

Aversley 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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2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
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5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Aversley Wood

Location:	Sawtry	Grid	reference:	TL163820	OS	1:50,000	Sheet	No.	142
Area:	61.58 hectares (152.17 acres)								
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest								
Internal Designations:	N/A								

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Aversley Wood lies on a prominent flat topped ridge at the western edge of the Cambridgeshire fens, south-west of Sawtry and the A1(M). The wood is one of the largest Ancient Semi-Natural woodlands in Cambridgeshire and forms an important landscape feature. The Woodland Trust have owned this wood since 1982. It is surrounded on all sides by intensively managed farmland. Other major woods in the local area include Archer's wood (also owned by the Woodland Trust) which is 0.5 km south of Aversley Wood, and Monks Wood National Nature Reserve which is approx. 4km away in a similar direction.

Ash is the main tree species dominating the woodland canopy, which can make up over 75% of the composition in a large proportion of the wood. Oak is the other major species of the woodland canopy. The understorey also consists of ash, hazel, field maple and blackthorn. The wood is especially notable for a greater-than-average number of wild service trees, some of which exceed 60 cm diameter (large for this species). The wood also contains small pockets of elm, beech and aspen.

The wood has been managed for coppice in the past and large multi-stemmed ash stools can still be found within the wood today. A large section of the ground in the southern half of the wood has a 'ridge and furrow' landform, indicating medieval strip ploughing. This is thought to date back to the 14th century, after which time the land reverted to woodland following the impact of the Black Death plague.

The woodland ground flora is generally rich and contains a number of ancient woodland indicator plants, and Aversley Wood has been quoted as arguably the best bluebell wood in Cambridgeshire. Other woodland plants include enchanter's nightshade, dogs mercury, meadow sweet, wood anemone and pendulous sedge. The woodland flora is particularly visible alongside the extensive network of open sunny rides, which are a major feature of this wood.

The network of open rides also provides easy public access by foot. Several narrower paths lead through the compartments, creating interest and variety for visitors. The heavy clay soils mean the woodland paths are often waterlogged in the winter. There is an attractive pond in the northern quarter of the wood, which is accessible to visitors on one of its sides.

The wood's Key features are:

- Ancient Semi-natural Woodland
- Informal Public access

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long term intention is for Aversley Wood to develop into a diverse ancient woodland habitat with a high forest structure and containing a mixture of mature broadleaved trees. Oak is likely to become the main canopy species in the long term, as a large and continued decline in ash is anticipated (through ash dieback disease) with this species becoming a minor component. As well as oak and ash - field maple, hazel, aspen and elm are likely to be common components, together with minor components of beech, alder and willow. The important collection of wild service trees will be retained long term as specimen trees in the wood, and management works will seek to perpetuate them standing for as long as biologically possible. The veteran coppice stools (of mainly ash) will also be retained for as long as biologically possible and management operations will avoid cutting and felling these, provided they do not pose a safety risk to the public.

The wood will also be regenerating vigorously with a diverse range of native broadleaves (including ash as well as other species), and there will be gaps in the tree canopy to allow this to happen. Decline and death of ash trees through disease will create many of the canopy gaps for natural regeneration to develop, and for the deadwood habitat to increase. Continued regeneration of the woodland will also be encouraged though to achieve a diverse range of age classes over time, with periodic silvicultural intervention taking place to allow this to occur. The local deer population will be at a balanced and sustainable level to ensure they are not posing a threat to the ecology and natural regeneration of the woodland. Old veteran coppice stools (mainly ash) within the wood, which are important historically and ecologically, will also be retained and left uncut until their natural decline, provided they pose minimal safety risk to the public. Silvicultural operations will seek to avoid their cutting and removal. The wood will continue to retain a network of ecologically-rich wide rides, which will have structured woodland edges, providing habitat especially for flora and invertebrates.

Public access on foot will be maintained at the wood in perpetuity, and visitors can expect to find a good network of well managed paths and welcoming signage at the entrances. Information about the wood, its history and management will be provided at the main entrances and infrastructure such as benches will be provided at key points. The wood will be made as safe as possible for the public to enjoy, with regular safety visits conducted.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Aversley Wood was designated a SSSI (site of Special Scientific Interest) in 1983 as an ancient woodland of notable interest within the local area, consisting of a predominately W8 NVC (National Vegetation Classification): Ash/Maple/Dog's Mercury woodland.

The wood now has a high forest structure, with the main canopy species being oak and ash, plus localised components of elm and beech and a scattering of impressive mature wild service trees. Ash is particularly dominant in the wood, making up over 70% of the tree canopy in some parts. However ash dieback disease is present, which is starting to reduce the vigour of the trees. The understorey consists of hazel, field maple, hawthorn (including Midland) and blackthorn. Historically the wood would have been managed as coppice-with-standards, with oak standards over ash dominated coppice. There is a scattering of large veteran ash coppice stools within the wood, that hark back to this period of over 100 years ago.

