

## School Trips to Perry Wood

The Kent Downs are a wonderful place to bring school groups, whether it's for formal education or simply to recreation. The Kent Downs AONB Service are keen to support school groups visiting the woods and this education pack is aimed at helping teachers get the most out of their visit.

The woods are very much a working landscape with management practices varying from routine woodland management in the form of thinning and felling to bracken clearing. To help schools plan their visit to the area and to avoid possible conflict with any of the management operations such as the ones mentioned above the AONB Service and Forestry Commission are asking teachers to contact them in advance of their trip.

Also some Kent Downs sites are very popular at certain times of the year and it is easy for more than one school to turn up and compete for the facilities over the same site. By notifying the AONB Service every effort is made to ensure double bookings do not happen and that your school is the only one visiting the site on the day.

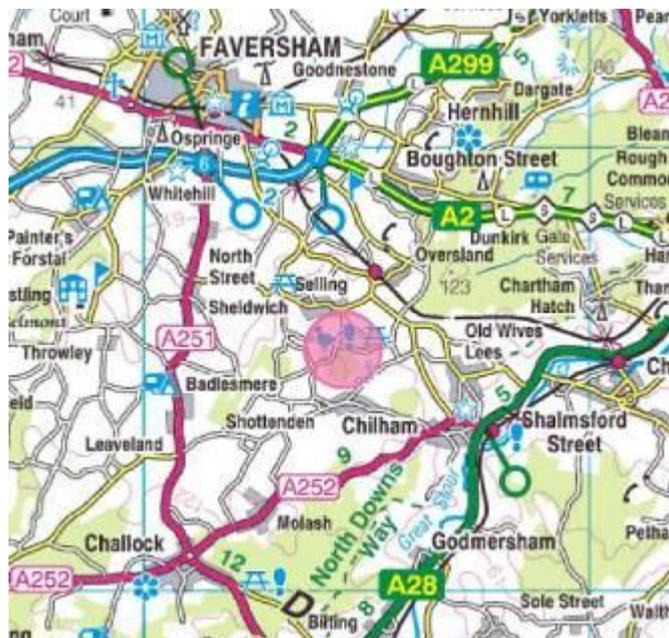
It is still the responsibility of the visiting school to ensure they are covered by the County Councils insurance and undertake appropriate risk assessments for the activities that they are wishing to undertake.

For further help please contact:

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Ashford  
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## Perry Wood: Location

