

Glossary of Terms

Access provision: Statutory rights, such as public rights of way or open access land which often exist over private land. These rights are permanent and cannot be readily removed. **Permissive access:** where access is granted by permission of the landowner, as part of an agreement, for example where access is purchased via agri-environment schemes. **De facto access:** where there is an absence of any legal right to be present on the land, but there is long-standing tolerance or implied consent of the owner to the recreational user's presence.

Ancient Woodland: A woodland which has existed since at least 1600 AD, and possibly much longer. Two broad types of ancient woodland can be identified; **Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)**, that is, composed of native tree and shrub species which have not obviously been planted, or **Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)**, that which has been continuously wooded since 1600 AD but where the former tree cover has been replaced with planted trees (often conifers).

Annex I habitat type(s): A natural habitat listed in Annex I of the EC Habitats Directive.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): Area of landscape outside a National Park that is of such outstanding natural beauty that it merits designation under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to secure its conservation and enhancement.

BAP: See UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

Benthic: The benthic zone is the lowest level of a body of water, such as the seabed or a lake. It is inhabited by organisms that live in close relationship with (if not physically attached to) the ground, called benthos or benthic organisms.

Biodiversity: "The variability among living organisms from all sources including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems" (UN Convention on Biological Diversity 1992).

Biosphere Reserve: Areas of ecological and landscape interest designated under the Man and the Biosphere Programme of UNESCO.6

Birds Directive: In 1979, the European Community adopted Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (EC Birds Directive), in response to the 1979 Bern Convention on the conservation of European habitats and species. The Directive provides a framework for the conservation and management of, and human interactions with, wild birds in Europe.

Birds of Conservation Concern: Assessment of the conservation status of UK birds. A total of 247 species have been assessed, and each placed onto one of three lists – red, amber or green. **Red list** species are those that are Globally Threatened and whose populations or range have declined rapidly in recent years. **Amber list** species are those with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe; those whose population or range has declined moderately in recent years; are rare breeders and those with internationally important or localised populations.

BSBI: Botanical Society of the British Isles.

Buffer zone: In geography, a buffer zone is any zonal area that serves the purpose of keeping two or more other areas distant from one another, for whatever reason.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): One of the key agreements at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Its main goals are: the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components; and the equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources.

CEH: Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.

Character Areas: Areas defined at the national level which describe the geographical, ecological and historical variations in landscape character. They were formerly termed Joint Character Areas (JCAs).

Common Land: See registered common land.

Community Forests: The Community Forest Programme was established as an experimental programme to revitalise some 1,750 square miles of countryside and green space in and around major conurbations. Since 1989 the twelve Community Forests have transformed landscapes in and around major urban areas in England, creating well wooded landscapes close to where most people live and work.

Countryside Quality Counts (CQC): A project and a methodology for assessing the direction and magnitude of landscape character change, by using the Character Areas of England as a reporting framework.

Countryside Stewardship: Countryside Stewardship was introduced as a pilot scheme in England in 1991 providing payments to farmers and other land managers to enhance and conserve English landscapes, their wildlife and history and to help people to enjoy them. The scheme by now been replaced by **Environmental Stewardship** and is closed to new applicants.

CRoW: Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000.

Defra: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Downland: A downland is an area of open chalk hills. This term is especially used to describe the chalk countryside in southern England. Areas of downland are often referred to as Downs.

EC: European Community.

Ecosystem: An ecosystem is a natural unit consisting of all plants, animals and micro-organisms (biotic factors) in an area functioning together with all of the non-living physical (abiotic) factors of the environment.

EA: Environment Agency.

Environmental Stewardship (ES): Land management scheme providing funding to farmers and other land managers in England for delivering effective environmental management on their land. ES has three elements: Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) and Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS) are basic whole farm schemes. Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) encompasses more complex management.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs): ESAs offered payments to encourage farmers to adopt agricultural practices to safeguard and enhance parts of the country of particularly high landscape, wildlife or historic value. The scheme has now been replaced by Environmental Stewardship and is closed to new applicants.

