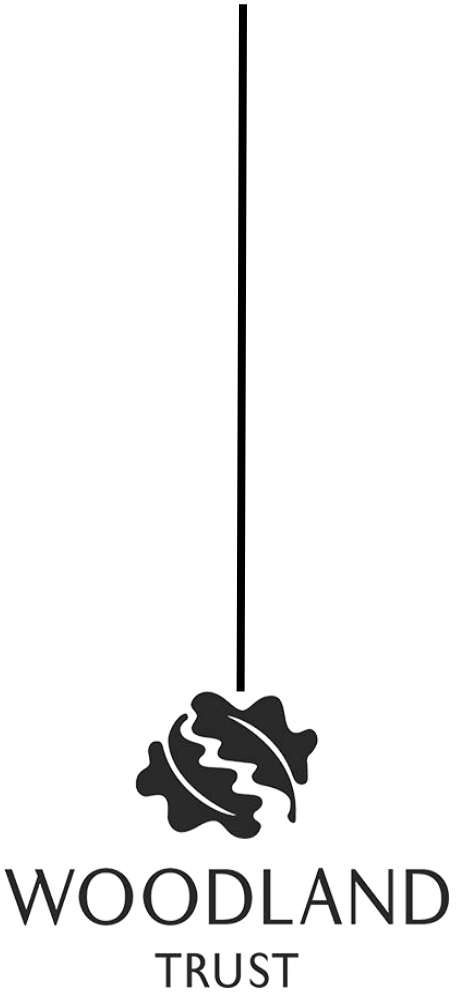
Dering Wood

(Plan period – 2023 to 2028)



Management Plan Content Page

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

1. SITE DETAILS

Dering Wood

Location:	Pluckley Grid reference: TQ900441 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 189
Area:	125.56 hectares (310.27 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	N/A

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Dering Wood, 310 acre (125.56ha), west of Ashford in Kent, is one of a number of large but isolated blocks of woodland set within a farmed landscape west of Ashford within the Low Weald National Character Area. Due to numerous development threats during the 1970's and 1980's the Woodland Trust acquired Dering Wood in June 1997 following a local and national appeal and with Heritage Lottery funding. Approximately 52ha of the wood outside the Woodland Trust's ownership remains lotted up in private ownership (with no public access) along the western edge and at the southeast end of the wood.

Dering Wood contains large areas of oak and hornbeam coppice with oak standards along with other mixed broadleaved species, and was managed for centuries for its coppice products. Much of Dering Wood was felled in the First World War and during the Second World War troops were based in the wood prior to D Day. Little management was carried out in the decades prior to the Woodland Trust ownership and as a result a significant amount of the coppice is now too mature to re coppice again.

Dering Wood is notified as a Local Wildlife Site being a good example of an ancient woodland with a rich and varied ground flora with stunning displays of bluebells and wood anemones to be seen in the spring months, and a good range of fungi in the autumn. This wood also contains well preserved medieval boundary banks or woodbanks which are of archaeological interest. Dering Wood's origin goes back much further with the area occupied by Dering Wood first being mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon charter in AD843.

There is a good ride network through the wood which originated in the 1800's by the Dering Family who designed the rather regimented and straight rides. Dering Wood's ride network prior to then is unknown. The Dering Family owned the wood up until the 1920's and used the wood as a place of recreation with King Edward VII being a frequent visitor apparently. A car park was added by the Woodland Trust off Smarden Bell Road soon after its purchase. (The car park is accessed under a height barrier with a 2 metre clearance). Accompanying the rides is an extensive medieval and Victorian ditch and drainage system aimed at helping to drain this geographically flat wood with its heavy wet clay soils. Many of these ditches feed into or out from several ponds found in the wood. The Dering Family also planted specimens of rhododendron, holm oak, Turkey oak, red oak and horse chestnut beside some of the main rides. Due to the spreading nature of rhododendron in particular, many of these non native species have been removed during the early years of the 21st century.

