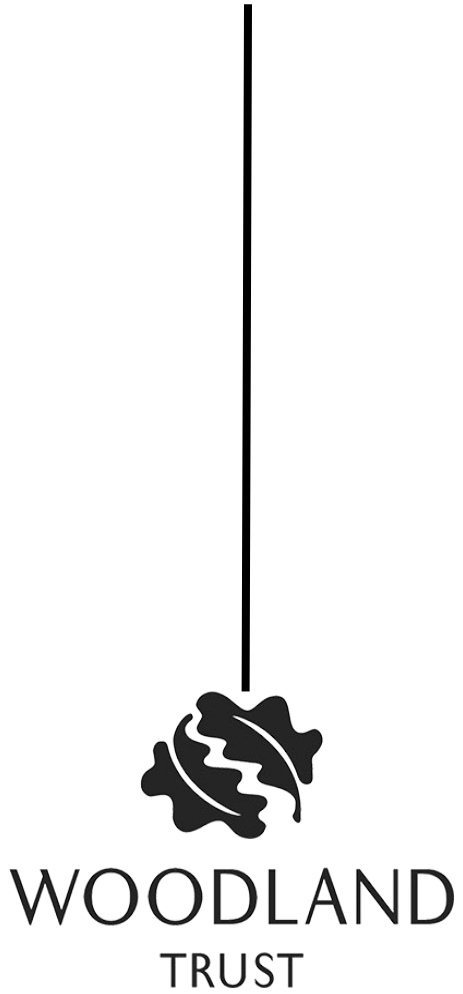
Chesham Bois & Blackwell Stubbs

(Plan period – 2023 to 2028)



Management Plan Content Page

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

Chesham Bois & Blackwell Stubbs

Location:	Chesham Grid reference: SP962002 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 165
Area:	17.26 hectares (42.65 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	N/A

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The woodland complex of Chesham Bois and the small outlier of Blackwell Stubbs is spread over 17.27 hectares within the Chilterns Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Chesham Bois

Chesham Bois Wood is a 16 hectare (40 acre) site that lies between the towns of Chesham (2.2km / 1.4 miles) and Amersham (3km / 1.9 miles). The site was acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1979 and is made up of 4 historic woods; Elvidge Wood (4ha) to the west, Hodds Wood, Little Hodds Wood and Hilbury Wood to the east (together as a continuous area covering 11ha). According to historic Ordnance Survey maps these 3 blocks were established post World War 1, in the 1920s, as plantation beech. Hodds Wood (3.5ha) is classified ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW), but is barely distinguishable from the surrounding secondary woodland areas, and so is not treated differently in terms of management.

Situated on the sides of a valley overlooking Chesham, the woodland is characterised by tall, straight, mature beech trees up to 25 metres high and this is the main impression of the wood from the A416 road. Historically there has been extensive mineral working close by and indeed an impressive old chalk quarry pit called Aldridge's Dell is situated on the northern edge of Little Hodds Wood. The wood was once part of the Du Bois family estate. They acquired the manor of Chesham Bois in the 13th century from the bishop of Bayeux who had owned it since the Norman Conquest.

The site is divided in two by the A416 road with residential properties bordering the wood in the south whilst private woodland and pasture surround the wood elsewhere. Significantly it is joined at the easternmost point to Great Bois Wood and Bois Wood, an area of around 20ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and to the west by Beech Wood & Howlet's Wood which comprises 7.5ha of ancient replanted woodland. Chesham Bois together with the connecting woodland forms a significant block (43.5ha / 107 acres) of woodland only separated by the A416. Elvidge Wood and all of the woodland to the east of the road is identified as Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat (Natural England Priority Habitats Inventory 2023). The site lies within the Chilterns National Character Area (NCA)110 which is characterised by a patchwork of mixed agricultural land with woodland, set within hedged boundaries. The NCA contains 27,153 ha of woodland or 17 per cent of the total area, of which 12,113 ha or 7 per cent is ancient woodland. Within the NCA, the Chilterns AONB is one of the most wooded landscapes in England with 21 per cent woodland cover, of which 56 per cent is ancient. Many woods have a history of being planted, replanted or selectively managed to create beech high forest, although records suggest beech is also the naturally dominant woodland type

Soils are in the main highly fertile, slightly acid, loamy and clayey with slightly impeded drainage that is suitable for a wide range of woodland types with an acid to neutral PH but becoming more calcareous towards the valley floor. Plantation beech is the dominant tree species with smaller components of ash, cherry, field maple, sycamore and Scots pine. Holly is dominant in the understory along with occasional hawthorn. Hornbeam and wych elm can be found toward the woodland boundaries. Horse chestnut is starting to seed into wood from mother trees in Aldridge's Dell.

