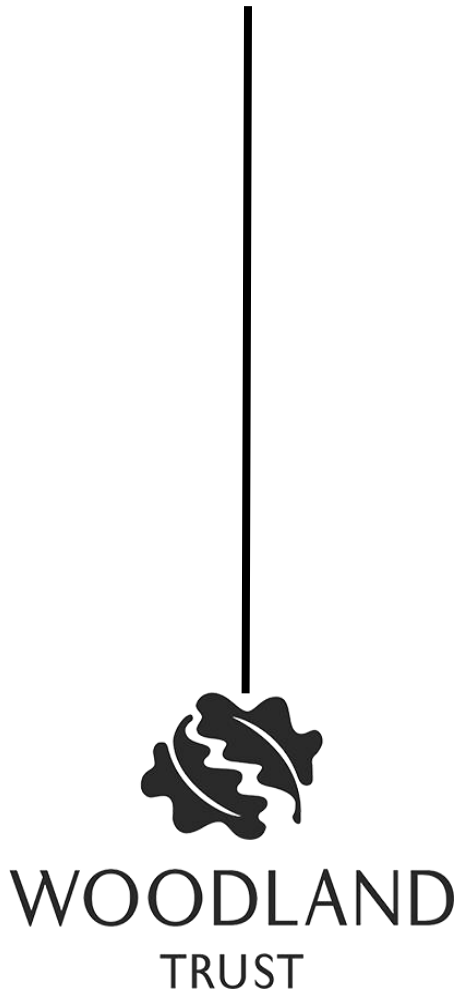
Pullingshill Wood & Marlow Common

(Plan period – 2020 to 2025)



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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

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

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4. Key Features

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5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Pullingshill Wood & Marlow Common

Location:	Marlow Grid reference: SU822865 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 175
Area:	27.30 hectares (67.46 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt, Registered Common Land, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation, Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	N/A

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Pullingshill Wood and Marlow Common is a 27.6ha / 68 acre site that is situated 2 miles / 3.2 km to the west of Marlow in the Chiltern Hills AONB. The wood was acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1991 through a private sale. It is part of a complex of ancient and long-established woods and joins other woodland to the south, east and north-east whilst on the west side is arable land.

Pullingshill Wood forms a 19.5ha / 48 acre block of ancient, semi-natural woodland on the western side of the site. The majority of which (15ha / 37 acres) is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for its rich and diverse ground flora. The site is dominated by mature beech and oak on the flat plateau, with some birch (especially over the trenches – see below). As the ground slopes down on the west and south sides, the wood contains greater concentrations of other species such as ash, field maple and cherry. There are mature beech and oak trees over most of this area as well as natural regeneration within storm-damaged areas from the storms of 1987 and 1990.

Pullingshill Wood (Compartment 1a) is separated from Marlow Common (Compartment 1b) by a very prominent wood-bank which runs north-south through the wood, which is an ancient parish boundary bank between Great Marlow and Medmenham Parishes, believed to date back to the Norman conquest. Pullingshill Wood is to the west of the wood-bank and this is the greater proportion of the site (over 70%). It is part of the legally designated Hollowhill & Pullingshill SSSI by virtue of its rich and diverse ground flora. The nationally rare ghost orchid has been recorded in this area of the site. The SSSI area (including Pullingshill Wood) is further designated as part of the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC (Special Area of Conservation) due to supporting internationally important species and habitats listed in the European habitats directive. Due to these designations, Natural England has been and will continue to be consulted during the drafting of management plans.

The Marlow Common portion of the site is registered common land and is part of the wider 'Marlow Common' which is a stretch of wooded common that continues north from the Woodland Trust site. Marlow Common is a planted wooded common and makes up 8ha / 19.7 acres on the eastern side. This is between the wood-bank of Pullingshill Wood in the west and privately-owned Davenport Wood to the east. The wood consists of beech and oak mostly planted or which became established during or just after the Second World War. The compartment is also intersected by a minor road running north-south which is narrow and the tree canopy is closed overhead.

