



**Kent and Medway  
Local Nature  
Recovery Strategy**

Making space for the county's nature



**NATURAL  
ENGLAND**



**Butterfly  
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

**Kent & SE London**

# East Kent Downs Farmers Elm project

Helping the White-letter Hairstreak  
(WLH)

*Nov 28 2025 | Roland Brown, Chair Butterfly Conservation  
Kent & SE London*





Connectivity



Priority Species



Restore

- WLH Status & threats
- Proposed conservation measures, project outline
- Collaborating to implement



Kent and Medway  
Local Nature  
Recovery Strategy

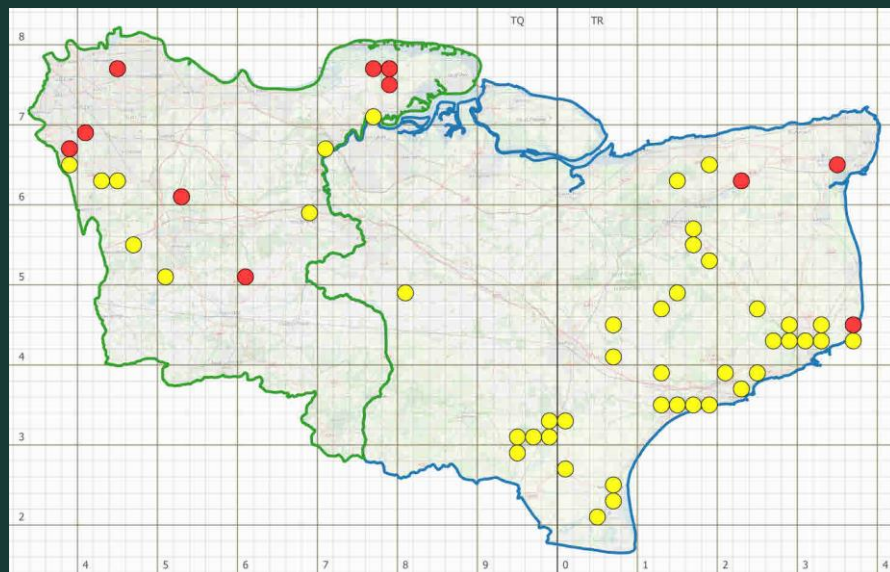
Making space for the county's nature



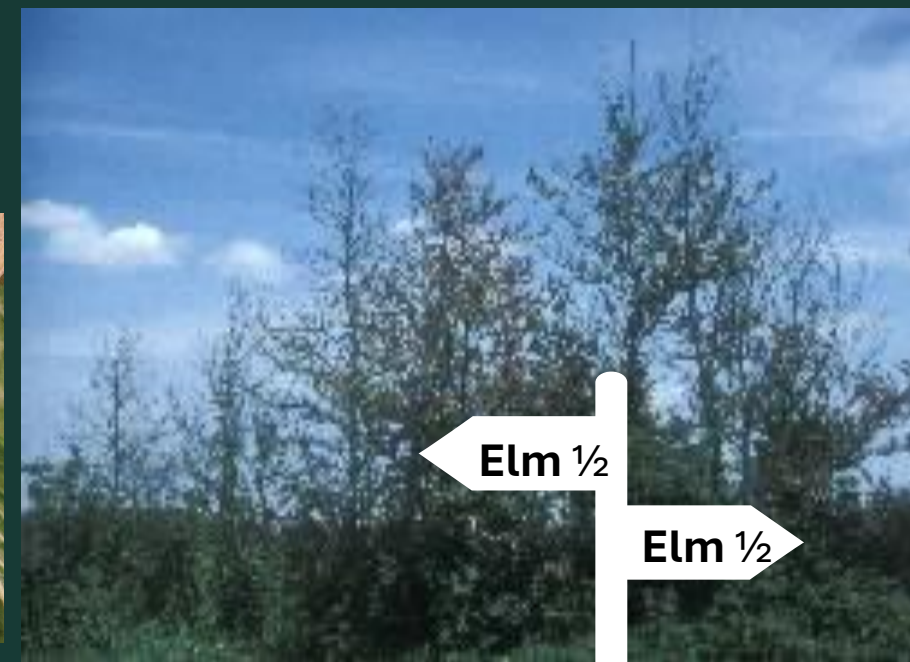
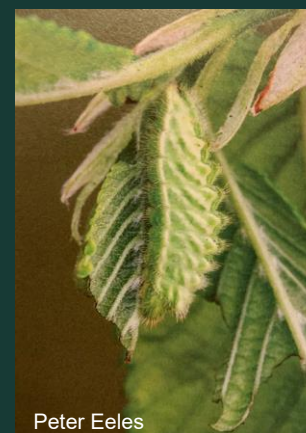
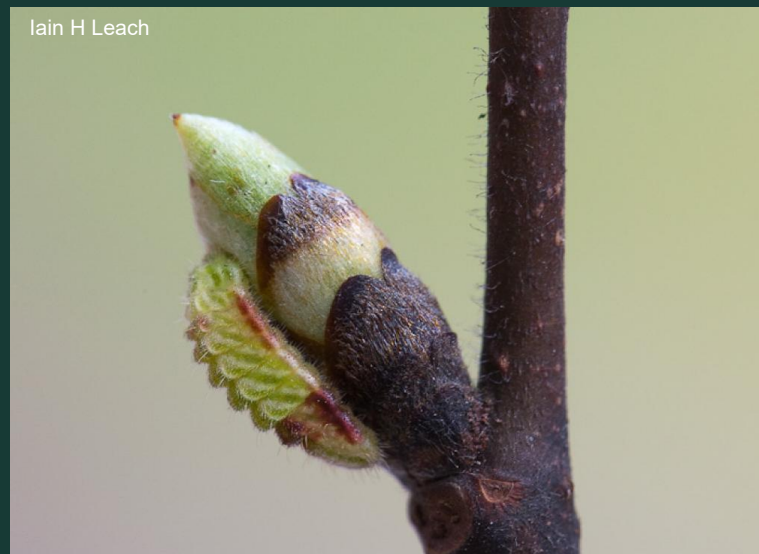
# White-letter Hairstreak: A butterfly with challenges