Hodds Wood to the east of the site is designated as ancient semi-natural woodland (ANSW) and contains specialist

woodland plant species such as bluebell, dog's mercury, yellow archangel and woodruff, some of which have also colonised the secondary woodland. There are also some mature elm on a field boundary between Little Hodds and Hodds Woods, and a whitebeam measured at 23 metres and reportedly the tallest in the country. The composition is largely even-aged and mature, although several small areas were wind-blown in early 1990's storms and have subsequently regenerated with young ash, beech, hawthorn and sycamore. These areas add structural diversity to the woodland but ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus) has now killed the majority of the young ash.

The wood is well used by local people, being within walking distance of main settlements, linked by two public footpaths (CSB/9/1 & CSB/10/1) to the north and south of the wood. There is a good network of permissive paths throughout the wood allowing the visitor a varied experience. The site is actively used as a Forest Schools site by a local school group. Paths around the wood are generally in good condition but can become boggy following wet periods of weather.

The Woodland Trust has given Chesham Bois Wood a category B rating for access (moderate usage site where we do maintain paths).

Blackwell Stubbs

Blackwell Stubbs is a small 1.6 ha site located in the Chilterns AONB, approximately 1km (0.6 miles) southeast of Chesham Bois Wood, on the eastern edge of the Chesham Bois settlement. It is positioned in a steep-sided valley, with freely draining lime-rich loamy soils supporting lime rich deciduous woodland. The wood is ancient in origin and quite mixed, with the major species being beech, cherry and sycamore with smaller components of ash and oak. Holly is dominant in the shrub layer with occasional hawthorn, hazel, elder and yew. Where light level allow swards of ancient woodland indicator species such as bluebell, dog's mercury and wild garlic can be found.

Situated between residential areas, it is a well-used woodland with a public footpath (CSB/2/1) connecting Leonards Road to Stubbs Wood Road along the southwestern boundary and a second public footpath (CSB/1/20) runs along the northern boundary connecting to St Leonard's Road to Latimer Road beyond the railway to the east. A small circular network of unsurfaced permissive paths run through Blackwell Stubbs for quiet recreation. The wood is best accessed from St Leonard's Road via one of the public rights of way, and is well-used by local people.

The Woodland Trust has given Blackwell Stubbs Wood a category C rating for access (low usage site where we do maintain paths).

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long term policy for Chesham Bois and Blackwell Stubbs is focused on the Woodland Trust's key aims to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife and providing informal public access.

The long term aim is to retain and improve 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 increasing peoples understanding and enjoyment of woodland.

The woodlands are highly prominent features in the landscape, being visible from the town of Chesham and the A416 corridor. The mature woodland has therefore been a feature of the local area for many decades, and as such any required silvicultural intervention must ensure the mature woodland composition is largely unchanged through a considered continuous cover management approach ie no clear-felling.

In Chesham Bois, components of the secondary woodland will be managed to diversify the overall age structure and species composition through small-scale continuous cover thinning works. This will help increase light levels and improve overall health of retained trees, and encourage natural regeneration (currently largely absent) of species such as beech, birch, cherry and sycamore to facilitate a more varied structure and composition.

The ancient woodland component (Hodds Wood) will be retained as a minimum intervention area within the site and left to develop through natural processes, as has been the case for many decades. The colonisation by ash dieback disease will affect species composition of the wood over time meaning beech is likely to remain the dominant tree species in the wood as it develops. Some broadleaved trees 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.

In Blackwell Stubbs, natural processes will continue to shape this small wood, ensuring a range of different species and ages of trees with gaps in the canopy where natural regeneration can thrive. Deadwood will continue to accumulate naturally. Naturally regenerating species include sycamore which is likely to become the dominant species as the wood develops. Felling will take place where tree safety dictates, and the operations will open gaps in the canopy to facilitate regeneration.