There is a large amount of woodland archaeology present including dells, wood-banks and perhaps most remarkably, a series of training trenches that were created in World War One. The dug trenches stretch for over 1400 metres and are known to be the best and most complete set of WW1 training trenches in the UK. They are a very rare example of this feature and were built by various regiments stationed nearby at Bovingdon Green during the early years of the war. The trench network was surveyed and accurately recorded in 2005 and visitor information about them is present on the site.

The underlying geology of the site is split north/south through the centre of Pullingshill Wood, with the eastern section including Marlow Common on Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation with overlying shallow soils of chalky, silty loam; and the west section on Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation with deep sandy loam soils. Overall structure supports woodland that approximates to W12 in the NVC (National Vegetation Classification): Beech-ash woodland with dog's mercury.

The variations in the surface layers, changes in soil types and large quantities of leaf litter, particularly in depressions, all help to provide niches for a wide range of woodland plants such as the rare ghost orchid. There is a good quantity of deadwood both standing and fallen which in turn provides habitat for fungi and bryophytes.

The site is a popular woodland for amenity use as well as for people with a special interest in nature conservation. The wood is well frequented by local visitors and there is good variety of paths to use. Limited parking is available next to the site through a number of informal roadside lay-byes.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long term policy for Pullingshill Wood and Marlow Common is focused on one of the Woodland Trusts key aims;

- to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife

Overall the management focus will be on retaining and improving woodland biodiversity and resilience, with all major ancient woodland components in a secure and improving condition including old growth trees, ground flora, archaeological features, and a diverse deadwood component. Management will also focus on improving appropriate accessibility and increasing peoples understanding and enjoyment of woodland.

Pullingshill Wood and Marlow Common is a prominent feature in the landscape and has therefore been an important component of the local area for many decades, and as such any required silvicultural intervention must ensure the mature woodland composition appears to be largely unchanged, and therefore the site will be managed with low levels of silvicultural intervention. This form of management perpetuates the approach since approx. 1950, which has led to a steady accumulation of large deadwood and some over-mature trees (beech and oak). The rationale for this is further supported by the presence of the nationally rare ghost orchid, which requires relatively undisturbed closed canopy woodland. Through this approach conditions will be maintained whereby this important plant can continue to be present at the site. This approach of low intervention will also lead to a continued accumulation of deadwood (standing and fallen) at the site and the development of veteran trees, especially beech.

Some canopy gaps have and will continue to occur through natural means, such as wind blow and tree disease, and this will introduce more structural diversity into the woodland. Natural regeneration has brought in many ‘new’ tree species such as field maple, birch, cherry and sycamore into the site and the wood is now more diverse than since 1940 and the last large scale active management. A proportion of the mature oaks (estimated 10-15%) will be lost through ‘acute oak decline’ (AOD) and this will lead to some canopy gaps for young trees to develop. Silver birch is likely to be the main species regenerating in these areas. Further down the slopes the young ash dominated woodland is being affected by Hymenoscyphus fraxineus (ash die-back disease). Further canopy gaps will appear in this area of woodland as ash trees succumb to the disease, and these are likely to be filled with natural regeneration of cherry, sycamore, beech and field maple.

Natural processes continue and any further management intervention will therefore aim to diversify the overall species diversity and stand structure through small scale works, mostly achieved through small scale ride-side work in addressing tree safety requirements and path and access improvements. This will help increase light levels and improve overall health of retained trees, and encourage natural regeneration of species such as those listed above to facilitate a more varied structure and composition.

Mature broadleaved trees, particularly beech and oak, will be identified as future old growth trees and left to reach old age and decline naturally. Deadwood volume will increase as trees mature and senesce contributing to important deadwood habitat both standing and fallen, particularly for invertebrate and fungal communities, apart from where it poses a significant tree safety risk. Where present and it is safe to do so mature ash dying within stands (<15% composition) will be left to decline and collapse to further bolster this niche habitat.

The birch-dominated woodland over-topping the trench network is likely to progress to an oak and beech mixture.

