

# Community Pindone Rabbit Baiting

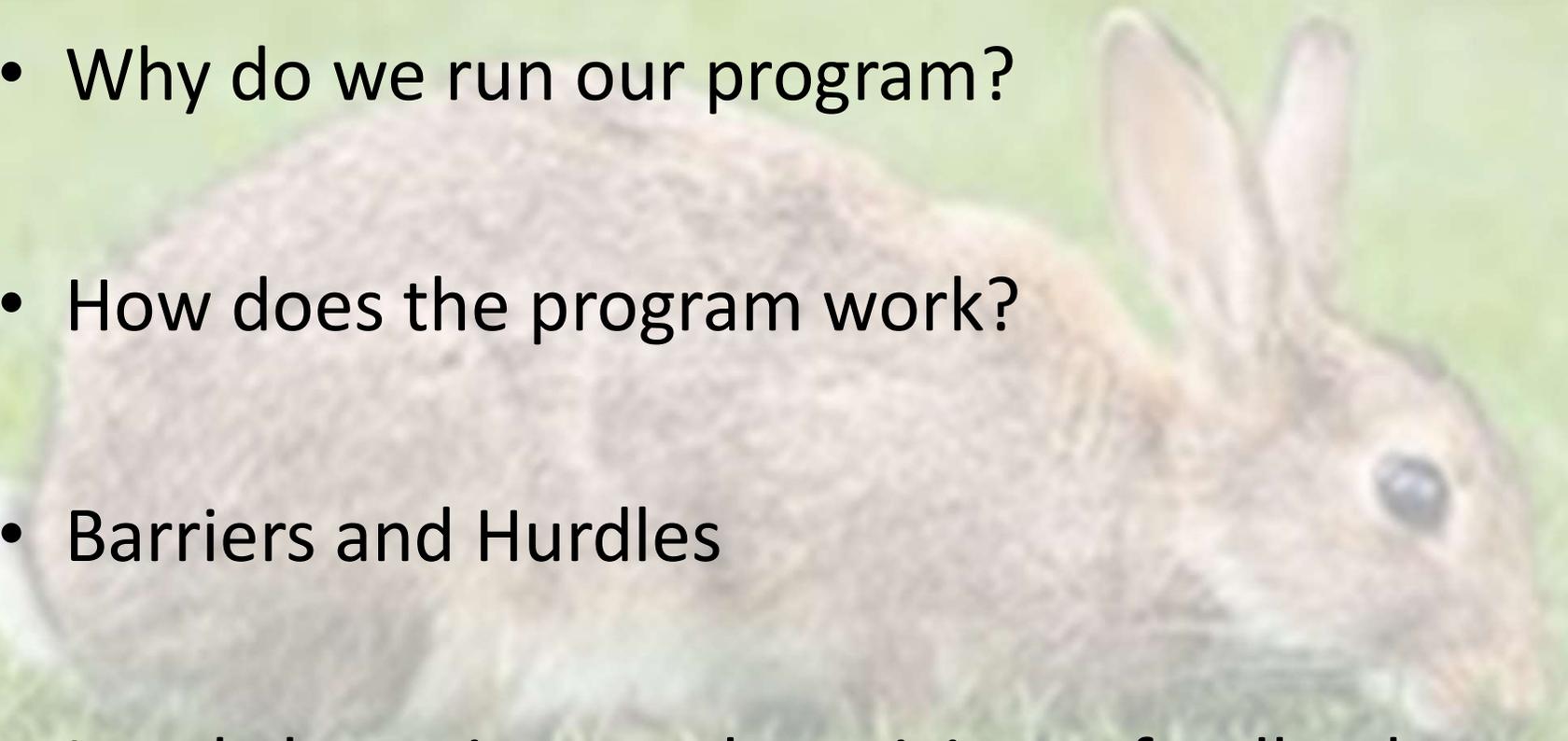


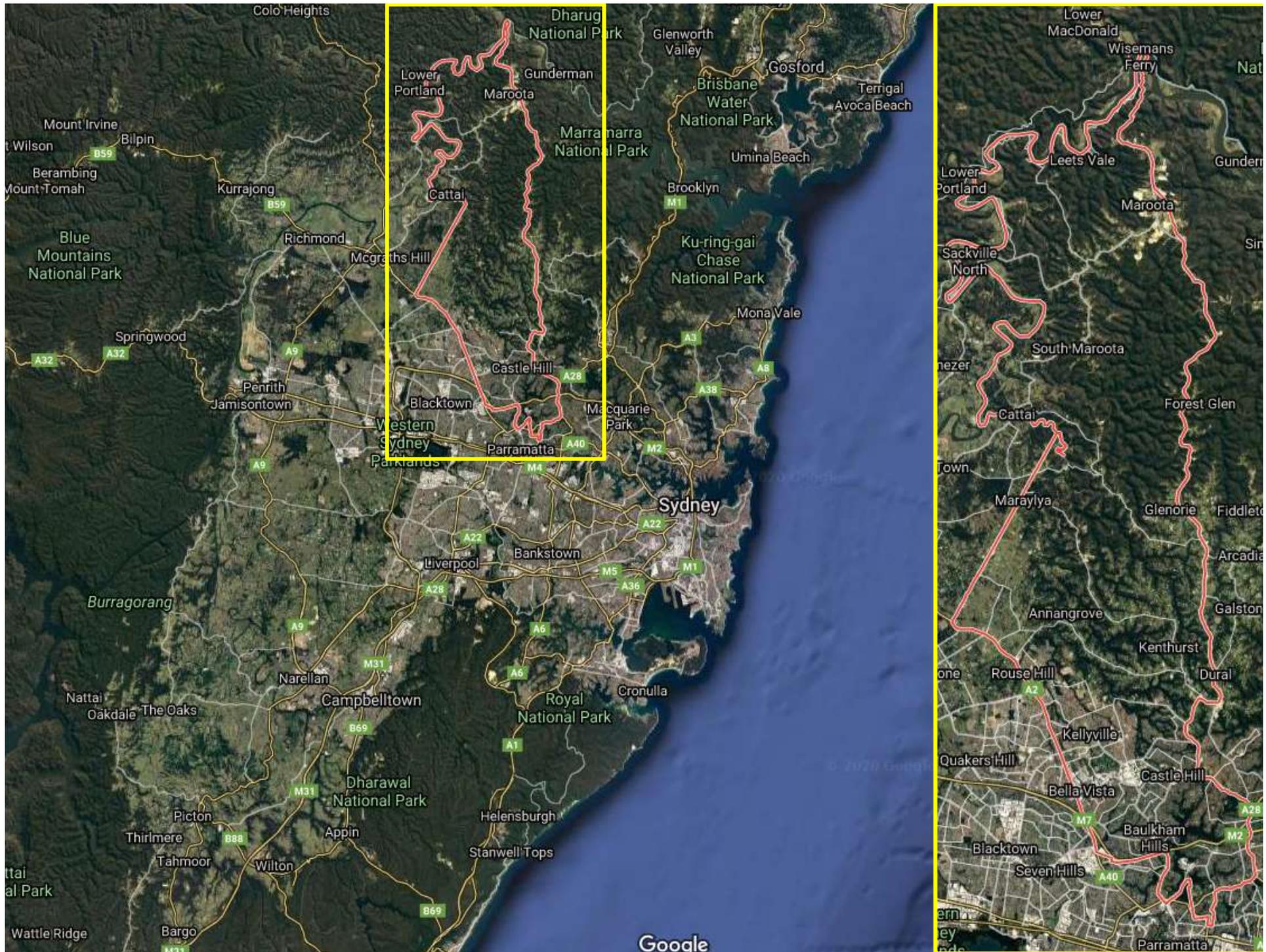
The Hills Shire Council  
Greater Sydney Local Land Services

**POLL:** How many bunnies can one female rabbit produce in a single breeding season?

# Contents

- Why do we run our program?
- How does the program work?
- Barriers and Hurdles
- Local champions and participant feedback



