

Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvements

A programme of woodland, grassland, wetland and water quality improvements

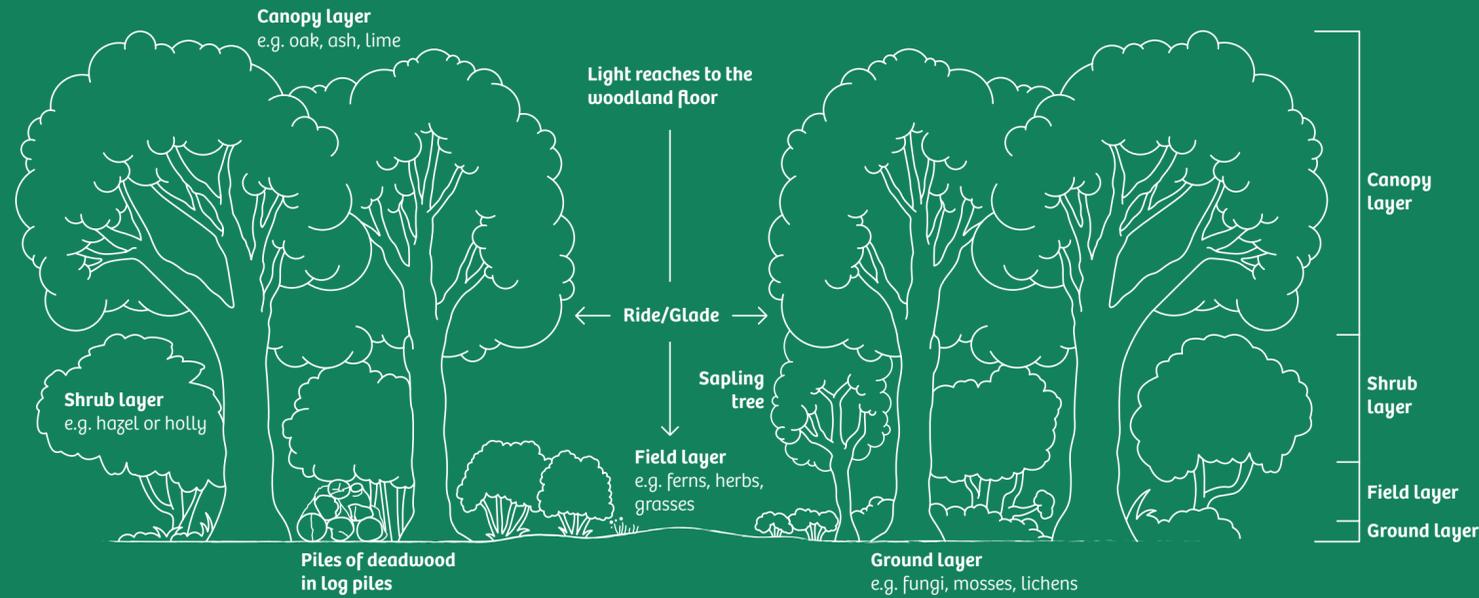
This project has enabled habitat enhancements in twelve of Solihull's woodlands

Solihull Council's woodlands are a key component of the landscape and are important for people and wildlife.

Managing our woodlands ensures that they have more variation in structure, age and species of trees which will increase their biodiversity – attracting and supporting a greater range of wildlife and plants.

Woodlands are composed of a variety of plants of differing heights and shapes. This gives a distinct vertical structure – canopy, shrub, field and ground layers.

Thinning the canopy creates the necessary space and light to enable trees to prosper and allow the next generation of saplings to establish. It also opens glades and rides, creating open areas that attract completely different flowers and wildlife from the rest of the wood.



The woodland structure diagram shows the layers and how rides /glades allow light into the woodland.

Most woodland butterflies are sun-loving insects and the majority only breed in open rides and glades which provide warm and sunny micro-climates. Bats also use rides for hunting attracted by the rich insect life.

Alcott Wood

Alcott Wood is an ancient semi-natural oak woodland and may have been part of the Chelmsley Wood and one of the last remnants of the Forest of Arden. Alcott Wood is also a Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site.

A number of species associated with ancient woodland are found here including wood anemone, remote sedge, wood sorrel, greater stitchwort and wood sage. The wood has a good age range of tree species including birch, rowan and oak with an understorey of hazel, holly and hawthorn.

Some species of animals and plants found in the wood



Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) is a small, shrubby tree. It has long, yellow, male catkins in spring and green, ripening to brown, hazelnuts that appear in late summer. These nuts are a favourite food of grey squirrels, dormice and wood mice, and some small mammals will hide their finds, storing them in burrows or old birds' nests.



Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*) is a spreading groundcover woodland plant. Clusters of white flowers appear in spring. These flowers have a delicious scent which attracts bees. It thrives in sun or dappled shade, the leaves have a hay-like scent when pulled up and dried – try keeping sachets of it among your clothes as a moth deterrent.

Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) is a brightly coloured crow that can be found in woodland, parks and gardens. Generally a shy bird, its screaming call is most likely to be heard as it flies between trees. Jays eat invertebrates, especially caterpillars and beetles and will also sometimes take eggs and young birds from nests. They love acorns which they often leave hidden.



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