

Culvery Wood

(Plan period – 2016 to 2021)



WOODLAND
TRUST

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Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

“A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.”

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK’s native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.
4. The long term vision for all our ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities to generate income from our Estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we encourage our woods to be used for local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the Estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.
10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/>

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

The Management Plan

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GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Culvery Wood

Location:	Pensford Grid reference: ST616639 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 172
Area:	3.56 hectares (8.80 acres)
External Designations:	Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc)
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Culvery Wood is a peaceful, community woodland 3.17 hectares (7.83 acres) in size on the western edge of the village of Pensford in the Chew Valley, next to the Pensford viaduct near Bristol. It is approximately 6 miles south of Bristol and 8 miles west of Bath, on the A37 Wells Road from Bristol to Shepton Mallet. Part of National Character Area (NCA) 118 Bristol, Avon Valleys and Ridges. The site was acquired as part of the Woods on your Doorstep project in 1997.

Culvery Wood is a mixed-age, woodland standing on a south-westerly facing valley slope; part planted, and part mature secondary woodland with ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) characteristics. The mature secondary/ASNW is oak, ash and hornbeam; with veteran trees and excellent ground flora and an abundance of spring flowers including bluebell, wood anemone and primrose. The planted woodland is native broadleaf planting with oak, hornbeam and woody shrubs planted in 1998, whilst a small extension was gifted and planted in 2000, and a further extension was gifted and planted in 2016 with similar native species.

Two public footpaths cross the site. Management access is via a narrow private road from the village under the viaduct. The site is bounded by fields to the north, south and west with a few houses and mature woodland along part of the eastern boundary. The site runs down to the River Chew in two places at its southern end and links with longer walks through the Chew Valley.

The surrounding area was extensively mined for coal in the late 19th and early 20th Century, of which some evidence remains outside the site, including a large viaduct forming an impressive landscape feature to the south.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Informal Public Access – In 50 years' time the importance of the wood as a local recreational resource will have been maintained and the site will still be valued by local users and visitors and will provide a clear welcome. An attractive and serviceable network of tracks and paths through the site will provide walks and views that encourage the appreciation of the woodland, surrounding river valley, and the abundance of spring flowers.

Local Woodland Habitat - In 50 years' time the woodland will have an attractive and mature native broadleaf woodland with a mixed age structure and species diversity through management under a continuous cover forestry regime. There will be abundant shrub and understory layers, natural regeneration, and robust ground flora populations. The veteran oak, ash and hornbeam and areas of planted native broadleaved woodland will be managed to maximise their natural lifespan and to ensure that there is a succession of trees and deadwood habitat for the future. There are no interventions planned for the mature or planted broadleaf woodland in this plan period.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
<p>Culverly Wood is a peaceful, community woodland on the western edge of the village of Pensford in the Chew Valley, next to the Pensford viaduct near Bristol. It is approximately 6 miles south of Bristol and 8 miles west of Bath, on the A37 Wells Road from Bristol to Shepton Mallet, and within Bath & North East Somerset Council.</p> <p>Created as part of the Millennium ‘Woods on your Doorstep’ project, the local community were involved in the fundraising, design and planting of the site in 1998. Further extensions to the wood were gifted to the Woodland Trust in 2000 and 2016 (2 acres and 1 acre respectively) by, and in memory of, a local landowner; and were planted with native broadleaf trees by volunteers and Pensford Primary School children.</p> <p>The site can be accessed via a public footpath under the viaduct along a private road from Church Street in Pensford, close to the Rising Sun Pub. Two public footpaths cross the site with a small permissive circular walk linking the two, all paths are unsurfaced with some short, steep sections with steps, and all entrances are kissing gates.</p> <p>The site is bounded by fields to the north, south and west with a few houses and mature woodland along part of the eastern boundary. The site runs down to the River Chew in two places at its southern end and links with longer walks through the Chew Valley, or the ‘3 Peaks Walk’.</p> <p>The surrounding area was extensively mined for coal in the late 19th and early 20th Century, of which some evidence remains outside the site, including a large viaduct forming an impressive landscape feature to the south.</p> <p>There is an active volunteer group ‘Culverly Wood Volunteer Group’ at the site that meet once a month in autumn and winter to carry out small woodland management tasks as directed by the Site Manager.</p> <p>A small quantity of on-road parking is available in the village with an uphill 200m walk to reach the site.</p>
Significance
<p>Culverly Wood provides an important local amenity and valued recreational space for people living in the area. It is well used by visitors including walkers and dog walkers, and connects and links visitors into the wider natural landscape, and will inspire people to connect with their natural environment, native woodland and trees.</p>
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- There is no car park and limited parking near the site.- The steeper slopes across the sites restrict access to some areas by those people with mobility limitations.

