



# Eynsham 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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>	Eynsham Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Eynsham
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SP425101, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 164
<b>Area:</b>	5.36 hectares (13.24 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

This young, planted wood is the Woodland Trust's 200th 'Woods on Your Doorstep' millennium project. Various grass rides and paths (some muddy) take you through and round the maturing woodland.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Eynsham Wood is a 5 hectare / 13 acre site located to the west of Oxford on the A40, lying just north of the village of Eynsham, from which the wood derives its name. Eynsham Wood was part of the Woodland Trust's 'Woods on your doorstep' (WOYD) project and was planted in December 2000 with the help of local people. It was the 200th WOYD site to be acquired by The Trust, and sponsorship from Homebase paid for the purchase. Prior to the Trust's ownership the site was in arable cultivation.

The wood has been planted with native broadleaf trees and the major tree species are oak (30%) and ash (25%), along with field maple, hazel and cherry. There are other minor species including hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, wild privet, buckthorn and spindle and also specimen crab apple trees. Three pure blocks of hazel have been established, each of 0.25ha in size. Most of the perimeter boundary contains a mature hedgerow, with occasional willows.

The underlying geology is Oxford Clay Formation and West Walton Formation. The soil is mostly comprised of slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils, with moderate fertility suitable to woodland and seasonally wet pastures.

A network of wide rides throughout makes the wood accessible for the public and there is a public bridleway on the western boundary. A seat with a living willow sculpture was installed as a millennium feature in the central glade. Along all the boundaries there are mature, relatively untended hedgerows which probably date back to the Enclosure Act. A public bridleway runs up the western side of the site alongside the hedge, and there are numerous permissive footpaths within the site. The site is on the edge of the old Wychwood Forest.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Getting to the site: there is a bus stop near the Evenlode public house on the A40 with buses passing to/from Oxford. The nearest railway station is Hanborough Station near Long Hanborough about 4km to the north and Oxford Station lies about 11km to the east.

There are three entrances to the site - a bridleway gate in the north-west corner, a management and bridleway gate off Freeland Road, in the south-west corner and a large kissing gate on the southern side, off the A40. The pedestrian gates are not fully accessible to all. A public bridleway runs along the western boundary from the Freeland Road entrance, up a concrete track, to the gate at the north-west corner of the site. The site gently slopes towards the south and there are no surfaced paths on site.

Car parking is difficult at the site, and access by car is best achieved by parking in the village of Eynsham and then crossing the A40 (at the pedestrian crossing) to enter the wood via the large kissing gate on the A40 road frontage.

The nearest public toilets are at Back Lane Car Park, Eynsham (not open 24 hours). See [www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk) for more details.

(Further information about public transport is available from Traveline - [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or phone 0871 200 22 33)

All distances are approximate.

## 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long term policy for Eynsham Wood is focused on one of the Woodland Trusts key aims;

- to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife

The woodland will be managed to ensure there is good diversity of tree species and to improve conditions for selected retained specimens to enable it to be resilient to change. Silvicultural intervention will be necessary to achieve this. The wood will contain an element of open space (15%) through managed rides and a glade, and the coppice coupes will be cut on rotation creating a cycle of successional habitat. Small scale silvicultural management such as ride-side coppicing and cutting of the glade will be incorporated into the on-going management of the wood.

The likely colonisation by ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) will affect the species composition of the wood over time, and so oak is likely to be the target dominant tree species within the woodland areas, with hawthorn, blackthorn and birch most likely to initially colonise. The deadwood habitat will increase over time, as some trees die through competition for space and disease.

Observations will be carried out to record any threats to the woodland, for example from deer browsing, diseases such as ash dieback, or anti-social behaviour, and will be managed where necessary.

Eynsham Wood has been designated as a Category C site for public access (low usage site where we do maintain paths). Management for access will therefore be low key with paths and entrances being cut back at least once a year and small welcome signs erected at the entrances. The woodland will always remain safe and open for people to enjoy in an informal way. Safety of the site will be managed through annual tree safety surveys in high risk zones, such as the A40 roadside and inspections of site infrastructure.



## 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 Secondary Woodland

#### Description

The site was planted as native broadleaved woodland in December 2000 using native woodland species locally appropriate to the area and soil type. Trees have been slow to establish but are now developing well. Ground flora is now developing with lords and ladies and primrose present, as well as coarse vegetation such as bramble in less shady areas.

The main species in compartment 1a are oak (30%), ash (25%), hazel (15%) and field maple (15%). Three blocks of pure hazel (0.25ha / 0.6 acres in size - cpt 1b) have been included in the planting and were planted with a view to managing them as coppice coupes. Along all the boundaries there are mature, relatively untended hedgerows which probably date back to the Enclosure Act.

