

Kenley Common Nature Trail

All activities can be completed at any point on the trail. Follow the map and complete the activities along the way. You will likely be passing through meadows with cows and sheep grazing. Please obey all the bylaws and on-site signage and keep dogs on leads when in grazing meadows.

Kenley Common has many beautiful meadows to walk, skip or run through in spring and summer. There are lots of birds, butterflies, bees and insects to see around the flowers and trees. You might also find our Sussex cows and Jacob sheep. Look up into the sky for gliders soaring above, just as the planes did during WW2.

#kenleycommontrail

SUITABLE
FOR AGES
5-10



Land art

Use 4 sticks to make a square or rectangle on the ground – this is your picture frame! Now make a picture using things you find on the ground – remember, don't pick flowers, leaves or twigs from plants, only use what you find on the ground as the plant and animals still need them.



Now see what textures you find; something rough, something smooth, something spikey and something soft.

Flourishing flowers

This big slope here is called Whyteleafe Bank. Just underneath the thin layer of soil is chalk, just like the chalk you would use on a chalkboard. This type of soil and chalk together means that some unusual flowers grow here. We have been working for many years to bring back the chalk grassland habitat – not long ago there were trees all along this bank! The area furthest south was the most recently cleared and therefore the flowers are just starting to come back. You should notice more flowers the further north you are. Use the compass number at the bottom to help!



Use the spotter sheet on the next page and tick off what you find!

Start at the black sign board

Walk down the slope using the track to the right. Be careful here, it is quite steep! Just after the trees is a grassy path to your left, go down this path.

Stand still and listen to the sounds around you. How many different types of bird song can you hear?

Charming countryside colours

As you look out over the meadow you should see a whole rainbow of different colours. Use the colour wheel to see if you can find all of these colours here today. Look high and low, in the trees and in the meadows, in the bushes and in the mud!

Tick when you find a colour to match



Woodland wonders

Can you find any creepy crawlies living on Kenley Common? Look under logs and stones, on the bark of the trees and on leaves; dig a little into the soil to see what's there! Remember to be very gentle with whatever you discover and to always put it back when you've finished looking.

Photo point

Stop at the post by the gate, place your phone or camera in the gap and take a photograph. Use the hashtag below and compare your photo to other photos taken in different seasons!

#kenleycommontrail

Share your adventure and we will re-tweet our favourite photos!

Big butterfly buffet

As you walk alongside the hedgerow, see how many butterflies you can spot. Can you see the blossom on the hedge? Are there flowers growing on the ground in the long grass? All of these plants produce nectar, a sugary liquid which the butterflies love to eat using their long, straw-like mouth!

Use the spotter sheet on the next page and tick off what you find!

Greedy grazers

We use Sussex cattle and Jacob sheep to graze the meadows on Kenley Common. The cows use their strong curling tongue to wrap around the grass and pull it up, tearing it off in clumps. The sheep nibble at the shorter grass cutting it low down to the ground. Grazing with animals is better for the grassland than cutting it with mowers...

- They leave different height grass and flowers which different insects use to hide in over winter
- Their hooves create bare patches of soils for new seeds to grow in
- Their poo is great for some special beetles – especially dung beetles!
- They don't damage the giant ant hills, which green woodpeckers love to eat
- They can get up and down the very steep slopes easily

How many cows can you see? How many sheep can you see?

Unfortunately, due to the nature of our site, not all our routes are accessible for wheelchair users or visitors with limited mobility. Please contact us at kenleyrevival.org for more information or alternative routes to see our heritage and natural features.



Old Officers' Mess
No access – private land



- Airfield perimeter
- Heritage feature
- Private land – no access
- Gate
- Path
- Public bridleway
- Access



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Plant spotting guide



Ox-eye daisy (May-September)
Watch out for a white flower with a yellow circle in the middle. This plant is very tall you should be able to spot it easily.



Buttercup (May-September)
The yellow flowers are very shiny which form a large carpet on Kenley Common.



Scabious (July-September)
The lilac blooms that bob on the end of long stalks are a common sight on Whyteleafe Bank.



Common spotted orchid (June-September)
This is the most common of all the orchids, so you should have a good chance of finding this one!

Can you find any other plants growing on the common that are not on this list?

Learn More

The Kenley Revival Project aims to conserve and protect Britain's most intact WW2 fighter airfield. As well as our education programme for schools and family groups we provide annual archaeology digs on site, a project website and online archive, regular events, an established volunteering programme and an oral history project. If you would like to take part or learn more please visit kenleyrevival.org for more information to join our monthly newsletter with project updates, events and opportunities.

Butterfly spotting guide



Peacock
This butterfly has four 'eye spots' to trick predators into thinking they are big and scary. The underside of the wings are coloured like dead leaves for camouflage.



Gatekeeper
The Gatekeeper lives up to its name and is often found around gateways, hedgerows and field edges where clumps of flowers are left to grow.



Brimstone
This butterfly looks incredibly like a leaf. With pointed tips on the edge of its wings and clear veins running through the wings, just like the veins in a real leaf!



Speckled wood
Their food doesn't come from a flower... it comes from a tiny insect called an aphid. Aphids feed on the sap of plants, and what they poop out is a very sugar liquid called honeydew. Honeydew is what the specked wood butterfly eats!!

How you can help

Want to get involved? Our fantastic volunteers help to run our project by undertaking oral history interviews, running school workshops, writing blog posts for our websites and much more! Visit kenleyrevival.org/volunteering to find out more information about how to get involved.

