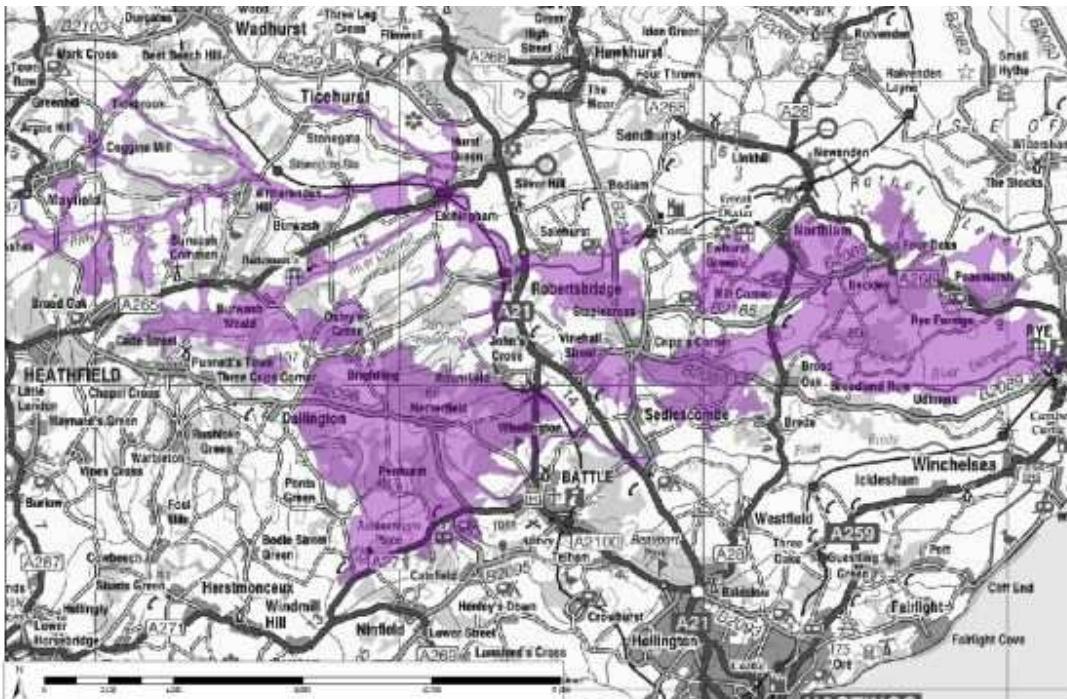


## Rother, Brede and Tillingham Woods Biodiversity Opportunity Area

**Joint Character Area** High Weald and Romney Marsh

**Geology** Rother, Brede and Tillingham Woods Biodiversity Opportunity Area lies on sandstones, siltstones and mudstones of the Ashdown Beds.



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](http://www.sebiodiversity.org.uk). Contains Ordnance Survey data Crown copyright and database right 2010

Rother, Brede and Tillingham Woods has been recognised as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) as it represents a priority area for the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets. It is one of 75 such areas across Sussex. The BOA covers approximately 8462 hectares.

The River Rother floodzone is an area that is rich in opportunity for wetland restoration; however its tributaries and those of the Brede and Tillingham flow through the heavily wooded landscape of the High Weald. Much of this landscape is being looked at in great detail by the Rother Woods Project, where the important butterfly populations of the area are being conserved by a woodland management approach. The woodlands that are selected in this opportunity area are considered priorities for biodiversity action. Within this area there are also many lowland meadows, which have been surveyed by the Weald Meadows Initiative.

## BAP Habitat

Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh

Lowland fens

Lowland heathland

Lowland meadows

Reedbeds

Traditional orchards

Wood-pasture and parkland

Woodland

BAP Species 98 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

<b>Species</b>	<b>Habitat Requirements</b>
Grey Dagger <i>Acronicta psi</i>	Hedgerows, parks, woods and gardens, Hawthorn and Blackthorn
Knot Grass <i>Acronicta rumicis</i>	Meadows, gardens and hedgerows, larvae feed on a range of herbs
Flounced Chestnut <i>Agrochola helvola</i>	Woodland, hedgerows, larvae feed on deciduous trees
Ear Moth <i>Amphipoea oculea</i>	Chalk grassland, marshy and damp places
Mouse Moth <i>Amphipyra tragopoginis</i>	Grassland, heathland, wetland, hedgerows and some woodland
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
Dusky Brocade <i>Apamea remissa</i>	Woodland, marsh, chalk and other grassland
Water Vole <i>Arvicola terrestris</i>	Rivers, ponds, canals and drainage ditches, reedbeds, fens, grazing marsh, banks, slow-flowing waters
Centre-Barred Sallow <i>Atethmia centrago</i>	Woodland and hedgerows, larvae feed on Ash and Sallow
Bittern <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	Wet reedbed and marshland
Minor Shoulder-Knot <i>Brachylomia viminalis</i>	Damp woodland, hedgerows, heathland and fens, Willow
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
Mottled Rustic <i>Caradrina morpheus</i>	Suburban areas, hedgerows, Nettle and Dandelion
Lesser Redpoll <i>Carduelis cabaret</i>	Birch and Alder woods, most common in the north in the summer
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
Goat Moth <i>Cossus cossus</i>	Feeds under the bark and in the heartwood of broadleaved trees, along riverbanks, fens, marshes, heathland, woodland edge
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Woodland, scrub, marshes, heathland, reedbed
Oak Lutestring <i>Cymatophorima diluta</i>	Mature oak woodland, larvae feed on Oak