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 impacts of ash dieback and other pests and diseases monitored and managed where necessary.

The public's enjoyment of the woodlands will be enhanced by maintaining an accessible and safe network of paths and rides. On-going monitoring of both sites 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 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

Hodds Wood (Subcpt 2b, the most eastern block of Chesham Bois Wood – 3.5ha) and all of Blackwell Stubbs Wood (Subcpt 3a - 1.3ha) are designated as ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW).

Soils comprise in the main high fertility slightly acid, loamy and clayey with slightly impeded drainage that is suitable for a wide range of woodland types. Hodds Wood approximates to W14 (beech with bramble) under the National Vegetation Classification (NVC). The main tree species is beech with wild cherry, hornbeam, oak, whitebeam and elm. Some very large English elms stand on the wood bank on the western boundary of Hodds, and within the woodland is a very large whitebeam over 23m in height. The ground flora is especially diverse in Hodds, with a wide collection of woodland specialists including bluebell, yellow archangel, woodruff, sanicle and wood anemone. Coral-root bittercress is also present, which is a national rarity. There is good quantity of standing and fallen dead wood. Holly is dominant in the shrub layer and is becoming impenetrable in places. The flora in Hodds is acting as a reservoir for colonisation of the adjacent well established secondary woodland (Hilbury and Little Hodds).

Blackwell Stubbs approximates to W12 (beech with dogs mercury) under the NVC. The increasing presence of sycamore is replacing beech as the dominant tree species, especially in the lower storey. Oak, ash, silver birch, cherry and rowan are also present although the mature cherry is starting to collapse. There is a good quantity of standing and fallen dead wood which is increasingly significantly due to the collapse of cherry and ash die back. The southern boundary has an old wood bank which contains some old veteran oaks and beech while coppiced hornbeam can be found along the eastern boundary. Localised swards of ancient woodland indicators such as bluebell, wild garlic and dog's mercury are still present along with lesser celandine and enchanter's nightshade although bare ground is frequent.

Significance

The amount of ASNW left in Britain has been drastically reduced over the last century and ancient woodland is irreplaceable. 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. The Chilterns AONB is one of most heavily wooded areas of the UK with a very high concentration of ancient woodland (over 13% of the land area). Both Hodds Wood and Blackwell Stubbs contain ancient woodland vascular plant indicator species. Hodds Wood in particular is acting as a seed source for colonising adjoining woodland.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
- Woodland archaeology is present and damage must be avoided during any management operations
- Access can become boggy in wetter weather. Any management work should be carefully timed with drier site conditions if possible

Opportunities
- 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
- Improvement of tree age range, structure and species diversity through silvicultural management

Factors Causing Change

- Increasing shade and loss of structure in minimum intervention stands where the canopy is closed
- Localised diversification in species and structure where gaps in canopy due to wind-blow and disease/dieback e.g. Hymenoscyphus fraxineus in ash have developed
- There is evidence of deer on site but impact is being minimised via regular public access
- There has been garden rubbish dumping at the site in the past, some dumped garden exotics have previously rooted within the woodland area and been cleared

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The ancient woodland area of Chesham Woods (Hodds Wood - 3.5ha) will be allowed to develop largely through natural processes where the deadwood habitat is likely to increase over time through trees being left to age and collapse naturally.

The composition will remain predominantly 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 mixed stands (beech, cherry, sycamore, birch, and oak being the most common species) of high forest will be self-regenerating and of high conservation and amenity value.

Blackwell Stubbs (1.3ha) will be also allowed to develop largely through natural processes although some intervention is likely to be required to address safety concerns, and is likely to become more dominated by sycamore but beech will still remain a major component.

Deer damage to the broadleaf trees will be monitored and action taken if the damage becomes unacceptable.

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

As natural processes will be allowed to shape the ancient woodland component of Hodds Wood and Blackwell Stubbs Wood, planned interventions over the course of this management cycle will only be those deemed necessary to protect the ecological condition of the wood or the safety of visitors and in response to routine inspections.

- Blackwell Stubbs (Cpt 3a) to be selectively thinned, targeting ash with dieback and other hazardous trees. 2024.

