# Hurst Meadows Butterfly Monitoring Project

Hello! and thank you so much for thinking about monitoring butterflies in Hurst Meadows.
Below is some information about the project.

*Red admiral*

*Peacock*

*Comma*

*Brimstone*

*Painted lady*

## Hurst Meadows - a bit of background

Hurst Meadows lies to the north of Hassocks road in Hurstpierpoint. The fields are ex-arable grassland, with areas of seed-sown wildflowers, self-seeded trees and scrub, all bounded by hedgerows and trees. The Millennium Garden and St George's Green are also in Hurst Meadows and comprise pockets of meadow, woodland and amenity grassland habitats.

Hurst Meadows is owned and managed by Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council. It is Countryside Open Space, covenanted against any development and its management is intended to benefit both the local community and wildlife.

**Habitat management here**

The habitat management plan for Hurst Meadows is in its early stages of development. By collecting detailed information at regular intervals about the species that live here, we develop a dataset that over time helps measure, among other things, the success of the management and helps inform whether any changes are needed to benefit wildlife.

## Why butterflies?

Butterflies are good biological indicator species. They have short life cycles and are sensitive to environmental conditions, so they quickly respond to changes in habitat suitability. Counting the number of different species and their abundance over time, helps monitor the success of the local habitat management and when combined with national data also helps monitor climate change.

## The UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS)…

Is a monitoring project where volunteers walk the same route weekly, recording butterflies and the weather using a standard method. By joining this scheme, our records not only directly inform the Hurst Meadows management, but also contribute to long-term butterfly monitoring in the UK. Established in 1976, the UKBMS data are used nationally to assess butterfly ecology, the impacts of habitat and climate change on butterfly abundance and by government policy makers to progress biodiversity conservation policy initiatives.

Julia Lowson (the Sussex Butterfly Conservation - UK-BMS co-ordinator) is helping us set up the project in Hurst Meadows.

## Why do we need a team of volunteers?

Weekly transect walks can be a big commitment for just one person, but by working in small groups, together we can join the thousand or so other volunteer groups monitoring transects all over the UK.

*Speckled wood*

*Orange tip (male)*

*Small copper*

*Large white (female)*

*Brown argus*

## Joining in

We hope you will join in on this journey and together we can enjoy the butterflies in Hurst Meadows, help inform the site management plan and contribute to butterfly monitoring nationally. 17 species of butterfly were recorded in Hurst Meadows on one day in July 2020 and this winter, brown hairstreak eggs were found on the blackthorn. So, there will be plenty of butterflies to look forward to seeing and enjoying.

## What is involved?

- Walk a 1-2km transect route at a steady slow pace

- The route is divided into sections. In each section, butterflies are identified, counted and recorded 2.5m to each side, 5m ahead and 5m above you. Weather conditions are also recorded.

- Transects are walked…
    - once a week
    - between 10:45am and 3:45pm
    - in suitable weather conditions.

- Suitable weather conditions are -
    - Not when temperatures are below 13$^{o}$C
    - Not when it's raining
    - If the temperature is between 13-17$^{o}$C and there is at least 60% sunshine
    - Temperatures above 17$^{o}$C, with any amount of sunshine
    - When the wind is below 5 on the Beaufort Scale (i.e. small trees in leaf are swaying or less).

- Transects are walked every week from 1 April to 29 September each year (weeks run from 1-7 April etc. regardless of day).

- Data is entered onto the UK Butterfly Monitoring website before 31 October each year.

**Transect routes**

The number of transects we enter into the UK-BMS will depend on how many people can help. A location plan for Hurst Meadows and the proposed routes are shown on the two attached maps. More detailed map will be provided for each transect, including the sections, later.

**Group organisation**

Transects will only go ahead if there are enough volunteers to take part from April to September for each one. If we get lots of volunteers, we can run more than one transect – if not we will just do less. This is supposed to be fun after all!

The commitment would be to at least one survey a month, working in a rota for each week of the season. It will be up to participants to find cover for their week if they are unable to make it.

*Small heath*

*Common blue*

*Large skipper (male)*

*Meadow brown*

*Marbled white*

**Group communication**

Groups will need to stay in touch. This might be to discuss the rota, the transect route, what you've seen and generally how everything is going. One of the easiest ways of keeping in touch is via Whats App. If you would like help to install Whats App on your smart phone or are only able to be contacted via e-mail or phone call please let me know through the volunteer questionnaire.

**Data collection**

Records will also need to be entered onto the UK-BMS website by participants (Julia and I will help with training to use the site). Please let me know via the volunteer questionnaire if this isn't going to be possible and I will see what I can do.

**Training**

Hopefully, from the 29 March, groups of six or less can meet outside. The season will start slowly, so we can do transects walk together in small groups or pairs. We will all be learning together, so please don't worry if this looks a bit daunting at first. We will get there. I will organise training in more detail when I have an idea of numbers.

