



## History

The area is underlain by chalk, a soft calcareous rock which is visible in parts of the site. It has been quarried here since at least Roman times. There is evidence all over the site, including banks, trackways, pits and quarry faces, most now overgrown with trees and bushes.

Until the early 20th century, the thin chalky soils on the steeper slopes were grazed. This produced a grassland rich in wild flowers and associated wildlife. Pockets of this 'chalk grassland' can be found at Gibbet Hill.

Other parts of the site were cultivated but later abandoned and have developed into wildflower grassland and scrub. The southern end was planted with beech in the 1850s, with many being lost to the gales of 1990. New trees and shrubs have grown to fill the gaps.



## Management

Grassland habitats are managed predominantly by grazing during the summer months, with sheep grazing the chalk grassland of Gibbet Hill, while cattle graze the large area of grassland at the north of the site.

The wood are managed to ensure their long-term survival, with 'thinning' out of some trees so that others can grow strong. Where possible, dead wood is left - it is great for insects and fungi. Coppicing along the woodland paths lets in the sun and creates a good habitat for plants,



## Key

- Surfaced paths
- Unsurfaced paths
- Car park
- Interpretation panels
- Benches
- Large Mobility (RADAR) gate
- Steps
- Kissing gate
- Fenceline
- Public footpath
- Public bridleway

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Find out more about Weston Hills.