- Inspections and informal site visits will monitor the development of the wood within the plan period, including carrying out deer impact surveys every 3 years to assess any increase in levels of damage - next survey due 2024.

Woodland condition assessments will inform management plan reviews - next assessment due spring 2028.

4.2 F2 Secondary Woodland

Description

Secondary woodland forms the major portion of Chesham Bois Wood, totalling 12.7ha (74% of the whole site) and comprising of Elvidge Wood, Little Hodds Wood and Hilbury Wood.

Soils are slightly acid-loamy and clayey with impeded drainage. They are clay with flint on the plateau with an acid to neutral PH, and becoming more calcareous towards the valley. The woodlands approximate to a mixture of W14 (beech with bramble) & W12 (beech with dog's mercury) under the National Vegetation Classification (NVC). They are dominated by mature and tall plantation beech trees, (planted 1915 – 1925), with minor components of other species such as ash, wild cherry, oak, hornbeam and elm. Some natural regeneration of beech, ash and sycamore is developing although this is suppressed by the mature trees around them which have a closed canopy structure. A minor component (<5%) of conifer (Scots pine, Norway spruce, Corsican pine and European larch) is present in Elvidge Wood. The wood was last thinned in 1983.

The flora is more diverse in Little Hodds and Hilbury Woods with species such as yellow archangel, woodruff and sanicle present, as well the scarce yellow bird's nest (Monotropa hypopitys), and these woods are clearly benefiting from their proximity to Hodds Wood (ancient woodland). Aldridge's Dell, a large old quarry pit, is an impressive feature in compartment 2 and was clearly worked over many years, presumably for chalk extraction.

Significance

The secondary woodland acts as a buffer to the ancient wood, Hodds Wood (3.5ha). The proximity to Hodds Wood is leading to the attainment of ancient woodland characteristics (woodland flora) in both Little Hodds Wood and Hilbury Wood, and in parts is almost indistinguishable from the ancient woodland area.

Hodds Wood, Little Hodds Wood and Hilbury Wood which form compartment 2 of Chesham Bois Wood, were recognised as a County Wildlife Site in 2007 due to its diverse flora.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
- Access for timber extraction is challenging due to A416 road, surrounding settlements and site topography
- Woodland archaeology is present and damage must be avoided during any management operations
- Access can become boggy in wetter weather. Any management work should be carefully timed with drier site conditions

Opportunities:
- To ameliorate tree safety risk and reduce associated cost burden along A416 through silvicultural intervention

- To develop a diverse and mixed woodland that is more resilient to pests and diseases
- Opportunity to collaborate with surrounding landowners on cooperative management

Factors Causing Change

-Shade from the dense, closed canopy of beech in both Chesham Bois and Blackwell Stubbs is suppressing natural regeneration and diversity of the ground flora leading to extensive bare ground and minimising structural diversity
- Mammal damage (deer, squirrel)
- Death of ash due to infection by ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus)
- Increasing shade and loss of structure within stands
- Holly density is increasingly significantly in the southern half of Hodds Wood and is threatening to make the parts of the wood impenetrable.
- Changes in structure and gaps in canopy due to wind-blow and disease/dieback e.g. collapse of mature cherry and Hymenoscyphus fraxineus in ash
- There has been garden rubbish dumping at the site in the past, some dumped garden exotics have previously rooted within the woodland area and been cleared.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland will be an uneven aged, self-regenerating stand of high conservation and amenity value. Deadwood habitat will have increased over time as some trees have been left to age and collapse naturally.

The secondary beech-dominated compartments 1a and 2a (comprising Little Hodds, Elvidge and Hilbury Wood) will require management intervention in order to vary the stand composition in terms of age, structure and species diversity. This will be achieved through small scale continuous cover thinning operations and will help increase light levels and improve overall health of retained trees, and encourage natural regeneration of species such as beech, birch, cherry and sycamore. Enrichment planting may be considered if natural regeneration is poor in these areas.

A network of managed two zone rides and glades will help to increase light levels and structural diversity and lead to an increase in natural regeneration and diversification/expansion of ground flora and the shrub layer.

Deer and squirrel damage to broadleaved trees will be monitored and action taken if damage becomes unacceptable.