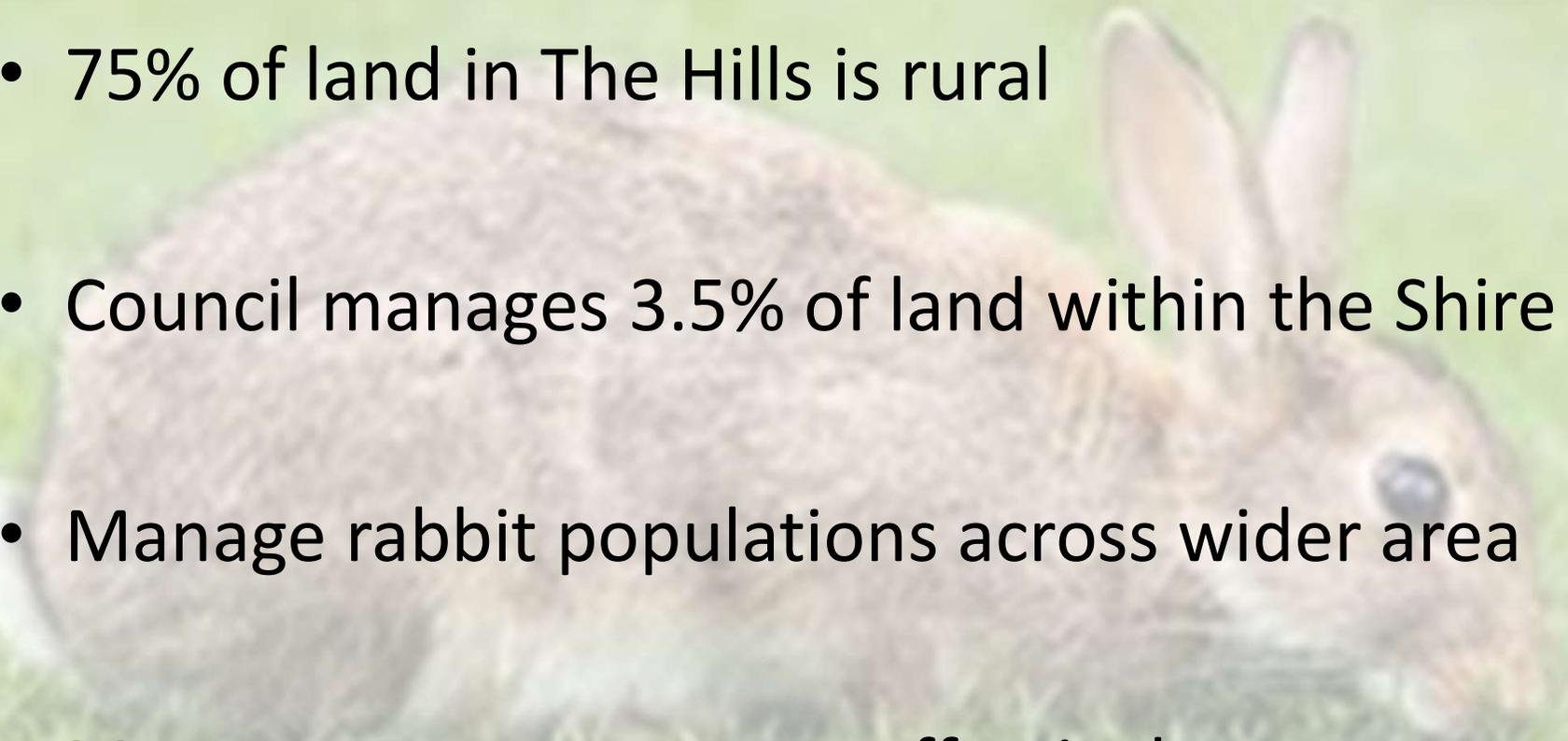


# History

- 2010 – Council began the community program
- Pre 2010, Council poisoned rabbits in Council reserves
- Identified as an opportunity in the Council's Environmental Management Plan
- Engages rural land owners in active environmental management

# Context

- 75% of land in The Hills is rural
- Council manages 3.5% of land within the Shire
- Manage rabbit populations across wider area
- Manage pests more cost effectively



