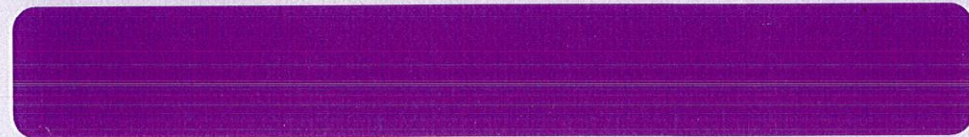
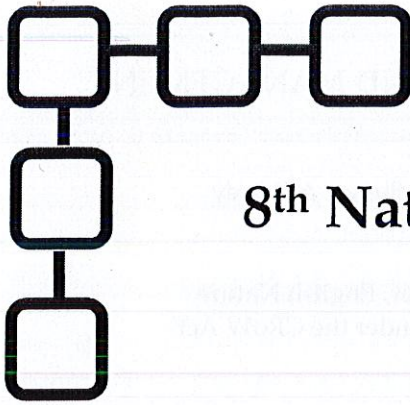


8th National Heathland Conference

**University of Sussex
at Brighton**

7-9 September 2004

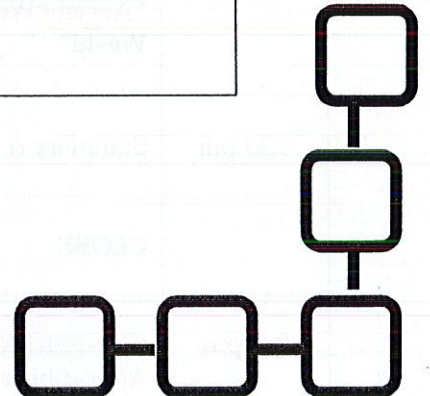




8th National Heathland Conference
University of Sussex
7th - 9th September 2004

Conference Programme
Day 1 - Tuesday 7th September

8.00am	Registration begins Refreshments
10.00am	Press Call and Conference Opening Councillor Daphne Bagshawe Chairman of East Sussex County Council and Conservator of Ashdown Forest
THEME	HEATHLANDS AS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES
10.10am	Convenor: Professor Nigel Webb
10.15 am	Professor Peter Emil Kaland, University of Bergen "The HeathCult Project"
11.00am	Chris Howkins - Ethno-botanist "Heathland and the Manorial system"
11.30am	Professor Brian Short, University of Sussex "Victorian Heathland as a social and cultural environment: the case of Ashdown Forest, Sussex"
12.00pm	Summary & Questions
12.15pm	LUNCH



THEME	THE POLICY CONTEXT OF HEATHLAND MANAGEMENT
1.45 pm	Convenor: Chris Edwards , Team Manager, English Nature Sussex & Surrey
1.50pm	Graham Bathe , Access and Common Land Projects Manager, English Nature "The Practical Implications of a Statutory Right of Access under the CRoW Act"
2.15pm	David Smallshire , Policy Advisor – Ecology, Defra RDS "Changes to Agri-Environment Schemes"
2.45pm	Chris Short , Senior Research Fellow, Countryside & Community Research Unit, University of Gloucestershire "Determining Best Practice for Re-establishing Sustainable Management on Common Land: a Comparative Review of the Ecological, Economic, and Social Implications"
3.15pm	Summary & Questions
3.30 pm	REFRESHMENTS
THEME	HEATHLANDS IN THE LANDSCAPE
4.00pm	Convener: Dr Tony Whitbread , Director, Sussex Wildlife Trust
4.05pm	Professor Paul Buckland , Professor of Environmental Archaeology, Bournemouth University "The Age of Holocene Heathlands – a Palaeoentomological View"
4.35pm	Dr. Kathy Hodder , Conservation Ecologist, Centre of Ecology and Hydrology "Near-Natural Grazing and Conservation; Potential and Constraints in the English Landscape"
5.05pm	Patrick McKernan , Southeast AONBs Woodlands Officer & Dr Patrick Roper , Consultant Ecologist "Ancient Woodland or Ancient Heath? Re-examining the Importance of Wooded Heath in the Weald"
5.35 pm	Summary & Questions
	CLOSE
7.30pm	CONFERENCE DINNER After-dinner Speaker: Dr. Peter Brandon , Author and Historical Geographer

Day 2 – Wednesday 8th September

THEME	HEATHLAND ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT
9.00am	Convener: David Streeter , Reader in Ecology, University of Sussex & Friends of Ashdown Forest
9.05am	Martin Brown , Environmental Advisor - Archaeology, Ministry of Defence "Barrows, Bracken and Battle Tanks: Archaeology and Heath on the Defence Estate"
9.35am	Dr. Rob McGibbon , Project Manager, Surrey Heathland Project "The Goat and The Heath"
10.00am	Malcolm Ausden , Senior Ecologist, RSPB "Creation of Heathland and Acid Grassland on Agriculturally Improved Land"
10.30am	REFRESHMENTS
11.00am	Heather Tidball , Project Manager, Urban Heaths LIFE Project "Reducing Urban Pressure on Heathland SSSI's"
11.30am	Mike Edwards , Consultant Ecologist "Insects and condition assessment - a good first step?"
12.00pm	Summary & Questions
12.15pm	CLOSE
SITE VISITS	
12.30pm	<p>COACHES LEAVE (packed lunch en route)</p> <p>One of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 'Grazing on Ashdown Forest' Ashdown Forest ● 'Wealden Greensand Heaths' (Ambersham Common & Lord's Piece) ● 'So what <u>is</u> a chalk heath?' Lullington Heath NNR ● 'Tudeley Woods Heathland Restoration Project' RSPB Kent. <p>Please see www.highweald.org for further information about each site visit.</p>
6.00pm	RETURN to campus
7.30pm	DINNER

Day 3 – Thursday 9th September

THEME	HEATHLAND PRODUCTS, PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL
9.00am	Convener: Dr. Hew Prendergast , Superintendent, Ashdown Forest
9.10am	Jeremy Clitherow , Conservation Officer, Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage Cornwall & China Clay Woodland Project, English Nature "Socio-economic Reintegration of the Heathland Landscape"
9.45am	Les Davies , Senior Warden, Mendip Hills AONB, Bracken Down Composting Ltd
10.15am	Dr. A. J. Barker , Dalefoot Composts "There's Gold in them there Hills - Lakeland Gold, a bracken-based soil conditioner"
10.45am	REFRESHMENTS
11.15am	Andy Hall , Team Leader South, Forest Research, Forestry Commission "Wood Fuel from Heathlands - The Opportunity"
11.45am	Richard Lutwyche , Traditional Breeds Meat Marketing Scheme "The Opportunity for Niche Marketing – Livestock from Heathland Grazing Schemes"
12.15pm	Summary & Questions
12.30pm	LUNCH
THEME	PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE OF BRITISH HEATHLANDS
2.00pm	Convenor: Bryan Pickess , Dorset Heathlands
2.05pm	Dr. Isabel Alonso , Heathland Ecologist, English Nature "THH & BAP - What we have achieved so far, and what do we still need to do"
2.35pm	Nigel Symes , Land Management Advisor, RSPB "Vision for heathland in 50 years time"
3.05pm	Summary & Questions
3.20pm	Round-up & Closing Bryan Pickess
3.30pm	CONFERENCE CLOSE

National Heathland Conference

Site Visits

September 8th 2004

“Tudeley Woods Heathland Restoration Project”

Tudeley Woods RSPB Reserve, Kent

Leader Martin Allison, The Wealden Heath and Woodland Manager

Grid Ref: TQ612416

Synopsis of site:

Tudeley Woods is a 308 ha RSPB nature reserve set within the High Weald AONB. The site is primarily semi-natural ancient woodland where work is in progress to restore a mosaic of traditional coppice and lowland heath to create an intricate patchwork of habitats, which reflect the cultural history of the High Weald landscape.

Synopsis of field trip:

Approximately 40 ha of the reserve is under heathland restoration or recreation management. We will be visiting the original woodland clearances plus the experimental field conversions, where soil stripping, mulching, heath harvesting and grazing have all taken place. If time allows we will visit the new extensions in the next valley to the north.

Itinerary:

Walk from coach to woodland clearance, and then onto fields. Round trip approximately 2.5 kilometres maximum.

Lunch:

Picnic provided by the university to be eaten on the coach.

