Earlswood Common Management Plan

2022-2027

Contents

1. Summary 5
2. Foreword 6
Consultation process 6
Format of the Management Plan 7
3. Introduction 8
Site Description 8
Historical context 11
Earlswood Common today 14
Geology, topography and soils 15
Lakes and ponds 19
Grassland and flora 21
Woodland 25
Wetland areas 28
Broad habitats 29
Fauna 29
Invasive Species 33
Archaeology 34
Byelaws 35
Landscape quality 35
Recreation 38
Access and infrastructure 40
Education and interpretation 43
Management of Earlswood Common 44
4. Policy context: Local and National 45
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 45
Reigate and Banstead Core Strategy Objectives 2012-2027 45
Biodiversity: 2020 Department for Environment Fisheries and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) 46
'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'. HM Government 46
5. Legislation 47
Nature and biodiversity 47
Landscape 49
Access 49

Planning 49
Archaeology 50
6. Evaluation of features on Earlswood Common 51
Archaeology and landscape 51
Ecology and Biodiversity 51
Recreation 53
Education and interpretation 51
Management and maintenance 54
7. Site management and maintenance principles 55
Site management issues 55
Enforcement and Legal Issues 58
Site maintenance issues 58
Issue relating to the management planning process 59
8. Management of Earlswood Common LNR 60
Visions 60
Targets and indicators of success 60
9. Management Objectives 2022-2027 64
Objective 1. Management of Priority Habitats and Species of Principle Importance 64
Objective 2. Protection of the Common 64
Objective 3. Use of the Common (Recreation, Education, Infrastructure, Heritage) 65
Objective 4. Scheduled Monument 65
10. Management Polices 66
Objective 1: Priority Habitats, Species of Principle Importance and enhancing biodiversity 66
Objective 2: Protection of the Common 92
Objective 3. Use of the Common (Recreation, Education, Infrastructure, Heritage) 94
Work Programme: Grassland 96
Work Programme: Woodland and Tree Management 98
Work Programme: New Pond (fishing lake) 100
Work Programme: Upper Lake 101
Work Programme: Chain Pond 102
Work Programme: Woodhatch Pond 101

Work Programme: Seasonal Ponds 102
Work Programme: Ditches 103
Work Programme: Wetland Areas 104
Work Programme: Access & Furniture Maintenance 105
Work Programme: Hedgerow Maintenance 105
Future surveys 106
References 107
Appendix 1: Strategic water courses Earlswood Common 110
Appendix 2: List of species recorded during Phase 1 Habitat Ecological Appraisal 113
Appendix 3: Botanical Survey, Surrey Botanical Society 119
Appendix 4: Byelaws Earlswood Common 123
Appendix 5: Biodiversity Opportunity Area 124
Appendix 6: Grass mowing regimes 126
Appendix 7: Broad habitats on Earlswood Common 127
Appendix 8: Merstham Cricket Club pitch maintenance 128
Appendix 9: Football pitch maintenance 129

Pictures

Picture 1 Chain Pond (left) & Woodhatch Pond (right) 11
Picture 2 Earlswood Common looking towards Pendleton/Woodhatch Road junction 14
Picture 3 Before (left) & after (right) desilting and scrub clearance along the inlet into lower lake. 18
Picture 4 Aerial view of the lakes on Earlswood Common, 2007. 19
Picture 5 Seasonal pond eastern edge of Earlswood Common. 20
Picture 6 Heath Bedstraw in old golf course roughs 22
Picture 7 Chamomile on Earlswood Common 23

1. Summary

Ordnance Survey Sheet (1:50,000): 187

National Grid Reference: TQ 270485

Locality: 1.5 km to the south of Redhill town centre

Wards: Earlswood and Whitebushes Meadvale and St Johns

Status:

- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI)
- Common Land registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965. Common Land Number 79 (CL79)
- Metropolitan Green Belt
- Open Access Land under the CROW Act 2000
- Scheduled Ancient Monument

Area: 88 Hectares (217 Acres)

Owner: Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Licensees:

- Merstham Cricket Club
- Redhill Football Club
- Earlswood Boats and Café
- Horley Piscatorial Society

2. Foreword

Consultation process

The development of this plan has been done so through a consultation process with the Earlswood and Redhill Commons Steering group and members of the public. Other individuals representing local and county level nature conservation groups were also informed of the management plan and were asked to contribute current data in fields such as birds, bats, butterflies, amphibians, reptiles and botany. This data has been invaluable in setting specific objectives around enhancing biodiversity.

Throughout the development of the management plan the steering group were asked to give feedback and guidance on the discussion, objectives, targets and work prescriptions that are presented. The group met on several occasions where the plan was presented by RBBC Officers. This management plan has been submitted to full council to be adopted as a public document.

The plan has also been periodically presented internally to the Greenspaces Operations Manager to ensure that the operations prescribed align with council policy and working practices.

Assistance and contributions have been given by the Earlswood and Redhill Commons Steering Group. Members of the group have provided guidance on the information, management policies and objectives presented and the formatting of the plan, a thank goes to those members.

It has also been guided by the Greenspaces Operations Manager at Reigate and Banstead Borough Council to whom a thank you is given.

A thank you must also be given to other groups whose wildlife surveys, records and knowledge have been invaluable to guiding management policies and objectives:

- Butterfly Conservation Trust (Southwest London and Surrey branch)
- British Trust for Ornithology
- Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group,
- Surrey Botanical Society
- The Surrey Bat Group

To gain a better understanding of public views about the value of both commons and management proposals a user survey was created by the Communications team at the council. Both the Greenspaces Team and Steering group gave assistance. The survey was made available for the public to complete either online on the council website or by paper copies at the Town Hall and Earlswood Common café. The results from the survey were analysed for significant issues that were of importance to users of both commons. A thank you is given to staff at the council who prepared the survey and to members of the public who took the time to share their views.

Format of the Management Plan

Earlswood and Redhill Commons differ in many ways such as habitat types, landscapes, topography, geology and land use. For this reason, a separate management plan has been written for both commons although similarities in management issues, objectives and policies will be observed by the reader. It is hoped that by presenting two separate plans as a single document it will be clear how both commons will be managed as individual greenspaces that are linked to form a corridor for nature, access, recreation and quiet enjoyment.

The inclusion of the Redhill Common Management plan is the first ever to be written, the last plan for Earlswood Common expired in 2013.

3. Introduction

Earlswood Common is a large area of public open space immediately to the south of Redhill and covers 100 Hectares (247 Acres). Adjacent to, and contiguous with, Redhill Common, these blocks of open access land establish a significant green wedge within the urban area (the Commons are bordered by Woodhatch, Mead Vale, Redhill, Earlswood and South Earlswood) and provide green links to other open space to the south. Earlswood Common is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and registered Common Land (CL39).

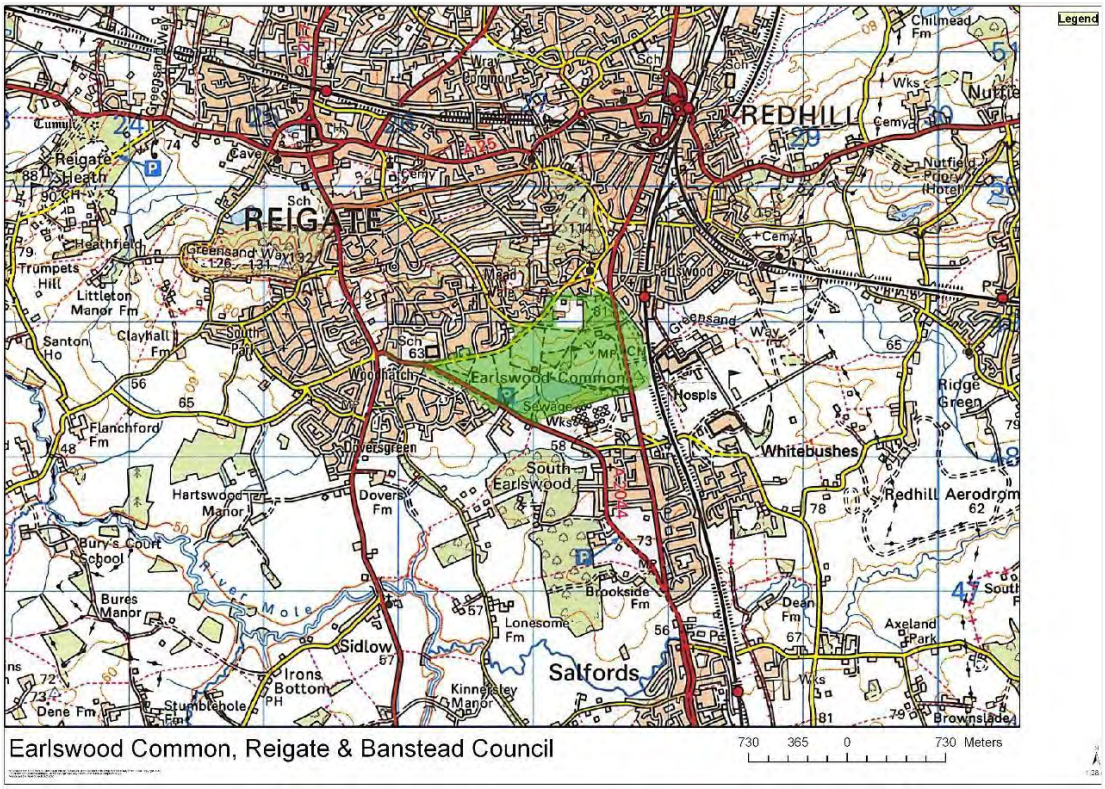
This Management Plan has been prepared to outline the management regime and rationale of the Common and covers the periods from 2022-2027. The last Management Plan covered the period 2009-2013 since then new opportunities and issues have arisen that will be evaluated and addressed.

The following chapters of this Management Plan provide a description of Earlswood Common, including a brief review of its history and features, an evaluation of the Common and the issues which effect it and a vision statement, with management objectives and policies. The work programme is written according to the management of the objectives and policies set out in the plan. This Management Plan covers the full five-year period from 2022-2027 and will be renewed at the end of this timeframe.

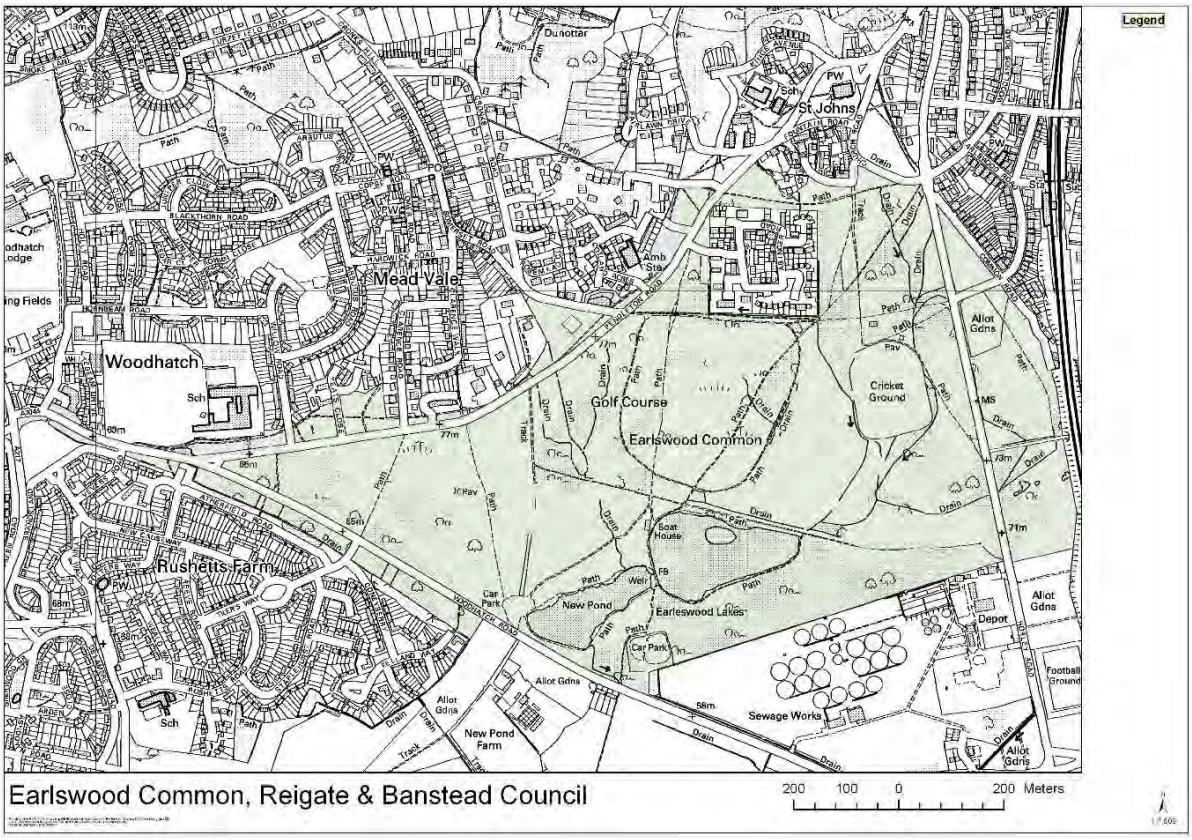
Site Description

Earlswood Common is located approximately 1.5km to the south of Redhill town centre and about 2.5km to the southeast of Reigate (see map 1).

Earlswood and Redhill Common share the same Common Land Registration Number, but in management terms, the Commons are discrete units. This division is reflected in the area covered by this management plan. The majority of Earlswood Common lies to the south of St John’s including areas on the east of the A23 from Asylum Arch Road down to the football club (Map 2). The management of Redhill Common is presented separately but still forms part of this document.

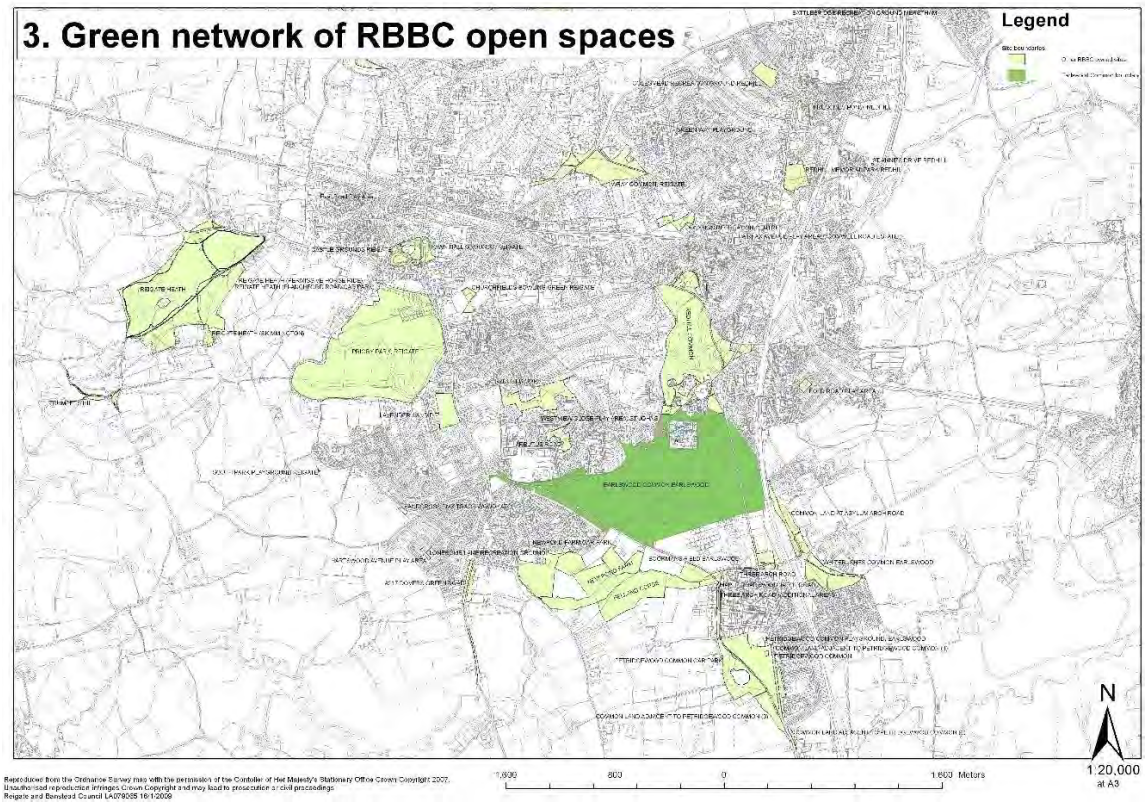


Map 1 Earlswood Common location



Map 2 Area covered by Earlswood Common Management Plan

The common sits in a wider fabric of open spaces in the borough (map 3), management principles and objectives for these sites are guided by targets set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy 2017 such as priority habitat restoration, public engagement and wellbeing improvements. Furthermore, it is important to understand how the common is linked to adjacent sites particularly Petridgewood Common, New Pond Farm, Felland Copse and Whitebushes Common in terms of habitat and landscape. Neutral grassland and native broadleaf woodland, and ponds all are Priority Habitats and present in fragments. They therefore contribute to targets within Biodiversity Opportunity Area Low Weald 7 and Urban Edge/Low Weald landscape characteristics; both are described in section *Landscape Quality.*



Map 3 Green network of RBBC open spaces

This management plan is restricted to the area under Borough Council ownership; the wider context has been considered, however, and reference is made to areas beyond the Common's boundaries where relevant.

Earlswood Common is a complex site that supports a range of landscape types and uses. Development of an effective management plan requires an understanding of not only its current condition but also its historical context. The following paragraphs provide a description of the Common, commencing with the historical development of the area in paragraphs 2.5 to 2.15, and continuing with a description of the current condition in paragraphs 2.16 to 2.27.

Historical context

Evidence of the prehistory of Earlswood Common can be drawn largely from archaeological finds in the area. Local sites such as Reigate Heath and Redhill Common have produced a number of Mesolithic (8000-4000 BC) and Neolithic (4000-2500 BC) flint arrowheads and implements. The earliest finds on the Common itself are from the Bronze Age (2300-600 BC) and include a flat Celt axe that was discovered in 1817. There is also one bowl barrow located 20m to the south of Pendleton Road. This monument, originally one of a group of three, dates from the late Neolithic period to the late Bronze Age and is listed on Historic England's Schedule of Monuments.

There is sparse evidence in the local area of the Roman occupation of Britain between 43-410 AD. However, in 1817 the foundations of an "ancient building", possibly Roman, were found on the east side of the Common on an area now under housing.

In Medieval times, Earlswood Common, or Aleswood as it was then called, formed part of the Manor of Reigate. Quarrying of the underlying clay started at this time, for the manufacture of tiles and bricks. Although the practice of digging soil on the Common required a licence from the Lord of the Manor, records show that unauthorised persons continued to help themselves throughout the Middle Ages.

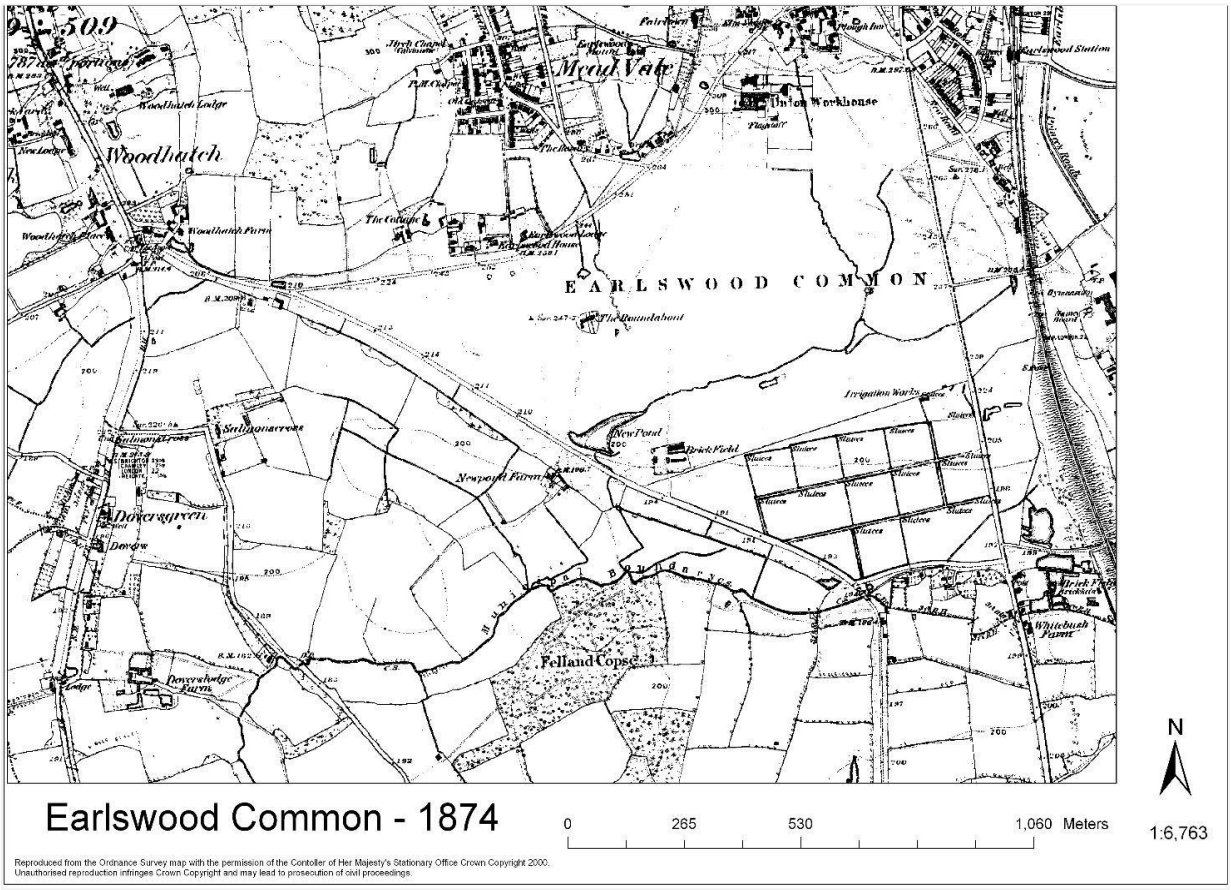
The Lower Lake, or 'New Pond', is thought to date back to at least the 14th Century and is almost certainly man made. It was described in a survey of 1700 as 'a long pond well stored with fish' [sic]'. The Upper Lake was created in the 1880s (see 2.14 below) and was also stocked with fish (in 1913, the Common's keeper Mr Hewitt reported to the Conservators that fish in both ponds were dying, likely due to contamination). 19th Century maps show a number of other waterbodies and ditches, most of which are no longer present on the Common. Two of the surviving ponds, Chain Pond and Woodhatch Pond, were created some time before 1874.

Picture 1 Chain Pond (left) and Woodhatch Pond (right)

The historic character of Earlswood Common would probably have been Weald Woodland and is thought to have had characteristics of wood pasture due to commoners exercising their right to graze which is a significant historic characteristic of common land. It is likely that the wooded character changed dramatically in the 17th Century when Lord Monson supposedly cut down the trees for use in London, possibly converting the land into rabbit warrens.

Over the centuries many parts of Earlswood Common have been lost to encroachment. In 1794 a poorhouse (later to become Reigate Union Workhouse) was built on 10 acres of the Common following the formation of a Poor Law Union by the parishes of Reigate, Nutfield and Headley (the site became Redhill General Hospital in the1930s and was sold for housing in the 1990s). In 1847 Earlswood Asylum, the “national home for the feeble minded”, was built on the east side of the Common. The institution, which survives today as residential apartments, is notable for having John Langdon-Down as its first Superintendent. In 1865, 63 acres of the

southern end of the Common was passed over to the Council for use as a sewage system, a use which continues to this day, linked by a main sewer infall pipe, which runs across the Common as an embankment. Construction of the London-Brighton railway line and the Redhill-Brighton turnpike road both had a major fragmenting effect on the Common.



Map 4 Earlswood Common in 1874

The historic 1874 map of shows various other buildings on the Common including the 'Roundabout', a collection of cottages located close to Union (now Pendleton) Road (see illustration below). It is not known how or why the 12 cottages came to be built in the middle of Common land, but some remained inhabited into the 20th Century. In 1903 the Council managed to acquire the site from a consortium of local men who had purchased the cottages at auction. For unknown reasons they were not demolished for a further fifty years.

The novelist George Eliot was acquainted with Earlswood and the Common; her journal of 1874 includes the following extract:

> 'May 19th, 1874 – This month has been published a volume of my poems – "Legend of Jubal and other poems". George continues to have tolerable health and is far on in the preparation of his second volume. On the 1st of June we go into the country, to The Cottage, Earlswood Common, for 4 months, and I hope there to get deep shafts sunk in my prose book. My health has been a wretched drag on me during the last half year'.

By the 1880s, Redhill Common was being actively excavated for sand and gravel. A group of local people commenced action against Earl Somers and challenged his right to remove material from the site. Following the hearing, an agreement was drawn up to restrict excavation rights to just two existing local brickworks, and to allow Messrs Barrow and Waterlow to apply for Redhill and Earlswood Commons to be protected and preserved for the recreation of the local inhabitants. In 1884, these regulations became part of a special Act of Parliament entitled 'Commons Regulation (Redhill and Earlswood Commons) Provisional Order Confirmation Act, 1884'.

The passing of the 1884 Act saw the formation of the Commons Conservators, whose purpose was to maintain the Commons free from sandpits and excavations, illegal encroachments and poaching. The Conservators set about making improvements to the Commons, including tree planting, new paths, and construction of the Upper Lake. The lake was created to provide an area suitable for boating, bathing and skating. In 1922, ownership of the Commons was conveyed to the Council, and in 1945 the Reigate Corporation Act was passed to provide for the dissolution of the Conservators and the passing of responsibilities to the Borough Council.

In the latter half of the 19th Century, Earlswood Common increased in significance as a site for recreation. Redhill Cricket Club was formed in 1860 and played their games at 'The Ring'. Redhill and Reigate Golf Club was formed in 1887 (the second oldest golf club in Surrey) and an 18-hole course was built on the Common shortly afterwards. Informal activities on the lakes were also encouraged following the works carried out by the Conservators.

After World War I, alterations to the Lower Lake were made to improve its suitability for bathing. Platforms were constructed, a bathing hut installed with steps to the water, and a diving board, supported by four posts, placed in the middle of the lake. The concrete used for these items supposedly came from an anti-aircraft gun and searchlight station that had been in the area. As a result of increasing use for mixed recreational activities a steering group was created in 1995. The purpose of the steering was to ensure that the conservation and recreation interests could exist without conflicts. Representatives from conservation and recreation groups were nominated to sit on the group and work together to assist the council to better manage the commons.