Prior to acquisition by Woodland Trust the site was managed for sporting use resulting in wide mown rides, which are now managed for their habitat value. There is artificial pond to the north, thought to have been created in Victorian period through the damming of a stream. The pond was opened up and restored in 2006 and is known to support great crested newts (last surveyed June 2023).

Woodland flora of notable interest includes bluebell, wood anemone, early purple orchid and stinking iris.

A system of historic wide sunny rides is present throughout the wood, thought to date back to the 17th century. These add greatly to the ecological diversity in the wood, supporting uncommon butterflies such as white letter and black letter hairstreak and flora such as meadowsweet, common spotted orchid, twayblade and Devil's bit scabious.

The solid geology is Oxford Clay overlain by chalky glacial till, with a mixture of sand and loess in the topsoil. Both clays are calcareous, but made slightly acid by the sand and leaching. Soils are surface water gleys belonging to the Hanslope Series. These are ill drained, making the wood very waterlogged during the winter.

Aversley Wood is included as a survey site within the National Forest Inventory. The survey plot number is 55739.

Many species records are held for this wood, reflecting the extremely diverse character of the habitat. These include a bat survey from 2012 which recorded the rare Barestelle bat.

The ancient woodland supports some significant archaeology. Approximately 20ha of the southern section of the wood lies on well-defined medieval ridge and furrow plough lines. The ridges vary from 6-11 m wide by 130-300 m long. This is thought to date to from ~ 1350 when the Black Death reduced the population and the land was abandoned and reverted to woodland. The wood is also bounded by a discontinuous wood bank. There is some evidence of historic shallow mineral workings in the very SW corner.

Significance

One of largest ancient semi-natural woods (ASNW) in Cambs, a county with a very low proportion of ASNW (0.8% of the county or 2006 Ha). The Cambridge ancient woodland inventory (Robinson 1987) noted a loss of 7% of the ancient woods in the county

The wood has a high profile locally and is famed for its beauty. Because of its size and importance in the County, together with its diverse ecology, Aversley Wood is notified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints

Ground conditions can be very wet in Autumn/Winter months restricting management operations at these times.

The wood is somewhat remote, being several kilometres from a surfaced public road. There is management access to the wood, via a byway and farm track, but weather conditions can again restrict use of these.

The wood is unconnected to other woodland in the landscape, and surrounded by intensively managed farmland providing a barrier to species dispersion

Factors Causing Change

Deer damage

Pests & diseases, such as ash dieback disease

Possible edge effects from intensive farming, such as spray drift.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The long term intention is for Aversley Wood to develop into a diverse ancient woodland habitat with a high forest structure and containing a mixture of mature broadleaved trees. Oak is likely to become the main canopy species in the long term, as a large and continued decline in ash is anticipated (through ash dieback disease) with this species becoming a minor component. As well as oak and ash - field maple, hazel, aspen and elm are likely to be common components, together with minor components of beech, alder and willow. The important collection of wild service trees will be retained long term as specimen trees in the wood, and management works will seek to perpetuate them standing for as long as biologically possible. The veteran coppice stools (of mainly ash) will also be retained for as long as biologically possible and management operations will avoid cutting and felling these, provided they do not pose a safety risk to the public.

The wood will also be regenerating vigorously with a diverse range of native broadleaves (including ash as well as other species), and there will be gaps in the tree canopy to allow this to happen. Decline and death of ash trees through disease will create many of the canopy gaps for natural regeneration to develop, and for the deadwood habitat to increase. Continued regeneration of the woodland will also be encouraged though to achieve a diverse range of age classes over time, with periodic silvicultural intervention taking place to allow this to occur. The local deer population will be at a balanced and sustainable level to ensure they are not posing a threat to the ecology and natural regeneration of the woodland.

The wood will continue to retain a network of ecologically-rich wide rides, which will be open and sunny and have structured 3-zone woodland edges: a central grass path mown regularly; a scalloped long grassy/herbaceous zone; and a scrub/coppiced zone. In doing so the ride edges will continue to provide good habitat especially for flora and invertebrates to thrive.

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

The main short term objectives this plan period are:

- to create conditions for natural regeneration of non-ash species to occur,
- to manage safety issues associated with advancing ash dieback,
- to manage and conserve a network of ecologically rich rides, and
- to manage the threats imposed by deer on the wood.