In the longer-term ash dieback is likely to lead to the death of the majority of ash throughout the woodlands but it is hoped that a small percentage of the ash will show some genetic resistance and these trees be monitored and protected.

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

Roadside felling & potential re-stocking, and small-scale thinning works are proposed for the secondary woodland component of Chesham Bois Wood in order to alleviate tree safety concerns alongside the A416, and facilitate structural and species diversity by appropriate management of light levels to encourage natural regeneration within the stands. This will be delivered through:

- A felling and thinning operation in autumn/winter 2023 targeting Little Hodds, Elvidge and Hilbury Wood - cpt 1a & 2a)
- Deer impact surveys will be carried out every 3 years to assess any increase in levels of damage - The next survey is due in 2024

4.3 F3 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Chesham Bois Wood and Blackwell Stubbs Wood are located on the west and east extremities of the Chesham Bois settlement (population 2963) with Chesham (population 23,689) 2.2km / 1.4 miles to the north and Amersham (population 17,387) 3km / 1.9 miles to the south. Chesham Woods are classified as access category 'B', or "regular usage, 5 – 15 people using one entrance per day". Blackwell is access category 'C' sites, defined as; "low usage sites but where we do maintain paths".

In Chesham Bois Wood, public rights of way connect the site in the east to both Chesham and Chesham Bois. In Blackwell Stubbs, public rights of way connect Stubbs Wood Road and St Leonard's Road on the western edge of the site whilst also connecting to the wider right of way network in the east. Both sites contain permissive path networks providing varied circular walks. Whilst path networks are managed to ensure uninhibited and safe access, they are occasionally steep and uneven and can be boggy in wet weather.

Significance

The woodland provides an important natural setting for informal recreation in a busy part of the country between Chesham and Amersham. The fact that they are within walking distance of large settlements means they have the potential for routine use by many people.

Chesham Bois, especially the woodland to the east of the A416, provides a convenient location for recreation and is well used by local people including a forest schools group. The impressive trees, undulating terrain and historic features such as Aldridge's Dell create an interesting experience for visitors. In addition, the wood provides a more scenic route of access between Chesham and Chesham Bois/Amersham, than that of the roadside pavement.

Blackwell Stubbs is a smaller, quieter doorstep site nestled between residential streets. This wood provides a convenient route of access as well as short peaceful walks amongst diverse and mature woodland and is well used by local residents.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
- Chesham Bois has no car parking facility and is intersected by the busy A416 road.
- The path network is unsurfaced and can be muddy and wet in winter.
- Blackwell Stubbs is a small site with no car parking facility although parking is available in adjacent residential streets.

Paths are unsurfaced and steep in places.

Opportunities:
- Chesham Bois already hosts a successful Forest Schools group and has opportunity for increased community involvement in management of the wood through volunteering activities
- Chesham Bois is within 1km of three primary schools (The Beacon School, Our Lady RC Primary School and Thomas Harding Primary School) and could provide a location for 'one-off' educational visits

Factors Causing Change

- Antisocial activities, e.g. fly tipping, fires, vehicle trespass, cycling off permitted routes. Aldridge's Dell is frequently a focus for social gatherings
- Government adopted local housing targets will lead to increased development in the area and further pressure on the wood through increased visitor numbers

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access for informal and quiet recreation will be maintained in perpetuity. The woodlands will be kept as safe as possible for visitors and there will be a managed network of paths, together with visible and clearly signed entrances. An on-going programme of maintenance will ensure as much as possible safe and uninhibited access along clearly defined routes for quiet recreation. Provision of infrastructure will be kept low key as appropriate for the grading of these sites:
Chesham Bois – B (moderate usage where we do maintain paths)
Blackwell Stubbs – C (low usage where we do maintain paths)

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

A programme of maintenance and tree safety inspections will ensure the wood remains open and as safe as possible to visitors through:

- Annual tree safety inspection of Zone A (high risk areas) along the A416 and southern boundary of Cpt 2 and neighbouring houses (alternating summer and autumn).

- Annual tree safety inspection of Zone B (maintained access routes) until 2024 due to ash dieback. Review frequency of inspection 2024.

