

The Woodland Trust in the East of England

The East of England is a place of contrasts – the south is one of the most ancient wooded areas in the country, while Cambridgeshire is the least wooded county in Britain. It is also growing fast. The number of people living in the region is predicted to grow from 5.6 million in 2006 to nearly 7 million in 2031 and, as a result, the region could be expected to accommodate over 30,000 new homes each year.

This growth is both a great opportunity and a potential threat for woods and trees. Woodland has a big part to play in good green infrastructure so we expect woodland creation to be high on the agenda across the region.

Planting more trees will also help existing woodland adapt to climate change by linking and buffering them. But we must also ensure new development doesn't lead to the destruction of existing woodland.

In the East of England, the Trust has:

- 89 sites covering over 2,000ha and containing more than 720ha of ancient woodland
- more than 20,000 members – it is the third largest region for the Trust by membership

The region has:

- 140,000ha of woods covering 7.3% of the land area
- more than 27,000ha of ancient woodland, only 28% of which has statutory (SSSI) protection
- over 8,400ha of planted ancient woodland sites (PAWS)
- around 13.5 million trees in the countryside not in woodland

Only 11% of residents in the East of England can access a wood of at least 2ha within 500m of their home and only 51% are able to visit a wood that is 20ha or more within 4km of their home.

What we want to achieve in the East of England

Woodland creation

WTP/LCTP Photography



Heartwood Forest, Hertfordshire

New woodland is needed in many parts of the region to address inequalities in access and provide benefits such as improved air and water quality. The Trust is leading the way by creating England's largest new native

forest – Heartwood Forest – in the region as well as planting thousands of trees on our new Elmstead Market site in Essex. We are also working with other landowners to plant trees on their land and ensuring trees and woodland feature in the region's green infrastructure strategies.

Restoration of planted ancient woodland sites

WTP/L/John Tucker



Wormley Wood, Hertfordshire

woodland suffers greatly when non-native trees, such as conifers, are planted on these sites. In the East of England we aim to restore these sites on our own land and assist others to do likewise.

Ancient woodland protection

Ancient woodland is irreplaceable and home to more rare and threatened species than any other UK habitat, so we strive to protect it. We lobby for it to have explicit protection in planning documents; we encourage

local authorities to update their ancient woodland inventories; and we fight threats from new developments.



Wormley Wood, Hertfordshire

Adapting to climate change

Climate change poses a massive threat to species and habitats in the region but we are working with others to help the natural world adapt by reconnecting fragmented woods.

People engagement

Visiting woods provides many physical and mental health benefits, so we work with schools, youth groups, health organisations and others in the region to give people the chance to get out and about in woods.



Outdoor learning at Elmstead Market

WTP/L/Andrew Butler

WTP/L/Douglas Blanks

What we are doing i

Woodland creation

Heartwood Forest, Hertfordshire

The Trust and local people are working together to plant over 600,000 trees on this 347ha site near Sandridge, St Albans – which will make it the largest new native forest in England. The site already boasts four remnants of precious ancient woodland, and is home to species such as rare butterflies and English bluebells, yet is just 25 miles from Marble Arch in London. Over the next ten years a community orchard, new wildflower meadows, open spaces and miles

of footpaths and bridleways will be created with the help of thousands of children and local residents.

Other woodland creation sites: Fordham Hall Estate and Elmstead Market, Essex; Reynolds Wood, Bedfordshire; and Pound Farm, Suffolk



Heartwood tree planting

Carlos Reyes-Manzo/Andes Press Agency

Green infrastructure

Green Arc

The Trust has played a key role in the pioneering Green Arc project that covers 400 square miles of countryside north east of London. The project seeks to provide new multi-functional landscapes for people. Objectives such as linking fragmented habitats, reducing pollution. As part of a partnership, the Trust has planted more woodland in the Green Arc, including Epping Forest and Hainault Forest.

Other landscape-scale conservation sites: Epping Forest, Hainault Forest, and Vale, Bedfordshire

KEY:

- Woodland Trust sites in the East of England

© Crown Copyright 2010. All rights reserved.
Ordnance Survey Licence number 100017626.

Partnership working

Essex County Council

Recently, the Trust formed a partnership with Essex County Council to help it fulfil a pledge to plant 250,000 trees. We

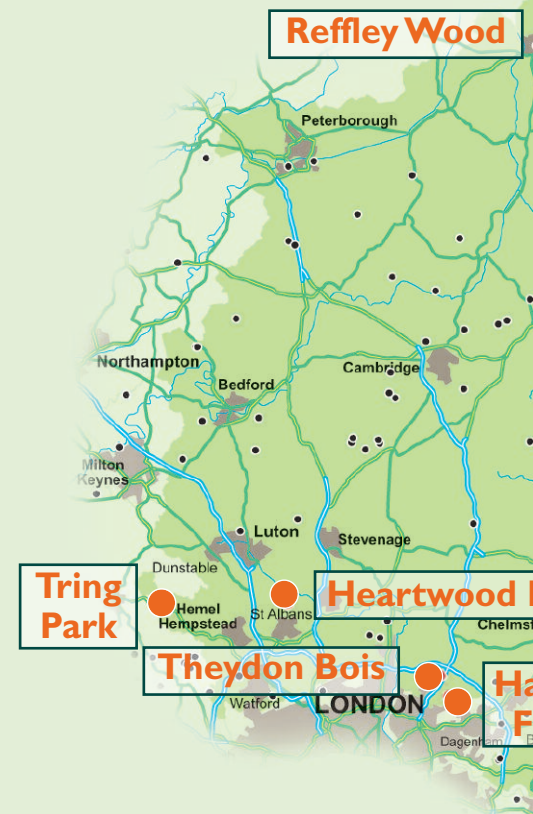
did this by setting up a Schools Planting Programme, distributing free Hedge and Copse tree packs to schools and offering woodland-based school trips. We held Scouts and Guides planting days across the county, as well as community planting days at three of our sites in Essex: Theydon Bois, Hainault Forest and the newly acquired Elmstead Market. We also pioneered our MOREwoods scheme which helps landowners wishing to create small woods on their own land. By engaging with the Country Land and Business Association and the National Farmers Union, we reached a new audience that resulted in the planting of around 23,500 trees (approximately 11.5ha).

