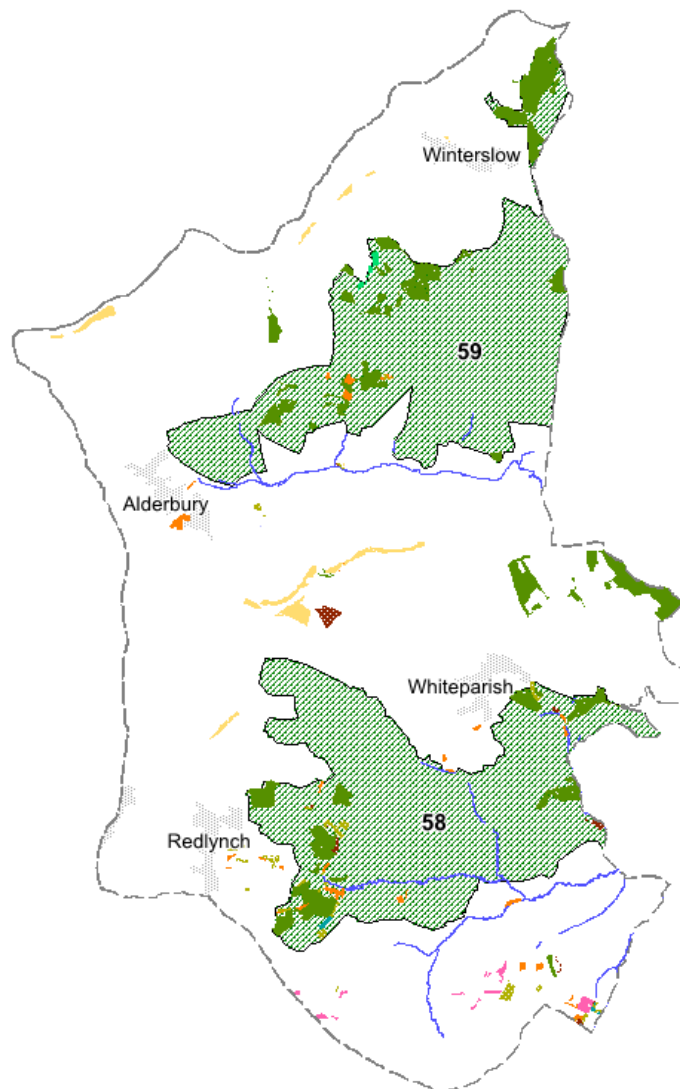


## Area 11 - Tytherley and Langley Woods



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Strategic Nature Areas by Main Habitat	Priority Habitats
Chalk Downland	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh	Lowland meadows
Limestone Grassland	Rivers
Neutral Grassland	Lowland calcareous grassland
Neutral Grassland and Woodland	Wet woodland
River	Purple moor-grass and rush pastures
Woodland	Eutrophic standing waters
Woodland and Chalk Downland	Lowland beech and yew woodland
Woodland and Neutral Grassland	Heathland
	Lowland fens

Figure 13: A map of the Tytherley and Langley Woods Landscape Biodiversity Area indicating priority habitats and the labelled, numbered Strategic Nature Areas within this Area.

### 1.11.1 Area Profile

**National Character Area** – [Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs \(132\)](#), [New Forest \(131\)](#)

**Landscape Character Types** – Forest-Heathland Mosaic (14) and Wooded Downland (2)

**Landscape Character Areas** – Farley Forest (14A), Witherington Wooded Downland (2C) and Landford Forest (14B)

**AONBs** – N/A

**Related BAPs** – [Nature in the New Forest: action for biodiversity \(2012\)](#)

**SNAs** – There are 2 SNAs in Area 11 –Tytherley Woods (59) and Langley Woods (58). See [here](#) for SNA targets.

**Geology** – Area 11 is characterised by an underlying geology of London Clay & Reading Beds to the north and south of the Area, with a band of Wooded Downland on Chalk running through the central band.

**Community Area Boards** – Southern Wiltshire Community Area Board

### 4.11.2 Background

The Area to the southeast of Salisbury is characterised by a highly wooded landscape on distinct bands of sand and clay in the north and south and separated in the middle by an area of chalk on which areas of calcareous grassland occur.