Dering Wood supports a number of notable butterfly species such as the silver - washed fritillary, white admiral and grizzled skipper. The wood also supports small populations of dormouse, nightingale and turtle dove which are found in the actively managed coppiced and ride edge areas of the wood and are nationally important. Other birds regularly seen are blackcap, chiffchaff, garden warbler, marsh tit and nuthatch.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

In fifty years' time, Dering Wood will contain a diverse structure providing a good range of different habitats typical of this native broadleaved woodland. There will be a mosaic of actively coppiced areas interspersed amongst managed high forest and areas managed through minimal intervention with an increasing resource of decaying wood. Linking up the active coppice areas will be a wide ride habitat centred on some of the main tracks whose edges are coppiced on a short rotation. A diverse suite of woodland habitats will allow the opportunity for a diverse and abundant mix of species to be supported leading to a more resilient woodland habitat.

Through the active management of coppiced areas, habitat for a range of invertebrate, bird and mammal species, including woodland specialist species which rely on temporary open space, will be provided for. Areas of managed high forest will be evolving a multi layered canopy as interventions by thinning provides gaps in the canopy for natural regeneration and stump regrowth to become established. This will also provide additional habitats for invertebrates and birds. Within the managed high forest areas decaying wood habitats will be allowed to build up and with time beyond the next 50 years future veteran trees will become plentiful with their own developing deadwood habitats.

The areas of over mature coppice habitat being managed through minimal intervention as old-growth groves (9.5ha) will been seen as areas of denser groves of trees. These areas can produce unique conditions linked to higher moisture and humidity along with the increasing age of the trees. This will allow an increasing deadwood habitat to develop which will in turn support a large range of invertebrates and fungi. In addition as the trees senesce there will be an increasing prevalence of coppice stools splitting and falling apart. This will not only help to generate more deadwood but also allow the regeneration of an understorey through increasing light levels. This is to be expected as a previously managed coppice woodland converts to a more semi natural woodland habitat through minimal intervention.

The presence of non-native trees (Turkey oak) and shrubs (rhododendron) will continue to be monitored, although it is expected that in 50 years' time any active control will by then be minimal. Deer numbers in Dering Wood in 50 years' time will continue to be monitored and controlled so that their numbers do not become too high so preventing the woodland from regenerating.
The medieval woodbank heritage will be preserved through the management and manipulation of the trees growing on or near these structures to ensure these structures remain undamaged.

Although the site will retain its tranquil character, it will be visited by a moderate number of visitors each year who appreciate and respect walking in a large broadleaved woodland with diverse habitats and archaeological features, along a well-maintained network of rides.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description
Dering Wood is typical of ancient semi natural woodland (ASNW) growing on heavy wet Weald Clay supporting a tree, shrub and ground flora vegetation community of NVC (National Vegetation Community) W10 oak woodland with bramble and bracken. 29 ancient woodland indicator plant species, over 60 species of bryophytes, more than 300 fungus species, 25 species of butterfly including county important species and 11 rare species of moths of which 2 appear listed in the red data book along with whiskered or brandt's, brown long eared and natterers bats have all been recorded at Dering Wood. Nightingale, cuckoo, turtle dove and lesser spotted woodpecker have also been recorded along with the dormouse. Its richness and diversity is partly due to its size and historical existence. Records show that a wood was recorded in AD843 where Dering Wood is now located, and that it has been continuously wooded since medieval times and managed extensively for its coppice products up until the middle of the 20th century. A small area of Dering Wood was cleared in the 19th century, Lane Field (in sub compartment 4a), and was under arable crops in 1838; however this was subsequently abandoned and planted with trees by 1898. The ground flora is generally sparse under the thick tree canopy but there are areas where carpets of bluebell and wood anemone can be found in the spring months, but where light permits bramble will dominate. The main tree species forming the canopy are oak, both pedunculate and sessile with hornbeam. In the northern part of Dering Wood the soils are slightly less acidic allowing ash, field maple and hazel to be present in the canopy. Aspen, downy and silver birch and goat willow are minor components as is wild service tree which is found on the western fringe of Dering Wood. The wide rides are quite rich in woodland ground flora species which attract and support a range of invertebrate species. Fallow deer are regularly seen although no permanent population is thought to be living in Dering Wood; small family unit of roe deer is present on site. The coppice areas contain oak standards however these trees are all less than 100 years old, as all of the mature trees appear to have been felled during the 1914-1918 war. Dering Wood therefore lacks large trees at the moment and has a low amount of dead wood habitat due to the historical coppice management of the site. Active coppicing continued until the early 1960's and then sporadically until Woodland Trust ownership in 1997. Since 1997, 42ha or 33% of the wood has been identified which contains "in rotation" coppice, split into 35 different cants based on age, and formed of predominately oak and hornbeam with a small area of sweet chestnut. A wide ride habitat with short rotation coppiced edges with pinch points links together the actively coppiced areas and this extends to approximately 4.0km (2.5 miles) along some of the major tracks. Coppicing is beneficial in providing the continuity of habitat in particular for the woodland specialist butterflies, moths, dormouse and other invertebrates which all depend on recently coppiced areas and the wide ride habitat for suitable habitat to survive in. Red listed bird species identified linked to coppiced areas include nightingale, marsh tit, song thrush, mistle thrust, cuckoo and turtle dove; amber listed bird species include stock dove, bullfinch, tawny owl, wren and tree creeper. A high proportion of Dering Wood (83ha or 66% of the wood) contains over mature coppice which is too old to coppice