Small Square-Spot <i>Diarsia rubi</i>	Prefers damp and marshy places, hedgerows
Small Phoenix <i>Ecliptopera silaceata</i>	Woodland, hedgerows, open habitats including commons and gardens, willowherbs
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Open countryside, scrubby areas, woodland edges, hedgerows, insect-rich grassland, seed-rich areas
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Wetlands including reedbeds, tall rushes and wet grassland with good vegetation cover, gardens, farmland, hedgerows, ditches
September Thorn <i>Ennomos erosaria</i>	Woodland, hedgerows, parkland, gardens, Oak, Lime and Birch
Dusky Thorn <i>Ennomos fuscantaria</i>	Woodland, parkland, Ash
Dingy Skipper <i>Erynnis tages</i>	Chalk grassland, woodland rides, cliffs and embankments, mosaic of bare ground, shorter sward and sheltered areas, Bird's-foot Trefoil
Autumnal Rustic <i>Eugnorisma glareosa</i>	Woodland edges, moorland, hedgerows
Small Emerald <i>Hemistola chrysoprasaria</i>	Chalk downland, hedgerows, woodland edges, larvae feed on Traveller's-joy
Ghost Moth <i>Hepialus humuli</i>	Grassy areas, hillsides, waste ground
Rustic <i>Hoplodrina blanda</i>	Gardens, grassland and heathland, docks, plantains, hedgerows
Rosy Rustic <i>Hydraecia micacea</i>	Marshy areas, waste ground, hedgerows
Wryneck <i>Jynx torquilla</i>	Mainly on the ground in open woodland, farmland, occasionally seen in gardens
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	Nests on cliff tops, saltmarsh, shingle, coastal grassland, urban roofs, winters on pasture, arable and urban recreational grassland
Wall <i>Lasiommata megera</i>	Short, open grassland, gardens, sand dunes, vegetated undercliffs and rocky foreshores
Brown Hare <i>Lepus europaeus</i>	Open farmland and grassland, habitat mosaic
White Admiral <i>Limenitis camilla</i>	Woodlands, sunny glades, Bramble, Honeysuckle, partially-shaded locations
Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella naevia</i>	Scrub, thick grassland, reedbeds, forestry and gravel pits
Wood Lark <i>Lullula arborea</i>	Heathland, woodland, mosaic of scattered trees, bare ground, short vegetation and taller vegetation, open seed-rich areas
Brindled Beauty <i>Lycia hirtaria</i>	Woodland, hedgerows, parkland, gardens
Lackey <i>Malacosoma neustria</i>	Gardens, hedgerows, Hawthorn, Blackthorn
Dot Moth <i>Melanchra persicariae</i>	Gardens, verges, waste ground, hedgerows
Broom Moth <i>Melanchra pisi</i>	Open woodland, shrub, heathland, Broom, Bracken
Pretty Chalk Carpet <i>Melanthia procellata</i>	Hedgerows, scrub, woodland edges, Traveller's-joy
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Open woodland and woodland edges, parks and gardens
Shoulder-striped Wainscot <i>Mythimna comma</i>	Gardens, damp habitats, marshes and fens, Cock's-foot.
Grass Snake <i>Natrix natrix</i>	Water, reedbed, ponds, heathland, hedgerows, grazing marsh, gardens, fish, amphibians
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	Reedbeds, estuaries, damp grassland, heathland, mosaic of tall vegetation for nesting with short vegetation and open habitats for feeding