- to safeguard trees of significant interest (eg the larger Wild service standards)

Most of the ash across the site will be retained and allowed to decline in situ where it is deemed safe to do so (away from public paths and gathering points). To encourage natural regeneration to occur and to introduce greater diversity in the most ash-dominated stands, however, two targeted coupes of approx. 0.5ha will be selectively felled each year, so a total selective fell of 5ha over the plan period. The felling will remove the majority of ash trees in the coupes, but will retain any historic ash coppice stools and all other non-ash trees, with specimen trees such as wild service being halo thinned to preserve them from windblow. The coupes will be especially targeted towards the more heavily ash-dominated areas of the wood (please refer to operational map) and sections of the following compartments will be targeted: 1a, 1b, 2a, 3a. The felling coupes will include suitable specimen oak trees which will act as appropriate mother trees for oak regeneration. The response of this work will be monitored to see what regeneration takes place. If regeneration of non-ash trees is not occurring, then after 5 years following the felling, consideration will be given to restocking through planting. The coupes will be protected with temporary deer fencing after felling is complete, to ensure no deer pressure takes place within the coupes.

Where the felling coupes border the ride edges, the ride edge will also be coppiced (with species such as hazel cut) to improve structure and light conditions - and the opportunity will be taken to remove ash trees with advanced dieback in this zone as well.

The wide ride system will be managed overall via a 3 -zone approach. Firstly, a central grassy path (3m approx.) will be mown several times a year for access; a wider grassy/herbaceous zone will be managed through a late season annual cut once a year undertaken in a scalloped/variable formation to create very wide grassy zones of 10-12m as well as narrower pinch points. The third zone will consist of coppice/scrub such as hazel, blackthorn and bramble cut on a 5-7 year cycle. The main priority this plan period will be cutting the 3rd zones bordering the felling compartments, and regular monitoring will also identify any other priority areas during the plan period.

Tree safety inspections, carried out every other year will be especially targeted towards monitoring and managing the ongoing safety impact of ash dieback on the wood.

An annual deer management contract will be implemented, using professional stalkers, with appropriate cull targets set to reduce the level of pressure on the woodland ecology. This will be supported and informed by a regular herbivore impact assessment, to monitor the impacts of deer on the wood. An internal deer ride will be managed in the southern section of the site to aid deer management and high seats will be used by the stalkers.

4.2 f2 Informal Public Access

Description

Aversley Wood is located just to the south of the village of Sawtry, in north Cambridgeshire. It is next to a public byway at its southern end called Bullock Road, and there is also a public footpath along the eastern side of the wood. The wood has over 5.5km of rides and paths. The best place to park is at the Recreational Ground, off St Judiths Lane, in Sawtry and from there visitors will need to walk for approx. 1km along the public footpath up the hill, passing allotments before reaching the wood. The paths are un-surfaced and clay soils mean they can become very muddy during periods of heavy rain and through most of winter. Slopes can be relatively steep in places, although you never climb more than about 30metres in total. There are 6 formal entrance points into the wood, 5 of these from the public footpath on the east side and one at the Southern end off the byway. The wide sunny rides and significant wildlife interest, especially woodland flora, adds greatly to the visitor experience at this wood.

Significance

A very significant and large site for open public access in a County where woodland access is limited. The wood is located close to several other accessible woods including Archers Wood, also owned and managed by The Woodland Trust, and Monks Wood which is managed by Natural England.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

- Several sections of the ride network are extremely wet even during the summer, especially towards the stream crossing at the northern end of the wood
- The remote location together with undulating and wet conditions will be a challenge for less-abled visitors
- Parking close to the wood is not possible
- Illegal horse-riding through the wood has rutted the surface of some paths.

Factors Causing Change

Advanced Ash dieback disease symptoms leading to a large percentage of dead ash trees could lead to some paths being closed permanently in the future for safety reasons.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Free and open public access for pedestrians will continue to be provided at Aversley Wood in perpetuity. A diverse network of well-managed paths and sunny rides will be available for visitors to use. Entrances will be prominently signed and welcoming, with accessible gates or other structures. Facilities at the wood will be low-key, as befitting a quiet rural site. But there will be a small number of seats available in key locations. The public will be properly informed about any operational works happening. The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections in high risk zones.

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

During this plan period the short term objective will be to ensure that Aversley Wood remains accessible, welcoming and as safe as practical throughout.

The following works will be undertaken to support these objectives:

- Annual management of the permissive path network across the site, covering approximately 5.5km maintained to a nominal width of 2m, by mowing and removal of overhanging vegetation at least twice per year.
- Regular safety inspections of trees in high risk zones, namely the managed path network. It may be appropriate to close some minor paths if the safety risk due ash dieback becomes too high.
- Monitoring during the plan period to check on the standard of access provision which will consider any maintenance and replacement of infrastructure (such as signs, gates and seats). Monitoring visit planned for 2025.
- Monitoring of the incidence of any anti-social behaviour and to undertake any appropriate security measures.

