

# Gillham's Wood

(Plan period – 2021 to 2026)



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](http://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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

or contact the Woodland Trust

[operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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

### Gillham's Wood

Location:	Linchmere Grid reference: SU864321 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 186
Area:	7.92 hectares (19.57 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, National Park
Internal Designations:	N/A

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Gillham's Wood, a native broadleaf woodland of 7.92ha (19.56 acres), is situated between the villages of Liphook, Hampshire (1km to the west) and Haslemere, Surrey (within 1km to the east) and itself is located in West Sussex. It is in the Wealden Greensand National Character Area (NCA) and is on the very northern fringe of the South Downs National Park, the boundary of which follows the course of the River Wey and county boundary 100m to the north of the wood.

The wood is immediately bordered by a railway line to the north, beyond which is riparian woodland associated with the River Wey; to the west is an equestrian field, and to the south and east and west are pockets of woodland and substantial residential properties with large gardens. Beyond these properties to the south is Lynchmere Commons Local Nature Reserve (LNR), a lowland dry heath community with mixed broadleaf and coniferous woodland.

The NCA is defined by a belt of greensand which abounds the chalk of the North Downs and the clay of the Weald. The wood sits on the Hythe Foundation – Sandstone, and occupies north-facing slopes of an acidic sandstone ridge with overlying clay. On the southern plateau and along the steep slope the soils are acidic, dry heathy and well drained whereas at the bottom of the slope to the north of the wood, conditions are damper and soils can be wet-logged especially in the wetter months.

The wood is a mix of designated ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) and long-established secondary woodland. Overall, the woodland has a diverse mix of species and age-classes. Oak dominates the canopy across the site, with veteran/ ancient trees found throughout the two areas of woodland. Secondary canopy species include beech and sweet chestnut, whilst the understorey is dominated primarily by holly and silver birch in the east. Gillham's Wood was severely damaged in the storms of 1987 and 1990 during which significant numbers of mature oak and beech were blown. Following clearance of the timber, profuse birch natural regeneration established in the canopy gaps and now form dense thickets. Other species also found in the well-established understorey include hazel, willow, rowan and ash. Under the dense holly understorey, ground flora is sparse, however, along the paths and under the lighter canopies species such as wood avens, wood sorrel, yellow pimpernel, wood speedwell, violets, wood sedge and slender St John's wort can be found.

Acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1992, the wood lies in a tranquil location off a minor private road (Gillham's Lane) accessed from the Liphook Road (B2131). One public bridleway and one public footpath cross the site from east to west. The woodland has a very good network of well-maintained permissive and public paths offering access to all parts of the site and a circular route of 1.5km. There is no car park associated with the wood and the level of public use is relatively low being mainly used by locals who live within walking distance.

### 3. LONG TERM POLICY

The areas of ancient and secondary woodland within Gillham's Wood will mostly be left to continue developing under the influences of natural processes, except where intervention is required to address issues caused by pests and diseases, control invasive non-native species and enhance ancient woodland features.

The mature oak, beech and sweet chestnut will senesce to form veteran trees or collapse opening up gaps in an otherwise closed canopy. Species such as birch and woody shrubs (e.g. hazel and holly) will take advantage of the gaps in the canopy, increasing the wood's structural and species diversity. The naturally established secondary woodland area will continue to develop with oak remaining the dominant canopy species. The compartment will eventually be as rich as the adjoining ancient woodland with the boundaries between the two becoming increasingly less defined.

The Woodland Trust has given Gillham's Wood a category C for access (which translates to low usage sites where we do maintain paths). Hence, our management for visitor access will be relatively low-key. On-going monitoring and maintenance will ensure the woods remains a safe wood to visit, with infrastructure appropriate for the sites relatively low visitor number i.e. those from neighbouring villages.

## 4. KEY FEATURES

### 4.1 f1 Natural Secondary Woodland

#### Description

Approximately half of Gillham's Wood is designated ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) (compartment 1a) which runs through the centre (east-west) of the wood, the remainder (compartment 1b and 1c) is well-established secondary woodland. Both are covered under this key feature. The wood approximates to National Vegetation Classification (NVC) W10a – oak (pedunculata)/ bluebell/ bramble.