## From Butterfly Conservation SE England Regional Conservation Strategy (Priority Butterflies)

Regional Distribution Trend 1990-2014	-40%
Regional Population Trend 1990-2016	-95%***



- 2023
- 2005-2009



# White-letter Hairstreak: A butterfly with hope



Modest habitat requirements



Under-recording of elm & WLH



Tenacity of small colonies



Disease Resistant Elm

*Might we create continuous elm corridors, via disease resistant elm (DRE) planting, to reconnect surviving habitat and colonies?*



Butterfly  
Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment  
Kent & SE London





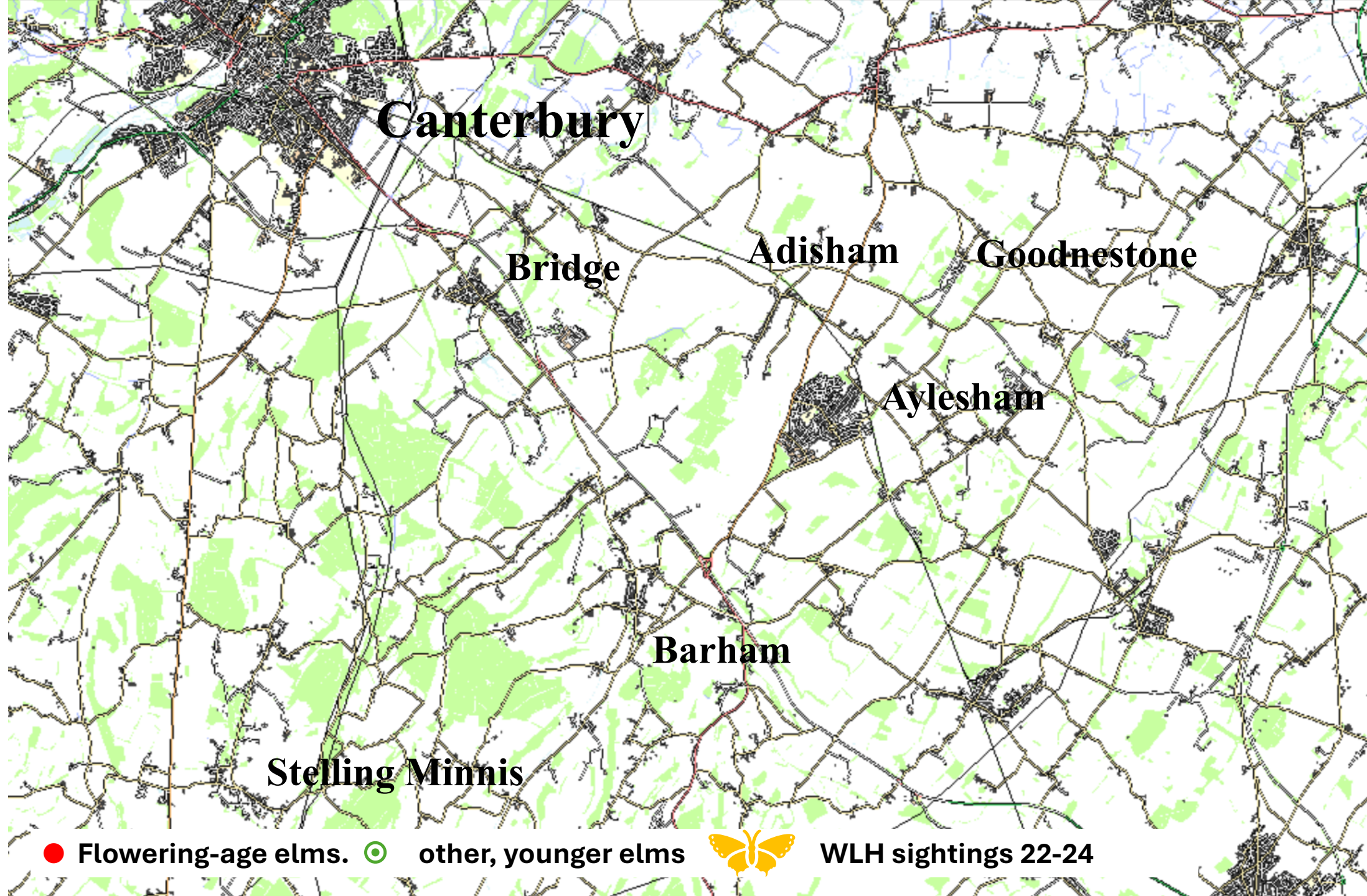


