

Rose Hill Woods

Management Plan
2022-26



Avenue of specimen trees at Rose Hill

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This management plan has been produced by White Horse Ecology on behalf of Swale Borough Council. It is an update of a management plan written in 2017 that was commissioned by the Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership that formed part of the Woodland Wildlife Hidden History project that was been supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Swale Borough Council.

It should be noted that most of the material in this plan has been updated from the 2017-22 plan. The work carried out in this update included site visits to refresh species lists and discuss management with Swale Borough Council staff as well as discussions with local stakeholders. Mapping was also updated for this plan. This work ensures that the management plan is still fit for purpose and that it can be used as a guide to future management by all of those that have an interest in the site.

Thanks are due to all of the stakeholders and members of the public who took time to contribute their ideas to the original management plan as well as this update.

November 2021

White Horse Ecology

T: 01227 652126

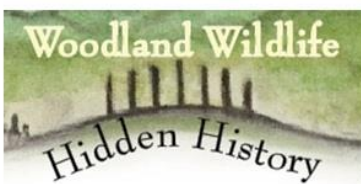
T: 07540 250320

E: info@whitehorseecology.co.uk

W: www.whitehorseecology.co.uk



White Horse Ecology



1. Introduction

Rose Hill Woods is owned and managed by Swale Borough Council. This management plan has been produced as a way of gathering together some of the accumulated knowledge about the site to create a plan for the future management and use of the woods. It reflects the views of local people, stakeholders and those working at the woodland that have been consulted about their views. The uses of the document include:

- Clearly identifying management objectives for each of the distinct areas within the site as well as how the woodland should be interpreted and whether there are infrastructure improvements needed to help people enjoy the open space.
- Updating knowledge about species present on site and ensuring that protected flora and fauna are identified and that works enhance and conserve the habitats of these species.
- Ensuring that the heritage of the site is integrated into the management of the wood and is well understood by visitors.
- Acting as a guide to a possible future 'Friends of' group that may get involved in the management of the site.
- Supporting external funding applications.
- Allowing Swale Borough Council to prioritise work programmes undertaken by contractors and make the best use of current site expenditure.

Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre have provided species information for the site and this has been supplemented by on-site surveys. The aim of this document is to be a short introduction to the wildlife, heritage and amenity of the site that is readable, identifies achievable outcomes and maximises the potential of the site.

1.1. Location

Rose Hill Woods is situated in the western part of Sittingbourne just north of the Grove Park Cricket Club. It is to the north of the A2 and the centre of the site is located at TQ 886 644.

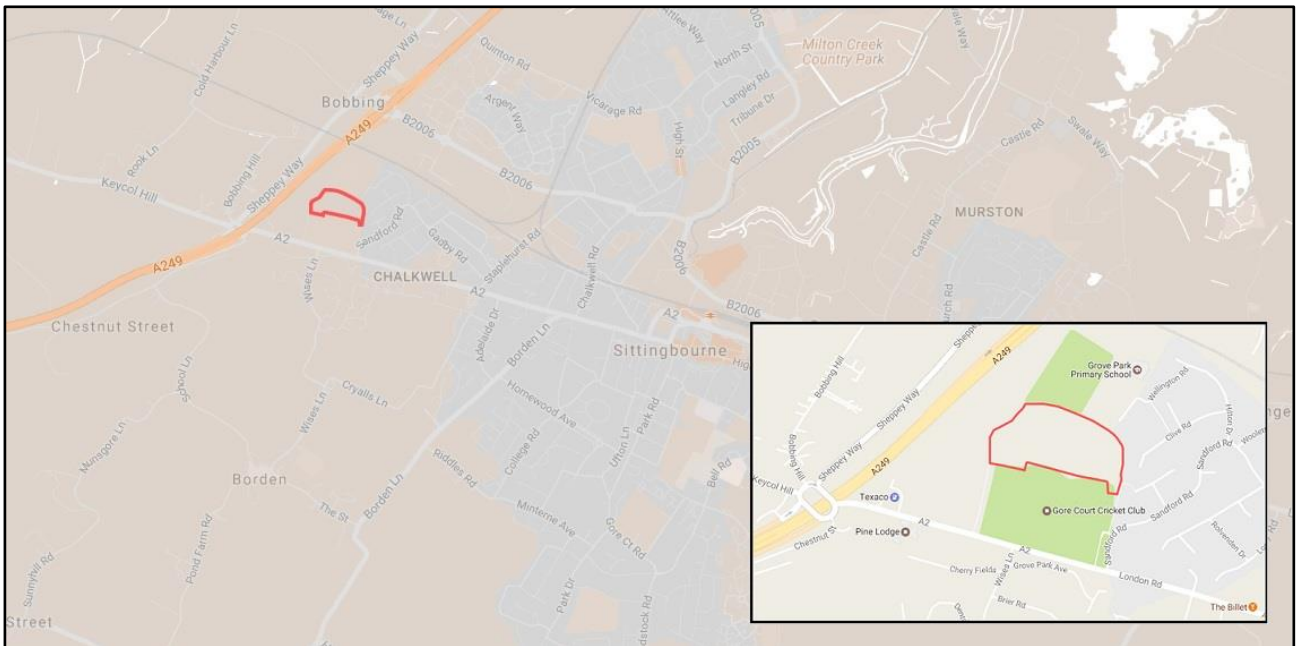


Figure 1: Location of Rose Hill Woods

1.2. Links to strategy documents

There is a selection of strategic documents at a national, county and district level that are relevant to the purpose, aims and objectives of Rose Hill Woods.

1.2.1. National

Although many documents could be quoted in this section, for the sake of brevity, just one national level document will be referenced.

25 Year Environment Plan (2018)¹

This is the overarching plan for the environment over the next 25 Years. It is a high-level document but has some clear goals:

1. *Clean air.*
2. *Clean and plentiful water.*
3. *Thriving plants and wildlife.*
4. *A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought.*
5. *Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently.*
6. *Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.*

In addition, we will manage pressures on the environment by:

7. *Mitigating and adapting to climate change.*

¹ 25 Year Environment Plan -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

8. Minimising waste.
9. Managing exposure to chemicals.
10. Enhancing biosecurity.

Rose Hill Woods contributes to most of these goals. The ecosystem services benefits of a wood like Rose Hill should be valued highly and be recognised for the contribution they make at a local and district level.

1.2.2. County level

Kent Environment Strategy (2016)²

This is a high-level document outlining environmental priorities for Kent County Council. The vision for this document neatly encapsulates the value of green spaces like Rose Hill to local communities:

“The county of Kent is benefitting from a competitive, innovative and resilient economy, with our natural and historic assets enhanced and protected for their unique value and positive impact on our society, economy, health and wellbeing.”

Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy (2020-2045)³

This strategy looks specifically at targets for biodiversity over the next 25 years, linking broadly with the government’s 25 Year Environment Plan

The goals of this document relate to the quality of terrestrial habitat, how connected it is and how much of it there is. This management plan looks to contribute to these goals.

Kent Nature Partnership Strategic Priorities and Action Plan (2018-2023)⁴

This document sits below the Environment Strategy (KES) as the mechanism for delivering the biodiversity elements of the KES. The document highlights four priorities, all of which are relevant to Rose Hill Woods and which the area is delivering:

- Priority 1 - Strengthening the consideration of biodiversity within local plans and the growth agenda*
- Priority 2 - Embedding natural capital into planning and decision making*
- Priority 3 - Taking forward the health and nature agenda*
- Priority 4 - Improving the quality, extent and connectivity of our high value habitats*

1.2.3. District level

Swale Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan (2020)

² Kent Environment Strategy - <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy>

³ Kent Biodiversity Strategy - <http://www.kentnature.org.uk/uploads/Kent%20Biodiversity%20Strategy%202020%20-%202045.pdf>

⁴ KNP Strategic priorities and Action Plan - <https://www.kentnature.org.uk/uploads/files/About-Us/Kent%20Nature%20Partnership%20-%20Strategic%20Priorities%20and%20Action%20Plan%202018%20-%202023.pdf>

Swale Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and released this action plan in 2020 to help The Council become carbon neutral by 2025 and for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030. As well as these ambitious targets this document commits to make space for nature as a key priority, and safeguard our wild places, ancient woodlands and hedgerows.

Of the ten priorities outlined by the document the two that are most relevant to Rose Hill Woods is:

- *Tree planting on council land (target; 148,100 trees or 60 acres of woodland) to offset 20% of council emissions.*
- *Improve facilities and incentives for walking and cycling.*

Swale Open Spaces and Play Area Strategy (2018-2022)⁵

This strategy assesses the provision of open space in the borough, how it fits into planning policy and local strategic planning and identifies an action plan. The plan acknowledges that the funding situation is difficult at present but also makes the following recommendation:

“Destination (Strategic) Sites should be recognised through protection and enhancement.”

The recommendation goes on to state:

“The Council should seek to ensure the role and quality of these sites through continued enhancement so providing a diverse range of features.”

