

Bracher's Wood

(Plan period – 2025 to 2030)



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

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GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Bracher's Wood

Location:	Rothwell, Kettering Grid reference: SP814806 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 141
Area:	0.55 hectares (1.36 acres)
External Designations:	N/A
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Bracher's Wood was donated to the Trust by Kettering Borough Council as part of an A14 landscaping scheme. It is highly visible from the A14 and the Rothwell Road.

The site is predominantly flat and was planted up entirely by local volunteers in 1996 with 350 native broadleaved trees (ash, field maple, wild cherry, crab apple, willow and a mix of shrubs). The wood is maturing into a recognisable woodland but still in places retains a ground flora associated with its previous use as an allotment -rank grasses, rhubarb, etc (though this is mostly dominated by ivy, nettles and bramble). The site is bordered by residential properties to the north, allotments to the south-west and a layed hedge marks the boundary to the east. There is a ditch that runs along the south of the site and under a culverted path partially into the wood to the west.

The site is likely to be regularly used by small number of local residents for dog exercise and established trees screen the road junction from the housing. There are multiple incidences of flytipping (from gardens) and litter on site.

Key features are:

Secondary Woodland

Informal Public Access

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long-term vision for the site includes the continued development of native broadleaf woodland which will remain fully accessible for people to enjoy for informal recreation and will act as an effective shelter between adjacent housing and the A14.

Now that the initial establishment period is over, the woodland will be allowed to develop naturally as far as possible, only intervening when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes in accordance with the Woodland Trusts Management Approach (such as through ride-side coppicing and silvicultural thins). The aim is to create a diverse mature woodland with a range of native species, age ranges, well structured rides and with deadwood, both standing and fallen, being retained where it is safe to do so. Gaps in the canopy will allow for floral colonisation and regeneration.

Low-key public access will be maintained in perpetuity through a managed path network, entrances and regular safety checks. Infrastructure and facilities will be minimal and only essential signage used. Use of the site will be monitored and provisions for informal recreation reviewed accordingly. Ride edge coppice work in selected locations will be undertaken to enhance visitor enjoyment, as well as structural diversity. Public safety will be assessed through infrastructure monitoring and tree safety inspections conducted regularly.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
A circular unsurfaced footpath running through the site, starting and ending on the main road into Rothwell.
Significance
Although small, it does provide some green space for walking and other suitable recreational activities for nearby residents.
Opportunities & Constraints
Very small site that borders residential housing to the north-west, allotments to the south-west and a highway for the remainder of the boundary (with a small wooded buffer of unknown ownership). It is prone to littering and fly tipping (particularly from neighbouring gardens).
Factors Causing Change
Level of use (increasing)
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Low-key public access will be maintained in perpetuity through a managed path network, entrances and regular safety checks. Infrastructure and facilities will be minimal and only essential signage used. Use of the site will be monitored and provisions for informal recreation reviewed accordingly. Ride edge coppice work in selected locations will be undertaken to enhance visitor enjoyment, as well as structural diversity. Public safety will be assessed through infrastructure monitoring and tree safety inspections conducted regularly.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
Contractors to inspect and maintain the entrances to the site (thrice annually), with any repairs undertaken as necessary. Cut all path to a minimum width of 2 metres (twice in spring/summer) and then to full width in autumn (leaving a vegetation buffer between path and ditch) Annual cutting of roadside hedge. Tree safety inspections regularly completed, as per Woodland Trust policies. Levels of litter and flytipping to be monitored and removed and responsibly disposed off periodically (annually at least).

4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland

Description
Bracher's Wood is highly visible from the A14 and the Rothwell Road. The site is predominantly flat and was planted up entirely by local volunteers in 1996 with 350 native broadleaved trees (ash, field maple, wild cherry, crab apple, willow and a mix of shrubs). The wood is maturing into a recognisable woodland but still in places retains a ground flora associated with its previous use as an allotment -rank grasses, rhubarb, etc (though this is mostly dominated by ivy, nettles and bramble). The site is bordered by residential properties to the north, allotments to the south-west and a layed hedge marks the boundary to the east. There is a ditch that runs along the south of the site and under a culverted path partially into the wood to the west.
Significance
One of the very few publicly accessible woodlands in the town area. Effective screen for A14.
Opportunities & Constraints
Constraint: Very small site means that maturing trees may dominate. Deadwood may be stolen for firewood. Opportunity: Well used by local population.
Factors Causing Change
Pest and diseases such as Chalara/Ash Dieback. Wood thefts/poaching.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Now that the initial establishment period is over, the woodland will be allowed to develop naturally as far as possible, only intervening when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes in accordance with the Woodland Trusts Management Approach (such as through ride-side coppicing and silvicultural thins). The aim is to create a diverse mature woodland with a range of native species and age ranges and with deadwood, both standing and fallen, being retained where it is safe to do so. Gaps in the canopy will allow for floral colonisation and regeneration.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
As per WCA summaries, Bracher's Wood would benefit from very light/halo-thinning to allow the better development of retained trees and to better develop floral and understorey layers. Selected trees will be felled and left as fallen deadwood (2026/7). Ride-side and property-side coppicing to diversify structure and reduce potential hazards. (2027 & 2030) Cut roadside hedge annually.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	May
2026	WMM - Secondary Silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within secondary woods 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	December
2027	WMM - Coppice Management	Works associated with the management of coppice areas – such as coppicing, maintenance of protective fencing, etc	December

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	0.55	Mixed broadleaves	1996	High forest		
Small area of planting adjacent to road junction of A 14 with the A6. Previously old allotment site planted up entirely by volunteers in November 1996. Mix of native broadleaved species including ash, field maple, willow, cherry crab apple, hazel and dog rose. Density of planting variable at 1100 plants per Ha, approximately 350 trees planted.						

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:

The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL.

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