National Heathland Conference

Site Visits

September 8th 2004

"So what is a Chalk Heath"

Lullington Heath NNR

Leader Malcolm Emery, English Nature Sussex and Surrey Team, East Sussex
NNR site Manager

Grid Ref: TQ562014 (end of lane to Jevington Church)

Synopsis of site:

A 62 hectare National Nature Reserve, comprising a mosaic of species-rich chalk grassland and scrub with chalk heath at its heart. Beautiful scenery and tranquillity make the site a very popular destination for quiet recreation.

Synopsis of field trip:

A pleasant walk up from Jevington church to enjoy the chalk heath and discuss its ecology and management. Sheep, ponies and goats all play their part in maintaining the site.

Itinerary:

Total walking distance, round trip - 4.5 kilometres. 20-30 minutes up and down the hill with 2 hours on site, making a total of 3 hours from drop off in Jevington and pick up again.

Lunch:

Picnic provided by the university to be eaten on the coach.

Other:

Stout footwear recommended

National Heathland Conference

Site Visits

September 8th 2004

"The Wealden Greensands Heaths"

Lord's Piece and Ambersham Common SSSI

Leaders Rob Free

Toby Williamson

Mike Edwards

The southern ridge heaths in this area, approximately between Petersfield at Storrington in Sussex, are nationally important for their invertebrate interest, as they are low, hot, dry and sheltered by the South Downs. It is probably no accident that the last native site for the field cricket is to be found here. We will visit this site, Lords Piece, to discover from Mike Edwards (Consultant Entomologist) how it is being managed as the epicentre for this Species' Recovery Programme. The management includes a rotation of birch and bracken control, scraping works to expose bare soil, and Exmoor pony grazing to maintain the short grassy sward.

The second site is a classic example of the heathland in this area. Ambersham Common is a 140 hectare SSSI with a typical mosaic of heathland habitats supporting a nationally important assemblage of invertebrates, a diverse community of breeding birds, and the smooth snake and sand lizard, both introduced in the 70's. We will be looking at the integration of management here including a discussion on the management of invertebrate assemblages with Mike Edwards.

Lunch; Picnic provided by the university to be eaten on the coach

Afternoon itinerary:

- 12.30 Coach leaves Brighton (packed lunch on coach)
- 1.30 Coach arrives at car park, Lords Piece (parking on roadside),
Brief introduction to site by SWGH Project and Sebastian Anstruther
Walk around part of site where field crickets are most active, gently sloping short walk of about 300 metres.
Presentation & discussion/answer session with Mike Edwards.
Visit across the road to Coates Castle SSSI to compare
- 2.30 Coach leaves Lords Piece for Ambersham Common SSSI
- 2.45 Coach arrives Ambersham Common (parking at crossroads car park)
Brief introduction to site by SWGH Project and Cowdray Estate
- 3.0 Walk along road and up steep slope to brow of hill (800m) to dry, south facing heath,
Presentation & discussion/answer session with Mike Edwards.
- 3.30 Continue walk to valley mire area (900m). Good footwear required,
- 3.45 Presentation & discussion/answer session re invertebrate assemblages and management issues with Mike Edwards,
- 4.30 Close & depart for Brighton

National Heathland Conference

Site Visits

September 8th 2004

"Grazing on Ashdown Forest"

Ashdown Forest SSSI, cSAC, SPA.

Leaders Chris Marrable, David Streeter Hew Prendergast

Grid Ref : TQ462287 (Hollies car park)

Synopsis of site:

Due to deer hunting Ashdown Forest was already being managed as a discrete part of the High Weald in the 13C. The iron industry and use by local Commoners have been other major influences on a landscape whose public access area of 2500 hectares is now 60% heathland and 40% woodland.

Synopsis of field trip:

Unfenced livestock grazing ceased in the 1980s. 500 ha were fenced in 1998 and have since held up to 1000 sheep and 10 cattle in summer. From a spectacular viewpoint we will explore the heathland and discuss the effects of grazing and other management techniques.

Itinerary:

We will descend 80 metres in altitude from the car park southwards and do a circular walk of ca.3 km along well-established rides/fire-breaks. Two hours are allowed. Divided into groups and accompanying Forest staff, we will see areas that have been burned, mown for bracken control, and mechanically cleared of scrub. Marsh Gentians will be in flower.

Other:

Bring the usual outdoor gear in case of adverse weather. Binoculars worth bringing too! See the Forest's website at www.ashdownforest.org

National Heathland Conference

7-9 September 2004

University of Sussex

Heathlands as Social and Cultural Landscapes

Convenor - Nigel Webb

Professor Nigel Webb began his studies of heathland while in Denmark as a post graduate student. He joined the Nature Conservancy (the forerunner of English Nature) at Furzebrook in Dorset in 1967. He retired in 2002 as Deputy Head of Furzebrook Research Station after 34 years service in NERC. He has specialised in the ecology of European heathlands and Arctic tundra with an emphasis on the ecology of soil invertebrates, conservation and restoration. He is the author of the Collins New Naturalist Volume entitled 'Heathlands'. He was Chief Editor of the Journal of Applied Ecology from 1989 to 1995. He holds visiting Professorships at the Universities of Liverpool and Bournemouth. He has been Chairman of the Institute of Biology Environment Committee since 1999 and was IoB Vice-President (Science Policy) 2001-02.

Professor Peter Emil Kaland - University of Bergen

The HeathCult Project

HEATHCULT is a EU project (Raphael-programme) and has the following purposes:

- * to increase the European public awareness of the heathland as one of the oldest cultural landscapes of Western Europe
- * to protect it as a part of the European cultural heritage
- * The heathland is today rapidly vanishing and rapid action on a European level is needed to retain it for the future

16 European institutions from 7 countries support the project. Each of the partners has long experience of promoting the heath landscape within its own region. The co-operation within HEATHCULT has made it possible to extend the target group to the European community.

Members of the European HEATHCULT project:

Bergen museum, University of Bergen, Norway, The Heathland Center, Norway, Center for Culture Landscapes, County Council of Hordaland, Norway, The National Forest and Nature Agency, Denmark, Herning Museum, Denmark Skjern-Egved Museum, Denmark, Grindsted-Vorbasse Museum, Denmark, National Trust, England, New Forest Committee, England, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Dorset, England, European Economic Development Services Ltd, Hexham, England, Landwirtschaftsmuseum Lüneburger Heide, Germany, Alfred Toepfer Akademie für Naturschutz, Germany, Agricultural Research Department, Wageningen, the Netherlands, Institute for Nature Conservation, Belgium, Instituto da Conservacao da Natureza (ICN), Portugal

Chris Howkins - Ethno-botanist

Chris Howkins researches, writes and publishes material on British ethnobotany, with a special enthusiasm for heathlands. As such he is thought to be the only person in Britain who does this full-time, independently, to academic levels acceptable to the Government agencies. The data base has been built up over a lifetime and is said to be the third largest of its kind, after the British Museum and the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. See website for more details including publications:- www.chrishowkins.com

Abstract 'Heathland Grazing as part of the Manorial system'

Heathlands today are viewed as distinct habitats but in the feudal Manorial past the people who worked the heathlands viewed them as part of their overall landholding. The very limited range of

plants was used to satisfy an incredible range of their daily needs, so that plants like Ling, Bracken, Birch and Furze have been among the most valuable of all native plants.

In particular, the Ling provided emergency grazing whenever there was a crisis in the grass pastures - when the water meadows were flooded, frozen or under deep snow, since the heathlands were usually on higher ground above floods and frost pockets. Then, every year, Ling provided vital grazing when the grass pastures had to be cleared of livestock to enable the grasses and other meadow plants to flower, ready for hay-making. For winter feed there was an alternative to hay until the mid 17th century and so this heathland grazing was vital to the economic survival of the community.

When the livestock had to be removed from the meadows there was also the problem of where to put them in terms of space. It is difficult to imagine today the vast numbers of sheep that sustained the medieval woollen cloth industry, the amount of food they needed and the space they took up. Many manors did not have any option but to exploit their heathlands in this way, every year.

In order that we understand our heathlands better they need to be seen in the context of the whole manor, so that we can begin to calculate how the various resources, from woodlands to arable lands, were exploited together, not just to survive but to prosper. Many communities did indeed prosper, as testified by their beautiful but expensive medieval churches. These were lit with wax candles, more so than in any other country in Christendom, thanks to the bees working the heathers on the heathland, after other British flowers had gone to seed. The heathlands are more than a limited range of plants on very poor soils. They are the coloured pictures to the black and white text of a very long and complex social history.

