

Location

OS map grid reference
SU144802

Leaving Wroughton on the High Street (A4361) turn left into Nursery Close and pass two turnings until you reach the junction with Badgers Brook. Turn right and park in the street (please do not block neighbours). Enter reserve via small bridge.

If using bus Bus access to Kings Farm Wood only. The 49 Trowbridge to Swindon bus stops in Wroughton High Street. Follow driving directions from Nursery Close to reserve. Visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/parkingtransportandstreets

If cycling Leave National Cycle Route 254 in Broad Hinton and follow the A4361 towards Wroughton. Nursery Close will be on your right. Visit www.sustrans.org.uk

Access In winter wear walking boots as the steep terrain is often muddy. The reserve is not suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs. Dogs on leads are welcome.

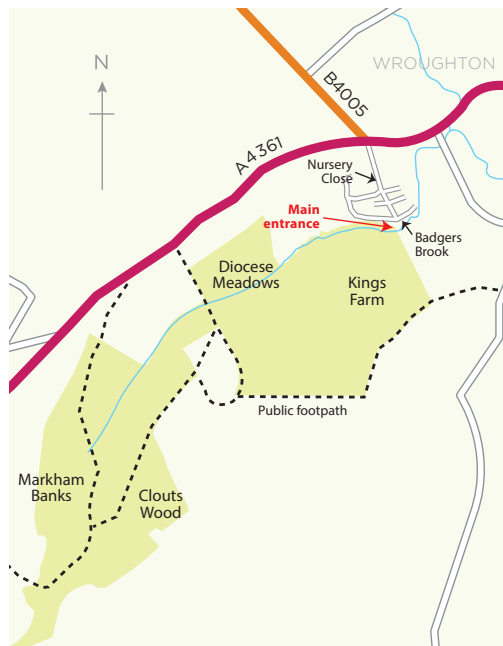
Nearby reserves Hagbourne Copse, Rushey Platt

The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Covering 668 square miles (1,730 sq. km) of Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire, this is the third-largest AONB. It was created in 1972 to protect and enhance a unique and spectacular landscape that includes tranquil open downland, ancient woodland and chalk streams. Visit www.northwessexdowns.org.uk



Buzzard



About Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Our vision is to create a county rich in wildlife and to help people live sustainable lifestyles that protect the environment for the benefit of everyone.

We have more than 18,000 members, look after over 40 nature reserves, are supported by hundreds of volunteers, and work with local communities, schools, businesses and public bodies to achieve our aims. To do all this we rely on the support of our members.

If you would like to join us, or to find out about how you can help the environment, please visit www.wiltshirewildlife.org, 'like' us on [facebook.com/WiltsWild](https://www.facebook.com/WiltsWild) and follow @WiltsWildlife on Twitter. You can also call us on (01380) 725670, or write to us at: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Elm Tree Court, Long Street, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1NJ.

Front (green woodpecker) and back cover photos, Jon Hawkins

Interior photos by Karen Lloyd, Neil Aldridge, Bob Coyle, David Kjaer WWT

Registered Charity No. 266202



A sustainable future for wildlife and people

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Nature reserves

Clouts Wood

including Kings Farm Wood, Diocese Meadows and Markham Banks



Kings Farm Wood is the gateway to our Clouts Wood, Markham Banks and Diocese Meadows nature reserves. It is also an entry point to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a nationally protected landscape of open downland, ancient woodland and chalk streams.

The four reserves are made up of distinct habitats, covering both sides of Markham Bottom, a valley near Wroughton.

A small chalk stream rises in Markham Banks and runs along the valley floor, cutting through each reserve before flowing into Swindon's River Ray.

Kings Farm Wood

We jointly bought this reserve in 2013 with Swindon Borough Council and Wroughton Parish Council.

Generations of the King family grazed their livestock on this land. They planted the wood in 2002 with species such as pedunculate oak, silver birch, hawthorn, rowan and guelder rose. We will thin the wood as it matures, and create glades and scalloped woodland edges to increase biodiversity.

Primrose, early dog violet, sanicle and giant fescue grow along the stream's banks. Springs swell in the western part of the woodland.

You may spot **buzzards**, red kites and swallows overhead, or hear the call (known as yaffle) of the **green woodpecker** or the bark of a fox.

Willow warblers, tits and small mammals live here.

Orange-tip, comma, red admiral and **speckled wood** butterflies make the most of the sunny rides where wildflowers grow.

Diocese Meadows

From Kings Farm Wood you can walk across Diocese Meadows and into Clouts Wood. We lease the two meadows from the Diocese of Bristol, hence their name. It is known as glebe land – land that traditionally was put aside to support the local priest. We are encouraging wildflowers to re-establish here through sensitive grazing and hedgerow management.

