



## Kent Country Parks

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# Trosley Country Park Management Plan 2021-2026



Updated: Jan 2022 by Tim Bell- N and WK Ranger Services Manager

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## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This [plan](#) is available to read at or and from the on-site office and the [Park leaflet](#) is available to download.. Section 1, the Executive summary is a brief overview of the plan, sections 2-13 are the main document which is a working management plan for site staff in addition to being available for the public to review.

### **1.1 Background Information**

Trosley Country Park totals 68.79 ha (170 acres), with woodland and scrub covering approximately 55.03 ha (136 acres), and calcareous grassland covering 13.5 ha (33.5 acres). The Park is within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and parts of the site are within the Halling to Trottiscliffe SSSI, (a total of 7 units). There is a tree preservation order covering the whole site from Gravesham and Tonbridge and Malling Borough councils.

The Country Park is in the civil parishes of Vigo and Trottiscliffe, in the districts of Gravesham and Tonbridge and Malling, North Kent and was once part of the Trosley Towers Estate. It is now managed by Kent County Council. The Country Park is bounded to the north by Vigo Village. The south-western boundary is formed by the A227 road and the Pilgrim's Way, which forms the southern boundary of the site. The roads separate the Country Park from the North Downs escarpment to the west; an area partly owned by the National Trust (Wrotham Water Estate) that includes areas of chalk grassland, scrub, and ancient semi-natural woodland (Hognore Wood). To the south of the site the landscape is dominated by large agricultural fields (mainly arable) and scattered woodlands. To the east of the Country Park, the woodland extends along the North Downs escarpment and plateau in Whitehorse Wood, Holly Hill, and Crookham Wood, and includes extensive areas of ancient semi-natural woodland. Further smaller areas of ancient semi-natural woodland lie to the north of Vigo Village.

The Park has achieved a Green Flag award for Country parks from 2009-2021 and won the South and South East in bloom Silver Gilt award for country parks from 2010 to 2018 and gold in 2019-2021.

### **1.2 Vision for the Site**

Trosley Country Park aims to provide a welcoming, safe environment for all ages and backgrounds whilst protecting and conserving the Site of Special Scientific Interest. The site aims to raise awareness of sustainable energies, healthy living and recycling through the visitor centre and café.

The overall vision for the country parks in Kent is for the county to be renowned for its great country parks, operating a service which meets the needs of the people of Kent and its visitors, and which is securely funded into the future.

A 3-year (2017-2021) Kent Country Parks strategy has been produced with clear measurable targets; this can be found at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/kent-country-parks-service-strategy>

### **1.3            *Conservation Management***

Trosley Country Park will be managed to provide several features including a mixed age structure woodland mosaic comprising of broad-leaved coppice with standards and high forest which will be left as minimum intervention. The entire site is managed with biodiversity as a major objective; Based on the UKWAS woodland assurance scheme guidelines this states that a minimum of 15% of the woodland forest area should be managed with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective. The widening of the existing ride system to develop a three-zoned structure and the creation of temporary and permanent glades will be a key goal. Wherever possible there will be no loss of important/veteran trees, with tree surgery being used wherever possible to extend the life of the tree.

The long-term objective of the calcareous grassland is to achieve favourable status as identified by Natural England, with the short/medium term objective to achieve a status of unfavourable to recovering in Little Pell and Great Pell and favourable in Quarry Field and 6 O Clock field. Areas of woodland will be maintained and enhanced where possible to further add to the site's overall biodiversity.





## **1.4            *Heritage Management***

Most of the archaeological features found within Trosley Country Park are not actively managed by staff as part of the day-to-day running of the land. To this end much of what remains in the woodland such as earth banks and relics of a WW2 military training camp with old structures spread throughout the park are left undisturbed and the management of the woodland will not interfere with the archaeology. The Pilgrims Way and North Downs Way both run through the site.

Any works that may be carried out within the park will be subject to the consideration of the archaeology, for example the use of hogging to resurface the North Downs Way.

An historic environment record for the site and WW2 camp information is held in the site office.

## **1.5            *Visitor Management***

Kent County Council manage Trosley Country Park both as a nature conservation site and a recreational resource. These recreational facilities include: two way marked walks, a horse route, an orienteering course, a café, a visitor centre, the trim trail, and an outdoor events area and a children's play area. A further three walks are waymarked into the wider countryside.

The site is open from 9.00am every day except Christmas Day and closes at dusk. Locking times are displayed at the entrance of the site.



## **1.6            *Education***

Education staff offer INSET training for teachers and team-building days to corporate groups to help generate income to offset the site's running costs. The parks team are now offering a nationally accredited OCN Forest Schools programme.

The Hamilton room is available for schools to book, and an education ranger will deliver activities as and when required. There is a pool of contracted and casual staff who deliver education across the Country Parks sites.

## **1.7            *Site Maintenance***

Site maintenance is undertaken by KCC site staff, if external contractors are used the relevant site staff manage the contract. This includes daily, weekly, and annual site checks. All staff have allocated areas of responsibility for site maintenance. Specialist inspections are carried out by organisations on the Kent County Council approved contractors list. Annual inspections of buildings, trees, electric equipment across the whole portfolio of parks are managed centrally.

The Countryside wardens are responsible for visual inspections of site furniture, play equipment and other key features. They then report back to the Rangers with any issues that they cannot resolve. They are responsible for disposing of waste and removing graffiti found out on site and remove it daily where possible.

Rangers take responsibility for implementing repairs and for actioning the health and safety inspections that are carried out each year including ROSPA and tree inspections. They also deal with and reactive health and safety issues on a day-to-day basis.

Building maintenance is the responsibility of Kent County Council's Property & Infrastructure Department, via a contractor under the Total Facilities Management contract (Skanska were appointed in October 2014). The Visitor Services Manager and Ranger Services manager ensure that all reactive maintenance issues are reported to the contractor promptly and liaise with them regularly regarding planned maintenance requirements. Any more major improvements are first assessed by the KCC Property contact before being given the go-ahead.

General waste is removed weekly from the site. Recycled paper, plastic bottles, glass, clothes, are removed under the TFM contract.

## **1.8            *Health and Safety***

Kent County Council has a central Health and Safety Advisory Team, whose role it is to ensure that all departments follow corporate policies and legislation regarding the safety of

both staff in the workplace and visitors to our sites. The advice that the Kent Country Parks team receives includes:

- Creative solutions to health and safety management challenges
- Advice on legislation and policy
- Advice and assistance on risk assessment
- Training and instruction for health and safety management
- Full back up and support following health and safety incidents
- Pressure management and change management staff support tools
- Audit services to check compliance and support developments

The Kent Country Parks team has a designated member of staff to take the lead on liaising with the corporate team, ensuring all park staff are updated on changes in law and that all staff undertake the relevant training to their position. All Kent Country Parks staff therefore undertake core training in health and safety when they begin in a new post, and then will be given further training according to the needs of their role.

In addition, emergency plans have been developed for all sites (last updated Apr 2020) and are stored in all offices and at head office.

Site contractors either complete a permit to work and submit a risk assessment for all works carried out on site that is authorised by the Officer who commissioned the work or for larger contracts an NEC3 Engineering and Construction short contract is completed. Any contracts over £50,000 go through a competitive tender process. All non-specialist contractors must be from the KCC approved contractor list. KCC aims to use local contractors and materials in all contracts where possible.

Risk assessments are reviewed annually and updated when necessary. These were last updated January 2021.

There is a high-pressure gas pipeline running through the site which restricts site activity using heavy machinery and involving ground disturbance. The location of the pipe is described in appendix D 15.1.4. All works within proximity to the pipe must be logged at [Line Search Before U Dig](#) using the site log in and username before they commence and no works may be carried out until permission is gained from SGN.

## **1.9            *Community Involvement***

The Trosley liaison group meets quarterly to discuss the management of the Country Park. The group are consultative mechanism that enables us to reach several local user groups and other interested parties. Representatives from the Vigo School, Meopham secondary



school, the parishes of Trottiscliffe and Vigo, Community warden, CTC, Ramblers Association, The Kent Downs AONB and the British Horse Society are invited.

Management of the park is discussed at each meeting and thoughts and ideas from members are taken into consideration.

Rangers have been consulted as part of the planning process on the Vigo neighbourhood plan and a member of the planning group now attends the liaison group meetings.

We hold an open day annually for our visitors to get to know what we do and to ask any questions. This is useful for engaging with visitors who are not necessarily represented by any other organisation.

### **1.10 Financial Overview**

Kent County Council provide an annual revenue budget to fund the day-to-day operations of the park. Due to pressures in the wider organisation, this is not enough to fund all site services, so staff are focussed on generating income to offset their costs. The park's main income streams are:

- car park pay and display income
- Café income
- Income from woodland products (logs and kindling)
- Corporate events and functions
- CPD and INSET training
- Birthday parties
- Education groups

Opportunities for additional income streams have been investigated by KCC special projects team and private consultants and upon investigation proved to be uneconomic for the site. These include:

- Green Weddings
- Green accommodation
- Go Ape
- Mountain bike circuits

Additional money is available through an annual Capital works budget which is allocated by the head of country parks based on a general works plan and information submitted by site staff.

The country parks service costs 28p per person per year to the people of Kent (April 2020) and has moved from 46% self-financing to 81% from 2009-2019.

Additional income through Education, Birthday parties, season tickets sales and INSET training goes into central income budgets as opposed to site specific.



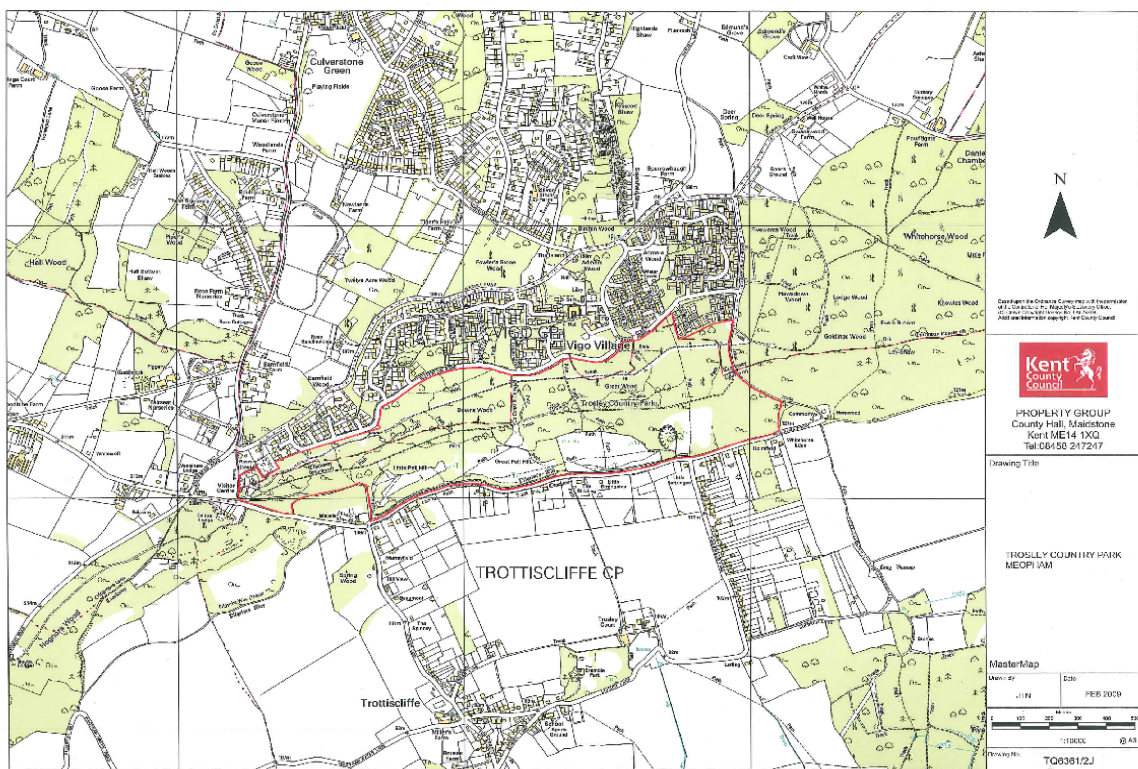
## 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 2.1 Location

Trosley Country Park totals 68.79 ha (170 acres), with woodland and scrub covering approximately 55.03 ha (136 acres), and calcareous grassland covering 13.5 ha (33.5 acres).

The Country Park is in the civil parishes of Vigo and Trottiscliffe, in the districts of Gravesham and Tonbridge and Malling, North Kent and was once part of the Trosley Towers Estate. It is now managed by Kent County Council. The Country Park is bounded to the north by Vigo Village. The south-western boundary is formed by the A227 road and the Pilgrim's Way, which forms the southern boundary of the site. The roads separate the Country Park from the North Downs escarpment to the west; an area partly owned by the National Trust (Wrotham Water Estate) that includes areas of chalk grassland, scrub, and ancient semi-natural woodland (Hognore Wood). To the south of the site the landscape is dominated by large agricultural fields (mainly arable) and scattered woodlands. To the east of the Country Park, the woodland extends along the North Downs escarpment and plateau in Whitehorse Wood, Holly Hill, and Crookham Wood, and includes extensive areas of ancient semi-natural woodland. Further smaller areas of ancient semi-natural woodland lie to the north of Vigo Village.

Fig 1 below shows an outline boundary marked in red.





### 2.1.1 *Contact Details*

Trosley Country Park, Waterlow Road, Vigo Village, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0SG  
03000 420992

### 2.1.2 *Directions to Site*

Trosley Country Park is sign-posted off the A227 between Meopham and Wrotham which can be accessed from Junction 2 (M20 motorway) and 2a (M26 motorway).

### 2.1.3 *Map Coverage*

Trosley Country Park is covered by Ordnance Survey mapping on the following maps:  
OS Landranger map no. 188 (1:50,000)  
OS Explorer map no. 148 (1:25,000)

### 2.1.4 *Photographic Coverage*

General views within the wood complex are available and held by Kent County Council, who also hold aerial photographs from 1946, 1990 and 2008.

The Kent County Council Planning Department hold all these.

Aerial photographs are valuable for the interpretation of the wood's ecological context and recent history of management.

Fig 2, the image below, is from Kent View, 2008 (KCC intranet, 2017)



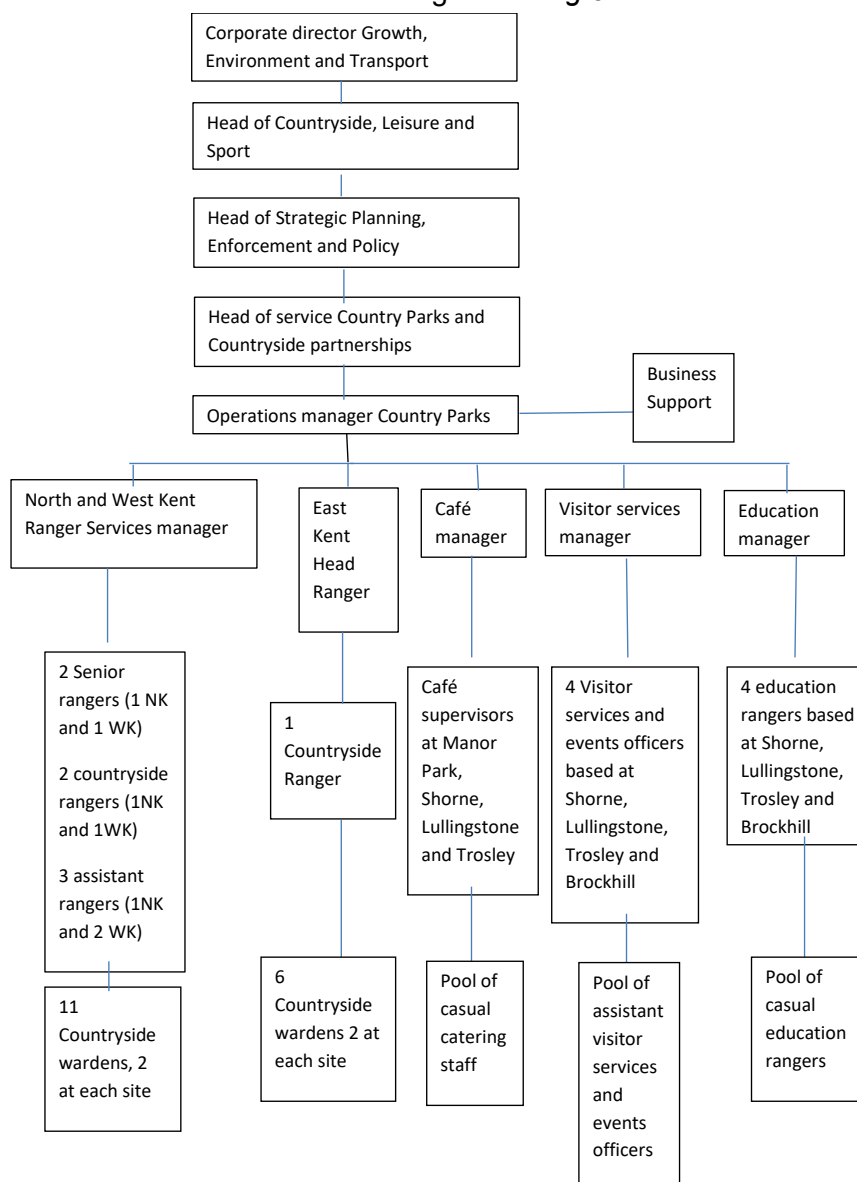
## 2.2 Management of the Site

Trosley Country Park is owned and managed by Kent County Council (KCC).

Trosley Country Park forms part of a network of 9 county council-owned sites, which total 810 hectares. They cover a wide range of habitats including chalk grassland, deciduous and coniferous woodland, and meadow. They are managed to increase interest in, and understanding of, nature conservation.

This management plan will run from January 2021 until January 2026. The management plan is reviewed and updated annually by the Ranger Services Manager as part of the Green Flag process. Most of the management work outlined in this Management Plan will be undertaken by KCC staff and volunteers, who own a range of equipment for general estate maintenance.

A brief outline of the staff structure is given in *Fig 3* below:



Please see [Section 14.5](#) for an accessible alternative of this visual.



