

This vision document prepared by Essex Wildlife Trust  
03-02-10



**Living Landscapes - a vision for the future of Essex**

## **Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex Living Landscape (Living Landscape 47)**

*'An important historical landscape of ancient woodland with areas of open land supporting a variety of wildlife and a valuable gateway to the countryside for residents and visitors.'*

**This Living Landscape will protect wildlife for the future  
and benefit local people**



**This vision document supported by the following:**

# **Living Landscapes - a vision for the future of Essex**

## **Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex Living Landscape**

### **Contents**

- 1. Introduction**
  - 2. The vision**
  - 3. Objectives**
    - 3.1 Wildlife targets**
    - 3.2 People targets**
    - 3.3 Local community targets**
    - 3.4 Local economic targets**
  - 4. Statement of ecological significance**
  - 5. Ecosystem services**
  - 6. Resources required to deliver the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape**
    - 6.1 Projects to meet wildlife targets**
    - 6.2 Projects to meet people targets**
    - 6.3 Projects to meet local community targets**
    - 6.4 Projects to meet local economic targets**
- Figure 1a**      **Current position: *Designated land***
- Figure 1b**      **Current position: *Land in conservation management***
- Figure 2**        **Agri-environment schemes**
- Figure 3**        **Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard**
- Figure 4**        **Long term vision**

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## 1. Introduction

Living Landscapes is about creating large, well connected, wildlife rich areas which are highly valued by the local communities which live and work in them and by visitors which come to enjoy them. It is about ensuring the landscape and its ecosystem services are functioning well so they are robust enough to deal with climate change and land use change so they can provide long term benefits for both wildlife and local communities.

The Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex living landscape covers 470 Hectares (ha), of which 182 ha are woodland, 235 ha are open land and 53 ha built up areas. The landscape provides a vital green lung for the residents of Hadleigh, Rayleigh and Thundersley in Castle Point Borough, Southend-on-Sea Borough and Rochford District.

Originally, this landscape would have been covered by the wild wood which developed throughout England after the last ice age, 10,000 years ago. Unusually for southern England, much ancient woodland has survived in Hadleigh and Daws Heath. (Ancient Woodland is a term used to refer specifically to woodland dating back to 1600 or before.) This may have been due to heavy clay nutrient poor soils which were difficult to convert to profitable farmland. While some of the woods were cleared to create open land, use is limited to grazing and haymaking. This long history of woodland management and low intensity agriculture has resulted in an historic landscape rich in wildlife. Ancient Woodlands are irreplaceable and should be protected and managed to maintain and enhance their special character.

Three of the habitats which occur in the Hadleigh and Daws Heath complex; ancient woodland, hedgerows and lowland grassland are of high conservation priority in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (2008). Ancient woodland has declined by 40% and lowland grassland by 73% in the UK over the last 50 years. The wildlife which relies on these habitats is well represented in the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex and key species in need of conservation are; Heath Fritillary butterfly, dormice and Song Thrush. (The Heath Fritillary butterfly is one of the country's rarest butterflies, recognised as a UK and local BAP species and by its red-data book protected species.)

The importance of this living landscape to the community has been recognised by the Castle Point Open Spaces Strategy (2008 – 2013), particularly by making the environment cleaner and greener. The woods and open land provide continuous public access from Little Haven Nature Reserve and West Wood in the west to Belfairs Park in the east. Informal recreation across the landscape includes, walking, cycling and horse riding. There is a need to further improve access and recreational provision while not damaging important areas for wildlife.

Historically, the main industry within the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex was the production of products derived from the ancient woodland. This included coppice for fire wood, horticultural products and charcoal. Open land was grazed and hay cut for winter feed.

These traditional management practices created diversity in the landscape and were beneficial to wildlife that we value today. These forms of management have been reinstated by the Essex Wildlife Trust on its Nature Reserves at Pound Wood, Tile Wood and Little Haven and by Southend Borough Council at Belfairs Nature Reserve. There is further scope to expand these activities due to the increasing demand for fire wood and hay. Equestrian interests are an important part of the local economy with local farms and stables providing livery. Horse riders can access a network of bridle ways within the complex. The planned Woodland Resource Centre at Belfairs

Park will aim to introduce a wider audience to the value of woodland management and provide trading opportunities for business specialising in the production of woodland products. Improvements in access, interpretation and promotion of the landscape will also benefit local tourism.

## **2. The vision**

The vision is to conserve, enhance and reconnect sites of value to wildlife and people and involve the community in the conservation of their local environment, while increasing business opportunities within the local economy.