again because there has been too long a gap in the felling cycle to resume active coppicing with no guarantee of any successful regrowth if cut again. Within this area 3 old-growth groves are being managed as minimal intervention areas covering approximately 9.5 ha containing over mature coppice. The remainder of over mature coppice (73ha) is being managed by continuous cover technique which through thinning interventions will ensure the development of natural regeneration and a woody shrub layer through increasing light levels.

Within parts of the ASNW, exotic species were planted in the 19th century such as horse chestnut, Turkey oak, red oak and rhododendron. These tended to be beside the main carriageway created by the Dering family in the 19th century (along with the current ride network), however, rhododendron and turkey oak did spread out from their original planting areas and in parts became the dominant species until clearance and eradication began in 2001.

Within the ASNW are good examples of woodbanks and other archaeological remains which are detailed in a Core Monument Record. Within the wood are networks of sinuous woodbanks and silted ditches which enclosed the 7 individual woods which now make up Dering Wood. These are probably medieval divisions as names can be traced back to the early part of the 17th century e.g. Fagotter's Wood, Birch Wood and Pierce Wood. Overall the woodbanks are in an excellent condition and fine examples of their type in the Low Weald, however there are isolated cases woodbanks have been damaged by vehicles gaining access across them prior to Woodland Trust ownership.

In addition, running throughout the wood is a complex network of drainage ditches and grips which naturally drain through the wood originating in medieval times with more recent additions. Several sump ponds are located on the edge of the wood to collect flood water.

Significance

ASNW is a dwindling habitat and as such all remnants of ancient woodland need to be protected from further loss. The Woodland Trust ownership of Dering Wood extends to 125.46ha, although the actual size of the wood extends by a further 128 acres (52ha) approximately in private ownership. In addition on the north side of Smarden Bell Road is Frith Wood, 37.3ha, which is very similar in habitat to Dering Wood. Thus combined together, Dering and Frith Woods, make a significant impact on the landscape within a sea of arable farmland.

Dering and Frith Woods are both Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) also known as Local Wildlife Sites, and so contain significant biodiversity interest.

Within the Woodland Trust ownership at Dering Wood there is a significant area of coppice still within rotation. The benefits of coppicing are a continuity of the coppice habitat and its associated bird, mammal, invertebrate and plant assemblages which have survived under this type of management for 1000 years or more; maintains an intimate mixture of mainly light demanding tree species which would otherwise not be represented in woodlands; coppicing has enabled the direct links with original-natural (primeval) woodland to be maintained; coppice woodlands provide opportunities for flora to survive along the ride network due to the higher light levels maintained within the woodland due to coppice activity.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity:
To use the site to demonstrate the Trust's approach to woodland management and to influence neighbouring landowners and other key stakeholders.

