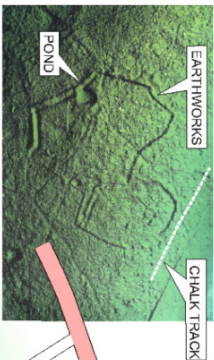


Welcome to Common Wood



Archaeology of the wood

- A** An earthenwork enclosure - covers nearly 4 acres on a hill-top plateau with substantial outer bank, inner ditch and pond. Excavation of brooches, coins, jars and bowls near the remains of an imposing south-facing, outward-facing entrance revealed a Romano-British settlement and evidence of iron smelting, perhaps a continuation of pre-Roman industry. Records of Backs 48 (2003), pp.37-53. (See LIDAR image to right).
- B** An old holloway, which descends northwards from the plateau to Deadmans Dean Bottom.
- C** A banked oval pond - with no obvious entrance so perhaps an ornamental feature built by Earl Howe after the wood was enclosed in 1855.
- D** The Chalk Track - Map evidence (1875) shows that this track was put in after the 1855 enclosure. 13 inches of excavated chalk from outside the wood were added in 1985 to improve the surface for vehicles.
- E** A large quarry, one of seven. Flints, sand and perhaps clay, were most commonly quarried in the wood. There are also at least a dozen 19th century saw pits spread throughout the wood.
- F** A double bank and ditch running north from the main gate to Holloway. There are numerous old trackways and small banked boundaries elsewhere in the wood.
- G** Lynchets or terraces in the fields to the NE of Deadmans Dean Bottom have been observed in 1947 aerial photographs and are relics of Bronze Age, Iron Age or medieval farmers in the valley.



Ecology of the wood

Farther Barn Field is an open field, but has been part-planted and is grazed by cattle.

Gravelly Way Plantation is a former silver birch and larch plantation, which is being thinned and replanted with native species.

Elephant Tree - Two beech trees have grown together to form the shape of an elephant's trunk. It can be seen just above the W of Middle Way. (see map, and picture at left).

Common Wood is a semi-natural Ancient Woodland. This means it has been woodland for over 400 years but has been managed by man for most, if not all that time. The mainly beech woodland we see today was mostly planted by the Penn Estate after the 1855 enclosure, with some Douglas Fir avenues. Over the years, the beech has been felled either by deer falling whole areas, or by selective felling to preserve a continuous canopy. This, combined with a rich variety of soil types, has resulted in an interesting mix of flora within the wood.

There are no less than 14 of the nationally recognised "vegetation classifications" within the wood, from Birch and Bramble, to Grass and Bramble scrub, to Oak with Silver Birch, to Yew. This makes for excellent biodiversity. In 2003, 150 plant and tree types, 85 fungi (including the first UK report of Russula lepidocory) and 40 bird species were recorded. Less common mammals include badgers, wood mice, muntjac and occasional roe deer.

Please help us to look after our woodlands:

- Litter - please pick up and take it home
- Dogs - please control, max 4 per person, clear poo from paths
- Horse riders - only with permit and on designated paths
- Cyclists - limit your speed, warning of approach
- Foraging and firewood - permission needed
- Fly-tipping - report to Penn Parish Clerk 01494 815458
- Fires - none allowed
- Please keep to footpaths - leave flora and fauna in peace



For more information on the woods please visit:

<http://commonwood.pennandtyersgreen.org.uk>



The upkeep of Common Wood is by volunteers and voluntary contributions.

To help, please email - commonwoodvolunteer@gmail.com



This map has been produced by the Penn and Tyers Green Residents Society 2020



Old Names

(earliest reference date in brackets)

Old Penn Street Way is the surviving centre part of the main track, through the wood from Potters Cross to Penn Street, used before the 1855 enclosure established modern roads (Common Wood Lane and New Road).

Red Gate (1838) was an entrance to Wycombe Heath. The side banks of Penn House Way descending to Red Gate are evidence of long use.

Barnfield (1690), **Splinter** (1690) and **Crook Snails** (1838) are old field names.

Deadmans Dean Bottom (1838) - This former trackway probably owes its name to the discovery of an Anglo-Saxon grave, complete with skeleton and iron belt-buckle, in 1828. A Bronze Age axe was found c.1905.

The Two Sisters (1852) were two old beech trees on the Rushmoor Path side of Farther Barn Field.

The Penna is the central open place of Penn Wood where the purple-leaved beech from Prince Charles' Highgrove estate was planted by Earl Howe in 2000 to mark the purchase of the wood by the Woodland Trust after its rescue from becoming a golf course.

Goose Pond Gate reminds us of the original role of Penn Wood as common land before enclosure. A 17th-century protest poem runs: "The law locks up the man and woman, who steals the goose from off the common/ But leaves the greater villain loose, who steals the common from the goose." The nearby Gagemoor Pond could be a misheard Old English Gagemoor Pond.

Build-up Areas

Woods open to the public

Private Woodland

Dedicated Public Footpaths

Permitted Footpaths

Paths also used by horse riders (see permits & cycles)

Circular walks

Long Trail (10 miles - 6 days)

Sport Trail (10 miles - 1 day)

Information boards

Waymark posts

Limited outside parking