# Kent Plan Tree

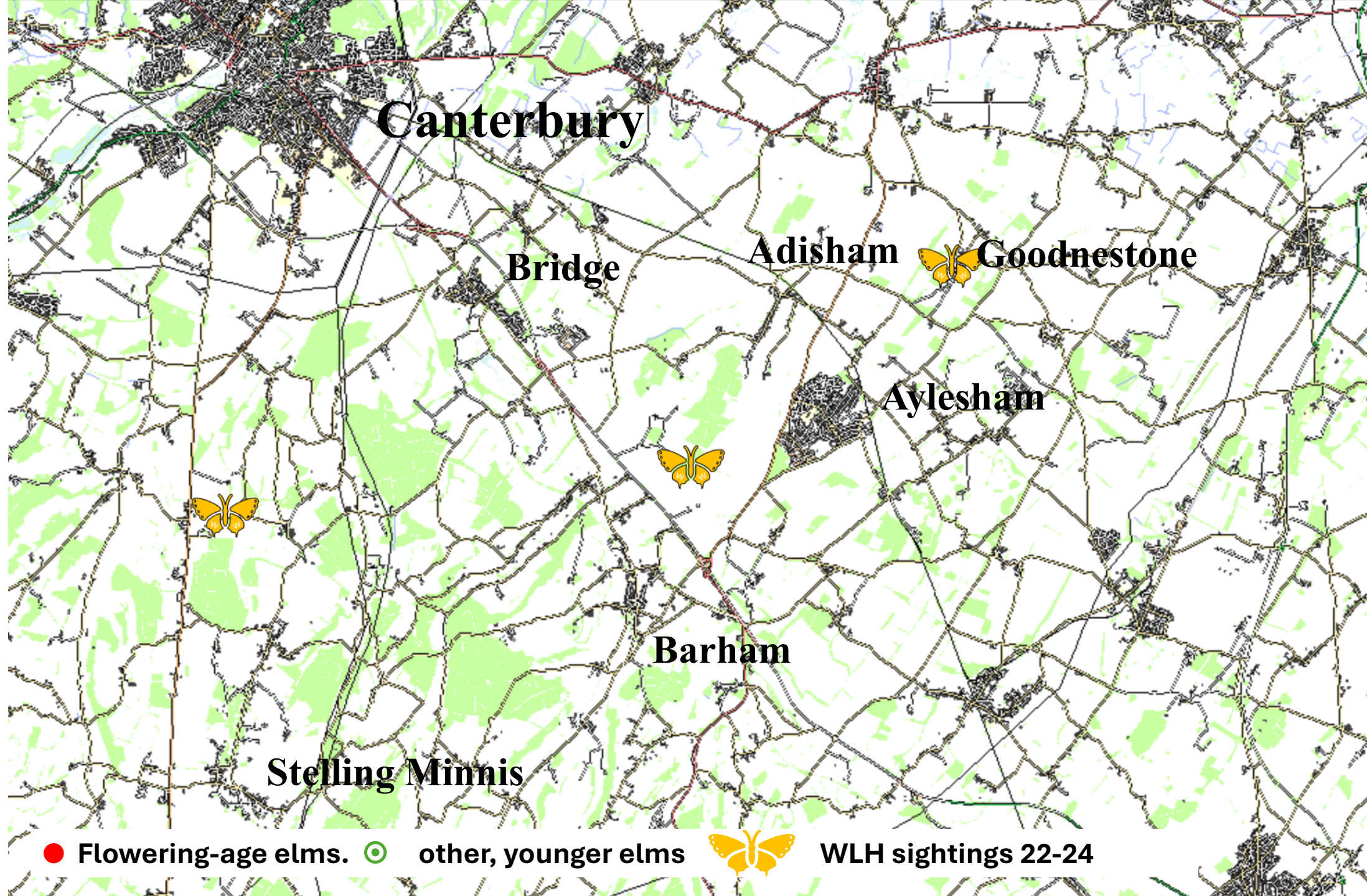
Working in partnership with **Medway Council**, **Kent local authorities**, other organisations and landowners to expand tree cover and biodiversity across Kent and Medway. Supporting priority species in the LNRs.

- ▶ **Focusing on Trees Outside of Woodland and Disease resistant elms.**
- ▶ **Supporting Local Projects**
  - ▶ Tree nurseries and seed gathering
  - ▶ Local authority grants
  - ▶ Community orchards
- ▶ **Funding through The Tree Council and Forestry Commission**
  - ▶ Trees Outside of Woodland Fund (2025-26)
  - ▶ Network Rail Community Tree Fund (2025-26)
  - ▶ Local Authority Treescape Fund (2021-25)