The **vision** is to deliver a range of benefits for wildlife, people and the local community:

- The conservation and positive management of the remaining ancient woodland UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitat and open spaces which will benefit wildlife and people within Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh on Sea.
- To encourage the local community to use the land with public access and to be proud of its conservation and heritage value
- To safeguard and connect all existing Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats within the landscape to make them more robust and sustainable.

## **The delivery**

The vision will be delivered by organisations and individuals working together on projects that will achieve agreed objectives, for the benefit of the landscape, wildlife, people and economy of Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh on Sea.

## **3. Objectives**

The vision will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Enhance the management of existing ancient woodland, lowland grassland and hedgerows which are of high conservation priority in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Maintain and increase populations of Heath Fritillary butterfly, dormice and Song Thrush, which are UK and Essex Biodiversity Action Plan species.
- Create and pursue opportunities to link up existing habitats by planting new hedgerows and woodland to enable key species to colonise new areas to develop more robust and sustainable populations.
- Monitor habitats and key species to determine current condition and status and to provide base lines to assess the effectiveness of future conservation management.
- Improve access within the landscape for a wider range of local people, including the less able and schools.
- Increase the involvement of schools in their local landscape by developing the Forest School initiative in Castle Point, Southend and Rochford.
- Improve community involvement in the management of ancient woods and in creating new habitats by increasing voluntary activity within Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh on Sea.
- Develop the Belfairs Woodland Resource Centre to interpret and promote the value of woodland within the landscape to a wider audience.

- Provide business opportunities for the rural economy for the production and sale of woodland products.
- Promote the value of the landscape and opportunities for informal recreation to visitors, for the benefit of local tourism.
- Influence the planning process to minimise the adverse impacts of development and to maximise any benefits that can be achieved through planning gain.
- Provide management advice to farmers and landowners that would lead to enhancement of the landscape.

### **3.1 Wildlife targets**

By 2014 we aim to achieve:

- 60% of ancient woodlands to be in favourable conservation status and 40% improving.
- 10% of hedgerows to be surveyed and to be brought into favourable conservation status.
- Ensure 80% of Local Wildlife sites (LoWs) are in Positive Conservation Management
- The creation of 25 ha of woodland or hedgerows to link existing woodlands and act as wildlife corridors for Heath Fritillary butterflies, dormice and Song Thrush.
- Increase Heath Fritillary butterfly colonies from 3 to 5 and increase the population to 2000 adult butterflies.
- Increase dormice colonies from 2 to 5 and increase the population by 10%.
- Increase the breeding population of Song Thrush by 10%.
- Complete a phase one habitat survey for the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex.
- Monitor the range and abundance of Heath Fritillary butterflies, dormice and Song Thrush to determine the effectiveness of conservation management.
- The creation of 1 ha of heathland where it existed historically within Daws Heath.
- To purchase Tile Wood.
- The restoration of traditional management practises to woodlands
- Protect and maintain suitable habitat for existing butterfly populations in particular Small Copper, Marbled White, Ringlet, Common Blue as well as the Heath Fritillary

### **3.2 People targets**

With the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex being in the centre of a residential area it provides opportunities for educational purposes for large numbers of people and children, there are approximately 13 Secondary Schools (over 15,000 pupils) and 24 Primary Schools (over 5,500 pupils) beside this landscape.

By 2014 we aim to achieve:

- 25% of primary school children engaged within formal environmental education, linked to the Primary National Curriculum needs
- 10% of special needs students engaged with informal and formal education
- 25% (6 Primary Schools) to develop their grounds for wildlife gardening and outdoor learning
- 10% of secondary students to be engaged within formal environmental education, linked to the Secondary National Curriculum needs
- Increase the number of children and young people engaged with informal environment education, such as school holiday activities, forest schools, pre-school clubs and family days.

- Over 100 students engaged within the formal environmental education linked to Advanced and further education requirements.

### **3.3 Local community targets**

By 2014 we aim to achieve:

- Involve and support 50 volunteers in practical conservation work parties.
- Involve and support 10 volunteers in conservation monitoring projects.
- Run 2 general open day events and 5 specific community events per year.
- Run 10 wildlife and heritage walks per year.
- To create a wildlife garden as a flagship design to encourage others to develop them within their own gardens throughout Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh on Sea.
- Establish a wildlife watching scheme to enable the community to submit sightings from their own gardens and when visiting sites within the Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh on Sea area.
- To create 10 ha or 10 km of permissive access land to link existing land to which the public have access.
- Improve access for the less able on 1 km of paths with appropriate parking and access gates.
- Identify opportunities for volunteering in activities such as education, media, marketing and conservation.
- Establish a visitor centre – Belfairs Woodland Resource Centre
- Provide information about the area, its wildlife, history, access and educational opportunities, available in the form of leaflets, displays, website, events, local community groups and through the Tourist Information Board.

