



# Weald Meadows Group

## Terms of Reference

### 1. Role /Purpose

The purpose of the Weald Meadows Group is to protect and enhance botanically-rich grasslands in the High Weald AONB by co-ordinating conservation action, advancing scientific knowledge, promoting best practice, and advocating more effective regulation.

The Weald Meadows Group will provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure the key objectives set out in the AONB Management Plan are delivered.

### 2. Term

This Terms of Reference is effective from Monday 1 January 2018 and will be ongoing until terminated by agreement between the membership.

### 3. Membership

The Weald Meadows Group comprises:

Iain Parkinson (RBG Kew Chair)  
Sally Marsh/Gerry Sherwin (High Weald AONB Partnership)  
Keith Datchler (People Need Nature)  
Kate Ryland (Dolphin Ecology)  
Clare Blencowe (Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre)  
Dawn Brickwood (High Weald Landscape Trust)  
Margaret Pilkington (Emeritus, Senior Lecturer University of Sussex)  
Ted Chapman (UK Native Seed Hub Coordinator, RBG Kew)  
Laura Newland (Natural England)  
James Newmarch (East Sussex County Council)  
Matt Pitts (Plantlife)

### 4. Meetings

Meetings will be chaired by a representative from the High Weald AONB Unit. A meeting quorum will be 5 members of the Group. Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by the High Weald AONB Partnership and this includes: preparing agendas and supporting papers, preparing meeting notes and information. Meetings will be held quarterly for 2 hrs at a rolling venue to be agreed by mutual consensus. Subgroup meetings will be arranged, as required, outside of these times at a time convenient to subgroup members.

### 5. Amendment, modification and variation

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied, or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by Weald Meadows Group members.

## **6. Reporting**

The Weald Meadows Partnership does not report to any specific body but will share information freely and individual members provide updates to and from their respective organisations.

## **7. Review of terms**

The terms of reference will be reviewed every quarter during the first year and annually thereafter.

## **8. Governance**

The principle duties of the Chair will be to coordinate meetings, actively promote the work of the Group, build relationships with other relevant organisations, represent the Group at appropriate events, and ensure that the wider partnership is kept informed and that their views are considered.

The Group will review and approve the annual plans and strategy documents, monitor progress towards meeting the objectives outlined in the work plan, contribute knowledge, expertise and recommendations as required, and freely share information and data to support specified outputs.

The role of members will be support the aims of the Group and to promote its work to other organisations, stakeholders and networks, to regularly attend meetings or to nominate a representative, and to actively seek opportunities to deliver and improve the work plan.

## **9. Definition of meadow grassland**

The term 'meadow' has been adopted in the name of the group because it is synonymous with flowery grassland and engenders an emotive response. To standardise terminology for general communication the term 'botanically rich grassland' will be adopted – this reflects the changing nature of meadow habitats and embraces their wider ecological significance including other organisms including fungi.

## **10. Objectives**

- Record the extent and condition of botanically-rich grasslands in the High Weald area by consolidating and standardising existing data to create a baseline that can be used to monitor change, inform future management decisions, and measure success.
- Identify where opportunities exist to restore and enhance degraded grasslands to create a more resilient ecological network and reconnect associated habitats.
- Advance scientific knowledge through a programme of long-term monitoring and research to improve our ability to manage and restore grassland habitats and to provide evidence based advice across a wide range of sectors.

- Celebrate the intrinsic beauty and cultural value of botanically-rich grasslands as special places for quiet reflection, recreation, and inspiration.