

Sent by email to Stephanie Powell, caseworker for
Dr Caroline Lucas MP (Brighton Pavilion Ward)

11 July 2016

Dear Stephanie Powell,

Many thanks for the trouble Caroline has taken over this. It is much appreciated.

I hope it is clear that BHWF raised these points at our meeting of 2nd February, following which John Patmore used the opportunity of Caroline's MP surgery to discuss these on behalf of BHWF.

This does not seem to be acknowledged in the BHCC reply to you.

1. Our request 1).

Confirmation is sought as to whether the City Plan includes a 'Constraints Map' which accurately shows LWS (inc LGS) locations using current data following the 2013 LWS review?

Response:-

The City Plan Part One includes a 'Policies Map' (also known as a 'Proposals Map') which shows allocations and identified constraints relevant to planning. It continues to reflect the Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI's) adopted via the Local Plan 2005 because the City Plan had got too far in the development plan making statutory process to include the 2013 LWS review data (or LGS). To date the intention has been to reflect the 2013 LWS review within the City Plan Part Two subject to appropriate expert support. **An early stage of public consultation on the issues for inclusion in the City Plan Part Two is planned for this summer.**

The Submission City Plan Part One's Policies Map can be viewed by clicking [here](#) - please note this will be amended if the City Plan Part One is adopted at Full Council on the 24 March 2016. **It does however accurately reflect the SNCI's within the city.**

We are concerned that BHCC are not adequately taking into account the provisions outlined in both (a) and (b) below. Admittedly Summer is now approaching, and presumably we can then expect the stated "early stage of public consultation for Part Two". However, to suggest Part 1 already accurately reflects the SNCIs in the City is misleading, and this counters the comment above that the City Plan Part 1 accurately reflects the SNCIs within the City. The acronym SNCI was dropped in 2011 when 'Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' (DEFRA, 2011. Ref: PB13583) changed the correct term to '[Local Wildlife Site](#)'; all other organisations now refer to Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

Using current 'Up to date' information

(a) "The Gov't Planning Practice Guidance - under Plan Making- Local Plans"

http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/plan-making/#paragraph_158

This states:

Paragraph 158: *Using a proportionate evidence base*

“Each local planning authority should ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. Local planning authorities should ensure that their assessment of and strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated, and that they take full account of relevant market and economic signals.”

Para 109 *“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

● *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; ”*

Para 165 *“planning policies and decisions should be based on up-to-date information about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area ” plus “Working with Local Nature Partnerships where appropriate, this should include an assessment of existing and potential components of ecological networks ” [NPPF, March 2012] ”*

BHCC are, regrettably, still only using LWS data from 2005 despite having updated information available from their former Ecologist who carried out extensive consultations over these, in 2013.

We retained data on the sites adopted in the 2013 consultation if BHCC are unable to find the details their own officer agreed with key stakeholders. A list of sites is provided below (Annex 1)

BHWF recommends steps are taken to ensure Sussex Wildlife Trust are working to this updated list,

(b) In addition it seems BHCC are not fully taking into account the provisions outlined in **BHCC City Plan Part 1**, which states:

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2. Ensure that all development proposals:

a) Provide adequate up-to-date information about the biodiversity which may be affected;

b) Conserve existing biodiversity, protecting it from the negative indirect effects of development, including noise and light pollution;

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4.130 All local authorities have a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising all their functions. The duty aims to make biodiversity conservation an integral part of policy and decision making.

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4.137 Supplementary Planning Document 11 ‘Nature Conservation and Development’ includes a clear procedure for identifying existing nature conservation features which may be affected by a development and for quantifying the amount of new nature conservation features which should be delivered, either on or off site.

It seems that City Plan policies and Sites are currently being based on outdated information, the Plan may be deemed unsound at examination stage.

Geological and Geomorphological Sites (LGSs)

As covered in the LWS comments above, the importance of Geology has been recognised in National Policy and best practice guidelines. Our local geology (especially the Chalk Downs) and geomorphology (especially the shingle overlying the chalk ‘wave cut platform’) literally form the bedrock of local biodiversity. Demonstration sites have been selected by Natural England in consultation with local specialists, such as the Sussex Geodiversity Partnership. In the past they were termed RIGS (/RIGGS) forming a network of ‘Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites’ . To this network can now be added Local Geological Sites (LGS) which are given importance in Local Planning terms.