Constraints:
The thick, wet heavy clay soils and the European Protected Species status of dormouse restricts the seasons in which active management work can be accomplished.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive rhododendron, invasive Turkey oak, antisocial behaviour

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Woodland biodiversity tends to be greater in wooded areas which are structurally diverse in terms of their age, species, edge habitat potential, understory and deadwood component.

The long term objective is to develop varied and robust native woodland with diverse and complex structure all well represented within the different woodland habitat types. This includes managed high forest, coppice, standards, rides, dead and decaying wood and areas left to develop by natural processes. This will be achieved through thinning, coppicing and retaining standards and other interventions such as ride side management. Coppice woodlands are traditionally low on dead and decaying wood habitats, with well-spaced standards trees perhaps supplying the only dead and decaying wood within the wood.

Further dead and decaying wood habitat will be provided in the areas of coppice which are out of rotation and have been left to mature and senesce in the old-growth groves managed by minimal intervention covering approximately 9.5ha (cpts 3b, 4c and 5c).

To remove those invasive and threatening tree and shrub species (Turkey oak and rhododendron regeneration) which are currently dominating areas of Dering Wood and suppressing the ground flora.

Areas to coppice during particular plan periods will be dictated by their condition, age and structure. The aim is to achieve a diverse age range of actively coppiced areas connected by a maintained wide ride habitat. The coppice areas will be set within a mosaic of stored coppice managed as high forest and old-growth groves managed by minimal intervention.
The managed high forest areas will be regularly thinned on continuous cover principles to encourage natural regeneration and successor generation of trees through single tree selection. This will in time produce irregularly spaced canopy trees with a developing understorey of trees and woody shrubs and a habitat of high conservation value.

The proportion of standing and fallen deadwood within this wood will be increasing through the active management works including ring girdling a small proportion of trees to create dead standing timber. The increasing age of the trees in the old-growth groves managed by minimal intervention will gradually accumulate deadwood habitats, and the works to reduce invasive Turkey oaks through felling to waste.

To maintain this diverse habitat and to ensure the survival of a healthy and secure ground flora deer will be controlled should there impact become damaging.

The presence of non-native and threatening species to be absent or minor with containment and eradication work still continuing.

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

The short term objective is to contribute towards the creation/ maintenance of structurally diverse woodland through coppicing, thinning, ride management and the removal of exotic invasive species.

- Coppicing

Approximately 3ha of predominately hornbeam and oak coppice to be felled in 2027 felling coppice within compartments 1a, 4b and 6a. Standards will be retained within the areas coppiced and the recruitment of "new" standards will occur to create (in the long term) a density of approximately 20-30 per ha, with additional standards recruited where necessary each time the areas are coppiced. Standards are to be a mixture of species (oak, hornbeam, wild cherry). Adjacent cants will not be cut until the coppice regrowth has reached a minimum of 2m in height with successful regrowth of cut stools, supplemented with natural regeneration of tree species to maintain an adequate stocking density where coppice stools have died of no less than 1100 stems per hectare.

- Ride edge management

During the plan period a 3 zone wide ride habitat with short rotation coppiced edges is to be maintained along approximately 4.5km of rides maintaining pinch points where designated. There will be an annual programme of works to cut the vegetation within the 3 zones with zone 1 areas cut annually, 71 sections of zone 2 areas to be cut at least once during this plan period on a rotation of 3-5 years, and 11 sections of zone 3 areas to be cut once during this plan period on a rotation of 10-15 years, and all cut in a piecemeal fashion. This will accentuate the woodland edge habitat providing valuable temporary open space coppice habitat.

