



Heartwood Halo





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The land around Heartwood Forest is nourished by and in return nourishes the forest within.

The permeable **land, water and air** resources are shared with and supported by the forest's **wildlife, flora and fauna**, which in turn **supports the human environment** for our physical and mental health.

Known as **ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS**

This land should be kept natural forever more.

Red list birds in North St Albans



Heartwood red list bird species:



Species such as Skylark are completely intolerant of any form of development and require open land for breeding.

| | |
|----------------|----|
| Fieldfare | RL |
| Hawfinch | RL |
| Herring Gull | RL |
| House Sparrow | RL |
| Lapwing | RL |
| Lesser Redpoll | RL |
| Linnet | RL |
| Mistle Thrush | RL |
| Redwing | RL |
| Skylark | RL |
| Song Thrush | RL |
| Starling | RL |
| Yellow Wagtail | RL |
| Yellowhammer | RL |

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Other source 2022 | |
| Cuckoo | RL |

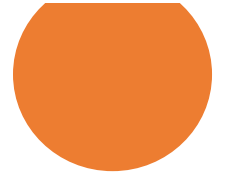
| Red list analysis in North St Albans | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Bird | | Date |
| Cuckoo | | May-22 |
| Song Thrush | | May-23 |
| Skylark | | May-23 |
| Mistle Thrush | | May-23 |
| Nightingale | | May-23 |
| Redwing | Feb 2022 and Feb 2023 | |
| Yellowhammer | Feb 2022 and May 2023 | |
| Starling | | May-23 |

Barn Owls and Kestrels

As the tree canopy at Heartwood begins to close, the number of Barn Owls and Kestrels will decline.

The future management of the remaining areas of open grassland will be critical for maintaining the presence of these two species.

Source: Hertfordshire Natural History Society
Heartwood Update 2022



Heartwood Mammals



Two of the UK's "at risk or lost" species are currently present at Heartwood, both bat species.

- Barbastella (a pipistelle)
- Leisler's

[Source: MS RL20 England.pdf \(mammal.org.uk\)](#)



“The results for the rare Barbastelle Bat (*Barbastella barbastellus*) are of particular interest as it is also being studied across Hertfordshire as part of the Hertfordshire Barbastelle project. Up to 2020, they had only been detected occasionally in Heartwood, but the recent recordings show that they are the most active species after the two Pipistrelle species.”

Source:

Long-term monitoring at Heartwood Forest – 2022 update

Hertfordshire Natural History Society

Foragers from the forest



Badgers

There are active setts on all sides of Heartwood Forest.

Badger setts can be up to 100mtrs long underground, and they forage for distance of around 2.5km from their setts.

Source: [About UK Badgers and their fascinating lives](#) | [Badger Trust](#)

Wood Mouse

Most wood mice stay in the same general area but may travel a quarter of a mile (400m) in one night to forage in the open.

They will venture into open spaces where other small mammals will rarely go.



Pipistrelle Bats

Forages up to 5km from roost around the surrounding land.

Source: University of Bristol School of Biological Sciences

Who comes with humans?

Any development is likely to bring an increased number of cats closer to Heartwood Forest.

Cat predation is not confined to gardens and can be a problem.

The potential impact is particularly sensitive when next to scarce and protected habitats.