Brian Short - University of Sussex

Professor Brian Short is an historical geographer from the Department of Geography at Sussex University and has spent many years working on the landscapes and societies of England and Wales. He edited 'The Ashdown Forest Dispute 1876-1882: Environmental Politics and Custom' (Sussex Record Society 1998), and among his other publications relevant to the theme of the conference are the co-edited 'An Historical Atlas of Sussex' (Phillimore 1999), a chapter on 'forests and wood pasture in lowland England' in Joan Thirsk (ed) Rural England: 'an illustrated history of the landscape' (Oxford Univ Press 2000), and articles on the Victorian Ashdown Forest in the journals of Rural History and Journal of Historical Geography.

Abstract '19th Century Ashdown Forest and its struggles, commoners and customs.'

The late Victorian period witnessed a growing concern for, on the one hand, environmental protection, and on the other, the 'human fauna', with their vanishing folk heritage, living on the margins of a capitalist rural economy. The Ashdown Forest area of lowland heath was a complex intermixture of private property and common land, the outlines of which were set down in a Decree and Award of 1693 which attempted to set out once and for all the exact pattern of common land, and common rights, over which there had been longstanding disputes. Settlement was characterized by small subsistence holdings, isolated cottages or hamlets scattered around the Forest pale, within which kinship, friendship and working links were maintained, in large part through access to Ashdown's resources. Larger tenant farms and elite residences were located around the edges of the forest. Gentry attitudes to such forest communities varied, but were generally as condemnatory as remarks about the scenery before the mid nineteenth century.

The conflicts over custom and common right were brought to a head through the actions of the 7th Earl de la Warr, inheriting the title in 1873, and beginning soon afterwards to initiate local law suits against the commoners over their rights to collect litter (bracken, heather, gorse, coarse grasses etc.) This was used as a cheap substitute for straw in cattle yards, as domestic or commercial fuel, or for thatching, and as such was an extremely valuable commodity to the commoners, especially to the poorer families. In connection with the culminating Ashdown Forest legal dispute (1876-82) the young solicitor William Augustus Raper interviewed elderly residents to collect evidence of 60 years

of user rights. Their depositions reveal much about the ways in which local environmental politics were a constituent part of custom and economy on the Forest, and how such contested rights underpinned the more elite conservation movement at this time. The evidence reveals much about the interrelations between Victorian peasant communities and their environments, but also much about the individuals, and their social, economic and spatial relations.

Ashdown was a shared setting for the economic activity, social lives and cultural interaction of its inhabitants. The role played here by the ideas of ancient liberties, of common rights, whether real, fabricated or exaggerated, must also be stressed as a key issue concerning social justice around which much activity was focused. A collective memory of 'taken-for-granted' practice was being tapped and re-assembled by Raper, primarily to assist in the contemporary defence of the local working community, and its elite members, who were paying the legal fees.

The Policy Context of Heathland Management

Convenor - Chris Edwards Team Manager, English Nature Sussex and Surrey

Graham Bathe - English Nature

Graham is currently leading English Nature's work associated with the implementation of a statutory right of access under the CROW Act. He worked in Parliament during the passage of the Bill in 2000, and now works alongside the Countryside Agency, Defra and other organisations to ensure that the statutory right of access is introduced in ways that fully protect nature conservation interests. Graham has 30 years postgraduate experience in nature conservation and ecology in this country and overseas, having worked for the Gloucestershire Trust, National Trust, Devon County Council and the International Council for Bird Preservation in the Seychelles. With English Nature and its predecessor, the Nature Conservancy Council he has worked in ten different English counties. In addition to access issues, he is also working on the case for the legislative reform of common land in England and Wales.

Abstract 'The Practical Implications of a Statutory Right of Access under the CROW Act.'

Part I of the CROW Act 2000 will introduce a statutory right of access to certain types of land in England and Wales for open-air recreation, in a regional programme which will unroll between September 2004 and December 2005. The Act confers a right of access on foot (or invalid carriage), and does not include bicycles, horseback or other forms of recreation. In contrast to provisions for rights-of-way, the Act relates to area-wide access, enabling people to wander off-path. The right is subject to a range of general restrictions that apply everywhere (eg not lighting fires, damaging plants etc), and local restrictions which may be made for specific purposes. The land to which the right applies comprises open country (specifically mountain, moor, heath and down) and registered common land. In addition landowners may also voluntarily dedicate their land for access (the Forestry Commission has stated its intention to do this). Statutory maps of access land are in preparation. In England approximately 958,000ha of land qualify, comprising 485,000ha of mountain or moorland, 51,000ha of downland, 51,000ha of heathland and 370,000ha of common land. Approximately half of all access land is within the National Parks.

When the Bill was passing through Parliament, no-one appreciated the intimate relationship between access land and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Now that mapping is nearing completion, it transpires that 54% of all access land is SSSI. On heathland there is a range of wildlife present which may be sensitive to a statutory right of access. However, the implementation of the CROW Act has demonstrated the limited usefulness of research hitherto undertaken on the relationship between wildlife and people or their dogs, much of it focusing on behavioural or physiological responses. Hence we know that birds fly off when approached beyond certain critical distances, or their heart rate may double, but what does this mean for conservation? A number of research projects are in progress specifically relevant to the conservation of scarce heathland birds, including Woodlark,

Nightjar, Dartford warbler and Stone curlew. These are revealing some interesting, and unexpected relationships.

Where conservation interests are vulnerable to access pressures, a range of solutions is available. Whereas the Act enables access to be restricted or excluded for conservation purposes, the Countryside Agency and English Nature advocate the management of qualifying land to reconcile access and wildlife wherever possible. Making use of a special grant scheme, various techniques are being employed to protect wildlife without the need for statutory restrictions. The key to the successful implementation of the CROW Act is management, to integrate access and nature conservation; achieving not a balance, not a trade-off, but both.

David Smallshire - Policy Advisor - Ecology, DEFRA RDS

Abstract 'Changes to Agri-Environment Schemes.'

In England, the Agriculture Act (1986) and the measures accompanying the 1992 Common Agricultural Policy reform paved the way for the establishment of the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) scheme and the expansion of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS), respectively. These nationally available 'agri-environment' measures offer incentives to land managers to adopt sympathetic management practices, with payment rates calculated on the basis of the income forgone.

The schemes are operated by Defra's Rural Development Service, in partnership with statutory and other conservation organisations. They are targeted, either at specific areas of high environmental value (ESAs), or at priority habitats or landscape types, including lowland heathland (CSS). The voluntary, 10-year, management options include payments for maintenance, enhancement and re-creation, together with a range of supporting capital payments.

The 22 ESAs in England include substantial areas of lowland heathland in Breckland, Exmoor, West Penwith and parts of Dartmoor and Shropshire Hills, lowland heathland under agreement covering some 5,800ha in 2003. The corresponding figure for CSS is 34,006ha, which includes a new agreement covering the New Forest. Annual payments totalling almost £2 million were made in 2003 for lowland heathland under these schemes.

The last new agreements for these schemes will run from 2004. In 2005, they will be replaced by a new scheme, Higher Level Stewardship (HLS), which will sit within Environmental Stewardship. HLS has been designed with extensive consultation; it aims to be less prescriptive and more focused on environmental outcomes. Habitat condition assessments, made during an initial, funded audit (the Farm Environmental Plan), will guide both the selection of options to be applied for and the subsequent management of sites.

Final confirmation of HLS details is awaited, but the proposed management options include a suite covering maintenance; restoration from forestry areas and neglected sites; and creation on arable, improved grassland and worked mineral sites. Supplements should also be available for the use of native breeds at risk, other native breeds, difficult sites and the control of bracken and other invasive plants, as well as a range of capital payments.

Chris Short - Countryside & Community Research Unit, University of Gloucestershire

Abstract 'Determining Best Practice for Re-establishing Sustainable Management on Common Land: a Comparative Review of the Ecological, Economic and Social Implications.'

Common land is important and valuable for a wide range of reasons, far more diverse than the traditional practices of centuries ago. Common land is a unique type of land partly because of its age but also the fact that it has its own personal, and rather complex, suite of legislation all to itself. As such the management of this type of land needs to be different. This presentation is based on research work being conducted by the CCRU for a consortium of English Nature, Defra, Countryside Agency, National Trust and the Open Spaces Society. The aim of the research is to produce a 'code of practice'

that will assist land managers and those interested in managing common land to do so while recognising and fully taking on board the ecological, economic and social aspects of this important resource.

Heathlands in the Landscape

Convenor - Tony Whitbread - Director of Sussex Wildlife Trust

Tony Whitbread joined the Sussex Wildlife Trust as Head of Conservation in 1991. His role is to manage the Conservation Department and represent the Trust on conservation policy issues. He sits on numerous local, county and regional committees including Local Strategic Partnerships, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission committees. He also oversees the Reserves Department, People and Wildlife Department and the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre.

