

Priory Grove

(Plan period – 2022 to 2027)



WOODLAND
TRUST

Management Plan Content Page

Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

The Public Management Plan

Location and Access

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

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

or contact the Woodland Trust

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
 - 4.1 f1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
 - 4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland
 - 4.3 f3 Informal Public Access
 - 4.4 f4 Veteran Trees
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Priority Grove

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|------------------------|--|
| Location: | Monmouth Grid reference: SO526139 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 162 |
| Area: | 31.57 hectares (78.01 acres) |
| External Designations: | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Planted Ancient Woodland Site, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |
| Internal Designations: | Ancient Woodland Restoration Project |

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Priory Grove is a relatively narrow and long site situated approximately 1 mile north of Monmouth. It occupies a ridge and steep valley running parallel to the River Wye and the Forest of Dean. The western slope rises up from the River Wye and Hadnock Road to a long ridge before sloping down to a valley containing a seasonal stream and rising up again to a farm track which forms the eastern boundary. It forms part of a striking landscape within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and is clearly visible from the A40 and the A4236. Pedestrian access to the site is via a network of public and permissive footpaths which can be reached from the A4236, but more easily from Hadnock Road, a minor public road between the woods and the river.

The site has several National and International designations because it supports rare broadleaved semi-natural woodland habitat including the European and UK priority (Tilio-Acerion and Asperulo-Fagetum types). It is a National Nature Reserve (NNR), part of a more extensive Lower Wye Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) known as Fiddlers Elbow.

The site is also almost entirely dominated by ancient woodland, most of which is semi-natural, with oak, beech, ash and birch dominant. Wild cherry, small-leaved lime, hazel, willow and aspen are also locally frequent, especially lime. The central ridge supports a row of veteran beech coppice and short-pollards. A small area has been planted with sweet chestnut and a patch of secondary woodland was cleared of Larch in 2018 and re-planted with mixed broadleaves. The woodland is largely mature, high forest but there is abundant evidence of past coppicing activity in the form of outgrown coppice stools and numerous and well spaced charcoal platforms. Coppicing has been reinitiated in some areas from around the mid-nineteen nineties in the Southern half of the woodland. Dormice are known to be present but the population levels are unknown. Fallow, roe and muntjac deer are present along with feral pigs and all are having a significant negative impact on tree and shrub regeneration at the site. Habitat Impact Assessments in 2020 and 2021 highlight an almost total absence of natural regeneration.

The general trend is towards high-forest and there is very little structural diversity in the canopy and, outside the coppiced areas, very poor understory and ground flora. A combination of heavy shading and high browsing levels is of detriment to the wood, and if left unmanaged, will make the site less attractive to woodland dependent species including dormice.

Key features of the site are:

- Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland
- Secondary Woodland
- Veteran Trees
- Informal Public Access

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The site will be dominated entirely by ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) apart from the small area of broadleaf plantation but, over time, this too will develop into species-rich woodland.

The majority of the site will develop naturally as high forest with natural processes driving management. Deadwood will be abundant and preserved standing if possible. Efforts will be made to preserve the veteran beech coppice stool/pollards and other veteran trees by releasing them from competition for light and protecting them from browsing damage. Structural diversity will be achieved by small areas of thinning of mature broadleaf stands and continuation of the recent small-scale coppicing in some areas. There is a historic tradition of coppice management both at Priory Grove and across the Wye Valley AONB, as evidenced by the many charcoal platforms and managed trees.

Deer and feral pig populations will be managed to ensure that natural regeneration, canopy recruitment and understory development in areas of thinning and coppicing occurs. Their populations and impacts will be monitored via Habitat Impact Assessment (HIA) and thermal imaging surveys to help inform control. Deer exclusion fencing may be necessary in some areas to allow for coppice regeneration.

