

COUNTY: KENT            SITE NAME: BROOKLAND WOOD

BOROUGH: TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Local Planning Authority: TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TQ 661388    Area: 10.7 (ha.) 26.4 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 188    1:10,000: TQ 63 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1981    Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986    Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

The special interest of this site centres on the variety of woodland stand types present, with the area of alder *Alnus glutinosa* woodland being of particular note. The ground flora is also diverse.

Where silty clay and clay loams overlie the Wadhurst Clay, soil moisture is high, but drier conditions prevail where sandy loams have formed. In these drier parts coppiced hazel *Corylus avellana*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and field maple *Acer campestre* predominate under oak standards *Quercus robur*, whilst the wet areas support alder woodland with some aspen *Populus tremula* and willow *Salix sp.* The shrub layer is fairly sparse over most of the wood but includes guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*, holly *Ilex aquifolium* and elder *Sambucus nigra*.

Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* generally dominates the ground flora, but in the extensive flushes pendulous sedge *Carex pendula* is the most abundant species. A number of plants indicative of ancient woodland are also present including wood sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and violet helleborine *Epipactis purpurata*; wood horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum*, a rare plant in Kent, occurs in the dampest places. Marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica*, a scarce and declining species in the county, used to occur but has not been recorded recently.

A few small streams flow through the wood and these support a rich community of bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) together with a few higher plants, such as opposite-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*.