

Chess Valley Biodiversity Opportunity Area Statement

Area Coverage	2606 ha
Number of Designated Sites	Local wildlife sites 20 SSSI 1
BAP Habitat	Chalk River Fens 2.5 ha Lowland Meadow 13.5 ha Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland 33 ha Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland 35 ha

The River Chess flows through Chesham towards the Hertfordshire Border. The BOA also includes the headwaters of the Chess.

The area is adjacent to the Chess Valley Key Biodiversity Area in Hertfordshire

Joint Character Area	Chilterns
Landscape Types	Wooded agricultural land on low hills
Geology	Chalk bedrock, with alluvial deposits at the valley bottom.
Topography	A narrow, steeply sloping valley with protruding spurs. The valley bottom is gently sloping.
Biodiversity	<p>Chalk River – River Chess is a chalk river and is a priority UK BAP river</p> <p>Hedgerows – The valleys around Chartridge have a concentration of ancient species rich hedges, while the area around Bellingdon, Cholesbury and Hawridge is predominantly pre 18th Century enclosures. There are several green lanes designated as LWSs.</p> <p>Acid Grassland / Heathland – There are areas of these habitats on Hawridge and Cholesbury Commons and remnants on Leyhill Common.</p> <p>Calcareous Grassland – There may be areas of semi-improved grassland in the BOA.</p> <p>Arable Field Margins – There are many arable fields in the area and the Chilterns is a Plantlife priority area for rare arable plants</p> <p>Lowland Meadows – There are lowland meadows in 2 SSSIs – Frogmore Meadows and Sarratt Bottom</p> <p>Woodland – The area contains 11 woodland LWSs.</p> <p>Traditional Orchards – There are 2 potential BAP orchards in the area</p> <p>Wood Pasture and Parkland – There is existing parkland at Latimer</p>
Access	The Chess Valley walk runs along the valley from Chesham. The Woodland Trust own 4 woods around Chesham Bois.
Archaeology	Latimer Historic Park and Garden. 1 SMR – Cholesbury Camp Hillfort

Targets

Chalk Rivers – Management, Restoration
Hedgerows – Management, Restoration, Creation
Lowland Dry Acid Grassland – Management, Restoration
Lowland Heathland – Restoration, Creation
Lowland Calcareous Grassland – Restoration, Creation
Arable Field Margins – Management, Creation
Lowland Meadows – Management, Restoration, Creation
Woodland - Management, Restoration
Traditional Orchards - Management, Restoration
Wood Pasture & Parkland - Management, Restoration
Lowland Fens – Management

Area of BAP habitat present in BOA (from BCC Integrated Habitat System Mapping 2010) and 2015 Habitat Targets for this BOA				
Chess Valley BOA	Lowland Meadows	Lowland Fen	Lowland Beech & Yew Woodland	Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland
Area of Habitat in BOA (ha)	13.7	2.5	33.1	35
% of BOA Area	0.5	0.1	1.3	1.3
% of County Resource	0.5	3.7	2.8	2.2
2015 BAP Targets	Lowland Meadows	Lowland Fen	Native Woodland	
Maintenance (ha)	13.7	2.5	68.1	
Achieving Condition (ha)	13.7	2.3	44.3	
Restoration (ha)	0.9	0.5	38.4	
Creation (ha)	0.5	N/A	6.7	

Info on resource for other BAP habitats

Arable Field Margins		Traditional Orchards		Ponds		Hedgerows		Rivers and Streams	
Area of Arable (ha)	597	No of Orchards	22	No of BAP Priority Ponds	0	% of BOA with potential for hedgerows of high-med biodiversity value	39	BAP Habitat Present	Chalk Rivers
% of BOA in arable	23	Area of Orchards (ha)	9.4	Creation Target	tbc	% of BOA with potential for hedgerows of med-low biodiversity value	21		
Area of arable in ES (ELS / HLS)	271 (0)	<i>Data from PTES Traditional Orchards Aerial Photo Survey</i>				<i>Data from BCC Historic Landscape Assessment</i>			
% of arable in ES	45								

The Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) map depicts the regional priority areas of opportunity for restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats. This is a spatial representation of the BAP targets and the BOAs are areas of opportunity, not constraint. The BOAs shown in the map do not include all the BAP habitat in the region, nor do they include all the areas where BAP habitat could exist. In particular, more work is needed to develop approaches in urban and in marine environments.

The Biodiversity Opportunity Areas Map is the property of the members of the South East England Biodiversity Forum. For more information please see www.sebiodiversity.org.uk

Priority Habitat Mapping data supplied by Buckinghamshire County Council, Natural Environment Team. Data is correct of April 2010.

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