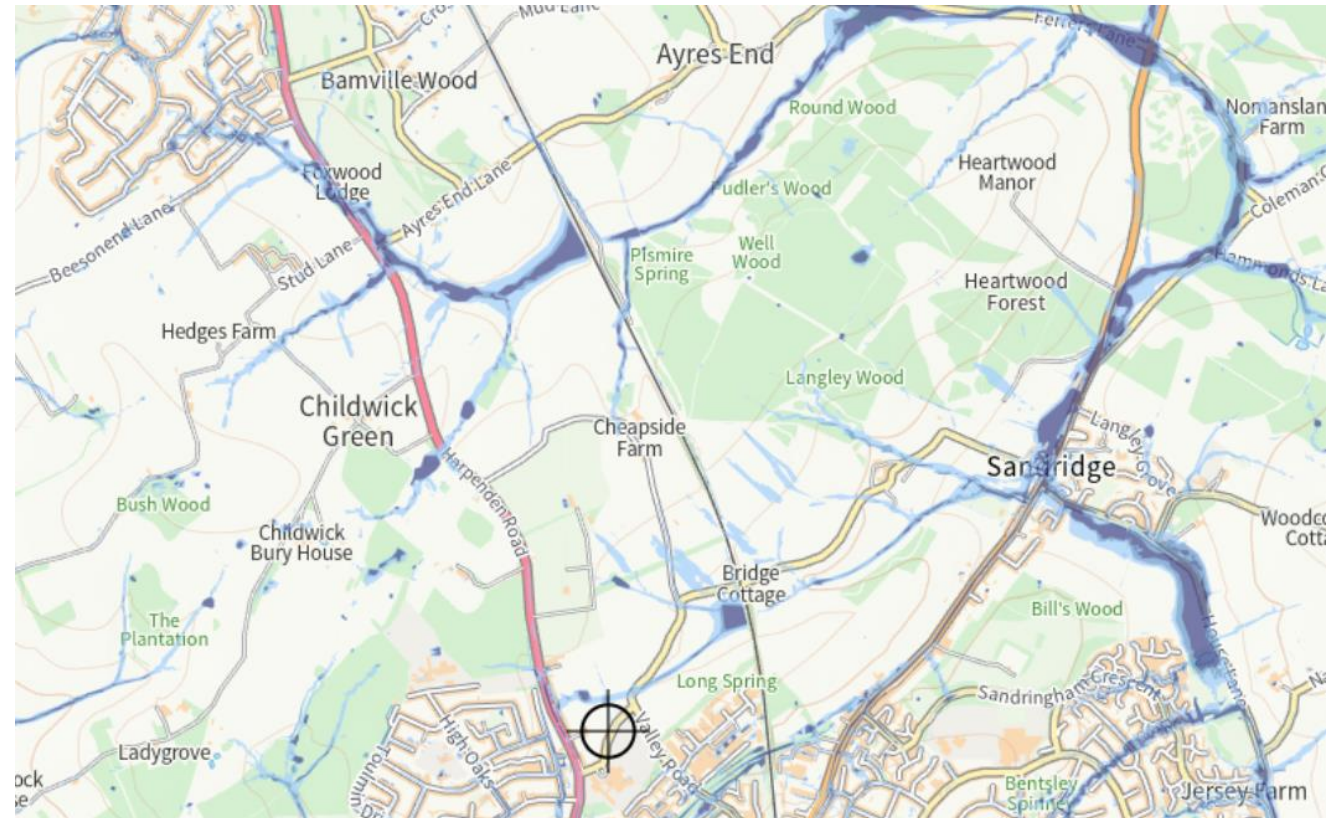


Hydrating Heartwood: Water filtration sites around Heartwood Forest

Heartwood sits within the Vale of St Albans, geological area.

Did you know Heartwood is fed by a spring that comes from the pressure build-up of the water within the chalk bed aquifer underground?

An aquifer can be described as an underground water reservoir.



[Learn more about this area's flood risk - GOV.UK \(check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk\)](https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk)