The strategy action plan also states that the following targets will be put in place:

- a. *To invest at least £100,000 capital spending per year for 5 years on existing open spaces through developer contributions, grants, capital works and disposals.*
- b. *To invest £500,000 in a rolling programme to refurbish several play areas during the life of the strategy.*
- c. *To achieve at least 3 Green Flag parks and open spaces in the next 5 years.*
- d. *To review our open space portfolio and identify relevant sites for investment, disposal or alternative uses by September 2018, linked to our successful programme of Community Asset Transfer and in consultation with the relevant Ward Members.*
- e. *To actively promote our open spaces in partnership with other agencies and voluntary groups as places to sustain and improve health and wellbeing.*
- f. *To increase the amount of open space under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares and by December 2022.*
- g. *Seek improvement of horticulture in our open spaces to enrich the biodiversity*
- h. *To increase community involvement in open space management by providing support to new or existing community groups.*

⁵ Swale Open Spaces and Play Area Strategy - <https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s10121/Appendix%20-%20SWALE%20BOROUGH%20COUNCIL%20OPEN%20SPACES%20AND%20PLAY%20STRATEGY%20FINALSENT%20TO%20CABINET.pdf>

- i. To ensure actions in relation to Local Plan Policy DM 17 are put in place to protect existing open space and private playing fields, to help negotiate new open space in future housing developments and to continue the designation of Local Green Space across the Borough.
- j. Look at new methods of operation and potential commercial ventures to help meet the ongoing cost of maintaining open space facilities
- k. A Borough wide review of public conveniences to also consider an audit of existing Changing Places toilets provision.

These priorities form the basis for this management plan's approach to Rose Hill Woods.

Health and Well Being Improvement Plan (2020-2023) – currently only available in consultation form

This document highlights the importance of good health, especially in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the importance of taking regular exercise. Green spaces play an important part in how people take their exercise. One of the priorities identified in this document is:

“Work with Leisure and Technical services and Comms to consider how we use and promote our open spaces to encourage physical activity and improve wellbeing.”

Swale Biodiversity Action Plan (updated 2016)⁶

This plan focuses on the habitats and species that make Swale's biodiversity special. It includes priority habitats relevant to Rose Hill Woods:

- Woodland
- Wildflower grassland
- Built up areas and gardens

These are all habitats that are found at or adjacent to Rose Hill.

Swale Green Grid Strategy (2016)⁷

This document examines how the borough's green spaces can be enhanced and monitored via a partnership of organisations.

There are also other documents relevant to Rose Hill Woods

Swale Volunteering Strategy (2013-2016)⁸

Swale Cycling and Walking Guidance Statement (2018-2022)⁹

⁶ Swale Biodiversity Action Plan - <https://www.swale.gov.uk/assets/Strategies-plans-and-policies/Biodiversity-Action-Plan-2016.pdf>

⁷ Swale Green Grid Strategy - <https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s6079/Green%20Grid%20Strategy%202016%20proof%20Aug%202016.pdf>

⁸ Swale Volunteering Strategy - <https://archive.swale.gov.uk/assets/Strategies-plans-and-policies/Swale-Volunteering-Strategy-May-2014.pdf>

⁹ Swale Cycling and Walking Guidance Statement - <https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s11291/Item%208%20Appendix%20I.pdf>

1.3. Information gathering

This management plan was compiled with specific reference to information gathered from stakeholders and members of the public over the course of the Woodland Wildlife Hidden History project managed by the Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership. The following sources of information were used to assess opinions and a summary of the information that was contributed can be found in appendix III:

- Consultation during the introductory phase of the project (2014/15)
- Stakeholder telephone conversations conducted in December 2016
- E-mail consultation in December 2016
- Public prioritisation and consultation event on 22nd January 2017
- Further consultation with staff and local stakeholders took place in autumn 2021 to inform the updated plan.

1.4. How to use this management plan

Management plans are not designed to be static documents that never change. They are part of a process that involves identifying aims and objectives, putting a plan into place and then reviewing the success of the plan, adjusting as necessary. A typical management flow diagram can be found overleaf.

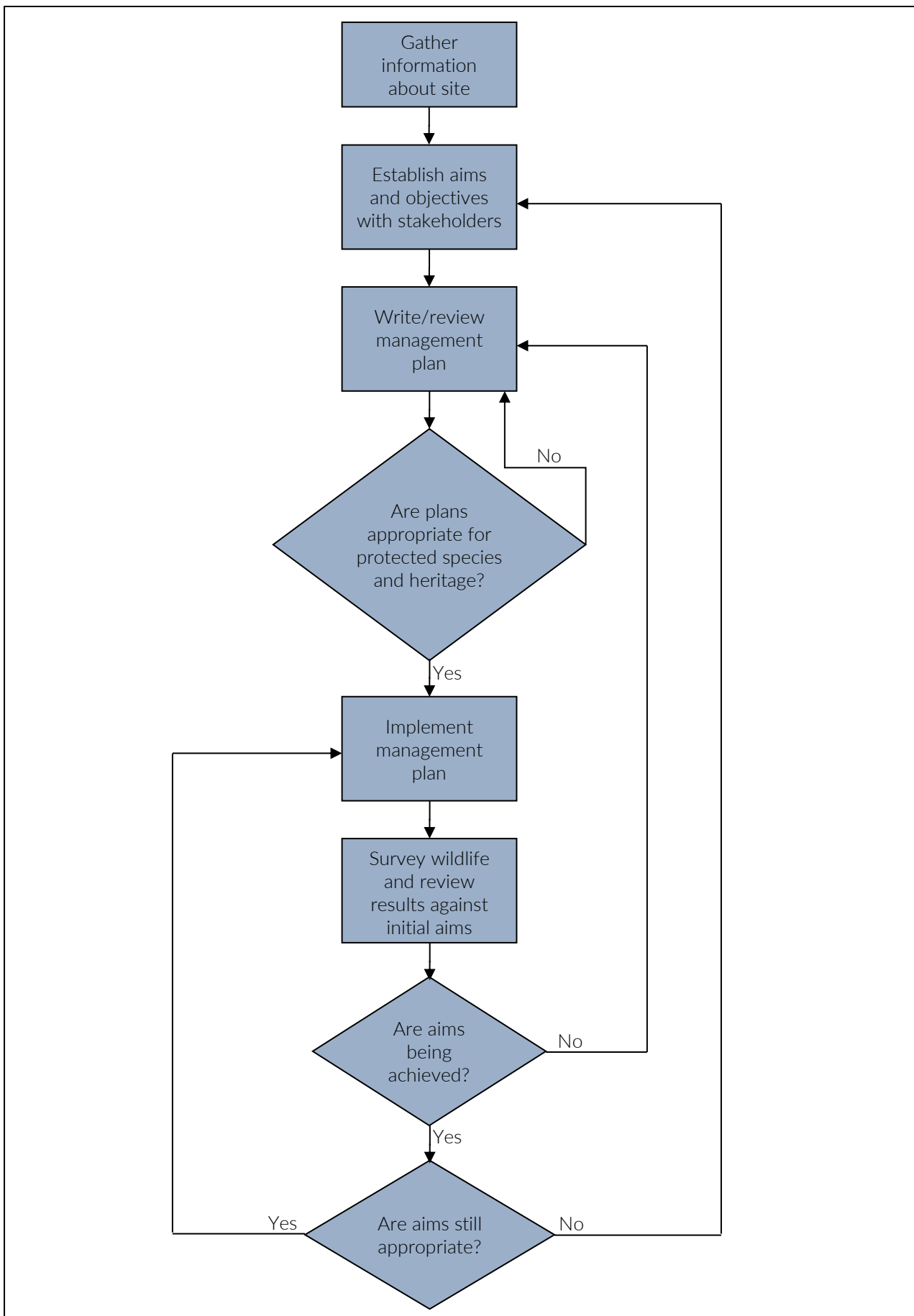


Figure 2: Management plan flow diagram

2. Site description

Rose Hill Woods is an area of amenity woodland that is situated behind Grove Park Cricket Club. It is a well-loved and well used piece of woodland that has grown up on the site of an old house known as Rose Hill. It is currently an area of trees, largely sycamore in places, which



Figure 3: Rose Hill Woods

is managed with a light touch and used as a place for local people to walk dogs and enjoy the outdoors. However, it is the history of the site that unlocks the clues that make Rose Hill Woods so much more than just a piece of secondary woodland used to exercise children and dogs.

Figure 3 shows the site boundary and an overhead photographic view of the site. To gain a better picture of the evolution of the site into what we find today it is necessary to look at the aerial view in figure 4 from the 1940s. From this we can see that Rose Hill Woods used to be a house and garden that overlooked the cricket club and was, until relatively recently, much more open than it is now. The house had a formal garden and the grounds also contained some impressive specimen trees that may date from the early 19th century, many of which are still thriving. The house was demolished in the 1970s and the land acquired by Swale Borough Council. Since the demolition of the house natural processes have been allowed to dominate and secondary woodland has grown over the area where the house once was and around the



Figure 4: Aerial view of Rose Hill in 1946

specimen trees that would once have dominated the character of the site. Rose Hill Woods now has the feel of a woodland rather than a formal garden and this has benefitted wildlife. The site is well used by birds and the botanical flora, whilst unremarkable, is becoming more diverse and typical of woodlands rather than gardens. It is a good example of nature taking over where humans once used to dominate. The purpose of this management plan is to help those managing the site to be able to investigate and celebrate the history of Rose Hill whilst enhancing the biodiversity and allowing people to enjoy walking in a place with a 'natural' feel.

