

Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

NOTICE OF RELEVANT AUTHORITY DECISION FOLLOWING REVIEW OF DIRECTION RESTRICTING CROW ACCESS

Prepared by Natural England

Access authority: East Sussex CC
Relevant authority: Natural England
Local access forum: East Sussex
Direction reference: 2009030023

Land Parcel Name	Direction Reference	Details of restriction on original direction
Old Lodge Nature Reserve	2009030023	Walkers exercising dogs must keep them on short leads annually between 1st January & 30th September: Until 2031

Natural England has now decided how to proceed following its review of the above-mentioned long-term direction to restrict open access rights on this land. A consultation was held between 03/03/2025 & 28/03/2025 with statutory consultees and the general public. We received one joint comment from the Access Authority and Local Access forum in support of the direction.

Outcome of the review:

Natural England's decision is to leave the original direction unchanged in the way it was originally proposed and extend the end date for a further six years.

This site within Ashdown Forest SSSI / SPA / SAC is a local nature reserve managed by the Sussex Wildlife Trust. It is approximately 103 hectares (the restriction covers 55 hectares) and is mainly heathland. There are species of European significance on site, namely Woodlarks, Dartford Warblers and Nightjars, which nest on or close to the ground and which require protection. The heathland habitat is also deemed rare and meriting attention.

The reserve management have recorded Grasshopper Warbler and continued numbers of Barn Owls on the reserve. There is also higher number of reptiles and amphibians benefitting from the management measures.

Therefore informal management solutions are insufficient to address these concerns and a statutory restriction require dogs to be on a short lead is still necessary. (During the period when birds are prospecting for nest sites, are actually on the nest and when any chicks have fledged.) Woodlarks arrive in February, and nightjars remain on the nest until September, with Dartford Warblers spanning the period.

Natural England's policy for long term directions is that they should not be given for a period of more than 6 years. Therefore, the original direction will be extended to an end date of **01/11/2031**.

Details of the restriction will appear on the relevant map of access land on the Open Access website - www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk.

Where a direction restricts access indefinitely, for more than five years, for part of every year, or for part of at least six consecutive years, we have a statutory duty to review it within five years of the date of its issue.

Date review completed: 01/04/2025