The track and path network will be managed for informal public access, operational purposes and management of ride edge habitat.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

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| Description |
| <p>The majority of the woodland is ancient semi-natural, characterised by mature high forest developed from remnant coppice and naturally regenerated and planted maidens. A small area at the southern end of the site was managed as coppice with standards until 2007. This area is ready for re-coppicing. Oak, ash and beech are all widespread, with wild cherry, birch and aspen locally frequent to abundant. Mature yew occurs to the south-west of the site and old beech pollards and coppice stools form an avenue either side of the ridge track which divides compartments 1 and 2, these are also scattered within compartment 1c. Compartment 2b supports mature sweet chestnut that was thinned in 1998/99; it's now very mature and in need of coppicing.. Hazel is frequent in the understorey along with field maple. The ground layer is often dominated by bracken and bramble but bluebell, greater woodrush, male, broad-buckler and hard ferns are also frequent. Ransoms, primrose and soft-shield fern occur at the edges of the site and along ride margins. Dormice occur within the woodland, being particularly abundant on the western slopes. Japanese knotweed appears occasionally along the stream running through compartment 3a. Himalayan balsam has occurred previously in compartment 1a.</p> |
| Significance |
| <p>The woodlands of the Lower Wye Valley SSSI are one of the most important areas of woodland in Britain because of their extent, their contiguity and the variety of semi-natural woodland types represented. Priory Grove contains Tilio-Acerion forests (which include NVCs W8e and W8f) of European priority interest; Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests (which include NVC W14) of European interest and Sub-Atlantic and medio-European oak or oak-hornbeam forests of the Carpinon betuli (which include NVC W10a) of national interest. Beech is believed to be native to the site and the veteran beech stools/pollards are likely to be of invertebrate and mycological interest. The avenue of beech stubs along the ridge track is striking in appearance and of some significance to the historic landscape. The site contributes significantly to the local landscape and as Monmouth is approached from the east.</p> |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">-There is an opportunity to leave natural processes of trees dying and natural regeneration taking place in compartments 4a, 4b/2 parts of 1a, 1c, 1d, 2c and elsewhere.-Lack of structural diversity - apart from the young planted broadleaf trees in compartment 4a the woodland is even aged and structurally homogenous.-Structural diversity could be added by conversion of the mature sweet chestnut stand (compartment 2b) to coppice, conversion of approximately one hectare of the young birch in compartment 1c to coppice and by thinning the canopy within compartments 1a, 2a and 4b/2.-Continuation of the coppicing that has occurred historically throughout the site, as evidenced by the charcoal hearths, |

and more recently in compartments 1b, 1c and 1d. This will further enhance structural diversity and continuing a traditional a management practice with biodiversity benefits of increased early successional habitat. Parts of the site are highly visible in the landscape, meaning easy visibility from the A40 and coppice coupes are accordingly carefully designed. Limited markets for coppice produce and high working costs on steep slopes are constraints to coppice management. Although several species and species groups are likely to benefit from coppice management, no species on the site are known to be coppice dependant and the value of continuing traditional coppicing at this site will be reviewed periodically.

-Dormice and bats (EPS) are present and must be considered during the planning of operations. Similarly badger setts are present (confidential). Deer browsing is having a significant negative impact on the natural regeneration of shrubs and trees and is a significant hindrance to coppice regrowth.

-There is an opportunity to prolong the survival of existing beech stools and pollards which are of heritage and biodiversity value along the ridge track.

-Deer browsing is high - Combined with the high shade because of the high forest canopy this is preventing natural regeneration and canopy recruitment.

-Grey squirrels will impact on the re-stocking in compartment 4a, young coppice in 1b, 1c and 1d and any new areas of thinning or coppicing that occur.

Factors Causing Change

-Deer browsing impeding natural regeneration,

-Squirrel damage may be effecting tree health

-Lapsed coppicing on former coppice stands will revert to high forest.

-Un-thinned high forest will continue to shade out field layers and understory

-Invasive species: knotweed, himalayan balsam and buddleja are known to favour the site

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Mixed age, structurally diverse, semi-natural woodland will dominated with a range of site-native species (including veteran beech stools and pollards) with and a characteristic ground layer that is regenerating with sufficient saplings to ensure the continuity of woodland in the long-term, and also improve r create an under-storey. The south of the site may be managed as coppice with standards. The ride network will be maintained for public access with biodiversity enhancements.