The areas are not easily distinguished on the ground. Oak dominates both areas, with beech increasing in abundance towards the east of the wood. Secondary canopy species include sweet chestnut, hazel, willow, rowan, ash with occasional western hemlock dotted throughout the wood whilst the understorey is dominated primarily by holly. A notably different stand-type is the area of vigorous natural birch regeneration following the 1987 & 1990 storms over the east side of the wood which straddles both the areas of woodland. There are specimen veteran European larch near the west boundary of the wood.

Under the dense holly understorey, ground flora is sparse, however, along the paths and under the lighter canopies species such as wood avens, wood sorrel, yellow pimpernel, wood speedwell, violets, wood sedge and slender St John's wort can be found. The flora is particularly abundant along the prominent earth banks in the northern area of the wood where mosses and male and hart tongue ferns are abundant. In the glades (created following the clearing of invasive rhododendron and laurel, pockets of which are still found across the site) bracken dominates with occasional patches of bramble and small colonies of heather on the drier sandy plateau in the south, a remnant of the former "moor". There is a patch of variegated yellow archangel, a non-native invasive plant near the south-west entrance to the site.

There is a relatively high abundance and even distribution of both standing and fallen deadwood across the site. Fallen deadwood is mostly likely remanent from the storm damage and throughout the abundant veteran/ mature trees there is plenty of standing deadwood and snag type fractures and features.

#### Significance

Gillham's Wood is situated in the South Downs National Park and the Wealden Greensand NCA. There are extensive areas of ancient mixed broadleaf woodland, and including secondary woodland and plantations, accounting for 25% of the NCA.

Woodland, especially ASNW - an irreplaceable habitat, is becoming increasingly fragmented in the South East - a region which supports 40% of the UK's ASNW.

#### Opportunities & Constraints



**Constraints:**

- The terrain with a steep north facing slope is the primary constraint to management as vehicular access to the north is not possible except in the very driest conditions.

**Factors Causing Change**

- Impact and damage from deer. A Deer/Herbivore Impact Assessment will be carried out to assess impacts and the management required to mitigate impacts upon the woodland and open space habitat.
- Invasive non-native species such as variegated yellow archangel, cherry laurel and rhododendron are present but a control programme will be implemented throughout the plan period. Holly, although native, could become invasive and should be monitored.

**Long term Objective (50 years+)**

The areas of ancient and secondary woodland within Gillham's Wood will mostly be left to continue developing under the influences of natural processes, except where intervention is required to address issues caused by pests and diseases, control invasive non-native species and enhance ancient woodland features. The mature oak, beech and sweet chestnut will senesce to form veteran trees or collapse opening up gaps in an otherwise closed canopy. Species such as birch and woody shrubs (e.g. hazel and holly) will take advantage of the gaps in the canopy, adding to the wood's structural and species diversity.

The naturally established secondary woodland area will continue to develop, oak remaining the dominant species of the canopy alongside beech and birch. The compartment will eventually be as rich as the adjoining ancient woodland with the boundaries between them becoming increasingly less defined.

Intervention may be required to control invasive and non-native species such as rhododendron and laurel; and to protect ancient woodland features such as woodland specialist ground flora, precursor and veteran trees, deadwood, and archaeological features (e.g. earthbanks).

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

During this plan period the short-term objective is to begin the process of making the woods more diverse and to lessen the threats to them. This will be achieved by:

To increase structural diversity the following works will be completed within the next 5 years.

- Cherry laurel and rhododendron (combined area of less than 0.5ha) in cpt 1a, 1b and 1c will be cut and uprooted where possible, beginning 2021 with on-going monitoring. If uprooting is not possible, arisings will be left on site and stumps chemical treated to control any regeneration. Complete a glyphosate environmental and social risk assessment before undertaking treatment and follow up with annual monitoring.
- Invasive variegated yellow archangel, (area of less than 0.01ha) near the south-west entrance of the site in cpt1c, will be uprooted where possible, beginning 2021 with on-going monitoring. If uprooting is not possible, chemical treatment will be used control any regeneration. Complete a glyphosate environmental and social risk assessment before

undertaking treatment and follow up with annual monitoring.

- Holly will be monitored to ensure it does not become invasive. An assessment will be undertaken in 2025 to ensure no more than 40% of the total area of woodland will be dominated by holly. If more than 40% of the wood is covered by holly, it will be thinned along rides with arisings used to create a dead hedge.
- A Deer Impact Assessment will be undertaken in 2025 to inform whether deer control is required or appropriate.
- Conducting a full woodland condition assessment in 2025 to inform the next management plan review.