**Data protection**

By taking part in this survey, you are agreeing to the Hurst Meadows Butterfly Monitoring Project and the Parish Council office storing your data and using it to contact you to relay project information. Your details will be deleted from the group contact list at your request or if you are not able to help any more. You will also be asked if your e-mail address and phone number can be shared within the Hurst Meadows Butterfly Monitoring Project group.

## More information

Please read the **HM-BMS Additional information** document. This information is taken from the UK-BMS website and explains the survey in detail.

For more detailed information on the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme please visit:

www.ukbms.org and www.sussex-butterflies.org.uk/transects

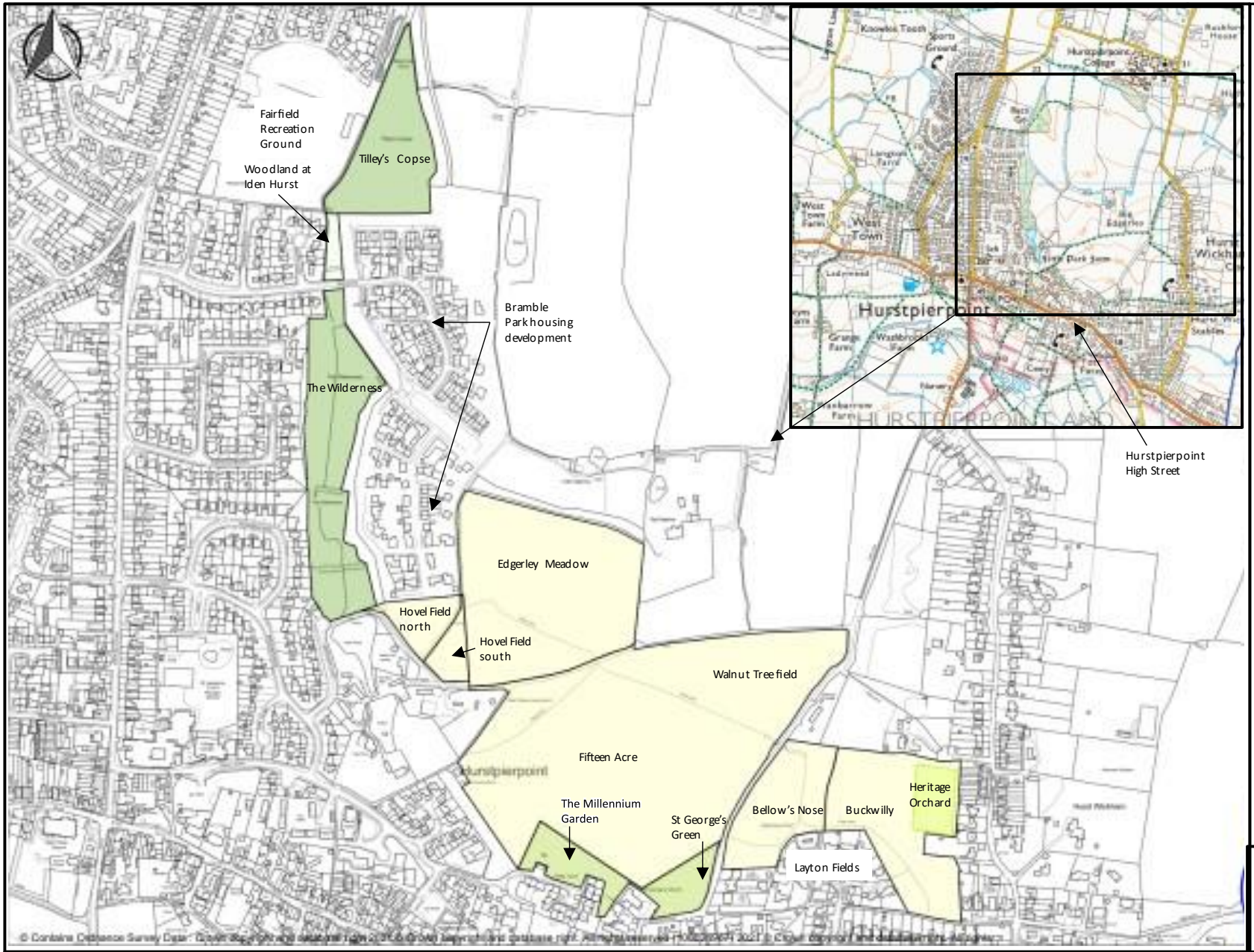
## How to get in touch

Please fill out the volunteer questionnaire form and email it to me.

