

Sussex Lund

Autumn 2019



Sussex Lund, the grants programme created by Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin, supports small-scale, practical projects that improve the ecology and landscape of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Since 2016, Sussex Lund has awarded £729,000 to 147 projects. Community groups, town and parish councils, charities, landowners, churches, trusts and other non-profit organisations have received grants of between £500 and £10,000 - making a tangible difference to the High Weald's landscape.

Well restoration in Ticehurst

Ticehurst Parish Council received a grant from Sussex Lund of £10,000 towards a project to restore the Victorian well in the centre of the village, part of a larger scheme to enhance the village centre.

The 20m deep hand-dug well was originally built in 1887 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The restoration works carried out by local tradespeople have replaced crumbling brickwork, installed a glass cover, planted new trees (replacing those whose roots had undermined the well's structural integrity), put a new bench in place and levelled the surface around the well, making it safer to navigate.

A special community event was held to celebrate the project's completion with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting by the High Sheriff of East Sussex at the time, Major General John David Moore-Bick (below right).



Dilapidated well prior to restoration

"The project has awakened local interest in the history of Ticehurst and the well, which is now an attractive focal point for the village. We're very grateful to Sussex Lund for the generous grant, and to the High Weald AONB Partnership for their continuing support"



LUND

A charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin

Sussex Lund 2019 grant recipients have now been announced - find out more on page 6.

Sussex Lund is administered by the High Weald AONB Partnership.

More info at www.highweald.org/sussexlund

Hedgerow planting at Freemans Farm

A grant of just over £3,800 was awarded to improve a hedgerow at Freemans Farm, a 47-acre mixed livestock farm outside Rotherfield and Mayfield. The project restored and extended a boundary hedge, creating a wildlife corridor to other species-rich areas.

Yvonne Hopkins, farm owner says: *“We had already seen the benefit of restoring hedgerows on our farm for wildlife - particularly for the range of birds. This was the final piece of hedgerow to help bring our small farm to a rich level of wildlife diversity and also provide a shelter for our livestock from the elements.*”



Overgrown hedge to be restored

We started the project by marking out the location for a new fence and restored hedge. It was quite a challenge to erect the fence and kissing gate - Wealden sandstone takes a lot of effort to dig through!

We planted the native hedging mix between January and March 2018 (working through all weathers imaginable!) and thankfully they have all established well so far.”



Newly-planted section of hedge

“We have been helped by the local dentist, two retired ladies and a chiropractor and her mother, who have all found the project incredibly worthwhile and fun. We also attracted a lot of interest from walkers who saw the bonfire and work we were carrying out along the hedge.”

The newly-planted hedge crosses a public footpath that runs across the farm boundary so the general public walking through will be able to see the rich variety of wildlife. Dense hedges and hedgerow trees are

important for hunters like owls, and having erected two owl boxes, Yvonne is delighted to see barn owls flying around the farm at night.

“The restored hedge has opened up the views across the Weald and we hope it is enjoyed by everyone who walks or drives along the lanes.”



Old hedge restored by hedge-laying, a traditional rural craft

Pond-dipping platform and boardwalk in Horam

A grant of £9,745 has enhanced wildlife habitat and diversity while improving public access around a pond at a 40-acre community land project, Sacred Earth in Horam.

The grant funded the creation of a new mini-pond, and the construction of a pond-dipping deck and boardwalk pathways around the existing pond. The boardwalks allow access for visitors while preventing damage to the sensitive wetland habitat. Although hit by challenging weather and ground conditions during the work in February 2018, perseverance and hard work paid off.

"This funding has been a godsend. We're very grateful because it's made a big difference to the amount of conservation work we can do here.

It's not only good for our wildlife but also for making these types of projects more accessible and interesting to local people."

Phil Greenwood, Sacred Earth founder



Boardwalk complete - blending in well with the natural environment



Even snow couldn't halt construction of the dipping platform!

Ross and Christine, the High Weald AONB team's Landscape Management Advisors, say:

"We particularly love the design of the boardwalk on this project. Randomly offsetting the boards makes it look sculptural, more natural and organic.

It blends in beautifully, and will allow visitors to experience and interact with the wetland without inadvertently damaging it."

Watch inspiring project stories...