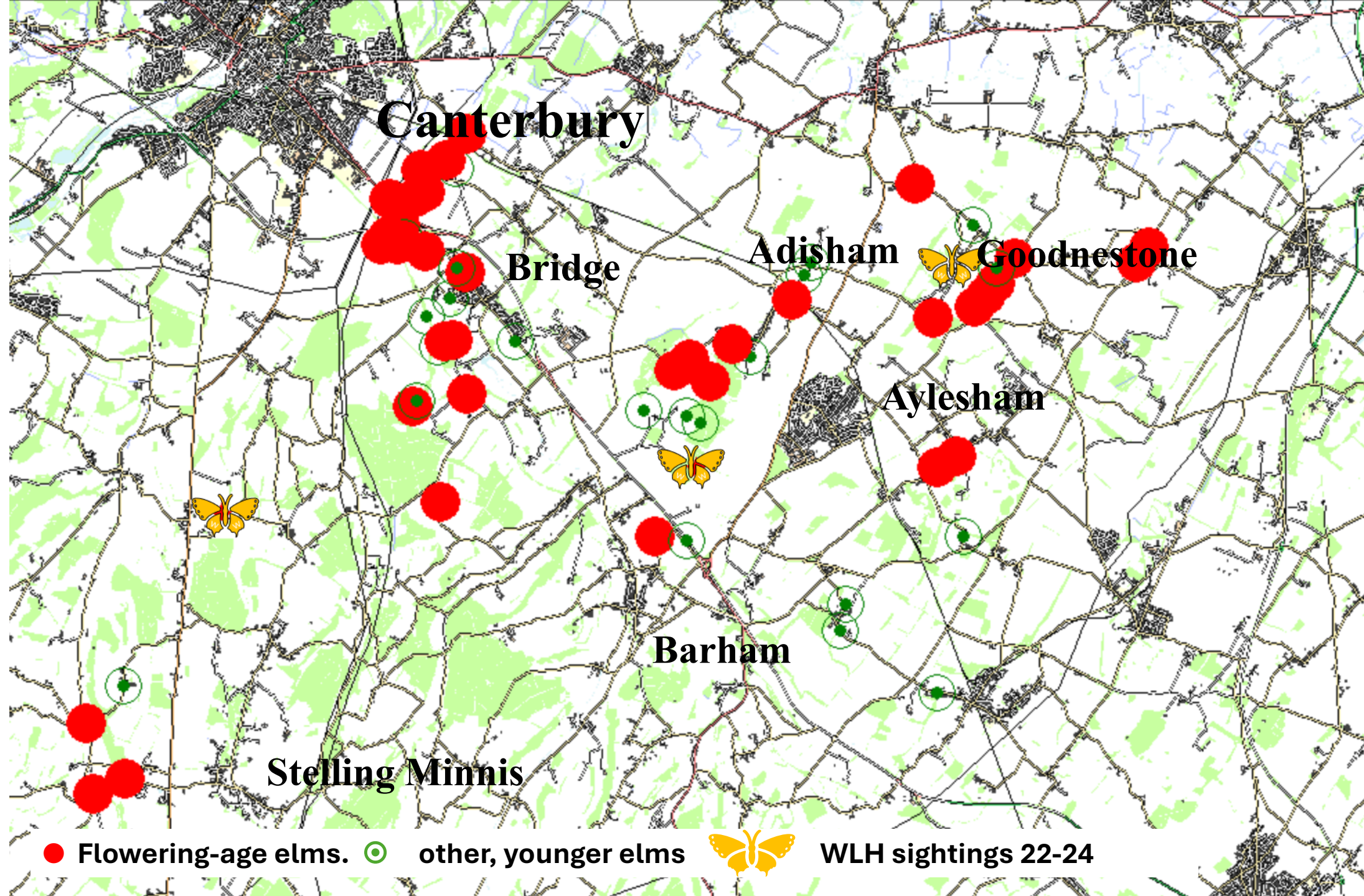




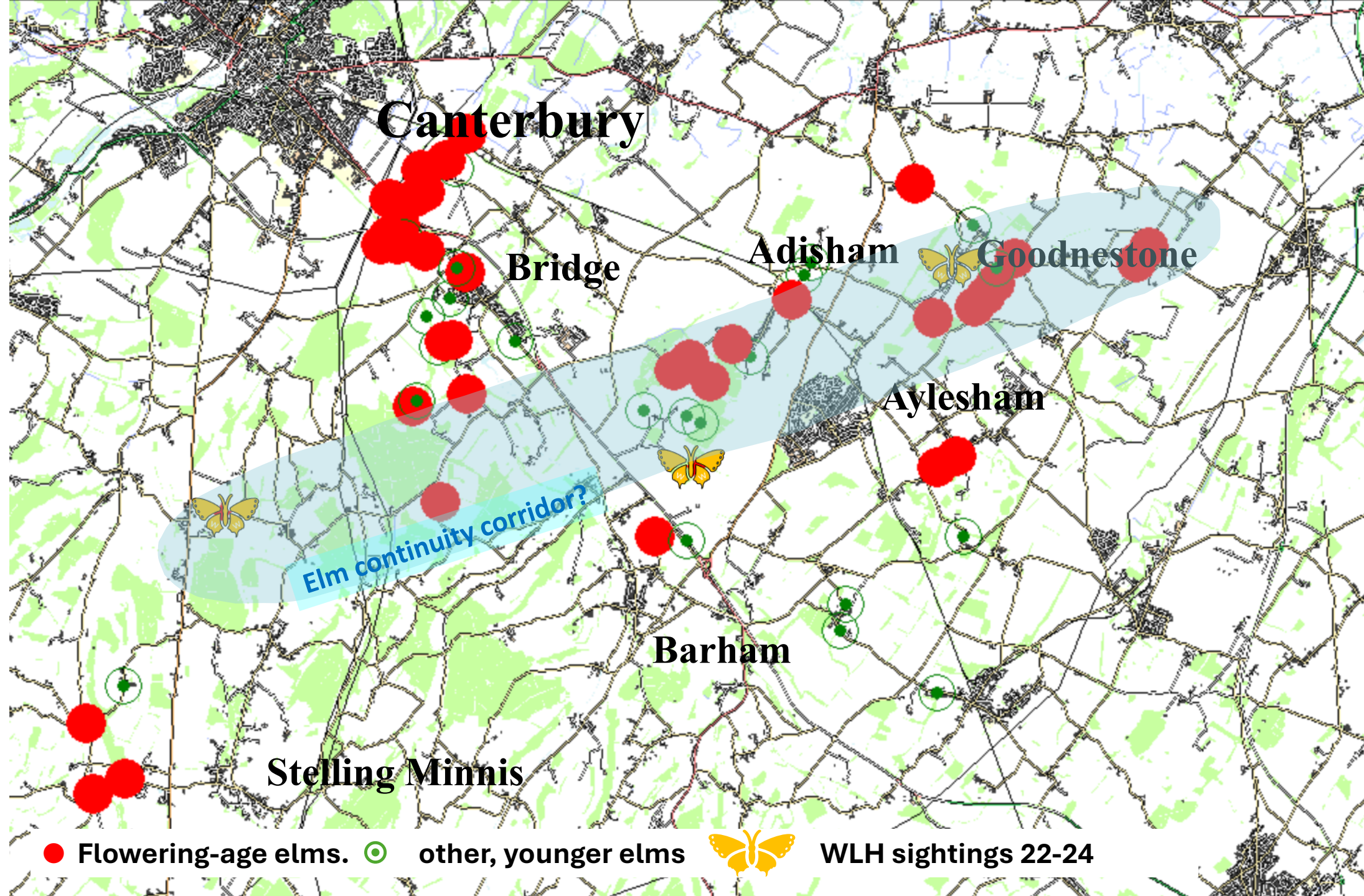














# THE EAST KENT DOWNS LANDSCAPE RECOVERY PROJECT

NATURAL  
ENGLAND



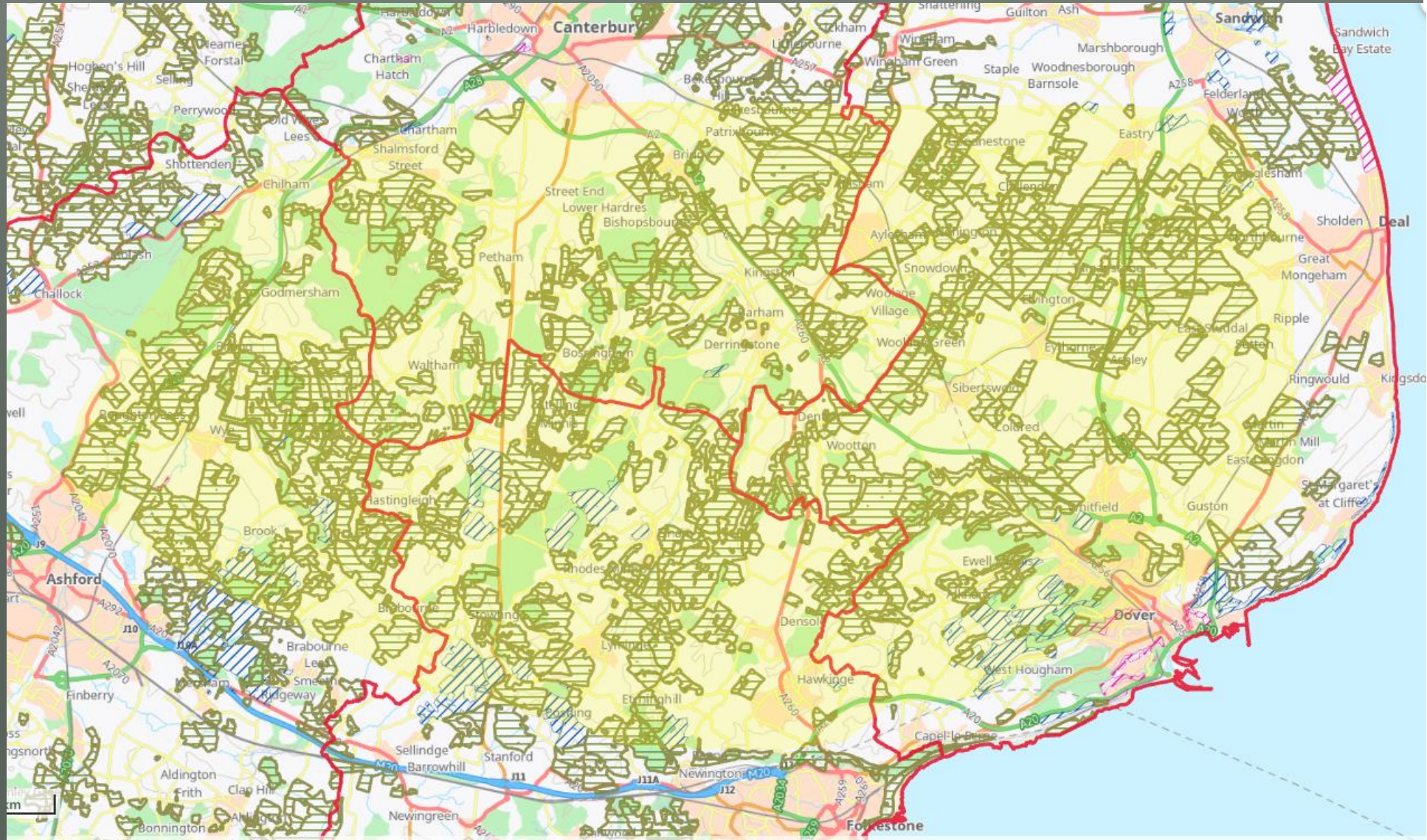
## Landscape scale nature recovery in action

A pioneering habitat restoration project based on long term partnership working with  
farms for over 25 years





# East Kent Downs Landscape Recovery Project



A Natural England-led project, working with 120 farms using agri environment, BNG and private funding to deliver nature recovery across East Kent

NATURAL  
ENGLAND



# THE EAST KENT DOWNS LANDSCAPE RECOVERY PROJECT

NATURAL  
ENGLAND

## Creating a new generation of wildflower grasslands

Re-building a network of wildflower grasslands and  
creating insect-rich landscapes to drive species  
recovery

## Producing food in harmony with wildlife friendly farming practices

Farms creating wildlife margins, nectar and seed-rich  
plots, and adopting regenerative farming practices to  
supplement the network of wildflower grasslands

