St Martin's Wood
(Plan period – 2021 to 2026)



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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 woodled 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 seminatural 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

- 1. Site Details
- 2. Site Description
- 3. Long Term Policy
- 4. Key Features
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 - 4.2 f2 Informal Public Access
 - 4.3 f3 Open Ground Habitat
- 5. Work Programme

Appendix 1: Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

St Martin's Wood

Laugharne Grid reference: SN304115 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 159

Area: 6.71 hectares (16.58 acres)

External Designations: No designations for this site

Internal Designations: Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Situated on the northern edge of the popular coastal town of Laugharne, St Martins Wood is an attractive new native woodland. The trees were planted in March 2000 by local residents under the Woodland Trust's Woods On Your Doorstep scheme. The woodland lies on a south west sloping aspect and adjoins the public right of way, section 22/6, to the south east leading onto the nearby Wales coast path and into the village below. The new woodland site is surrounded by predominately improved pasture for the benefit of dairy farms locally, but also borders the nearby church grounds and cemetery of St Martins, which has the acclaim of being the resting place of the poet Dylan Thomas who resided at Laugharne.

Several mature hedges and field boundaries divide the site and these contain a diverse ground flora including species such as lords and ladies and harts tongue fern. The field boundaries reflect the 14th century medieval strip field system and as such the sites planting design has been to maintain where possible this layout following consultation. As the woodland develops into mature native broad-leaved woodland, these remnant species should migrate into the resulting cool, shaded woodland conditions that result.

Public access, along with new native woodland and an area of unimproved grassland constitute the key features of the site and a network of permissive footpaths and bridleways. Some are a little steep in places, and may not be suitable for the less-able walker. The steepness of the site does have some benefits though, as the visitor is rewarded with splendid views of the surrounding area and Carmarthen bay area from the higher north-eastern end.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The site will develop into a mature native broadleaved woodland, which will then become self-sustaining through natural regeneration over time. Open spaces will be maintained to sustain a woodland edge and unimproved grassland habitat and views across the surrounding area. The ground flora will change as shade increases under the growing trees with grasses gradually giving way to woodland flora such as ferns, brambles and other shade tolerant plants. Woodland wild flowers will slowly spread through the woodland from the hedges. External hedges will be maintained and periodically re-laid but internal hedges will grow out into trees, retaining them as visible old field boundaries but not keeping them laid or cut annually.

All permissive paths, bridleways and access points will be maintained in good condition and ride edges will be managed to develop rough grassland. The viewpoints from the top of the site will be kept open by periodic tree felling as necessary. Other open areas will be gradually colonised by scrub providing woodland edge habitat.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 New Native Woodland

Description

The site was planted with native broadleaved trees in March 2000, incorporating a public planting event, under the Woodland Trust's Woods On Your Doorstep scheme. The most common species are birch, oak, rowan and elder, with lesser quantities of alder buckthorn, holly and willow. The trees have been planted at close spacing within the planting blocks, with the spacing gradually increasing towards the edges to give a "feathered" effect. Unfortunately, some of the trees were subsequently bent over by high winds and some have now been stumped back. The woodland as a whole appears to be developing adequately, with high rates of tree survival although relatively slow growth rates of some species.

Significance

The creation of new native woodland is a key Woodland Trust objective and also contributes to Section 10.15 of Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan.

Opportunities & Constraints

The development of the trees is partially constrained by the high saline winds associated with the site.

Factors Causing Change

Growth of newly planted trees, frequent Wind Damage, chalara.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will gradually develop into a mature native broadleaved woodland, with closed canopy and associated ground flora, which will hopefully have migrated into the plantations from the existing hedges. The woodland edge trees planted at wider spacings develop fuller canopies and provide shelter for the site, allowing natural regeneration to establish and a rich ground flora to develop in the gaps between their canopies.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

No tree work is needed in this plan period as long as the trees remain healthy. The hedge along the bottom of the site will be maintained by laying and annual cutting. The internal hedges will be allowed to grow out into trees.