2.1. Designations

The site itself has no statutory designations although Grove Park (including the cricket pitch and more formal areas of park around it) does figure on the UK database of Historic Parks and Gardens that is held at <http://www.parksandgardens.org/>

Lowland deciduous woodland is considered to be a Natural England Priority Habitat under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). As the site develops and further biological recording takes place a body of evidence that supports Local Wildlife Site designation may become available.

Although the site has no statutory designations there are a total of 27 trees that have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them. These trees have been designated due to their public

amenity value and may not be felled or have their crowns reduced without formal written permission from the local authority unless they are dead, dying or dangerous. This has no impact upon the proposed actions of this management plan as maintaining and enhancing the specimen trees will form an integral part of the plan. There are also a number of other impressive trees that are not covered by TPOs. The list of trees covered by TPOs can be found in section 2.8.2.



Figure 5: Christmas greeting from an anonymous walker

2.2. Urban green space and links to the wider countryside

The importance of urban sites such as Rose Hill Woods is greater than the sum of the land given over to wildlife on the site itself. These areas provide essential green space that acts as a refuge to wildlife which, in turn, will increase the amount of wildlife in nearby gardens. These spaces also provide important areas of recreational space for local residents and access to wildlife. Additionally, despite extensive house building in this part of Sittingbourne, there are currently still physical links to the wider countryside to the west through woodland, farmland and the hedgerow next to the public footpath that goes north of the wood alongside the rugby pitches. These allow for the movement of wildlife both to and from Rose Hill to adjacent sites. Equally, sites like Rose Hill Woods can be used as 'stepping stones' by more mobile animals

such as birds as is illustrated by sightings of the migratory firecrest (*Regulus ignicapillus*). The most important habitats found adjacent to Rose Hill Woods are:

- The playing fields belonging to Grove Park School and Gore Court Cricket and Rugby clubs and associated hedgerows to the north of the site. These go on to link with The Meads Community Woodland, a newer mixed species deciduous woodland.
- To the west of Rose Hill there is some deciduous woodland that extends to the A249. To the south of this woodland but to the north of the houses on the A2 is an area of rough grassland and scrub that will provide excellent habitat for reptiles, small mammals and invertebrates.
- The road margins of the A249 to the west provide some of the largest extents of semi-natural habitat in the area and continuous habitat links for reptiles, small mammals and invertebrates.

2.3. Site usage

The woodland is in an area of Sittingbourne with housing to the south and east. Rose Hill Woods and The Grove provide the closest open green space for residents and it is well used by dog walkers and those looking to find peace and tranquillity in an urban area. It is also valued as a place to go with family.

There is minimal use of Rose Hill Woods as a thoroughfare although the path on the eastern side of the wood does provide access to Grove Park School and is used for this purpose.

The Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership ran the Woodland Wildlife Hidden History project between 2014 and 2017 which encouraged community participation in events at both Rose Hill Woods and the nearby Meads Community Woodland. A key to the success of this project was the work of the Historical Research Group of Sittingbourne (HRGS) who have undertaken exploratory digs at the house that have been volunteer led and included extensive work with Kent County Council Heritage, the local Grove Park School and local volunteers.

2.4. Biological recording and protected species

There are relatively few records for Rose Hill Woods although a database search was made by the Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre few of these records can be directly attributed to Rose Hill Woods itself. A survey of significant trees was also carried out in 2006 as was a small scale wildlife survey undertaken by Kent Wildlife Trust and Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership has augmented this list. Further botanical survey work was conducted for the 2021 update. However the species list is still incomplete. Therefore, it is crucially important to ensure that all records that are made at the site are sent to the appropriate recording group and/or the Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre. The records that are available for the site can be found in appendix II.

Whilst the overarching aim of nature conservation management within Rose Hill is to enhance habitats for all species groups, there are specific species that require attention in their own right due to their protected status. This section will identify those species that have been recorded on site, are protected and which legislation they are covered by. Other important, but not protected, species will be dealt with in the assessment of habitats.

Table 1: Protected species

Species	Locations (if known)	Notes
The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019		
This is the highest level of designation and provides protection against killing, injury and disturbance. The breeding and resting habitat of these species is also protected		
Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	Although no bats have been recorded on the site of Rose Hill all of these species have been recorded within 3km of the site. It can therefore be reasonably assumed that bats use the site for foraging and as there are mature trees containing dead wood, roosting is highly likely. The consequence of the likely presence of bats is that the removal of larger trees or any built structures should be approached with caution.	
Soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)		
Serotine bat (<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>)		
Daubenton's bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)		
Noctule bat (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)		
Brown long-eared bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)		
Dormouse (<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>)	Although the presence of dormice is unlikely it is not impossible that they may utilise the site due to the presence of adjacent coppice. Survey work using nesting tubes is recommended.	
Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) – protection under section 9.1 of the act		
Species identified under schedule 5 of the act have protection against killing or injury although their habitat is not protected.		
Grass snake (<i>Natrix helvetica</i>)	Although neither species has been recorded it is likely that grass snakes will utilise the site and not impossible that lizards will also use some of the more open areas	Current and proposed management of Rose Hill is unlikely to impact upon reptile species. However, should open spaces be created in the woodland this should be revisited.
Viviparous lizard (<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>)		
Slow-worm (<i>Anguilla fragilis</i>)	Recorded in compartment 2	

Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) – protection under section 1.1 of the act
Wild birds are protected against killing as well as damaging or destroying nests and eggs.

All wild bird species	Found throughout the site.	Vegetation management of potential nesting sites should not take place during the breeding season (usually March to August) unless using hand tools and checks are made for nests.
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Other protected species

Stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*), common frog (*Rana temporaria*), smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) and common toad (*Bufo bufo*) are protected from being sold or advertised for sale. These species are all thought to be present on site. However, this has little impact on the management of the woodland.

Managing sites with protected species needn't be overly restrictive. There are simply certain activities that should be avoided. Kent Bat Group, Kent Mammal Group and Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group can offer advice when needed.

2.5. Non-native invasive species

There are also a number of non-native invasive species that have been identified at or near Rose Hill Woods. These species have the potential to spread rapidly and threaten the status of native species. Those identified include:

- Harlequin ladybird (*Harmonia axyridis*) – a threat to native ladybirds.
- Marsh frog (*Pelophylax ridibundus*) – a large and noisy frog (in late spring) that is thought to compete with native frogs and toads.
- Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) – a rapidly spreading tree that can shade out regeneration of native species.
- Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) – More of a problem on chalk grassland in Kent but still has the potential to spread rapidly given the right circumstances.
- Cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) – a garden escapee that can thrive in woodlands. Provides little in the way of habitat for invertebrates or other wildlife.

Whilst little can be done about ladybirds and marsh frogs, non-native invasive plants should be removed if safe to do so and where this does not compromise protected species. Sycamore has become so well established at Rose Hill Woods (and loved by some) that removal of all sycamore is neither feasible with existing resources nor necessarily favourable due to the impact it would have on the character of the woodland. Sycamore will be dealt with in more detail later in this plan. It should be noted that there are also a number of non-native plants such as winter aconites (*Eranthis hyemalis*) that survive from the garden at Rose Hill house.

These are not thought to pose a problem as they are not invasive and are an important part of the history of the site.

2.6. Archaeology and history

The archaeology of Rose Hill Woods is an area of significant interest and research that has been carried out primarily by the Historical Research Group of Sittingbourne (HRGS). There is known to have been a house at Rose Hill, probably since the end of the 18th century and it stood until being abandoned and eventually destroyed in a fire in the 1970s. Planning permission was unsuccessfully sought for the site shortly afterwards and ownership of the site was then taken on by Swale Borough Council. Since then, the house has become buried under the soil and become shrouded in a canopy of sycamore though many local people still remember the house and played in and around it as children. More about the house can be found in Roger Cockett's notes on Rose Hill.

In 2015, HRGS undertook a nine day dig at the site as part of the Woodland Wildlife Hidden History project that involved thousands of volunteer hours as well as involving Grove Park School who took part in the dig. The success of the project and the interest that it generated showed the importance of the site in the local psyche. These digs were followed up by further excavations in 2016. The public consultation that took place showed overwhelming support for making more of the archaeology that is left at Rose Hill and this can be done in a way that is also beneficial for the biodiversity of the site.

Little is known about what the site may have been used for before the building of Rose Hill House. However, there is speculation that a high piece of ground close to a Roman road is unlikely to have no archaeological evidence that predates the house.

