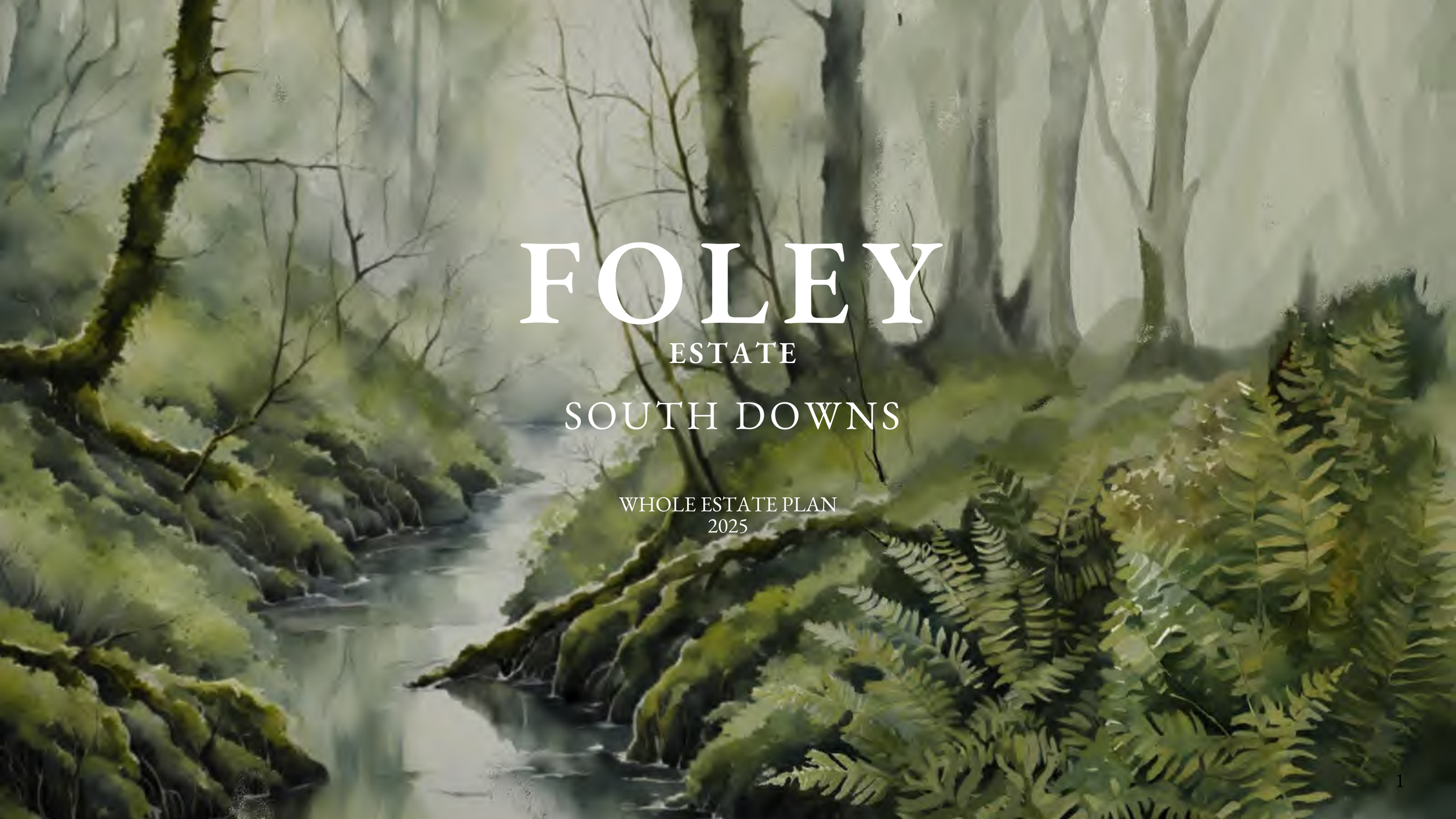


FOLEY

ESTATE

SOUTH DOWNS

WHOLE ESTATE PLAN
2025

Preface

Long ago, along the sandy ridge that now marks the boundary of Foley Estate, families built mounds to bury their dead. A lush valley stretched out below them, flowing with streams and freshwater springs. The people took their cattle to these waters to drink, and let them roam among the meadows to feed. Many generations lived here, telling stories of their ancestors and the adventures of their lives. They lit fires. They laughed. They loved their children. And in the hills beyond, they hunted. They carved spears of birch and bows of alder, coating their flints with white sap from the poisonous yew. The ultimate prize was an impossibly fast and clever beast. Very few could ever claim it. But one man did. When he died, he was buried in a mound with the animal's fur wrapped around his shoulders. A cloak from the pelt of an English wolf.

The hills where the man was buried are known as the Woolmer Forest, a 3,000 acre heathland reserve now used by the British Army to train their troops. The wolves are gone, but their presence is still felt by anyone who mentions the name. Woolmer comes from the Old English Wolfs Mere: the Wolf's Marsh. An echo from a distant, wilder past.

Foley Estate is a 655 acre farm at the southern tip of the once great forest. It is the bowl-shaped valley that the ancient hunters could see from their burial grounds. It is a magical, boggy landscape. Full of mystery. Rich in nature. This whole estate plan will tell the untold story of Foley. In doing so, we hope to save it - and to preserve it for many generations to come.

Contents

Introduction 4

CHAPTER 1: The Story of Foley 5
- A Landscape of Ritual 6
- The Decline of the Manor 7
- The Magical Map of Foley 8
- Glorious Times at Foley 9
- Foley during War 12
- Foley during the 20th Century 13
- The Vision 14

CHAPTER 2. Foley Estate Today (Asset Audit) 16
- **Summary 17**
- **Map of Foley Today 18**
- **Situation 19**
- **Shifting Estate Boundaries 21**
- **Composition of Foley 22**
- **Human & Cultural Assets 25**
  - The Walled Garden Complex 28
  - Foley Farm 29
  - Westlands Farm 30
  - The Cottages 31
  - The Deers Hut Pub 32
  - Liphook Golf Course 33
  - Historical Features 34
  - Interconnection with Liphook 35
- **Natural Assets 37**
  - Water 39
  - Woodland 40
  - Diverse Habitats 41
  - Tranquility 42
  - Protected Sites 43
  - Biodiversity 44

CHAPTER 3: Challenges We Face 45
- Socio-economic Challenges
  - Lost Heritage 47
  - Crumbling Infrastructure 48
  - Unproductive Farming 49
  - Hospitality Pressures 51
  - Bottleneck of Visitors 52
  - Impact on Weavers Down 53
  - Loss of Public Open Space 54
  - Impact on Westlands Farm 55
  - Migration of Young People 56
  - Crime 57
- Environmental Challenges
  - Flooding 58
  - Erosion and Soil Depletion, Disease, Pollution 59
  - Species Loss and Fragmented Habitats 60
  - Climate Change 61

CHAPTER 4. Ecosystems Services at Foley 63
- Supporting Services 64
- Provisioning Services 66
- Regulating Services 68
- Cultural Services 72

CHAPTER 5. Our Action Plan 74
- Summary 75
- Haven for Wildlife Projects 77
- Place for Exploration Projects 87
- Model for Conscientious Land Ownership Projects 97
- Financial Planning 102
- Engaging with Stakeholders 103

REFERENCES 105

Introduction

A Whole Estate Plan is a formal document, but we hope this one is unlike any other. This is an expression of love for our British countryside; a work of passion and heart by the custodians of Foley - informed and shaped by the people who live and work around it.

Many small estates and farms have fallen into ruin in recent decades, decimated by a struggling rural economy, rising prices, and market pressures. In the near future, climate change and the ongoing mass migration of young people away from rural areas will deepen our troubles. This document will outline a plan for how we adapt to these challenges. It will outline a vision of a nature-focused future at Foley that will improve its resilience, its business model and role in the local community, creating spaces to sustainably learn, work and live for a new generation. These initiatives align closely with the priorities of the South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan - and the core objectives of the National Park when it was created in 2010. We feel these objectives are the same as our own.

Foley Estate is an ancient and storied place. Its woods, ponds and wildlife are enchanting. But it must also adapt if it is to survive in the modern era. Over the following pages, we will outline our vision for achieving this.

Chapter 1
THE STORY OF FOLEY

A Landscape of Ritual

The abundance of fresh water on Foley Estate has probably drawn humans for thousands of years. Multiple springs erupt from our landscape, flooding our woodland and filling 10 ponds, before forming the Hollywater - a tributary of the River Wey. The forgotten ancient peoples who drank from these waters left behind an extraordinary volume of burial mounds in the area. More than 30 ancient barrows dot the hills surrounding the estate – from what is now Liphook golf course in the south, to the heights of Woolmer Forest in the north. They were built between 4000 and 1500 BC, and all appear to have been ceremonial and funerary monuments[1,2]. Excavations by an eccentric priest in the 1880s revealed fragments of fur clothing, coffins from hollowed tree trunks and signs of cremation inside these tombs. For centuries, Foley was a watery oasis in the midst of a complex ritual landscape spanning what is now Hampshire and West Sussex.

These mound-building people would have been farmers. Prehistoric communities cleared land, divided it into fields, and grew crops like wheat and barley. In addition to gathering edible plants like dandelions, acorns, nettles and water mint, and hunting game in the surrounding forests, they also herded cattle. These were the descendants of aurochs – enormous and fierce buffalo, who, much like wolves and modern dogs, were tamed by humans and selectively bred into domestic animals. Generations of their intensive grazing helped form the sandy soils of our heathland today.

The fields of Foley lie within this ancient footprint. By hoof, paw and foot, the contours of the land have been formed by people interacting with nature for millennia. It has long been a gathering place. And a place of great meaning to the people who call it home.

The Wardens of Wolf's Mere

Foley Manor's character as a tranquil and watery oasis is apparent from its earliest recorded history. The first mention of the estate in writing is from the early 1200s, when the king gifted Norman knight Sir John de Venois the manor known as la Folle - a 'leafy retreat' - on the boundary of "Wlfmere Forest"[3]. The deed refers to a dwelling house, 128 acres of pasture and a "vivary"- ponds and enclosures for keeping fish and deer.

The estate was not included in the Domesday Book as it was encompassed by the Royal Forest. This was also the source of its significance. At the time, Woolmer was one of the largest hunting grounds in England and the early medieval occupiers of Foley Manor appear to have held the title "Lord Warden of Wlfmere." Medieval wardens enjoyed prestigious rights of warren and invaluable access to the king himself - likely hunting and dining with him near his lodge just a few kilometres north. The surrounding hills were full of wild boar, hare, red deer and wolves (with a licence to hunt wolves nearby granted to the owner of Foley Estate in 1275).

Records show Venois passed the manor on to his son-in-law, Adam de Gurdon - a fabled character in British history[4]. Gurdon rebelled against the "unjust" king during a civil war in the 1260s, forming a band of outlaws who ravaged Hampshire - actions which later inspired the story of Robin Hood. Gurdon would go on to fight the future Edward I in single combat near Alton and be jailed in the Tower of London - only to be pardoned four years later. When released, the king returned the land and the title of "Lord Warden of Wlfmere Forest" back to his former adversary - and restored "the manor of Folle" to the hooded bandit once more[5].

The Decline of the Manor

When the Black Death arrived at the port of Southampton in 1348, the main cart road to London passed within a few kilometres of Foley Manor. The plague devastated the surrounding area - killing up to half the population. A number of villages were entirely abandoned, potentially including one just a few miles downstream.[6] Being principally a residential holding for the Warden of Woolmer Forest, with only a moderate income, it's likely the estate suffered from the county's severe labour shortages and rising wages. After almost two centuries in the hands of the noble Venois and Gurdon family, and an even longer association with the Royal Forest, Foley was sold for the substantial sum of £33 in 1398.[7] The buyer was Henry Popham, High Sheriff of Hampshire and Member of Parliament. A lawyer and former tax collector, Popham had gained eminence during the suppression of the Peasants' Revolt in Hampshire a decade earlier (one of the few areas in England where officials were not humiliated or killed by the rebels).

The sale of Foley to a member of the gentry class - a common happening for aristocratic properties across England at the time - likely marked the end of its official recognition as an estate with a lordly title. From then until the early 1600s, "the lands called Folley" passed between multiple wealthy members of the gentry - without the privilege of a lordship.[8]

The Magical Map of Foley

Perhaps the most spectacular record of Foley Estate is a coloured map from 1656.

The map describes the estate as a “vivarium”, a place for keeping animals for sport and the table - suggesting considerable continuity from the early medieval period. This included herds of red deer, which are pictured in the margins, as well as an abundance of fish and eels. Six large ponds are illustrated: Fry Pond, Great Crabtree Pond, House Pond, New Pond, Little Crabtree Pond and Forest Pond. Only House Pond remains, restored by Vernon Northcott in the 1950s. Fry Pond, Little Crabtree Pond and Forest Pond have since silted up, forming the wet grasslands seen at Foley today. Fry Pond covers much of present-day “Big Wood,” while Great Crabtree Pond covers the entire extent of present-day “Reedy Wood.” A deed from 1690 ordered the draining of Foley and its conversion into water meadows for agriculture - a landscape which lasted until the early 19th century.[9]

In the map's centre is what may be the original medieval Foley Manor, with glass windows and a singular hearth chimney, surrounded by open, parklike fields. An orchard is illustrated at the site of the present-day walled garden, and Foley Farm and Foley Hatch cottage (“hatch” being the medieval word for a gate to a royal forest) are also depicted. Areas of sedge, oak, alder, heath and moorland are marked, and along the borders are the lands of “Bowhunt” and “Woolmer Forest.” Liphook is also mentioned (a name which derives from the Old English “the corner by the leap” - a leap being a fenced deer enclosure). Standing proudly, watching over it all, is a painting of an armed hunter and his hound.

Glorious Times at Foley

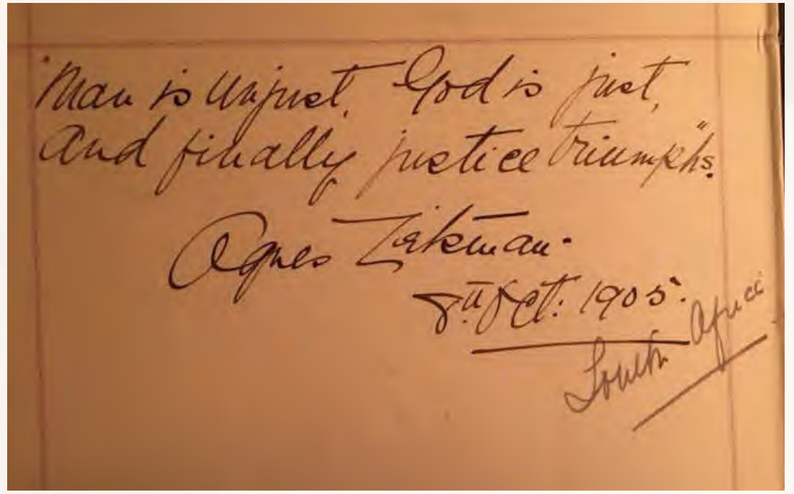
Foley Estate would transform into one of the grandest seats in the county during the Regency Period. William Bettesworth made it his principal residence in 1792, tearing down the medieval manor, converting the fields surrounding the property into formal parkland. A number of the exotic trees he planted, including Lebanese cedars, American redwoods, Japanese acers and Chilean monkey puzzles still surround the manor and its park today[10].

Further expansion took place in the late 1800s, turning Foley into a gargantuan residence with more than 30 gardeners, groomsmen and servants. The medieval orchard was turned into a walled kitchen garden with a peach house, tomato house, pineapple house and orangery. Ornate water gardens were created around House Pond, an icehouse was dug, a ram pump and water tower installed, and the manor house was extended with a new L-shaped wing. A clock tower and extensive stables were then added in 1869 by the Tristrahm family.[11]

All of the property's food and water needs were met on site, and the Foley Manor address book shows a revolving door of visitors from among Britain and the world's elite. An aerial photograph from the 1900s shows the scale of the former manor - which must have been a beehive of activity akin to "Downton Abbey." For a century, Foley enjoyed an era of unparalleled largess. But it was not to last.

The Secret Journal

Among the many treasures of Foley is a sketchbook discovered behind a bookcase in the manor in 2020. Once dusted off, it revealed a remarkable series of musings and illustrations by an unknown lady who lived in the house in the late 1800s and early 1900s. It offers a fascinating glimpse into the world she inhabited - showcasing the latest fashion, vignettes of the suffragettes and patriotic reflections during the era of Queen Victoria and the dawn of the Great War.



Foley during War

Conflict transformed Foley Estate. During the First World War, the nearby Deers Hut pub became a sawmill supplying material for ships and trenches - processing an amazing 111,111 tonnes of timber from the estate (the equivalent of 15 Eiffel Towers).[12] During the Second World War, Foley's walled garden operated at full capacity to help "feed the nation," with five battery chicken and pig barns added to the site.

The tragedy of the trenches and the brutality of Normandy's beaches had a devastating long-term impact on the estate. A number of Foley's workers died in these conflicts and when peace came, the era of the "grand Victorian estate" was over. With so many young men killed in action, the gardens, manor and farm could no longer find workers, and much like the famous "Gardens of Heligan"[13], Foley fell into a devastating period of decline and abandonment. Over three decades, the manor, traditional farm, ram pump, water gardens, ice house, orchards, and walled garden fell into ruin.

Vernon Northcott, the future owner of Foley Estate, saw fierce fighting during World War II

Foley in the 20th Century

In 1952, decorated war veteran Vernon Northcott - having fought at Dunkirk and in Burma - bought the estate for just £40,000. The manor was crumbling and the farm was a bottomless pit of expenditure. To try to save it and balance the books, he demolished half of the Victorian mansion and purchased a neighbouring property called “Westlands” - a commercial farm on the border of Liphook.

Despite decades of improvements, the modern era has been equally challenging for Foley. The estate has been a victim of the macro-economic pressures that have driven thousands of small farms out of business in the UK - with changes in agriculture and subsidies strongly favouring larger landowners. Foley Estate’s orchards are too small, its fields too boggy for modern machinery and its arable land too wet for crops. In the early 2000s, the dairy farm was forced to close, mirroring a 70% decline in British farms over the last 30 years.[14] The conversion of multiple farm buildings into rental properties has stabilised the estate as a business, but daunting challenges remain.

Decades of agricultural decline and rising costs have placed enormous pressure on the ongoing operations of Foley. Without significant investment and change, the estate faces a dangerous and uncertain future.

Vernon Northcott overseeing the ploughing of Foley Farm in 1952, shortly after taking over the estate.

A statue of Field Marshal Lord Strathnairn, moved from London and installed on the Shipwrights Way at the entrance to Foley Estate by Northcott

The Vision

We want to usher Foley Estate into a new and exciting chapter, dusting off the cobwebs of the past few decades in order to thrive, once again, in the modern era.

Our core goals are:

- To regenerate and transform Foley into a sustainable and financially viable estate, to help us navigate a challenging economic and environmental future.
- To protect and enhance biodiversity within Foley's landscape, bringing unproductive farmland into balance with nature, and harnessing new revenue streams.
- To create a world-class educational space for children to learn about and reconnect with nature.
- To create new jobs and opportunities within the South Downs National Park, increasing access and awareness in our magical little corner of Hampshire.

By 2040, Foley will be

A model for conscientious land ownership

Setting a new benchmark for how a small estate can be sustainable and productive while protecting the natural world and serving the local community.

A place for exploration & education

Where regenerative tourism and nature-based education can help visitors, locals and young people reconnect with their landscape and history.

A haven for wildlife

Where the transformation of our farm and restoration of an ancient floodplain will create a more sustainable future for both wildlife and people.

This vision has been years in the making, born out of a deep love and passion for Foley. We have done our best to align with the National Park Partnership Management Plan and shaped our ideas following feedback from a diverse range of local stakeholders.

Chapter 2
FOLEY TODAY

Summary

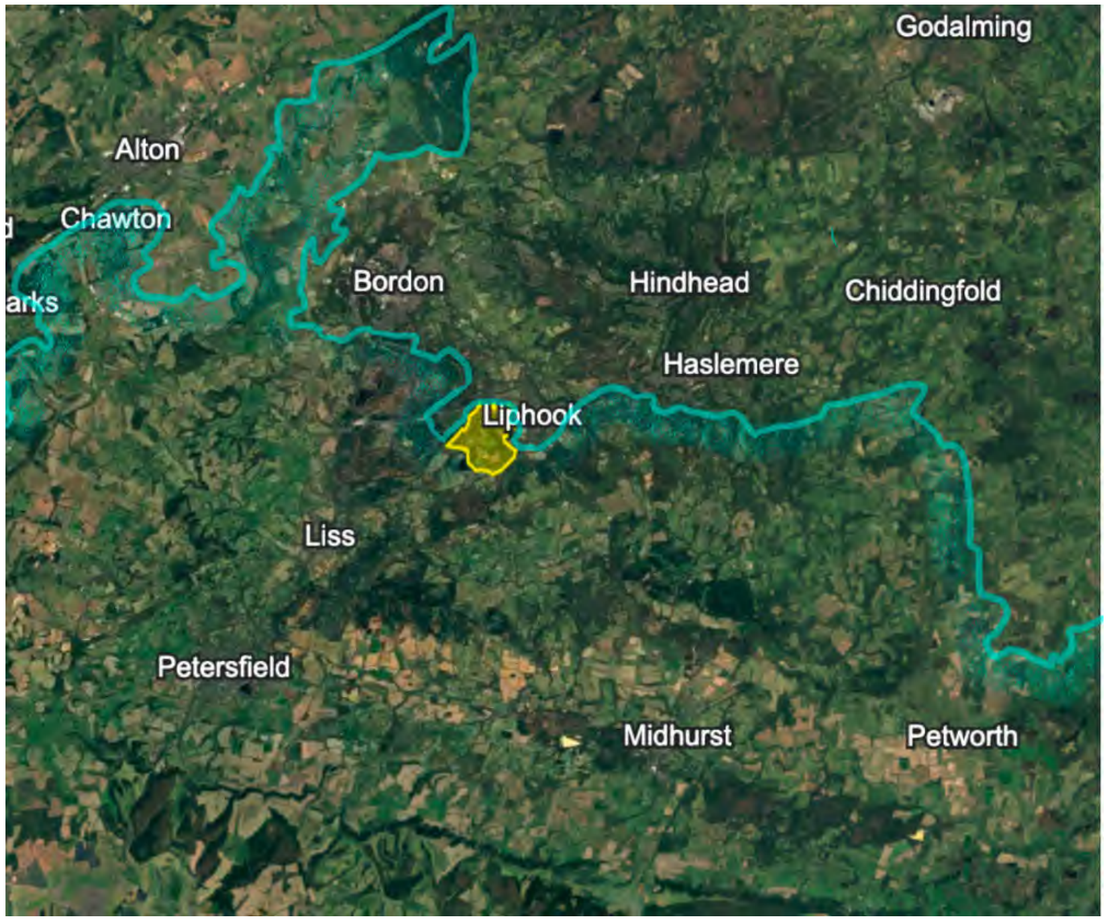
This chapter will give a detailed overview of Foley Estate in the present day - an audit of all of our assets. It has been split into three sections - first, a general overview of the estate's land composition and situation, then delving into its human and cultural assets, before covering its natural assets. Despite categorising Foley Estate's assets in this way, we see them as inextricably woven together. Our local economy feeds off our bucolic environment, just as our biodiversity depends on our conscientious land management.

We have also indicated any ecosystem services relevant to each asset, with a deeper dive into the ecosystem services analysis in Chapter 4.