Hence, there will be a steady reduction of the birch as it is replaced by the oak and beech. A regular survey of trees over the trenches will be carried out to minimise any deterioration of the trench structures, especially through birch trees falling and the root plates lifting. This survey will identify any unstable trees which will subsequently be felled before they cause any damage. Over the long term the wood is likely to remain an oak-beech dominated woodland, but with increased proportions of birch, cherry, field maple and sycamore present.

Observations will be carried out to record any factors causing change that may be detrimental to the vitality and structure of the woodland. For example there should be no damaging invasive species present on the site, and the likely colonisation by ash die-back (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus) and other pests and diseases monitored and managed where necessary.

The Woodland Trust has given Pullingshill Wood & Marlow Common a Category B for public access (a moderate usage site. Regular usage, 5 – 15 people using one entrance per day). On and off-site interpretative material will be available to the public, especially about the training trenches. Main entrances will be clearly signed and welcoming and there will be a well-managed path network. The managed path network will however avoid areas where the ghost orchid has been found.

The public's enjoyment of the woodlands will be enhanced by maintaining an accessible and safe network of paths and rides, in line with the recommendations for category B for access. On-going monitoring will ensure access and boundaries remain as safe as possible. This will be achieved through a managed path and entrance network and regular safety inspections of site infrastructure and of higher risk tree zones.

Archaeological features such as the trenches, boundary wood-banks and pits will be monitored and protected for future generations of visitor to enjoy. Entrances, boundary fences, and benches will be maintained as necessary and the appropriate access provision will be monitored and delivered.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

The site consists of Pullingshill Wood (Cpt 1a; 19.5ha) which is mostly ancient woodland, and also Marlow Common (Cpt 1b; 8ha) on the east side which is well established semi-natural woodland but not classified as ancient. In management terms, there will be no variation between the two. The soil type is freely draining slightly acid but base-rich soils with high fertility, supporting woodland that approximates to W12 in the NVC (National Vegetation Classification): Beech-ash woodland with dog's mercury.

The top plateau of the site (the eastern half) is mostly a mixture of mature oak and beech. Other minor species are present here including holly and birch. An area of birch dominated woodland is present in Pullingshill Wood overtopping the network of WW1 training trenches. The trees here are clearly younger than those on the rest of the plateau, which is an indication that, during the construction of the trenches, the woodland covering the ground was cleared and what we see now is natural regeneration following this event.

Pullingshill Wood is separated from Marlow Common by an historic and prominent wood-bank, which also marks the boundary of 2 parishes (Medmenham & Great Marlow).

On the west side of the site the ground slopes down towards a dry valley, and here the soil becomes more alkaline and the composition of the woodland changes. The woodland on the slopes is generally ash, with components of cherry, field maple, hazel and beech. The majority of the trees in this part of the wood are semi-mature, and they derive from the regeneration of the wood following the severe storms of 1987 and 1990.

Some old pollards and coppice stools are present including circa 300 year old sweet chestnut pollard. Standing decaying wood is extant as well as fallen deadwood. Pockets of deep leaf litter are present in ditches and hollows. Also steep banks and areas with shallow stony soils.

The site is designated a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), mainly because of the presence of the ghost orchid which is a national rarity. Other uncommon plants are also present including goldilocks buttercup and broadleaved helleborine. More common woodland plants include bluebell, dog’s mercury and woodruff.

There is much woodland archaeology at this site including 1400m of WW1 training trenches, old wood-banks and a number of large old quarry pits (especially in the Marlow Common part of the site). The training trenches are known to be one of the best preserved and finest examples in the country. They were extensively surveyed and recorded in 2005, and a detailed map of the network was produced.

Significance

Ancient woodland is a limited and irreplaceable resource which is home to more species of conservation concern than any other habitat in the UK. A substantial number of specialist woodland species are almost wholly confined to coppice and old growth stands. Approximately 40% of England's ASNW is found in the South East.
ASNW is very important due to the continuity of woodland cover over hundreds of years which allows for a diverse range of wildlife and vegetation to develop over time that cannot be found in new woodland creation sites.
A key aim of the Woodland Trust is to prevent any further loss of ancient woodland.