Professor Paul Buckland - Bournemouth University

Abstract "The age of Holocene Heathlands - a palaeoentomological view"

The recent discussion of the nature of mid-Holocene ('Atlantic') woodland, precipitated by the English publication of Frans Vera's work (Vera 2000), has led to consideration of a number of aspects beyond the trees. Vera envisages a landscape in which open areas, maintained by natural grazing pressure, are a long term feature of the forest. His model presents a much more dynamic view of the regeneration cycle, moving away from the rather simplistic model of closed forest with minor gaps created by wind fall and other factors to one in which herbivores provide the dominant driving force. The approach has been strongly criticised, particularly by palynologists, and some aspects are perhaps more appropriate to previous interglacials, where elephant, rhinoceros and hippopotamus created clearings on the floodplain, a landscape more akin to temperate savannah, than the present depauperate interglacial, where the extinct aurochs and red deer were perhaps the dominant forest modifiers, but add natural fire and the activities of mesolithic hunter-fishers to his model, and the possibility of a longer history for present lowland heaths becomes evident. There has always been something of a dichotomy between upland and lowland in the interpretation of pollen data, with the former being seen as much older anthropogenic landscapes than the latter. This partly reflects the distribution of pollen diagrams, although there are hints, particularly from soil pollen work on lowland heaths, of early to mid-Holocene human impact leading to acidification. In terms of both the Holocene fossil insect record and the biogeography of species, heathland habitats reappear during the Lateglacial and Early Holocene, and some habitat continuity is required for the survival of their invertebrate denizens into the periods of heathland expansion after neolithic and later forest clearance. There are similar problems with the range of pyrophilic species, including specialists like the buprestid *Melanophila acuminata* of the Surrey Heaths, which are unlikely to be recent immigrants. A recent review of the Holocene fossil insects and construction of a database of all records highlights the patchy nature of the record for open ground species before extensive forest clearance and this paper will consider whether this is a reflection of taphonomy, geographical distribution of sites examined or actuality.

Dr Kathy Hodder - Centre of Ecology and Hydrology

I'm a conservation ecologist based at the NERC Centre of Ecology and Hydrology, Dorset. My interests include conservation issues such as species' reintroduction and conservation grazing, looking at the consequences for biodiversity. Over the last 10 years I've carried out several field studies of vertebrate ecology and behaviour, on species including red and grey squirrels, buzzards, pike and geese. These studies have focussed largely on habitat choice of vertebrates and how this can be linked to habitat management options. The CEH Conservation Management web pages can be found at CEH management web pages

Abstract 'Near natural grazing and conservation; potential and constraints in the English Landscape.'

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in landscape scale conservation, and even in the possibility of creating 'new wilderness' areas. Natural processes could be allowed to operate in such

places, without the comparatively tight controls often required by conservation management. They are envisaged as zones where sharp boundaries would be replaced by ecotones: relatively species rich areas where habitats merge. Conservation objectives for such 'natural areas', however, are much less straightforward to define than they are for cultural landscapes. One approach is to use a past landscape as a sort of template. This does not suggest an attempt to recreate the past, but an agreement about standards against which site condition may be judged. In north-west Europe, the landscape of the early Holocene is probably the best reference point: this was just prior to any significant impact by Neolithic peoples.

For decades, it was generally agreed that this early Holocene landscape was dominated by closed forest, at least in the lowlands. Recently, though, this view has been challenged, and there has been considerable debate about the nature of post-glacial landscapes in north-west Europe. Much of the debate has focussed on work published by Frans Vera. He used ecological, palynological, etymological and historical arguments to propose an alternative 'half-open', park-like landscape, for the pre-Neolithic era. A cyclical turnover of vegetation types was postulated, leading to the development of a shifting mosaic of open grassland, scrub and woodland groves. Crucially, Vera argued that wild grazers such as aurochs, horse, bison, elk, red deer, and roe deer played an essential role. Currently there appears to be reasonable agreement that the early Holocene landscape may have been more open than was previously thought, but this is not equivalent to saying that a wood-pasture environment would necessarily dominate. Instead, there may have been a mixed landscape including areas with vegetation cycles, and others with more permanent vegetation. Degrees of openness are likely to have varied in different edaphic, topographic, and climatic conditions, but at present there is no clear guidance on the patterns that might have existed.

Irrespective of the outcome of the debate about the nature of past landscapes, the concept of near-natural grazing may be useful in the conservation of large reserves. Critically, near-natural reserves would differ from other extensively grazed areas in that herds of large herbivores would be allowed to live almost independent lives, with self-regulating population size, rather than a prescribed stock density. Open areas could be allowed to scrub over and forested areas to open out. Clearly, numerous ecological, economic, cultural and welfare implications arise when considering the suitability and practicality of near-natural grazing schemes. Even in the Netherlands, where near-natural grazing was pioneered, there is no consensus on the use of this approach in conservation. In practice it is likely that managers may opt for allowing natural processes to operate up to predefined limits to acceptable change in landscape and biodiversity, and that close monitoring of near-natural systems would enable suitable management intervention when required.

Patrick McKernan, Southeast AONBs Woodlands Officer & Dr Patrick Roper, Consultant Ecologist

"Ancient Woodland or Ancient Heath? Re-examining the Importance of Wooded Heath in the Weald"

Peter Brandon - After Dinner Speaker

Peter Brandon was born in Sussex and has lived in the county for the past 45 years. His maternal forebears have been associated with Sussex for centuries and he has been immersed in its affairs as a part-time lecturer at the University of Sussex and as a chairman of the Sussex branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England. He is a historical geographer who was formerly head of the Department of Geography at the University of North London, and he has written and edited several books on Sussex and S.E. England including *The Making of the Sussex Landscape* (1974), *The South Saxons* (1978), *The South Downs* (1998) and *The Kent and Sussex Weald*. He is an ardent walker (and outdoors man) who is concerned as much with the present and future of the county as with its past.

Heathland Ecology and Management

Convener - David Streeter Reader in Ecology, University of Sussex

Chairman, Friends of Ashdown Forest
Deputy President, Sussex Wildlife Trust
Member, Sussex Downs Conservation Board
Past Member, Countryside Commission
England Committee, Nature Conservancy Council

Martin Brown - MOD, Archaeologist

Martin Brown is the Defence Estates archaeologist responsible for sites in southern Britain. Before moving to the MOD he spent 10 years in East Sussex as part of the County Council Environment Group where he was involved in projects to conserve and interpret numerous sites and monuments including heathland areas. In his current post he is responsible for the historic environment of areas of heathland including Bovington and Lulworth and areas of the Ashdown Forest.

Martin's research interests include military and battlefield archaeology, as well as the biography of monuments including the accretion of meanings and uses that sites acquire over time. He has also devoted a good deal of his time to the presentation of heritage to the public through guided walks, talks and occasional forays into TV and radio.

Abstract 'Barrows, Bracken and Battle Tanks: Archaeology and Heath on the Defence Estate'

Defence Estates is an agency of MOD. It is responsible for some 1% of the UK landmass. While barracks and runways cover some areas of the estate other areas include significant landscape areas used for military training, the most famous of which is Salisbury Plain. The estate includes large areas of heathland which bear the marks and monuments of military training over, in some cases, two centuries. However the effective management of the Defence Estate and the concurrent preservation of the heritage means that we must understand the resource and not just the military heritage but the whole of human history that has left its mark there.

Until recently it was common for archaeologists to be rather scathing of heath. A search in many County Sites and Monuments Records will reveal scant data about heaths but the work that has been undertaken both in archaeological and historical spheres has revealed a fascinating time depth to the heath. Historic exploitation of these areas can include hunting, grazing and military activity, all of which leave their own particular, if sometimes ephemeral, archaeological remains. However it is also worth remembering that the heaths themselves are constructs and that they may have had other, earlier uses before their management in their present form.

This paper will explore the archaeological heritage of the heath, drawing on examples from southern England and look at the sometimes complex relationships between this particular part of the historic environment and the modern Army Training Estate.

Dr Rob McGibbon - Surrey Heaths Project

After starting work as a plant breeder - of sugar beet and lupins, Rob McGibbon made a career change in the early 1980's when he moved to the Nature Conservancy Council in Dorset. A special interest in heathland developed there, continuing after a move to Nottinghamshire where there was a growing awareness of the importance of the heathland of Sherwood Forest. He has worked with the Surrey Heathland Project for the past 14 years, now running 'Surrey's Last Wilderness', part of the Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage Programme. Work in Surrey has had a strong practical bias and the project owned and managed its own livestock for several years. This has given a good opportunity to evaluate different types of livestock and systems of grazing management.