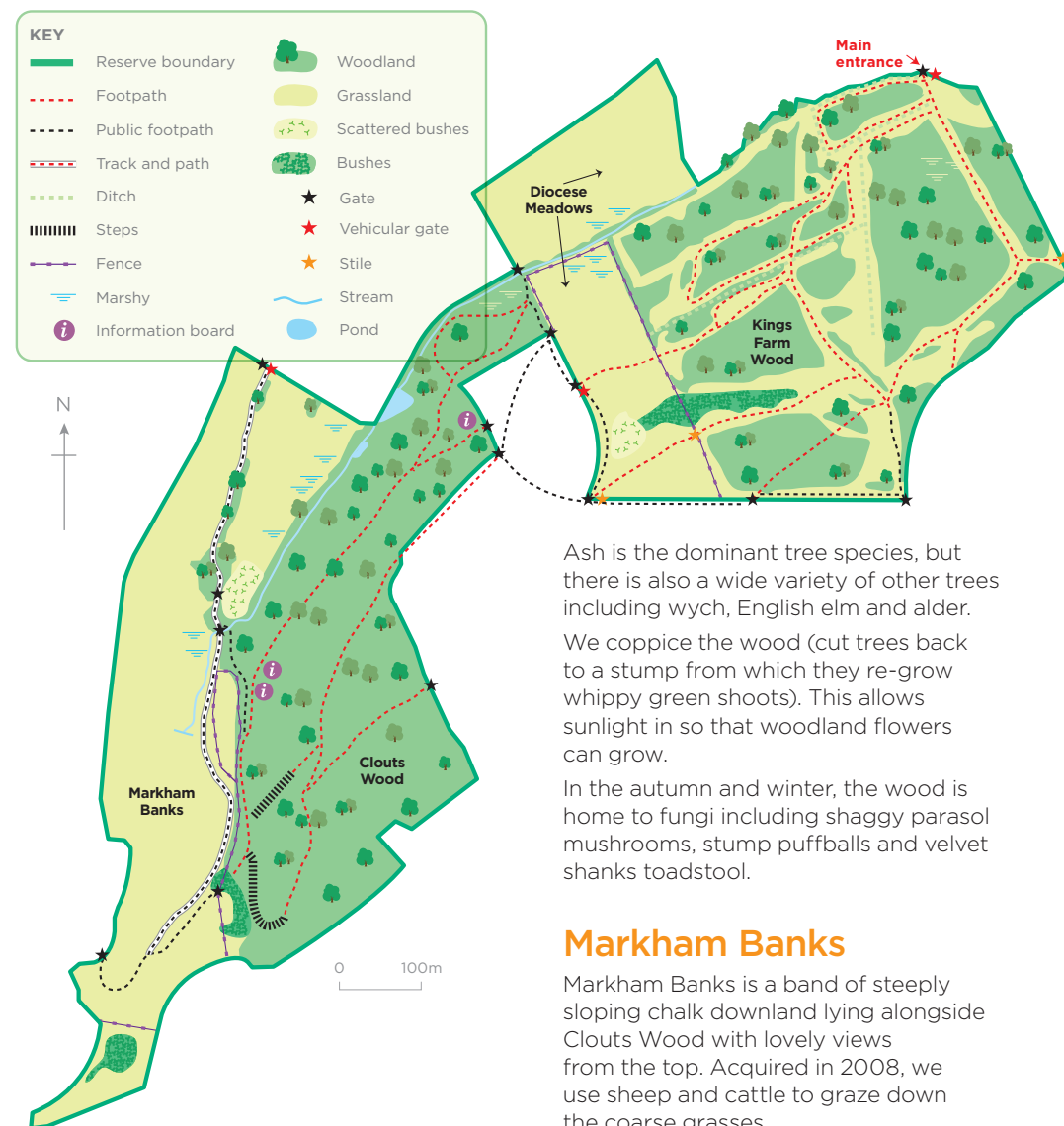
Clouts Wood

Clouts Wood is a **Site of Special Scientific Interest**. The wood covers one side of Markham Bottom and gets its name from old English 'clud', meaning rough or rocky hillside.

The valley has been wooded since the ice-age receded, and there are records of sale of coppice rights that date back to the 1600s.

In spring there is a colourful display of **ramsons**, woodruff and goldilocks buttercup.

From late June you will see the tall, yellowish spikes of the nationally scarce **Bath asparagus**. Wildflowers such as green hellebore, wood vetch, herb Paris and meadow saffron sprinkle the woodland floor.



Ash is the dominant tree species, but there is also a wide variety of other trees including wych, English elm and alder.

We coppice the wood (cut trees back to a stump from which they re-grow whippy green shoots). This allows sunlight in so that woodland flowers can grow.

In the autumn and winter, the wood is home to fungi including shaggy parasol mushrooms, stump puffballs and velvet shanks toadstool.

Markham Banks

Markham Banks is a band of steeply sloping chalk downland lying alongside Clouts Wood with lovely views from the top. Acquired in 2008, we use sheep and cattle to graze down the coarse grasses.

Ten species of bumblebee have been seen here, including buff-tailed and common carder. They come for the rich mix of wildflowers, which includes chalk milkwort, common rockrose, kidney vetch, autumn gentian and spiny retharrow.

In summer butterflies such as brimstone, small skipper, painted lady, gatekeeper and clouded yellow fly above the slopes.