Pullingshill Wood and Marlow Common has very important ground flora with national rarities, especially in areas of deep leaf litter. This is especially true of the ghost orchid saproxylic communities in old trees and associated decaying wood. The woods are within the Chiltern Hills AONB, one of the most heavily wooded landscapes in the country. Locally this site directly joins a number of other semi-natural and ancient woodlands, forming part of a wooded network within the landscape.

Pullingshill Wood is part of the Hollowhill & Pullingshill Wood SSSI which is especially important for its population of the rare ghost orchid. Sites of Special Scientific Interest are given protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. It is the responsibility of The Woodland Trust to manage the site in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Appropriate management is very important to conserve the special wildlife and geological features of SSSIs. As a SSSI the site is legally protected. There are a number of operations which cannot be undertaken without the prior written consent of Natural England. A list of these Potentially Damaging Operations has been provided by Natural England, which is kept in the site files and referenced at the end of this plan.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
- Vulnerable to thefts of firewood which will decrease the overall deadwood component of the site
- Hollows and dells could be damaged by illegal vehicle or recreational off-road riding activity
- Steep banks and areas with shallow stony soils vulnerable to trampling and vehicle compaction
- Woodland archaeology present such as rare example of WW1 practice trenches and vulnerable perimeter wood-banks and damage must be avoided during any management operations
- The woodland has limited infrastructure for timber harvesting – no surfaced tracks and unsuitable entrance points for forest machinery. Access can become boggy in wetter weather. Any management work should be carefully timed with drier site conditions if possible
- Low timber quality and volumes make thinning works / coppicing uneconomical
- Key species present such as ghost orchid, requiring stable and relatively undisturbed canopy woodland, limits the scale of silvicultural intervention at this site
- The presence of some steep slopes further limits the extent of forestry activities
- The intersection of a minor road north/south through compartment 1b limits wider management options and increases threats to roadside trees

Opportunities:
- To maintain close links with Wycombe District Council who manage areas of land to the north and south and Archaeology in Marlow (AIM) who surveyed the WW1 trench network

- 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

Factors Causing Change

- Mammal damage (deer, squirrel) - Currently low risk; evidence of low pressure and repeat monitoring scheduled
- Increasing shade and loss of structure in minimum intervention stands - Low risk medium impact – minor management interventions and natural processes will vary structure slowly over time
- 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 15% mature canopy and naturally regenerating composition. This will alter the areas of post-storm naturally regenerating woodland currently present on the slopes. Acute oak decline (AOD) is likely to lead to the loss of a proportion of the mature oak (10% is estimated over the next 10 years)
- Anti-social behaviour problems: fly tipping/litter/off-roading/mountain biking – Medium risk high impact due to ease of accessibility of site and proximity to more densely populated areas
- Sycamore is present in the wood and is likely to become more common in the future, as it exploits any gaps created in the tree canopy. Medium risk low impact. With the loss of ash regenerating sycamore is likely to be tolerated in order to maintain control of light levels (See NE/FC 'Managing woodland SSSI's with ash dieback' Section 4.7 Replacement trees.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Pullingshill Wood and Marlow Common will continue to develop largely through natural processes, where the deadwood habitat is likely to increase over time through trees being left to age and collapse, and subsequent natural regeneration succeeding within canopy gaps. Intervention will take place to reduce threats to this natural development where required. Through this approach it is expected that the rare ghost orchid will remain and thrive at the site, as the plant requires stable woodland conditions.

The composition will remain broadleaved, with all major ancient woodland components in a secure and improving condition including old growth trees, ground flora, archaeological features, and a diverse deadwood component. The colonisation by ash die-back (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus) will affect the species composition of the wood over time, and the resulting mixed stands (oak, cherry, birch, sycamore, field maple being the most common species) of high forest where managed will be on a continuous cover silvicultural system to produce uneven-aged, self-regenerating stands of high conservation and amenity value. AOD is likely to affect the overall longevity of oaks, and it is unlikely that many will grow on to become veterans. The deadwood habitat will become very well developed as ash, some oak and the old coppice stools in particular collapse and die.

