

## A3: Biodiversity Analysis - Habitats and Protected Sites

The data tables on the following pages provide information on the distribution and spread of habitats and of sites designated for their nature conservation value, across Test Valley Borough. This information provides additional detail to the descriptive data contained within Volume 1 of this study. The analysis has summarised the data for each Landscape Character Area, providing information on the key habitats and designated sites within each area.

### Accuracy of data

The Landscape Character Assessment was digitised at a 1:50,000 scale, while many of the nature conservation datasets were digitised at 1:10,000 or larger scales. It is also important to stress that for the purposes of this analysis it was necessary to treat LCA boundaries as sharp boundaries. In reality many LCA boundaries will be a broad zone of transition.

Care should be taken in the interpretation of the results. In particular habitat types that occur only rarely within an LCA may be more strongly associated with an adjoining LCA. Similarly protected sites that only just extend into an area may lie principally in an adjoining area. As a precautionary measure, these protected sites have been included in both LCAs, because management of either LCA could potentially impact upon the quality of the designated site.

### Habitat & Land Use Analysis

In order to gain an insight into the distribution of habitats across the Landscape Character Areas of the Borough, the Habitat and Landuse dataset, supplied by Hampshire County Council, was analysed. To reduce the number of categories in the Habitat and Landuse dataset, habitat polygons were grouped into Broad Habitats, as shown in the table below.

The Broad Habitat data was intersected with the Landscape Character Areas using a Geographical Information System. Summary statistics were then calculated for each Landscape Character Area,

showing the area of each Broad Habitat and the percentage of the LCA that it covers. In order to permit comparison between Landscape Character Areas, the mean percentage cover of Broad Habitats within each Landscape Character Type was also calculated.

### Designated Sites Analysis

Analysis of the distribution of designated sites was carried out within a Geographical Information System, in order to identify the sites present within each Landscape Character Area. The following designations were considered:

#### SINC

A Site of Interest for Nature Conservation is land which is considered to be of particular importance for nature conservation within Hampshire. The criteria for selecting SINCs is shown in the table below.

#### SSSI

A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is the land notified as an SSSI under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), as amended. Sites notified under the 1949 Act only are not included in the Data set.

#### SAC

A Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is the land designated under Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.

#### SPA

A Special Protection Area (SPA) is the land classified under Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds.

#### Ramsar

A "Ramsar site" is the land listed as a Wetland of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention) 1973.

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UK BAP Broad Habitat Types	UK Bap Priority Habitat Types	Hants BAP Broad Habitat Types	Hants BAP HAPs	NVC	Associated PHASE 1 for comparison	No BAP category	Hampshire Habitat Types	Test Valley Broad Habitats
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Lowland Beech	Broadleaved, Yew Woodland, Scrub	Ancient Semi-natural Woodland	W14, W15	A1.1		W1, W3, W4	Broadleaved, Yew Woodland, Scrub
	Wet Woodlands			W1, W5, W6	A1.1			
				W7, W8, W10, W13	A3			
				W21, W22, W23, W24	A1.1, A1.3		ST1, ST11, ST2	
	Lowland Wood Pastures and Parkland	Lowland Pasture Woodland, Parkland	Pasture Woodland, Parkland		A2		ST3, ST31, ST32	Wood Pasture and Parkland
Coniferous Woodland		Coniferous Woodland			A1.2.2		W5, W6	Coniferous Woodland
						Mixed woodland	W7	Other Woodland
						Plantation	W2, W8	
						Other woodland	ST5, W9, W10, W11, W12	
Arable and Horticulture	Cereal Field Margins (6m width)	Arable Farmland	Arable Land	OV	J1		AR1, AR3, BL1	Arable Farmland
Improved grassland	Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh	Improved Grassland		MG	B4		GL1, GL2, GL3, GL4, GL7, GL13, GL22	Improved Grassland
Neutral Grassland	Lowland Meadows	Floodplain Grazing Marsh	Lowland Wet Grassland	MG4	B2, B5		GL5	Floodplain Grazing Marsh
		Unimproved Neutral Grassland, Fen		MG8, MG9, MG10, MG12, MG13	B2, B5			Unimproved Neutral Grassland, Fen
			Unimproved Neutral Dry Grassland, Hay Meadow	MG5	B2		GL12	
				MG1, MG6, MG7	B2			
Calcareous Grassland	Lowland Calcareous Grassland	Calcareous grassland	Lowland Calcareous Grassland	CG1, CG2, CG3, CG5, CG6, CG7	B3		GL21	Calcareous Grassland
Acid Grassland	Lowland Dry Acid Grassland	Lowland Heath/ Bog/ Acid Grassland	Heathland, Acid Grassland and Bog	U1	B1		GL11	Lowland Heath, Bog, Acid Grassland
Bracken				U20	C1		GL8	
Dwarf Shrub Heath	Lowland Heathland				H2	D		

