

Sevenoaks Greensand Commons

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Kent Wildlife Trust



Supported by

The National Lottery[®]

through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Introduction

- **Kent Wildlife Trust**
- **Greensand Commons**
- **Geology**
- **History**
- **Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Project**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Summary**



Tel: 01622 662012 | info@kentwildlife.org.uk | kentwildlifetrust.org.uk



Protecting **Wildlife** for the Future

What we do...

Save species and wild places

Inspire people and share wildlife knowledge

Influence development to win for wildlife

Empower people to make a difference

What we are...

- KWT is a Charity
- Set up by our membership in 1958
- Supported by and financially dependent on income from members
- Led by a governing body elected from our members
- A small trading arm
- Independent of government and other economic interests
- Part of a movement of wider independent Wildlife Trusts



Kent Wildlife Trust statistics...

- 31,042 membership at the end of October
- 14,000 children in school visits to 5 visitor centres and in schools
- c90 Staff
- 3,200 ha under management
- 64 reserves
- c£4.5m turnover
- 1,000+ active volunteers
- A hardy grazing herd over 550 head



Greensand Commons Project Sites

The Westerham cluster (159ha) includes:

- Hosey Common
- Farley Common
- Crockhamhill Common

The Sevenoaks cluster (115ha) includes:

- Bitchet Common
- Fawke Common
- Seal Chart and Redhill Wood

All managed by Sevenoaks District Council since 1925 under a Scheme of Management

- Sevenoaks Common (18ha)

Managed by Sevenoaks Town Council

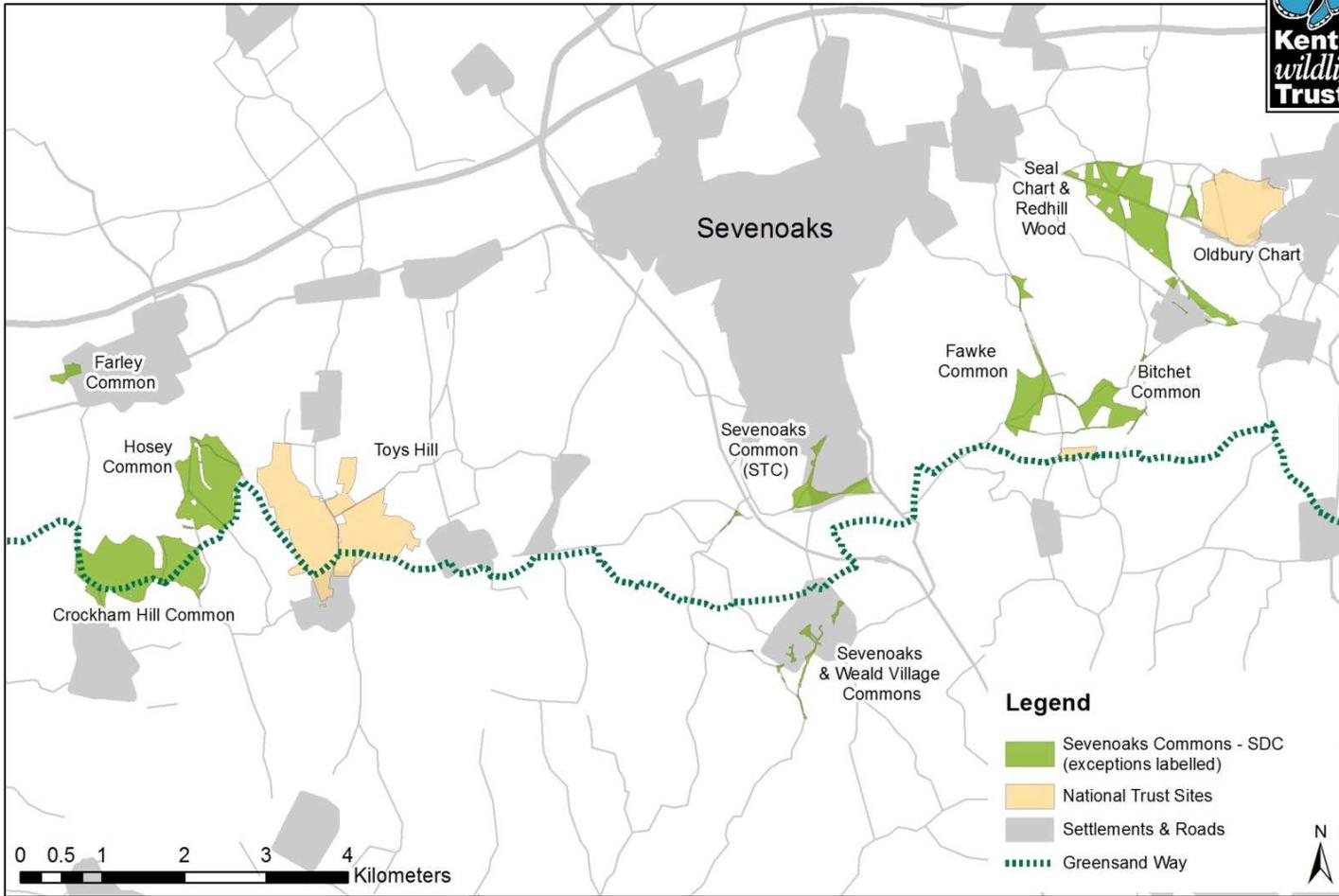
- Sevenoaks Weald Common (4ha)

