

Westbrook Hay

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

In 2003, Box Moor Trust acquired the freehold of 165 acres of mixed woodland and pasture known as Westbrook Hay Farm, which is all that remains of the Ryder family estate that once stretched from Bourne End to Bovingdon. Westbrook Hay comprises a variety of different environments and habitats, which are cared for by the Trust for the benefit of the community and nature. It is now managed as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and features a choice of walk routes to suit all abilities.



Photo: Liz Warriner

Chalk Grassland

Once parkland, the field now known as Bovingdon Reach is subject to minimal management to allow natural regeneration of a chalk downland slope with a rich diversity of plants. In the summer, there is a prolific display of butterflies, insects and birds, including the Marbled White butterfly and Skylarks. Orchids, including Common-spotted, Pyramidal and Bee orchids, can be seen in the chalk meadows during summer. Some fields provide grazing for the Trust's sheep, cattle and goats.



Photo: Katherine Harper

Livestock

You may encounter some of our livestock while walking around Westbrook Hay. We manage the land with the help of our rare breed cattle and sheep for conservation grazing. We also have a small herd of Old English goats, which are excellent at scrub management. To see where our animals are currently grazing, please view our stock map. If you are walking a dog, please do not allow it to chase any of the livestock or wild animals that you may encounter. Your dog must be under effective control at all times.



Photo: Chris Ward

Woods and Trees

Hay Wood is in part ancient, being the remnants of an old, wooded field system. Ramacre, Gorsefield and Green Croft are all secondary woodland. Ramacre is notable for a very old yew wood, close to where the path enters from Three Crofts. The field know as Ryders boasts a splendid avenue of lime trees. The most visible tree on the estate is the Giant Wellingtonia (sequoia) situated in the field behind the Old Barn, planted in the late 1850s and standing around 140ft tall.



Photo: John Sparrow

Ponds

The large pond on Preston Hill was originally created in 1997 to provide a wet area on the otherwise dry landscape. It was completely refurbished in 2023 and now supports a wide range of wildlife, including newts, dragonflies and damselflies. The water is ground sourced and pumped from a borehole. There are smaller wildlife ponds in Hay Wood and behind the Old Barn.



Scan here to view our latest stock map



Map Key

- ○ ○ ○ Walk Route 1 (600m*)
- ● ● ● Walk Route 2 (1.5km**)
- ● ● ● Walk Route 3 (3km*)
- ● ● ● Walk Route 4 (4.8km*)
- Field Boundaries

* Please note that all distances shown are approximate
** All-weather path



The Box Moor Trust



Scan to donate

Please consider making a donation to help support our charity

Visit our website to find out more
www.boxmoortrust.org.uk