Earlswood Common today

Today, Earlswood Common functions as a valued and varied area of open space. It provides a variety of formal and informal recreational opportunities and access to nature for residents of the adjacent urban area. As such it is locally and regionally important and is one of the most used open spaces in the borough of Reigate and Banstead. It won a 'South East in Bloom' silver gilt award in 2019 and progressed to a gold award in 2020. The promotion was based upon improvements to biodiversity and footpath access and partnership working.

Picture 2 Earlswood Common looking towards Pendleton/Woodhatch Road junction

The Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) designations require careful management for wildlife and biodiversity as well as for public enjoyment. At present the Local Nature Reserve area is significantly wider than the Site of Nature Conservation Importance, it has not been surveyed since 2008, and it is possible that the SNCI boundary could be widened to the same size of the LNR. It is anticipated that the Surrey Nature Partnerships will be updating SNCI surveys in the near future which will ascertain whether other areas on the common meets the required criteria. This could be a future target for the common.

Geology, topography and soils

The underlying geology for most of Earlswood Common is Wealden Clay. The clay contains veins of sand and limestone, one of which outcrops as a shallow east to west ridge just north of the sewage works. A band of Atherfield Clay forming part of the Lower Greensand sequence runs from east to west across the area of land north of the golf course and south of St John's church.

The Common's undulating topography rises steadily from south to north, ranging in elevation from around 60 or 65m above ordnance datum (AOD) around the lakes and southern site boundary to 90m AOD on the northern boundary at the St. John's Conservation Area. To the west, the land rises to 75m on Pendleton Road (near to the Golf Club), and to the east gradually rises to around 70m at the A23. To the north, Redhill Common reaches approximately 145m AOD at its highest point above St John's Church.

The soils of Earlswood Common are identified as 'slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base rich loamy and clay soils. These soils have impeded drainage and moderate natural fertility and are characteristic of lowland seasonally wet pastures and woodlands. Soils are subject to waterlogging in the winter and can suffer from baking and cracking during hot weather. To the immediate north of the Common the soils consist of 'freely draining, slightly acid loamy soils' of low natural fertility.

Hydrology

Weald clay is a relatively impervious substrate and surface water generally drains from northeast to southwest following the lines of topography described above. The site carries numerous watercourses that erupt historically from spring lines on the interface between the Greensand and Weald clay.

Study of the historic Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, however, indicates changes in the hydrology and drainage of Earlswood Common over the last 150 years. A comparison of the 1874 and 1897 maps shows that many ponds present in 1874 had been lost or reduced in size by 1897 (although between these years the Upper Lake was created). This trend appears to have continued into the 20th Century with a number of the waterbodies present on the 1897 map no longer present on the Common today. This apparent reduction in the number of water features may have been due to the increase in surrounding built development and associated drainage works (see Map 3).

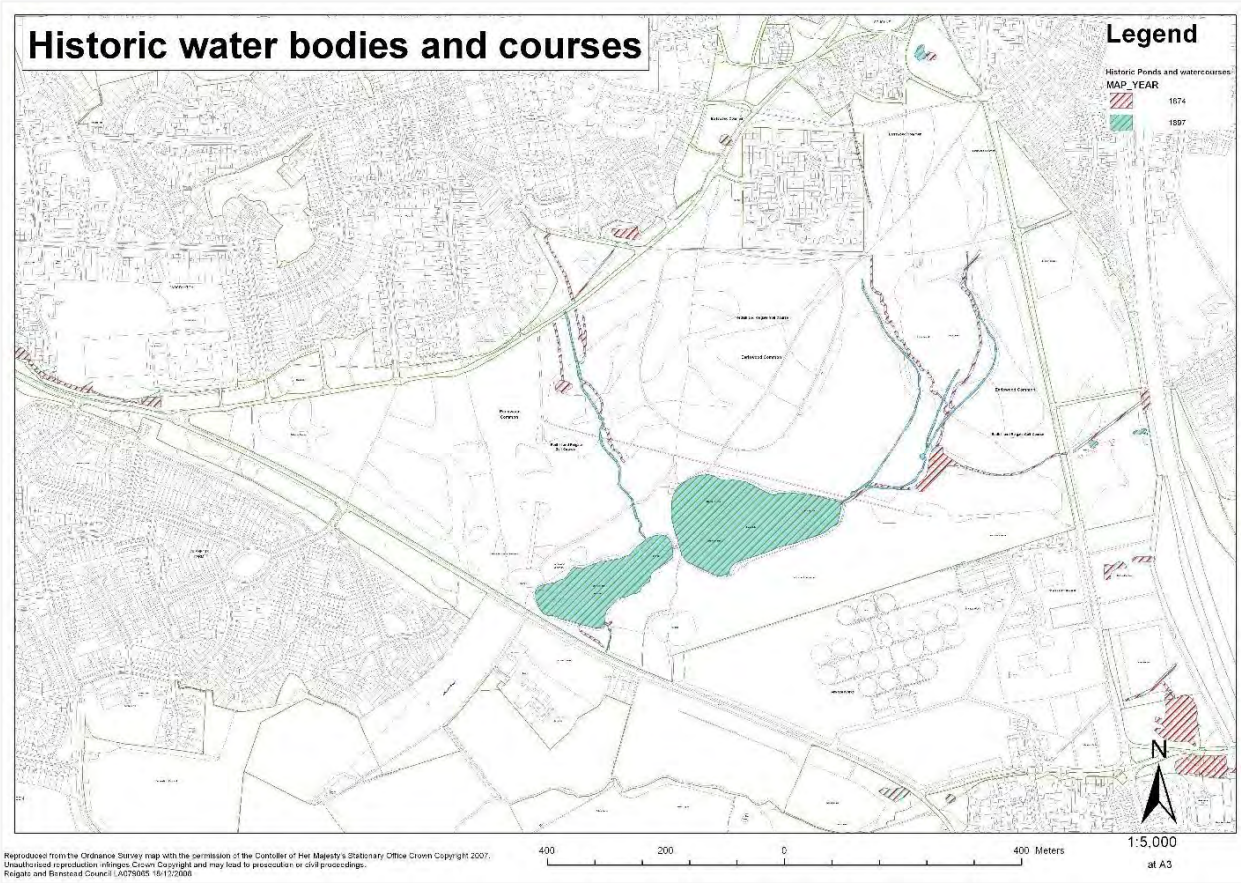
The current Environment Agency flood risk maps indicate that, save for a small area south of Lower Lake, Earlswood Common is not at risk from flooding. However, there are three watercourses on the Common that have been designated by RBBC as 'Strategic Ordinary Watercourses' due to their history of flooding. These courses carry water onto the site from the housing estates north of Pendleton Road and run south across the Common to the lakes. The designation is contained in the RBBC Policy Statement on Flood Defence 2002 (Revised 2011) which also states that although the Council does not own or manage any flood defences, Earlswood Lake(s) act as surface water attenuation facilities.

There is an extensive network of open drainage ditches across the Common, which in the past would have been associated with a number of smaller water bodies and wetland areas. Some of these watercourses are now disconnected and broken from their original network, and others were piped towards the end of the 19th.

Century (Map 4). A number of ditches are classed as Strategic in the sense that they carry water run off to alleviate flood risk to the surrounding urban area. These ditches carry water into the lakes on the Common and into the wider Earlswood Brook. The ditches that once served drainage for the golf course are still important to carry excess water offsite. Maps of Strategic water courses can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Of the numerous areas of standing water that historically existed on the Common, two lakes and three ponds survive today. These are Lower Lake (historically New Pond) and Upper Lake to the south of the site, Chain Pond and Woodhatch Pond to the north, and a small seasonal pond close to the railway line on the east side of the Common. These features, in particular the large lakes, are important parts of the Common's character and its ecological and recreational significance. Other ponds that have been lost over time that have the potential to be reinstated are as follows:

- Opposite old Redhill hospital entrance, adjacent to Pendleton Road
- Opposite the Plough Inn public house, St Johns
- Boremans Field, adjacent to Woodhatch Road/Maple Road junction



Map 5 Historic water courses Earlswood Common

Both the lakes have changed in use over their life span and are currently managed for different purposes. The lower lake is predominantly recreational and is actively managed for angling. Fishing rights over the lake are currently licensed to the Horley Piscatorial Society. The license gives them permission to fish the lower lake and manage the fish stocks and also sets rules to prevent angling on the upper lake and night fishing.

The management and maintenance of the lakes is still the responsibility of RBBC although some works are carried out by Horley Piscatorial Society. An improvement project to the lower lake swims was completed in 2006 with the help of a grant from the Environment Agency. This was further developed in 2019 to carry out scrub clearance and desilting in the inlet at the top of the lake. A more recent grant has been applied for in 2020 to plant more aquatic vegetation around the lake and to install fishing platforms.

Biodiversity is encouraged on the lake as it benefits both angling and the visual amenity. In contrast the upper lake is now maintained for nature conservation with management geared towards encouraging biodiversity rather than recreation save for pedal boating which operates in the summer under a lease with RBBC. Some major operations have taken place to meet these aims including the relocation of fish stock into the lower lake in 2019 to discourage anglers from the upper lake.

Picture 3 Before (left) and after (right) desilting and scrub clearance along the inlet into lower lake.

Lakes and ponds

Both the lakes have a capacity of over 25,000m3 and are as such subject to the Reservoirs Act 1975. To comply with the Act, RBBC employs an independent engineer to carry out an annual inspection of the lakes and dams. An in-depth inspection is required every ten years and compliance with the regulations requires the top dam to be maintained with all brambles and bank grass kept low to allow inspection access and any leaks to be visible.

Chain pond is a small water body located to the north of the Common, close to Pendleton Road. The pond appears on the OS map of 1874 and is thought to be an old cart pond. On this map the pond appears to be fed by drainage channels from the north across land now occupied by housing estates, which may be part of the reason for the pond's current poor water quality. A nesting platform for ducks sits in the middle of the pond and was rumoured to act as a basking area for a resident terrapin, both have now disappeared. The Terrapin was humanly dispatched by the council. The pond is known to support Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) and Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*). In recent years problems have included duckweed (*Lemna minuta*), poor water quality due to run off from Pendleton Road, and excessive feeding of ducks which leads to a build-up of nutrients and blue green algal blooms. The pond has been well maintained by Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers through a programme of reed control and removal of invasive plants.

Picture 4 Aerial view of the lakes on Earlswood Common, 2007.

Woodhatch pond is also located to the north of Pendleton Road, close to the entrance to Reigate School. It too appears on the 1874 OS map and was given a complete make over by the school in the 1980s. The pond is currently in poor condition and overgrown, with the non-native and invasive parrot's feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) and Australian swamp stonecrop (*Crassula helmsii*). The pond is surrounded by a cleft chestnut post and rail fence and suffers a great deal from littering due to proximity to the school. A recent Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) fund has been secured to restore the pond through desilting and aquatic planting of:

- Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*)
- Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*)
- Marsh Marigold (*Caltha Palustris*)
- Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris Pseudacorus*)
- Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*)
- Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum Salicaria*)
- Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*)

RBBC Greenspaces undertook this work in 2021. parrot's feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) and Australian swamp stonecrop (*Crassula helmsii*) have not been evident recently.

Three seasonal ponds can be found on the eastern edge of the common near the railway line. All are heavily over-shaded by tree cover and could be an important feature for amphibians but in their present state offers little ecological value.

Picture 5 Seasonal pond eastern edge of Earlswood Common.

Grassland and flora

Earlswood Common supports a mosaic of habitats including woodland, semi-improved grasslands, and wetlands. The Common has been granted SNCI status, in part due to its significant populations of wild chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*). Surveys of all or part of the site's flora have been carried out intermittently since

1994, including information from 1906, 1953 and 1960. In addition are two Victorian surveys of the flora of Reigate, one from 1838 and the other 1856.

A botanical survey carried out by the Surrey Wildlife Trust classified the botanical communities on Earlswood and Redhill Commons using the National Vegetation Classification (NVC), as follows:

Table 1 NVC botanical communities on Earlswood & Redhill Common

NVC Code	NVC Description
W10	*Quercus robur – Pteridium aquilinum – Rubus fructicosus* woodland (Pedunculate Oak – Bracken – Bramble woodland)
W25	*Pteridium aquilinum – Rubus fructicosus* underscrub; (Bracken – Bramble underscrub)
MG1e	*Arrenathererum elatius* grassland; *Centaurea nigra* sub-community (False Oats grassland; Common Knapweed sub community)
MG7	*Lolium perenne* leys and related grasslands (Perennial Rye grass)
U4	*Festuca ovina – Agrostis capillaris* – Gallium saxatile grassland; (Sheep Fescue – Common Bent – Heath Bedstraw grassland)
U20	*Pteridium aquilinum – Galium saxatile* community (Bracken – Heath Bedstraw community)
N/A[1]	Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land (plant communities colonising waste ground)

Further surveys have been carried out in 2020, a botanical survey by the Surrey Botanical Society and a Phase 1 Habitat Ecological Appraisal by A Lyne Ecology. These surveys are discussed in greater detail in section 6 Management Objectives, and the list of recorded species can be viewed in appendix 2 and 3.

[1] The NVC "Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land (plant communities colonising waste ground)" does not have a specified code.

Areas of grassland on the Common are managed for a number of different purposes and under a number of different maintenance regimes. At the time of the last Management Plan much of the grassland was improved for golf club and sports use, the golf club ceased operating in 2019 which has left large tracts of former fairway available for nature enhancement. There are also more biodiverse, unimproved areas such as the former golf course roughs and small acid grass parcels throughout the site and these are managed less intensively, the regimes are discussed in greater detail in the Management Objectives.

Picture 6 Heath Bedstraw in old golf course roughs

Football pitches and the cricket square also receive specialist maintenance. The football pitches and the outfield of the cricket pitch are maintained by RBBC. The cricket square is maintained by Merstham Cricket Club. A summary of current maintenance is included in Appendix 8.

Earlswood Common supports a population of wild chamomile (Chamaemelum nobile) cited as ‘rare’ on IUCN (2020) red data list. Wild chamomile has become increasingly rare nationally due to the reduction of grazing on areas such as commons. The species occurs at Earlswood because the regular close mowing of the cricket pitch and golf fairways imitates grazing. It was recorded on the Common in 1960, and a later survey in 1995 highlighted 5 main areas. By 2001, however, all but the population on the cricket pitch and a few patches elsewhere had been lost due to herbicide applications. Since then, careful management has seen a considerable increase over much of the cricket pitch, and several patches have been recorded on the fairway and rough of the 18th hole next to Pendleton Road.

The management of Chamomile is discussed in greater detail in section 6 Management Objectives. Other species of interest include Harebell which is now endangered and cited so on the IUCN red data list, Birds Foot Trefoil, Heath Bedstraw, Tormentil all typically associated with acidic and neutral grassland types. English Bluebell and Lords and Ladies are also present within the more mature woodland areas.

Yellow anthills can be found throughout Earlswood Common in the old golf course roughs, because little disturbance has occurred here the anthills have continued to grow. The anthills are not only an interesting visual feature they also play a significant role in the ecological framework. The hills constructed over a very long time are made up of tiny soil particles excavated by yellow ants, inside the hills the ants nurture and raise their offspring. A complex series of tunnels and chambers are built to house colonies of up to 14,000 ants. They are often referred to as ‘Super Societies or Organisms’ due to their sophisticated social structure. The hills are constructed in areas that will receive warmth from the sun which is needed to incubate eggs, larvae and pupae and acts as a natural storage heater. Various types of wildlife such as green woodpecker rely on yellow ants as their main diet whereas species such as small copper butterfly and grasshopper lay their eggs in the loose warm soil. Common lizards will also use the hill as basking sites.

Picture 7 Chamomile on Earlswood Common

Picture 8 Yellow anthills in less disturbed grass

Woodland

Earlswood Common was probably well wooded until Lord Monson began the conversion to open grassland. Maps and photographic evidence from the 19th/early 20th centuries show an open, grassy landscape. Over the last 100 years the site has become more wooded with the cessation of traditional management through grazing, and secondary woodland has developed around the intensively managed areas such as the former golf course and sports pitches. Today, woodland and trees form the surrounds to many of the recreational features of the site, including the former golf fairways, sports pitches, and parts of the lake.

Picture 9 Secondary woodland on Earlswood Common

The dominant tree species in the woodland is English oak (*Quercus robur*) with some sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*). There are also exotic specimen trees, planted in the 1980s, located in the grass verges on the north side of Pendleton Road. Woodland tree and flora species can be viewed in Appendix 3.

Picture 10 Mature Oak woodland on Earlswood Common

Picture 11 Scrub along the woodland edge

There is abundant understorey throughout the woodland areas, mainly consisting of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and some areas of dense Norway maple saplings. Elm (*Ulmus procera*) is also a common component, reduced to an understorey species by Dutch elm disease which infects the species once the stems become of sufficient size to harbour the disease's carrier, the large elm bark beetle (*Scolytus scolytus*). Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) is a common ground cover in most of the woodland blocks, as is bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Herbaceous ground flora is poor, and typical of unmanaged secondary woodland casting shade over a previously grassland habitat.

There are extensive areas of woodland scrub edge that provide shelter, foraging, navigation corridors and space for egg laying to a wide variety of wildlife. Scrub edges have been allowed to develop since the golf course closure through a less frequent grass mowing regime.

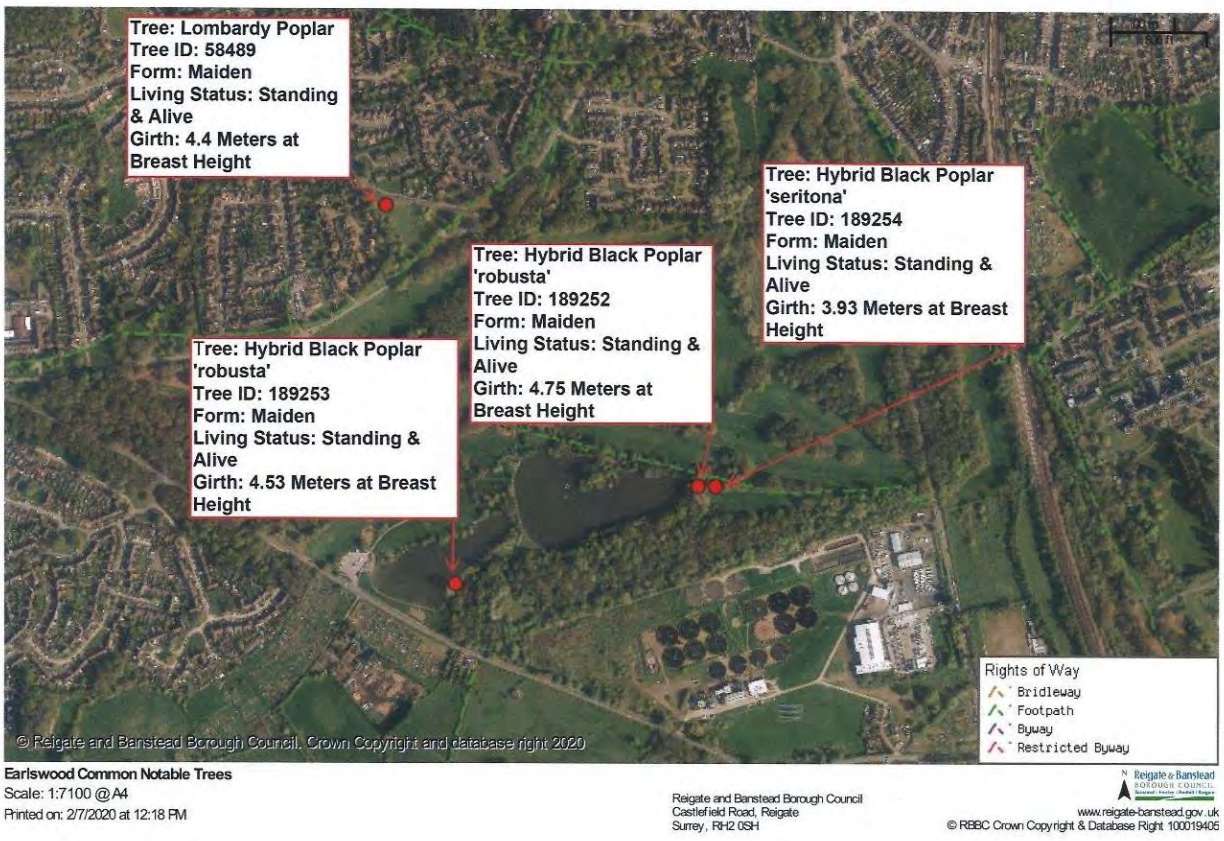
The preceding Management Plan cites the nationally rare dwarf gorse (*Ulex minor*) is present in the woodland adjacent to Woodhatch Road. This species may have been more common in the past when the habitat was more open, however, no records exist of its location and during the 2020 Phase 1 Habitat Survey it was not noted.

Although the Common has become more wooded over the last century, 19th century maps do show the presence of some trees. A map dating from 1871 shows an avenue of trees along Asylum Arch Road, a few surrounding the Brickfields site (location of the old car park), and some trees around St John's. The OS map of 1897 shows some trees around the Ring, some on the western end of the site, and an avenue of trees along Brighton Road. It is possible that these were planted by the Common's Conservators as part of their improvement of the Common in the late 19th Century. There are also several mature oak pollards that survive on the site today that have both wildlife and landscape value.

Picture 12 Parkland type tree cover

Some areas of the Common have parkland and wood pasture characteristics with mature trees and open, predominantly grass ground cover. A small number of notable trees that are recorded on the Ancient Tree Forum can be found on the Common which adds to the arboreal interest. The woodland areas also, however, have an abundance of secondary tree and scrub growth. Although it would be desirable to clear out some of this secondary vegetation and manage the areas as parkland in the interests of visual amenity and landscape significance, the inability of the site to allow grazing means that it would have a considerable impact on maintenance resources, although mowing operations does help maintain the feature.

The 2020 Phase 1 Habitat survey carried out on the Common gives a full list of lower plant species and fungi recorded and is discussed in relation to Management Objectives in section 6 and can be viewed in Appendix 2.



Map 6 Notable trees recorded on Earlswood Common (Ancient Tree Forum records)

Wetland areas

The surface network of ditches supports some residual marginal and aquatic species, but current maintenance practices (mainly strimming back of vegetation) combined with steep ditch profiles has reduced the number and variety of species. Many original ditches remain in wooded areas, and it is not clear if these still function or if they could/should be restored. It is very possible that they could become useful wetland habitats.

There are also areas of wet woodland that capture ground water for most of the year apart from periods of drought conditions. The most prominent areas are both sides of the A23 and the southeastern corner of the common next to Woodhatch Road.

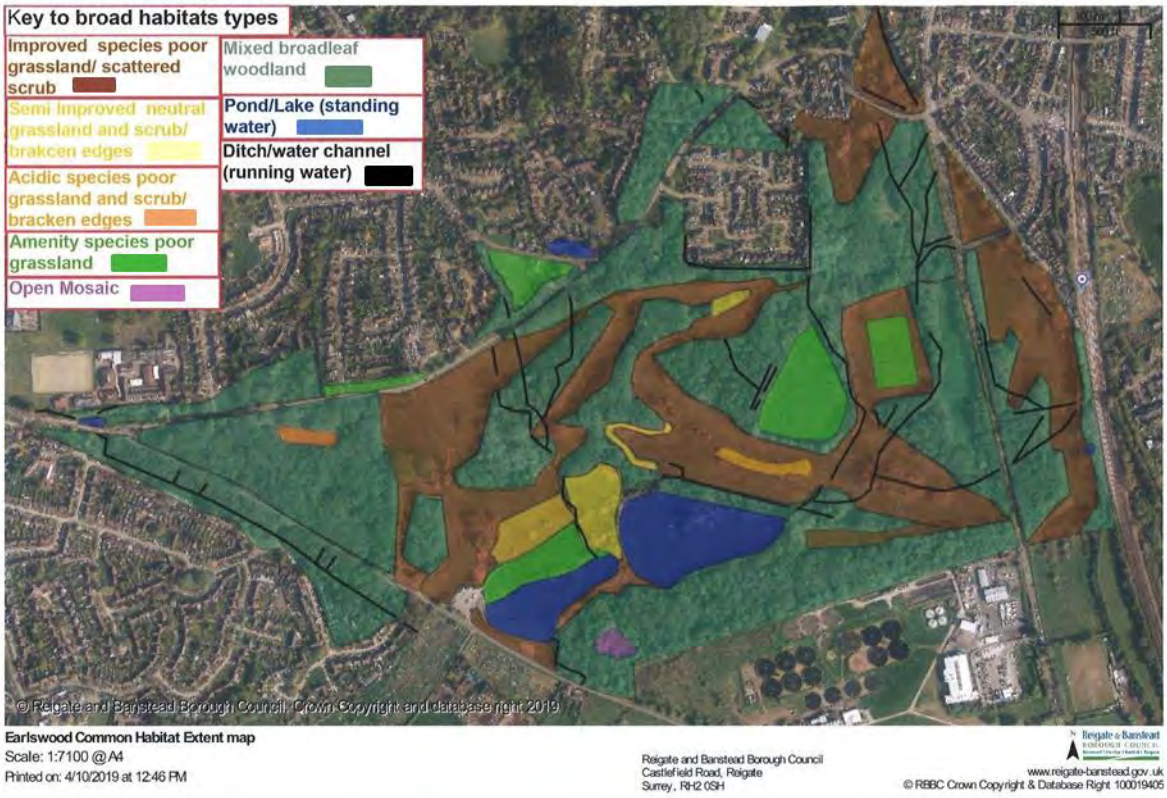
During times of heavy rain, the ditches often overflow into these woodland blocks to create a mosaic of pools. These are valuable habitats to a range of wildlife such as birds, amphibians and flora. The topography of the common with scattered depressions allows for water to be temporarily stored acting as seasonal wetland habitats.

RACV have recently undertaken works on one of the redundant golf ditches to restore it from a piped culverted ditch and reprofiled to an open flowing water corridor which will create a more valuable habitat as well as coppicing around one of the seasonal ponds which has greatly enhanced the feature.

The lake margins support limited aquatic, emergent and marginal plants. This is due to a number of reasons including heavy shading by surrounding woodland, large populations of waterfowl, and a dredging exercise that took place in the early 1970s. A restocking programme, funded by Thames Water, has been started (2008) in an effort to improve the aquatic ecology. During 2021/22 Horley Piscatorial Society will be planting aquatic plants along the edges of the lower lake as part of a habitat improvement grant from the Environment Agency.

