

LGA Sustainability Roundtable: Climate Vulnerability in West Sussex

David Sale, Climate Change Policy &
Partnerships Manager
david.sale@westsussex.gov.uk



Context



- West Sussex County Council (WSCC) adopted its Climate Change Strategy in 2019 with two central ambitions around mitigation and adaptation
- Carbon neutral = clear targets, quantitative measures of progress, centralised working group, familiarity among officers and members
- Climate resilient ~ no coordinated vision, limited view of short- and long-term risks, little integration across teams

Carbon neutral
in our own
operations by
2030

Resilient to the
impacts of
climate change



Fire service warning with wildfires on the increase in West Sussex

Unprecedented extreme heatwave, July 2022

People

'Catastrophic wildlife decline' outlined in West Sussex

A catastrophic decline in wildlife in West Sussex - including otters and hedgehogs - was outlined at a 'Nature Recovery' meeting in Horsham this

Areas of East & West Sussex potentially underwater by 2030

24th April 2022

SUMMARY

Torrential rain causes floods across Sussex

Heavy rain and floods cause disruption in Sussex



Education

UK heatwave: West Sussex secondary school tells students and staff to work remotely on Monday and Tuesday

A West Sussex secondary school has told students and staff to work remotely on Monday (July 18) and Tuesday (19) due to extreme weather conditions.



S News > Sussex News > Weather

Sussex flooding expected and people told 'act now' as torrential rain and wind approaches

S News > Sussex News > West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Live as West Sussex crews tackle two fires in Fishbourne and Walberton

