

COUNTY: AVON

SITE NAME: CLEEVE WOOD, HANHAM

DISTRICT: KINGSWOOD

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and countryside Act 1981 as amended

Local Planning Authority: AVON COUNTY COUNCIL, Kingswood District Council

National Grid Reference: ST 655703

Area: 8.9 (ha.) 21.9 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 172

1:10,000: ST 67 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1966

Date of Last Revision: 1974

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1988

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Boundary amended by extension and deletion.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Cleeve Wood is situated on the steep south facing slopes of the River Avon valley near to the City of Bristol. Although much of the wood has been planted with non-native species it contains a very large population of an uncommon plant.

The soil is of the Sherborne Association type, has developed over Jurassic limestone and clay and is a slowly permeable, calcareous, clay.

The primary scientific interest of the wood is the particularly large population of Bath Asparagus *Ornithogalum pyrenaicum* which it supports. The Bath Asparagus in Cleeve Wood represents what is considered to be the largest and most stable population of this plant in this its centre of distribution.

The wood is derived from the calcareous Ash-Wych Elm (southern variant) type but has been much planted with non-native species mainly Beech *Fagus sylvatica* and Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* but with some Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* and Cypress trees *Cupressus*. In the more natural areas of the wood Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* is dominant with occasional Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* standards. In such places the shrub layer is dominated by Field Maple *Acer campestre*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Hazel *Corylus avellana* and young Wych Elm *Ulmus glabra*.

The field layer in many areas is dominated by Ivy *Hedera helix*, especially on the disturbed slopes. Other common ground flora includes Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*, Stinking Iris *Iris foetidissima*, Clematis *Clematis vitalba* and Slender False Brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*.