

Nine Acre Wood

(Plan period – 2023 to 2028)



WOODLAND
TRUST

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Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

“A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.”

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK’s native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

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

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Nine Acre Wood

Location:	Haddenham	Grid reference:	TL444722	OS	1:50,000	Sheet	No.	154
Area:	3.69 hectares (9.12 acres)							
External Designations:	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund							
Internal Designations:	N/A							

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Nine Acre wood is situated 1.3 km south of Aldreth in the wide shallow valley of the River Great Ouse (Old west River) of the Cambridgeshire Fenlands. It has good links with public rights of way, and is accessed from a public byway, Church Fen Drove, which leads from the village. There is also a public footpath following the northern boundary of the River Great Ouse which runs along the southern edge of the wood. Although the wood lies at approximately 2m ASL, it is protected from flooding by the northern barrier bank of the Ouse.

The local community were involved in the fundraising, design, planting and early maintenance of Nine Acre wood. Originally a peat-based arable field, the wood was planted in 1995 with a mixed broadleaved woodland containing a high proportion of poplar designed to attract breeding golden oriole. It provides a valuable woodland habitat within an arable landscape, a haven for wildlife and a quiet space for informal recreation.

The wood is well-established with a high canopy dominated by poplar, with Ash and Alder making up the majority of the main tree species within the wood. The wood also has a shrub understorey consisting of Hawthorn, Guelder rose, Dogwood, Hazel, Elder, Dog rose, and blackthorn. The woodland edge habitat is quite shrubby leading to a good variety of age structure on the edge of the wood. Maintained footpaths create a circular route within the wood. Although there is little woodland in the area, there are two Woodland Trust Woods On Your Doorstep woods about 10km away, Wicken Fen is about 10km to the east and there are the extensive semi natural washland systems of the Ouse Washes Special Protection Area 1 mile away to the west and the Cambs Washes to the east.

The key features are:

Secondary Woodland
Informal Public Access

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Nine Acre Wood will be allowed to develop into a well-structured and resilient native broadleaved woodland through a mix of natural processes and good silvicultural practice.

The woodland will consist of primary species such as Poplar and Alder with a supporting species mix of longer lived species such as Oak and Field Maple. Species such as Birch ,Crab apple, Willow, Cherry and Aspen will become part of a changing and developing woodland species mix that has varying longevity providing structure and resilience to the wood. Ash will still be a component of the site, but will provide the important feature of standing and fallen deadwood habitat within the wood due to Ash Dieback. The areas where the Ash has died and opened up the canopy, will provide areas for ground flora and natural regeneration to flourish.

The shrub component of the site will include species such as Hawthorn, Guelder rose, Dogwood, Hazel, Elder, Dog-rose and Blackthorn.

The woodland will be open to the public in perpetuity. Low key public access will be maintained at the site and the paths, signs and other furniture that allows safe access for the public will be maintained in good order. The wood is primarily for the use and enjoyment of the people of Haddenham and Aldreth and the other immediately neighbouring parishes. The wood will continue to link to the local public footpath networks and will be part of the much wider access provision in the area. Community involvement at the site will be supported if there is local interest.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
<p>Nine Acre wood is situated 1.3 km south of Aldreth in the wide shallow valley of the River Great Ouse (Old west River) of the Cambridgeshire Fenlands. It has good links with public rights of way, and is accessed from a public byway, Church Fen Drove, which leads from the village. There is also a public footpath following the northern boundary of the River Great Ouse which runs along the southern edge of the wood. Although the wood lies at approximately 2m ASL, it is protected from flooding by the northern barrier bank of the Ouse.</p> <p>The wood has approximately 1400 metres of unsurfaced paths with one gated entrance.</p> <p>The local community were involved in the fundraising, design, planting and early maintenance of Nine Acre wood. Originally a peat-based arable field, the wood was planted in 1995 with a mixed broadleaved woodland containing a high proportion of poplar designed to attract breeding golden oriole. It provides a valuable woodland habitat within an arable landscape, a haven for wildlife and a quiet space for informal recreation.</p>
Significance
<p>The wood was very much a product of the local communities interest, to create local woodland and has proved a great success. There is very little woodland of any kind in the locality, the nearest woods of any kind are two Woodland Trust WOYD's 10kms away . The nearest semi natural woodland is also 10km away at Wicken Fen to the east.</p>
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-The wood paths are linked in with parish public rights of way system, the linking drove is hard surfaced-It is quiet and has excellent views of the surrounding fen landscape- consideration will be given to the management of the site by a third party community group <p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-It is 1.2km away from the village centre- no car parking on site
Factors Causing Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Paths becoming blocked by overgrown vegetation.- antisocial behaviour