The birch-dominated woodland over-topping the trench network is likely to progress to an oak and beech mixture. Hence, we will see a steady reduction of the birch as it is replaced by the oak and beech. A regular survey of trees over the trenches will be carried out to identify any that are unstable, and these will be felled before they cause any damage.

Any threats to the biodiversity or historic features of the wood will be monitored and resulting action taken, i.e. deer damage to the broadleaf trees will be monitored and action taken if the damage becomes unacceptable. Regular woodland condition assessments will be carried to monitor the presence of tree diseases, especially ash die-back, and how the composition of the woodland may change (monitoring the increase in sycamore for instance).

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

The ASNW woodland area of Pullingshill Wood (Cpt.1a) is likely to undergo composition change within this plan period due to colonisation by Hymenoscyphus fraxineus (ash die-back). Ash is regenerating from mature trees present within the compartment, and it is likely most of the regenerating ash and many mature trees will fail.

Intervention is not at this stage required to re-stock as although ash comprises around 15% of the canopy, beech and oak will close many canopy gaps and there is abundant regeneration (birch / hazel / field maple / sycamore most commonly) to mitigate risk from coarse vegetation proliferating.

During this plan period the short term objective is to maintain stable woodland conditions to conserve the sensitive features of the wood. This will be achieved by the following specific actions:

- Undertake silvicultural operations only where necessary to ensure the safety of the public – annual in response to survey results
- Conduct a botanical survey in 2021 with the special purpose of confirming the presence and location of ghost orchid
- Undertake interim observations to observe & manage the presence and effects of ash die-back - annual
- Undertake full woodland condition assessment to look at the overall health of the woodland. This will inform the next management plan review - 2025
- Conduct a survey of the trees on top of the trenches (especially birch) every 3 years to identify any that pose a risk to the structures because of their instability or poor health. Surveys scheduled in 2020 and 2023
- Install / repair barriers to prevent 4x4 access and parking from roadside to within woodland boundary. 2020, 2022, 2024 and as required

4.2 f3 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Pullingshill Wood & Marlow Common is located in south Buckinghamshire and is only 2 miles (3.2km) from Marlow (population 14,325). Marlow is located on the River Thames, 4 miles (6 km) south south-west of High Wycombe (pop 125,257), 5 miles (8 km) west north-west of Maidenhead (pop 70,000) and 33 miles (53 km) west of central London.

The Marlow Common portion of the site is registered common land and is part of the wider 'Marlow Common' which is a stretch of wooded common that continues north from the Woodland Trust site. Marlow Common is a planted wooded common and makes up 8ha on the eastern side. This is between the wood-bank of Pullingshill Wood in the west and privately-owned Davenport Wood to the east. It also has the advantage of being close to other accessible woodland, in particular the larger area of Marlow Common to the north which is managed by The Chiltern Society. Hog and Hollowhill Woods to the south are managed by Berks Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust. The site is bounded by arable land to the west.

The site is popular with local people for recreational walking and there are two public footpaths through the site, and one of these forms part of the ‘Chiltern Way’ long distance footpath, a 134 mile circular path highlighting the best features of the historic landscape and AONB. Visitors can also use a variety of other permissive paths through the wood, allowing for shorter circular walks. Only pedestrian access is permitted at this wood.

The wood has a good range of natural and historic features to interest the visitor including the WW1 training trenches, old pits and wood-banks, clusters of large impressive beech trees, undulating terrain and views over the surrounding countryside.

Car parking is possible but limited to a number of lay-bys off the road running north-south through the wood. There is an information board present on the site to help visitors appreciate and understand the WW1 training trenches.

