

Wildlife Site Survey Report for: Bower Heath Common

Site Ref:	41/006	Site size (ha):	8.13ha
District:	St Albans	Grid Ref:	TL145167
Surveyors:	AH, CL		
Date of survey:	1/8/12	Weather:	Dry, overcast
		Duration:	3.5hrs

Geology:	Bedrock:	LEWES NODULAR CHALK FORMATION AND SEAFORD CHALK FORMATION (UNDIFFERENTIATED) - CHALK
	Superficial Deposits:	CLAY WITH FLINTS FORMATION – CLAY , SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL

Original criteria:	H.2.2e, H.6.1	Habitat:	secondary woodland, scrub and unimproved acidic grassland
Criteria met:	H.2.2b Neutral (9 indicators) H.2.2c Acid (7 indicators) H.2.2e Mixed (14 indicators) H.6.1 – mosaic (woodland is borderline at 10 AWIs and structure is not brilliant, but neutral/acid/mixed all robust)		
Changes to boundary?	Minor adjustment to fit boundary at western corner as shown on map		

New Site Description:	Common Land surrounded by residential gardens and farmland, dissected by a number of roads. The site is secondary woodland, scrub and unimproved acidic grassland. The woodland canopy is mainly Pedunculate Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) with Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) an understorey is rather sparse in places but consists of Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), suckering English Elm (<i>Ulmus procera</i>) natural Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>) and Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) and areas of mature scrub of Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>). The field layer is dominated in parts by Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) with Bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides</i> sp.). Dog's Mercury (<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>) and other woodland indicators are present but rather scarce. An open glade east of Bower Heath Lane supports acid grassland with Common Bent (<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>), Red Fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i> agg), Heath Bedstraw (<i>Galium saxatile</i>), and Sheep's Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>). Areas of acid grassland to the western side of the site support species such as Common Bent (<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>), Creeping Soft-grass (<i>Holcus mollis</i>), Field Wood-rush (<i>Luzula campestris</i>), Heath Bedstraw (<i>Galium saxatile</i>), Sheep's Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>) and Harebell (<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>). Wildlife site criteria: Mosaic site with grassland and woodland indicators
Compartment 1: GRASSLAND EAST OF BOWER HEATH LANE (Open grassy glade)	Unimproved species-poor acid grassland: Common Bent (<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>), Red Fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), Sheep's Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>), Heath Bedstraw (<i>Galium saxatile</i>). Fairly species-poor but with good characteristic species of acid grassland and lacking negatives. SC herbs 40%
Compartment 2: GRASSLAND WEST OF BOWER HEATH LANE	Acid grassland, largely unimproved, divided into two halves by access track. South-west of track Red Fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), Common Bent (<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>), Yorkshire Fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>) around edges. Common Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>) but only a little Sheep's Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>) and Heath Bedstraw (<i>Galium saxatile</i>).

	North-east of track Red Fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), Common Bent (<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>), Creeping Soft-grass (<i>Holcus mollis</i>), Field Woodrush (<i>Luzula campestris</i>), plentiful coverage of Heath Bedstraw (<i>Galium saxatile</i>) and Sheep's Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>) a small amount of Harebell (<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>) SC herbs 35%
Compartment 3: SIDE OF LANE/TRACK	Habitat very limited and in part overgrown by brambles but with a few species characteristic of more calcareous acid grassland Ladies Bedstraw (<i>Galium verum</i>) and Black Knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i>) SC herbs 35%
Compartment 4: SECONDARY WOODLAND	Unmanaged mature secondary woodland. Canopy dominated by Pedunculate Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) with Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>), understorey of Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>) and Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), stands of mature hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>). Though secondary does achieve 10 ancient woodland indicators perhaps because common land has a long continuity*. *Note: This number of AWI's probably with the addition of Bluebell (which could be the wild species <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> but too late in the season to confirm) in secondary woodland may be because of some tree cover on the boundary providing a reservoir for ancient woodland species when the common was more open and due to the long history of the site as common land allowing woodland relics to persist.