Abstract The Goat and the Heath'

A brief history of goats in Britain is followed by an assessment of the importance of surviving feral populations. The Surrey Heathland Project has used domestic and feral stock and has gained some experience of the effect of goats on heathland vegetation and the practicalities of their management. Food selection, containment (how to keep them in!) and welfare is discussed as is the place of the goat as a restorer of heathland and in longer-term management systems.

Malcolm Ausden - Reserves Ecologist, RSPB

Malcolm Ausden is Senior Ecologist at the RSPB's headquarters at Sandy. His roles include advising on acquisition and management of RSPB's nature reserves and overseeing research, survey and monitoring on them. Malcolm's specialist areas are heathlands, freshwater wetlands and managed re-alignment.

Abstract Creation of Heathland and Acid Grassland on Former Arable Land

Creation of heathland and acid grassland require suitable soil conditions, a source of heathland/acid grassland propagules and suitable aftercare. In this talk I will review the results of a range of techniques used to create heathland and acid grassland at two sites, Tudeley Woods and Minsmere RSPB Reserves.

At Tudeley Woods we have investigated the success of various methods of heathland creation on agriculturally improved grassland using small-scale experiments. The first compared the effects of topsoil removal and deep ploughing on pH and nutrient levels in the upper soil. The second involved adding combinations of pine mulch, bracken litter and heather clippings from topsoil stripped areas to determine their effects on soil conditions and establishment of heathland vegetation.

Topsoil removal was more effective at reducing nutrient levels in the upper soil than deep ploughing. Both these treatments, though, resulted in a higher pH of the upper soil than in the control plots. All treatments involving addition of heathland clippings and topsoil removal resulted in a high cover of heathland plants after six years, despite the upper soil being of higher pH (5.9 - 6.8), than that generally thought to be required for establishment of heathland vegetation.

At Minsmere we commissioned research in the early 1990's to investigate ways of creating acid grassland and heathland on former arable land. From 1996 onwards we applied the results of this research at the field-scale, grazed these fields with sheep and monitored changes in vegetation composition and soil chemistry.

During the last seven years the vegetation under all treatments has become more similar to their target acid grassland community, U1 Sheep's-fescue - common bent- sheep's sorrel grassland. There are, though, substantial differences in vegetation composition between the different treatments. Addition of sulphur and an acid grassland mix has resulted in a species-poor sward dominated by the sown grass species. Addition of sulphur and bracken litter has produced a more species-rich sward most similar to U1 grassland, but with substantial areas dominated by common gorse introduced with the bracken litter. Fields left to revert naturally are least similar to U1 grassland and are now largely dominated by Yorkshire-fog, Cat's-ear and Fine-leaved sheep's-fescue.

Heather Tidball - Urban Heaths LIFE Project

Heather is a qualified teacher with over twenty years experience of managing habitats for nature conservation. She has worked for voluntary organisations and local authorities, undertaking a wide range of projects from constructing an award winning country park to overseeing the conversion of semi-derelict farm buildings into a countryside visitor/training centre. In all her projects she has encouraged community participation and understanding. She has extensive experience of partnership working.

The Urban Heaths LIFE Project (UHLP) is co-financed by the EU LIFE-nature fund and the Urban Heaths Partnership (UHP). UHP is made up of the five local authorities in south east Dorset, Dorset

Wildlife Trust, the Herpetological Conservation Trust, English Nature, Dorset Police and Dorset Fire and Rescue Service. UHLP aims to improve the conservation status of the internationally important heathlands in and around the urban areas of south east Dorset by reducing damage caused by their use and misuse by people.

Abstract **'Reducing urban pressure on heathland**

Dorset's heathlands once covered a vast area of southeast Dorset but are now reduced to about 7000ha in over 100 fragments. 30% of this is in or immediately abutting the Poole/Bournemouth conurbation. As well as the problems of lack of management and fragmentation these urban heaths have another suite of problems caused by their close proximity to 450,000 people.

These are: -

- fire
- trampling
- erosion
- disturbance
- eutrophication (dog faeces, dumped rubbish)
- introduction of garden plants
- predation of rare animals by pets
- public opposition to change

The need to address these problems led to the formation of UHP. Of particular concern were uncontrolled, deliberately set fires and it is this particular problem which prompted the participation in the partnership of Dorset Police and Dorset Fire and Rescue Service.

A small multi-disciplinary team co-ordinates the actions of the project partners in three interlinked areas of activity.

- management and equipment
- wardening and enforcement
- education and awareness raising.

For example there are actions to reduce the numbers and the extent of fires in all three areas of activity.

- Management and equipment
 - A fire atlas has been produced which contains fire maps for every urban heath. The fire maps show entrances, accessible tracks, no go areas and fire hydrants. Every fire appliance in the county has one.
 - New fire fighting equipment has been purchased for DFRS Land Rover fire appliances with match funding from the other partners.
 - New call out procedures. Wardens are paged by fire control so the fire ground commander has benefit of their detailed knowledge of the site. DFRS have changed their response and escalation procedures.
 - Training. Training is provided by DFRS to partner wardens and managers so they interact effectively in the event of fires. DFRS are overhauling their fire fighter training.
 - Fire risk management. Creation and management of firebreaks, access tracks, water supplies etc.
- Wardening and enforcement
 - Extra seasonal wardens
 - Incident recording procedures and database. All fires and other unwanted activities are recorded on a GIS database that all partners can query so intelligence is passed quickly between them. This is subjected to crime pattern analysis by Dorset Police.
 - Wildlife and Heathland Protection Officer in Dorset Police. Full time wildlife crime officer who disseminates information out to relevant beat teams. Police operational orders lay out procedures for all police personnel to follow.

- Education and awareness raising.
- Structured programme for schools.
- Regular articles in the press
- Exhibition trailer used at community events and activities.
- Displays and interpretation.
- Training courses for teachers and partner staff.
- Programme of community events and activities.
- Website and electronic education resources.
- Opportunities for volunteering.

Mike Edwards - Consultant Ecologist

Abstract 'Towards Condition Assessment - a Good First Step - 10 Years of the Western Weald Invertebrate Survey.'

Whilst it is widely agreed in principle that the condition of conservation sites should be suitable for the wildlife present on them; the way in which this should be done, or even which features should be considered, is far from clear or agreed.

The existence of an established systematic classification of botanical communities has allowed the description of the botanical communities present. The relative ease with which larger organisms, such as birds and mammals, may be counted makes at least the recording of total populations utilising a site feasible. With invertebrates, their relatively small size and the difficulty of reliably finding them appears to present insurmountable barriers to assessing the populations present.

On closer examination, however, the situation is not as well-defined in these areas as may be expected. The National Vegetation Classification was designed as a descriptor of species communities present, not of the structural nature of these communities. This is essential component of the habitat for the other organisms present, and often for the continuity of the plant community itself. Just knowing the number of birds using a site does not inform greatly about the reasons why they use it, nor which features are important to maintain this use. In both cases more detailed information about the ecology of the species present is needed in order to inform the interpretation of the raw data.

With invertebrates the greatly improved understanding of the detailed autecology of many species and the relatively large numbers of species present does, I believe, allow an informed assessment of sites and their invertebrate communities which adds greatly to the overall aim of describing, and ultimately maintaining, the overall conservation interest of sites. Such interpretation need not be inferior in quality or use to that regularly provided in botanical and larger animal terms.

Here I shall deal in detail only with a sub-set of the insects, themselves a sub-set of the invertebrates but, never-the-less, covering a range of potential species rather greater numerically than all the plants and birds and mammals combined, especially as very little consideration is normally taken of the so-called lower-plants, including fungi, not to mention bacteria!

This is not to pretend that all the problems have been solved, or that we understand perfectly how everything should be done. What I am suggesting is that the large species pool available enables an approach which has affinities with established statistical sampling and that this approach, if utilised with due regard to its imperfections, provides important information which is relevant to the overall conservation interests and our attempts to maintain them. This approach has the considerable advantage that it is expandable in the light of future information, both regarding species presence and autecology.

Heathland Products, Problems and Potential

Convenor - Dr Hew Prendergast, Superintendent, Ashdown Forest

Hew Prendergast has BSc and PhD degrees in plant sciences. He became the first full-time collector for the Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place in 1989 and from 1994-2003 headed Kew's Centre for Economic Botany. He now runs Ashdown Forest. His latest (co-authored) books are Britain's wild harvest and The dragonflies of Sussex.

