

Croft Glebe

(Plan period – 2022 to 2027)



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

Croft Glebe

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------|------------|----------|----|----------|-------|-----|-----|
| Location: | Croft | Grid | reference: | SP507959 | OS | 1:50,000 | Sheet | No. | 140 |
| Area: | 3.93 hectares (9.71 acres) | | | | | | | | |
| External Designations: | Tree Preservation Order | | | | | | | | |
| Internal Designations: | Woods on Your Doorstep | | | | | | | | |

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site extends to approximately 10 acres (4 hectares). The majority being parkland, set around an open space, which was formally the village cricket pitch. As glebe land, the site has been part of the fabric of village life, from its use for the church festivals, to the informal gathering of hedgerow berries and conkers from the parkland trees.

The mature trees, mainly horse chestnut, sycamore and hornbeam dominate the site creating the feel of the parkland landscape and together with the boundary hedgerows provide the site's nature conservation interest as habitats for nesting birds, including: tawny owl, great-spotted woodpecker, lesser whitethroat, black cap and mistlethrush. The trees and the remnants of the hedgerow along the southern boundary are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Whilst the site adjoins houses to the north and east, the tall, broad hedges and local topography preclude far-reaching views either into, or out from the site, so that the focus is an internal one. The only exception to this is the view from the southern boundary across the River Soar and adjoining grassland, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are other publicly accessible green spaces in the locality in the form of the area surrounding Croft Hill, Stoney Woods and Huncote Hill Nature Reserve. However, the area is largely dominated by arable agriculture.

The site is bounded by a public bridleway to the north, and public footpaths to the west and south. Within the site there are two permissive paths. One through the fenced paddock, which is grassed and also contains the majority of the parkland trees. The other runs through the newly planted area along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site.

The key features for this site are secondary woodland, veteran trees and informal public access.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long-term intention at Croft Glebe will be to increase the structural diversity and habitat diversity over the whole 4 hectares. Every effort will be made to maintain the parkland quality of the site as it is this habitat which is the dominant feature.

The pasture area is to be maintained through continued grazing with the intention of improving species diversity. The parkland trees will be retained for as long as possible. However, where trees have to be removed as a consequence of concern for public safety similar species will be planted to replace them.

The plantation areas will be allowed to reach maturity and will develop the characteristics of more naturally occurring woodland. Woodland Condition Assessments will inform future management of the site, with silvicultural interventions being used to ensure the wood is diverse in tree species and structure and to promote a good mixture of both young and mature trees. This will enable the wood to be more resilient to change in the future and will ensure it supports the greatest range of wildlife.

A good standard of access provision will be maintained at Croft Glebe. The entrances will be accessible and clearly signed as per WT Spec 1.1 It shall be clearly visible from approach routes, attractive and inviting, easy and safe to use. The existing path network will be kept open for use. The information board on site will be maintained for as long as it is deemed attractive and usable. If funding becomes available for new interpretation on the site then this will be pursued.

The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections as per Woodland Trust Internal Guidance and best practice.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Secondary Woodland

| |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Description |
| 1.17ha of mixed broadleaves planted in November 1999 main species include oak, ash, beech and field maple (see compartment records for full species mix). |
| Significance |
| Although there are other areas of woodland in the locality, this area of Leicestershire is predominantly arable agriculture. The belt of young woodland that borders the parkland on site adds to this green space as well as providing a buffer to the veteran trees within the site. |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| Opportunities Colonisation of woodland of more diverse plant species as found in surrounding pre existing hedgerows. Haven for woodland wildlife in the area. Constraints Small strip bounded by fields. Little opportunity for change. |
| Factors Causing Change |
| Rabbit damage and ash die back are natural changes occurring. Some timber theft occurs on the site, although small in scale, the small size of the site means that any timber stolen negatively affects the woodlands dead wood habitat. |
| Long term Objective (50 years+) |
| The plantation areas will be allowed to reach maturity and will develop the characteristics of more naturally occurring woodland. Woodland Condition Assessments will inform future management of the site, with silvicultural interventions being used to ensure the wood is diverse in tree species and structure and to promote a good mixture of both young and mature trees. |
| Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years) |
| The 1.17 ha of secondary woodland will be maintained. Regular woodland condition assessments will be carried out every 5 years to monitor tree health. To carry out a silvicultural intervention, thinning the woodland of roughly 30% of the timber, as per the recommendations of the woodland condition assessment carried out in spring 2022. This will allow more light into the woodland areas, facilitating natural regeneration of tree species, improving the diversity of the age structure. |

