



**The Land Trust** is a charity committed to the long-term sustainable management of open space for community benefit. The Trust took on the management of the Woodlands in 2014.



**Grainger PLC** is the UK's largest specialist residential property owner, manager and developer and is responsible for the overall Wellesley Aldershot project.



**BVCP** is a partnership project between Hampshire County Council, other local authorities and community organisations working to improve and maintain the River Blackwater and associated green spaces. BVCP undertakes the day-to-day site management of the Woodlands.



**TCV** is the UK's community volunteer charity that works to create healthier and happier communities through environmental conservation. Their mission is to connect people and green spaces to deliver lasting outcomes for both. TCV are responsible for developing community engagement in the Woodlands.

This project was also supported by Farnborough Airport Community Environmental Fund.

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# Nature and Heritage Rubbings Trail



Follow the trail to discover some of the nature and heritage of Wellesley Woodlands.

Use a wax crayon to take a rubbing of each plaque. There are 18 plaques to find.

Find more trails and activities at [wellesleywoodlands.co.uk](http://wellesleywoodlands.co.uk)



A Natural Partnership





## Stag Beetle

An adult Stag beetle can be up to 75mm long. Male beetles have huge antlers which are used in courtship displays and to wrestle other males. Stag beetle larvae can be up to 110mm long and feed on decaying wood under the ground as deep as half a metre down, from three to seven years. Adults can't feed on solid food and rely on the fat reserves built up whilst developing as a larva.

**Did you know:** Stag beetles spend the winter underground in the soil and usually emerge from mid-May onwards.

Rubbing Area

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## Wellington Statue

The Wellington statue in Aldershot is a monument to Arthur Wellesley: 1st Duke of Wellington, victor at the Battle of Waterloo and later Prime Minister of the UK. Sculpted by Matthew Cotes Wyatt, it was the largest equestrian statue in Britain when it was unveiled at its original location on the Wellington Arch at Hyde Park Corner in 1846.

**Did you know:** In 1883 the future King Edward VII, suggested that it should be moved to Aldershot Military Town, "where it will be highly regarded by the Army."

Rubbing Area

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## Scots Pine

Scots pine is an evergreen conifer native to northern Europe, and is one of just three conifers native to the UK. Mature trees grow to 35 metres and can live for up to 700 years. After pollination by wind, the female flowers turn green and develop into cones. They mature the following season, meaning there are always cones of different ages on the one tree.

**Did you know:** Scots pine timber is one of the strongest softwoods available, and it is used in the manufacture of telegraph poles, pit props, gate posts and fencing.

Rubbing Area

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## Heather

Heather is an evergreen plant with spiky leaves and small purple, pink, or white flowers. In the UK it grows across heath and moorland in low, dense, scrubby bushes. Our three most common heathers are Bell heather, Ling and Cross-leaved Heath.

**Did you know:** The Bell heather's name comes from the flower being shaped like a bell.

Rubbing Area

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## Firing Wall WWI

These two walls (east and west) are the remains of a machine gun range built with bricks from a company that closed in 1930, indicating they were built around World War I. The two walls are slightly different, the eastern one being reinforced with 12.5mm thick iron sheeting, suggesting this was a later wall.

**Did you know:** The eastern wall has graffiti from 1941, showing it had fallen into disuse by World War II. Can you spot it?

Rubbing Area



## Finger Post

A fingerpost, sometimes called a guide post, is a traditional sign post used in the UK made up of a post with one or more arms, known as fingers, which point in the direction of the places named on them. There are 49 finger posts in Wellesley Woodlands, all made from oak, pointing the way to different areas. How many have you seen today?

**Did you know:** The oldest finger post in existence is thought to be in Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, which dates back to 1669.

Rubbing Area



## Centipede

The Common centipede is brown/red in colour with long antennae at the front and a pair of long legs at the back. These back legs are almost as long as the front antennae, making it quite difficult to tell front from back. The centipede can crawl backwards as easily as it can forwards, using these long back legs as another pair of feelers.

**Did you know:** Although the name centipede suggests they have 100 legs, in Britain they always have an odd number of pairs of legs, ranging from 15 to 101 pairs.

Rubbing Area



## Badger

Badgers are most easily identified by their black and white striped head - the silver-grey hair on their body makes them difficult to make out especially in poor light. Signs of badger activity can be seen more easily than the animal itself as they are nocturnal. Look for evidence such as distinctive 5-toed footprints and mounds of earth outside the entrances to setts.

**Did you know:** Badgers are omnivorous - they eat both animals and plants - and are able to choose from a wide range of food.