Broad habitats

The map below summaries the broad habitats as discussed above that are present on Earlswood Common.



Map 7 Broad habitat types

Fauna

Herpetofauna: information on the presence of reptiles and amphibians on and within a 5km radius of Earlswood Common was provided by the Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG). The report included survey data collated between 1900 and 2008:

- There are records of Common Lizards presence on Redhill Common.
- The closest recording of slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) was in 1987, 1.7km to the northeast of the site, and Common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) was recorded in a similar location in the same year.
- The 2020 Phase 1 Habitat Ecological Appraisal Survey however did not record reptilian presence.

It is known that common toad (Bufo bufo) breed in both lakes. Common frog (Rana temporaria) is also thought to be present as tadpoles were recorded during the Phase 1 Habitat Ecological Appraisal Survey in 2020. There was a designated toad crossing point on Woodhatch Road which allows travel from the common to New Pond Farm on the other side, but this has since become redundant. National figures indicate a decline in toad populations however the lakes and wet areas are still important habitats to conserve for toad populations.

Although there are no recent records of great crested newts within 1km of the site, the lower lake has supported populations in the past. As current management of the upper lake is now geared towards nature conservation, and fish stock has been moved to the lower lake, their return to the common may be viable, particularly if new waterbodies are created. The nearest current breeding sites are the ponds at East Surrey Hospital.

Mammals: The Phase 1 Habitat Survey carried out in 2020 recorded evidence of Badgers, Grey Squirrels and Bats.

Bats: information on bat species is currently limited to informal data provided by the Surrey Bat Group. The presence of noctules (*Nyctalus noctula*) around the Lower Lake and car park, daubentons (*Myotis daubentoni*) over both lakes, and common pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) around the hedgerows have been confirmed. Other species that may still be present in other areas of the Common are serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) and possibly the whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*).

Invertebrates: the Surrey and South West London branch of the Butterfly Conservation transect data was submitted in 2019. A wide range of Butterflies are present and most significant being the white-letter hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*), a UKBAP priority species which is dependent on elm (*Ulmus spp.*) for survival, and the small heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) which relies on unimproved grassland. The Cinnibar Moth (*Tyria jacobaeae*) is also present and a UKBAP priority species and relies on the Ragwort plant. The full list of invertebrates can be viewed in Appendix 2.

The list of odonata (encompassing dragonflies and damselflies) recorded during the Phase 1 Habitat Survey can be viewed in Appendix 4.

Historic yellow anthills are in the roughs and clearing near Woodhatch Road, they support an important habitat for green woodpeckers and common lizards.

Fish: The Lower Lake has been used as a fishery since at least the C17th according to Horley Piscatorial Society records and this use has continued up to the present day. In January 2007, several improvements were implemented on the lakes, which included alterations to the fish stocks. The upper lake was netted in 2019 and all large fish removed, with some tench, bream and pike moved to the lower lake. The intention is to maintain the upper lake as a site for nature conservation.

The fish stocks as per the CEFAS (Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) registration certificate and the Environment Agency Fish Movement Permit held by Horley Piscatorial Society include the following native species: Carp - Common, Bream - Bronze, Tench - Green, Roach, Rudd, Perch, Pike. Horley Piscatorial Society strive towards improving biodiversity and improving the stock of smaller native species through habitat improvements funded by the Environment Agency and Rod Licence Grants. Additionally, Horley Piscatorial Society are exploring predation control measures with the guidance from the Angling Trust, RBBC and their local Environment Agency Fishery Officer.

Fish stocks in both lakes are owned and managed by the Horley Piscatorial Society. The Council and the Horley Piscatorial Society will continue to monitor fish stocks and management will be carried out as and when necessary to ensure that only the lower lake is used for angling and that both native and non-native species are not introduced without consent from the Environment Agency and RBBC.

Picture 13 Fish netting in the top lake by Horley Piscatorial Society in 2019

Birds: the two lakes on Earlswood Common are well populated with waterfowl and noted for mute swans, great crested grebe and, historically, mallard. Other species present include Canada geese and kingfisher. In recent times, cormorants have been roosting on the upper island and have caused major damage to the fish stock. A formal count of the bird populations in and around the lakes is carried out frequently by a member of the British Trust for Ornithology. The records are submitted to RBBC following the counts and are archived electronically. No significant trends of the impact of boating on waterfowl populations have been identified. However, counts for mute swans have fluctuated between 2018 and 2021 which may be linked to the varying levels of visitors to the lakes throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic:

- 2018 – 27 counted
- 2019 – 63 counted
- 2020 – 28 counted, this could be significant as during this year visitor numbers were excessively high which may indicate an impact on Swan activity
- 2021 – 45 counted
- The 2020 Phase 1 Habitat Survey also recorded these birds present.

Feeding the ducks is a popular pass time and the lower lake is the main feeding station, due to the west end's proximity to the car park, although this has led to conflicts with anglers and dogs. Waterfowl also suffer from the public accessibility of both lakes, which leads to high levels of disturbance. Waste nutrients from excess bread left in the water can lead to blue green algal blooms which starves the water of oxygen and can be harmful to humans. New signage was installed in 2018 to educate the public about the impacts of this and encourage feeding natural grain and seeds.

Picture 14 Public information sign installed by lower lake

Invasive Species

A number of invasive species are present on the Common these are:

- Canada goose
- Egyptian goose
- Grey squirrel
- Signal crayfish
- Himalayan Balsam

All the above are listed in Schedule 9 in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, is an offence to introduce or allow them to spread into the countryside. Himalayan Balsam is controlled on an annual hand pulling programme undertaken by the Downland Countryside Partnership. The other species are difficult to control due to their abundance and established nature.

Other non-listed invasive species, which should be controlled to ensure they do not become too dominant at the expense of priority species, include:

- Sycamore
- Norway maple
- Reed mace
- Bracken
- Bramble

Archaeology

As mentioned in section 2.5, evidence of the prehistory of Earlswood Common can be drawn largely from archaeological finds in the local area. Reigate Heath (located to the west of Reigate) and Redhill Common (directly north of Earlswood Common), both located on the Lower Greensand formation, have a number of Mesolithic (8000-4000BC) and Neolithic (4000BC-2500BC) flint arrowheads and other implements. Interpretation of these finds indicates that areas neighbouring Earlswood Common may have been inhabited for thousands of years.

The earliest surviving evidence of human activity on the Common is the bowl barrow (thought to be late Neolithic/Bronze Age) located 20m to the south of Pendleton Road. Historic England have assessed the barrow as having survived 'comparatively well and contains archaeological remains and environmental evidence relating both to the monument and the landscape in which it was constructed'. The monument is said to be one of a group of three barrows, and it is thought there may be more on the Common. A flat Celt axe dating from the early Bronze Age was also discovered on the Common in 1817.

There is sparse evidence in the local area of the Roman occupation of Britain between 43-410AD. However, Hooper mentions the discovery, in 1817, of the foundations to an ancient building on the east side of Earlswood Common. The account given by local historian Ambrose Glover describes the building as consisting of six apartments with a paved atrium at the west end.

Underlying Wealden clay was excavated from the Common during medieval times for the manufacture of tiles and later bricks; other archaeological finds from this era include a 14th century jug and a 12/13th century pitcher. It is likely that the practice of quarrying was carried out continuously from the Middle Ages to the early 20th century.

The Common has some interesting features of more modern archaeology that, although hidden away, are quite visible to anyone wanting to find them. In a block of woodland located just north of the Lower Lake one can make out the foundations of the cottages that once comprised 'the Roundabout' (demolished early 20th century). On the tithe map of 1861 the roundabout is separated into two apportionments, one containing 4 cottages and gardens, and the other five.

Just south of the lakes is a clearing (known as the old car park) which was once a brick-kiln, cottage and yard. Within the adjacent woodlands it possible to locate old tracks (partially surfaced with brick bats) leading east from the brick-kiln. Signs of earthworks in the woodlands may also be remnants of quarrying.

A number of ancient tracks are connected with the Common, including Batts Hill, Wray Lane, White Post Hill and Common Road. It is thought that connections to the Whitebushes area continued to the Thunderfield area of Horley (near Haroldsea Drive).

Byelaws

The use of Earlswood Common is regulated by the RBBC byelaws for Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces, made under Section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875, Sections 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906. A copy of the Byelaws can be found in Appendix 4.

The RBBC Land Drainage Byelaws were written in accordance with Section 66 of the Land Drainage Act 1999 to secure the efficient working of the drainage system in the district for the purpose of preventing flooding or remedying or mitigating any damage caused by flooding. There are a number of drainage channels on the Common including three Strategic Ordinary Watercourses (see paragraph 2.24). The Byelaws are significant to the various site managers responsible for the maintenance of ditches and surrounding land. As best practice, the RBBC Drainage Engineer should be contacted before any works take place on or within 9m of a watercourse. Whilst maintaining and restoring pond habitats under BOA targets is important any works must not breach regulations set out under the byelaws, pertinent examples include blocking and diverting water courses.

Landscape quality

Earlswood Common lies within the Low Weald Countryside Character Area (Natural England Countryside Character Initiative). The key characteristics of this landscape that relate to the Commons are listed as follows (extracted from JCA121):

- broad, low lying and gently undulating clay vales underline a small-scale intimate landscape enclosed by an intricate mix of small woodland, a patchwork of fields, and hedgerows.
- topography and soils vary locally in relation to higher drier outcrops of limestone or sandstone, which are commonly sites of settlements.
- low Weald generally includes an abundance of ponds and small stream valleys often with wet woodlands of alder and willow.
- grassland predominates on the heavy clay soils while lighter soils on higher ground support arable cropping in a more open landscape.
- urban and airport related development sprawl in the flat plain around Gatwick, and in the Horley-Crawley commuter settlements, contrast with the pleasant, wet, woody, rural character of the area and as such are less distinctively Wealden.

Surrey County Council's landscape assessment divides the Low Weald Countryside Character Area into two sections: Wooded Weald and Open Weald. Earlswood Common is included in the Wooded Weald area, which includes all Low Weald land to the west of the M23.

The key characteristics of the Wooded Weald character area are listed as follows:

- densely wooded, small scale, intimate landscape.
- large areas of sinuous woodland and distinctive gill woodland.
- tall hedges and shaws enclosing small areas of farmland.
- narrow, winding lanes enclosed by tall hedges or hedge banks.
- substantial areas of forestry plantation.

In landscape terms, Earlswood Common is distinct from many of the attributes that comprise the character of the low weald/wooded weald. The site's status as common land means that it does not enjoy boundary features such as hedgerows, which create the 'patchwork of fields and hedgerows' common in JCA121. The unused golf course continues to give the site a more open nature, quite different to the densely wooded, intimate character described in the SCC landscape assessment.

Earlswood Common does, however, have many positive attributes with regards to landscape. These include the lakes and associated vegetation, the physical links with other local open spaces (such as Redhill Common), the expansive vistas still viewable despite the now redundant golf course fairways, a mosaic of habitats (grassland, woodland, wetland etc), and shared boundaries with the St. John's conservation area.

Negative landscape and visual influences on the immediate environs of Earlswood Common include the A23 London-Brighton Road, which cuts through the east section of the site from north to south. The traffic and clutter associated with the busy highway greatly diminishes the tranquillity of the common in this area. Pendleton Road (north boundary) and Woodhatch Road (south boundary) are less busy than the A23 but still have a negative impact on the site's landscape appeal.

Furthermore, Earlswood Common falls into the below Surrey Landscape Character type and is described below:

(Urban Edge) UE7: EARLSWOOD COMMON

Location and Boundaries: The Earlswood Common Character Area is located to the south of Redhill. It is surrounded by the Built-Up Areas Redhill and Earlswood. The majority of the boundary therefore follows the Built-Up Area edge, plus Woodhatch Road to the south.

Key Characteristics:

Located at the northern edge of the low weald, gradually rising to meet the greensand hills to the north.

Earlswood Common is Open Access Land occupied by a golf course set within woodland.

The golf course has large areas of woodland developed on the common land off the fairway but closed in 2018 and therefore has less significance to the area's character.

Other open areas include, in particular the large Earlswood Lakes.

Houses, filtered by tree cover, face onto the common in places. Tree cover at the perimeter of the character area screens views of surrounding Built Up Areas generally, including a sewage works adjacent to the south. There are occasional glimpses of the wider rural landscape to the south, but layers of tree cover obscure most distant views.

A thin strip of mainly wooded Earlswood Common, called Whitebushes, remains to the east, between South Earlswood and The East Surrey Hospital. It buffers the roads and roundabout through this part of the character area from surrounding houses at the hospital.

The northern part of the character area includes houses and St. Johns Church within the St. John's Conservation Area, but elsewhere the common is unsettled.

The Greensand Way Recreational Path crosses through the character area into the adjacent Built-Up Areas and onto the wider countryside. There is a lakeside car park and minor visitor facilities at the southern end of the Common.

Roads, albeit partly obscured by tree cover, edge and cross the character area in a number of places.

Almost the entire character area is registered as Common Land, and there is a bowl barrow schedule ancient monument on Earlswood Common to the south-west of the character area. The majority of the common is designated a Site of Nature Conservation Interest and a Local Nature Reserve.

The area is a valuable outdoor resource for the surrounding population, with woodland providing secluded areas. However, the land use and other surrounding and internal human influences limit the sense of remoteness and give Earlswood Common more of a public amenity feel than the less disturbed Redhill Common to the north, and more rural character area to the south.

The urban environment also impacts on many areas of the Common's boundaries. Around the St John's Conservation Area and perhaps along Pendleton Road, this can be seen as a positive asset (or at a worst neutral impact), but in other areas the urban form can exert a negative influence, particularly in the Woodhatch area where the Common extends along built-up roads.

The sewage works that lies adjacent to the southeast boundary of the common is not visible from the site but has a major, if intermittent impact, due to the smell it produces.

No formal landscape or visual assessment has been carried out for Earlswood Common other than described in Sections 2.82 to 2.87.

Recreation

Earlswood Common has a long history of recreational activity that continues to this day. Both the cricket pitch and golf course have been active since the 19th century, and the lakes have a long history of fishing, bathing, boating, and even skating. The size and location of the site have made it ideal for both formal (requiring a specific infrastructure) and informal (occurring due to the environment offered) recreation.

The formal recreational activities that are currently offered on the site are as follows:

Golf

The 18-hole golf course on Earlswood Common was established in 1887. Redhill and Reigate Golf Club (RRGC) used the course under licence from RBBC. Due to financial difficulties the Golf Club ceased operation in 2018.

Cricket

Merstham Cricket Club took over the use of the “RING” under licence from RBBC in 2013 including the maintenance of the Pavilion and Cricket Square. The cricket square having been used by Redhill and Old Coulsdon Cricket Club since the 1860’s. Merstham Cricket Club use the facility for their 3rd.4th and 5th teams plus junior games including girls. These games amount to around 60 per season.

The Ring is leased to the cricket club from RBBC. The agreement gives the club responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the square, while the council maintains the outfield. It should be noted, however, that this area is also a key area for wild chamomile (it can just be seen in the foreground in the picture below).

Picture 15 The Ring leased to Merstham Cricket Club

Merstham Cricket Club manages the small pavilion under licence from RBBC. The pavilion was extended in 2021 to include machinery storage. The internal layout was altered at the same time to modernise the facility (See the picture above).

There have been problems with anti-social behaviour over the years, mainly focused on the pavilion. The roof has been damaged and there has been several attempted break ins. The pavilion is in the unfortunate position of being tucked away in a secluded part of the Common, and as such is a desirable target to vandals.

Football

The two football pitches are rented out on a seasonal basis. Management, maintenance and administration of the pitches are carried out by RBBC. Changing rooms are located in woodland behind the cricket pavilion.

Redhill Youth FC currently uses the pitches but there are no long-term agreements. During the 2019/20 football season the pitches were only occasionally fit for use due to drainage problems and wet weather.

Angling

The lower lake is leased from RBBC by the Horley Piscatorial Society for recreational fishing. The current licence is due to expire in 2025.

Horley Piscatorial Society have ‘Fishing Rights’ (meaning the right to introduce to and to fish, take and carry away fish) for the Lower Lake only, and ‘Ancillary Rights’ (meaning the right to move and carry away fish in order only to manage stock levels in accordance with the provisions of the licence) over both the Lower and Upper Lakes. The lease also requires them to adhere to acceptable standards of land use. They own all the fish stock and has the power to prosecute if fish are removed illegally.

Formal play areas (for children)

There are 2 children’s play areas located on Earlswood Common, one in the eastern area between the A23 and Common Road and one in the northern area close to Mead Vale and adjacent to the Chain Pond (refurbished in 2008). There are also play facilities on Woodhatch Park, located close to the west end of the site.

Formal use by St John’s School

St John’s Primary School has used Earlswood Common as playing fields for over 100 years. Recent use includes PE lessons, after school sports clubs, nature trails and litter picks. The school accesses the Common via the track from the school and possesses a key for the gate. Once a year the Common is used for Sports Day and for such events the Cricket Club also allows the school to use their facilities.

Informal activities

Earlswood Common is a large open space with an extensive network of paths and grassy expanses. This environment lends itself to a variety of informal recreational activities, and is well used for dog walking, rambling, picnicking, watching and feeding the ducks, and all kinds

of sports and games. RBBC currently leases the Common for a children's nature group 'Leafy Learners', a military re

enactment club and a woman's exercise class, all pay an annual fee.

The Common's location, with many adjoining residential properties, makes access by foot an option for a significant number of local residents. Some horse riders and cyclists would also like to make use of the Common, although neither use is currently permitted.

A survey of open space users in the Borough of Reigate and Banstead was scheduled to take place in 2020 but due to COVID 19 Pandemic it was postponed.

Access and infrastructure

Earlswood Common has one surfaced public car park, located on Woodhatch Road. The tarmac surface has no demarcation of parking spaces, and concrete bollards and a small boundary embankment prevent vehicular access on to the Common. A metal height barrier is situated on the entrance from Woodhatch Road, which prevents larger commercial vehicles from accessing the car park. There is no charge or restriction on parking, and the space is popular with smaller commercial vehicles as well as private cars.

This car park, located next to the lower lake, acts as a visitor focus and gateway to the rest of the Common. There are some signs and interpretation boards located in the area, a small catering kiosk which has been refurbished since the last Management Plan, toilets and benches but no cycle racks.

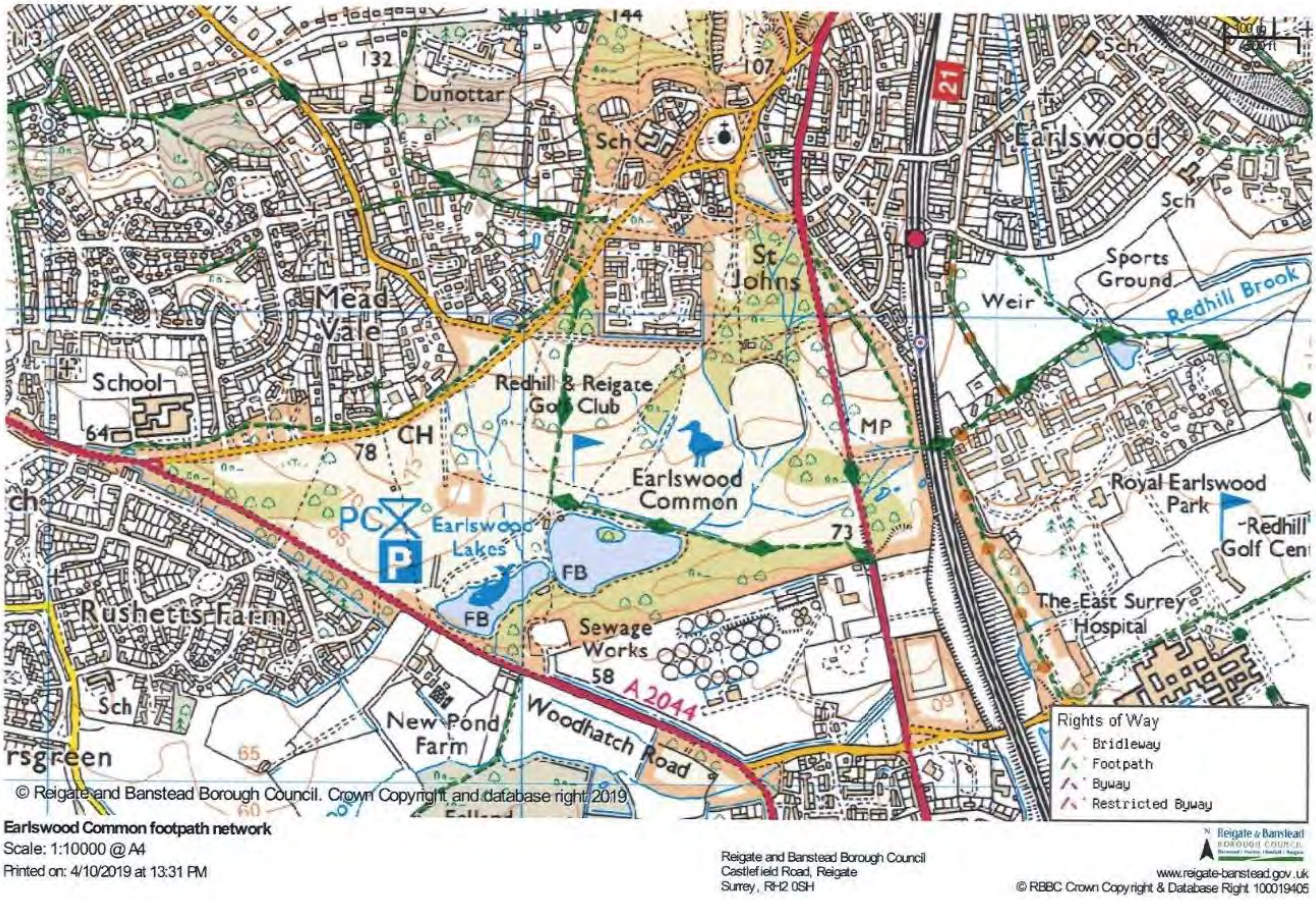
Vehicular access to the northern sections of the Common is possible via a track leading from St Johns to the Ring. Right of entry is restricted by a padlocked gate. The track is mainly used by the cricket and football clubs with cars parked behind the pavilion. The track is unsurfaced, rough, uneven, often muddy and heavily shaded and enclosed by woodland.

There are 17 litter bins and 14 dog bins owned and managed by RBBC located on the Common. There are seven litter bins that were owned and emptied by the Golf club have been removed along with other golf furniture such as ball cleaners, tee platforms. A number of 'Big Belly' compactor style bins have been installed near the lakes to tackle the increase in volumes of rubbish being discarded, they have the holding capacity equivalent to six standard rubbish bins.

The whole of Earlswood Common is designated Open Access Land under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.

In the past there have been incidences of travellers using the site although this is strictly forbidden in the byelaws. To prevent this problem a number of security measures have been implemented around the site's road boundaries including mounds, posts, concrete bollards, metal gates and the height barrier in the car park. The most recent additions are wooden posts and earth embankments installed along vulnerable points along road edges. This is discussed in greater detail under Management Objectives.

The established network of paths on the Common is a mix of style, material, size, and condition. Tarmac paths of varying quality surround parts of the lakes, grass paths are mown into the areas of meadow grass, and bound gravel paths link former golf course holes. A network of informal paths provides access throughout the area of the Common. The network of surfaced footpaths around the lakes was repaired during 2019 improving access for all users.



Map 8 Footpath network on Earlswood Common

Picture 16 Footpath improvements: surface repair and installation of safety rails near water edge

Two key long-distance paths traverse the Common. These are the Greensand Way, a 108 mile walk across Surrey and Kent, and the Millennium Trail South, a local walk designed and provided by RBBC to celebrate the new Millennium. Both paths are way marked across the Common.

Since the last management plan the kiosk situated by the car park has been upgraded to a larger food and beverage facility which attracts many visitors. Some only visit purely as a means of purchasing food and drink but also provides welcome refreshments for users of the common.

Picture 17 Greensand Way long distance footpath passes through Earlswood Common

Education and interpretation

Earlswood Common has been identified as a potentially valuable educational resource but is significantly underused in this respect and is a Management Objective discussed later in this plan.

A free leaflet on Earlswood Common is available from Reigate Town Hall, Help Shops and local libraries and on the parks page on the council website. The leaflet contains a map of the Common including path layout and location of facilities, and provides a brief summary of the site's history, biodiversity and accessibility. Production of the leaflet was jointly funded by RBBC and Thames Water in 2007. The Council's website also has downloadable copies of these on it.

Brown tourism signs are located on roads around the Common, advertising the site to road users. There is only one official entrance sign to the site, which is located in the car park on Woodhatch Road. The sign contains some general information about the Common including the byelaws. In the car park area are also two lectern-style interpretation panels, one containing a map of the Common and the other providing details about the Common's wildfowl. A third interpretation panel is located by the old boathouse on the Upper Lake and gives information on the site's trees and wildlife. There are plans to improve the level of interpretation to give greater detail on the Common's ecology and heritage and as such is a Management Objective.

Guided walks of the Common occasionally take place run by organisations such as Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers, Surrey Bat Group and Butterfly Conservation Trust. The Earlswood and Redhill Common Steering Group undertake a site walk every summer to identify any issues and management ideas.

Management of Earlswood Common

A number of bodies are involved in the management and maintenance of Earlswood Common. Management is led by RBBC and supported by the Earlswood Common Management Steering Group, which actively encourages and advises on the management of the site. Members of the Steering Group represent the main bodies involved in the management of the Common and key users of, and interest groups in, the site. Details of the Steering Group, including members and Terms of Reference, can be found in Appendix C.

Earlswood Common is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), designated by Natural England. This designation requires that RBBC manage the Common such that the features that give the site its special interest are maintained.

Maintenance of the common is mostly undertaken by the council's Greenspaces team although the staff available for specialist countryside management tasks has been reduced to one Ranger which is a significant limitation. Supported is provided by local groups such as Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers and Horley Piscatorial Society.

'When declaring an LNR, the local authority accepts responsibility for ensuring that the special interest of the land is maintained. It must, therefore, consider carefully exactly how the reserve is to be managed – and by whom – and what resources will be needed'.