Factors Causing Change
Litter and anti-social behaviour. Canopy closure of trees making paths wet/muddy/slippery. Loss of the woodland through pests/diseases E.g. Ash die-back.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Informal Public Access – In 50 years’ time the importance of the wood as a local recreational resource will have been maintained and the site will still be valued by local users and visitors and will provide a clear welcome. An attractive and serviceable network of tracks and paths through the site will provide walks, views and encourage the appreciation of the woodland, surrounding river valley, and the abundance of spring flowers.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
Easily accessible, attractive, well-maintained and safe woodland that a wide range of public frequently enjoy. Welcoming entrances and a path network appropriate for level and type of use and in line with access category C. Manage visitor safety via ongoing tree and infrastructure monitoring regime and remedial works as necessary. Carry out occasional coppicing of ride-side trees and vegetation in particularly shaded, wet, and muddy sections of the steep paths where access is difficult, and carry out access improvements when needed as instructed by the site manager.

4.2 f2 Local Woodland Habitat

Description
<p>Culverly Wood is a mixed-age, woodland standing on a south-westerly facing valley slope; part planted; and part mixed age woodland with secondary and ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) characteristics. The mature woodland has ancient and semi natural woodland indicators along the length of the wood on a steep slope, but is below the size recorded in the ancient woodland register.</p> <p>The mature secondary/ASNW is oak, ash and hornbeam; with hazel, hawthorn understory; and veteran oak, ash and hornbeam trees; and excellent ground flora with an abundance of spring flowers including bluebell, dogs mercury, wood anemone and primrose. Mature woodland is P c1900 with some individual older veterans, and the woodland has some regeneration of all species.</p> <p>Broadleaf woodland was planted on acquisition in 1998 on the upper slopes around the existing woodland, with oak, hornbeam, and woody shrubs. An extension to the northwest of the site was gifted and planted in 2000, and a further NW extension was gifted and planted in 2016 with similar native species including oak, hornbeam, wild cherry, silver birch, small leaved lime, rowan, spindle, field maple, hawthorn hazel, holly, buckthorn, dog rose and crab apple. Planted native broadleaved woodland covers approximately half of the site.</p> <p>An existing hedgerow runs along the footpath at the west boundary which was hedge-layed in 2016. There is a small area of natural regeneration and planted woodland with remnants of a pond on the boundary between the two</p>

acquisitions which was the site of a cottage.
Significance
The creation of native broadleaved woodland, a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat is a core objective of the Woodland Trust. The wood and the River Chew are part of a larger Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), and the mature wood is likely a remnant of a bigger ASNW that provides increased woodland connectivity in the landscape. There are a large number of veteran hornbeam trees, which is unusual for the local area, as well as veteran oak and ash trees.
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Constraints:</p> <p>Predominantly ash secondary woodland and ash is susceptible to ash die-back.</p> <p>Ground conditions are variable with poor tracks due to steep slopes, hollows, waterlogged areas and springs.</p> <p>Powerline crosses southern section of the woodland, and needs regular access for pruning work by contractors for Western Power.</p> <p>Squirrel damage of newly planted hornbeam, oak and field maple is an issue, as many have damage on stem and branches preventing them from reaching maturity.</p> <p>The management access is narrow and with steep slopes.</p>
Factors Causing Change
<p>Pests and Tree diseases, particularly ash dieback</p> <p>Deer browsing affecting recruitment of natural regeneration and squirrel damage preventing some broadleaf trees from reaching maturity.</p>
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Local Woodland Habitat - In 50 years' time the woodland will have an attractive and mature native broadleaf woodland with a mixed age structure and species diversity through management under a continuous cover forestry regime. There will be abundant shrub and understory layers, natural regeneration, and robust ground flora populations. The veteran oak, ash and hornbeam and areas of planted native broadleaved woodland will be managed to maximise their natural lifespan and to ensure that there is a succession of trees and deadwood habitat for the future. There are no interventions planned for the mature or planted broadleaf woodland in this plan period.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
<p>To ensure continued existence of the wood and to allow it to develop naturally and healthily with good structural diversity and species composition with natural regeneration of broadleaf trees, some mature trees, a rich shrub layer and developing ground flora. There are no interventions planned for the woodland in this plan period, other than small scale ride-side coppicing, and work for tree safety in the plan period.</p> <p>The rides and internal pathways will be managed by rideside coppicing annual where needed to ensure it allows light and air movement along the paths to benefit wildlife, increase and allow the spread of ground flora, in addition to</p>

improving public access.

