WOODLAND TRUST

Aversley Wood

Management Plan 2016-2021

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MAPS

THE WOODLAND TRUST

INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.
Please either consult The Woodland Trust website www.woodlandtrust.org.uk or contact the Woodland Trust (wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland.

Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

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.

In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, 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.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on 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 heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential 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 allow our woods to be used to support 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. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
10. Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

1.0 SITE DETAILS

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

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Aversley is a gem of an ancient woodland in England’s least-wooded county. Perched on a high, flat-topped ridge, this Site of Special Scientific Interest boasts stunning views, plentiful birdlife, a wealth of wildflowers and what is arguably the best bluebell display in Cambridgeshire.

2.2 Extended 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. It is surrounded on all sides by intensively farmed land-arable and grassland although there are some managed hedges abutting the wood. Archer's wood (also owned by the Woodland Trust) is 0.5 km south of Aversley Wood.

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 and suffer from poaching from even moderate use in wet periods.

Approximately 20 ha of the southern section of the wood lies on well defined ridge and furrow plough lines (compartment 1). 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 bounded by a discontinuous wood bank. The present size and shape of the wood dates from 1768 and most of the internal ride system from 1887. There is some evidence of shallow mineral workings in the very SW corner. This lies adjacent to the ancient track way, the Bullock Road which was a major route until the 18th Century.

The whole wood is ancient coppice woodland although large scale coppicing ceased ~1890. The typical structure is an upper storey of ash and oak with a second storey of ash and maple coppice and maidens, and an under storey of small coppice hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn. The wood is a typical W8 Ash/Maple/Dog's Mercury woodland. Hazel would have been the dominant tree in the past but it is in decline due to shading and an increase in ash maidens on cessation of regular coppicing. Prior to acquisition by WT the site was managed for sporting use resulting in wide mown rides and the clearance of the northern artificial pond. Opportunistic felling of larger timber trees also took place.

The wood is notable for its wild service trees, some of which exceed 60 cm diameter, large for this species. The wood also contains small pockets of elm and aspen. The woodland ground flora is generally rich and contains a number of ancient woodland plants. Arguably the best bluebell wood in Cambridgeshire, enchanter's nightshade and dogs mercury are also common place. Meadow sweet, wood anemone are easily found on the ride edges, although under threat from bramble and pendulous sedge due to long standing deer pressure.

The network of wide open rides provides easy public access by foot. Several narrower paths leads through the compartments, linking the grid of rides, makes for a varied and interesting tour of the wood. Often waterlogged in the winter, the paths suffer badly from unauthorised access by cycles and horses in particular.

The wood's Key features are:
-Ancient Semi-natural Woodland
-Informal Public access
-Ride margins
-Archaeological feature (ridge and furrow)

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

By bus: There is a bus service between Peterborough and Huntingdon, stopping on Green End Road in Sawtry.

By train: The closest train stations are Peterborough (18km/11 miles) and Huntingdon (19km/12 miles).

For up-to-date information on public transport, visit traveline.org.uk (0871 200 22 33).

By car:

From the north, leave the A1 at junction 15. Follow Old North Road, taking the second exit at the first roundabout and the second exit at the second roundabout, onto St Andrew's Way which crosses over the motorway. At the next roundabout take the first exit to Fen Lane, then at the following roundabout take the third exit and continue along Green End Road before turning left into St Judith's Lane.

From the south, leave the A1 at junction 15. At the roundabout take the second exit, and continue along Green End Road before turning left into St Judith's Lane.

Car parking is available in St Judith's Lane, Sawtry.

3.2 Access / Walks

Access is by a walk of around 20 minutes along a grassy path from the car park in St Judith's Lane in Sawtry.

The site has a path and ride network of over 5.5km (3.5 miles), including routes in the wood and along a public footpath adjoining the southern boundary. Paths are unsurfaced and can become very muddy and slippery during periods of heavy rain and in the winter. Slopes are quite steep in places, although you never climb more than about 30meters (100ft) in total.

