, ordered, food, church, house, typography, different crops, south facing</p>	<p>3. Summer, industrial, photographic, large scale, intensive, rural character, sloping</p>	<p>4. Meadow, traditional, poetic, hay, small, enclosed, not intensive, trees</p>
			
<p>5. Grazing, steep, biodiversity, goats, molehills, ant hills, unimproved grassland, floodplain, wild</p>	<p>6. Meadow, species rich, wild flower meadow, set aside, old pasture</p>	<p>7. Rolling, countryside, improved, grazing, valley, trees, green, big</p>	<p>8. Labrador, recreation, access, footpath, enjoyment, being at one with the field, freedom</p>
			

9. Intensive, steep, exposed, non-traditional use, modern	10. Monoculture, landscape structure, bigger, skinny footpath, enclosed by woodland	11. Horsiculture, paddock, tidy, horses, hay crop without variety, uniform	12. Intensive, weed, barley, pylons, flat area, no local character
			
13. Conifers, edge of housing, ancient settlement, small	14. Loss of structure, decline in grazing, horses, cattle, reservoir		
			

Comments from the Moderator and Observer:

- Vegetation types and management were mostly well identified by participants. Noticeable by their absence were the terms soil, grass and particularly livestock. Activity related phrases such as ‘managed for/by’ or ‘grazed by’ also appear infrequently.
- In comparison with the previous question in which fields tend to be described very generally, when a visual image on a small scale is presented, people tend to describe objects in the fields more accurately. Visual close ups can therefore be especially helpful when communicating specific features about a field. Images such as 9, 11, 13 and 14 appeared to be the most challenging to describe. Possibly these images did not adhere to the mental images people had of fields or were considered to be more generalised countryside views. The usage of these pictures may need more careful interpretation.
- Anthills, which are useful indicators of valuable wildlife grassland, and rare livestock breeds often used for conservation grazing such as Hebridean sheep were not readily recognised.
- Fields that appear to be rough grazing/ pony paddocks are most usually associated with horsiculture rather than wildlife interest;
- When a visual image is presented people tend to describe what is physically there although there can be an easy transition to descriptions of perceptual and emotional characteristics of fields.

Question 3: Describe a Field boundary?

Planning Focus group 1	Definable feature
------------------------	-------------------





	Edge Hedgerows Ditch A means of subdivision A line on a map (It does not need to exist) A physical structure (It does need to exist)
Planning Focus group 2	Balk Mature hedge Post and rail Wire Attractive to wildlife Nesting birds in trees hedge Shaw Hedge Bank Ditch Fences Wooded hedge Materials Design Hedgerows Species mix Height Age/historic Windbreak Native hedgerows Fencing Wildlife corridor Enclosed by hedgerows and trees Stone wall
Landowner interviewees	Well fenced Hedgerow Ditched

Comments from the Moderator and Observer:

- Planners generally view field boundaries as a physical, tangible and recognizable feature that subdivides fields. Less definable features such as archaeological remains underground that may indicate a historic field boundary are generally not taken into account. Landscape architects are also interested in lost historic boundaries in part to inform opportunities for landscape restoration.
- Characteristics related to boundaries were often mentioned in terms relating to their ecological interest or physical structure. Historic features in general were not often mentioned.
- Landowners tend to associate field boundaries with management citing concerns that if hedges are not cut, they will eventually overgrow the grass. The management burden of features like hedges, fences and ditches may explain why these are more prominent in their minds than earthwork banks. The most frequently mentioned reason for retaining hedges was for biological reasons (bee keeping, flowers, seeds banks);
- Landowners are more comfortable with removing and creating new boundaries. These need not be hedges, electric fences are also used but interestingly not often seen as a field boundary.

- When talking about fields, almost all landowners spoke of field boundaries as well suggesting that any information on fields needs also to deal with boundaries. Many had stories to tell about different hedges, often mentioning their history.

Question 4: How would you describe the size and shape of these fields?

