

Railway Land Local Nature Reserve

Site Management Plan

2009 – 2014



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For the Railway Land Management Committee

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INTRODUCTION

Lewes Railway Land Local Nature Reserve is a dynamic urban fringe site, located in the heart of the Lewes townscape. Consisting of 25 acres of mixed habitats, the site is both a haven for wildlife, and place for informal recreation and easy access thanks to its easy to reach location.

This document sets out a clear and comprehensive management policy, as well as giving detailed background, description, evaluation and prescriptions on how and why the site is managed. Part 1 sets the management plan in the context of the Green Flag assessment criteria, and part 2 follows a standardised site management plan format, and constitutes the bulk of this plan.

A series of appendices include habitat and location maps, plans and key documents associated with this plan.

Purpose of this plan

This plan aims to:

- Centralise information relating to the site, and point direction for further information.
- Provide a structured framework for continuity of management.
- Evaluate and confirm important features
- Set out a clear 5 year prioritised work programme
- Set a framework to review and monitor management activities.

Part 1: Assessment of the Railway Land using the Green Flag Criteria

1.1 A Welcoming Place

1.1.1 Announcing the reserve

- There is a large interpretation and welcome board at the main entrance to the site, on Railway Lane, which is a large rustic wooden construction containing information about the site, it's management, history and wildlife importance. There is also a user friendly site map, showing the main footpaths, disabled access routes, habitats and points of interest. There are also two A4 updatable panels which give the latest news about the site, and also details of how to get involved in volunteering. This board also gives details of ownership, and contact numbers and web sites addresses for people wishing to report anything or seek more information.
- At the three other smaller entrances to the site, there are smaller wooden marker signs, which announce that visitors have arrived at the reserve.
- Site byelaws are printed on the reverse of the signs.

1.1.2 Access Physical

- Lewes Railway Land is located in the heart of the town centre, and is walking distance from the Bus and Rail stations. Car parking is not encouraged on site, as

there is a large public car park 200 metres from the site (Friars Car Park). However the Ranger opens the gate and allow vehicles to park on site when working with adults with mobility difficulties, or by prior arrangement.

- There is a hierarchy of paths throughout the site, many of which are surfaced, flat and suitable for wheelchair users and pushchairs. The path network is advertised on the site interpretation board, and also through the site information leaflets and within local "Access for All" publications. There are also informal paths which run through the site, which are managed by a grounds maintenance contract, but are not surfaced. This is a management decision to prevent excessive access to more sensitive areas of the site, for example the woodland areas.
- The reedbed area is wheel chair accessible throughout, as is a pond dipping platform.
- The signal box bird hide is kept locked, but a key is available by arrangement, or by signing for it from the local pet shop, located 200 metres from the site. This building is also wheel chair accessible.
- Cycling is permitted throughout the site, but not actively encouraged due to lack of linkage to through routes.

1.1.3 Access - Social

- The Railway Land has high levels of community participation in management. The Railway Land Wildlife Trust, are a local charity set up during the mid 1980's to save the site from potential development. There are regular committee meetings where the Community Ranger liaises with The RWLT, who participate directly within the management planning and day to day management process. See section 1.6 for more details.
- A Junior Management Board consisting of children aged between 8 and 15 meets regularly. The children represent local schools, and have participated in a wide range of projects. See appendix for details.
- Regular practical habitat management volunteers tasks are organised by the Community Ranger, which take place at least monthly. There are regular tasks at weekends and during the week to reach a wide variety of the community. Increasingly corporate companies are getting involved in voluntary activities, including corporate team building days.
- Several long running innovative projects take place on the site, including the Nature Corridors for All Project involving adults with learning difficulties taking part in regular management activities. They work with the Community Ranger and other skilled professional including photographers and artists.
- A regular special events programme targeting a wide section of the community including summer open days, river festivals and schools work. See appendix for examples.

- Guided walks take place from time to time, led by either the Community Ranger, or members of the Railway Land Wildlife Trust. They are advertised locally and encourage adults and children of abilities to attend.
- Disabled access is encouraged through provision of “Access for all” footpaths network, and special viewing and pond dipping areas.

1.2 Healthy, Safe and Secure.

1.2.1 Health and well-being

- The Community Ranger is a qualified First Aider, and always carries a first aid kit whilst patrolling.
- There are a network of informal footpaths throughout the site, as discussed some of which provide access for wheel chairs. These paths link to a wider network, for example the permissive path to Newhaven 7 miles to the south along the river bank.
- There are 10 benches on site, including a woodland circle seat, designed to appeal to young people and to larger social groups and education groups.
- The Sussex Healthy Walks programme hold regular guided walks through the site, designed to promote health and well being.
- The corporate events programme increasingly encourages workers to participate in practical volunteer work both from a corporate responsibility perspective, but also to facilitate team building and a healthier work force. Examples in 2008 include EDF energy, Amex, the Inland Revenue and Responsible Travel.

1.2.2 Equipment and facilities

- Public toilets and disabled facilities including car parking are available 200 metres from the site, in Friars Car Park.
- There is a bird hide / tool store / class room located to the south of the site, in an old signal box.
- An “Access for All” pond dipping platform is also provided within the Reedbed area.

1.2.3 Security and safety

- One of the two Community Ranger’s is present on site a number of days each week, although this site forms part of a wider portfolio of reserves and responsibilities throughout the district. In addition, there are Community Wardens who regularly patrol the site, and report issues of vandalism or anti social behaviour. This staffing presence gives a visible reassurance to visitors and a point of contact for information.

- The site is protected by Byelaws, which are enforced by Lewes District Council.
- The site has a large vehicle restriction barrier at the only vehicle entrance to prevent unwanted access.
- There are 4 life buoys on site, situated around the deep water areas within the reedbed, and adjacent to the pond dipping area.
- All staff have CRB checks prior to undertaking work on site.
- Regular risk assessments and site inspections are carried out and reviewed by the Community Ranger.
- The Community Ranger has good links with Local Action Teams, who form a partnership between the local authority and police, reporting and talking anti social behaviour.

1.2.4 Health and Safety Policies.

- The Community Ranger works within the corporate Health and Safety and Risk Management Framework. LDC has a corporate policy on both Health and Safety and risk management. Risk assessments are carried out and reviewed for both site specific items and activities.

1.2.5 Control of Dogs

- Dog walkers are some of the most regular and responsible users of the site, and there is a dog bin provided for their use. However not all owners are responsible. Signage regarding picking up after dogs is in place on gates and the interpretation board at the main entrance.
- The District Council Animal Warden undertakes regular patrols and educational visits, handing out leaflets and advice to dog walkers about the potential dangers of not controlling or picking up after their dogs.
- The entrance area of the reserve has a small area that was designed by young people, and dogs are excluded from this area.
- Signage regarding keeping dogs under control in stock grazing areas (the meadows) are in place at entrances to the meadows.

1.3 Well maintained and clean.

1.3.1 Litter and waste management.

- There is one litter bin and one dog bin on site, at the main entrance, which are emptied three times per week by Lewes District Council.

- The whole of the site is within the Leisure Management Outdoor (LMO) grounds maintenance contract, for litter picking. All “accessible areas” are picked weekly.
- At all large events, recycling bins are provided on site.
- All contractors are required to have waste transfer licences when transporting waste off site.
- Green waste is composted on site.
- The council has an EMAS (Environmental Management Audit System) policy, which dictates much of our Environmental policy.

1.3.2 Grounds Maintenance

- Wyevale are the Council’s grounds maintenance contractors, under the LMO contract (see above). Grounds maintenance items within this contract include weekly whole site litter picking, three times per year footpath and footpath verge strimming, and flexible scrub clearing programmes.
- The contract is closely monitored by the Community Ranger, and detailed contract specifications prevent ambiguity of interpretations.
- Specialist contractors are bought in for tree surgery work and various agricultural operations ranging from field topping, to ditch dredging.

1.3.3 Buildings and Maintenance.

- The signal box bird hide is the only building within the reserve. This is a small class room and bird hide, with a tool storage area in the undercroft. This building is owned by the Railway Land Wildlife Trust (RLWT) and they maintain it by keeping it clean, annual painting and general upkeep.
- There is full wheel chair access to this building.
- Occasional graffiti is removed by LDC Community Wardens.

1.3.4 Infrastructure and other facilities.

- The footpath network is a mixture of surfaced and unsurfaced paths. Surfaced paths have the verges strimmed as part of the Grounds Maintenance Contract. Their surface is maintained annually, with the application of a fine gravel topping. Grass paths are strimmed within the contract, and woodland paths are kept relatively narrow, to discourage excessive access.
- There are several bridges, both metal and wooden on site, which are inspected regularly by the Community Ranger

- There are two information boards and three site welcome boards which are kept up to date and maintained as required.
- Fencing includes post and rail fencing around culverts, and the site boundary, and stock fencing in the meadows. These are inspected regularly and maintained by contractors.

1.3.5 Equipment maintenance – Staff.

- There is tool store in the under-croft of the old signal box. Hand tools and environmental education equipment is stored within the signal box. These are maintained by the Community Ranger, along with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The Community Ranger supervises all practical tasks carried out on site, and is fully trained in skills and competencies for the activities he undertakes. (e.g. Chainsaw, Brush Cutter etc). Power tools are stored off site.
- There is a strict hand tools only policy adopted by LDC for its volunteers. All volunteers are given a health and safety talk prior to undertaking any activities, by the Community Ranger.