My contact details are: Georgina Judd

**Email:** hurstbutterflies@outlook.com

The Parish Office can also be contacted on: 01273 833264




## Key:

- Semi-natural ancient woodland
- Semi-natural broad-leaved woodland
- Improved grassland
- Heritage Orchard
- Garden and amenity grassland

Scale: Habitat map only

0 50 100 150 200m

Scale: 1:4877

HURSTPIERPOINT & SAYERS COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

ParishOnline

Figure 1: Hurst Meadows location and habitat plan

**Project:** Hurst Meadows, Hurstpierpoint

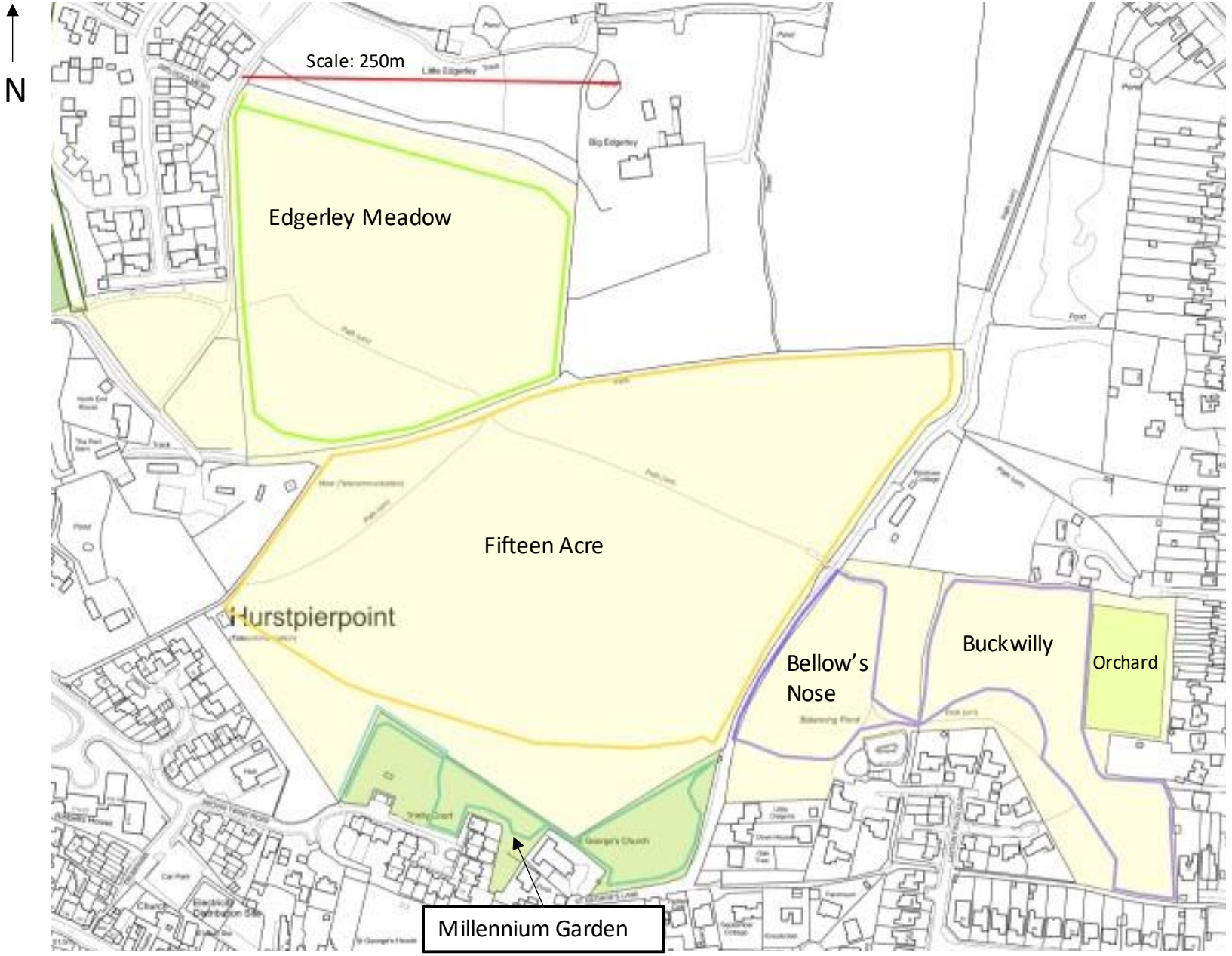
**Title: Hurst Meadows location plan**

**Date:** 23 January 2021

Rev:

Drawing no:

# Hurst Meadows Butterfly Monitoring survey transect map




## Key:

Transect routes are proposed in:

- Edgerley Meadow
- Fifteen Acre
- Bellow's Nose & Buckwilly
- The Millennium Garden
  This transect will not be officially registered in 2021, as the route needs to be developed over the season.
- Scale = 250m