<p>Group 1: Medium size fields, regular, well enclosed</p> <p>Group 2: Small, irregular, well bounded, big trees, becoming more modern</p> 	<p>Group 1: Not well defined field, large fields, never been enclosed</p> <p>Group 2: Big, large scale, open, regular</p> 
<p>Group 1: Irregular, gardens, swimmingpools, cleared woodland, road</p> <p>Group 2: Irregular, small, very enclosed, well maintained</p> 	<p>Group 1: Irregular, tall trees,</p> <p>Group 2: Irregular, no straight boundaries,</p> 
<p>Group 1: Drone shot, irregular, managed hedgerows, intensively grazed</p> <p>Group 2: Parkland</p>	



Comments from the Moderator and Observer:

- All groups agreed on finding it more useful to study both oblique and aerial pictures. Oblique pictures helped to estimate the height of the area, while aerial pictures gave better insight in the shape and size of the fields.
- In general people found it challenging to describe field sizes and shapes with different groups coming to contradictory conclusions in one case suggesting that terms to describe size and shape need further clarity and clear comparators.
- While regular and irregular were familiar terms in relation to shape of fields none of the specific terminology used in Historic Landscape Characterisation or Monument types was mentioned;
- Interestingly landowners tended to immediately state the size of their fields in acres or hectares, while the shape was not often mentioned.

Question 5: What are the threats to the existence of fields?

Threat types	Planning focus group 1	Planning focus group 2	Landowner interviews
Housing development	Housing Estate Residential developments Mixed developments Removal of connectivity	Large scale developments Housing Development Lighting Infrastructure	Housing Infrastructure
Horse	Equine Stables	Manage Stables	
Energy production and its transportation	Wind farm, wind turbines Solar farm, solar farm Pylons	Pylons	Intensive farming Oil and gas exploration Drilling
Loss character of fields	Field enlargement	Removal hedgerows Removal boundaries Loss of hedges Removing vegetation Loss of trees Electric fencing Subdivision of fields	Taking hedges out Digging up hedgerows to make land more manageable Cutting down field trees
Recreational activities	Off road vehicles Golf courses	Golf course Paintball activity	Public footpaths

		Motorcross	
Maintenance	Intensive crops Abandonment	Not being used Not managed Manicured Agricultural need	Rubbish Ploughing ancient fields Lack of management
Flora & Fauna			Bramble encroachment Non-native species Wildlife, Thistles
Lack of continuity			Fragmentation Different landowners

Comments from the Moderator and Observer:

- All group identified a wide range of threats to fields. Both focus groups considered housing development to be the biggest threat. Horse-related activity and energy production features were also perceived as particularly concerning.
- Landowners focussed more on the direct threats to the management of fields related to invasive species and fragmentation of the land.
- Many interviewees identified lack of management as an important threat to the existence of fields. This may be associated with concerns about the loss of the perceived character. Continuity in management and landownership were considered important to preserve and protect field systems.

Question 6: What are the benefits of fields?

	Planning focus group 2	Landowner interviews
Utility	Food production	Hedges good for cattle Pony paddocks Future housing plots Employment
Emotional & perceptual qualities	Openness Well-being Sense of place Nostalgia	Personal history Natural heritage
Flora & Fauna	Wildlife	Support of diversity Flowers Diversity Seed bank Wildlife – skylarks The land in its natural state
Historic	Contribution to historic landscape character	

Comments from the Moderator and observer:




- Food production is often seen as the most important benefit but it was interesting to note that landowners focused on wider economic potential including the potential for housing development.







The importance of fields for temporary uses was mentioned such as putting up a marquee for an event, or planting a singular tree.



- Emotional and perceptual qualities of fields are also often referred to. Fields give a sense of nostalgia, well-being, openness and place.
- Nature and wildlife is seen as a benefit and more often mentioned than historic character, particularly amongst landowners. However, landowners speak of a sense of nostalgia about fields and the land probably because their personal history is interwoven with the landscape.

Question 7: Housing development exercise

Summary of the brief: - In groups, planning focus group participants were asked how they would allocate 400 homes to a small village in the AONB, population 6000. Eight sites, each able to take between 50 and 200 homes, were available either within the settlement or adjacent to the settlement boundary with various constraints. Subsequently, groups were asked i) which site they would save if they could only save one?, and ii) whether information that one of the sites was Anglo Saxon with the likelihood of buried remains, would make any difference to their decision.

