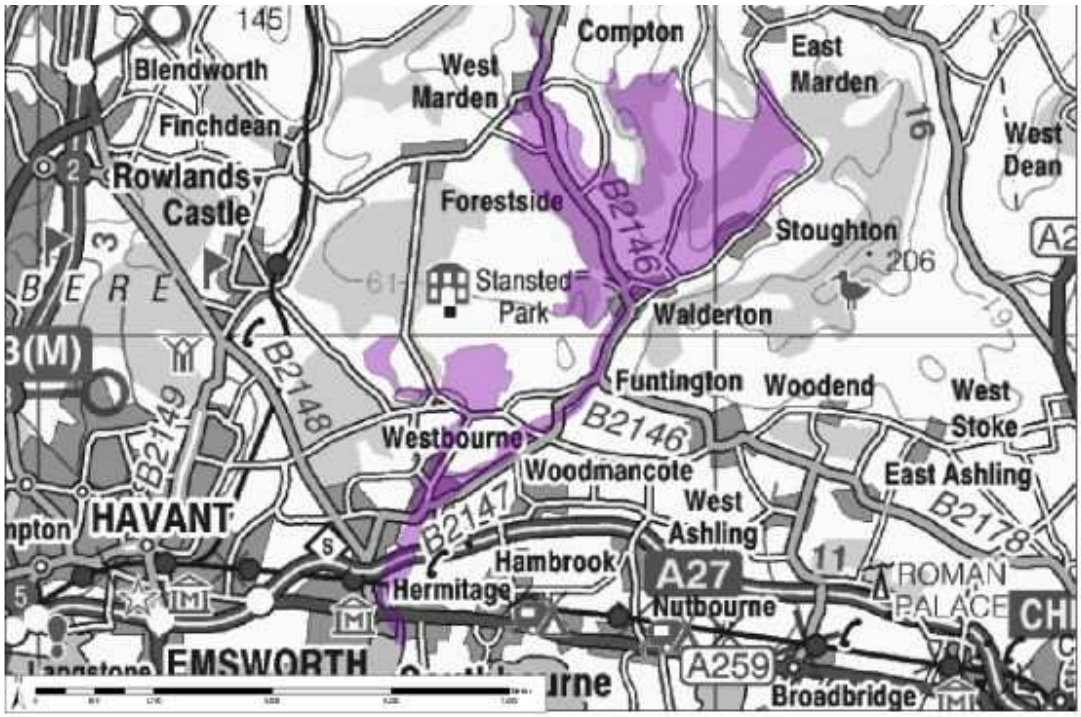
Westbourne chalk streams to Compton tributaries Biodiversity Opportunity Area

Joint Character Area South Downs

Geology The majority of the Westbourne Chalk Streams to Compton Tributaries Biodiversity Opportunity Area lies on chalk bedrock, with some areas of clay, silt and sand to the south west.



The Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) are the regional priority areas of opportunity for restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats. They are a spatial representation of BAP targets and are areas of opportunity, not constraint. The BOAs are the property of the South East England Biodiversity Forum www.sebiodiversity.org.uk. Contains Ordnance Survey data Crown copyright and database right 2010

Westbourne chalk streams to Compton tributaries has been recognised as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) as it represents a priority area for the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets. This is one of 75 such areas across Sussex. The BOA covers approximately 1115 hectares.

This area is selected as a BOA for its chalk streams, some of the aquifers that feed these chalk streams are also selected

BAP Habitat

Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
Lowland calcareous grassland
Reedbeds
Saline lagoons
Wood-pasture and parkland
Woodland

BAP Species 30 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Species	**Habitat Requirements**
Water Vole *Arvicola terrestris*	Rivers, ponds, canals and drainage ditches, reedbeds, fens, grazing marsh, banks, slow-flowing waters
White Helleborine *Cephalanthera damasonium*	Woodlands, particularly Beech on chalk or limestone soils, low ground cover, shaded habitat
Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*	Woodland, scrub, marshes, heathland, reedbed
Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*	Open countryside, scrubby areas, woodland edges, hedgerows, insect-rich grassland, seed-rich areas
Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*	Wetlands including reedbeds, tall rushes and wet grassland with good vegetation cover, gardens, farmland, hedgerows, ditches
Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*	Heathland, woodland, mosaic of scattered trees, bare ground, short vegetation and taller vegetation, open seed-rich areas
Harvest Mouse *Micromys minutus*	Arable margins, hedgerows, meadows, scrub, reedbeds, tall grass
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*	Open woodland and woodland edges, parks and gardens
Fly Orchid *Ophrys insectifera*	A plant of chalk and limestone soils usually found in open woodland and scrub, often in deep shade, also occurs on grassland and fens
Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auritus*	A widespread bat of open woodlands, hedgerows, parks and gardens, it roosts in old buildings and trees in the summer, moving to caves and underground sites in the winter.
Marsh Stitchwort *Stellaria palustris*	Pools with seasonal variation, grassland with open sward, damp/wet soil, herb rich, unimproved, fens, reedbed
Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*	Woodland edges, hedgerows and open land with scattered bushes
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*	Farmland, grazing marsh, wet meadows, seeds and insects

Invasive Non-native Species one species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*

Designated Sites

Aldsworth Pond and Meadows, Emsworth SNCI is of considerable ornithological importance, and also supports large numbers of dragonflies and a White-letter Hairstreak colony. The two meadows have a wet influence with species such as Southern Marsh Orchid and Ragged-Robin.

Brickkiln Ponds and Meadow SNCI consists of two large ponds, unimproved neutral grassland and woodland. The ponds provide important breeding sites for amphibians, birds and dragonflies, and the meadows have botanical and invertebrate interest (particularly Lepidoptera and Orthoptera).

Haslett Copse complex SNCI is designated on account of its ancient semi-natural woodland and neutral grassland.
Lordington Copse, Watergate Hanger, Westmarden Copse and Nore Down SNCI consists of ancient semi-natural woodland and chalk grassland, with Lordington Copse being particularly botanically rich. Several notable plant species are found within the site, including Green Hellebore and Round-headed Rampion

The River Ems and Meadows SNCI consists of a section of the river (a chalk stream) and associated semi-improved neutral grassland. Several ponds and an area of wet woodland add to the ecological interest of the site.

Opportunities Identified

- Wetland habitat management, restoration and creation
- Policy integration
- Ecological networks