The monitoring of strategic watercourses is the responsibility of RBBC's Drainage Engineer. The courses are surveyed once a year, usually in the winter, and any problems or required works are passed on to the Greenspaces Team to follow through as part of routine maintenance. Under the Council's Land Drainage Byelaws 2001, permission must be granted by the Drainage Engineer for any works within 9m of the strategic watercourses. In some cases, consent may also be required from the Environment Agency.

4. Policy context: Local and National

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

The NPPF 2019 promotes conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, as detailed in paragraph 118, which states: “When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:

> “If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused…”
>
> “Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged…”

Reigate and Banstead Core Strategy Objectives 2012-2027.

The most relevant objectives that apply to biodiversity and the natural environment within the Borough have been extracted from the full Core Strategy:

The environment

- To achieve an overarching, multi-functional framework which links existing and planned communities through a connected, easily accessible green space network, whilst also respecting the ecological and cultural heritage of the borough, the role of the Green Belt and the promotion of local distinctiveness
- To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation facilities which encourage walking and cycling.
- To maintain and enhance the borough’s valued landscapes, historic, built and natural environment including habitats and species and heritage assets.
- To keep and enhance the identified character and separate identities of the borough’s towns and other urban areas.
- To safeguard and promote biodiversity and wildlife corridors at a local level, as well as on designated sites, through responsible and positive design and management.
- To ensure that the design of new development makes best use of the site, integrates effectively with its setting, promotes local distinctiveness, maximises accessibility and minimises the opportunities for crime.
- To require that developments conserve natural resources, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and help to reduce waste, and are adaptable to climate change (including the risk from flooding) Valued landscapes and the natural environment.

Biodiversity: 2020 Department for Environment Fisheries and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Biodiversity loss is addressed in this strategy on a national level, but its targets are drawn down to a local level.

A Vision for England

By 2050 our land and seas will be rich in wildlife, our biodiversity will be valued, conserved, restored, managed sustainably and be more resilient and able to adapt to change, providing essential services and delivering benefits for everyone.

2020 Mission

Our mission is to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.

'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'. HM Government

The 25 plan outlines key environmental issues and strategies that will be addressed and implemented in response to England's departure from the European Union and sets out the scope and opportunity to develop national environmental policy and legislation. The key themes relating to land management on a local level are:

- recovery of native wildlife species and their habitats.
- preservation of broadleaf woodland through tree planting and control of tree pests and pathogens.
- provision for access to nature such as forest schools, informal recreation.
- promoting natural open spaces to improve mental and physical health.

5. Legislation

Nature and biodiversity

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)

The Act provides law regarding SSSIs and other protected areas. It also makes provisions for protecting birds, animals and plants as well as measures for preventing the establishment of non-native species, which may be detrimental to native wildlife.

Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA): BOA Low Weald 07 (LW07)

BOAs aim to establish a strategic framework for conserving and enhancing biodiversity at a landscape scale making wildlife robust to changing climate and socio-economic pressures. BOAs are where targeted maintenance, restoration and creation of Habitats of Principal Importance (NERC Act 2006) take place. The description and targets of BOA LW07 can be viewed in Appendix 5.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Provides for the protection of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites, European Protected Species and Habitats. European Protected Species include, but are not limited to Great Crested Newt, Natterjack Toad, Smooth Snake, Sand Lizard, all bat species and Hazel Dormice.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

Under this legislation it is an offence to kill or injure a Badger; to damage, destroy or block access to a Badger sett; or to disturb a Badger in its sett. The Act also states the conditions for the protection of Badgers licence requirements.

Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) became law in England and Wales in 2003 via the Water Environment (WFD) (England and Wales) Regulations. The Water Framework Directive has four main goals: (1) to prevent deterioration in water status, (2) all water bodies achieve good ecological status, good chemical status and good groundwater status (or potential), (3) reduce and eliminate sources of pollution and (4) contribute to achieving objectives of sites protected by other EU legislation. The Tidal Thames is classified as a ‘heavily modified water body’ and transitional water under the WFD. Its current status is ‘moderate ecological potential’ with the aim of reaching good ecological potential by 2027.

Bern Convention

The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) was ratified by the UK Government in 1982. The principal aims of the Convention are to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species) listed in Appendix III. To this end, the Convention imposes legal obligations on contracting parties, protecting over 500 wild plants.

The State of Nature 2016 & The State of Surrey's Nature Report 2017

The State of Nature 2016 gives a national overview of the state of nature in the UK. The State of Surrey's Nature (Waite, 2017) provides a county-wide perspective but represents how habitat categories relate to the conservation status of species. It helps focus decision-making about the conservation and management of Lowland Heathland, Acid Grassland, Mixed Deciduous Woodland and Wetland habitats on Earlswood Common.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006

This Act implements key aspects of Government's Rural Strategy (2004) and addresses a range of issues relating to the natural environment. It places a duty to conserve biodiversity on public bodies in England, which may include enhancing, restoring or protecting a species population or habitat. It creates offences in connection with SSSIs, controls on pesticides and codes of practice with regard to invasive non-native species.

White Paper: The Natural Choice - Securing the Value of Nature 2011

This paper recognises that a healthy natural environment is the foundation of sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal wellbeing. It contains plans to 'protect, restore and improve England's natural environment', whilst 'repairing damage done to the environment in the past.' It sets out how the value of nature can be enhanced by protecting and improving our natural environment and reconnecting people and nature.

Landscape

Surrey Landscape Character Assessment

The Landscape Character for Earlswood Common has been described in section 2.82-2.90.

A Green Future: 25 Year Environmental Plan 2018

This plan states that the government will take action on a number of fronts, looking to join up policies in a way that maximises benefits and value for money. Four key areas apply to Earlswood Common using and managing land sustainably; recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes; connecting people with the environment to improve health and well-being; and increasing resources efficiently and reducing pollution and waste.

Common Act 2006 & Common Registration (England) Regulations 2014

All the land covered by this management plan has rights over common registered under the original Acts. These latest Acts seek to deliver positive management of common land to provide benefits for the economy, biodiversity, archaeology, recreation and community. Restricted works preventing or impeding access; resurfacing land and fencing; constructing buildings; or digging of ditches on common land are prohibited unless they have the consent of the Secretary of State.

Access

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The Act provides a right of public access on foot to areas of open land, heath and registered common land with safeguards for landowners and wildlife. It improved the rights of way legislation and enables the diversion of rights of way to protect SSSIs. The Act also increased measures for the management and protection of SSSI, strengthened wildlife enforcement legislation and provided for better management of AONBs.

Planning

Conservation Areas

The land and buildings in the St Johns area fall within a designated Conservation Area. Any works to trees and hedges must have formal consent from the RBBC Planning Team by giving at least six weeks' notice of application.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO'S)

There are no trees on Earlswood Common with TPO designations.

Archaeology

Any works likely to impact the existing Scheduled Monument on Earlswood Common must have formal consent from Historic England.

Any works likely to impact on the Area of High Archaeological Importance surrounding the above must have formal consent from Surrey County Council Heritage Team.

6. Evaluation of features on Earlswood Common

Archaeology and landscape

Feature	Significance/Value
Scheduled Monument	National significance with legal protection under the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979
County Site of Archaeological Importance	High county significance
Archaeological potential	Moderate potential
Common Land	National designation with legal protection and management implications
Historic landscape	No formal designations; high local significance; lack of research

Recreation

Feature/Activity	Significance/Value
Informal recreation including walking, exercising dogs, picnicking; open space experience etc.	High local significance for wellbeing
Open access land (common land)	High local significance
Angling	High/moderate local significance
Cricket	High local significance
Football	High/moderate local significance
Playgrounds	High local significance

Ecology and Biodiversity

Feature/Habitat	Significance/Value
Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)	High county value and local significance
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	High local value
Semi-improved grassland	High National value and significant presence of nationally rare Chamomile – UK BAP Priority Species and BOA target. Harebell species of concern
Pollarded oaks	High local significance
Wetland, Wet Woodland and Drainage	High local significance, wet woodland BOA target
Ponds and Lakes	High value (National, County and Local) – UKBAP Priority Habitats, ponds BOA target
Fauna	Locally significant bat populations – Soprano Pipipestrelle, Noctule, Long Eared Bat, Daubenton Nationally significant butterflies recorded (White-letter hairstreak and Small Heath) – UKBAP priority species. Waterfowl of high local significance Potential significance for reptiles, invertebrates and Amphibians – Common Toad High National value for Birds – Linnet, Song Thrush, Starling, Sparrow, Bullfinch, Herring Gull – UKBAP Priority Species The following protected species/species of conservation concern were recorded during the Phase 1 habitat survey carried out in May/June 2020: • Badger setts

	• Bat roosts in trees • Cinnabar moth • Common gull • Common sandpiper • Dunnock • Great crested grebe • Grey wagtail • House sparrow • Red kite • Song thrush • Small heath butterfly • Swift • Starling
Flora	Species of conservation concern: • Harebell • Chamomile • BOA target Lesser Spearwort
Mixed broadleaf woodland	High national, county and local value – UKBAP Priority Habitat

Education and interpretation

Feature/Activity	Significance/Value
Education	High potential local value
Interpretation	High potential local value
Communication	High potential local value

Management and maintenance

Feature	Significance/Value
Management of Steering Group	High local value
Partnership working	High local value (conservation groups, fishing club)
RBBC, Greenspaces	High local value (service provision)

7. Site management and maintenance principles

Site management issues

Relationship between Nature Conservation, Recreation and Commercialism

Earlswood Common is designated as a Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance for its ecology and biodiversity value. It is also an area of local authority owned open access common land and is used for both formal and informal recreation. The recreational value of the Common is highly significant locally, but the nature conservation value is of county importance.

Conservation and recreation do not always sit happily together. The Common is heavily used for recreation and aspects of this use can be damaging to nature conservation interests. Users allowing dogs off leads in restricted areas and angling can be directly harmful to waterfowl. Drainage issues have been criticised for reducing the quality of sports pitches, but impeded drainage and wetlands can be good for nature conservation. Dog fouling has a negative impact on both nature conservation and recreation.

Whilst generating additional income from commercial activities can be of value there is the risk of damaging the LNR and SNCI character of the Common. This needs to be addressed and carefully managed.

Changes to the climate has seen increased and intensified rainfall over last the five years resulting in prolonged flooding and excessive levels of surface water. Measures to prevent flooding under the Drainage Act 1999 places a responsibility on the borough council where flooding occurs, whilst preserving and creating wetland habitats is of importance so too is protecting properties and persons from harm.

However, this issue does provide an opportunity to create seasonal ponds as a way of capturing surface water, not only will this meet BOA targets for pond creation it will satisfy statutory flood prevention requirements. Plans on how to achieve this is outlined under Objectives.

Common mowing regimes

The closure of the Golf Club has provided an opportunity to modify the frequent mowing regime that facilitated golf play to a more selective regime that enhances biodiversity whilst maintaining amenity value.

Road verge mowing

Policies at county level are driving towards more wildlife friendly verges by less intensive mowing regimes and sowing native wildflower seed. Recent botanical surveys have indicated that many road verges that form part of the Common are species rich and support plants of Conservation Concern detailed in Appendix 3. Therefore, it is important to identify areas that can be managed more sensitively without traffic sightlines being obscured. These areas are outlined in Work Programmes.

Formal and Informal Recreation Management

Earlswood Common supports a range of formal recreational activities and offers many opportunities for informal recreation. This has led to a number of recreation related issues. The main conflicts are between irresponsible dog walkers and anglers, the fishing club operates a well organised bailiff-ing and rules policy and is well engaged with the community, council and the police.

Rope swings and den building are also prevalent throughout the common. Den building is tolerated providing they do not attract anti-social behaviour they will be removed if this is the case. Rope swings cannot be easily inspected for safety, quite often they are attached to unsuitable trees, therefore they will be removed when reported to Greenspaces.

The former Golf Course occupies a large proportion of the 100ha Common since its closure users have been less restricted to where they can walk. The use of the Common has increased significantly since then and during the COVID 19 Pandemic resulting in an increase in discarded litter and breaches of Common Byelaws.

The Ring cricket pitch is in a sheltered part of the Common and has been subjected to a number of incidences of vandalism.

There is some demand for both cycling and horse riding on the Common. Current byelaws do not allow either activity without the permission of the Council (although cyclists, and occasionally horse riders, do use the Common from time to time). Opinion is divided on the advisability of permitting these additional activities and it is certainly the case that soil conditions, especially in winter could mean that horse riding is not practical.

Pedal boating on the top lake is an activity enjoyed by many visitors in the summer months, to ensure that the nature conservation interest is not impacted an area is roped off and is strictly a no boating area. It is of upmost importance that this area is not reduced for expanded boating activity. There have been recent issues of pedal boaters disturbing nest birds on the islands. The lease holder of the facility has been instructed to replace the floating markers with larger buoys that are more visible to pedal boat users.

Litter

Litter is often a problem on open access sites that attract regular visitors as mentioned in section 3.16. Collection of litter and emptying of bins is carried out by the RBBC Street Cleansing Team. Occasional events such as the Big Spring Clean and work parties organised by the fishing club also help to control discarded litter. Members of the public can also organise litter picking events by arrangement with the Greenspaces Team.

Access

Car park: the site only has one car park, which consists of an expanse of un-delineated tarmac with open views across parts of the Common. Parking pressure has increased dramatically over the past two years particularly during the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Entrances: there are many paths leading on to the Common but few locations for information/interpretation or other facilities other than the access from Woodhatch Road. Although the Common Land designation means that access to the site cannot be restricted (and fencing is not possible), there is confusion relating to access, particularly when vegetation is left to develop for biodiversity which can be perceived as a barrier.

Crossing Points: sections of the Common are divided by the A23, Pendleton Road and Woodhatch Road. There is currently a lack of safe crossing points across these highways. This presents a safety issue and increases the fragmented nature of the site. However, Surrey County Council are the Highway Authority and are responsible works of this nature. Wooden sleeper bridges allow ditches to be crossed over the common, many need replacing.

Hydrology

Both lakes were significantly affected by Blue Green Algal blooms during the summer period. The duration of low rain fall, sun exposure and heat made for perfect conditions for the blooms to spread. This created a health risk to human and dogs through contact with the water resulting in suspended provision of angling and boating. There were no reports of fish mortalities or cases of user contamination. Due to COVID 19 social distancing restrictions, it was not possible to install barley straw bales during the spring as is current practice. The likelihood of future hot and dry summers means that other measures to reduce algal blooms need to be put in place.

Poor drainage on areas of the Common cause problems for many site users due to unusable sports pitches and unsuitable path condition. The Strategic ditches require annual inspections for blockages. The ditches formerly for golf course drainage require reactional inspection to minimise site flooding. All ditches have the potential to be enhanced for biodiversity value without compromising flood alleviation.

Naturally un-sustainable levels of wildfowl on the lakes can cause very high levels of nitrates which can have a serious effect on the ecological balance of the lake. Persistent grazing from Egyptian and Canada geese can gradually erode the banks and leave little vegetation.

Interpretation, Education, Information and 'Audience Development'

Current information and interpretation provision (signs, interpretation lecterns etc) is limited and there is considerable potential for improved and extended interpretation and use of the Common to support a number of education initiatives. Any additional provision of information through signage or interpretation boards needs to be balanced against the impact on the visual landscape and character. There is, however, significant scope to introduce a far wider range of interpretation.

e.g. PSPO signage scheduled in 2020, information and education by a variety of other means, including off site and web-based information provision and involvement of local schools. The 2020 South East in Bloom report recommended installing more interpretation boards to highlight biodiversity and heritage features.

There is also considerable scope to increase the numbers of residents who could benefit from the Common's facilities and to extend the range of activities that could be enjoyed on the Common e.g. Forest School. Again, such extension to the existing 'audience' would need to be effectively managed to mitigate potential impacts on biodiversity, existing users, visual character, tranquillity, etc. The sailing of model boats became a significant issue in 2019 whereby an individual was granted permission to sail a boat on the fishing lake, although prohibited under the Byelaws it was agreed that permission would be given on this occasion due to their circumstances. This however gave the impression that sailing was allowed encouraging others to do so which led to confrontations between enforcement officers and those concerned. To tackle this, it has been agreed to install more Byelaw signs making prohibited activities clearer.

Enforcement and Legal Issues

There are several ways in which the Common is misused. Many activities disallowed on the Common under the byelaws still take place on a regular basis, such as cycling, horse riding, barbecues, and dog fouling. Graffiti and vandalism of buildings and structures can also be a problem. Currently, RBBC has insufficient staff to provide a significant or regular presence on the site and alternative or additional methods of handling these issues needs to be investigated. PSPO's have been updated to allow further enforcement to protect wildlife from dog attacks.

Site maintenance issues

A significant influence on maintenance work on Earlswood Common is the constraints on resources. The revenue budgets allocated by the Council to the Greenspaces Team covers basic maintenance of the borough's countryside sites. There is also a process whereby officers can make bids internally for funds to cover works additional to revenue budgets e.g. CIL Funding. In the past and present, special projects and enhancement schemes have been supplied by additional resources from steering group members such as RACV, Horley Piscatorial and externally from local businesses such as Willis Towers Watson.

Monitoring is essential to gauge the success of maintenance and management. Adequate monitoring has not always been possible on Earlswood Common due to lack of a Management Plan and a defined monitoring structure, as well as resource limitations. Definition of performance indicators and other methods of simple monitoring will be important to future maintenance. Fixed point photographic monitoring to measure Chamomile has been carried out since 2018.

Efficient and appropriate maintenance work requires regular reviews, particularly in the light of monitoring results. Before and after photography is one way of reviewing works.

Issue relating to the management planning process

Status of Plan and Steering Group: this document will be the second full Management Plan written for Earlswood Common and it is likely; therefore, that some of those involved in site management/ maintenance may not have experience of working to a Plan of this nature. Poor appreciation of the need to comply with the plan (by site staff, other RBBC departments and external bodies) could result in actions contrary to the Management Plan and to the detriment of the Common. The role of the Plan and of the Steering Group needs to be clearly established and communicated to all involved with Earlswood Common.

The Steering Group is representative of groups on or around the Common (including three elected Council members). The group meets three times a year including a site visit. All issues regarding the management of the Common are discussed allowing representative members to provide advice and comment to the management framework. They also act as a communication channel for residents and users of the Common.

The current representative groups are:

- Horley Piscatorial Society – Angling
- Reigate Area Conservation Group – Nature conservation
- St Johns School – Local school
- Friends of Swans – Swan conservation
- Environment Agency – Lake, River and Flood management
- Earlswood Boats and Café – Pedal boating and catering Reigate Society – Local history
- Merstham Cricket Club – Cricket
- Ward Councillors – Ward representation
- RBBC Officer – Countryside management and grounds maintenance

Communication: closely linked with all the above issues is the need for good communication within RBBC and between the Council and external bodies (including key stakeholders) that can help guide management.

All the issues outlined above have been carefully considered in the preparation of the visions, objectives and policies. They are detailed in the following section, and in the Work Programme to be found in Section 7.

8. Management of Earlswood Common LNR

Visions

Throughout the duration of this management plan the overarching visions are set out below. The following section outlines how they will be delivered through management policies and operations:

- Conserve and enhance LNR and SNCI features in line with Biodiversity Opportunity Area and UKBAP targets.
- Regulate impacts of recreation on LNR.
- Review commercial activities and their impacts on biodiversity Improve the value of open space for public well-being.

Targets and indicators of success

Note the quantifiable targets set by the Surrey Nature Partnership expired in 2020, they are currently undergoing review so are likely to change. Until this happens current ones will be used, should new targets be set during the management plan period they will replace the ones below.

BOA creation and restoration of habitats
1.5 Ha mixed deciduous woodland
0.25 Ha wet woodland. ***0.54 Ha of wet woodland is extant, maintained through Priority Habitat objective***
8.25 Ha wood pasture and parkland. ***40 Ha will be restored through Priority Habitat objective***
4.5 Ha meadows. ***10.97 Ha will be created through Priority Habitat objective***
2 Km hedgerows
*0.75 Ha ponds****. Currently 0.14 Ha of extant pond habitat. Surplus 0.61 Ha of pond habitat to restore through Priority Habitat objective (Ponds).***
Indicators of success. Quantified data can be provided to demonstrate habitat creation and restoration

BOA Priority Species Recovery: evidence of at least stabilisation or recovery of the local populations of priority species list including additional Priority Species UKBAP
Grizzled skipper butterfly. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Neutral Grassland)***
White letter hairstreak butterfly. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Woodland and Wood Pasture Parkland) particularly preservation of Elm trees***
*Cinnabar Moth****. Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Neutral Grassland)***
Small Heath Butterfly. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Neutral Grassland)***
Great crested newt. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Ponds, Wet Woodland)***
Common Toad. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Ponds, Wet Woodland and Neutral Grassland)***
Common Lizard. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Woodland and Neutral Grassland)***
Hedgehog. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Woodland, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***
Brown Long Eared and Noctule Bat. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Woodland, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***
Common Starling. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Neutral Grassland, Hedgerow, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***
Linnett. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Neutral Grassland, Hedgerow, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***
*Bullfinch****. Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Neutral Grassland, Hedgerow, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***
*House Sparrow****. Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Neutral Grassland, Hedgerow, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***
*Herring Gull****. Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Ponds)***
*Song Thrush****. Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Neutral Grassland, Hedgerow, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***

Cuckoo, Dunnock, Yellow Hammer. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Neutral Grassland, Hedgerow, Wood Pasture and Parkland)***
Lapwing, Skylark: ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective, Priority Habitat objectives (Neutral Grassland)***
*Chamomile****. Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Neutral Grassland)***
Harebell. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Neutral Grassland)***
Lesser Spearwort. ***Population recovery through Species of Principle Importance objective and Priority Habitat objective (Ponds, Neutral Grassland)***
Indicators of success. Quantified data can be provided to demonstrate stabilisation or recovery of priority species

Regulation of recreational activities
No recreational activities or commercial events to be allowed that could damage the LNR. ***Unauthorised activities and events will be enforced through Use of Common objective.***
Indicators of success. No evidence of unauthorised activities or events taking place

Prevention of illegal incursions on common land
Maintenance of bunds and bollards to prevent incursions. ***Protection of Common objective***
React promptly and effectively to intelligence of attempted incursions. ***Protection of Common objective***
Effective communications between steering group, Greenspaces and JET. ***Protection of Common objective***
Indicators of success. No further illegal incursions occurring

Preservation of Scheduled Monuments
The Bowl Barrow south of Pendleton Road will not suffer any damage by activities or disturbance. ***Achieved through Scheduled Monuments objective***
Indicators of success. No evidence of damage or disturbance reported or ratified by Historic England in monitoring reports

Public wellbeing improvements
Improved public knowledge and value of the common. ***Achieved through Use of Common objective***
Lawful access to the common maintained and not restricted. ***Achieved through Use of Common objective***
Reduced litter and dog problems. ***Achieved through Protection of Common objective***
Indicators of success. Public wellbeing improvements evidenced in community surveys and feedback at Steering Group meetings

9. Management Objectives 2022-2027

Objective 1. Management of Priority Habitats and Species of Principle Importance

Grassland Management (Lowland Acidic, Neutral, Wood Pasture and Parkland)

- Enhance biodiversity through modifications to mowing regimes on verges and former golf course.
- Enhance wildflower and grass species diversity as above Target species of Principle Importance e.g. Chamomile Retain standing deadwood and veteran trees.

Woodland Management

- Preserve Mixed deciduous woodland by implementing suitable Silvicultural systems Contribute to County set tree planting targets.
- Retain notable trees e.g. Elms, and mature/veteran trees for wildlife.
- Monitor tree diseases/pests such as Oak Processionary Moth & Ash dieback.
- Veteranisation of trees for habitat enhancement
- Maintain access for informal recreation and learning Create glades for wildlife.

Ponds, Lakes, wetland and ditches

- Continue to enhance ponds, lakes, wetland, wet woodland and ditches for biodiversity.
- Restore historic and neglected ponds Develop strategies to reduce algal blooms.

Hedgerows

- Restore defunct hedgerows by planting of native species.

Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed land

- Maintain and prevent loss to encroachment.

Objective 2. Protection of the Common

- Prevent illegal incursions.
- Reduce and enforce anti-social behaviour (dog control, litter).

Objective 3. Use of the Common (Recreation, Education, Infrastructure, Heritage)

- Develop strategy to ensure recreational use and commercial activities do not damage the LNR/SNCI features.
- Investigate opportunities for education programmes Maintain network of footpaths and review impacts on wildlife Address parking pressure as result of increased visitor use.
- Develop educational information about features of Heritage/Biodiversity interest Control prohibited recreational activities.

Objective 4. Scheduled Monument

- Preserve Listed Scheduled Monument in accordance with Historic England regulations.
- Develop better interpretation on the Scheduled Monument.

10. Management Polices

Objective 1: Priority Habitats, Species of Principle Importance and enhancing biodiversity

The below habitats are either present on Earlswood Common and have the potential to be enhanced. They are of national and county importance and are designated as Priority Habitats within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP 2007) which underpins Section 41 of The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity 2020: Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystems Services. Each habitat will be discussed, their condition evaluated and how they will be managed over the course of the management plan. Each habitat will bear reference to Priority Species which can be found in them:

- Lowland Acidic Grassland (present, potential to enhance species richness)
- Neutral Grassland (present, potential to enhance Neutral Grassland and increase species richness)
- Wood pasture and parkland (present)
- Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland (present) Wet Woodland (present)
- Ponds (present, potential to enhance number and condition) Hedgerows (present, potential to increase and enhance) Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously developed land

Species of Principle Importance on Earlswood Common

Below is a list of species within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and BOA targets and have the same function as outlined above most of which have been recorded on Earlswood and Redhill Common. It this these species that habitat management will focus on over the course of the management plan period and each is discussed in accordance with the habitat to which they belong to:

- **Invertebrates:** Cinnabar Moth, Small Heath Butterfly, White Hairstreak Butterfly, Grizzled Skipper Butterfly
- **Mammals:** Brown Long Eared Bat, Noctule Bat, Hedgehog **Amphibians:** Common Toad, Great Crested Newt **Reptiles:** Common Lizard (Redhill Common)
- **Birds:** Common Starling, Linnett, Bullfinch, House Sparrow, Herring Gull, Song Thrush
- **Vascular Plants:** Chamomile, Harebell, Lesser Spearwort

Lowland Acidic Grassland (NVC Types U4, U20)

Lowland Acidic Grassland is typically found on nutrient poor acidic soils and are now rare in the Southeast largely due to development pressure and poor management such as allowing scrub dominance. Bracken is often dominant as are Fescue and Bent grasses. Only very small remnants of moderately acid grassland are present due to improvement of grass for sports and encroachment of scrub, invasive vegetation and trees.