1.3.6 Equipment maintenance - Public

- Weekly site inspections are carried out by the Community Ranger or the Community Wardens.

1.3.7 Cleanliness

- Graffiti – The District Council’s “Clean and Green Team” are responsible for monitoring, and removing graffiti (within 24 hours if offensive or racist). Our Community Wardens regularly monitor, report and remove graffiti.
- Vandalism is dealt with swiftly by the Community Ranger.
- The council’s “Clean and Green Team” is responsible for removing any fly tipping, although this is a rare occurrence on this site due to restricted vehicle access.

1.4 Sustainability

1.4.1 Environmental Management

- Lewes District Council is part of the EMAS (Environmental Management Audit System), and the ISO 14001. This provides a framework to improve the Council’s environmental management over time.
- The District Council also has an Environmental Policy.

- All work undertaken by staff, volunteers or contractors must comply with this policy. (see appendices).

1.4.2 Pesticides

- Use of pesticides is kept to an absolute minimum within the whole of Lewes District Council as a stated policy. In addition, the Council's EMAS policy, sets strict guidance on which chemicals are approved for use.
- In practice, pesticides are only used to treat Japanese Knotweed
- All pesticide application is carried out by contractors, who have NPTC certificates in competence of use, and have approved storage, transport and disposal facilities.

1.4.3 Materials

- Very little planting is done on the Railway Land, but when it is peat free compost is always required when sourcing tree saplings, or wildflower plugs.
- Timber used on site for step building is always FSC certified and from a local supplier, and is where possible, of local provenance.
- Benches on site are either of locally produced green oak (Kent and Surrey Sustainably Farmed woodlands), or we have used fallen trees from the site, and carved benches using chain saws.
- Recycled plastics have been used in fence rails, boardwalks and pond dipping platforms throughout the site.

1.4.4 Waste management and recycling

- Green waste, associated with habitat management activities is composted on site, by leaving log and compost piles.
- Litter is collected as part of the Grounds Maintenance contract.
- Recycling of waste is only practical during special events, due to low volumes, but special glass, paper and can recycling points are set up during these events.
- Green waste from large scale scrub clearance operations is taken to Beddingham green waste site for commercial composting.

1.4.5 Horticultural and Arboricultural management

- There is little need to carry out planting on site, accept associated with specific projects or tree donations. When trees are sourced, these are always native, locally grown, and of wildlife value to the site, e.g. Hazel coppice area planted in 2004 associated with the Southern Water pipeline that went through part of the woodland area.

- The woodland is managed to maximise wildlife potential – for example retaining water levels within the wet woodland, or leaving dead wood in situ where tree works are carried out.
- Non intervention areas are managed to give a natural woodland cycle in places.
- Health and Safety is a priority within the woodland area. All tree works are carried out by specialist contractors, with significant arboricultural experience. Trees adjacent to footpaths or high public access areas, are monitored and inspected regularly for structural integrity.

1.4.6 Pollution reduction

- No fuel, chemicals or other pollutants are stored on site.
- Vehicle use is kept to a minimum on site, and is confined to Ranger and contractor vehicles.
- Activities likely to be noisy are kept to a minimum.

1.4.7 Water, energy efficiency and air quality.

- Water is very important to the Railway Land, as many of the habitats are fresh water dependant. E.g. The Reedbed and the Meadows. Management aims to retain optimum water levels within these areas, by actively managing structures such as sluices and ditches.
- Several ponds have recently been restored.
- A water conservation campaign designed by and aimed at young people was launched in 2007, to promote awareness of this issue and the impact on wildlife.
- Lewes District Council has a corporate energy conservation policy, governed through its EMAS membership.
- Air quality within the District is monitored through EMAS membership.
- Bonfires on Lewes Railway Land Local Nature Reserve are kept to a minimum through composting green waste resulting from small scale management operations where possible. This also has the benefit of creating habitat piles for reptiles and small mammals.

1.5 Conservation and heritage.

1.5.1 Cultural Landscapes

- Lewes Railway Land Local Nature Reserve has a rich cultural history, particularly through its importance for industry and commerce. See section 2.3 in section two of this management plan for further details.

1.5.2 Water Management

- The hydrological regime is critical to the health and dynamism of the habitats represented on this site. These include reedbeds, wet woodland, drainage ditch network within the flood plain grazing meadows, the Winterbourne Stream and a series of ponds and wetland habitats. The River Ouse also plays a fundamental role in the site, particularly in times of flooding. The management of all these habitats is detailed within section 2.2.1 of this plan.

1.5.3 Habitats, flora and fauna.

- There are a whole variety of habitats represented within the Railway Land. These include Wet woodland, Reedbeds, unimproved grassland, various wetland areas, flood plain grazing meadows, etc. Management of these habitats together with further details of flora and fauna are set out in section 2.2.4

1.5.4 Geological and physiographic features.

- The geology for this site is dominated by riverine silts, due to the flood plain location. Chalk hills rise steeply to the East. See section 2.2.2 for more details.

1.5.5 Conservation of landscape

- The site has an important relationship between industry and culture, and is very much a post industrial browfield site. As recently as the 1980's the site was dominated by railway sidings, and has also been a coal yard. There is evidence in the landscape of this, with railway embankments evident in the woods and other features such as occasional brickwork from old viaducts.
- The site also was the location of a formal house and gardens, called Leighside House. Evidence exists through historical pictures, but also through existence of exotic trees such as Swamp Cyprus and Norway Spruce. These features are used during guided walks and interpretative events to convey this historical landscape.

1.5.6 Conservation of the built environment and historical artefacts.

- The features mentioned above are only peripherally evident in the landscape. However, features such as the old railway embankments, and exposed brickwork, are actively managed and preserved on the site.
- Although physical artefacts are few and far between, the historical photographic archive for the Railway Land is well documented, thanks to the existence of the Reeves Collection, and also the photos of EJ Bedford. Thomas Reeves photographed much of Lewes throughout the Victorian era, and EJ Bedford captured the Railway Heritage on film throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

1.5.7 Maintaining historic character

- As detailed above, historic landscape features are actively preserved throughout the site. For more details see section 2.3.1 of this plan.

1.6 Community Involvement

1.6.1 Patterns of use

- Audience development studies have been carried out by a local Environmental Consultant, working voluntarily as part of her studies. Her project looked at visitor numbers, reasons for visiting, as well as demographic information about the visitors. This work has been fed into the management process by, for example, improving on site interpretation.
- LDC Community Wardens patrol the site weekly, and note any concerns from members of the public.
- An annual visitor survey is carried out by the Community Ranger to determine current approval ratings for the nature reserve management.
- Annually, a meeting of nature conservation experts called the Habitat Advisory Group meet on site to discuss the current management of the site; evaluating success, and impact on visitors.

1.6.2 Community Involvement in management and development

- One of LDC's key corporate aims is to involve the community in the management of nature reserves and open spaces, and install a sense of community ownership within local environments.
- The Railway Land was created by community pressure in the mid 1980's, when the site was under threat of development. A charity called the Railway Land Wildlife Trust (RLWT) was set up to oversee this process, and when the site was bought by LDC, a partnership was cemented between the RLWT and LDC. Today that partnership is enshrined in a Memorandum of Understanding, which sets out clear roles and responsibilities for both organisations in relation to site management and administration. LDC employs a full time Community Ranger and an Assistant Community Ranger for the whole of the District, and some of their time is spent managing the site. The Community Ranger attends committee and planning meetings of the RLWT, and delivers reports, answers questions, and suggests future management strategies. The RLWT decide on which recommendations are put into practice and looks at long term strategies.
- The RLWT also provide a practical wing, called the Meadow Minders, who work with the Community Ranger once a month on habitat management activities.
- Volunteers are very important to the work of LDC and to the Railway Land. There are voluntary tasks two or three times per months, involving several groups

including the Meadow Minders, Brighton Conservation Volunteers, South Downs Volunteer Rangers, and various corporate volunteer groups such as Amex, Inland Revenue, and EDF energy.

- There are also a number of innovative projects, aimed at including adults with learning difficulties in the site's management. An example is the Nature Corridors for All Project, which is a partnership between LDC, the RLWT and East Sussex Adult Social Care. This project involves a group of adults with learning difficulties working every month on practical projects, including fixed point photography, practical conservation tasks with the Community Ranger and fund raising activities.
- The Railway Land has a Junior Management Board (JMB), which is a group of young people aged between 8 and 16 who represent local schools in the Lewes area. The group meet to discuss projects and ideas for young people on the site. They have had some significant successes, including a project in 2007 to design a water conservation campaign, restore a redundant pond with a bespoke viewing platform, and also script and star in a short film about the JMB. This was a £23,000 project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

1.6.3 Facilities

- The site is conveniently located in the town centre of Lewes, and within 100 metres of a large pay and display car park, public toilets and disabled facilities as well as town centre amenities and shops.
- On site, there is a wide network of disabled access surfaced paths, including benches and view points. There is also a bird hide located at the southern end of the site, overlooking the meadows.
- A programme of guided walks, education events and activities takes place throughout the year.

1.6.4 Children's play

- The Railway land is located within half a mile of a major secondary school (Lewes Priory), and Sixth Form College (Sussex Downs). Children use the site regularly as a site for informal play, as a place to gather, or as a cut through to the town.
- Pond dipping facilities are located within the Reedbed area
- A woodland circular seating area was designed by young people, and provides a place for quiet informal gathering.
- Part of the site is kept as clear open grassland to allow a space for play as well as for events.