**POLL : Does your Council currently run any pest management programs?**

A photograph of a brown rabbit sitting on a patch of green grass. The rabbit is facing right and has its ears upright. The text "The Hills Shire Council Rabbit baiting program" is overlaid in the center of the image.

**The Hills Shire Council  
Rabbit baiting program**

# Three key components

- **TRAINING**

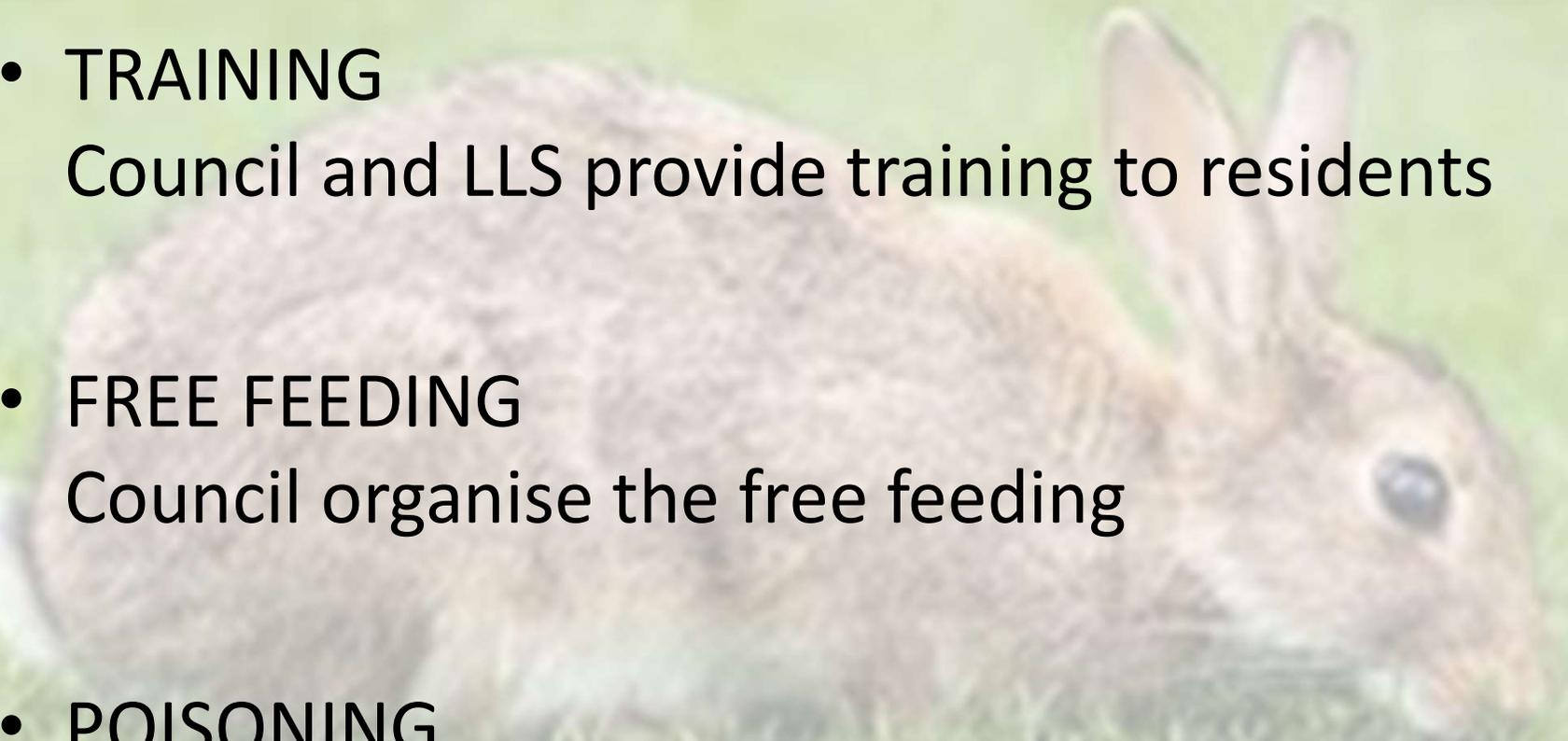
Council and LLS provide training to residents