Similarly, in terms of LGSs, BHCC are also not fully taking into account the provisions outlined in **“From The UK Sustainable Development Strategy ‘Securing the Future’ ” (2005)** shown on the following link:

<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/delivering-sustainable-development/11-conserving-and-enhancing-the-natural-environment/> and which states:-

Para. 109 The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;

Para. 117 To minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should aim to prevent harm to geological conservation interests, (as shown on the above link.)

It seems that it should not have taken too much extra effort to include the full list of LWS proposed by members of the Sussex Geodiversity Partnership (www.geodiversitysussex.org.uk/) and BHWF in 2012 to the former Council Ecologist when work on Part 1 was first prepared, and it is not clear why this did not happen. We provide this list of 4 sites again:-

TQ20/121 The Goldstone, Hove Park

TQ30/135 Stanmer Village

TQ30/236 Black Rock, Brighton Marina

TQ40/174b Coastal section: Friar's Bay to Brighton Marina

2. Our request 2).

The other striking omission in the LBAP is a lack of an 'Action Plan' . It would be useful for implementing the LBAP objectives to see a Table clarifying the Actions proposed over the year, and a checklist for confirming progress.

Response:-

These matters are led by the City Parks Team and I have forwarded this enquiry to the City Parks Manager. They have stated that while there is currently no resource to produce a further Action Plan these resourcing issues will be considered as part of the Open Spaces Strategy which is currently being produced. In the meantime work to maintain and improve habitats is continuing within the resources available.

It is stated here that City Parks Team are to consider resourcing Action Plan issues, as part of the Open Spaces Strategy, which we understand is being progressed by Paul Campbell of BHCC, with the aim to produce a 'Standardized Relationship' agreement between City Parks and Local Friends of Groups. In many ways the Local BAP was intended to be 'the action plan' , so there is no need to produce a further one. Having invested considerable resources into publishing the Council' s Adopted version of the LBAP the next stage is to implement the LBAP. The objectives and targets do not need reinventing, merely clarifying in a concise and accessible format. The planned 'work to maintain and improve habitats' would obviously conform to the LBAP objectives and progress should be monitored and recorded alongside the LBAP targets.

This does not require any extra 'resources' as described. Merely a shared and transparent approach to progressing existing work and recording this for others to see.

BHCC has a Formal Duty to promote biodiversity, yet has not assigned resources to this. It seems that resources are now being diverted to a much larger 'Open Spaces Strategy' at the expense of implementing any biodiversity Duty.

3. Our request 3).

Clarify who in BHCC Planning Policy Team will take primary responsibility for ensuring an accurate dataset is incorporated on to City Plan maps. In this case the LWS and LGS locations, names and boundaries are clearly shown. We can then establish communication with this officer, and BHWF can provide detailed specialist information about the LWSs to the Planning Policy Team.

Response:-

Information on ecology and biodiversity is provided by the Sussex Biodiversity Resource Record Centre (SBRC). The collating, and potentially mapping, of the 2013 LWS review can be undertaken by the SBRC and this would need to be undertaken in discussion with the City Parks Team. This work can inform the City Plan Part Two and its future public consultations. I am the lead planning policy officer on open space matters however ecology expertise lies with the County Ecologist who is consulted on detailed ecology matters when applicable to planning proposals.

To date no local geological sites have been formally identified in the development plan except for two Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) that adjoin (ie Black Rock, Brighton and Coastal Section, Friar' s Bay to Black Rock Marina).

We are concerned the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (their correct name) are stated to be the only source of ecology and biodiversity data to the council. BHWF, the County Ecologist and Sussex Geodiversity Partnership have all provided site based data to BHCC. Why is this data not being used too? Discussion with SxBRC has also revealed they expect BHCC to take the lead over maintaining their own dataset of LWS and LGS details. Deciding on site selection is supposed to be a consultative activity and BHWF should be automatically fully included in this.