1.6.5 Educational facilities

- As previously mentioned, there is a wide range of educational activities and facilities on site, including a varied events and activities programme, e.g. the annual open day and river festival that takes place every June. This brings together families for workshops themed on environmental education, e.g. willow weaving, pond dipping, bug hunting etc.
- Guided walks are led by the Ranger, the Railway Land Wildlife Trust, and also through the adults with learning difficulties involved in the Nature Corridors for all project.

1.6.6 Open for all

- Access to the Railway Land is through a series of pathways managed in different ways. Full disabled access is provided through the level areas, on surfaced footpaths, together with wheel chair access to a view point and a pond dipping platform. The highlight is a fully accessible reedbed area. Woodland footpaths are not “access for all” due to their susceptibility to flooding and because the habitats present are more sensitive (wet woodland etc).
- Regular seating is provided along disabled access pathways.

1.7 Marketing

1.7.1 Information provision and interpretation.

- There is a large interpretation board and notice board at the main entrance to the site, on Railway Lane. This board provides a site map, suggested walks, guidance on site management and habitats present. This also is a health and safety information point
- In addition, there are two updatable panels on the interpretation board, which are regularly updated by the Ranger, with latest information on management issues or wildlife observations.
- The board also displays contact details for the Ranger, as well as information about volunteering and getting involved with the site on this information board.
- At each other site entrance, there is a small wooden welcome sign to the Railway Land.
- There is a comprehensive Web site for Lewes Railway Land, which can be found at www.railwaylandproject.org. This has access for all facilities, including voiceovers of the main header pages by the BBC’s Natasha Kaplinsky. The web site has sections on wildlife, site management, the Junior Management Board, the Meadow Minders and much more.
- A further web site, listing all nature reserves managed by LDC, is found at www.lewes.gov.uk/leisure/1901.asp

- The site has a quarterly news letter produced by the Railway Land Wildlife Trust.
- Regular press releases document key events in the nature reserve.
- The Railway Land has a full site management plan, which is part of this wider document.
- There are a two leaflets dedicated to the Railway Land, in full colour; one aimed at adults, and one designed by and aimed at children.

1.7.2 Events

By way of example, the following is a list of events and activities that have taken place on the Railway Land in the past year (2008)

- Meadow Minders Volunteers – 1st Sun of every month – 1:30 – 4:30pm.
- JMB meetings – every two months – Sunday afternoons.
- Nature Corridors for All Project (NCFA) (Adults with learning difficulties) – one Tuesday or Thursday per month (am only).
- South Downs Volunteer Rangers – one Wednesday every two months – practical conservation activities on site.
- River Festival, 13th June 2008
- School events – Priory School, Lewes New School (surveying), etc.
- Guided walks – led by NCFA group.

1.7.3 Promotion

- Leaflets – There are two full colour leaflets available for the Railway Land, including one aimed at Children.
- Web site- There is a detailed website available at www.railwaylandproject.org (see 1.7.1 for details).
- District Link – the council has a quarterly update publication that is delivered to all households within the District. Articles relating to the Railway Land regularly feature in this publication.
- Press Release's – regular press releases are issued via the District Council press office, concerning issues affecting the site. For example prior to tree works taking place. The Railway Land Wildlife Trust also issues press releases about work and events of site.
- Notice board (see 1.7.1).
- A visible Ranger presence is maintained when possible, with the Rangers being available to answer questions the public may have about the site, or any work taking place.
- Promotion by the RLWT (Railway Land Wildlife Trust) – for example through a quarterly newsletter, sent to members.
- Partnerships with other nature reserves – e.g. the Nature Corridors for All Project – The Parc Guy Webber, near Dieppe.

1.7.4 Using the Green Flag in marketing

- If successful, the Green Flag would be included on all publicity materials associated with the reserve, and consideration given to having a specific PR event to launch the Green Flag.

1.8 Management

1.8.1 Public Service

- Lewes Railway Land is managed as a Local Nature Reserve, and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. This necessitates a very careful balance between nature conservation, public access, education and other cultural activities that take place on site. The management of the reserve aims to balance all these needs, with an equal focus on wildlife and people.
- In recognising the urban nature of this site, the management aims to encourage people to gain access and understand the importance of this green space within the urban landscape. Wherever possible, the site is promoted as a gateway to the countryside from the town.

1.8.2 Personnel

- The Community Ranger and Assistant Community Ranger are responsible for the management of the Railway Land, and their knowledge has helped shape this management plan. The plan aims to link organisational objectives with wider nature conservation and other government objectives, to achieve a balanced and knowledgeable approach to site management.

1.8.3 Quality systems

- The management plan has a detailed prioritised prescription and work programme.
- Activities within the management plan and subsequent management activities are monitored through a variety of methods. Site inspections, risk assessments, ecological survey, public feedback questionnaires are all carried out at regular intervals.

1.8.4 Financial Management

- Management of the Railway Land is funded from a variety of sources. The main source is an annual LDC revenue budget. Additional resources are provided from the RLWT, and through external grants applied for by the Community Ranger and others, e.g. JMB.
- Financial management is carried out within LDC and fully budgeted and audited through LDC Finance Department. The RLWT has an independent finance system, and separate bank accounts from LDC.

1.8.5 Implementation

- The management plan is the main tool for setting and planning works. It is a working document, and is updated regularly by the Community Ranger. Review,

evaluation and monitoring of the content and success of implementation is carried out by the Community Ranger

Part 2 Site Management Plan

1. 2.1 General Information

2.1.1 Location

OS Grid reference, (main site entrance approximate location) TQ 420098. The Railway Land is situated south of the Lewes Town Centre, adjacent to the River Ouse and the Lewes – Hastings railway line. It occupies former railway sidings on the flood plain of both the Ouse and Winterbourne Streams.

2.1.2 Site status

This site was designated a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in 1995, a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) in 1986 and was accredited with the UK Man & Biosphere (MAB) award for Urban Excellence in 1997. The site lies at the foot of the Sussex Downs AONB, may be included (subject to appeal) in the proposed South Downs National Park boundaries (Natural England 2009).

2.1.3 Tenure

(See ownership map, in appendix). The land within the LNR boundary (see appendix) is owned by Lewes District Council (LDC). Land also covered by this plan, includes a section of the meadows called Chilly Brooks, which is owned by The Railway Land Wildlife Trust (RLWT). The rest of the meadows are owned by a local farmer, and a Trust based in the Wirral. There is a grazing agreement between LDC and a local farmer for summer grazing of the meadows.

2.1.4 Site definition and boundaries

The Railway Land LNR occupies 25 acres (approx. 10 ha). See appendix for maps and plans of the site.

2.1.5 Legal & other constraints

- LDC as land owners are responsible for maintaining appropriate insurance cover
- The Lewes District Council Local Plan refers to the site under the following policies: District-wide policies on habitat protection (specifically SNCIs) (ST9, 10), flood risk and EA control (ST 16), access for all issues (ST5, 6), recreation around rivers (RE7). Specific references are made in policies on access to the River Ouse (LW10).
- The Environment Agency (EA) is responsible for the management of the flood regime of the River Ouse and the Winterbourne Stream. Southern Water is responsible for the water quality of the Winterbourne, inasmuch as some of their storm drains flow into this stream –
- The EA also has control over what structures or activities take place within an 8 metre strip on either side of the river and Winterbourne Stream. These areas are commonly known as castingways. Similarly, because the site is a Local Nature Reserve it is the responsibility of the EA to warn in advance of any works that are to be undertaken by them.

- There are no legal “Rights of Way” across the site, but it is managed for general public access. This is primarily done through the maintenance of a network of footpaths. A map of the main footpaths is shown in appendix 3.
- Cycling is permitted along the surfaced footpath.
- The riverside footpath on the meadows is under private ownership, and this path is permissive access only. Consultation with the farmer is required for any works affecting this path.
- There are several underground services present on the site, including sewage pipes. Southern Water should be contacted regarding any of these issues
- South Street Bonfire Society have their annual bonfire celebration on the Lewes Railway Land LNR. Arrangements and contact details are available from the Chairman of South Street Bonfire Society.
- The meadows adjacent to the site, (partially owned by LDC and partially within the LNR), are subject to a Countryside Stewardship agreement, first signed in 1992 and re-signed in 2002 for a further 10 year period. This agreement, brokered by the RLWT, will place certain obligations and management restrictions on this area, currently managed by a local farmer. For more information contact DEFRA.
- Issues relating to the LNR designation or for any advice on protected wildlife should be directed to English Nature.
- All site works are governed by LDC’s EMAS policy, which restricts the use of certain chemicals and practices. E.g. specific herbicides or pesticides.
- All work on site must conform to LDC’s Health and Safety policy and the Health and Safety and Work act, a copy of which is available through the LDC web site at www.lewes.gov.uk.
- Site risk assessment is carried out annually by the LDC Ranger, in conjunction with LDC Risk assessment procedures.
- All activities carried out on site are subject to risk assessment procedures, which are the responsibility of the group leader / organisation organising the activity.

2.1.6 Main fixed assets

- Signal Box bird hide/classroom is located at the southern end of the reserve, overlooking the meadows. This is owned by the RLWT, but the land on which it stands is leased by LDC at a peppercorn rent to the RLWT. Public access is provided to the top storey, in which a bird hide and small classroom are located. The key is held by a number of individuals, and also publicly available from Pets Corner, located in Railway Lane, Lewes. The under-storey consists of a tool shed for the Ranger and volunteers.