- **FREE FEEDING**

Council organise the free feeding

- **POISONING**

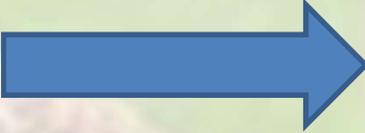
LLS provide the poisoned carrots



# Training

- Council provide a hall and equipment
- LLS conduct the Vertebrate pest training
- Council covers the cost of the training (\$50pp)
- Mail out to neighbours and expiring cards

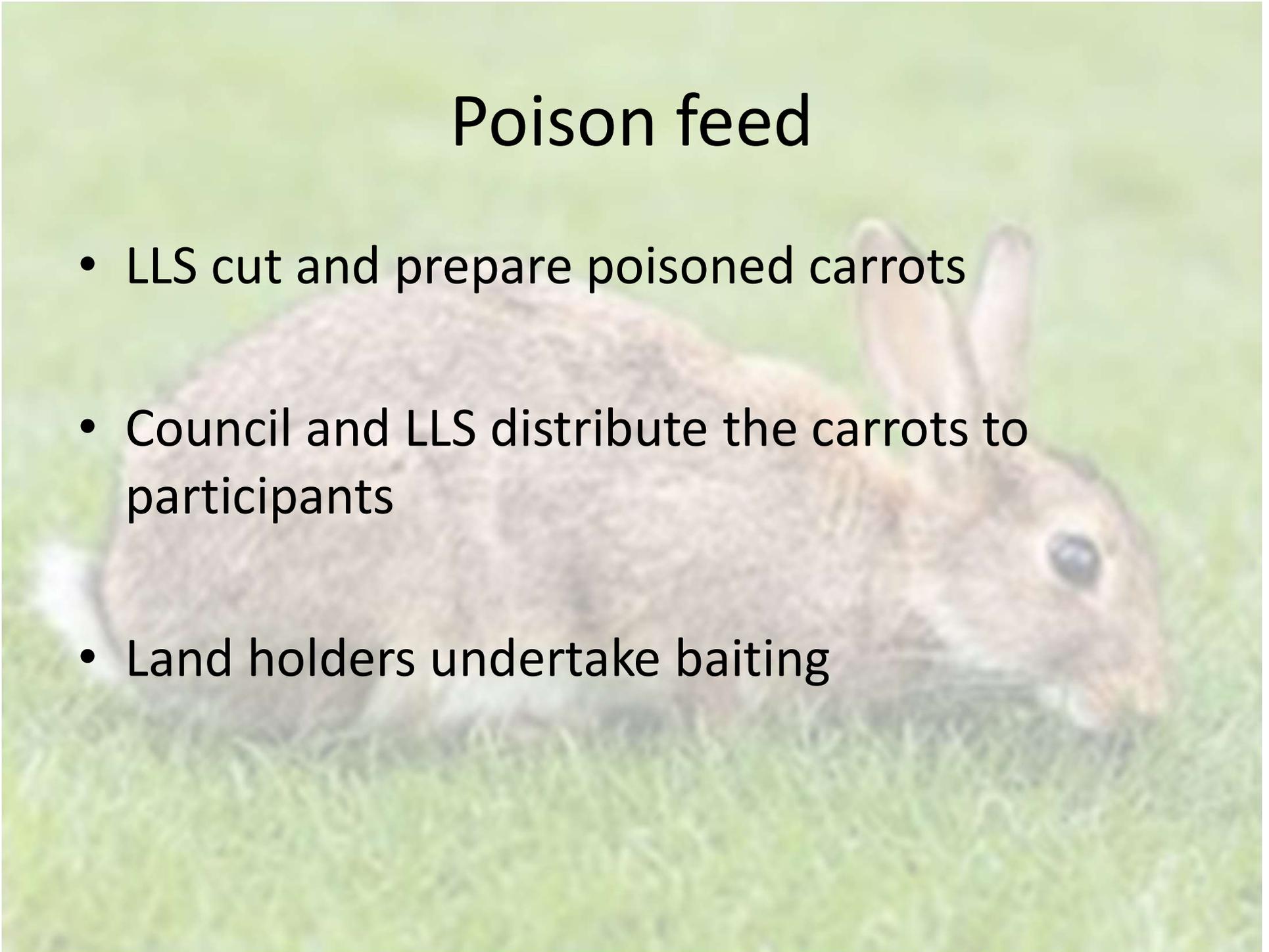
# Free feed

- Council borrows the LLS carrot cutter 
- Purchase bulk carrots
- Cut and distribute carrots
- Land holders undertake the free feed (x3)  
Monday, Wednesday and Friday



# Poison feed

- LLS cut and prepare poisoned carrots
- Council and LLS distribute the carrots to participants
- Land holders undertake baiting



# Participation and costs

- 125 residents with current qualifications
- Two programs per year (April and November)
  - Average of 41 properties per baiting program
- 20 residents trained each year
  - refresher and new
- Budget of \$8,800 per year
  - \$110 / property / program

# Baiting on public land

- Use our bush regeneration staff
- Public notification (signage, advertising, mail-out)
- Requires overtime and disruption to normal work schedule
- 10 site visits during program, planning, signage etc.
- \$1,400 per site plus \$480 for all notifications

# What do we spend our money on?

- Training
- Buying carrots for free feed
- Purchasing poisoned carrots from LLS
- Staff wages and overtime





PUNISHING RABBIT  
RABBIT



# TELL US

- What barriers and opportunities would you expect with establishing a program like this?