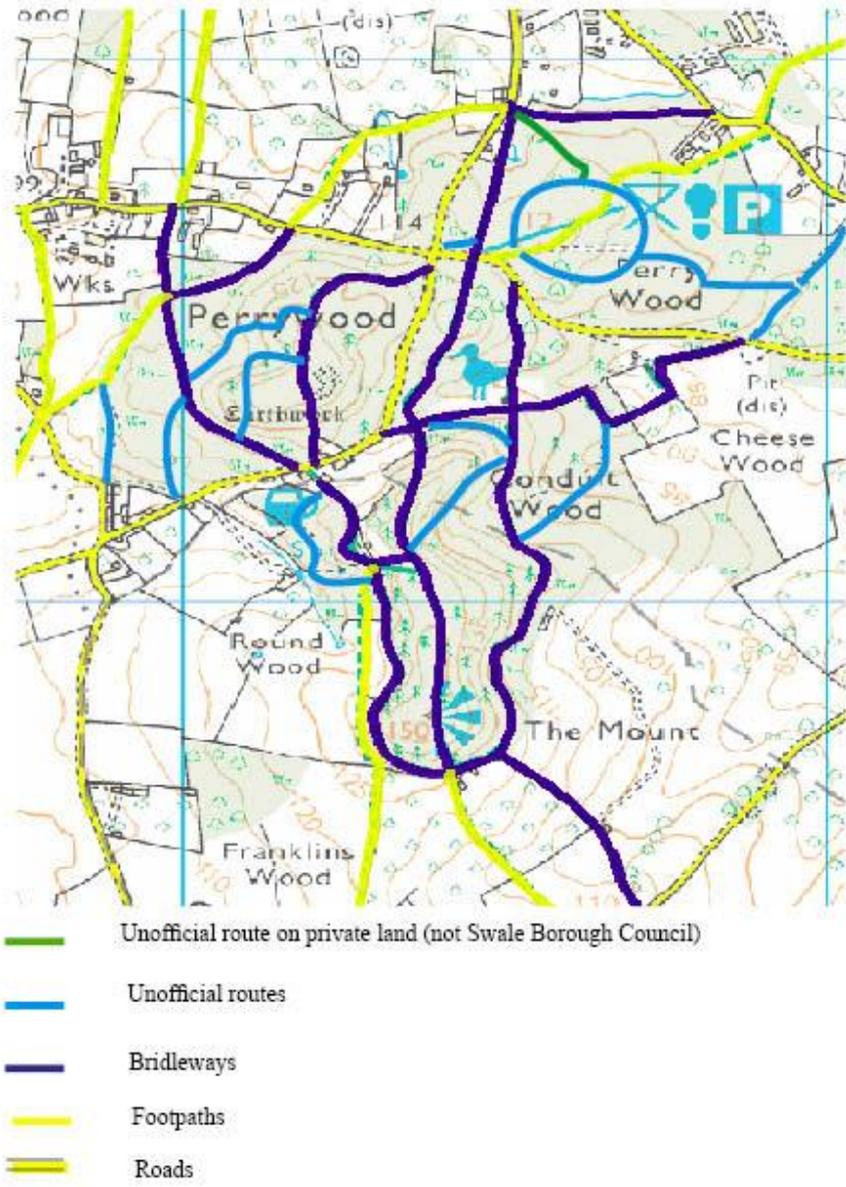
Perry Wood is located in the parishes of Selling and Chilham, near Faversham, Kent, partly in the Borough of Swale and partly in the Borough of Ashford. The site is situated on the northern boundary of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) close to Faversham. Perry Wood covers two prominent hilltops, from which there are extensive views over a large part of Kent across a landscape of arable farmland, orchards, hop-gardens and woodland.



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Perry Wood. Map showing location of the woods south of the village of Selling (highlighted by pink circle).

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## Perry Wood through the Seasons

These are suggestions for focussed activities in the wood throughout the year, relating largely to changes in nature and species that can be easily studied, as well as considering lines of sight for mapping the signals, and bracken coverage over the Earthwork.

The table could be used to identify specific activities, or groups of activities for a whole day out, or series of days out in the Woods. For example, looking at April, projects could be grouped into:

A study of Spring wildflowers, perhaps recording / drawing of colours and shapes by the younger children, mapping different species for data analysis by the older children. Equally if the teacher needed to focus on music or literacy at this time, birdsong recordings could be made, or poems about the new-life that emerging throughout the woods, which could then be used as part of Easter celebrations.

Ideas such as seasonal photos of favourite spots in the woods and personal Perry Wood scrapbooks, sketchpads, could help to create some continuity to the work. A small area of display space be given to woodland finds, thoughts, pictures and poems throughout the year.

Art work can be linked to virtually any aspect of the work. Nature is a huge inspiration for artwork, from drawings of plants and animals through to pattern and print making, and even trying to draw the past using data sources, empathy and imagination. There are just some notes here regarding general changes in nature through the year, which could be recorded in drawings and photos, and things that will be out in flower or leaf for specific projects.

There continual opportunities for inspiration from a visit to the woods for literacy and music. Outdoor musical performances can be incredibly atmospheric and memorable; whilst the quiet reflection aided by the woodland environment can be ideal for inspiring poems, prose and stories. Again, there are potential links with the rich history of the site, the playing and reciting of old poems, songs and stories, perhaps through performance.