European Landscape Convention (ELC): Council of Europe Convention, signed by the UK Government, which sets out measures for the recognition, protection, management and planning of landscapes everywhere, through domestic policy and practice and European cooperation.

Eutrophication: The over-enrichment of an aquatic or terrestrial environment with nutrients, especially nitrates and phosphates, often anthropogenic (for example, sewage, ammonia from livestock, fertiliser run-off), which may result in excessive growth of algae or changes in plant communities, and can adversely affect species and ecosystems.

Farm Environment Plan (FEP): Part of the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme application process used to identify features of environmental value on the land.

FC: Forestry Commission.

Geodiversity: The natural range (diversity) of geological (rocks, minerals, fossils), geomorphological (land form, processes) and soil features. It includes their assemblages, relationships, properties, interpretations and systems.

Geo-features: A reporting unit for the condition of geological / geomorphological features, reflecting the complex spatial relationship between GCR sites and geological / geomorphological SSSIs.

Geological Conservation Review (GCR) sites: Sites identified through a systematic and rigorous process as being of national scientific importance for their geological and geomorphological features. Most GCR sites are eventually notified, individually, or in combination with other GCR sites or biological interests, as SSSIs.

Geology: Relates to the Earth, its origins, structure, composition and history (including the development of life), and the processes that have given rise to its present state.

Geomorphology: Relates to landforms and the processes, such as glaciation, coastal and fluvial erosion and gravity that form them.

Geoparks: An international network of series of geological sites (endorsed by UNESCO) of particular importance in terms of their scientific quality, rarity, aesthetic appeal or educational value. The majority of a Geopark must be part of the geological heritage, but there may also be archaeological, ecological, historical or cultural interest.

Green space: Any vegetated land or water within or adjoining an urban area. It includes: nature reserves, local parks, sports grounds, cemeteries, school grounds, allotments, commons, woodlands, greenway linkages in urban areas (roadside verges, canals, railway sidings) and countryside immediately adjoining a town which people can access from their homes.

Habitats Directive: In 1992 the European Community adopted Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive). The Directive requires Member States to introduce a range of measures including the protection of habitats and species listed in the Annexes.

Heritage Coast: Coastal landscape defined through agreement with local authorities to help conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of coasts, their marine flora and fauna, and their heritage features.

Historic Landscape Characterisation: A tool and method that is used by English Heritage to characterise the historic dimension of urban and rural landscapes.

Intertidal: The area of the shore between the highest and lowest tides.

Invasive species: Plants, animals and microbes not native to a region which, when introduced either accidentally or intentionally, are harmful to the environment by out-competing native species for available resources, reproducing prolifically, or dominating regions and ecosystems.

Joint Character Area (JCA): See Character Areas.

JNCC: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Landscape Character Assessment: A tool and method that is used to help understand and describe the character of the landscape. It is a transparent process that identifies, analyses and maps variations in landscape character.

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs): Declared by local authorities, in consultation with Natural England, under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. They are sites with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally, which give people opportunities to study, enjoy and have contact with nature.

Managed retreat: A form of coastal management where the shoreline is allowed to move inland in a controlled way. This may involve abandoning previously used hard sea defences.

Marine Nature Reserve (MNR): Created by statute (under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) to conserve marine flora and fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest, while providing opportunities for study of the systems involved.

Marine Protected Area (MPA): "Any area of intertidal or subtidal terrain, including geological and geomorphological features, together with its overlying water and associated flora, fauna, historical and cultural features, which have been reserved by law or other effective means to protect part or all of the enclosed environment" (IUCN definition, as modified by the Marine Protected Areas Group).

Mineralogy: Relates to minerals, including their formation, composition, properties and classification.

Mycorrhizal: Association between a fungus and the roots of a plant in which the fungus and plant exchange commodities required for their growth and survival.