Long term Objective (50 years+)
The woodland will be open to the public in perpetuity. Low key public access will be maintained at the site and the paths, signs and other furniture that allows safe access for the public will be maintained in good order. The wood is primarily for the use and enjoyment of the people of Haddenham and Aldreth and the other immediately neighbouring parishes. The wood will continue to link to the local public footpath networks and will be part of the much wider access provision in the area. Community involvement at the site will be supported if there is local interest.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
The 1400m of Paths and rides are to be managed annually , ensuring works are carried out as necessary to keep the path network open and easy to use for informal public access as detailed in EMC spec 2.01 .The wood will be welcoming with the entrances clearly signed and accessible.
Manage site safety through safety observations and inspections.
-Associated signage (Site name/welcome signs) to be kept in good condition and regularly maintained as detailed in EMC Spec 1.01 , with a five yearly review of access facilities by the Site Manager.
Access inspection - July 2027
Tree Safety surveys
-Zone B Tree Safety Inspections to be carried out every 36 months

4.2 f2 New Native Woodland

Description
The wood is well-established with a high canopy dominated by poplar, with Ash and Alder making up the majority of the main tree species within the wood. The wood also has a shrub understorey consisting of Hawthorn, Guelder rose, Dogwood, Hazel, Elder, Dog rose, and blackthorn . The woodland edge habitat is quite shrubby leading to a good variety of age structure on the edge of the wood. Maintained footpaths create a circular route within the wood. Although there is little woodland in the area, there are two Woodland Trust WOYD woods about 10km away, Wicken Fen is about 10km to the east and there are the extensive semi natural washland systems of the Ouse washes SPA 1 mile away to the west and the Cambs Washes to the east.
Significance
Cambridgeshire is one of the least wooded counties in England and the fenland area is one of the least wooded districts in the county- the nearest ancient wood is 18km away to the west. Being in the middle of the fens there is virtually no woodland in the locality although there are the extensive semi natural washland systems of the Ouse washes to the west and the Cambs Washes to the east.
Opportunities & Constraints

<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The drains/river banks and drove verges which form boundaries already act as wildlife havens for common species which could move into the new woodland - expansion potential <p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Island Habitat which still has intensive arable management on three sides
<p>Factors Causing Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Poplar dominating more desirable but slower growing broad-leaved trees. -Ash Dieback - deer -squirrels
<p>Long term Objective (50 years+)</p> <p>Nine Acre Wood will be allowed to develop naturally into a well-structured and resilient native broadleaved woodland.</p> <p>The woodland will consist of primary species such as Poplar and Alder with a supporting species mix of longer lived species such as Oak and Field Maple. Species such as Birch , Crab apple, Willow, Cherry and Aspen will become part of a changing and developing woodland species mix that has varying longevity providing structure and resilience to the wood. Ash will still be a component of the site, but will provide the important feature of, standing and fallen deadwood habitat within the wood due to Ash Dieback. The areas where the Ash has died and opened up the canopy, will provide areas for ground flora and natural regeneration to flourish.</p> <p>The shrub component of the site will include species such as Hawthorn, Guelder rose, Dogwood, Hazel, Elder, Dog-rose and Blackthorn.</p>
<p>Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)</p> <p>Undertake assessments of woodland health every five years, Works to be ordered through observation actions as required.</p> <p>Woodland Health Monitoring visit - August 2027</p> <p>Woodland Management</p> <p>The short term management for nine acre wood will provide opportunities for a variety of broadleaved species to break through the poplar dominated canopy which will increase the age and species structure of the woodland. This will be achieved through selective thinning of poplars, protecting regeneration and, if necessary, planting longer-lived species such as Oak and Field Maple.</p> <p>Woodland Thinning-</p>

- a selective thin of the Poplar and some Ash within the wood will open up gaps within the canopy , which in turn will provide an opportunity for a variety of tree species to break through and develop. Due to the potential wet nature of the ground in Nine care wood this work should be undertaken using low impact methods of felling and forwarding. This will be a site wide approach to thinning.

Selective thin -Autumn/Winter 2026/2027

Regeneration

There are good levels of established regeneration within the wood however there is less evidence of younger regeneration within the wood. To help some of this younger regeneration develop Genguards should be installed within the wood to protect regeneration and monitor regeneration success. Two 5x5 metre Genguards should be installed within the woodland compartment and monitored to show the impact. Alongside this a Habitat Impact Assessment should be completed .

Install Genguards - Autumn 2024/2025

Habitat Impact assessment - January 2026

Coppicing

100 metres of ride side coppicing should be undertaken to allow more light into the more overshadowed areas of the wood. This work will be undertaken at the same time as the thinning works as the works will complement each other.

Ride side coppicing - Autumn/Winter 2026/2027

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	December
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
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 promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	February

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	3.8	Mixed native broadleaves	1995	High forest		Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund
<p>A roughly rectangular shaped wood on peat derived arable soil. It was planted in 1995 with 7145 trees (approx 2250 per ha).</p> <p>The planting mixture is very varied the key species being the 500 poplars planted to encourage the Golden oriole to breed in the future.</p> <p>The remainder of the planted trees and shrubs being chosen to reflect the local tree cover- 20% ash and 20% alder with a number of other tree species and a mix of native shrubs.</p> <p>Several Dutch elm disease resistant Elms have also been included- provided by the Cambridge botanic garden.</p> <p>There is an internal figure of eight path and a perimeter path which has good views out into the surrounding fenland.</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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