### **3.4 Local economic targets**

- To enable 3 landowners to receive the benefit of the following management grants:
  - Environmental Stewardship (Entry and Higher Level Schemes)
  - Woodland Management Grants (English Woodland Grant Scheme and Ancient Woodland Cluster Scheme)
  - Local Wildlife Sites Positive Conservation Management Grants
  - Essex County Council initiatives
  - Essex Biodiversity Project
- To promote Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex Living Landscape area within the local community, including all locations of local tourist interest in particular Belfairs Woodland Resource Centre using a Living Landscape guide map
- To increase the sales of local produce by 20% in the local area including the following products:
  - Logs, charcoal, fencing, local woodland craft products and hay

## **4. Statement of ecological significance**

Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex ecological area contains 182ha (ancient and secondary) woodland and approximately 16.5 km of hedgerows. The main habitats are ancient woodlands, coppiced woodlands, hay meadows, pasture and a network of hedgerows.

Environmental Stewardship Scheme Grants assist farmers and land managers to undertake work to conserve and improve the countryside – delivering environmental benefits. In the Hadleigh and

Daws Heath Complex the Little Haven Nature Reserve (25.94 ha) – Woodland and hay meadow complex with ancient coppiced hedgerow agri-environment scheme – is in Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) plus High Level Stewardship (HLS) (see Map Fig 2). HLS focuses on supporting more complex land management, tailored to specific environmental features on the land.

Nine Local Wildlife Sites (LoWs) are within the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex covering approximately 177.31 ha. Local Wildlife Sites (LoWs) are important areas of land with significant wildlife value and are protected within the local planning system. (They can both support locally, regionally and nationally threatened species and habitats.) A grant is available to LoWs landowners to improve these sites local biodiversity and to achieve Positive Conservation Management.

<b>Local Wildlife Site (LoWs)</b>	<b>Habitat</b>	<b>Area</b>
Cottage Plantation and Rag Wood	Ancient Woodland	6.74 ha
Little Haven Complex/Tile Wood	Mosaic of Ancient Woodlands, hedgerows, hay meadows and rough grassland (EWGS)	48.62 ha
Coxall Wood	Ancient Woodland	0.837 ha
Pound Wood	Ancient Woodland (EWGS)	22.54ha
Oakwood Reservoirs	Acid Grassland	3.41ha
Belfairs Park Wood	Mosaic of habitats including Ancient Woodland	15.76ha
West Wood	Ancient Woodland	33.12ha
Belfairs Golf Course	Mosaic of closely mown grassland	26.2ha
Belfairs Park Wood	Ancient Woodland	20.08ha

#### **Nature Reserves**

Little Haven (40.47 ha) – Woodland and hay meadow complex with ancient coppiced hedgerows

Pound Wood (22.26 ha) – Ancient Woodland

Tile Wood (6.88 ha) – Ancient Woodland

## **5. Ecosystem services within the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape**

Natural ecosystems are important to the health of the environment and hence to human populations. Healthy ecosystems assist in maintaining the quality of air, the quality of surface and underground water, the quality of soils. Access to natural ecosystems is also important for the physical and mental health of human populations, particularly by enabling quiet recreation. Thus ecosystems are important to the quality of life of human populations.

The valuation of ecosystem services is notoriously difficult, and is the subject of significant ongoing research. The estimates of the existing value for the ecosystem services in this Living Landscape have been taken from the result of studies conducted by the University of Essex.

The area covered by each of the main habitats and land uses has been estimated from Maps 1a and 1b. These habitats and land uses offer different values as ecosystem services.

Attempts are being made to put a value on these ecosystem services and the best current estimates of the existing value for their ecosystem services are:

- 112 ha of existing ancient woodland: at £45,600 per hectare = £5,107,000 per year
- 41 ha of existing secondary woodland: at £36,000 per hectare = £1,476,000 per year
- 235 ha of existing grasslands/heathlands: at £36,000 per hectare = £8,460,000 per year
- 53 ha of urban area at £48,000 per hectare = £2,544,000 per year

(Figures for areas are approximate)

The estimated value of the new areas for their ecosystem services are:

- An increase in heathland by 1 ha: at £36,000 per hectare = £36,000 per year
- An increase in woodland/hedgerows by 25 ha: at £36,000 per hectare = £900,000 per year

This gives an indication of the value of these habitats and land uses to the community as a whole rather than just to the landowner.