Jeremy Clitherow Conservation Officer, English Nature Cornwall

Standing in for Ian Davies Project Manager Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage Cornwall & China Clay Woodland Project

Abstract "Socio-economic Reintegration of the Heathland Landscape"

The European heathland resource has suffered some stunning losses over the past 200 years. There have been some equally stunning 'wins' achieved by THH and other schemes in recent times.

However, the economic and social changes that caused the original heathland decline still remain and recent gains may be well lost in the future if the relationship between heathland and the economic and social sectors does not improve. Long-term sustainable heathland management will only be achieved by reinventing the interdependent relationships between heathland, economies and communities - this will promote the value and worth of the heathland landscape whilst offsetting many of the costs of management, particularly by using heathland for grazing and tourism/recreation.

In Cornwall a number of projects, working at the landscape scale, are beginning to have real impacts in this sector and reintegration, with a modern twist, looks a more distinct possibility. However, much remains still to be done and in future we will need to be flexible, creative, realistic and above all inclusive if our heathlands are to have a sustainable future.

Les Davies - Mendip Hills AONB, 'Bracken Down'

Les Davies first came to the Mendip Hills AONB over 13 years ago. The whole of his life has been spent in connection with the land, and for the past 10 years he has been Senior Warden with the AONB Service based at Charterhouse on Mendip.

The Senior Wardens post is central to the AONB Service, maintaining and enhancing working co-operation between local land owners, user groups and conservation organisations within the area. The work of the Wardens is that of action on the ground. Dealing with conflict issues, visitor management, access in its widest sense, and practical landscape enhancement to name but a few. It is the local knowledge coupled with an understanding of the rural way of life that has an effect on the work done by the AONB Service within the Mendip Hills.

Communication is also a vital part of the job. Not only with the local landowners and communities, but with schools and colleges close to the AONB that will be using the area for study. Links with the media, together with written articles for local and national publications all help to keep the AONB and its good news stories in the eye of the public.

Abstract Brackendown Composting Ltd.

The control of bracken is a subject close to the heart of any land manager, be they farmer or conservationist. Control has normally meant total eradication by one means or another, quite often chemically. As one of the 4 oldest plants in the world, bracken has had a long time to build its defences against any threat to its survival and as many know attempts to bring it to heel can be met with frustration and expense.

Within the Mendip Hills AONB the sustainable harvesting of bracken is now providing a financial incentive for its management, as well as adding to the Biodiversity and landscape value of this important area of lowland heath, Black Down on Burrington Commons. At 325 metres above sea level, Black Down is the highest point of the Mendip Hills and open to the extremes of weather from its western seaboard as well as from the east.

Harvesting takes place within the first couple of weeks in August. This fits the Commons by-laws as well as the availability of farm machinery required for the job. Areas are cut using a large self-propelled forage harvester with attendant trailers which can produce upwards of 500 cubic metres of cut bracken in a morning. This cut bracken is then ensiled close by until required for composting later on in the following year. The ensiling has enabled the composting process to be carried out at the most favourable time of the year, through the summer months, when ground conditions and weather conditions are better suited to outdoor composting.

Composting takes place outside in long windrows that are turned regularly with a specialist turner. This is the very key to successful composting. Once the initial composting is completed the material goes into the large maturation heaps where it is turned less frequently.

Once the composting process is completed the material is moved to the screening and bagging plant where it is graded and packed. All distribution is through Fountain Bark Products Ltd who already make and sell a range of garden products from composted bark, to bark strips. Bracken Down is a natural product from the Mendip Hills AONB that is made from renewable sources. It is a peat free soil improver that is as good for your garden as it is for the environment.

As a result of the project Bracken Down Composting Ltd is now an independent business that is not only producing Bracken Down soil conditioner, but is also involved in the on farm composting of green waste from the local Authority community recycling centres.

Website links: www.brackendown.co.uk www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk

For further Info. : Bracken Down Composting Ltd, 01934 863526, Mendip Hills AONB, 01761 462338

Dr Jane Barker – A farmer, environmental contractor and composter in that order. An acquaintance once described their career as ‘less a ladder and more an adventure playground’ – something, which found resonance in my psyche. With degrees from Huddersfield and Salford, a Postgraduate Diploma in Planning from Leeds, a PhD from Bradford and a Certificate in Permaculture, I could be most easily defined as an Environmental Scientist. A breadth of experience from countryside and economic planning, rural community development, research and latterly lecturing at Bradford University prepared me for greater things. I now farm in the Lake District (hill sheep and fell ponies), run a successful environmental contracting business with clients across the UK and manufacture compost.

Abstract **“There’s Gold in them there Hills - 'Lakeland Gold' - a bracken-based soil conditioner”**

In our case ‘Lakeland Gold’, is a rich fertilising soil conditioner made from composted bracken. Not an original idea but one borrowed from Lawrence D. Hills who said: “There is a thriving outdoor business waiting for anyone with the courage and capital who will start cutting bracken... Until this kind of enterprise begins in Britain’s great North Territory, bracken harvesting is just a tantalising possibility.” (1971). In 1998 we mustered the courage and capital and are currently working on the ‘thriving’ bit!

During this paper I will chart our experience of setting-up a bracken harvesting and composting business, the trials and tribulations - from our early attempts at harvesting, experiments in large scale composting through to the marketing and distribution of the finished product. The technical issues in relation to the physical aspects of composting bracken will be reviewed and the importance of

product placement and marketing. The context of farm diversification will be considered along with an overview of the potential economic contribution of such a business development.

Andy Hall - Forest Research, Forestry Commission

The Technical Development Group (TDG) carries out work on a wide range of forest management and harvesting operations on behalf of the Forestry Commission and Forest Enterprise, as well as for a number of clients outside the Forestry Commission. The aim of TDG) is to:

- Develop and evaluate safe and efficient equipment and methods of work
- Maintain and expand output information
- Provide a technical trouble shooting service

Abstract 'Realising the Energy Potential for Scrub'

Woodfuel is not new, having been used as a source of heat for thousands of years. It is however going through resurgence and is in part seen as a replacement for fossil fuels.

It is Forestry Commission policy to help support the management of neglected or undermanaged woodland. However, the current low prices obtained for small roundwood calls the economic viability of harvesting into question. Being able to harvest woodfuel may make harvesting operations economically viable, this in turn will help reengage the private forestry sector and the agricultural sector, both vital components to this emerging industry and promote active management of small woodlands.

The fledgling woodfuel industry is developing along two very distinct lines; namely the burning technology and the fuel supply chain and there has been little effort on behalf of the producers/suppliers or the boiler/burner manufacturers to understand each other's requirements. This in turn has led to little or no technical integration.

Against this background and the need to ensure social, economic and environmental benefits accrue from the UK's potential woodfuel resource, this presentations looks at essential areas of woodfuel production and the opportunities in relation to managing small heathland woodlands, namely:

- The benefits of wood-fuelled heating
- In terms of social, environmental and economic considerations
- The economic and cost considerations
- In terms of CAPEX, operational and fuel supply considerations
- Fuel selection and preparation
- In terms of practical harvesting guidance
- Ways of achieving woodfuel specifications in relation to burning technology requirements
- Drying and storage

Richard Lutwyche - Traditional Breeds Marketing Scheme

I have been involved with the conservation of rare breeds since the movement started in 1973 and became a Life Member of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust in 1974. My profession is marketing and I am a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

In 1989 I recognised that the conservation of rare breeds was being held back by their rejection in the mass market dominated by supermarket buyers. When the RBST was reluctant to do anything to address the problem, I established a mail order company to market meat from pure bred rare breeds and its success led the Trust to establish its meat marketing scheme in 1994. Until then, pure bred rare breeds were virtually unsaleable in the marketplace. I began work at the RBST in 1996 and my duties as Marketing Director soon included responsibility for the scheme. In 2002, under some pressure from the Charity Commissioners who were anxious about commercial activities, the scheme was hived off into a separate company and I moved with the company to run it on a full time basis.

