

Kent Local Wildlife Site Schedule



CA58 Old Park and Chequers Wood

Date designated: June 2025

Date last approved: June 2025

Dates revised: 5th June 2025

Area (ha): 65.73

District Council: Canterbury City Council

Parish: Fordwich, Canterbury/unparished

Grid reference: TR1676558653

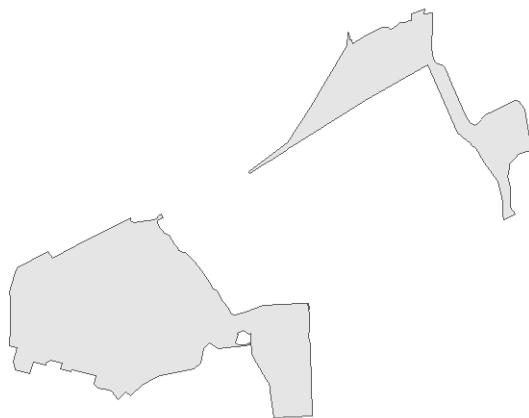
Owner: Local Authority/MOD/Private

Natural area: North Kent Plain

AONB: No

TPO:

Habitat types: Arable and Horticulture (0.20 ha), Broadleaved Woodland (59.12 ha), Coniferous Woodland (0.51 ha), Fen, Marsh and Swamp (0.00 ha), Modified Grassland (5.08 ha), Suburban (0.65 ha), Urban (0.15 ha)



Reason for designation: Chequers Wood and Old Park SSSI was originally designated in 1968 and the boundary follows land ownership parcels rather than the ecological extent of the habitat. In the years since then the city of Canterbury has expanded considerably and is now encroaching on the heathland and woodland of this area. This Wildlife Site encompasses the remaining areas of high-quality habitat around the SSSI and adds numerous features to the overall ecological value of the area; moreover, it forms a buffer zone around the SSSI, helping to protect the wildlife from disturbance and edge effects.

Rationale for site boundary: The proposed boundary includes all areas of semi-natural and otherwise relatively undisturbed habitat around the SSSI.

Site description: CA58 should be viewed as integral to the SSSI, creating one large site. However, when considered separately, CA58 comprises three distinct areas. The largest part is the MOD land at Old Park, which is acid grassland and scrub and contains numerous species typical of this habitat, including four uncommon species of clover (*Trifolium ornithopodioides*, *Trifolium glomeratum*, *Trifolium striatum* and *Trifolium subterraneum*), Mossy Stonecrop *Crassula tillaea* and Blinks *Montia fontana*. It also contains one of the largest populations in Britain of the Nationally Rare Bedstraw Broomrape *Orobanche caryophyllacea* and hosts a good population of breeding nightingales *Luscinia megarhynchos*^{1,2,3}.

The second area is the eastern edge of the golf course, including the wet woodland along the stream and the lower part of the golf course. The woodland is high quality ancient wet woodland with county rarities such as Alternate-leaved Golden-saxifrage *Chrysoplenium alternifolium*, which is one of the plants for which the SSSI was designated (but which is mostly outside the SSSI boundary). A small block of plantation (PAWS) adjacent to this shows clear signs of a rich ancient woodland ground flora as well as some relict tree species, including hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*. The roughs in this parcel are amongst the more species-rich acid grassland swards of the golf course.

A third much smaller area consists of land around the southern and eastern edges of Sturry Road Community Park (main central area including skate park etc is excluded), which is a capped and landscaped rubbish tip which has a good range of scrub and woodland.

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This Local Wildlife Site contains a Nationally Rare plant and at least 25 species of axiophyte (10 species is the recommended minimum for a Wildlife Site and 30 for a SSSI). It is also important for the Red List bird species nightingale and turtle dove *Streptopelia turtur*^{1,2,3}.

1 Amber List. Birds of Conservation Concern 2009.
2 Kent Red Data Book Status 2. A. Waite (Ed.) 2000.
3 Red List. Birds of Conservation Concern 2009.