

COUNTY: KENT            SITE NAME: ELLENDEN WOOD

DISTRICT: CANTERBURY

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

Local Planning Authority: CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TR 101624    Area: 90.8 (ha.) 224.4 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 179    1:10,000: TR 16 SW, TR 06 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1972    Date of Last Revision: 1981

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985    Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

This is a 'Nature Conservation Review' site. The greater part is managed as a nature reserve by the Kent Trust for Nature Conservation (KTNC).

Reasons for Notification:

This ancient woodland site contains several uncommon woodland types. Sessile oak-beech predominates on the acidic sandy soils in the central and eastern parts of the wood. Hornbeam with pedunculate and sessile oak occurs on the clay soils of the western valley. Other types are also present including small plantations of sweet chestnut coppice. The wood has a diverse flora with over 250 higher plants and 300 fungi present. Large numbers of insects including three nationally rare species have been recorded. The area also supports a diverse breeding bird community.

Sessile oak and beech coppice with sessile oak standards is common in the central and eastern parts of the wood, with rowan, holly and wild service tree also present. The ground flora is dominated by great woodrush *Luzula sylvatica* and common cow-wheat *Melampyrum pratense*. Hornbeam, ash and field maple coppice with pedunculate and sessile oak standards occurs in the western valley. Here, bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* and brambles *Rubus* species are common. High forest of sessile oak, beech and ash occurs on the valley sides. A number of small ponds and streams are present in the wood. The ponds are acidic and dominated by bog moss *Sphagnum* species.

Coppicing has recently been reintroduced as part of the reserve management and this has resulted in an increase in the numbers of breeding birds such as wren and blackcap. In addition some areas have been promoted to high forest, to produce a diverse woodland structure. Birds breeding regularly include nightingale, green woodpecker, great-spotted woodpecker, nuthatch and several tits and warblers. Kestrels have bred near the woodland edge in recent years.

The insect fauna is diverse with numerous moths, butterflies, bugs and beetles recorded including some uncommon species such as the brindled white spot moth *Ectropis extersaria*. Two nationally rare flies *Lophosia fasciata* and *Sytemna nitidula* and a rare beetle *Cicindela hybrida* have also been found.

The mammals of Ellenden Wood have also been well recorded. Among the smaller animals are dormouse, wood and harvest mouse, and two species of shrew. Predators include fox, stoat and weasel. There are also badger setts in the wood.