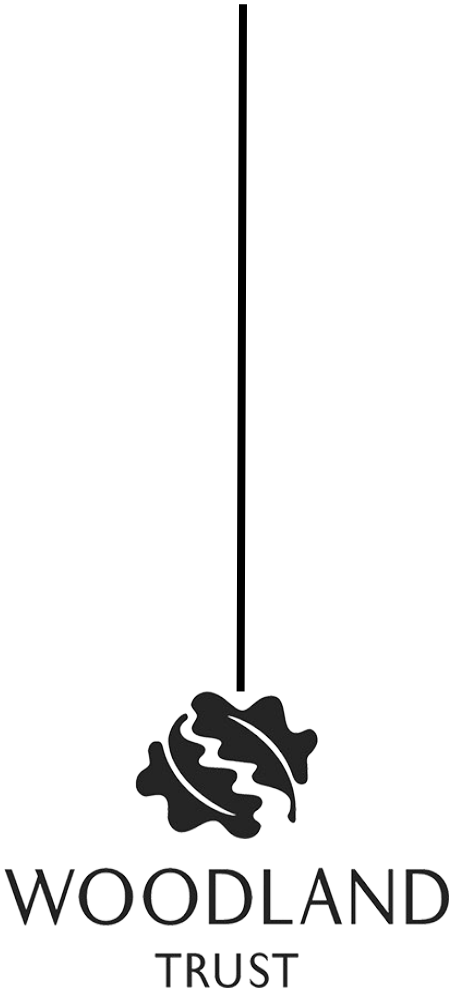
Harnser Wood

(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

Harnser Wood

Location:	Elsing Grid reference: TG047167 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 133
Area:	4.33 hectares (10.70 acres)
External Designations:	Woods on your Doorstep
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The land at Elsing was purchased in the year 2000 as one of the Woodland Trusts, Woods On Your Doorstep projects to create a new community woodland in Norfolk.

Harnser wood lies on the western edge of Elsing village, which ensures that the wood provides a valuable area for Public recreation, local wildlife, and an important feature in the landscape. The surrounding area is predominantly arable, with small isolated patches of woodland scattered throughout the local landscape.

Harnser wood was planted with a mixture of native broadleaf trees that are common in the local landscape. The species include Oak, ash, field maple, silver birch, cherry and Hornbeam. The boundary of the wood also has some mature trees which complement the younger woodland.

The site was named to commemorate the partnership between the Woodland Trust and the Norfolk Women's institute, who were heavily involved in the site through fundraising. The Harnser is a local Norfolk name for the Grey Heron, which is also the logo for the Norfolk Women's Institute. The site has a wooden sculpture situated in the glade which also has the Norfolk Women's Institute logo etched into it.

The Key Features for this site are:
Informal Public Access – Harnser wood is open to the public.
Secondary woodland – Planted native secondary woodland.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long term intention for Harnser wood is to be managed as a mature broadleaved secondary woodland , that has a diverse age structure, developing natural regeneration and deadwood habitat. Once the wood has reached maturity Harnser Wood will be allowed to develop naturally and become high forest through minimal intervention.

The species mix within Harnser will consist of Oak, Field Maple, Silver Birch, Cherry and Hornbeam. Ash is currently the main species on the site but due to the presence of Ash dieback within the wood it is likely to not be the future dominant species. The Ash affected by Ash Dieback will provide some deadwood habitat within the woodland blocks and allow light to penetrate from the canopy and therefore aid natural regeneration. The Oak, Field Maple and Silver Birch will become the dominant species within the wood supported by Cherry and Hornbeam. The ride edges will be structurally diverse with a diverse range of shrubs and ground flora.

The shrub species within the wood will primarily be a mix of Hawthorn and blackthorn with some hazel with a diversity of ground flora.

Public access

Harnser Wood will be open to the public in perpetuity . Low key public access will be maintained to the site and the paths, signs, and other furniture that allows safe access for the public are to be maintained in good order. The Womens Institute sculpture will be a prominent feature of the site and will provide a focal point for visitors to the wood. The sculpture will be maintained in conjunction with the Norfolk WI, for future generations of its members and wood visitors to enjoy into the future. The wood will also link to other public rights of way within the vicinity.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
Harnser wood serves predominantly the local population of the village of Elsing. Free public access is provided across the whole site at all times. Access facilities include wide access for all kissing gates at the entrances, grass paths across the site and seating within the wood. Access to the wood is predominantly on foot by locals from within the Village of Elsing . There is also a statue in one of the open glades to commemorate the Norfolk WI.
Significance
Harnser wood received a significant amount of support, and given the limited open public access area in the locality, provides an important resource for the village and local area.
Opportunities & Constraints
Opportunities To maintain Harnser wood as an area of public open space for the local residents of the village of Elsing. Links to existing rights of way Constraints No formal car parking
Factors Causing Change
Vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Harnser Wood will be open to the public in perpetuity . Low key public access will be maintained to the site and the paths , signs, and other furniture that allows safe access for the public are to be maintained in good order. The Womens Institute sculpture will be a prominent feature of the site and will provide a focal point for visitors to the wood. The sculpture will be maintained in conjunction with the Norfolk WI, for future generations of its members and wood visitors to enjoy into the future. The wood will also link to other public rights of way within the vicinity.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
The 980m of paths and rides are to be maintained annually with a ride system cut 3 times annually to a minimum of 2m to allow unhindered access for the public, as detailed in EMC Spec 2.01