We are dependent on the ecology of our local areas and a good Living Landscape will support what are called good ecosystem services i.e. good quality of water, air and soils and good quality of life.

## **6. Resources required to deliver the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape**

Approximate costs have been estimated for each of the following projects:

### **6.1 Projects to meet wildlife targets**

1. 60% of ancient woodlands to be brought into favourable conservation status and 40% improving ~ £25,000 to undertake conditional assessments and provide advice to woodland owners in the form of short management statements.
2. 10% of hedgerows to be surveyed and to be brought into favourable conservation status ~ £10,000 (including planting up gaps and improving species composition)
3. The creation of 25 ha of woodland or hedgerows to link existing woodlands and act as wildlife corridors for Heath Fritillary butterfly, dormice and Song - £225,000 to purchase land and plant this with native species.
4. Increase Heath Fritillary butterfly colonies from 3 to 5 and increase the population to 2000 adult butterflies through woodland management ~ £5,000 per hectare of woodland management.
5. Increase Dormice colonies from 2 to 5 and increase the population by 10% through:
  - a. woodland management ~ £5,000 per hectare of woodland management
  - b. Creating a woodland strip to link existing blocks of woodland within the Little Haven Nature Reserve – planting predominantly hazel
6. Increase the breeding population of Song Thrush by 10% ~ £5,000 per hectare of woodland management.
7. Complete a phase one habitat survey for the Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex ~ £8,000.
8. Monitor the range and abundance of Heath Fritillary butterfly, dormice and Song Thrush to determine the effectiveness of conservation management ~ to be achieved within existing resources with Essex Wildlife Trust staff and volunteers working together towards agreed objectives.
9. The creation of 1 ha of heathland where it existed historically within Daws Heath ~ £60,000 to purchase and prepare for heathland.

10. The restoration of traditional management practices to woodlands ~ £5,000 per hectare of woodland management.
11. Protect and maintain suitable habitat for existing butterfly populations in particular Small Copper, Marbled White, Ringlet and Common Blue – to be achieved by the continuation of traditional hay meadow management.

## **6.2 Projects to meet people targets**

1. Over 1,375 primary school children engaged within formal environmental education linked to the Primary National Curriculum needs ~ £14,000 to run 70 sessions with Education Officer
2. 10% special needs students engaged with informal and formal education - £ 4,000 to run 20 sessions for special needs
3. 6 primary schools to develop their grounds for wildlife gardening and outdoor learning - £24,000
4. Over 1,500 secondary students to be engaged within formal environmental education, linked to the Secondary National Curriculum needs - £15,000 to run 75 sessions with Education Officer
5. Increase the number of children and young people engaged with informal environment educations, such as school holiday activities, pre-school clubs and family days – in particular at Belfairs Woodland Resource Centre when established - £200/day
6. Over 100 students engaged within the formal environmental education linked to Advanced and further education requirements ~ £1,600 to run 8 sessions with Education Officer
7. Encourage local community involvement with Forest Schools - £250/day (The opportunity to experience Forest Schools develops confidence, self esteem, trust, emotional and social skills while developing a connection and respect for the natural environment.)

Essex Wildlife Trust is working with Southend Education Trust which is a partnership of 54 schools and the Local Authority in Southend and actively promoting outdoor learning including supporting the Belfairs Woodland Resource Centre and Forest School initiative.

## **6.3 Projects to meet local community targets**

1. Involve and support 50 volunteers in practical conservation work parties ~ £2,500 to provide tools and support work parties
2. Involve and support 10 volunteers in conservation monitoring projects ~ to be achieved by existing Essex Wildlife Trust staff involving, training and supporting volunteers.
3. Run 2 general open day events and 5 specific community events per year ~ to be run at break even.
4. Run 10 wildlife and heritage walks per year ~ £1,000 to promote and run programme of walks
5. To create a wildlife garden as a flagship design to encourage others to develop within their own gardens throughout Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh on Sea ~ £10,000
6. Establish an online wildlife watching scheme to enable the community to submit sightings from their own gardens and when visiting sites within the Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh on Sea area ~ £20,000 to develop and promote interactive web site.
7. To create 10 ha or 10 km of permissive access land to link existing land to which the public have access ~ achieved through Higher Level Scheme.