Fire crews have warned members of the public to stay away from both areas

SEVERE WEATHER LEADS TO INFLUX OF POTHOLE REPORTS IN WEST SUSSEX

News Home More from Sussex News

Saturday, January 14th, 2023 6:00am



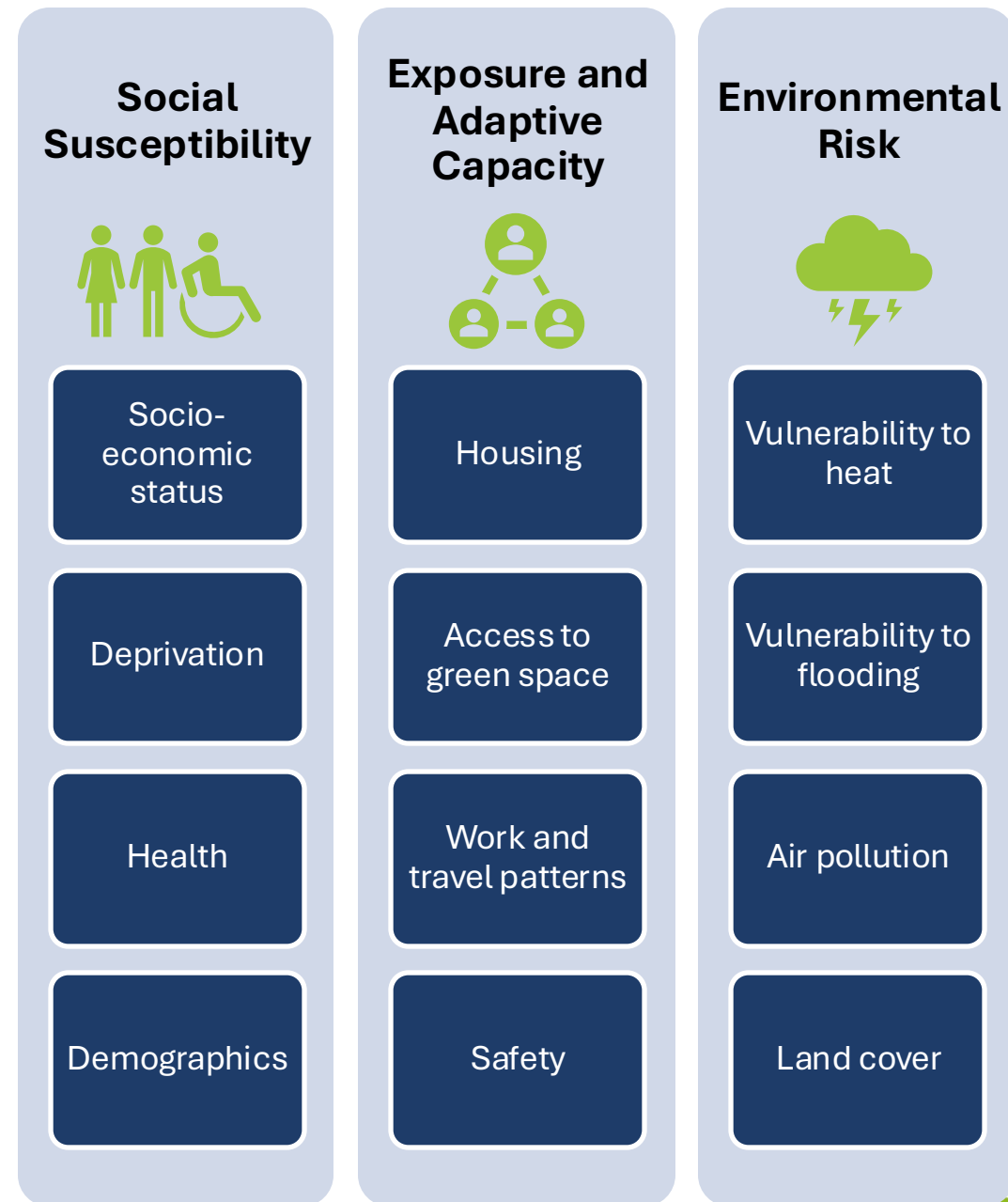
Challenges to Resilience Planning

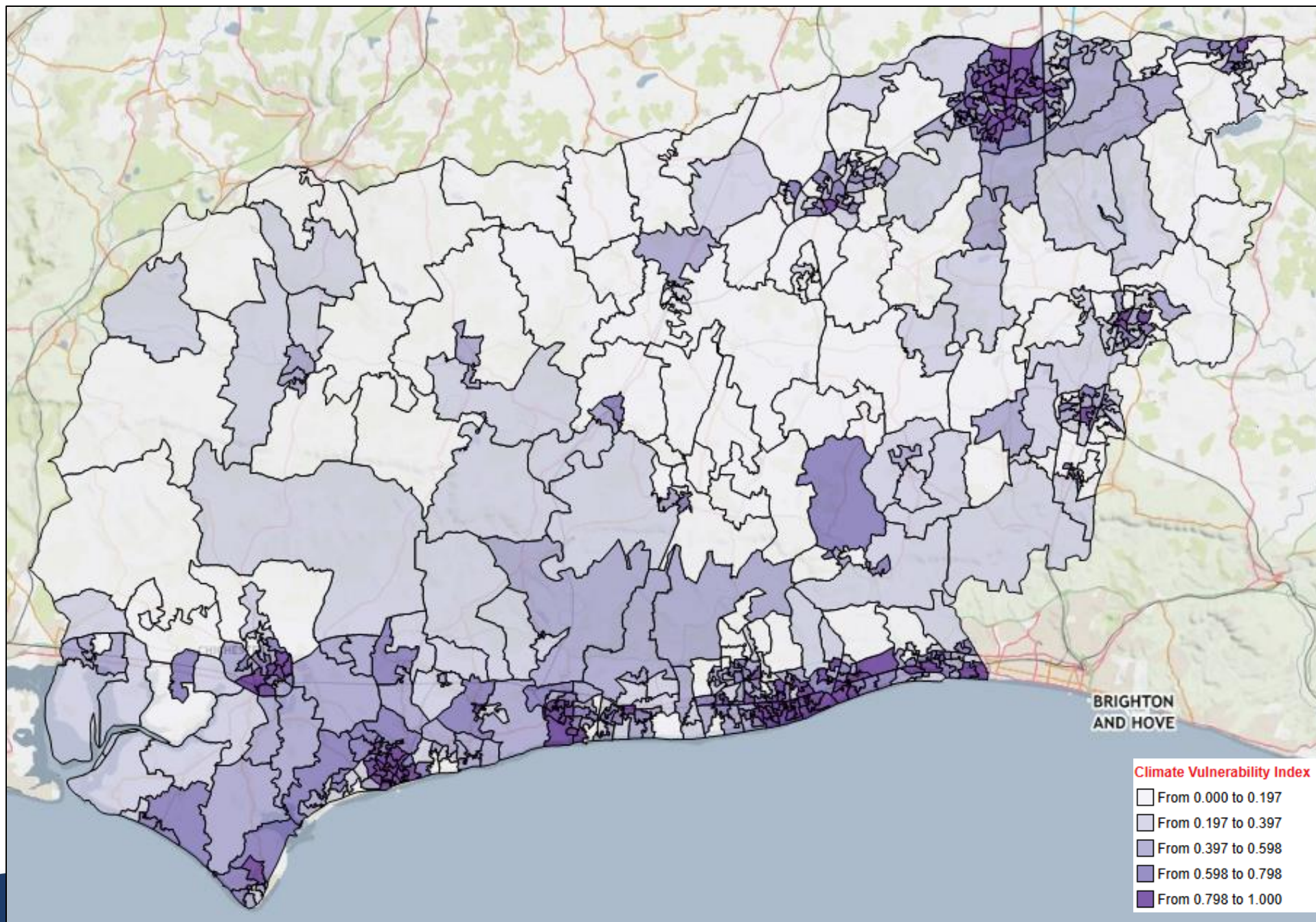


- Anecdotally, we know that climate change is already affecting WSCC assets, service delivery and the communities we serve
- There is a need to identify ways to adapt to a changing climate and increase the resilience of our organisation/communities
- But, complexity arises due to (1) the interrelating and cascading effects of climate change on WSCC and the community, (2) lack of clear