## Working together to share knowledge and exchange ideas

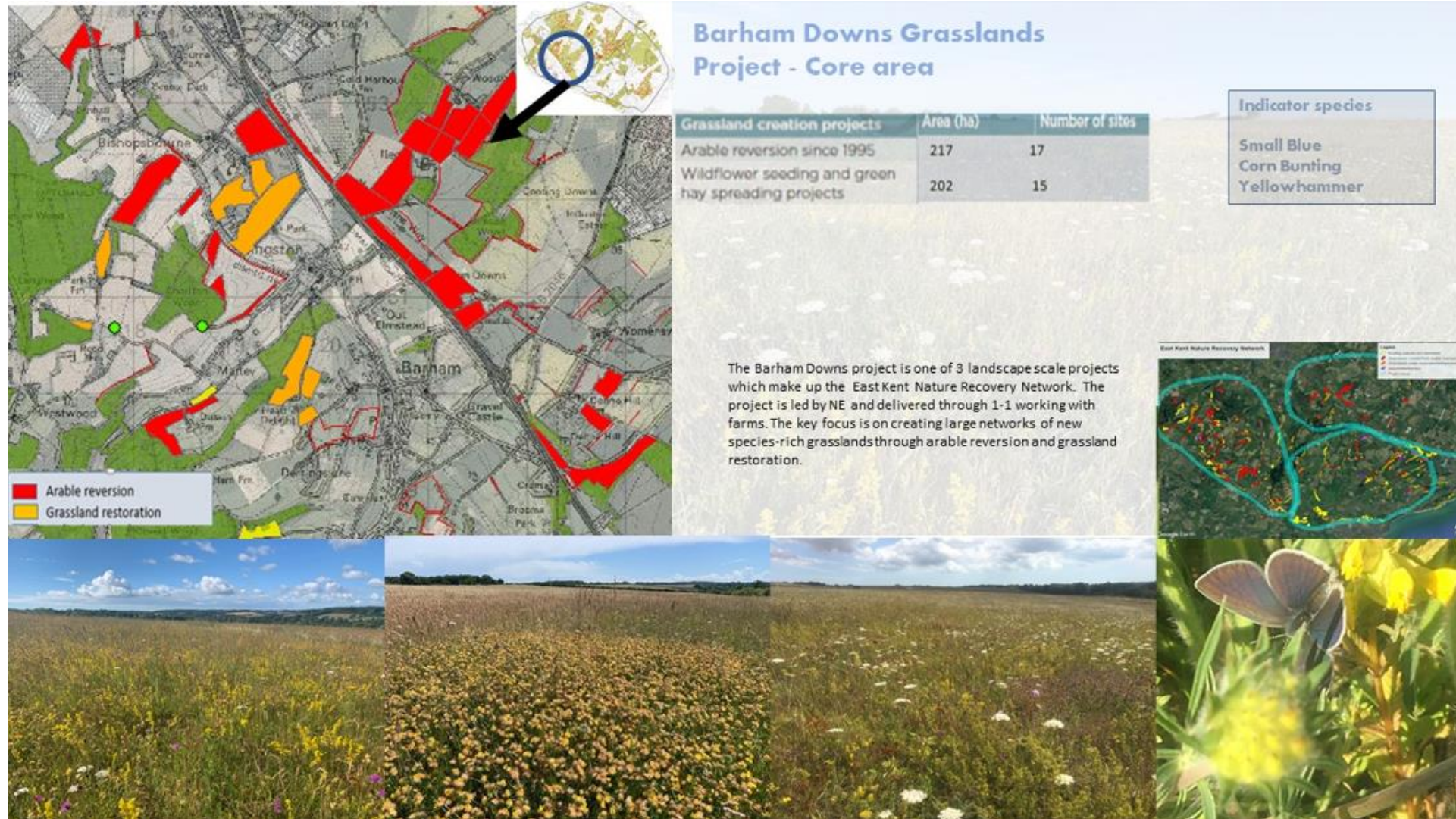
Holding regular farmer group walks, events and  
workshops to help share knowledge

## Public engagement

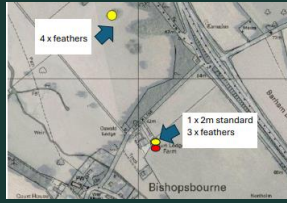
Farmers telling their story of producing food, hand in  
hand with making space for nature on their farms



# Barham Downs wildflower grassland creation program lies at heart of the WLH/elm project

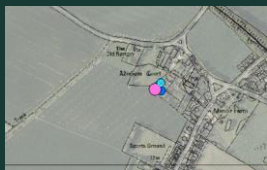






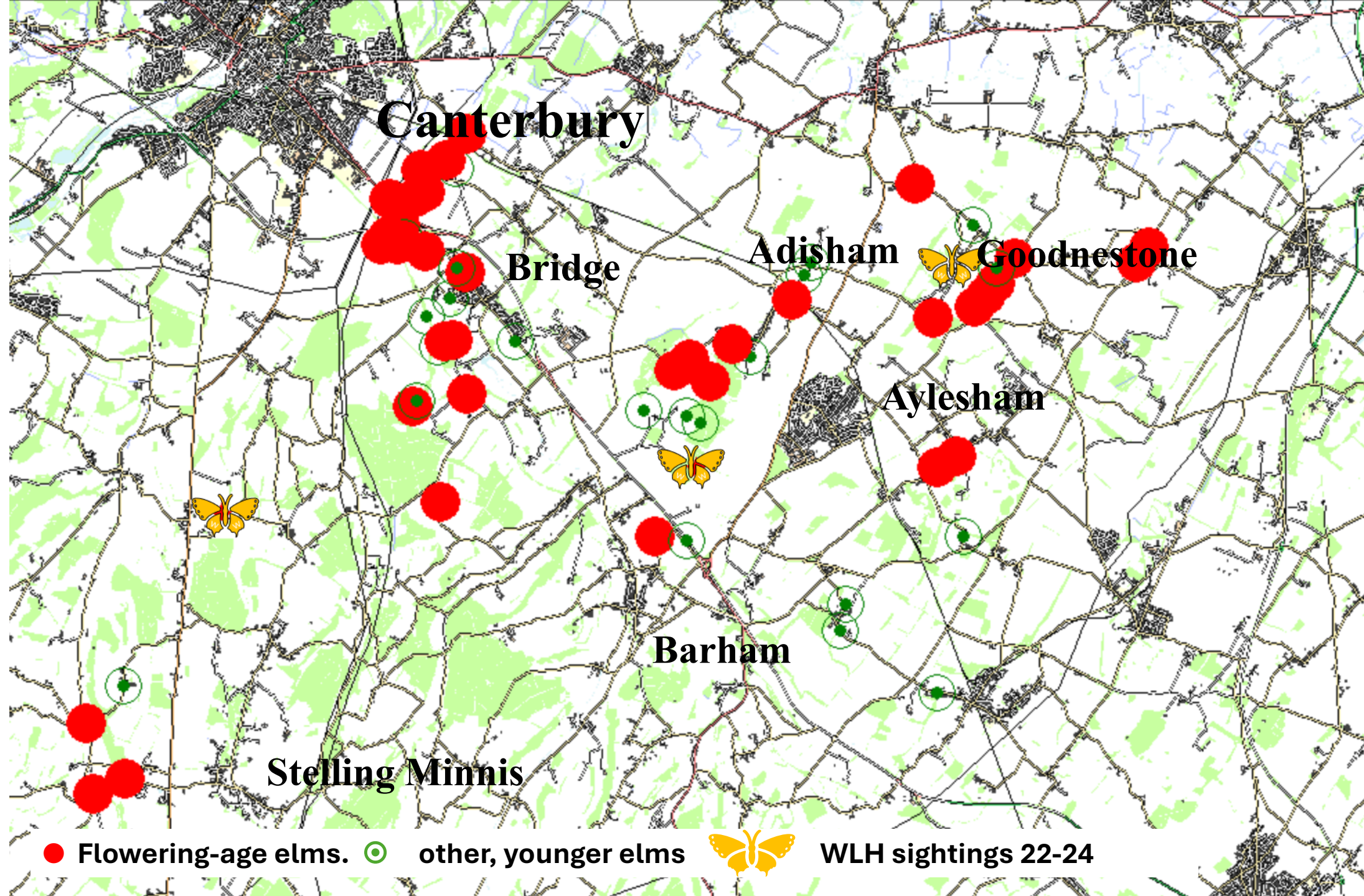
# Getting it done on the ground - How it worked

