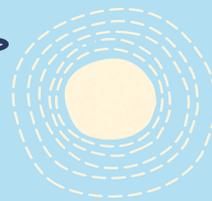


Defining downland habitats

Can you draw lines to match the words with their definitions? The first one has been done for you.



A habitat is a home for plants and animals or other organisms.

The Old Chalk New Downs project area contains a rich mixture of habitats which provides homes to many plants and animals. These downland habitats include chalk grassland, scrub, woodlands (ancient and coppice woodland, veteran trees and wood pasture), traditional orchards, chalk rivers, hedgerows and farmland.

Scrub

Woodlands are divided into sections and each section of trees are cut down to just above ground level, usually every 10 - 15 years. Cutting or coppicing as it is known, encourages the new growth of lots of shoots. Well managed coppiced woodland provides a variety of habitats for wildlife.



Hedgerow

Bushes or shrubs, such as blackthorn and hawthorn. Scrub may refer to: a few scattered bushes, a patch of nettles and brambles, a dense thicket next to a woodland or some young birch trees. Chalk scrub supports rare plant species and trees such as box and juniper.

Coppice woodland

Large-scale hedgerows (narrow woodland strips of mature trees). Shaws are a key feature on the downs and provide valuable wildlife corridors.

Veteran tree

A tree that is interesting because of the way it looks, it's importance to wildlife, historical value and/or because of its age, size or condition.

Shaw Hedgerow

These were once planted to contain livestock and form boundaries before the introduction of fencing. Hedgerows provide valuable habitats for wildlife and help to prevent soil erosion.

Draw lines to match the words with their definitions.

Defining downland habitats

Wood
pasture

A watercourse which flows across chalk bedrock, and/or is influenced by local chalk geology. All chalk rivers are fed from natural underground aquifers meaning they have clean, clear water and stable water temperatures. The Darent and Stour are local chalk rivers.



Arable
farmland

Areas of grazed parkland, with a scattering of mature and veteran trees. The National Trust are restoring the ancient wood pasture at Cobham Wood.

- The trees are old and at low density.
- The trees are frequently managed by pollarding.
- The grazing tends to be long and sustained, leading to a different structure and species composition than ungrazed woods in similar soils.

Chalk river

Ancient
woodland

A large area of the North Downs is used as farmland. The land at the bottom of the Downs is flat or gently sloping land, has fertile soils and is quite well sheltered making it an ideal place to grow crops (arable farming) and grow crops. Historically arable habitats had lots of wildflower species, mainly those which like the thin chalky soils. Ranscombe Farm is a nationally important botanical site and has been considered one of the richest sites for arable plants in the UK.

An area of open chalk hills. This term is used to describe the chalk countryside in southern England. Areas of downland are often referred to as downs, deriving from the Old English word dun, meaning "hill".

Traditional
Orchard

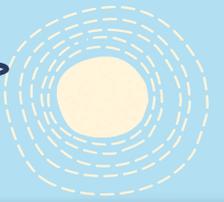
These are woodlands which have been continuously present since at least 1600 AD. Nearly 70% of the Kent Downs woodlands are ancient. The type of ancient woodland (trees present) vary and depend on the soil type and other factors. Lowland beech and yew woodland is particularly distinctive in the Kent Downs.

Downland

An orchard with more than five trees spaced between 8 - 10 metres apart. They are managed so that there is little or no use of chemicals and inorganic fertilisers; these old trees can reach the veteran stage; and grassland is seasonally grazed with sheep or cut for hay. These traditional orchards are good for both fruit and wildlife and will have a huge diversity of insects.

Defining downland habitats

Picture examples of some of the downland habitats



Arable farmland at the foot of the chalk escarpment



Wood pasture



Veteran tree



Shaw hedgerow



Coppice woodland



Scrub



Chalk downland with islands of scrub, grazed by goats