2.2 Environmental information

2.2.1 Hydrology

One of the most important features of this site is its complex and dynamic hydrological regime, and the relationship this has with the habitats represented here.

The River Ouse and the Winterbourne Stream are the main source of water to this site, along with precipitation. The River Ouse is heavily tidal at Lewes, and is responsible for draining a large area of Sussex. Over hundreds of years, the river channel has been substantially altered, and around Lewes, is embanked so that the high tide can reach 2 metres above the surrounding land (Peter Brett Associates, 1999). Added to this there

are significant seasonal variations from the Winterbourne Stream, which flows mainly in winter, sourced from a chalk aquifer bore hole near Falmer. This stream will only flow when the water table rises so that surplus water flows along the Winterbourne.

This channel has been heavily altered throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, culminating in a short above-ground flow through the Railway Land to a sluice gate outlet into the Ouse.

This sluice gate closes at high tide, to prevent flow of water back along the channel. During high flow conditions, the water from the Winterbourne backs up, and flood the surrounding woodland, creating a wet woodland habitat.

Flow from the Winterbourne stream is heavily dependent on annual precipitation levels and possibly groundwater extraction rates, and consequently the degree of flooding of the site with fresh water varies from year to year.

A further watercourse on site is found in the former natural meanders of the Winterbourne Stream, which still flows due to seepage from freshwater springs. This watercourse also varies considerably in seasonal volume, and flows via a culvert into the Winterbourne Stream in the woods. (This watercourse will be the main supply of additional water to the Reedbed Project which will divert this water through the new reedbed, and via a Victorian culvert in the old sidings, into the meadow ditch system, and eventually out into the Ouse. (see section 5.3 for details).

The woodland area is interspersed with seasonal ponds and drainage ditches, and the former sidings and meadows contain a large network of drainage ditches, which form a key habitat within the site.

Detailed hydrology of the site is discussed within the study by Peter Brett Associates (1999), and have also been considered by students from the University of Brighton. One such study, by Katie Fawcett (source John Parry) outlined a theory that some water may well permeate down through the chalk cliffs to the east, and under the river up into the site. This could be the reason why several ditches fill up very quickly after heavy rain fall.

The Reedbed area was created in 2005 and links the wetland habitats of the wet woodland, to the meadows, through a series of ponds, ditches, pipes and sluices.

2.2.2 Geology

The local geology of Lewes is dominated by the rising chalk beds which form the Lewes Downs, however, the Lewes Railway Land occupies a flood plain site adjacent to a tidal river.

The areas around Lewes historically would have been very marshy, before the flood embankments and drainage schemes were initiated. Therefore over the years large amounts of alluvial mud and clay will have been deposited on flood plain from the tidal river, providing nutrient rich material and soil matter.

The study by ESCC (1996) briefly describes the geology as being “underlain by Alluvium, that typically consists of soft silty clays, gravel’s and peat”. This study also concluded that chalk would be present beneath the alluvium, which we assume to be at varying depths.

The cliffs to the east of the site form part of the Southerham Grey Pit SSSI, which are of national importance, for their exposure of Chalk Marl and the lower half of the Grey Chalk (Cenomanian) and is the only inland section of these beds in southern England or northern.

2.2.3 Soils

The ESCC (1996) study on soil contamination on the Railway Land concluded that, as a whole, the site had low levels of soil contaminants, given its past land use as railway sidings. However, across several areas used by the railway sidings, levels of copper and zinc were high but not hazardous to health. However these kinds of concentrations could significantly affect flora growth (ESCC 1996). Other characteristics of the soil were large amounts of coke, coal, and general clinker on and around the former sidings area (ESCC, 1996). Higher levels of contaminants (e.g. Hydrocarbons) are present in the entrance area of the reserve, where a railway goods yard once existed. Care should be taken during any excavations that may be necessary in this area.

2.2.4 Habitats

There is a great diversity of wildlife because of the range of habitats contained within the site. Historically, this would have been a predominantly wetland area, with a woodland cover. However, human influence on the local ecology can be traced back to early water management with the creation of stew ponds in the 1200s. More recently, the house and gardens of Leighside (c.1880) and the railway development of the late 19th and 20th centuries, plus allotment gardens, have all helped create a complex mosaic of habitats.

This site has been divided into habitat management compartments, consisting of broadly homogenous vegetation types, for descriptive and management purposes (See habitat compartment map in appendix 2 & 4).

- **Compartment 1:**
Western access corridor –thick areas of buddleia bushes and some bramble scrub.
- **Compartment 2:**
Woodland – this consists of a secondary willow woodland, interspersed with a few exotic trees, some wet areas including a number of ponds, and wet willow carr areas. There are remnants of a Victorian landscaped garden here, together with large tree specimens.
- **Compartment 3:**
Reedbed and Railway corridor – adjacent to the railway line. This area has the Winterbourne Stream, some open scrub/grassland subject to inundation, and several drainage channels. Since summer 2005, it has also contained part of the reedbed.
- **Compartment 4:**
Former Railway sidings and valley floor. Riverside banks, main entrance areas and grassland/scrub area prone to seasonal inundation.
- **Compartment 5:**
Former allotment area that is now a small black poplar copse, dominated by willow-

herb and teasel.

- Compartment 6:
The meadows: wet grazing meadows, interspersed with drainage ditches.

2.2.5 Flora and Fauna

Possibly the most sensitive area is the wet woodland. It is the area that has been least disturbed over the years; consequently, the maturity of habitat means a large variety of wildlife lives here, including nationally rare and scarce insect species. The structure of the woodland, with native and planted ornamental trees and under-storey shrubs, ground flora and dead wood, has resulted in an impressive list of wildlife species being recorded. Of note are the beetles, bugs and flies, recorded by entomologist, Peter Hodge, and stored on the English Nature Database at Peterborough, and due to be shared with the Sussex Biodiversity Records Office. They are also stored at the Lewes District Council offices. For example within the drainage ditches we see the great silver water beetle (*hydrophilus piceus*) which is a Red Data Book species (RDB3 rare) listed for its rare existence.

The site also has a number of bat species present, which have not been surveyed since 1995. (bat presence survey by Mike Holmes, 1995)

Wetland habitats are represented by ponds, reedbed, willow carr, meadow ditches, the Winterbourne Stream and the River Ouse. Winter rains transform much of the site into a flooded landscape which is used by over-wintering snipe and very rarely redshank and lapwing. With the rare and secretive water-rail, resident kingfisher, kestrel and regular visits by heron and sparrowhawk, plus peregrine falcons nesting nearby, the site contains a high diversity of birds for an urban setting.

The major grassland is the wet meadow, but chalk railway embankments and a triangular allotment area provide contrasting habitats. The wet meadow habitat and species composition has to some extent been conserved through traditional grazing management. Downland butterflies and snails are to be found on the ex-railway sidings and crickets and grasshoppers are commonly heard during the summer in the various grasslands.

The succession from bare ground through to scrub is evident throughout the site. The cleared railway sidings have a range of ruderal species such as bramble and hawthorn, which provide bird cover and nesting sites; and the buddleia is a classic nectar provider for butterflies and other insects.

2.3 Cultural

2.3.1 Site history

The site has an interesting industrial history and has been an integral part of the town in terms of its transport system. The former railway sidings have evolved into an attractive wildflower area. Adjacent to the former railway sidings are the allotments of the railway workers and living evidence of their horticultural efforts may still be seen in the form of fruit trees, comfrey and horseradish.

There is still evidence of the former turntable area and the Lewes to Uckfield rail track. The viaduct was demolished in 1990.

Leighside Hall and gardens have now become woodland, consisting mainly of willow, elm and sycamore as well as non-native (but thankfully not invasive) species, such as Bamboo, that were planted in the Victorian gardens. The natural succession that has taken place is of interest, coupled with the remnants of its former use.

2.3.2 Commercial use

There are currently no commercial uses within the Railway Land LNR, and there are no future plans to develop any. Indeed a British Rail Property Board covenant forbids this. The past land uses (discussed in section 2.3.1) formed an important part of the railway economy up until the mid 20th century and are an important part of Lewes's cultural heritage. There are plans to build a comprehensive sustainable visitors centre on the site main entrance, and planning permission has been granted. Fund raising is currently taking place.

2.3.3 Access and Recreation

- There is a hierarchy of footpath, which include disabled access surfaced footpaths throughout the site.
- Secondary footpaths run throughout the site, particularly the woodland and riverside. These paths are mowed as part of the grounds maintenance contract for LDC.
- The main recreation activities include informal walking (especially with dogs), running, and children playing on the site.

2.4 Research, survey, monitoring

There are a variety of survey and monitoring taking the form of photos, surveys, and reports on the ecology and physical environment. There is also a particularly good photographic record of the site, and its development as a nature reserve.

There are clear gaps in the survey and monitoring undertaken on the site, and a lack of co-ordination or standardisation of method or presentation. In particular there is insufficient data on the following: ~

- Mammals
- Reptiles and Amphibians
- Birds (although there is a survey of common birds from before the railway sidings were removed)
- Flora (although there is a flora survey from 2003 undergoing processing by the RWLT that will be important).

2.5 Current management arrangements

The site is managed on a day-to-day basis by the LDC Community Ranger and Assistant Community Ranger. However, the strategic management is governed by The Railway Land Management Committee, which was constituted by Lewes District Council in 1994 following acquisition of the site from British Rail Property Board. The Committee pre 2003 consisted of local Councillors and interested parties, but changed significantly in December 2003, as the RLWT took over responsibility for the “development” of the site and the running and administration of the committee (which continues to contain some councillors), through a “Memorandum of Understanding” arrangement (see appendix).