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

-Structural diversity will be added by conversion of the mature sweet chestnut stand (compartment 2b) to coppice, conversion of approximately one hectare of the young birch in compartment 1c to coppice, re-coppicing 0.5 ha of compartment 1b, and by thinning the canopy within compartments 1a, 2a and 4b/2.

-Management in 1b, 1c and 2a, 2b will allow for the halo release of some of the veteran beech trees n a controlled manner. Care will be taken to minimize potential wind damage.

-Deer and feral pig impacts on the vegetation will be effectively monitored every two years informing the on-going wildlife management with the aim of seeing improved natural regeneration throughout the site and any unprotected coppicing regrowth to be successful in coppiced areas.

- Eradicate invasive non-native Japanese knotweed, Buddleja and Himalayan balsam.
- Re-establishment of dormouse monitoring. The current system of boxes for recording are old and decayed. Also, they are placed in a linear fashion which does not allow for a population estimate to be made.
- Biodiversity surveys, E.G. fungi and moth surveys will be encouraged by external recorders and data fed back to NRW, this may inform future decisions with regard to site management.

4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland

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| Description |
| <p>Sub-compartment 4a was previously a larch plantation but the area was clear-felled in 2018 and re-stocked with native broadleaf trees in 1.5m deer tubes. The area was mapped as fields from at least as early as 1765 up to and including the 1900s.</p> <p>The understorey is largely absent but there is occasional elder and Buddleja is also appearing. The stand is bounded to the south by ancient woodland and to the east and west by tracks which support ancient woodland species. Bramble and bracken form a tall dense field layer within the stand but are not affecting establishment of the young trees.</p> |
| Significance |
| <p>The Woodlands of the Lower Wye Valley SSSI (which this sits outside) are one of the most important areas for woodland conservation in Britain because of their extent, their contiguity and the variety of semi-natural woodland types represented. Priory Grove contains Tilio-Acerion forests (which include NVCs W8e and W8f) of European priority interest; Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests (which include NVC W14) of European interest and Sub-Atlantic and medio-European oak or oak-hornbeam forests of the Carpinon betuli (which include NVC W10a) of national interest. Although mapped as fields from at least as early as 1765, the location of this secondary plantation (surrounded by ancient woodland and or ancient woodland species) implies that it could readily take on semi-natural woodland characteristics and extend woodland habitat.</p> |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| <p>High deer pressure and steep slopes will mean the tubes need to stay on longer than is usual.</p> <p>Squirrels - they are likely to pose a threat to the young trees from 2026 onwards.</p> |
| Factors Causing Change |
| Squirrels |
| Long term Objective (50 years+) |
| The broadleaf plantation area will develop the characteristics of the adjacent semi-natural woodland, and be similar in composition and structure to the ancient semi-natural high forest present on site. |
| Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years) |
| No intervention required other than monitoring of the re-stocking to ensure the current high levels of establishment continue. |

4.3 f3 Informal Public Access

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| Description |
| There are no surfaced paths. A public right of way runs north-south on the western side of the stream. There is a network of permissive paths throughout, giving access on generally shallow gradients. There is waymarking and the provision of benches. It is possible to park on the Hadnock Road and gain access from the west; other access points are via pedestrian access from adjacent land and a private property (with own gate fitted into the boundary fence). The site is used by very few people. |
| Significance |
| Priory Grove is both close to the county town of Monmouth and within the Wye Valley AONB which is popular with visitors. Ancient woodland is a significant feature in the area which can provide quiet, informal public access. |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| The opportunity is taken for visitors to have an a full appreciation of the extent of the semi-natural ancient woodland via a well maintained pathway network. Views are limited due to the height of the canopy. The low number of visitors constrains any further requirement to further enhancement of visitor infrastructure. The noise from nearby A40 is a constraint on visitor experience. |
| Factors Causing Change |
| An increase in site visitors. A change in the way visitors use the site. |
| Long term Objective (50 years+) |
| Maintain paths and infrastructure to a high standard to ensure a positive experience by visitors. |
| Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years) |
| Facilities maintained in good condition for the enjoyment of visitors. Tracks mown at least once annually. |