- NE adviser approaches 18 farms within Barham Downs farmer group – leveraging well-established relationships
- Evolution of planting plan: regular NE/BC review, tweaking as issues arose. 4 further farms approached when required
- On-site meetings with farmers to agree locations, numbers of trees
- Final planting plan agreed. NE adviser supports farms with KCC application forms
- NE adviser produces planting maps for farms liaising with KCC/BC
- Trees delivered to central farm. Distributed to farms by BC and NE adviser
- Farms plant trees
- NE adviser captures photo record

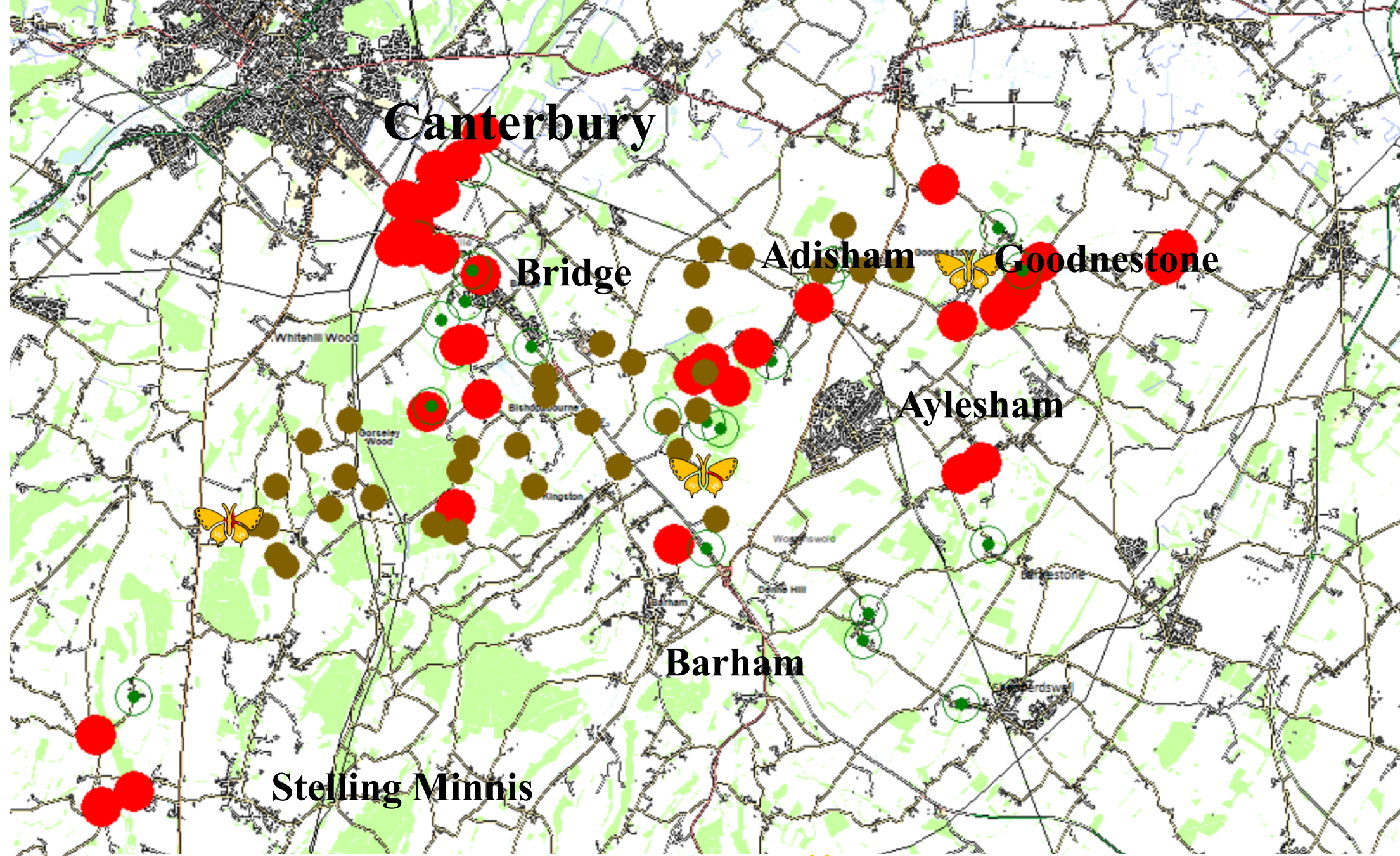


Farm	Feather	Standard
Bossington Farm	TR2321 5455 TR2349 5546 TR2097 5196 TR2331 5409	3 2 3 4
Hedger Court Farm	TR1463 5083 TR1475 5083 TR1501 5047 TR1509 5028 TR1576 5104 TR1750 5077 TR1766 5074 TR1766 5154 TR1785 5199 TR1866 5213 TR1883 5115 TR1905 5277 TR1899 5309	2 2 2 5 3 6 2 2 2 2 6 3 4
Adisham Court Farm	TR2120 5390 TR2131 5462 TR2150 5496 TR2197 5486 TR2260 5427	6 3 2 6 2
Adisham granary	TR2073 5252	3
Manor Farm	TR2299 5420	5
Mariners Farm	TR1963 5240	2