3 Education

The range of habitats within several hundred metres of an urban centre surrounded by educational establishments that are within walking distance is quite exceptional. Environmental education activities and events run throughout the year, led by the Community Ranger and the RLWT.

3.1 A Junior Management Board - was set up in 1996, to allow young voices to be heard in terms of their ideas for the ongoing use and interpretation of the site. This first Junior Management Board for a LNR in the country, acts as a vital link between the schools, the Management Committee, and the Nature Reserve. It consists of children aged 8-14 years old, representing local schools. The Board is an independent group but should be given the opportunity to share ideas and experiences with other similar groups wherever possible, to benefit them as a group and as individuals. They have been involved throughout the past few years on various projects, the most recent of which was a Heritage Lottery Funded Young Roots project, involving restoration of a pond, directing and starring in a short film about themselves, and co-ordinating a water conservation campaign.

The JMB are of fundamental importance to the management structure of the site, and will be fully consulted on any aspect of strategic management.

The Nature Corridors for All project involves adults with learning difficulties working with the Ranger once per month on site, and carrying out a variety of habitat management activities. In addition, they carry out fixed point photography and a variety of other projects on the site.

4. 4 Evaluation

This site evaluation will aim to assess the site against standard criteria (based on those developed by Ratcliffe (1977), with others) and set the site in a regional, national and international context.

4.1 Size

This site covers 10 ha, which meets the English Nature criteria for LNR designation (Barker 1999). The proximity of the site to other land of similar conservation value allows us to increase the reserve conservation value beyond the administrative boundaries, out into the meadow, the river, and surrounding downland. There are a number of different habitats represented on this site which, combined with the proximity to the town centre

and various educational establishments, make this an ideal place to carry out environmental education activities. The management regime has aimed to maintain the maximum number of habitats within the site boundaries - however, most are small habitats, for example, a small area of wet woodland, a small area of scrub and grassland. Larger habitats include the flood plain grassland (important regional BAP target habitat) and grazing meadows. The site therefore although relatively small in nature reserve terms, is packed with habitats and opportunities non the less.

4.2 Diversity

The diversity of habitats present makes this an interesting site to study or visit, but there is currently limited survey data, which would allow us to confidently talk about species diversity. Although there is a variety of survey data, it is some what sporadic, and ad hoc. The only comprehensively surveyed group are insects, for which the site has good data. The entomological data suggests that the aquatic insects found in drainage ditches and ponds represent a diverse variety. However, without greater data, it is difficult to know if this site does have any national or regional significance in terms of species diversity.

4.3 Naturalness

This is a typical urban fringe site, bearing all the signs of heavy pedestrian disturbance, former industrial land uses, evidence of old houses, and heavily managed watercourses and flood defence structures. Therefore this site is a long way from an undisturbed wilderness. However, the habitats that have evolved represent great examples ecological change over time, especially succession from one habitat type to another. The best example of this is within the woodland, which has succeeded from a formal garden to a willow dominated wet woodland in the space of 50 years. This could change relatively quickly with a change in the management regime, or in the hydrological cycle.

4.4 Rarity

There are one or two important rare species found on this site. These include a variety of insects surveyed over the past 10 years by Peter Hodge. Examples include RDB species such as *hydrovatus clypealis* (RDB3 a rare water beetle) (Hodge, 1994). The lack of survey data for specific species groups makes this criteria difficult to assess at a species level. At a habitat level, the wet woodland and flood plain grassland habitats are important BAP target habitats, with declining national acreage. (see section 4.9.1) The degree of community 'ownership' of the site is itself a valuable rarity, as its progressive management structures for example the JMB.

4.5 Fragility

All wildlife habitats present a degree of fragility, but the disturbed and urban nature of this site mean that any habitat present must be fairly robust. The changing nature of the site hydrology presents the most important factor in habitat stability and condition. In this sense, the site is open to changes due to drought or flooding conditions from year to year.

Further threat comes from human intervention. Vandalism of the trees and other shrubs, together with small fires within the woodland, has been associated with groups of children and youths. This presents only a minor problem, but will need to be monitored over time to prevent more serious damage.

In the past, fears of potential building development on the site has raised public awareness of the site, and current LDC and ESCC planning policies reflect this concern with their planning policies aimed at no “development” being permitted within the site. (see section 1.5). The only exception to this would be an information centre dedicated to the site.

4.6 Typicalness

The habitats present are typical of an urban fringe site, in that they are consistent with high levels of disturbance. They are therefore not particularly high quality examples of typical habitats. The only exception to this is the drainage ditches, which represent a fine example of a healthy aquatic ecosystem (if properly managed and water levels maintained, see section 5).

4.7 Recorded history

There are good entomological surveys of the Railway Land, and monitoring has been consistent for in excess of a 10 years. However, there is very little other survey data (other than the 2003 flora surveys), and almost no other monitoring. In addition, there have been no studies into visitor numbers, dynamics and required facilities.

There have been soil contamination (PBA 1999) and hydrology surveys (ESCC, 1996) carried out in the past 10 years.

There has been a long history of educational use of the site by both local schools and universities, and several projects and dissertations have been completed on the site.

There is also recorded social and industrial history, e.g. old maps, which could be considered part of the cultural heritage of the site
See appendix for a list of available survey data.

4.8 Position in ecological unit

The Railway Land is isolated by both natural barriers (the river) and human barriers (the roads, railways and town).

The site sits within the traditional flood plain of the River Ouse. However, human intervention has drastically changed the water budget for this area, and consequently much of the natural hydrological cycle has been interrupted. This therefore will affect the way the site interacts with its surroundings, and has the effect of largely isolating it from its natural neighbours; that of the River (and other water courses) and the surrounding land.

Industry and urbanisation have also affected the site, most notably with the former railway use, but also through building of houses within the old woodland area (Court Road). The current railway line also constrains the site, and creates a barrier from the adjacent meadows (the Railway Land Meadows SNCI see map in appendix). Having said this, the Railway Land extends its natural boundaries into the meadows, and consequently the site is greatly enhanced by the proximity to this important habitat. This is why the site is considered with the meadows to consist of 44.4 ha.

The River Ouse is a corridor for aquatic wildlife and a regular source of nutrients from the flood waters. This provides a direct link along the whole of the Ouse Valley, also offering an historical transport link to the port of Newhaven and beyond.

The Railway Land remains somewhat isolated by both the natural boundaries of the river and cliffs, but also human creations such as the railway line, and the A26 main road.

Type of management	Objective	Rationale
	To engage local community in site management.	As above, this emphasis on community involvement helps to focus local attention on the site, and raises the site's profile. Community participation in site management and strategies will help install a sense of ownership amongst the community, and increase levels of understanding of local and other environmental issues.
Marketing	Promote the site in such as way as to attract visitors to the site, participate in events, and generally raise the profile of the site, whilst maintaining the local nature of the site.	In order to raise the status of the site, attract public support, maintain and increase revenues for site management activities. The profile of the site is intrinsically linked to site usership, and consequently, marketing must be carefully targeted.
Habitat management, and Site maintenance.	To maintain and enhance the existing habitat diversity, as well as invest in suitable habitat creation schemes.	To conserve and enhance habitat "quality" in order to increase ecological diversity, and help meet targets within regional and nationally important BAP habitat and species action plans.
	Support habitat improvement schemes within the Railway Land and adjacent meadows, including water level manipulation and drainage ditch enhancement. This will be through partnership with the RLWT, the EA, DETR, and the local farmer.	Improving habitats listed under regional BAPs, such as flood plain grassland, will help meet targets, and enhance the site for wildlife, especially birds and aquatic flora and fauna.

Type of management	Objective	Rationale
	Supervise work of external contractors and volunteer groups.	The LDC maintenance contract involves several contracted activities, including footpaths strimming, and scrub clearance, to be carried out by contractors. Close supervision is required in order to prevent misunderstandings and safeguard sensitive habitats. The same goes for supervision of volunteer groups.
Access	To maintain and enhance the land for safe and effective use as an informal recreation.	To encourage people to use the site safely is essential to conforming to Local Authority Health and Safety Guidelines, through the Risk Assessment process. The site is ideal for walking and other such activities, which all help to improve health and happiness of the community.
	To provide for the annual bonfire celebrations of South Street Bonfire Society, as long as these are performed sensitively before, on and after 5 November.	There is a long running tradition of the South Street Bonfire Society staging this event here. Sensitive attention to detail is observed in preparation and clean up operations.
	To allow access along the riverside by means of a footpath, and through the site for circular walks.	This footpath forms part of the trail ranging from Newhaven to Lewes, along the banks of the River Ouse. It is therefore of strategic importance to the local footpath network, as well as being an attractive walk.
	To provide access from the town centre, between parts of the town and between the countryside footpath network, the site itself and the town, for the whole community.	The site's geographical location within the town makes it an ideal through-route and short cut from one place to another.

