

# Tranquil Wood

(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

1. Site Details
2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

## 1. SITE DETAILS

### Tranquil Wood

Location:	Gt. Buckland, nr Gravesend Grid reference: TQ667640 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 178
Area:	1.66 hectares (4.10 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Local Wildlife Site
Internal Designations:	N/A

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Tranquil Wood is a small woodland site in Great Buckland, around 3.5 miles east of the large village of Meopham (pop. 6,722 as of the 2011 census). The site is 1.66ha (4.10 acres) in size, and is split into two separate areas of land. The main entrance to the site lies off Lockyer's Hill and this section comprises two sub compartments 1a (0.94ha) and 2a (0.37), with a smaller sub compartment located to the east (1b: 0.34ha), off Wrangling Lane.

The site is located in the North Downs National Character Area (NCA), a ridge of chalk hills supporting several important habitats including chalk grassland, ancient woodland, chalk quarries and cliffs and small areas of chalk heath, interspersed with a number of important geological and historical features. Tranquil Wood sits at the head of a dry, wooded valley within the scenic Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, on soil comprising clay with flints over chalk. Flint deposits are more notable to the west of the site.

At the time of acquisition in 1997, the site formed part of a smallholding of open grazing land, along with two small areas of ancient semi-natural woodland. The Woodland Trust converted the open space in subcpt. 1a to secondary woodland through a small scale tree planting programme in 1998, planting this area with a mixture of broadleaved tree species including ash, oak, wild cherry alongside woody shrubs. The western area of this subcpt. was left for natural regeneration to colonise and now chiefly consists of ash and field maple. Subcpt. 1b was also planted with a mixture of the same tree species.

The ancient semi-natural woodland in subcpt. 2a is made up of two different stand types. The first is a narrow strip of ash and field maple coppice, with occasional oak and wild cherry running alongside Lockyer's Hill, which most closely resembles NVC W8 Woodland Type (ash-field maple-dog's mercury) with a ground cover of wood anemones and bluebells with dog's mercury and honeysuckle. This narrow strip was last coppiced in 2004 for tree safety reasons.

The woodland towards the western end of 2a consists of over mature hornbeam coppice with sweet chestnut standards with some single stem ash present in the canopy. This area is part of a larger woodland called Luxon Wood (a designated Local Wildlife Site), which is not owned by the Woodland Trust.

Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) has been present at Tranquil Wood since at least 2013. Ash is a frequent species at the site and can be found across the three sub compartments. Those impacted trees have shown variation in decline, ranging from early stage symptoms (<5%) to advanced (>50%).

The public have access to both subcpt. 1a and 1b via an unmodified grass and earth surface path network totalling approximately 0.3km. The short, linear path leading through subcpt. 1a accessed via the main pedestrian kissing gate off Lockyer's Hill is a Public Right of Way (footpath 0161/NS231/1) and forms part of the Wealdway Walk. This 82 mile route extends across the chalk ridges of the North and South Downs and through the Weald. A short, circular permissive path can be found within sub compartment 1b, and the public have access to this area via a kissing gate located next to the neighboring property. There are also good footpath links to Tranquil Wood from Meopham in the west, Luddesdown in the north and Upper Halling in the east.

### 3. LONG TERM POLICY

In fifty years' time, Tranquil Wood will contain a diverse woodland structure, typical of native semi-natural broadleaved woodland, with the secondary woodland areas continuing to mature whilst providing a refuge for wildlife.

Ash dieback will have a notable impact on identified areas of this woodland, where it makes up around 50% of the canopy. However, with the loss of a high proportion of the ash, comes an increased decaying wood habitat, which will help to encourage invertebrate and fungal communities. Natural regeneration of species including oak, cherry, hornbeam, elder and hawthorn will grow up to replace the lost ash. The small 0.14ha strip of ash dominated coppice found along Lockyer's Hill will be actively managed by re-coppicing, ensuring public safety along the highway and allowing the oak and cherry standards found within the stand to continue to develop as future veteran trees. It is likely that some further tree safety felling during the period 2020-2025 will be required. This management work will ensure that suitable habitat is provided for a range of invertebrate, bird and mammal species, including woodland specialist species which rely on temporary open space.

Other areas of the woodland will be managed through minimum intervention, allowing decaying and deadwood to accumulate and old trees to develop. Young trees and shrubs will continue to regenerate where there are losses, and where natural gaps are appearing in the canopy. There is a good growth rate of woody shrub varieties such as elder, hawthorn, hazel, dogwood and dogrose, and natural regeneration of oak and some cherry, alongside hornbeam and ash saplings which will all help to further diversify the site in terms of both structure and habitat, and can be supplemented with additional planting if necessary.

The provision of safe and informal public access will remain across this site and it is expected that local residents and ramblers passing through as part of longer walking routes will continue to make up the main visitor demographic. Management will entail regular path and access point works, alongside safety inspections of higher risk tree zones along the path network and site boundaries. Statutory obligations will continue to be met with respect to managing tree safety along the boundary with Lockyer's Hill and Wrangling Lane, and beside the wayleave route.

All Woodland Trust sites are focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing people's understanding and enjoyment of woodland, to help create a UK rich in native woods and trees, for people and wildlife.

## 4. KEY FEATURES

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## 5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
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## APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	0.94	Ash	1998	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Mixed broadleaves of ash, oak, wild cherry and woody shrubs planted in 1998 east of the Public Right of Way. To the west of the Public Right of Way, natural regeneration has colonised this area and consists mostly of ash and field maple. A Memorial stone with a plaque to the Legator's husband is located in the middle of the sub-compartment and is positioned beside a small clump of oak trees also planted in 1998.</p>						
1b	0.34	Ash	1998	Min-intervention		Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Mixed broadleaves of ash, beech, oak, wild cherry and woody shrubs planted in 1998. A plaque on a stone dedicated to a number of people by E Berry 1989, is situated next to the gate entranceway off Wrangling Lane.</p>						
2a	0.37	Sweet chestnut	1900	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Area of ancient semi-natural woodland which most closely resembles NVC W8 Woodland Type (ash-field maple-dog's mercury) with ground cover of wood anemones and bluebells with dog's mercury and honeysuckle. The woodland consists of over mature hornbeam coppice with sweet chestnut standards with some single stem ash present in the canopy at the western end. This leads to a narrow strip of ash/field maple woodland with the occasional oak and wild cherry alongside Lockyers Hill. This narrow strip was last coppiced in 2004 for tree safety reasons.</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:**

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

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