Abstract **'The Opportunity for Niche Marketing - Livestock from Heathland Grazing Schemes.'**

The Traditional Breeds Meat Marketing Company deals with pure bred stock of rare and minority breeds raised extensively in high welfare systems. We work with a network of independent butchers that we accredit and act as a link between them and the producers in order to achieve regular supplies. We also set standards, prices etc and authenticate all stock supplied and certify every carcase to facilitate the necessary niche marketing that justifies higher than commercial prices. Further, we produce and supply Point of Sale material and organise local and national publicity in support of the butchers. The success of the scheme has been significant and we continue to expand throughout year on year. The net effect is improved conservation with more producers encouraged to keep more stock with the reassurance that in breeding pure, they will have an outlet for non-breeding stock. Other advantages are the growing awareness of rare and traditional breeds and their benefits, not least the eating qualities. Chefs and food writers such as Rick Stein, Jamie Oliver, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and Antony Worrall Thompson are all dedicated users of rare breed meat and welcome ambassadors for what we are doing. Conservation grazing systems too have become a significant factor in the use of rare breeds and will become more important as the movement grows, particularly when used in conjunction with the network of Finishing Units we have established as one of the primary sources of stock for the Accredited Butchers.

Past, Present and Future of British Heathlands

Convenor - Bryan Pickess Dorset Heathlands

Bryan Pickess has been involved in heathland management since he came to Arne in Dorset as the RSPB warden in the mid sixties. He has been instrumental over the years in developing a range of new management techniques and pioneering heathland restoration work, drawing on his deep knowledge of heathland ecology and his long experience as a fine field naturalist. His special interest is the ecology of dragonflies, but he has published numerous papers and reports on many aspects of heathland natural history and management. Although now retired, Bryan still makes a major contribution to the conservation of the Dorset heaths

Dr Isabel Alonso - Heathland Ecologist English Nature

Isabel Alonso is the Lowland Heathland Ecologist for English Nature, based in Peterborough. She is a member of the Lowland Heathland HAP group and chairs the Lead Agency working group which coordinates the work of the Agencies. Her role is to contribute to a wide range of issues related to this habitat. Some of them are: to provide advice internally and externally on heathland management and conservation; to develop and implement the mechanisms to set conservation objectives and monitoring; to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge; to respond to consultations.

Abstract **'THH & BAP - what have we achieved and what more do we need to do?'**

The 1995 Biodiversity Action Plan for Lowland heathland aimed to:

- * Maintain and improve by management, all existing lowland heathland in the UK (estimated to be around 58,000ha).
- * Encourage the re-establishment by 2005 of a further 6,000ha of heathland, particularly where this links separate heathland areas.

Since the plan was signed many restoration and re-creation projects have been carried out as a result of public or private initiatives. Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage is arguably the most significant of all. This programme, which encompasses 25 projects, aimed to provide resources to contribute significantly to meeting the Lowland Heathland Biodiversity Action Plan targets. Under this umbrella, work has been carried out to manage and restore over 70% of the existing heaths and re-create over 40% of the 6,000ha BAP target.

The Habitat Action Plan, however, had a wider remit, aiming also among other things to:

- * Determine the extent and condition of heaths and identify gaps in the coverage of SSSIs/ASSIs
- * Influence the reform of the agri-environment schemes
- * Improve the process to fence and graze sites
- * Actively involve the largest heathland landowners (MOD and FC) in the process
- * Influence local and planning authorities to consider lowland heathland in their plans, both to protect and to re-create in disused sites
- * Provide a source of advice to be used countrywide on all sort of heathland-related issues and develop standard monitoring methods
- * Maintain and improve links with other European organisations
- * Raise public awareness on the importance of lowland heaths

Some of these tasks have been easier to achieve than others. There has been significant progress in the review of the agri-environment schemes, the development of common standards for monitoring heathland SSSIs, raising awareness and maintaining links with European colleagues. MOD and the FC are active members of the HAP group and have contributed with their own funds to meet a high proportion of the targets.

But unfortunately there has been little progress in basic issues such as establishing a reliable baseline, simplifying the process of fencing in common land or implementing local planning systems to safeguard the remaining heathland sites.

The BAP targets will be reviewed in 2005 and we will need to write a new Plan for the next 10 years, or perhaps a longer time-scale. Can we learn from the past to improve the future?

Nigel Symes - RSPB

Nigel Symes is based at the RSPB's Headquarters and advises nationally on the conservation of terrestrial habitats. He has been closely involved in heathland conservation for over 20 years; at Frensham in Surrey, maritime heath in Wales and Northern Ireland, and in Dorset with the RSPB Dorset Heathland Project. He authored the recent RSPB handbook 'A practical guide to the restoration and management of lowland heathland', and was a co-author of the FACT 'Scrub Management Handbook'. He is currently working on a GIS project to assess the current extent of lowland heathland and the potential for its recreation in England.

'Vision for Heathland in 50 years time'

8th National Heathland Conference,
7-9 September 2004, University of Sussex

Delegate List

1	Ms	Mary	Adler	Surrey Wildlife Trust
2	Mrs	Elizabeth	Akenhead	British Horse Society
3	Mr	Martin	Allison	RSPB
4	Mr	Rich	Allum	High Weald AONB
5	Dr	Isabel	Alonso	English Nature
6	Mrs	Penny	Anderson	Penny Anderson Associates
7	Mr	Neal	Armour-Chelu	The Herpetological Conservation Trust
8	Mr	Philip	Armshaw	Cannock Chase Council
9	Mr	Malcolm	Ausden	RSPB
10	Dr	Louise	Bardsley	English Nature Sussex and Surrey Team
11	Dr	Jane	Barker	Lakeland Gold
12	Dr	Gerry	Barnes	Norfolk County Council
13	Mr	Graham	Bathe	English Nature
14	Ms	Jemma	Batten	
15	Mr	Nick	Baxter	Surrey County Council
16	Miss	Sue	Beale	The National Trust
17	Miss	Anna	Bell	Butterfly Conservation
18	Mr	Chris	Betts	English Nature
19	Mr	Craig	Blackwell	Oxfordshire County Council
20	Mr	Bill	Boyd	Norfolk Wildlife Trust
21	Mr	Peter	Bradley	RSPB
22	Mr	Peter	Brandon	
23	Mr	Stuart	Britton	National Trust
24	Ms	Henri	Brocklebank	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
25	Mr	Martin	Brown	Defence Estates
26	Professor	Paul	Buckland	Bournemouth University
27	Mr	Chris	Chesterton	Rural Development Service, Defra
28	Mr	Simon	Christian	English Nature
29	Ms	Emma	Clare	Defra
30	Mr	Stuart	Clarke	Bournemouth Borough Council
31	Mr	Steve	Clarke	English Nature
32	Mr	Jeremy	Clitherow	English Nature
33	Mr	Glen	Cooper	English Nature Suffolk Team
34	Mr	James	Couzens	Defra
35	Miss	Amanda	Craig	English Nature
36	Mrs	Teresa	Cross	Urban Heaths Life Project
37	Mr	Alex	Cruickshank	Hampshire Heathland Project
38	Mr	Martin	Davey	English Nature
39	Mr	Brian	Davies	English Nature
40	Mr	Les	Davies	Mendip Hills AONB
41	Dr	John	Day	RSPB
42	Miss	Claire	Dinsdale	Urban Heaths Life Project
43	Mr	Jonathan	Douch	University of Sussex
44	Mr	Peter	Dullaghan	Rural Development Service
45	Mr	Paul	Edgar	The Herpetological Conservation Trust
46	Mr	Chris	Edwards	English Nature Sussex & Surrey
47	Mr	Robin	Edwards	West Sussex County Council
48	Mr	Mike	Edwards	
49	Mr	Richard	Elston	English Nature