Type of management	Objective	Rationale
Survey and monitoring	Maintain a comprehensive survey and monitoring programme.	Accurate survey data is essential in order to formulate site management policy. It is only possible to create effective policy if site managers are aware of the presence or absence of species, assess rarity or abundance, assess particular habitat requirements, and make decisions as to what management to undertake. Use of repeatable standardised scientific methods are essential in survey and monitoring, so that the data will be rigorous, accurate and usable.
Audience development	Site user surveys undertaken.	In order to determine user satisfaction of facilities and management, and in order to determine who uses the Railway Land for what activities. With this data, future management could be influenced.
Education and interpretation	Improved interpretation facilities on site - physical, such as visitors' centres (the Signal Box or another visitors' centre in the entrance area), leaflet and information boards, as well as websites.	Interpretation facilities are essential to help introduce and explain the site to the public, in order to get the message about the site's importance across. Different methods need to be employed for different target audiences and for different subject areas. Members of the JMB were very keen to see facilities in the Signal Box updated and improved (and possibly a power supply to the signal box), and they even suggested a possible temporary visitors' centre that could be erected in the entrance area during schools events. Other ideas include provision of a dedicated web site that would be kept up to date with information about the site.
	Support development of Linklater Pavilion	If RLWT raise necessary funding, the entrance area will change fundamentally, with the creation of a carbon neutral sustainable visitors centre.

Type of management	Objective	Rationale
	Continue to support and develop the JMB	The JMB are important ambassadors for the Railway Land, and represent local schools in the area. The views of young people are represented through the JMB, which through its participation with the Adult Management Committee (RLMC), is directly participating in the democratic process, by providing access to Councillors and policy makers.
Community Involvement	Support local community group involvement with the site, including volunteer groups, special needs groups and other interested parties.	As a key aim of site management, facilitating community involvement contributes to the principles of sustainable development, and equal opportunities. By providing support to these groups, and facilitating access/activities, a broad section of the community can benefit from the Railway Land.
Health and Safety	Maintain the site for safe access to the public. This includes carrying out site risk assessments, activity risk assessments for any events or activities carried out on the site, and working to reduce any risks identified through this process.	As landowners, the Council has a legal duty of care to the public, and maintains public liability for these purposes. As the site is managed for public access, it is the duty of the Council to maintain the site in as safe a way as possible, whilst balancing the need to retain the site in its natural setting. This is to say, sensitive and measured assessment of risks, and appropriate responses, based on the professional judgement of the Community Ranger, and supporting Council officers.

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Habitat Management			
1a	The area of buddleia to the south and thick scrub on the northern side of the path provide both shelter and a food supply for birds and insects. In particular, the nationally rare blue carpenter bee has been recorded in this area, and is associated with the cut stems of bramble and buddleia.	Manage buddleia to create a mixed height and age structure. ~ <i>low (priority)</i>	Coppice areas on the fringes of the footpath area on a 5 year rotation.	Winter – between October and February.	Volunteers approximately 4 days pa.
		Control Litter ~ <i>high</i>	Pick up litter and talk to school children regularly	Weekly	Volunteers LMO Contractors
		Access			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		<p>Keep footpaths open and clear of overgrowth, and prevent excessive slippery conditions occurring. ~ <i>high</i></p> <p>The bramble on northern side of path should remain as non- intervention. ~ <i>low</i></p> <p>Prevent bramble on south bank from getting too thick ~ <i>low</i></p>	<p>Cut back with hand tools monthly and strim nettles on occasions,</p>	<p>As and when required</p> <p>Once every 5 years</p>	<p>Volunteers and contractors (see LMO (Leisure Management/ Outdoor) Contract</p> <p>Volunteers 2 days</p>
		Habitat Management			
1b	<p>Willow dominates the area and there are large amounts of dead wood present. There is good gradation of flora from the existing rail track to the pathway near the stream culvert, although nettles can completely dominate the area in summer.</p>	<p>Maintain flora gradation ~ <i>low</i></p> <p>Maintain health and safety of footpaths as mature and unstable trees present ~ <i>high</i></p>	<p>Scythe/strim approx. 325m² area on annual basis. Remove cuttings into compost piles.</p> <p>Pollard old willow trees as high as possible if they become unstable, due to proximity to footpath and railway line</p>	<p>Autumn</p> <p>Autumn / Winter unless urgent</p>	<p>Appointed tree surgeons with Ranger supervision</p>

Compartment 2: The Woodland

Landscape Character – In the wider context this woodland area is an attractive feature important to the setting of the town. It is the core of the site which is separated from the rest of the site by the Winterbourne Stream. Its overriding character is of a once secluded but now well used area, containing evidence of past uses and events. This area is where young people like to gather in groups, which has in the past been subject to litter and other anti-social behaviour problems.

The features within the area require sensitive conservation management to bring back, if not create, a space of distinctive character and wildlife value. Although there are many mature trees, the woodland habitats, such as alder carr and willow woodland are still developing and should be managed to enhance growth. The tree canopy of the area of willow should be conserved as it is a significant tree screen and buffer for the town from its rural approaches. Since most of the area is damp or wet throughout the year, different habitats have evolved. Within the woodland exists 3 ponds, two of which were part of the old ornamental garden, and the other was a Stew Pond, build by the Greyfriars (see section 2.2.1).

Long term compartment vision:

- Well balanced and structured woodland area, with florally diverse woodland glades.
- well established hazel coppice established, to make a working demonstration woodland.
- Sculpture / woodland seating areas cared for and managed
- Reduced littering.

Overall aims for this compartment:

- **Manage the woodlands in accordance with tree health and safety policies.**
- **Maintain and enhance the diversity of the woodlands by managing ponds and open areas as well as non-intervention areas.**
- **Monitor water levels throughout woodland from season to season annually, but do not manipulate over and above work of the EA, as part of this plan.**
- **Develop network of footpaths within the woodland and maintain for safety and access.**
- **Maintain a woodland seating area, (possibly with a fire site), and work with Woodcraft Group to help implement design**

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Habitat Management			
2a	This area is part of the former Leighside House and garden and contains several large specimen trees, e.g. the Swamp Cypress (<i>Taxodium distichum</i>). The dominant species are ash, sycamore and ivy.	Pollard or coppice trees as required for safety reasons following advice of consultant arboriculturalist. These should be checked for bats prior to any work taking place. <i>~ high</i>	Monitor trees especially after windy conditions, and coppice/pollard or remove trees as appropriate.	Autumn and Winter, but if necessary all year round.	Ranger to inspect, tree surgeon to undertake works
		Access			
		Prevent overgrowth obstructing pathways. <i>~high</i>	Trim off overhanging vegetation	summer	ranger
		Habitat Management			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
2b/2c	Area extensively restored in 2008. Pond dredged and reshaped. Former duck pond of Leighside House, now pond of two halves – open water to West, and Sedge pond to East.	Maintain pond by clearing overgrowth where necessary. ~ <i>Medium</i>	Dredge on a 7 year cycle if necessary. Remove any reedmace. Maintain viewing bridge and platform. Monitor amphibian population – good population of Palmate Newts here.	Autumn and winter.	Ranger/ volunteers for half a work day.
		Access			
		Footpath thoroughfare should be maintained. ~ <i>high</i>	Strim path width and a verge beyond.	When needed (all year round).	LMO Contract, Rangers and volunteers
		Access to pond should not be encouraged, accept around the southern banks, as it is a good site for pond survey ~ <i>low</i>			
		Habitat Management			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
2d	This area is a low lying stream-side former willow plantation, with ageing trees and some fallen trees. The soil is wet or damp at most times of the year and the pond area is flooded at times of high water table. The tree canopy is a very important part of the screen and buffer to the town and needs to be retained.	Non intervention area. Sensitive Wet woodland habitat. ~ <i>high</i>	Monitor tree conditions, and try to maintain main footpaths in order to tempt people away from woodland (willow and alder carr) core.	All year	Ranger
		Access			
		Small woodland seating area, where small fires can be easily controlled if they are started. Social area for young people.	Litter pick area and monitor fires.	All year	Ranger / LMO contract
		Habitat Management			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
2e	The former Uckfield railway line ran along the embankment before running on the viaduct (demolished 1989) which crossed Cliffe High Street. The embankment now bears a good regenerated tree canopy with bramble under-storey. Its elevated position offers a potential viewing platform for zone 2d. Some woodland trees such as ash, hazel and hornbeam are present.	Non intervention. Allow tree canopy to develop, and encourage native species. Sycamore should be allowed to generate, but not in the glade areas, or if shading out significant native trees. This can be done by maintaining the glade in the former turntable area. Log piles can be created. ~ <i>medium</i>	Scythe the glade areas annually (approx. 200m ²), and remove sycamore and buddleia saplings. Small 10m ² patch of Buddleia to coppice at edge of glade.	Autumn/ winter	Ranger/ volunteers for 1 day.
		Access			
		Maintain footpath, and remove obstacles from the footpath ~ <i>high</i>	Strim path, and prune overgrowth (path runs for 110m)	All year	LMO contract
		Habitat Management			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
2f	Hazel coppice planted 2004. Open grassland along pipeline, (storm overflow pipe laid in 2004 by Southern Water).	Maintain open grassland on pipeline. Encourage woodland ground flora.	Coppice Hazel on 7 year rotation Strim grassland over pipeline. Maintain planted bluebell / primrose / butches broom. Monitor understory flora.	Coppicing in Autumn. Surveys in Spring. Strim nettles / docks before they seed, mid summer.	Ranger

Compartment 3 – Winterbourne Stream and Reedbed

Landscape Character – It is inescapable that this part of Lewes has been and still is greatly influenced by busy transport routes, with the railway line running along a part of the boundary of the LNR. This compartment also consists of the Winterbourne Stream, the Heart of Reeds, the former route of the Winterbourne Stream, an area of woodland and drainage channels.