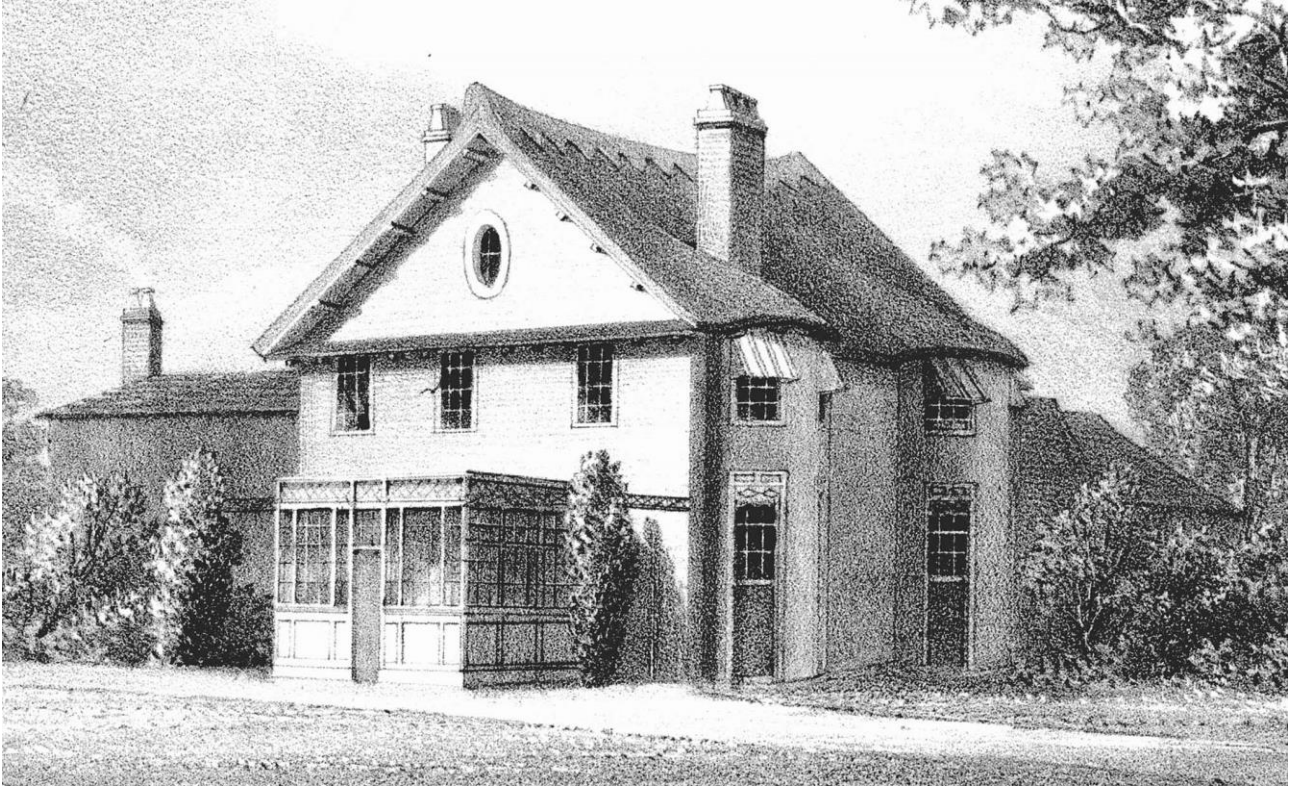


Figure 6: Rose Hill House (picture thought to date from 1838)

2.7. Infrastructure and interpretation

Currently, infrastructure consists of the following:

- A series of paths that have developed over time from desire lines. These include a main path around the site and a path with benches that incorporates some of the finest trees on the site. These paths are dynamic and reflect people's use of the woods. The main paths are shown overleaf
- Several litter bins at the entrance to the site
- Several unofficial access points at the north of the site.
- Vehicular access is provided by a tarmacked track to the rugby pitches to the north along the western side of Rose Hill Woods. This is also a public footpath. Vehicle access is also possible to the entrance of the wood on the eastern side using the access track for the rugby/cricket club car park

There is currently no interpretation at Rose Hill. Sittingbourne in Bloom have created a panel and HRGS are keen to have at least one panel to interpret Rose Hill House. Gore Court Cricket and Rugby Club have also stated that they would be happy to display information about the

woods in the pavilion. Public consultation showed support for interpretation of both the wildlife and the history of Rose Hill Woods.



Figure 7: Main paths at Rose Hill Woods

2.8. Habitats

In order to make appropriate management decisions it is necessary to assess the habitats that are found at Rose Hill Woods. This ensures that any future management does not compromise the wildlife and protected species on the site. The site can be split into broad habitat types that are described below.

2.8.1. Secondary woodland

Although there are some significant and specimen trees that will be dealt with in section 2.8.2 the majority of the site has become secondary woodland since the house at Rose Hill was abandoned. This is woodland that has grown up without assistance and is in large parts dominated by sycamore. It contains plants that have either self-seeded from species already in the woodland or are the remains of plants once in the garden at Rose Hill. Other tree species that have done well include, hawthorn, elder, holm oak and wych elm. Also present are beech, English elm, cherry, blackthorn, holly and lime.

The structure of the woodland currently benefits from a reasonable understorey in areas (the scrub and small trees that provide places for birds and other animals to perch, nest and take cover). Although some of this layer is made up of brambles it is important for the biodiversity of the site. However, the understorey is being threatened by the dominance of sycamore which casts a dense shade and is threatening the continued existence of the complex understorey. As of 2021, this problem is still present and some of the trees in the woodland are looking increasingly unstable and potentially unsafe.



Figure 8: Secondary woodland at Rose Hill

The ground flora in the woodland is typical of that found in secondary woodland with a mixture of ruderal plants that take advantage of open ground and some more traditional woodland plants such as bluebells and wood anemones. There are even records of enchanter's nightshade and sanicle, which along with the wood anemone are ancient woodland indicators. This kind of flora suggests that there may be a history of woodland that extends back several hundred years in this part of the site.

The ground layer is also dominated by ivy in places which is typical of secondary woodland. Ivy is often the victim of those who see it as something that smothers and ultimately chokes trees but this is not the case and ivy on trees does not need to be removed. It flowers late in

the season providing nectar and pollen and the berries provide vital food for birds during the winter.

The other significant feature of the ground layer is the presence of plants that are clearly from the garden at Rose Hill. These include winter aconites, several varieties of snowdrop and white sweet violets. Although not native plants, these garden escapees (or perhaps relics is more accurate) provide a splash of colour and a clue to the history of Rose Hill.

2.8.2. Significant and specimen trees

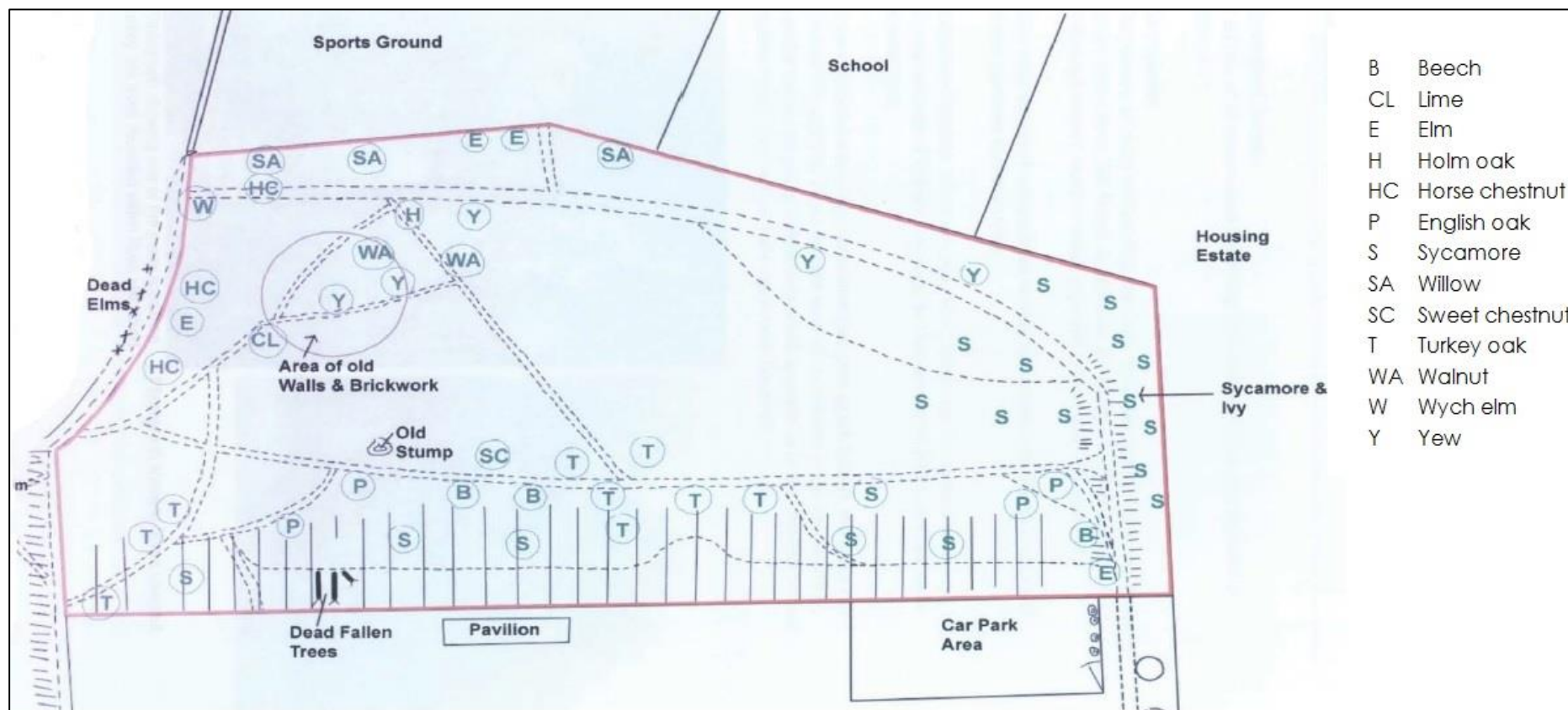


Figure 9: Significant and specimen trees

Source: adapted from Groundwork Management Plan (2007)

The mature trees of Rose Hill Wood are the jewels of the site with some appearing to date back approximately 200 years. These trees are not all native and many are relics from the formal planting associated with Rose Hill when it was a private residence. Figure nine shows the location of some of the biggest and most important trees at Rose Hill. Some of the trees have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) placed upon them and these can be seen overleaf. Most of the TPOs are found in the northern part of the site but some of the most important trees run along the line of the east to west running path at the south of the site and these are not covered by TPOs.