Is Rebecca Fry (Principal Planning Officer) the planning officer to whom LWS and LGS details should be sent within BHCC? Stating ‘...however ecology expertise lies with the County Ecologist’ is an issue of BHCC administration. As a Brighton and Hove based Forum we asked which officer within BHCC Planning Policy Team we should communicate with over detailed specialist information about the LWSs (and LGSs).

With best regards and thanks for the valuable help from Caroline.

Martin Robinson
For Brighton and Hove’s Wildlife Forum

SEE ANNEXES ATTACHED

1. Annex 1. - List of LWSs agreed in 2013 with BHCC’s Former Ecologist (Matthew Thomas)
2. Annex 2. - List of LWSs with OS central points, agreed in 2013
3. Annex 3 - List of LGSs formally proposed by members of Sussex Geodiversity Partnership and BHWF in 2012

***Brighton and Hove's Wildlife Forum* shares information and experience to improve our knowledge on local nature among local wildlife groups and specialists. We work on sites to promote best practice and policies which benefit our local biodiversity.**

**We are free to join. See our website: www.BHWF.org.uk and follow [@BtnHoveWildlife](https://twitter.com/BtnHoveWildlife)
If you care about local wildlife and the natural world please join us**

**Annex 1. List of LWSs agreed in 2013 with BHCC's Former Ecologist.
(Matthew Thomas)**

Confirmed LWSs - with decision made at 2013 BHCC Workshop meetings.

Name | Decision (Yes = agreed as LWS)

- 2 Cockroost Hill West | Yes
- 3 Cockroost Hill East | Yes
- 4 Mile Oak Fields | Yes
- 5 Southwick Hill East | Yes AKA Oakdene, Southwick Hill
- 6 Sidehill Scrub | Yes
- 10 Emmaus and St Nicholas | Yes
- 11 Foredown allotments | Yes
- 12 New Barn Farm Slope | Yes
- 13 Basin Road South | Yes
- 14 North Benfield Valley | Yes
- 15 Benfield Valley Central | Yes AKA 9 (15) Benfield Valley Golf Course
- 16 Dyke Trail | Yes 17 St Helens Churchyard | Yes
- 19 Benfield Valley South | Yes
- 20 Round Hill | Yes AKA Brighton & Hove Golf Course
- 22 St Leonards Churchyard | Yes
- 24 Toad's Hole Valley | Yes to east facing slope; valley should be treated as if designated

- 25 Dyke Road Strip | Yes
- 26 Waterhall Golf South | Yes + pLNR
- 27 Waterhall Golf Central | Yes + pLNR
- 28 Waterhall Golf North | Yes + pLNR
- 29 Waterhall Farm Slope | Yes
- 30 Hove Park Reservoir | Yes
- 31 Casterbridge Farm | Yes AKA 13 East Hill
- 32 Sweet Hill | Yes
- 33 Waterhall Valley | Yes + pLNR
- 35 Waterhall East | Yes
- 34 Sweet Hill West | Yes
- 36 Green Ridge & Coney Woods | Yes + pLNR
- 37 Three Cornered Copse | Yes
- 38 Engineerium Grounds | Should be treated as if designated
- 40 Park Royal & High School | Yes
- 41 Cardinal Newman School | Yes
- 42 Highcroft Villas | Yes
- 45 Station Road | Yes
- 47 Redhill Sports Ground | Should be treated as if designated
- 17 (48) Bramble Rise Copse | Yes
- 50 Hogtrough Bottom | Treat as if designated

- 53 Withdean Park Copse | Yes
- 54 Surrenden Field Copse | Yes
- 56 Surrenden Crescent & Surrenden Road | Yes
- 57 Parkmore Terrace Railside | Treat as if designated
- 58 Argyle Road Copse | Treat as if designated
- 59 Brighton Station North | Yes now known as Brighton Greenway
- 63 Dorothy Stringer Wildlife Area | Yes + proposed LNR
- 64 Patcham Court Farm | Treat as if designated
- 66 Braeside Avenue Scrub | Yes
- 67 Ewe Bottom | Yes AKA Ewe Bottom Hill
- 68 Standean Cottage Down | Yes *Separate from #67 Ewe Bottom
- 69 Deep Bottom & The Chattri | Yes
- 70 Ditchling Road SW | Yes + proposed LNR
- 71 London Road Station | Yes
- 72 Roundhill Copse | Treat as if designated
- 74 Beaufort Terrace | Treat as if designated
- 75 Burstead Woods | Yes + proposed LNR
- 76 Hollingbury Wood | Yes + proposed LNR
- 77 Hollingbury Golf Course | Yes + proposed LNR
- 78 Queensdown | Yes + proposed LNR
- 79 Wild Park | No - !!! - this is obviously an important site