Managed by Sevenoaks Weald Parish Council

Sites are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest and/or Local Nature Reserves
...ancient woodland and remnant open heath

Located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Sevenoaks Greensand Charts and Commons - Project Sites



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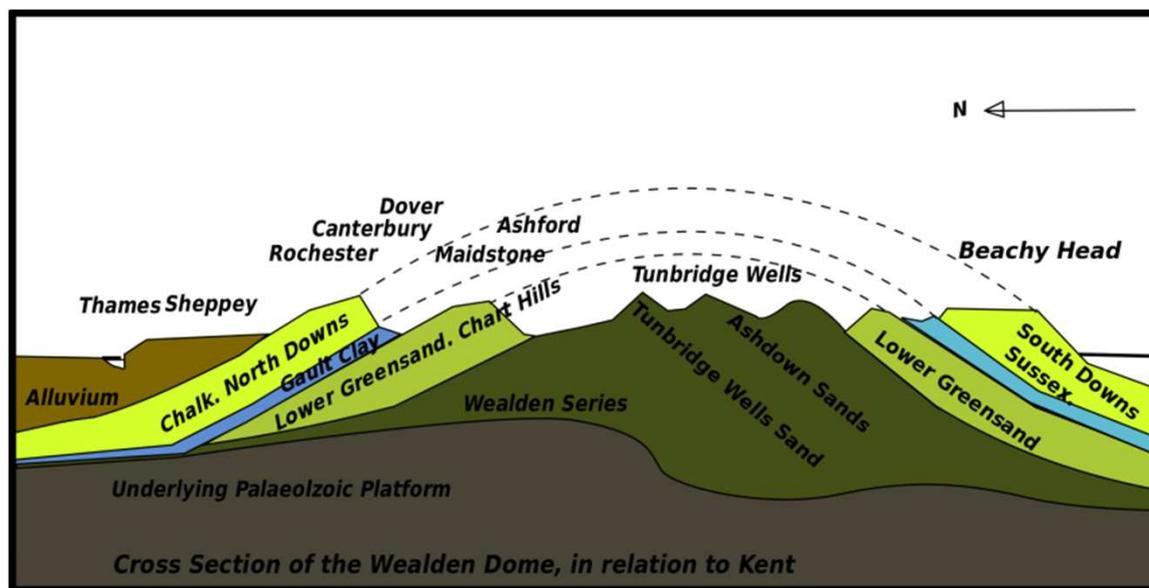