8. Improve access for the less able on 1 km of paths with appropriate parking and access gates ~ £20,000 to create suitable path and access and £10,000 to and promote its location and use.
9. Identify opportunities for volunteering in activities such as education, media, marketing and conservation ~ to be achieved by existing Essex Wildlife Trust staff involving, training and supporting volunteers.
10. Provide information about the area, its wildlife, history, access and educational opportunities, available in the form of leaflets (£5,000), displays (£5,000), website (£1,000), trail guides (£3,000), community groups and through the Tourist Information Board and the proposed visitor centre - Belfairs Woodland Resource Centre (Joint initiative with Essex Wildlife Trust and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council).

## 6.4 Projects to meet local economic targets

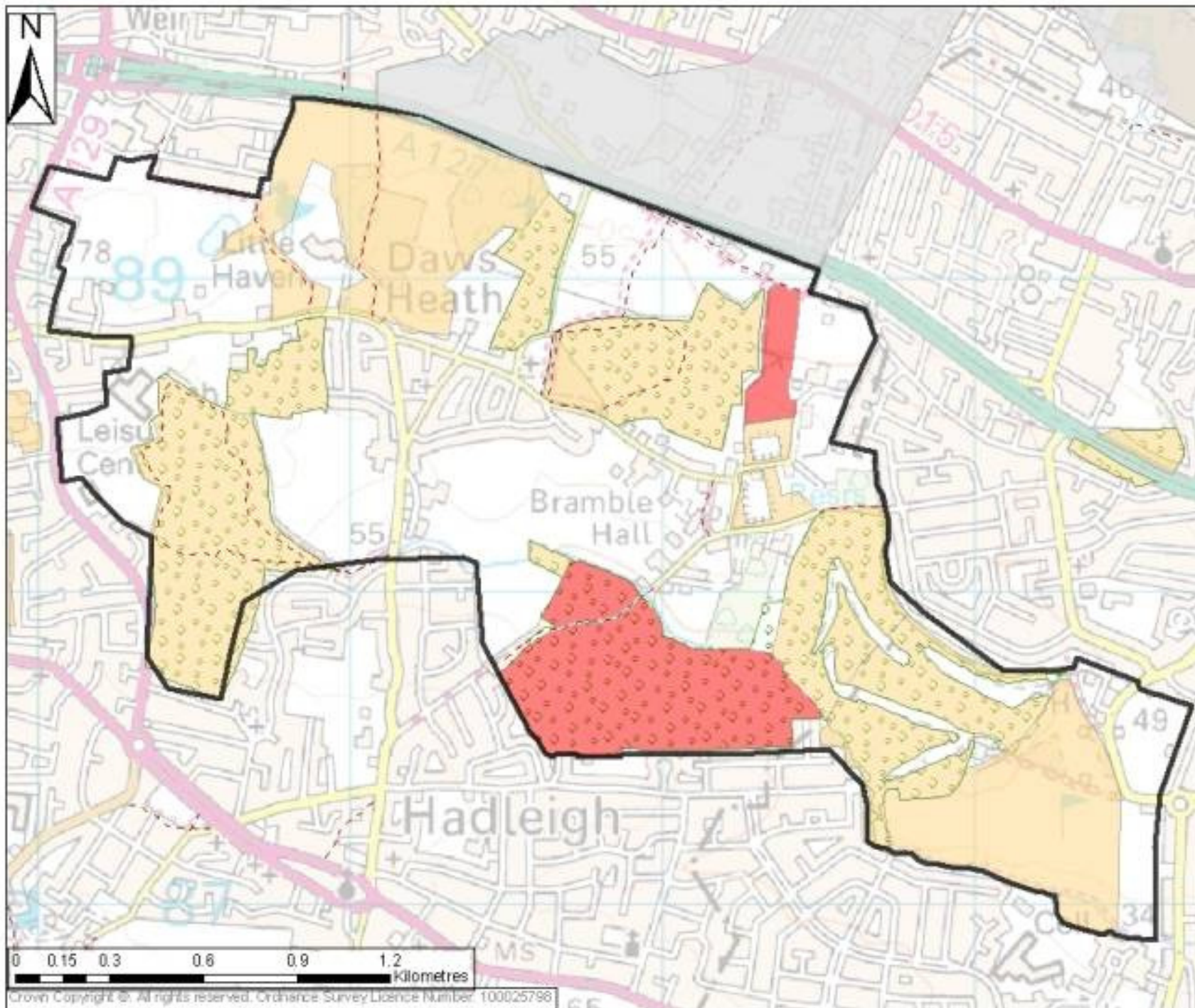
To enable 3 landowners to receive the benefit of the following management grants - £6,000 to provide assistance and maps for grant applications which will benefit landowner, wildlife and access at £2,000 per landowner.

