

# King's Cliffe Millennium Wood (Plan period – 2023 to 2028)



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

Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

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

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

## The Public Management Plan

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

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

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

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

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

or contact the Woodland Trust

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

to confirm details of the current management programme.

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

## Location and Access

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

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

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

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

# The Management Plan

1. Site Details
2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
  - 4.1 f1 Informal Public Access
  - 4.2 f2 New Native Woodland
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

## 1. SITE DETAILS

### King's Cliffe Millennium Wood

Location:	King's Cliffe, Oundle Grid reference: TL002978 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 141
Area:	4.51 hectares (11.14 acres)
External Designations:	Local Wildlife Site, Special Landscape Area
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Kings Cliffe Millennium Wood is an 11.1 acre (4.5ha) woodland creation site planted in February 2000. It was planted as part of the Woodland Trust “Woods On Your Doorstep” initiative to celebrate the Millennium, hence the woodland name. The woodland lies off Willow Lane, a track running north from the village of Kings Cliffe. The woodland is 600m from the centre of the village. The site is surrounded by hawthorn hedges.

The community of Kings Cliffe were very active in all aspects of the woodland creation, assisting the Trust in raising funds, designing the wood and help in the planting. The community won a 'Care In The Environment' award for their work in making the woodland happen.

The woodland was planted with native trees, mainly broadleaf, although groves of Scots pine have been included amounting to 0.3 ha. Oak, ash, field maple and cherry are the main species planted. There were no individual tree guards, the whole site is protected by a combined deer and rabbit fence, with fallow and muntjac deer being present within this part of the Rockingham Forest. In addition to the Scots pine, there is also a hazel grove. A further feature of the site includes two stone seats. These are constructed from large slabs of Jurassic limestone mounted on brick bases. There is also a small pond, created by the Environment Agency. It is fed from a drainage channel leading from the trackside ditch. A network of paths allows easy access to all parts of the wood. There is open access to the whole of the site.

Update 2022 - The establishment of both broadleaved and conifer species has been good - a testament to the success of protection from browsing mammals in the critical establishment phase. The woodland can now be described as juvenile/ early pole stage. Establishment of woody shrub species has also been very successful, and this has resulted in areas of well-established dense thicket.

Natural regeneration of both tree and woody shrub species also occurs throughout the site and as such is adding to the structural diversity of the new woodland. There are signs of low-level deer activity which should be monitored, to assess any impact on successful establishment of the current natural regeneration and coppice regrowth. There is a large impact to the planted and naturally regenerating ash from ash dieback (*Hymenoschyphus fraxinea*). This has resulted in an almost total loss of the canopy element of the planted ash and the probable unviability of the regenerating material.

The woodland paths are maintained to a high standard and the site appears well used and respected and contains a manageable level of facilities (benches/ interpretation) and infrastructure (rides).

The structural and environmental diversity is developing well, with overall successful establishment of all planted species (with the exception of ash). The woodland structure is developing beyond late establishment stage, with conifer, broadleaf and woody shrub species providing a varied height structure. Natural regeneration, if successful, shall also introduce an age class diversity. The open areas (glades/ rides) and water feature add to the positive environmental impact.

Key features for the site include Informal Public Access and New Native Woodland as briefly outlined above and further information for which can be found in section 5.0: Key Features.

### 3. LONG TERM POLICY

The intention of this site is that it will be a structurally and species diverse native broadleaved woodland, with Scots pines groves, various open areas, rides and edge and scrub habitats.

Now that the initial establishment period is over, the woodland will be allowed to develop naturally as far as possible, only intervening when it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, to manage the encroachment of blackthorn and goat willow, for reasonable site user safety, and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes in accordance with the Woodland Trusts Management Approach (such as through ride-side coppicing and silvicultural thins). The aim is to create a diverse mature woodland with a range of native species, age ranges, well structured rides and with deadwood, both standing and fallen, being retained where it is safe to do so. Gaps in the canopy will allow for floral colonisation and regeneration of all species. Ride side thinning and scalloping are likely actions, mimicking natural processes and creating a diverse structure. Selected hedges may be laid and maintained as such. The main tree species are expected to be pedunculate oak, alder, willow, birch and potentially ash, with a variety of shrub species, including buckthorn, hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn. The deer / rabbit fence can remain for as long as it remains effective.

Low-key public access will be maintained in perpetuity through a managed path network, entrances and regular safety checks. Infrastructure and facilities will be minimal and only essential signage used. Use of the site will be monitored and provisions for informal recreation reviewed accordingly. Ride edge coppice work in selected locations will be undertaken to enhance visitor enjoyment, as well as structural diversity. Public safety will be assessed regularly and tree safety inspections made. Paths and boundaries are areas for review, based on the level of use.

