

Woodland Trust Management Plan

# St. John's Woods

(Plan period – 2020 to 2025)



WOODLAND  
TRUST

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## Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

“A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.”

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK’s native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

# Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](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.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.
4. The long term vision for all our ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities to generate income from our Estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we encourage our woods to be used for local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the Estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.
10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

## The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

or contact the Woodland Trust

[operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

## Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/>

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

# The Management Plan

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GLOSSARY

## 1. SITE DETAILS

### St. John's Woods

Location:	St. John & Antony villages, nr Torpoint Grid reference: SX410539 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 201
Area:	1.32 hectares (3.26 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Great Landscape Value
Internal Designations:	N/A

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

St John's Woods consists of two small woodlands (Benskin's and Antony) both of which provide some local woodland habitat and public access with short 'circular' routes and seats to allow visitors to enjoy their surroundings. Benskin's offers superb views out over St John's Lake in the Tamar SSSI and is partly young woodland planted in the mid-1980s and partly Ancient semi-natural woodland. Antony was planted in the mid-1980s as with Benskin's. Access is management squeeze gap or hunter's gates and along level grass and naturally surfaced paths. Recreation values are limited due to their small size poor highway access, but both are used regularly by a small number of local residents and therefore provide good amenity for their respective communities and those interested in the lake and its wildlife. There are facilities in both the adjacent villages and public transport services travel close to both however it should be remembered that these are limited as would be expected within such a small and disparate rural community

## 3. LONG TERM POLICY

St John's Woods is one of a number of small properties which together comprise the Trust's 'wild spaces'. These are largely left for nature to take its course with only minimal management input, usually to ensure public safety or to meet legal obligations. And currently it is felt that it does not offer any key features. The woodland will be allowed to develop towards mixed, predominantly native broadleaf high forest with a varied age and size structure, understory and ground flora providing attractive informal access to visitors predominantly from the adjacent small villages. The existing paths, tracks, viewpoints and entrance facilities will be managed annually as required to maintain safe levels of access already present and in line with its access category C (D) rating. This will help meet the Trusts aims of protecting native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future and inspiring everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees. It will also compliment the conservation values of the adjacent woodland and the amenity and aesthetic values of the wood in the landscape and to visitors.

## APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	0.57	Mixed native broadleaves	1900	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Great Landscape Value
<p>Benskin's Wood - A small area of predominantly semi-mature native broadleaf woodland designated ASNW with occasional Holm Oaks. It is sparsely populated with a hazel and holly understory, the wood is however becoming populated with Sycamore from the few large seed trees present and in the adjacent land. Ground flora includes Greater wood-rush, Primrose, bluebell and wild madder. It overlooks St Johns Lake, an area of salt marsh and tidal mudflat and part of the Tamar Valley SSSI. Standing on quite heavy soils the ground surface can be very wet and slippery, but seldom become water logged because of its high shellat content. The wood's authorised path doesn't extend into this narrow area as it slopes steeply towards the adjacent 'cliff edge' around the lake however a narrow path through sub-Cpt 1a has been formed by local walkers and passes very close to the cliff edge in one place as they gain access to an adjacent field. The section was fenced for safety reasons but the path is not promoted to discourage its use.</p>						
1b	0.51	Mixed native broadleaves	1979	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Area of Landscape Value, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Great Landscape Value
<p>Benskin's Wood - An area of mixed broadleaved woodland directly overlooking St John's Lake. Planted into a small meadow in 1979 with native species - Oak, Ash, Birch, Small-leaved lime and Sweet chestnut with encroachments of thorn from the surrounding hedges it was intended that it would extend the ASNW in 1a. Some grassland spp remain but the flora following post thicket stage shading is succeeding to ivy, with dense patches of thorn, ash, field maple and oak regeneration where light levels permit.</p>						
2a	0.15	Mixed native broadleaves	1979	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
<p>Antony Wood - A small woodland creation site standing on level ground on the edge of Antony Village. It has a short circular path around it, with two seats for visitors to use and access is via a small hunter's gate at each end of the wood. It also lies adjacent to a large lay-by beside the main road to Torpoint which offers limited benefit for management and passing vehicles. It was planted in 1979 with Oak, Ash, Small Leaved lime and Hazel and has formed a small dense sheltered woodland. Two hedges form a boundary with an adjacent farm, one consisting of semi mature ash and sycamore stools and the other a row of Lawson cypress which provides a dense barrier, but also some shading. The third boundary adjacent to the lay-by and roadside verge is topped with dense elm suckers. There is little understory and the ground flora is predominantly of grassland species.</p>						



### **Ancient Woodland**

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

### **Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland**

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

### **Ancient Woodland Site**

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

### **Beating Up**

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

### **Broadleaf**

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

### **Canopy**

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

### **Clearfell**

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

### **Compartment**

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

### **Conifer**

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

### **Continuous Cover forestry**

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

**Coppice**

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

**Exotic (non-native) Species**

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

**Field Layer**

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

**Group Fell**

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

**Long Term Retention**

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

**Minimum Intervention**

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

**Mixed Woodland**

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

**National vegetation classification (NVC)**

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

**Native Species**

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

**Natural Regeneration**

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

**Origin & Provenance**

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

**Re-Stocking**

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

**Shrub Layer**

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

**Silviculture**

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

**Stand**

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

**Sub-Compartment**

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

**Thinning**

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

**Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes**

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

**Weeding**

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

**Windblow/Windthrow**

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

**Registered Office:**

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