

GLA 50: Knighton Wood, Potential RIGS

London Borough of Redbridge, TQ 413 935

Ownership: Corporation of London (part of Epping Forest). Public open space

Woodford Gravel

Knighton Wood and the adjacent Lord's Bushes are areas of adjoining oak and hornbeam woodland partly in The London Borough of Waltham Forest and partly in Essex. The woodland sits on an extensive patch of what is known as Woodford Gravel, the origin of which is not entirely clear. The proportion of angular and rounded flint, and in particular of other rock types such as Lower Greensand chert from The Weald, indicate that it was deposited by a northward-flowing river. This theory is supported by the fact that there are other patches of Woodford Gravel in the vicinity and they decline in elevation northwards. It therefore appears that the Woodford Gravel was deposited by a river flowing from what is now the Weald of Surrey northwards across East London to join the Thames which at that time flowed across north Essex and Suffolk. When this river was in existence is very difficult to determine but it was probably over 700,000 years ago. The gravel was first described from a borehole in Woodford, hence the name, and the components and elevation are considered to be sufficiently different to distinguish it from the Stanmore Gravel that caps the Epping Forest ridge and is of higher elevation ([BGS Special Memoir](#), pp. 59-65)¹.

Knighton Lake

The Woodford Gravel is well-exposed around the edge of Knighton Lake, particularly on the east side, close to the path. Further round the lake, a good example of Pulhamite can be seen at the western end. This is a manufactured rock face much loved by the Victorians created by the Pulham family, probably in the early 1900s (see <http://pulham.org.uk/>).

Access

Knighton Wood and Lord's Bushes are part of Epping Forest and are accessible at all times. Access from Knighton Lane where there is parking space for a few cars. Buckhurst Hill Underground station is close by.

Reference:

¹ Gibbard, P.L. 1995. Palaeogeographic evolution of the lower reaches of the Thames. *In*: Bridgland, D.R., Allen, P. and Haggart, B.A. (Editors). *The Quaternary of the Lower Reaches of the Thames – Field Guide*. Quaternary Research Association, pp. 5-34.

Exposure of Woodford Gravel on the eastern perimeter of Knighton Lake

Source: London's foundations, page 222 (Diana Clements)



Site Map

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Source: London's foundations, page 220