Site safety to be maintained through regular inspections:

Associated signage (Site name/welcome signs) to be kept in good condition at all times and maintained as detailed in EMC Spec 1.01 , with a five yearly review of access facilities by the Site Manager

-Access monitoring inspection- 2026.

-Zone A Tree Safety Inspections to be carried out every 24 months
-Zone B Tree Safety Inspections to be carried out every 24 months

4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland

Description

The woodland was planted in during the winter of in February 2000 with a native broadleaved species mix at 3m spacing that reflects many of the local native broadleaf woodlands within the locality. Although the woodland became established and there were surprisingly few tree failures it was slow in development only reaching canopy closure after 15 years.

Harnser wood has now become a young woodland that is now developing at different rates creating an interesting and diverse woodland structure. Ash dieback was identified within the woodland in 2013 and the planted ash has been in decline since creating small woody glades and valuable deadwood habitat. The main tree species are Ash ,Oak, Field Maple, Silver Birch, Cherry and Hornbeam with shrub species of Hawthorn, Blackthorn, and Hazel.

Significance

Once Harnser Wood has reached maturity the site will help to increase the area of new native woodland in Norfolk. On a local level it is a significant new habitat for wildlife in the context of the surrounding arable farming landscape.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities

Woodland development has created a diverse age structure
To develop a variety of Woodland flora and fauna.

Constraints

Surrounded by minor roads on two sides
Surrounded by intensive arable on two sides

Factors Causing Change

Ash Dieback
Human impacts
Deer

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The long term intention for Harnser wood is to be managed as a mature broadleaved secondary woodland , that has a diverse age structure, developing natural regeneration and deadwood habitat. Once the trees have reached maturity Harnser Wood will be allowed to develop naturally and become high forest through minimal intervention.

The species mix within Harnser will consist of Oak, Field Maple, Silver Birch, Cherry and Hornbeam. Ash is currently the main species on the site but due to the presence of Ash dieback within the wood it likely will not be the future dominant species. The Ash affected by Ash Dieback will however ,provide some deadwood habitat within the woodland blocks and allow light to penetrate from the canopy and therefore aid natural regeneration. The Oak, Field Maple and Silver Birch will become the dominant species within the wood supported by Cherry and Hornbeam. The ride edges will be structurally diverse with a diverse range of shrubs and ground flora.

The shrub species within the wood will primarily a mix of Hawthorn and Blackthorn with some Hazel with a diversity of ground flora

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

The desired objectives within the plan period will be for the secondary woodland to continue to see a development towards a high forest structure with developing deadwood habitat and developing natural regeneration through natural processes.

Work Programme:

Ride edge thinning feathering :

Ride edge feathering/thinning will benefit the woodlands edge structure and provide areas for ground flora to develop as well as helping to keep the ride network open and inviting to the public.

-Coppice/thin trees to a depth of 1m either side of paths to open rides and develop edge structure. Small numbers to be removed each year to maintain ride side structural diversity and annual felling works to be spread along all 980m of paths within the site. Hence, up to 200m of ride will be worked each year. All timber to be either removed from site or stacked neatly within the wood. All brash (branches) to be stacked neatly within the woodland away from pedestrian paths. Timing- October 2023 to February 2027

-Zone A Tree Safety Survey every 24 months
- Zone B Tree Safety Survey every 24 months

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	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
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	February
2025	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
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	4.44	Ash	2000	Min-intervention		Woods on your Doorstep
Compartment 1a covers the entire site, which is flat on Sandy light soil, and surrounded on all boundaries by mature hedges. The compartment was planted in November 2000 allowing approximately 20% as open space. The planting consists of oak, hornbeam, ash and birch. Minor species to include Crab apple, Beech, Rowan, Field Maple, Wild cherry. Shrubs include Hazel, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Guelder rose.						

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.