

Woodland Trust Management Plan

Armstrong's Wood

(Plan period – 2023 to 2028)



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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5. Work Programme

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GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Armstrong's Wood

Location:	Tostock	Grid	reference:	TL964637	OS	1:50,000	Sheet	No.	155
Area:	1.58 hectares (3.90 acres)								
External Designations:	N/A								
Internal Designations:	N/A								

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Armstrong's Wood is a linear roadside shelterbelt which runs along the southern side of Church Road in Tostock. It contains a wide variety of broadleaved trees including ash, hornbeam and sweet chestnut which were probably planted in the nineteenth century. There is also a small pond in the western section of the wood. Most of the land to the south of the wood is used for arable farming and the land to the north is mainly grazing and paddocks. A water pipe and electricity cable run under the site at the western end. Access to the wood is informal with a desire line/path running through the length of the wood which offers an alternative option to walking on the roadside.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

For the broadleaved woodland to retain its multi-aged, layered and deadwood structure through natural regeneration and minimal intervention.

The long-term intention is to retain public access at a sustainable level by maintaining the path through the wood. The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors/highway traffic through annual tree safety inspections as per Woodland Trust Internal Guidance and best practice. Due to the size, shape and location of the site, even if any management intervention was desirable it would be constrained by the proximity to the highway.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
Visitor access requirement to Armstrong's Wood is minimal. It is predominantly used as a footpath or desire line along Church Road to and from the village of Tostock to avoid walking on the road. There is a small informal pull in layby on the woodland edge.
Significance
It is important to maintain informal public access at this site in order to fulfil one of the Trust's main objectives of increasing public enjoyment of woodland.
Opportunities & Constraints
Fly tipping occurs occasionally and can make the site look uncared for.
Factors Causing Change
Ash dieback has led to the removal of some ash through Zone A/B inspections.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Maintain public access through the wood to allow safer passage along the length of the wood and roadside.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
To retain open access by maintaining the existing path and keeping it free of obstacles. To litter pick and remove fly tipping. To replace the welcome sign.

4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland

Description
Armstrong's wood is a mature mixed broadleaf secondary shelter belt woodland with a good deadwood structure.
Significance
In the context of the locality this native broadleaved woodland is an important feature in the landscape and helps mask the noise of the A14.
Opportunities & Constraints

Due to its location adjacent to a busy road tree safety is a high priority.

Factors Causing Change

Ash dieback increasing tree safety work along the roadside. Several mature ash have already been removed and is anticipated that more will also succumb to ash dieback and will require removal in the future.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain mature secondary woodland structure maintaining current levels of deadwood habitat throughout the wood.

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

Maintain the current mature woodland structure and deadwood habitat within the woodland. The Woodland will be left to undertake a natural process where intervention will be left to a minimum.

To undertake annually both health and safety and tree safety inspections to maintain a safe environment.

Remove the ash trees with ash dieback for road safety as the disease progresses and the trees develop potential for hazards.

Cut back the trees alongside the road as necessary.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2024	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	July

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	1.8	Hornbeam	1890	High forest	Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	
<p>Armstrong's Wood is a linear roadside shelterbelt with a wide variety of broadleaved trees which were probably planted sometime in the nineteenth century. The dominant species are ash, hornbeam, common ash, oak, sycamore and field maple, which were coppiced before 1940. Some cherry and holly are also present with some sparse hazel and hawthorn in isolated patches. Ground flora is sparse but contains dogs mercury, wood anemone, ground ivy and nettle. In the western section of the wood there is a small woodland pond.</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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