



# Martin's Wood

## Management Plan 2019-2024

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## 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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.

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## 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](http://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.

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## 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

<b>Site name:</b>	Martin's Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Woodhouse Eaves
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SK506151, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 129
<b>Area:</b>	4.69 hectares (11.59 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	National Forest, Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Martin's Wood in Charnwood Forest boasts spectacular views across the Soar and Trent valleys. A network of paths and rides provide a circular route. The public bridleway running alongside the wood gives easy access to Beacon Hill Country Park.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Martins Wood is a 4.75ha woodland creation site located within Charnwood Forest and forming part of the wider National Forest area purchased with much local support from the Friends of Charnwood Forest in 1993. The property consists of two fields that were both previously permanent grassland enclosed to the north by Dean's Lane and on all other sides by mature shelter belts.

Martins Wood was planted in 1995 and includes two small blocks of mature trees planted in the past as shelter belts, one of the shelter belts is located to the east of the property and is some 10 meters wide and a similarly sized dividing shelter belt exists between the two fields which make up Martins Wood. There are dry-stone walls surrounding the shelter belts and also the woodland perimeter.

The main access to Martins Wood is via the adjacent Deans Lane though parking is very limited.

Martins Wood is located at a high point in Charnwood Forest with excellent views looking towards Loughborough and Nottingham and is one of a network of new planted woodlands to be found within the wider National Forest area. The woodland is situated near to the village of Woodhouse Eaves and is immediately adjacent to Beacon Hill Country Park, a very popular local visitor destination managed by Leicestershire County Council with pay to park car park facilities and toilets. Felicities Wood another small Woodland Trust property can also be found adjacent being located on the opposite side of Deans Lane to Martins Wood.

The hill upon which Martins Wood sits is formed from the remnants of volcanic activity which occurred 700 million years ago which at it's highest point is 248 meters above sea level; the trig point being located at Beacon Hill Country Park, making it the second highest point in Leicestershire. The rocks found here are some of the oldest to be found anywhere in the world.

The site is well-served by a pattern of permissive footpaths connecting Beacon Hill Country Park in the south with Dean's Lane and Felicities Wood in the north.

To take into account the fine views of Charnwood Forest and the Trent valley to the north the planting that took place in 1995 was restricted to small areas against the shelter belts of the northern field and a more extensive area of the southern field, wide rides were included in the planting also. In all only 2.9ha of the 4.75ha was planted with a large proportion of the northern field being retained as hay meadow (1.5 ha)

The mature shelterbelts which are at least 100years old are dominated by Oak with some Beech, Holly, Sycamore and Rowan with a scattered understorey of Elder and Holly in places and a ground flora which is grass dominated but including Blue bell, Foxglove and Bracken.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

This small site is approximately 5 kms SW of Loughborough on the northern flank of Beacon Hill, a significant landscape feature in Charnwood Forest. It can be accessed from the low end on Dean's Lane and the upper boundary with Beacon Hill Country Park. There is a small pull-off on Dean's Lane but it would be far better to park cars in the Beacon Hill Country Park car and walk the 500 metres to the wood.

The paths through the site are mown grass and generally smooth but moderately steep. There are a number of strategically placed seats which enable the visitor to take in the wonderful views northwards over Wood Brook, Loughborough and the Trent Valley beyond. There is an excellent walk from Beacon Hill, through Martins Wood and across Deans Lane to Felicity's Wood, join the permissive path along Wood Brook and thence to Jubilee Wood and the Outwoods. Then follow the road towards Woodhouse Eaves and enter the bottom end of Beacon Hill Country Park.

There is no public transport but the walk to Martins can be shortened by taking the bus from Loughborough to Nanpanton or Woodhouse Eaves.

There is a public toilet at Beacon Hill Country Park.

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The primary objective pertaining to the Woodland Trusts "Conservation" corporate aim is to allow Martin's Wood to develop into healthy, resilient mature woodland consisting of multiple native tree and shrub species of varying age classes and to preserve the woodland in perpetuity. This will take the form of mixed broadleaved high forest and open meadows that are an important component of the landscape character of this part of Charnwood Forest. It will also be important to retain the expansive views to the north across the open grass meadows which were considered so important to the visiting public at the initial consultation on acquisition of the site.