Long term compartment vision:

- **Healthy and dynamic Winterbourne stream and spring, feeding through the reedbed into the meadow hydrology systems.**
- **Access for all footpath running in circular walk from reedbed area, along Winterbourne, and through to site entrance**
- **Non intervention areas where nature is left in peace.**

Overall aims for this compartment

- **Maintain a variety of wetland and woodland habitats associated with the Winterbourne Stream.**
- **Maintain safe footpaths and prevent access to sensitive habitats.**
- **Carry out a rotational tree safety monitoring and pollarding programme.**
- **Integrate the Heart of Reeds into the whole of the Railway Land and adopt a management regime for the project.**

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Habitat Management			
3a	This area follows the course of the Winterbourne Cut (created in 1985). The Winterbourne flow levels fluctuate daily and seasonally, with no flow during the summer months. The banks of the stream are lined with willow trees, some of which have been coppiced and pollarded. Good cover for birds such as mallard, snipe, moorhen and water-rail.	Provide a variety of habitats, with different light conditions and scrub/tree densities along the stream ~ <i>medium</i>	Pollard trees along Winterbourne on a 5 year rotation, working from the culvert along to the stream bend, but not beyond.	Winter, every 5 years.	Tree surgeons
		The Winterbourne Culvert and sluice is maintained by the EA, and they are responsible for the upkeep and health and safety of the area. They erected post and rail fencing around the culvert in 2003 ~ <i>high</i>	Report any damage to fencing, sluice or bridge to the EA.	Weekly	EA to carry out regular checks

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Open up views from the stream through to the chalk cliffs towards the golf course. ~ low	Pollard/coppice dangerous trees (especially crack willows) overhanging footpaths, or adjacent to the Railway.	After annual inspections, or following storm damage	Ranger
		Access			
		Keep paths clear and safe ~ high	Clearance of nettles to enable access.	Summer.	LMO cut (summer)
		Warn of slippery / flood conditions	Signage near entrance area	As and when required	Ranger
		Habitat Management			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
3c	This area is characterised by open young woodland dominated by elm, hawthorn, willow and alder, and contains remnants of the allotments. This is one of the unmanaged areas of the Nature Reserve. A ditch runs through this zone and contains a small amount of water in the winter months. The character of the ditch is dry and overgrown, and provides shelter for mammals such as stoats, weasels, rabbits and foxes.	Maintain as a quiet and inaccessible area. <i>~ low</i>	Non-intervention area.		Ranger to enforce
		There is a patch of Japanese knotweed to be controlled as part of the whole site knotweed treatment programme (see section 4c) <i>~ high</i>	Knotweed treatment programme (see section 4c)	Two to three applications of EMAS approved chemical annually (in Summer).	Licensed contractor to undertake under close supervision of the Ranger
		Habitat Management			
3d	The course of the old Winterbourne runs through this zone and is fed by a spring. It consists of mainly willow and a horse chestnut (one of only two specimens on the site). There are a lot of fallen branches in and around the spring which should be retained. This is where the kingfisher nests.	Non intervention <i>~ high</i>	Monitor kingfisher presence and participate in Reedbed Project design.	N/A	Ranger

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
3g,h ,l,j,& k	The Reedbed. Split into zones.	Manage reeds and aquatic vegetation. <i>~high</i>	Remove reeds from channel where they completely fill channels. Cut using hand tools below water, from a small boat	Autumn / Winter	Ranger / Volunteers. Consider specialist contractor if needed.
		Create site lines, so that even in areas of thick vegetation growth, open water can be viewed from path. <i>~ high</i>	Clear tall vegetation using hand tools or trimmers, along a 3m width, in a straight line from the footpath edge to the waters edge.	Throughout summer, as vegetation grows. Monitor for bird nests and minimise disturbance.	Ranger / Volunteers.
		Remove tree saplings throughout reedbed, including islands. <i>~ high</i>	Pull out willow saplings, or cut down if established.	Winter	Ranger / Volunteers
		Non intervention within main reedbed area	Leave site to develop naturally	N/A	Ranger to monitor
		Clear 1m verges round all surfaced footpaths within reedbed <i>~ high</i>	Strim	Summer	LMO contract

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Clear south facing glades within banks, to create reptile basking areas (esp for Grass snakes present). <i>~ high</i>	Hand tools / strimmer	Winter / Summer	Volunteers
		Manage water levels to retain enough water to help support and control reed growth <i>~ high</i>	Monitor and maintain sluice network	All year	Ranger
		Monitor water levels	Install depth gage on main sluice	4 times per year	Ranger
		Maintain land – water ratio	Dredge channels as and when needed – possibly on 10 year basis	Every 10 years or after major flood	Contractor
		Maintain pond dipping platform	Monitor stability. Make repairs if necessary.	Annual health and safety check	Ranger
		Maintain fencing on viewing mound.	Monitor	Annual health and safety check	Ranger

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Maintain surfaced footpaths	628m in total. Remove encroaching vegetation. Top up annually with limestone fine toppings.	Annually	Ranger
		Maintain 4 lifebuoys on site and deep water signs	Check weekly	Weekly	Ranger / Wardens
		Maintain board walk in good working order	Monitor	Maintain when necessary. Annual check	Ranger
		Maintain two benches on the reedbed area	Monitor	Maintain when necessary. Annual check	Ranger
		Monitor ecological development	Ecological survey	Annually	Ranger

Compartment 4 – Former Railway Sidings and Valley Floor

Landscape Character – This is the most heavily used part of the site as it is the entrance to the riverside footpath and is the main entrance and access route of the Nature Reserve, leading to the signal box bird hide.

Long term compartment vision :

- Landscaped entrance area, interpretation boards with leaflets, welcoming seating, and views over the reedbed project

- Sustainable visitors centre built in the entrance area, with place for education facilities.
- Tidy, free from litter, and attractive gateway to site, accessible to all.

Overall aims for this compartment

- Gateway area to site - should maintain open view points across the former sidings
- Maintain site for South Street Bonfire celebrations
- Restrict scrub growth on the embankment and monitor for flora
- Control Japanese knotweed

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
Habitat Management					
4a	Much of this area is made up with old railway ballast. There are large buddleia bushes just past the railway gate, which need managing. The Riverside footpath also begins in this area.	Monitor buddleia growth and trim if encroaching path. <i>~ low</i>	Hand pruning	Summer / Winter	Ranger

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Maintain footpaths ~ <i>high</i>	<p>Fill holes in the disabled access footpath using MOT type 1 gravel (pile located on site).</p> <p>Clear overgrowth from riverside footpath, and maintain several viewing areas out across the river. Maintain wide footpaths and graded verge height at path edges</p>	<p>When necessary – on-going</p> <p>As above</p>	<p>Ranger</p> <p>LMO Contractors and volunteers</p>

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
4b	The removal of the railway sidings in 1990 created an open space where the influences of water-logging and subsoil's are generating a particular type of vegetation which is typical with former industrial land. The area is undergoing natural succession from grassland to scrub, dominated by bramble and willow-herb. Flooding is an has a seasonal impact on this site.	Scrub succession in this area should be controlled in large sections, in order to retain a diverse height structure and flora conditions. ~ <i>medium</i>	Annual scrub clearance should be targeted and results monitored. This can be through use of hand tools, or cutting machinery. Areas involved total approx. 1500m ² (however, this amount will vary from year to year, based on growth rates). Cuttings should be collected and composted on site, to prevent nutrient build up and ruderal growth. The area between the line of alder trees should be left to grow as cover for nesting birds, amphibians and reptiles.	Winter, on a rotation cycle	Ranger, volunteers, and LMO contractors. Sub contracting will be necessary as the LMO contract only covers 50m ² . 3 days of volunteer time could also be used.
		This area is historically the site of the South Street Bonfire on 5 November, and this needs to be maintained. ~ <i>high</i>	South Street Bonfire Society control all the activities and clear up operations associated with this activity.	5 November	SSBC.

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
4c	<p>This is the remnants of the old embankment and acts as a secondary flood bank. The substrate is "railway" grit mixed with. This area provides yet another habitat, supporting chalk grassland plant species such as viper's bugloss, rest harrow and wild mignonette. It is a confined corridor but its elevated position provides views over zone 4b and the western part of the site and over the Brooks. The banks are very important for invertebrates, as highlighted by the entomology surveys.</p> <p>There is a disabled access path running along the top of the embankment from the entrance on Railway Lane, to the signal box.</p>	<p>Control Japanese knotweed on either side of path (particularly bad on the Eastern Bank adjoining the old allotment area (5b)).</p> <p>~ low</p>	<p>Spray knotweed using the EA approved method – Glyphosate based spray applied using a droplet sprayer, on three separate occasions throughout the spring and summer. Timing is crucial: should be rigorous and effectively applied to all plant leaves in early spring (upon shrub emergence), in mid summer – at the plants most vigorous stage) and in late summer, prior to plant annual die-back.</p>	See column left	Contractor
		<p>Keep embankment free from scrub, by clearing bramble</p>	<p>Hand tools or tractor and flail</p>	Winter	Ranger / Contractor / Volunteers

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Remove tree saplings and coppice hawthorn at specific points along the route, particularly around the view point looking across the meadows. <i>~ low</i>	Annual coppice/pruning of approx. 15m ² of hedgerow.	Winter	Ranger 1 work day
		Access			
		Maintain the surface footpath to a standard suitable for disabled users. <i>~ high</i>	Maintain a 1m verge either side of path to prevent encroachment. The path is 1166m in length. Top up gravel and fine surfacing using suitable material (pile of MOT type 1 located on site).	Three times per year, either spring, summer and autumn. When necessary	LMO Contractors. Ranger