The more acidic grasslands are to be found in the woodland clearing and to some degree in the old golf course roughs although these are more neutral in character. In some cases, these areas are being dominated by scrub vegetation and are generally species poor. However, a programme of clearance has now been instigated. Of the Priority Species Acid Grassland is important for: Small Heath Butterfly, Common Toad, Common Lizard, Linnet and Harebell. The parcels of Acid Grassland will be managed by scrub clearance and periodic late summer mowing to create a mosaic of grass lengths. The cuttings are to be removed to avoid a build-up of nutrients.

Picture 18 Species Poor Acid Grass near junction of Woodhatch and Pendleton Road

Neutral Grassland (NVC Types MG1e, MG7)

Neutral Grassland is the broad habitat with Lowland Meadow being the Priority habitat in the classification. A Lowland Meadow will be species rich holding an extensive variety of flowers and grasses. Much of the grassland is Species Poor being dominated by Perennial Rye, Bent, Yorkshire fog and Cocks Foot grasses, this is largely due to the extent of land used for sports. The old roughs are classed as Neutral although but are still considered Species Poor, however notable species are present. They will be managed by two-year rotational cutting to allow a full life cycle of invertebrates and overwinter refuge. Dominant scrub and bracken regrowth will also be controlled by herbicide treatment and mowing, but occasional distribution will be allowed to provide ecological structure. See pictures 24-27.

With no further plans to reinstate golf on the Common there is now the opportunity to enhance Neutral Semi Improved, Semi Improved Species Poor and Amenity Grassland. Of the Priority Species Neutral Grass is important for Cinnibar Moth, Grizzled Skipper, Brown Long Eared Bat, Noctule Bat, Common Lizard, Common Toad, Linnet, Bullfinch, House Sparrow, Song Thrush, Chamomile and Harebell. By selecting specific areas to convert to meadow will provide a suitable habitat for these species. Relaxing mowing to a frequency of two cuts a year and collection of arisings will help to achieve this. The mowing regimes map in Appendix 6 outlines how this will be achieved on the common. The same regime will be used on the Pendleton Road verges that border the common where sight lines will not be affected.

Picture 19 (Left) Species Poor Neutral Grass; (Right) Chamomile on old fairway

Picture 21 Less frequent mowing on former golf course fairway East of A23

Picture 20 Harebells establishing on an old fairway that has been mown less frequently

Picture 22 Scrub encroachment in grassland puts wildflowers at risk of decline

Chamomile

Chamomile (*Chamaemelum Nobile*) has been recorded as being present on Earlswood Common since the nineteenth century. Due to a decline in livestock grazing, increased drainage and inappropriate mowing it is a rare plant in Surrey and is a Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) underpinned by Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem services. Its range has been confined to the Cricket outfield and along a number of the now redundant golf fairways.

The frequent mowing of sports pitches imitates grazing whereby dominant vegetation is restricted from outcompeting and casting shade which inhibits growth. This method also helps to maintain a tight sward which Chamomile favours. Human disturbance such as walking also mimics the trampling of livestock which aids its development. Large amounts of Chamomile are often found in areas such as path edges that are disturbed frequently.

Photographic Monitoring

Since the closure of the former golf course the spread of Chamomile has been monitored to observe how it has reacted to the cessation of frequent mowing. Contrary to the above the range is still present (despite a relax in mowing) along all the old fairways where it has been previously recorded. It seems to have spread next to Pendleton Road and near Horley Road, this may be due to the prolonged wet weather in 2018 and 2019 which created extremely wet ground conditions in which it favours. Additionally, with the closure of the golf course and fairways no longer in use there has been significant increased use of the Common by the public which may have contributed to the spread. Similarly, the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020 also resulted in an influx of visitor numbers and again this may be a contributing factor. The cricket outfield mowing regime has not changed and is mown frequently throughout the summer and populations are still present.

Picture 23 August 2019 Looking from Horley Road next to Earlswood Depot

Picture 24 August 2020 Looking from Horley Road next to Earlswood Depot

Picture 25 July 2021 Looking from Horley Road next to Earlswood Depot

Picture 26 August 2019 Edge of Pendleton Road near junction with Somerset Road

Picture 27 August 2020 Edge of Pendleton Road near junction with Somerset Road

Picture 28 August 2019 Ditch near Asylum Arch Road

Picture 29 August 2020 Ditch near Asylum Arch Road

Picture 30 August 2021 Ditch near Asylum Arch Road (Note longer grass has prevented flowering)

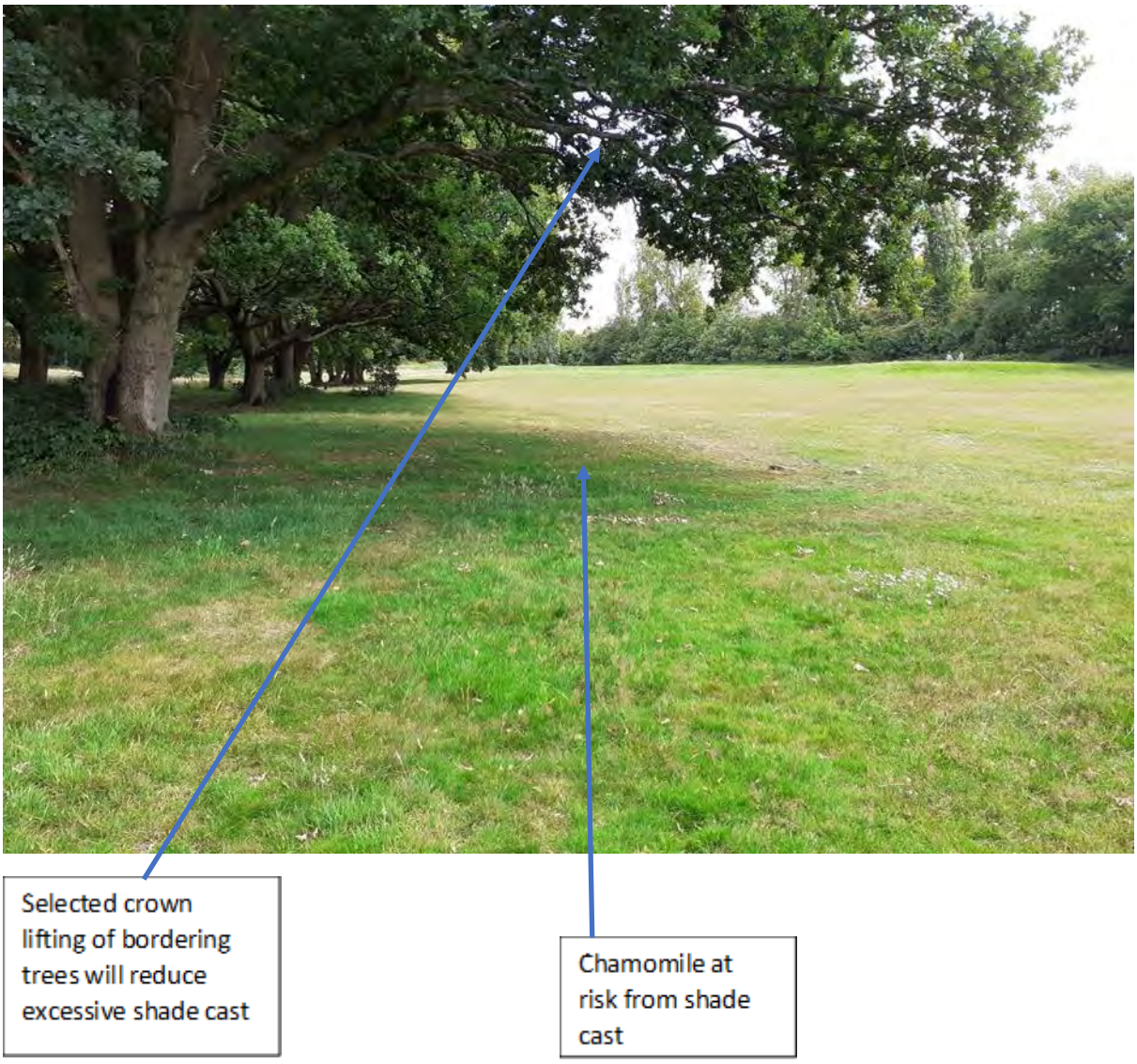
Future management

To maintain and enhance the populations of Chamomile it is important to apply the most appropriate mowing regime. Once monthly mowing from April into mid-summer and removal of cuttings will keep a tight grass sward, and it is expected that ground disturbance from the public walking in areas will further aid the spread and range. No further mowing should take place from September as the plants needs to be able to set seed into the ground. The mowing range in the targeted areas will gradually increase over the period this plan covers. This is so that fixed point photography monitoring can continue to assess the success of Chamomile spread. The aim is to fully reach this range by 2027 as shown in blue on the map in appendix 6 by 2027. The success of this management programme will be discussed and modified in the renewed plan.[2]

[2] 'Managing your land for Chamomile'. Plant Life, August 2001.

Picture 31 Disturbance and trampling from visitors will help to maintain the Chamomile sward and spread seed via foot movement.

It is important that shade cast from bordering trees is managed to ensure that light conditions remain suitable for Chamomile growth and spread. Crown lifting of selected trees will help to reduce excessive shade cast.



Picture 32 Shade cast by mature trees

Wood pasture and parkland

This habitat accounts for the most cover on the common featuring stand-alone mature trees such as Elms and Poplars, areas of scrub vegetation and short open grass. It is a valuable habitat for foraging wildlife such as Hedgehogs, Badgers, Sparrows and Starlings. By maintaining a frequent grass mowing schedule and applying good arboricultural and forestry practices to mature trees the habitat will be maintained as well as enhancing the Low Weald landscape character and vistas looking towards St Johns Conservation Area, the grass mowing regimes can be seen in appendix 6.

Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland (and deadwood)

The extent of woodland on Earlswood Common falls into Woodland National Vegetation Classification (NVC) W10 Quercus robur – Pteridium aquilinum – Rubus fructicosus. Quercus robur (Pedunculate Oak) is the dominant tree species although many other deciduous trees such as Ash, Elm and Sycamore are components within this grouping. The understory is characterised by Pteridium aquilinum (Common Bracken) and Rubus fructicosus (Bramble).

The woodland occurs in small groups across the Common forming a valuable mosaic pattern in between grassland areas, water courses and ponds. Of the Priority Species the woodland on the Common supports Notcule Bat and White Letter Hairstreak Butterfly. The mature and veteran trees such as Oaks are valuable roosts for Noctule Bat species whereas the White Letter Hairstreak Butterfly relies solely on the Elm for breeding. Recording known Bat Roosts and retaining their habitat whilst enhancing the surrounding land appropriately will help preserve the Bat population. Similarly recording the Elm trees and retaining them as well as managing the surrounding land will benefit the White Letter Hairstreak Butterfly population.

The woodland also features several Badger Setts, although Badgers are not a Priority Species, they are a Protected Species from any form of disturbance, injury or unlawful killing. Activities that could disturb Badgers should be prohibited and any works carried out near a Sett be undertaken with a Licence from Natural England.

Map 9 Elm tree locations on Earlswood Common

Management of deadwood habitats

Many of the trees on Earlswood Common are over mature and in the declining stages of their life cycle. Whilst dying and dead trees do pose a safety risk for users of the Common and must be managed, they are important ecological features and should be retained and enhanced where safe to do so. Deadwood (standing or lying) is a valuable habitat to many forms of wildlife as it creates hibernation and refuge zones, a supply of food through the insects they attract and perfect conditions for fungi, lichen and mosses. Examples of the types of wildlife that benefit from standing and lying deadwood are hedgehogs, lizards, frogs, toads, spiders, beetles, bats and birds such as woodpeckers. The now rare Stag Beetle relies solely on lying deadwood to lay its eggs, modern attitudes to tidying greenspaces and clearing deadwood has resulted in a decline of its population. It is now a Priority Species and efforts must be made to improve its habitat.

Dead and dying trees will be retained standing if they do not pose a risk to visitors, property or are vulnerable to fire. The pictures below show how a dead tree has been retained and managed for habitat provision whilst removing the hazards. The dead branches at risk from falling have been removed leaving a safe standing dead tree perfect for bats, birds, insects, fungi, moss and lichen.

Picture 33 Creation of a standing deadwood habitat

Tree cuttings will be stacked neatly as close to the tree as possible either in the woodland or on the edges where they are not at risk from arson or disturbance. It is important that any organisms such as insects can return to the tree to continue their life cycle. The pictures below show examples of deadwood from the above tree stacked in the woodland, it will attract insects, reptiles, amphibians, birds, hedgehogs, fungi, mosses and lichen.

Picture 34 Deadwood piles edge of woodland

Veteran Trees: Creation and Preservation

Existing veteran trees should be preserved where possible to do so, they are a valuable habitat to a range of wildlife such as bats and birds of prey. Younger trees can be selected to undergo 'veteranisation' techniques which involves careful and deliberate cutting into the trunk and of branches to bring on early decay and natural nesting cavities as the trees continues to slowly grow.

Picture 35 Veteranisation of oak – managing trees to speed up habitat production by Vikki Bengtsson1, Jonas Hedin2, Mats Niklasson3

The following trees will be selected for veteranisation.

- young native broadleaf trees.
- trees in woodland and woodland edges.
- trees that are not near a footpath or high public use area.

Silvicultural systems

A woodland management regime is required to ensure that is it preserved and offers value to wildlife particularly species that are protected under UK Law. A careful combination of woodland management techniques will be used throughout the woodland blocks to create a balance of tree ages and open habitats. Creation of additional glades by rotational clearance of vegetation will improve the ecological structure of the woodland and enhance amphibian, reptile and mammal habitat e.g., Common Toad, Common Lizard, Hedgehog and Bat species. At present there is only one maintained glade in woodland near Woodhatch Road, two additional proposed glades are shown on map 13, these both occur in damp woodland. The following silvicultural systems will be used to manage the woodland areas.

Minimal-intervention – woodland is left unmanaged and natural processes are allowed to continue freely. Clearance of dominant vegetation in glades and tree safety works are still undertaken.

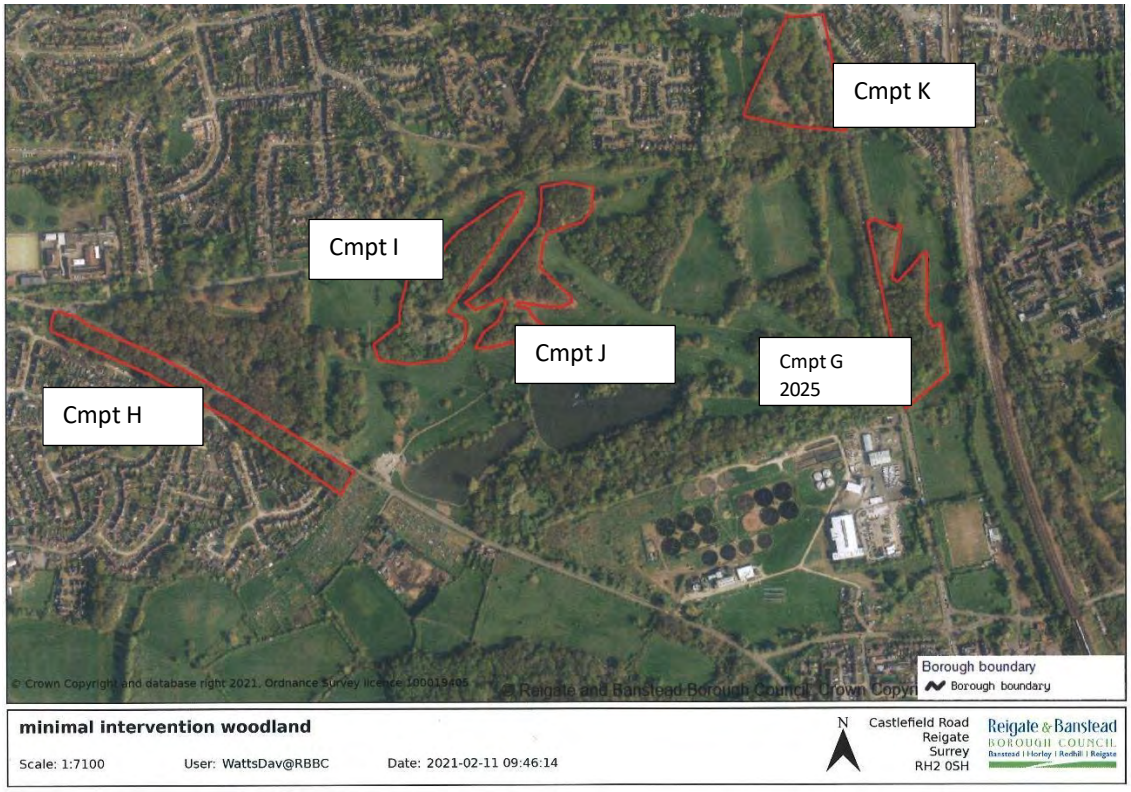
High forest – the woodland is managed to allow a mature even aged composition with very little understorey to develop and will be achieved through minimal intervention.

Selective thinning – trees in the upper storey and under storey are selectively removed for the purpose of increasing light levels, creating an uneven age mixture and reduction of invasive species such as Sycamore. This includes ‘Halo releasing’ whereby smaller trees are systemically removed over a number of years to make space for larger more desirable trees. Woodland blocks will be thinned on rotation as shown in Map 10. Stumps of thinned trees will be treated with herbicide to prevent regrowth, the general prescription will be to clear a small block on each rotation within the compartment, the area cleared in each rotation will be subject to the time and resources available.

At present selective thinning has been undertaken in the woodland blocks b and c south of Horley Road next to the Earlswood Depot. To retain a visible screen from the treatment works a proportion of the edge is left. The regime of thinning Sycamore will continue throughout the woodland blocks using volunteer groups from the surrounding area. The areas that will undergo thinning will be of value to bat roosts as it maintains space for commuting and will create gaps for flora such as bluebell and wild daffodil to establish.

Remaining woodland will be managed as ‘minimal intervention’ for the most part save for safety works and any tree replacement planting where required. What further info on thinning is required, I have updated rotational dates below.

Map 10 Woodland thinning



Map 11 Minimal intervention woodland

Previous records have shown that Noctule Bat, Common Pipistrelle Soprano Pipistrelle and Daubenton roost in the woodland, Grey Long Eared use the woodland edges for hunting. All species benefit from woodlands that feature veteran trees, which are free of invasive vegetation inhibiting commuting routes, open areas and minimal intervention. The Noctule and Soprano Pipistrelle Bat both benefit from High Forest systems whereby the age class is even and mature.

Map 12 Bat Roosts on Earlswood Common

Glades – acidic grassland glade to be cut on a two-year rotation to allow a full life cycle of invertebrates to develop but ensure that scrub dominance does not take over. The presence of dwarf gorse may return as a result of this which will allow further restoration plans to be put in place. The two additional damp woodland glades will be cut on a two-year rotation to allow the development of flora and invertebrate life cycles and to prevent scrub dominance taking over.

Map 13 Existing and proposed woodland glades

Picture 36 Sycamore thinning reduces dominance, provides bat commuting spaces, creates space for native Oaks and increases light levels to benefit woodland flora.

Conserving woodland wildlife biodiversity takes priority over other factors such as recreation, sports and commercial activities. These will all be encouraged to a degree but only if they are not going to have a negative impact on the natural state of the woodland and surrounding habitats. Such activities and their impacts will be assessed and any new proposals requiring council permission will be reviewed first by the Steering Group.

Tree Planting for Climate Change

The UK government has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, and on the 9th of July 2019 Surrey County Council followed suit by declaring a 'Climate Emergency'. Surrey County Council has committed to planting 1.2 million trees by 2030, at a local level Reigate and Banstead Borough Council is targeted to contribute to this target by planting trees across the borough.

Tree planting of native species will be undertaken where gaps arise in the woodland or edges, to replace lost trees, alleviate flooding or enhance habitat on the common. The aim is not to afforest the common and damage the important grass habitats but to plant where appropriate on the common. The Surrey Nature Partnership have produced a paper 'Tree planting for Climate Change mitigation in Surrey' which addresses the risks to other habitats from tree planting and guides landowners on how to mitigate biodiversity loss, RBBC follows the protocols outlined in the paper.

Biosecurity: Managing tree pests and pathogens

Trees and woodlands are under continuous threat from harmful pests and pathogens, the two significant being Ash Die Back and Oak Processionary Moth.

Ash Die Back is a pathogenic disease which over time causes the tree to lose its foliage, branches and in some cases its entire structural stability. This not only poses a risk to safety but has a negative impact on the landscape. It is wide- spread in the north of the borough and it is highly likely that it will continue to move southward.

Where Ash Die Back is observed it will be recorded and remedied in accordance with Forestry Commission guidelines, unless an infected tree poses a risk to persons and property it will be left standing otherwise it will be felled. It is currently present along road edges of Horley Road, A23.

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) is a tree pest that is not only a threat to Oak trees but is also a threat to public health. The caterpillar of the moth feeds on Oak leaves in mass volumes causing defoliation and decline in the tree's health. The hairs of the caterpillar can cause allergic reactions to human and animals in the form of rashes and breathing difficulty. It is a public health risk and has been a Statutory requirement to notify reports of OPM to the Forestry Commission or Animal and Plant Health Agency.

OPM has been recorded in the north of the borough and in Redhill so it is highly likely that it will continue southward, the Forestry Commission as part of their own management policy undertake periodic inspections of vulnerable areas.

The borough of Reigate and Banstead is within the 'established zone' which means OPM nests will be present for the foreseeable future. RBBC's policy is to remove nests in areas where they pose a public health risk.

New policy announced in 2022 on the management of OPM now allows landowners to manage nests on a risk-based approach meaning that the removal of nests is no longer a

statutory obligation allowing the decision making to be made by the landowner. However, where a Statutory Plant Health Notification (SPHN) for OPM is received from the Forestry Commission, removal of nests is a statutory obligation.

To prevent spread of tree diseases RBBC Arborists and contractors working for them will apply Forestry Commission biosecurity guidelines such as tool and equipment sanitising between work sites.

Ponds, wetland, wet woodland and ditches

Two permanent ponds exist alongside several seasonal ponds that hold water during periods of heavy rain. Pond habitats are important for a vast range of wildlife including Common Toad and the Noctule and Brown Long Eared Bat all of which are a Priority Species. Other forms of wildlife that rely on ponds are Common Frog, Toad, Newts, aquatic insects, Birds and aquatic plants.

One of the two permanent ponds has declined over the past decade and there are plans to enhance its biodiversity by desilting and replanting of native aquatic plants. The other pond is in a fair condition but does require periodical clearance of Reedmace which can be invasive. The 3 seasonal ponds provide potential biodiversity opportunities but would benefit from some enhancement works such as crown lifting overhanging trees. This will increase sunlight helping any aquatic vegetation to develop, it will also help to reduce silt build up from decaying tree foliage. Creation of Amphibian refuges built around the ponds would also benefit key species such as Common Toad and Newts.

Picture 37 Woodhatch Pond is in decline and requires enhancement works

Picture 38 (Left) trees overhanging seasonal pond create silt build up and reduce light levels. (Right) pond after clearance works 2021.

Picture 39 Recent works by Surrey County Council to divert surface water from Horley Road, A23 has helped to create additional networks of seasonal ponds and wet woodland on both sides of the road. RACV coppiced pond edges trees in 2022.

Picture 40 Chain Pond is in fair condition although invasive Reedmace requires periodic control

Areas of wet woodland will require occasional thinning of water demanding trees to maintain water levels. Trees such as Elm, Oak and Hawthorne will be thinned via coppicing and allowed to regrow to allow a sustainable wildlife habitat.

The ditches are important biodiversity features and support Priority Species such as Bats, Common Toad and Chamomile (A Lyne Ecology 2020) as well as other wildlife such as Badgers, Common Frog, Purple Loosestrife, Pendulous Sedge, Fools Water Cress, Common Marsh Bedstraw, Yellow Iris, Compact Rush (Surrey Botanical Society 2020). It is important to not allow scrub to take over the ditch edges but allow desirable aquatic flora to develop.

Hedgerows

A network of unconnected hedgerows bordering residential areas and roads are scattered around the extents of the Common. The condition of hedgerows range from intact species poor to defunct species poor. Nonetheless they still provide a valuable habitat to a number of bird Species of Principle Importance: Common Starling, Linnett, Bullfinch, House Sparrow, and Song Thrush as well as Bats and Hedgehogs. The hedgerow that borders Woodhatch Road near the main car park is a priority to enhance for both biodiversity and visual value and will be replanted with native hedgerow species. Hedgerows are cut annually in September outside of the bird nesting season early March to late August.

Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously developed land

Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land was added to the National Vegetation Classification list compiled by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in 2010 and recognised as a Priority Habitat within the Biodiversity Action Plan. The criterion for a site or sub site to qualify as Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land is[3]:

1. The area of open mosaic habitat is at least 0.25ha in size.
2. Known history of disturbance at the site or evidence that soil has been removed or severely modified by previous use(s) of the site. Extraneous materials/substrates such as industrial spoil may have been added.
3. The site contains some vegetation. This will comprise early successional communities consisting mainly of stress-tolerant species (e.g. indicative of low nutrient status or drought). Early successional communities are composed of (a) annuals, or (b) mosses/liverworts, or (c) lichens, or (d) ruderals, or (e) inundation species, or (f) open grassland, or (g) flower-rich grassland, or (h) heathland.
4. The site contains unvegetated, loose bare substrate and pools may be present.
5. The site shows spatial variation, forming a mosaic of one or more of the early successional communities (a)–(h) above (criterion 3) plus bare substrate, within 0.25 ha.

Picture 41 disused car park closed circa 1961

[3] Criteria taken UK Biodiversity Action Plan; Priority Habitat Descriptions. BRIG (ed. Ant Maddock) 2008

This disused car park closed circa 1961 was formerly a brick works (circa early 1800's to the mid 1900's) on Earlswood Common. Since being derelict, it has become colonised by ruderal or waste ground plants. It can be regarded as a habitat of this type. During the last SNCI survey the following flora was recorded (see below table) many of which are associated with this habitat.

A more recent botanical survey in 2020 undertaken by the Surrey Botanical Society recorded the same and additional plants confirming that the habitat is continually developing and should be preserved through appropriate management through control of dominating vegetation such as Bramble and Willow. Occasional strimming of bramble and coppicing of trees will help to stop this habitat degrading.