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Native broadleaved woodland with ancient woodland characteristics. A diverse species and age structure will be maintained with a good level of deadwood both fallen and standing where it is safe to do so. Coppice structure, already lapsed beyond reasonable reinstatement, will be allowed to develop into high forest. A lighter management touch is desirable, with intervention only to maintain the key features, species diversity and structure. This is likely to include ride edge works, deer management, access work and occasional selective felling to retain specimen trees (eg wild service, or those approaching veteran status). More active management practices may also be necessary on occasion, such as thinning to develop and maintain species diversity & structure, building resilience in the long term.

The site will be valued and enjoyed regularly by visitors accessing by foot. Therefore infrastructure, signage and interpretation will be maintained to the latest WT standards.

Archaeological features (ridge and furrow) will be protected from damage, such as mechanical compaction or wheel rutting.

The open ride network will be retained for both public access and for its inherent floristic value. Regular mowing and removal of encroaching vegetation will be undertaken in agreement with Natural England under the sssi citation.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

5.1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Aversley Wood was designated a SSSI in 1983 as an ancient woodland of notable interest within the local area, consisting of predominately W8 NVC woodland classification ash - field maple, with oak with good understorey structure and composition including hazel, Midland hawthorn and wild service trees. Ground flora of interest including bluebell, wood anemone, early purple orchid and stinking iris. Compartment 3 contains a pond formed by damming a water course, thought to have been originally created during the late Victorian period, and restored in 2006.
Aversley Wood is included as a survey site within the National Forest Inventory. The survey plot number is 55739

Significance

One of largest SNAW 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.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints
Muntjack deer population can rapidly increase if control lapses can affect both the regeneration of the wood and the populations of specific woodland plant species.
Intensive surrounding land use meaning strong "edge" effects.

Opportunities
Locally there are many people with specialist knowledge who could provide invaluable information on the wood e.g. Hunts Fauna and flora Soc, ITE, local naturalists, etc.

Factors Causing Change

Prolonged deer damage
Climate change/ pests & diseases

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Aversley Wood will be maintained predominantly as high forest, with a well developed deadwood habitat. Species diversity will be encouraged and trees of particular value (eg, larger wild service trees) will be identified and maintained. Age structure will be further developed, identifying good quality trees to be retained into veteran status. Halo thinning around such trees may be required. Natural regeneration will continue to be the favoured method for recruiting new trees. Diversity and abundance of tree regeneration will be monitored through 5 yearly condition assessments and annual deer impact assessments.

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

Aversely is within the infection zone for chalara, although no confirmed symptoms have been noted to date (2015). Ash is the dominant canopy species in many areas and as such is under threat. Recruitment of native broad-leaved trees will be crucially important going in the short and medium term, and so deer management needs to be a priority. Annual deer monitoring and culling will continue as part of the on-going control of deer population within the site to reduce browsing pressure on developing natural regeneration. This will see continued use of an impact based approach, with annual impact assessments (combination of scored damage and activity observations) undertaken by the site manager. This will be used to inform cull targets.

Furthermore it is necessary to identify ash dominated compartments and favour non-ash native species through silvicultural intervention /halo thinning within this plan period; increasing light levels to sub-canopy trees and encouraging greater regeneration. Sub-compartments where ash is the only species present, silvicultural practices should be employed to lighten the canopy cover combined with under planting. Where areas of dense coarse or invasive ground vegetation develop, management of this vegetation will be undertaken to aid with the recruitment of natural regeneration. The effects of this will be monitored through regular visual inspection by the site manager at least every 2 years, with adjustments made to the future operations based on observations. Additional under-planting of native species such as wild cherry, oak, field maple and hornbeam will be considered where regeneration is not seen as forthcoming in 2 consecutive inspections. (within 4 years). A condition assessment of the woodland will be carried out every 5 years and this will inform the subsequent operations

To aid with the future silvicultural operations a survey of the suitability of the current infrastructure network will be carried out during this plan period. The findings of this survey would identify any infrastructure work required before the planned silvicultural operations to ensure that the integrity of the woodland can be maintained during the operations.