4.4 f4 Veteran Trees

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| Description |
| Row of mature beech coppice and short pollards along the track running along the boundary of compartments 2a, 2b and 2c. Veteran trees of unknown age but indicative of the historic management practices. |
| Significance |
| Of importance culturally and because of their biodiversity value |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| Halo release from shade competition is complicated by the fact the tree run along a high exposed ridge. Windblow is likely without careful planning. |
| Factors Causing Change |

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| Shading from adjacent canopy Windblow |
| Long term Objective (50 years+) |
| Maintain as healthy trees |
| Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years) |
| Coppice small areas adjacent to the trees to see how they respond to wind exposure. |

5. WORK PROGRAMME

| Year | Type Of Work | Description | Due Date |
|------|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 2022 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | April |
| 2021 | CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment | Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring | May |
| 2021 | CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment | Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring | May |
| 2022 | WMM - General Site Management | Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, | May |
| 2022 | WMM - Invasive Plant Control | Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants – such a repeat cutting and control treatments | September |
| 2022 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | September |
| 2022 | SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B | Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland | December |
| 2022 | SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B | Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland | February |
| 2022 | WMM - Coppice Management | Works associated with the management of coppice areas – such as coppicing, maintenance of protective fencing, etc | February |
| 2022 | CS - General Consultancy | Use of external consultant to support Woodland Trust site management | February |
| 2022 | AW - Management Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of management access infrastructure and tracks Such as repairs to vehicle entrance points, maintaining vehicle bridges and repairing / reinstating surfaced management access routes. | February |
| 2022 | PC - Deer Control - Shooting | Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc | February |
| 2023 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing | April |

| Year | Type Of Work | Description | Due Date |
|------|------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| | | pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | |
| 2023 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | September |
| 2023 | AW - Management Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of management access infrastructure and tracks Such as repairs to vehicle entrance points, maintaining vehicle bridges and repairing / reinstating surfaced management access routes. | September |
| 2023 | PC - Deer Control - Shooting | Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc | February |
| 2024 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | April |
| 2024 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | September |
| 2024 | PC - Deer Control - Shooting | Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc | February |
| 2025 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | April |
| 2025 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | September |
| 2025 | WMM - Coppice Management | Works associated with the management of coppice areas – such as coppicing, maintenance of protective fencing, etc | February |
| 2025 | WMM - AWS silviculture | Works associated with silvicultural operations within ancient woodlands to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, | February |

| Year | Type Of Work | Description | Due Date |
|------|---------------------------------|--|-----------|
| | | thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors | |
| 2025 | WMM - AWS silviculture | Works associated with silvicultural operations within ancient woodlands to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors | February |
| 2026 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | April |
| 2025 | WMM - General Site Management | Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, | April |
| 2026 | AW - Visitor Access Maintenance | Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc, | September |

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|---|-----------|---------------|------|-------------------|--|---|
| 1a | 3.28 | Oak (sessile) | 1920 | High forest | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |
| <p>Sub compartment 1a has a moderate to steep westerly aspect. It has the character of high forest although there is much evidence of past coppicing. The NVC is W10a.</p> <p>The sub compartment is a fairly open stand of mixed broadleaves. Oak maidens are the most abundant, estimated to have been established around 1920, with a small number of older trees possibly established around 1900. Mature and veteran beech and ash, including mature coppice stools, also make up a percentage of the canopy. Mature yew are present but being over shaded by the mature oak and beech. The remaining canopy is composed of younger ash, small leaved lime, holly and beech coppice, all estimated to have been last cut around 1955. Other species occasionally scattered throughout the stand include wild cherry, silver birch and sycamore. The understorey is composed of occasional to frequent hazel coppice.</p> <p>Ground flora species include bluebell (abundant in places), lords and ladies and patches of bramble and bracken.</p> | | | | | | |
| 1b | 0.94 | Hazel | 1960 | Coppice | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |
| <p>Sub compartment 1b has a steep westerly aspect. The NVC is primarily W10a.</p> <p>The sub-compartment was coppiced in 1990 but many of the coppiced stools did not respond well (due to age,</p> | | | | | | |

