

**KENT LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES**

KWT File No: 848512

<b>Site:</b>	King's Wood and Abbey Wood, Kingswood	<b>Site Ref. No:</b>	MA08
<b>LPA:</b>	Maidstone	<b>Central Grid Ref:</b>	TQ 848512
<b>Parish:</b>	Langley/Harrietsham/Broomfield & Kingswood/ Ulcombe/Leeds	<b>Category:</b>	Woodland
<b>Owner:</b>	Private	<b>Natural Area:</b>	Wealden Greensand
<b>Area:</b>	267.11 ha	<b>AONB:</b>	No
<b>First notified:</b>	1986	<b>TPO:</b>	Small part of King's Wood only
<b>Last revised:</b>	January 2004		

**DESCRIPTION**

The site consists of two important blocks of ancient woodland which support a large number of ancient woodland indicator species.

The site boundary is drawn tightly around the remaining areas of King's Wood and Abbey Wood.

This very large complex of mixed woodland on sandy soils consists predominantly of sweet chestnut coppice, with important stands of stub pollarded sessile oak woodland and mixed conifer plantations. Relict mixed broadleaved woodland with hornbeam, ash and hazel coppice, mostly unmanaged, fringes some of the rides and the eastern perimeter of King's Wood. There is much honeysuckle, downy birch and silver birch. Aspen, alder buckthorn and sallow occur where soils are heavier and damper in a small valley running through King's Wood. Heather *Calluna vulgaris* and bell heather *Erica tetralix* are found along the margins of the wide, open rides.

There is little ground flora under the dense conifer, but bluebell <sup>1</sup> *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and bramble dominate beneath the chestnut, with stands of bracken in more open areas. A wide range of species present includes red campion *Silene dioica*, broom *Cytisus scoparius*, wood spurge *Euphorbia amygdaloides*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, broad buckler-fern *Dryopteris dilatata*, male-fern *D. filix-mas*, early dog-violet *Viola reichenbachiana*, enchanter's nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, primrose *Primula vulgaris*, wood melick *Melica uniflora*, wood millet *Milium effusum*, yellow pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*, common figwort *Scrophularia nodosa*, great wood-rush *Luzula sylvatica* and pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*. Lily of the valley <sup>2</sup> *Convallaria majalis*, pill sedge *Carex pilulifera* and moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina* have also been recorded. 32 ancient woodland indicator plant species have been recorded from the site.

The woodland supports a diverse fungus flora, and the bryophyte flora reflects the dry and wet soil types.



The bird fauna is important, with nightjar <sup>3, 4, 5, 6</sup>, nightingale <sup>7, 8</sup>, redstart <sup>7, 9</sup>, spotted flycatcher <sup>4, 5, 6, 10</sup> and wood warbler <sup>7, 9</sup> all having been recorded. Considerable numbers of crossbill <sup>1, 3, 4, 5</sup> have been observed in Abbey Wood. Other species recorded include turtle dove <sup>4, 5, 6, 10</sup>, tree pipit <sup>7, 8, 10</sup>, cuckoo <sup>7, 11</sup>, woodcock <sup>7, 10</sup>, hobby <sup>1</sup>, willow tit <sup>\* 5, 10</sup> and siskin.

Deer regularly visit the woodland, as well as fox and rabbit.

A range of common butterflies can be found in the cut coppice.

- <sup>1</sup> Protected under Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.
- <sup>2</sup> County Scarce. Atlas of Kent Flora. Philp. 1982.
- <sup>3</sup> Red Data Birds in Britain. NCC/RSPB. 1990.
- <sup>4</sup> Priority Species, UK Biodiversity Action Plan. 1998.
- <sup>5</sup> Red List. Birds of Conservation Concern 2002-2007.
- <sup>6</sup> Kent Red Data Book Status 2. A. Waite (Ed.) 2000.
- <sup>7</sup> Amber List. Birds of Conservation Concern 2002-2007.
- <sup>8</sup> Kent Red Data Book Status 3. A. Waite (Ed.) 2000.
- <sup>9</sup> Kent Red Data Book Status 1. A. Waite (Ed.) 2000.
- <sup>10</sup> Rapid Decline. BTO Breeding Birds Report. 2000.
- <sup>11</sup> Moderate Decline. BTO Breeding Birds Report. 2000.
- <sup>\*</sup> Willow tit is no longer believed present in Kent. The Kent Ornithological Society's last record of breeding is 2005.