Sites chosen for allocation and why		
Planning focus group 1: Sub-group 1		
<p><i>A community open space within the settlement boundary. The Historic Environment Records show evidence of historic boundary banks and a Roman settlement nearby.</i></p>		<p>Seek to put all 400 homes on one site. Reasons – allocating all to one site minimises damage to others; location within settlement suggests infrastructure already exists; section 106 agreements may help mitigation; even though it is on a Roman settlement artefacts can be removed. If two sites had to be selected this would be more difficult and dependent on context.</p>
Planning focus group 1: Sub-group 2		
<p><i>Pony paddocks surrounding modern farm building off the main road close to the settlement. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		<p>Seek to spread the impact. This group wanted to safeguard the sites that had historic, wildlife or habitat importance. Community open space was seen as important to protect, as was the orchard because it was characteristic.</p>
<p><i>An arable field adjacent to the settlement boundary with a public footpath. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		

<p><i>School playing fields within the settlement. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		
<p>Planning focus group 2: Sub-group 1</p>		
<p><i>Pony paddocks surrounding modern farm building off the main road close to the settlement. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		<p>Seek to build on less harmful sites.</p>
<p><i>An arable field adjacent to the settlement boundary with a public footpath. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		
<p>Planning focus group 2: Sub-group 2</p>		
<p><i>Pony paddocks surrounding modern farm building off the main road close to the settlement. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		<p>Seek to spread allocation and build on sites that would suit small scale developments.</p>
<p><i>An arable field adjacent to the settlement boundary with a public footpath. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		
<p><i>An orchard adjacent to the settlement boundary with a public footpath. No historic environment or biological records for the site.</i></p>		
<p>The most important sites chosen for protection and why</p>		
<p>Planning focus group 1: Sub-groups 1 and 2</p>		

<p><i>A small wildflower meadow with a public footpath, adjacent to the settlement boundary. Rare adder's tongue fern recorded at the site.</i></p>		<p>Both sub-groups sought to protect the small wildflower meadow</p>
<p>Planning focus group 2: Sub-groups 1 and 2</p>		
<p><i>A group of small fields adjacent to the settlement boundary grazed by livestock and abutting a historic farmstead with a 17th century listed barn, now a dwelling.</i></p>		<p>Both sub-groups sought to protect the group of grazed fields, part of a historic farmstead. One sub- group also wanted to save the community space from development.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The impact of additional information about site history</p>		
	<p>Planning focus group 1 – Both sub-groups indicated that information about the history of the site not on any historic environment record would not make a difference to their decision.</p>	
	<p>Planning focus group 2 – question not asked</p>	

Comments from the Moderator and Observer:

- History did not play an important role with the planners. Subsequent studies might explore whether story-telling would be a more effective way to engage with a site's history than the presence/ absence of archaeological records.
- The first focus group spent longer discussing the task. People wanted to know more about the context, and did not want to pick a site based just on the provided information and visual image.
- Generally speaking, the pony paddock and the arable field were found the most suitable for development. Comments included –
 - ‘Pony paddocks are fringe land’;
 - ‘Arable land is valuable for food but offers lots of space for infrastructure’
 - ‘Some sites look already urbanised’
 - ‘The pylon site is an obvious candidate’
 - ‘Land is land’, ‘Our needs now outweigh other concerns’ and ‘Availability is the key’
 - ‘Real landscapes are not museums’
- There was some debate about the merits of developing or saving the community open space and playing fields. Comments included –
 - ‘We want to protect public open space’ but ‘should we lose public open space (within settlements) in order to protect the wider countryside?’
 - ‘We could relocate playing fields’
 - ‘If it is good enough for the Romans (to live there) it is good enough for us’
- Interestingly the ‘popular viewpoint’ site was not selected to receive housing development by any groups. Comments included:
 - ‘Popular viewpoints would be a no go’ but ‘No one has a right to a view’ and ‘We may still be able to retain the view within the development’

A colourful semi-improved grassland with public footpath and popular viewpoint. No historic environment or biological records for the site.



- There was some debate about the merits of developing or saving the orchard. Comments included:
 - ‘Orchards are rare but it isn’t an old orchard’ and ‘there are no biological records for the site’
- The spaces that have been saved all have historic or biological records which will mostly be derived from the Historic Environment Records (HER), the government’s interactive mapping site MAGIC or county biological record centres. We can derive from this that generating historic and biological records may be helpful to inform day to day decision making on fields. If no records are provided there is a bigger chance that these sites will be found less valuable.
- Interestingly the community open space was chosen for development by the first focus group, while the second focus group wanted to save this space.
- In general discussion around the concept of protecting certain sites comments included:
 - ‘The only real no-go are is flood risk’
 - ‘There isn’t anything that can’t be dealt with by mitigation’
- Words likely to trigger concern about a site are ‘rare’ and ‘historic’ and ‘biological’ in relation to records.

