



Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan - Biodiversity

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Context

- Located on coastal plain between South Downs National Park and coast
- Low lying with a history of flooding
- History – Small hamlets of Westergate, Woodgate, Nyton, Norton, Aldingbourne.
- Westergate stream culverted to allow post war growth of Westergate.



Aldingbourne NP

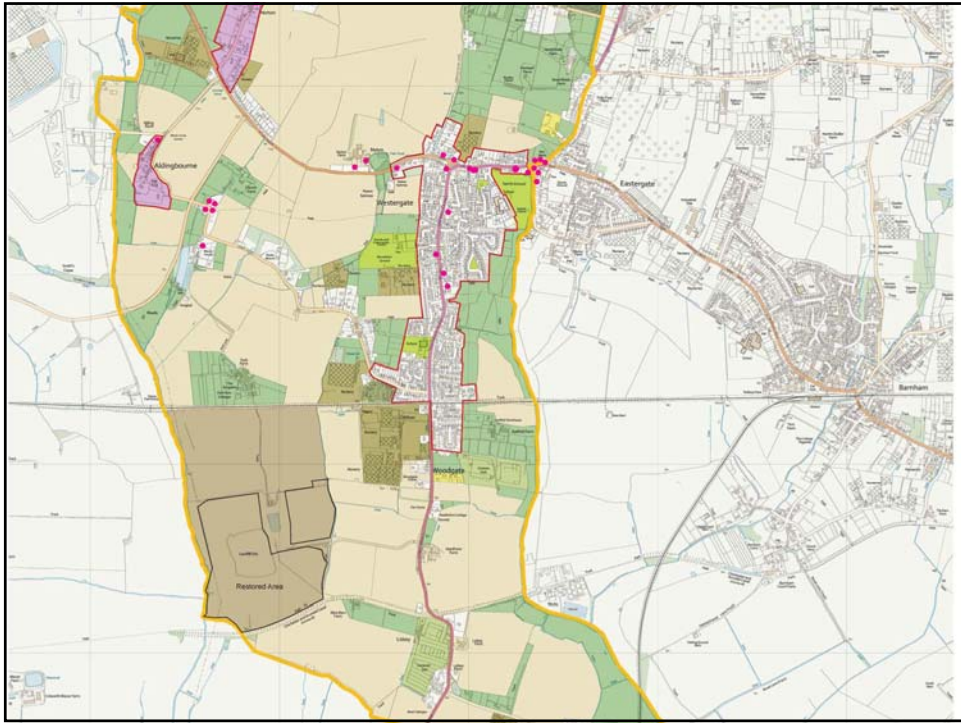
- Begun before Arun Local Plan proposed 2,000 houses between Barnham, Eastergate, Westergate
- Arun Leisure Strategy – aim to improve recreational links between Downs and Coast
- Skilled volunteers, strong interest in biodiversity and landscape.

The approach

- Examined 1840s tithe map – Sussex Record Office CD available for each parish – to establish land use and field pattern.
- Showed presence of large no of ponds and watercourses, some filled in.
- Significant arable areas, with smaller field systems retained largely around hamlets – small scale producers.
- The district's landscape study failed to adequately address historic land use pattern.

Process cont

- Checked 1940s RAF post war aerial survey (WSCC records office). Without original photos difficult to accurately interpret. Access to originals and help tracking down Luftwaffe pre-war view would be helpful.
- Accessed current aerial photos via Google
- Used EA flood map – which shows potential for creating wetland/wildlife corridors
- Used biodiversity report supplied by Sussex Biological Records Centre, run by SWT, supplemented by additional info on chalk streams.
- All maps need to be checked on the ground – ie walk the parish: Check old hedgerows and old trees.
- Checked TPOs – proved out of date, most disappeared!



NP Outcomes

- We are now trying to create landscape, biodiversity and recreational corridors as part of the Aldingbourne NP
- A NP is not simply about where to put or not put development, but an opportunity to engage a community in more sustainable planning, which involves making space for nature and climate change

Replication/Problems to address

- Need skilled volunteers with time to push NP on
- Developers proposals – divert attention
- NPPF meant to deliver sustainability but Local Plan does not take adequate account.
- Need info from key agencies: SWT most helpful and accessible of all organisations contacted, also WSCC Records Centre. Flood responsibilities split: EA and WSCC. Least helpful EA nationally.

Replication/problems to address

- Surface water management plan only now being prepared – linkage?
- Lack acknowledgement by planning authority and EA that chalk streams are part of UK Biodiversity Action Plan and need to be integrated into Neighbourhood and Local Plans.
- Outcome, ie ADC and examiner, an unknown quantity!