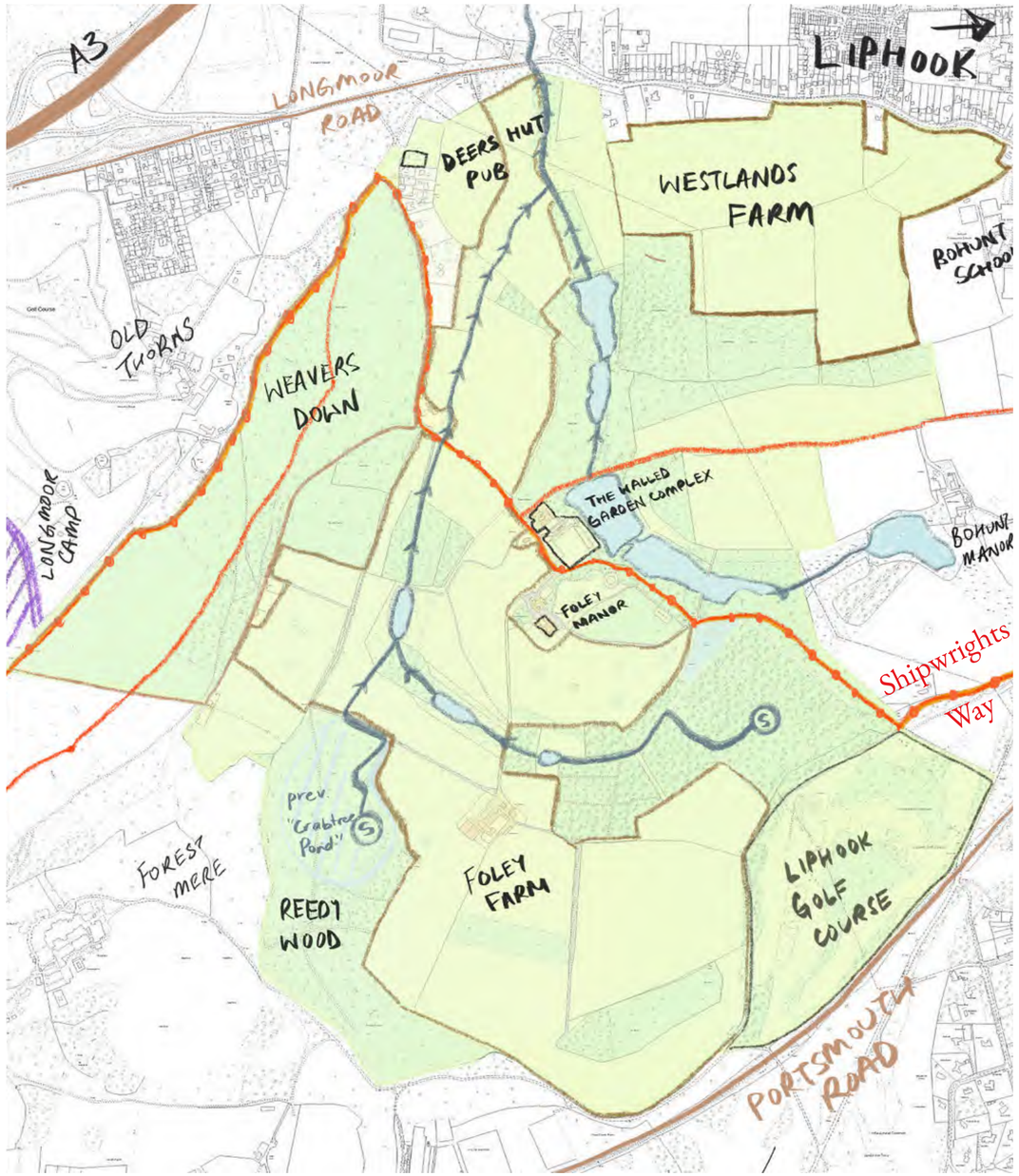
Key components of the estate include:

- 655 acres, entirely within South Downs National Park.
- A principal residence and 2.5-acre walled garden complex
- Two separate farms (Foley Farm and Westlands Farm)
- The Deers Hut public house
- A portion of Liphook Golf Course, leased to the club
- 11 cottages, and approximately 40 overall residents
- Approximately 45 part-time and full-time employees
- Three public footpaths (including Shipwrights Way) which are the main gateway to the National Park for Liphook residents
- Shared boundaries with Bohunt School, Liphook village, Bohunt Manor, Forest Mere, Old Thorns and Longmoor Camp (part of the historic Woolmer Forest)

Map of Foley Today



SDNP Boundary Foley Boundary

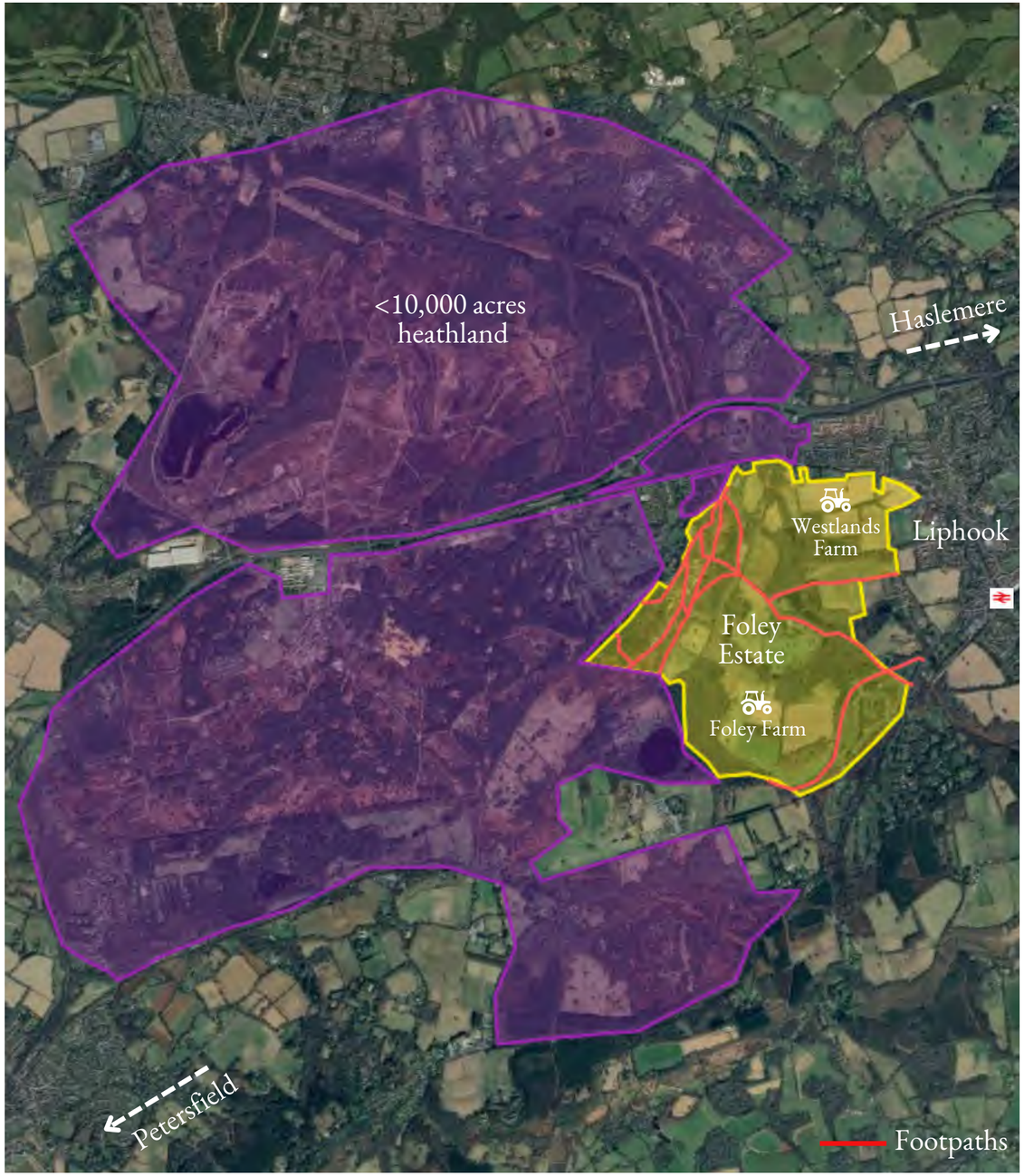


Public Footpath Spring

Situation

Foley occupies an interesting position in the regional landscape, forming a northern boundary of the National Park. To the south and west, the historic portion of Foley Estate borders Weavers Down, Woolmer Forest SSSI (part of Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area), Forest Mere SSSI, Chapel Common SSSI, and Longmoor Camp, which collectively form the second largest area of heathland habitat in southern England. To the east, the more recently acquired Westlands Farm portion of the estate borders the village of Liphook, Bohunt Manor and Bohunt School.

Foley's three public footpaths (including the Shipwrights Way) are the main access points to the National Park for the residents of Liphook. Our boundary is a 15-minute walk from Liphook Railway Station, which provides direct connections to London and the south coast. The A3, a major north-south arterial route, provides excellent access to Guildford, London and Portsmouth - and we also sit in proximity to the towns of Haslemere (7km to the northeast) and Petersfield (14km to the southwest).



Source: Google Earth

An Estate of distinct parts

Historic Foley Estate
This is the heart of the estate and the centre-point for its rich history. This 483 acre area includes the manor house, Foley Farm, and multiple cottages. Sitting within a bowl-shaped valley, it is also a natural watershed for thousands of acres of hilly heathland habitat, which form 10 ponds and the Hollywater tributary on the estate. Protected land or large tracts of mixed woodland border historic Foley on all sides, giving it an unusually strong sense of peace and isolation. The Shipwrights Way and an adjoining footpath cross the historic estate, but it is otherwise devoid of public access.

Weavers Down
Occupying the north-west of Foley Estate, 78 acre Weavers Down lies within the Woolmer Forest SSSI and is part of the Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area. This biodiverse heathland, which was formerly within the Royal Forest, is home to a range of threatened species and has extensive public access. The view from the bottom of Weavers Down towards Foley Manor is identified as a "significant local view" in the Liphook Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2040. Although the heathland sits within the E1b transition zone of the Dark Skies Reserve, parts of it are recorded as having "intrinsic rural darkness."

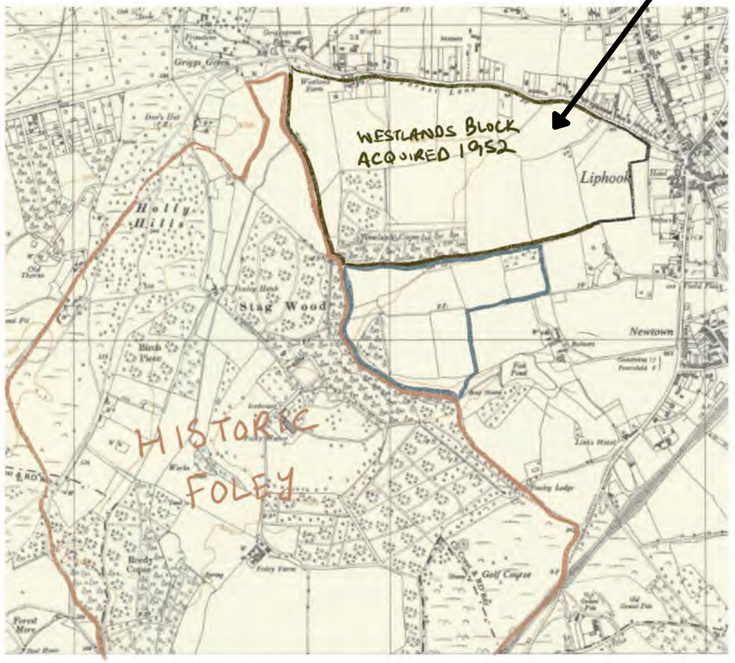
Westlands Farm
Westlands Farm, which borders Bohunt School and Liphook, was purchased in the 1950s in an attempt to generate revenue in the post-war era. It has a different character to the rest of the estate, being 64 acres of Grade 2 and 3 arable land, with no recorded significant habitat or historical monuments. The farm has no working buildings and is accessed via two entrances off Longmoor Road. It is largely separated from the rest of Foley by a 53-acre block of poplar and larch plantation, which was established for timber in the 1940s.

The Deers Hut pub
This freehold public house was acquired in 2008 and extensively renovated in 2012. Accessed via the Shipwrights Way, it is a major gathering point for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, and a buzzing hub of activity within the local area. As with the historic portion of Foley Estate, the pub has a rich past, steeped in the folklore of the Royal Forest.

Shifting Estate Boundaries

1842

Westlands Farm Block acquired 1952

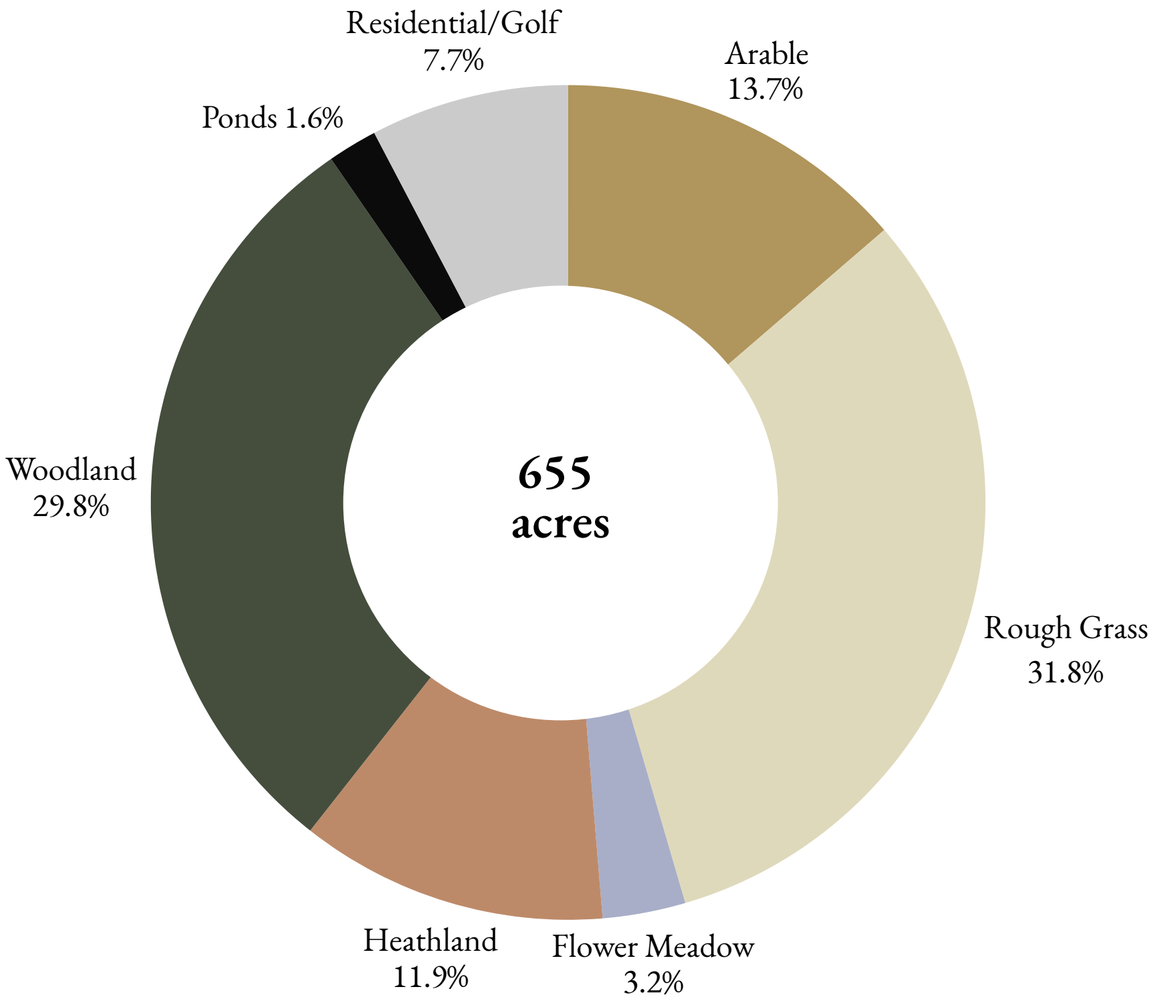


1961

Deers Hut Acquired 2008

2025

Composition of Foley



11 households

1 site of Special Scientific Interest

High priority habitats

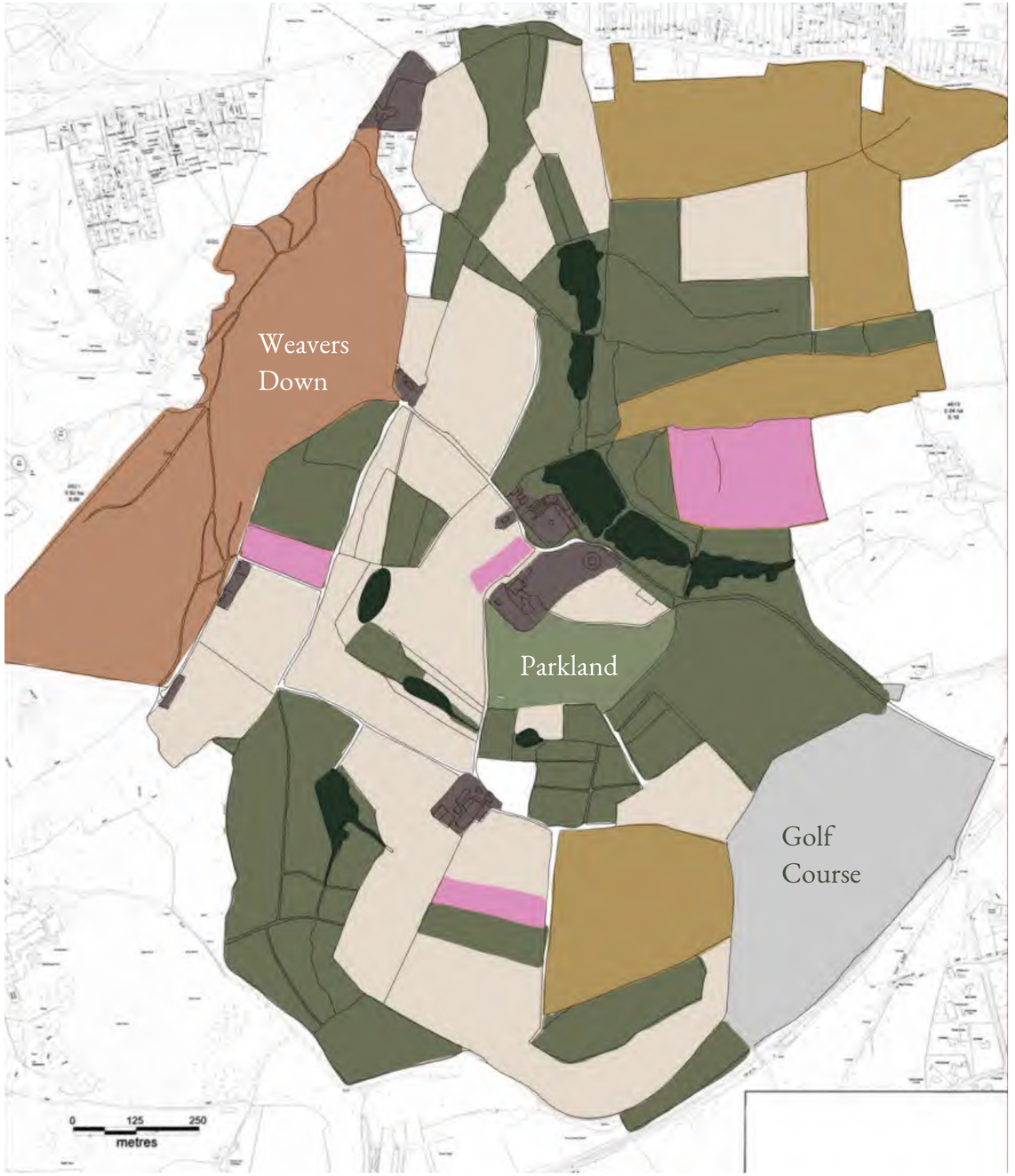
9km of footpaths and bridleways

45 employees

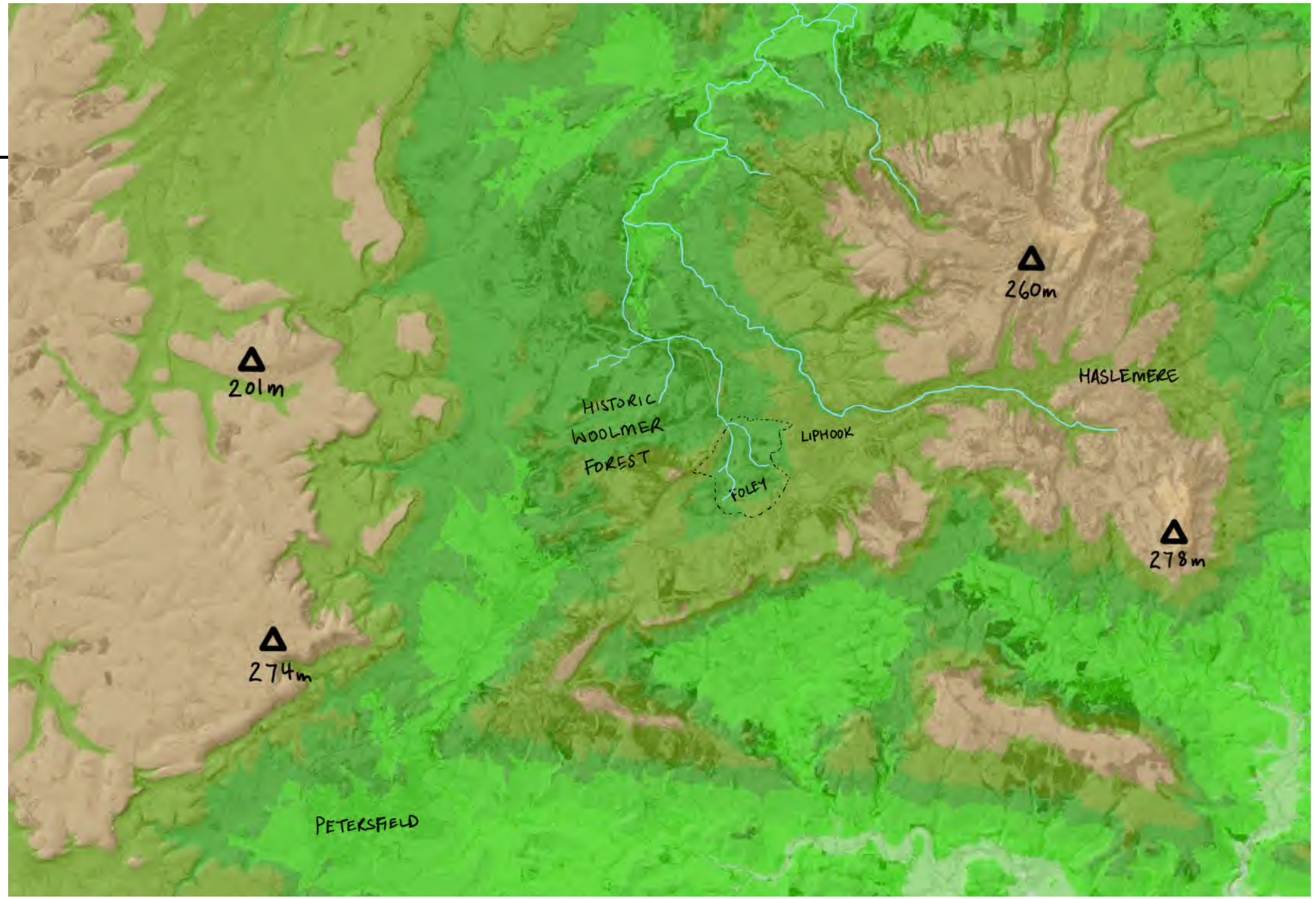
Rich local history

Current Land Use

- Heathland
- Rough Grass
- Arable
- Woodland
- Ponds
- Wildflower Meadow
- Residential