To promote Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex Living Landscape area including all locations of local tourist interest using a Living Landscape guide map - £5,000

Increase the sale of local produce by maintaining the quality of product and providing a high level of customer service.

Maps:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Figure 1a</b> | <b>Current position: Designated land</b>                |
| <b>Figure 1b</b> | <b>Current position: Land in conservation ownership</b> |
| <b>Figure 2</b>  | <b>Agri-environment schemes</b>                         |
| <b>Figure 3</b>  | <b>Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard</b>           |
| <b>Figure 4</b>  | <b>Long term vision</b>                                 |

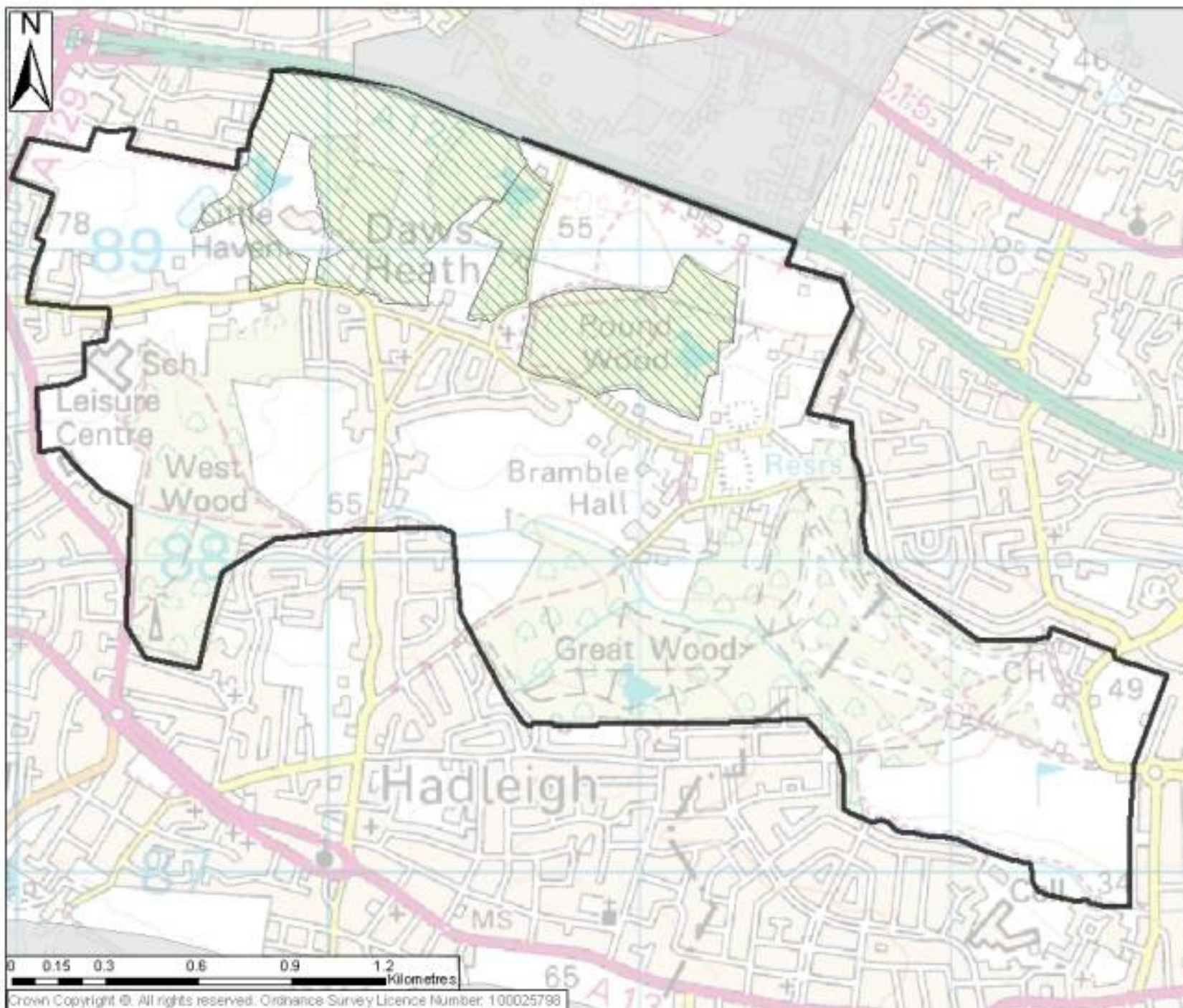


**Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex (LL47)**  
**Living Landscape**  
 Figure 1a: Current Position  
 Designated Land