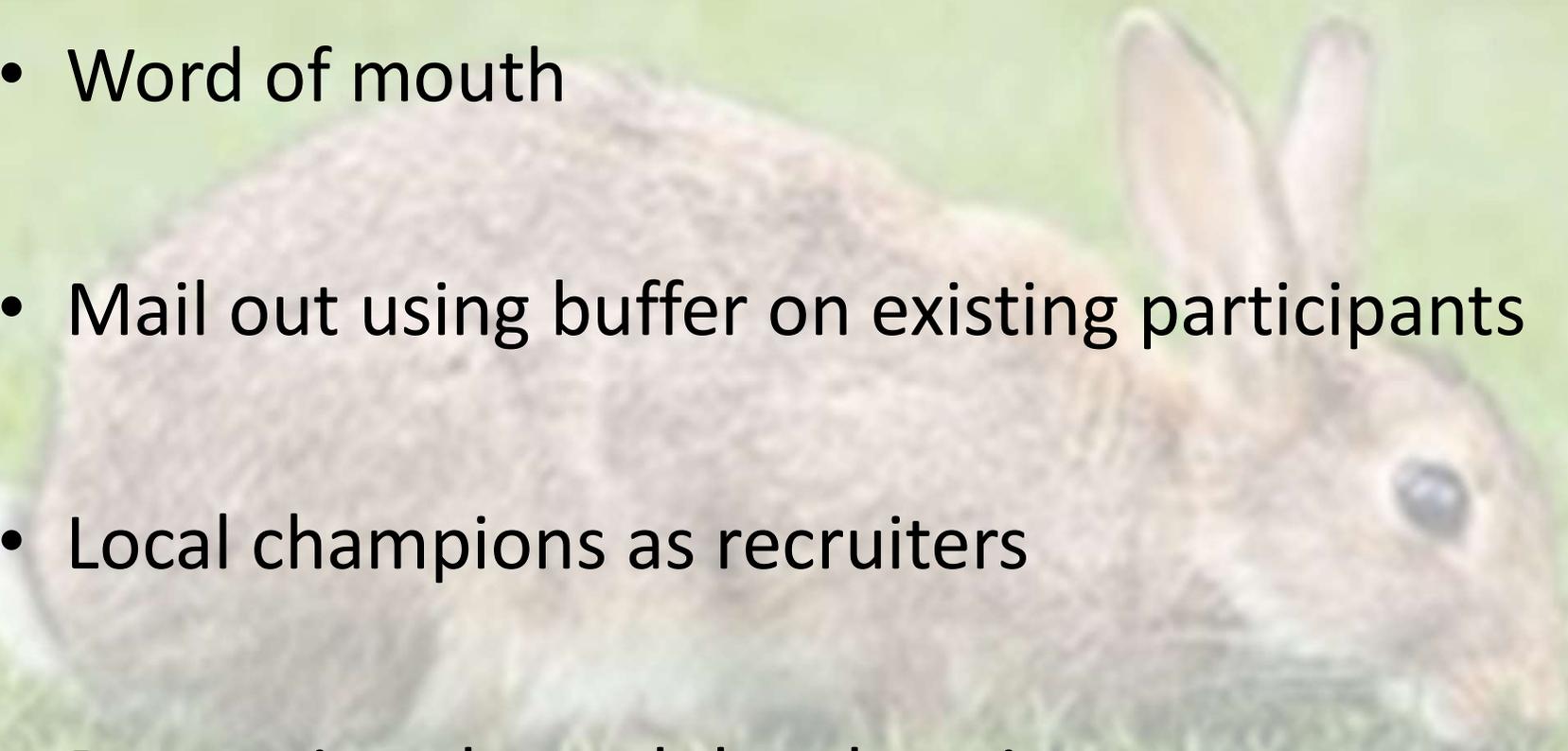
Use the chat box

A photograph of a brown rabbit sitting on a field of green grass. The rabbit is facing right, with its ears perked up. The text "Barriers and Hurdles" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Barriers and Hurdles

# Recruitment

- Word of mouth
- Mail out using buffer on existing participants
- Local champions as recruiters
- Promotion through local environment centre