The primary plan is to allow the above to take place with minimal management intervention. Any interventions that do take place will come about as a result of recommendations made during the periodic Woodland Condition Assessments carried out prior to each management plan review in conjunction with assessments made during New Native Woodland Key Feature Observations. Any interventions will come out of a necessity to promote the woodlands resilience in the light of threats from pests and disease such as Ash Dieback and also environmental changes resulting from climate change. The future species composition should consist of native species with oak becoming the primary dominant and with birch and field maple the predominant secondary species.

In order to meet the Woodland Trusts "Public" corporate aim Martin's Wood will remain fully accessible for people to enjoy for informal recreation at all times with regular path cuts and entrance and welcome signage maintenance taking place annually as part of the Estates Management Contract associated with the property.



## 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 New Native Woodland

#### Description

Oak dominated woodland with wide open views to the north across a wide central glade and expansive rides maintained by mowing. The new woodland planted in 1995 is enhanced by the presence of a significant amount of mature plantation which has many of the elements of a much older woodland such as understorey and ground flora and the inclusion at the site of a large percentage (35%) of open grassland managed as meadow and ride habitat.

The wood is contiguous with other older planted woods outside of the Woodland Trust ownership. Within the wood there are several other minor habitats also including dry stone walls, open grassland, dead wood. The wood is located in an interesting area on the lower slopes of Beacon hill, which is geologically very unusual

#### Significance

As part of the National Forest area Martins Wood helps to fulfill many of the original goals set out for the National Forest, these were:- To create a diverse landscape and enhance biodiversity.  
To make a significant contribution to the UK's efforts to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide.  
To create a major resource for tourism, recreation and education.  
To provide a productive alternative use for farmland.  
To make a contribution to the UK's timber needs.  
To stimulate the economy and to create new jobs.  
Despite the fact that Charnwood forest is a well wooded area before the National Forest initiative got underway, woodland cover across the area as a whole accounted for just six per cent of land use, well below the national average.  
This particular wood also adds to the special landscape character of Charnwood Forest that is one of scattered woods with meadows and heaths.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

### Constraints

The views from the northern glade northwards over the rest of the Wood Brook valley and beyond must be maintained.

No local interest in taking the hay crop off the glade area since the wood was created.

### Opportunities

Expansion of common woodland ground flora species outwards from the established shelterbelts into the planted zones.

Retention of the hay meadow under licence agreement with local farmer to integrate the site into the immediate landscape typical of this part of Charnwood Forest.

There may be further opportunities in the future for joint partnership working with both the National Forest Company and other local landowners / groups pertaining to a range of management and promotional activities.

### Factors Causing Change

Threats from Ash dieback and other pests and diseases.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To allow the woodland to develop into native high-forest with trees and shrubs of varying age classes and species types. The woodland will reach this state relying on natural processes where possible with observations from "Woodland Condition Assessments" informing management going into the future, interventions only taking place if highlighted as necessary by the Woodland Condition Assessments; the aim being to ensure the long term resilience of the woodland in perpetuity.

To maintain the meadow and views to the north as part of the habitat mosaic.

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

Monitor the woodland annually to assess its health and well-being via the New-Native Woodland Key Feature observation.

Once in the plan period, just prior to the next management plan review, assess the woodland using a "Woodland Condition Assessment" the results of which will inform the next management plan review in 5 years' time.

Look to carry out 25% thin in 2021 focusing primarily on ash the aim being to favour the growth and development of other native species such as oak and birch in light of threats from ash dieback.

## 5.2 Informal Public Access

### Description

Martin's Wood was planted to form part of the National Forest in association with the National Forest Company and with funding from the Forestry Commission and The Friends of Charnwood Forest. The property lies within the Charnwood forest area, which is renowned locally for its pleasing landscape character. The wood is well connected to the public rights of way network directly off of Deans Lane and via the permissive routes through adjoining Felicity's Wood and up to Beacon Hill Country Park. There are 850m of paths throughout the site and a large amount of open grassland at the roadside entrance which afford excellent views to the north. The wood is well used for quiet enjoyment and as a cut through to Beacon Hill and the wider area.