Hear how successful grant applicants Phil Greenwood, Gavin Stacey and Andy Jesson are making a difference to the High Weald's landscape and habitats. [Watch our short videos on YouTube](#) or visit highweald.org/sussexlund



Gavin Stacey - Battle Woods Nr Mountfield

Re-establishing native flora in Ashdown Forest

Hindleap Warren Outdoor Centre run by London Youth is set within 115 hectares of ancient semi-natural woodland in Wych Cross. A £3,720 grant is allowing native woodland plants to recover.

Following rhododendron clearance over ten years ago, the woodland's understory of shrubs and ground flora has been unable to regrow due to the pressure of grazing by fallow deer which freely roam the Ashdown Forest. By temporarily fencing areas to protect them from deer, this project is allowing these native plant layers to re-establish, improving the woodland habitat for other wildlife.

The Centre discovered that temporary small, circular fenced areas, or 'roundels', were effective at keeping deer out and allowing regrowth of native flora. Using the grant, more roundels were installed using locally-sourced sweet chestnut posts. These are protecting the understory of pioneer trees, shrubs, ground flora and mosses from deer-browsing, allowing them to recover and establish.

"This project has exceeded my expectations in its effect on our bit of the AONB and will continue to do so for years to come. Thank you for your help!"

Peter Dennett, Site manager

Barren woodland understorey due to deer browsing



Recovering vegetation within fenced roundel



Heath Lobelia conservation

A grant of £3,750 is helping the Species Recovery Trust and a local landowner restore habitat for the nationally rare Heath Lobelia, a summer-flowering plant with beautiful purple-blue spikes.

This scarce and threatened plant is only known in five other places across the UK, all in southern England. Historically, afforestation and cultivation for agriculture have contributed to the decline of heaths, the plant's preferred habitat. Current threats include sites becoming overgrown through a lack of appropriate management.

The project opened up woodland rides and glades with volunteers and contractors, pulling and cutting invasive Himalayan balsam and clearing overgrown bramble, bracken and young birch. Heath Lobelia seed-heads were added to areas of mechanically-scuffed soil to help new plants establish from seed. Monitoring is already showing the project has been a success with over 300 plants recorded in 2019, an increase of at least 100 plants since 2018.



Heath Lobelia in flower
by Ralph Hobbs



Bracken area before cut



After cut, with soil disturbance to help germination



Collection of cut bramble and invasive scrub

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More info at www.highweald.org/sussexlund

Infrastructure for heathland habitat management

New rainwater tank to be installed below ground



A £7,870 grant towards a project to install new equipment is improving the condition of heathland habitat at adjacent nature reserves, Brenchley Wood and Cinderhill in Matfield.

Kent Wildlife Trust used the funding to install a rainwater harvesting system and troughs to provide livestock with a permanent drinking water supply. This has allowed conservation grazing by cattle and ponies to enhance the important lowland heath habitat for the benefit of wildlife and visitors. These larger livestock also help maintain the heathland through trampling, which reduces bracken dominance.

Chestnut timber from the reserves was used in constructing the roof collection area, and volunteers gained new skills and knowledge while helping to install the system.

Tree-planting with Five Ashes C of E Primary School

Five Ashes Village Hall Committee used their £1,050 grant from Sussex Lund for a fantastic tree-planting project working with the local primary school.

A variety of native trees were planted along one side of the village playing field to create an attractive tree line, provide a more diverse wildlife habitat and help offset carbon emissions. During spring 2019, local schoolchildren got involved in a 'planting day' under the supervision of a tree expert. The work was then completed by volunteers from the village.

"Thank you to Sussex Lund for providing this opportunity to enhance our landscape and provide ongoing learning opportunities for our school children and all the people who regularly walk this area."

Geoff Gregory,
Village Hall Management Committee Chair



Sussex Lund 2020 launch

We're now inviting applications for 2020 Sussex Lund grants of between £500 and £10,000. Closing date for applications is 2 March 2020. For details, go to highweald.org/sussexlund.

Come along to a drop-in session for advice from the High Weald team on applying for a grant for your project:

- Wednesday 13 November 2 to 6pm at the AONB Partnership offices at Flimwell
- Wednesday 15 January 2 to 6pm at the Ashdown Forest Centre at Wych Cross

To book a slot, call us on 01424 723011 or email sussexlund@highweald.org

Congratulations to the 47 projects awarded Sussex Lund grants in 2019!