- Thinning

Approximately 16ha of stored coppice to be singled/thinned in compartments 3a, 3b, 4b and 5a and so increase the light levels penetrating through the canopy and encourage the development of an understorey of tree and woody shrub natural regeneration and ground flora; 4.85ha to be thinned in 2026 and 6.95 ha in 2028. Within each area thinned to ring girdle up to 3 trees per hectare over 35-40cm dbh to create standing dead and decaying wood.

- Removal of exotics

The systematic removal of exotic invasive species such as rhododendron, Turkey oak and holm oak within compartments 1a, 3a, 3b, 4b, 5a and 6a before these areas have been coppiced or thinned. Eradication of these invasive species and its regeneration will occur on an annual basis (if necessary) through the management plan's period with aim of no regeneration after 5 years in the target areas. An environment assessment to be competed to confirm method of eradication. Large or mature Turkey oaks to be felled to become decaying wood habitat.

- Survey

A baseline survey in 2027 of the 3 minimal intervention areas to be carried out assessing ground flora, tree diameter

distribution and dead and decaying wood amounts.
A 5 yearly whole site bird survey in 2027 and compare to 2017 and 2022 surveys.

4.2 f2 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Dering Wood is situated between the villages of Pluckley (pop 1,069) and Smarden (pop 1,301) and approximately 9 miles/14.5km west of the town of Ashford (pop 74, 204). Pluckley, was named 'the most haunted village in England' in the 1989 Guinness Book of World Records and has been featured in a number of ghost-hunting TV programmes. Pluckley was also the location for filming of the Darling Buds of May in the 1990s. As a result, the public interest in Pluckley and Dering Wood due to its free public access, is higher than usual for a wood of similar size and location in SE England.

The public have access to the wood from the car park and from 2 other entrances off Smarden Bell Road and from the Public Right of Way which all lead on to an extensive path network in the wood. There are two way-marked trails which both start from the car park. The paths can become very muddy with high use during the wet winter months.

Dering Wood is well used by mainly dog walkers during the daytime and serves communities from Pluckley, Smarden, Egerton, Mundy Bois, Headcorn and others from further afield. In Spring, the site has a very good bluebell and wood anemone display. The car park can attract antisocial behaviour in the evenings, and has been opened and closed at weekends and even daily during the previous 5 years to attempt to reduce this behaviour with limited affect.

A permissive horse route runs through part of the wood to allow riders to gain access to a Toll Ride network and to avoid part of Smarden Bell road. This permissive route is marked by red and white paint on trees along its route.

A small group of Volunteer Wardens help monitor antisocial behaviour, litter pick and report other site related problems.

Significance

The village of Pluckley is on the Greensand long-distance walking route and near the Stour Valley Walk.

Dering Wood enables access to a large ASNW and gives an opportunity for the Woodland Trust to promote the message of ancient woodland habitats and the importance of its protection.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity:
Provision of public access to a large ASNW for its enjoyment – fantastic display of spring flowers; to demonstrate conservation management by Woodland Trust; to potentially use the woodland as a resource for education by holding events for children as well as events/walks aimed at an older audience, linking in with seasonal opportunities eg

bluebells, fungi, bat/moth walks.

Constraints:
Thick Weald Clay soils and a flat terrain coupled with well used pedestrian routes causes the tracks to become muddy during the winter months, although they are still passable with suitable footwear.
Antisocial behaviour linked to the car park and often associated with 'ghost-hunting' activity causing unnecessary disturbance to wildlife and other visitors, plus additional expense for the Woodland Trust to clean up afterwards.

Factors Causing Change

Fly tipping, Antisocial behaviour

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A well established and safe network of paths for informal public access throughout Dering Wood where responsible visitors can appreciate and respect this wood with its different habitats, archaeological and wildlife interest without causing disturbances. The visitor numbers to be in line with its category A status with provision for parking on site in a car park if required. The provision of way marked routes, a site leaflet and information boards to be available on site if required.