Additional notes: Preferred access to information - Landowners

- In relation to the management of fields, most landowners mentioned that their knowledge came from education (agricultural colleges) and talking to neighbours and friends. Organisations like EBLEX, Meat and Livestock Commission and the farming press (Farmers Weekly and Farmers Guardian) were mentioned as the most trusted organisation to provide information. Landowners mostly rely on direct personal contact with people who are knowledgeable about the matter Visiting other farms was mentioned as a means of achieving this. There was a mixed response to using website searches for information but targeted e-newsletters were generally welcomed. It is clear that for landowners trusted personal contact is preferred as a means of accessing information.

Appendix 1: Contact details focus groups & Interviewees

Focus group 1. Mid-sussex 28-07-2015	Focus group 2 Kent County Council 30-07-2015
Moderator: Sally Marsh Observer: Eugenie van Heijgen	Moderator: Charles Winchester Observer: Eugenie van Heijgen
Participants:	Participants:
Alice Henstock Senior Planning Officer Planning Policy Alice.henstock@midsussex.gov.uk	Brenda Fazzani Policy planner Brenda.fazzani@ashford.gov.uk
Virginia Pullan East Sussex County Council Virginia.pullan@eastsussex.gov.uk	Paul Hopkins Principal Planning Officer Planning applications group (county council development) KCC Planning Paul.hopkins@kent.gov.uk
John Cheston Mid Sussex.D.C. District Plan Project Manager John.cheston@midsussex.gov.uk	Lucy Harvey Tonbridge and Malling BC Lucy.harvey@tmbc.gov.uk (contact is also Jenny Knowler)
Andrew Morrison Planning Officer Mid Sussex District Council Andrew.morrison@midsussex.gov.uk	Marian Kerry
Mark Bristow Neighbourhood planning officer Mid Sussex district council Mark.bristow@midsussex.gov.uk	Ruth Childs
Tim Dyer WSCC Environment & Heritage Team Manager West Sussex County Council Tim.dyer@westsussex.gov.uk	
Sarah Thompson Tandridge District Council Head of strategic planning policy sthompson@tandridge.gov.uk	
Jennifer Hollingum	Nicola Banister

Interviewee	Date	Adress	E-mail address
Joe Gingell	29-07-2015	Earlye Farm, Partridge Lane, Wadhurst, East Sussex, TN56LA	
Angela Brennan	29-07-2015	Wadhurst Park	Angela.brennan@wadhurstpark.com
Tobin Bird	29-07-2015	Woodside Farm, Iden Green, Benenden Kent,	tobin@woodside-farm.com

		TN174EZ	
Lorna Rowney-Smith	30-07-2015	The Oast, Huggets Furnace, Stonehurst lane, Five Ashes	Dave22lorna@btinternet.com
Jonathan Coote	31-07-2015	Iwood place, Rush Lake Green, TN219QT	jonathan@iwoodplace.wanadoo.co.uk

Appendix B: Workshop for testing the assessment method: Agenda

High Weald AONB Field Systems Assessment Framework meeting

Evaluating the impact of site allocations or proposed development on the AONB using the assessment framework

Monday 4th July, 10 .30 am – 12.30 pm, Rother District Council Chamber Offices, Town Hall, London Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 3JX

OR

Wednesday 6th July, 2 – 4pm, Mid Sussex District Council Offices, Oaklands Rd, Haywards Heath RH16 1SS, Committee Room

Programme

- Introductions and definitions (5 – 10 mins) *AONB Director*
- Landscape and natural beauty in the High Weald AONB (10 mins) *AONB Director*
- Questions and group work (15 mins) *All*
- Data sources (10 mins) *AONB Landscape Advisor*
- The character of fields in the High Weald AONB (10 -15 mins) *Dr Nicola Bannister*
- Refreshment break (5- 10 mins)
- Group session – Applying the assessment framework to site allocations and development proposals (45 mins) *All*
- Next steps, questions and depart (10 mins) *AONB Director*