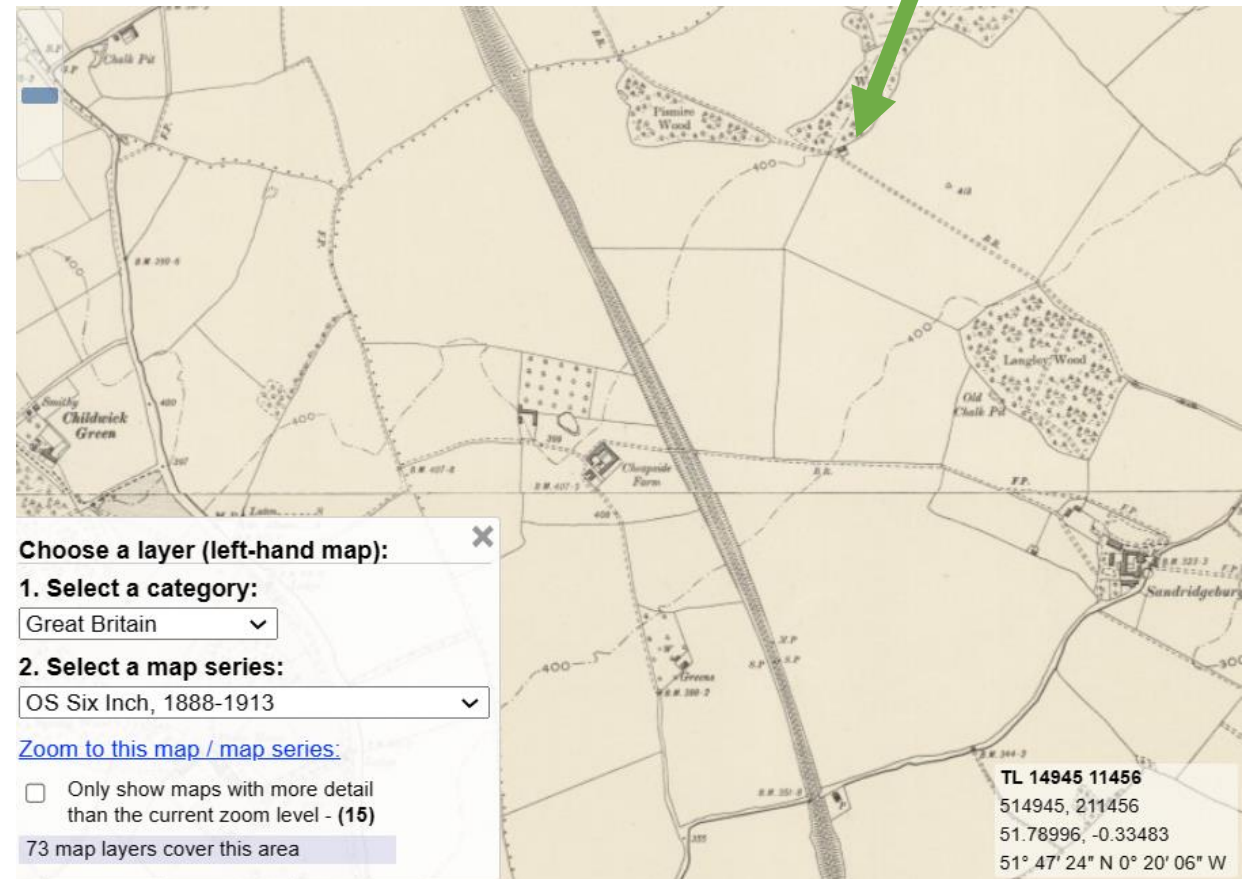
Well Wood

Once the site of a brick walled well which revealed itself in 2020.

Adjacent to Well Wood is the site of an old well, next to the “dog pond”, which is fed by an underground spring leading up from the chalk bed aquifer.



There continues to be bore hole access at this site and many others in the area.



<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/side-by-side/>

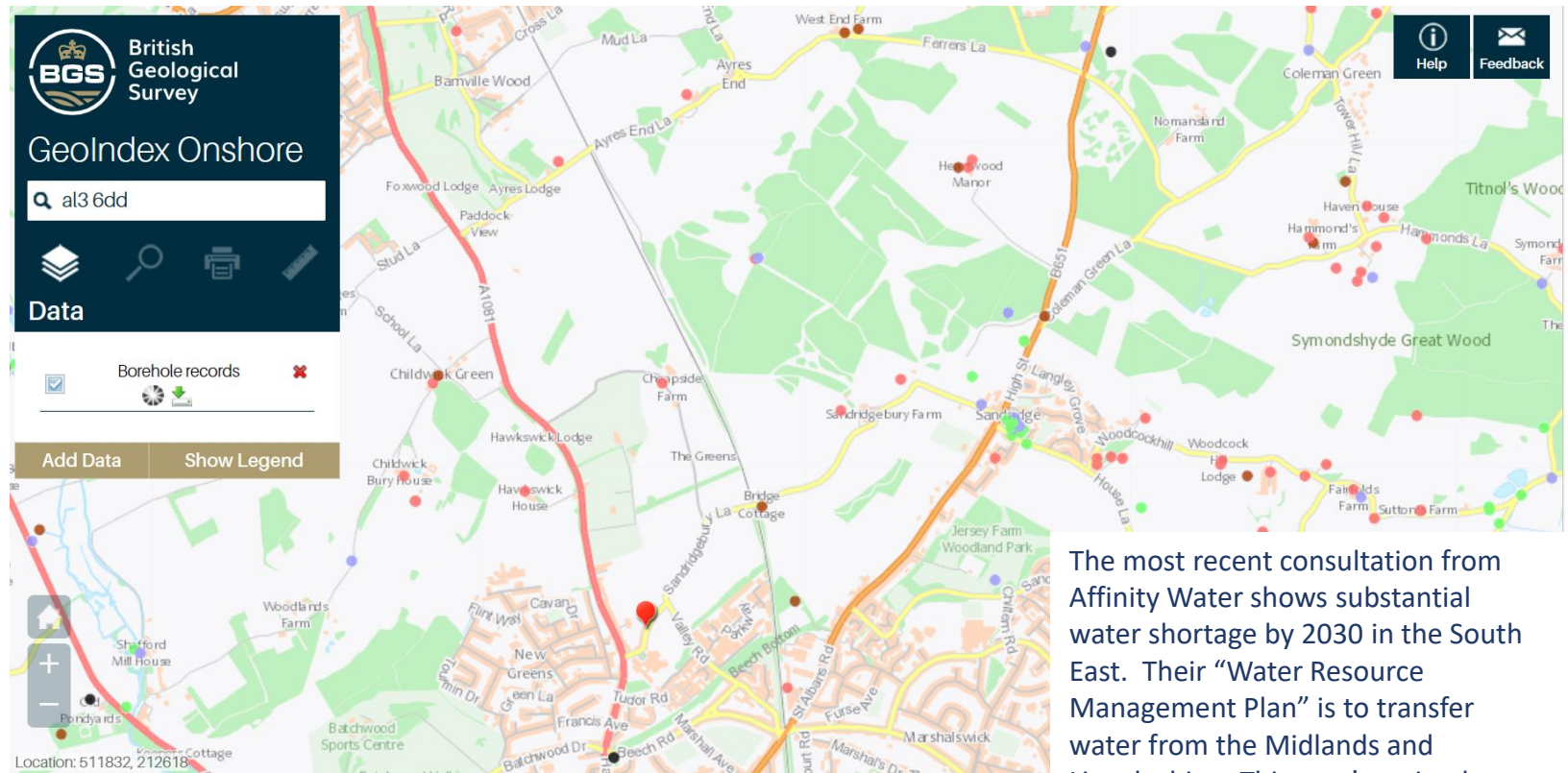
“You don’t know the well is dry until all the water is gone”