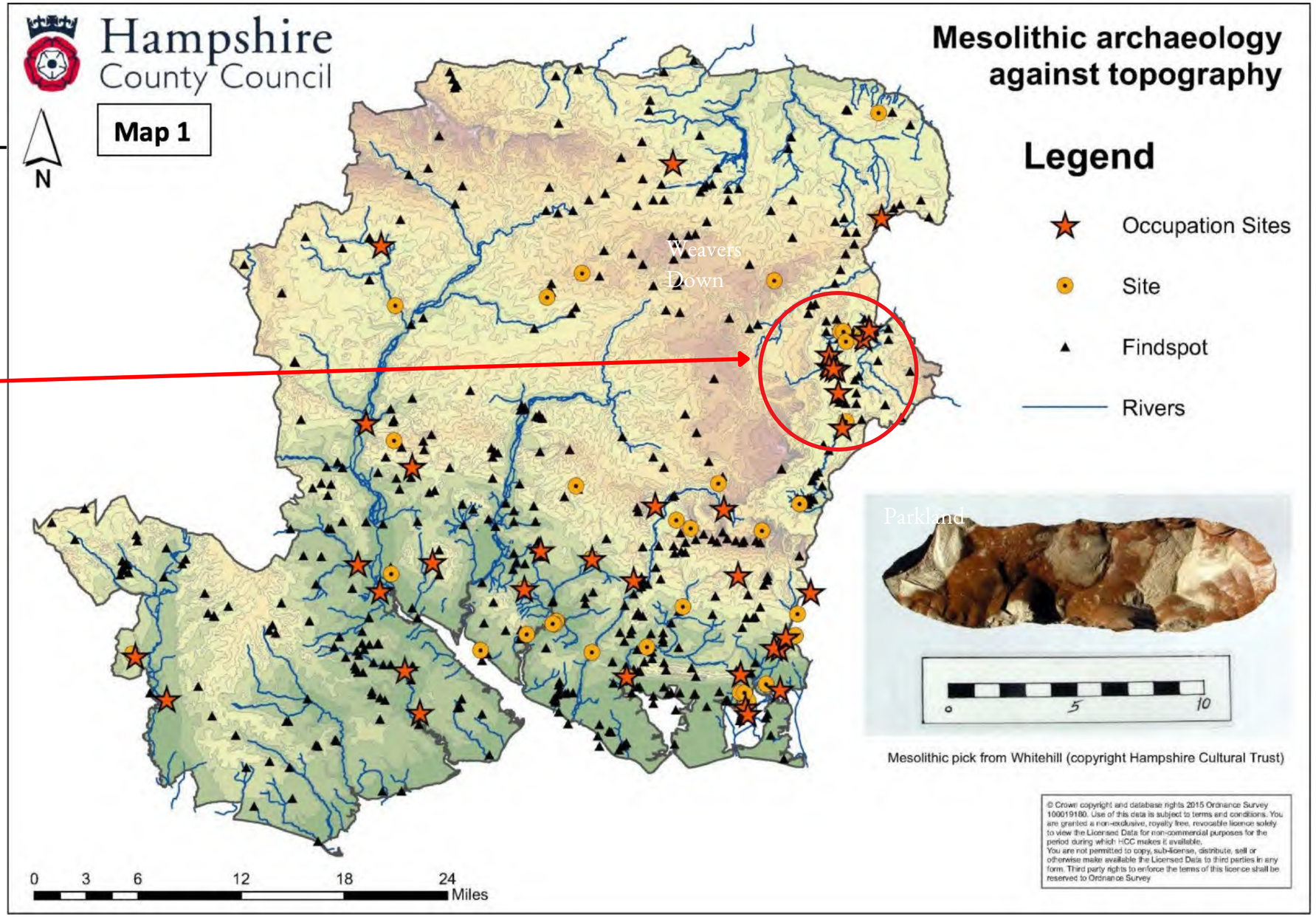
Foley Topography



Source: ARCHIMAPS LIDAR

Prehistoric Landscape

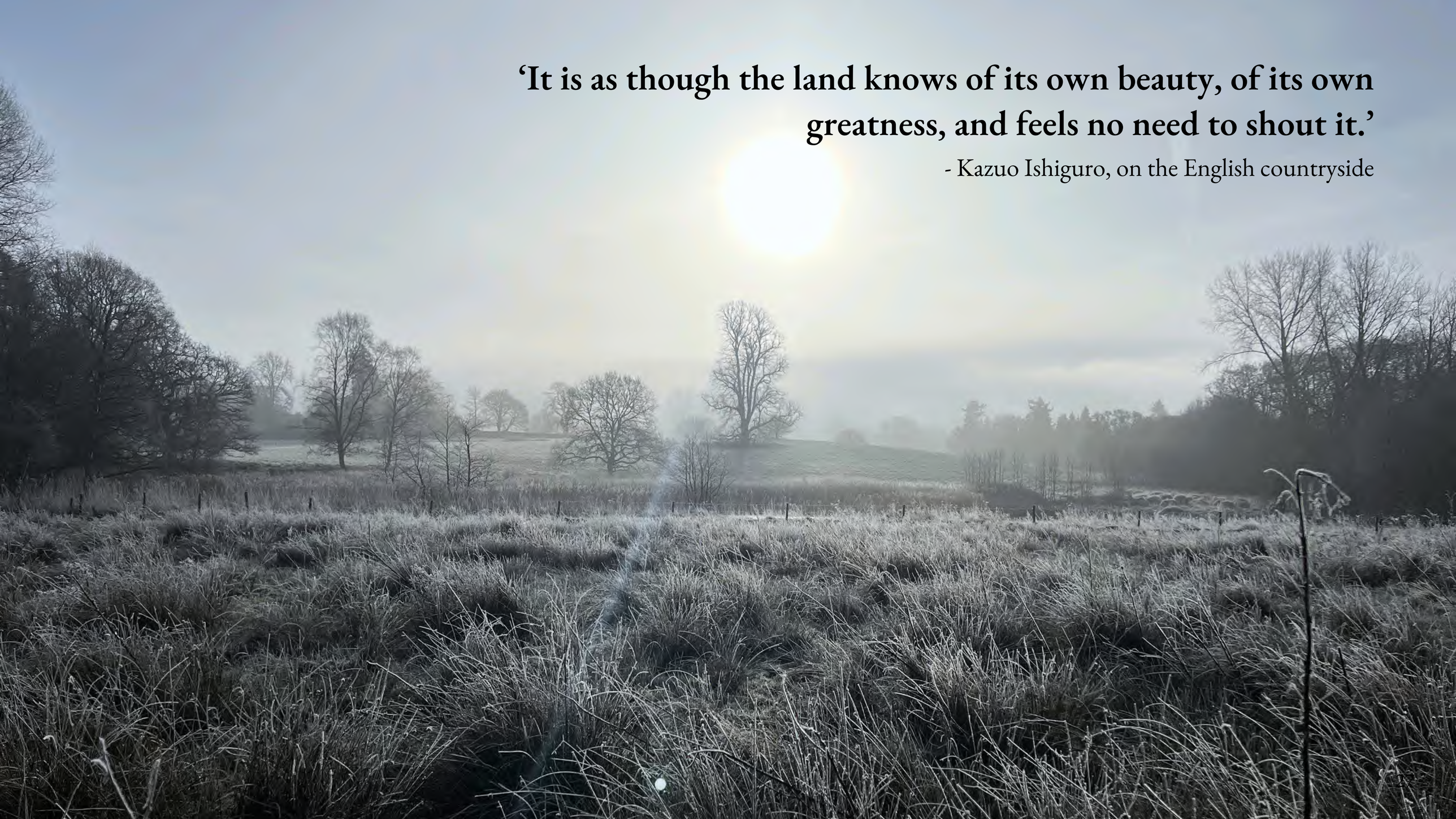
Vicinity of Foley



FOLEY TODAY

Human & Cultural Assets

Foley Estate is the landscape through which Liphook and the surrounding villages experience South Downs National Park. It is a place for exploration and work, and a place that many people call home.



‘It is as though the land knows of its own beauty, of its own greatness, and feels no need to shout it.’

- Kazuo Ishiguro, on the English countryside

Ecosystem Services Icon Key

Supporting

Soil Formation

Primary Production

Nutrient Cycling

Water Cycling

Biodiversity

Provisioning

Water Supply

Food Production

Timber

Energy

Genetic Diversity

Regulating

Air Quality

Climate Regulation

Water Flow / Flood Reg

Erosion Regulation

Soil Quality

Disease & Pest Regulation

Water Quality

Pollination

Cultural

Inspiration / Spiritual Values

Tranquility

Cultural Heritage

Recreation & Tourism

The Walled Garden Complex

Foley Estate's walled garden complex covers 2.5 acres, encompassing six derelict former pig and poultry barns, a water tower, a derelict peach house, orangery, pineapple house, tomato house, a partially collapsed icehouse, and an abandoned kitchen garden - including former vegetable beds, flower beds, and a berry grove. What would have once been a magnificent water garden - complete with islands, statues and stone pathways - skirts the edge of medieval Home Pond. Two rented cottages, Gardners and Keepers, sit adjoining the garden complex. One of two historic orchards remains, supplying apples to the Deers Hut pub. The gardens are situated adjoining the Shipwrights Way public footpath, and a second footpath leads to Bohunt School. None of the buildings are listed.

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Foley Farm

Foley Farm, in the heart of the historic estate, comprises of 83 acres of grazed pasture, 67 acres of grassland cut for hay, 44 acres of arable land growing maize, and 16 acres of wildflower meadow - sown in 2024. The farm also includes 16 acres of parkland and is surrounded by 165 acres of deciduous woodland. Foley Farm's working buildings include two large barns, a horse stable, a barn for wood processing and two storage barns. The buildings are all 20th century and are not listed.

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Westlands Farm

Westlands Farm encompasses 81 acres of Grade 2 and 3 arable land, 70 acres of which are used to grow maize, while 11 acres are set aside for grass. The farm is accessed via two entrances off Longmoor Road. A 53-acre mixed woodland and larch plantation form the boundary of the farm with the historic portion Foley Estate to the south, which can be accessed via an ungraded track. The farm has no barns or outbuildings, and the former farm house in Liphook is no longer owned by the estate. Bohunt School's sixth form building overlooks the fields.

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Cottages

Eleven former workers' cottages are scattered across Foley Estate. Some of these, such as the Coachouse, Old Stables, and Old Dairy, were former working buildings which were converted to residential over the past 100 years. Others were former residences for farm, garden, or shoot employees, which now serve as one to four bedroom homes. One property is occupied by an estate worker, while the rest are let out to long-term tenants. Income from these properties is integral to the function of the estate.

The Deers Hut Pub

The Deers Hut public house became part of Foley Estate in 2008. After decades of disrepair, its amazing team have transformed the pub into one of the most iconic destinations for food and leisure in the local area. It hosts weddings, community meetings and family events, and employs over 40 people locally, including many young people saving up to go to university. The pub prides itself on its food and locally sourced produce, including apples and venison from Foley Estate, and pheasant, asparagus and beef from nearby farms. During your average week, the pub provides more than 1,200 meals for the local community.

"A good local pub has much in common with a church, except that a pub is warmer, and there's more conversation."

- William Blake

Image Sources The Deers Hut

Liphook Golf Course

Land forming part of the award-winning and immensely popular Liphook golf club are leased from Foley Estate. This area includes pockets of valuable heathland habitat. The club is ranked among the best in the country and holds numerous national competitions each year.

Image Source Top 100 Golf Courses

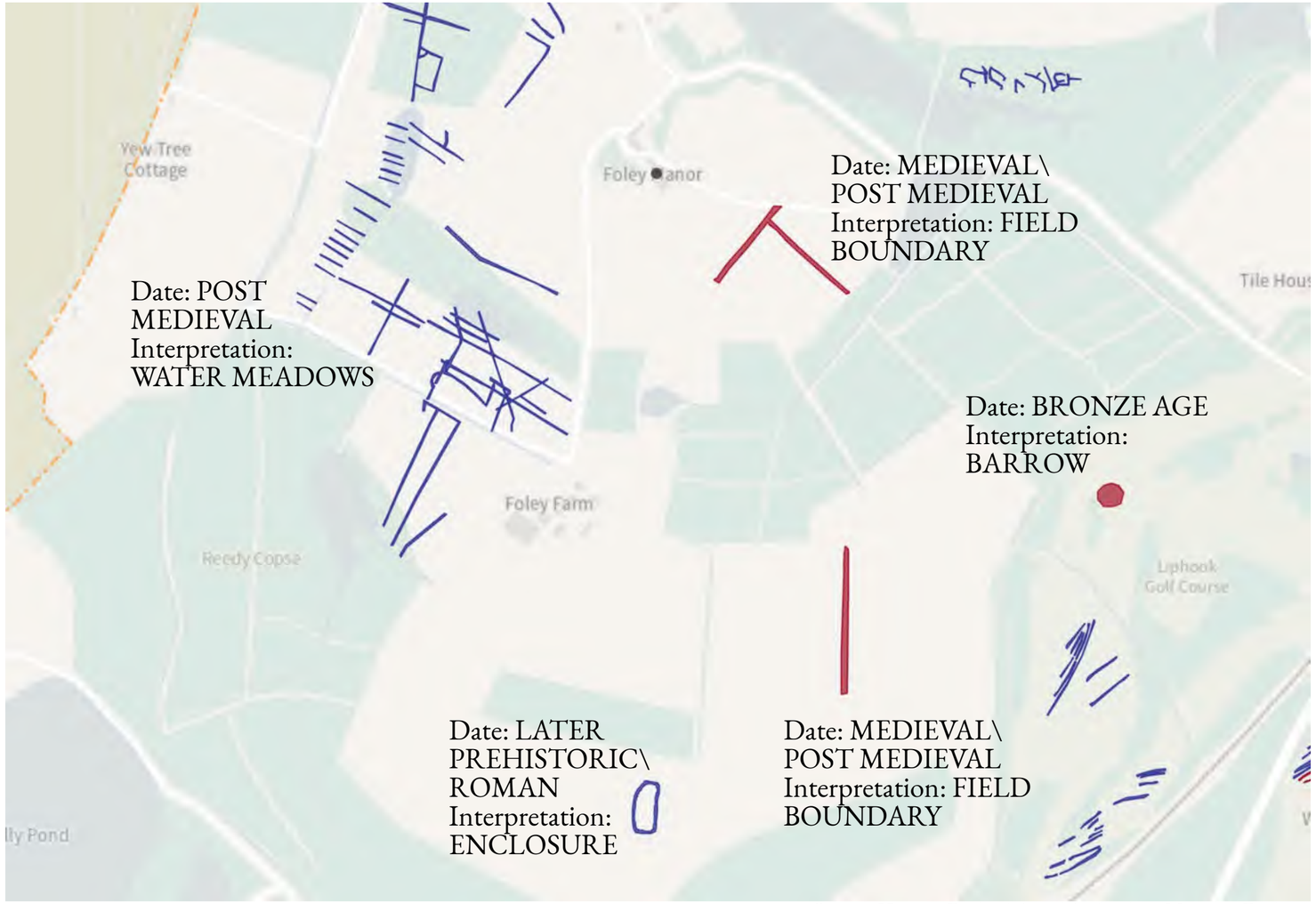
A course for the connoisseur.
- Top 100 Golf Courses

Image Source Top 100 Golf Courses

Home to one of the best heathland courses in the UK
- Golf Monthly

Historical Features

Despite the rich history of the wider area, the turbulent demolition and rebuilding of Foley Estate in the late 19th century and early 20th century means there are no listed buildings and there is only one registered monument. Aerial surveys carried out in the past 20 years have identified a number of interesting features near Foley Farm which could merit further archaeological exploration, however. Digital mapping in 2005 identified an unexcavated late prehistoric settlement enclosure in a field close to Forest Mere road. A 1995 study identified the incredible extent of the water meadows, extended in 1690, which once drained the Hollywater across the estate. There is also a registered but unexcavated Bronze Age Barrow situated on Liphook Golf Course[16]. The northern and western portions of the estate have no indications of historical features, likely reflecting later settlement of that area in tandem with Liphook's early modern emergence as a carriage stop and subsequent evolution into a railway village.



Ditch - includes features cut into earth

Bank - includes 'built' features

Source: Historic England Aerial Archeology Mapping Explorer

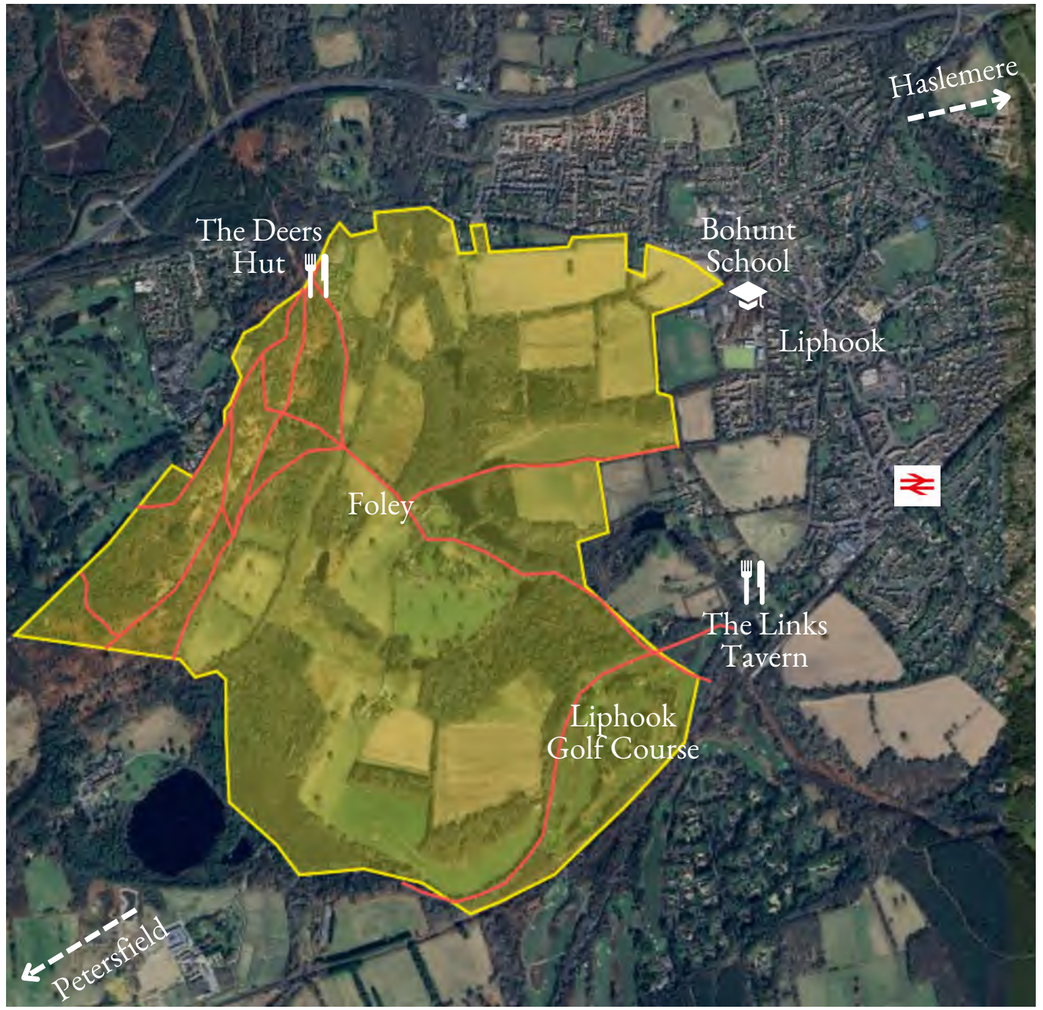
Interconnection with Liphook

Liphook has long been deeply interconnected with Foley Estate. Today, the estate provides locals with a multitude of goods and services, including recreational space for biking, walking, horse riding and golf, the amenities of the Deers Hut, and employment opportunities through the land and its businesses.

For most residents of the village, Foley Estate is their gateway to South Downs National Park. The Shipwrights Way passes through the estate's main entrance gates, through our walled garden complex and Home Pond, before climbing Weavers Down and meeting the Deers Hut pub. A second footpath beginning on Portsmouth Road joins the Shipwrights Way close to the walled garden. A third footpath, known as the Shepherds Way, passes Forest Mere SSSI, fragments into multiple sandy paths on Weavers Down, and travels up to the Deers Hut.

Liphook's highly regarded state comprehensive, Bohunt School, also directly borders Foley Estate. Westlands Farm has a historical relationship with the school, after it was founded on a portion of the Farm's fields in 1978, before it subsequently took over more arable land for games pitches.

In recent times, Foley Estate also restored and owned the Links Tavern, portions of Bohunt Manor and made substantial contributions to the Liphook fire brigade, cricket club and the annual village carnival.



RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

FOLEY TODAY

Natural Assets

Foley has a broad range of natural assets ranging from priority habitat to highly degraded and fragmented farmland. We feel nature could become our greatest asset, and would like to expand our most precious and biodiverse sites.

‘Before the swallow, before the daffodil, and not much later than the snowdrop, the common toad salutes the coming spring. It has about the most beautiful eye of any living creature.

- George Orwell, Some Thoughts on the Common Toad

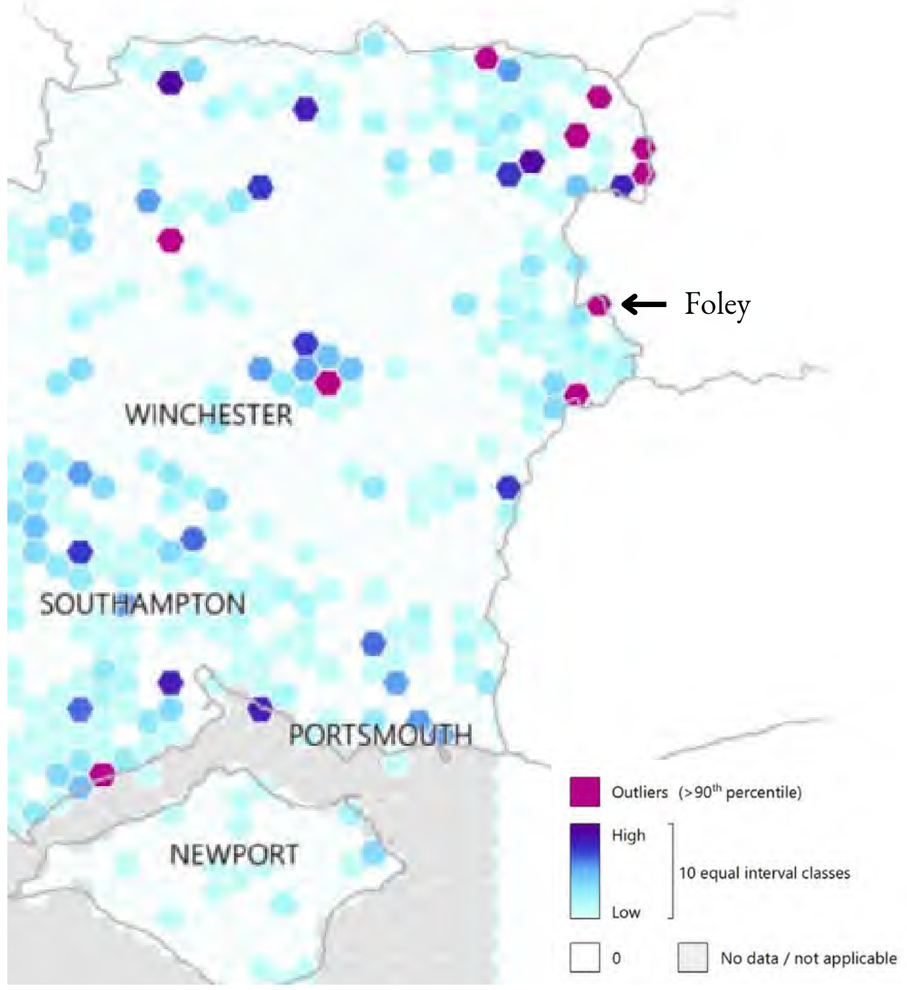
Water

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

WC NC WS WF WQ

Like a green sponge between the dry heathland habitats that surround it, historic Foley Estate flows with abundant natural water throughout the year. From the ancient barrows overlooking our valley, to our medieval water meadows and the ruins of our Victorian hydraulic ram pump, the history and culture of the estate have long centred on its watery landscape. The crystal-clear spring that emerges in Reedy Wood is likely the source of the Hollywater, a river which was believed to have healing properties in the Roman and medieval periods.[16] Today, the estate has 10 ponds, spanning a surface area of 16.50 acres, numerous ephemeral pools and dozens of small creeks and brooks, as well as extensive carr woodland, which floods throughout the winter months. The estate has a high freshwater habitat quantity indicator, ranking above the 90th percentile in the UK for lakes and standing waters.[17]

Freshwater Habitat Quantity Indicator



Source: Natural England's Natural Capital Atlas (Hampshire & Isle of Wight)

Woodland

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Foley Estate has recently created an approved Woodland Management Plan to help care for its 250 acres of woods. 58% of this is mixed broadleaf woodland, much of which is wet and dominated by naturally regenerating birch, oak, alder, willow and poplar - aged between 25 and 50 years. 20% is conifer with a minority broadleaf element, mainly present in the elevated and dry heathland areas. 5% is conifer plantation and 4% is sweet chestnut with oak standards. There are also 46 acres of woodland pasture, dotted with veteran trees, and a 14-acre park with 225-year-old oak, beech, lime, monkey puzzle, cedar and redwood.