- 80 39 Acres | No - !!! - this is obviously an important site
- 81 Ditchling Road | Yes + proposed LNR part only
- 82 Hollingbury Industrial Estate | Yes + proposed LNR
- 83 Coldean Lane Slopes | Treat as if designated
- 84 Crespin Way Copse | Yes
- 85 Watts Bank | Yes AKA Brighton University
- 86 Hodshrove Wood | Yes
- 87 North Bevendean Down | Yes + proposed LNR
- 88 Heath Hill Down | Yes + proposed LNR
- 89 South Bevendean Down | Yes
- 90 Bevendean Horse Paddocks | Yes + proposed LNR
- 92 Bevendean Farm Slope | Yes
- 93 Falmer Hill | Yes
- 94 Land off Ashurst Road | Yes
- 95 Westlain Plantation | Yes
- 97 Land at Coldean Lane | Yes + LNR
- 98 Stanmer Park South | Yes + LNR
- 99 Stanmer Park North | Yes + LNR
- 100 Stanmer Park East | Yes + LNR
- 101 Lots Pond to the Ridge | Yes + LNR
- 102 Cemeteries off Bear Road | Yes + LNR AKA Woodvale, Extra-mural & Downs Cemeteries

- 103 Stevenson Road Quarry | Yes
- 104 Land at Sea-Saw Way | Yes + LNR AKA Wilson Avenue, Whitehawk
- 105 Madrria Drive Green Wall | Yes
- 106 Volks Railway East | Yes + LNR
- 107 Volks Railway Central | Yes + LNR
- 108 Volks Railway West | Yes + LNR
- 109 Beach at Black Rock | Yes + LNR
- 110 Brighton Marina | Yes
- 111 Cliff Road Paddock | Yes
- 112 Cliff Corner | Yes
- 113 Sheepcote Valley North | Yes + LNR
- 114 Sheepcote Valley South | Yes + LNR
- 115 East Brighton Golf Course | Yes
- 116 Mount Pleasant | Yes
- 117 Ovingdean Church to Cattle Hill | Yes *Ovingdean Ch. MISSING*
- 118 Ovingdean School Slope | Yes AKA Roedean School Bank (Slope)
- 119 Copse at Woodingdean Cemetary | Yes
- 121 Land at Bexhill Road | Yes
- 122 Field East of Woodingdean | Yes AKA Bostle Bottom
- 122a Field E of Ravenswood Drive | Yes - using 1998 data AKA Cowley Drive Paddocks OR 47
- 123 Scrub East of Woodingdean | Yes

- 125 Happy Valley Downland | Yes
- 126 Abinger Road Paddock | Yes AKA Abinger Road Open Space
- 127 Old Cottage Paddocks | Yes AKA Ovingdean Road Horse Paddocks
- 128 Meadow Vale Paddocks | No!!! - this is obviously an important site, which should be included as LWS.
- 129 Long Hill | Treat as if Yes POSSIBLY Wanderdown Road Open Space???
- 131 Ovingdean Hall | Treat as if Yes AKA Ovingdean School Grounds
- 132 Rottingdean Pond | Yes
- 133 Whiteway Lane | Yes
- 134 High Hill | Treat as if Yes AKA High Hill Pasture
- 135 Balsdean Down | Yes AKA Balsdean Downland West
- 136 Balsdean Down East | Yes
- 137 Balsdean Downland North | Yes
- 138 Saltdean | Yes AKA Wivelsfield Road Grassland (Saltdean Down)
- 139 Saltdean Vale | Yes AKA Looes Barn Woodland
- 140 Coombe Meadow | Yes AKA Coombe Farm (Meadow)
- 141 Saltdean Chalk Pit | Yes - using 1998 data AKA Quarry Field
- 142 Westfield Avenue | Yes

Annex 2. – List of LWS OS central points, agreed in 2013

Note: Sometimes the names and numbers do not match perfectly. BHWF has captured most of the 2013 data and can supply more details and GIS polygons if still required.