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

During this plan period, the short term objective is to continue to provide public access at Dering Wood which is safe and enjoyable. How this will be achieved:-

- 7.4km (4.6 miles) of paths will be maintained to allow continued access across the whole site for pedestrians by mowing as appropriate during the summer months and litter picks at the same time.
- Horse access along the permissive route will also be maintained by mowing and cutting back tree growth interfering with the route as necessary during the plan period. Red and white paint marks to be refreshed once during this period in 2027.
- Liaise with Kent Police to combat persistent antisocial behaviour if this arises during the plan period. Volunteer Wardens to walk the site regularly each week.
- To maintain the tarmac to the car park approach off Smarden Bell Road as and when is necessary.
- To annually brush cut the coppice regrowth and bramble to form a 60 metre wide "bell mouth" centred on the car park access point so the car park remains obvious.
- Annual inspection of all gates, bridges, waymarker posts and monitoring of path surfaces and replace infrastructure when needed through the plan period.
- Annual Zone A tree safety inspection. Fungal survey to be carried out once in every 24 month period in the autumn with a summer survey in between to check trees' crowns.
- Zone B tree safety inspections are to be carried out every 4 years. Arboriculture work to be carried out as appropriate.
- The woodland vegetation along the public road is to be flailed in November/December each year to ensure there is no interference with users of the highway year; where applicable that there is a minimum height clearance above the full width of the highway to 5.1m.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2027	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	April

