Centenary Wood & Royal Tigers (Plan period - 2023 to 2028)



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

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 seminatural 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
- 2. Site Description
- 3. Long Term Policy
- 4. Key Features
 - 4.1 f1 New Native Woodland
 - 4.2 f2 Informal Public Access
 - 4.3 f3 Open Ground Habitat
- 5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Centenary Wood & Royal Tigers

Location: Bagworth, nr Hinckley Grid reference: SK453070 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 140

Area: 33.48 hectares (82.73 acres)

External Designations: National Forest

Internal Designations: N/A

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Centenary and Royal Tigers' Wood covers 33.5ha and occupies a prominent hillside position south of the village of Bagworth. The surrounding countryside has a history of mining, in fact the neighbouring Leicestershire County Council owned Bagworth Heath Woods was once Desford Colliery but has been restored into a large countryside property. Centenary and Royal Tigers Wood has been designed to complement this restoration work forming an extensive area of community woodland across the two sites. The site sits within the National Forest area, and as such is part of a patchwork of young woodlands that have changed what was once an agricultural/industrial dominated area, into an area with a high proportion of tree cover.

The woodland is made up of two sections, which for management efficiency have been combined. Centenary Wood to the north was planted to commemorate 100 years of Bagworth Parish Council, whist the section to the south, Royal Tiger's Wood, is living memorial to The Royal Leicestershire Regiment. The site is gently undulating, with a low point in the middle of the two woods in which a stream passes through. The soil type is generally heavy clay, so ground conditions can become boggy in the lower parts.

The woodland was planted between 1994 and 1996, on what was arable farmland. The 28,000 trees that were planted here are of one age group. A mix of native broadleaves was planted, with oak, ash and field maple being the dominant species as well as birch, cherry, willow and several shrub species. Mature hedgerow trees and saplings created through a limited rate of natural regeneration has diversified this age structure slightly. Hedgerows, a stream and the mature hedgerow trees add to the diversity of the site. Open areas of grassland have been retained and are mown for hay to encourage a rich mixture of wild grasses and flowers.

The site was purchased by the Woodland Trust in 1993, with considerable financial support from The Royal Leicestershire Regiment, In recognition of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment a memorial stone and an arboretum have been incorporated into the woodland. The arboretum is managed by the regiments Veteran Association and is comprised of tree species that are native to countries where the regiment won battle honours.

The key features for the site are New Native Woodland, Informal Public Access and Open Ground Habitat.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The wood will be allowed to reach maturity and will develop the characteristics of more naturally occurring woodland, as opposed to a plantation of single aged trees. As the woodland was planted with a predominantly ash and oak mix and ADB has vastly reduced the long term survival and potential co-dominance of ash on site, the woodland is likely to evolve into an oak dominated wood, however cherry, birch, willow and other species will always be retained. For this reason silvicultural intervention will be considered as the wood develops to ensure the wood is diverse in tree species and structure, to promote a good mixture of both young and mature trees. This will enable the wood to be more resilient to change in the future, and will ensure it supports the greatest range of wildlife.

Open habitats will also remain and be managed within the woodland matrix, including the meadow areas but also sunny rides. With vegetation being cut back along rides, facilitating access and allowing light to the woodland floor.

A good standard of access provision will be maintained at the site. The entrances will be accessible and clearly signed as per WT Spec 1.1. It shall be clearly visible from approach routes, attractive and inviting, easy and safe to use. The existing path network will be kept open for use and any new desire line paths that are created and are sensible will become official paths and be maintained. The information board on site will be maintained for as long as it is deemed attractive and usable. If funding becomes available for new interpretation on the site then this will be pursued.

The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections as per Woodland Trust Internal Guidance and best practice.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 New Native Woodland

Description

A total of 26.5 ha of former agricultural land was planted in three annual phases from 1994-1996. The species of the initial planting was a mixture of native broadleaves. Major tree species include predominantly oak and ash with smaller amount of field maple and cherry. Minor tree species include hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, dog rose and purging buckthorn. Minor species making up approximately 10% of the trees planted. In addition Willow has been planted in the wetter area of compartment 2.

Significance

This predominately planted woodland, together with the Trust's other holdings nearby and other National Forest initiatives in the area will help to increase the proportion of woodland habitats in an area where the habitat type was considerably under-represented. Thus the site will contribute significantly to the regional biodiversity.

Opportunities & Constraints

Along with neighbouring Bagworth Heath Woods, the site makes up a large block of young woodland in one area.

There is a good mosaic of habitats present across the two sites, with young woodland, open grassy areas, large patches of scrub and several large ponds.

Factors Causing Change

Ash die back has had and is having a considerable impact on the site, with a lot of young ash tree showing signs of the disease. As ash is one of the major tree species planted, this will have a dramatic affect on the woodland.

Grey squirrels are present on the site and damage to the majority of the oaks has been noted.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will be allowed to reach maturity and will develop the characteristics of more naturally occurring woodland, as opposed to a plantation of single aged trees. As the woodland was planted with a predominantly ash and oak mix and ADB has vastly reduced the long term survival and potential co-dominance of ash on site, the woodland is likely to evolve into an oak dominated wood, however cherry, birch, willow and other species will always be retained. For this reason silvicultural intervention will be considered as the wood develops to ensure the wood is diverse in tree species and structure, to promote a good mixture of both young and mature trees. This will enable the wood to be more resilient to change in the future, and will ensure it supports the greatest range of wildlife.