- Connected Living Landscapes
- Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex
- PROW
- Ancient Woodland
- Local Wildlife Site
- SSSI

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 Scale                          1:16,000  
 Date                          07-Dec-2009





# **Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex (LL47)** **Living Landscape**

Figure 1b: Current Position  
 Land in conservation ownership

- Connected Living Landscapes
- Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex
- Essex Wildlife Trust Ownership

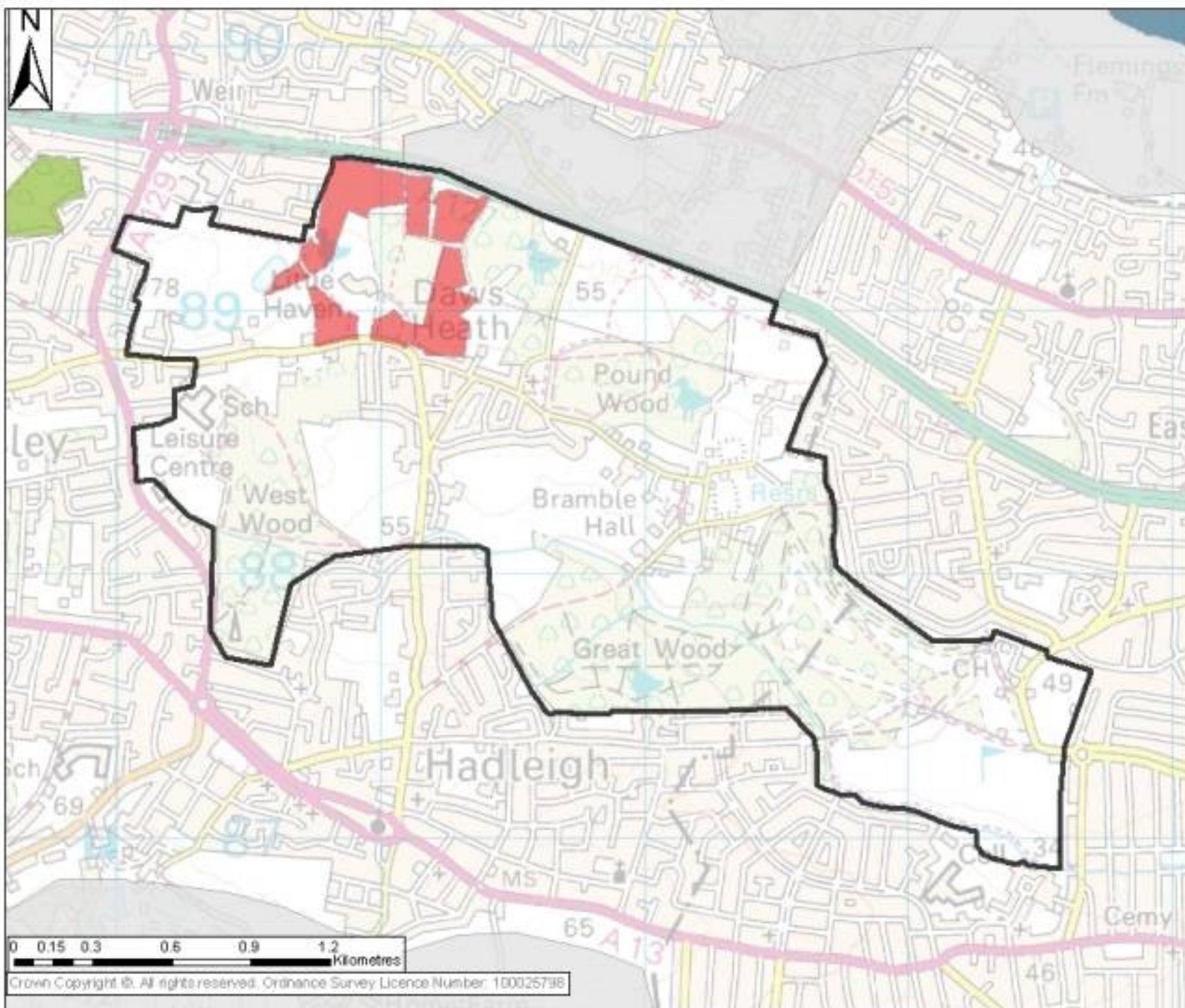
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**Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex (LL47) Living Landscape**