# Barriers and hurdles

Perceived difficulty of using poison safely

- LLS training
- High level of support during first program
- Set up mock baiting station at delivery site
- Reminder emails throughout program
- Free feeds are a practice run with little risk

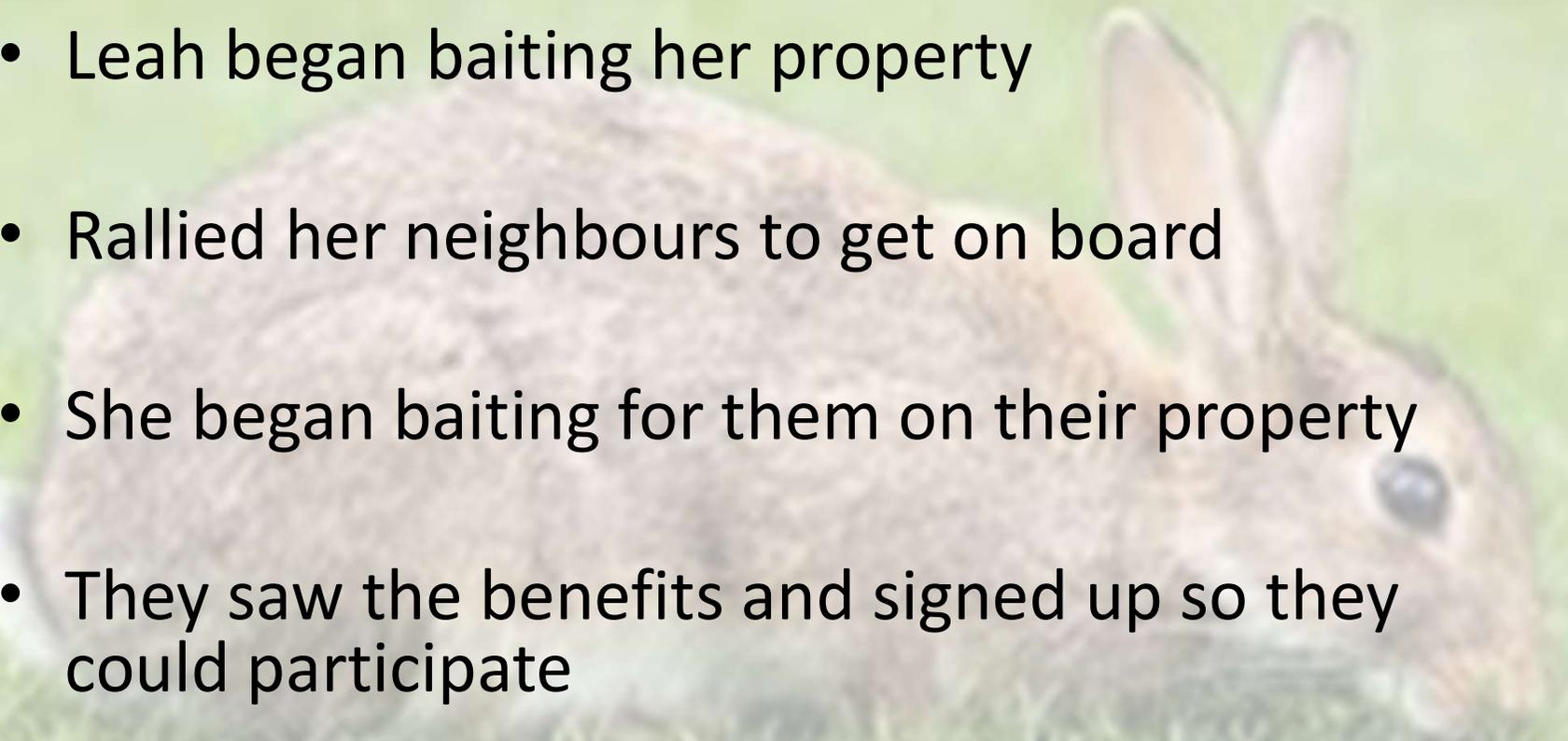
# Barriers and hurdles

- Property suitability (fences, neighbours)
  - Check mapping and photos of property
  - Not entire property has to be secure
  - Most neighbours will support the program