Fauna:	Birds: Stock Dove, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Wren, Blackbird, Nuthatch, Long-tailed Tit, Blue Tit, Magpie
	Mammals: Rabbit
	Invertebrates: Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Field Grasshopper

Invasive species:	<i>Lamium galeobdolon argentium</i> in woodland (location marked on map), one Cherry Laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>) in woodland, Rosebay Willowherb (<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>) minor introductions from garden rubbish on boundary. Some small scale dumping of garden rubbish on boundaries and fly tipping (also mainly garden rubbish) around small car parking area
Adjacent landuse	Mostly surrounded by agricultural field and improved grasslands of little interest. Wall Wood does have some variety and diversity of structure (including dead wood) mainly Cherry, Pedunculate Oak, Sweet Chestnut and Yew with field flora of Bracken, Dog's Mercury and Early Dog-violet, but is not very species-rich.
Current Management:	Rabbits and deer help to keep grassland open and sward of a sufficient low height suitable for its distinctive acidic grassland flora
Recommended Management:	Some scrub clearing to keep grassland area open
Comp 1	GRASSLAND – opening up areas, enlarging areas of grassland - rabbits may be maintaining these as open areas – controlling encroachment by brambles and scrub.
Comp 2	GRASSLAND – as above
Comp 3	Clearing back brambles
Comp 4	WOODLAND – Create some clearings in the wood and consider planting with appropriate local-provenance tree species to ensure regeneration and a developing mid-layer.

Woodland habitat condition (secondary woodland area to East)		
Attributes	Targets for positive condition	detail
Structure and natural processes	UNDERSTOREY (2-5m) present over at least 20% of total stand area (NB: Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>) and Oak (<i>Quercus</i>) woods often have sparse shrub layer)	Holly dominated with hazel towards boundary, young sycamore and hawthorn, suckering elm
	CANOPY COVER present over 30-90% of stand area (Coppiced stands have lower canopy cover)	85-90% mainly pedunculate oak and sycamore
	AGE CLASSES - at least three, spread across the average life expectancy of the commonest trees	Yes but lack of mid-aged oak /established saplings
	OLD GROWTH FEATURES: Some areas of relatively undisturbed mature/old growth stands or a scatter of large trees allowed to grow to over maturity/death on site (e.g. min of 10% of the woodland or 5-10 trees/hectare	Developing on pedunculate oaks and sycamore but not a large amount
	FALLEN DEAD: A minimum of 3 fallen lying trees >20cm diameter per ha and 4 trees per ha allowed to die standing	No
Regeneration	Signs of seedlings and saplings growth? – describe age classes and density	Yes but probably being grazed by rabbits and deer
	No more than 20% of areas regenerated by planting as opposed to natural regeneration?	No planting
	Are the new plantings all with natives?	No planting
Composition: trees and shrubs	At least 95% of cover in any one layer of site native or acceptably naturalised species	Yes
	Death/destruction of native woodland species through effects of deer/squirrels or other external unnatural factors (e.g fires/flytipping etc) not more than 10% by number of trees? Or not more than 10% of total area ?	Rabbits and deer preventing regeneration