Existing bore holes:

Accessing the ground water within the aquifer below.

Defra states that St Albans is within a drinking water safeguard zone and has high levels of groundwater vulnerability.

Aquifer levels vary with rainfall.



[GeoIndex - British Geological Survey \(bgs.ac.uk\)](https://bgs.ac.uk)

The most recent consultation from Affinity Water shows substantial water shortage by 2030 in the South East. Their “Water Resource Management Plan” is to transfer water from the Midlands and Lincolnshire. This won’t assist the aquifer levels.

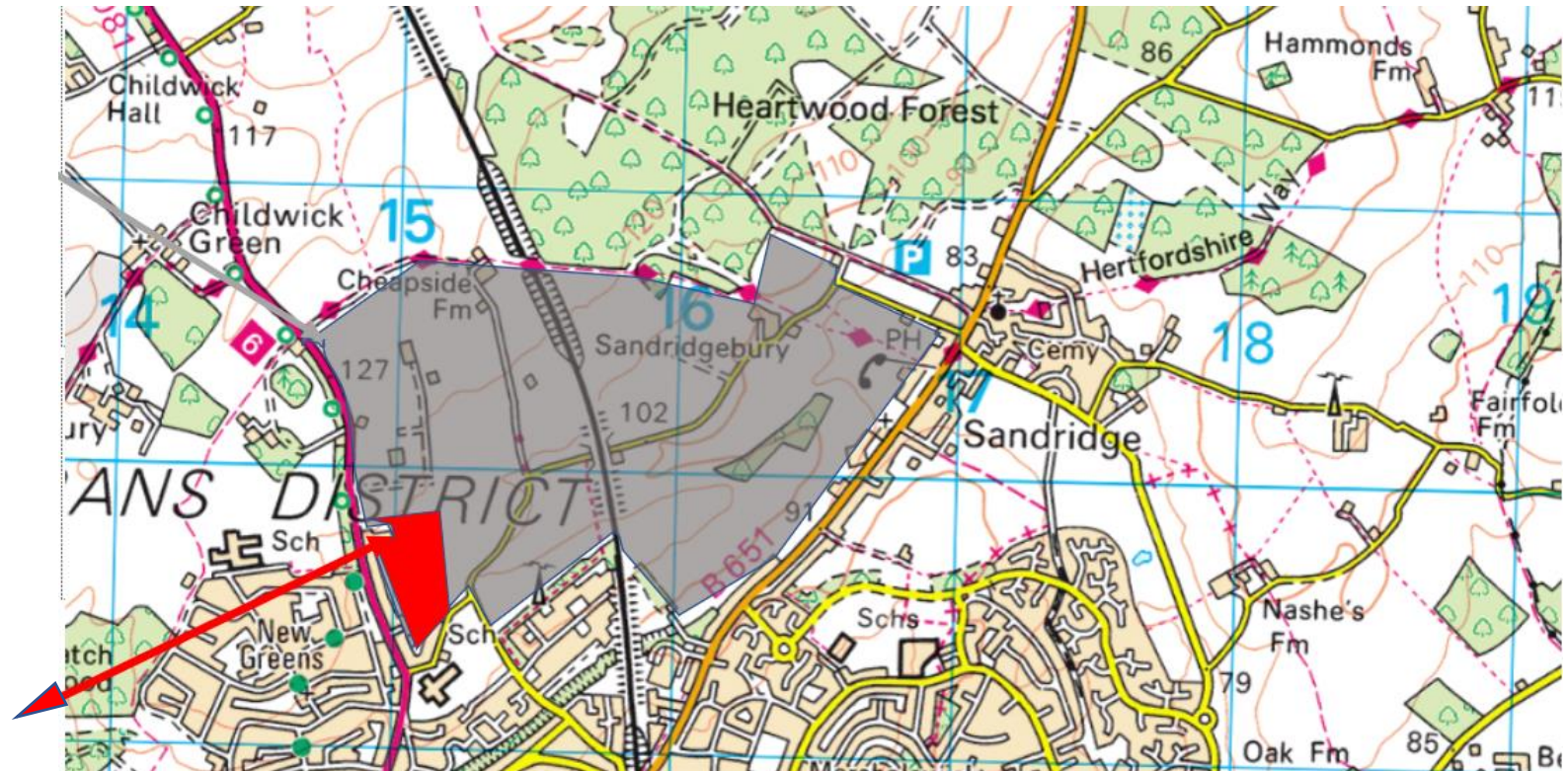
“When the well is dry we know it’s worth”