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Geology



- Formed in very shallow seas as land sinking
- Particles of sand washed from the land cemented together by lime in seawater
- Formed bands of hard rock, compared to soft sandstone and mud of Weald to the south, and chalk of the North Downs
- Areas remained on plateau, where left as **very stony, slightly acidic, impoverished soils**
- Easy to clear, very hard to farm



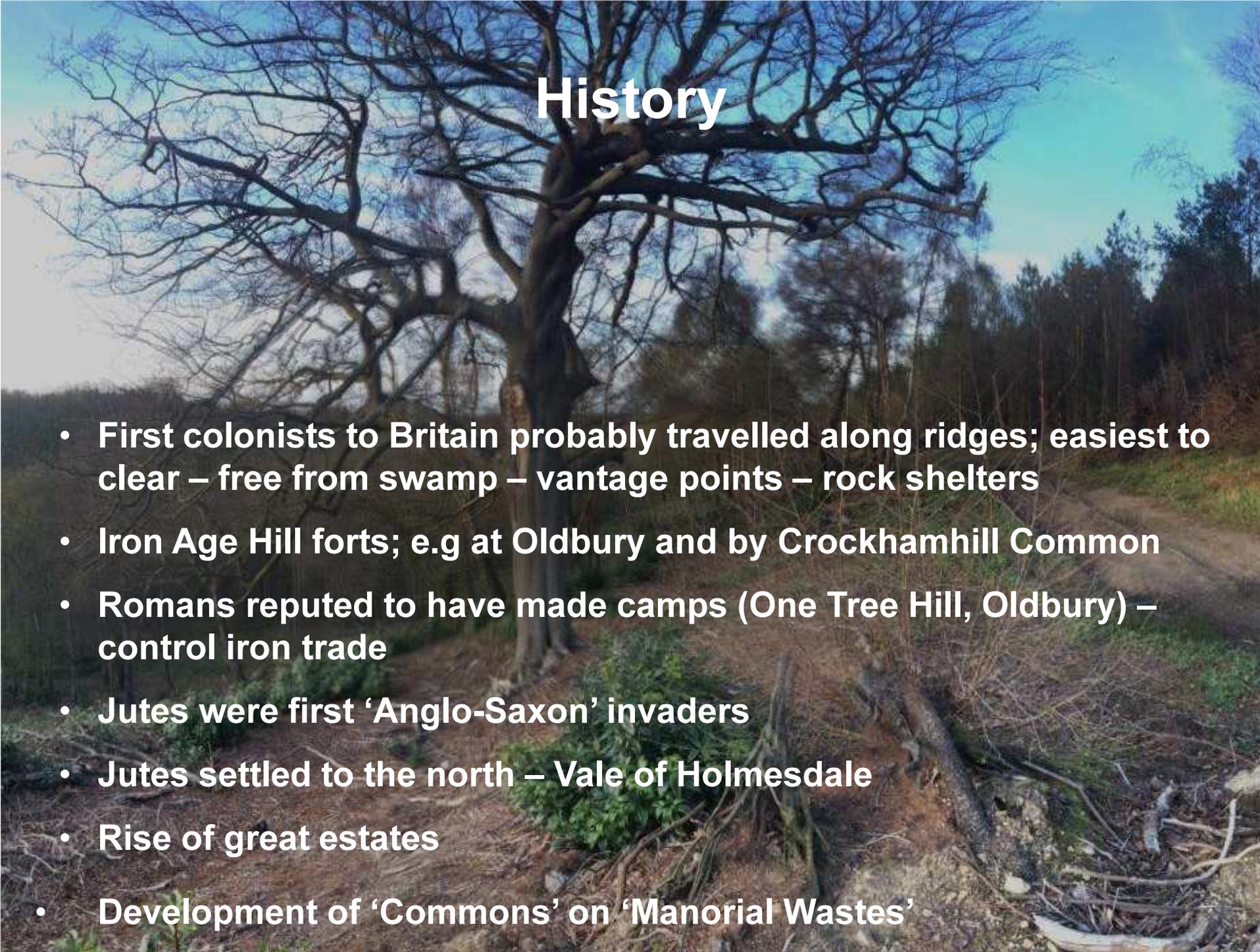
Author: Clem Rutter



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History

- **First colonists to Britain probably travelled along ridges; easiest to clear – free from swamp – vantage points – rock shelters**
- **Iron Age Hill forts; e.g at Oldbury and by Crockhamhill Common**
- **Romans reputed to have made camps (One Tree Hill, Oldbury) – control iron trade**
- **Jutes were first ‘Anglo-Saxon’ invaders**
- **Jutes settled to the north – Vale of Holmesdale**
- **Rise of great estates**
- **Development of ‘Commons’ on ‘Manorial Wastes’**

History

- **Agistment:** Right to pasture cattle, horses, sheep
- **Piscary:** Right to fish
- **Turbary:** Right to take sods of turf for fuel
- **Common of Marl:** Right to take chert, sand and gravel
- **Pannage:** Right to turn out pigs for a period in autumn to eat mast (beech mast, acorns and other nuts)
- **Estovers:** Right to take sufficient wood for the commoner's house or holding; usually limited to smaller trees, bushes (such as gorse) and fallen branches... 'By hook or by crook'



- “Wooded Heath”
- a kind of Wood Pasture
- Very ancient origins
- Traditional management created rich, varied habitats
- Features grand ‘pollards’ created to allow grazing at the same time as wood production
- Lowland Heath now very threatened in the UK, ‘Wooded Heath’ even rarer





The vision;

For local people to have **worked together** to restore the natural heritage of the Commons and to have increased our communities' capacity to **value, manage & protect** this same heritage by **building & sustaining skills, knowledge & resources**, now & into the future.



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Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Project



Development Stage

- **Appoint Development Officer**
- **Set up steering group**
- **Ecological surveys and historical research**
- **Public consultation at each Common**
- **Develop outline management plans for each common**