- Blocking access to key rides with logs to prevent illegal vehicle access in Elvidge Wood

- Routine safety inspections of the trees in the higher risk zones, such as alongside footpaths, roads and property boundaries.

- Inspections of footpaths will be carried out formally every 2 years. Inspection of boundaries alongside roads and property will be carried out on an annual basis alternating between summer and autumn.

- Entrances and other infrastructure will be inspected annually with any remedial work undertaken as and when

required.

- An annual path cut will be undertaken in July

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	October
2023	Management Fees - Site		October
2023	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	October
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	November
2023	CS - General Consultancy	Use of external consultant to support Woodland Trust site management	November
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	November
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	December
2024	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.	August
2024	SL - Tree Safety Silviculture Work	Retrieving data. Wait a few seconds and try to cut or copy again.	October
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,	November
2026	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	October
2026	WMI - Ride Restoration	Works associated with the initial restoration, creation or significant reinvestment to new/existing woodland rides such as – initial coppicing and felling for widening, ditching etc.	October
2026	WMM - Secondary Silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within secondary woods to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and	October

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
		promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	5.17	Beech	1925	High forest	Archaeological features, Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Landscape factors, No/poor vehicular access to the site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Tree Preservation Order
Compartments 1a, 2a and 2b refer to Chesham Bois wood, 1a being the compartment to the west of the Amersham Road A416, 2a and 2b to the east of the highway, 3a refers to Blackwell Stubbs Compartment 1a: This is the part of Chesham Bois Wood to the west of the A416 and known as Elvidge Wood. Beech is the major tree species, and the mature trees are tall and of exceptional form. Minor components of other species are present such as oak, cherry, ash, sycamore and hornbeam. There is some limited regeneration of beech underneath the mature trees, as well as holly, elder and bramble in the understory. There is a minor component of conifer dominated by Scots pine. Holly is dominant in the shrub layer.						
2a	7.57	Beech	1915	High forest	Archaeological features, Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Landscape factors, No/poor vehicular access within the site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Tree Preservation Order
Compartments 1a, 2a and 2b refer to Chesham Bois wood, 1a being the compartment to the west of the Amersham Road A416, 2a and 2b to the east of the highway, 3a refers to Blackwell Stubbs Compartment 2a: The area of Chesham Bois Wood to the east of the A416. It comprises 2 historic woods: Little Hodds Wood and						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
Hilbury Wood. The majority of the compartment is dominated by mature tall beech trees of a very straight form. Gaps in the canopy have been created by the 1990 storms and these have naturally filled with young beech, ash, sycamore and hawthorn. Wytch elm and Scots pine is present close to the A416 . The occasional young horse chestnut is starting to appear, probably seeding from the mature horse chestnut growing in Aldridge's Dell. There is a field bank separating Little Hodds and Hilbury Wood.						
2b	3.27	Beech	1700	High forest		
Compartments 1a, 2a and 2b refer to Chesham Bois wood, 1a being the compartment to the west of the Amersham Road A416, 2a and 2b to the east of the highway, 3a refers to Blackwell Stubbs The eastern most section of the site known historically as (Hodds Wood). This sub compartment is classified as ASNW and is more diverse in species and consists of beech, cherry, hornbeam, oak and holly with minor components of elm and whitebeam. Although ancient, Hodds wood is barely distinguishable from the surrounding secondary woodland areas although it supports some lovely veterans including old coppiced ash stools.						
3a	1.26	Sycamore	1900	High forest	Archaeological features, Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Services & wayleaves, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Compartments 1a, 2a and 2b refer to Chesham Bois wood, 1a being the compartment to the west of the Amersham Road A416, 2a and 2b to the east of the highway, 3a refers to Blackwell Stubbs Compartment 3a: Beech is the dominant species in the upper storey although sycamore is naturally regenerating in the woodland and is dominant in the lower storey. Mature cherry is frequent but is starting to collapse. Ash is present but is infected by Ash dieback. Very old beech and oak trees are present on the southern boundary with coppiced hornbeam along the eastern and southern boundary bank. Yew is rare but can be found in the body of the wood. The shrub layer is made						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
up predominantly of holly with occasional hawthorn and hazel. Laurel is present in the western end of the wood but is currently rare.						

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.