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|--|-----------|----------------------|------|-------------------|---|---|
| <p>species and deer damage) although hazel remains dense in places. A small proportion of maiden oak, beech and wild cherry were retained (estimated to have been established around 1960). Abundant regeneration of silver birch has begun to fill the gaps with occasional aspen, hazel and willow species some of the sub-compartment remains open in places, dominated by bracken with patchy bramble. Oak planting occurred around 2007 to the south of the compartment and although initial establishment was successful the trees have been destroyed by squirrels.</p> | | | | | | |
| 1c | 4.89 | Birch (downy/silver) | 1980 | High forest | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |
| <p>Steeply sloping, north-west facing sub compartment (NVC W10a with W8f and W8e towards the southern end). The sub-compartment is dominated in most areas by a dense young canopy comprising mainly birch coppice and maidens, although goat willow coppice is dominant at the bottom of the slope. Other species present include hazel, beech and small-leaved lime coppice, with sessile oak, wild cherry and yew. Yew is present as several large standards throughout the sub-compartment and beech pollards/stools form an avenue along the ridge track on the eastern boundary as well as being scattered through the area. A small selection of these will be re-coppiced periodically, therefore not impacting negatively on their value as potential value as dormouse nest sites. There is an area of more open ground between two streams at the south western end containing mature wild cherry and oak, with wild garlic abundant underneath. Ground layer flora includes bluebell, broad buckler, male and hard ferns, wild garlic, greater woodrush and ivy.</p> | | | | | | |
| 1d | 5.08 | Small-leaved lime | 1980 | Coppice | Landscape factors, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special |

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|---|-----------|----------------|------|-------------------|--|---|
| | | | | | | Area of Conservation |
| <p>Steeply sloping, north-west facing sub-compartment (NVC W10a with W8f and W8e). The canopy is of mixed age and structure with much of it managed as coppice historically. Birch and small-leaved lime dominate with goat willow sessile oak, ash, wild cherry, aspen and yew also present. A small area at the western end was coppiced in 1990 and two further coupes were cut in approximately 2004 (approx. 0.7 ha) and 2006 (approx. 0.6 ha). Yew trees occur as large individuals throughout but are most abundant around the old quarry.</p> <p>The ground layer flora is rich and diverse with dog's mercury, wild garlic, ransoms, bramble, fern species, ivy, wood anemone and bluebell.</p> | | | | | | |
| 2a | 3.68 | Oak (sessile) | 1900 | High forest | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |
| <p>Sub compartment 2a has a moderate easterly aspect. The NVC is W10a and is comprised of mixed broadleaves, dominated by large oaks estimated to have been established around 1900. Other species within the stand, estimated to have been established/last coppiced between 1950 and 1965, include ash in the north with beech, silver birch and small leaved lime coppice in the south and west where the stand is denser. Occasional field maple is also located within the stand, as is occasional douglas fir. The south western edge is bounded by an avenue of veteran beech stools/pollards.</p> <p>The understorey is sparse and over shaded comprising patchy hazel coppice (especially in the north), of which a proportion of the stools are of a relatively old age. Natural regeneration is very poor because of high browsing pressure and shading.</p> <p>Ground layer species include bluebell, bramble and bracken but leaf litter dominates. Charcoal platforms provide evidence of the historic management approach.</p> | | | | | | |
| 2b | 0.28 | Sweet chestnut | 1970 | Coppice | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Planted Ancient Woodland |

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|--|-----------|-------------------|------|-------------------|--|---|
| | | | | | natural features & vegetation | Site, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |
| <p>Sub-compartment 2b has a gentle to moderate south-easterly aspect. The NVC is W10a. Sweet chestnut high forest dominates the canopy estimated to have been established in 1920 and thinned in 1998/99. Sycamore and silver birch are scattered within the stand and the understorey comprises occasional hazel coppice. The western edge is bounded by an avenue of beech stools/pollards; there is little deadwood and the ground layer is predominantly a thin coverage of bluebell with bramble and greater woodrush.</p> | | | | | | |
| 2c | 1.49 | Oak (pedunculate) | 1960 | High forest | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |
| <p>Sub-compartment 2c has a moderate to steep south-easterly aspect. The NVC is W10a with a small area of W8e in the south-west corner.</p> <p>The woodland comprises thinned semi-mature broadleaf coppice of silver birch, ash, beech, sweet chestnut and occasional sycamore, all estimated to have last been coppiced around 1960. The north west edge is bounded by an avenue of veteran beech stools/pollards.</p> <p>The understorey is composed of occasional hazel coppice and the ground layer species include bluebell.</p> | | | | | | |
| 3a | 2.33 | Ash | 1975 | High forest | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special |