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

Carry out a first thinning exercise throughout the site. This will create the open woodland habitat desired and bring about an increase in biodiversity. It will not focus on any species, despite the presence of Ash Die Back on site. The idea being to allow the ash to set seed for as long as possible and then to provide standing deadwood across the site. Any ash that are close to footpaths will be more intensively thinned in order to make tree safety works more economically viable. Coupes of hazel across the site will be mapped and the potential for a long rotation coppicing regime will be explored.

Maintain the core of the open areas by the cutting and removal of hay where appropriate.

Ensure that there is easy access to all the specimen trees in the Royal Tiger's Arboretum.

4.2 f2 Informal Public Access

Description

The whole of the 34.4ha is open for informal public access. There are 8 entrances to the site in total, the main ones leading in from Heath Road. The site has 3800m of grass footpaths regularly mown during the summer months, two of these footpaths are Public Rights of Way.

In order to enhance the public enjoyment of the site the initial planting design incorporated a number of vistas where the views across to the recently restored Desford Colliery site will be maintained.

There is an information board at the main entrance from Heath Road. The site also boasts an arboretum of exotic tree species, each with its own information panel and a war memorial, in the form of a boulder.

Significance

The site, along with its neighbour Bagworth Heath, is a significant addition to the public open access land in the local area. The attraction of the arboretum is unlike any other in the area, once the arboretum trees reach maturity it will be a very unique woodland trust site.

Opportunities & Constraints

Centenary and Royal Tigers has a generally flat aspect making walking easy and enjoyable throughout the whole area.

The input into the site from the Royal Tigers Regiment adds extra interest.

Factors Causing Change

Maturation of the plantation means that grassy paths may become more enclosed.

Ash die back means that the ash component on site will start to cause a hazard to the path network as the trees succumb to the disease.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Continue to maintain the pattern of transverse and circular paths. As the woodland matures any informal paths that are created by desire lines will be monitored. If these are felt to be in the best interest of the management of the site and also have the potential to increase public enjoyment then they will become formalised. The formalisation process implies the construction of bridges over ditches, the mowing of paths, the clearance of encroaching regeneration and all aspects of tree safety.

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

Cut all rides five times per year, as well as checking and maintaining information boards and welcome signs at entrance points. Such operations will be maintained through the Woodland Trust 'Estate Maintenance Contract'.

Replace/update the interpretation board at the entrance to Royal Tigers' Wood after liaising thoroughly with the Royal Tigers' Association.

Seek to improve the directional signage between the Bagworth Heath car park and the entrance to Royal Tigers' Wood.

4.3 f3 Open Ground Habitat

Description

There are three significant areas of grassland which were left unplanted in Royal Tigers' Wood. The first is on the north-facing slope against the western boundary, the second adjacent to it but containing the Royal Tigers memorial and the third in the broad open valley in the south-eastern sector of the site.

Significance

The inclusion of the meadows in the initial design plan sought to achieve both cohesion on a landscape scale and to increase the biodiversity of the site by the incorporation of a significant open ground habitat.

Opportunities & Constraints

The first contains coarse grasses and weeds but has a large number of regenerating trees along its western boundary. The second, central meadow is floristically more diverse and is suitable for the cutting of hay. The third is poor quality grassland with little floristic diversity. A trial project was carried out in 2005 as part of the "Forest of Flowers" initiative. This involved enhancement planting of wildflowers in the memorial meadow area and the sowing of both annual and perennial wildflower seeds in deep-ploughed subsoil in the southern half of the broad valley.

Factors Causing Change

Occasional illegal grazing by traveller's horses.

Succession into scrub habitat then woodland if left unmanaged.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The creation and maintenance of a variety of open-ground habitats from tree/scrub colonised coarse grassland to traditionally managed floristically diverse hay meadows and areas of intermediate characteristics.

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

As part of the Forest of Flowers project apply appropriate prescriptions to the three differing grassland areas appropriate to their present characteristics and desired future outcomes in terms of floristic diversity. Those areas deemed suitable will be cut for hay under licence.				
The Forest of Flowers area should be topped in late Summer.				

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2022	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	March
2023	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	April
2023	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	May
2023	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,	June
2023	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	August
2023	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	August
2023	WC - Shelter Supply / Erection	Works associated with the supply, erection, maintenance and removal of tree shelters	August
2023	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	September
2023	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
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 - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	March
2024	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing	June

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
		pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	
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,	June
2024	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Works associated with the construction of a new or extension to existing car parking facilities.	July
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
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,	June
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,	June
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
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,	
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
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	December

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	18.78	Mixed native broadleaves	1994	High forest		National Forest

Centenary Wood, this is a long elongated area of land running north south with a gentle southerly aspect. The area was planted in 1995/96 with a mixture of native broadleaves. Major tree species include predominantly oak and ash with smaller amount of field maple and cherry. Minor tree species include hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, etc. Minor species making up approximately 10% of the trees planted. Trees were planted at 3 x 3 metre spacing and this has resulted in slow growth and poor form in some areas. Canopy closure has been achieved in almost all locations by 2013.

2a	14.75	Mixed	1996	High forest	National Forest
		native			
		broadleaves			

Royal Tigers' Wood, this is situated at the southern end of Centenary wood. The two areas are adjoined by a narrow piece of land were a footpath and small stream connect the two woodlands together. There is a higher proportion of open ground in this compartment (approx. 3.6ha) which is surrounded by trees planted in 1994 and 1996. Species mix is the same as compartment 1a with the exception of crack willow planted at the northern end of the compartment. Tree growth is more even within this compartment with some of the oaks showing good form and growth rates. A small seasonal pond has been created and is slowly being colonised by wetland species.

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.

Registered Office:

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