The northern section of this Area comprises the Tytherley Forest, a mix of habitats including high canopies of oak and other deciduous species alongside areas of neutral grassland. Containing many areas of ancient woodland, the area is well known for its diversity and abundance of butterfly species. To the south, the Langley Woods and the New Forest form part of the New Forest SAC and are characterised by abundant acid woodland and conifer plantations, together with heathland and bog habitats. Central to the Langley Wood complex is the Langley Wood National Nature Reserve, an extensive tract of ancient forest on acid clays where the variation in soils and drainage has resulted in an exceptionally rich and varied woodland both structurally and botanically: - The epiphyte lichen flora is particularly rich and a wide range of breeding birds including BAP species: Nightingale, Nightjar, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Wood Warbler have all been recorded here. One area of young plantation supports a rich community of butterflies including Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Duke of Burgundy, both of which are very rare in the New Forest.

Remnants of traditional common land used for grazing are still evident in the south of the county and are closely associated with village areas. Within the woodlands are damp boggy areas containing purple moor grass and rush pasture which are an increasingly rare priority habitats within the county and southern England at large. These habitats are important for reptiles and ground nesting birds including curlew and nightjar, as well as rare plant species including the insectivorous sundew and pale butterwort which are characteristic of wet heaths and sphagnum bogs. Within the mosaic of wet habitats and woodland are important ponds which provide valuable habitats for rare amphibian species including great crested newts.

Separating the two woodland areas is a band of chalk downland which contains some significant areas of priority lowland calcareous grassland, in particular along the north facing scarp of Upper Chalk to the south west of Salisbury which includes West Grimstead Down and Pepper Box Nature Reserve. This area includes the Brickworth Down and Dean Hill SSSI which typifies the succession of chalk grassland through to juniper scrub and yew woodland and is the best example of this transition in Wiltshire.

Blackwater River and the River Dunn represent the two significant areas of running water priority habitat in Area 11. Tributaries of the River Test, these rivers form important wildlife corridors,

connecting associated wetland habitats in Wiltshire with those to the east in Hampshire. Designated as a SSSI, the River Test is an important chalk river which supports a rich community of plant and animal species including trout and salmon.

### 4.11.3 Priority Habitats

Priority Habitats	Area (ha)
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	442.24
Lowland calcareous grassland	62.39
Lowland meadows	35.58
Purple moor-grass and rush pastures	35.55
Wet woodland	18.3
Heathland	15.36
Rivers	11.72
Lowland beech and yew woodland	5.09
Lowland fens	3.09
Eutrophic standing waters/Ponds	0.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>629.36</b>

### 4.11.4 Priorities and opportunities for conservation

1. **Woodland**
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Mosaic of heath, bog and wet habitats
  - Woodland butterflies
  - Bats
2. **Rivers and streams**
3. **Lowland Calcareous Grassland**

#### 1. Woodland – SNAs: 58 & 59

##### Ancient Woodland

There are extensive areas of ancient woodland types within Area 11, with over 2000 ha of this habitat recorded in the [Ancient Woodland Inventory \(AWI\)](#). The largely wooded character of this Landscape Biodiversity Area is the result of large tracts of ancient woodland types concentrated around two main blocks, the Tytherley Woods in the north and Langley Woods and the New Forest in the south. These woods are well known for their rich and varied woodland which support a wealth of rare butterflies, birds and lichens. Extensive, continuous woodland management is required to maintain the diversity of these woodlands. Issues include loss of edge and glade habitats, lack of regenerations resulting from increased deer grazing pressure and encroachment by invasive species. Whilst woodland areas have suffered from over-grazing, under-grazing is an issue with some of the wood pastures and meadows which intersperse these woodlands. Priorities for this habitat include:

- Buffer / extend ancient woodland sites with appropriate new woodland planting
- Improve connectivity between ancient woodland sites through hedgerow and woodland planting, and integrate them into the wider landscape
- Manage wood pastures through grazing options in agri-environment schemes

- Promote conversion of plantation woodlands to a more natural mix of deciduous woodland species of diverse age and structure
- Introduce appropriate deer management to encourage regeneration of woodland understorey.
- Promote the application of England Woodland Grant Schemes to conserve and enhance remaining areas of natural and semi-natural woodland.
- Ensure that work undertaken within and adjacent to the New Forest should complement the aims of the New Forest Action Plan for Biodiversity and coordinate with other current cross-border biodiversity initiatives.