# Local Champions!

- Leah began baiting her property
- Rallied her neighbours to get on board
- She began baiting for them on their property
- They saw the benefits and signed up so they could participate
- Leah is still the driving force within her street

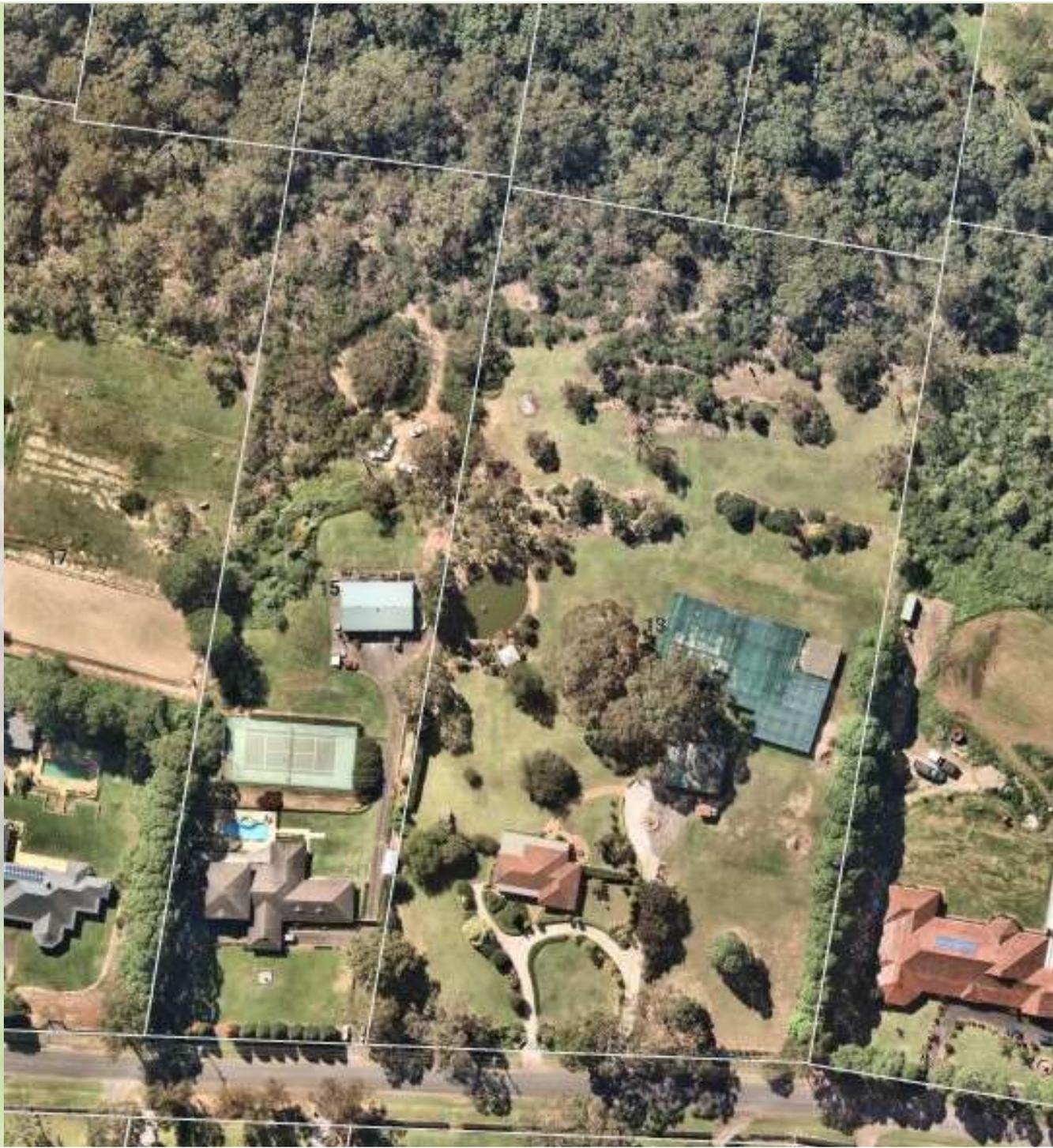


## What our participants say

*We really appreciate that The Hills Shire Council has the Pindone Rabbit Baiting program.*

*Otherwise our property wouldn't look as green and our garden would be barren because of the plague of rabbits we used to have. It's helped us over the years as we were a wholesale nursery and grew many variety of plants which were on weedmat out in the open. Please continue doing this program.*