Woodlands Manor	TR2137 5313	3
Broxhall Farm	TR1565 5132	2
Chalk pit Farm	TR2030 5335	2
Goreley House	TR1646 5135	6
Sunnyside Farm	TR1601 5240	4
Uffington Court	TR2209 5147 TR2443 5471	3 2
Woodlands Forestry	TR2123 5249	2
Hearts Delight	tbc	2









● Flowering-age elms.



other, younger elms

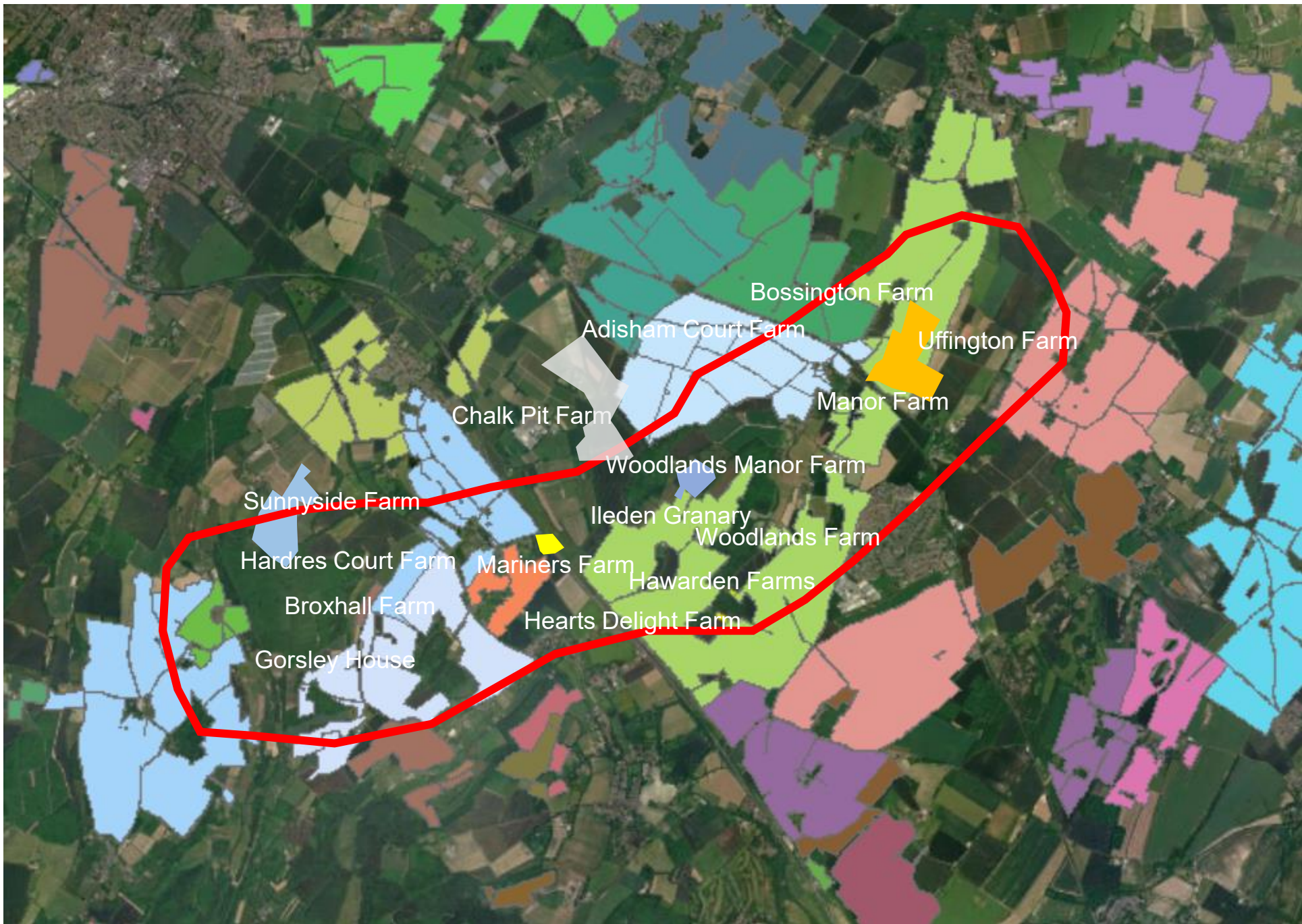


WLH sightings 22-24



Planting site











# Epilogue

Over to the WLH: can it take advantage & use its new corridor in the coming years, as the elms grow?

Elm survival better than expected, despite extreme summer 2025, thanks to landowners' efforts

WLH recording stimulated by the project: 2025 records in-verification, but anticipate confirmation of past under-recording.

More colonies than we thought, isolated nevertheless

Elms are also under-recorded.

Including varietal subtleties of larger specimens

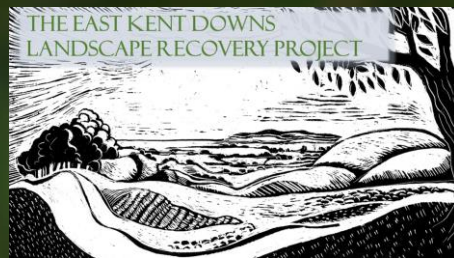






**Kent and Medway  
Local Nature  
Recovery Strategy**

Making space for the county's nature



**NATURAL  
ENGLAND**



**Butterfly  
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

# Thank you & Questions