This year Sussex Lund has allocated over £193,000 to 47 projects designed to improve the ecology and landscape of the High Weald AONB. Each project will receive a grant of between £500 and £10,000.

Sussex Lund supports projects that make tangible improvements to the High Weald and can inspire wider change. This year's projects include:

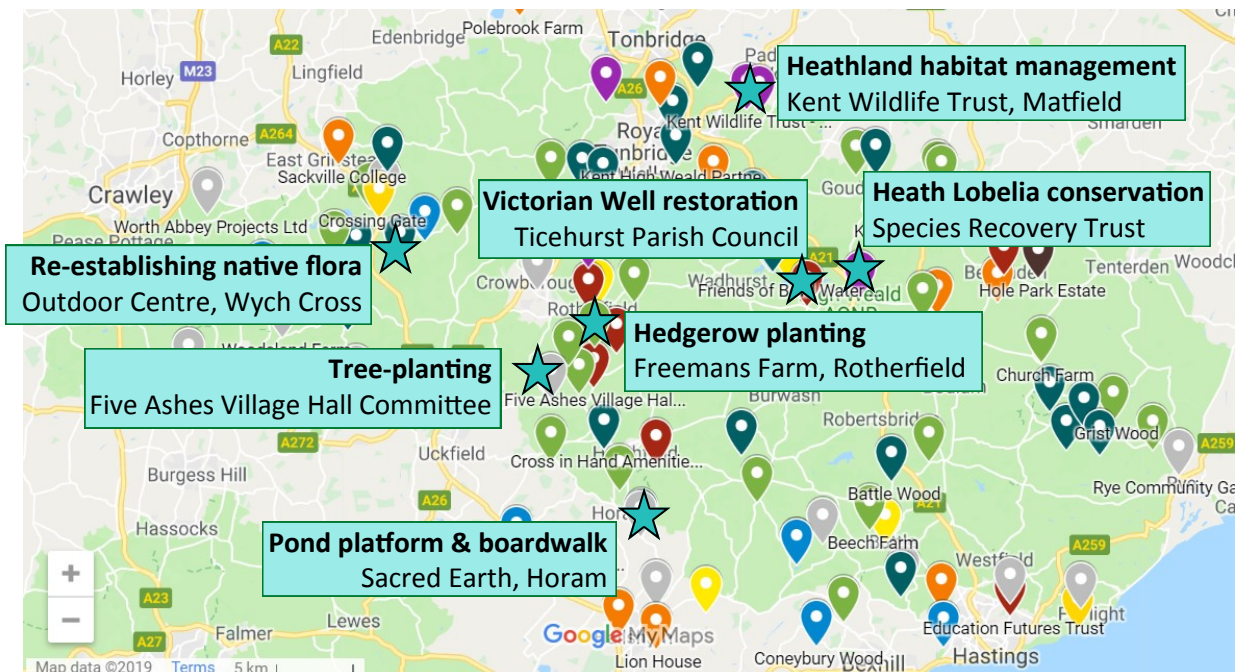
- Woodland management for wildlife, including restoring hazel coppice for dormice and creating wet woodland habitat.
- Planting fruit trees and managing orchards in a traditional, nature-friendly way.
- Restoring and creating ponds.
- Creating wildflower-rich grassland.
- Installing and restoring access paths to protect habitats from visitor damage.
- Supporting volunteer groups managing woodland, heath & meadow habitats.

Lisbet Rausing, co-founder of Lund Trust, said: *"The Sussex Weald has been our family's home for the last four decades – we love this ancient, small-scale farming landscape. We are delighted to support good ideas for practical work to make the High Weald even more green and more beautiful, and thus inspire us all to care for it sensitively and gently."*

Watch out for details of 2019-2020 projects in our next Sussex Lund update - meanwhile [download the full grant list here](#), or see highweald.org/sussexlund
Learn more about Lund Trust at lundtrust.org.uk



Sussex Lund project locations, 2017 to 2019



- ★ - projects featured in this newsletter
- 📍 - different project types. View the detailed map on Google Maps



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