These trees include some impressive specimens of beech, turkey oak, English oak and sweet chestnut. Large, but relatively young, sycamore trees dominate in the eastern and north-eastern parts of the woodland.

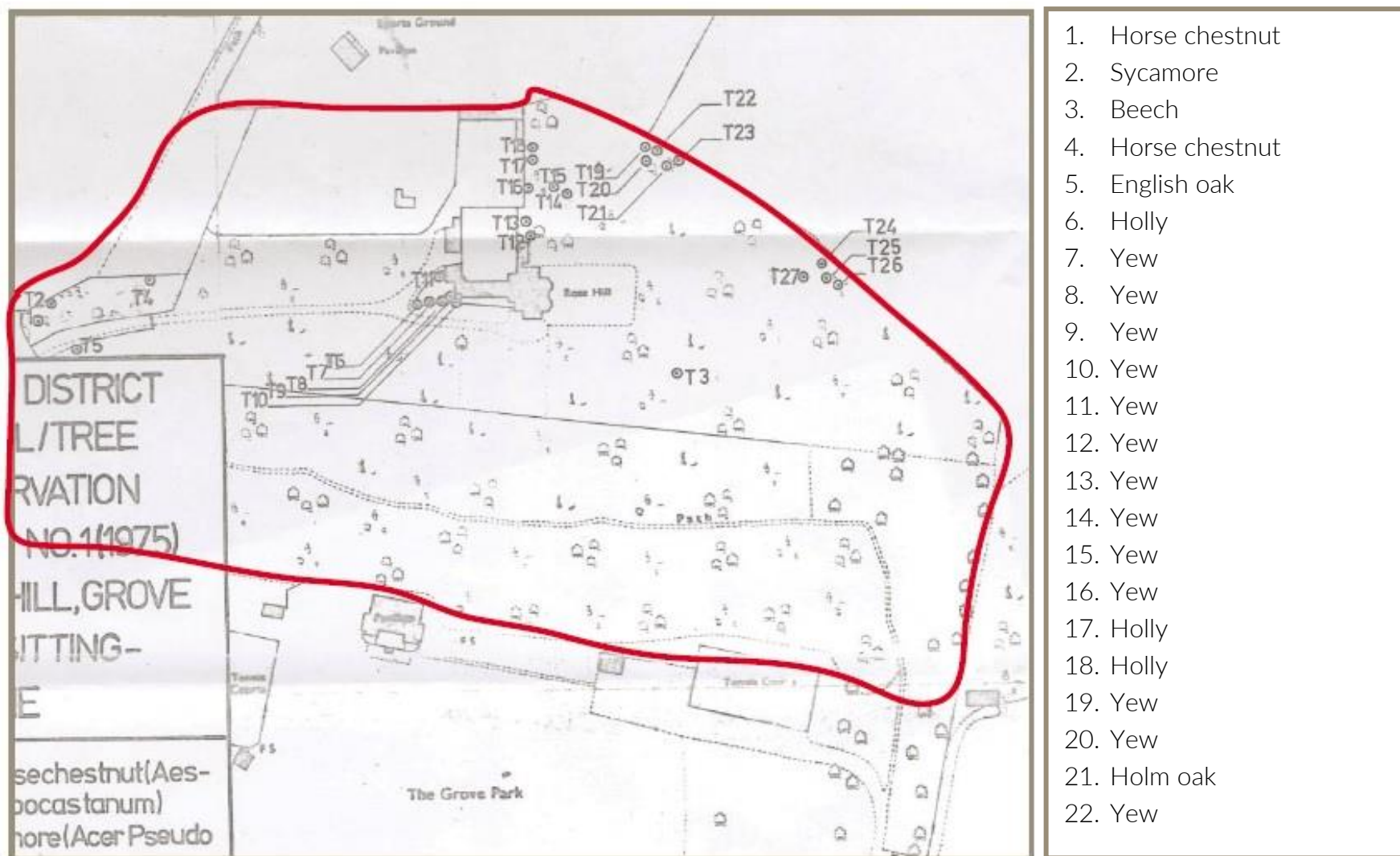


Figure 10: Tree Preservation Orders at Rose Hill

2.8.3. Paths

The only other habitat of note at Rose Hill Woods is the area of the paths. There are a significant number of paths in the woodland creating bare ground with opportunities for herbaceous plants between the interface of the path and the scrub layer. There are large, well-used paths and a network of desire lines created by people as they cross the wood or play in it. In places bare earth has been exposed where bikes have been used and/or footfall is particularly heavy. Although not particularly important for their ecological value, the total area taken up by paths is significant and more imaginative management of paths such as creating a zonal management structure could enhance the biodiversity of the site.



Figure 11: Part of the circular path at Rose Hill

2.9. Compartments

In order to assist with management planning and implementation, Rose Hill Woods has been split into different compartments that reflect both the geography and habitats found on site. Each compartment will have its own specific management objectives that need to be implemented.

Compartment summary

1	House	1.86 hectares
2	Specimen trees	1.39 hectares
3	Sycamore	0.72 hectares



Figure 12: Compartments at Rose Hill Woods

The compartments were chosen as they appear to be the most logical way to split the woodland. Rose Hill is to all intents and purposes a single block of secondary woodland but, on closer inspection, these three compartments became apparent. This is particularly the case if the 1946 imagery is viewed (Figure 4) as this clearly shows the three compartments. Compartment 1 is the old house and garden, compartment 2 contains a good percentage of the specimen trees and compartment 3 consists largely of sycamore trees. Each of these compartments will have different management proposals.

3. Management aims and objectives

3.1. Aims

The management plan has three overarching and linked aims:

Biodiversity. To maximise the potential for wildlife to flourish at Rose Hill Woods and to examine the resources available to achieve this.

History. To enable historical investigations to continue and ensure that the results of this work are known by local people and visitors to the site.

People. To make Rose Hill Woods a place that is well used, well valued and looked after by the local community.

3.2. Objectives

The management of the site has specific objectives that work towards achieving the aims identified above. These objectives have been established through public consultation, discussions with key stakeholders including Swale Borough Council and the Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership and the implementation of sound, key principles of nature conservation management and the conservation of archaeology. These objectives will form the basis of the management plan for the next five years, the implementation of which will be detailed in the work plan in section 6.

1. Increase biodiversity within habitats to maximise the number of native species that thrive in the woodland.
2. Enhance the site for visitors. Make Rose Hill Woods a place visited by more local residents who understand both the wildlife and historical value of the site.
3. Have a better understanding of the range of species found at Rose Hill Woods.
4. Carry out works that do not conflict with protected species and habitats legislation.
5. Control the spread of invasive species within the woodland.
6. Maintain the woodland as a safe place for people to enjoy.

4. Strengths, threats and constraints

Rose Hill Woods is clearly valued by local people and has many positive attributes. There are many regular users of the wood, Swale Borough Council is committed to the ongoing management of the site and the number of species that have been recorded is impressive for a small wood that has such heavy use. The use of the woodland by the Historical Research Group of Sittingbourne and Grove Park School are also excellent examples of how local green spaces can be used to provide opportunities for both volunteering and understanding local history and wildlife. However, there are threats to the nature conservation value, the historical remains at the site and local people's willingness to use the woodland.