## **2.3            *Visitors to the Site***

Trosley Country Park is managed by KCC both as a nature conservation site and a recreational resource; the provision of recreational facilities being a major factor in site management. Further details are given in *Section 6*. There is a visitor centre and separate secure works compound adjacent to the main car park.

## **2.4            *Wider Policies and Strategies Affecting the Site***

### **2.4.1            *Introduction***

The site is currently influenced by the following designations and is mentioned in policy documents.

### **2.4.2            *Statutory Designations***

#### ***Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)***

Trosley Country Park lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

#### ***Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)***

The part of the site that lies to the south of the North Downs Way and extends to approximately 30 hectares is included in the Halling to Trottiscliffe Escarpment SSSI.

Five SSSI units lie within the site boundary, units 006-010 inclusive. Four of these relate to the chalk grassland areas; Little Pell (unit 6), Great Pell (unit 7), Six O'clock Field (unit 8), and Quarry Field (unit 10). Little Pell has been classified unfavourable declining and Great Pell has been classified as Unfavourable Recovering, whilst Six o'clock Field and Quarry Field are classified as Favourable. The woodland area (unit 9) was classified as unfavourable recovering.

The last assessment by Natural England of the condition of the units was October 2010. Trosley SSSI area currently consists of 30.4 hectares, of which 8 hectares are favourable and 20.8 hectares are unfavourable recovering, 2.76ha unfavourable declining

#### ***Tree Preservation Order (TPO)***

The whole site is covered by a Tree preservation order (TPO) that covers all the woodland at Trosley Country Park. These are the Vigo village 1959 TPO for Gravesham Borough Council and TPO number 1 from 1953 from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council as the boundary falls within the site. permission must be sought before any treeworks are carried out unless covered by a felling licence or essential health and safety tree works.

### *Gas high pressure pipeline*

There is a gas pipeline running through the site which restricts site activity using heavy machinery and involving ground disturbance. The location of the pipe is described in appendix D 15.1.4. All works within proximity to the pipe must be logged at [Line Search Before U Dig](#) using the site log in and username before they commence and no works can start until permission is given by SGN.

### *2.4.3 Grants*

#### *Single Farm Payment*

In December 2011 Trosley Country Park's Grassland Areas were entered for Higher Level Stewardship scheme. The scheme was extended for one year so now expires in 2022.

This is a 10-year programme of works aimed at improving the Chalk grassland habitat within the park. A copy of the plan is held in the site office at Trosley Country Park.

#### *English Woodland Grant Scheme*

The last scheme ran from 17th August 2009 to 2014 (case No. 19340); A hard copy of the plan is held at the ranger's office at Trosley filed under - Trosley EWGS.

The aim of the current woodland programme of works is to re-start an active coppicing regime and eliminate alien species such as

- Rhododendron & Sycamore.
- Thin larch to favour broadleaf species and manage ride edges for wildlife habitat.

A 10-year woodland management plan was approved by Forest England and consented by Natural England in 2021, this includes felling permissions for the treeworks listed in the plan.

### *2.4.4 Green Flag and South and South-east in Bloom awards*

Trosley Country Park has been awarded the Green Flag award every year since 2009. As part of this process the site has an annual inspection based on a desk-based assessment and field evaluation. This award is awarded every year to parks that show continuous improvement in all areas encompassing all aspects of the park management and organisational infrastructure including conservation, customer focus, Finance, community engagement and health and safety.

Since 2010 Trosley Country Park has been awarded a silver gilt award South and South East in Bloom awards competition for Country Parks. In 2019 it achieved its first gold award which was retained in 2020.

Independent judges judge both these schemes annually against a set-criteria used as a standard nationwide for country parks.

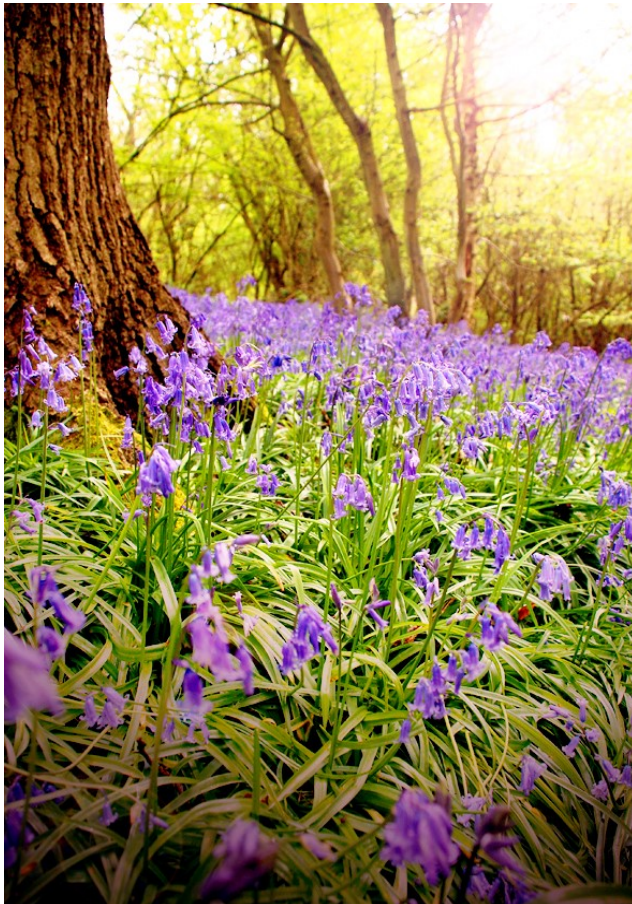
#### 2.4.5 *Biodiversity Action Plans*

Three habitat types on the site are given priority under the Local Biodiversity Action Plan. These are: woodland, scrub, and chalk grassland. The site also has suitable habitats for several species listed in Kent Species Action Plan including Dormouse and Serotine bat.

#### 2.4.6 *Kent County Council Internal Policy*

The site adheres to the [Kent County Council Environment Policy \(2015\)](#) and Kent County Council general statement of policy on health, safety, and welfare at work (October 2021) which can be seen in appendix B, section 14.4.2.

As part of KCC the site also works within the ISO14001 quality standard.



### **3 VISION FOR THE SITE**

Trosley Country Park aims to provide a welcoming, safe environment for all ages and backgrounds whilst protecting and conserving the Site of Special Scientific Interest. The site aims to raise awareness of sustainable energies, healthy living and recycling through the visitor centre and café.

#### **3.1 General Aims**

The overall vision for the country parks in Kent is for the county to be renowned for its great country parks, operating a service which meets the needs of the people of Kent and its visitors, and which is securely funded into the future.

#### **3.2 Conservation Management Objectives**

Trosley Country Park will be managed to provide several features including a woodland mosaic comprising of broad-leaved coppice with standards (in various stages of the coppice cycle) and high forest which will be left as minimum intervention. The entire site is managed with biodiversity as a major objective; this complies with UK Woodland Assurance Scheme. This states that a minimum of 15% of the woodland forest area should be managed with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective. The widening of the existing ride system to develop a three-zoned structure and the creation of temporary glades will be a key goal. Wherever possible there will be no loss of important/veteran trees, with tree surgery being used wherever possible to extend the life of the tree.

The long-term objective of the calcareous grassland is to achieve favourable status as identified by Natural England, with the short/medium term objective to achieve a status of unfavourable to recovering. Areas of woodland will be maintained and enhanced where possible to further add to the site's overall biodiversity.

#### **3.3 Visitor Services Objectives**

Public enjoyment and recreation are a key feature of the site. The site aims to attract more visitors at off peak (mid-week & winter months). The site also aims to educate and inform the public on conservation and environmental issues whilst also promoting healthy living and wellbeing.

Strategic aim 3 of the Kent Country Parks Strategy 2018-2021 has an objective of "Continue to review all business areas to maximise income and investigate new ideas which are supported by a strong business case." This is to work towards making the service fully self-sufficient in the future.

## **4 CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Physical**

The climate in Kent is moderately Continental. In comparison to the rest of the British Isles, it generally has higher summer temperatures, whilst winter temperatures tend to be slightly lower than the rest of Southern England, with the county often being subject to brief cold spells. Rainfall levels tend to be below the UK average.

Trosley Country Park is located on a stretch of land known as the North Downs. This geological feature is approximately 120 miles long, reaching from Hampshire, through Surrey and across Kent, ending at the famous white cliffs of Dover. This belt of land is made up of a thick layer of chalk. The chalk was formed in the Upper Cretaceous period, between 100 million and 65 million years ago, when sea levels were much higher, and Kent was under water. Planktonic algae live in the ocean that once covered Kent, when they died their colourless skeletons fell to the seabed and mixed with other microscopic remains to eventually create layers of white lime mud. Over many years the effects of pressure, compacted the mud forcing out the water and creating chalk.

The North Downs Natural Area extends from the Hog's Back near Farnham in the west to the white cliffs of Dover in the east. The south-facing scarp slope is cut by a series of steep-sided coombes and supports areas of internationally important grassland. The north-facing dip slope, level in places with shallow, dry valleys, has largely been agriculturally improved for arable and improved pasture. On the top of the downs and the upper slopes there are extensive areas of woodland with Oak, Ash, Beech and Yew. The vegetation on the top of the downs is frequently on deeper soils such as clay-with-flints. Further down the scarp slope there are thin chalk soils.

Trosley Country Park has a clear example of a 'scarp face', a geological feature characteristic of the North Downs. The scarp face is the dramatic area of land sloping steeply off to the south, reaching from the woodland at the top of the park to the farmland below. This creates spectacular panoramic views from the top of the Downs over the surrounding landscape the whole area is in fact the most important geological feature in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

### **4.2 Habitats and Vegetation Communities**

#### **4.2.1 Woodland and scrub**

Nature conservation/biodiversity enhancement and recreation are the key objectives of management at Trosley Country Park.

There are five SSSI units that are within the site, all of which are part of the Trottscliffe to



Halling SSSI. Units 8, 10 are in Favourable condition and unit 6 unfavourable declining, 7 and 9 are in un-favourable recovering condition. Several compartments have been established as minimum intervention high forest. These areas have been set aside to provide relatively undisturbed high forest habitat for wildlife. Management in these areas is likely to be unobtrusive and will only include tree safety works where necessary.

Traditional management systems have been reintroduced at Trosley Country Park including *Castanea sativa* (Sweet Chestnut) dominated coppice-with-standards and mixed coppice-with-standards of *Quercus* spp. (Oak) and *Fagus sylvatica* (Beech). These management systems are principally employed to create the conditions preferred by many of the species of conservation importance but particularly for the dormouse.

Although some of the coppice resource is harvested, retention of deadwood is important. Following the storm in 1987 fallen deadwood of significant size is prevalent in many areas. These areas are frequently characterised by a tangle of fallen dead wood, secondary woodland and dense *Rubus fruticosus* (Bramble) scrub. Some small areas have been cleared and replanted. Standing deadwood is retained wherever this does not have implications for health and safety.

Two small *Larix decidua* (European Larch) plantations will gradually be felled and managed for native broad-leaved species ideally through natural regeneration. The Larch trees were originally planted as a nurse crop and there are several broad-leaved trees beneath them.

Silvicultural management systems practised at the site includes the following.

- Sweet Chestnut coppice-with-standards including over-mature stands.
- Mixed coppice-with-standards including Hazel coppice.
- High forest minimum intervention.
- Actively managed high forest largely of plantation origin.

Potential saleable resources from these management systems include the following.

- Timber from standards and high forest areas.
- Sweet Chestnut coppice for fencing and firewood.

#### 4.2.2 *Tree diseases- Phytophthora and Chalara*

Phytophthora is evident in all coppice compartments

The annual tree inspections from 2018 onwards included an analysis of the spread of Chalara and this is now recognised as being widespread on site. Trees will be monitored and any dieback within proximity to paths or infrastructure will be removed. In 2021 Natural England funded the removal of Chalara infected trees that impacted on the North Downs Way.

In areas affected by disease natural regeneration from the local seed stock will be encouraged to reduce the risk of disease and ensure the trees are appropriate for that habitat.

#### 4.2.3 *Grassland*

Four of the chalk grassland areas are SSSI units; Little Pell, Great Pell, Six O'clock Field, and Quarry Field. Great Pell have been classified as Unfavourable Recovering, Little Pell unfavourable declining whilst Six O'clock Field and Quarry Field are classified as Favourable.

The grassland areas are managed with the intention of maintaining and where resources allow, increasing the area of chalk grassland, maintaining populations of rare and noteworthy plants, invertebrates, and mammals and to prevent the spread of scrub and woodland.

Grazing using goats has been undertaken in Little Pell since 2016, this compartment was grazed on rotation (with the other grassland compartments) by ponies until 2015. The ponies were particularly useful in creating patches of poached ground during late winter which provide habitat for the Ground Pine. Water is brought to both Little Pell and Great Pell using a bowser. Site staff undertake daily animal welfare checks and were trained by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

Six O'clock Field and Quarry Field has been grazed by ponies. Until recently these compartments were not suitable to graze goats. However, the fencing has been upgraded as part of the Old Chalk New Downs HLF project to allow the goats to graze and they were reintroduced in 2017. Mains water is available in Quarry Field and Six O'clock Field.



### **4.3            *Flora***

#### **4.3.1            *Vascular plants***

*Ajuga chamaepitys* (Ground-pine), *Dipsacus pilosus* (Small Teasel), *Epipactis purpurata* (Violet Helleborine), *Herminium monorchis* (Musk Orchid), *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* (Bluebell), *Juniperus communis* (Juniper), *Monotropa hypopitys* (Yellow Bird's-nest), *Ophrys insectifera* (Fly Orchid), *Orobancha elatior* (Knapweed Broomrape), *Platanthera chlorantha* (Greater Butterfly Orchid). Additional information on rare/notable vascular plants is given in Pitt & Weightman 1995. In 2019 the Kent Botanical group recorded notable species on site and provided the GPS location of the plants

#### **4.3.2            *Fungi***

Surveys were carried out in 2007 and 2010 by local volunteers, details of this are held electronically and are available on request. *A list of fungi is provided in Pitt & Weightman 1995, but the location of each record is not given.*

### **4.4            *Fauna***

#### **4.4.1            *Mammals***

The following mammals have been recorded at Trosley Country Park

##### ***Badger (Meles meles)***

Found mainly along the lower slopes of the park alongside the Pilgrims way.

##### ***Dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius)***

Found throughout the park but most of the survey data being collected relates to the lower woodland alongside the Pilgrims way. Full survey reports are kept in the Rangers office at Trosley Country Park. The boxes are surveyed annually by volunteers.

##### ***Bats***

Common Pipistrelle Bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

Soprano Pipistrelle Bat (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)

Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

Noctule Bat (*Nyctalus noctula*)

Serotine Bat (*Eptesicus serotinus*)

##### ***Other mammals***

Yellow necked mouse (*Apodemus flavicollis*)

Common Shrew (*Sorex araneus*)

## Pygmy Shrew (*Sorex minutus*)

### 4.4.2 *Reptiles*

Site staff carry out annual reptile surveys on site. Key reptile species recorded at Trosley Country Park include:

*Adder (Vipera berus)*

*Grass Snake (Natrix natrix)*

*Slow-worm (Anguis fragilis)*

*Common Lizard (Lacerta vivipara)*

*Details of the survey data are held on file at Trosley and on KCC central drive. Copies are also sent to KRAG (Kent reptile and amphibian group)*

### 4.4.3 *Birds*

The site supports a wide variety of birds. Of greatest interest are the woodland birds; all three species of Woodpecker breed in the SSSI (*Dendrocopos major*, *Dendrocopos minor* and *Picus viridis*) along with Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*), Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) and Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*).

Spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), White throat(*Sylvia communis*)

### 4.4.4 *Invertebrates*

There are several rare and notable species of invertebrate in the chalk grassland compartments. The SSSI is the only known location of the moth *Hypercallia citinalis*. In addition, the SSSI citation notes an uncommon bug *Psylla viburnia* which feeds on Wayfaring Tree. Several other scarce moth, beetle and grasshoppers are also found in the SSSI. In 2020 the previously thought to be extinct *Andrena Polita* or Maidstone mining bee was discovered in Little Pell.

### 4.4.5 *Lepidoptera*

As part of our Management Plan the monitoring butterfly populations take place with particular attention focused on the Chalkhill Blue (*Polyommatus coridon*), Dark Green Fritillary (*Argynnis aglaja*), Dingy Skipper (*Erynnis tages*), Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus malvae*), With other notable species such as the White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrion w-album*), Purple emperor (*Apatura iris*) and Adonis Blue (*Polyommatus bellargus*) being noted.

Details of the butterfly survey data are held on file at Trosley and on Kent County Council central drive.

## 4.5 **Past Land-use**

### 4.5.1 *Prehistory*

5000 years ago, the farmers of the North Downs practised a form of shifting cultivation. The trees that covered the downs were very shallow rooted and so easily cleared with simple tools. Once an area was cleared they could exploit the fertility that had been built up over thousands of years under the ancient wildwoods. Farmers would grow perhaps one or two crops then move on to a new area. The sites would then start to re-colonise with scrub and trees and then perhaps years later other farmers would return and repeat the process. Eventually the soils became eroded and exhausted because of over farming. Slowly grasses and wild flowers colonised and the introduction of farm animals such as cattle and sheep prevented the regeneration of the woodland. The landscape developed into the typical open grassland that we now associate with Downland scenery.

### 4.5.2 *Trosley Towers and Vigo (1471-1887)*

The name Vigo is first mentioned around the early 18th century, where it is recorded as the Hamlet of Vigoe. It is thought that the name has its roots in the local Pub originally called 'The Drover' which has a history dating back to 1471. Admiral Sir George Rooke gave money as a reward to a sailor who reputedly saved his life, during the battle of Vigo bay, in the Franco/Spanish war of 1702. When the sailor returned to England he purchased 'the Drover' renaming it 'the Vigo'. The name eventually became synonymous with the surrounding Hamlet.

In 1870 Sir Sidney Waterlow purchased large parcels of land in the Trottiscliffe, Stanstead, Wrotham and Meopham areas; collectively they would become the Trosley Towers Estate from which the Park takes its name. Sir Sidney Waterlow was the founder of the Waterlow printing business, which was famous for producing white bank notes! He built a large house in 1887 and named it Trosley Towers; the house stood on the top of the Downs and had a walled garden surrounding it. The two entrance drives were entered via North Lodge and South Lodge, the gate houses which still exist today along with the walled garden. Hamilton Drive was a main route through the estate and still exists today running through the centre of the park as part of the North Downs Way. The last owner of Trosley Towers was Mr E.E. Shamoon.