Powdered Quaker <i>Orthosia gracilis</i>	A moth of habitats such as floodplain grassland where larvae feed on Bog Myrtle and willows
Clay Fan-foot <i>Paracolax tristalis</i>	Oak woodland, larvae feed on oak leaves usually on sheltered ground
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	Urban areas, farmland, hedgerows
Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	Farmland, woodland edges, hedgerows with mature trees, wetland edges
Grey Partridge <i>Perdix perdix</i>	Farmland, rush pastures, moors, mosaics of bare ground and cover, hedgerows, uncultivated margins
Wood Warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Mixed deciduous woodland, even age-canopy, little understorey, patchy ground cover
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.
Grizzled Skipper <i>Pyrgus malvae</i>	Grassland, quarries, embankments, woodland rides, larvae feed on Agrimony and <i>Potentilla</i> species, requires warmth and shelter
Shaded Broad-bar <i>Scotopteryx chenopodiata</i>	Chalk grassland and a range of open habitats, larvae feed on vetch and clover
White Ermine <i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>	Gardens and hedgerows
Buff Ermine <i>Spilosoma luteum</i>	Woodland, parks and gardens
Turtle Dove <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	Woodland edges, hedgerows and open land with scattered bushes
Feathered Gothic <i>Tholera decimalis</i>	Rough grassland and downland, larvae feed on grass blades
Blood-Vein <i>Timandra comae</i>	Gardens, fields and waste ground
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
Ring Ouzel <i>Turdus torquatus</i>	Short grassy areas
Cinnabar <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	Meadows, wasteland, road verges and downland
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Farmland, grazing marsh, wet meadows, seeds and insects
Adder <i>Vipera berus</i>	Open heathland, woodland and moors, fens, cliff
Oak Hook-tip <i>Watsonalla binaria</i>	Oak woodland and parkland, larvae feed on oak
Sallow <i>Xanthia ictertia</i>	A common species in most of Britain, occupying damp woodland, hedgerows, heathland and marshy places, larvae feed on willow
Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet <i>Xanthorhoe ferrugata</i>	Coastal sandhills, limestone and chalk downlands, hedgerows
Common Lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	Open woodland, moorland, heathland, fens, sand dunes, rocks, gardens and cliffs

**Invasive Non-native Species** 21 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Water Fern *Azolla filiculoides*  
Heath Star Moss *Campylopus introflexus*  
Red Valerian *Centranthus ruber*  
Wall Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis*  
New Zealand Pigmyweed *Crassula helmsii*  
Canadian Waterweed *Elodea canadensis*  
Nuttall's Waterweed *Elodea nuttallii*  
Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*  
Shallon *Gaultheria shallon*  
Harlequin Ladybird *Harmonia axyridis*  
Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*  
Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*  
Hybrid Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta x hispanica = H. x massartiana*  
Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*  
American Mink *Mustela vison*  
Parrot's-feather *Myriophyllum aquaticum*  
Winter Heliotrope *Petasites fragrans*  
Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*  
Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

## Designated Sites

Dallington Forest SSSI is an area of ancient woodland with steep sided ghyll that supports a rich Atlantic flora including Wood Fescue Grass and Cornish Moneywort. A meadow to the north of the site has species characteristic of wetter areas such as Ragged-Robin and Meadowsweet.

Wilingford Meadows SSSI consists of a series of unimproved meadows, with the geology of the site presenting a mosaic of calcareous, acid and neutral grassland types. Notable species include Adder's-tongue Fern, Green-winged Orchid and Dwarf Thistle.

Blackbrooks SNCI comprises of a mosaic of woodland communities, with both ancient woodland and conifer plantation present. The woodland is reportedly a site for the rare Coral-root Bittercress and Thin-spiked Wood Sedge.

Brede Valley SNCI consists of a plain with an extensive ditch system which supports a great diversity of submerged, floating and emergent aquatic plants. The site is important for birds particularly warblers, and the invertebrate community includes many nationally scarce species.

Chantry, Lordine and Wattshill Woods SNCI is three contiguous woodlands along a stream valley, dominated by mature Hornbeam coppice and Oak, as well as areas of Sweet Chestnut coppice. The richest ground flora can be found in rides with species such as Yellow Pimpernel and Early Purple Orchid.

Clay, Ten Acre and Newbridge Wood SNCI consists predominantly of neglected Hornbeam and Hazel Coppice, with an area of Small-leaved Lime found which indicates the ancient origin of the site.

Green Wood SNCI is a large area of ancient woodland with Oak and Beech coppice occurring throughout. The ground flora is variable with numerous ferns in the several stream valleys on site.

Henhurst Farm Woodland and Meadows SNCI includes semi- improved fields with a moderate species assemblage including Common Twayblade. There are also wooded stream valleys, shaws and copses which all appear ancient in origin.

Powdermill Reservoir, Brede High Woods and Hurst Wood Complex SNCI includes the reservoir, which is used by numerous bird species, and surrounding woodlands. Large areas of Brede High Woods have been coniferised, with other areas being of a more mixed composition including Hornbeam, Alder and Oak. Dodder and Greater Broomrape have been recorded in the past as well as 33 butterfly species including Grizzled Skipper and Pearl-bordered Fritillary. Areas of Hurst Wood Complex contain a diverse ground flora including Yellow Archangel and Wood Anemone.

## Opportunities Identified

- Wetland habitat management, restoration and creation
- Meadow management, restoration and creation
- Woodland management and restoration
- Woodland butterfly interest
- Exploring markets for natural products
- Education and community engagement
- Working with and attracting new businesses
- Access improvements

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