SNCI Report 2008	Surrey Botanical Society 2020
• Common Ragwort • Creeping Thistle Bird's foot-trefoil • Common Knapweed • Ribwort Plantain • Wild Teasel • Large Bindweed • Hairy Tare • Occasional shrubs include Gorse, Goat Willow, and White Willow (possibly planted)	• Narrow Leaved Vetch • Tufted Vetch • Guelder Rose • Agrimony • Scarlet Pimpernel • Greater Burdock • Fat Hen • Marsh Thistle • Wild Teasel • Cut Leave Cranes Bill • Perforate St John's Wort • Common Birds Foot Trail • Field Forget Me Not • Red bartsia • Trailing Tormentil • Creeping Cinquefoil • Hybrid Cinquefoil • Self Heal • Common Figwort • Hoary Figwort • Common Ragwort • Lesser Stitchwort

Objective 2: Protection of the Common

Illegal incursions

Illegal incursions have been a consistent problem occurring on varying sub sites on Earlswood Common and in the wider borough. Gaps along the boundaries have been exploited and gates have been crudely cut to provide access to caravans and motor homes. This has resulted in considerable damage and disruption to the Common in the form of discarded rubbish, human excrement, acts of anti-social behaviour causing distress and safety impacts for visitors and residents. The costs of removing trespassers and cleaning up after them are considerably high and takes up a great deal of Officer time to organise.

Preventative measures have been put in place to address this problem from reoccurring. In 2019 vulnerable sections of the Common underwent protection works such as installing wooden bollards and constructing earth embankments to prevent further incursions. To comply with Common Land Legislation a Section 38 Application was made to the Planning Inspectorate to be approved by the Secretary of State. The application has been approved, and the formal consent documents are now awaited by the Council. The full application document can be viewed by appointment at Earlswood Depot.

Picture 42 Embankment along Pendleton Road and wooden posts along Horley Road

Other forms of anti-social behaviour have also been a problem particularly during the Lock Down periods of the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Litter

During the summer of 2020 the number of visitors visiting the Common increased significantly which saw high volumes of litter being left behind from barbeques and gatherings.

Dogs

Dog control was also an issue with lots of cases of dogs not being kept on leads in restricted areas leading to attacks on resident Swans. Whilst the Joint Enforcement Team made increased efforts to patrol and enforce the social distancing, regulation made this difficult to achieve.

A wider review of dog control and Public Space Protection Orders in the borough was undertaken in the summer of 2020 to combat this problem. Following a public consultation the current Dog PSPO's are now in force for the Common.

The whole Common is a dogs-on-lead-by-direction area, where a dog would need to be put on a lead if asked by an authorised officer of the council.

The area is covered by the order that sets the maximum number of dogs to be walked, which means no one person is allowed to walk more than six dogs at a time. It is also covered by the order covering the fouling of land by dogs, requiring the person in charge of the dog to clear any fouling. These are a dogs-on-lead area, where dogs are required to be on a lead at all times:

- Earlswood Common play area – Common Road
- This is a dog exclusion area, where no dogs are permitted.
- Earlswood Common play area – Somerset Road Redhill
- This is a dog exclusion area, where no dogs are permitted.
- Earlswood Common - Upper and lower Earlswood Lakes

The area is also covered by the order that sets the maximum number of dogs to be walked, which means no one person is allowed to walk more than six dogs at a time. It is also covered by the order covering the fouling of land by dogs, requiring the person in charge of the dog to clear any fouling.[4]

[4] https://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/info/20059/antisocial_behaviour/1146/dogs_pspo_consultation/3

Objective 3. Use of the Common (Recreation, Education, Infrastructure, Heritage)

Access to recreation is an important aspect of the common and will be provided as the Byelaws allow. There is however increasing interest to carry out other forms of recreation such as creation of BMX tracks, metal detecting, and model boat sailing. These activities can have a negative impact on the LNR character and will not be allowed unless in exceptional circumstances and with consent from the Council.

Prohibited structures such as rope swings will be removed and dens that attract anti-social behaviour will be removed.

Commercial activities such as open days, shows and filming can generate significant income, however careful consideration should be given first as there is the risk of disturbance and damage to ecological features. To ensure activities are appropriate applications will be reviewed by Greenspaces and the Steering Group.

The network of footpaths will be reviewed to determine how they can be better waymarked to provide clearer direction to users. The wooden sleeper bridges that cross the ditches and connect footpaths will be replaced where required.

Group led walks will be encouraged in improve public knowledge about the common's flora and fauna although this is subject to the availability of staff or appropriate people to lead such walks. RACV have recently resumed guided bat walks on the common which will be of high value to the public.

The common will continue to be a valuable educational facility for St Johns school, the steering group will actively support the school in providing access to materials and knowledge that will be of use for outside learning programmes.

Council managed social media channels will be used more effectively to better inform the public on specific management operations. For example, reduced grass mowing to enhance biodiversity and essential tree works giving clear information on the reasons for carrying out works.

Car parking pressure will be addressed by conducting a carrying capacity survey of the site, at present the demand of car parking is high and is becoming congested with roadside parking more prevalent. The carrying capacity survey will determine whether the common is now overused and if parking needs to be limited to reduce negative impacts on the nature reserve character.

Interpretation boards will be increased over the common to provide more information on ecological and heritage features.

Objective 4. Scheduled Monuments

The existing Scheduled Monument south of Pendleton Road will be preserved in accordance with Historic England guidance and legislation. No works involving disturbance to the ground will be carried out without consulting Historic England.

To enhance the public knowledge of the archaeological feature better interpretation should be investigated as this would add value to the site.

Work Programme: Grassland

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timings of works
Acid grassland	Woodland block between Woodhatch and Pendleton Road (see site plans)	Enhance and expand Acid grassland. Mow grass/strim between ant hills.	RBBC	2-year rotation September – October
Neutral grassland	Former roughs of Golf Course (see site plans)	Spot spray dominant scrub with herbicide Rotational mowing of roughs to allow full life cycle of invertebrates. Clear woody scrub encroachments treat any stumps with herbicide.	RBBC RBBC RBBC	Early summer 2-year rotation September – October When required November – February
Wildflower meadow (neutral grassland)	Adjacent to lower lake (see site plan)	Maintain wildflower meadow. Mow and clear cuttings.	RBBC Contractor	Late summer when flowers have set seed
Former fairways (woodland pasture and parkland)	All over site (see site plan)	Maintain access, enhance landscape, preserve and expand Chamomile. Mow during the growing season. Avoid areas where Chamomile is growing.	RBBC	See site plan (Appendix 6)

Roadside verges	Entrance track verges from Plough Pub to Common Pendleton. Road verges amenity areas. No mow between Yeats Close and Clarence Road track	Maintain sightlines for traffic, increase biodiversity through 2 cuts per year and collect cuttings	RBBC	2 cuts per year- Spring and late Summer. Inc of mid-summer sightline cut
Open Mosaic	North of lower lake	Occasional strimming of dominant bramble and coppicing of trees. Maintain open habitat	RBBC	2024 Between September - December

Work Programme: Woodland and Tree Management

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of works
Woodland blocks subject to selective thinning	See Map 9	Reduce invasive species cover (Sycamore, Laurel and Ash) by rotational cutting. Treat stumps with herbicide.	RBBC and volunteer groups	Annually 2022-27 (November – March)
Veteran and Ancient trees		Preserve Veteran and Ancient trees by phased halo releasing. Map and record notable trees for any remedial works.	RBBC	Winter
Habitat trees	All over site	Where safe to do so retain dying trees as standing deadwood	RBBC	Ongoing
Habitat boxes	On appropriate trees	Install Boxes for Bats, Owls, songbirds	RBBC	
Tree safety		Inspect trees for hazards and arrange remedial works.	RBBC Tree Officers	High target areas: Annually Medium target areas: Every three yeas Low target areas: Informal observation
Tree planting		Where gaps occur in the woodland replant with native broadleaf trees	RBBC	Where required

Woodland edge		Identify edges of woodland that are encroaching on Acidic grass land. Draw up a regime to push back woodland edge by 3-year rotational tree removal	RBBC/ ECSG	Identify in Year 1 of Management Plan. Action in 2023, 2026
Woodland edge		Identify edges of woodland that would benefit from scalloping (cutting of bays) every three years to create structural vegetation diversity	RBBC/ ECSG	Identify in Year 1 of Management Plan. Action works 2023, 2026
Woodland edge	Chamomile grassland areas	Crown lift branches that cast shade onto grassland	RBBC	2023
Woodland glades	Woodland Cpt K and E	Identify areas in woodland to create glades to enhance bat habitat. Cut vegetation and scrub on two-year rotation	ECSG	Identify in Year 1 of Management Plan. Action works 2022, 2025
Ivy on trees		Develop Ivy severing regime where it creates weight loading on trees near		Winter
Treatment of tree arisings	All over site	Where appropriate, pile arisings for deadwood habitat	RBBC	When required
Invasive plants: Himalayan Balsam	Woodland edges	Control Himalayan Balsam via hand pulling	RBBC/ Volunteer groups	April and May

Work Programme: New Pond (fishing lake)

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
Aquatic marginal plants	Around lake margins	Improve aquatic habitat	Horley Piscatorial	2021/22
Bank vegetation	North bank by dam	Keep clear of vegetation to allow dam inspection	RBBC	Annually October
Bank vegetation	South by dam wall	Mow grass short to allow dam inspection	RBBC	Annually and periodically throughout summer
Outlet ditches	North and South of lake	Inspect and clear blockages	RBBC	Periodic inspections
Fishing swims	Around lake	Maintain in good condition by vegetation clearance and tree pruning	Agreement between Horley Piscatorial and RBBC	When required between November and February
Water condition	Lake	Reduce algal blooms via installation of barley straw nets. Commission water contamination testing when required	Agreement between Horley Piscatorial and RBBC	Install in March. Remove after late autumn
Dam and water flow condition	Both lakes	Inspection of dam walls and water flow	External Engineer	Annual inspection

Work Programme: Upper Lake

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
Inflow ditch	North of lake	Monitor for blockages	RBBC	Periodic inspections
Silt trap	North of lake	Clear of silt deposits	RBBC	Annually October
Water condition	Lake	Recue algal blooms via installation of barley straw nets	Agreement between RBBC and Horley Piscatorial	Install in March. Remove after late autumn

Work Programme: Woodhatch Pond

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
De silt	Woodhatch Road	Increase water holding capacity	RBBC	February 2021
Re pollard and coppice Willows	Pond edge/ Woodhatch Road	Reduce leaf fall into pond/ best arboricultural practice	RBBC	January 2021,2026
Plant native aquatic species	Pond edge and surrounds	Increase species richness	RBBC	March/April 2021
Scrub control	Pond edges	Control scrub dominance	RBBC	October 2023,2025

Work Programme: Chain Pond

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
Control of Reedmace	Pond edges	Control dominance of Bulrush	RACV	October 2021, 2023, 2025
Monitor for invasive plants	Pond edge and water	Monitor and control invasive species e.g. Australian Stonecrop, Parrots Feather	RACV	Spring-Summer
Marginal vegetation	Periodically clear dominating vegetation	Maintain water surface area	RACV	October 2021,2023,2025
Pond edge vegetation	Edge of pond	Leave 2m width uncut around pond edge. Maintain pond habitat and control scrub dominance.	RBBC	Ongoing

Work Programme: Seasonal Ponds

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
3 Seasonal Ponds	East of A23	Reduce over shading and scrub dominance 4-year rotation	RBBC/RACV	October-November 2021, 2025, 2029

Work Programme: Ditches

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
Strategic ditches	Woodland block South of Pendleton Road	Annual inspections to record and remedy blockages	RBBC Engineer	Annually December
Strategic ditches	As above	Enhance biodiversity value. Strim edges for safety were required	RBBC	When required October - November
Other ditches (old golf course)	All over site	Reactive inspections. Strim edges for safety. Control scrub dominance to enhance biodiversity, avoid Chamomile areas	RBBC	As above
Other ditches (old golf course)	All over site	Improve profile of ditches to allow desirable aquatic plants to develop	RACV Volunteer tasks	Where required October – November

Work Programme: Wetland Areas

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
Seasonal wet bog	Eastern grass area between lower and top lake	Maintain wetland habitat, prevent scrub dominance by mowing	RBBC	Once monthly between April – August
Wet woodland	Woodland block East of A23, Cpt g	Prevent tree dominance. Minor works required – coppice, minimal intervention	RBBC or RACV	2025 November – March
Wet woodland	Woodland block West of A23, Cpt e	As above only minor works required – coppice	RBBC or RACV	2026 November – March
Wet woodland	Woodland block southeast of lower lake adjacent to Woodhatch Road, Cpt f	As above only minor works required - coppice	RBBC or RACV	2027 November – March

Work Programme: Access & Furniture Maintenance

Feature	Location	Targets to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
Access points	All over (see site plan)	Maintain access by strimming vegetation	RBBC	Every six weeks April to September
Signs, bins and benches	As above	As above	As above	As above
Unmade grass footpaths	Earlswood Common sub site Horley Road	Maintain access. Mow footpath with tractor mounted flail	RBBC	Every six weeks May to September
Woodland footpaths	Woodland blocks	Maintain access. Cut back encroachments	RBBC	Every six weeks July – September
Tracks	All over site	Maintain access, repair surface where degraded	RBBC	As required
Sleeper bridges	All over site	Repair worn bridges	RBBC	2022

Work Programme: Hedgerow Maintenance

Feature	Location	Target to achieve	Carried out by	Timing of work
Hedgerow	Around Woodhatch Pond	Maintain hedgerow habitat and sightlines	RBBC	Twice yearly September - February
Hedgerow	Yeates Close	Maintain hedgerow habitat and sightlines	RBBC	Once annually September – February

Future surveys

To maintain ecological knowledge of the common the following surveys will be of value and should aim to be conducted throughout the duration of this plan:

- Reptiles
- Invertebrates
- Birds
- Bats
- Lower order species (fungi, mosses, and lichens)
- Update of SNCI survey, this is currently being scheduled by the Surrey Nature Partnership and hoped to be completed in 2022.
- Carrying capacity of commons

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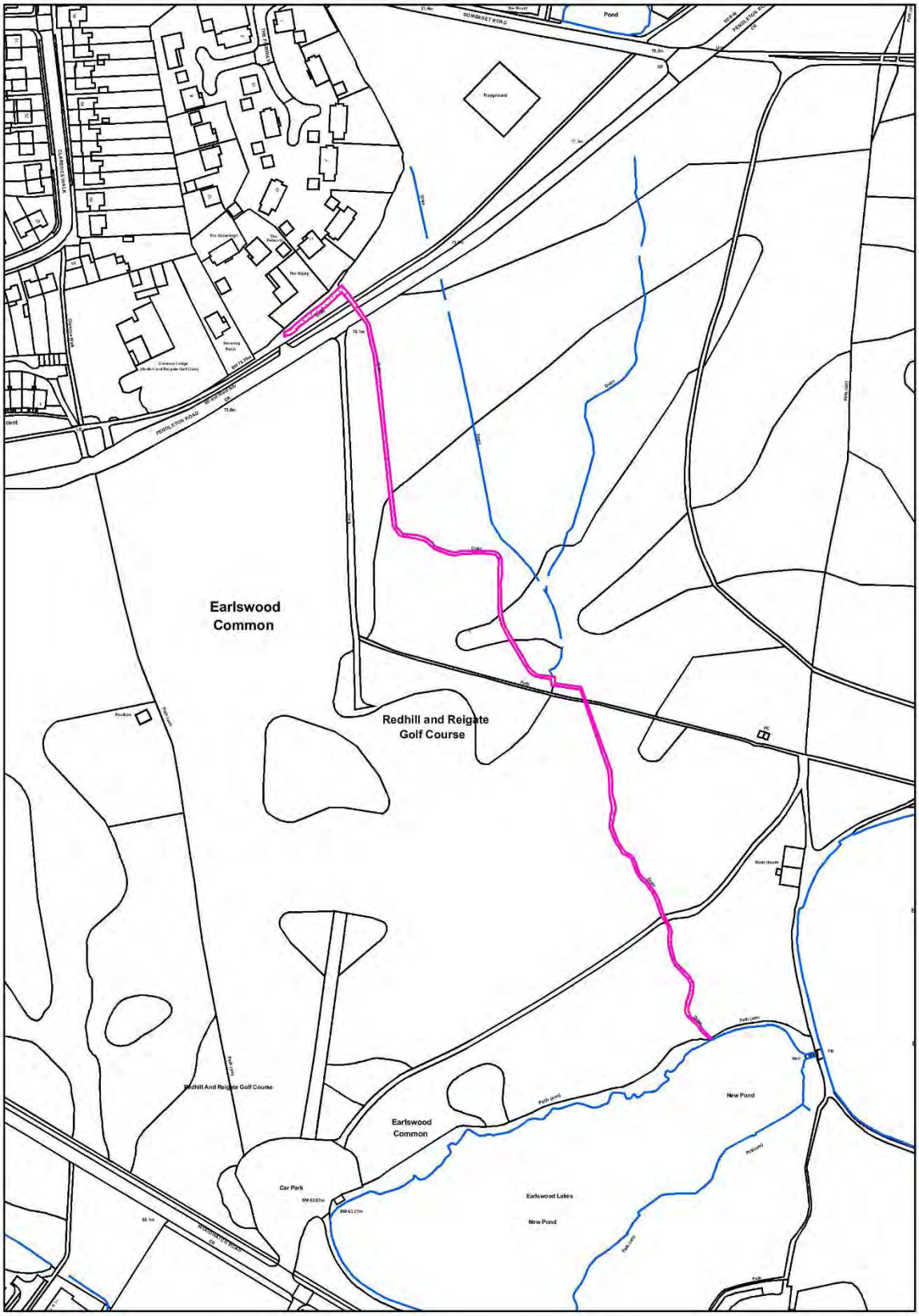
Appendix 1: Strategic water courses Earlswood Common

Stategic Ordinary Watercourses 44 - Earlswood Common Ditch 1



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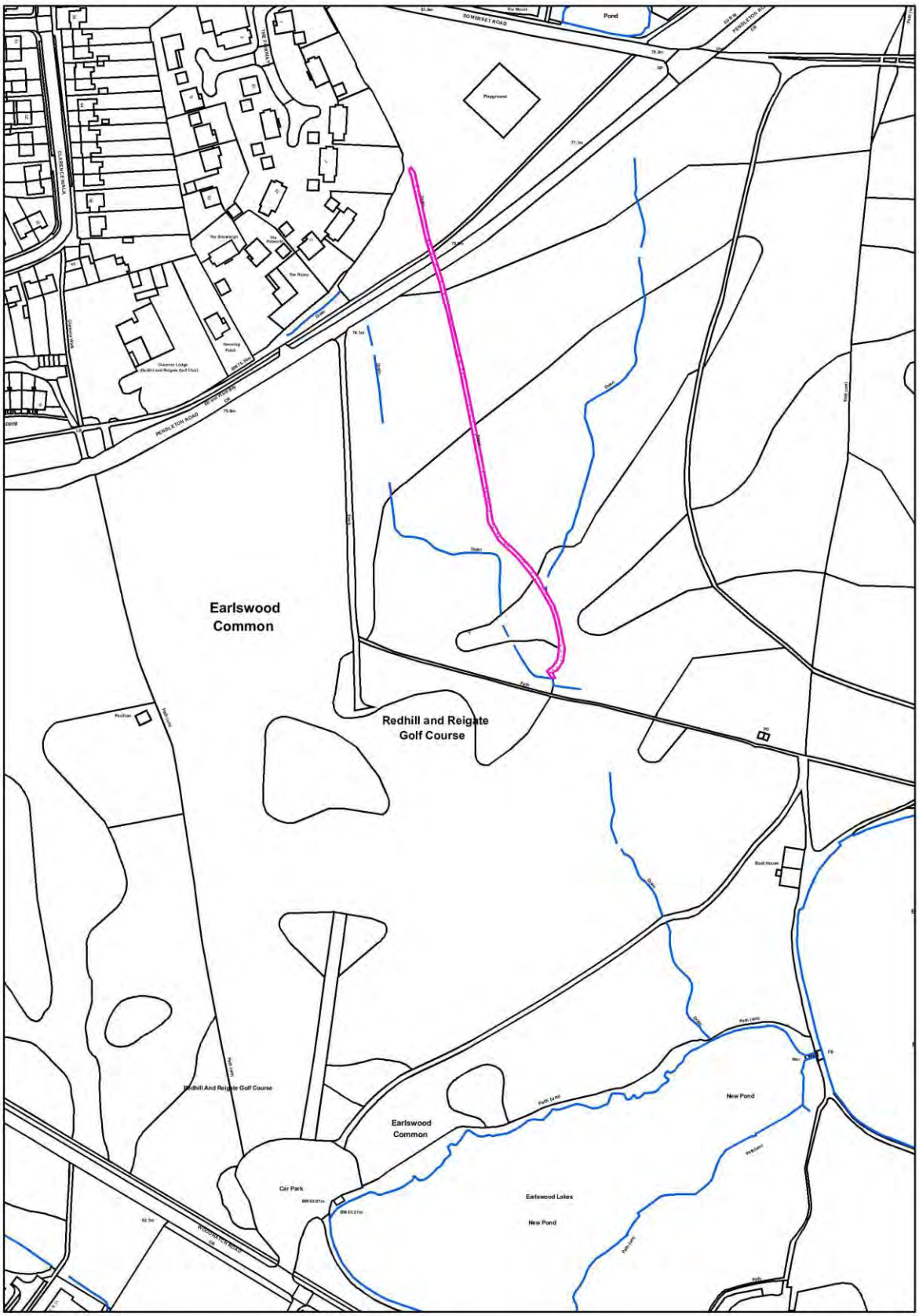
Scale 1:2,500

Stategic Ordinary Watercourses 45 - Earlswood Common Ditch 2



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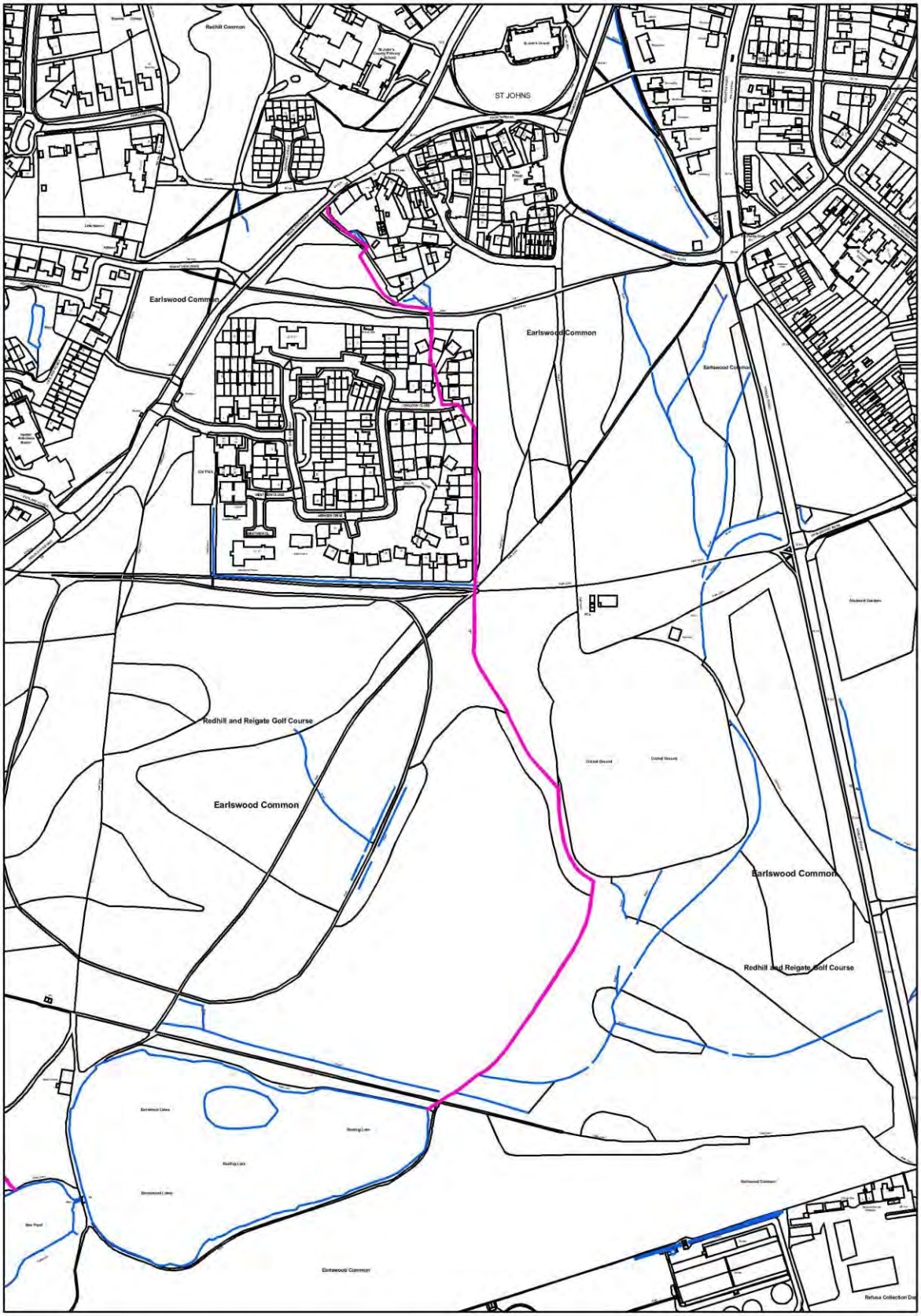
Scale 1:2,500

Stategic Ordinary Watercourses 18 - St Johns Ditch



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Appendix 2: List of species recorded during Phase 1 Habitat Ecological Appraisal