50	Mr	Barry	Embling	Forest Enterprise
51	Ms	Margaret	Enstone	West Sussex County Council
52	Mr	Alun	Evans	Cheshire County Council
53	Miss	Lynne	Farrell	Scottish Natural Heritage
54	Ms	Caroline	FitzGerald	High Weald AONB
55	Miss	Anna-Marie	Ford	Bournemouth Borough Council
56	Ms	Natasha	Free	Hampshire Heathland Project
57	Mr	Rob	Free	Sussex Wealden Greensand Heath Project
58	Mr	Stephen	Fry	Sussex Wildlife Trust
59	Mr	Mike	Funnell	West Sussex County Council
60	Mr	Neil	Gartshore	RSPB
61	Ms	Isobel	Girvan	Surrey Wildlife Trust
62	Mr	Pete	Gotham	Bracken Consulting Ltd
63	Mr	Mike	Gray	Heathland Management Svcs
64	Mr	Adam	Green	Hart District Council
65	Mrs	Penny	Green	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
66	Mrs	Theresa	Greenaway	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
67	Mr	Jon	Groves	Kingston University
68	Mr	Andy	Hall	Forestry Commission
69	Ms	Betty	Hansell	Qinetiq
70	Mr	Jim	Hardcastle	Mendip Hills AONB
71	Miss	Rebecca	Haworth	Forestry Commission
72	Cllr.	Tony	Hayes-Allen	Woking BC
73	Ms	Kate	Henson	University of Bristol
74	Mr	Kristoffer	Hewitt	English Nature Sussex and Surrey Team
75	Mr	David	Hoare	National Trust
76	Mr	Ralph	Hobbs	English Nature Sussex and Surrey Team
77	Mr	David	Hoccom	RSPB
78	Mr	David	Hodd	The National Trust
79	Dr	Kathy	Hodder	Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
80	Miss	Charlotte	Hodgson	Elmbridge Borough Council
81	Ms	Nicola	Hodgson	Open Spaces Society
82	Mr	Tom	Holland	RDS Defra
83	Mr	Chris	Howkins	
84	Mr	Steve	Hughes	RSPB
85	Mr	Peter	Hughes	RSPB
86	Mr	David	Huskisson	David Huskisson Assocs
87	Ms	Louise	Hutchby	English Nature
88	Mr	Philip	Irving	The Greensand Trust
89	Ms	Dawn	Isaac	English Nature
90	Professor	Peter	Kaland	University of Bergen
91	Mr	Mel	Kemp	RSPB
92	Mrs	Rosy	Key	English Nature
93	Dr	Rick	Keymer	English Nature
94	Dr	Sophie	Lake	Grazing Animals Project
95	Ms	Jessie	Leamy	East Sussex County Council
96	Mr	Rod	Leslie	Forestry Commission
97	Ms	Jackie	Lewis	West Sussex County Council
98	Mr	Douglas	Lloyd	Cannock Chase Council
99	Ms	Justine	Lloyd	Lichfield District Council
100	Ms	Justine	Lloyd	Lichfield District Council
101	Miss	Jennie	Lloyd	Birmingham City Council
102	Mr	Rob	Lucking	RSPB
103	Mr	Richard	Lutwyche	Traditional Breeds Marketing Scheme

104	Mr	Robin	Macklin	RSPB
105	Mr	David	Marchant	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
106	Mr	Chris	Marrable	Conservators of Ashdown Forest
107	Ms	Sally	Marsh	High Weald AONB
108	Mr	Jez	Martin	Borough of Poole
109	Mr	David	Mason	Suffolk Wildlife Trust
110	Mr	Roger	Matthews	English Nature Sussex and Surrey Team
111	Dr	Robert	McGibbon	Surrey Heathland Project
112	Mr	Patrick	McKernan	South East AONB Woodland Officer
113	Mr	Stephen	Miles	British Entomological & Natural History Society
114	Mr	Mark	Miller	Bournemouth Borough Council
115	Mr	Bob	Milton	Defend Our Commons Campaign
116	Mr	Huw	Morgan	West Sussex County Council
117	Mr	Pip	Morse	The National Trust
118	Mr	Dante	Munns	RSPB
119	Ms	Siobhan	Murphy	DEFRA
120	Mr	Ash	Murray	English Nature
121	Mr	Doug	Napier	CIP
122	Mr	Adrian	Newton	Bournemouth University
123	Ms	Christine	Newton	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
124	Mr	Andrew	Nicholson	English Nature
125	Mr	Simon	Nobes	English Nature
126	Dr	Rachel	O'Hara	Surrey Wildlife Trust
127	Mr	Joe	Oliver	The National Trust
128	Dr	Stuart	Otway	Defence Estates
129	Mr	Paul	Owen	City of Nottingham
130	Mr	David	Page	Elmbridge Borough Council
131	Miss	Alice	Parfitt	Sussex Wildlife Trust
132	Mr	Iain	Parkinson	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
133	Mrs	Kay Renate	Paterson	English Nature
134	Mr	Michael	Payne	Staffordshire County Council Ranger Service
135	Mr	Mike	Pearce	DEFRA, RDS
136	Mrs	Rebecca	Pearson	English Nature
137	Miss	Angela	Peters	National Trust
138	Miss	Susanna	Phillips	Rural Development Service, Defra
139	Mr	Andy	Phillips	West Berkshire Council
140	Mr	Bryan	Pickess	RSPB
141	Mr	Neil	Pilcher	Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust
142	Mr	John	Pinel	States of Jersey, Environment Dept.
143	Mr	Hew	Prendergast	Conservators of Ashdown Forest
144	Miss	Rachel	Remnant	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
145	Mr	Vaughan	Robbins	Defra Rural Development Service
146	Mr	Graham	Roberts	West Sussex County Council
147	Mr	Ian	Robertson	Ministry of Defence
148	Ms	Fiona	Robertson	Wildlife Trust for Lancashire
149	Mrs	Vicky	Robinson	DEFRA
150	Mr	Tony	Robinson	English Nature
151	Mr	Patrick	Roper	
152	Miss	Liz	Rowan	Defence Estates
153	Ms	Kate	Ryland	Dolphin Ecological Services
154	Mr	Andy	Schofield	RSPB
155	Dr	Matthew	Shepherd	Rural Development Service, Defra
156	Ms	Susan	Sheppard	Staffordshire County Council
157	Mrs	Jan	Sherry	Countryside Council for Wales

158	Ms	Gerry	Sherwin	High Weald AONB
159	Mr	Christopher	Short	University of Gloucester
160	Professor	Brian	Short	University of Sussex
161	Ms	Morag	Sinton	Cheshire County Council
162	Mr	Julian	Small	English Nature
163	Mr	Dave	Smallshire	Defra/RDS
164	Mr	John	Smith	Staffs Wildlife Trust
165	Mr	Jonathan	Spencer	Forest Enterprise
166	Mr	Nicholas	Squirrell	English Nature
167	Miss	Karyn	Stander	Sherwood Forest Trust
168	Mr	Pete	Stevens	RDS Defra
169	Mr	David	Streeter	University of Sussex
170	Mr	Chris	Sutton	Conservators of Ashdown Forest
171	Mr	Nigel	Symes	RSPB
172	Dr	Alex	Tait	East Sussex County Council
173	Miss	Carrie	Temple	RSPB
174	Mr	Craig	Thomas	Coversands Heathland Project
175	Ms	Heather	Tidball	Urban Heaths Life Project
176	Mr	Steve	Tillman	Sussex Wildlife Trust
177	Mr	Marcus	Turley	Surrey Heathland Project
178	Miss	Rachel	Urwin	English Nature
179	Mr	Neil	Vigar	West Sussex County Council
180	Mr	Gordon	Voller	Surrey Heath Borough Council
181	Mr	Michael	Waite	Greater London Authority
182	Mr	Graham	Walker	English Nature
183	Mr	Adrian	Wallington	West Berkshire Council
184	Mr	Michael	Way	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
185	Mr	Chris	Webb	National Trust
186	Professor	Nigel	Webb	
187	Miss	Sally	Westaway	High Weald AONB Unit
188	Mr	Steve	Wheatley	Sussex Police
189	Dr	Tony	Whitbread	Sussex Wildlife Trust
190	Mr	Martin	Whitchurch	Borough of Poole
191	Miss	Rachael	Wildman	Defence Estates
192	Mr	Toby	Williams	Sussex Wealden Greensand Heath Project
193	Miss	Laura	Willing	Hart District Council Countryside Service
194	Mr	Matt	Willmott	Rural Development Service
195	Mr	Graham	Wilton-Smith	RSPB

8th National Heathland Conference

University of Sussex

7th - 9th September 2004

Feedback Form

Please complete this form and hand in before you leave the conference or post to the address on the bottom. The information will be analysed and then fed to the organisers of the 9th Heathland Conference, therefore this is your opportunity to influence the next one.

1. Did you find the content of the presentations?

Too Advanced Challenging Adequate Too Basic

2. Did you find the conference beneficial to your job or professional development?

Yes Very Yes Slightly No

3. Which theme of the Conference did you find most useful and why?

4. Which theme or paper of the Conference did you find least useful and why?

5. Which site visit did you attend?

Ashdown Forest

Greensands Project

Lullington Heath

Tudeley Woods

6. Was the standard of the visit?

High Satisfactory Tolerable Low

Please add explanation if required.

Please turn over/

7. Please tick the following features of the course indicating whether, in general, the standards of each were, high satisfactory, tolerable or low.

	HIGH	SATISFACTORY	TOLERABLE	LOW
Conference Admin:				
Pre-Conference				
During Conference				
Lectures				
Support Material:				
Handouts etc				
Accommodation				
Food				
Comments				

8. Any other general comments (attach separate page if necessary)?

Participant's signature (optional)

Thank you for your help.

Please hand in before you leave the conference or post to:

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