Monitoring visit planned for 2025

- Installation of public information boards in 2024 to explain the ecological importance and management approach at the wood.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	November
2025	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	September
2025	WMI - NR Protection / Promotion	Physical works, other than tree felling / thinning, undertaken to encourage/promote / protect natural regeneration – such as fencing to protect natural regeneration	November
2025	WMI - NR Protection / Promotion	Physical works, other than tree felling / thinning, undertaken to encourage/promote / protect natural regeneration – such as fencing to protect natural regeneration	November
2025	WMM - AWS silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within ancient woodlands to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	November
2025	WMM - AWS silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within ancient woodlands to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	November
2026	WMM - AWS silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within ancient woodlands to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	November
2026	WMI - NR Protection / Promotion	Physical works, other than tree felling / thinning, undertaken to encourage/promote / protect natural regeneration – such as fencing to protect natural regeneration	November
2027	WMI - NR Protection / Promotion	Physical works, other than tree felling / thinning, undertaken to encourage/promote / protect natural regeneration – such as fencing to protect natural regeneration	November
2027	WMM - AWS silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within ancient woodlands to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives,	November

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
		thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	12.33	Ash	1930	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Oak and ash standards estimated to have been established around 1900 or before. Over mature ash coppice is also present, estimated to have last been cut around the 1930s.</p> <p>A number of younger oak and ash stems also make up a proportion of the main canopy species and are estimated to have been established around the 1960s although these stems only remain occasional.</p> <p>The occasional large field maple is also located within sub compartment 1a.</p> <p>A clone of English elm is present in the south eastern corner of compartment in the area surrounding the now dry "armed" pond.</p> <p>Understorey is frequent to abundant consisting of coppiced hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and field maple, elder, goat willow and aspen.</p> <p>Historic ridge and furrow landform is present on the ground.</p>						
1b	4.11	Ash	1920	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Oak and ash standards. Oak maidens estimated to have been established around 1900, with the ash at a latter date in the 1940s.</p> <p>Younger oak coppice estimated to have last been cut around 1970 also makes up a percentage of the canopy composition. The area also contains a small area of ash and hazel last cut in 1995. Understorey consists of frequent to dominant coppiced hazel, hawthorn and field maple.</p>						
2a	15.87	Ash	1920	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Oak and ash standards established around 1900 or before. Over mature ash coppice is also present, last been cut around the 1930's.</p>						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
<p>A number of younger oak and ash stems also make up a proportion of the main canopy species established around the 1960s.</p> <p>Understorey is frequent to abundant consisting of coppiced hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and field maple. A number of old hazel coppice stools and occasional wild service trees also present.</p> <p>A thick blackthorn hedge is present situated along the north easterly compartment boundary, probably a remnant ancient hedgerow.</p>						
2b	4	Ash	1900	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Oak and ash standards. Oak maidens established around 1900, with the ash in the 1940s.</p> <p>Younger oak coppice last been cut around 1970 also makes up a percentage of the canopy composition. There is small area of coppiced ash, hazel and hawthorn cut in 1996-1997 situated in the northern section of the compartment.</p> <p>Understorey consists of frequent coppiced hazel, hawthorn and field maple.</p>						
3a	8.1	Ash	1940	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Oak and ash standards established around 1900 or before. A number of mature beeches are situated towards the southern end of compartment 3a, established at around 1900. Over mature ash coppice last cut around the 1920s. A proportion of younger ash coppice stems also make up a percentage of the main canopy species last cut around the 1950s. The occasional aspen and birch can also be found.</p> <p>The understorey is frequent consisting of hazel, hawthorn and elder coppice as well as the wild service tree and wych elm although these remain rare throughout the compartment.</p> <p>In the extreme southern corner of the compartment Wych elm maidens and coppice stems make up the main canopy, established in the 1930s. White letter hairstreak is known to populate this area. An artificially constructed pond lies in the North East corner of the compartment in the small valley that runs east-west through the wood at this point.</p>						
4a	7.24	Ash	1940	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
<p>Main canopy species are oak and ash standards established around 1900. Over mature ash coppice last cut around the 1930s, along with younger oak, ash and field maple coppice last cut around the 1950s. Ash stems established through planting or by natural regeneration also make up a proportion of the main canopy species established around the same time as the last coppicing operations in the 1950s. A number of wild service trees are present in the compartment. Understorey consists of frequent coppiced ash, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, elder and a small number of aspen stems.</p>						
5a	3.6	Ash	1930	High forest	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
<p>Oak and ash standards, with a number of the maiden oaks established at around the 1850s. Over mature ash coppice is present throughout the stand last felled around the 1920s. Younger coppiced ash is also mixed in with the main canopy species last cut around the 1940s. This compartment is more diverse in species than other compartments and the under storey is abundant consisting of coppiced ash, hazel, hawthorn, field maple, elder and grey willow. A proportion of the hazel and field maple are estimated at around 40 years or more, last cut around the 1950s. Several significant wild service trees are present. The large area of Blackthorn has contained black hairstreak butterfly.</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.

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