10. Appendix 2 – Full Species List and Target Notes

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
Semi-Natural Broad-Leaved Woodland	Annual meadow-grass	*Poa annua*
	Ash (trees and saplings)	*Fraxinus excelsior*
	Beech (saplings)	*Fagus sylvatica*
	Black locust	*Robinia pseudoacacia*
	Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*
	Bracken	*Pteridium aquilinum*
	Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.
	Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
	Broad-leaved willowherb	*Epilobium montanum*
	Burdock	*Arctium minus*
	Butterfly-bush	*Buddleja davidii*
	Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
	Chicken of the woods	*Laetiporus sulphureus*
	Cleavers	*Galium aparine*
	Cock's-foot	*Dactylis glomerata*
	Common buckthorn	*Rhamnus cathartica*
	Common nettle	*Urtica dioica*
	Cow parsley	*Anthriscus sylvestris*
	Crab apple	*Malus sylvestris*
	Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
	Creeping jenny	*Lysimachia nummularia*
	Creeping thistle	*Cirsium arvense*
	Cricket-bat willow	*Salix alba caerulea*
	Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale*
	Dog-rose	*Rosa canina*
	Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
	Enchanter's nightshade	*Circaea lutetiana*
	English bluebell	*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*
	English elm	*Ulmus minor*
	English oak (trees and saplings)	*Quercus robur*
	Eucalyptus	*Eucalyptus* sp.
	Field forget-me-not	*Myosotis arvensis*
	Field maple	*Acer campestre*
	Foxglove	*Digitalis purpurea*
	French broom	*Genista monspessulana*
	Garlic mustard	*Alliaria petiolata*
	Germander speedwell	*Veronica chamaedrys*
	Gorse	*Ulex europaeus*
	Great brome	*Bromus diandrus*
	Greater plantain	*Plantago major*
	Greater stitchwort	*Stellaria holostea*
	Green alkanet	*Pentaglottis sempervirens*
	Grey willow	*Salix cinerea*
	Ground-ivy	*Glechoma hederacea*
	Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
	Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
	Herb-Robert	*Geranium robertianum*
	Hogweed	*Heracleum sphondylium*
	Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
	Holm oak	*Quercus ilex*
	Honeysuckle	*Lonicera periclymenum*
	Horse chestnut 'red'	*Aesculus x carnea*
	Horse chestnut 'white'	*Aesculus hippocastanum*
	Ivy	*Hedra helix*
	King Alfred's cake	*Daldinia concentrica*
	Large-leaved aster	*Eurybia macrophylla*
	Lesser celandine	*Ficaria verna*
	Lime	*Tilia × europaea*
	Lords and ladies	*Arum maculatum*
	Male fern	*Dryopteris filix-mas*
	Meadow buttercup	*Ranunculus acris*

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
	Pendulous sedge	*Carex pendula*
	Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*
	Pine	*Pinus* sp.
	Red campion	*Silene dioica*
	Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
	Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*
	Scotch broom	*Cytisus scoparius*
	Sheep sorrel	*Rumex acetosella*
	Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
	Sow thistle	*Sonchus oleraceus*
	Snowberry	*Symphoricarpos albus*
	Sweet chestnut (trees and saplings)	*Castanea sativa*
	Sycamore (trees and saplings)	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
	Whitebeam	*Sorbus aria*
	White poplar	*Populus alba*
	Wild cherry	*Prunus avium*
	Wild privet	*Ligustrum vulgare*
	Wood avens	*Geum urbanum*
	Yellow archangel	*Lamium galeobdolon*
	Yew	*Taxus baccata*
	Yorkshire-fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Dense Scrub	Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.
Scattered Scrub	Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.
	Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
	Cleavers	*Galium aparine*
	Creeping thistle	*Cirsium arvense*
	Dog-rose	*Rosa canina*
	Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
	Gorse	*Ulex europaeus*
	Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
	Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
	Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
	Ivy	*Hedra helix*
	Portuguese laurel	*Prunus lusitanica*
Scattered Broad-Leaved Trees	Alder	*Alnus glutinosa*
	Ash	*Fraxinus excelsior*
	Black locust	*Robinia pseudoacacia*
	Black polar	*Populus nigra*
	Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
	Copper beech	*Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea*
	Copper sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus* spp.
	Cricket bat willow	*Salix alba caerulea*
	Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
	English oak	*Quercus robur*
	Field maple	*Acer campestre*
	Grey willow	*Salix cinerea*
	Hawthorn	*Cretageous monogyna*
	Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
	Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
	Horse chestnut 'red'	*Aesculus x carnea*
	Horse chestnut 'white'	*Aesculus hippocastanum*
	Hybrid black poplar 'robusta'	*Poplus x canadensis 'robusta'*
	Hybrid black poplar 'serotina'	*Poplus x canadensis 'serotina'*
	Ivy	*Hedra helix*
	Lime	*Tilia × europaea*
	Lombardy poplar	*Populus nigra*
	London plane	*Platanus × acerifolia*
	Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*
	Sessile oak	*Quercus petraea*
	Siberian elm	*Ulmus pumila*
	Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
	Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
	White poplar	*Populus alba*
	Wild cherry	*Prunus avium*

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
Scattered Coniferous Trees	Pine	*Pinus* sp.
Semi-Improved Neutral Grassland	Annual meadow-grass	*Poa annua*
	Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
	Bush vetch	*Vicia sepium*
	Cock's-foot	*Dactylis glomerata*
	Common cats' ear	*Hypochaeris radicata*
	Common daisy	*Bellis perennis*
	Common mouse-eared chickweed	*Cerastium fontanum*
	Common silverweed	*Argentina anserina*
	Common vetch	*Vicia sativa*
	Cow parsley	*Anthriscus sylvestris*
	Creeping bent	*Agrostis stolonifera*
	Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
	Creeping cinquefoil	*Potentilla reptans*
	Creeping thistle	*Cirsium arvense*
	Cuckooflower	*Cardamine pratensis*
	Cut-leaved cranesbill	*Geranium dissectum*
	Daffodil	*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*
	Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale*
	English bluebell	*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*
	Fescue	*Festuca* sp.
	Field bindweed	*Convolvulus arvensis*
	Field forget-me-not	*Myosotis arvensis*
	Garlic mustard	*Alliaria petiolata*
	Germander speedwell	*Veronica chamaedrys*
	Goutweed	*Aegopodium podagraria*
	Great brome	*Bromus diandrus*
	Green alkanet	*Pentaglottis sempervirens*
	Ground-ivy	*Glechoma hederacea*
	Hard rush	*Juncus inflexus*
	Herb-Robert	*Geranium robertianum*
	Hogweed	*Heracleum sphondylium*
	Lesser-hop trefoil	*Trifolium dubium*
	Meadow buttercup	*Ranunculus acris*
	Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*
	Ragwort	*Jacobaea vulgaris*
	Red clover	*Trifolium pratense*
	Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
	Sheep sorrel	*Rumex acetosella*
	Sweet vernal-grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*
	Thyme-leaved speedwell	*Veronica serpyllifolia*
	Timothy	*Phleum pratense*
	Tufted vetch	*Vicia cracca*
	Violet	*Viola* sp.
	Wall barley	*Hordeum murinum*
	White clover	*Trifolium repens*
	Wood avens	*Geum urbanum*
	Yarrow	*Achillea millefolium*
	Yorkshire-fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Species-Poor Semi-Improved Grassland	Birds'-foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*
	Broad-leaved willowherb	*Epilobium montanum*
	Burdock	*Arctium minus*
	Creeping bent	*Agrostis stolonifera*
	Creeping thistle	*Cirsium arvense*
	Field forget-me-not	*Myosotis arvensis*
	Germander speedwell	*Veronica chamaedrys*
	Ground-ivy	*Glechoma hederacea*
	Hard rush	*Juncus inflexus*
	Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*
	Perforated St. John's-wort	*Hypericum perforatum*
	Ragwort	*Jacobaea vulgaris*
	Sphagnum moss	*Sphagnum* sp.
	Teasel	*Dipsacus fullonum*
	White clover	*Trifolium repens*

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
Continuous Bracken	Bracken	*Pteridium aquilinum*
	Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.
	Cleavers	*Galium aparine*
	English bluebell	*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*
	Hard rush	*Juncus infelxus*
	Lady's bedstraw	*Galium verum*
	Yorkshire-fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Scattered Bracken	Bracken	*Pteridium aquilinum*
Tall Ruderal	Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
	Broad-leaved willowherb	*Epilobium montanum*
	Burdock	*Arctium minus*
	Cleavers	*Galium aparine*
	Common mugwort	*Artemisia vulgaris*
	Common nettle	*Urtica dioica*
	Cow parsley	*Anthriscus sylvestris*
	Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
	Creeping thistle	*Cirsium arvense*
	Cuckooflower	*Cardamine pratensis*
	Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale*
	Field forget-me-not	*Myosotis arvensis*
	Garlic mustard	*Alliaria petiolata*
	Green alkanet	*Pentaglottis sempervirens*
	Ground-ivy	*Glechoma hederacea*
	Hard rush	*Juncus infelxus*
	Hedge bindweed	*Calystegia sepium*
	Herb-Robert	*Geranium robertianum*
	Hogweed	*Heracleum sphondylium*
	Ivy	*Hedra helix*
	Meadow buttercup	*Ranunculus acris*
	Pendulous sedge	*Carex pendula*
	Poison hemlock	*Conium maculatum*
	Ragwort	*Jacobaea vulgaris*
	Red campion	*Silene dioica*
	Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolate*
	Sheep sorrel	*Rumex acetosella*
	Wood avens	*Geum urbanum*
Running Water	Fools watercress	*Apium nodiflorum*
	Hard rush	*Juncus inflexus*
	Pendulous sedge	*Carex pendula*
	Yellow flag	*Iris pseudacorus*
Standing Water	Annual meadow-grass	*Poa annua*
	Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.
	Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
	Broad-leaved willowherb	*Epilobium montanum*
	Bulrush	*Scirpoides holoschoenus*
	Cock's-foot	*Dactylis glomerata*
	Common duckweed	*Lemna minor*
	Cricket bat willow	*Salix alba caerulea*
	Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
	Garlic mustard	*Alliaria petiolata*
	Hard rush	*Juncus inflexus*
	Male fern	*Dryopteris filix-mas*
	Lesser celandine	*Ficaria verna*
	Panicled bulrush	*Scirpus microcarpus*
	Pendulous sedge	*Carex pendula*
	Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
	Salad burnet	*Sanguisorba minor*
	Wood avens	*Geum urbanum*
	Yellow flag	*Iris pseudacorus*
	Yorkshire-fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Amenity Grassland	Annual meadow grass	*Poa annua*
	Borage	*Borago officinalis*
	Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
	Cock's-foot	*Dactylis glomerate*
	Common cat's ear	*Hypochaeris radicata*

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
	Common daisy	*Bellis perennis*
	Common mouse-ear chickweed	*Cerastium fontanum*
	Common poppy	*Papaver rhoeas*
	Cranesbill	*Geranium* sp.
	Creeping bent	*Agrostis stolonifera*
	Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
	Cuckooflower	*Cardamine pratensis*
	Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale*
	False oat-grass	*Arrhenatherum elatius*
	Fescue	*Festuca* sp.
	Garlic mustard	*Alliaria petiolata*
	Germander speedwell	*Veronica chamaedrys*
	Greater plantain	*Plantago major*
	Green alkanet	*Pentaglottis sempervirens*
	Herb-Robert	*Geranium robertianum*
	Hogweed	*Heracleum sphondylium*
	Knotgrass	*Polygonum aviculare*
	Meadow buttercup	*Ranunculus acris*
	Ox-eye daisy	*Leucanthemum vulgare*
	Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*
	Pink sorrel	*Oxalis articulata*
	Red clover	*Trifolium pratense*
	Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolate*
	Rough meadow-grass	*Poa trivialis*
	Sheep sorrel	*Rumex acetosella*
	Soft brome	*Bromus hordeaceus*
	Sow thistle	*Sonchus oleraceus*
	Sweet vernal-grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*
	Wall barley	*Hordeum murinum*
	White clover	*Trifolium repens*
	Yarrow	*Achillea millefolium*
	Yorkshire fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Intact Species-Poor Hedge	Ash	*Fraxinus excelsior*
	Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.
	Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
	Cleavers	*Galium aparine*
	Cow parsley	*Anthriscus sylvestris*
	Garlic mustard	*Alliaria petiolata*
	Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
	Hedge bindweed	*Calystegia sepium*
	Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
	Honeysuckle	*Lonicera periclymenum*
	Horse chestnut 'white'	*Aesculus hippocastanum*
	Ivy	*Hedera helix*
	Leyland conifer	*Cupressus × leylandii*
	Lonicera	*Lonicera nitida*
	Privet	*Ligustrum vulgare*
	Snowberry	*Symphoricarpos albus*
	Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
Defunct Species-Poor Hedge	Beech	*Fagus sylvatica*
	Field maple	*Acer campestre*
	Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
	Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
Dry Ditch	Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
	Common nettle	*Urtica dioica*
	Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale*
	Egg-leaf spurge	*Euphorbia oblongata*
	Hard rush	*Juncus inflexus*
	Hogweed	*Heracleum sphondylium*
	Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
	Sheep sorrel	*Rumex acetosella*
	Water dropwort	*Oenanthe crocata*
	Yellow flag	*Iris pseudacorus*
	Yorkshire-fog	*Holcus lanatus*

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
Invertebrates	Beautiful demoiselle	*Calopteryx virgo*
	Brimstone butterfly	*Gonepteryx rhamni*
	Brown silver-line moth	*Petrophora chlorosata*
	Cinnabar moth	*Tyria jacobaeae*
	Common blue butterfly	*Polyommatus icarus*
	Common blue damselfly	*Enallagma cyathigerum*
	Emperor dragonfly	*Anax imperator*
	Grey-patched mining bee	*Andrena nitida*
	Harlequin ladybird	*Harmonia axyridis*
	Honeybee	*Apis mellifera*
	Lacewing	*Chrysopidae* sp.
	Large white butterfly	*Pieris brassicae*
	Meadow brown butterfly	*Maniola jurtina*
	Oak leaf-roller moth (caterpillar)	*Tortrix viridana*
	Orang-tip butterfly	*Anthocharis cardamines*
	Peacock butterfly	*Aglais io*
	Red admiral butterfly	*Vanessa atalanta*
	Red-tailed bumblebee	*Bombus lapidaries*
	Signal crayfish	*Pacifastacus leniusculus*
	Small heath butterfly	*Coenonympha pamphilus*
	Small tortoiseshell butterfly	*Aglais urticae*
	Small white butterfly	*Pieris rapae*
	Speckled wood butterfly	*Pararge aegeria*
	White-tailed bumblebee	*Bombus lucorum*
Amphibians	Common frog (tadpoles)	Rana temporaria
Reptiles	Yellow bellied turtle	*Trachemys scripta scripta*
Birds	Blackbird	*Turdus merula*
	Blackcap	*Sylvia atricapilla*
	Blue tit	*Cyanistes caeruleus*
	Buzzard	*Buteo buteo*
	Canadian goose	*Branta canadensis*
	Chaffinch	*Fringilla coelebs*
	Chiffchaff	*Phylloscopus collybita*
	Common gull	*Larus canus*
	Common sandpiper	*Actitis hypoleucos*
	Coot	*Fulica atra*
	Crow	*Corvus corone*
	Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*
	Egyptian goose	*Alopochen aegyptiaca*
	Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis*
	Great crested grebe	*Podiceps cristatus*
	Great spotted woodpecker	*Dendrocopos major*
	Great tit	*Parus major*
	Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris*
	Green woodpecker	*Picus viridis*
	Grey heron	*Ardea cinerea*
	Grey wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*
	House sparrow	*Passer domesticus*
	Jackdaw	*Corvus monedula*
	Jay	*Garrulus glandarius*
	Long-tailed tit	*Aegithalos caudatus*
	Magpie	*Pica pica*
	Mallard	*Anas platyrhynchos*
	Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*
	Nuthatch	*Sitta europaea*
	Pied wagtail	*Motacilla alba*
	Red kite	*Milvus milvus*
	Robin	*Erithacus rubecula*
	Song thrush	*Turdus philomelos*
	Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*
	Swan	*Cygnus olor*
	Swift	*Apus apus*
	Treecreeper	*Certhia familiaris*
	Tufted duck	*Aythya fuligula*
	Wood pigeon	*Columba palumbus*

Appendix 3: Botanical Survey, Surrey Botanical Society

Notable flora species recorded on Earlswood Common

This is a summary of more notable plants extracted from the full botanical survey undertaken by Surrey Botanical Society. Many of which are of conservation concern on the JNCC Red List (in bold text) the others are good examples of species in their habitat.

***Aphanes australis* (Slender Parsley-piert):** East of A23 on bare patches in former golf features short turf on 8th tee and bare turf on former golf feature.

Campanula rotundifolia (Harebell): East of A23, patch 5m x 8m near former golf feature North of Asylum Arch Rd and another smaller patch a few metres to the East, open grassland West of lakes, North of Pendleton Road, small patch in rough of former fairway Northeast of upper lake.

***Carex leporina* (Oval Sedge):** Open grassland West of lake, small patch in unmown area on fringe of damp woodland, damp grassy area West of lakes, East of A23 By ditch crossing former fairway.

Cardamine pratensis (Cuckooflower): By ditch draining into upper lake, ditch across former fairway, North of Pendleton Road, on bund of imported soil and by drainage ditch, East of A23 Only visible in unmown areas by planted daffodils, East of A23 Scattered patches in damper grassland.

***Carex otrubae* (False Fox-sedge):** Ditch crossing former 18th fairway.

***Cirsium palustre* (Marsh Thistle):** Open acid grassland with seasonal damp depressions, damp depression East of upper lake.

***Cerastium semidecandrum* (Little Mouse-ear):** Scattered in short turf on former golf feature.

***Chamaemelum nobile* (Chamomile):** Many extensive patches in this area on former fairway East of Pendleton Rd, several patches on former fairway parallel to Pendleton Road, many plants in closely mown and trampled turf on West side and in fenced off wicket area, East of A23 Large patch c. 7m x 10m just North of Asylum Arch Rd and another smaller patch 4m further North.

***Conopodium majus* (Pignut):** North of Pendleton Road scattered plants in open grassy area East of Yeats Close.

***Erodium cicutarium* (Common Stork's-bill):** North of Pendleton Road, small patch South of Somerset Road.

***Erophila verna* (Common Whitlowgrass):** North of Pendleton Road, on cobbled surround to small pond, small patch on verge by bus stop.

***Galium palustre subsp. Palustre* (Common Marsh-bedstraw):** Ditch across former fairway East of Pendleton Road.

***Galium saxatile* (Heath Bedstraw):** On ant hills and in shorter turf.

***Hordeum secalinum* (Meadow Barley):** Scattered patches on former fairway North of lake, East of A23 large swathe along former fairway.

***Hyacinthoides non-scripta* (Bluebell):** A few colonies in wooded areas.

***Hypochaeris radicata* (Cat's-ear):** On bank by former golf tee16th tee and elsewhere, Cricket Pitch, East of A23 Open grassland, North of Pendleton Road

***Iris pseudacorus* (Yellow Iris):** Ditch draining into upper lake, ditch across former fairway, East of A23 In small pond.

***Iris foetidissima* (Stinking Iris):** A few scattered plants in woodland and scrub.

***Jacobaea erucifolia* (Hoary Ragwort):** Open area East of lower lake Silene dioica Red Campion. Rough herbage East of Pendleton Road

***Lathyrus pratensis* (Meadow Vetchling):** Longer swards, North of Pendleton Road large patch in mown grass near the Mackrells, damp area South of ditch feeding the upper lake.

***Lythrum salicaria* (Purple-loosestrife):** By outflow from lakes, many patches on margins of upper and lower lakes.

***Leontodon saxatilis* (Lesser Hawkbit):** Former 18th fairway South of Pendleton Road, North of Pendleton Road, on bank of imported soil near playground, short turf on former golf feature North of upper lake.

***Lonicera periclymenum* (Honeysuckle):** North of Pendleton Road Scrambling up old tree stump.

***Lotus corniculatus* (Common Bird's-foot-trefoil):** North of Pendleton Road Scattered patches, unmown open areas, East of A23 by ditch crossing former fairway, short turf on former eighth tee, open acid grassland with seasonal damp depressions.

***Lotus pedunculatus* (Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil):** Damp grassy area West of lakes.

***Luzula campestris* (Field Wood-rush):** In shorter turf on former golf features, widespread in shorter turf, East of A23 short and worn turf South of Asylum Arch Road, Cricket Pitch, North of Pendleton Road large patches in shorter turf.

***Lycopus europaeus* (Gypsywort):** A few patches on North margin of the lower lake.

***Montia fontana* (Blinks):** Many plants in worn turf on former golf feature, Cricket Pitch many plants in closely mown and trampled turf Southwest of pitch.

***Plantago coronopus* (Buck's-horn Plantain):** North of Pendleton Road Outer verges, path opposite former clubhouse South of Pendleton Road.

Pilosella officinarum Mouse-ear-hawkweed. In short turf on former golf features, short mown turf on former golf feature, East of A23 Short and worn turf South of Asylum Arch Road.

***Pimpinella saxifrage* (Burnet-saxifrage):** Scattered on former 18th fairway and open grassland West of lakes, North of Pendleton Road Scattered plants emerging through mown arisings.

***Poa pratensis* (Smooth Meadowgrass):** By former fairway West of A23.

***Potentilla anglica* (Trailing Tormentil):** Open acid grassland with seasonal damp depressions. With P. reptans and P. x mixta.

***Potentilla erecta* (Tormentil):** Damp grassy area West of lakes & in the rough of former fairway North of upper lake and in ant hill area, open grassland West of lake.

***Primula vulgaris* (Primrose):** Banks of ditch draining into upper, bank of ditch across former fairway.

***Ranunculus bulbosus* (Bulbous Buttercup):** Open grassland scattered and widespread in longer, North of Pendleton Road Scattered in open grassland, East of A23 open grassy areas.

***Ranunculus flammula* (Lesser Spearwort):** Small patch on shallow NE margin, ditch across former fairway South of the Ring, several plants in swampy area, along ditch North of Upper Lake, along ditch South of 5th fairway, East of A23 By small pond on side of former fairway.

***Ranunculus sardous* (Hairy Buttercup):** Several patches on mown grass between car park and path. Ground in woodland south of cricket pitch. Originally recorded as R. lingua because of leaf size but flowers too small when they apeared.

***Rorippa palustris* (Marsh Yellow-cress):** Disturbed soil on former golf feature West of A23

Rumex acetosa (Common Sorrel): North of Pendleton Road, banks of ditches, damp grassy area West of lake, scattered patches in former rough and by ditches, East of A23 Scattered patches in open grassland

***Rumex acetosella* (Sheep's Sorrel North):** off Pendleton Road there are many patches in bare and short, widespread, and frequent in bare and worn turf on former Cricket Pitch in worn and bare turf, East of A23 bare and worn turf.

***Tanacetum vulgare* (Tansy):** By outflow from lakes.

***Sison amomum* (Stone Parsley):** Shady path North of upper lake, hedgerow South of lower lake.

***Stellaria graminea* (Lesser Stitchwort):** Open acid grassland with seasonal damp depressions, unmown open areas.

***Stellaria apetala* (Lesser Chickweed):** Bare turf on former golf feature, many patches in short turf on former golf feature, patch on path on East side, short turf on former 8th tee.

***Veronica beccabunga* (Brooklime):** Ditch across former fairway, ditch feeding upper lake, small patch on shallow Northeast margin.

***Viburnum opulus* (Guelder-rose):** Small shrub East of path from Woodhatch Road.

***Vicia sativa subsp. nigra* (Narrow-leaved Vetch):** Open acid grassland with seasonal damp depressions.

***Viola reichenbachiana* (Dog violet):** Small patch on East side near A23.

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Appendix 4: Byelaws Earlswood Common

Reigate & Banstead
BOROUGH COUNCIL
Banstead | Horley | Redhill | Reigate

PLEASURE GROUNDS, PUBLIC WALKS AND OPEN SPACES

Byelaws made by the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council under Section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875, Sections 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 with respect to pleasure grounds, public walks and open spaces referred to in Schedule A to the byelaws

Interpretation

1. In these byelaws:
"the Council" means the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council;
"the ground" means any of the grounds listed in Schedule A to the byelaws.

Opening Times

2. On any day on which the ground is open to the public, no person shall enter it before the time, or enter or remain in it after the time, indicated by a notice placed in a conspicuous position at the entrance to the ground. This byelaw applies to any of the grounds listed in Schedule B to these byelaws.

Vehicles

3. (1) (i) No person shall, without reasonable excuse, ride or drive a motor cycle, motor vehicle or any other mechanically propelled vehicle (other than a cycle) in the ground, or bring or cause to be brought into the ground a motor cycle, motor vehicle, trailer or any other mechanically propelled vehicle (other than a cycle), except in any part of the ground where there is a right of way for that class of vehicle.
(ii) No person shall, without reasonable excuse, ride a cycle, except in any part of the ground where there is a right of way for cycles, or along such routes as may be fixed by the Council and indicated by signs placed in conspicuous positions in the ground.
(2) If the Council has set apart a space in the ground for use by vehicles of any class, this byelaw shall not prevent the riding or driving of those vehicles in the space so set apart, or on a route, indicated by signs placed in conspicuous positions, between it and the entrance to the ground.
(3) This byelaw shall not extend to invalid carriages.
(4) In these byelaws:
"cycle" means a bicycle, a tricycle, or a cycle having four or more wheels, not being in any case a motor cycle or motor vehicle;
"invalid carriage" means a vehicle, whether mechanically propelled or not, the unladen weight of which does not exceed 150 kilograms, the width of which does not exceed 0.85 metres and which has been constructed or adapted for use for the carriage of one person, being a person suffering from some physical defect or disability and is used solely by such a person;
"motor cycle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle, whether or not intended or adapted for use on roads, not being an invalid carriage, with less than four wheels and the weight of which unladen does not exceed 410 kilograms;
"motor vehicle" means a mechanically propelled vehicle, whether or not intended or adapted for use on roads, not being an invalid carriage;
"trailer" means a vehicle drawn by a motor vehicle, and includes a caravan.

Overnight Parking

4. No person shall, without the consent of the Council, leave or cause or permit to be left any vehicle in the ground between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 a.m.

Horses

5. No person shall in the ground intentionally or negligently ride a horse to the danger of any other person using the ground.

Climbing

6. No person shall, without reasonable excuse, climb any wall or fence in or enclosing the ground, or any tree, or any barrier, railing, post or other structure.

Removal of Structures

7. No person shall, without reasonable excuse, remove from or displace in the ground any barrier, railing, post or seat, or any part of any structure or ornament, or any implement provided for use in the laying out or maintenance of the ground.

Erection of Structures

8. No person shall in the ground, without the consent of the Council, erect any post, rail, fence, pole, tent, booth, stand, building or other structure.

Camping

9. No person shall in the ground, without the consent of the Council, erect a tent or use any vehicle, including a caravan, or any other structure for the purpose of camping, except in any area which may be set apart and indicated by notice as a place where camping is permitted.

Fires

10. (1) No person shall in the ground intentionally light a fire, or place, throw or let fall a lighted match or any other thing so as to be likely to cause a fire.
(2) This byelaw shall not apply to any event held with the consent of the Council.

Children's Play Areas

11. (1) No person who has attained the age of 14 years shall enter or remain in the children's play area in any of the grounds listed in Schedule C to these byelaws.
(2) This byelaw shall not apply to any person who is bona fide in charge of a child under the age of 14 years.

