

Site name: **Kidney and Bull Woods CWS**

Status(es): County Wildlife Site

Gridref: TL097192

Area: 40.3 hectares

Council(s): Central Bedfordshire

History:
1990 CWS recognized

CWS recognized for: Ancient semi-natural woodland
Trailing tormentil

Main habitats present:
UK BAP Priority Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

Other habitat(s) Conifer plantation
Mixed plantation
Neutral grassland
Marshy grassland
Bracken

Site Description:

Survey 1988

Kidney Wood is a broadleaved woodland, with semi-improved neutral grassland to the north at TL094196. The wood has a rather open canopy dominated by *Betula pendula* over most of its area. The shrub layer includes *Corylus avellana*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Prunus spinosa* and *Sambucus nigra*. *Rubus fruticosus* and *Pteridium aquilinum* dominate an abundant ground flora. The northwestern part of the wood has a canopy dominated by *Quercus robur* with *Castanea sativa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* also present. Understorey species include *Carpinus betulus* coppice, *Corylus avellana* coppice and *Ilex aquifolium*. Ground flora locally dominated by *Mercurialis perennis*, other species include *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Hedera helix* and cf. *Euphorbia amygdaloides*. The clearing along the path of a former power line has a dense ground flora dominated by *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rubus fruticosus* and *Chamerion angustifolium*, with very frequent *Betula pendula* saplings present. Other ground flora species include *Hypericum perforatum*, *Senecio jacobaea*, *Cirsium arvense* and *Juncus effusus*. *Cytisus scoparius*, *Cornus sanguinea* and *Salix* sp. are also present. The small area of marshy grassland is dominated by *Juncus effusus* with *Polytrichum* sp. moss and frequent *Cirsium palustre*. The narrow strip along the southern boundary has been clear-felled and replanted.

The semi-improved neutral grassland to the north is uncut and ungrazed. Grass species are dominated by *Lolium perenne*. Herb species include *Rumex obtusifolius*, *Senecio jacobaea*, *Cirsium vulgare* and *Sonchus* sp.

Phase 1 Survey 1990

The CWS is comprised of: Kidney Wood at TL093192; Bull and Lower Kidney Woods extending from TL093187 northeast to TL103196. Kidney, Lower Kidney and Bull Woods are largely ancient woodland.

Bull and Lower Kidney Woods

Bull and Lower Kidney Woods, extending from TL093187 northeast to TL103196. Bull Wood consists mainly of dense mixed plantation with a rather sparse ground flora. Close to the northwestern edge of the wood is a strip of rough, rushy neutral grassland below the path of a power line. The narrow strip of broadleaved woodland at the southwestern edge of Bull Wood has an open canopy and a sparse understorey. The block of coniferous plantation at TL093188 has a dense mature canopy and a very sparse understorey and ground flora. Lower Kidney Wood is mainly broadleaved woodland with a block of conifer plantation. The broadleaved area has a mature canopy and a sparse understorey.

Kidney Wood

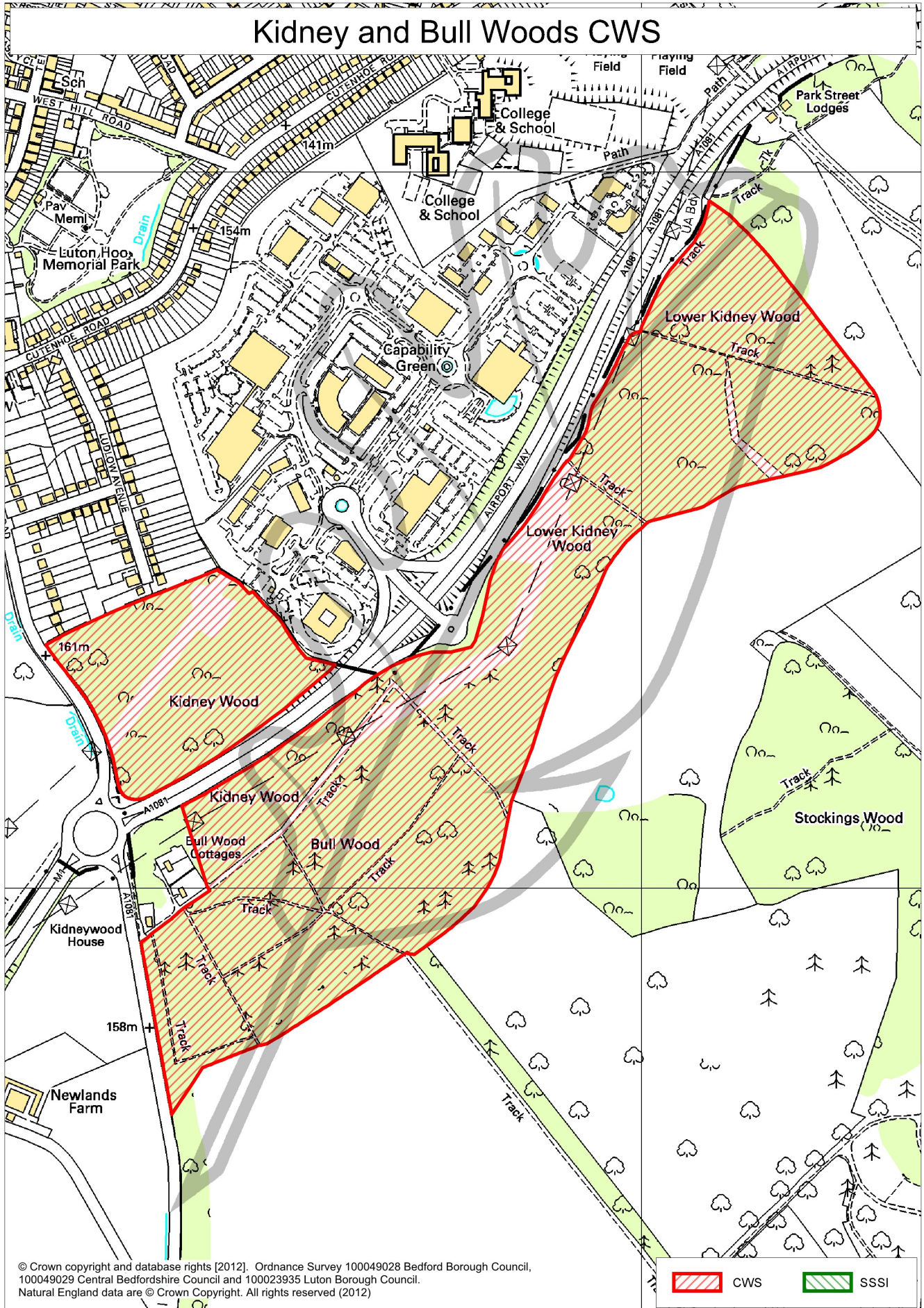
A block of broadleaved woodland and a very small area of marshy grassland. The wood has a rather open canopy and an abundant ground flora. It contains a clearing under the path of a former powerline

which is dominated by ruderal and fern vegetation and *Betula pendula* saplings. A narrow strip along the southeastern boundary of the wood has been clearfelled and replanted.

Survey 1998

The glade (TL093193) largely comprises of regenerating birch stumps surrounded by low-growing herbs, piles of wood chippings and dense patches of nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*). There are areas dominated by Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*). Scattered species include common centaury (*Centaureum erythraea*), bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), slender St Johns wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*), perforate St Johns wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), wood sedge (*Carex sylvatica*), common dog violet (*Viola riviniana*), hairy wood rush (*Luzula multiflora*) and heath speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*).

Kidney and Bull Woods CWS



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