Natura 2000: Network of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

National Nature Reserve (NNR): Statutory designation under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. NNRs contain examples of some of the most important natural and semi-natural terrestrial and coastal ecosystems in Great Britain. They are managed to conserve their habitats or to provide special opportunities for scientific study of the habitats communities and species represented within them. This designation is for land areas; the equivalent marine designation is Marine Nature Reserve.

National Park: Extensive tract of countryside designated under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act for reasons of its natural beauty and for the opportunities it affords for open air recreation. Designation supports the conservation and enhancement of its landscapes, wildlife and cultural heritage, and the promotion of understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities.

National Trails: National Trails provide opportunities to walk, or in some places ride a horse or cycle, for short or long distances through some of the most outstanding scenery in England; they are some of the nation's favourite walks and rides - officially designated by Government and supported by Natural England.

NERC: Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Open access land: Under CROW, the term "access land" includes all mapped open country and registered common land (as defined above).

Open country: Areas mapped by the Countryside Agency as land that is wholly or predominantly mountain, moor, heath or down and open to public access under CROW.

OSPAR Convention: The 1992 OSPAR Convention is the current instrument guiding international cooperation on the protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic. The work under the convention is managed by the OSPAR Commission, made up of representatives of the Governments of 15 Contracting Parties and the European Commission, representing the European Community.

Pelagic: The pelagic zone, also known as the *open-ocean zone*, is the part of a body of water which is located in the open water column, that is the part of the ocean that is not near the coast or continental shelf. The pelagic zone is further divided into sections creating a number of sub-zones based on their different ecological characteristics. These characteristics are roughly a function of depth.

Phenology: The study of the timing of natural events especially as affected by climate. These include dates of flowering, leafing and seed set in plants and the arrival of bird and insect migrants.

Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS): See Ancient Woodland.

Protected landscapes: Collective term for National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Heritage Coasts although the latter have no protection under law.

PRoW: Public rights of way.

Public Service Agreements (PSA): First introduced in 1998, to modernise and improve the government's performance on the issues that matter most to the public – including education, health, crime and the environment. This has involved setting ambitious and publicly accountable targets across the whole of government.

Ramsar sites: Internationally important wetland areas designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention on 'Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat'.

RDPE: Rural Development Programme for England.

Red Data Book: The IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) maintains an international list, published as the Red Data Book. Red Data Book species are classified into different categories of perceived risk. Each Red Data Book usually deals with a specific group of animals or plants (for instance, reptiles, insects or mosses).

Registered common land: Land registered as common land under the Commons Registration Act 1965 and whose registration under that Act has become final.

Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS): Non-statutory designations for the protection of regionally or locally important geological or geomorphological sites. RIGS are selected on a local or regional basis according to nationally agreed criteria.

Section 16 under CRoW: Section 16 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) makes it possible for the owner of land of any kind voluntarily to dedicate it, permanently and irrevocably, for public access on foot under the Act.

Section 35 NNRs: Although most NNRs are managed by Natural England, a number (currently 88) are wholly or partly managed by other bodies approved by Council, under Section 35 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): Nationally important sites forming a network of the best and most representative examples of our wildlife and geodiversity features. Selected and designated by Natural England and afforded protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs): are designated under European Communities Directive 92/43/EEC known as the 'Habitats Directive'. This requires the conservation of important, rare or threatened habitats and species across Europe.

Special Protection Areas (SPAs): are designated under the European Communities Directive 79/409/EEC, known as the 'Birds Directive', to conserve the habitats of certain migratory or rare birds.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP): The UK Biodiversity Action Plan, published in 1994, was the UK government's response to signing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. It sets out a programme for the conservation of the UK's biodiversity.

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Upland: Land generally lying above 250 – 300 metres.

World Heritage Site (WHS): Designated by UNESCO, these sites are designated for their internationally important cultural or natural interest and require appropriate management and protection measures.