4.1. Threats

- **Vandalism and anti-social behaviour** do impact Rose Hill Woods and some of those involved in consultation events have often mentioned that this does make them feel unsafe at times, particularly at night. However, vandalism is not common and usually at a fairly low level. For young people having places to explore and feel as if you are not constantly being watched is important. The interpretation of the site and information panels are going to be discussed in the near future and the potential for vandalism and arson will be considered seriously. Acts of vandalism should be dealt with promptly. The 'broken window' principle states that areas that appear to be well cared for attract less acts of anti-social behaviour.
- **Litter and dog faeces** are always an issue on urban sites and Rose Hill Woods is no different. Litter is often particularly bad along the main paths and near the entrances of the woods. These areas are particularly vulnerable to littering from those visiting nearby take away restaurants and shops. Minimal resources are available to deal with this and it creates a very bad first impression of the site. This is an area where community involvement could be of particular use and the appointment of a volunteer warden either officially or unofficially could also help.
- Local authorities are currently under significant financial strain. A lack of **resources** could compromise the ability to effectively manage the woodland. Rose Hill does not currently benefit from a ranger in the way that key strategic sites such as Milton Creek and Oare Gunpowder Works do. External funding applications, volunteers and continued support for the woodland can help to mitigate for these financial pressures and will form a key part of the management plan.
- **Invasive and/or non-native species** will exploit open space and should be controlled as they can become dominant if unchecked. With the exception of sycamore trees this is not a big issue at Rose Hill Woods
- **Dangerous trees** present a significant issue at Rose Hill Woods. Many of the trees are old and have signs of decay. Additionally, *Chalara fraxinea* (Ash die back) has been identified at Rose Hill Woods. Ash is relatively uncommon at the site but the disease will have an impact on those plants that are present and should be monitored.

4.2. Constraints

Although listed as constraints as these protected species limit certain activities, constraints should be seen as positive features of the woodland. The presence of constraints indicates that current management and conditions afford the privilege of Rose Hill Woods being chosen by species that are considered so valuable they are protected by legislation.

- **Bats** carry the highest level of protection and any works on the site should not impact upon their breeding and resting habitat. There are a considerable number of large trees at Rose Hill and the holes, decay and even fissures in the bark provide potential roosts for bats. These trees should be left untouched where safety concerns allow even at the end of their lives. To minimise the likelihood of impacting bat populations felling should take place between September and November and only after a visual inspection of trees.
- **Reptiles** are protected from harm by law and management activities must not lead to injury or death. Reptile populations are thought to be low at Rose Hill due to the limited basking opportunities and none of the prescriptions in the management plan are likely to cause injury or death to reptiles. The management plan will also identify actions that can enhance habitat for reptiles.
- All **wild birds**, their nests and eggs are protected from damage and destruction. As a consequence, potential nesting sites should not be mechanically managed during the nesting season (March to August). All but essential tree felling should also take place outside the bird breeding season.
- The presence of **Dormice** is thought to be unlikely, though not impossible, at Rose Hill Woods. The management activities prescribed within this document are unlikely to impact upon dormouse resting and breeding habitat. However, survey work for dormice is encouraged and the management work suggested in this plan will improve the diversity of plants that provide food for dormice.

5. Management prescriptions and rationale

Each of the compartments have specific objectives and this will be used as the rationale for each of the prescriptions. The work plan (an annex of this plan) will summarise all of the prescriptions.

Tree Felling

It is important to note that there are 27 trees at Rose Hill Woods that are covered by Tree Preservation Orders. These trees should not be felled unless they are dead, dying or dangerous.

The felling of trees was a divisive issue during consultation and it was not possible to get a clear consensus of what people wanted to see happen. The only proposal was that sycamores should be felled. Opinions included:

- People like the tree cover provided and do not want any trees to be felled;
- During prioritisation there was some support for cutting sycamores and replacing with native shrubs and trees though little opposition either;
- There was, however, support for creating glades where the house used to stand to aid with interpretation which would include felling sycamores;
- There was also overwhelming support for managing the wood for wildlife though most people wanted to balance this with managing for people as well as wildlife. Managing for wildlife would include reducing the dominance of sycamore;
- When asked about the management of trees nine people only wanted dangerous trees to be removed, six people wanted sycamore to be removed and replaced with native shrubs and six people wanted sycamore removed to recreate the garden at Rose Hill. Although more people wanted to see sycamores removed it is not an overwhelming majority.
- Four of the telephone interviewees were positive about the removal of at least some sycamore trees and one was against.

On balance, some management of sycamore trees appears to be favoured by the majority but to balance the views of those worried about the impact this may have on the character of the woodland the removal should remain small scale and be phased.

5.1. Management prescriptions throughout the site

Certain operations apply across the whole of the site.

5.1.1. Invasive species control

Although invasive species do not pose a major problem at the current time, vigilance and eradication of non-native species now can prevent time consuming and/or expensive work in the future. The following species are viewed as the most important at this point in time:

- **Cherry laurel.** This garden escapee often finds its way into woodlands and can become a major problem. Cutting plants where it is seen is appropriate at this stage so that the spread by sexual reproduction can be limited. The use of herbicides should only be considered if the plant spreads rapidly and threatens to dominate in areas.
- **Sycamore.** Mature sycamore trees will be dealt with later in this section and there is no consensus about what to do with the mature trees. However, sycamore saplings should be removed when seen, particularly in areas that are being kept clear or areas where other shrub species are being promoted.
- **Holm oak.** There is only one large holm oak tree at Rose Hill and there is no suggestion that this tree should be removed. As with sycamore, the removal of saplings around the tree can help to prevent its spread.

These activities could make ideal volunteer tasks.



Figure 13: Invasive species at Rose Hill Woods

5.1.2. Monitoring wildlife

An essential element of assessing the impact of management activities is to monitor wildlife. Some of this can be carried out by volunteers where the skills exist and training can be provided. Developing relationships with some of the recording groups can help both build skills within the group and help generate more information about species distribution within the site. It is important that any recording that does take place is submitted to the recording groups and/or the Kent and Medway Biological Recording Centre. This should also include a survey of the significant trees on the site.

5.1.3. Wildlife friendly features

During consultation, people were asked how they felt about the introduction of wildlife friendly features in the wood such as bat and bird boxes, dead hedges and reptile hibernacula. The response to this was universally popular and should be considered not just for the potential benefits for wildlife but also because people can be involved in the installation and

monitoring of these features and they can also act as easy of helping to inform the public of what is being done to promote wildlife on the site and how.

- **Bat and bird boxes** are cheap to purchase but care needs to be taken when installing and checking due to Working at Height Regulations. There is also a danger that boxes can be vandalised, which is not a pleasant prospect if there are nesting or sheltering animals inside.
- **Dead hedges** can be produced with brash if any felling work takes place in the woodland. They are easy to construct and can also be used to help keep people from certain sensitive areas (though by no means a barrier). They are a possible fire risk.
- **Reptile hibernacula** are easy to create and have no cost. They are holes in the ground filled with rubble and wood and then covered with soil that create places for overwintering animals including reptiles, small mammals and invertebrates.

5.1.4. Clearance of litter

Removing litter from the site is a very important way of improving the image of the site to local residents. Unfortunately, this work needs to take place at regular intervals as the results of a one-off spring clean can soon appear to have not happened. However, if one or two regular users of the woods can be encouraged to pick up a little litter every time they visit the overall impact can be impressive as can be seen at The Meads Community Woodland.

5.1.5. Maintaining public access

There is an extensive network of paths throughout the woodland that have been created by usage rather than by intent. The consultation asked people about paths. There was some support for surfacing and formalising the main path around the wood to make access easier in the winter but also others were vehemently opposed to surfacing of paths. There was also some support for blocking off some of the smaller and less used paths to minimise disturbance to wildlife but the majority did not want to see this happen. Zonal ride management could be implemented in some areas to help keep paths drier in the winter and this will be explored in greater detail in the compartment management prescriptions.

Although there are several unauthorised access points and nothing to stop motorbike access it is not proposed to do anything about this at the current time. Motorbike access is only occasional and preventing access is both costly and unlikely to be successful to those that are particularly determined to gain access.

5.1.6. Interpretation

There is currently no interpretation of the site. The community consultation events did reveal a high level of support for interpreting the site. Both the wildlife and the history were seen as important and that proper interpretation could enhance visits and help people to understand the significance of the site. Information panels were favoured but concerns were raised about

how vandal proof any installations would be. The Woodland Wildlife Hidden History website does carry information about the site and whilst a web browser search for 'Rose Hill Woods, Sittingbourne' does find this page it is probably not used much.

5.1.7. Furniture

During public consultation several people mentioned a requirement for benches. The woodland is small and does not have a great requirement for seating. However, several benches made from felled trees could be placed at the steepest part of the slopes on the main circular path.

5.1.8. Community engagement

There is currently no Friends of Rose Hill Woods and the formation of a group received a mixed reception during consultation. One of the reasons for a lack of enthusiasm was that there may not be many things for a 'Friends of' group to do except pick up litter. Although the need for a group is not as clear as it is at The Meads Community Woodland there are a variety of tasks that could be carried out by volunteers and the work plan will outline a number of other tasks that can be undertaken by volunteers. It should also be noted that the HRGS are very active at the site and are keen to continue to have a strong presence.

It is suggested that two approaches could be taken. A number of people have expressed an interest in joining a group over the years and these people can be approached to see if there is a real appetite to form a group. Should this not be successful (and even if it is) it may be possible to identify and appoint one or more volunteer wardens who are keen to pick litter and do other light tasks independently. They can then be given resources to help facilitate their tasks.