Music could also be used as a medium to study the sounds of the outdoors, to reflect bird song and other sounds of nature, sounds of chopping and sawing in the woods, sounds of the harvest and so on. The Kent Downs AONB have carried out a similar project with older children called Sounds of the Downs see the film at <http://www.kentdowns.org.uk/>

Type of project	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
Science Nature Trail focus  Local Natural Materials Project Land Observations Project	Winter animal tracks & signs  Observation of winter bird behaviour and number of species  Anytime  Anytime	Snowdrops	Counting or mapping Spring wildflowers	Counting or mapping Spring wildflowers  Recording birdsong and number of bird species.	Trees & green plants, how they live  Mini-beast hunting	Summer animal tracks and signs  Mini-beast hunting
Geography  Map as you walk – any time	Mapping the signals (semaphore chain)	Mapping the signals	Mapping the signals  Draw the View	A visitor study	A visitor study	A visitor study
History  Victorian people, Wartime in the Woods – Any time.	The Earthwork – a history walk	The Earthwork – a history walk	The Earthwork – a history walk			
Art  Any time	Winter trees and landscape views  Birds arriving at school bird-feeder?	Snowdrops	Violets, primroses, wild daffodils, trees starting to bud	Plants (anemones), trees and insects,  Fresh new life in newly coppiced glades	Plants, trees and insects  Bracken  Summer landscape views	Plants, trees and insects.  Bracken  Summer landscape views
English, Music (& PE, RE)  Any time  Music to reflect birdsong and other sounds of nature.  Any time		How it feels as the days grow longer and we head towards warmer months. How the woodland is starting to come to life.	Mothering Sunday. Reflections on nurturing of new life.	Woodland Easter Egg hunt, Easter songs and celebrations	Maypole dancing around a tree!	Midsummer – significance in cultures past.

Type of project	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<p>Science Nature Trail focus</p> <p>Local Natural Materials Project</p> <p>Land Observations Project</p>	<p>'Habitat mapping', looking at different groups of plants and trees.</p> <p>Mini-beast hunting</p>	<p>Holidays</p> <p>Encourage continued wildlife spotting and monitoring, using Spike the Spotter!</p>	<p>Reptiles. Looking for reptiles and reptile habitat</p> <p>Mini-beast hunting</p>	<p>Autumn leaves and fungi</p> <p>Signs of hibernating animals – dormouse nut hunt!</p>	<p>Autumn leaves and fungi.</p>	<p>Native evergreen trees and mapping winter food sources for birds.</p>
<p>Geography</p> <p>Map as you walk – any time</p>	<p>A visitor study</p>	<p>A visitor study</p>			<p>Mapping the signals /</p>	<p>Mapping the signals</p>
<p>History</p> <p>Victorian people, Wartime in the Woods – Any time.</p>					<p>The Earthwork – a history walk</p>	<p>The Earthwork – a history walk</p>
<p>Art</p> <p>Any time</p>	<p>Plants trees and insects</p> <p>Bracken</p> <p>Summer / harvest landscape views</p>	<p>Holiday wildlife spotting</p> <p>Summer harvest / landscape views</p>	<p>Heather in flower on Windmill Hill</p> <p>Landscape views after harvest- stripes and patterns for print-making / textural ceramics, collage etc.</p>	<p>Autumn light, colourful views, leaves and fungi</p>	<p>Autumn light, colourful views, leaves and fungi</p>	<p>Winter trees, Christmas holly</p>
<p>English, Music (&amp; PE, RE)</p> <p>Any time</p> <p>Music to reflect birdsong and other sounds of nature.</p> <p>Any time</p>			<p>Harvest, how it feels as Summer ends, how different the land looks after the harvest</p>	<p>Autumn reflections, poems about light and colour</p>	<p>How it feels as the days grow shorter, with dark evenings. What it's like in the dark woods.</p>	<p>Carol singing, recorders in the woods</p>