## 4. KEY FEATURES

### 4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

<b>Description</b>
<p>Access is off Willow Lane (track). This is not an official public right of way but has a long history of use by local people and permitted public use should ideally be maintained. The disused railway 100m to the south has been turned into a community path known as King's Cliffe Railway Path, from which there is a link to Willow Lane. Kings Cliffe Millennium Wood is therefore popular and well used by local people.</p> <p>There is are two main entrances; one with management and pedestrian gates into the site and through the deer fencing from Willow Lane and another from 'Village Field' to the south, via a kissing gate and wooden footbridge. An information board can be found in the area by the management access. Roughly 1500m of mown paths cross the wood and five seats are located at strategic points.</p>
<b>Significance</b>
<p>Forms an important link in the biodiversity network (nearby to Fineshades Wood and bordering the 'Village Field' wildflower meadow and woodland strip, linking other 'King's Cliffe wildlife areas') and provides informal recreation for the local population</p>
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
<p><b>Constraint</b> The status of the Lane (not a public ROW) is a possible issue.</p> <p><b>Opportunity</b> The location close to the popular village of Kings Cliffe where there is a strong community spirit means that the woodland is well used and supported. Close to existing tracts of woodland and so possibility in the long term to link up</p>
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
<p>Increased public use may impact pathways.</p>
<b>Long term Objective (50 years+)</b>
<p>Open access will retained throughout the whole of the site. The 1500m of grass paths and entrance will be cut during the summer months to keep them clear and well defined. Welcome signs and an information board will be maintained for visitors use at the entrance. Regular inspections will be made to check the visitor facilities.</p>
<b>Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)</b>



Mow internal paths three times each spring/summer and trim around entrances, signs and seats. Mow open ground full width in late summer and ride sides every 2-4 years. Cut-back the blackthorn where and when it threatens to limit access. Check all facilities for stability / safety every 24-36 months.

## 4.2 f2 New Native Woodland

### Description

The woodland design includes an input from the local community. Main tree species include ash, oak, cherry and field maple. There are also specific areas of Scots pine and hazel. Trees are planted at 2250 / ha and protected within a combined rabbit and deer fence.

A pond has been created near the eastern boundary, drawing water from the adjacent ditch and overflowing back into the same. This appears to have been stocked with aquatic plants and has developed well.

The boundaries all comprise of good, tall hedges, the ownership being doubtful for all of them except the eastern one, which is known to be the responsibility of the Trust. Hedge laying shall continue to form part of the work programming as appropriate stages of growth are reached. There are only two mature trees; these are in the western hedge in the southern quarter.

### Significance

The woodland is important because it is close to the village of Kings Cliffe and is likely to attract woodland wildlife from the adjacent Rockingham Forest, extending its range, where it is more likely to be seen and appreciated.

### Opportunities & Constraints

There is an opportunity for the community to continue to be involved in the woodland.  
Managing the hazel area on a rotational coppice to improve structural diversity.

### Factors Causing Change

Increased public use may impact pathways.  
Deer (if gaining access to the site)  
Grey squirrel  
Encroachment by willow and blackthorn thickets.  
Pests and disease (such as ash dieback).  
Overcrowding of planted areas if left unthinned.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To create a native W8 woodland of no less than 4.5ha in area. To retain the diversity of species planted and the groves of Scots pine and hazel.

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

Check annually to ensure that the levels of deer browsing are within acceptable limits. Address appropriate mammal control methods ahead of levels increasing to unmanageable levels. Monitor the general woodland health. Check the spread of the blackthorn thickets and encroaching goat willow where they threaten to overgrow paths or dominate woodland areas. Manage the discreet areas of ash dieback and incorporate into biodiversity improvement works.

Complete an inventory of the woodland and, when deemed appropriate, complete a silvicultural thin. Create scalloped areas and bring ride-side areas (especially hazel and willow) into rotational coppice, if viable.

## 5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	February
2024	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	February
2024	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	February
2024	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	February
2024	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	September
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,	October
2024	WMI - General Site Restoration Work	Works associated with initial or restoration phases to conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, infield and boundary trees	November
2024	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 promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	December
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,	December
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,	October
2025	WMI - General Site Restoration Work	Works associated with initial or restoration phases to conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, infield and boundary trees	November

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2025	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December
2025	WMI - General Site Restoration Work	Works associated with initial or restoration phases to conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, infield and boundary trees	December
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,	October
2026	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December
2027	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,	October
2027	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December

## APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	4.51	Alder species	2000	Wood establishment		
<p>A single compartment planted with mainly native, broadleaf trees at a density of 2250 / ha. It includes 0.3ha of Scots pine. The soil is a heavy glacially derived clay, water was flowing down the eastern half of the field prior to planting. Trees are protected by a combined deer / rabbit fence running inside the perimeter of the site. Compartment includes roughly 1500m of mown paths, contributing to 20% open ground. The artificial pond dug in 2000 takes run-off from the track-side ditch and has had waterside plants introduced.</p>						

### **Ancient Woodland**

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

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

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

### **Ancient Woodland Site**

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

### **Beating Up**

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

### **Broadleaf**

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

### **Canopy**

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

### **Clearfell**

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

### **Compartment**

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

### **Conifer**

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

### **Continuous Cover forestry**

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

**Coppice**

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

**Exotic (non-native) Species**

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

**Field Layer**

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

**Group Fell**

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

**Long Term Retention**

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

**Minimum Intervention**

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

**Mixed Woodland**

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

**National vegetation classification (NVC)**

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

**Native Species**

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

**Natural Regeneration**

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

**Origin & Provenance**

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

**Re-Stocking**

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

**Shrub Layer**

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

**Silviculture**

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

**Stand**

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

**Sub-Compartment**

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

**Thinning**

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

**Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes**

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

**Weeding**

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

**Windblow/Windthrow**

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

**Registered Office:**

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

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