Shamoon wanted to develop the whole of the area for housing and sold part of the old estate to Croudace in the 1950's. This was the beginning of the Vigo village that we know today.

Trosley Towers was demolished in 1931 and Hamilton Lodge was built along with stables. Over the Vigo Hill there is a bridge which used to link two parts of the estate. The Waterlow family crest can be seen on the side of the bridge, it incorporates a plough. This is said to derive from Sir Sidney Waterlow having ploughed the land in this area when he was a young man. It is still a local landmark and is surrounded with many local legends of ghostly



horseman & glowing apparitions. It is now owned and managed by the Trosley Society which hopes to preserve this feature for future generations to enjoy.

#### 4.5.3 *Trosley during the Second World War*

During the Second World a large area along the North Downs was occupied by the army. This became a training camp from 1942-1946 and was used by the army to give Officer Cadets basic skills prior to attending and Officer Cadet Training Unit.

Today little is left of the camp. When it closed in 1946 some of the buildings were used to re-house homeless people while other parts of the camp were demolished. Some of the elements of the camp remain in the Country Park today. The most prominent are the concrete foundations of the buildings and ditches used for exercises. At the bottom of the North Downs – along the Pilgrim's Way – there are the remains of an old brick pump house and the climbing wall of the assault course.

An assessment of the historic environment at Trosley Country Park was carried out by Dr. Nicola Bannister in 2009. The full report can be found files under “surveys” at the Country Park office. Further historical records are kept on site.

## 4.6 ***Conservation Management History***

There was little habitat management between 1950 and 1980, but since its purchase by Kent County Council in 1973, Trosley Country Park has been managed for nature conservation and recreation.

Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) funding was first obtained in 1993 covering the period 27 September 1993 to 31 March 1999. During this period the aim was to manage the woodlands with elements of high forest, coppice, and coppice-with-standards. Management recommendations included coppicing Sweet Chestnut for timber, some thinning to high forest, restocking largely through natural regeneration, control of encroachment into the grassland and reduction of *Rhododendron ponticum* (*Rhododendron*) to a screening strip along Waterlow Road. A ride running parallel to the northern boundary of the CP was managed following recommendations by English Nature.

A second WGS agreement covered the period 26 April 2000 to 26 April 2005. Annual Management Grant was claimed for 43.6 hectares, including felling and re-growth of coppice over 4.6 hectares, and thinning over 4.7 hectares. The main aim of management during this period was to establish a linked coppice rotation across the site to provide a mosaic of habitat right through the woodland and scrub onto the chalk grassland. Ride management and thinning of some areas of high forest was continued.

In March 2008 a woodland management plan was produced to meet the requirements of the

UKWAS (UK Woodland Assurance Scheme) Standard. This woodland management plan ran until 2013 and was the basis for the management prescriptions in this management plan.

The last EWGS scheme was approved on the 17th August 2009 (case No. 19340) and ended in 2014 when the woodland grants system changed.

A Higher-Level Stewardship agreement is in place from 2011 to 2021 for the management of the chalk grassland enclosures.

A woodland management plan was completed in 2020 to forestry commission standards to ensure felling permission and consent for works for the next ten years.

#### **4.7            *Management Objectives***

The main aims of management at the CP are for nature conservation and recreation which can sometimes conflict. In the areas of woodland and scrub below the North Downs Way it is likely that nature conservation will be the priority and management is likely to be dictated by the Actions prescribed in the SSSI Site Management Statement. However, this statement recognises the management required on an amenity site with a high recreational value and where safety is of importance. Standing dead timber will therefore only be retained where it is safe to do so. Wherever possible and within resource constraints it is likely that woodland compartments within the SSSI will be included in the coppicing regime. Areas of scrub will be managed on a short-term rotation or possibly cleared from grassland.

The North Downs are a very important landscape feature, and the CP is located along a stretch that is heavily wooded. To maintain the landscape value of the site the woodland will be managed using a Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) system with the only areas 'felled' being the coppice coupes. Areas of minimum intervention woodland will be always maintained around the site boundaries.

To maintain a sequential 15-20-year coppice rotation system, at least 20 different coupes throughout the site are required if one coupe is to be cut each year. Ideally 0.5 hectares in any one coupe should be cut each year. High forest will be created wherever it is appropriate to do so.

Approximately 13.8 hectares of woodland will be included in the 15-20-year coppice rotation. It is hoped that rides and some paths can be widened to at least 12 m (up to 24 m), using a two or preferably a three-zone system, with the creation of temporary and permanent glades leading from pathways.

At present all visitor facilities are concentrated around the car park and this is likely to minimise the number of people using other areas of the Country Park. However, there are several points of access into the site and heavy local use. All areas of the woodland are already well-used although this may increase with the planned improvement work to the rides and paths. Visitors will be guided around the network and away from more sensitive areas by surfacing particular paths. It is not feasible to further zone the use of the Country Park although the slope provides a natural barrier to the heavy use of the woodland within the

SSSI. Due to the density of the vegetation in the years following cutting it is not envisaged that there will be any further conflict with the wildlife interest of coppiced areas due to public access. Access away from the rides and paths is already limited in many places by storm damage and Bramble growth.

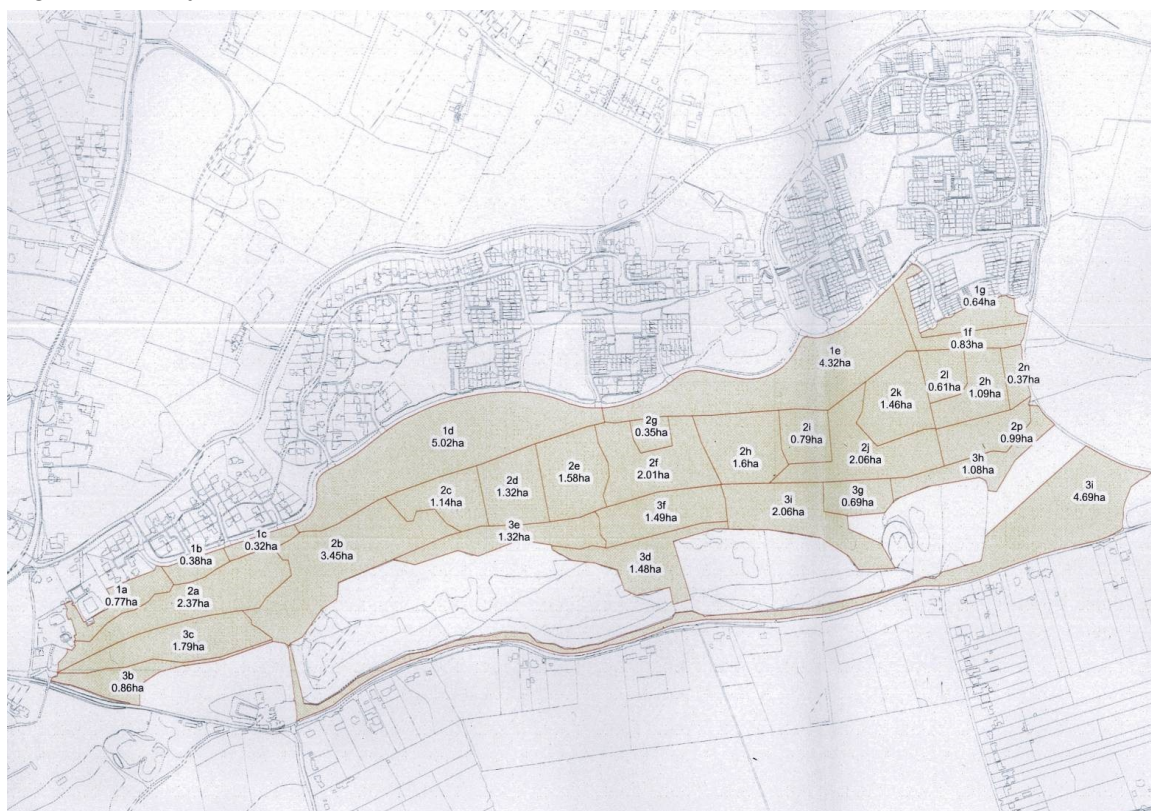
#### 4.8 ***Conservation Management Prescriptions and Operations***

The management plan is based on a system of management compartments devised for the purposes of previous management objectives. Trosley Country Park Country Park has seven main compartments which comprise of four chalk grassland compartments & three woodland compartments. There are 30 sub-compartments within the woodland. The entire site is managed with biodiversity as a major objective. A compartment map showing the compartment sizes in hectares can be seen in fig 3 on p.28.

There is a gas pipeline running through the site which restricts site activity using heavy machinery and involving ground disturbance. The location of the pipe is described in appendix D 15.1.4. All works within proximity to the pipe must be logged at [Line Search Before U Dig](#) using the site log in and username before they commence.

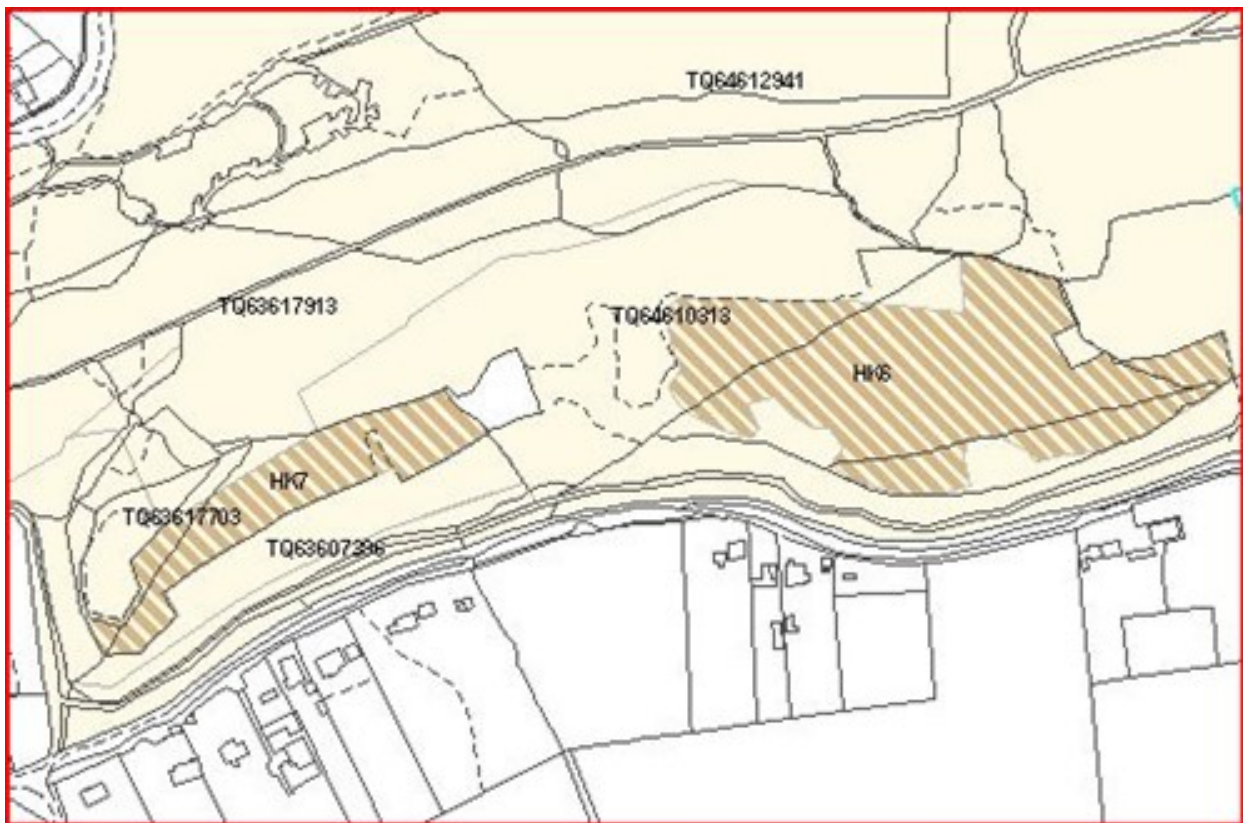
A 10-year woodland management plan meeting the Forestry Commission requirements was produced to run from 2020-2030 and this will detail woodland prescriptions in specific detail compartment by compartment for the next ten years. The full document is available separately on request.

Fig 3 – Trosley Woodland compartment map and the downland compartment maps

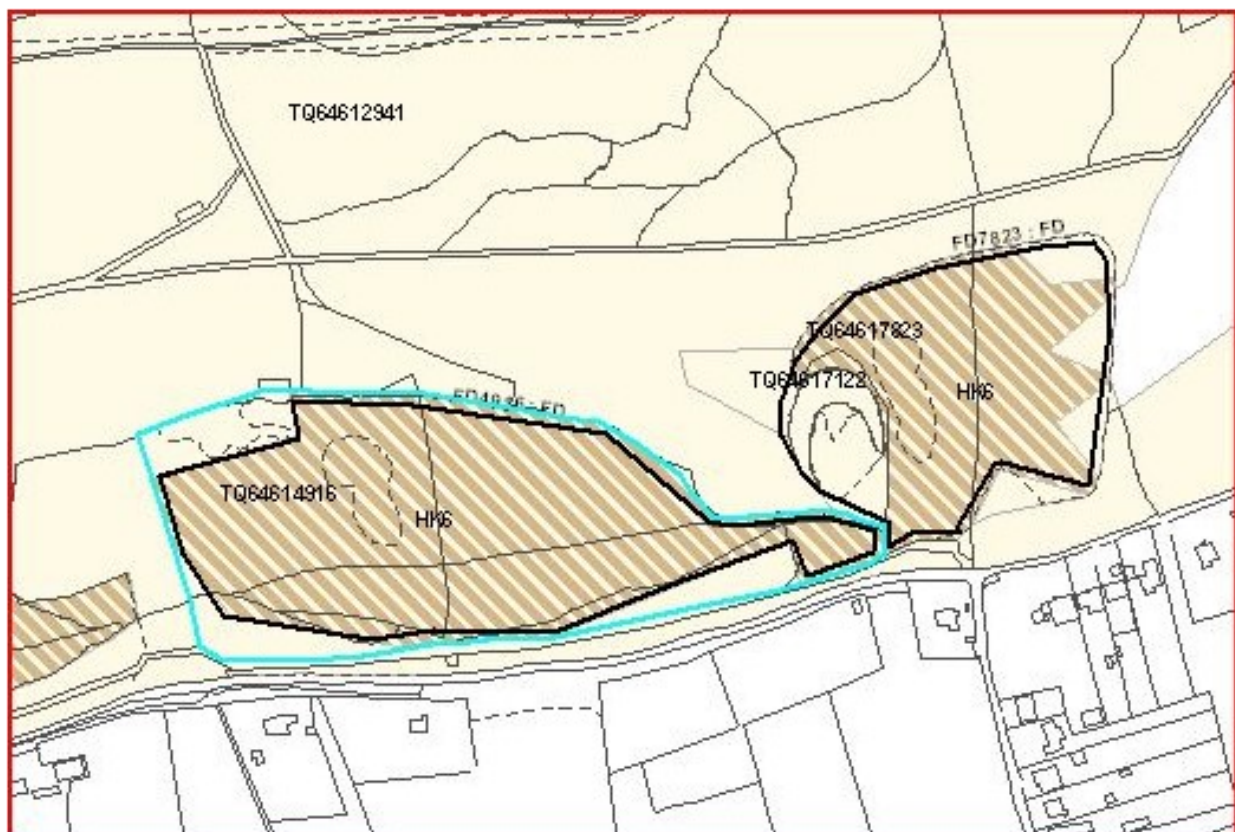




## Little Pell and Great Pell downland compartments



## 6 O'clock field and Quarry field downland compartments



## 4.9 *Features*

### 4.9.1 *Woodland*

#### Compartments – All woodland compartments



#### Policy:

Part of the woodland complex forms part of the larger SSSI known as Trottiscliffe to Halling Down. Natural England assess the current condition of the SSSI which make up the Trosley Woodland SSSI. This is compartment 3 (unit 9 of the SSSI)

Trosley Country Park is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO); all trees on site are protected under this TPO.

#### Habitats and Species:

The woodland supports ancient woodland indicator species including Bluebells and Dogs Mercury. Other noteworthy species include Dormice, Noctule & Pipistrelle bats and Hawfinches, invertebrates, and other small mammals.

#### Management Considerations:

The Country Park is managed for public recreation alongside the countryside management; this will have a direct influence of the

management of the site.

Any future management agreements such as the new environmental Stewardship will directly influence the management prescriptions.

All coppice timber is used for the log boiler to heat the main building on site, it is estimated that burning 1ha of coppice burns 30 tonnes of carbon but a 1ha coupe of coppice absorbs 30 tonnes of carbon, so this is a more environmentally friendly method of heating the building than using fossil fuels.

#### Management Objectives

- The woodland will be managed in accordance with the UKWAS Standard. The ecological integrity of the woodland will be protected, and biodiversity enhancement is a major objective.
- Most of the site will be managed as minimum intervention allowing high forest to develop.
- Species which are recognised as endangered at a local or national level should be protected, with habitat management focused on these species.
- Invasive species will continue to be monitored and removed.
- Some areas of woodland that were previously managed as coppice with standards will be brought back into a coppicing cycle. There will be continued creation and maintenance of the ride system. This will include ride widening and scallop and glade creation.
- Woodland compartments should contain a proportion of standing and fallen deadwood while having due regard to the safety of site visitors, site workers and others.
- All veteran and or notable trees will be preserved whenever possible.



**Prescriptions:**

Woodland in Compartment 3 will be managed as minimum intervention. This means the only work to be carried out in these areas should be work necessary for health and safety purposes, and work related to the conservation of subsidiary habitats or notable species. This area is SSSI.

The ride and glade network will need regular management to maintain this feature. Pinch points should be located every 100 m to aid Dormouse movement.

Areas of coppicing will be reinstated (where resources allow) in comp 1 and 2. Areas will be coppiced to create a mosaic of woodland ages to maintain substantial areas of young coppice up to 10 years of age for the benefit of wildlife. The aim will be to coppice 0.5ha every other year (subject to resources) to ensure the timber needs for the log boiler are achieved.

