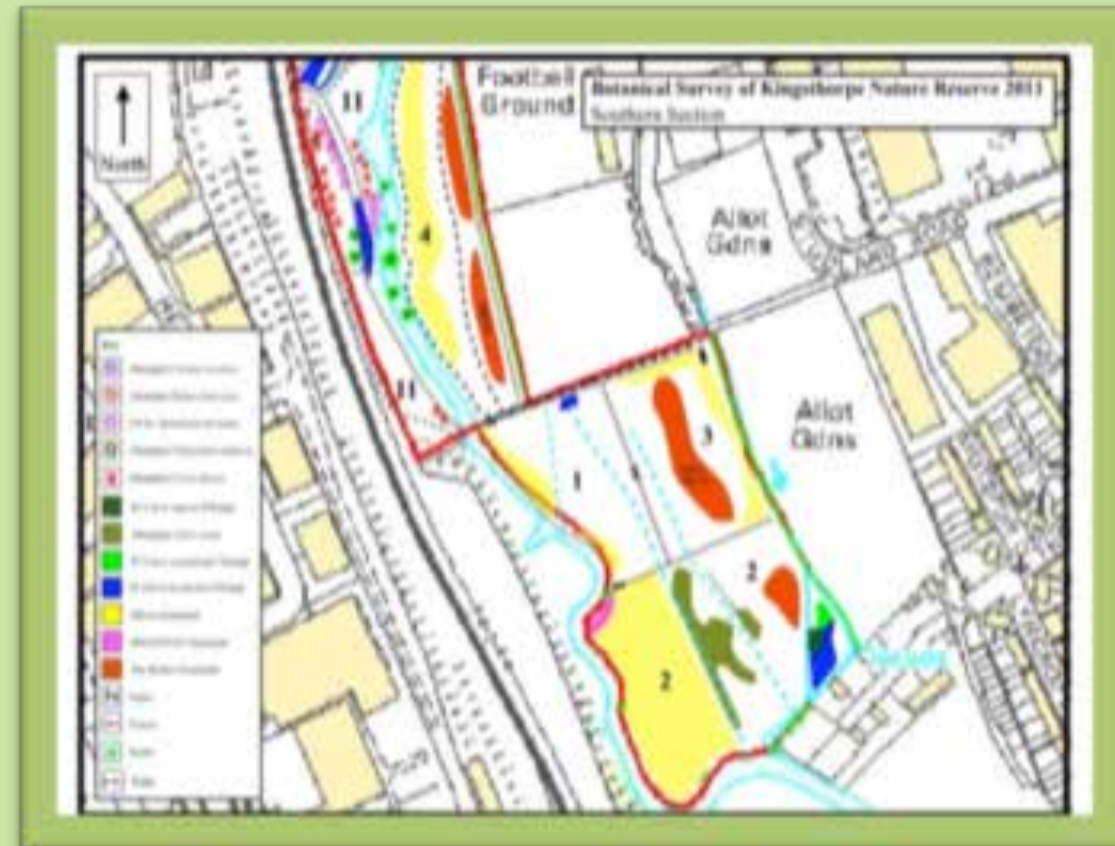


# Kingsthorpe Meadows LNR



Kingsthorpe Meadows LNR is a 15 ha. site north of Northampton town centre. The site is owned by Northampton Borough Council and managed by Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust since 1990. The site is divided by the Brampton arm of the river Nene and regularly floods in winter. The site was previously grazed with horses and several of the meadows had severe problems with ragwort, dock and creeping thistle.

The three southern most meadows were a water meadow that was last used in the 1940s. The western meadow on the north side was flooded in winter and allowed to freeze for the villagers to skate on.



The three southern meadows have no public access and thus with little disturbance, seem to be a good overwintering ground for waders particularly Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*).

Following several site visits from Floodplain Meadows Partnership, the Trust have implemented a haycutting followed by aftermath cattle grazing regime initially on the southern most meadow but to include other meadows on the site at a later date. The Trust also commissioned a botanical survey of the whole site to provide a base for future monitoring.

The amount of hay being produced has decreased over the three years thus indicating that nutrients are being reduced. Also the large areas of *Carex* spp. and *Juncus* spp. are shrinking and the abundance of thistles, docks and ragwort have dropped considerably. The overwintering waders seem to approve of the new regime with numbers as high as twelve, not bad for 1.91 ha. meadow in such an urban area! Small flocks of Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) and Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) have also been recorded in these meadows since haycutting has been implemented.

Future plans include continued botanical monitoring, haycutting regimes on other meadows and spreading green hay or seed from our nearby reserves.

