



WOODLAND TRUST

# Stratfield Brake



Whether you're walking your dog, bird watching or strolling along the woodland paths, Stratfield Brake is always open for you to enjoy the changing seasons of the countryside.

## WELCOME

Managed by the Woodland Trust, Stratfield Brake is the ideal location for a peaceful visit at any time of year.

There's a lot to see and do including birdwatching at the wetland area, finding bluebells during spring, or making the most of the network of paths to enjoy a quiet walk or make a detour across to the Oxford Canal.

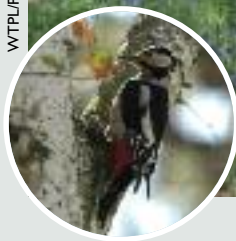


Oxford Canal

Philip Halling



WTPL/Pete Holmes



## HOW TO GET THERE

**Grid reference:** SP494119

**OS (1:50,000) sheet** 164

**By car:** Stratfield Brake is reached by vehicle from the A4260 road. The site is about a mile south from Kidlington town centre and adjacent to Stratfield Brake Sports Ground.



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**The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 6LL**

**Tel: 01476 581111 [woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk)**

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## INTRODUCTION

Stratfield Brake is an 18.5 hectare site made up of a mature wood, a young wood and a wetland area. The Woodland Trust began managing the site from 1997 after establishing a lease with the site's owner, Oxfordshire County Council.

Several paths cross the site, some of which have been surfaced to make them easier to use. One such path provides a circular route from the car park and runs past the mature wood and the young wood. Another goes through the mature wood, while a third leads out of the site and joins the Oxford Canal towpath. Timber seats can be found near the paths so you can stop to take a break or admire the view.



Path through young woodland



WTPL/Anna Badley

WTPL/Dick Todd

## WHAT TO SEE

In the spring you'll find beautiful displays of bluebells and other woodland flowers in the mature woodland. The wood contains tree species like oak, field maple and elm, as well as many bird species such as tree creepers, rooks and woodpeckers. Old oak trees provide habitats not just for birds but also fungi, mosses, insects and bats.

The wetland area is another great place to look for birds. Many bird species –including mute swans, tufted ducks, herons, coots and types of gulls – use the open water area and the islands. The areas of taller lakeside vegetation are good places to spot warblers during the summer. A herd of Dexter cattle graze the grassland areas alongside the wetland throughout summer and autumn, which helps create suitable wet meadow conditions for birds and insects.

The young woodland was planted in 1997 using at least ten different species of native tree, all of which are thriving on the fertile site. How many tree species can you find?

## THE FUTURE

How will Stratfield Brake look in the future?

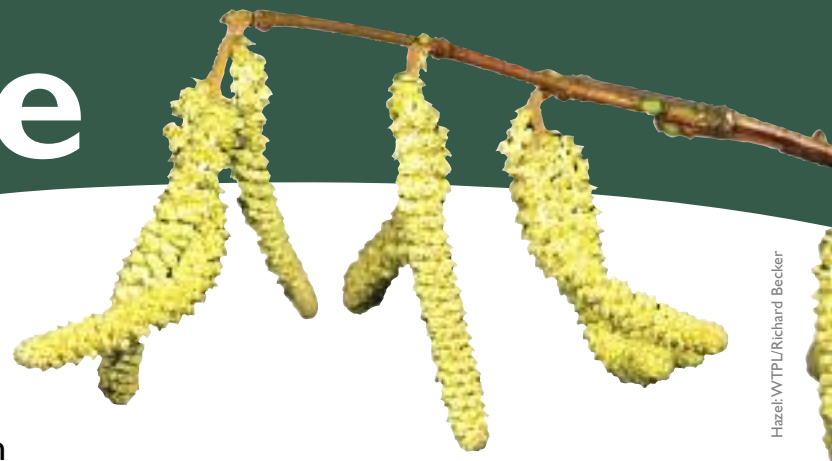
The young woodland will gradually develop into a mature wood with old trees, glades and self-sown trees. The existing mature woodland will continue to thrive with the bluebells slowly spreading through the site. Meanwhile, the wetland and grassland areas will carry on developing due to fluctuating water levels, grazing management and natural vegetation succession.