4.2 f2 Veteran Trees

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Description |
| Mature trees mainly horse chestnut, sycamore and hornbeam dominate the area and are protected under a TPO. See site files for individual tree details and map of locations. The pasture area is regularly grazed and a grazing management plan is also saved to file. |
| Significance |
| Veteran trees capable of supporting a phenomenal range of other wildlife from large obvious creatures such as owls, woodpeckers and bats to a myriad of insects and communities of extremely specialised lichens, mosses and fungi. |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| Even agedness of mature trees. Many of the tree are reaching senescence and are beginning to cast boughs. New standard trees have been planted to become the future veterans of the site. |
| Factors Causing Change |
| Trees liable to damage from strong winds. |
| Long term Objective (50 years+) |
| Maintain the parkland landscape. Maintain standing deadwood within the limitations of public safety. |
| Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years) |
| Maintain the senescent trees as long as possible by judicial pruning and other tree safety measures. Check their condition annually. Where trees are likely to be lost in the short term continue to plant parkland species in small stock-proof enclosures. Maintain the parkland character by grazing under licence. If for any reason grazing does not occur then top the grass and treat nettles, docks and thistles. The licence is to run between 15th April and 31st October annually and allows the grazing of either cattle or sheep at a stocking rate to be agreed in advance with the Trust. |

4.3 f3 Informal Public Access

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Description |
| The site is bounded by a public bridleway to the north, and public footpaths to the west and south, the only formal public access existing currently is the footpath that clips the southernmost toe of the site, however public access is permitted through out the whole area. |
| Significance |
| In line with corporate objectives-to increase visitor access and enjoyment. |
| Opportunities & Constraints |

O1 To make the site available for use by community groups/schools for one off events.

C 1 No parking facilities.

C2 Grazing animals on site at certain times of the year

Factors Causing Change

Encroachment of shrubs and lower branches of planted trees on to paths.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintenance of paths and entrances to allow low key pedestrian access for as wide a range of people as possible given the limitations of the site.

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

Mowing of paths for access, entrance condition checks (with repairs as necessary) - currently three a year.

Maintain/repair all gates, fences, stiles, information board, and welcome signs in good condition. Brash-back shrubs and crown-lift trees which limit passage along footpaths.

All aspects to be inspected once every two years.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

| Year | Type Of Work | Description | Due Date |
|------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 2022 | SL - Tree Safety Silviculture Work | Retrieving data. Wait a few seconds and try to cut or copy again. | October |
| 2023 | SL - Tree Safety Emergency Work | Work associated with unplanned emergency tree safety works – such as clearance of fallen trees/branches and associated repairs | January |

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1a | 1.36 | Mixed broadleaves | 1999 | High forest | | Tree Preservation Order |
| <p>This area is secondary woodland, planted in part by local volunteers and contractors, in November 1999. Major species include oak, ash, beech, walnut, sweet chestnut, hornbeam and field maple. Lesser species are hazel, crab apple, dogwood and holly. The planting blocks are situated to the south and east of the site surrounding the open area of grassland at the heart of the site. Yew seedlings grown from the trees in St Michael's churchyard have been planted along the southern edge of the woodland to create a 'yew walk' and to provide a physical marker of the association between church and land.</p> | | | | | | |
| 2a | 2.62 | Mixed broadleaves | 1850 | Wood pasture | | Tree Preservation Order |
| <p>This area of open parkland is separated from the new areas of planting by a post and wire fence with 3 kissing gates to allow public access. Mature trees mainly horse chestnut, sycamore and hornbeam dominate the area and are protected under a TPO. New parkland planting has been undertaken with hornbeam, beech, walnut, oak and horse chestnut to reflect the species already present locally. The parkland area is surrounded on the north and western boundary by mature hedgerows. The grassland is grazed annually.</p> | | | | | | |

Ancient Woodland

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

Ancient Woodland Site

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

Beating Up

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

Broadleaf

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

Canopy

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

Conifer

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

Continuous Cover forestry

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

Coppice

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

Exotic (non-native) Species

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

Field Layer

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

Group Fell

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

Long Term Retention

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

Minimum Intervention

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

Origin & Provenance

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

Re-Stocking

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

Sub-Compartment

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

Thinning

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

Weeding

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established.

Windblow/Windthrow

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.

Registered Office:

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