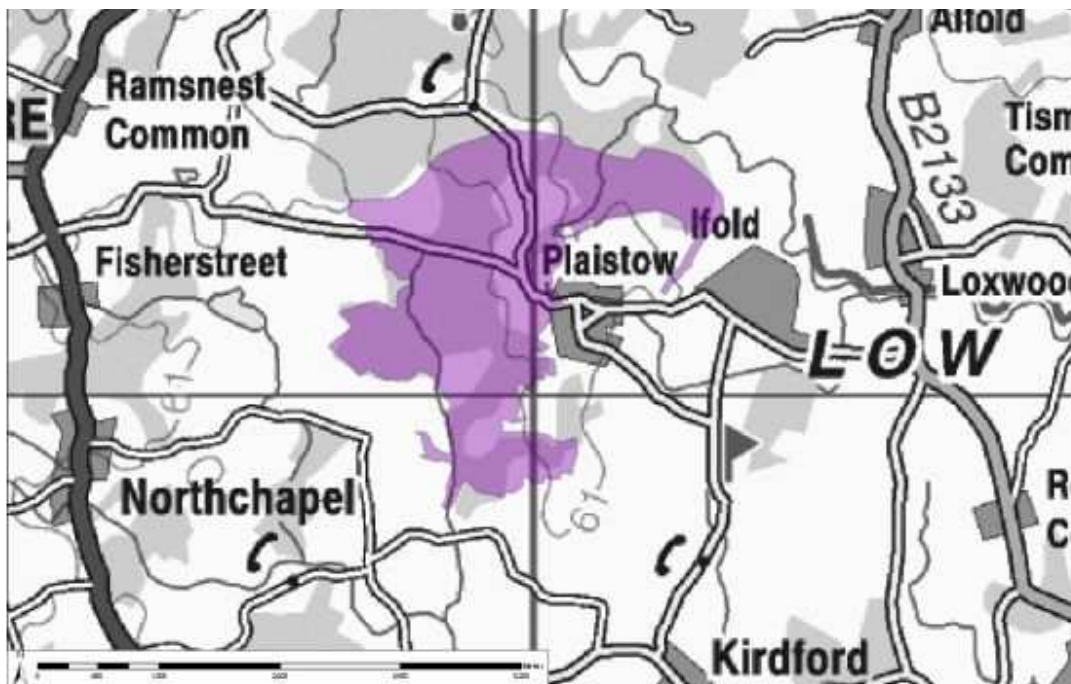


Chiddingfold Complex Biodiversity Opportunity Area

Joint Character Area Low Weald

Geology Chiddingfold Complex Biodiversity Opportunity Area has a solid geology mosaic of Weald clay formation sandstone and mudstone, interspersed with Paludina limestone.



The Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) are the regional priority areas of opportunity for restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats. They are a spatial representation of BAP targets and are areas of opportunity, not constraint. The BOAs are the property of the South East England Biodiversity Forum www.sebiodiversity.org.uk. Contains Ordnance Survey data Crown copyright and database right 2010

Chiddingfold Complex has been recognised as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) as it represents a priority area for the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets. This is one of 75 such areas across Sussex. The BOA covers approximately 731 hectares.

This area represents one of the four core areas of the West Weald Landscape Project. The aims of the project are reflected in the choice of boundary for this area. The core of the area contains the Chiddingfold Forest SSSI but the area is extended to include adjacent wooded and agricultural landscapes, and streams. The project aims to enhance the areas around the SSSI particularly for specific bird, bat and butterfly species. This area extends north in to Surrey.

BAP Habitat

Lowland meadows

Wood-pasture and parkland

Woodland

BAP Species 84 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Species	Habitat Requirements
Slow-worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i>	Open habitats, gardens, heathland, cliff, mixed deciduous woodland, structural variation, hedgerows
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Newly planted conifers or open heath, mixed deciduous woodland
Pearl-bordered Fritillary <i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>	Woodland, violets in sheltered locations, woodland clearings with some scrub or Bracken
Common Toad <i>Bufo bufo</i>	Scrub, rough grassland, fens, reedbed and wet woodland, dense ground vegetation or litter, ponds, large water bodies, hedgerows
Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Heathland, moorland, open woodland, recently felled conifer plantations, mosaic of bare ground, low vegetation, scrub and trees
Hawfinch <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Woodland, good supplies of fruit, seeds and keys, drinking pools
Small Heath <i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	Dry grassland, heathlands, short turf, parks and gardens
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Woodland, scrub, marshes, heathland, reedbed
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Open countryside, scrubby areas, woodland edges, hedgerows, insect-rich grassland, seed-rich areas
Wood White <i>Lepridea sinapis</i>	
Hazel Dormouse <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	Woodland, overgrown hedgerows, Honeysuckle, Bramble, Hazel and Ash, well-structured woodland with a well-developed understorey and scrubby areas
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Open woodland and woodland edges, parks and gardens
Grass Snake <i>Natrix natrix</i>	Water, reedbed, ponds, heathland, hedgerows, grazing marsh, gardens, fish, amphibians
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	Urban areas, farmland, hedgerows
Soprano Pipstrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	A widespread bat that has a preference for riparian habitats, hedgerows, buildings are often important for roost sites and it requires good linkages between these and its foraging grounds.
Brown Long-eared Bat <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	A widespread bat of open woodlands, hedgerows, parks and gardens, it roosts in old buildings and trees in the summer, moving to caves and underground sites in the winter.
Turtle Dove <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Woodland edges, hedgerows and open land with scattered bushes
Great Crested Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	Breeding sites are mainly medium-sized ponds, although ditches and other waterbodies may be used, ponds with ample aquatic vegetation, do not require very high water quality, but usually a neutral pH. Hedgerows, mixed deciduous woodland
Adder <i>Vipera berus</i>	Open heathland, woodland and moors, fens, cliff
Common Lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	Open woodland, moorland, heathland, fens, sand dunes, rocks, gardens and cliffs

Invasive Non-native Species 4 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

New Zealand Pigmyweed *Crassula helmsii*
 Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*
 Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

Designated Sites

Chiddingfold Forest SSSI consists of a mixture of woodland types ranging from ancient oakwoods to coniferous plantations. There are several good specimens of Wild Service Tree, and Greater Butterfly Orchid is found in several areas. The well developed ride system ensures a good invertebrate and botanical variety including Broad-leaved Helleborine and Lesser Skullcap. Over 500 species of Lepidoptera have been recorded including several rare, endangered and vulnerable species. Chiddingfold Forest is also notable for its woodland bird community which includes Nightingale and Hawfinch.

Sparrow Hanger and Roundwyck Copse complex SNCI consists of several wooded stream valleys and a number of unimproved meadows. The woodland is mostly well-structured Oak and Field Maple with a diverse community of mosses and liverworts. Much of the grassland is characteristic of ancient meadows with species such as Pepper-saxifrage and Adder's-tongue.

Weald Barkfold Copse and Barkfold Hanger SNCI consists of predominantly Oak woodland, with some areas of rich ground flora including Sanicle, Tutsan and Moschatel.

Opportunities Identified

- Policy integration
- Ecological networks
- Woodland management and restoration, including gill woodland
- Landowner advisory and agri-environment schemes
- Education and community engagement
- Working with businesses
- Woodland butterfly interest