understanding of future risks and threats posed to business continuity, and (3) the need to work horizontally with multiple stakeholders to seek agreement and collaborate on delivery

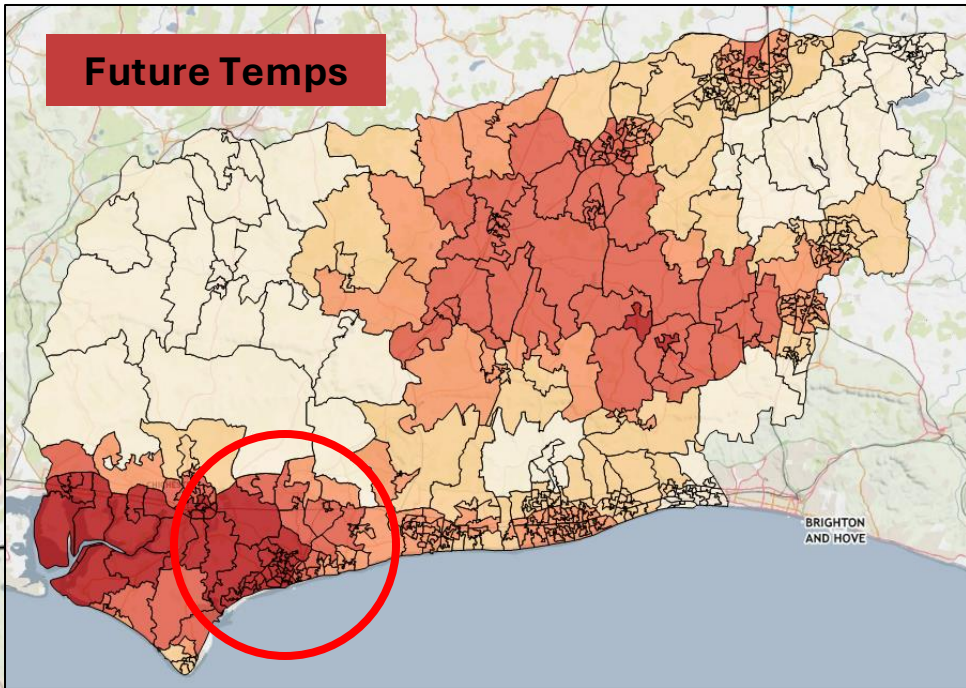
Mapping Vulnerability

- First step in developing an approach to resilience planning was making sure we were clear about the risks posed to the county council's services and residents
- Given the nature of the county council's responsibilities, it was also important to highlight the links between climate change risk and other societal risk factors
- Climate vulnerability is a product of both social vulnerabilities and environmental risks – who are those affected 'first and worst' by climate change?