Selective thinning of Larch will be undertaken to restore broadleaf forest in these areas.

**Monitoring and Required Surveys:**

- Monitor tree and shrub regeneration throughout the woodland, but with focus on those areas where Rhododendron clearance has occurred.
- Undertake botanical monitoring of species of interest e.g.: Small Teasel. And the spread of invasive non-native species.
- Continue to monitor Dormouse population. Undertake regular checks of nest boxes between April and November. Ensure that Kent County Council staff who undertake survey work hold a Dormouse Licence.
- Undertake ongoing recording of birds, fungi, herpetofauna, invertebrates, plants, and other small mammals.
- Estimate the amount of dead wood in all woodland compartments.
- Visually inspect veteran trees.

### Woodland Action Plan

#### Woodland felling- October to March

YEAR	Compartment	Area and species	Date completed
2021	Ride widening	0.5ha Sweet Chestnut	
2022	2a	Thin larch	
2023	2M	0.5ha Sweet Chestnut	
2024	2g	Thin Larch	
2025	2L	0.5ha Sweet Chestnut	
2026	2i	Thin Larch	

#### Invasive species control- September to March

YEAR	Compartment	Area and species	Date completed	Date re-treated year one growth
2021	1a,b,c	Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Sycamore		
2022	1d	Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Sycamore		
2023	1e,f,g	Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Sycamore		
2024	2a,b,c	Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Sycamore		
2025	2d,e,f,g,h,i	Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Sycamore		
2026	2j,k,l,m,n,o, p	Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Sycamore		

#### Health and safety tree work- September to March

Zone 1=tree inspector

Zone 2 and 3= Ranger team

YEAR	Compartment	Zones to be inspected	Date completed
2021	All	Zone 1, 2 and 3	
2022	All	Zone 1	
2023	All	Zone 1	
2024	All	Zone 1 and 2	

<b>2025</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Zone 1</b>	
<b>2026</b>	<b>all</b>	<b>Zone 1,2 and 3</b>	

<b>1A</b>
Some thinning may be carried out in the central area. Tree safety works along road boundary.
<b>1B</b>
Coppice half of this compartment within the next five years to maintain the screen from Waterlow Road. Tree safety works along road boundary. Last done during Feb 2011
<b>1C</b>
No work proposed for next 5-year period. Woodland to be managed as high forest through minimum intervention although some thinning may be required. Tree safety works along road boundary.
<b>1D</b>
Coppice 0.5ha Tree safety works along road boundary. Done 2011
<b>1E</b>
Open rides to the southern boundary and continue ride-side coppicing. 0.5ha to be coppiced as a scallop. To be managed as high forest through minimum intervention although some thinning may be required. Tree safety works along road boundary. Done 2010 by Tillhill forestry.
<b>1F</b>
Coppice Sweet Chestnut on a ten-year rotation to minimise problems with adjacent residential dwellings. 0.83ha to be coppiced within the EWGS/WIG. Open to provide better access from the western site boundary. Done 2010 by Tillhill /Rangers.
<b>1G</b>
No work proposed for next 5-year period. Coppice Sweet Chestnut on a ten-year rotation to minimise problems with adjacent residential dwellings.
<b>2A</b>
Weed and thin plantation. Woodland managed as high forest through selective thinning.
<b>2B</b>
Coppice 0.5 hectares as part of a restorative project in this compartment.

Remove all Sycamore and stump treat/spray regrowth. Maintain standards and maintain existing line of old Pollards and earth bank.
<b>2C</b>
Continue coppice rotation. Maintain open ride to northern boundary. Last coppiced in 2005.
<b>2D</b>
Continue coppice rotation. Maintain open ride to northern boundary.
<b>2E</b>
Continue coppice rotation (when resources allow). Continue to maintain open aspect of ride to southern boundary. Rhododendron to be cut and sprayed with herbicide during 2010/11. 0.5 ha cut in 2012. Rhododendron treated in 2010, 2011 & 2012.
<b>2F</b>
Continue coppice rotation elsewhere as appropriate –. Continue to maintain open aspect of ride to southern boundary. Create habitat piles along rides for Adders. Rhododendron to be cut and sprayed with herbicide 0.5 ha cut in 2011. Rhododendron treated in 2010, 2011 & 2012.
<b>2G</b>
Thin Larch and allow natural regeneration. First thin completed in 2012.
<b>2H</b>
Manage as a coppice with standards. Remove Rhododendron. Rhododendron treated in 2010, 2011 & 2012. Ride side coppice carried out on northern boundary 2012. 0.5ha coppiced 2018/19 by site staff
<b>2I</b>
Thin Larch and allow natural regeneration. PAWS thinned under the EWGS/WIG scheme during year 2010/11. Done in 2010 by Tillhill forestry.
<b>2J</b>
To be managed through coppicing. Remove Rhododendron. Open ride to southern boundary. Rhododendron to be cut and sprayed with herbicide during 2010/11. Rhododendron treated in 2010, 2011 & 2012.
<b>2K</b>

This compartment will be brought into the coppice cycle in the future.	
<b>2L</b>	
Continue coppice rotation (when resources allow). Investigate Phytophthora control.	
<b>2M</b>	
Coppice with standards. Done in Nov 2018	
<b>2N</b>	
Coppice Ash gap up with Hazel Done in 2010 by Tillhill Forestry.	
<b>2P</b>	
Continue coppice rotation.	
<b>3A</b>	
Woodland to be managed as high forest through minimum intervention although some thinning may be required.	
<b>3B</b>	
Woodland to be managed as high forest through minimum intervention.	
<b>3C</b>	
Leave as non-intervention area, some thinning may be required	
<b>3D</b>	
Leave as non-intervention area, some thinning may be required	
<b>3E</b>	
Leave as non-intervention area, some thinning may be required. An unconditional felling license applied to this compartment until 2014.	
<b>3F</b> Coppice old storm damaged compartment and gap up with Hazel. Work covered in current EWGS/WIG/2010/11. Bring back into coppice rotation when appropriate. Done by Tillhill forestry in 2010.	
<b>3G</b>	
No work proposed for next 5-year period. Co	
<b>3H</b>	
No work proposed for next 5-year period. Within next twenty-year period selectively cut stems to produce diverse age-structure. Scrub rotation of 8-12 years	
<b>3I</b>	
Thin canopy for Small Teasel as appropriate. Non-intervention along Pilgrim's Way to maintain screen.	

### *Harvesting*

Coppice with standards – undertake coppicing in next 5-year period in any of the following Compartments 1B,1D,1E,1F, 1G, & any of compartment 2's sub comps.

Compartments will be coppiced to create a mosaic of woodland ages and structure to maintain substantial areas of young coppice up to 20 years of age for the benefit of wildlife. Ideally at least one coupe should be cut every year, however if resources are limited then it is acceptable to cut a larger area every two years. Approximately 0.5 to 1 hectare per year should be cut. The minimum coppiced area should be 0.5 hectare, as below this the woodland would not benefit from opening the canopy, with over-hanging trees in adjacent compartments limiting the light reaching the woodland floor. Adjacent blocks of woodland, of at least half a hectare should be cut. Once coupes have been cut they will not then be re-coppiced for 15 to 20 years (dependant on the species and available market). This low impact Silvicultural system will result in no more than 10% of the woodland area being cut during the 5-year plan period unless required to enhance biodiversity. It will also result in a broad diversification of stand age-classes and habitats.

Compartments 1F (last done in 2010) and 1G will be coppiced on a 10-year rotation to maintain their screening function. In all coppice compartments remove Rhododendron and other non-native species.

### *Selective thinning – Compartments 2G, 2I.*

Selective thinning will be undertaken in areas where it is necessary to promote natural regeneration of native species over non-native species, and as a timber resource. Selective thinning will seek to create a diverse habitat with a varied age structure. Arisings will be left on site if considered appropriate for the provision of additional fallen dead wood. Otherwise, they will be removed and chipped or burnt on site if appropriate, using a single fire-site in each compartment area.

### *Invasive species control*

At present Rhododendron is not an extensive problem although plants are found scattered throughout the CP and there are some large stands near Waterlow Road. As previously discussed, access by vehicles to areas other than those situated near the top ride is difficult and therefore only manual management options are available in most cases. Control would therefore be via hand cutting using a chainsaw and subsequent treatment of the stumps with an approved herbicide. Site staff should refer to the Natural England guidance on the use of herbicides on sites of nature conservation value.



Other non-native shrubs including Himalayan Honeysuckle, Cherry-laurel and Butterfly-bush should be controlled using similar methods.

Pull up or cut Himalayan Balsam before June and before the plant flowers and sets seed. Cut or pulled plants should be disposed of carefully and appropriately as directed by the Environment Agency. Where plants are located within the SSSI Natural England should also be consulted.

The recommended method of removing *Hyacinthoides* *Hispanic* (Spanish Bluebell) from your own land is by digging the plants up after they have flowered with their leaves intact, and leaving them in the sun to dry out for as long as a month. This will ensure that the bulb is dead. Only when bulbs are dead can they safely be composted. Composting bulbs before they are dead could lead to inadvertently propagating them. For identification tips visit Plant Life's webpage <http://www.plantlife.org.uk/bluebell/interactive.html>

Scientific evidence suggests that *Rhododendron* acts as a reservoir for *Phytophthora ramorum* (also known as Sudden Oak Death), which can then move into trees. The Forestry Commission Plant Health Service produce a best practice note which all site staff and or contractors should be made aware of prior to coming into contact with *Rhododendron*. The Plant Health Service should also be consulted regarding appropriate action. All trees showing signs of Sudden Oak Death will be noted during the regular tree health and safety checks.

#### 4.9.2 *Chalk grassland*

Compartments: Little Pell/ Gt Pell / 6 O'clock field & Quarry Field



##### Policy:

The chalk grassland at Trosley Country Park is a SSSI. Quarry Field (unit 10) and Six o'clock Field (unit 8) are both rated as favourable. Great Pell (unit 7) is unfavourable recovering and Little Pell (unit 6) unfavourable declining. (Oct 2018)

**Habitats and Species:**

The south facing chalk grassland has open areas of grassland and patches scrub. There is also an old chalk quarry at the eastern end of the site.

Species of interest include Common Lizards, Adders, Chalkhill Blue butterflies, and plants including Ground Pine, Musk orchid and Knapweed Broomrape.

**Management Considerations:**

- There is a statutory obligation to maintain and improve the SSSI rating and this will influence the management.
- The Country Park is managed for public recreation; this will have a direct influence the work carried out on site
- The number of and species of livestock available to graze the land will affect the management.
- Fluctuations in the wild rabbit population will affect grazing levels required on the grassland.

**Management Objectives:**

- To establish an ongoing grazing regime. Ensure all compartments are suitably fenced to house livestock.
- Continue to reduce amount of scrub and reduce regeneration.
- To create a varied structure and complexity of habitats within the grassland, with a mosaic of different sward height. This will involve controlling the wild rabbit population.

**Prescriptions:**

- Continue grazing with goats, the length of time the stock will be on site depends on the qualities of the grazing and the number of animals used.
- To continue the management of scrub within the compartments.

**Monitoring and Surveys:**

- Continue the annual butterfly and reptile surveys
- Monitor the notable plant species such as Ground Pine and Knapweed Broomrape.
- Monitor and control invasive non-native species

*Individual compartment management***Little Pell (A)**

*The compartment is to be grazed by goats. Grazing by goats should reduce*

<i>vigour of scrub, however it is anticipated that some scrub cutting on the lower part of the slope (within the paddock) may need to be undertaken.</i>
<b>Great Pell (B)</b>
<i>New fencing around perimeter of Great Pell to allow summer grazing by goats.</i>
<b>Six O'clock Field (C)</b>
<i>The island of scrub has been removed in this area and all stock fencing has been upgraded. Goats started to graze this compartment in August 2018.</i>
<b>Quarry Field (D)</b>
<p><i>The island of scrub has been removed and fencing has been upgraded in preparation for grazing Goats.</i></p> <p><i>1ha of scrub was removed as part of the OCND HLF project in Oct 18 this will be maintained by a combination of grazing and mechanical flailing.</i></p> <p><i>This was grazed for the first time by goats from Oct- Dec 2019</i></p>

Rabbit populations are high on the areas of chalk grassland and scrub. Control measures will be carried out during the plan period if the impact of rabbit grazing is detrimental to the habitat.

All dead livestock including stillborn must be disposed of in accordance with [government guidelines](#). Currently WMS Farm services are used as a contractor for this service. Vaccinations should only be carried out by suitably trained staff.

## Site management and public amenity

Compartments: all

**Policy:**

- All aims and Objectives for Trosley Country Park come from Kent County Council's Country Park Strategy 2017/2021
- From 2008 to 2021 Trosley Country Park has been awarded the Green Flag award.
- From 2012 - 2018 Trosley CP was awarded a silver gilt & silver in the South & South East "in bloom" awards scheme. It has achieved a gold award from 2019-2021

**Management Considerations:**

Trosley Country Park aims to successfully combine landscape and nature conservation with its role as a major visitor attraction, providing an important recreational and educational resource for Kent and further afield.

The Country Park must meet all legal and other obligations for its Environmental policy, Health and Safety Framework.

Way-marked walks, Sports England run 123 routes, the Trim trail and orienteering courses are maintained for public use. Annual ROSPA checked are carried out on the Trim Trail equipment. In 2020 a new sensory/activity trail combining learning and fun

through music, play and engaging with nature was opened in the park. This includes a new play area at the end of the overflow car park.

There has been in the past some localised vandalism for example damage to notice boards gates and fences however this is generally limited in extent by the continued presence of site staff. Fly-tipping of has also been a problem at the eastern boundary of the site on the Commority Road byway.

Tree inspections are completed throughout the site. The Country Park paths are zoned for tree inspections, high, medium, and low.

#### **Management Objectives:**

- To maintain and improve the site as a recreational facility, enabling members of the public to enjoy the countryside both within and outside its boundaries.
- To provide a site on which a variety of activities can be enjoyed within a countryside environment without damaging the ecological interest of the site.
- The site aims to provide facilities for the information of visitors, to encourage greater knowledge and appreciation of the countryside.
- To maintain, improve and extend the path network throughout the site via a programme of regular maintenance and upgrade works.
- The Country Park must meet all legal and other obligations.

#### **Prescriptions:**

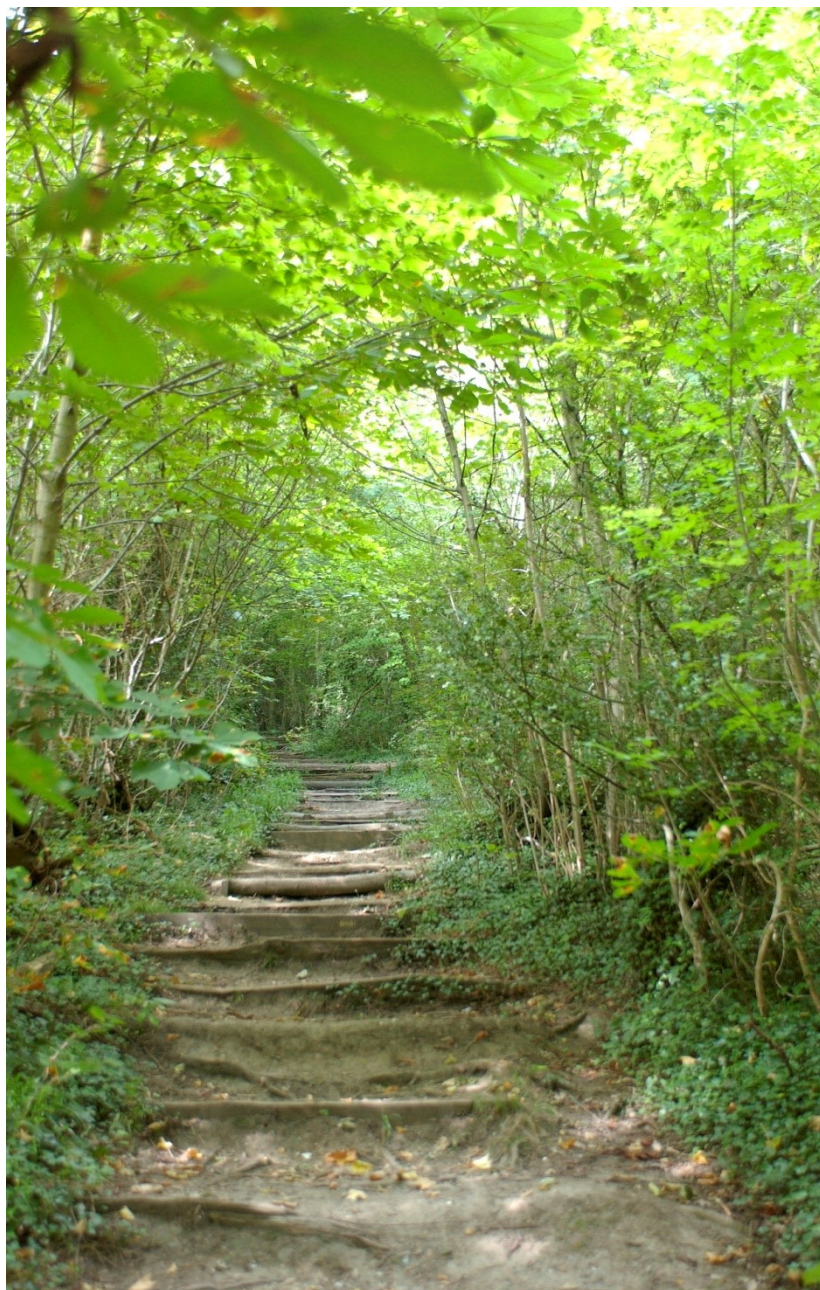
- Ensure all site staff and contractors are fully conversant with Kent County Council Health and Safety Framework. Undertake training where necessary.
- Ensure all volunteers and local groups comply with Kent County Council Health and Safety Framework, provide suitable training and supervision.
- Ensure all site staff implement Risk Assessment actions.
- Undertake daily, weekly, monthly, and annual site checks.
- Undertake annual tree inspections
- Undertake annual inspections of site furniture.
- Liaise with neighbouring landowners.
- Consult with Natural England. As the site is part of a SSSI Natural England should be consulted regarding any significant changes in management and or operations of site.
- Communicate with the general public, to provide information and to educate site users of the site's history, necessity of management works. Ensure contact information for staff is available. Provide warden service.