### Mosaic of heath, bog and wet habitats

In this south eastern corner of the county the underlying geology of clay and acidic top soils has resulted in damp, boggy conditions which support areas of wet grassland, bog and wet heath. These habitats are increasingly rare within Wiltshire and southern England at large as a result of drainage, ploughing and the increased application of fertilisers and herbicides. This mosaic of habitats represent remaining fragments of common land and open habitats, primarily maintained through sustainable grazing and a range of management practices including cutting and burning of vegetation. These habitats are present generally as small, fragmented patches scattered throughout the woodlands which are extremely vulnerable to changes in land use and hydrology, as well as succession to woodland where management is lacking. Priorities for these habitats include:

- Promote the uptake of agri-environment and woodland schemes to maintain the mosaic of heath, bog and wet habitats through appropriate grazing management.
- Take steps to maintain the hydrology of wet heath, bog and purple moor grass sites to ensure that there is no loss of priority habitats characteristic of these wet soils.
- Conserve and augment the mosaic of heathland, bog and other wet habitats within the New Forest National Park where it overlaps the Wiltshire boundary and in adjacent areas as opportunity presents.
- Complement the grazed commons work of the New Forest National Park by augmenting across the border into Wiltshire wherever appropriate
- Maintain favourable management of ponds and open water to promote use by amphibians including Great- crested newts.

### Existing projects and initiatives

- **New Forest Park Authority** – The New Forest National Park Authority has produced [New Forest: An action plan for biodiversity](#) which considers the state of nature at present and sets out the objectives and strategic actions required to conserve and enhance biodiversity to 2020. In addition to this a [Landscape Action Plan](#) for the New Forest National Park has recently been submitted for consultation which sets out proposals on how to look after the landscape, conserve its history and wildlife, and help plan for its future. There are important strategic opportunities to extend the New Forest and the grazing resource it supports could be a key tool for improving grassland management in southern Wiltshire if the right economic and management linkages could be made between landowners and the local

Commoning community. In addition to this the New Forest Land Advice Service can assist landowners in applying for agri-environment grants and other sources of funding.

- **The Deer Initiative** – In both the Tytherley and Langley Woods there is considerable deer grazing pressure. In places this has led to reduced regeneration of understorey and ground flora which ultimately will reduce the biodiversity of the woodlands. It is a priority to establish appropriate deer management regimes to allow the woodland structure to recover. The Deer Initiative has worked with Butterfly Conservation in Bentley Woods as part of the South East Woodland Project to try and reduce deer numbers. With funding to this project now finished it is important to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to manage deer numbers across the woodlands of Area 11.

## Woodland Butterflies

The Tytherley and Langley Woods are noted for their abundance and diversity of woodland butterflies including a number of priority species such as the Duke of Burgundy, Marsh fritillary and the Purple Emperor. Bentley Wood to the east of Salisbury is a large, mixed woodland and is nationally recognised for its importance as a site for butterflies. Significant efforts have been undertaken here by Butterfly Conservation, the Forestry Commission and Natural England to implement management options to enhance the woodlands for butterfly species. This management needs to be maintained and similar management implemented across the Tytherley and Langley Woods to ensure that woodlands are in a favourable condition for butterflies. Priorities for woodland butterflies include:

- Secure suitable management to enhance woodlands for butterflies including widening of woodland rides and selective thinning at woodland edges, in line with Butterfly Conservation's South East Woodlands Project
- Continue to monitor the impacts of these management measures on butterfly and other woodland species.
- Improve connectivity between woodland sites, particularly where known populations of priority woodland butterflies exist, to allow the movement of individuals between populations and help species move in relation to climate change.

## Existing projects and initiatives

- Butterfly Conservation's three year funded '**South East Woodlands Project**' - This project aimed to reinvigorate woodland management in key woodland sites across the Southeast and halt the loss of rare woodland species such as the Marsh Fritillary and the Purple Emperor. This project came to an end in 2010 and therefore it is important not to lose the beneficial management measures put in place through this period. It is also important to continue to monitor the impact that these management measures have had on the butterfly and woodland species in order to apply these findings elsewhere.

## 2. Rivers and Streams

The rivers Blackwater and Dunn, both tributaries of the River Test, represent the two significant areas of running water priority habitat in Area 11. The River Test to the east has experienced a long history of modification and the last assessments by Natural England in 2012 showed the river to be in unfavourable condition and failing to meet objectives set by the Water Framework Directive. Issues include inappropriate water levels, siltation, water pollution - agriculture/run off, water pollution – discharge. As tributaries of the River Test it is important to ensure that the Rivers Dunn and Blackwater are managed to maintain water quality and riparian habitats, reducing negative impacts on the river system down stream in the River Test. Wiltshire Council has identified opportunities for wet grassland buffering and extension around the Rivers, especially around Alderbury. Priorities for this habitat include:

- Retain, buffer and extend areas of wet grassland around the River Dunn and River Blackwater.
- Support catchment scale projects which contribute towards achieving Natura 2000 objectives for the River Avon SSSI and help meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive to achieve ‘good ecological status’ of water bodies by 2015.
- Encourage the take up of capital grants available for the Blackwater and Dun catchments under the Catchment Sensitive Farming scheme to reduce agricultural and pesticide runoff, reduce soil erosion by livestock and vehicles, and halt river sedimentation from runoff
- Work with riparian landowners to implement sympathetic management, particularly restoration & enhancement works, to restore natural processes to the river and enhance resilience to climate change.
- Co-ordinated monitoring of rivers to identify presence of invasive plants and signs of pollution incidents affecting riverine fauna and flora

### Existing conservation projects and initiatives

- **River Test and Itchen River Restoration Plan** - The Environment Agency and Natural England are developing a restoration strategy for these rivers to identify the required works, or improved management, to improve the physical habitat condition of the rivers.
- **Catchment Sensitive Farming** - The Rivers Test and Itchen are designated as a Priority Catchment as part of the Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) scheme, with a CSF Capital Grant Scheme Target Area encompassing the Rivers Dun and Blackwater. Capital grants are available in this target area for work to reduce agricultural and pesticide runoff in watercourses, limit physical damage to soil caused by livestock and vehicles, and halt sedimentation from runoff. Further buffering of these important chalk streams can be achieved by improving management of riparian habitat, including the control of non-native invasive plant species which should be coordinated with the provision of some replacement planting or specialist management to encourage a more appropriate flora.

### Bats

The woodlands of South East Wiltshire are particularly important for a wide range of bat species, supported by a rich mosaic of habitats including woodland, wood pasture, wet woodland, purple moor grass pasture and woodland ponds. However, very little monitoring data is available on these

areas and it is likely that important roost sites of rare and endangered woodland species are likely to be in this area. Priorities for this species group include:







- Collect baseline data on bat activity within the area and identify and map important roosting sites and foraging grounds for the rarest species
- Maintain mature and veteran trees, particularly those known to be used for roosting
- Identify and favourably manage next generation of mature/veteran trees
- Manage existing hedgerows and woodland used for foraging and commuting routes
- Hedgerow planting and woodland creation to improve connectivity between key roosting/foraging sites
- Maintaining the important mosaic of woodland, grassland and open water habitats which help support the rich diversity of bat species

### 3. Lowland calcareous grassland

The chalk downland between the Tytherley and Langley Woods is important for its lowland calcareous grassland, juniper scrub and yew woodland, as well as a number of species with restricted ranges which are characteristic of these habitats. Under-grazing on some sites has led to encroachment by scrub whilst overgrazing on others has resulted in a lack of juniper scrub regeneration. Appropriate grazing management should maintain a dynamic mosaic of rich mixed scrub habitat of varying ages and species with calcareous grassland and woodland which can offer a variety of surfaces and features for invertebrates, together with overwinter cover and abundant nectar sources (NE condition assessment 2010). Priorities for this habitat include:

- Implement / increase grazing on under grazed calcareous grassland sites via agri-environment schemes to improve sward composition and control scrub.
- Establish new stands of juniper on chalk grassland with appropriate grazing management regime and where this is failing – consolidate through planting.
- Target conservation actions in areas where the data suggest appropriate habitat creation or restoration might provide the best contribution to enhancing ecological connectivity.

### 4.11.5 Conservation initiatives

	"Bees for Everyone"	A project to raise public awareness of the importance of bumblebees and the problems that they face, and conducting active habitat management to safeguard, restore and create valuable bumblebee habitats.	8, 9, 10	Click folder for project details	
	Meadow research project	Foodplain Meadows Partnership (based at the Open University) has been monitoring the plants, soils and water of key Foodplain meadows for many years. This information is used to develop our understanding of how these meadow communities change in response to wider environmental factors and help guide the management of Foodplain meadows elsewhere.	1 - North Meadow and Clatney Farm SACs	Click folder for project details	
	Great Western Community Forest	The purpose of GWCF is to create a multi-purpose forest throughout Swindon from the cores of the town and into the surrounding countryside. Multi-purpose forests incorporate the creation and use of a diverse natural and built environment including trees and woodland, grassland, wetlands, hedgerows, ponds and rivers.	1, 2, 3 & 5	Click folder for project details	

Please see the attached table of current conservation initiatives within the particular Landscape Biodiversity Areas