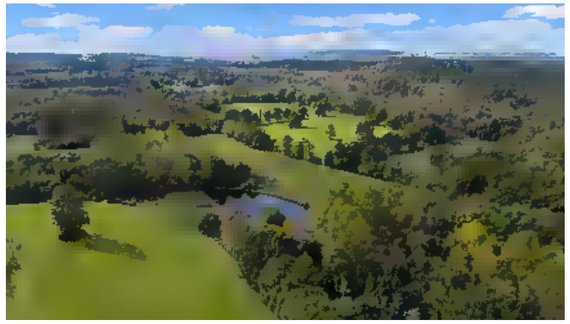
The ecological value of the woodland on the historic portion of Foley Estate is high. There are large areas of wet woodland across lower lying areas, as well as lowland heathland/scrubland areas across Weavers Down and the Holly Hills. These areas may respond well to a conservation forestry approaches - such as woodland glade creation, deer management and ride creation. Natural regeneration in many areas has provided a wide range of tree species and age composition within individual stands. The Westlands Farm portion of the estate is separated from the rest of the estate by a 53 acre block of woodland - which includes significant areas of mature, closed-canopy larch plantation that would merit a clear fell and re-stocking.

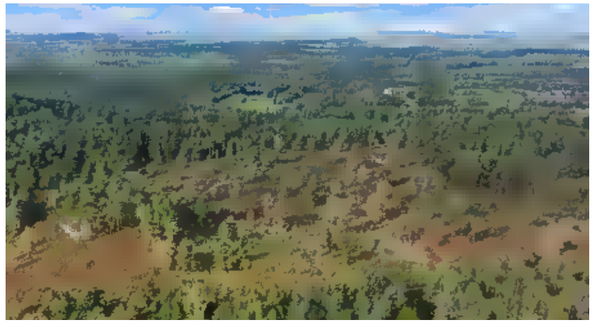
The Foley Farm area has two wooded areas designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) and no Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS), which correlates with a more recent history of wartime forestry and a lowland heathland or scrubby landscape. Areas of Foley Estate were planted up under the Farm Woodland Planting Scheme in compartments in the early 1990s, and further grants were utilised for works in Big Wood to control rhododendron throughout the 2000s and 2010s. Unfortunately, rhododendron presence across the estate remains high and is a significant threat to the health of Foley's woodland habitat.

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Diverse Habitats

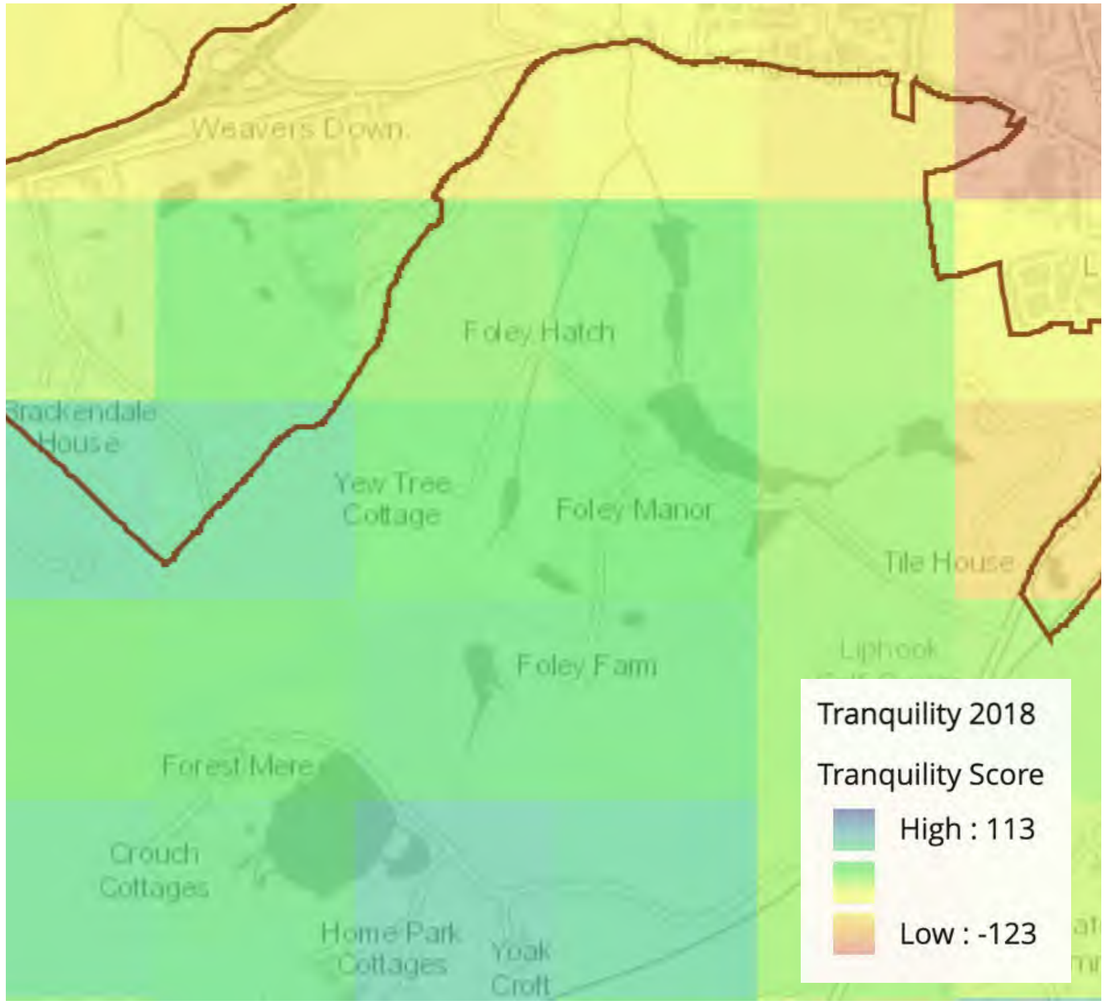
Foley Estate's position, in a bowl between two heathland ridgelines, gives it an unusually broad range of habitats for a holding of its size. The land is over 150m at its highest point, before plunging into a valley filled with woodland pasture, marsh, ponds, wet woodland and multiple natural springs - forming the Hollywater, a tributary of the River Wey. Sandy soil, dominated by heather, holly and pine, gives way to sandy meadows filled with sedge and wildflowers, intercut by perennially wet groves of oak, fern and alder. Almost none of this habitat has been effectively surveyed; however, desk-based priority habitat mapping suggests that Foley Farm includes deciduous woodland, good quality grassland, lowland fern and lowland heathland. Westlands Farm, which is predominantly arable, does not include any priority habitat.





Tranquility

Foley Estate has a broad range of tranquillity scores according to analysis by CPRE and SDNPA. The historic portions of the estate and Weavers Down enjoy an exceptional sense of peace and isolation - scoring up to 23.84 on the National Parks tranquillity index, and registering areas of “intrinsic rural darkness” in its night sky assessment. Thousands of acres of heathland escarpment and thick banks of woodland encircle this part of the estate on all sides, creating a magical high weald landscape featuring veteran trees, woodland, rutted paths and sandy outcrops framing the horizon.[18] The Westlands Farm portion of the estate, in contrast, is surrounded by Liphook to the north and east, resulting in low tranquillity scores of between -15.72 and -41.80.



Source: SDNP Landscape Qualities Map - Tranquility

Protected Sites

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

WEAVERS DOWN

Foley Estate is home to Weavers Down, which is part of the Woolmer Forest SSSI and the Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area. The land is currently licensed to the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust, which oversaw the successful reintroduction of sand lizards in 1991. Over the last 2 decades, a healthy adder population as well as more than 100 other flora and fauna on the West Sussex Rare Species Inventory have been identified on the Down - including nightjar, woodlark and dartford warbler.[19] Weavers Down is part of the wider Longmoor Camp heathland area, owned by the Ministry of Defence, which is the only site in England to contain 12 of the UK's 13 reptile and amphibian species. Historically, this area marked the beginning of the Royal Woolmer Forest, and would have been roamed by red deer, wolves and wild boar for centuries. The Down is criss-crossed by sandy footpaths (the Shipwrights Way and Shepherds Way), providing exceptional public access to this portion of the estate. The views across this area are some of the most spectacular in the Hampshire and West Sussex borderlands.

RELEVANT ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Potential For Rich Biodiversity


Minotaur Beetle


Sand Lizard


Bittern


Nightjar


Adder


Dormouse


Red Kite


Barn Owl


Fallow Deer

Beyond the well-known and very special wildlife on Weavers Down, public records indicate there is very little biodiversity across the rest of Foley Estate. This is largely a result of a lack of survey data. One of the goals of our Whole Estate Plan is to correct this hole in the record and better understand what biodiversity hotspots there might be.

Foley Estate has a broad range of habitats and land uses, in varying conditions. Some areas of the estate, such as Westlands Farm, have been intensely managed for arable farming and commercial forestry for more than a hundred years. Other areas, concentrated within the historic portion of Foley Estate, have traditionally been too wet and too wooded to farm. Within these “wilder” corners of the land, wet woodland, reedbeds, wet heath and other priority habitats thrive. In the lush and naturally regenerated carr woodland that was once the medieval Great Crabtree Pond, two crystal clear springs flood portions of the forest, creating boggy pools amidst an enchanting landscape of watermint, fern, lichen and moss. Our wettest fields erupt with orchids each summer, and mounds of greater tufted sedge grass are home to a rich diversity of rodents over winter - hunted by ghostly barn owls.

For us, this is the essence of the estate. We hope to build on the health of these fragmented, but potentially rich areas of biodiversity - and to expand them. Nature could thrive across our land if we can access the resources to protect and enhance it.

Chapter 3
CHALLENGES WE FACE

Summary

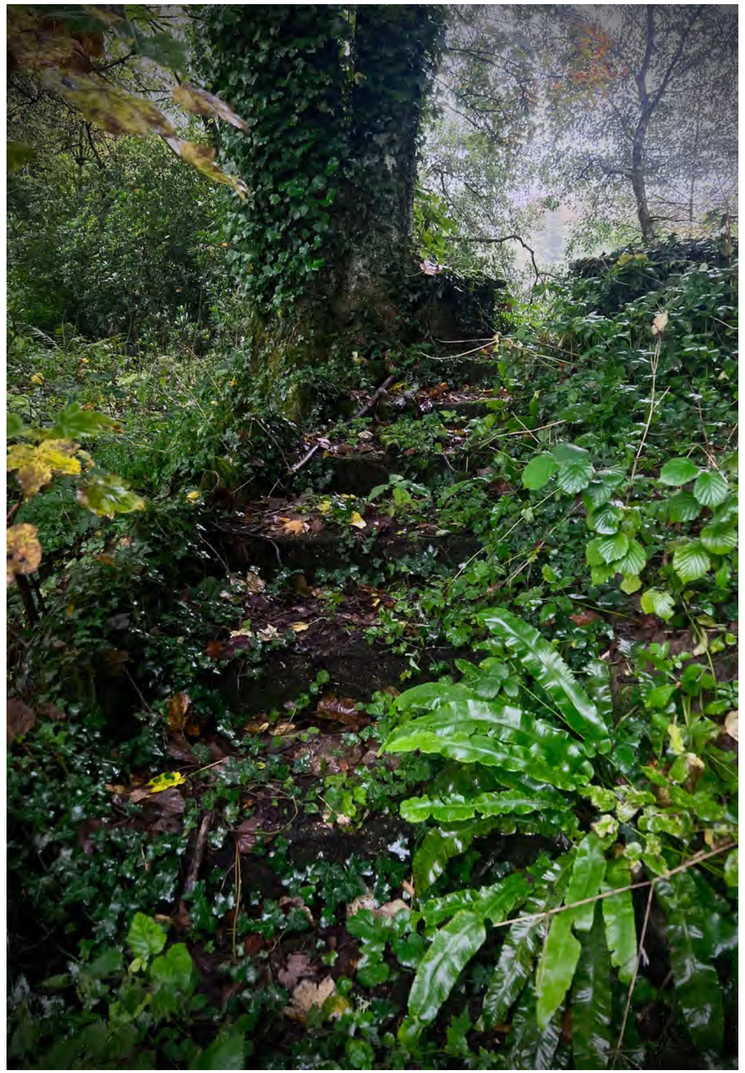
Our Whole Estate Plan is not just a vision for what we would like to achieve. It is an attempt to save historic Foley from a perilous future which is already unfolding in the present day. We hold many precious natural, cultural and human assets, but all of these are under threat. Traditional farms of this size are not surviving the test of time, and we are in urgent need of diversification, investment and change.

This chapter will give an overview of the challenges we face across Foley Estate.

Lost Heritage

Foley Estate's 2.5 acres of walled gardens and outbuildings have fallen into severe disrepair over the past century. Nine gardeners managed this site in the pre-war era, using traditional methods to grow an astonishing array of produce - including most vegetables, a wide range of berries in groves, apple, pear, medlar, plum, cheery and damson across two orchards, and tropical fruit in greenhouses, such as pineapples, melons, peaches, nectarines, grapes, tomatoes and oranges. The water gardens adjoining medieval Home Pond would have been spectacular. Accessed via secret gates and stone entrances, pathways led across man-made islands dotted with statues, surrounded by dramatic bog-planting with 5ft gunnera and royal fern.

The current state of these gardens is a sad sight for everyone who walks down the public footpaths across the estate. In recent years, all of the stone statues have been stolen, as well as more than 2000 Victorian terracotta pots, once used to grow everything from seed. The outbuildings have collapsed, been fly-tipped and vandalised. The beautiful planting schemes have disappeared and been replaced with nettle and thorn. The loss of these gardens is a loss to Foley Estate, Liphook and South Downs National Park. Without investment and a creative new business model for running such a large site, they will be lost forever.

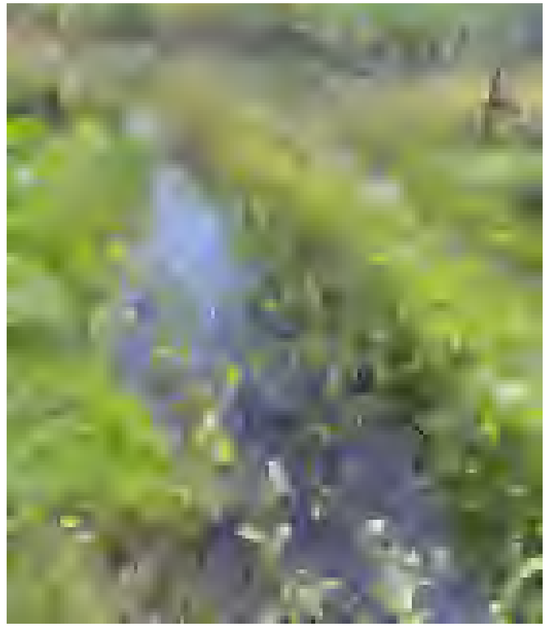


The "Lost Gardens of Liphook"

Crumbling Infrastructure

Like the famous “Lost Gardens of Heligan”, Foley Estate was historically supplied with water by natural springs using a self-powered hydraulic ram pump - invented in the late 1700s. This remarkably sustainable[20] system was replaced with a mains water piping in the 1920s, which was not mapped and has fallen into critical disrepair. Mains water leaks are having a devastating financial impact on the estate each year and must be entirely replaced, at enormous cost.

Farm tracks passing through Foley have become badly eroded in recent years, limiting access for vehicles during winter months and preventing normal agricultural activity. These need to be regraded and their adjacent ditches re-dug. Many fences and gates also need replacing, and old fencing - semi-embedded within the soil - needs to be removed.



Water leaks on Foley Farm in 2024

One of many fences at Foley that needs replacing

A fixed joint following a leak in 2024

Unproductive Farming

Mirroring macro-economic trends across the UK, both of the estate's farms -Foley Farm and Westlands Farm - are unproductive and struggling to make ends meet in the modern era. They face different but related challenges.

Overall issues:

1. The natural landscape of Foley Estate is too wet, wooded and eroded for most modern-day machinery, limiting the scale and productivity of agriculture on our land.
2. For decades, rising costs, land-based subsidies and agricultural pricing have favoured larger farms that benefit from economies of scale, rendering smaller estates like Foley unable to compete.
3. The government's policy of phasing out traditional rural payment schemes has rapidly stripped Foley Estate of its primary grant income, while the complexity of filing new claims and the steep rates of consultants have continually created barriers against adaptation and change.
4. Foley Estate has a severe lack of data on its farmland, limiting its ability to access new environmental grants (Countryside Stewardship and the Single Farming Incentive).

Breaking down the farm challenges

Foley Farm

- Foley's dairy farm - which used to supply Marks and Spencers with milk - became financially unviable and was shut down in the early 2000s.
- We later attempted to convert the farm into an organic beef enterprise, but this also proved financially unsuccessful and the project was abandoned.
- Since then, Foley Farm has been managed by a tenant farmer - who pays a peppercorn rent to over-winter cattle as part of a much larger local holding.
- The majority of Foley Farm's 150 acres of grassland are wet year-round and can only sustain a small number of light cattle for beef production.
- The bogginess of the ground and the erosion of our sandy farm tracks limit our ability to access parts of the farm with vehicles during the year, while repair costs can run into many thousands of pounds.
- The single farm payment system has collapsed, depriving the farm of its primary source of income. Very few of Foley's fields have undergone formal surveys, preventing us from accessing new nature-focused stewardship grants which could otherwise stabilise our revenue.
- Foley Farm's 44 acres of arable fields grow maize, which can produce good yields, but requires fertiliser and pesticides - depleting the soil and negatively impacting wildlife.
- The SFI proceeds from our 16 acres of wildflower meadow go to the tenant farmer. No other land has received SFI grants.
- Many gates and sections of fencing are in disrepair and in need of replacement. Our barns are also in poor condition and need additional upkeep.
- Currently, the cost of managing the farm significantly outweighs its income.

Westlands Farm

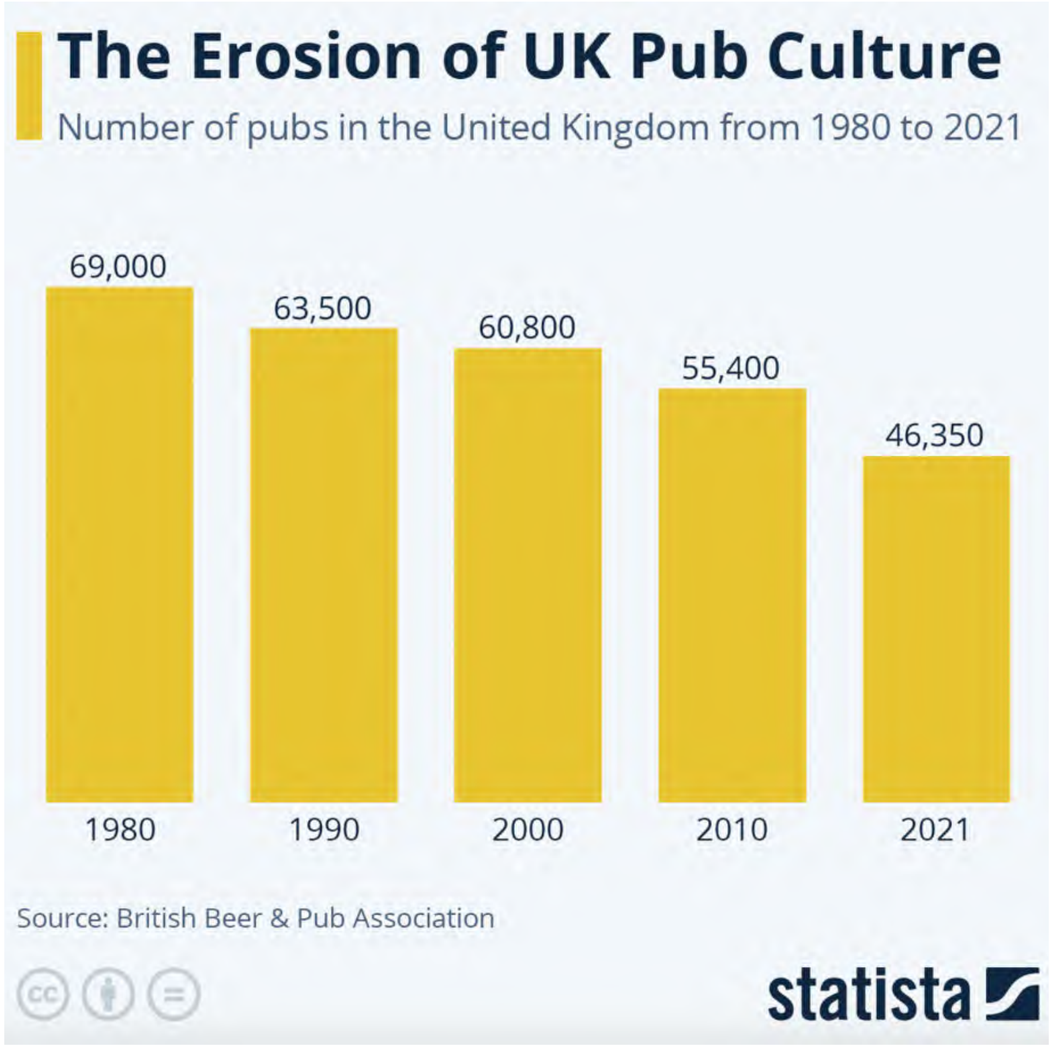
- Although once an important commercial contributor to Foley Estate, Westlands Farm - 70 acres of which grow maize, while 11-acres are set aside for grass - has faced the same catestrophic decline many small farms have faced over the past two decades in the UK.
- Rising costs, collapsed subsidies and fluctuations in product pricing have all played their part. Attempts at diversifying crops - growing wheat, barley and organic beans - have all failed.
- Maize can produce high yields, but the fertilisers and pesticides required damage the soil. Over time, what was once healthy Grade 2 and 3 quality land has been depleted under various tenancies seeking to generate income under difficult conditions.
- Environmental factors, like drier summers and wetter winters, combined with ditches in need of thousands of pounds of repairs, have severely impacted crops.
- These issues have been compounded by the farms physical constraints. Westlands has no on-site farm buildings, making it difficult to store produce or equipment on site - generating the inconvenience, cost and carbon emissions of additional travel.
- The growth of Liphook has also made accessing Westlands Farm increasingly difficult for farm vehicles like combine harvesters. Longmoor Road is the only functional entrance to the fields at Westlands Farm for combines and tractors, with the ungraded track across Foley Estate too wet, eroded and enclosed by woodland for large vehicles to pass.
- Over time, Westlands Farm has become increasingly unviable as a business. Today, as with Foley Farm, the cost of managing the land outweighs its income.

Hospitality Pressures

Britain's hospitality sector is under unprecedented pressure, with up to a third of businesses facing bankruptcy in 2023[21]. Pubs are among the worst affected, with a record number going bust in 2024,[22,] including three within 10 miles of Foley Estate. The Deers Hut has an incredible team and thankfully continues to perform well in this climate. Nevertheless, it is still facing all of the same macro-economic industry challenges, including higher rates, higher national insurance, higher wages, food inflation and higher energy costs. A lack of local skilled workers and a lack of accommodation for staff, who are often required to do late night shifts, are both ongoing challenges.

Lack of Diversification

Currently, the majority of the estate's income is generated from its 11 rental properties. Many properties date back to the early 19th century and require major renovations annually, while others have long-term tenants and have not undergone rent reviews since as far back as 2009. Overhauling this business faces the ticking clock and uphill challenge of the government's new energy efficiency (EEC) requirements, which require all landlords to upgrade their properties to Band C by 2030[23]. With all of our properties requiring upgrades, and many including features that make meeting these requirements exceedingly difficult (such as solid stone walls), Foley Estate will need to invest heavily over the next 5 years to maintain its principal revenue stream.