Species List

Scientific Name	Common Name	WS inds (*a/n/c/w/f) & neg inds (*.)	Comp1 grassland east of Bower Heath Lane	Comp2 grassland west of Bower Heath Lane	Comp3 side of lane	Comp4 woodland	all inds	no of comps total
			DAFOR	DAFOR	DAFOR	DAFOR		
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Maple, Field	*				+	X	1
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore					F		1
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow			+				1
<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	Agrimony	c/n			R		X	1
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Bent, Common	a/n	F	O		R	X	3
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Mustard, Garlic					+		1
<i>Anisantha sterilis</i>	Brome, Barren				+			1
<i>Arctium lappa</i>	Burdock, Greater				+			1
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Oat-grass, False	- a/c/n/w		R	+			2
<i>Ballota nigra</i>	Horehound, Black				+			1
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	- a/c				+		1
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Birch, Silver					+		1
<i>Buddleia davidii</i>	Butterfly Bush*					+		1
<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	Harebell	c/a		+			X	1
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Knapweed, Black/Com'n	c/n			+		X	1
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Mouse-ear, Common	- a		R		+		2
<i>Chaerophyllum temulum</i>	Chervil, Rough					+		1
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Willowherb, Rosebay	- a/c	R					1
<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>	Enchanter's-nightshade	*				+	X	1
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Thistle, Creeping	- a/c/n/w		R		R		2
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Thistle, Spear	- a/c/n/w				+		1
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	*				R	X	1
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn					R		1
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Hawk's-beard, Smooth		+					1
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cocksfoot	- a/c/n/w			+	+		2
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Fern, Scaly Male	*				+	X	1
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Fern, Broad Buckler	*	+			R	X	2
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Fern, Male		R	+		R		3
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	Willowherb, Broad-leaved					+		1
<i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>	Willowherb, Hoary					+		1
<i>Festuca rubra agg.</i>	Fescue, Red (family)		O	O				2
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash					+		1
<i>Galeopsis agg.</i>	Hemp-nettle, agg.					+		1
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	- c/n				+		1
<i>Galium saxatile</i>	Bedstraw, Heath	a	F	F			X	2
<i>Galium verum</i>	Bedstraw, Lady's	c/n			+		X	1
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb Robert					R		1
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens					+		1
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground Ivy			R	O	+		3
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy					R		1
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed			R		+		2
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog	- a/c/n/w	R	R		R		3

Scientific Name	Common Name	WS inds (*a/n/c/w/f) & neg inds (*^-)	Comp1 grassland east of Bower Heath Lane	Comp2 grassland west of Bower Heath Lane	Comp3 side of lane	Comp4 woodland	all inds	no of comps total
			DAFOR	DAFOR	DAFOR	DAFOR		
<i>Holcus mollis</i>	Soft-grass, Creeping	a		R			x	1
<i>Hyacinthoides</i> sp.	Bluebell species					R		1
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Cat's-ear, Common		+	+				2
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	*				R	x	1
<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>	Archangel, Yellow	*				+	x	1
<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i> ssp <i>argentatum</i>	Archangel, Yellow, cultivated*					R		1
<i>Lapsana communis</i>	Nipplewort				+			1
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle					+		1
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	Wood-rush, Field	a/n		R			x	1
<i>Malus</i> sp.	Malus, cultivar*					+		1
<i>Malus pumila</i>	Apple, domestic*			+				1
<i>Malva</i> sp.	Mallow, garden cultivar					+		1
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's Mercury	*				R	x	1
<i>Moehringia trinervia</i>	Sandwort, Three-veined	*				+	x	1
<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	Forget-me-not, Field					+		1
<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>	Forget-me-not, Wood, cultivated*					R		1
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Marjoram, Wild	c				+	x	1
<i>Plantago major</i>	Plantain, Greater	- a/c/n				+		1
<i>Poa annua</i>	Meadow-grass, Annual					R		1
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Meadow-grass, Rough	- w				+		1
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Selfheal					+		1
<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	Laurel, Cherry*					+		1
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken					R		1
<i>Quercus robur</i>	Oak, Pedunculate		+	+		F		3
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Buttercup, Meadow	n		+			x	1
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Buttercup, Creeping	- w		R		R		2
<i>Rosa canina</i> agg	Rose, Dog					+		1
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble		R	R	F	R		4
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	Raspberry					+		1
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Sorrel, Common	n	+	R			x	2
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	Sorrel, Sheep's	a	R	R			x	2
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Dock, Broad-leaved	- c/n/w		+		+		2
<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	Dock, Wood					+		1
<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	Pearlwort, Procumbent					+		1
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Willow, Goat					+		1
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder					R		1
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Ragwort, Common	- a/c/n	+					1
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Sow-thistle, Prickly					+		1
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Woundwort, Hedge					+		1
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Stitchwort, Lesser	a/n	O	R			x	2
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	Elm, Wych	*				+	x	1
<i>Ulmus procera</i>	Elm, English					R		1