#	OS REF	SITE NAME
1	TQ 242,091	Mile Oak Farm Bank
2	TQ 243,086	Cockroost Hill West
3	TQ 248,084	Cockroost Hill East
4	TQ 246,078	Mile Oak Fields
5	TQ 246,070	Southwick Hill East
6	TQ 247,066	Sidehill Scrub
7	TQ 249,081	Portslade North Slope
8	TQ 251,080	Mile Oak Farm Earthwork
9	TQ 256,060	Loxdale Centre
10	TQ 256,063	Emmaus & St Nicholas
11	TQ 256,071	Foredown Allotments
12	TQ 254,082	New Barn Farm Slope
13	TQ 264,045	Basin Road South
14	TQ 260,092	North Benfield Valley
15	TQ 262,071	Benfield Valley Central
16	TQ 266,085	Dyke Trail
17	TQ 267,072	St Helen's Churchyard
18	TQ 269,077	Dyke Trail South
19	TQ 264,064	Benfield Valley South
20	TQ 269,084	Round Hill
21	TQ 274,064	Mill View Hospital
22	TQ 265,052	St Leonard's Churchyard
23	TQ 279,067	Alexandra Court
24	TQ 279,075	Toads Hole Valley
25	TQ 275,089	Dyke Road Strip
26	TQ 282,087	Waterhall Golf South
27	TQ 282,091	Waterhall Golf Central
28	TQ 284,099	Waterhall Golf North
29	TQ 279,099	Waterhall Farm Slope
30	TQ 283,067	Hove Park Reservoir
31	TQ 285,112	Casterbridge Farm
32	TQ 290,101	Sweet Hill Scrub
33	TQ 285,091	Waterhall Valley
34	TQ 287,094	Sweet Hill West
35	TQ 294,092	Waterhall East

36	TQ 294,087	Green Ridge & Coney Woods
37	TQ 285,075	Three Cornered Copse
38	TQ 285,065	Engineerium Grounds
39	TQ 286,048	St Andrew Old Church
40	TQ 302,047	Park Royal & High School
41	TQ 296,056	Cardinal Newman School
42	TQ 301,060	Highcroft Villas
43	TQ 300,063	Millers Road
44	TQ 298,070	Withdean Road Woods
45	TQ 299,071	Station Road
46	TQ 292,077	Tongdean Rise
47	TQ 290,081	Redhill Sports Ground
48	TQ 293,084	Bramble Rise
49	TQ 293,101	Braypool
50	TQ 295,105	Hogtrough Bottom
51	TQ 300,092	Scrub at Mill Road Roundabout
52	TQ 301,090	Black Lion Copse
53	TQ 305,078	Withdean Park Copse
54	TQ 301,075	Surrenden Field Copse
55	TQ 301,071	Oak Close Copse
56	TQ 303,063	The Preston Twins
56a	TQ 305,073	Surrenden Crescent and Surrenden Road
57	TQ 308,055	Parkmore Terrace Railside
58	TQ 309,054	Argyle Road Copse
59	TQ 310,053	Brighton Station North
60	TQ 310,051	Brighton Station South
61	TQ 306,052	Howard Terrace Slopes
62	TQ 306,070	Whittingehame Gardens
63	TQ 308,071	Dorothy Stringer Wildlife Area
64	TQ 302,092	Patcham Court Farm
65	TQ 305,092	Patcham Court Field
66	TQ 313,094	Braeside Avenue Scrub
67	TQ 303,098	Ewe Bottom
68	TQ 308,102	Standean Cottage Down
69	TQ 304,109	Deep Bottom & The Chattri
70	TQ 318,081	Ditchling Road SW
71	TQ 313,058	London Road Station
72	TQ 317,056	Roundhill Copse
73	-missing-	
74	TQ 321,049	Beaufort Terrace