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Fen, Marsh and Swamp	Reedbeds	Fen, Carr, Marsh, Swamp, Reedbeds	Fen, Carr, Marsh, Swamp, Reedbeds	S4	F1		AQ2	Fen, Carr, Marsh, Swamp, Reedbed
				S3, S5, S6, S7, S8, S12, S13, S14, S15, S18, S22	F1		AQ3	
	S25, S26, S28			F1		AQ4		
	M13, M22, M23, M24, M27			F1		AQ1		
Bogs				M	E1			
Standing Open Water and Canals	Mesotrophic Standing Waters	Standing Open Water	Open Standing Water	A1, A2, A5, A7, A8, A9, A10, A11, A12, A15, A16, A17, A18, A19, A20	G1, G2		AQ5, AQ6	Standing Open Water
Rivers and Streams	Rivers and Streams	Chalk Streams					AQ7	Running Water
		Rivers and Streams						
		Coastal Grazing Marsh	Coastal Grazing Marsh				GL6	Coastal Grazing Marsh
		Urban	Urban				BL2, BL4, UR1, UR2, UR3, UR4, UR5, UU1, UU10, UU3, UU4, UU5, UU6, UU7, UU8, UU9	Urban
						Quarry, Landfill	QR1, QR2, QR3, QR4, QR5, QR6	Quarry, Landfill
						Gardens, Churchyards, Orchards	BL3, ST4	Gardens, Churchyards, Orchards
						Amenity areas, Allotments, Cemeteries	ST6, UR6, UR7, UR8, UR9	Amenity areas, Allotments, Cemeteries
						Aquaculture	AQ9	Aquaculture

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## Criteria for selecting Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Hampshire

The criteria below define those sites which are considered to be of particular importance for nature conservation within Hampshire. These sites are in addition to the statutorily designated sites and are referred to as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

### Woodland

- 1A** Ancient<sup>1</sup> semi-natural<sup>2</sup> woodlands.
- 1B** Other woodland where there is a significant element of ancient semi-natural woodland surviving.
- 1C** Other semi-natural woodland if;
  - (ii) they comprise important community types of restricted distribution in the County, such as yew woods and alder swamp woods
- 1D** Pasture woodland and wooded commons, not included in any of the above, which are of considerable biological and historical interest.

### Neutral/acid/calcareous grassland

- 2A** Agriculturally unimproved grasslands<sup>3</sup>
- 2B** Semi-improved grasslands which retain a significant element of unimproved grassland.
- 2D** Grasslands which have become impoverished through inappropriate management but which retain sufficient elements of relic unimproved grassland to enable recovery.

### Heathland

- 3A** Areas of heathland vegetation; including matrices of dwarf shrub, acid grassland, valley mires and scrub.
- 3B** Areas of heathland which are afforested or have succeeded to woodland if;
  - (i) they retain significant remnants of heathland vegetation which would enable their recovery, or
  - (ii) they are contiguous with, or form an integral part of an open area of heathland,

### Coastal habitats

- 4A** Semi-natural coastal and estuarine habitats, including saltmarsh, intertidal mudflats, sand dunes, shingle, brackish ponds, grazing marsh and maritime grasslands.

### Wetlands

- 5A** Areas of open freshwater (eg. lakes, ponds, canals, rivers, streams and ditches) which support outstanding assemblages of floating/submerged/emergent plant species, invertebrates, birds or amphibians.
- 5B** Fens, flushes, seepages, springs, inundation grasslands etc. that support a flora and fauna characteristic of unimproved and waterlogged (seasonal or permanent) conditions.

### Species

- 6A** Sites which support one or more notable species<sup>4</sup>.
- 6B** Sites which regularly support a significant population of a species which has a restricted distribution or has substantially declined in population or range. Such sites may be used seasonally or for only one part of a species life-cycle.
- 6C** Sites which support an outstanding assemblage of species.

### Social value

- 7A** Sites of nature conservation interest which occur in areas otherwise deficient in such interest, and/or are known to be of particularly high value to local communities eg. community wildlife sites.

Sites selected under this criteria will be rigorously confined to those which, if lost, would result in a considerable and demonstrable loss to the local community which would be very difficult/impossible to replace. Because of the widespread distribution of sites of nature conservation interest in Hampshire, and the high threshold used to define critical importance, only a limited number of sites are likely to meet this criteria.

### Geology and geomorphology

- 8A** Sites which have been designated as Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)

Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites are sites of regional importance excluding SSSIs. RIGS are analogous to biological non-statutory sites.

<sup>1</sup>Ancient - refers to woodlands which have developed particular ecological characteristics as a result of their long continuity. Those identified to date which are over 2ha are included on the Hampshire Inventory of Ancient Woodlands (Provisional).

<sup>2</sup>Semi-natural - modified types of vegetation in which the dominant and constant species are accepted natives to Britain and that locality, and the structure of the community conforms to the range of natural vegetation types.

<sup>3</sup>Agriculturally unimproved grassland - grassland that is composed of a mixed assemblage of indigenous species in essentially semi-natural communities which has been allowed to develop without the major use of herbicides or inorganic fertilisers.

<sup>4</sup>Notable species include Red Data Book species, Nationally Scarce species, species covered under Schedules 1,5 and 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, Annex 1 of the EC Bird Directive 79/409 and Annex II & 1V of the EC Directive 92/43/EEC 'The Habitats Directive', and those covered by the Bern, Bonn and Ramsar Conventions. Notable species will also include species which are considered 'County Rare' or 'County Scarce'. County Rare = those species recorded in 1% or less tetrads in Hampshire or either of the two vice-counties (11 & 12) separately. County Scarce = 4% or less tetrads.