5.2 Ride Margins

Description

Aversley wood has a long established ride network parts of which historically have been managed as open wide rides. This has allowed a diverse ride flora and fauna to develop, which includes Meadowsweet, Cuckoo flower, Devils bit scabious, Common spotted orchid, Twayblade. Very rich butterfly fauna in particular Pinnacle Ride and South Ride known to provide good butterfly habitat White letter hairstreak on Pinnacle Ride.

Significance

Long established and extensive ride system, which can be traced back at least to the 17th century. Species rich in both fauna and flora which are specially adapted to open warm conditions. Extensive network of about 3km of rides which provide a variety of open sunny, damp shaded and dark conditions. Grass ride areas mostly unimproved neutral grassland which is uncommon in the region.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints
The wetness of the rides can restrict access to mowing machinery, specialist mowing machinery is required to manage the tough sedge species
Colonies of Black hairstreak and White letter hairstreak are thought to exist on some of the encroaching Blackthorn and Elm scrub this restricts timing and scale of management.
Flowering and seeding times of ride plants restrict timing of mowing

Opportunities
Much opportunity to encourage ride community through active management
Very extensive length of rides should be able to provide a wide range of conditions for many species

Factors Causing Change

Shading of rides through canopy closure, Natural Succession to course grassland and excessive deer pressure.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Continue to provide a floristically diverse open ground habitat and ride system within Aversley wood. Maintaining the floristically diverse open rides and promoting the development of the floristic communities through appropriate management.

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

Maintain the floristic diversity within existing open ground rides habitat within the main open rides focusing on the main ride, pinnacle ride and the ridge and furrow ride. Cut central areas of rides to at least 2meters width three times through the growing season and alternate verges biennially in September. Within the most floristically diverse rides (see work map) arisings will be wind rowed on the ride edges.

Ride edge coppice works to prevent over shading of woody vegetation to be identified through biennial inspection by site manager. Works to be agreed with Natural England and undertaken in late autumn/ winter when ground conditions allow, to minimise impact to wildlife and in line with industry best practice.

Maintain the deer glade in centre of cmpt 1a, and the glade at the ride juncture to the north of cmpt 1a through annual cutting in September. Allowing safe shooting positions and good sight lines through periods of high cover, thus extending the cull season within the site.

5.3 Informal Public Access

Description

With over 5500m of rides and paths within the wood, permissive access is good. The site is close to the village of Sawtry, although Parking is limited. The paths are un-surfaced and can become very muddy during periods of heavy rain or through most of winter. Slopes can be relatively steep in places, although you never climb more than about 30meters in total, so they are not overly restrictive to anyone with a good general mobility.

Significance

Strong local demand for walking in an area with limited PROW. The site has been walked for many years and is linked to the nearby villages by a PROW and the Bullock Road byway to the SE. A local walking group also use the wood on a casual but fairly regular basis, with as many as 20 or 30 participants.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
-Several sections of the ride network are extremely wet even during the summer. The worst area is the stream crossing between 5a and 3a.
-Due to the remote location and undulating and wet conditions less able access routes will not be viable
Opportunities:
-wildflowers and stunning bluebells displays in spring attracts a wide range of visitors

Factors Causing Change

Encroaching vegetation blocking access
Misuse of paths by bridleway traffic causing damage to path surface. Ruts and holes left by horse Hooves also pose a trip hazard.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will be regularly visited and valued by local people. With a well kept network of paths and rides providing opportunities for quite informal recreation. WT signage will be prominent but low key, appropriate to the setting and level of use.

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

Maintain site as an area of public open access, with all main internal paths being minimum of 2m width, unhindered by ride edge woody scrub and fallen trees. Internal structures (i.e. seats, steps and boardwalk) will be maintained in a safe usable condition and signs will be maintained to latest WT specifications and branding. Works identified through biennial inspection by site manager. Tree safety work will be identified and carried out through risk assessment actions/inspections.
Entrances to be updated (in 2015) to restrict unauthorised access by bridleway traffic. Signage will also be replaced and updated at this time.