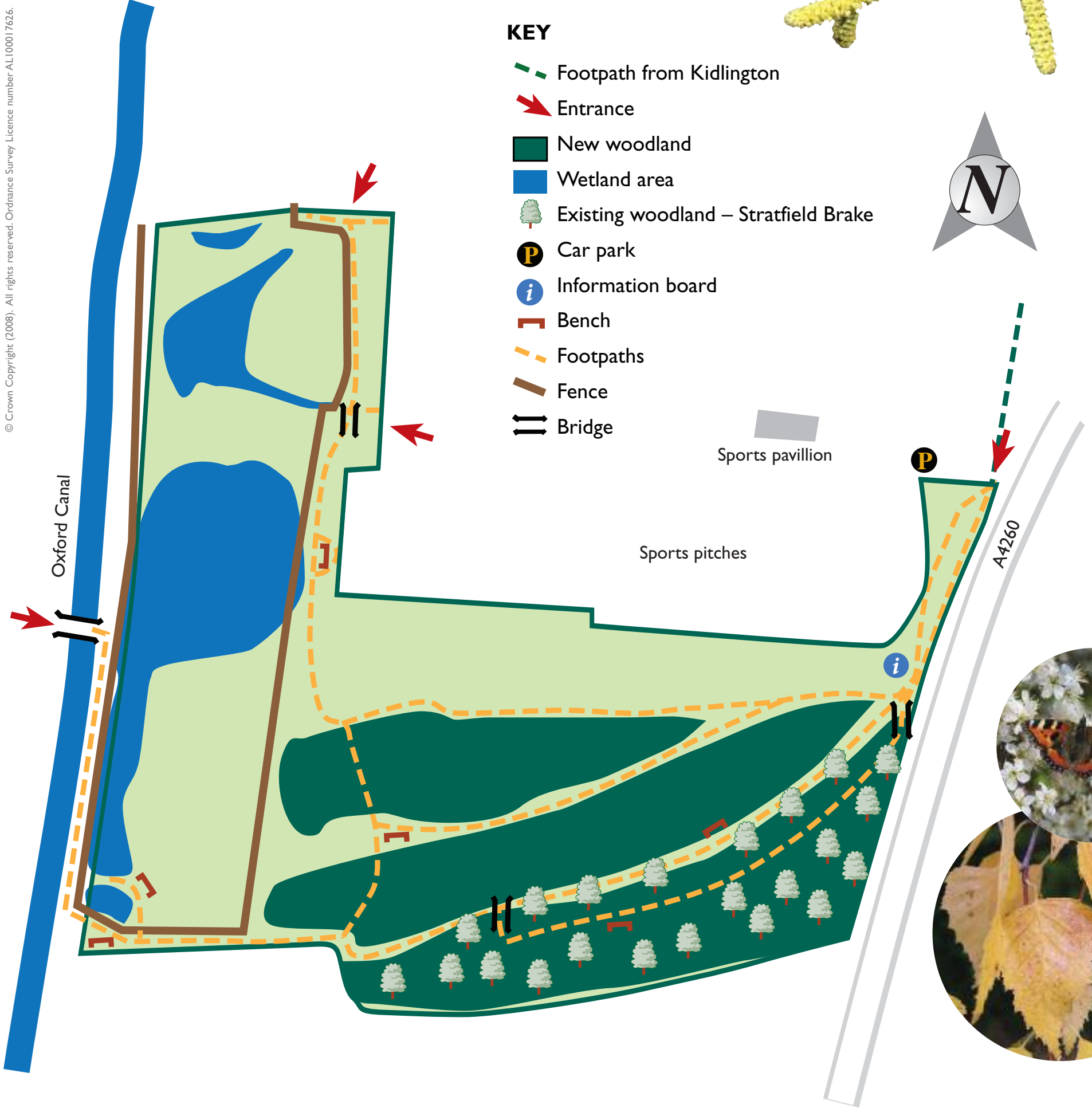
Coots: WTPL/Bob Carter; swan: WTPL/Georgina Smith



# Stratfield Brake



Hazel: WTPU/Richard Becker



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Blackthorn: WTPU/Phil Lockwood



Birch: WTPU/Pete Holmes

