

# The Woodland Trust

## in the South West

The **South West** is particularly important to the Woodland Trust as it contains over 20% of England's remaining ancient woodland. It is the largest of the English regions geographically and has a population of five million people – a third of whom live in rural areas. A third of the region is also designated as protected landscape, and the region attracts some 26 million visitors a year.

But the natural environment is under pressure as the region becomes ever more popular as a place to live due to the high quality of life available. Meanwhile, the region's 'eco-footprint' reveals that if everyone in the world lived like the average South West resident, three extra planets would be needed to sustain life.

Saving what is already there and ensuring people everywhere can get the benefits of woods and trees are key priorities for the Trust in this region.

### In the South West, the Woodland Trust has:

- 183 sites covering over 2,345ha and containing more than 1,100ha of ancient woodland
- more than 27,000 members – the second highest proportion of members by region

### The region has:

- 212,000ha of woods covering 9% of the land area, but only a third are accessible on foot
- some 73,000ha of ancient woodland, only 14% of which has statutory (SSSI) protection
- around 38,000ha of planted ancient woodland sites (PAWS)
- some 11% of the region's woods are SSSIs

Only 13% of people can access a wood of at least 2ha within 500m of their home and only 67% are able to visit a wood that is 20ha or more within 4km of their home.

## What we want to achieve in the South West

### Woodland creation



Kea Wood, Cornwall

Despite woodland covering 9% of the South West, many people still live a long way from an accessible woodland. Plus, there are areas where trees and woods can bring significant benefits, such as

improved air and water quality. So we strongly promote and fund tree planting in partnership with other landowners, and we lobby for more woodland creation to feature in the region's green infrastructure and other planning strategies.

### Restoration of planted ancient woodland sites

The rich diversity of plants, animals and fungi found in ancient woodlands suffers greatly when non-native trees, such as

conifers, are planted on these sites. In the South West there are thousands of hectares which have met this fate, so we aim to restore these sites on our own land and assist others to do likewise.



PAWS restoration

### 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.



Shapter Woods, Devon

### 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

# What we are doing

## Woodland creation

Mackintosh Davidson Wood, Wiltshire  
 Mackintosh Davidson Wood is situated just to the south of the village of West Knoyle on the Wiltshire/Dorset border, and was acquired by the Trust in 1993 thanks to a generous benefactor. It provides an outstanding example of integrated woodland creation, with the new tree planting in 1995-96 linking and buffering the existing ancient semi-natural woodland and complimenting the site's permanent pasture, which is managed as unimproved grassland, rough grassland and scrub. This creative combination of trees and open space makes for a most attractive landscape with high biodiversity potential, and



Mackintosh Davidson Wood

WTPU/Justin Milward

is now being managed as wood pasture. The site is well used both locally and by visitors from further away.

*Other woodland creation sites: Sanctuary Wood, Cornwall; Stratton, Swindon and Warneage Wood, Wiltshire*

**KEY:**

- Woodland Trust sites in the South West

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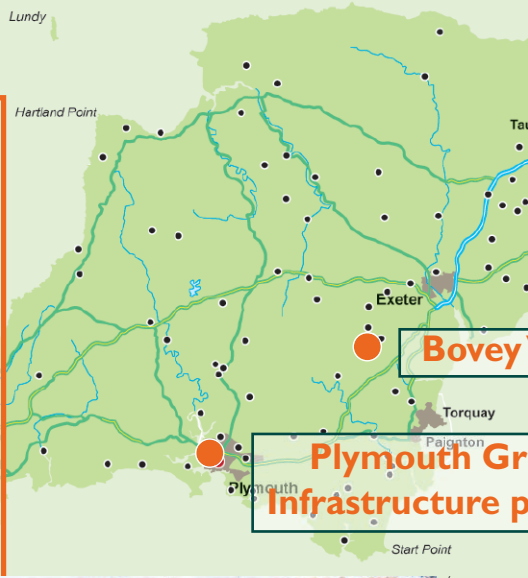


Sanctuary Wood

## Landscape-scale partnerships

Plymouth Green Infrastructure project, Devon

In partnership with Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council, Natural England and the Forestry Commission, the Trust has contributed to the creation of a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy for the Plymouth urban/rural fringe, which has now moved into delivery mode.



WTPU/Justin Milward



Mackintosh Davidson Wood

Planning obligation funding has enabled the Langage Landscape Fund to provide £250,000 towards a targeted woodland creation initiative delivered by the Trust's MOREwoods scheme. This exciting initiative will involve creating around 50ha of new woodland on other people's land in the GI project area.

*Other landscape-scale partnerships: Kingsettle Wood and Mackintosh Davidson Wood in the Cranborne Chase Ancient Woodland Priority Area; working with partners in the Dartmoor, Exmoor and Cotswolds Ancient Woodland Priority Areas*



Whiteleigh Wood, Plymouth

WTPU/John Tucker

# g in the South West



WTPL/Paul Glendell

Bovey Valley Woods

## Planted ancient woodland site (PAWS) restoration

### Bovey Valley Woods, Devon

Spread over 86ha of beautiful Dartmoor, the Bovey Valley Woods are part of an internationally important mosaic of protected landscapes. Many ancient woodland areas like the Bovey Valley were felled and replanted with a variety of non-native conifer species in the 1960s. The Trust's long term sensitive restoration of these areas of PAWS helps meet government targets for Forestry and UK Biodiversity Action Plans, as well as contributing to National Park aims. The

restored ancient woodlands and their wildlife are already responding positively to improved light conditions and – importantly for a popular tourist area – offer a more captivating visitor experience.

*Other PAWS restoration projects: Duncliffe Wood, Dorset; Clanger Wood, Wiltshire; and Buck's Valley Woods, Devon*



Abbots Wood

Mackintosh Davidson Wood

Valley Wood

Green project



WTPL/Nick Cobbing

## People engagement

### Abbots Wood, Bristol

Abbots Wood, located within the Forest of Avon on the edge of the town of Keynsham, was planted up over 1994-96 as part of the Trust's Millennium Commission backed 'Woods on Your Doorstep' project. This project saw the Trust create 250 new community woods throughout the UK to celebrate the Millennium. The 8ha site was designed in consultation with the local community and an

extensive network of wide paths and glades was created to facilitate public access and take account of views. Community engagement on this site has continued long after the last tree was planted – members of the public have helped to improve access, plant wildflowers and build educational nature links with nearby schools.

*Other sites for people engagement: Whitleigh Woods, Plymouth and Stratton, Swindon*



WTPL/Stuart Handley

# 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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.

[naturecalendar.org.uk](http://naturecalendar.org.uk)



**WOODLAND  
TRUST**

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

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

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