



## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE REVIEW**

**2009**



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**FINAL**

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Prepared by Essex Ecology Services Ltd.  
EECOS  
Abbotts Hall Farm, Great Wigborough, Colchester, Essex, CO5 7RZ  
01621 862986, [eecos@essexwt.org.uk](mailto:eecos@essexwt.org.uk)

Company Registered No. 2853947  
VAT Registered No. 945 7459 77

## **IMPORTANT NOTES**

Please note, the use of the term 'brownfield' in this report refers to the condition and appearance of sites in terms of their wildlife habitat content at the time they were surveyed. It is not intended to mean, and should not be interpreted as meaning 'previously developed land'. This latter definition depends entirely upon the previous use(s) and planning history of the land.

### **Nomenclature**

The terms "Site of Importance for Nature Conservation" (SINC) and "County Wildlife Site" (CoWS) used in previous reports are here replaced by the currently generally accepted term of "Local Wildlife Site" (LoWS).

### **Rationale**

It is hoped that this identification of Local Wildlife Sites is not seen as a hindrance to the livelihood of those landowners affected, or an attempt to blindly influence the management of such sites. It is an attempt to describe the wildlife resource we have in the county as a whole, which has been preserved thus far as a result of the management by landowners. The Essex Wildlife Trust and the Local and Unitary Authorities of Essex hope to be able to help landowners retain and enhance this biodiversity for the future. In recent years, the existence of a Local Wildlife Site on a farm has been seen as an advantage when applying for grant-aid from agri-environment schemes, with such grants favouring areas with a proven nature conservation interest.

### **Public Access**

Identification as a Local Wildlife Site within this report does not confer any right of public access to the site, above and beyond any Public Rights of Way that may exist. The vast majority of the Sites are in private ownership and this should be respected at all times. Those few sites that are described as being appropriate for environmental education already have some public access.

### **Land Ownership**

It has always been the intention of the Essex Wildlife Trust to contact all landowners of LoWS, advising them of this identification and promoting nature conservation management of the site. To that end, the Essex Wildlife Trust has appointed a Local Wildlife Sites Officer to administer this suite of sites across the county. Currently, all the major forces behind nature conservation in Essex are working on the Local Area Agreement, focussing on National Indicator 197 (Local Wildlife Sites), which will gradually involve contact with those LoWS landowners that can be traced. While this lengthy undertaking is in progress it is requested that the Essex Wildlife Trust is contacted prior to any formal approach regarding any Site identified within this report.

### **Boundaries**

Whilst every attempt has been made to ensure accurate mapping of the site boundaries, the accompanying maps should be considered as being illustrative only. This is especially true for any SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), which are included within LoWS site boundary maps to help interpret the context of LoWS in the wider countryside. Definitive SSSI boundaries are

maintained by Natural England. The Essex Wildlife Trust should be consulted over the precise boundary of all Local Wildlife Sites, should any dispute occur or precise determination be required.

## **Planning**

The information within this report should not be used as a bypass to the normal planning consultation process. It is inevitable that, with the passage of time, some Local Wildlife Sites will be lost or damaged to the extent that they are no longer considered as such. Similarly, new Sites may be identified and periodically added to the list for each Local Authority. For these reasons, the Essex Wildlife Trust still wishes to be consulted on all planning proposals affecting areas of open countryside, regardless of whether or not they apparently affect a Site detailed within this report. This report will allow a greater understanding of the wildlife resources of the district/borough and will make the consultation process much faster and more cost-effective.

## INDEX

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1	General Introduction	1
1.2	Background	1
1.3	Objectives of Review	2
1.4	Review Process and Methodology	2
1.5	Limitations of Survey	5

### **2. RESULTS**

2.1	Identification of Local Wildlife Sites	6
2.2	Changes to Old SINC Network	7
2.3	Additions	11
2.4	Summary of Additions/Deletions	13
2.5	Other Sites	14

### **3. DISCUSSION**

3.1	Local Wildlife Site Network	15
3.2	Living Landscapes	16
3.3	UK BAP Priority Habitats	19
3.4	Essex BAP Species and Habitats	21
3.5	County Context	22
3.6	The Way Ahead	25

Appendix 1 Summary Table of Local Wildlife Sites

Appendix 2 Register of Epping Forest District Local Wildlife Sites

Appendix 3 Register of Potential Local Wildlife Sites

Annex 1 Local Wildlife Sites Selection Criteria (separate document)