- Ensure staff surveying for Dormice hold an appropriate European Protected Species Licence. Ensure appropriate training is available.

**Monitoring and Required Surveys:**

- Monitor visitor numbers in the park.
- Maintain a record of the numbers of individuals attending events



**5*****HERITAGE MANAGEMENT*****5.1            *General Introduction***

Trosley Country Park lies on the scarp slopes of the North Downs – lands which were marginal to the centres of historic settlement in the Vale below the scarp. The exploitation of the chalk slopes and the Downs plateau has origins in the early medieval period and continuing into the early post-medieval to the present day.

Human exploitation of the landscape at Trosley possibly goes back to the time of the Neolithic period and thus there has probably been continuity in land use at Trosley for over 5000 years. Although the country park is now dominated by woodland (ancient and secondary) with chalk grassland on the steeper slopes, the archaeological evidence shows that parts of the country park were once farmed from at least the early medieval period and probably earlier. Areas on the Downs plateau above the escarpment were probably abandoned to woodland in the medieval period, whilst the scarp face has become significantly covered in scrub in the modern period due to a cessation in grazing.

Kent County Council employed the services of a heritage consultant (Dr Nicola Bannister), to carry out an enhanced assessment of the heritage prior to applying for Higher Level Stewardship. This report was published in May 2009 entitled “Trosley Country Park – Historic Environment Assessment”. A copy of this report is held at the office of Trosley Country Park. Detailed maps and photos of all the features are available in the plan

**5.2            *Archaeological Details*****5.2.1            *Earthworks***

*The most common archaeological feature is the boundary earth banks and strip lynchets. These are well preserved and are found across the park. The banks are grouped into three main types: ecclesiastical parish boundaries – Meopham and Trottiscliffe; ancient wood banks and wide field system boundaries.*

**5.2.2            *Quarrying***

Areas of flint digging and chalk extraction are present across the site. The main chalk quarry is at the foot of the scarp in the eastern field – Quarry Field. This is likely to have been used for extracting chalk for use in lime for the fields or in construction.

**5.2.3            *Routes***

There are two main historic routes through the park, one prehistoric and the other more recent. The prehistoric route of the Pilgrim’s Way runs along the base of the scarp and forms

### 5.2.4 Other features

### 5.3 Archaeological features management

A copy of a map showing the whole site from the HER is shown overleaf, the digitised maps show the locations in greater detail and are available on request but are too large to fit in this.





## **6 VISITOR MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 General**

Trosley Country Park is managed by Kent County Council both as a nature conservation site and a recreational resource. These recreational facilities include: two way marked circular walks, a horse route, an orienteering course, a café, a visitor centre, the trim trail, Sports England 123 running routes and an outdoor events area, a toddlers children's play area and play equipment for older children located around the Trosley Trail circular route. A further three walks are waymarked into the wider countryside.

The site is open from 9.00 am every day except Christmas Day and closes at dusk. Locking times are displayed at the entrance of the site.

In 2019 a new volunteer garden was created and a new visitor welcome area adjacent to the building and play area to allow a space for groups to gather and a new orientation panel and interpretation.

### **6.2 Buildings**

The Bluebell Café located within the visitors centre is open from 9.30am all year round except Christmas Day. The café serves a range of delicious and affordable food, catering for all. There is a kitchen and café area leading to an outside patio/picnic area. This has been managed in house since Sep 21. The café also sells logs from the parks conservation work that are certified as 'ready to burn'.

Toilets are provided adjacent to the visitor centre. Male, female, disabled toilets, and baby changing facilities are available. The toilet block has been designed to incorporate ecological features with a Sedum green roof, rainwater harvesting, and timber harvested from site. There is also a ranger's office, workshop, and stores.

The Visitor Centre incorporates a classroom for educational use (the Hamilton room); this facility is available for hire for corporate events, birthday parties etc. There is a wood fuelled boiler to heat the centre and provide its hot water supply. The wood fuel is harvested from the park as part of the annual coppice rotation. Within the centre there are toilet facilities which include separate disabled, ambulant, and baby change areas. There is also a drying room which is provided for the education staff to use for drying wet weather gear used by schools. The outer lobby of the building serves as an information point providing leaflets and interpretation on the park.

A new office was constructed in 2021 adjacent to the café to make the staff more accessible to the public.

### 6.3 *Car Park*

There are 50 spaces available in a 600m<sup>2</sup> surfaced car park. Parking charges are Monday to Friday £1.50 & £2.00 weekends and Public Holidays. A season ticket is available at £50 per year. Buses/coaches are welcome by appointment and a charge of £5.00 is made. The public car-park is in the north-west corner of the site and is accessed via a tarmac surfaced road off a minor road in Vigo Village.

There is also a 1500m<sup>2</sup> overflow car park which was surfaced with stone in 2021 due to the increased off season popularity of the site.

In 2019 an additional overflow car park was built along the entrance drive for up to 20 more cars and a small staff car park built for use at peak times to create more space for customers.

ANPR cameras are used to monitor the car park and Euro car parks are employed to monitor and enforce the parking rules. The equipment, signage and cameras were funded by Euro car parks. The pay and display machines are maintained by Metric.

### 6.4 *Site Furniture and Signage*

Type of infrastructure	Number
Small noticeboards	2
Large noticeboards	1
Interpretation panels	4
Orientation fingerposts	2
Waymarker posts	80
Orienteering posts	25
Recycled plastic steps	77
Wooden box steps	46
Equine fencing	2000m
Goat/deer fencing	3000m
Chestnut palling fence	150m
Cleaved Chestnut fencing	80m
Close board fencing	78m
Metal palisade	143m
Kissing gates wooden	10
Kissing gates metal	4
Field gates wooden	3
Field gates metal	6
Metal bar gates	5
Ladder information boards	3
Site welcome boards	1
Picnic bench-rectangular non dda	16
Picnic bench- rectangular dda	1



Picnic bench- round non dda	5
Red dog bin	9
Large recycling bin	3
Play area (Eibe)	1
Trim Trail (Playdale)	1
Water troughs	5
Water trough piping	250m

## 6.5 *Footpaths and Internal Path Network*

Trosley Country Park has several Rights of way crossing through the site including the Pilgrim's Way and the North Downs Way. These include MR193, MR196, MR197, MR197A, MR195, MR565, NS280, NS300 and NS356.

At its Eastern boundary there is an ancient byway called Commority Rd.

The North Downs Way section that runs through the park is also known as the Hamilton Drive and was once the main track that led up to the Trosley Towers building that once existed on the Western side of the Vigo Hill.

There are 3 internal waymarked trails these are:

- The Woodland Walk (Red arrow) 4 km;
- The Downland Trail (Blue arrow) 3.2 km;
- The Trosley Trail (Yellow arrow) 2.4 km;

There are no official bridleways within Trosley Country Park, but there is a permissive route that runs from Vigo Hill on the Eastern Boundary to Pinesfield lane on the South Eastern boundary.

There are 3000m non-easy access standard surfaced path, sections of the North Downs Way and Pilgrims way.

The run 123 routes are a nationwide Sports England project for encouraging people to take up running and use a standardised waymarker.

## 6.6 *Marketing*

The site is promoted by roadside brown tourism signing and is marked on the Ordnance Survey map as a Country Park. In addition, Trosley Country Park is mentioned in the County Council Countryside Sites promotional literature including the Council webpage – Kent County Council Country Parks Kent ([www.kent.gov.uk/countryparks](http://www.kent.gov.uk/countryparks)). Details of all the park's facilities and images of park can be viewed on the web site along with other information useful in planning a visit.

A Country Parks event list is published on the web each year and posters advertise events on parish notice boards and in local shops.

An official Facebook account has been setup which informs the public of activities that are taking place in the park and allows us to interact with the users.

An event proforma is used by site staff to ensure all events are managed effectively.

KCC currently employs a part time member of staff as part of the wider countryside team to coordinate marketing and publicity and staff from the Explore Kent countryside access team. This member of staff is responsible for press releases and adverts and assists with marketing and web site design. The website is updated by the internal communications team. Nominated site staff manage Facebook pages for each of the main sites.

The conference and education facilities at the park have specific brochures and leaflets offering a range of services. The education team promote their provision at networking events and in relevant magazines such as primary times.

## **6.7 Visitors**

Visitor surveys (2004, 2007, 2009 and 2014) are carried out to ensure constant feedback is received about the park. In addition, Green Flag judges and South and South East in bloom judges provide detailed feedback reports annually, which provide invaluable annual feedback on park management.

In 2014 Kent County Council commissioned visitor exit surveys at 8 of our sites. Trosley Country Park was included in the surveys. The following results were gleaned from this survey.

- 62% of the visitors were female and 38% were male
- Almost 97% of the visitors live in Kent
- 10% said that the park had improved since their last visit
- 76% of visitors came by car and 19% walked to the park
- 22% travelled between 5 – 15 minutes 59% travelled between 15 and 45 minutes
- 67% of the visitors stayed for 1-2 hours
- 78% of the visitors were at the park to go for a walk.
- 93% were either very satisfied or satisfied with their visit to the park

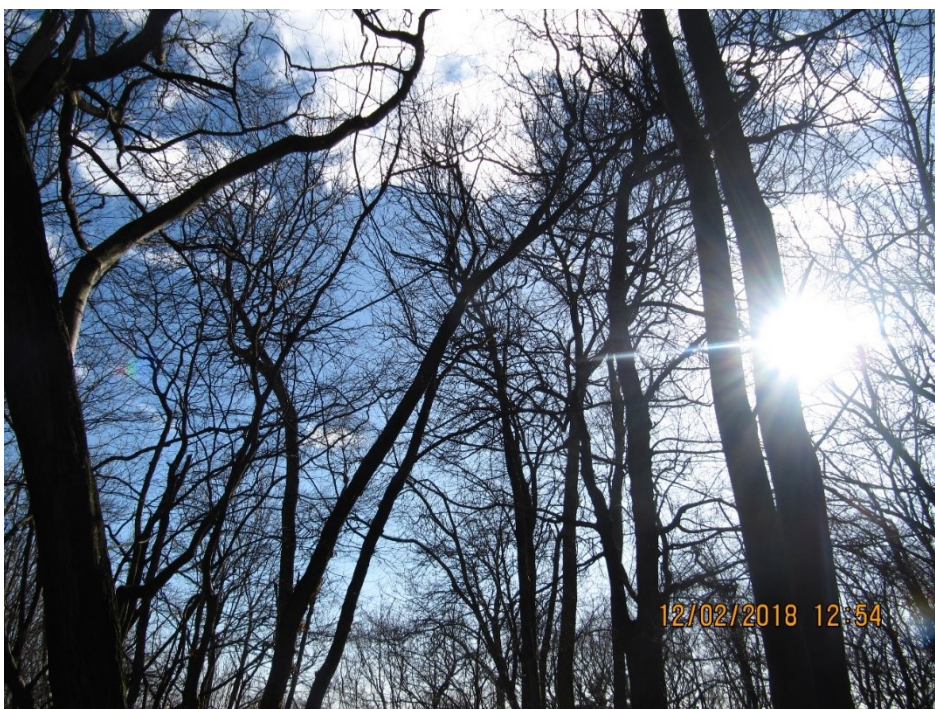
A customer feedback policy provides guidance on compliments and complaints handling and in conjunction with regular customer car training Kent County Council achieved a Customer Care charter mark for its customer care in 2008. A copy of this policy can be found in *Appendix F, Section 12.4.5*. KCC aims to acknowledge all queries within five days and respond in full within 20 days.

### *Interpretation plan*

During 2011 an interpretation plan was produced for Trosley Country Park in-house by KCC. The report made recommendations for the site based on consultation with general visitors, user groups and our own liaison groups. The plan analysed planning a visit, visitor welcome and orientation and exploring and discovering whilst on site.

The following works were carried out which were highlighted in the plan;

- Way-marking- adding themes to the walks
- Providing locating finger posts at key points in the woods.
- New interpretation in the visitors' centre.
- New signage at the entrance and approach road.



## **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **7.1 Health, Safety and Security**

#### **7.1.1 General**

Kent County Council has a central Health and Safety Advisory Team, whose role it is to ensure that all departments follow corporate policies and legislation regarding the safety of both staff in the workplace and visitors to our sites. The advice that the Kent Country Parks team receives includes:

- Creative solutions to health and safety management challenges
- Advice on legislation and policy
- Advice and assistance on risk assessment
- Training and instruction for health and safety management
- Full back up and support following health and safety incidents
- Pressure management and change management staff support tools
- Audit services to check compliance and support developments

The Kent Country Parks team has a designated member of staff to take the lead on liaising with the corporate team, ensuring all park staff are updated on changes in law and that all staff undertake the relevant training to their position. All Kent Country Parks staff therefore undertake core training in health and safety when they begin in a new post, and then will be given further training according to the needs of their role. Health and safety areas that are particularly relevant to the parks setting, and for which staff adopt specified practices, include:

- Accident/incident reporting
- COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)
- Driving at work
- Fire (and fire safety in the workplace)
- First aid
- Food hygiene
- Lone working
- Management of contractors
- Manual handling

- Occupational health
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Risk assessment
- Violent behaviour
- Working at height
- Safeguarding for children and young people
- CDM regs 2015

In addition, emergency plans have been developed for all sites and are stored in all offices and at head office.

Site contractors either complete a permit to work and submit a risk assessment for all works carried out on site that is authorised by the Officer who commissioned the work or for larger contracts an NEC3 Engineering and Construction short contract is completed. Any contracts over £50,000 go through a competitive tender process. All non-specialist contractors must be from the KCC approved contractor list. KCC aims to use local contractors and materials in all contracts where possible.

Risk assessments are reviewed annually and updated when necessary.

All archaeology projects undertaken are individually risk assessed.

#### 7.1.2 *Standard practices*

Trosley Country Park has its own on-site health and safety plans in addition to the central plans. There are daily, monthly, annual, and seasonal inspections carried out by the Countryside Wardens, see section 8.1. If any issues arise these are reported back to the Ranger Services Manager who also ensures that the checks are carried out. They sign a weekly inspection sheet to advise the ranger team that all checks have been carried out

Standard instructions (see *Section 15.4, Appendix D*) for annual inspections including tree inspections, first aid kits, trailers, machinery, PPE are issued centrally. Some of these are carried out by authorised staff, others are contracted out to specialist services, and these include Tree inspections, PAT tests and fire extinguisher tests.

Site contractors either complete a permit to work and submit a risk assessment for all works carried out on site that is authorised by the Officer who commissioned the work or for larger contracts an NEC3 Engineering and Construction short contract is completed. Any contracts over £50,000 go through a competitive tender process. All non-specialist contractors must be from the KCC approved contractor list. KCC aims to use local contractors and materials in all contracts where possible. The documentation is reviewed by the central Health and Safety team on an annual basis.

### 7.1.3 *Risk Assessments and Staff Training*

For all tasks and where machinery or tools are used a Risk Assessment is produced and is available to all staff and or volunteers, where necessary training is given on all machinery before it can be used. Explanation such as tool talks and health and safety checks are carried out before all activities. An electronic version of all risk assessments is available, an example can be found in *Section 13.4, Appendix G*. These are reviewed annually by the wider Country Parks team with the last review occurring in January 2021.

Kent County Council is also an Investor in People and as such all-site staff have a personal development plan which lists all training undertaken during their employment with the council. All staff undertake core training that includes:

- Lone working
- Dealing with difficult customers
- Manual handling
- Risk Assessments
- Basic Fire Awareness
- First Aid appointed persons

Wardens have access to a warden's handbook for the site which summarises all important information that they need to know. This was reviewed in July 2018. There is also a volunteer Health & Safety manual summarising the most relevant risk assessments for the volunteer team. A risk assessment and policies folder are held at each site for staff who do not have access to the electronic versions.

All staff complete an annual occupational road risk assessment before they can drive any Kent County Council vehicle. No vehicles can be driven off road unless a basic off-road driving course has been undertaken.

### 7.1.4 *Fire Plan*

A fire plan has been undertaken for the site which identifies rendezvous points; locations of fire hydrants and safety equipment, vehicle assess points, available water supplies and other hazards on site. The plan is for the building and the wider site. A copy is held in the site office and at the head office in Maidstone.

### 7.1.5 *Tree Inspections*

Tree inspections are completed throughout the site. The Country Park is divided into three zones for tree inspections. The annual inspection of zone 1 is carried out by qualified arboroculturalists, continuous visual inspections of zones 2 and 3 are carried out by park staff who have basic training in identifying tree health. This is summarised in *Section 15.4, Appendix E*.



### 7.1.6 Security

There are CCTV Cameras which cover the main site assets situated mainly within the secure compound. The information is digitally recorded and kept for one week before being destroyed. All buildings are covered by an intruder alarm which is monitored and includes a “redcare” system. If an alarm is activated, we have a security contractor who responds to the callout.

The visitors centre also has a fire alarm system which is also monitored in the same way. One of the Rangers carries out an alarm test including all emergency lighting once per week and records this in a logbook.

There is a carbon monoxide alarm in the boiler/plant room which is also tested weekly.

Out on site there are posters which show the KCC emergency call centre number, this is monitored 24 hrs per day.



## **8 SITE MAINTENANCE**

### **8.1 Maintenance of Equipment and Landscape**

Wardens complete daily, monthly, and seasonal checks and report back to the ranger team any risks or defects they identify if they cannot resolve them themselves. Each week they sign an inspection sheet to confirm they have carried out all the inspections. Details of these inspections are listed below.

#### **8.1.1 The Daily Checks- Wardens**

- *Clean toilet block, maintain consumables, and check for damage to building/fittings.*
- *Clean Hamilton Room and Toilet facilities after events*
- *Check waste bins and litter pick around car park and visitor centre.*
- *Check car park/picnic areas for broken glass and other dangerous objects.*
- *Maintain biomass fuel for boiler and light boiler.*
- *Empty Pay and Display machines*
- *Clear leaves/debris from carpark/driveway/grills using leaf blower/broom*
- *Check children's playground for broken equipment, glass etc.*

#### **8.1.2 Weekly Checks- Wardens**

- Check livestock, fencing, water supply and supplementary feed when applicable
- Check picnic tables for structural defects.
- Mow/trim grass on driveway (summer).
- Check/adjust Light timer in toilet block.
- Lubricate all site locks with WD40. Check manhole covers for secure fitting.
- Check the overhead height barrier for damage and safe operation.
- Clean office floor and conduct building safety checks.
- Check all paths/steps/gates/stiles on Downland Trail and Woodland Walk/Trosley Trails for defects and dangerous objects/trees/branches.
- Check all paths/steps/gates/stiles in zones 1-2 and 3-4 alternately for defects and dangerous trees/branches/objects.