#### 4.2 f2 Connecting People with woods & trees

##### Description

Gillham's Wood is used mainly by local walkers and horse riders (on the bridleway). The wood is almost equidistance between the villages of Liphook (population c.8500) and Haslemere (population c.10,500). There is a small hamlet of Hammer Bottom to the north of the wood. Due to the links of the public paths, most of the site's visitors are likely to come from Hammer Bottom and Haslemere. A public bridleway transects the wood (350m), running east to west, and a public footpath (350m) runs the northern boundary of the wood with which a permissive path links to provides a circular route approximately 1.5km around the wood.

There is no car park associated with the wood.

##### Significance

Although the wood is relatively small it provides an important natural amenity for the village of Hammer Bottom and the neighbouring properties.

##### Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints: the small size of the wood limits its wider appeal to a greater number of visitors. Car parking opportunities close to the wood are very limited.

##### Factors Causing Change

- An increase in visitor numbers could cause a detrimental impact on the wood with damage to unsurfaced paths, increase risk of path encroachment, more desire lines, increased compaction around tree roots near to paths, trampling of specialist ground flora and disturbance to wildlife.
- A recent increase in bike use and anti-social behaviour in the wood includes littering and vandalism, which could result in an increase in health and safety concerns and measures needed to safeguard other users of the site as well as the site itself.
- Occasional horse trespass from the public bridleway can be an intermittent problem.

##### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access for informal and quiet recreation will be maintained in perpetuity. Visitor infrastructure at the wood will be low-key in light of the relatively low visitor numbers. The main entrances will be visible and clearly signed, and the footpaths kept accessible and open for use. The wood will be made as safe as possible for visitors, neighbours and road users.

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

During this plan period the short term objective is to provide low key public access which is safe and enjoyable. This will be achieved by:

- Annual management of the permissive and public path (approx. 1500m in total). This will include cutting back and clearing vegetation from paths and entrances, and appropriate tree safety work identified by Zone B safety inspections.
- Annual tree safety surveys along the roadside (340m), railway line (400m) and property boundaries (100m).

## 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,	October
2022	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	August
2022	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,	August
2023	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,	August
2024	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,	August
2025	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,	August

## APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	0	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Min-intervention		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
<p>This compartment outlines the area of the site designated as ancient semi-natural woodland. Following the change in topography, it runs in a band from east to west across the wood, narrowing towards the west.</p> <p>Oak dominates most of the canopy with beech increasing in abundance towards the east. Holly generally dominates the understorey under the mature oak, whereas dense birch regen, established post-storms, dominates the area to the east of the compartment. Ground flora is sparse under the holly and thicket of silver birch, and pockets of rhododendron are scattered all through the compartment. Ground flora increases in diversity along the paths where bramble, wood sedge, dock, bluebell, goldilocks, forget-me-not and wood sorrel can be found. Veteran oak and beech can be found all through the compartment and western hemlock is also found sporadically throughout. Standing and fallen deadwood is frequent across the compartment.</p>						
2a	0	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Min-intervention	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	
<p>This compartment is the area of natural well-established secondary woodland to the north of the ASNW (cpt1a). It is the wettest part of the site, being at the bottom of the slope.</p> <p>The canopy is still dominated by oak with beech increasing in abundance to the east. There is a greater abundance of silver birch and willow in the damper areas. There is the occasional sweet chestnut and western hemlock throughout, and 2 specimen European larch along the western boundary. Again, the understorey is dominated by holly and there are pockets of rhododendron with a significant patch in the north-west corner of the compartment. However, compared to cpt1a, there are more open areas, possibly where rhododendron has been cleared and these are dominated by bracken. The flora is particularly abundant along the prominent earth bank along which the public footpath follows where mosses and male and hart tongue ferns are abundant.</p>						
1b						
3a	0	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Min-intervention		
<p>This compartment is the area of natural, well-established secondary woodland to the south of the ASNW (cpt1a). It sits on the plateau and is notable more open compared to the other compartments and has a "heathier" character.</p>						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1c						<p>Again, oak dominates the canopy, however, holly is less abundant and species such as rowan, sweet chestnut and increasingly silver birch can be found. In the open areas, possibly created as a result of rhododendron management and some pockets still remain, bracken dominates and there is abundant honey suckle. Other ground flora includes wood avens, wood sorrel, yellow pimpernel, wood speedwell, violets and heather. There is a patch of variegated yellow archangel, a non-native invasive plant near the south-west entrance to the site.</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:**

**The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL.**

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