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	14.26	Hornbeam	1900	Coppice	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Hornbeam coppice with sessile oak standards with some hazel in understorey. Majority coppiced in the early 1990's with the roadside strip coppiced in 2012. Standards, mostly of coppice origin recruited during last coppice operation. This sub compartment contains 13 identified coppice cants numbered 1a15, 1a16, 1a17, 1a18, 1a19, 1a20, 1a21, 1a22, 1a35, 1a36, 1a37, 1a38, 1a39. The permissive horse route's exit onto the Smarden Bell Road is at the northeast corner of the external wood boundary. Archaeology: extensive ditch and woodbank systems pass through this sub-compartment, in particular a double bank and ditch runs along the northern edge of the wood to the verge of the Smarden Bell Road verge - see Archaeological Report for more details.						
1b	16.83	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Over-mature hornbeam coppice and oak coppice with scattered oak standards singled from coppice in the past with stands of downy birch which appear to have been coppiced in the past. Some areas of the hornbeam have been coppiced between 1999 and 2007. This sub compartment contains 4 identified high forest areas numbered 1b1, 1b2, 1b18, 1b19. An old heavily shaded and silted pond 5mx5m which holds very little water is also situated on the eastern boundary at the junction with 1b. The public footpath runs NE-SW through the southern part of this compartment. Archaeology:						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
Three elliptical pond-like depressions exist at the edge of Dering Wood near the junction with sub-compartment 1b and a woodbank. Two of these depressions are between 0.75m and 1.25m deep and a diameter of 4 - 7m with traces of spoil mounds in the locality; the third is 15-20m in size and up to 0.75m deep. They are all located at the end of three straight nineteenth century avenues. These depressions can be seasonally wet and flooded. At the southern end there exists a long depression of overall length 20-25m and a width of 5m. This feature comprises two depressions in a line on an orientation of NNW-SSE. This could be a relic from 1939-45 war and possibly used for training the Home Guard. Extensive ditch system pass through this sub-compartment - see Archaeological Report for more details.						
2a	11.55	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Coppice	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Hornbeam and oak coppice with some singled oak and scattered specimens of turkey oak present with a developing understorey in places of hornbeam. In some areas the hornbeam coppice is poorly stocked. Dense birch occurs in places, hazel with the occasional holly and over-mature sweet chestnut coppice stools are also present. A line of horse chestnut has been planted along the eastern boundary of this compartment. Rhododendron has been present within 2a, planted initially along the edge of the old Carriageway in Victorian times, but has now been eradicated. This sub compartment contains 3 identified coppice cants numbered 2a23, 2a24, 2a33 and 2 identified high forest areas numbered 2a10 and 2a34. Archaeology: At either end of the old Carriageway there was a ragstone and brick lodge with the characteristic Dering windows. The northern lodge has now gone and the southern lodge is in privately owned woodland. The Carriageway is over 30m wide and comprises a central cambered roadway which appears to have been metalled in some way at one time (This is now buried beneath a thick layer of soil 20cms depth approximately). On either side there is a ditch, and 10m beyond on either side are further parallel ditches. The Avenue was planted with sweet chestnut, Norway spruce and under planted with rhododendron. No spruce has survived but the chestnut is still in place and is situated in the 10m wide area between the parallel ditch system. An extensive ditch and woodbank systems pass through this sub-compartment - see Archaeological Report for more details.						
3a	2.78	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
ASNW. Over-mature sweet chestnut and hornbeam coppice. Some stands of sessile oak coppice with occasional standards with mature hornbeam. Stands of downy and silver birch are frequent with occasional hazel coppice stools. Open bracken glades are locally frequent with bramble and young seedlings of birch and oak are attempting to partially re colonising these areas. The public footpath forms the north western boundary of this sub-compartment. Rhododendron has been present within 3a, planted initially along the edge of the old Carriageway in Victorian times, but has now been eradicated. This sub compartment contains 1 identified high forest area numbered 3a17. Archaeology: An extensive ditch and woodbank systems pass through this sub-compartment - see Archaeological Report for more details.						
3b	4.79	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Over-mature oak and hornbeam coppice with scattered sweet chestnut trees. Some stands of sessile oak coppice with occasional standards with mature hornbeam. Stands of downy and silver birch are frequent with occasional hazel coppice stools. The public footpath forms the north western boundary of this sub-compartment. This sub compartment contains 1 identified high forest area numbered 3b1. Archaeology: to the south east of the public right of way is situated a possible sawpit. It is approximately 3m long and 2m wide. Extensive ditch and woodbank systems pass through this sub-compartment - see Archaeological Report for more details.						
3c	3.75	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Min-intervention		
ASNW. Over-mature oak and hornbeam coppice. Stands of downy and silver birch are frequent with occasional hazel coppice stools. Open bracken glades are locally frequent at the southern end with bramble and young seedlings of birch and oak are attempting to partially re colonising these areas. The public footpath forms the north western boundary and the railway runs along the southern boundary of this sub-compartment. Extensive ditch and woodbank systems pass through this sub-compartment forming part of the property boundary - see Archaeological Report for more details.						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
4a	21.73	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