Other partnership projects: Green Arc, north east of London; The West Cambridgeshire 100s Project, Cambridgeshire



Trees for Theydon Bois

WTPL/Douglas Blanks



Elmstead Market

WTPL/Douglas Blanks

n the East of England



ers
and
provide
people to enjoy and to deliver other
habitats, flood risk management, and
ship, the Trust is working to create
has already planted over 40ha of native
site in Essex, acting as a link between

: Reynolds Wood/Forest of Marston



Planted ancient woodland site (PAWS) restoration

Reffley Wood, Norfolk

Reffley Wood is gradually returning to its ancient roots. At present dominated by Scots and Corsican pine and Douglas fir, a restoration programme will re-establish broadleaved woodland, remnants of which can still be found on this 52ha site, including hazel and hawthorn. Many flowers associated with ancient woodland thrive along the wide rides, including bluebells, primrose and wild garlic. The Trust is now using its expertise in PAWS restoration gained from working on sites like Reffley to interest other landowners in the benefits of restoration.

Other PAWS restoration projects: Old Wood, Norfolk and Thunderfield Grove, Hertfordshire



People engagement

Hainault Forest, Essex and Tring Park, Hertfordshire

Grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Biffaward, Grantscape and WREN have allowed the Trust to run the Hainault Forest Project which is dedicated to getting people into the Forest. Events include tree planting days for local children and a Forest Festival with over 70 different events and activities including: bushcraft skills, orienteering, speed dating walks, an ancient tree hunt, fungi walk, and a bonfire party. Huge numbers of local people also planted more than 20,312 trees on the site as part of the BBC's 'Tree O'Clock' campaign. The 113ha site itself is a former hunting forest that is now one of the best surviving medieval forests of its kind.



As well as specific funded projects, the Trust is also undertaking a visitor investment programme (VIP) on its landmark sites, which includes Tring Park in Hertfordshire. This 107ha site situated in the Chilterns AONB has ancient woodland, grazed SSSI grassland, scheduled ancient monuments and is also a Grade II listed parkland. As part of the programme the Trust expects to work closely with the town to promote the site and increase visitor numbers.

Other people engagement sites: Old Wood, Norfolk; Heartwood Forest, Hertfordshire; and Swan Wood, Essex



About the Woodland Trust

**The Woodland Trust is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity
It owns over 1,000 woods and has more than 190,000 members in the UK**

Our vision is for the UK to be rich in native woods and trees that are enjoyed and valued by everyone and we have the following core beliefs:

- There should be at least twice as much native tree cover in the UK
- There should be no further loss of any ancient woodland
- Every child should have a chance to plant a tree
- There should be a wood with open access close to everyone's house
- Everyone should recognise that trees and woods are an essential part of a healthy environment

In order to achieve these, we use our own sites as well as working with other landowners such as farmers and local authorities. We lobby politicians and policy makers, undertake research, form partnerships with corporate bodies and others, and help people who are keen to do their bit to champion woods and trees.

These are some of our recent projects:

Woodland Carbon

Establishing new native woodland is a cost effective way to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide. The Trust's Woodland Carbon project is available to businesses and individuals, as well as via our award-winning payroll giving scheme, and enables us to plant trees that will benefit people and wildlife for generations to come.

woodlandtrust.org.uk/carbon

Ancient Tree Hunt



Thousands of people are helping create a map of the 100,000 oldest, fattest trees across the UK. This will be used by the Woodland Trust, the Tree Register of the British Isles and the Ancient Tree Forum to help secure their future.

AncientTreeHunt.org.uk

Nature Detectives

Our online children's activity club has been visited by over a million people and is helping inspire the tree lovers of the future. There are over 26,000 members including schools and youth groups and the website has more than 1,000 downloads featuring games and activity sheets.

naturedetectives.org.uk



Plant woods and trees

We want to see a doubling of native tree cover in the UK and so we are helping landowners, such as the NHS, farmers, local authorities and community groups create places rich in native woods and trees. We run schemes such as MOREwoods, which provides support to people planting at least one hectare of new woodland. We also provide tree planting packs for schools and community groups to plant in their local area. For guidance on planting trees, take a look at our website.

woodlandtrust.org.uk/planting

WoodWatch

Ancient woods across the country are threatened by development – we have recorded threats to at least 800 of them over the last ten years. WoodWatch encourages people to keep an eye on their local woodland and provides campaigning tips to help fight any threats.

WoodWatch.org.uk

Nature's Calendar

Volunteers are recording seasonal changes using our interactive website which is providing us with a crucial source of evidence as to how our wildlife is responding to climate change.

naturescalendar.org.uk



**WOODLAND
TRUST**

For further details of these and other areas of our work visit

woodlandtrust.org.uk

Diane Millis
Regional Policy Officer
08452 935758

dianemillis@woodlandtrust.org.uk

Toby Bancroft
Regional Manager
08452 935718

tobybancroft@woodlandtrust.org.uk