### Significance

The paths at Martin's Wood are important in fulfilling the Woodland Trusts corporate objective associated with "People"; 850m of path open to the public free of charge, 24/7. The woodland is located in the National Forest area and links with Beacon Hill Country Park and the wider rights of way network via its paths and rides. Open access to walkers remains throughout with the possibility of long woodland walks within the Forest having become a reality. Public access and its promotion is an important objective of the National Forest initiative, the access provided at Martin's Wood being an important contribution to that wider goal and symbolic of on-going successful partnership working between the Woodland Trust and The National Forest Company.

### Opportunities & Constraints

#### Constraints

Ground is steep as such the paths within the woodland would be challenging for less able people. The main entrance off of Deans Lane can suffer from littering, fly tipping and vandalism.

#### Opportunities

Links Felicity's Wood and Beacon Hill Country Park.

Is well connected into the local rights of way network.

Has excellent views over the local countryside which act as a draw for visitors and potentially could be used for promotional purposes.

### Factors Causing Change

Growth of ride-side trees and shrubs restricting passage.

Fly tipping, littering and vandalising of entrance furniture and signage can be an issue at the Deans Lane entrance.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain full permissive public access across the Woodland Trust ownership (both Martin's Wood and Felicity's Wood), with links to the larger Beacon Hill Country Park.

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

The objective of the current plan period is to provide a good standard of access provision with appropriately signed and welcoming entrances and easy to follow paths. An appropriate level of annual maintenance will be applied as part of the Estates Management Contract to achieve this.

## 5.3 Open Ground Habitat

### Description

Meadow to the north of the property left unplanted in order to maintain views valued highly by local people and also to match the landscape character of the surrounding Charnwood Forest area.

### Significance

The meadow primarily facilitates the very attractive view towards Loughborough and Nottingham but also adds some habitat diversity to the property and ties the site in nicely with the surrounding area which is of a similar character.

### Opportunities & Constraints

#### Opportunities

To manage the meadow for hay under licence with a local farmer.

To promote the site and it's views to the wider public.

To host events activity using the meadow as a focus though parking is very restrictive.

#### Constraints

So far local farmers have been uninterested in taking a cut from the property - mainly due to contamination from dog waste.

### Factors Causing Change

Change from meadow to woodland via natural succession if the meadow remains uncut.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To cut the meadow annually late summer and maintain it and the stunning views in perpetuity.

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

The aim will be to retain in perpetuity 1.45 hectares of area of open ground that complements the surrounding land type and retains landscape views

To carry out appropriate annual management of 1.45 ha area of open ground to ensure it does not succeed to woodland. Continue to explore better local options for managing the grass and using the resulting product.

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## 6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
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## APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	2.90	Mixed native broadleaves	1995	High forest		Informal Public Access	National Forest
<p>Compartment 1a was planted in 1995. Main species include Sessile Oak, Silver Birch, Rowan, Field Maple, Hawthorn and Holly, planted at 2250 trees per hectare it is an unusually shaped area as the planting was concentrated on the edges of the existing shelterbelts to retain the views. Within the trees a network of paths is maintained these link Deans Lane to the north (and Felicity's Wood) to Beacon Hill Country Park to the south.</p>							
1b	1.45	Open ground	1995	Non-wood habitat		Informal Public Access	National Forest
<p>An irregular shaped area within the northern field. This area was retained as open grassland at the time of planting to give views over the valley to the north. This was considered to be of utmost importance during consultation on acquisition.</p>							
2a	0.40	Mixed broadleaves	1880	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access	National Forest, Tree Preservation Order
<p>Two narrow shelterbelts of mature trees, one divides the north field from the south field the other lies along the eastern boundary of the wood. Both are under a Tree Preservation Order. They are both 20m wide, the easterly belt flares out to 50m wide adjacent to Deans Lane. Dominated by Oak with Sweet chestnut, Beech, Birch, Holly, Rowan and Sycamore there are small areas of fairly dense undergrowth but generally the woods are open in character with a grass dominated ground flora. Scattered patches of bluebell occur and bracken is evident in small quantities. The trees are around 80 to 100 years old. Both shelter belts are enclosed by ramshackle dry stone walls and there are occasional pits within the eastern belts.</p>							

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**Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)**

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2021	1a	Thin	2.90	17	50
2031	1a	Thin	2.90	17	50

## 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.