Part ASNW and part ASNW cleared for agricultural use (Lane Field) in 19th century and then re planted. The north and eastern end of this sub-compartment contain densely stocked oak and hornbeam coppice, some of which has been singled. There is a particularly well preserved ditch and woodbanked area of hornbeam coppice formerly known as Pierce Wood found in the southeast of 4a. The south-eastern half of 4a was formerly listed as Lane Field and 3 Acres and is now a semi-mature densely stocked broadleaved wood with oak, birch, with some hazel coppice and willow with large amounts of Turkey oak and Turkey oak regeneration. The public footpath forms the south eastern boundary of this sub-compartment. Rhododendron has been present within 4a, planted initially along the edge of the old Carriageway in Victorian times, but has now been eradicated. In the extreme south west corner is an area of woodland which was windblown in 1987 and replanted in 1991 with sessile oak at 3 x 3 metre spacing with a scattering of semi-mature oak standards. Birch regeneration has developed between the planted oaks. This sub compartment contains 7 identified high forest area numbered 4a10 - 4a16 inclusive. Archaeology: in the south east part of 4a to the north of the public right of way, there is a large water-filled pond which lies at the junction of several woodbanks. It is fed by three woodbank ditches from north, west and south and its outlet flows east through what was called Tufton Wood to join with the stream which eventually becomes a tributary of the River Beult. In addition a parallel system of drainage grips also feed directly into the pond. Its location at the northern end of an enclosure shows that this is a field edge pond providing a water supply to what was Lane Field (1839). The pond dates to before 1800 and may have initially been dug as either to provide water or as a marl pit. The woodbanks beside it are integral with the pond. Lane Field: A parallel drain network orientated NNE-SSW lies within an enclosure known as Lane Field in 1839. The ditches are 1.6m wide at the top sloping into 0.75 in at the bottom, with a depth of 0.3m. The ditches are approximately 8m apart and regularly spaced. Lane Field was open in 1871, but had been planted to trees by 1898. The ditch system is probably contemporary with this planting as a means of draining the arable soils to facilitate the growth of sweet chestnut.						
4b	9.27	Oak (sessile)	1991	Coppice	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
ASNW. Southern and central part was windblown in 1987 and replanted in 1991 with sessile oak at 3 x 3 metre spacing with a scattering of semi-mature oak standards. Birch regeneration has developed between the planted oaks. In the southeast are 2 areas of sweet chestnut coppice last cut in approximately 1995 and 2021. The western part is made up of predominately hornbeam coppice with oak standards some cut in 2003 and 2011. The permissive horse route exits onto the TROT controlled route near the south-western point on the external wood boundary. This sub compartment contains 5 identified coppice cants numbered : 4b25, 4b26, 4b28, 4b31 and 4b32, and 3 areas of potential high forest : 4b27, 4b29 and 4b30.						
4c	1.37	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Min-intervention	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Over mature oak coppice with an understorey of hornbeam with birch and hazel present.						
5a	22.45	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Contains mostly oak and hornbeam coppice with significant areas having been singled in the north-west part. Hornbeam regenerates well under the oak canopy and has formed a locally abundant understory and oak regeneration also occurs particularly along the ride margins and in open areas. Rhododendron has been present within 5a, planted initially along the edge of the old Carriageway in Victorian times, but has now been eradicated. This sub compartment contains 8 identified high forest areas numbered 5a1 - 5a8 inclusive. Archaeology: To the east of the northwest – south east orientated ride which bisects this sub-compartment lies a probable sawpit. The pit itself is 6m long and 3m wide with the mound of spoil on the downslope side and is orientated on a northwest – southeast axis. Midway along the western boundary of 5a lies a four armed pond which is fed by a main ditch from what was called Burnt Wood, and whose outlet runs into a ditch which passes west out of Dering Wood flowing through a culvert under a track. At the north-eastern corner next to the carriageway there are two longitudinal shaped ponds – one with an orientation of north northwest to south southeast whilst the other is on an east west orientation. The latter has an						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
outlet ditch on the west end which feeds into an extensive ditch system through what was Burnt Wood. These are the largest ponds in the wood. They may have been dug for stone with which to metal the carriageway but are not big enough to have supplied the whole route. Extensive ditch and woodbank systems pass through this sub-compartment - see Archaeological Report for more details.						
5b	4.44	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Min-intervention	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Contains mostly oak and hornbeam coppice. Hornbeam regenerates well under the oak canopy and has formed a locally abundant understory. Wild service tree regeneration is also found near the southeast end of this sub compartment. Small bracken filled glades occur under gaps of the oak canopy.						
6a	12.01	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	Coppice	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
ASNW. Mostly mixed broadleaved coppice dominated by oak and hornbeam with ash, goat willow, aspen, sweet chestnut and hazel. Centrally within this sub compartment are 3 cants of sweet chestnut coppice. In the south and east are 2 areas of over mature oak and hornbeam coppice (6a20 and 6a21) which have been singled. This sub compartment contains 14 identified coppice cants numbered: 6a1- 6a14 inclusive and 2 identified high forest areas numbered 6a20 and 6a21. Rhododendron has been present within 6a, planted initially along the edge of the old Carriageway in Victorian times, but has now been eradicated. The permissive bridleway passes through this sub-compartment. Archaeology: In the extreme northwest corner adjacent to the old carriageway lies the site of the North Lodge, a ragstone and brick lodge building which is now no longer present. Extensive ditch and woodbank systems pass through this sub-compartment - see Archaeological Report for more details.						

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.