#### **8.1.3 Monthly and seasonal checks- wardens**

- Check all paths/steps/gates/stiles in zones 1-2 and 3-4 alternately for defects and dangerous trees/branches/objects.
- Check boundaries, especially Waterlow/ Erskine/Commority Rd for damage to & effectiveness of fences and for fly tipping.
- Check for erosion/slippage along the upper edge of the Quarry and check the effectiveness of the Quarry fence line.
- Lubricate all door/gate hinges on site.
- In a period of Fire risk erect warning notices.

- After extreme weather conditions (Gale force wind/snow/heavy, prolonged rain) systematically check all buildings /paths / steps/gates/stiles/stock fencing for damage and dangerous trees/branches.

#### 8.1.4 *Annual Checks*

The following annual checks are undertaken by the ranger team or external contractors:

- testing of all tools and equipment *i.e.*, winches, chainsaws, trailers, electrical tools and appliances, motorised vehicles, safety hats and tools and hand tools.
- COSHH assessments;
- Risk Assessments and Occupation Road Risk Assessments.
- fire extinguishers.
- testing and checks of all buildings for general wear and tear, asbestos, and PAT electrical testing.
- annual tree inspection by an external contractor for all trees in Zone 1 areas *i.e.*, those where the public have day-to-day access.
- Zone 2 tree inspections every second year by the ranger team and zone 3 every 5 years; and
- An annual check by RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) of the children's play area and a monthly inspection by the RPII trained ranger team.

A record of inspection is kept for when weekly, monthly, and annual safety checks are made and by whom. The completed site inspection forms are held at the park or online.

#### 8.1.5 *Other Checks*

The pay and display machines are maintained by Metric through a centrally managed contract. They are contractually obliged to repair a broken machine within 24 hours.

General waste is removed weekly from the site as part of the Skanska Total Facilities Service contract.

Warden's carryout regular litter sweeps of the park. This comprises of walking the way-marked trails weekly, litter picking around the visitor centre and the trails near the centre daily. General waste and recycling bins are located outside the café and are emptied when required and dog waste bins are emptied every Thursday ready for bin collection on Fridays. The collected waste is sorted into the appropriate collection bins ready for recycling and disposal.

If fly tip is located on-site, then it is collected up by a member of staff and put in our waste collection area awaiting disposal by an approved waste contractor. If fly tip is not on site but nearby then we liaise with the appropriate borough council who have dedicated fly tip teams who will come out and remove it.

Vandalism is dealt with as soon as possible including repairing anything that is damaged i.e. benches, gates, signs etc. Staff patrol daily to ensure it is moved instantaneously or if further support is needed within 2 days.

#### **8.1.6 *Tools and Equipment Inspections***

Chainsaws, winches, vehicles are checked as part of the annual standing instructions to staff issued from head office.

Each chainsaw user in the team has their own chainsaw and it is their responsibility to keep it clean and sharp and in a safe working condition. All personnel using chainsaws are trained to do this as part of their NPTC qualification.

Some machines and vehicles require servicing by a qualified mechanic, and these are booked in by the operator or Ranger services manager according to the service interval.

### **8.2 *Buildings Maintenance***

Skanska have been awarded a 5-year contract to manage all Kent County Council buildings in North and West Kent as part of a total facilities service's agreement. This includes all works to the interior and exterior of the buildings. Issues are reported to a helpdesk then actioned. An SLA exists to monitor performance and financial penalties are issued if they do not meet their agreed targets. Issues are reported to property group and there is regular liaison between site staff and Skanska managers. This will be reviewed in 2022.

### **8.3 *Site equipment and furniture***

An inventory of site equipment is carried out annually and an electronic version is stored on site so that it can be easily updated. A map showing the location of site furniture including benches, bridges and waymarkers is also stored centrally and is available on request.

**9****EDUCATION**

Education at Trosley is administered by our team of dedicated Education rangers.

Visits to the site can be booked on a central number and staff can plan the day to suit the individual schools need. There is a full educational programme with the topics such as mini beasts, woodlands, sustainability, architecture, sensory, grassland plants and teddy bears picnics. Since the construction of the new centre in 2011 there is a classroom equipped with interactive whiteboard for education use.

Staff can provide a full Forest Schools programme, including Forest Schools INSET Training for teachers. There is an Open College Network Training Course for teachers who wish to gain a recognised qualification in Forest Schools.

The numbers of pupils led by the Education Ranger are as follows:

2014/2015	294
2015/2016	225
2016/2017	840
2017/2018	642 (Nov 18)
2018/2019	445 (Dec 19)

The visitor centre provides the base for Environmental Education sessions and has classroom facilities. The classroom can accommodate up to 70 children or two classes. The room is available throughout the day for the exclusive use of the school. All activities are risk assessed and these assessments are available upon request. All teachers bringing a group attend a pre-visit and write their own risk assessment.

The Forest School programme offers regular opportunities to all ages and abilities to gain confidence and raise self-worth through a series of hands-on tasks. Students learn basic forest skills including the use of hand tools to build a shelter, make whistles and pencils or other woodland products such as stakes or mallets. All students can benefit from Forest School including Early Years, students with behavioural and emotional difficulties and students with learning disabilities.

There is Higher Level Stewardship funding for 12 school visits per year to Trosley Country Park, which enables schools to visit for zero cost.

In 2018 a new outdoor learning area was created adjacent to the centre. This has a storytelling area, musical instrument and is surrounded by a dead hedge made from the tops of the coppiced woodlands that creates a habitat corridor around the area. A volunteer garden was created in front of the centre which has a drought tolerant bed, sensory bed and 3 other beds planted up and managed by volunteers.

## **10 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

### **10.1 Community Involvement**

#### *Trosley Volunteer Group*

A small group of volunteers who are local to Trosley have been coming out one-day-a-week for the last 25 years and get involved in a wide range of conservation and general site management activities. Volunteers have a wide range of skills which they bring together to help maintain the park. In 2019 they contributed 396 hours of time to the park

#### *Community Events*

**The Harvel Five** – This cross-country running event which is organised by local running club the “Harvel Hash Harriers” during June. It starts on the village green at Harvel and comes through the park using our forest ride and returns to Harvel via the North Downs way through the park. The event has been going now for many years and regularly attracts around 400 runners. During February the park host the Valentine run which is another demanding run cross country run by a members of the Harvel Hash Harriers. On the day our staff are in attendance to make sure every goes smoothly.

**Saxons Orienteering Club** – The local club regularly hold events in the park which are open to all. Some of their orienteering events are conducted during the night time.

**Local Consultation** –We produce interpretive material which is displayed through our own centre and on various notice boards throughout the park to raise awareness of the works being undertaken on site or future projects. In addition, Facebook is used as a tool to raise awareness.

#### *Trosley Liaison Group.*

This Group meets quarterly to discuss the management of the Country Park. The group are a consultative mechanism that enables us to reach several local user groups and other interested parties. We currently have representatives from the Vigo School, Meopham secondary school, the parishes of Trottiscliffe and Vigo, Community warden, CTC, Ramblers Association, The Kent Downs AONB and the British Horse Society. Management of the park is discussed at each meeting and thoughts and ideas from members are taken into consideration. This group has proved to be useful to the park allowing us to connect and engage with people it would be otherwise very difficult to do so.

We hold an open day annually for our visitors to get to know what we do and to ask any questions. This is useful for engaging with visitors who are not necessarily represented by any other organisation.

#### *Vigo Neighbourhood plan.*

Rangers have been consulted as part of the planning process and a member of the planning group now attends our liaison group meetings.



## 10.2 *Events*

The site staff organise several events throughout the year to promote the site and to increase public awareness of countryside issues and the environment through fun activities. Events are advertised locally in the press and through the Explore Kent leaflets which are available at Kent County Council owned sites as well as on the Explore Kent webpage.

Events are planned on a pro forma that analyses cost, staffing, numbers etc that allows a good understanding of the success of all events that helps with future planning. All events are planned on a site-by-site basis then discussed in a group meeting with all visitor services staff, education rangers, marketing staff and managers. Events in 2019 included wreath making and guided walks and post covid in 2021 a theatre group did a Wind in the Willows play in the events space which was very successful.

Events are held on site by the Old Chalk New Downs Lottery project and the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership.



**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

The park's main income streams are:

- car park pay and display income.
- café income from the Café lease.
- income from woodland products
- corporate events and functions,
- CPD training, INSET training
- Birthday parties,
- education groups,

Kent County Council provide an annual revenue budget to fund the day-to-day operations of the park. Due to pressures in the wider organisation this is not enough to fund all site services, so staff are focussed on generating income to offset their costs.

Additional money is available through a modernisation of assets budget and an annual Capital works budget which is allocated by the head of country parks based on information submitted by site staff.

The country parks service costs 28p per person per year to the people of Kent (April 2019) and has moved from 46% self-financing to 81% from 2009-2020.

The Countryside budgets are managed by the Ranger Services Manager and the visitor centre by the visitor services manager. There is support from a centrally based finance team and the Operations manager overviews all budgets. KCC have a policy of paying all invoices within 28 days of receipt.

Skanska manage the budget for the building's maintenance under KCC's Total Facilities Management contracts set up in October 2014. This is managed centrally.

Opportunities for additional income streams have been investigated by KCC special projects team and private consultants and upon investigation proved to be uneconomic for the site or the site has proved not suitable to the providers. These include:

- Green Weddings
- Green accommodation
- Go Ape
- Mountain bike circuits
- Free running/parkour
- Selling Christmas trees
- Renting land to private events

## **12                    *POTENTIAL THREATS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS***

The transformation process of KCC into a primarily commissioning authority may result in a complete change in the approach to management of the site. The parks service has been advertised nationally for expressions of interest from companies who can add value to the delivery of the service and ten companies submitted proposals. These have been discussed at an operational level and the feedback discussed at directorate head level before being discussed at the transformation group and being presented to members. In 2016 the decision was to continue as per the existing model working towards becoming cost neutral. Continuing budget cuts and service reviews may impact on the delivery of the service.

Matthew Balfour, KCC councillor for Environment and Transport was invited to speak at the Select Committee for public parks in 2017 as the KCC approach to raise awareness of the approach to financial sustainability whilst maintaining high quality parks was deemed to be a successful model of approach for others to consider.

The site still runs at a cost but across the 5 North and West Kent sites the income from other sites offsets the running costs of Trosley so as a group the sites are run cost neutrally. The café coming in-house will likely mean this site also runs cost neutral so at no cost to the taxpayer.

### ***FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS***

Service reviews will look at increasing the efficiency of the team and investigating any opportunities for reducing costs.

The new office has enabled a part-time visitor services and events officer to be based at the site so this will aim to improve venue hire, school hire and events bookings on site to help offset the sites running costs.

The Covid recovery fund has enabled some additional play equipment to be installed on the Trosley Trail so this will provide a better range of play equipment for visitors.

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## **14 APPENDICES**

### **14.1 Background Information**

#### **14.1.1 Appendix A – SSSI Citation for Halling to Trottiscliffe Escarpment**

COUNTY: KENT SITE NAME: HALLING TO TROTTISCLIFFE  
ESCARPMENT

DISTRICT: GRAVESHAM, ROCHESTER UPON MEDWAY, TONBRIDGE, AND MALLING

*Status:* Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the  
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

*Local Planning Authority:* ROCHESTER UPON MEDWAY BOROUGH COUNCIL, Gravesham Borough Council,  
Tonbridge, and Malling District Council

*National Grid Reference:* TQ 616596-704660 Area: 648.41 (ha.) 1602.22 (ac.)  
Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 178, 188 1:10,000: TQ 65 NW, TQ66 SW,  
SE, NE, TQ 76 NW

*Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):* 1951 Date of Last Revision: 1981

*Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):* 1984 Date of Last Revision: ₤

#### *Other Information:*

This site was formerly known as Halling to Trottiscliffe Downs and is a Nature  
Conservation Review site.

#### *Reasons for Notification*

This site consists of an extensive area of the North Downs west of the Medway  
Gap. The site is representative of Chalk grassland in West Kent and Beech  
woodland on the chalk. Outstanding assemblages of plants and invertebrates are  
present.

A mosaic of habitats is present at this site with areas of grassland, scrub and  
various types of woodland. The herb rich open downland is no longer grazed by  
stock and consequently only small areas remain. A full range of different types of  
scrub through to ash, yew, and beech woodland is present. The woodland



includes mature beech and yew on the steep slopes, oak standards and predominantly sweet chestnut coppice with some hornbeam on the more level higher ground; these two types of woodland support contrasting ground floras. The chalk grassland, on warm south-facing slopes, is dominated by upright brome *Bromus erectus* and sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* but supports many other plants which are characteristic of unimproved downland. Among these are dwarf thistle *Cirsium acaule*, chalk milkwort *Polygala calcarea*, clustered bellflower *Campanula glomerata*, horseshoe vetch *Hippocrepis comosa*, and several species of orchid including the scarce musk orchid *Herminium monorchis* and man orchid *Aceras anthropophorum*. This range of food-plants and the warm conditions are ideal for insects and the area is of great entomological importance. It is the only known location in Britain for the moth *Hypercallia citrinalis* and several other very scarce moths, beetles and grasshoppers also occur.

Some of the scrub is of entomological interest; there is an uncommon bug *Psylla viburni* which feeds on wayfaring tree for example. Overall hawthorn is the predominant species in the scrub but wayfaring tree and dogwood are also common. Climbers too are well represented with several rose species including the local burnet rose *Rosa pimpinellifolia* as well as traveller's joy *Clematis vitalba* which is abundant. The later stages of scrub succession resemble woodland with increasing numbers of trees such as ash, yew, and beech present in addition to the shrubs.

The beech and yew woodland are on thin chalk soils and where the ground flora is not shaded dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* predominates. Associated with it is stinking iris *Iris foetidissima* and several very scarce species such as lady orchid *Orchis purpurea* and stinking hellebore *Helleborus foetidus*. The ground flora of the plateau woodland is quite different with bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* most abundant and with other species such as rosebay willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium* and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*: these are generally restricted to non-calcareous soils.

The site supports a wide variety of birds with each of the habitats having its own characteristic community. Of greatest interest perhaps are the woodland birds; all three species of woodpecker breed here as do nuthatch and other hole-nesting species.

Hawfinch is present at a higher density than in most other parts of Kent.

14.1.2 *Appendix B - Natural England's Views of Site Management*

Main Habitat	Responsible Officer	Unit Number	Unit Id	Area (ha)	Latest Assessment Date	Assessment Description	Comment
CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND - Lowland	PHILIP WILLIAMS	006	1019116	2.7583	20/05/2009	Unfavourable - Recovering	Half of this unit is still covered in scrub and the other half is being grazed but still has vegetation more like a woodland ground flora than grassland. The only chalk grassland indicators found were <i>Primula veris</i> , <i>Viola hirta</i> and <i>Polygala</i> spp. The herb to grass ratio was very high i.e., not much grass and the level of scrub was above acceptable level (bramble was classed as scrub).
CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND - Lowland	PHILIP WILLIAMS	007	1006393	3.1958	20/05/2009	Unfavourable - Recovering	This unit is very tightly grazed by rabbits and horses. Most of the unit is now grassland with scrub/woodland at the very bottom of the slope and a band of scrub dividing the unit at the western end. For assessment purposes it made sense to

							<p>treat units 6, 7, 8 and 10 as one block. So, indicator species scores etc were calculated for the whole area. There were 3 species frequent throughout the sward and 5 occasional (including <i>Bromopsis erecta</i>). (The latter should have been frequent but was not present in unit 6 and could have been under-recorded). Grass to herb ratio was within the acceptable level. No negative indicator species were recorded. The % of trees and scrub was above acceptable level at 2 out of 12 monitoring points and the levels of scrub are still too high within all units. The average sward height was below acceptable minimum in unit 7 and</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

							within acceptable range in the other units. The levels of litter in the sward and bare ground were within acceptable limits. SRS survey for invertebrates revealed targets were met for preferred surfaces, bare ground, nectar sources and seed heads
CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND - Lowland	PHILIP WILLIAMS	008	1006394	4.6484	20/05/2009	Favourable	This unit is well grazed with a good sward height and discrete clumps of scrub (this is still over the max level of 5% of the unit). For assessment purposes it made sense to treat units 6, 7, 8 and 10 as one block. So, indicator species scores etc were calculated for the whole area. There were 3 species frequent throughout the sward and 5 occasional (including <i>Bromopsis erecta</i> ). (The