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
4d	Southern end of the reserve, consisting of the footpath, the signal box bird hide, and hedgerows. The reserve is very narrow at this area, squeezed between the meadows and the railway line. There are also key access points into the meadows via Chilly Brooks (owned by the RWLT) and to a railway underpass and to the western meadows, and on to Ham Lane.	Maintain interpretation facilities within signal box ~ <i>high</i>	Keep material up to date including stocking with leaflets, equipment well stocked, clean and in good working order.	Annually	RTWT and Ranger
		Maintain the Signal Box interpretation centre ~ <i>high</i>	Routine maintenance, including regular painting, oiling of locks, and fixing damaged structural elements	As and when required	RTWT
4 e	This is the area between the two gates, known as the entrance area.	<i>Possible site for Linklater Pavilion Visitors Centre</i>	Decision on fund raising by the RLWT	Decision by Feb 09	RLWT
	Main entrance to reserve	Maintain good standard of presentation within entrance area. Small area adjacent to old Stricklands Warehouse, was landscaped with a design by the JMB in 2005. This area is a wildflower meadow	Wildflower grass cut during August	August	LMO contract

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Maintain footpaths, and other structures such as interpretation board, benches, and railway sleeper shrub bed.	Volunteers and contractors to undertake works	As and when required. Annual Health and Safety checks.	Ranger
		Control Japanese Knotweed along river wall where appropriate. ~ <i>High</i>	See section 4c		
		Maintain entrance gate in good condition ~ <i>medium</i>	The old railway crossing gate was replaced in January 2004, and is an important symbol for the site, as well as crucial to the continuity of past industrial land use. Gate should be maintained in good paint and working order.	Check annually	Ranger

Compartment 5 – River Walk and Former Allotments

Landscape Character: This compartment is the river flood bank and has a statutory castingway of 8 metres. It is an important link between the town and countryside and forms part of a circular route back into Lewes as well as a route to Newhaven which is an 8 ½ mile walk along the river bank. The old allotments are those of the railway workers when the sidings were in use; the fruit trees are a reminder of its former use.

Long term compartment visions:

- **Black poplar copse well established and self sustaining, and the whole area is flourishing**
- **On going control of Japanese Knotweed over time**

Overall aims for this compartment:

- **Maintain access along the permissive riverside footpath**
- **Manage diverse scrub height structure, creating small glades along the banks to encourage grasses**
- **Manage black poplar copse to maximise growth potential of the young trees**
- **Control Japanese knotweed**

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Habitat Management			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
5a	<p>Scrub is developing along the river bank as is the tree canopy from the western edge. The ground level is slightly higher than the brooks. Although an open riverside bank is a necessary requirement of the EA (to allow for 8 metre castingway), their current attitude seems to be far more conservation minded, and following consultation with the EA conservation team, scrub development is generally to be allowed to continue on this nature reserve.</p> <p>The tidal river creates yet another habitat of brackish water, characterised by the presence of sea aster.</p>	<p>Scrub should be encouraged to develop along the river bank, with some glades cut into the scrub on the western side to encourage grasses. ~ low</p>	<p>Non-intervention except for cutting of glades. Cut using hand tools, strimmer and brush cutters.</p>	<p>Winter</p>	<p>Ranger</p>
		Access			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Maintain path width at least 2m with further 1m either side for a verge. ~ <i>high</i>	Strim path three times per year, with a once per year cut of the verge. The path is 300m long	4 times per year, by contractors. Additionally when required. Extra verge to be cut in Winter.	LMO contractors
		Habitat Management			
5b	The zone consists of a variety of fruit trees showing its former use. The area is a good sunny sheltered area for insects and supports an abundance of bird life. It is dominated in summer by rosebay willow-herb. A number of black poplar saplings were planted in 2000, and these have now grown into healthy young trees. There is some Japanese knotweed adjacent to the surfaced path (zone 4c).	Maintain the black poplars in optimum growth conditions. ~ <i>high</i>	Keep clear a 1m radius round each tree, and mulch with bark mulch to suppress weed growth.	Summer, annually, As section 4c Autumn	Ranger

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		Control Japanese knotweed ~ low	As section 4c		As section 4c

Compartment 6 – The Brooks

Landscape Character - The area is a network of ditches with wet grazing meadows. These meadows are bordered by the River Ouse. Though these meadows are not part of the LNR (except the northern meadow) they are of great ecological value. The meadows give a strong contribution to the rural character of the town and the LNR. (Defra countryside stewardship filed numbers owned by the RLWT are 3375 & 4478.

Long terms compartment visions:

- **Integration of meadow ditch system with the Reedbed project, and the Railway Land hydrological system**
- **Healthy and dynamic aquatic and wetland ecosystem develops based on a semi-natural flooding regime, and the management of the ditch system.**

Overall aims for this area

- **Co-ordinated grazing regime for sustainable grassland management**
- **Manage meadows and ditches as one unit, interconnected to the LNR**
- **Manage ditches on a long term maintenance programme to prevent excess silting, maintain water levels, and minimise scrub development.**
- **Increase grassland and flora diversity**
- **Maintain footpath access**

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
6a		Access			
		<p>Keep footpath open as in section 5a. Ground conditions are very wet at times, and any resurfacing of path must be in keeping with the rest of the riverside pathway. ~ <i>high</i></p>	<p>Add wood chippings from on site tree works to muddy paths to maintain grip and soak up excess mud. Possibly provide some drainage channels down towards the river.</p>	<p>When required during wet conditions.</p>	<p>Ranger</p>
		Habitat Management			

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
6b&c	<p>This area is a flat, wet meadow with ditches bordering each side. The ditches are recognised to be rich in invertebrates (Hodge 2009), and contain an abundance of marsh frogs amongst other animals. This meadow should be managed as part of the network of meadows and ditches that stretch across to the A27, (though the other meadows are privately owned they are all part of the same system). The ditch runs into former allotments and provides excellent cover (trees and brambles) which does not occur in the other ditches. This habitat is ideal for the more reclusive bird species such as water-rail and coot.</p>	<p>The main aim of management of the ditches is to retain sufficient water levels to support the invertebrates throughout the year. The ditch system, though very low-lying, is shallow in the warmer months due to the water running into the River Ouse via a low sluice. The boards on this sluice were replaced in 2003 by the RLWT and the EA, under countryside stewardship. ~ high</p>	<p>Remove or add boards to the sluice. Replace rotten boards as and when they are required. To clear ditches of silt, follow EA conservation guideline, which will dictate when and how they are cleared. Roughly speaking, one side should be cleared, and then the other left for a while. This will prevent too much disturbance to wildlife.</p>	<p>As and when necessary to control water levels, (a high priority within this plan).</p>	<p>Ranger/ EA / RLWT</p>
		<p>Grazing</p>	<p>Maintain sufficient summer grazing to fulfil requirements of Countryside Stewardship and retain grassland diversity.</p>	<p>Winter</p>	<p>Farmer</p>

Location	Description	Objective	How to meet objective	When to do	By whom
		<p>The landowner at present has the land under a Countryside Stewardship Scheme, which was renewed in 2002. Ditches should be re-dug on a rotation, so 20% of the ditches are dug in one year, another 20% the following year and so on. They must not all be done at the same time. There may be a case for leaving some ditches for longer. It is necessary for a programme to be drawn up showing which ditches are to be done and in which year. The Internal Drainage Board are obliged to clear out specific ditches every few years. This was a key aim of the entomological management set out by Peter Hodge (1990) when describing the value of the ditches on site. Insects indicate the core ecological health of the drainage ditches, and therefore this advice needs to be heeded in order to create optimum conditions for animals further up the food chain, especially bird life.</p> <p><i>~ high</i></p>	<p>Draw up a ditch maintenance programme involving the EA and the land owner, in consultation with DEFRA and the Countryside Stewardship scheme.</p>	<p>Winter</p>	<p>EA, DEFRA, LDC, RLWT and external contracted labour.</p>

Acronyms & abbreviations

- LDC – Lewes District Council
- EA – Environment Agency
- SW – Southern Water
- SWT – Sussex Wildlife Trust
- DEFRA – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- RLWT – Railway Land Wildlife Trust
- RLMC – Railway Land Management Committee
- SDCB – Sussex Downs Conservation Board.
- MAB – Man & Biosphere
- LNR – Local Nature Reserve
- SAC – Special area of conservation
- SNCI – Site of Nature Conservation Interest
- SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest
- AONB – Area of outstanding natural beauty
- Ha – Hectares
- Ac – Acres
- RDB – Red data book
- BAP – Biodiversity Action Plan
- EMAS – Environmental Management Audit System
- LMO – Leisure Services Maintenance Contract
- HAG – Habitat advisory group
- JMB – Junior Management Board
- ESRC – Economic and Social Research Council

Useful telephone contact numbers

- *Lewes District Council help desk 01273 484999*
- *Community Ranger, Lewes District Council – 01273 484408*
- *EA 0800807060 in emergency, or 01903 703943 Local EA conservation team.*
- *Southern Water 0845 278 0845*
- *Natural England Sussex & Surrey team 01273 476595*
- *Sussex Wildlife Trust 01273 492630*
- *Sussex Downs Joint Committee 01273 625242*
- *DEFRA – 01233 813740*