

Woodland Trust Management Plan

Nether Hall 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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GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Nether Hall Wood

Location:	Hartshorne, Swadlincote Grid reference: SK314214 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 128
Area:	8.15 hectares (20.14 acres)
External Designations:	National Forest, Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Nether Hall is an 8.46ha new native woodland creation site located within the National Forest area. It was planted as part of the Woodland Trusts Woods On Your Doorstep initiative to mark the Millennium. The site derives its name from 'Nether Hall', a period building immediately to the North West, now used as a nursing home. The nearest village is Hartshorne, 0.5 miles to the east in South Derbyshire. The site was purchased following a successful National Forest Tender Scheme bid in December 1998 and was planted in the spring of 1999.

The woodland is boarded by Repton Road to the north, Dunnsmoor Lane to the east, a stream to the south and a fence to the west. A further stream flows through the site and a public footpath crosses it. The meadow north of the dividing stream is low lying, wet and subject to flooding. It is also reasonably diverse in wild flowers. It has been retained as a wet meadow.

Additionally, there is a small block of mature woodland on the stream bank side which has a number of veteran apple and pear trees growing along its edges.

The prominent feature of the site is a wide avenue through the planted trees lying between the main entrance and Nether Hall. This was retained so as not to enclose the Hall and has been planted either side with yew. Other open ground has been retained beside the water-courses to further enhance habitat diversity on site.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The intention is to create a native, broadleaf, high forest woodland with open ground and meadowland. It will remain fully accessible for people to enjoy for informal recreation throughout. The woodland will be allowed to develop naturally with minimum management intervention.

Paths will be regularly cut up to three times per year and maintained so as to allow for easy access. Use of the site will be monitored and provisions for informal recreation reviewed accordingly. Public safety will be assessed regularly and tree safety inspections made on mature trees. Paths and boundaries are areas for review, based on the level of use. The avenue of Limes will be formatively pruned to produce standards.

The area of meadow will continue to be summer grazed to encourage biological diversity.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
<p>The whole of the site is accessible through out the whole year for public access on foot. Access is via the main entrance off of Repton Road or via the public footpath in the far western corner of the property. There are 1,200m of paths, which are mowed five times a year to keep them clear and well defined these form circular routes throughout the site and connect well into the wider public right of way network.</p> <p>Welcome signs identify the site as belonging to the Woodland Trust.</p>
Significance
<p>The site lies within 0.5 miles of the village of Hartshorne and is therefore highly accessible. It is no more than 1.5 miles from the major town of Swadlincote and accessible along relatively quiet country lanes. Burton Upon Trent, Ashby De La Zouch and the Heart of the National Forest area are only a short drive away. Nether Hall Wood does a great deal to contribute to the wider National Forests objective associated with providing publicly accessible green space available for recreation for local people, the property also contributes to the Woodland Trusts corporate objectives associated with "People".</p>
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Whilst access is available to Compartment 3, the meadow, it is possible that livestock will be present during the summer months though at the time of writing the meadow remains ungrazed. Appropriate signage will need to be erected warning site visitors that stock are present if a farmer can be found to graze the meadow.</p> <p>During the winter, the meadow can become very wet and this too may be a constraint for some visitors.</p> <p>The site falls within the National Forest area, Nether Hall Wood is an excellent example of woodland creation that promotes the Woodland Trusts presence in this high profile area, there may be possibilities for future collaborative working with the National Forest Company and other partners to promote the property further as a destination for visitors.</p>
Factors Causing Change
N/A
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Open access will retained throughout the whole of the site. The paths and entrances will be cut and maintained to keep them clear and well defined. Welcome signs and interpretation will be kept clean, clear and maintained. The main

entrance will be kept clean, tidy and litter free. The large meadow maintaining the view to Nether Hall from the main entrance will be maintained as meadow in perpetuity.

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

Mow all paths May, June, July, August, September annually.
Entrance Maintenance and clean signage May and September annually.
Litter clearance at Repton Road side entrance January, March, May, July, September, November annually.
The meadow associated with the view from the main entrance to Nether Hall will be cut in September annually.
To monitor once every 2 years to ensure that all the above is effective and being carried out as planned.

4.2 f2 New Native Woodland

Description

Planted in 1998 on what was arable fields the new woodland plantation consists of ash and oak with beech and field maple. There is an avenue of 40 yew defining the view to Nether Hall though there have been difficulties with their establishment and growth is poor. Trees were planted at 2250 / ha and protected with individual rabbit guards. Trees were planted in small groups of individual species to encourage rapid establishment and to help attract wildlife. The yews are individually numbered and have been dedicated to individuals as a marketing opportunity. There is a small block of mature woodland with fruit trees growing on its edge that forms compartment 2a.