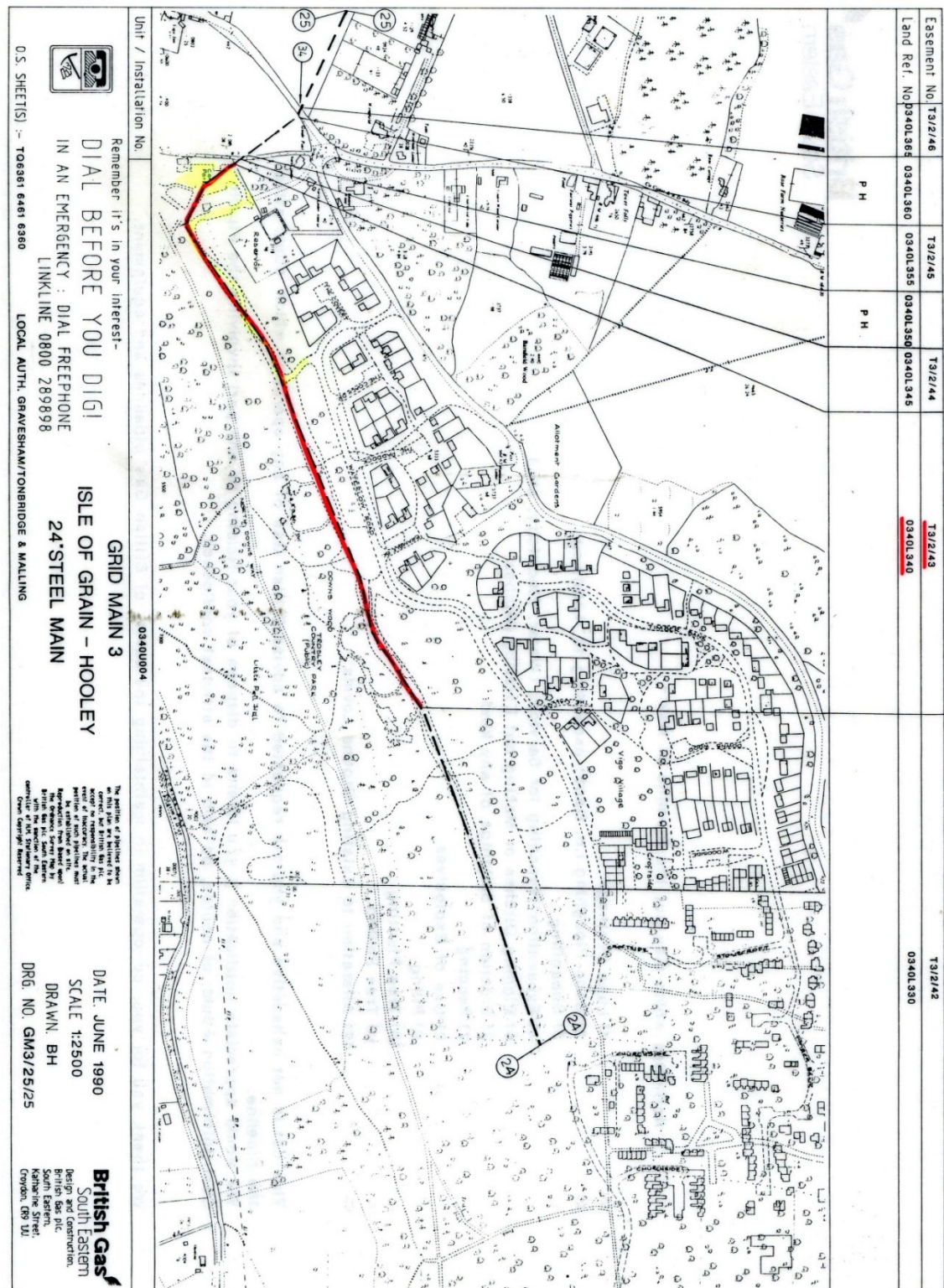
							latter should have been frequent but was not present in unit 6 and could have been under-recorded). Grass to herb ratio was within the acceptable level. No negative indicator species were recorded. The % of trees and scrub was above acceptable level at 2 out of 12 monitoring points and the levels of scrub are still too high within all units. The average sward height and levels of litter in the sward and bare ground were within acceptable limits. SRS survey for invertebrates revealed targets were met for preferred surfaces, bare ground, nectar sources and seed heads
BROADLEAVED, MIXED AND YEW WOODLAND -	PHILIP WILLIAMS	009	1006419	17.6294	20/05/2009	Unfavourable - Recovering	high forest along the top of the slope, consisting of



Lowland							hornbeam, ash, yew, beech, hazel coppice, field maple, hawthorn, sycamore, oak & sweet chestnut. The lower slopes are covered in scrub and there is a lot of potential to clear this and restore to grassland. It was possible to do the standard chalk grassland species assessment due to the lack of grassland. I have thus changed the condition from favourable to unfavourable recovering to reflect the fact that there is a lot more work to do. The SRS for invertebrates showed bare ground and scrub surfaces and plenty of nectar sources and seed heads provided by chalk scrub species and the grassland herb species clinging on amongst the scrub.
CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND - Lowland	PHILIP WILLIAMS	010	1006395	3.1245	20/05/2009	Favourable	This unit is well grazed with a good sward height and only

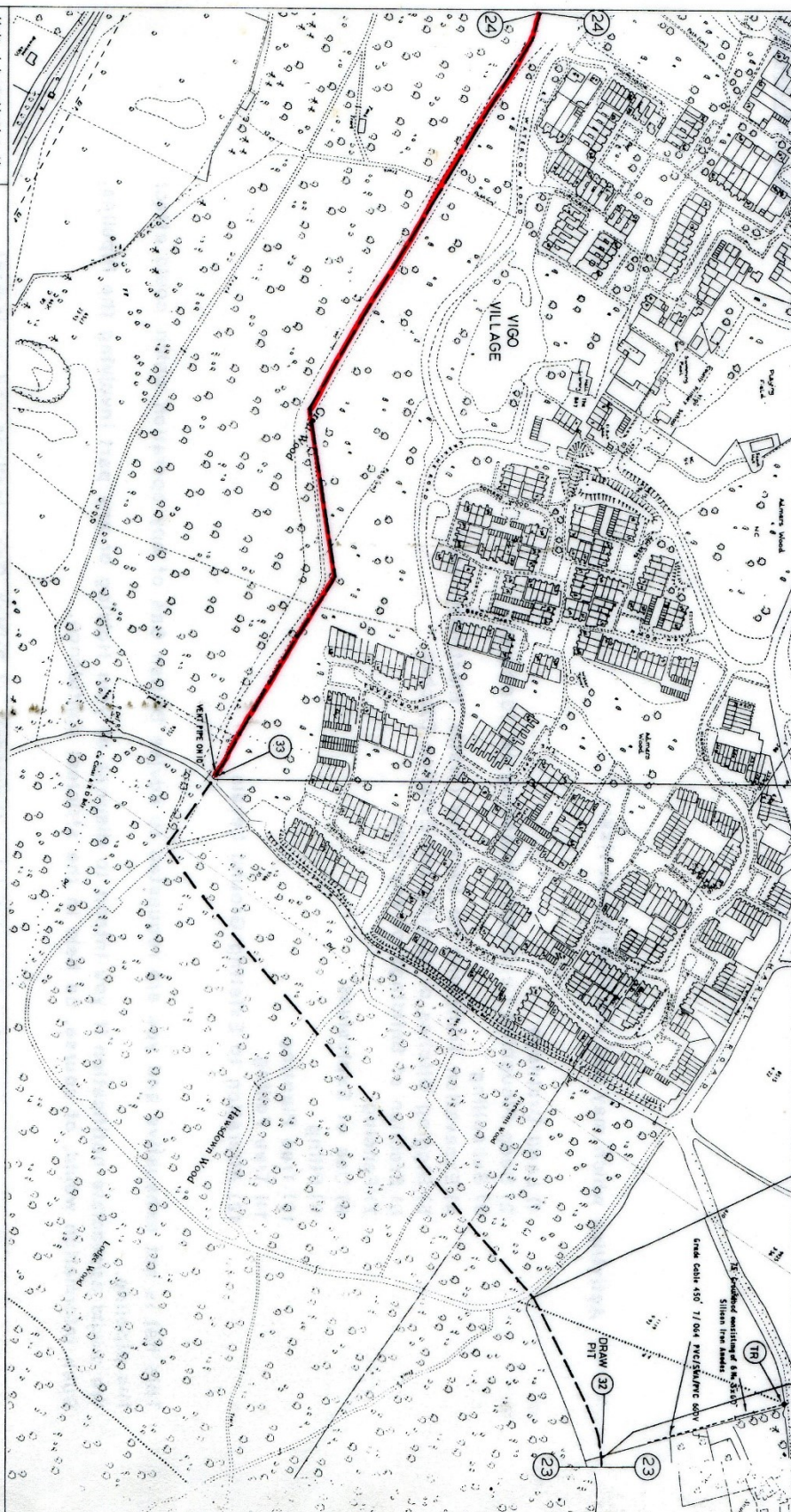
							discrete clumps of scrub mostly around the abandoned quarry. Species diversity and abundance was with acceptable range, along with grass to herb ratio, % cover of negative indicator spp, sward height, litter, and bare ground.
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14.1.3 Appendix D Location of Gas pipeline on site





Essement No.	<u>T9/2/42</u>			
Land Ref. No.	<u>0340L330</u>	T9/2/41	T9/2/40	T9/2/39
		0340L325	0340L320	0340L315



Unit / Installation No.

0340U004



Remember it's in your interest-

DIAL BEFORE YOU DIG!  
IN AN EMERGENCY : DIAL FREEPHONE

LINKLINE 0800 289898

GRID MAIN 3  
 OF GRAIN - HOOLEY  
 24"STEEL MAIN

GRID MAIN 3

24" STEEL MAIN

O.S. SHEET(S) :- TQ6462 6562 6461 6561

LOCAL AUTH. TONBRIDGE & MALLING/GRAVESHAM

DATE. JUNE 1990

SCALE 1:2500

DRAWN. BH

DRG. NO. GM3/25/24

**British Gas**

South Eastern  
Design and Construction.

**British Gas plc,  
South Eastern.**

Katharine Street  
Groydon, CR9 1UJ





Plant Owner = TRANSCO Origin = (0563155,0160994) MapRef = TQ6361 Extent = (300m,174m) - This map view is not to scale  
 MAPS Viewer V4.9.0

This plan shows only those pipes owned by Transco plc in its role as a Licensed Gas Transporter (GT). Gas pipes owned by other GTs present in this area. Information with regard to such pipes should be obtained from the owners. The information shown on this plan is the accuracy thereof cannot be guaranteed. Service pipes, valves, syphons, stub connections, etc. are not shown but their presence of any kind whatsoever is accepted by Transco plc, its agents or servants for any error or omission. Safe digging practices, in accordance with the relevant standards, should be established the actual position of mains, pipes, services and other apparatus on site before any mechanical plant is used. It is your responsibility to provide to all persons (either direct labour or contractors) working for you on or near gas apparatus.

It is not permitted to use this plan for any purpose other than showing the location of Transco plant unless the appropriate Ordnance Survey map is used. This plan is reproduced from (or based on) the Ordnance Survey map by Transco plc, with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

## 14.2 Work Records

### 14.2.1 Appendix A- Work records 2018/19

\*Works before 2018 are recorded in the appendices of previous management plans, the team works across 5 sites, this is just the major works completed at Trosley.

Date	Persons involved	Comp	Description of work
Jan 18	Rangers	1d	Ride widening on the Forest ride H & S tree work after high winds
Feb 18	Rangers	1d	Ride widening on the Forest ride Goat welfare checks completed
		2a	Dead hedge around storytelling area Chipped brash into Trim trail unit's bases
Mar 18	Rangers	1d	Ride widening on the forest ride Fence around wood yard repaired Four new picnic benches constructed Way-markers all surveyed New log benches installed in events space
April 18	Rangers	Lt Pell	Removal of dead scrub in Little Pell Grazing fence-lines checked
		1d	Wood extracted to log yard H & S tree work after high winds Strimming along Forest ride from chin ups to 123 finish post Goat and Livestock 2-day training course from Rare Breeds Survival Trust
May 18	Rangers	Gt Pell	Fence-lines inspected, and broken posts replaced 10 new Geocache posts installed
		6 O clock field	New fence line put in in front of lookout platform Goat shelters moved and raked out and cleaned Horse route, overflow car park, café area strimmed New p and D installed at overflow car park entrance Trim trail beds strimmed Downland trail strimmed
June 18	Rangers		Picnic area, drive, trim trail all strimmed Volunteer garden beds relocated to in front of café area Yard and workshop cleared
July 18	Rangers		Nannies' health checked Installed new way-markers on top ride




			Hedge cutting
Aug 18	Rangers		Logs processed for boiler
			Gates in 6 O Clock field goat protected ready for grazing
			Stone platform constructed in events space for education team
			Whole park strimmed
Sep 18	Rangers		Nannies and Billies separated into Gt Pell and 6 O Clock field (billies)
			New way-markers installed on Harvel Hike
			Drive and picnic area strimmed
Oct 18	Rangers		2 beds in volunteer garden planted
			Quarry Field tree clearance in preparation for mulcher work
			6 O Clock field tree clearance in preparation for mulcher work
			Goats had tetanus vaccinations and wormed
			Horse route overhanging trees cut back with pole saw
			Mowing and strimming on top ride completed
			3 dormice found during RSK survey
			Storytelling area relocated to new outdoor learning area adjacent to visitor centre
			OCND funded 1ha of scrub clearance in 6 O Clock field and Quarry Field
Nov 18	Rangers	2m	0.5ha coppicing started in comp 2m
			Brash from coppicing used to create dead hedge around new outdoor learning space
			Goats had booster jab
			Coppice coupe completed, brash burnt or removed for dead hedge
Dec 18	Rangers	2m	Male goats castrated to avoid inter breeding
			Brash from coppice coupe burnt
Jan 19	Rangers	Gt Pell	Fencing around Juniper in GT Pell repaired
			Top of Quarry field fence cleared for goat proof fencing installation
			4 new geocache posts installed
			2 new orienteering posts installed
16/1/19			Goats moved into 6 O clock field
Feb 19			Goats moved into Little Pell
Mar 19	Rangers		Stumps cut down in areas cleared by mulcher
			H and S tree work completed; storm damaged trees felled
Apr 19	Rangers		Strimmed picnic areas and café garden
			Created story telling area in outdoor education space
			Strimmed viewpoints on NDW
			Butterfly survey started
			Goats moved into Gt Pell
			Goat health checks completed
May 19	Rangers		Picnic area and all paths strimmed
			Woody debris removed off forest ride to allow for winter widening
			Final volunteer garden bed built
June 19	Rangers		Started extracting timber from comp 2m
			Bark pits on trim trail topped up
			Repaired cut fences in 6 O clock field
			All paths strimmed

			Split wood from Lullingstone brought over to fill log barns for heating visitor centre
July 19	Rangers		Repaired fence alongside Gt Pell steps
			Timber extraction
			Fenceline in 6 o clock field cleared
			Goats moved into 6 O Clock field
			Strimming all areas of the park
Aug 19	Rangers		Timber extraction
			All areas strimmed
Sep 19	Rangers		Won Gold in SSEIB award for first time
			Timber extraction
			Strimming in all areas
Oct 19	Rangers		Rubble from SWCP collected and used to form visitor welcome area base
			Timber extraction
			Boiler logs all stacked to dry in barns
			Gates in Quarry field goat proofed
			Highways volunteers cleared rhododendron
			Steps at top of Quarry filed repaired
			Goats moved into Quarry Field
			Staff eco plug trained
Nov 19	Rangers		Staff medium tree felling trained
			Top ride strimmed
			Trial pits dug for works above gas pipeline, watched by SGN
			Created new overflow car park along drive edge
			Created staff car park adjacent to wood barns
			Created new visitor welcome gathering area in front of centre next to play area including large new noticeboard
Dec 19	Rangers		N and W Kent ranger scrub clearing in Gt Pell and Lt Pell
			Whole team staff day clearing scrub in Gt Pell and LT Pell

## 14.3 Visitor Management

### 14.3.1 Appendix A – Site leaflet



### History and facilities

Trosley Country Park, once part of Trosley Towers Estate, covers 170 acres of beautiful woodland and chalk downland on the North Downs. It is home to a rich variety of wildlife.

Part of the park is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), mainly due to the chalk grassland slopes. These areas were created by early settlers who cleared woodland to graze livestock. In later years the grassland was left to scrub over as the grazing of livestock moved to the richer pastures of the weald. The grassland now supports a range of wild flowers and a fabulous array of butterflies each summer including the chalkhill blue and the rare musk orchid.

- A café serves drinks and refreshments daily in the summer and at weekends during the winter months.
- For our special events programme visit our website for more details.
- Enjoy unlimited parking with our annual season ticket.

### How to find us

Trosley Country Park is open daily (except Christmas Day) from 8:30am until dusk.

**Contact:**  
Trosley Country Park, Waterlow Road, Vigo, Kent DA13 0SC  
Tel/Fax: 01732 823570  
Email: [kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks](http://www.kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks)

**By car**  
Signposted off the A227 between Moopham and Wrotham.


**By bus**  
The Arriva bus service 308 runs Monday – Friday, from Bluewater to Sevenoaks stopping at Trosley Country Park. For enquiries tel: Traveline: 0871 200 22 33.

**By train**  
The nearest stations are: Moopham (4.8 miles, 7.7 km) and Borough Green (3.6 miles, 5.8 km). Both are served by the 308 Arriva bus and taxis. For rail enquiries call: 08457 48 49 50.

This leaflet is available in other formats and can be explained in other languages.  
Tel: 08458 247 600  
(Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm).


## Kent Country Parks

# Trosley




*naturally, a great day out*

For further details on the park and its facilities visit:  
[www.kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks](http://www.kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks)



Trosley Country Park has held a Green Flag Award since 2007

[www.kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks](http://www.kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks)



## Welcome to Trosley Country Park



**Red Route** (2.5 miles, 4 km)  
This is a flat way-marked route through the woodland giving far reaching views of the Weald, with seats and woodland sculptures along the way.

**Blue Route** (2 miles, 3.2 km)  
A steep, hilly walk across the chalk downland, incorporating part of the North Downs Way. During spring and summer, the downs are full of wildflowers.

**Yellow Route** (1.5 miles, 2.4 km)  
Our easy access route is ideal for visitors with pushchairs or wheelchairs. A trim trail is marked on this route, where you can exercise on the equipment.

Careful cyclists may use the Red and Yellow Routes. Those looking for more adventurous routes should use the horse route.

**Bluebells**  
This park is well-known for its colourful displays of bluebells in the springtime.

**Green woodpecker**  
The green woodpecker can be seen in the park. As can the lesser and greater spotted woodpeckers, tawny owls and sparrowhawks.

**Legend:**

Red Route (45 minutes)	Easy access and trim trail route	Parking	Cycling
Blue Route (1 hour)	Steps	Information	Disabled toilets
Blue Route shortcut	Toilets	View point	
Horse route		Picnic site	

## 14.3.2 Appendix B – Visitor Survey

Site surveys were carried out in 2009, 2014 and 2016. Details are available on request.