Woody shrubs planted along the ride edges and woodland margins include hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, wild privet, buckthorn and spindle and several varieties of local fruit trees were also included. Several oaks were planted along the northern and eastern boundaries with a view to pollarding them as marker trees in the future. All the plants were 30 - 45cm transplants, planted at a density of 2250 per hectare.

#### Significance

Locally the wood is important as a resource for wildlife, including some open ground, successional scrub and young woodland. The creation of this woodland has helped increase the amount of new native woodland cover in an area where woodland cover is low, as well as establishing an open access woodland near to where people live; the new woodland is an important amenity for Eynsham and the surrounding area, located very close to the village and well used by local visitors.

New woodlands help absorb CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, protect soils from erosion, create future wood fuel supplies, improve health and wellbeing, encourage wildlife and build resilience against pests and diseases while improving biodiversity.

It also represents an important contribution to the Wychwood Project whose aims are to increase new native woodland in the project area.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

**Opportunities:**

- Improvement of tree age range, structure and species diversity over time through silvicultural management and natural processes such as wind-throw
- To use the site to demonstrate the Trust's approach to woodland establishment and to influence neighbouring landowners and other key stakeholders where possible
- Selecting and promoting old growth trees well into the future to enable them to become veteran and ancient trees; this will require some control of competing trees
- The close proximity of the local community presents an opportunity to help manage and enhance the woodland

**Constraints:**

- The woodland is wet most of the year which presents challenges for management, which should be carefully timed with drier site conditions
- The size of the open ground limits any grazing management potential
- Low timber volumes make thinning works & coppicing uneconomical

**Factors Causing Change**

- Mammal damage (deer, squirrel) - Currently low risk; evidence of low pressure; repeat monitoring scheduled
- Increasing shade and loss of structure in minimum intervention stands - Low risk medium impact - monitoring and management scheduled
- Changes in structure and gaps in canopy due to wind-blow and disease/dieback e.g. *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* in ash - High risk, medium impact due to ash comprising circa 25% planted stock and 20% naturally regenerating composition. Natural regeneration of other species (blackthorn, birch, oak) is strong and will replace ash over time. Observations are scheduled to assess whether enrichment planting will be required within ash groups
- Open areas are succeeding to scrub and woodland thickets, dominated by blackthorn and birch - High risk, low impact due to permitted succession of scrub succeeding failed ash

**Long term Objective (50 years+)**

In the long term Eynsham Wood will be a thriving mixed native broadleaved woodland, with woodland components such as mature trees, self seeded ground flora, and a diverse deadwood component in a secure and improving condition.

The likely colonisation by ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) will affect the species composition of the wood over time, and the resulting stands (oak, field maple, hazel the most common species) of high forest will be being managed on a continuous cover silvicultural system to produce uneven-aged, self-regenerating stands of high conservation and amenity value. A proportion of open space (rides and glades - circa 15%) that has good woodland edge habitat and wild flower interest will be retained and will naturally improve condition and diversify over time with appropriate management. Deadwood habitat will increase over time through some trees being left to age and collapse naturally.

Deer damage to the broadleaf trees will be monitored and action taken if the damage becomes unacceptable. Similarly intervention may be required in consideration of major structural changes due to potential impact by pests and diseases.

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

In the short term the main planted compartment 1a of Eynsham wood will continue to develop through natural processes, the young trees will continue to develop and any changes or threats to development will be monitored and managed as necessary. Compartment 1b which comprises the 3 x coupes of near pure hazel will be cut with 2 years between each operation to provide a succession of habitat structure aimed at improving the biodiversity of the site.

- 3 x 0.25ha hazel coupes will be cut to improve biodiversity and structure - western coupe 2020 / south east coupe 2022 / northernmost coupe 2024
- Observation to reassess vitality of developing trees / assessment of impact of ADB on ash groups and if enrichment planting required / deer impact / ride edge vegetation in line with guidance and best practice - 2021 (& 2023 within WCA)
- Full woodland condition assessment to inform next management plan review - 2023

## 5.2 Connecting People with woods & trees

### Description

Eynsham Wood is in west Oxfordshire located to the north of Eynsham Village (population 4,648) and separated from the village by the busy A40 trunk road. Oxford (population 154,600) lies around 10km (6 miles) east of the site. A pedestrian crossing across the A40 and near to the entrance on the southern boundary, which enables villagers to access the site safely.