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|---|-----------|-------------------|------|-------------------|--|---|
| | | | | | | Area of Conservation |
| <p>Sub compartment 3a is a thin stand situated along both sides of a small ephemeral watercourse running south-north, with a wider area at the southern end which also borders the A4136. The aspect is gently northern and the ground is quite wet.</p> <p>The area to the north is NVC W10, predominantly made up of broadleaved coppice including ash, goat willow and hazel as well as rare sweet chestnut and small leaved lime. All are estimated to have last been coppiced around 1975 and a number of the hazel coppice stools are of a relatively old age.</p> <p>The southern end of the sub-compartment is NVC W8f with W8eat the bottom. It has a different character and is made up of both coppice and standards. Species include sweet chestnut, ash, and small leaved lime, all estimated to have been established/cut around 1950. The understorey of the entire sub-compartment is composed of occasional to frequent hazel coppice with a small proportion of young cherry.</p> <p>Ground layer vegetation includes bluebell, hart's-tongue fern and ransoms in the south as well as primrose along the ride edges in the north. Bracken and bramble are locally abundant.</p> <p>Japanese knotweed occurs periodically along the course of the stream and will require eradication as and when it appears.</p> | | | | | | |
| 4a | 3.26 | Small-leaved lime | 1960 | Min-intervention | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| <p>Sub-compartment 4a has a moderate to steep westerly aspect.</p> <p>It was a stand of mature larch but this was clear-felled in 2018/2019 because of a number of reasons. It had been thinned on three occasions but because the soils are not ancient woodland in origin and deer pressure was high almost no broadleaf natural regeneration had occurred. Re-stocking occurred in spring 2019 at a density of approximately 1,600 trees per hectare. The species mix was primarily small leaved lime, oak and wild cherry in that order with the aim being that the stand could be managed as coppice woodland in the future. Bracken dominates the field layer with abundant bracken. Other species present include bramble with little evidence of woodland specialist flora other than around the edges. This is to be expected as the site is secondary woodland in origin. Buddleja is appearing and should be controlled if necessary.</p> | | | | | | |
| 4b | 4.07 | Beech | 1940 | High forest | Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation | Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Nature Reserve, Site of |

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|---------|-----------|--------------|------|-------------------|------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | | Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation |

Sub-compartment 4b has a moderate westerly aspect. The NVC is W14 and W10a with open areas supporting W25, but likely to have previously been W10a. Charcoal platforms provide evidence of the historic management approach.

There are two stand types present:

4a/1 - The northern half is mixed broadleaf stand containing both maiden and coppice stems. Semi-mature to mature ash, small leaved lime, wild cherry and beech dominate the canopy and are thought to have become established around the 1950's, possibly post-clear fell of the coppice woodland during the war. The understory is fairly dense hazel with elder and other species and hard to penetrate because of abundant clematis making the area particularly good for dormice and nesting birds. The ground layer is dense consists of patchy bramble, bluebell, lords and ladies, ransoms, greater woodrush and broad-buckler and male ferns with soft shield fern and primrose along the ride edges. A substantial sunken lane known locally as the 'Kings Road' runs along the eastern boundary.

4a/2 - The southern half is almost totally devoid of understory and field layer. Ground cover is limited over much of the area to leaf litter probably because of past management and the very dense shading. The canopy consists of abundant mature and semi-mature beech, oak and small leaved lime with occasional birch, ash and wild cherry. The woodland is a very open and dense with good potential to thin out the canopy to encourage understory, field layer development as well as future canopy recruitment. Natural regeneration is virtually absent because of high shade and browsing levels.

A number of small areas within the stand were felled around 2000 but regeneration and planting (in 2003) have largely failed, probably due to deer damage, combined with dense bramble growth. Further beating up was carried out in 2007. A substantial sunken lane known locally as the 'Kings Road' runs along the eastern boundary.

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.

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