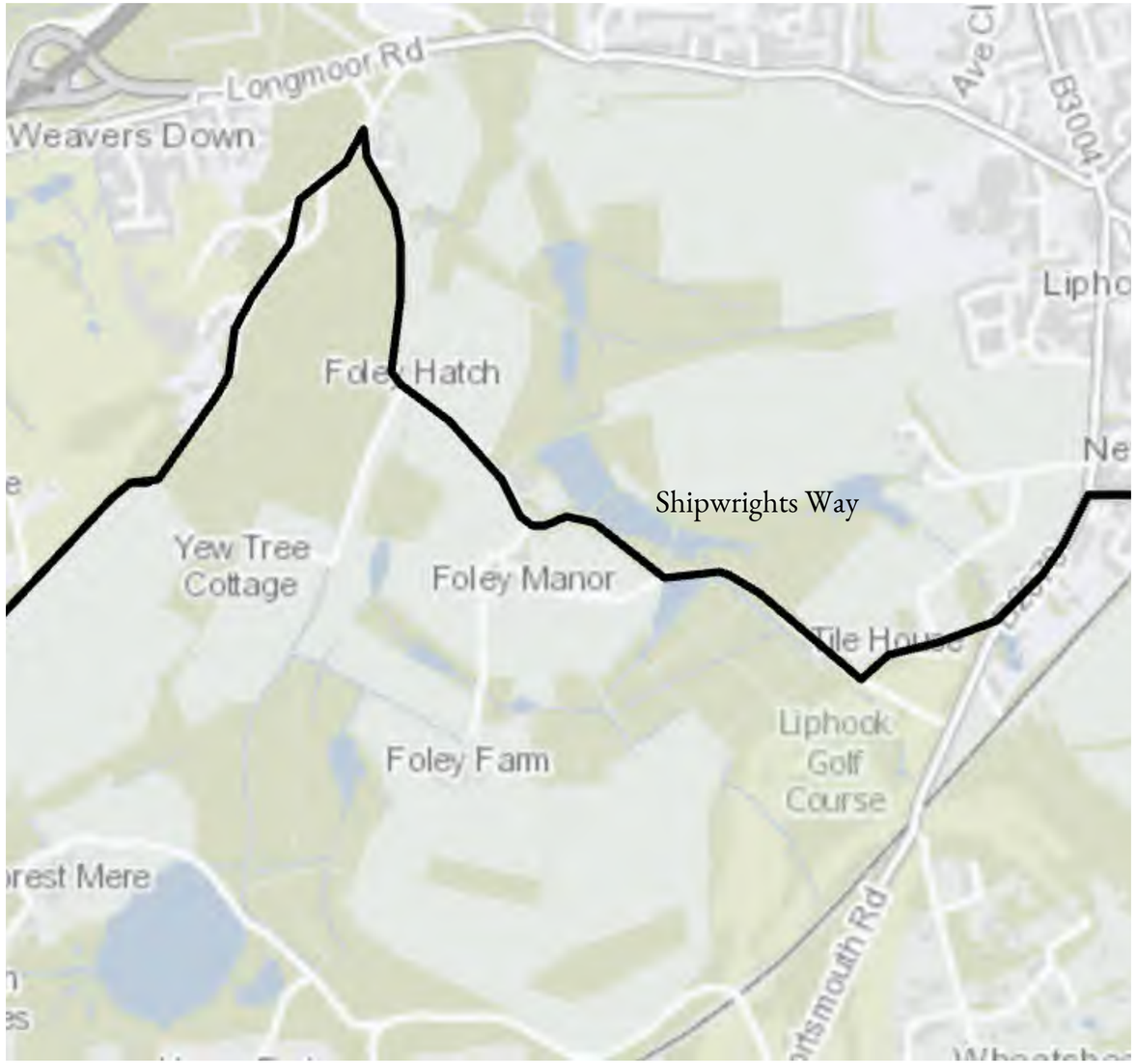


A bottleneck of visitors

Liphook has grown significantly in the past two decades, as have the cities of Woking and Portsmouth, just 40 minutes away by train. Residents from these local population centres want to access nature and green spaces, and the Shipwrights Way across Foley has repeatedly been promoted as one of the “most scenic free walks in Hampshire.”[24] These demographic pressures, combined with the third-party promotion of assets within our estate, have led to an unsustainable increase in visitors across our main footpaths.

Two of the paths across the estate are infrequently used due to uneven ground and wet conditions. The Shipwrights Way is graded however, and just a 15-minute walk from Liphook Railway Station. Analysing footage from our security camera at the Lodge, up to 200 people use this path through the heart of the estate over an average weekend, frequently accompanied by children and dogs[25]. This Shipwrights Way route is also our main driveway and the only road access to the estate for all of our residents and farm vehicles. On average, there are more than 40 car journeys on this road per day, exacerbated by the rise of delivery driver culture.

This dramatic increase in foot and vehicle traffic has resulted in a number of accidents and near misses with pedestrians. Our driveway and the footpath were not designed for this level of visitors, and has no verges in places, overhanging woodland and steep ditches on either side. Over time, the much-loved Shipwrights Way has become a safety hazard and significant cost for Foley Estate. Without attractive alternative footpath routes out of Liphook or a footpath more directly accessing common land to the north-west, this situation will likely get worse as the village continues to grow.



Impact on Weavers Down

The situation across Weavers Downs (part of the Woolmer Forest SSSI and Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area), which has a network of footpaths, is particularly concerning. Surveys have found large numbers of adders in this area, in addition to a breeding population of nightjar and sand lizards, which rely on sandy scrapes created by the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust to breed. In search of accessible green space, the public has begun illegally parking across the Down, driving dirt and quad bikes across the sandy scrapes, letting their dogs run loose through the heathland and making campfires. Without intervention, the wildlife populations of this area will be lost, and we could face a devastating wildfire, as occurred on neighbouring Longmore Camp in 2023, where 16 hectares of heathland were destroyed[26].

The volume of people visiting Foley Estate in search of nature could be an asset which we could convert into revenue. At present however, a lack of public awareness about the sensitivities of our habitat and an overwhelming bottleneck of visitors is generating unsustainable problems and costs.

Littering and trespass is a common along the Westlands Farm boundary

Dozens of cases of petty arson have been encountered on Weavers Down

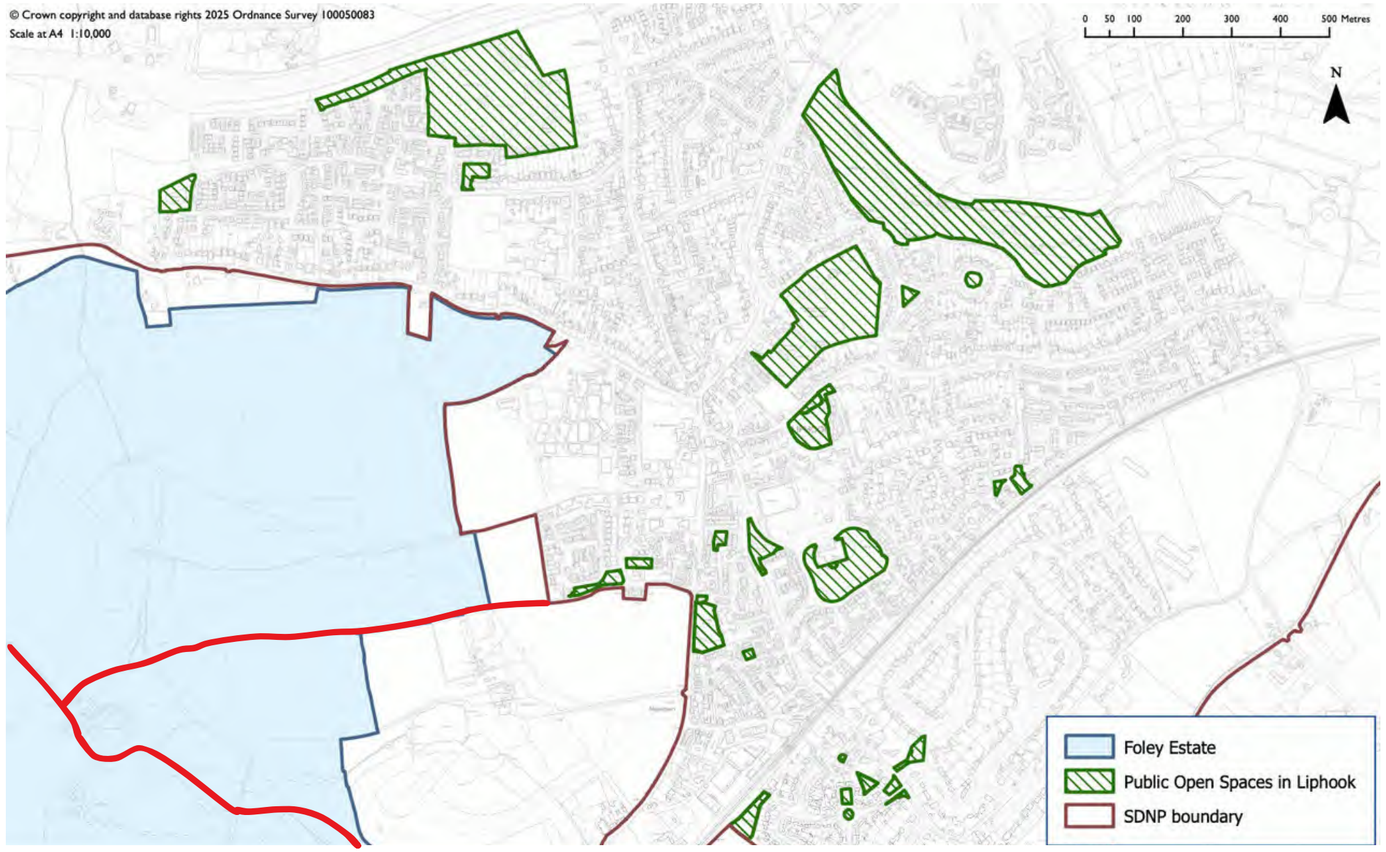
Illegal quad-bike activity across the Down - a major threat to wildlife

Evolution of Liphook

Loss of Public Open Space

One of the factors influencing the challenges along Foley Estate's footpaths is a net loss of public open space in Liphook relative to the rate of development. Looking back at maps from the 1920s, most of the village's significant public open spaces have been lost and never replaced.[27] The village green, where a great oak once stood, has become a car park. The parkland grounds of Chiltley Manor, which once occupied the centre of the community, have been largely consumed by housing estates. Radford Park - created in the 1960s from landfill from the new A3 - is the only public open space that provides meaningful access to nature, and is affected by littering and vandalism. A lack of quality public open space options was highlighted in Liphook's Neighbourhood Plan[28] and is an ongoing point of frustration among residents.

Being the largest green area of the National Park next to Liphook, Foley Estate is bearing the brunt of this significant local challenge. Public desire to access open space negatively manifests itself across the estate every year in the form of trespassing, footpath congestion, damaged fences and gates, littering and vandalism of our barns and buildings. Liphook residents understandably want more areas to play, walk their dogs and experience the outdoors, but are finding themselves short of local options.



Evolution of Liphook

Impact on Westlands Farm

Our land management challenges are most acutely felt at Westlands Farm, which is engulfed by Liphook on two sides. We have spent thousands of pounds planting hedgerows and installing deer fencing to protect our eastern boundary, without success. Houses, forming ribbon development along Longmoor Road, lie directly adjacent to our fields. Many members of the public interpret this as an open invitation. We have seen our fences pulled down across our boundary and crops damaged. The floodlighting of Bohunt School's games pitches and light pollution from Longmoor Road also make many fields inviting after dark, instigating unwanted nocturnal activities such as arson, poaching and drinking.

The development of Lowsley Farm and growth of Bohunt School have also made it increasingly difficult for combines and tractors to access Westlands Farm off Longmoor Road (the only functional entrance to the land for large farm vehicles). The drop-off point for Bohunt School's 1,800 pupils twice a day is just 100m from the main entrance to the farm. We have, on more than one occasion, had contractors refuse to work our fields due to issues turning into the site and complaints about crop damage.

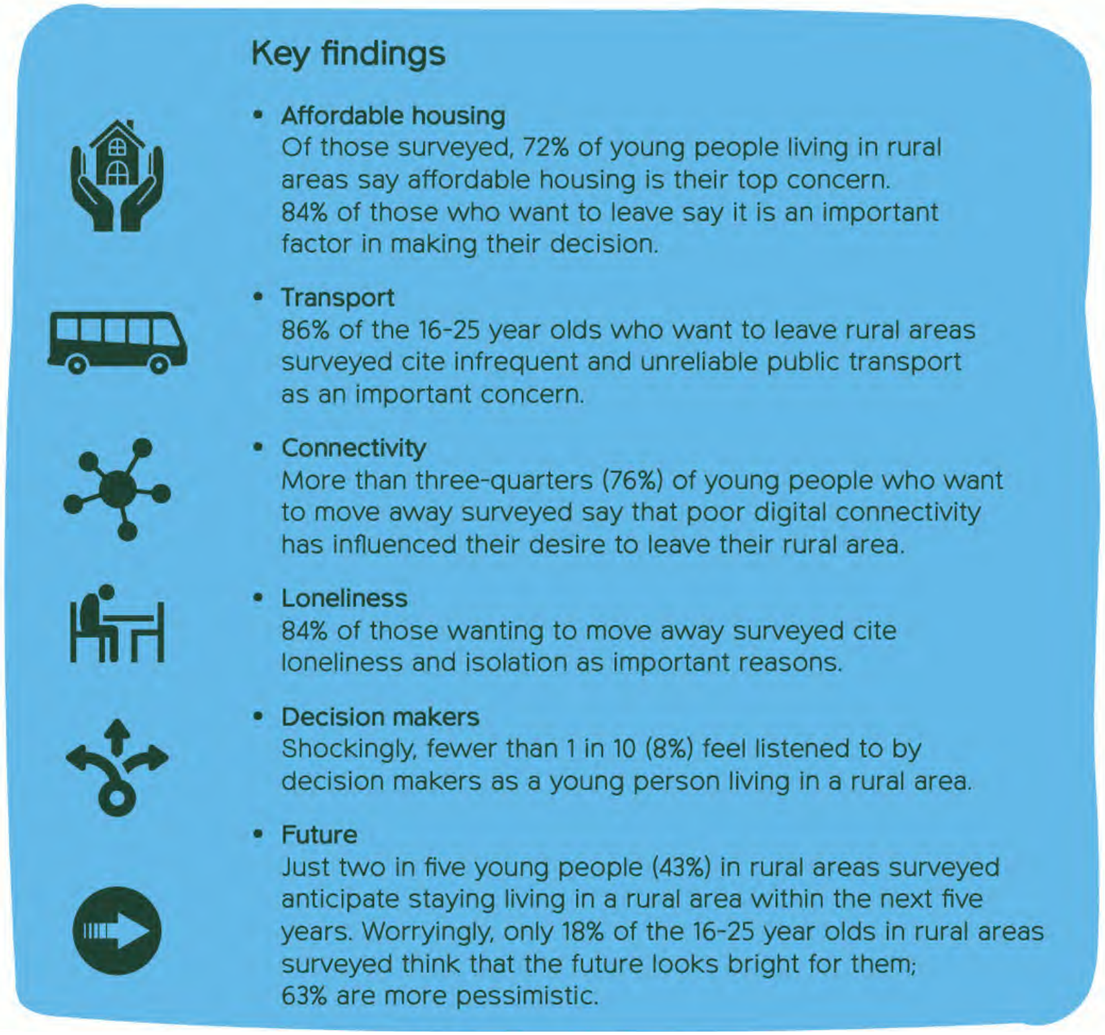
Fencing pulled down on our western boundary .

Evolution of Liphook

Migration of Young People

Demand for homes is incredibly high in Liphook. The community has some of the best state education in the region, is just an hour's commute from London by train, and is within 40 minutes of the beaches at West Wittering. Despite producing many talented young graduates, there is a critical lack of homes and affordable housing in the community, mirroring similar problems across the UK. Unable to find a place to live, and with most students aspiring for white collar jobs, a continual flow of young people leaves Liphook each year, draining energy and youthful talent away from our area in a damaging pattern that's playing out across rural England.[29]

This problem has a direct impact on Foley Estate and is embodied by the staffing challenges we face in the Deers Hut - where we heavily rely on recruiting young, energetic employees, but lack any accommodation which might help retain them or allow for late-night shifts. The same problem occurs when seeking seasonal workers for the estate and its farms. We suffer from a lack of grazers, a lack of forestry workers, a lack of builders and a general lack of skilled labourers in our area. In order to thrive in the future, Foley Estate will need to find a way to attract a diverse array of young and vibrant employees who want to and can afford to live and work in the area.



Source: CPRE Survey on why young people feel forced to leave rural areas October 2021

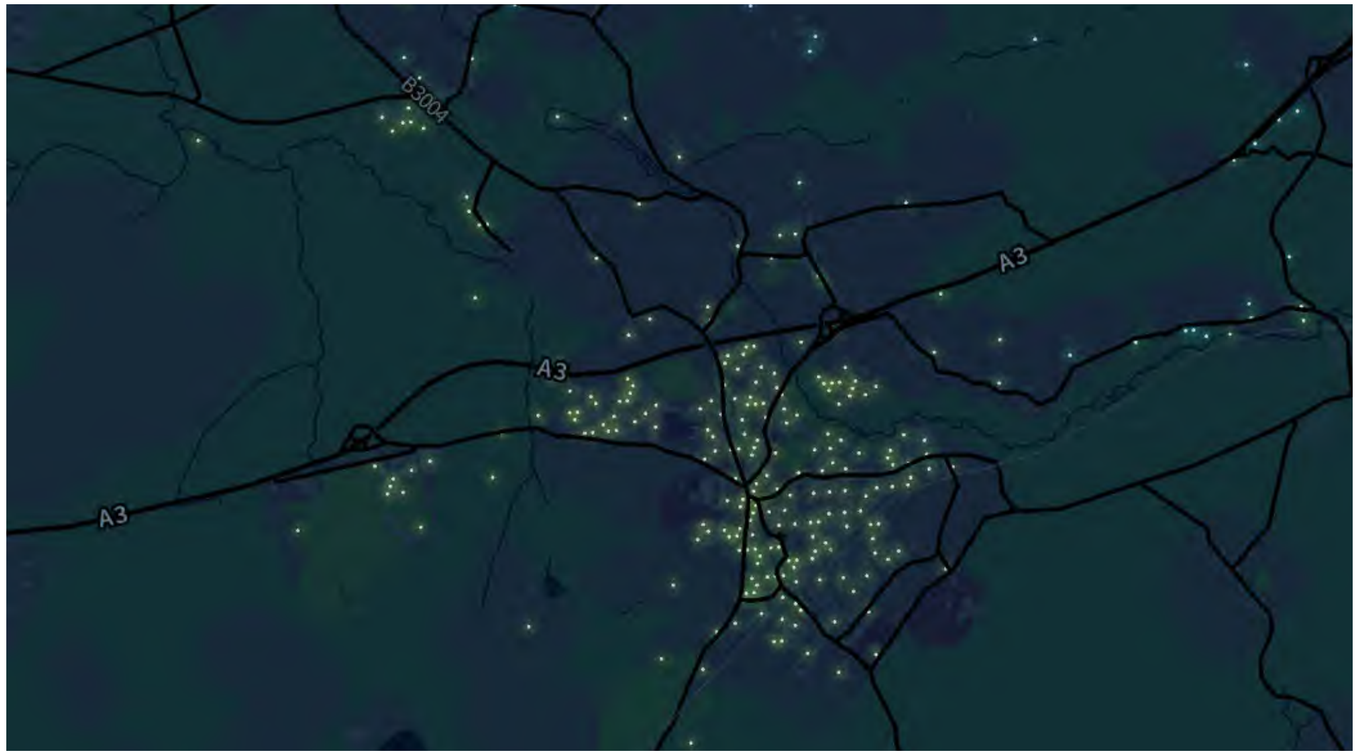
Evolution of Liphook

Crime

An estate tool shed broken into and robbed in 2024

Liphook has some of the highest crime rates for a community of its size in Hampshire, ranking the worst small town in the county for anti-social behaviour in January 2024, and in the top 10 for 2025[30]. This is likely an underestimate given the volume of undocumented cases that occur across Foley Estate each year. Most worryingly, Liphook has also scored highly for violence and sexual offences, recording 222 crimes in 2024[31].

This breakdown of law and order locally has a considerable impact on the Deers Hut and Foley Estate each year, and has forced us to invest heavily in estate security - including new fencing, gates, CCTV cameras and bollards.



Crimes committed in and near Liphook. Source: https://crimerate.co.uk/hampshire/bramshott-and-liphook

Flooding

Foley Estate is the natural watershed for thousands of acres of hilly heathland and the source of the Hollywater tributary, which flows into the River Wey. Over centuries, multiple sections of the Hollywater have been straightened to form a deep, unobstructed canal across Foley, with drainage ditches and underground piping rapidly funnelling water off our land and into the river.

A straight “canal” section of the Hollywater on Foley

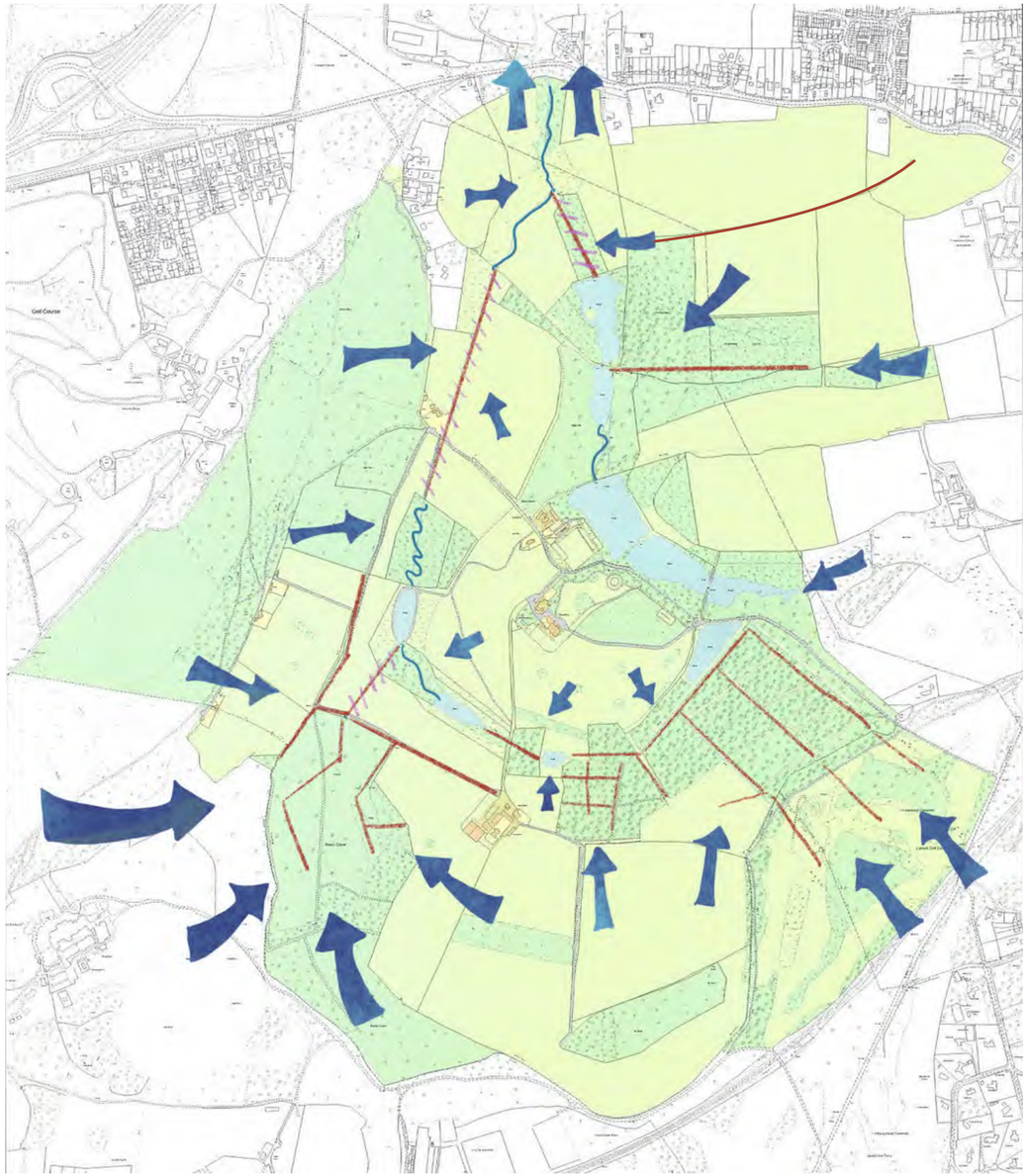
A neighbouring property that flooded in 2024

Natural water course

Drainage ditches

Course straightened into canal

Direction of water flow

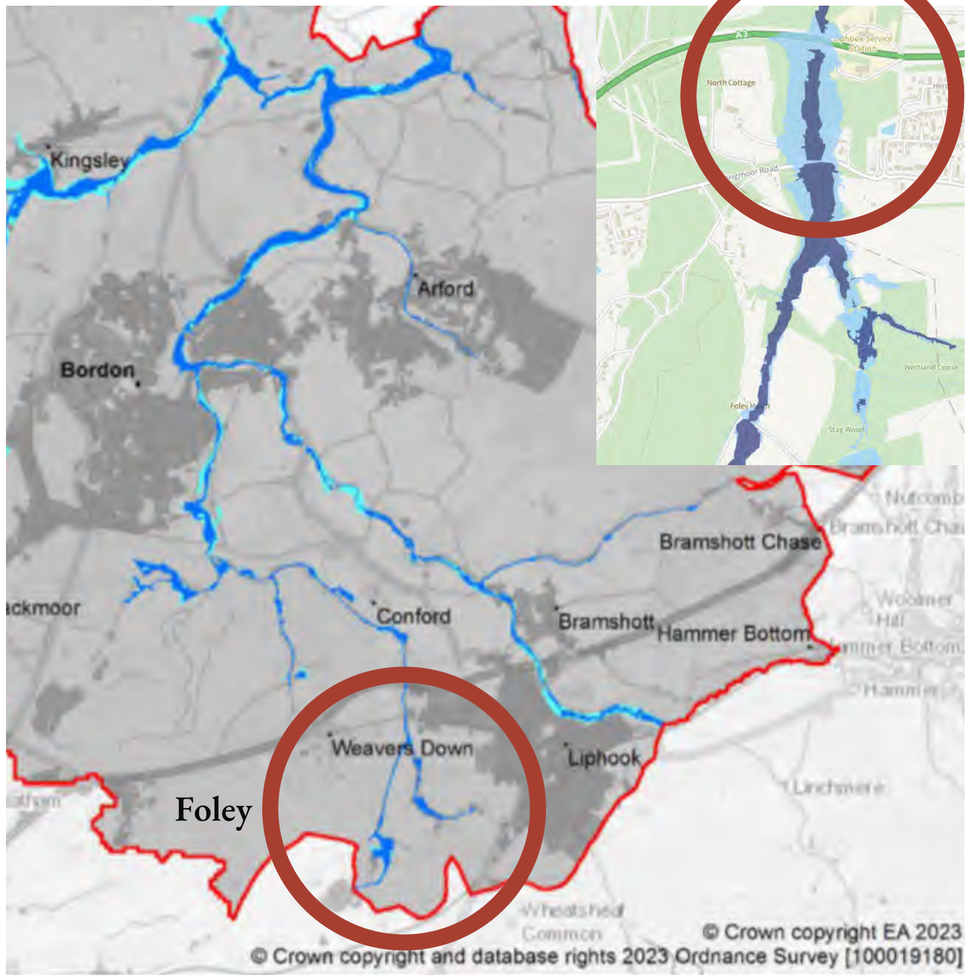


Flooding

Foley Estate falls within Hampshire County Council's River Wey Basin Management Area, a strategically important region for mitigating against flooding. Multiple towns and villages downstream are listed as priority areas for flood defence and have faced serious flood episodes in recent years, including Bordon, Conford, Linford, Tilford and Godalming.[32,33] The unnatural manipulation of Foley's ancient floodplain - which takes in water from thousands of acres of heathland, before moving it quickly off the land - is contributing to these problems downstream.