Significance

One of the Woodland Trust's main objectives is the promotion of public access to, and enjoyment of, woodlands.
The woods provide an important natural setting for informal recreation close to Marlow, and are part of a wider network of freely accessible woodland. This site provides a quiet area for walking and recreation for some people living within walking distance, and is a site of interest for some local naturalists and historians.
The site has a variety of habitats and unique historic features that can be used to engage the public, including children, in appreciating the landscape on a wider scale.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
- There is a history of illegal access by 4WD vehicles. The opportunity for this has been reduced by installing roadside ditches and bollards, but the open and flat nature of the wood close to the road always makes this a continued threat
- Heavy public use and trampling could be a threat to the ghost orchid and other sensitive flora, and formal managed paths will need to continue to avoid the most sensitive areas
- Car parking is limited to pull-in areas adjacent to the wood, and there are no opportunities to extend or enhance parking at the site
- Paths can be muddy and waterlogged during the winter / wet weather

Opportunities:
- The training trenches are a special feature at this site and have a wide interest. There is an opportunity to make use of them as part of wider engagement opportunities
- The special wildlife at the site (e.g. ghost orchid) offers a wider interest for specialist ecological groups, and could be used for educational purposes

Factors Causing Change

- Antisocial activities such as fly tipping in the parking areas, littering, fires & cycling
- Footpath creep due to wet, muddy conditions
- Desire lines altering paths and creating new 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. Information will continue to be provided on and off site to interpret the WW1 training trenches, and to link them with historical events happening in the local area.

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 appropriate for the grading of this site: Category B for public access (a moderate usage site. Regular usage, 5 – 15 people using one entrance per day).

The wood will be monitored for the impact of any anti-social problems, and measures will be taken to limit the threat

from these.

Involvement of the public in wildlife monitoring will be supported if there is local interest.

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

Following a 2018 survey, entrance upgrades were commissioned and installed in 2019 and 2020. During this plan period the short term objective is to ensure the wood remains safe and accessible for use, this will be achieved by the following specific actions:

- Replacement 4 x entrance and welcome signs – 2020
- Mowing & trimming back of the main paths (approx. 2km) and vegetation management and maintenance of infrastructure at entrances - annual
- Carry out a review of the access provision to ensure that facilities are of a good standard, in line with the Category B access status. Any threats posed by anti-social activities will also be assessed and action taken to minimise these – 2023
- 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
- Clearing of all boundary ditches to prevent access for unauthorised vehicles – annual
- Litter picking along roadsides, verges, entrances and paths - annual

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2021	SL - Tree Safety Emergency Work	Work associated with unplanned emergency tree safety works – such as clearance of fallen trees/branches and associated repairs	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,	July
2024	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	July

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	19.5	Beech	1940	High forest	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Tree Preservation Order
The area known as Pullingshill Wood. Mature oak-beech woodland dominates the higher ground to the east. The western side (on the slope) is more mixed and contains semi-mature ash, field maple, beech and hazel with occasional mature beech. This part of the site contains the WW1 training trenches. This area consists of predominantly beech and oak with a mixture of birch, ash and sweet chestnut and small numbers of larch and spruce trees. In areas where gaps in the canopy have formed from storm damage, there are young stands of ash trees on the lower slopes and birch on the upper ones. This compartment contains the WW1 practice trenches as well as a prominent ancient parish boundary bank that marks the division between Great Marlow Parish and Medmenham Parish on the eastern boundary. The boundary is also the division between the ancient semi natural woodland and the wooded common land of Marlow Common. Where there is dense canopy shade, the ground flora is sparse but in the more open areas there is privet, bramble and bracken with occasional guelder rose. There is one ancient sweet chestnut coppice stool that could be at least 300 years. This area contains the SSSI which was designated for the contrast between the acidic plateau soils and the more calcareous valley soils which give rise to interesting flora such as the rare ghost orchid.						
1b	8	Beech	1940	High forest	Archaeological features, Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Registered Common Land, Tree Preservation Order
The area known as Marlow Common. Dominated by mature oak-beech woodland but also containing a proportion of sycamore, cherry, holly and birch. This area consists of a wooded common, which possibly grew or was planted during or just after the Second World War. The most common trees are oak, beech, sycamore and cherry. The under-storey comprises beech and oak regeneration with some sycamore regeneration in the south east corner growing up in gaps created from storm damage. The ground flora consists of bramble in the more open areas, with bracken and occasional fern species. There is an area of beech between the secondary road that runs north to south through the common and the parish						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
boundary bank to the west. The eastern boundary consists of a field edge in the south and a boundary bank for the rest of the site. There are other obvious woodland archaeological features present such old quarries.						

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.

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