**James K. from Annangrove**





**Burrows**



**Droppings**



**Furrows**

# What our participants say

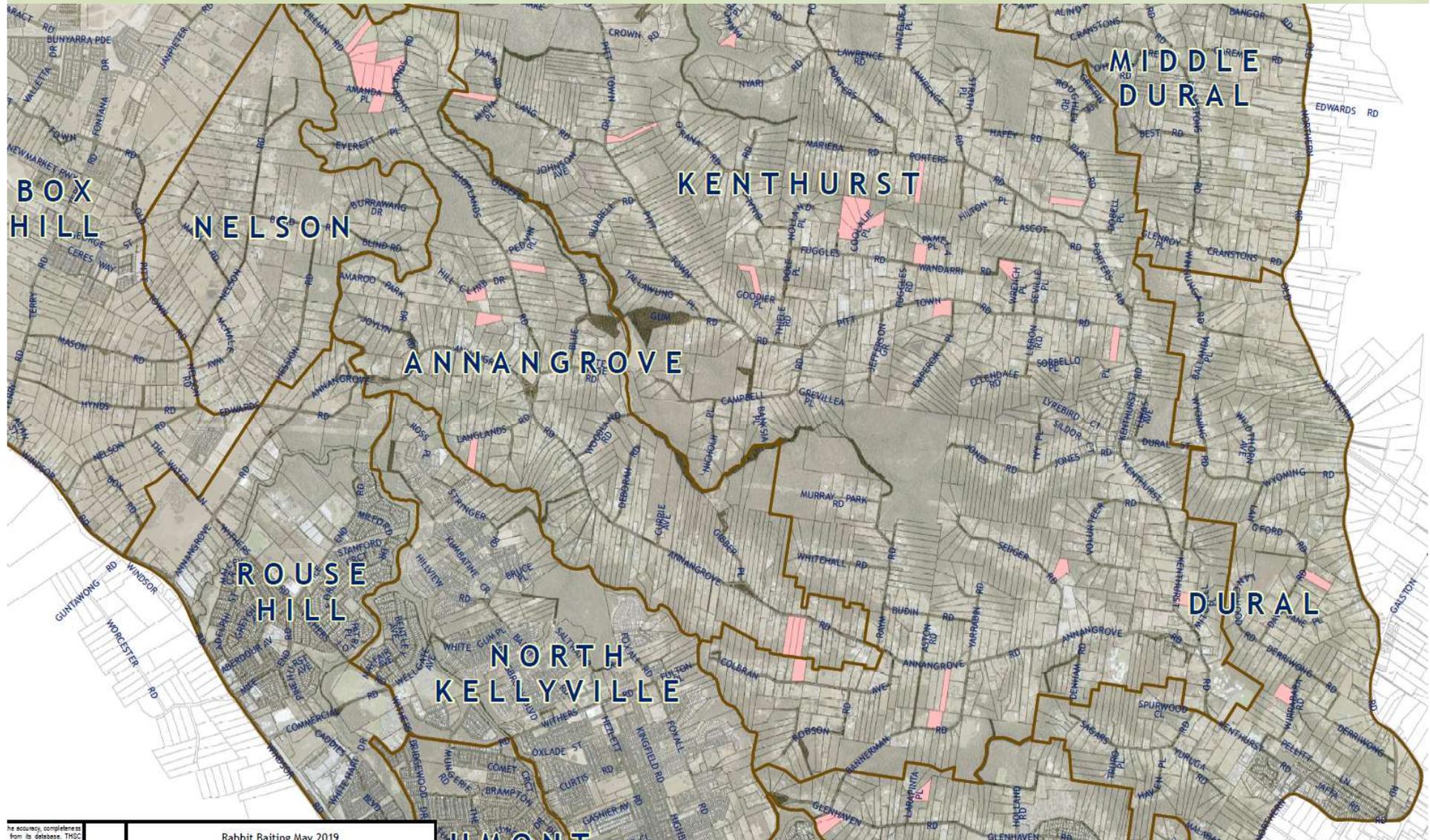
*In 2016 we purchased a property which was very overgrown, had fences in disrepair and backed onto bush. The novelty of watching a dozen rabbits running through the property each day quickly wore off when we discovered that every attempt to establish gardens and plant grass were eaten overnight. We commenced participating in the Rabbit Baiting program with The Hills Shire Council in 2017.*

*The practical tasks required for setting up the furrows with the free feeds and then distributing the Pindone is simple and does not take much time. We needed to be a little innovative as we were very conscious of the wildlife who also visited and fed on our property. This includes a beautiful family of wallabies. We secured pool fencing to cover each furrow, which prevented them accessing the carrots. Every morning the furrows were empty of any trace of the carrots.*

*By participating in this program twice a year, it has effectively reduced the number of rabbits not only on our property but also on neighbouring properties. A very, very successful program which we have greatly appreciated being part of.*

*Donna – Resident of Kenthurst*

# Clusters of properties



Day 3 of Free feed – 07:51



Day 3 of Free feed – 14:21



Day 3 of Free feed – 16:21



# Day 1 of poison feed – 18:08