Figure 2: Agri-environment Schemes

- Connected Living Landscapes
- Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex
- Entry Level Stewardship
- Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
- Higher Level Stewardship

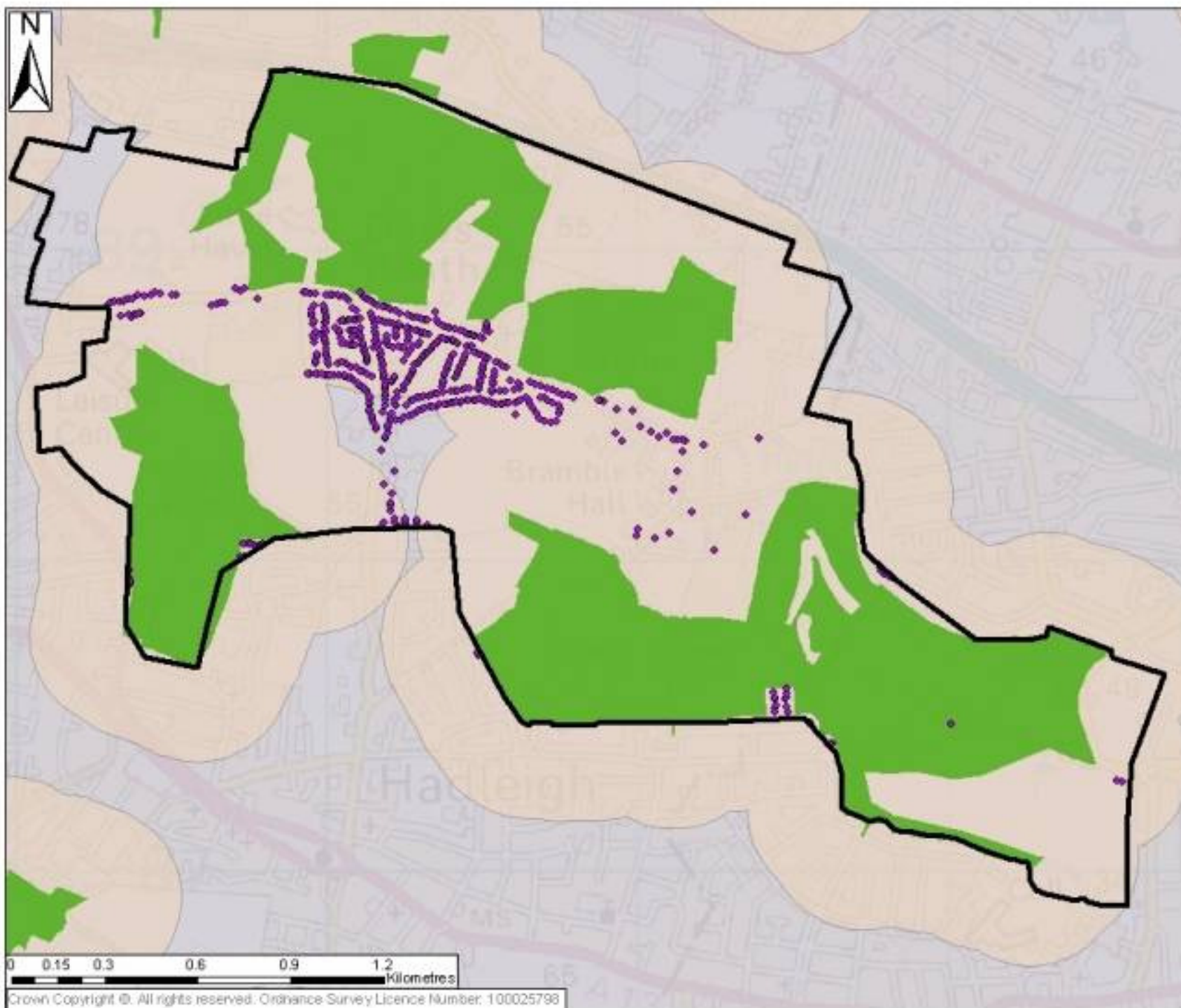
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# **Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex (LL47)** **Living Landscape**

Figure 3: Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard

- Hadleigh & Daws Heath Complex
- Accessible natural greenspace (ANG)
- 300m buffer around 2ha+ANG
- 2km buffer around 20ha+ANG
- Hadleigh & Daws Complex Households

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Scale 1:16,000

Date 07-Dec-2009



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