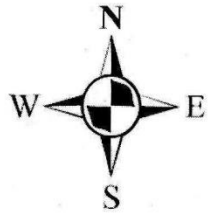
Scientific Name	Common Name	WS inds (* /a/n/c/w/f) & neg inds (* -)	Comp1 grassland east of Bower Heath Lane	Comp2 grassland west of Bower Heath Lane	Comp3 side of lane	Comp4 woodland	all inds	no of comps total
			DAFOR	DAFOR	DAFOR	DAFOR		
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Nettle, Stinging	- a/c/n/w		R	R	R		3
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Speedwell, Germander	c/n	+			R	x	2
<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>	Speedwell, Thyme-leaved					+		1
*=planted/introduced/escape	per compartment totals:		16	25	12	64		

Total species (all comp.s)		total indicators					
87		24					
Comp1 grassland east of Bower Heath Lane	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	1	4	4	1	0	0	6
Comp2 grassland west of Bower Heath Lane	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	0	5	7	1	0	0	9
Comp3 side of lane	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	0	3	0	3	0	0	3
Comp4 woodland	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	10	2	1	2	0	0	3
All Compartments:	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	10	9	7	6	0	0	14
Thresholds:	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	min size (ha)	1	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
	min indicators	10	8	5	8	5	5

DAFOR Scale:

D	Dominant	>75% cover
A	Abundant	51-75% cover
F	Frequent	26-50% cover
O	Occasional	11-25% cover
R	Rare	<11% cover, >=5 individual plants
+	Very Rare	<5 individual plants

Map



Wildlife Sites 41/006 Bower Heath Common

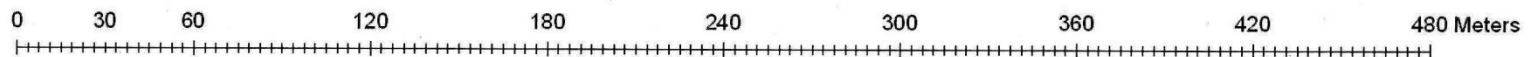
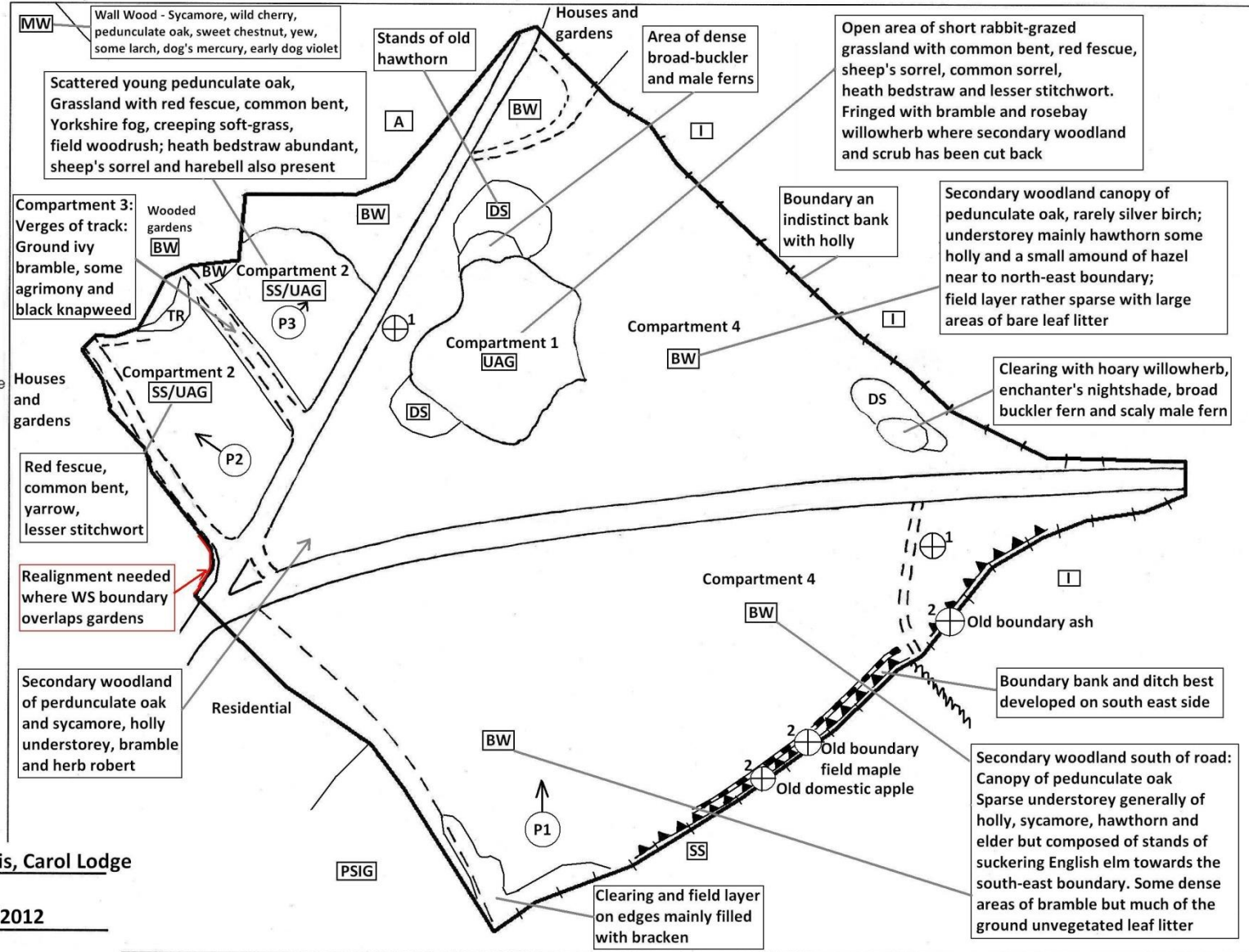
Legend