Monitor regeneration and damage by squirrel and/or deer and monitor spread of ash dieback in tree safety zones.

Ensure 2016 planted area trees are continuing to establish well and are supported until maturity.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2021	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Paths rides and entrance management to full width minimum of 3m. Including area around bench and new path.	30/09/21
2022	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Ride-side clearance and coppicing of wet, muddy areas to improve access and allow ride-side vegetation to develop – volunteer activity.	28/02/22
2022	WC – Site Maintenance	Ensure 2016 planted trees are supported until maturity – volunteer activity.	30/06/21
2022	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Path cut to 2m avoiding any woodland plants entrance management - clean signage. Including area around bench and new path through recent planting.	31/07/22
2022	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Paths rides and entrance management to full width minimum of 3m. Including area around bench and new path.	30/09/22
2022	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Tree safety inc ash dieback safety felling along pathways	31/10/22
2023	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Path cut to 2m avoiding any woodland plants entrance management - clean signage. Including area around bench and new path through recent planting.	31/07/23
2023	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Paths rides and entrance management to full width minimum of 3m. Including area around bench and new path.	30/09/23
2024	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Path cut to 2m avoiding any woodland plants entrance management - clean signage. Including area around bench and new path through recent planting.	31/07/24
2024	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Paths rides and entrance management to full width minimum of 3m. Including area around bench and new path.	30/09/24

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2024	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Replacement of access infrastructure across site and entrances	31/08/24
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Path cut to 2m avoiding any woodland plants entrance management - clean signage. Including area around bench and new path through recent planting.	31/07/25
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Paths rides and entrance management to full width minimum of 3m. Including area around bench and new path.	30/09/25
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Path cut to 2m avoiding any woodland plants entrance management - clean signage. Including area around bench and new path through recent planting.	31/07/26
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Paths rides and entrance management to full width minimum of 3m. Including area around bench and new path.	30/09/26
2034	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Replacement of access infrastructure across site and entrances	30/06/34

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	1.4	Mixed native broadleaves	1998	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Community Forest
<p>Mixed broadleaf woodland planted by volunteers and contractors in December 1998 around existing ASNW woodland, with species including oak, ash, hornbeam, goat willow, field maple and hazel, and other woody shrubs. Prior to planting, the field was a mixture of bracken and rough pasture. Existing public footpath runs along the top of the slope, and corridor of mainly hazel shrubs run under overhead powerline and coppiced on rotation by Western Power contractors.</p> <p>A further area to northwest was planted with the same species mix in 2001. There is the remnants of a pond on the boundary between the two acquisitions which was the site of a cottage.</p> <p>Management access is via the narrow private road from the village to the SE running under the viaduct.</p>						
1b	1	Mixed native broadleaves	1900	High forest	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc)
<p>Mixed mature secondary and ancient semi-natural broadleaf woodland, predominantly ash, hornbeam and oak c1900 with hazel, hawthorn understory. The woodland flora has many ancient and semi natural woodland indicators including wood anemone, bluebell, and primrose, with veteran hornbeam, oak and ash trees. This was recorded as grazed at times in the past.</p> <p>Short river frontage on southern boundary with public footpath running from main entrance to SW gate. Small quarry and previous waste area in south of site below main entrance.</p> <p>An existing hedgerow runs along west boundary and footpath which was hedge-layed in 2016.</p>						
1c	0.4	Mixed native broadleaves	2016	Wood establishment	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Community Forest
<p>Mixed broadleaf woodland planted by volunteers in Feb 2016 with oak, hornbeam, wild cherry, silver birch, small leaved lime, rowan, spindle, field maple, hawthorn hazel, holly, buckthorn, dog rose and crab apple. Prior to planting the area was agricultural pasture grazed by cattle. Access to hedge line left for neighbouring farmer to carry out management on hedge line and ditch. There is a management entrance to compartment in far north-west corner.</p>						

Ancient Woodland

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

Ancient Woodland Site

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

Beating Up

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

Broadleaf

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

Canopy

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

Conifer

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

Continuous Cover forestry

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

Coppice

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

Exotic (non-native) Species

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

Field Layer

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

Group Fell

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

Long Term Retention

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

Minimum Intervention

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

Origin & Provenance

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

Re-Stocking

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

Sub-Compartment

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

Thinning

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

Weeding

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established.

Windblow/Windthrow

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.

Registered Office:

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