Flooding in Tilford - January 2024

Defra's flood risk map, highlighting the dangers facing the A3 and Longmoor Road immediately downstream from Foley Estate's boundary



Source: https://documents.hants.gov.uk/flood-water-management/16-HCC-CMP-WeyEastern.pdf

Erosion and Soil Depletion

Foley Estate's soilscape is categorised as "very low fertility" and "freely draining, very acidic sandy and loamy" by the Landis soil map of Britain.[34] This is typical of lowland heathland habitat and contributes to the speed at which water drains from the surrounding hills into the Hollywater floodplain. The composition of the land also affects the stability of farm tracks across Foley, which are in places deeply rutted and impacted by erosion - to the point of being impassable in some places. This challenge has a negative impact on our ability to farm, use heavy machinery and extract timber from our landscape - which often get stuck in the lowland bogs.

A cattle trough reduced to a bog

A farm track the estate was forced to abandon in 2022 due to erosion

Disease

Foley Estate has lost all of its ash and elm trees to Ash Dieback and Dutch Elm disease. The estate's historic role in providing timber during the First World War also means it has several mature larch plantations, which are at risk of Phytophthora ramorum and Heterobasidion annosum, as well as certain bark beetles. Looking to the future, climate change and large populations of roe deer and pheasants (from neighbouring shoots) increase the risk of several animal diseases, including Chronic Wasting Disease in deer and Bird Flu.[35] Lyme disease is also a growing risk in Hampshire, with tick populations booming as a result of our warmer summers and winters.[36]

Pollution

The estate is relatively free from water pollution, with no major development or sewage treatment adjacent to its springs or river system. Recent testing of the Hollywater downstream found the water quality to be of "good ecological status" - the highest possible rating.[37] However, land-based pollution, in the form of littering from public footpaths and paraphernalia from a former pheasant shoot, is a problem across the estate. Light and sound pollution are observed at Westlands Farm, which borders Liphook and Longmoor Road.[38]

Environmental Challenges

Species Loss

In living memory, the historic portion of Foley Estate has been a nesting ground for curlew, corn crake and lapwing - all of which have disappeared in recent years, in line with national decline.[39] Adder populations on Weavers Down have been declining, facing pressure from increased public footfall and the spread of birch and bracken. Historically, the estate's extensive water bodies were probably once home to water voles and otters, which have been pushed out by American mink - again mirroring the picture across the UK.[40]

An adder seen on a Weavers Down footpath

Rhododendron thrives in Foley's acid soil

Fragmented Habitats

Although Foley Estate has many wonderful pockets of biodiversity in its historic heartland, its habitats are fragmented and damaged by invasive species and human impact - a common problem in England. Victorian planted rhododendron has taken over vast areas of native woodland, depleting wet woodland and heath areas of potentially rich flora and fauna. Parts of the Hollywater flood freely and are thick with reedbeds, while others have been straightened into canals with no vegetation. Sheep fencing, dense conifer plantations, rhododendron, roads and public footpaths also break up our natural landscape, affecting the movement, breeding and density of wildlife. Across the estate, our woodland is under-managed and in many places has become a closed canopy, limiting biodiversity. Hedges across Foley need coppicing, deer protection and sustained management.

One the estate's woods heavily infested with rhododendron

The now disappeared corn crake

Climate Change

Across the UK, we are already observing drier, warmer summers and milder, wetter winters as a result of climate change. For Foley Estate in particular, climate change is most felt with increasing temperatures (the mean yearly temperature in our local vicinity has increased from 9.3°C to 11.6°C from 1979 to 2024[42]), precipitation changes and increasing pest populations.

How is Foley going to be impacted by Climate Change?

Accelerated growth of bracken and birch, requiring greater woodland management[43]	Worse flooding of the Hollywater, impacting communities downstream[44]	Greater erosion of our sandy fields and tracks[45]	Prolonged drought impacting water bodies[46]	Increase in invasive plant species4[7]
Greater risk of tree diseases[48]	Collapse of insect biodiversity[49]	Increasing energy costs[50]	Negative impact of heatwaves on nesting birds[51]	More difficult farming conditions[52]
Rising tick populations and risk of lyme disease[53]	Greater risk of deer diseases[54]	High costs associated with net zero goals[55]	Increasing mains water costs[56]	Potential collapse of adder population[57]

Chapter 4
ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES

Supporting Services

Soil Formation

Human societies have long understood that human activity can deplete soil productivity and the ground's ability to produce food. But it's only in recent years that we've come to understand the critical role our soils also play in sequestering carbon and supporting complex subterranean ecosystems.[58]

Heathland is often an indicator of extensive prehistoric grazing; hundreds of thousands of years of human activity on the landscape.[59] Foley - with its rich Neolithic history - is dominated by lowland heathland soil types, characterised by free-draining, very low fertility, sandy ground. This soil is generally poor for farming and vulnerable to erosion. As a result, most land at Foley is not suitable for growing crops, and the 114 acres of arable land we do have is currently used to grow maize (one of the most reliable and low-cost grains). Attempts at growing wheat and barley have failed to be economical.

Conversely, Foley's poor quality, sandy heathland soil supports a number of plant species with deep root systems, which are exceptional storers of carbon - such as gorse and heather.[60] The estate's extensive woodland and wet and loamy grassland - close to 60 hectares - are also exceptional for sequestering carbon.[61]

The historic portions of the estate used for low-density beef farming and pasture are likely contributing to a healthy cycle of soil formation. Intensive maize production and use of fertilisers are likely damaging the soil structure, negatively impacting the estate's net outcome.

Primary Production

Historically, Foley Estate produced an incredible array of foods and primary products, through its walled garden, orchards and dairy farm, both for consumption on site and for sale. The collapse of the gardens, the loss of the orchard and the decline of the farm have all resulted in a dramatic decline in the estate's production. Today, the only commercial crop produced is maize (114 acres) and silage, which are fed to cattle. Apples from our orchard and venison from the land are supplied to the Deers Hut.

Nutrient Cycling

Human activities have a dramatic impact on our planet's nutrient cycles. Farming using pesticides and fertilisers is particularly impactful - disrupting the balance of nutrient exchange between soil, plants, and the atmosphere. The estate has both arable and pastoral farming. Large areas of pasture grazed by low-density cattle across Foley Farm are likely beneficial for the nutrient cycle. The 114 acres of maize grown on the estate for cattle feed, predominantly at Westlands Farm, is likely having a negative impact - contributing to emissions, soil erosion and degradation (maize is among the most destructive crops in farming).[62] In 2024, the estate converted 16 acres of maize fields into wildflower meadows under the SFI scheme - beginning some of our regenerative farming plans.

Water Cycling

Foley Estate plays an important role in the regional water cycle, hosting multiple springs and the source of the Hollywater - all filtered through the wild and sandy heathland that surrounds us. Approximately 20% of the estate has been scored 80-100 out of 100 in its capacity to purify water and reduce pollution impacts before reaching watercourses, with a further 25% of the estate scored at 60-80 out of 100.[63] Downstream from Foley, the Hollywater has been graded "good" quality - the highest ecological rating in the River Wey catchment.

Biodiversity

Foley Estate's most important habitats include wet woodland and heathland on the historic portion of the estate. Beyond Weavers Down, which has over 100 species on the rare species index, no biodiversity surveys have been carried out elsewhere. We are eager to carry out further surveys to assess what we have. Existing biodiversity is seriously threatened by rhododendron, which is abundant across the estate.

Supporting Services

	Strength	Weakness	**Opportunity**	**Threat**	**Priority**
Soil Formation	Foley Estate's wild heathland, wet grassland and natural forest regeneration helps replenish our soils	Foley Estate's soils drain rapidly, erode easily and are generally poor for agriculture. Arable farming has likely damaged our soil structure.	Regenerative agriculture and conservation could bolster nature across the estate and improve our soils	Risk of greater erosion and flooding in the future	Preserve existing heathland and woodland habitat and consider expanding it. Carry out soil surveys and consider conservation and carbon sequestering as revenue streams on healthy soil habitat
Primary Production	Producing locally sourced food for the Deers Hut in small quantities, and food for cattle.	Non-economical farming and the loss of historic assets mean the estate is largely unproductive.	Our walled garden complex and restoration of our orchards have the potential to produce large quantities of food, bolstering local production.	A lack of cash flow and capital, and a deepening crisis in farming nationally, place a hard limit on what is possible.	Seek alternative income streams from the farms, stewardship agreements, and investment for the walled garden complex.
Nutrient Cycling	Many areas of Foley Estate have a low or positive impact on the nutrient cycle.	114 acres of the estate is having a substantial negative impact, potentially causing long-term damage.	BNG and new stewardship grants could provide avenues for transitioning away from maize production.	A lack of cash flow and capital, and a deepening crisis in farming, place a limit on what is possible.	Seek alternative income streams from the farm, increase conservation grazing and wildflower coverage, and seek to transition away from maize production.
Water Cycling	Foley is an exceptional estate in its contribution to a healthy water cycle.	A lack of pond management and the use of fertilisers is likely increasing the amount of nutrients in our system.	Further restoration of our water courses and historic floodplain is possible and deliverable.	Climate change could negatively disrupt our system.	Limit use of fertilisers, manage the woodland around our ponds and seek funding for floodplain restoration.
Biodiversity	Foley Estate has pockets of rich biodiversity.	A lack of baseline scientific data, fragmented habitat, lack of protection status and lack of funding.	Great potential for enhancing and expanding existing habitats, improving and connecting degraded ones and species reintroduction.	Climate change, funding, invasive species, public access and poaching.	Engage with local stakeholders to seek data, funding and momentum for major biodiversity initiatives across the estate. Priority is to seek to remove rhododendron.

Provisioning Services

Water Supply

Foley Estate's 10 ponds and wet woodland hold large volumes of water throughout the year, playing a critical role in local water supply - feeding into the Hollywater, the River Wey and eventually the Thames. The estate has a high freshwater habitat quantity indicator ranking above the 90th percentile in the UK for lakes and standing waters,[64] which underlines its importance in local water provision.

Despite this, historical farming along the Hollywater has severely damaged Foley's historic floodplain and flow. The loss of medieval ponds, the creation of networks of ditches and the straightening of the river into a canal in places moves water rapidly off the landscape during rain, contributing to flooding downstream.

Food Production

The current farm enterprise grows crops for animal feed and raises just over 60 beef cattle. We are seeking alternative ways of farming to reduce our emissions, increase revenue and potentially increase production. The estate provides apples and venison for the Deers Hut. Historically, the farm and the estate produced an abundance of food through the walled garden complex.

Timber

Foley Estate has approximately 275 acres of woodland. At present, none of this is commercially managed. However, when trees have fallen or need to be felled for safety or woodland management reasons, a portion is converted into firewood logs, which are then sold to the estate's residential tenants. Foley Estate has engaged in large rhododendron removal projects and planted over 300 native English trees over the last two decades to improve biodiversity - but there is potential for much more improvement.

Energy

The estate is a net consumer of energy and buys electricity from Octopus as it invests in and manages renewable energy projects. An ongoing challenge is improving the energy performance of the 19th-century properties across the estate. At present, all homes meet the minimum EPC requirements, but will need substantial investment over the next 5 years to meet government efficiency deadlines. Historically, the estate was entirely self-sufficient with its own gas works and hydraulic ram pump. We would like to explore what modern renewable energy possibilities there are for Foley. Transmission power lines across Westlands Farm hold potential for battery storage and supporting the grid.

Genetic Diversity

Foley Farm's diverse landscape and position next to large areas of wild heathland should ensure healthy levels of genetic diversity - particularly due to the significant levels of natural regeneration of our woodland that has occurred over the past 100 years. However, heavy-footed public access, use of pesticides in some areas and areas dominated by rhododendron all likely play a role in isolating pockets of species, in particular our reptiles on Weavers Down and our aquatic life in the healthy sections of the Hollywater. Habitat expansion, restoration and species reintroduction are things we are actively pursuing.

Provisioning Services

	Strength	Weakness	**Opportunity**	**Threat**	**Priority**
Water Supply	Foley is an exceptional estate in its contribution to local water supplies.	Historical farming practices have damaged the ancient floodplain and canalled the Hollywater, contributing to local flooding.	Further restoration of our water courses and historic floodplain is possible and deliverable.	Climate change could make existing problems worse and funding can be hard to access.	Seek partnerships and funding for the restoration of the Hollywater.
Food Production	Foley Estate produces large quantities of maize for cattle, moderate amounts of beef and apples.	Both farms are unproductive and struggling. Current methods are not sustainable.	Potential for pivoting towards conservation grazing and more sustainable farming.	Lack of cash flow, rising costs, disrupted government grants, erosion, poor soils and climate change.	Transform our farms and restore our walled garden and orchards. Seek partnerships and funding for baseline surveys and new use of the farming landscape.
Timber	Foley Estate has large areas of woodland and recently created a Woodland Management Plan.	Most of our woodland is too wet or remote to be commercially harvested. Large areas are dominated by rhododendrons.	Potential for more effective woodland management and some commercial felling.	Lack of cash flow, rising costs, disrupted government grants, erosion, wet ground.	Create a 5 year woodland management plan and seek stewardship. Include deer management, large-scale rhododendron removal, and biodiversity enhancement.
Energy	The estate is actively working to improve energy usage and efficiency.	Significant investment is required to achieve this. Most properties are oil heated.	Potential for sourcing water and energy power on site - including solar mounted on barns.	Lack of cash flow, rising costs, navigating planning and government regulations.	Upgrade all properties to be EPC compliant and begin exploring longer term renewable energy options.
Genetic Diversity	The historic portion of the estate is situated within a large heathland ecosystem, with a diverse range of habitats that have undergone natural regeneration.	A lack of scientific data, fragmented habitat across the estate, vulnerable species.	Potential to work with local stakeholders to improve habitat and outcomes for nature - including species reintroduction.	Lack of funding, growing footfall across public access areas, invasive species, climate change.	Work with local stakeholders to explore projects and funding options to improve biodiversity and genetic diversity across the estate. Priority is to extend Weavers Down habitat to non-public access areas.

Regulating Services

Climate Regulation & Carbon Storage

The estate's pasture, meadows, woodland, heathland and scrub sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Natural England's Natural Capital Atlas supports this, showing that the Foley area exceeds the 90th percentile for Woodland in the UK, which indicates it is playing a useful role in climate regulation and carbon storage locally.[77] The legacy of dairy and arable farming across parts of the estate means that the carbon capacities of our habitats vary quite significantly. We are continually working to improve the estate's carbon storage capacity - over the past decade, the estate has planted over 300 native English trees. We intend to further these efforts by making applications for grants that will allow new planting, habitat regeneration and floodplain restoration. Our desire to shift to a sustainable farming model will help to reboot the carbon cycle within our soils, materially increasing their annual contribution to sequestration.

Erosion regulation

Foley Estate's land is categorised as "freely draining, very acidic sandy and loamy" by the Landis soil map of Britain. This contributes to the speed at which water drains from the surrounding hills into the Hollywater. The sandy composition of the land also affects the stability of farm tracks across Foley, and public footpaths, which are in places deeply rutted and impacted by erosion.

Water Flow, Storage & Flood regulation

As a headwater for the River Wey and the source of the Hollywater tributary, Foley Estate plays an important role in regulating water flow and downstream flooding. In addition to a large volume of trees, [8] the estate's 12 ponds, wet grassland and carr woodland act as a sponge - storing, purifying and slowing down water.

Historic manipulation of the Hollywater for agriculture has damaged the effectiveness of the estate's water regulation however, and is likely contributing to the annual flooding affecting communities downstream. The straightening and ditching of the river, combined with the draining of fields and the loss of medieval ponds, means water leaves Foley at a quicker pace and in larger volumes than would be natural within our natural landscape. To address this, we are exploring landscape restoration measures such as re-wiggling streams, blocking ditches, reintroducing beavers and re-evoking traditional floodplain management techniques.

Air Quality Regulation

The estate's pastures, meadows, and woodlands help absorb carbon dioxide and act as a natural buffer against greenhouse gas emissions. These habitats contribute to reducing air pollution arising from the traffic on the A3 and congestion that occurs in Liphook during school drop-off and pick-up times. Oil boilers and open fireplaces in our cottages likely do harm to local air quality.

Soil quality

While some of Foley Estate's soils are likely healthy due to woodland regeneration and low-density beef farming, other areas are likely depleted due to use of fertilisers and pesticides to grow maize on Grade 2-3 agricultural land. No up-to-date soil data exists for the estate. In recent years, we have begun sowing herbal lays and flower meadows to improve our environment and soils. Our impending shift to an extensive, conservation grazing-led regenerative system will improve soil health over time.

Regulating Services

Water quality

Foley Estate is committed to maintaining and improving water quality across its landscapes. The estate's diverse habitats, especially its wet woodland and grassland, play a crucial role in filtering pollutants and improving water purity before it reaches larger watercourses downstream. Approximately 20% of the estate has been rated 80-100 out of 100 in its capacity to purify water, with a further 25% scoring between 60-80 according to the SDNP's Ecosystem Services water map.[65] We are interested in pursuing formal testing of our water quality. Tests of the Hollywater downstream showed it had some of the highest water quality in the River Wey catchment.

Disease & Pest Regulation

The estate has always made every effort to prevent disease through the careful management of livestock and game, and the annual culling of deer for the Deers Hut. Most significantly, the hosting of a pheasant shoot was stopped at Foley in 2024, bringing to an end 200 years of tradition on the estate, but also taking a crucial step towards preventing bird flu locally. More needs to be done to reduce our risk of disease however. Climate change could exacerbate tree and animal diseases and we still have an overly large population of deer and areas of larch plantation. Stewardship options through our Woodland Management Plan could provide a pathway towards funding these efforts.

Pollination

The diversity of vegetation and habitats on the estate supports numerous pollinating insects. According to SDNP's Pollination Capacity map, Foley Estate (like much of the surrounding area) has a high capacity.[66] The creation of 16 acres of wildflower meadow on land formerly grown for maize and the introduction of three bee hives in 2024 will likely boost this. The continuity of pesticides across 114 acres of land will no doubt be seriously harming our pollinators however - drastically reducing the overall service of the estate. Westlands Farm is a major contributor to this, with over 70 acres still relying on pesticide use every year.

Regulating Services

	Strength	Weakness	**Opportunity**	**Threat**	**Priority**
Air Quality Regulation	Foley's woodlands and heathland store carbon and improve our local air quality.	Beef farming, use of oil boilers and open fires all contribute to carbon emissions.	Regenerative farming and habitat restoration will improve our air quality - as will improving the energy efficiency of our properties.	Cost of converting to renewables and funding for estate property and energy transitions.	Upgrade the energy efficiency of our properties and seek partnerships and funding for nature regeneration.
Climate regulation and carbon storage	The estate's rich natural assets play a useful role in storing and regulating carbon.	Existing farm and businesses play a limited role in storing carbon.	Significant carbon sequestration opportunities.	The cost of switching to renewables and shifting our business model is a barrier against change.	Protect existing habitat, and seek to expand it. Transition our farm towards a more sustainable model.
Water flow, storage, and flood regulation	Foley's natural environment plays an important role in storing water throughout the year.	Historic agriculture has damaged the floodplain and corrupted the Hollywater, contributing to flooding.	We have identified a number of steps we can take to restore the Hollywater and maximise Foley's role as a buffer against flooding.	Climate change will increase the risk of both drought and flooding, and there are major financial hurdles to overcome in accomplishing our goals.	Begin forming partnerships and laying the groundwork for a multi-year project to restore the Hollywater.
Erosion regulation	Much of Foley is left to nature, reducing the impact of human driven erosion.	Tracks and public footpaths continue to degrade and require upkeep. A number of tracks have been entirely lost to erosion.	A more sustainable farming model, using less heavy machinery will reduce erosion. Local planning and public engagement could provide some relief for our footpaths.	Climate change and the growth of Liphook could deepen these problems.	Work with local authorities to help transition to sustainable farming and manage the issues affecting our footpaths.

Regulating Services

	Strength	Weakness	**Opportunity**	**Threat**	**Priority**
Soil Quality	Much of Foley Estate is free from fertilisers and destructive forms of farming.	We have a history of growing maize, which has likely damaged soil across our arable land.	Increase wildflower meadows and pivot to regenerative farming and conservation grazing - funded by stewardship or BNG.	Changes to government grants and farming and cost pressures.	We are in the process of transforming our farm towards a more sustainable model.
Water Quality	Likely excellent water quality and natural filtration in many places.	Historic manipulation of our waterways and farming practices are having a negative impact - pulling sediment and unnatural nutrients into our system.	Switching to sustainable farming and restoring our ancient floodplain.	Costs of restoration and pollution from neighbouring landowners.	Carry out tests of our water and embark on our multi-year project to restore the Hollywater.
Disease and pest regulation	Historic lack of serious disease on the estate.	Non-native tree plantations and large deer population.	Woodland Management plan provides scope for deer control and removal of larch.	Multiple pheasant shoots in the area, climate change and unchecked deer populations.	Remove larch and implement formal deer control.
Pollination	High pollination capacity rating and diverse habitat.	Pesticides still used on 114 acres of the estate.	Potential to cease all pesticide use on Foley Farm by 2027.	Farming costs, climate change and pesticide use on neighbouring land.	Work with our neighbours to create an extended pesticide free zone spanning thousands of acres. Aim to cease all pesticides on Foley Farm by 2027.