- Wildlife Sites 2010
- Selected Wildlife Site
- Cultivated yellow archangel (garden introduction)
- Veteran or notable boundary trees




































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Surveyor: Andrew Harris, Carol Lodge

Date of survey: 01/08/2012



Map key:

		WS boundary (NB use a red line to denote anywhere boundary changes should be made)	
WOODLAND		Semi-natural broadleaved woodland	 Coppiced broadleaved woodland
		Plantation broadleaved woodland	 Relict coppiced broadleaved woodland
		Plantation coniferous woodland	
		Mixed woodland	
		Dense-continuous scrub	
		Scattered scrub (NB: notate grassland type beneath)	
		Broadleaved Parkland/scattered trees (NB: notate grassland type beneath)	
		Coniferous Parkland/scattered trees (NB: notate grassland type beneath)	
		Mixed Parkland/scattered trees (NB: notate grassland type beneath)	
		Broadleaved recently felled woodland	
		Coniferous recently felled woodland	
		Mixed recently felled woodland	
	GRASSLAND		Unimproved acid grassland
		Semi-improved acid grassland	
		Unimproved calcareous grassland	
		Semi-improved calcareous grassland	
		Unimproved neutral grassland	
		Semi-improved neutral grassland	
		Improved grassland	
		Marsh/marshy grassland	
		Species-poor semi-improved grassland	
Tall herb and fen			Continuous bracken
		Scattered bracken (NB: notate grassland type beneath)	
		Tall ruderal vegetation	
		Non-ruderal vegetation (fen, e.g. reed/sweetgrass dominant stands)	
WATER		Standing water	
		Running water	
CULTIVATED		Arable land	
		Amenity grassland	 Urban
		Ephemeral/short (e.g. herbal pioneer communities/weedy species)	
		Perennial introduced shrub (eg snowberry, rhododendron, laurel, cotoneaster, bamboo etc)	

Images



Photo 1 – woodland, south of Common Lane



Photo 2 – grassland west of Bower Heath Lane



Photo 3 – other patch of grassland west of Bower heath Lane but further north

Surveyors List:

Carol Lodge	CL
Jenny Sherwen	JS
Jim Eggington	JE
Alec Cooper	AC
Ruth Graham	RG
Phil Aldwinckle	PA
Janet Lowndes	JL
Ken Coyne	KC
Claudia Harflet	CH
Emily Power	EP
Jean Williamson	JW
Andrew Harris	AH
Nigel Agar	NA
Julie Wise	JW2
Margaret Harris	MH
Laurie Harris	LH
John Moss	JM
Odette Carter	OC
Dawn Allwood	DA
Brenda Harold	BH
Graham Everett	GE
Stephen Mason	SM
Molly Egginton	ME