Children's Play Apparatus

12. No person who has attained the age of 14 years shall use any apparatus in the ground which, by a notice placed on or near thereto, has been set apart by the Council for the exclusive use of persons under the age of 14 years.

Games

13. No person shall in the ground play any game:
(a) so as to give reasonable grounds for annoyance to any other person in the ground; or
(b) which is likely to cause damage to any tree, shrub or plant in the ground.

Trading

14. No person shall in the ground, without the consent of the Council, sell, or offer or expose for sale, or let to hire, or offer or expose for letting to hire, any commodity or article, or provide or offer to provide any service for which a charge is made.

Grazing

15. No person shall, without the consent of the Council, turn out or permit any animal to graze in the ground.

Protection of Flower Beds, Trees, Grass, etc.

16. No person who brings or causes to be brought into the ground a vehicle shall wheel or park it over or upon:
(a) any flower bed, shrub or plant, or any ground in the course of preparation as a flower bed, or for the growth of any tree, shrub or plant; or
(b) any part of the ground where the Council, by a notice placed in a conspicuous position in the ground, prohibits its being wheeled or parked.

17. No person shall in the ground enter upon:
(a) any flower bed, shrub or plant, or any ground in the course of preparation as a flower bed, or for the growth of any tree, shrub or plant; or
(b) any part of the ground set aside for the renovation of grass or turf, where adequate notice to keep off such grass or turf is exhibited.

Removal of Substances

18. No person shall remove from or displace in the ground any stone, soil or turf, or the whole or any part of any plant, shrub or tree.

Archery

19. No person shall in the ground, except in connection with an event organised by or held with the consent of the Council, engage in the sport of archery.

Field Sports

20. No person shall in the ground, throw or put any javelin, discus or shot, except on land set aside by the Council for this purpose.

Golf

21. No person shall in the ground drive, chip or pitch a hard golf ball except on land set aside by the Council for use as a golf course, golf driving range, golf practice area or putting course.

22. No person resorting to the golf course referred to in the preceding byelaw for the purpose of playing or taking part in the game shall:
(a) play or take part in that game when a notice is set up in some conspicuous position prohibiting play on the golf course or any part thereof;
(b) commence to play, unless he is the holder of a season or periodical ticket, until he has obtained from the golf professional/agent/officer of the Council in charge of the golf course a ticket entitling him to play, which ticket shall be retained and shown on demand to any authorised officer of the Council;
(c) having completed a round, or desisted from playing before completing a round, commence to play again until he has complied with paragraph (b) of this byelaw.

23. No person resorting to the golf course referred to in the preceding byelaw shall on the golf course offer his service for hire as an instructor without the consent of the Council.

24. No person other than a person taking part in the game of golf or a person accompanying such a person shall, except in the exercise of lawful right or privilege, walk or run across or over or traverse the golf course.

25. No person shall on the golf course play or take part in any game other than the game of golf.

Cricket

26. No person shall use any cricket ball, except in the part of the ground which, by a notice placed in a conspicuous position in the ground, has been set aside as an area where a cricket ball may be used.

Skateboarding and Roller Skating

27. No person shall in the ground skate, slide or ride on rollers, skateboards, wheels, mechanical contrivances or other equipment, except on any part of the ground which has been set apart by the Council for that purpose and indicated by a notice conspicuously displayed.

Missiles

28. No person shall in the ground, to the danger or annoyance of any other person in the ground, throw or discharge any missile.

Waterways

29. No person shall:
Bathing
(a) without reasonable excuse, bathe or swim in any waterway comprised in the ground except in an area where a notice exhibited by the Council permits bathing and swimming;
Pollution of waterways
(b) intentionally, carelessly or negligently foul or pollute any waterway comprised in the ground;
Watercourses
(c) knowingly cause or permit the flow of any drain or watercourse in the ground to be obstructed or diverted, or open, shut or otherwise work or operate any sluice or similar apparatus in the ground.

This byelaw applies to any of the grounds listed in Schedule D to these byelaws.

Ice Skating

30. No person shall in the ground go or remain upon any ice or frozen body of water. This byelaw applies to any of the grounds listed in Schedule D to these byelaws.

Boats

31. No person shall, without the consent of the Council, launch, operate or sail on any waterway comprised in the ground any boat, power craft, dinghy, canoe, sailboard, inflatable or any like craft. This byelaw applies to any of the grounds listed in Schedule D to these byelaws.

Interference with Life Saving Equipment

32. No person shall, except in case of emergency, remove from or displace in the ground or otherwise tamper with any life saving appliance provided by the Council. This byelaw applies to any of the grounds listed in Schedule D to these byelaws.

Aircraft

33. No person shall, except in case of emergency or with the consent of the Council, take off from or land in the ground in an aircraft, helicopter, hang-glider or hot air balloon.

Fishing and Protection of Wildlife

34. (1) No person shall in the ground intentionally kill, injure, take or disturb any animal or fish or engage in hunting, shooting or fishing, or the setting of traps or nets or the laying of snares.
(2) This byelaw shall not prohibit any fishing which may be authorised by the Council.

Noise

35. (1) No person shall in the ground, after being requested to desist by an officer of the Council, or by any person annoyed or disturbed, or by any person acting on his behalf
(a) by shouting or singing;
(b) by playing on a musical instrument; or
(c) by operating or permitting to be operated any radio, gramophone, amplifier, tape recorder or similar instrument
cause or permit to be made any noise which is so loud or so continuous or repeated as to give reasonable cause for annoyance to other persons in the ground.
(2) This byelaw shall not apply to any person holding or taking part in any entertainment held with the consent of the Council.

Public Shows and Performances

36. No person shall in the ground, without the consent of the Council, hold or take part in any public show or performance.

Exhibitions and Structures

37. No person shall in the ground, without the consent of the Council, place or take part in any exhibition, or set up any swing, roundabout or other like thing.

Gates

38. Where the Council indicates by a notice conspicuously exhibited on or alongside any gate in the ground that leaving that gate open is prohibited, no person having opened that gate or caused it to be opened, shall leave it open.

Obstruction

39. No person shall in the ground:
(a) intentionally obstruct any officer of the Council in the proper execution of his duties;
(b) intentionally obstruct any person carrying out an act which is necessary to the proper execution of any contract with the Council; or
(c) intentionally obstruct any other person in the proper use of the ground, or behave so as to give reasonable grounds for annoyance to other persons in the ground.

Savings

40. (1) An act necessary to the proper execution of his duty in the ground by an officer of the Council, or any act which is necessary to the proper execution of any contract with the Council, shall not be an offence under these byelaws.
(2) Nothing in or done under any of the provisions of these byelaws shall in any respect prejudice or injuriously affect any public right of way through the ground, or the rights of any person acting legally by virtue of some estate, right or interest in, over or affecting the ground or any part thereof.

Removal of Offenders

41. Any person offending against any of these byelaws may be removed from the ground by an officer of the Council or a constable.

Penalty

42. Any person offending against any of these byelaws shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.

Revocation

43. The byelaws made by Reigate Borough Council and confirmed by the Secretary of State in 1955 relating to Redhill and Earlswood Commons are hereby revoked.

THE COMMON SEAL of THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF REIGATE & BANSTEAD was hereunto affixed this 30th day of March 2001 in the presence of:-) LS) 63/01

P J NORTH

Authorised Signatory

SCHEDULE A : The grounds referred to in byelaw 1 are as follows:

Redhill & Earlswood Commons, Redhill
Kingswood Recreation Grd, Kingswood
Lady Neville Recreation Grd, Banstead
Lonesome Lane Recreation Grd, Reigate
Merland Rise Recreation Grd, Tadworth
Redhill Memorial Park, Redhill
Riverside Garden Park, Horley
Tattenham Way Recreation Grd
Yattendon Road Recreation Grd, Horley

SCHEDULE B : The grounds referred to in byelaw 2 are as follows:

Redhill Memorial Park, Redhill

SCHEDULE C : The grounds referred to in byelaw 11 are as follows:

Redhill & Earlswood Commons, Redhill
Kingswood Recreation Ground
Lady Neville Recreation Grd, Banstead
Lonesome Lane Recreation Grd, Reigate
Merland Rise Rec. Grd, Tadworth Estate
Redhill Memorial Park, Redhill
Tattenham Way Recreation Grd
Yattendon Road Recreation Grd, Horley

SCHEDULE D : The grounds referred to in byelaws 29, 30, 31 & 32 are as follows:

Redhill & Earlswood Commons, Redhill
Lady Neville Recreation Grd, Banstead
Riverside Garden Park, Horley

THE COMMON SEAL of THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD was hereunto affixed this 30th day of March 2001 in the presence of :-) LS) 63/01

P J NORTH

Authorised Signatory

The foregoing byelaws are hereby confirmed by the Secretary of State and shall come into operation on the twenty-first day of September 2001

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

T. K. COBLEY
Head Of Unit, Constitutional and Community Policy Directorate

22 August 2001 Home Office, LONDON, SW1 04-30

Appendix 5: Biodiversity Opportunity Area

Surrey Biodiversity Opportunity Area Policy Statement

Biodiversity Opportunity Area **LW01: Chiddingfold & West Weald Woodlands**

Local authorities: Waverley

Aim & justification:

The aim of **Biodiversity Opportunity Areas** (BOAs) is to establish a strategic framework for conserving and enhancing biodiversity at a landscape scale, making our wildlife more robust to changing climate and socio-economic pressures. BOAs are those areas where targeted maintenance, restoration and creation of Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 'Habitats of Principal Importance', ie. **Priority habitats** will have the greatest benefit towards achieving this aim.

Realising BOA aims will contribute to UK commitments to halt biodiversity declines, and their recognition directly meets current **National Planning Policy Framework** policy to plan strategically for the enhancement of the natural environment; to be achieved by **providing net gains** for biodiversity and ***establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*** (para. 170). Designation of BOAs also fulfils NPPF requirements to ***identify, map and safeguard components of wider ecological networks***, and ***areas identified for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation*** (para. 174).

Explanatory

BOAs identify the most important areas for wildlife conservation remaining in Surrey and each include a variety of habitats, providing for an 'ecosystem approach' to nature conservation across and beyond the county. By working with larger, more dynamic ecosystems, it will be possible to create a wider range of habitats and their variants, which will in turn increase the ability of the landscape to support the widest variety of species.

1. Overview

This Biodiversity Opportunity Area includes the heavily wooded upper reaches of the River Arun in Surrey, from Haslemere & Grayswood in the west to Dunsfold & Alfold in the east where it is contiguous with West Sussex BOA 17 (Chiddingfold Complex). The northern boundary is the Hambledon ridge. **Area**: 4893.7 ha

2. National Character Areas

Low Weald (NCA 121), Wealden Greensands (NCA 120; marginal)

3. Profile

3.1 Physical

Weald Clay (with Paludina limestone), Lower Greensand. Undulating upper catchment of the Loxley Stream and tributaries, exhibiting a system of deeply-cut stream-courses ('gills') with intervening clay and sandstone plateaux.

3.2 Biodiversity

3.2.1 Statutory protected sites

SSSI: Chiddingfold Forest; Netherside Stream Outcrops (geological interest only)

AONB: Surrey Hills

3.2.2 Local Sites

SNCI: 44

3.2.3 NERC Act S.41

Habitats of Principal Importance (Priority habitats): Mixed deciduous woodland, Wet woodland, Wood pasture & parkland, Heathland, Meadows, Hedgerows, Ponds

Species of Principal Importance (Priority species):

Plants: Chamomile, Glandular eyebright, Pennyroyal*

Fungi/Lichens: Bearded tooth, Zoned tooth (all fungi)

Invertebrates: Brown hairstreak, Dingy skipper, Grizzled skipper, Pearl-bordered fritillary*, Small heath, Small pearl-bordered fritillary*, Silver-studded blue, White admiral, White-letter hairstreak, Wood white, Argent-&-sable, Common fan-foot, Clay fan-foot, Drab looper, Orange upperwing*, Betony case-bearer, White-spotted sable (all butterflies and moths), Bearded false-darkling beetle* Two-tone reed beetle, Stag beetle, Shining guest ant, *Chrysis fulgida* (a ruby-tailed wasp), Black-headed

* probably extinct in BOA

Further details available from Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre, C/O Surrey Wildlife Trust, School Lane, Pirbright, Woking, Surrey, GU24 0JN

ii

mason wasp, Long-horned mining bee

Vertebrates: Bullfinch, Cuckoo, Dunnock, Hawfinch, Lesser redpoll, Lesser spotted woodpecker, Linnet, Marsh tit, Skylark, Song thrush, Spotted flycatcher, Tree pipit, Turtle dove, Willow tit*, Yellowhammer; Adder, Common lizard, Grass snake, Sand lizard, Slow-worm, Common toad, Great crested newt; Barbastelle bat, Bechstein's bat, Brown long-eared bat, Common dormouse, Harvest mouse, Hedgehog, Noctule bat, Polecat, Soprano pipistrelle bat

3.2.4 Further important species interest: Alternate-leaved golden-saxifrage, Dyer's greenweed, Greater butterfly-orchid, Pale sedge, Zigzag clover; Purple emperor, Broad-bordered bee hawk-moth, Light orange underwing, Mocha, Small black arches (all moths), *Mesosa nebulosa*, *Xyleborus dispar* (both beetles), *Cheilosia carbonaria*, *Microdon analis* (=*eggeri*) (both hoverflies), Woodland grasshopper; Firecrest, Grey wagtail, Nightingale, Alcathöe whiskered bat

3.2.5 Ancient woodland: present, including PAWS (probably the densest concentration in Surrey)

3.2.6 Landscape scale conservation activity: Greenscape Facilitation Fund; Arun-Rother Catchment Partnership

3.3 Archaeology

Chiddingfold Roman villa; Burningfold Manor; Sidney Wood glassworks

3.4 Access

3.4.1 Publically-accessible Natural OS: Tugley Wood-Botany Bay, Sidney Wood (Forestry England); Oaken Wood NR (Butterfly Conservation); Durfold Wood (Woodland Trust); Dunsfold Common (Dunsfold Parish Council); Firtree Copse (Surrey Wildlife Trust), Wey & Arun Canal; Hambledon & Buss's Commons (part)

3.4.2 Long-distance PRoW, etc: Sussex Border Path; Greensand Way

3.5 Key ecosystem services

Timber production; Agricultural production; Carbon sequestration; Flooding regulation; Pollination services; Recreational (walking, equestrian, golf, angling, nature observation)

3.6 Socio-Economic

3.6.1 Employment profile: Silviculture and Agriculture sector; Equine livery, breeding & services; Leisure sector (golf, equestrian)

3.6.2 LEP: Enterprise M3

4. Objectives & Targets

LW01/O1: SSSI units to achieve favourable condition. **T1**: 50% by 2020 (by area)

LW01/O2: SNCI protected by planning policy & in positive management. **T2**: All by 2020

LW01/O3: Priority habitat restoration & creation.

- **Mixed deciduous woodland/T3a**: 4.75 ha by 2020
  (restoration; Ancient woodland prioritised: 75% by area)
- **Wet woodland/T3b**: 1.25 ha by 2020
- **Wood pasture & parkland/T3c**: 27 ha by 2020
- **Meadows/T3d**: 16.25 ha by 2020
- **Hedgerows/T3e**: 6.75 km by 2020
- **Ponds/T3f**: 6 ha by 2020

LW01/O4: Priority species recovery.

- **T4**: By 2020, evidence of at least stabilisation & preferably recovery in the local populations of listed Priority species:

Wood white	**Pearl-bordered fritillary**	**Adder**
Marsh tit	**Lesser spotted woodpecker**	**Bechstein's bat**

Appendix 6: Grass mowing regimes

(bottom map shows additional road and park mowing)

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Mowing Frequency

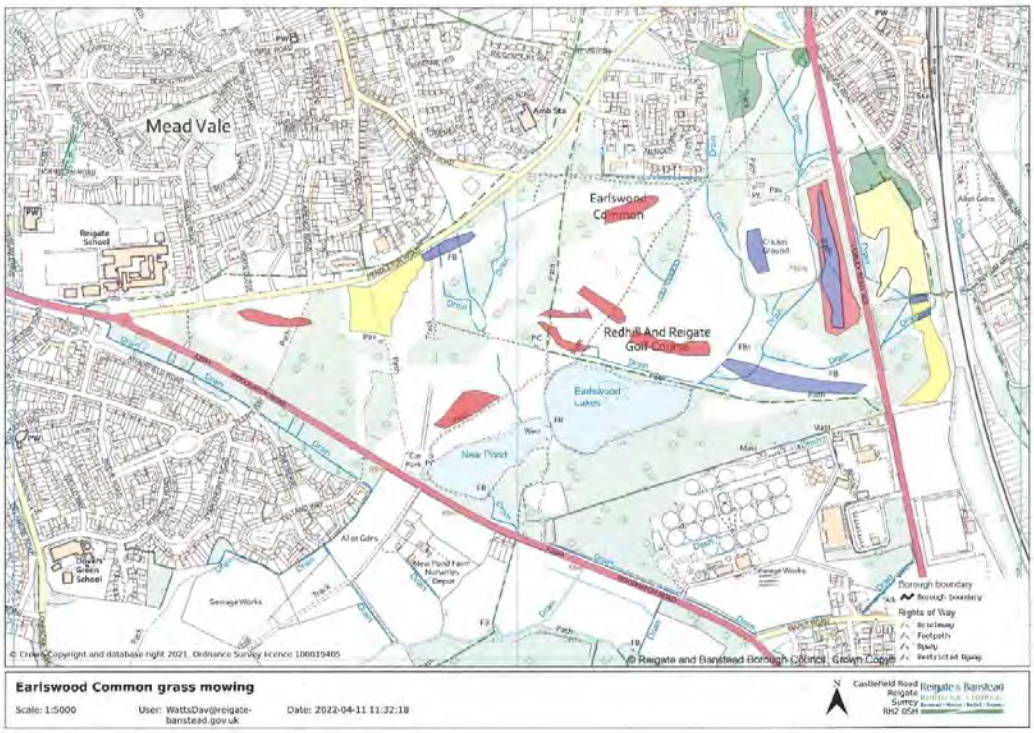
Red. Neutral grass: September. Two-year rotation

Yellow. Meadow: Late August/ September

Blue. Chamomile grassland: April, May and June (cricket outfield mown weekly throughout summer)

Green. Amenity grass: May, July, September

Purple. Parkland: Once monthly May – August



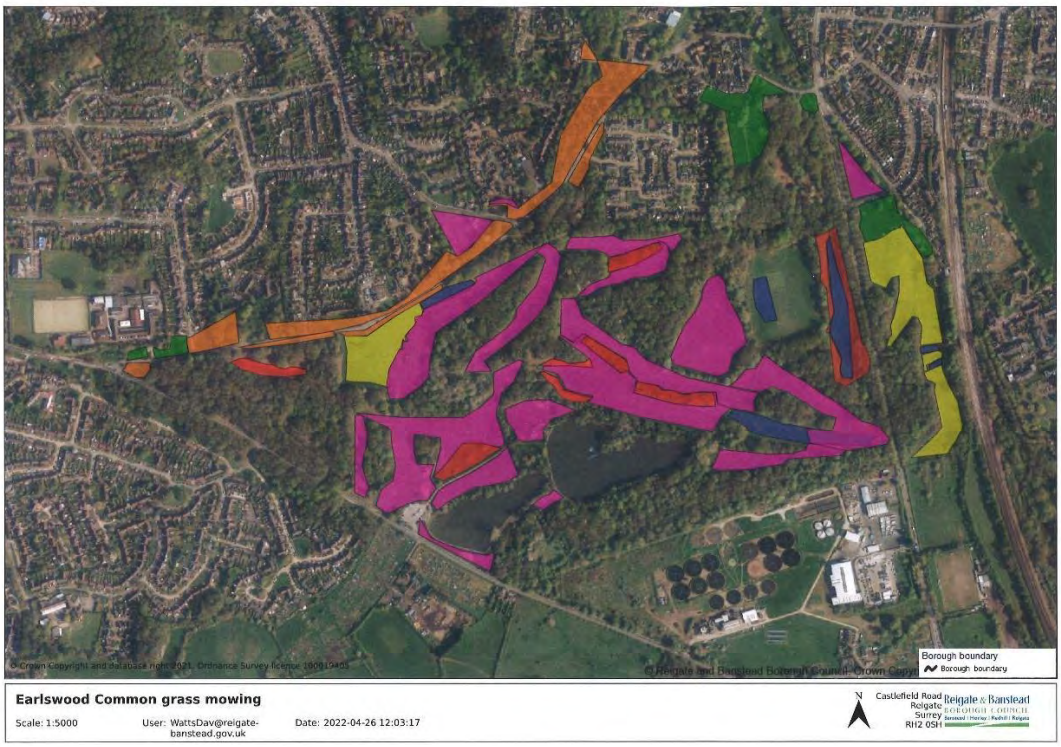
Mowing Frequency

Orange. Road verges: April, July (sightlines only) September – Disposal of cuttings

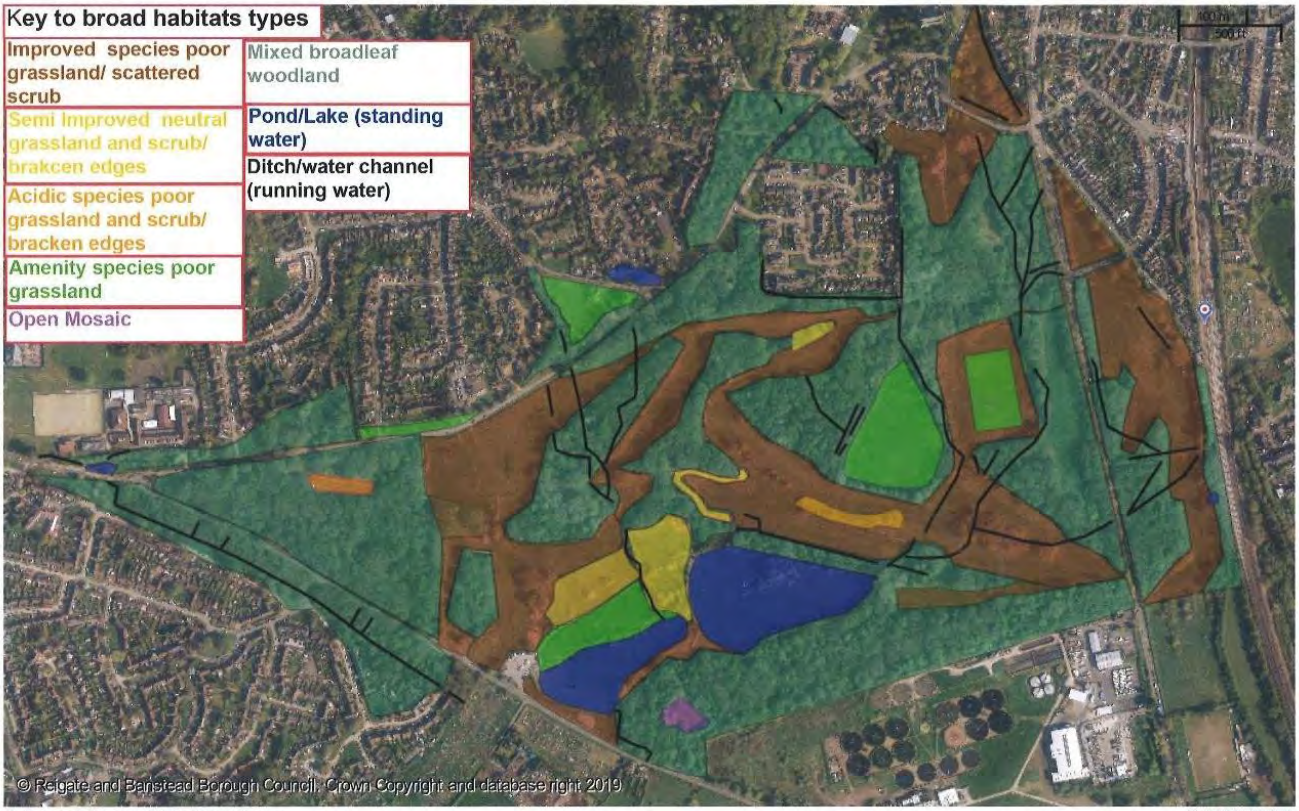
Red, yellow and blue areas: Cuttings to be cleared

Green & purple areas: Cuttings to be left on ground

Orange: Cuttings to be left on ground



Appendix 7: Broad habitats on Earlswood Common



Earlswood Common Habitat Extent map
Scale: 1:7100 @ A4
Printed on: 4/10/2019 at 12:46 PM

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Castlefield Road, Reigate
Surrey, RH2 0SH

www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk
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Appendix 8: Merstham Cricket Club pitch maintenance

The cricket club should maintain the cricket square as per the conditions of the lease with RBBC. Schedule. Obligations associated with the use of the cricket pitch. This would include:

Autumn and Winter

- During dry and mild weather regularly mow the square with mower set at a suitable height of cut.
- Apply additional fertilizer if required containing an FE element.

Pre-season

- Lightly Scarify
- Undertake preseason rolling in line with Ground Association guidelines.
- Regular Weekly Mowing
- Spring fertilizer feed applied including FE and weedkiller.

Playing Season

- Mow at least weekly.
- Prepare wickets by cutting and scarifying avoiding scalping.
- Wickets rolled as required and conditions permitting.
- Wickets marked as per ECB regulations, using a nontoxic water-based substance.
- Wicket repaired after use.

End of Season

- Scarify the whole square several times in different directions.
- Apply fertilizer with low Nitrogen content but including FE.
- Overseed the whole square.
- Top dress using a suitable loam of at least 35% clay content.

Appendix 9: Football pitch maintenance

Verti-draining

Twice yearly, at beginning and end of season. Normally in Oct – March/ April

Verti-draining of goal mouths

Monthly, if weather and ground conditions permit. Sep – May

Mowing

Fortnightly in season if weather and ground conditions permit. Sep – May

Harrowing

Monthly, if weather and ground conditions permit. Oct – March

Slitting

Monthly, if weather and ground conditions permit. Oct – March

Initial marking

Once at start of season. July – Sep

Over marking

Weekly. Sep – May

Painting of goal posts

Prior to season starting

Seeding of pitches

May through to September

Goal mouth repairs

At the end of the football season normally in May/June

Spraying of pitches

Pitches are assessed prior to the season for what is required either: spot spraying of weed species, full spray of weed species or application of fertiliser to improve grass **o**ut of the football season normally in June/ July

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