Rubbing Area





## Wellesley Former Arch

A wooden archway was carved by Nick Speakman of 3DWood to mark the public opening of the Woodlands on 14 November 2015. The W shape emulated the distinctive Wellesley logo. Carved into the arms were some of the animals and plants found in the area. In 2023 the arch started to rot and was given a new lease of life by the site ranger as standing totem poles.

**Did you know:** The 'loop' at the top of the sculpture has been made from an old shopping trolley, embracing the ethos of recycling.

Rubbing Area



## Beech

Common beech is a large tree, native to southern England and South Wales. Mature trees grow to a height of more than 40 metres. Beech is associated with femininity and is often considered the queen of British trees, where oak is the king.

**Did you know:** Beech trees are commonly used to carve lovers' initials on as it scars so easily and is unable to heal itself completely.



## Nature & Heritage - Rubbings Trail

The Nature & Heritage Trail comprises 18 rubbing posts located along the Beech & Plane Trails within Wellesley Woodlands. These trails are part of a wider network of waymarked trails within the Woodlands that enable you to explore this beautiful area.



### Key

- Rubbing Plaque Post
- Beech Trail
- Plane Trail
- Willow Trail
- Chestnut Trail
- Oak Trail
- Holly Trail
- Birch Trail
- Foothpath
- Access Point
- Parking
- Parking (not 24 hours)
- Firing Wall



## Bumblebee

There are 24 species of Bumblebee in Britain but only eight are both widespread and abundant. Most common is the buff-tailed bumblebee, one of the biggest, with 2 golden yellow stripes and a brownish tail. Bumblebees are vital pollinators of crops and wildflowers, being particularly effective with tomatoes as their buzzing frequency releases large pollen loads.

**Did you know:** Bumblebees visit flowers as far as 2km away to feed on the nectar and gather pollen.

Rubbing Area



## Silver Birch

Silver birch is a medium-sized deciduous tree native throughout the UK, which can reach 30 metres in height, with drooping branches and white bark which sheds layers like tissue paper. Silver birch provides food and habitat for more than 300 insect species and its leaves are an important food for caterpillars.

**Did you know:** Pollen of the birch tree is responsible for 15-20% of hay fever cases in the northern hemisphere.

Rubbing Area





## Dragonfly

Dragonflies are often confused with damselflies as they are closely related. However, dragonflies have much larger eyes, which take up most of their head. Both have two sets of wings, but the hind wings of a dragonfly are larger and are extended out like aeroplane wings, even when resting. Dragonflies that you might see around Wellesley Woodlands include the Keeled Skimmer and Emperor dragonfly.

**Did you know:** Dragonflies are thought to have been on the planet for 300 million years, and once had a wingspan of 2 ½ feet!

Rubbing Area



## Saluting Soldier

Established in 1854, Aldershot has long been seen as the home of the British Army. The garrison was established when the War Department bought land near the village of Aldershot to create a permanent training camp for the British Army. Over time, this camp grew into a military town and continues to be used by the Army to the present day.

**Did you know:** The Support Command of the British Army has its HQ in Aldershot. The Garrison here plays host to around 70 military units and organisations.

Rubbing Area





## Bedford RL Truck

The Bedford RL was the British military's main truck from the mid-1950s until the late 1960s. The truck formed the mainstay of Aldershot's troop transport fleet during this period. For young men joining the Royal Corps of Transport at Buller Barracks, the RL would be the vehicle in which they would undertake basic driver training.

**Did you know:** Many specialist models of the RL were also built; including recovery vehicles, mobile workshops, radio vans and cable layers.

Rubbing Area



## Oak

English Oak is the most common tree in the UK and has assumed the status of a national emblem. Oak trees produce acorns, but not until the tree is at least 40 years old. Peak acorn production usually occurs after around 80-120 years.

**Did you know:** Oak trees often grow to the height of around five double decker buses (21 metres) and often live for over 300 years.

Rubbing Area





## Holly

Holly is an evergreen shrub with distinct spiked, glossy leaves. Mature trees can grow up to 15m and live for 300 years. Younger plants have spiky leaves all over to protect it, but leaves in the upper parts of taller trees are likely to be smooth.

**Did you know:** A common old-wives-tale says that the more red berries there are on a holly bush, the harsher the winter will be.

Rubbing Area



## Firing Wall WWII

This brick wall is the remains of a machine gun range with similar design and construction to the pair of WWI firing walls, dating to around 1930. The raised earthworks at either side of the wall would have been where the soldiers were positioned before they began practice firing at it.

**Did you know:** A shell casing from 1944 was found here in recent years, suggesting this range remained in use well into World War II.

Rubbing Area