5.2. Compartment 1: House

This compartment covers the main area of the house and gardens and at first glance appears to be typical secondary woodland. However, further inspection shows that there are some interesting specimen trees and evidence of the existence of Rose Hill House that reveals itself as the remains of walls from the garden and the footings of the house. The evidence gathered from community consultation overwhelming showed that people would like to make a feature of the house, its remains and the voluntary work that has taken place at the wood to reveal so much about the history of the site. The aerial image from the 1940s gives a better idea than modern day imagery of how the house used to sit within Rose Hill Woods. The majority of the house and gardens still lies within the boundary of the wood though a small part of the garden in the north has been lost to the rugby pitches. It should be noted that the aerial



Figure 14: Compartment 1 as it looked in the 1940s

imagery is only a guide as to the current location. Where two images have been knitted together it is possible to see that parts of the garden are shown twice on the photo about 25 metres apart.

5.2.1. Management of trees around the house

The area that the main house stood at Rose Hill has been excavated by the Heritage Research Group of Sittingbourne. It is also an area that has fairly recently been colonised by sycamore trees. The sycamore trees around the house should be felled. The stumps should either be treated to prevent regrowth or stems that regrow should be removed annually. Trees with TPOs must be retained.

5.2.2. Interpretation of the house

As well as allowing sunlight to reach the woodland floor, the other reason for creating a glade around the house is so that the house can be interpreted in a way that allows visitors to understand what used to be on site. Although the interpretation of the site may require external funding some of the options that might be considered include the following suggestions that all received support during the consultation process:

- Exposure of the footings of the house and the garden wall in the area of the glade. This would be a way of making a feature of the house. Vegetation would need to be controlled in this area as regrowth would be rapid. This could be cleared annually either one metre around features to be exposed or the entire glade. As an alternative to annual clearance, this could be achieved by mowing at selected times during the year. The exact timing of mowing would depend upon the flowering plants that appear in this area. There would be considerable resource considerations for this option and it would probably depend upon volunteer input.
- Install interpretation at the house to help visitors understand the area. Although this could be an information panel there are other ways that this could be done including using reclaimed materials from the house to create a frame for the interpretation or using etched metal. As this part of the woodland is not overlooked the materials used and the ease of replacement of materials will need to be considered carefully.

During consultation, there was some support for the recreation of the garden as it was before the house was abandoned. There are a number of plants from the garden that still thrive so there is some evidence for what it would have looked like. The cost of doing this as well as the cost of maintenance would almost certainly be prohibitive. However, aerial photography can be used to get an idea of how open the site used to be and this could guide future tree management at Rose Hill.

5.3. Compartment 2: Specimen trees

This compartment contains some of the most spectacular trees in the wood and although they are not covered by Tree Preservation Orders, they are considered to be amongst the most valuable features of Rose Hill Woods. The compartment also contains the area nearest the sports pavilion and the cricket pitch which does suffer from litter.

5.3.1. Thinning around specimen trees

The specimen trees of this compartment mostly follow the path that runs from east to west. This is a well-used path with two benches. In order to make more of these special trees thinning of some of the sycamore trees growing around them is proposed. This will prevent the sycamore trees from growing into the crowns of the specimen trees. It will also have the benefit of creating additional light at the woodland floor which may benefit growth of the understorey and provide conditions suitable for wildlife including nesting birds and reptiles.



5.3.2. Glade creation

One of the most important parts of any woodland for its wildlife are open spaces. This not only increases the amount of woodland edge that wildlife thrives in but also creates a more open feel for people and gives them space to play in and explore. A glade is proposed at the southernmost edge of the woodland next to the sports pavilion. This provides benefits for wildlife but also provides a sheltered area in the sun to view cricket as was done in the past. Sycamore stumps should be treated and regrowth of sycamore should be cut every year or the area should be managed as grassland.

Rose Hill Woods - Management



- Rose Hill compartments
- Rose Hill Management**
 - Rose Hill House glade
 - Southern glade
 - Thin sycamore
 - Cut sycamore and replant
- Rose Hill House**
 - Outbuildings
 - Rose Hill House
 - Walled Garden of Rose Hill

© White Horse Ecology 2021

0 20 40 60 80 100 m



Base map © Google Maps 2021

Figure 16: Management prescriptions for Rose Hill Woods

5.4. Compartment 3: Sycamore

Compartment 3 comprises the eastern section of the woodland and is the area of the main circular path as it enters the wood in the south-east until the path leaves the wood to enter the rugby pitch and then Grove Park School. This makes it the busiest part of the wood for pedestrian traffic. It also makes it the area of the woodland that suffers most from litter. It is also the part of the woodland that is most dominated by sycamore. This dominance of the canopy is leading to the shading out of the understorey.

5.4.1. Sycamore thinning and replanting with native species

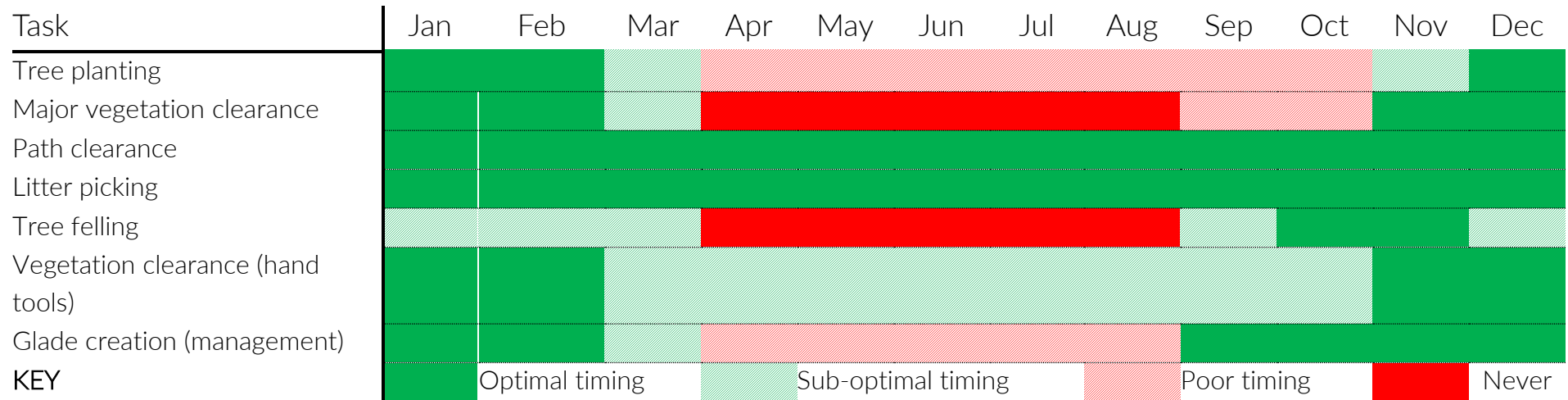
The recommendation for this part of the woodland is to fell sycamore trees where the budget allows and replant with native shrub and tree species including, hawthorn, cherry, field maple, wych elm and birch. It should be noted that there are several trees that have TPOs within the compartment. This will allow the recovery of the understorey that will help to ensure that tree species diversity is maintained within Rose Hill Woods and that nesting habitat for birds and potential foraging habitat is increased.



Figure 17: The main path in compartment 3

6. Appendix I: Timing of conservation tasks

Table 2: Optimal timing for conservation activities



7. Appendix II: Species list

The following is a list of all of the species that have been recorded at Rose Hill Woods. These records have been reported by volunteers, seen by White Horse Ecology in 2021, Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership officers or form part of a 2006 survey undertaken by Kent Wildlife Trust. As such, it is a fairly rudimentary list and should not be seen even as a baseline survey but as incidental records submitted during site visits.

Species	Scientific name	Compartment (where known)	Las recorded (where known)
Birds			
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipter nisus</i>		12/02/2016
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		12/02/2016
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinera</i>	Grove Park School	12/02/2016
Gold finch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		12/02/2016
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>		12/02/2016
Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		12/02/2016
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>		12/02/2016
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		12/02/2016
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		12/02/2016
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		12/02/2016
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		12/02/2016
Black headed gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Grove Park School	12/02/2016
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Grove Park School	12/02/2016
Coal tit	<i>Parus ater</i>		12/02/2016
Blue tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>		12/02/2016
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>		12/02/2016
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		12/02/2016
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		2006
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		12/02/2016
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>		2006
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>		12/02/2016
Gold crest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		12/02/2016
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		12/02/2016
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		12/02/2016
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		2006

Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	12/02/2016
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	12/02/2016
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	12/02/2016
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	2006

Plants and trees

Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	26/08/2021
Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	26/08/2021
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	26/08/2021
Ground elder	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	26/08/2021
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	26/08/2021
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	26/08/2021
Wood anemone	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	15/03/2015
Barren brome	<i>Anisantha sterillis</i>	2006
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	26/08/2021
Greater burdock	<i>Arctium lappa</i>	2006
Lesser burdock	<i>Arctium minus</i>	26/08/2021
Lords and ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>	26/08/2021
Black horehound	<i>Ballota nigra</i>	2006
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	03/09/2015
False brome	<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>	2006
Shepherd's purse	<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	2006
Hedge bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	26/08/2021
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	03/09/2015
Sweet chestnut	<i>Castanea sativa</i>	03/09/2015
Enchanter's nightshade	<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>	03/09/2015
Hemlock	<i>Conium maculatum</i>	2006
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	26/08/2021
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	26/08/2021
Male fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	26/08/2021
Greater willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	03/09/2015
Winter aconite	<i>Eranthis hyemalis</i>	26/08/2021
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	26/08/2021
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	26/08/2021
Snowdrop	<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>	03/09/2015
Cleavers	<i>Gallium aparine</i>	03/09/2015
Dove's-foot crane's-bill	<i>Geranium molle</i>	2006
Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	26/08/2021
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	26/08/2021
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	26/08/2021

Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	26/08/2021
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	26/08/2021
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	15/03/2015
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	26/08/2021
Stinking iris	<i>Iris foetidissima</i>	26/08/2021
Walnut	<i>Juglans regia</i>	03/09/2015
White dead nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	15/03/2015
Red dead nettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	15/03/2015
Garden privet	<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i>	03/09/2015
Common mallow	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	26/08/2021
Wood millet	<i>Millium effesum</i>	2006
Hart's tongue fern	<i>Phyllitis scolopendrium</i>	26/08/2021
Greater plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>	03/09/2015
Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	26/08/2021
Wild cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	26/08/2021
Cherry laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	26/08/2021
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	26/08/2021
Turkey oak	<i>Quercus cerris</i>	26/08/2021
Holm oak	<i>Quercus ilex</i>	26/08/2021
English oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	26/08/2021
Lesser celandine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	15/03/2015
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	26/08/2021
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolia</i>	26/08/2021
Wood dock	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	26/08/2021
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	26/08/2021
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	26/08/2021
Sanicle	<i>Sanicula europaea</i>	2006
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	03/09/2015
Common chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>	2006
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	26/08/2021
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale agg.</i>	26/08/2021
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	26/08/2021
Lime	<i>Tilia x europaea</i>	26/08/2021
Colt's foot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	2006
Wych elm	<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	26/08/2021
English elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i>	26/08/2021
Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	26/08/2021
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	15/03/2015
Ivy leaved speedwell	<i>Veronica hederifolia</i>	15/03/2015
Guelder rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	26/08/2021

Sweet violet	<i>Viola odorata</i>	03/09/2015
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Butterflies and moths

Holly blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	2006
Speckled wood	<i>Perarge aegeria</i>	2006
A longhorn moth	<i>Nemophora degeerella</i>	2006
Nettle tap	<i>Anthophila fabriciana</i>	2006

Other invertebrates

Seven spotted ladybird	<i>Coccinella 7 punctata</i>	2006
Buff-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>	2006
Red-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus lapidaries</i>	2006
White-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus lucorum</i>	2006
A centipede	<i>Lithobius forficatus</i>	2006
A woodlouse	<i>Oniscus asellus</i>	2006
A woodlouse	<i>Porcellio scabur</i>	2006
Great black slug	<i>Arion ater</i>	2006
Brown lipped slug	<i>Cepaea normalis</i>	2006
Garden snail	<i>Helix aspersa</i>	2006

Mammals

Grey squirrel	<i>Sciurus corolinensis</i>	15/03/2015
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Reptiles

Slow-worm	<i>Anguilis fragilis</i>	23/09/2014
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Fungi

Horse mushroom	<i>Agaricus arvensis</i>	2006
	<i>Agrocybe praecox</i>	2006
Jelly ear	<i>Auricularia auricular-judae</i>	2006
Many zoned polypore	<i>Coriolus versicolor</i>	2006
	<i>Enteridium lycoperdon</i>	2006
	<i>Hyphodonta sambuci</i>	2006
	<i>Lycogala epidendron</i>	2006
Fairy ring	<i>Marasmius oreades</i>	2006
	<i>Peziza micropus</i>	2006
	<i>Pluteus cervinus</i>	2006
Candle snuff	<i>Xylaria hypoxylon</i>	2006
Dead man's fingers	<i>Xylaria polymorpha</i>	2006

8. Appendix III: Summary of public consultations

Rose Hill Summary

Comments in **RED** are from phone interviews

How often

More than once a week	3
Once a week	2
Once a month	2
Once a year	6
Not for years	3
Never	2

Why do you go?

Dog walking	4
Litter picking	1
Peace	1
History	4
Walk	3
Local	1
Meeting people	1
Enjoy woodlands	3
Rugby and cricket	1

What do you like?

Easy access to children's play area	1
Wildlife	7
Peace and tranquillity	5
Meet people	1
History	6
Tree planting	2
Parking	1

Prioritisation Exercise (22/1/17)						
Respondents allowed one green dot to show support and one red dot to show opposition						
Expose footings and garden walls of Rose Hill house						
YES	2	NO	0			
Friends Of group						
YES	0	NO	1			
Cut sycamores and replace with native shrubs						
YES	0	NO	1			
Addition of wildlife friendly features (bat boxes, reptile hibernacula, dead hedges)						
YES	5	NO	0			
Create glades where the house used to be to help wildlife and make feature of the house						
YES	2	NO	0			
Simple benches made from logs						
YES	3	NO	0			
Respondents also given the opportunity to rank six suggested actions						
Numbers below show number of people who ranked ideas in each position						
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Expose footings	4	1	3	2	1	0
Friends Of group	2	1	0	0	1	6
Cut sycamores and replace	0	1	0	1	7	2
Wildlife friendly features	2	8	1	0	0	0
Create glade around house	2	1	7	0	0	1
Benches from logs	1	0	0	7	1	2

Place for people to go 1

What puts you off

Gangs of kids 1

Drug dealers 1

Graffiti and litter 1

Feel unsafe 2

Steep access 2

Dog poo 2

Muddy bits 2

Dumped garden rubbish 1

IDEAS

	YES	NO	DON'T MIND
More litter bins	6	1	1
Picnic benches	5		3
Maps	4		4
Information signs (wildlife and history)	7		
Make a feature of old house	8		
Surfaced paths	4	4	1
Seating	5		3
Open areas for recreation	3	2	2
More family events	5		3
Volunteer activities	8		2

What would you like to see?

Make a feature of old house 2

Wooden playhouse in the style of the house with ropes and swings 1

Bat boxes, bird boxes, bug houses and dead hedges 1

McDonalds picking up litter 1

Interpretation of old house	3
Signage	5
Pond	1
More wildlife friendly areas	1
More seating	2
More events	1
School visits	1
Use old trees for benches	1

MANAGEMENT

Trees

Only remove dangerous trees	9
Remove some sycamore and replant	6
Remove sycamore and recreate garden	6
Other	1
Don't mind	1
Recreating garden too expensive	2
I like it the way it is	1
Increase numbers of trees	1
Retain character of the woods but increase species diversity	1
Make clear areas with seating	1
Access by foot and by bike easier with tall trees	1

General

Don't manage	0
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Manage for wildlife	5
Manage for people	0
Bit of both	12
Other	0
Don't mind	0

Just a bit of tidying up

Wildlife should be encouraged and monitored

Few woods in urban area and could be valuable resource for schools etc.

The rubbish is an eyesore

Paths

Leave	8
Block some paths	4
Surface some paths	6
Other	0
Don't mind	1

Nearby KCC footpath not very buggy friendly

All weather paths may discourage use of informal paths

Foot access can be difficult in winter

Archaeology

Add info to website	13
Create a panel	13
Expose footings to make a feature	14
Recreate garden	8
Other	0
Don't mind	1

Information boards and picnic area would create a destination

Footings may get vandalised

More information the better

Friends of

8

Graeme Tuff

- Increase species diversity and reduce sycamore
- Create a glade that is sympathetic to archaeology
- Survey of estate trees
- Leave informal paths
- No litter bins in woodland
- New furniture should be rustic (logs)
- Perhaps outline of house to be interpreted

Ali Corbel

- Interpretation panels for wildlife and archaeology
- School involvement
- Waymarkers

Bob Bicker

- Likes understorey at Rose Hill and would support removal of more sycamore
- Don't remove the ivy
- Litter a problem

Mike Baldock

- Likes it as it is
- No necessity for cutting trees
- Don't remove the ivy
- Log seats on hills at the sides of woodland
- Paths should be left
- Interpretation panels
- Would like Swale to buy land to west of Rose Hill
- Supports interpreting the house on the ground but sees problems

Malcolm Moore

- Interpretation panel
- Tidying up undergrowth and removing dead trees

Rose Hill should be interpreted but don't leave holes

Paths OK

No benches or tables

Friends Of group could do litter picking but what else

Richard Emmett

Supports glade around the house plus marking shape of house

Interpretation panels (could be housed at Cricket Club)

Self-guided walk

Likes very old trees and sees them as important

Andrew Mayfield

Archaeological work looking for other time periods than the house

Clearance of glades where known archaeology is with linking pathways between glades

Make remains of archaeology more obvious

Archaeological trail through woodlands

Interpretation plan

Panels at Cricket Club and Grove School

Permanent survey grid to aid future examinations of the site

School archaeology and history project

Write up of investigations

Simon Mason

Very positive about school involvement and wants more both archaeology and Forest Schools