Surrounding land use is part-wooded but mainly arable, with patches of isolated woodlands in private ownership as well as large estates. The Farmoor Reservoir 6.5km (4 miles) to the south which offers visitor facilities and a four-mile walk around the reservoir with views of the water, woodland paths, Thames riverside meadows and nature reserves. Blenheim Palace, a World Heritage Site, and Blenheim Park is located 9.5km (6 miles) to the north, offering a visitor experience including the palace, parks and gardens.

Eynsham wood has approx. 2km / 1.2 miles of permissive paths and rights of way for pedestrian access only, and offers an interesting circular walk through an emerging woodland habitat, with good views across the landscape. The site slopes down from north to south and affords excellent views of Wytham Wood and Eynsham village to the east and south. These have been retained by orientating the paths along the lines of view.

There is a small layby next to the wood and alongside Cuckoo Lane where up to two cars can be parked, and this is the main entrance into the wood. There are two other pedestrian entrances on the other side of the wood which link to a lane and a right of way footpath across neighbouring farmland. The site is a category C for access site (low usage site where we do maintain paths).

Eynsham is a quiet wood and visitor numbers are not high, mainly comprised of locals using the site for low-key recreational activities. Overall visitor facilities are discreet but the site offers the visitor a peaceful place in which to enjoy the natural environment near the busy access routes and area surrounding Oxford.

### Significance

This site provides a quiet area of green space for walking and recreation for people living within walking distance of the woodland.

One of the Woodland Trust's main objectives is the promotion of public access to, and enjoyment of, woodlands.

As a developing new woodland the site has habitats and features that can be used to engage the public, including children, in appreciating woodland and the landscape on a wider scale.

### Opportunities & Constraints

**Constraints:**

- Eynsham Wood has limited and informal (2/3 cars) parking facility
- Paths can be muddy and waterlogged during the winter / wet weather due to the underlying geology

**Opportunities:**

- Ride edge coppicing will help to create more open, drier path surfaces for visitors
- Proposals for a garden village nearby could present an opportunity to engage with and promote the site and aims of the Trust to a wider audience, as well as increased volunteer opportunities to help care for the site

**Factors Causing Change**

- Proposed development of park & ride site to the west of Eynsham Wood - increased use from people using the site to access car park
- Proposed garden village to the north and east of the site - increased use from people seeking green space recreation locally
- Changes in vegetation along rides
- Visual changes as woodland matures
- Antisocial activities, e.g. fly tipping, fires, cycling off permitted routes

**Long term Objective (50 years+)**

Public access for informal and quiet recreation will be maintained in perpetuity. The woodland will be kept as safe as practical for visitors and there will be a managed network of paths, together with visible and clearly signed entrances.

An on-going programme of maintenance will ensure as much as possible safe and uninhibited access along clearly defined routes for quiet recreation. Provision of infrastructure will be kept low key and not over-managed with excessive infrastructure and signage as appropriate for the grading of this site: Category 'C' 'low usage site'

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

Management objectives are low key in line with the current use of the site and with requisite grading category. A visitor assessment was carried out in 2017, and site improvements proposed are scheduled below, alongside programmed routine management.

- Replacement main entrance interpretation panel and frame - 2019 (breadboard & other welcome signage to be installed 2020)
- Replacement bench in central glade - 2020
- Entrance vegetation management - cutting back roadside vegetation and around entrance and in to main path in to wood to improve clearance and sight lines and user safety - annual
- Routine safety inspections of the trees in higher risk zones along the roadside boundary - annual
- Routine safety inspections along internal path network within the site - annual due to presence of ash dieback
- The entrances, main paths open areas and glades will be maintained, through cutting where necessary, to ensure they remain open for visitors - twice annually
- Observation to reassess access provision and review provision in line with guidance and best practice - 2021 & 2023

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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	4.59	Oak (pedunculate)	2000	High forest			
<p>A plantation of native broadleaves planted in December 2000. The main species are oak (30%), ash (25%), hazel (15%) and field maple (15%), planted in groups. Other minor species include wild privet, buckthorn, crab apple and spindle and several varieties of local fruit trees. Along all the boundaries there are mature, relatively untended hedgerows which probably date back to the Enclosure Act.</p> <p>Woody shrubs planted along the ride edges and woodland margins include hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, wild privet, buckthorn and spindle. Several oaks were planted along the northern and eastern boundaries with a view to pollarding them as marker trees in the future. All the plants were 30 - 45cm transplants, planted at a density of 2250 per hectare.</p>							
1b	0.75	Hazel	2000	Coppice			
<p>1b comprises three blocks of pure hazel (each 0.25ha in size). There are occasional oak planted within the coupes.</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.
2020	1b	Coppice	0.25	20	5
2022	1b	Coppice	0.25	20	5
2024	1b	Coppice	0.25	20	5



## 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.