75	TQ 318,073	Burstead Wood
76	TQ 314,075	Hollingbury Wood
77	TQ 321,076	Hollingbury Golf Course
78	TQ 324,071	Queensdown
79	TQ 379,078	Wild Park
80	TQ 326,084	39 Acres
81	TQ 324,090	Ditchling Road
82	TQ 322,090	Hollingbury Industrial Estate
83	TQ 325,094	Coldean Lane Slopes
84	TQ 323,066	Crespin Way Copse
85	TQ 324,066	Watts Bank
86	TQ 333,071	Hodshrove Wood
87	TQ 337,065	North Bevendean Down
88	TQ 343,065	Heath Hill Down
89	TQ 331,062	South Bevendean Down
90	TQ 337,059	Bevendean Horse Paddocks
91	TQ 345,059	Brown Loaf Farm
92	TQ 347,063	Bevendean Farm Slope
93	TQ 348,076	Falmer Hill
94	TQ 342,077	Land off Ashurst Road
95	TQ 346,080	Westlian Plantation and Westlain Belt
96	TQ 339,082	Woollards Field
97	TQ 333,086	Land at Coldean Lane
98	TQ 337,090	Stanmer Park South
99	TQ 327,098	Stanmer Park North
100	TQ 342,091	Stanmer Park East
101	TQ 343,099	Lots Pond to The Ridge, Stanmer
102	TQ 327,056	Cemeteries off Bear Road
103	TQ 323,043	Stevenson Road Quarry
104	TQ 338,052	Land at Sea-Saw Way
105	TQ 319,037	Maderia Drive Green Wall
106	TQ 328,034	Volks Railway East
107	TQ 323,036	Volks Railway - Central
108	TQ 318,037	Volks Railway - West
109	TQ 334,032	Beach at Black Rock
110	TQ 340,029	Brighton Marina
111	TQ 338,034	Cliff Road Paddock
112	TQ 340,033	Cliff Corner
113	TQ 342,052	Sheepcote Valley North
114	TQ 342,037	Sheepcote Valley South

115 TQ 347,042 East Brighton Golf Course
116 TQ 353,044 Mount Pleasant
117 TQ 353,036 Ovingdean Church to Cattle Hill
118 TQ 349,034 Ovingdean School Slope
119 TQ 348,054 Copse at Woodingdean Cemetery
120 TQ 363,058 Land at 54 Crescent Drive North
121 TQ 365,061 Land at Bexhill Road
122 TQ 370,048 Field East of Woodingdean
122a TQ 365,045 Field off Ravenswood Drive
123 TQ 372,047 Scrub East of Woodingdean
124 TQ 375,043 Baze Hill Road Reservoir
125 TQ 356,048 Happy Valley Downland
126 TQ 361,047 Abinger Road Paddock
127 TQ 360,044 Old Cottage Paddocks
128 TQ 361,041 Meadow Vale Paddocks
129 TQ 359,040 Long Hill
130 TQ 362,035 Ovingdean Copse
131 TQ 358,036 Ovingdean Hall
132 TQ 369,025 Rottingdean Pond
133 TQ 375,028 Whiteway Lane
134 TQ 377,038 High Hill
135 TQ 376,044 Balsdean Down
136 TQ 380,048 Balsdean Down East
137 TQ 381,056 Balsdean Downland North
138 TQ 381,033 Saltdean Down
139 TQ 387,034 Saltdean Vale
140 TQ 391,030 Coombe Meadow
141 TQ 387,027 Saldean Chalk Pit
142 TQ xxx,xxx Westfield Avenue

Annex 3 – List of LGSs formally proposed by members of the Sussex Geodiversity Partnership (www.geodiversitysussex.org.uk) and BHWF in 2012

LGS No.	Name
TQ20/121	The Goldstone, Hove Park
TQ30/135	Stanmer Village
TQ30/236	Black Rock, Brighton Marina
TQ40/174b	Coastal section: Friar's Bay to Brighton Marina