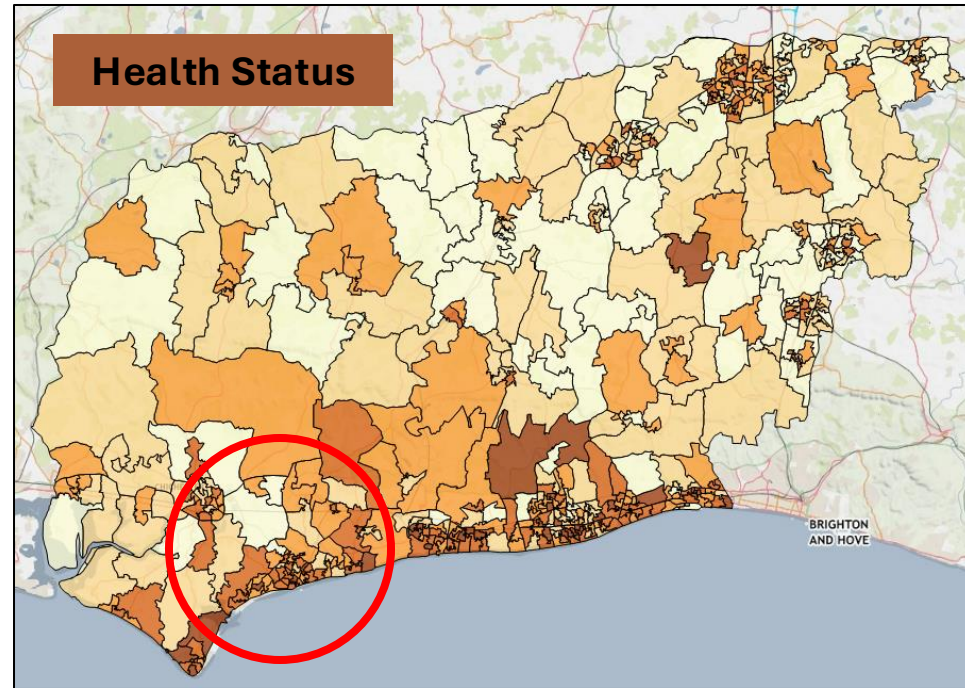




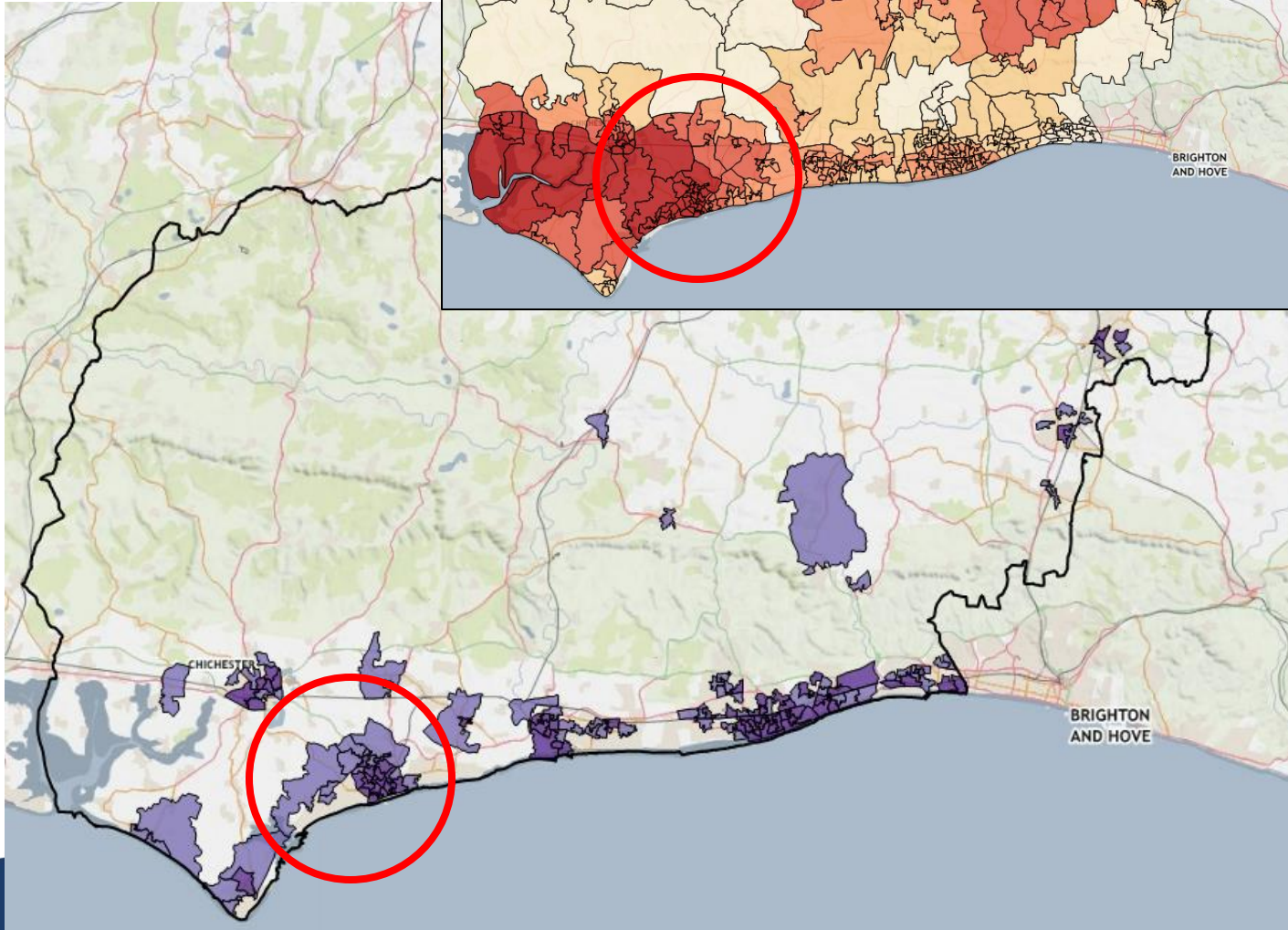