- **Volunteers recruited and trained**
- **Fundraising strategy developed and implemented for match funding**
- **Develop activity plans for the delivery phase**
- **Develop evaluation and communications plans**
- **Submit 2nd stage HLF bid - March 2018**



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Community Engagement



Community Engagement



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Community Engagement



The Green Wand Workshop

Courses include:

- ✦ Chair Making
- ✦ Garden Stools
- ✦ Living Willow 'Kilns'
- ✦ Willow Garden Structures
- ✦ Basket Making
- ✦ Handle Making
- ✦ Puff Lanes
- ✦ Hedgehog Coppicing

The National Centre for Horticulture
Buckingham Palace
London W1A 0AB

Community Engagement



Community Engagement



Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Project



Delivery Stage

- 4 year project – approx. £700k
- Project Manager, Community Engagement Officer, both .8fte
- Rolling programme of restoration work on each Common (2 per year)
- Volunteers recruited (150) and trained(15-20/year)
- Apprentices recruited and trained (one per year)
- Friends Groups established
- Heritage education programme launched (Bug Hunters, Landscape and Literature, Common Tales etc.)
- Organisations engaged and supported to deliver activities from their local Common



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Project Summary

We have secured an HLF Grant for a 'Development Stage' during which time we will collate more ecological information, carry out further consultation and run some 'pilot' events and activities leading to the submission in March 2018 of a funding application for a four year 'Delivery Stage' project.

Objective 1:

To have **restored the natural heritage** of the Commons and **opened up public access** through 26km of improved footpaths and bridleways & clear signage throughout

Objective 2:

To have **developed the capacity of local people** to take a lead role in the **on-going management** of some 300ha of Commons, their conservation & promotion of their heritage

Objective 3:

To have created opportunities for people (particularly under-represented groups) to **engage with and use** the Commons in ways they would like

Objective 4:

To have significantly **increased the knowledge** people (particularly children and young people) have about the natural heritage of the Commons

Thank you!



www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/sevenoaks-greensand-commons