

# 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  
11-16



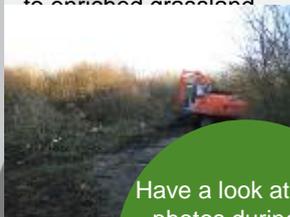
## Land art

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.



## Fuel dump and Bunker Bank

Stand on the circular track looking down the hill. Underneath your feet there is a huge tank which was used during WWII to store the fuel for the Spitfires and Hurricanes that flew from Kenley Airfield. In 2011–12 we cleared all the scrub and trees to restore the area back to enriched grassland.



Have a look at these photos during the works – do you recognise where you are standing?

## 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.

Green woodpeckers fly by bobbing up and down like this. See if you can spot any flying.

## Green woodpecker

Can you see all the hills on the ground? What do you think are making these? You might think they are mole-hills but you would be surprised! Because we graze the land and don't use heavy machinery to cut the grass, these ant hills are able to get to these large sizes. The green woodpecker feeds solely on ants. Not only are woodpecker holes great for the woodpeckers, these are also used by bats when roosting in the summer or hibernating in the winter. Can you see any woodpecker holes on the trees around you?

## Chalk grassland

As Chalk grassland is a magnificent miniature habitat for wildlife - up to 40 species of flowering plants can be found in one square metre alone! It has even been called the European equivalent of the tropical rainforest, but on a much smaller scale of course due to the low nutrient content. The chemical composition of chalk is calcium carbonate with small amounts of clay and rock. Ninety million years ago this meadow would have been at the bottom of the ocean, accumulating from the dead bodies of the microscopic plankton at the bottom of a great sea. Over millions of years this plankton was compressed, then squashed more with sediment to become rock. Later earth movements related to the formation of the Alps raised these former sea-floor deposits above sea level.

## 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
- woodpeckers love to eat
- They can get up and down the very steep slopes easily.

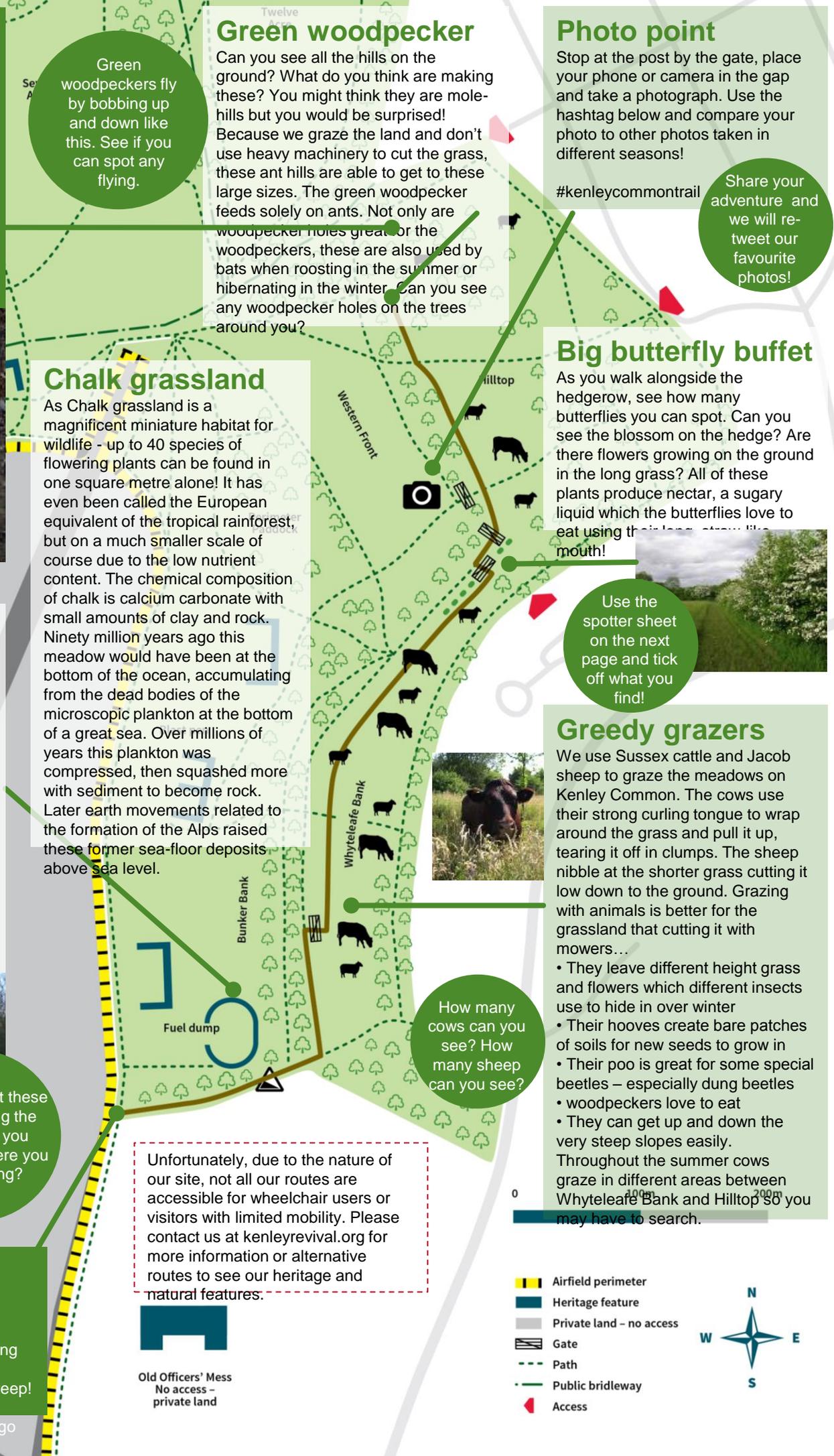
Throughout the summer cows graze in different areas between Whyteleaf Bank and Hilltop so you may have to search.

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](http://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



**Nettle leaved bellflower** (July-September)  
This plant is very tall and the leaves look like a nettle. The blue flowers are clustered and have the shape of a bell.



**Bird's-foot-trefoil** (May-August)  
Also known as "Granny's Toenails" or "Eggs and Bacon" and "Hen and Chickens" which refer to the egg-yolk yellow flowers and reddish buds. It is a low-growing plant and the flowers appear in clusters.



**Wild strawberries** (April-July)  
The white flowers are very delicate and low to the ground. Have a look next to a hedge in the sun.



**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](http://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 speckled 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](http://kenleyrevival.org/volunteering) to find out more information about how to get involved.**