Significance

Nether Hall is one of many new woodlands planted in and making up the National Forest area. Locally Nether Hall is one of a number of new woodland plantations which occupy a significant area in and around the Heart of the Forest area. The woodland contributes greatly to biodiversity in an area that consists predominantly of agricultural fields. Nether Hall Wood achieves the Woodland Trusts corporate objective associated with "Woodland Creation" and that associated with "Conservation".

Opportunities & Constraints

Retaining the view to Nether Hall, the public footpath, two streams, the flooding meadow and the sewer way leave are restrictions to development of further woodland on site, however, each of areas has added variety in terms of habitat on site.

Threats from pests and diseases such as squirrels and ash die back are likely going to be a constraint going forward into the future that will require careful monitoring and remedial work as necessary to ensure the long term diversity and resilience of the woodland habitat.

Factors Causing Change

Ash die back and other potential threats from pests and diseases as they appear and develop on site.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To allow the woodland to develop into native high-forest with trees and shrubs of varying age classes and species types. The woodland will reach this state primarily via natural processes through a minimum intervention management

approach. "Woodland Condition Assessments" will inform management going into the future, interventions only taking place if highlighted as necessary by the Woodland Condition Assessments; the aim being to ensure the long term resilience of the woodland in perpetuity.

To retain the yew avenue and associated open area with a view to Nether Hall which is an important aspect this woodland.

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

To monitor the woodland annually to assess tree health and woodland development and to carry out a full woodland condition assessment as part of the five yearly management plan review and to take any required action as appropriate.

To carry out a 25% thin across the property with the focus being on removal of ash where it is in competition with other native tree species in 2021.

4.3 f3 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

Description

At 0.9 ha the wetland meadow is large enough to be grazed. The meadow has been agriculturally improved in the past leading to a loss in floristic diversity but traditional grazing would aim to reverse this over many years. Livestock can be excluded from the stream forming the southern boundary by stock fencing. There are open drainage channels crossing the site in two other places however. A management gate exists off Repton Road. At the time of writing there is no grazing in the wet meadow and there has been no success so far in finding a farmer willing to put their livestock in to graze - efforts will continue to try and bring the meadow back into grazing.

Significance

Wet meadows that are managed in a traditional way are a rare and somewhat unique habitat type. Although the meadow at Nether Hall has been 'improved' in the past, diversity of flora and fauna will increase over time with continued sympathetic management.

Opportunities & Constraints

A lack of mains water means there is some constraint on grazing during dry periods. Visitors dogs have the potential to cause problems for livestock, although this hasn't been a known problem.

As of 2018 finding a farmer to graze the meadow has proved difficult and the meadow is currently ungrazed. Efforts to find a grazier will continue.

Factors Causing Change

Under or over-grazing by livestock.

Natural succession to scrub / woodland if the meadow remains ungrazed / not cut.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To increase the biodiversity of the wet meadow through the consistent, sympathetic management of extensive grazing and to maintain the meadow as an important habitat feature in perpetuity.

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

To find a grazier to graze the wet meadow within the current management plan period and if a grazier can't be found to consider other options for management.

To monitor the meadow area once every 3 years to assess it's general condition and any changes to the management regime as required.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2024	NWH - Initial Restoration Work	Works associated with the initial restoration or significant reinvestment works of existing non-woodland habitats to improve or protect their conservation value	August
2024	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	September

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	7.43	Ash	1998	High forest		National Forest
<p>Compartment 1 is the main woodland creation area. It was planted with native broadleaved trees, the main species being oak and ash. The planting density stands at 2250 trees per hectare. The trees were individually protected using Tubex Sleeves. Planting was in sinuous lines. Some beech was also included within the planting mix to replicate the make up of the mature woodland growing on the southern bank of the dividing stream.</p> <p>The 30 meter yew avenue, a public footpath and an underground sewer cross the site in areas of open space. The yew avenue has not developed well and there have been issues with establishment.</p> <p>Additionally, 10 meters of open space was retained alongside the two water courses to prevent them from becoming shaded.</p>						
2a	0.13	Beech	1960	High forest	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	National Forest
<p>A small area of existing mature woodland on the southern bank of the dividing stream to the west of the property that divides the tree'd areas from the wet meadow. It mainly comprises of beech with some sycamore. The ground slopes steeply to the north here. Fruit trees line its edges.</p>						
3a	0.9	Open ground	1998	Non-wood habitat	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	National Forest
<p>Cpt 3 is a wet meadow north of the dividing stream. It can be accessed directly from Repton Road through a management gate or via a ford or culvert from Cpt 1. The meadow is low lying and prone to flooding. It has open drainage channels running across it, which attract a diversity of associated flora and fauna. The northern hedge was cut and laid in 2000 and a new stock fence erected against the stream.</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:

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