4.2 f2 Informal Public Access

Description

Public access exists throughout the site in the form of a network of permissive footpaths and bridleways. The main public entrance to the site is situated opposite Longlane House. The site may also be accessed via two other entrances.

for horses from the same road and also from a sunken lane at the far eastern end. The site is fairly steep, sloping upwards to the northeast, and an excellent view may be gained from the area of open ground at the northeastern end.

Significance

The site was planted by the residents of Laugharne and is used by the local population, both walkers and horse riders, being situated on the edge of the town.

Opportunities & Constraints

Equestrian access was prohibited in 2014 due to several cases of misuse, leading to damage to the bridleway and footpath network. Misuse continues to be an issue, and as a result the permissive bridleway is closed during the winter months.

Factors Causing Change

As internal hedges grow out they may encroach on paths.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain free and unobstructed access to all parts of the wood for visitors in the future by maintaining entrances in a safe and usable condition and by keeping all permissive rides and other open areas free of obstruction.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

All entrances to the wood, will be inspected at least once a year to ensure they are maintained in a safe and serviceable condition for public use. The network of permissive routes will be kept open by annual mowing.

4.3 f3 Open Ground Habitat

Description

Area of open unimproved grassland along upper slopes of woodland site adjoining a nearby public right of way. This area has been left un-planted to maintain views across the Laugharne estuary area following community consultation upon the sites acquisition in 2000. Grassland area has become more diverse over time and includes areas of woody shrubs and scrub including blackthorn and gorse. Ground floral species includes birds-foot trefoil and knapweed.

Significance

Much of the surrounding landscape is classified as improved grassland and used for grazing purposes for equine use and dairy farms. The views across the area from this vantage point are a feature of the site for the benefit of local walkers using the coast path nearby.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity to improve and enhance the habitat condition through periodic cutting to prevent colonisation through scrub encroachment.

Constraints include limited access for vehicles and not suited for grazing purposes.

Factors Causing Change

Encroachment of woody shrubs and seeding from nearby planted woodlands.

Possible damage caused by permissive footpath and bridleway but due to the dry ground conditions, not considered a real issue.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain as an area of open space to conserve views across the estuary and enhance through periodic intervention to maintain open feel and dominance of grassland species over woody shrubs and trees.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

Undertake basic condition assessment of open area recording floristic species observed and carry out intervention to reduce areas of woody shrubs and scrub.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2021	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	November
2022	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of management access infrastructure and tracks Such as repairs to vehicle entrance points, maintaining vehicle bridges and repairing / reinstating surfaced management access routes.	September
2022	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	September
2022	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	October
2022	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	November
2022	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	December
2022	WMM - Secondary Silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within secondary woods to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment— such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	March
2023	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	September
2023	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	October
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	November

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	December
2024	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	September
2024	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	October
2024	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	November
2024	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	December
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APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	6.35	Ash	2000	Wood establishment	Archaeological features, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site, Services & wayleaves, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	

The whole site is one compartment. It is a moderately sloping, southwest facing compartment of broadleaves, planted in March 2000 under the Woodland Trust's Woods On Your Doorstep scheme. Mature sessile oak and ash are also present in the well-developed hedgerows that divide the site. Ground flora is currently heavily dominated by grasses, due to the previous use of the site as pasture, with lesser celandine, dock, primrose, wall pennywort, lords and ladies, enchanter's nightshade, wood violet, bramble, dandelion, nettle, ivy, bracken, cleavers, ground sorrel and harts tongue fern also present, although many of these species are confined to the vicinity of the hedges. Several permissive footpaths run through the site and a permissive bridleway follows the perimeter. Patches of open ground may also be found at the northeastern and southwestern ends of the site.

1b	0.45	Woody shrubs	2020	Non-wood habitat	No/poor vehicular access to the site	

Area of former dairy pasture left un-planted since acquisition. Compartment is along upper edges of slope with main woodland planting areas to north and south west. Open grassland has occasional woody shrub species and scrub including blackthorn and gorse and includes a permissive bridleway and footpath.

GLOSSARY

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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