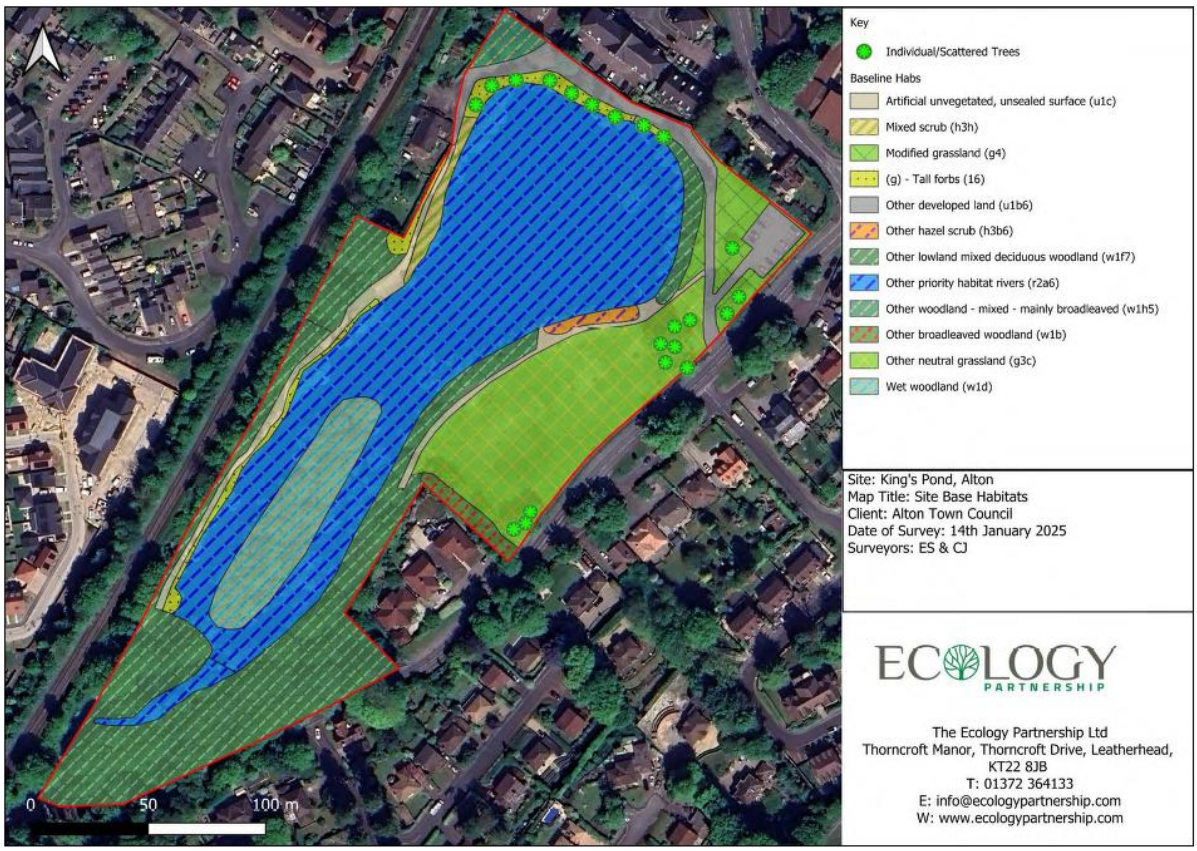
Kings Pond

Ecological Summary

This is a precis of the ecological surveys on the Kings Pond website pages.



General

The site contains a pond surrounded by areas of woodland and grassland with scattered trees. There are patches of forbs and mixed scrub. The woodland around the pond is generally mixed deciduous with one area of wet woodland in the SW corner of the site. The large island is classified as wet woodland.

The site is moderately well connected to the wider landscape with the railway embankment providing the best connections to other habitats.

There are some small patches of invasive plant species on the site – Japanese knotweed, bamboo, ground elder and buddleia.

Although the habitat may be suitable for otters and water voles there are no indications that these are ever present.

Bats

Bats use the site as a feeding ground and for commuting.

Walkover surveys recorded moderate to low activity levels with a large number of calls from a relatively small number of individuals of common species primarily soprano pipistrelle.

Static detectors recorded calls from 13 species. 93% of recorded calls were from Soprano and Common Pipistrelles; call made by other species were very low, down to only 2 calls by a Natterer's Bat out of a total of 52,000 for all species.

73% of the activity was recorded on the N side of the site where the railway embankment provides an obvious commuting route. The main foraging areas, in order of importance, are: the area on the W side of the pond alongside the railway embankment; the N end of the pond adjacent to Waterside Court; the central area of the pond just N of the main island.

Overall, the site is considered to support a moderate to high level of bat activity.

There are no bats roosting on the site.

Birds

The Wintering Bird survey over December 24, January and February 25, recorded 37 species on site and acknowledged that some other may not have been seen such as Kingfisher. Some species are of conservation concern. Those that are attracted by the pond habitat include gulls (Herring, Lesser Black-backed & Black-headed), Gadwall, Mallard & Moorhen. Grey Heron. Egrets and Cormorants were also observed.

The survey concluded that the site is likely of moderate importance for resident foraging birds particularly in terms of opportunities for feeding and winter roosting. The site is not considered to be an important resource for migrant wintering birds.

A survey in the breeding season (April, May , June), recorded 20 probable or confirmed breeding bird species. Of those that are attracted by the pond habitat the species of conservation concern are Mallard and Moorhen. Other species attracted by the pond habitat were Canada Goose, Coot, Grey Heron, Mute Swan and, probably Little Grebe. Approximately 25 other species, not breeding, were recorded on site.

This is considered to be a moderately large assemblage for a site of this size due to a combination of the habitats available and the significant supplementary food available during the breeding season.

Great Crested Newts

Kings Pond tested negative for Great Crested Newt presence. (DNA testing of the water)

Reptiles

A survey was conducted over 7 visits in September 25. No reptiles were recorded. A single slow worm was observed on a separate occasion so there is probably a low population on the site but may be associated with the cottage garden or the railway embankment. The site is not a key reptile site.

Amphibians

Generally, no amphibians are observed on site. The refugia used for the reptile survey did attract one or two common toads and one common frog. Amphibians are not entirely absent, but any population is very low.

Invertebrates

A survey was carried out in the 2026 season. The majority of the habitat elements on the site were considered minor, some considered moderate, for invertebrates (insects). 209 species were identified on site, seven of which have conservation designations. Three of these are associated with riparian (waterside) habitats.

Five specific habitat assemblages for invertebrates were identified. All were considered to be in unfavourable condition.

The water quality on site was assessed as poor with a very low score on the BWMP assessment method.

Dragonflies and Damselflies

A survey was carried out across the period May to September 26.

The population of dragonflies and damselflies at King's Pond found by this survey was very restricted both in number of species and the number of individuals. The total of only two (possibly 3) species observed is very low for a lowland pond of this size.

Pondlife

In addition to the invertebrate survey, Dr June Chatfield has done some limited sampling and made some observations:

- Samples taken along the edge of the pond show black silt and black plant debris – a sign of an oxygen deficient situation. Small numbers of animal life were found.
- This points to a limited ecosystem. The almost complete absence of aquatic plants gives little basis for food chains.
- Dr Chatfield attributes the deficiency of the ecosystem at King's Pond largely to unsustainable populations of mallards and geese with over abundant public feeding as the major cause of the pond imbalance.

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