

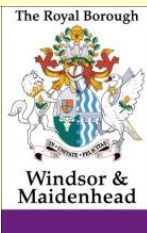
Berkshire Local Wildlife Sites Project



A partnership of landowners, conservation bodies and local authorities helping to conserve Berkshire's wildlife



The Berkshire LWS Project is funded by:



Contact us:

Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre,
c/o Oxfordshire County Council,
New Road Oxford,
OX1 1ND
www.tverc.org
tverc@oxfordshire.gov.uk
01865 815451



Sharing environmental information in
Berkshire and Oxfordshire

What are Local Wildlife Sites?

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are areas of land recognised for having high wildlife value containing rare or threatened habitats and species.

Berkshire has about 750 LWS covering approximately 10% of the county. They include ancient woodlands, parkland, heathland, bogs, hay meadows, chalk grassland and wetland, which contribute significantly to the richness of Berkshire's countryside.

Why are they important?

Found both on public and private land, Berkshire's LWS are home to a rich variety of wildlife and they are considered to be of county, if not national, importance. Many of these sites contain habitats and species that are priorities for conservation recognised through the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.

The historical sensitive management of many of these sites accounts for their rich wildlife today. The continued good work by landowners is key in conserving the rare species and habitats.

What happens to information about Local Wildlife Sites?

The species and habitat information collected by TVERC is held on our database and is made available with due regard to confidential and sensitive information. This information is freely available to all owners and managers of Local Wildlife Sites, who will receive copies of the reports of surveys on their land.

How are wildlife sites affected by the planning system?

LWS have no statutory designation but together with the legally protected areas of land, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), they form vital links across the county and beyond to create a national network of habitats that provide refuges for our country's diverse flora and fauna.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires planning authorities to identify Local Wildlife Sites and promote their conservation. Local Wildlife Sites are listed in the Unitary Authority's Local Plan. When considering a planning application, the Unitary Authority will take into account the wildlife interest of a site.

How are Local Wildlife Sites identified?

The project aims to identify the best quality sites for wildlife across Berkshire. Those that fit the selection criteria are notified through a process of ecological survey and assessment. A copy of the full criteria can be found on the TVERC website (www.tverc.org).



What does having a LWS mean to landowners and managers?

- ✓ Recognition that your land management has produced an important site for Berks's wildlife
- ✓ Free survey and information about the wildlife on your land
- ✗ NO obligation to change your land management practices
- ✗ NO restrictions on agricultural operations over and above standard regulations
- ✗ NO new rights of access are created and existing rights of way are unaffected
- ✗ NO active publicity of the site
- ✗ NO landowner or manager contact details are passed on to anyone without prior consent.