## 14.4 Health and Safety

## 14.4.1 Appendix A– KCC Standard Instructions

Kent County Council Environment & Economy - Country Parks Health & Safety - Standing Instructions		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
ANNUAL CHECKS		I	X										
BUILDING INSPECTIONS													
COSHH ASSESSMENTS			I	X									
RISK ASSESSMENTS			I	X									
VEHICLES - paperwork to be brought to monthly meetings				I	X								
OCCUPATIONAL ROAD RISK ASSESSMENT (at appraisal)					IX								
TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORIES					I	X							
FIRE EXTINGUISHERS						I	X						
ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTS - FIXED EQUIPMENT - PORTABLE BUILDINGS						I			X				
ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTS - FIXED EQUIPMENT - PERMANENT BUILDINGS (Every 5 years- 2001/2005/2009)						I			X				
ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTS - PORTABLE EQUIPMENT (Every 2 years - 2002/2004/2006/2008)						I			X				
PLAY EQUIPMENT								I			X		
CHAINS AW INSPECTIONS										I		X	
WINCHES INSPECTIONS										I		X	
SAFETY HATS										I		X	
TREE INSPECTIONS - P1 every year													X
P2 every 2 years (2004 / 2006 / 2008)			X										
P3 every 3 years (2004 / 2007 / 2010)			X										
TRAILER INSPECTIONS													X

Key: I Instruction to be Given X Confirmation of completion due

## 14.4.2 Appendix B Health and safety policy

H&S/SBS/Reviewed 18/10/2021/Next review 10.23

Kent County Council's  
General Statement of Policy  
**Health, Safety and  
Welfare at Work**  
October 2021

## **Foreword by David Cockburn Head of Paid Service**

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) take very seriously their responsibility for ensuring that the people who work for, and other organisations who work with, Kent County Council (KCC) can do so in a safe and healthy environment. The people we serve and those with whom we work in partnership must be confident that we provide the council's services in such a way that risks are managed and minimised.

We do not just accept the minimum legal standards set by national legislation: we strive to promote a culture which makes KCC an exemplar, producing a high standard of health and safety practice in the things we do. Achieving these standards actively contributes to the overall quality of the services provided by KCC and we will make available sufficient resources to facilitate a positive working culture.

Throughout our operational activity and as part of continuous improvement, we realise the importance of integrating health and safety into decision making, project initiation and risk management processes. We remain faithful to the principles of sensible risk management we signed up to in 2008, and we continue to ensure that these principles are embedded across all levels of the council. KCC managers are provided with instruction, information, training, and tools to enable them to be as self-sufficient as possible in order to manage health and safety issues sensibly with support provided by the Health and Safety Team of professionally qualified advisers.

Whilst the final responsibility for implementing KCC's Health & Safety Policy rests with CMT, every employee must take an active role in implementing the policy effectively. I remind all employees of the importance of safeguarding the health and safety of themselves and others by fully supporting the measures KCC takes to meet the standards outlined in this statement.

----- David Cockburn  
Corporate Director, Strategic and Corporate Services  
(Head of Paid Service)



# **KCC's General Statement of Policy on Health, Safety and Welfare at Work**

## **1. Introduction, context and key messages:**

i) KCC is required by law to set out its policy for managing health and safety. This gives us an opportunity to be clear about how we achieve the standards we strive for and to review our practices as an employer and provider of services and facilities to others. We recognise that health and safety is an important and integral part of all activities and relates to the efficiency and quality of services delivered to the people of Kent either directly or through partnership or contractual arrangements.

The purpose of this document is to:

- a) set out our management commitment to health, safety and welfare;
- b) outline the organisational structure and arrangements that are in place to fulfil the responsibilities acknowledged in the statement.

Health and safety is a shared responsibility, although we recognise that there are specific levels of responsibility and accountability. Everyone plays a part and all employees are required, as a condition of their employment, to comply with KCC policies and procedures.

ii) The authority appreciates the value of joint consultation and will establish and maintain suitable arrangements for joint discussion and agreement that will be effective for specific groups or the workforce as a whole.

iii) Devolved management and contracting out does not diminish accountability for ensuring that arrangements are adequate. Statutory responsibility cannot be delegated and must be recognised and agreed alongside the duties of other parties.

iv) It is important that this policy statement is brought to the attention of all staff and related organisations to reflect the fact that KCC performs its duties through its employees and others who provide services on the County Council's behalf. This policy statement is available in different formats if required.

The policy will be reviewed as necessary to take account of new or changed circumstances. This policy has been equality impact assessed to meet the requirements of the public sector equalities duties.

v) In keeping with this overarching, general statement, each directorate will establish and monitor how it satisfies health, safety and welfare obligations in the delivery of its services. These management plans may, in turn, be supported by service and establishment policy statements that set out local arrangements to meet the duties applicable to KCC.

## 2. General policy statement

### i) General responsibility

KCC recognises and accepts its statutory responsibility to provide safe and healthy working conditions for employees, volunteers, clients, and others who use or visit council premises or may be affected by its activities. The council will also take steps to ensure that its contractors and partners in service provision conduct their activities in a manner that is safe and without risk to health.

The policy sets out general principles for protecting the health and safety of employees and others. It explains the management organisation and arrangements for securing the provision and maintenance of:

- plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health for all staff
- arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- information, instruction, training and supervision that enables all employees to avoid risks and contribute to their own safety and health at work
- a safe place of work, with safe means to enter and leave premises
- a healthy working environment
- adequate welfare facilities including facilities to accommodate pregnancy, maternity, disabilities, sex and gender identity.

The remainder of the statement covers the council's strategic approach to health and safety management in general terms. It is supplemented by directorate arrangements that recognise this policy as a 'parent' statement.

### ii) Multi-user establishments/shared accommodation

Clear arrangements for health, safety and welfare (e.g. fire safety, first aid, maintenance and emergency procedures) need to be agreed between occupying parties (e.g. in Gateway buildings, or where KCC staff work on secondment in NHS premises). Suitable arrangements will be agreed in any such circumstances and an officer of one of the parties will be nominated as building manager to oversee the arrangements and liaise with the owner/landlord as necessary.

Business change programmes include early and regular consultation and communication of health and safety issues as a means of encouraging participation by staff affected by changes, including where protected characteristics may be adversely impacted. Programme Managers are expected to coordinate this.

### iii) **Procuring goods and services**

Contract and commissioning managers must ensure adequate conditions and standards of health, safety and welfare in connection with goods and services they obtain. This requires consideration and application of health and safety standards throughout all stages of the procurement and commissioning lifecycle.

### **3. Organisation: accountability and roles**

#### **i) Corporate Management Team**

The authority requires its CMT to implement this policy as an essential part of their management and executive duties. CMT are ultimately responsible for the health and safety performance of the council and will ensure that Members are adequately advised on health and safety matters. This will ensure decisions are made in line with the Council's policies and procedures.

#### **ii) Directors/Heads of Service**

The council is made up of four directorates: Strategic and Corporate Services, Growth Environment and Transport, Adult Social Care and Health, and Children Young People and Education, each headed by a Corporate Director. Directors and Heads of Service are accountable to CMT for fulfilling obligations relating to their areas of control and are required to lead and manage directorate health and safety practice through the organisation and arrangements set up within their directorate. Corporate Directors and their management teams will ensure adequate arrangements exist to fulfil corporate, directorate and service specific responsibilities and ensure that:

- safe working practice is based on a sensible and proportionate risk assessment approach
- accident/incident procedures are followed
- fire precautions and first aid provision are adequate and readily available
- emergency procedures are well considered and enacted
- training, instruction, and supervision provided meets the needs of individuals and is sufficient to protect others
- statutory and other necessary examinations of equipment and installations are carried out
- health, safety and welfare conditions and standards are monitored and reviewed.

#### **iii) Elected Member with special interest in health and safety**

The Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement and People is the nominated cabinet member with special interest in promoting and monitoring health and safety. Regular contact with the Head of Health and Safety is established to engage and inform both parties.

#### **iv) Managers**

Managers have key responsibilities regarding the standards of health and safety at work in their service.

Managers must secure, monitor and review safe working conditions and practices within their areas of control and in accordance with requirements and guidance from senior management.

Managers must implement the corporate and directorate health and safety policies/ arrangements and ensure the provision of safe systems of work relative to their service. They will achieve this by ensuring that risk assessments relative to their area of work are carried out, and that resulting safe systems of work are recorded, implemented and monitored.

To make these arrangements effective they must provide their staff with the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to enable them to minimise risks and contribute to the safety and health at work of themselves and others. This will ensure that employees at all levels have a clear understanding of what is expected and required of them.

v) Individuals/all employees

Health and safety information will be provided to all new staff on beginning their employment with the council. Individuals have a responsibility for their own health and safety and for that of others who could be affected by what they do or fail to do at work. They must:

- co-operate with the council in meeting its responsibilities. They must take personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others, including correctly using any protective equipment or work items in accordance with valid experience, instruction and training and in line with expected standards of professional conduct
- bring concerns about conditions or arrangements to the attention of managers/supervisors so that remedial action may be taken to avert danger to staff or others
- report accidents and significant incidents to their manager or responsible person as soon as possible.

vi) **Strategic and Corporate Services Directorate: People and Communications (PC)**

The Corporate Director, PC, helps senior managers to discharge their responsibilities by developing corporate health, safety and welfare policy and by monitoring compliance and performance through the Head of Health and Safety. Commitment to managing health and safety is spelt out in the Blue Book and embraced in employee relations and in the delivery of staff care services.

vii) Health and Safety Team

A team of competent, professional advisers is managed by the Head of Health and Safety. Advice and guidance on any aspect of health, safety and welfare can be sought from the advisory team. The team also manages statutory reporting and recording systems on behalf of the authority. The team works closely with Risk Management, Insurance, Infrastructure, Equality and Diversity and Staff Care Services to co-ordinate and maximise the effectiveness of safety management across the County Council.

The Head of Health and Safety and the Health and Safety Business Operations Manager ensure pro-active links with the enforcing authority, trade unions, senior management and Members to secure consultation and make sure that key information, including equalities related issues, is exchanged and passed on.

<p><b>KCC, like any employer, is subject to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974. The Act requires that a written statement is made available to all staff about how we look after the health, safety and welfare of the workforce. This statement is issued to</b></p>	<p>Amanda Beer Corporate Director People &amp; Communications</p>	<p>Zena Cooke Corporate Director, Finance</p>
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<p><b>you to make sure you know what KCC's aims and standards are and to remind you of the shared responsibility we all have for securing health and safety at work. Should you have any questions about the contents of this statement please speak to your manager or get in touch with a health and safety adviser.</b></p> <p>David Cockburn Corporate Director of Strategic &amp; Corporate Services</p>		
<p>Matt Dunkley Corporate Director Children, Young People &amp; Education</p>	<p>Richard Smith Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p>Simon Jones Corporate Director Growth, Environment and Transport</p>
<p>Allison Duggal Interim Director of Public Health</p>	<p>Ben Watts General Counsel</p>	<p>Bryan Sweetland Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement, People &amp; Partnership</p>

## 14.4.3

*Appendix C - Tree Zones***KCC country parks – Tree inspection policy**

Each Country Park will be zoned for tree inspections and the East Kent Head Ranger and North and West Kent Ranger Services Manager will be responsible for producing a zoning map which will be reviewed annually.

The sites that this policy covers are the 9 Country Parks and the 3 Countryside sites that the parks manage on behalf of the KCC estates team. The total land area is approximately 1200 acres.

These sites are:

North Kent area-	Shorne Woods Country Park –	292 acres/116 ha
	Manor Park Country Park-	52 acres/ 21 ha
West Kent area-	Lullingstone Country Park-	494 acres/200 ha
East Kent area-	Trosley Country Park-	170 acres/68 ha
	Teston Bridge Country Park-	32 acres/12 ha
	Brockhill Country Park	
	Pegwell Bay	
	Grove Ferry	
Countryside sites:	White Horse Wood	
	Preston Hill (WK)-	232 acres/94 ha
	Dryhill picnic site (WK)-	22 acres/9 ha
	Parkwood (EK)	

The inspections zones will be as follows;

Zone	Criteria	Inspection frequency	By whom
Zone 1 (red) (High Risk)	All areas bounded by roads, car parks, buildings, play areas and paths with a footfall greater than 15 persons per day	Annual inspection	Country Parks tree inspector
Zone 2 (Amber) Medium risk	All paths/bridle ways/land with a footfall greater than	Ground based Inspection every 3 years	By Rangers



	5 persons but less than 15 persons per day		
Zone 3 (green) Low risk	All paths/land with a footfall of less than 5 persons per day	Ground based Inspection every 5 years	By Rangers
All zones (no Colour)	All	AFTER SEVERE STORMS	By Rangers

**The zone 1** inspections will be initiated annually by Country Parks management and be competitively tendered to arboricultural experts. The inspection will be carried out in early Autumn. Trees will be individually numbered and a full report submitted with work specifications and priority response times. Areas likely to have a footfall of more than 15 people per day. Zone 1 includes:

Well used assembly points,  
pedestrian routes,  
roads,  
footpaths,  
buildings,  
car parks  
woodland boundary abutting properties and the highway

**The Zone 2** inspections will be 'standing instructions' that are initiated by the country parks Business support team. The inspections will be carried out by park staff trained to LANTRA basic tree inspection course level or above.

This will be a zoned survey utilising the compartment and sub compartments that the Country Parks have. Each compartment will be inspected and any areas with a likely footfall of between 5 and 15 per day will be checked.

A form will be completed for each tree or group of trees that have works carried out on them. A separate form will be kept for trees requiring ongoing monitoring.

**The Zone 3** inspections will be 'standing instructions' that are initiated by the country parks Business support officer. The inspections will be carried out by park staff trained to LANTRA basic tree inspection course level or above.

A form will be completed for each tree or group of trees that have works carried out on them. A separate form will be kept for trees requiring ongoing monitoring.

**Priority (time scale to do works)**

**1 – 24hours**

**2 – 3 months**

**3 – 6 months**

Amended by TB 24/08/21

## 14.4.4 Risk Assessment



## KCC Risk Assessment Form – The 5 steps approach

<b>Activity / Operation/ Event: Hand cutting tools - bowsaws, loppers, slashers, billhooks, axes, hand cycles, secateurs.</b>	<b>Assessment Date: 17/01/21</b>
<b>Establishment: Kent Country Parks.</b>	<b>Review Date: 17/06/23</b>

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Risk Rating	Step 4		Step 5 Action & Review	
Identify the hazards	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing?	Trivial/ low / medium / high / stop	Is anything further needed?	Action required	Responsible person	Date completed
Bowsaw The saw blade	User of tool, visitors, other works. Crush, blows to head and limbs, cuts, and lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools, using appropriate PPE (gloves ( <i>when needed and correct</i> ), steel toe cap boots, yellow vest, hard hat while in felling areas)	Medium	Supervision of students/ volunteers  Work with another person to help when needed. Give direction and support	Supervision of students, volunteer	Rangers	

loppers	User of tool, visitors, other works. Crush, blows to head and limbs, cuts, and lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools. using appropriate PPE (gloves ( <i>when needed and correct</i> ), steel toe cap boots, yellow vest, hard hat while in felling areas)	Medium	Be aware of anyone under the branch or stem being cut.			
Slashers, bill hooks, hand cycles, axes, shears	User of tool, visitors, other works. Crush, blows to head and limbs, cuts, and lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools. using appropriate PPE (gloves ( <i>when needed and correct</i> ), steel toe cap boots, yellow vest, hard hat while in felling areas)		Stay at least 2 clear tool lengths from others while using the tool. <b>Use tool correctly do not muck about – Keep tool sharp</b>			
Secateurs	User of tool, visitors, other works. Crush, cuts & lacerations.	Providing training on how to use the tool, safe use of tools. using appropriate PPE	Low	Be aware of anyone under the branch or stem being cut.			

<b>Assessor Name(s): Kevin Jennings</b>	<b>Job Title: Ranger</b>
<b>Signature: KJ</b>	<b>Review Date:17/06/23</b>

<b>Step 1</b> <b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Step 2</b> <b>Who might be harmed and how?</b>	<b>Step 3</b> <b>What are you already doing?</b>	<b>Risk rating</b>	<b>Step 4</b> <b>Is anything further needed?</b>	<b>Step 5</b> <b>Action &amp; Review</b>
Spot hazards by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>walking around your workplace</li> <li>asking those doing the task what they think</li> <li>checking manufacturers' instructions</li> <li>considering health hazards</li> </ul>	Identify groups of people, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employees</li> <li>temporary / agency staff</li> <li>contractors</li> <li>volunteers</li> <li>members of the public</li> <li>children (including work experience)</li> <li>lone workers</li> <li>pupils</li> <li>service users</li> </ul>	List what is already in place to reduce the likelihood of harm or make any harm less serious, examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>guarding</li> <li>training</li> <li>procedures, safe systems of work</li> <li>personal protective equipment (PPE)</li> </ul>	Trivial, low, medium, high or stop (please see matrix below)	You need to make sure that you have reduced risks 'so far as is reasonably practicable'.  An easy way of doing this is to compare what you are already doing with good practice. If there is a difference, list what needs to be done.	Remember to prioritise. Deal with those hazards that are high-risk and have serious consequences first.  List: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actions required</li> <li>who needs to do them?</li> <li>by when</li> <li>Check actions completed</li> </ul>

## 14.5 Plain Text English Format (Accessible Alternative)

This relates to the visual represented in [Figure 3](#).

- Corporate director of Growth, Environment and Transport
  - Head of Countryside, Leisure and Sport
  - Head of Strategic Planning, Enforcement and Policy
  - Head of Service Country Parks and Countryside Partnerships
  - Operations Manager Country Parks
    - Business Support
    - North and West Kent Ranger Services Manager
      - 2 Senior Rangers (1 NK and 1 WK)
      - 2 Countryside Rangers (1 NK and 1 WK)
      - 3 Assistant Rangers (1 NK and 2 WK)
        - 11 Countryside Wardens (2 at each site)
    - East Kent Head Ranger
      - 1 Countryside Ranger
        - 6 Countryside Wardens (2 at each site)
    - Café Manager
      - Café Supervisors at Manor Park, Shorne, Lullingstone and Trosley
      - Pool of Casual Catering Staff
    - Visitor Services Manager
      - 4 Visitor Services and Events Officers based at Shorne, Lullingstone, Trosley and Brockhill
      - Pool of assistant visitor services and event officers
    - Education Manager
      - 4 Education Rangers based at Shorne, Lullingstone, Trosley and Brockhill
      - Pool of casual education rangers