Cultural Services

Inspiration & Spiritual Values

The tranquillity and beauty of Foley Farm and Weavers Down naturally lend themselves to spiritual reflection and contemplation, allowing individuals to connect with themselves and the natural world. The Neolithic heritage that surrounds the estate and the naming of the “Holy water” suggest something akin to this has been felt by people visiting this land for thousands of years. Our vision for restoring our historic landscape and ecosystem, and our education-focused partnerships with Bohunt School and Green School (outlined in the next chapter), have the potential to inspire thousands of young people for many generations to come.

The Westlands Farm portion of the estate has no public access and is separated from the rest of Foley by large blocks of woodland. It is also separated from Liphook by deer fencing and hedgerows, meaning few people have the opportunity to see or experience the area beyond trespassing.

Support is required from local authorities to ensure we can access the resources we need to protect our special places, while also thinking strategically about the future of Liphook. We can also work harder to inform the general population about our rich history and ecology, which will deepen local connectedness with the land and hopefully help address some of the social problems we face.

Tranquillity

Foley Estate has a broad range of tranquillity scores according to analysis by CPRE and SDNPA. Westlands Farm scores low, ranging between -15.72 and -41.80 - encompassed by Liphook and Bohunt school.[67] Foley Farm and Weavers Down, sheltered from Liphook by large blocks of coniferous and deciduous woodland and thousands of acres of heathland, scores between 7.25 and 23.84. We want to preserve the tranquillity of our existing high-scoring areas as best we can by investing in a drop-off point for delivery vehicles at the gates to the estate, planting hedgerows and installing bird hides along footpaths, installing naturalistic barriers on Weavers Down to halt dirt biking and quad biking, and by better engaging with local authorities.

Recreation & Tourism

Foley is the gateway to the National Park for thousands of people in Liphook and hundreds more who visit the village by car and train. The Shipwrights Way footpath, which we improved and graded in 2012, is much loved by our community. But with no facilities for benefiting from this inflow, tourism and public access are currently generating significant costs for the estate. Strategic planning locally has not provided enough attractive, alternative and public green spaces which could help relieve some of the pressure on Foley.

Cultural Heritage Values

Although many of the standing structures on Foley Estate date to the 19th and 20th centuries, and none are designated heritage assets, the rich history of our area gives our landscape and key assets significant cultural and sentimental value. Nevertheless, due to the degradation of our walled garden complex and most of Foley’s records being held in private archives, very little of our past is known by the general public. A search for Foley Manor on the internet will reveal almost none of the information included in this Plan.

We hope to turn this around with our ambitious education-centred vision for the estate (outlined in the next chapter) - integrating an appreciation of our ecological and cultural history into information boards across our footpaths and into the curriculum of international and local children. We want people to know about our amazing past and to seek widespread support for our regenerative ambitions. We strongly feel this is the best pathway to restoring what we have left.

Cultural Services

	Strength	Weakness	**Opportunity**	**Threat**	**Priority**
Inspiration & Spiritual Values	Areas of the historic estate with rich cultural and spiritual history, with enduring qualities in the landscape.	Lack of public awareness, congestion on footpaths and areas of the estate with no public access or emotional value.	The potential to restore some of our historical landscape and inspire thousands of young people.	Growing population, lack of joined-up strategic planning, lack of funding.	Produce information boards for the estate and work with local authorities to fulfill our vision.
Tranquility	Areas of high tranquility on Foley Farm, Weavers Down and much of historic Foley Estate.	Areas of very poor tranquility across Westlands Farm, and a growing risk from vehicles sharing our footpaths.	Potential to work with local authorities to limit vehicle traffic on the footpaths and protect our most tranquil areas.	A lack of joined-up strategic planning in Liphook and overwhelming pressure for public green space and access.	Begin making improvements to our footpaths on Foley Farm and work more closely with local planning authorities.
Cultural Heritage Values	A varied and fascinating cultural history.	Much heritage is not known or in ruins.	Potential to restore our heritage and raise public awareness of Foley's magical history.	Lack of funding, and high start-up and planning costs for restoration and regeneration.	Work with local authorities to improve the situation and plan for the future.
Recreation & Tourism	Large numbers of tourists.	Lack of infrastructure for handling tourists or generating income, lack of alternative public green spaces locally, and costs for the estate.	Potential to create a tourism and education driven income streams, and to work with local authorities to better equip our footpaths and plan alternative public green spaces locally.	Lack of funding, growing population, rising costs, risk of accidents and liabilities on our footpaths.	Financial planning, local partnerships, Deers Hut accommodation exploration.

Chapter 5
ACTION PLAN

Summary

This section is our Action Plan - our strategy for fulfilling our vision for the estate. Each potential project is aligned to at least one of our vision pillars:

- **A model for conscientious land ownership** - Setting a new benchmark for how a small estate can be sustainable, productive and protect the natural world.
- **A place for exploration and education** – Where regenerative tourism and green learning can help people reconnect with their local landscape and wildlife.
- **A haven for wildlife** – Where the transformation of our farm and restoration of an ancient floodplain will create a more sustainable future for both wildlife and people.

Underpinning all of this is a drive to restore Foley Estate and make it financially stable and self-sustaining in the face of a challenging and uncertain future.

Each project in our Action Plan supports at least one of SDNP's ten ambitions for the next five years.

1 **Landscape and Natural Beauty**

2 **Increasing Resilience**

3 **Habitats and Spaces**

4 **Arts and Heritage**

5 **Outstanding Experiences**

6 **Lifelong Learning**

7 **Health and Wellbeing**

8 **Creating Custodians**

9 **Great Places to Live**

10 **Great Places to Work**

PROJECTS

Vision Pillar: A Haven for Wildlife

Haven For Wildlife | Projects Overview & Timeline

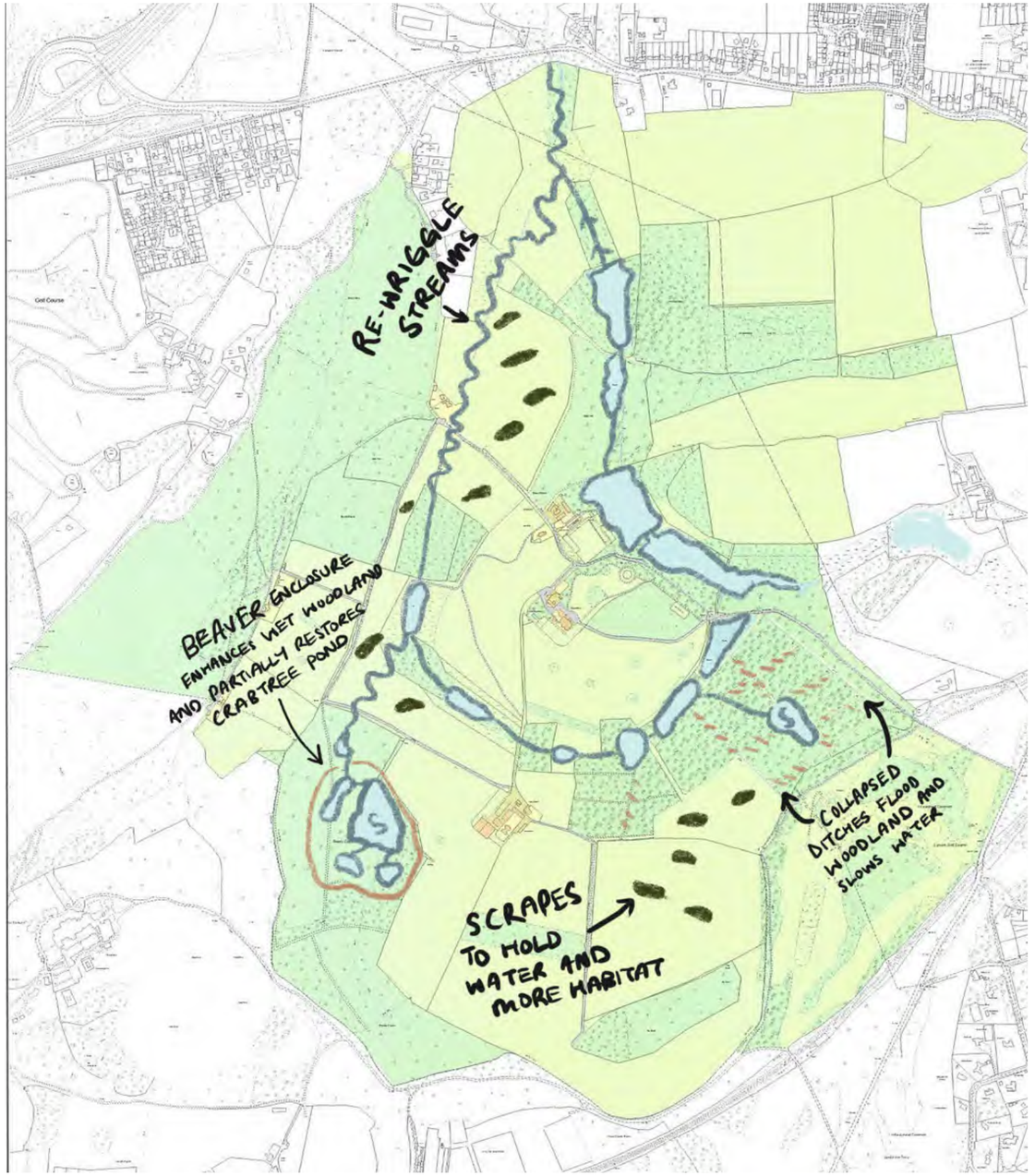
	Summary	PMP Outcome	2025	2026	2027	2028	- 2040
Project 1 **Restoring the Hollywater**	The Hollywater was once believed to be a sacred spring. We will restore this ancient tributary and its floodplain across Foley - benefiting wildlife on the estate and people living downstream.	1 2	Carry out water surveys and assessments, building key partnerships.	Apply for landscape recovery grants and seek BNG opportunities	Implementation, and seek further investment for ongoing restoration of the Hollywater		
Project 2 **Rewilding Foley Farm**	The restoration of the Hollywater floodplain will be combined with regeneration of our lowland farmland and heathland, creating a rich wet grassland and woodland mosaic for wildlife.	1 2 3	Carry out botany and baseline surveys on our grassland and woodland. Begin to explore BNG and Stewardship opportunities	Implement BNG or Stewardship requirements, restoring habitat or pivoting towards conservation based land management.	Explore species reintroduction in suitable areas, further BNG opportunities and new habitat where possible.		
Project 3 **Building a bug paradise**	Insects are a key barometer for the health of ecosystems, but are often overlooked in conservation schemes. We'd like to shape Foley to be a haven for a rich diversity of native insect species.	1 2 3	Carry out baseline surveys, priority pond surveys and habitat assessments, and explore new partnerships.	Implement BNG or stewardship schemes, create scrapes, initiate wood-pile scheme and cease all pesticides where financially viable.	Explore wider species recovery, pond creation and the potential of captive breeding in the walled garden		

Project 1 | Restoring the Hollywater

We want to restore the ancient Hollywater tributary and its floodplain across Foley Estate - benefiting wildlife and reducing flooding downstream. Actions will include:

- Rewiggling sections that have been straightened into canals
- Restoring the medieval Great Crabtree Pond
- Collapsing or diverting the Victorian ditch system
- Allowing portions of our farmland to naturally flood
- Creating scrapes in wet fields to hold more ephemeral water for wildlife
- Reintroducing beavers within an enclosure to restore and naturally manage one of the most degraded sections of the watercourse, boosting biodiversity.

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Carrying out water surveys and assessments, building stakeholder relationships.
2026	Applying for landscape recovery grants and seeking BNG investment.
2027-2040	Implementation and seek BNG or other investment for ongoing restoration of the Hollywater

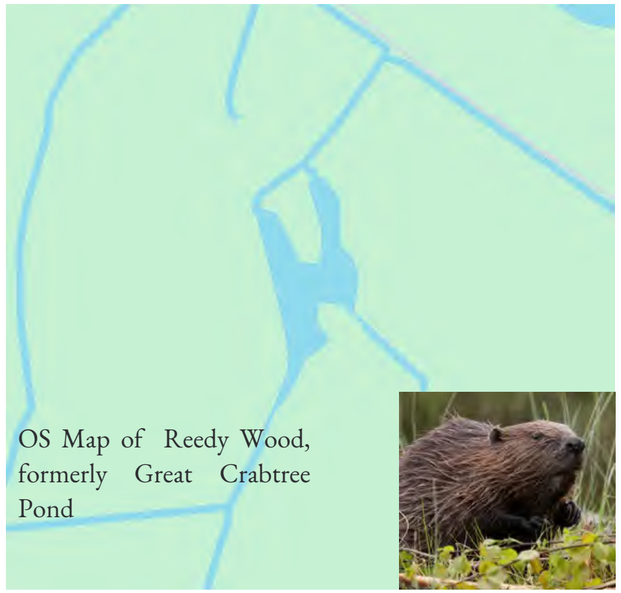


Spotlight: The restoration of Great Crabtree Pond

The 1656 map of Foley suggests the majority of Reedy Wood - a source of the Hollywater - was once a much larger, permanent water body called “Great Crabtree Pond,” surrounded by marshy habitat marked as “alder and sedge.” This ecosystem has become seriously overwhelmed by rhododendron, bamboo, willow and alder, which shut out light and limit biodiversity. The abundance of foliage has also silted up the pond over many centuries, leaving only a small remnant of the original water body. The landscape of Reedy Wood is too wet to bring in heavy machinery to carry out conventional woodland management. It is, however, perfect habitat for beavers.

We would like to create a fenced enclosure around the perimeter of “Great Crabtree Pond” to release a small population of beavers. These native animals are well-documented keystone species, which open up the canopy, dam water, boost biodiversity, and help filter river systems. They have the potential to dramatically enhance this watery habitat, while also restoring a site of cultural significance. We envisage this site being an incredible venue for some of our education ambitions outlined later in this chapter.

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Beaver assessment, drafting management plan and applying for licence. Collecting quotes for works to be conducted
Early-2026	Enclosure construction (including removal of rhododendron) and building holding facility for beavers.
2026-2040	Beaver release and monitoring.



OS Map of Reedy Wood, formerly Great Crabtree Pond

Project 2 | Rewilding Foley Farm

The restoration of the Hollywater floodplain will be combined with wider ecosystem restoration across our unproductive farmland, creating a less fragmented and richer wet grassland and woodland mosaic. We envisage Foley Farm becoming a largely fenceless and pesticide-free landscape, with low-density conservation grazing, multiple exciting reintroduction projects and thriving biodiversity. Actions will include:

- Surveying all our fields to establish our ecological baselines and stewardship and BNG options.
- Removing fencing to create a more connected landscape
- Implementing woodland management to restore our forests and heathland
- Providing areas safe from predators for ground-nesting birds.
- Beginning low-density conservation grazing with rare breeds of cattle to improve grassland, heathland and wet woodland.
- Installing home-made bat lofts at strategic points along our woodland edges.
- Converting low-yield arable land into wildflower meadows, more sustainable crops or habitat banks, ceasing all use of pesticides where viable.
- Creating more open heathland space for sand lizard and adder habitat in connection with Weavers Down.
- Explore species reintroduction, including natterjack toads, red deer, water voles and white stork.

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Carry out surveys and establish our baselines. Apply for penned beaver reintroduction.
2026	Implement new stewardship or BNG arrangements, and pivot towards conservation focused farming. Implement woodland management plans and carry out feasibility studies for species reintroduction.
2027	Reintroduce new species, where possible, and seek to wider wildlife uplift across the estate

A vision for the restored Hollywater across Foley Farm

Spotlight: The Return of Neolithic Grazing

Given modern dairy and beef farming have proved unsustainable at Foley, low-density conservation grazing - combined with Higher Tier Stewardship or BNG funding - may be our best alternative. Multiple ancient and rare breeds exist in the UK today, which are not dissimilar to the Neolithic cows which wandered across our landscape thousands of years ago. These conservation herds are nimble and include complete family units. Much like elephants in the wild, the herds are led by experienced matriarchs who teach young calves to navigate complex landscapes such as marshland and woodland. We have every reason to believe such breeds will thrive at Foley - improving our biodiversity, while also helping the estate access critical grants for managing our wet and species-rich grasslands.

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Carry out surveys on our grassland to establish our baselines. Assess which fields will be most suitable for conservation grazing
2026	Purchase stock and implement new stewardship arrangement
2027	Remove fencing and replace with smart collars

Spotlight: Native Species Reintroduction

From the wolves that roamed Weavers Down to the red deer and wild boar that fled our kings, wildlife has played a rich part in the history of Foley. We hope it can play an important part in our future too. Reintroducing “lost” native species into our landscapes is a complex challenge, which requires careful planning, long-term management and co-operation between multiple neighbouring stakeholders. We also believe it’s essential we do everything we can to restore our depleted ecosystems in the UK, which continue to be among the least biodiverse in the developed world. The historic portion of Foley Estate, situated within a 10,000-acre wider heathland ecosystem and separated from Liphook by large blocks of woodland, is well-placed to trial and implement successful reintroductions. In addition to the previously mentioned beavers, potential candidates include:

Natterjack Toads	Red Deer	Water voles	White Stork
The Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust have already carried out successful natterjack reintroductions on Foley’s neighbours: Longmoor Camp and Blackmoor. Our sandy fields and ephemeral pools could be suitable habitat - or be made suitable through a BNG scheme.	For centuries, red deer thrived in Woolmer Forest. They are a feature of our cultural history, as well as our ecology. Each year, Foley Estate and our neighbours spend tens of thousands of pounds of public funds cutting down young trees and scrub to maintain areas of open heathland. Red deer would do this naturally, and could provide venison for the Deers Hut if and when culling was required. The nearby Pirbright Ranges in Surrey have successfully reintroduced red deer, potentially providing a model which could be replicated.	A water vole recovery scheme is underway across the River Wey catchment. Foley Estate hope to join this initiative, paving the way for the installation of mink rafts and the future reintroduction of these amazing rodents. The estate has many areas of suitable habitat, and water voles would also benefit from our long-term plans to restore the Hollywater.	White storks are making a comeback in the UK, and tracking data suggests they are regularly visiting areas within a few miles of Foley. Once Foley Farm is turned over to nature, and the Hollywater is restored, the estate could become an important refuge for this species - alongside many other birds.
Viable prospect	Viable prospect with cooperation from neighbours & additional fencing.	Viable prospect	Viable prospect with careful management

Spotlight: Natterjack toad recovery

Foley Estate's neighbour, Longmoor Camp, under management by the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust, helped save natterjack toads from extinction in the UK in the early 1990s. These toads remain one of our rarest animals - classified as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Great Britain Red List. More than 75% of the toad's range has been lost in recent decades, due to a combination of development in Surrey and London and a loss of open, sandy habitat. Natterjacks need very specific conditions to survive: networks of shallow, ephemeral pools, sandy ground and surroundings largely devoid of vegetation. A decline in rabbit populations due to myxomatosis disease and warmer conditions accelerating tree growth have deepened the crisis. Climate change could lead to their extinction in the UK, with erosion and rising sea levels expected to eradicate much of their coastal range in the coming decades, which is currently home to more than 70% of the surviving population.

To save natterjack toads from extinction in Britain, they need more habitat. We believe Foley can play an important part in this. Much of our land is sandy and would have historically been lowland heathland. Our map from 1656 marks large areas of the estate as "moorland," "heath", and "waste." Working with the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust - who we have had a partnership with on Weavers Down since 1991 - we have the potential to enhance our existing areas of suitable habitat and reintroduce natterjacks. In doing so, we would help the species build resilience in the face of a challenging future.

A natterjack toad breeding site on Longmoor

A similar area of existing habitat on Foley Farm

A natterjack toad found on Longmoor in 2025

Spotlight: Saving Weavers Down

Weavers Down is one of Foley Estate's most precious natural assets. It's part of the Woolmer Forest SSSI, the Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area, and is home to multiple burial mounds and more than 100 threatened species, including nationally important populations of adder, nightjar and sand lizard. Climate change, fuelling tree and bracken growth, combined with public access challenges, such as dirt bikes, petty arson and dogs walking off-lead, all seriously threaten the future of this landscape and its wildlife population. We are determined to try and save it, and will seek to work closely with local authorities to achieve this.

Possible Actions

New public information boards could help educate visitors on the ecological and historic importance of Weavers Down, hopefully resulting in more conscientious and respectful use of the land.

The boundary of Weavers Down could be protected with new gates, stiles or natural hedging - such as "dead hedges" - to reduce illegal vehicle access and encourage people to use the established footpaths. This would ensure the public can continue to access and enjoy the Down, while also protecting sandy scrapes and other areas of conservation importance.

The management of Weavers Down must significantly improve and could benefit from renewed stewardship agreements, better management of scrub and bracken, livestock grazing, and in the creation of heathland corridors between private areas of Foley Estate and our neighbours - providing new areas for breeding and refuge for important wildlife. Certain viewpoints, such as the one from the top of the ridge filled with burial mounds pictured above, could also merit formal recognition or protection locally due to their remarkable beauty and cultural significance.

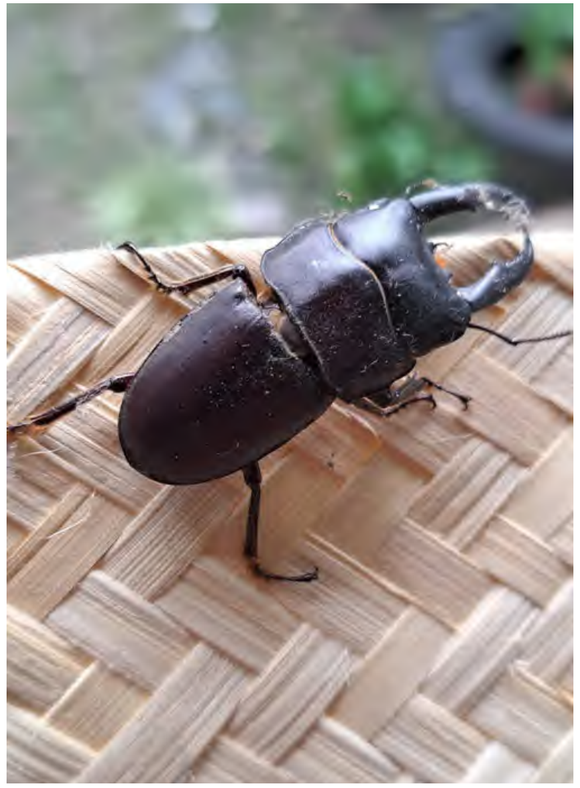
Project 3 | Building a Bug Paradise

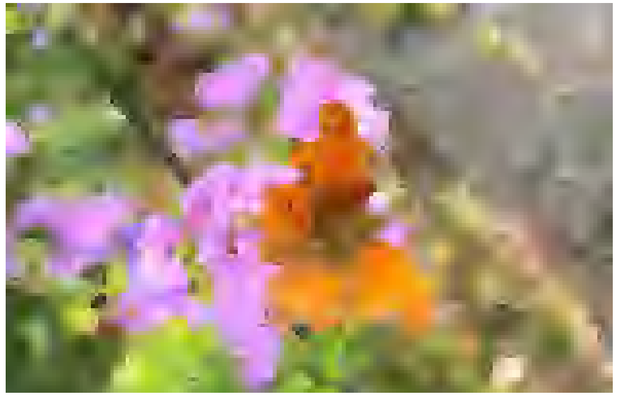
Insect species are drastically declining globally and are a key barometer for the health of our ecosystems. Despite this, they are often overlooked in rewilding initiatives and conservation schemes more generally.

We'd like to shape Foley to be a haven for a rich diversity of native insect species, and envisage this being a key component of our educational ambitions (outlined later in this chapter). Actions will include:

- Carrying out surveys to establish what is living at Foley.
- Drastically reducing all pesticides on the estate and replacing arable fields with wildflowers or other conservation measures where viable.
- Implementing woodland management schemes to remove invasive rhododendrons, carry out biodiversity felling, and replace spruce plantations with native trees, with a focus on critical symbiotic species for moths and beetles.
- Stopping burning for woodland management and creating a tapestry of wood piles across the estate, creating valuable rot-wood habitat.
- Creating scrapes and wallows in wet fields to improve ephemeral water habitat.
- Working with local charities to explore pioneering species restoration and reintroduction, possibly utilising greenhouses in the walled garden for captive breeding, with a view to benefiting conservation across the UK.

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Carry out surveys and apply for woodland management grants.
2026	Implement woodland management grants, create scrapes, initiate wood-pile scheme and seek to end pesticides where viable.
2027-	Continue to manage and enhance habitat, exploring wider species recovery.