Benjamin Franklin



Proposed development on land at North St Albans sites

Sewell Trust site was given outline planning approval in 2021, despite being a key flood attenuation point for the chalk bed aquifer below. Aquifers require rainwater to be fed.



Is Heartwood's water supply headed down the drain?



Developers know that Affinity Water and Thames Water (drinking water and sewer operators) cannot statutorily object

The plans they provide propose taking rainwater away from the aquifer and diverting the excess to the Thames Sewer system to be discharged elsewhere

Reducing the volume and water pressure that feed the Heartwood springs and existing bore holes

**URBAN DEVELOPMENT MUST NOT BE
ALLOWED HERE**



5 myths about Green Belt development



| Myth | Fact |
|---|---|
| “The Government house building targets are mandatory.” | <p>Government targets have never been mandatory. Michael Gove’s written statement to Parliament of 5 December 2022 states that the government’s housing need figures are “an advisory starting point, a guide that is not mandatory”.</p> <p>Current targets are based on outdated population forecasts from 2014 and overstate housing need by over 75%.</p> |
| “Taking away Green Belt and building more houses on the periphery of St Albans will make housing more affordable for key workers and first-time buyers. | <p>The housing market is not a simple ‘supply & demand’ model in highly desirable locations like St Albans. House prices are linked to the availability of credit.</p> <p>Supply is controlled by a small number of housebuilders, who manage delivery to maintain high prices and profits.</p> <p>Most properties built are not normally affordable for key workers and first-time buyers.</p> |
| “If we don’t build on the green belt, St Albans centre will be overrun by too many flats and high-rise developments. Building on Green Belt will reduce urban development.” | <p>Developers prefer greenfield sites because they are easier and more profitable to develop, not because they are what is needed.</p> <p>It makes sense to build where amenities and transport links already exist; this will reduce local car journeys and so reduce congestion, pollution and emissions.</p> |
| “If St Albans doesn’t meet government targets, Whitehall will step in, take control of the local plan and force us to build on the green belt.” | <p>Under planning legislation, government can intervene in the Local Plan process.</p> <p>However, where ministers have done this, it has been to censure, not “take control”.</p> |
| “Councillors must not interfere with the preparation of the Local Plan by Council Officers and should not engage with residents’ groups to avoid perceived bias. They shouldn’t make statements about the local plan and the use of Green Belt land so as to avoid accusation of predetermination.” | <p>The full Council will need to approve the plan. Councillors will own the Plan as much as Officers and must work in partnership to deliver it as legal requirement.</p> <p>Councillors must, therefore, engage with their residents as either individuals or with recognised organisations. This doesn’t have to be through formal public consultation.</p> <p>Residents will be asked to comment formally at set stages during plan development.</p> |