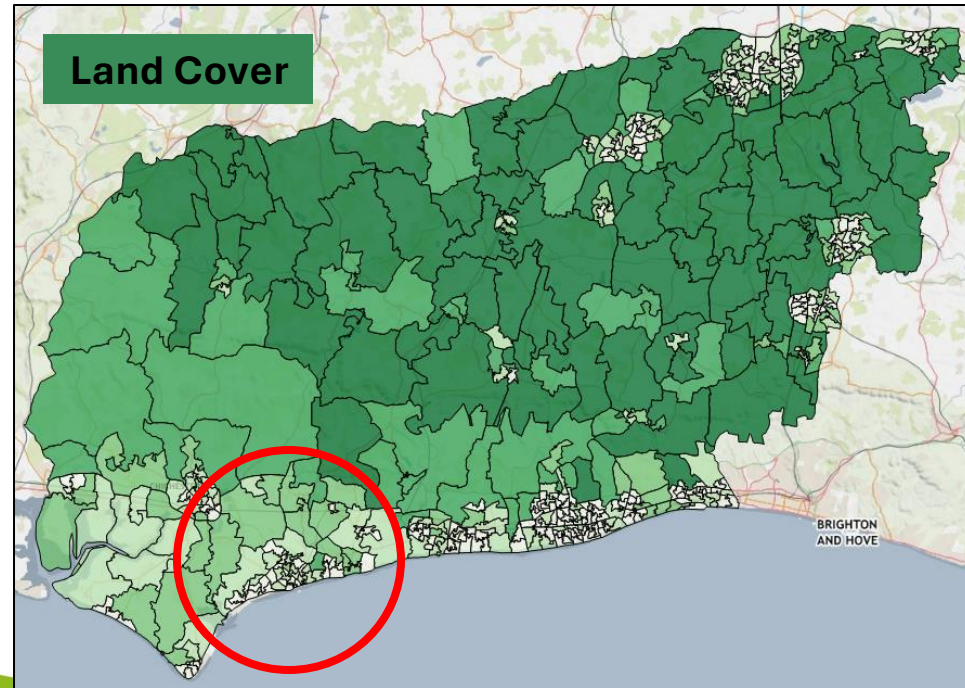
Future Temps