All photos from Foley Estate

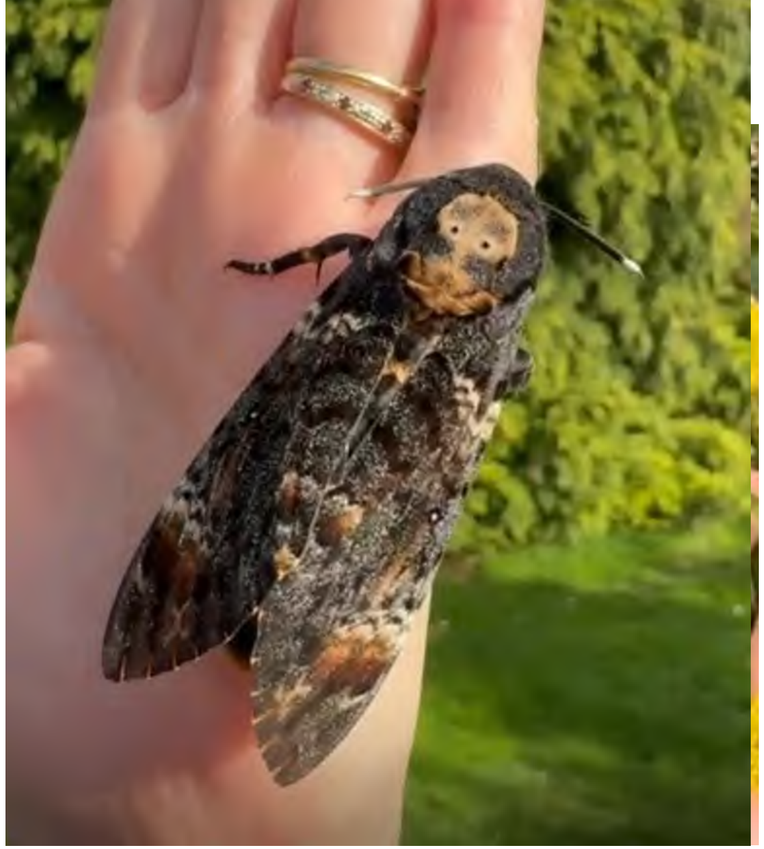
Spotlight: Pioneering Insect Recovery

Although the overall picture in the UK is bleak, there have been a number of successful insect recovery projects focused on butterflies[68], beetles and crickets, including at nearby Farnham Heath[69]. We believe there is potential for a far greater range of similar conservation projects, with strong public awareness and community engagement. We would like to work with relevant charities, scientists and stakeholders to explore and create several new and pioneering insect recovery projects, which could potentially be trialled at Foley Estate. Our ideas include:

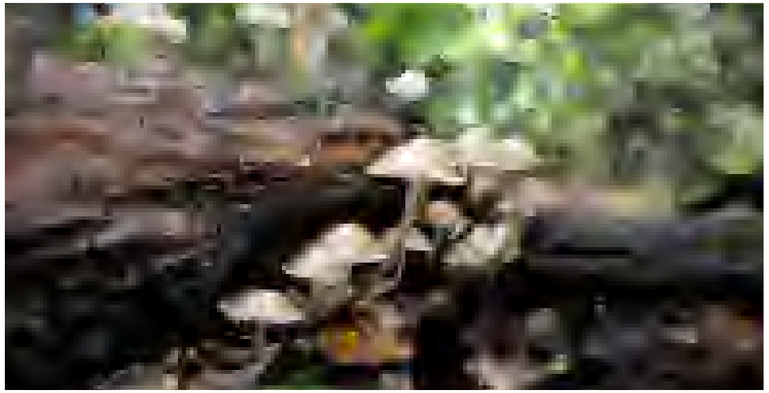
Innovative woodland management
Woodland management often produces large amounts of deadwood and woodchip, which are later taken away to be sold or burned. Instead, we could experiment with gathering this material and strategically creating networks of wood piles across Foley for the benefit of some of the 2000 native species which rely on rotten wood for food and habitat. This could benefit many charismatic creatures, including minotaur and and stag beetles - both of which are found on the estate.

Strategic wildflower meadows
Many insects have symbiotic relationships with specific plants. Tansy beetles feed almost exclusively on tansy wildflowers. Many endangered fritillary species exclusively lay their eggs on dog violets. Can we create wildflower meadows dominated by tansy to facilitate an easily replicated beetle reintroduction scheme? Can we create protected clearings sewn with violets to support these rare butterflies? We would like to experiment with these kinds of schemes at Foley Estate, with a view to playing a broader role in conservation across the UK.

Soil sifting for biodiversity credits
The ground beneath us is alive with thousands of invertebrate species. Their abundance is often a key indicator of the health of an ecosystem, and could be a future metric for measuring biodiversity in the embryonic biodiversity credit market. We would like Foley to be one of the first UK estates to carry out subterranean baseline surveys with a view to accessing this potential future market.



A deaths head hawk moth



PROJECTS

Vision Pillar: A Place for Exploration and Education

A Place for Exploration & Education | Projects Overview & Timeline

	Summary	PMP Outcome	2025	2026	2027	2028	2040
Project 1 **Walled Garden Complex**	Transform derelict 2.5-acre walled garden and buildings into a vibrant centre for education, regenerative tourism, artisan workspaces, and events,. Revive the historic gardens and water features, creating a sustainable business that supports education, conservation, and community engagement.	4 5 6 7 8	Seek feedback on concept and hone vision	Formalise partnerships, carry out financial assessments and explore funding pathways.	Carry out Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) given the site's partial location within 400m of the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA, and use it to inform, prepare and submit planning applications. Restore gardens and launch new education and events venture.		
Project 2 **Bohunt School Partnership**	Partnering with Bohunt School to provide new outdoor learning space, integrating the estate's wildlife and history into student education. This collaboration will create smartphone-free, nature-immersed learning experiences and tie into broader estate projects like the walled garden restoration.	6 7 8	Agreement with Bohunt School	Woodland management, curriculum design, classroom design, planning preparation.	Follow the design and planning journey, build non-permanent structures and impilment new curriculum / programmes.		
Project 3 **Huntsman Cabins**	Explore regenerative tourism in the woods near the Deers Hut pub, providing seasonal accommodation for nature-loving visitors, with locally sourced food options and wildlife tours.	1 2 4 5 7 8 9 8 10	Seek feedback on concept, market research, and hone vision	Financial assessments, carry out HRA to inform preparation and submission of planning process applications.	Create and implement, beginning with test cabins		

Why do we want to build a place for exploration and education?

A Crisis in Nature Connectedness

According to a recent survey, up to 25% of British children aged 5-11 cannot identify a robin - one of our most common and charismatic birds[71]. Since the 1970s, the proportion of young people playing in wild places in the UK has fallen from more than half to fewer than one in ten[72]. This growing dislocation of British children from the natural world comes at a time when climate change is unfolding and biodiversity is plummeting across the globe. It also coincides with more young people than ever wanting to find ways of experiencing and protecting wildlife[73]. We feel many of the negative social challenges faced by Foley Estate could be improved if more people growing up locally understood, experienced and cared for its natural assets.

Neighbouring Bohunt School, which sits along the boundary of Foley Estate, is working hard to address the problem of nature connectedness. The group teaches more than 1,800 students in our area, with a progressive natural sciences curriculum and dedicated outdoor learning officer. Yet beyond the public footpaths across Foley, students have very limited access to the incredible landscapes on their doorstep. Liphook is on the edge of the National Park, but for most young people locally, it is a "National Park" largely in name only. At present, people living here have very few options for meaningfully connecting with the nature Foley Estate has to offer.

Deer fencing shuts off Foley Estate from Bohunt School

Project 1 | Walled Garden Complex

Foley Estate's 2.5-acre walled garden complex, with its 13 buildings and water gardens, has fallen into ruin. We would like to transform this portion of Foley into a revenue-generating business which sustains itself and supports the estate. We will explore education initiatives on site, with additional revenue generated through regenerative tourism, a rented work or arts space, and/or events. Actions will include:

- Establishing a formal partnership with the International Green School Group and the Bohunt Education Trust to create a shared vision and curriculum for the site.
- Launching an ambitious restoration project, converting collapsed barns and other buildings into appropriate use, for example, sustainable holiday lets, classrooms and/or a workspace for artisans or other professionals.
- Restoring the magnificent gardens, creating opportunities for events, public access, student summer camps and horticultural spaces for educating children - including a medicinal plant garden and "witchcraft garden" for science, climate change and historical botany studies.

Our goal with this project is to restore our magnificent heritage while also helping the estate diversify and operate sustainably into the future. If realised, this will enable others to enjoy this special part of the National Park and for a broad range of children to have meaningful education experiences on Foley Estate.

Project 1 | Walled Garden Complex

Untapped potential

Foley Estate's walled garden complex contains nine derelict buildings and four derelict greenhouses. These buildings sit less than 50m from the edge of Home Pond and have direct access to the Shipwrights Way. We believe they could undergo appropriate conversion into a dynamic, mixed-use site - with holiday lets, rental space for artisans or professionals, learning spaces and event spaces. A regenerative tourism model of this kind could significantly diversify the estate, help restore ruined heritage and provide an inspiring environment for people to learn about nature, horticulture, craft-making and local history. Our goal would be for the site to be fully sustainable, both environmentally and as a revenue- and job-generating venture. We would also seek to minimise disturbance and anything which could upset the tranquility of the setting.

Project 1 | Walled Garden Complex

Restoring the “Lost Gardens of Liphook”

The walled garden and incredible water gardens surrounding it have the potential to become a significant cultural landmark in our area if appropriately restored. Our inspirations include the Lost Gardens of Heligan, Ainwick Castle Gardens, Slade Farm and the Eden Project. We would like to explore the following:

- Convert overgrown beds into a dramatic, hardy and perennial planting scheme - with a large wildflower meadow in the centre.
- Restore and re-plant the water gardens, with their network of islands, stone pathways, small pools and statues.
- Create a fenced “poison garden”, a traditional farming vegetable garden, and a medicinal plant garden, containing native species of historical and cultural significance.
- Convert the potato and cider house into kitchens, and the former orangery into a dining space which could cater to private or corporate events.
- Restore the peach house and tomato house for fruit production for the Deers Hut.
- Restore and re-stock the existing apple orchard and replant a former plum and cherry orchard which was lost in the early 20th century, again to supply the Deers Hut.
- Potentially use one of the greenhouses as a facility for keeping and breeding native insects for educational purposes.
- Develop a curriculum with the Green School Group and Bohunt Education Trust to effectively utilise the site.
- To use the walled garden as the centre-point of our education initiatives, but also as a jumping-off point for field trips to other areas of ecological interest at Foley, such as the beaver enclosure.
- Open the gardens for public access during certain times of the year and create free event days for local charities.

Subject to financial assessments, we envisage using this dynamic space to host business conferences and potentially a small number of weddings to support the upkeep of the site, while primarily treating it as a learning space for local and international children - through the private Green School Group and the state-run Bohunt Education Trust. This could also contribute revenue to the estate through holiday camps and government grants for educational access.

Project 1 | Walled Garden Complex

Project 2 | Bohunt School Collaboration

The Bohunt Education Trust teaches thousands students in our local area. Bohunt School - one of the most academically successful state comprehensives in the country - sits directly on our boundary. Despite this, students currently have no meaningful access to nature on Foley Estate and limited access to the National Park.

In January 2025, Foley Estate and the Bohunt Education Trust began an innovative collaboration - agreeing to work together to help provide new outdoor education and activity opportunities for students in our area. As part of this agreement, Foley Estate will grant Bohunt School access to 14 acres of land at Westlands Farm for outdoor learning and open up other areas of the estate for field trips. Our vision is for smartphone-free experiences where kids can immerse themselves in the outdoors - bridging the hurdles that land ownership, digital culture and socioeconomic backgrounds play in disconnecting modern children from nature.

In order to access the estate, a new private gate will be installed in the deer fencing along our boundary with the school, giving staff and students direct walking access to the site from their existing games pitches. Longer term, we wish to explore installing a small number of appropriately designed, non-permanent structures in a portion of the woodland, to provide shelter during outdoor classes.

In forming this relationship, we hope to leave a legacy we can all be proud of, benefiting nature and inspiring generations of children for decades to come.

Bohunt School Statement on the Foley Partnership

"Foley and Bohunt's partnership has creativity, vision and momentum; and the right people are in place to implement these plans, for example a highly skilled and experienced Head of Outdoor Learning, and the innovative leadership of Bohunt School. The Bohunt Education Trust is working in harmony with Foley Estate to radically improve the quality of education and community benefits via our ground-breaking collaboration.

Bohunt School serves a wide range of communities within the SDNP and is continually producing a new generation of young leaders and creative thinkers. Our innovative collaboration with Foley Estate will give future generations of these communities access to real-world opportunities to be educated for (rather than about) sustainability, conservation and biodiversity. This real-world approach has been shown over decades to be the emotional bridge between knowledge and action.

This will create new opportunities for learning, inspiration and growth for the thousands of children and teenagers who will pass through our doors for generations to come."

BOHUNT SCHOOL

Part of the woodland Foley Estate hopes Bohunt School can use for educational access and outdoor learning experiences, including science, climate change and conservation studies.

Project 3 | Huntsman Cabins

The Deers Hut pub is thriving, but lacks any accommodation. Building on the history of Foley Estate and the Woolmer Forest, we envisage creating a network of appropriately situated and designed non-permanent accommodation or glamping structures near the pub to help us capture the tourism potential of the area. We believe a regenerative tourism venture of this nature could become an important seasonal revenue stream for the estate.

Ideas we would like to explore include:

- Creating “huntsman cabins” to cater to ecologically minded tourists.
- Providing locally sourced hampers for guests to self-cook.
- Creating an introductory book and species manual for guests to appreciate the history and wildlife of Foley Estate, while also potentially offering guided tours.
- Converting the Deers Hut field into a wildflower meadow, enhancing the ecology surrounding the site.
- Hiring additional staff to manage the accommodation, creating more jobs locally.

Venision steaks sourced from Foley

Apples sourced from our orchard

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Seek feedback on concept, financially model the concept, market research and hone vision
2026	Carry out project-specific Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) given the site’s location within 400m of the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA, and use the HRA to inform, prepare, and submit planning applications
2027	Construct and implement
2028-2040	Explore guided tours and manage business

PROJECTS

Vision Pillar: Conscientious Land Ownership

A Model for Conscientious Land Ownership | Projects Overview & Timeline

	Summary	PMP Outcome	2025	2026	2027	2028	- 2040
Project 1 **Foley Farm Restoration**	Create a sustainable, wildlife-rich, and financially viable farm complex	4 6 8 9 10	Take 50% farm back in hand, research on design and feasibility	Formalise partnerships. Take the remains of the farm back in hand.	Seek funding and prepare planning applications	Restore farm buildings and energy and water infrastructure.	
Project 2 **Public Access & Safety**	Improve safety and public engagement along footpaths by enhancing signage, installing educational boards and bird viewing platforms, creating a delivery drop off point, and working with local authorities to explore new pedestrian routes.	3 4 5 7 9 10	Engage local authorities in designing signage, and seek planning advice.	Explore new pedestrian routes and local funding pathways	Seek planning permission and implement signage and viewing platforms		
Project 3 **Restoring our Cottages**	Invest in major upgrades to cottages, including insulation, heat pumps, solar panels, and electrical improvements. Restoring ruined outbuildings to contribute towards net-zero energy use	9 "Net-zero with nature"	Reedy Cottage, the Bullpen, the Lodge, Yew Tree Cottage and Keepers Cottage	Foley Hatch and Boundary Cottage	Farm Cottage, the Old Dairy, Old Parlour, Woodside barn.	Forestside	Remaining Cottages
Project 4 **Sustainability Overhaul**	Cut costs and emissions by modernising failing water infrastructure, reintroducing a sustainable spring water supply, and expanding solar energy generation.	"Net-zero with nature"	Explore new avenues and feasibility	Explore funding pathways and planning advice, begin replacing mains piping.	Begin energy and water upgrades		Complete desired works

Project 1 | Foley Farm Restoration

Foley Farm contains 12 buildings and needs extensive renovation and adaptation. We would like to create a more sustainable site that better serves the estate and its residents. Actions we would like to explore include:

- Converting any derelict or unused barns into a new appropriate use, including potentially workers' accommodation, holiday lets, or a workspace for a startup or business.
- Improve the biodiversity of the immediate farm area, reducing the use of pesticides on nearby fields.
- Creating a holding pen for beavers - a requirement of the permit process.
- Renovating our storage barn into a formal work shed for estate workers with modern lighting, efficient power supply and security.
- Incorporating our existing stables and paddock into our existing tenancies, providing our residents with the opportunity to keep horses.
- Installing a communal compost heap for residents.
- Installing owl boxes, bat boxes and swift boxes throughout the farm to create a “living” farm environment.
- Installing solar panels on the barn roofs and a borehole for spring water.

Our goal is to transform our early 20th-century farm into a more financially viable, modern, net-zero farm complex. As with our other conversions at Foley Estate over the past 100 years, we would want any construction to remain in keeping with our existing farm.

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Take farm back in hand, research on design, feasibility and financial options.
2026	Begin the renovation process and the planning journey.
2027-2040	Restore farm buildings and energy and water infrastructure.

Spotlight: Working buildings, working nests

Foley Estate once had a thriving population of swifts, house martins and swallows. The replacement of wooden facias with plastic on our farm has devastated our local population. We would like to bring these birds back, working with the charity Hampshire Swifts to create multiple nesting stations on our working buildings. These would have inbuilt “callers,” which would encourage the birds to come back during the spring - restoring their former colonies.

Project 2 | Public Access and Safety

The main gateway to Foley Estate for its residents and farm vehicles is the Shipwrights Way - the busiest public footpath in Liphook. As footfall and traffic have grown, so have accidents, antisocial behaviour and congestion. We would like to manage these routes more thoughtfully, working with the National Park Authority and local stakeholders to enhance public consciousness and improve safety and security. Actions could include:

- Installing information boards to educate the walkers on the estate's history and natural assets.
- Installing clearer signage to reduce trespassing, which has previously led to cases of arson and littering.
- Creating hedgerows and bird viewing hides across strategic sections to safeguard ground nesting bird populations, raise public awareness of sensitive areas, and provide opportunities for the public to observe our special wildlife.
- Work with local authorities to assess alternative pedestrian routes as part of their strategic planning for Liphook - to reduce human/vehicle conflict and reduce the risk of accidents at Foley.
- Explore the creation of a delivery drop-off point near the entrance to the estate to substantially reduce traffice flow in our tranquil areas.

TIMEFRAME	
2025	Engage local authorities in designing signage and seek planning advice.
2026	Begin footpath improvements and outreach with local authorities
2027	Seek planning permission, implement signage, build viewing platforms, and complete drop off point

Project 3 | Restoring our Cottages

Foley Estate is facing a daunting task of ensuring all of its cottages meet the government's energy efficiency guidelines by 2030. This is essential to preserve our principal revenue stream and will require major investment. A number of cottages could also be enhanced and improved, and have ruined or unused storage sheds or garages. Many of these outbuildings, if appropriately restored, could be fitted with solar panels to push the estate closer to net-zero. Action items could include:

- Replace or convert collapsed or ruined outbuildings.
- Install solar panels if and where appropriate.
- Install roof insulation and replace oil and gas systems with heat pumps where possible.
- Replace windows with double glazing and open fireplaces with approved log burners.
- Install smart metres and replace old electrical wiring.

TIMEFRAME FOR SUSTAINABILITY OVERHAUL	
2025	Explore new avenues and feasibility
2026	Explore funding pathways and planning advice, begin replacing mains piping.
2027	Begin energy and water upgrades
2028-2040	Complete desired works

Project 4 | Sustainability Overhaul

Foley Estate was historically a self-sustaining estate, with its own food supply, water system through a hydraulic ram and its own private electricity supply through a suction gas plant. It’s not possible or desirable to replicate this system today, but it makes economic and environmental sense to aspire to achieve net zero and meet as many of our needs on site as possible. Currently, leaks from failing 1920s mains water infrastructure is a significant burden, and many areas with renewable energy potential are not being utilised. Our goal would be to cut costs, reduce emissions and potentially generate new revenue. Action items could include:

- Installing a borehole and filtration system to supply the farm cottages and Weavers Down cottages with spring water, returning to a more sustainable way of life.
- Replacing mains water pipes - and mapping them - to the Manor, Gardeners Cottage, Foley Hatch, and the Lodge - across Liphook golf course.
- Replacing the asbestos roofs of the two main barns at Foley Farm, and installing south-facing solar panels to cover the electricity supply for residents and work buildings.
- Integrate our deer management plan into a regular supply of venison to the Deers Hut, in addition to apples and, potentially, tomatoes from our walled garden.

Financial Planning

Realising the Foley Estate's vision requires significant investment and a pragmatic and thorough approach to financial planning. Off the back of our Whole Estate Plan, we will commit to the creation of an overarching Financial Plan, which will model the costs, revenue, risks and opportunities of our ambitions across all land and assets. This integrated approach will ensure that our three vision pillars—A Haven for Wildlife, A Place for Exploration & Education, and A Model for Conscientious Land Ownership—are underpinned by long-term financial viability.

When Foley Estate attempted to transition to organic beef farming in the early 2000s, our efforts proved unsuccessful. In many respects, this venture was 10 years too early. Since then, new markets, new investment opportunities, new government subsidies and new levels of environmental consciousness among the public have emerged. In this revived context, Foley is well-positioned to capitalise on funding mechanisms like Countryside Stewardship, Biodiversity Net Gain, and capital grants, as well as new residential and farm tenancies that align more closely with our ecological goals. These options will be thoroughly tested within our Financial Plan to determine how best to support and scale our **Haven for Wildlife** action plan.

Becoming both **A Place for Exploration & Education** and a **Model for Conscientious Land Ownership** will require significant capital investment—particularly in restoring derelict buildings and potentially adapting them for educational, cultural, or commercial uses. Our Financial Plan will assess the costs of this transformation alongside the revenue-generation potential of new land-based enterprises, visitor experiences, and hospitality ventures. Success will hinge on the effective mobilisation of diverse funding streams: uplift and integration of existing estate assets, third-party investment, new tenancies, and—where appropriate—selective land sales. With a leadership team that blends expertise in education, green finance, media and marketing, nature capital and the hospitality industry, Foley Estate is uniquely placed to create a financially resilient new business model that balances care for nature, heritage, community, and our collective legacy.

Stakeholder Feedback

We have undergone an extended period of engagement with local and relevant stakeholders, hosting multiple guided walks of the estate, which have shaped our Action Plan and helped formulate our ideas for Foley:

- The Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (guided walk)
- Natural England (guided walk)
- The National Trust (guided walk)
- The Hampshire Wildlife Trust (guided walk)
- The Ministry of Defence/Longmoor Camp Ecology Team (indoor meeting)
- Local residents (guided walk)
- Representatives of the East Hampshire District Council (guided walk)
- Rewilding Britain (guided walk)
- Derek Gow Consultancy (guided walk)
- Celtic Rewilding (guided walk)
- Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (guided walk)

"The visit was truly inspiring. You get used to often very small gains working in conservation but to have a whole estate offering up good conservation ideas within what is economically possible was amazing"
- ARC Trust Representative

"I was genuinely moved to hear the story of Foley and what it could become in the future. I hope everything is done to help make this dream a reality"
- Dr James Kempton, Ornithologist

"It was really interesting to hear about the background... and challenges you face at Foley and see some of the estate. We appreciate you consulting the Trust and strongly support your environmental and community objectives. I feel you are very much on the right lines with your new aims for the estate... Foley is a public gateway for visitors to the SDNP from Liphook and London, although that will need management and resources to manage it better for you."
- Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

"We are working across many rewilding projects in Britain and this is the one we are most excited about."
- Celtic Rewilding

Transformation already underway

In many ways, Foley Estate has been a conservation-focused estate since before the National Park began. We have allowed large areas of woodland to naturally regenerate over 50 years, and in 1991, we licensed Weavers Down to the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust, who oversaw the reintroduction of sand lizards. In the early 1990s, 2000 and 2010, more than 300 trees were planted across the estate and over a hundred acres of rhododendron were cleared. In 2024, we decided to cease the pheasant shoot - in the wake of the risk of bird flu and growing data on the negative impact of game birds on insect life.

In 2025, we formally joined the Rewilding Network, commissioned our first ever botanical surveys of our grassland, launched our first mink rafts with the National Trust - paving the way for the future reintroduction of water voles - and drafted an application for a penned release of beavers on the estate: the start of our recovery programme for the Hollywater.

We hope this is just the beginning.

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