5.4 Archaeological Feature

Description

Ridge and furrow in the south west of the wood covering much of comp1.
Internal earth wood bank divides comp1 from comp 2
Historic mineral workings in SW corner of cpt 1A

Significance

Ridge and furrow is rare in the county

Opportunities & Constraints

Over time these features will survive without management but monitoring will be important.

Factors Causing Change

accidental damage
Tree growth / stability

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the archaeology in its current state

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

Continue to monitor archaeological feature for erosion and tree stability improving paths if human activity is causing erosion. Plan any management works carefully to avoid damage. Review every 5 years and visually monitor on 2 year cycle.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	12.33	Ash	1930	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Ride Margins	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
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. 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. The occasional large field maple is also located within sub compartment 1a. A clone of English elm is present in the south eastern corner of compartment in the area surrounding the now dry "armed" pond. Understorey is frequent to abundant consisting of coppiced hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and field maple, elder, goat willow and aspen. This compartment is situated on level ground and contains an abundance of dead wood. Deer damage is evident at the base of the young stems.							
1b	4.11	Oak (pedunculate)	1920	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Ride Margins	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Oak and ash standards. Oak maidens estimated to have been established around 1900, with the ash at a latter date in the 1940s. 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. Situated on level ground and contains a number of very wet areas which are surrounded by sedge. An abundance of dead wood is also present. Deer damage is evident at the base of the younger stems.							

2a	15.87	Ash	1920	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Ride Margins	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Oak and ash standards established around 1900 or before. Over mature ash coppice is also present, last been cut around the 1930's. A number of younger oak and ash stems also make up a proportion of the main canopy species established around the 1960s. 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. A thick blackthorn hedge is present situated along the north easterly compartment boundary, probably a remnant ancient hedgerow This compartment has a gentle to moderate northerly aspect down to the hedge and stream on its boundary. There is an abundance of dead wood and deer damage is evident at the base of the young stems.							
2b	4.00	NULL		High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Ride Margins	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Oak and ash standards. Oak maidens established around 1900, with the ash in the 1940s. 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. Understorey consists of frequent coppiced hazel, hawthorn and field maple. Situated on level ground it contains a small proportion of wind blow and snap adding to the abundance of dead wood.							
3a	8.10	Ash	1940	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Ride Margins	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest

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 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.
Has a gentle northerly aspect and situated towards the northern boundary is an area of very poor drainage surrounded by willow scrub.
In the extreme southern corner of the compartment Wych elm maidens and coppice stems make up the main canopy, established in the 1930s. The occasional too rare ash and beech stems also make up a small percentage of the main canopy species, probably established at around the same time as the elms. 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 it is thought to contain a colony of Great crested newts.

Deer damage is apparent on the younger stems.
The occasional aspen and birch can also be found in compartment 3a.

4a	7.24	Ash	1940	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Ride Margins	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest

Main canopy species are oak but predominantly 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.
Pendulous Sedge is present along the compartment boundaries.
The stand has a gentle north, north easterly aspect, and contains a small proportion of wind blow and snap, adding to the abundance of dead wood that is already present.
Deer damage is also apparent at the base of the younger stems.

5a	3.60	Ash	1930	High forest	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Ride Margins	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest

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.
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 is estimated at around 40 years or more, last cut around the 1950s.
Areas beneath the canopy gaps have been under planted with oak and ash in 1996-97.
Wet areas are present in compartment 5a situated towards the southern boundary. These areas tend to be dominated by grey willow.
The stand has a moderate southerly aspect, and contains an abundance of dead wood.
Deer damage is also apparent at the base of the younger stems. The compartment is bounded by a wide ride to the west and the stream to the south. The large area of Blackthorn in the area has contained black hairstreak butterfly

GLOSSARY

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. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

Windblow/Windthrow

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