Health Status

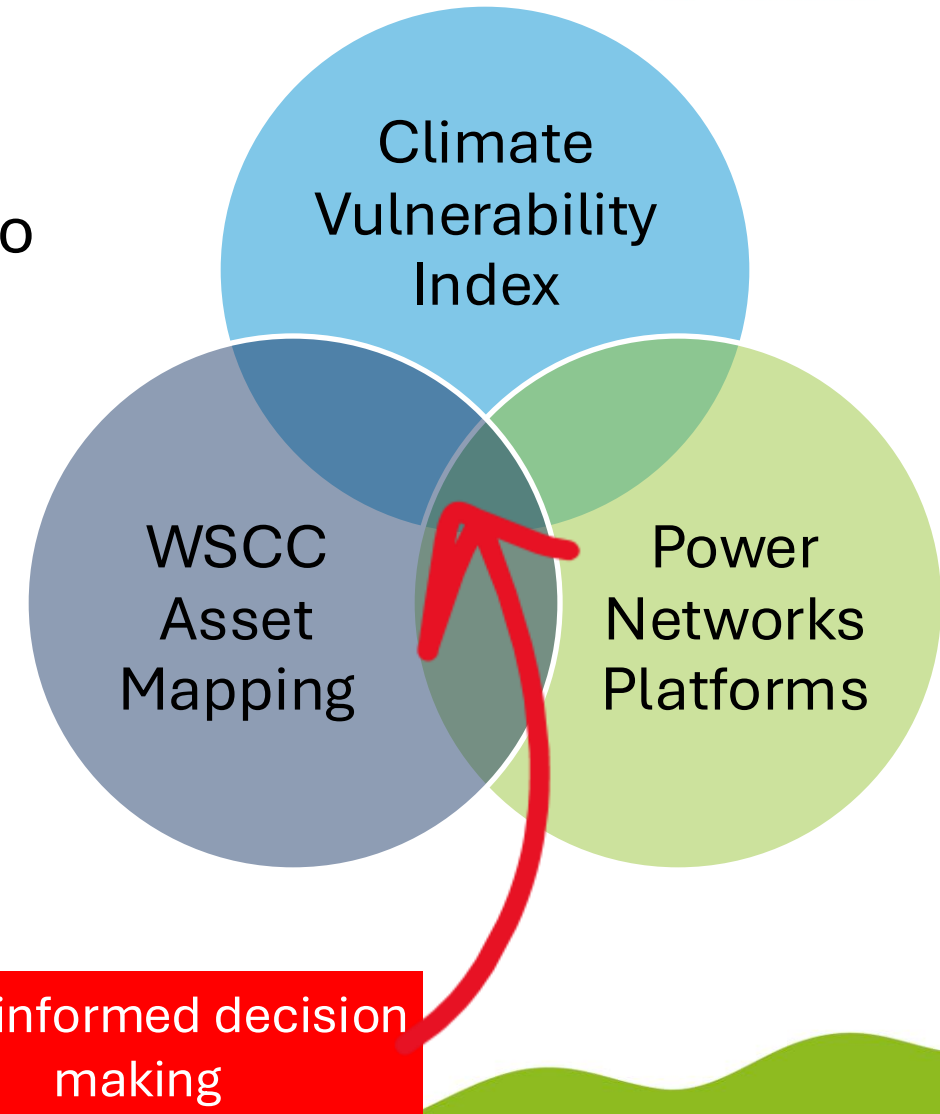


Land Cover



Use Cases

- Facilitated engagement with all services – even those traditionally disengaged with climate action planning – by linking climate change risk to business continuity and service delivery
- Supported applications for funding and participation in national initiatives, such as WSCC’s participation in the EA’s RAPA pilot
- Provided evidence-base for more targeted planning and community support, such as solar suitability and critical asset vulnerability mapping



Lessons Learned

- Buy-in from executive/political leadership ensures that services are available to have discussions around climate risks
- While ownership over emissions reductions can be amorphous for some services, discussions around climate related impacts and vulnerability can make climate change relevant to everyone – libraries, adult social care, children’s services, etc.
- Data visualisation and centralising tell a story and can make information relatable



Next Steps



- Currently working with the University of Brighton to update the CVI
 - Data still up to date?
 - User interface improvements?
 - Weighting risk factors?
- Identifying further use cases and applications for the CVI to be embedded in organisational decision making
- Working with collaborators, such as district and borough colleagues, to integrate CVI into their processes
- Questions?