



**PROTECT THE WOODS AND
TREES YOU LOVE TODAY, FOR
TOMORROW AND FOREVER**



WOODLAND
TRUST

Rewrite the future



I was thrilled to be asked to be the new chair of the Woodland Trust. My wife and I have been members for decades and love trees and nature.

Just think of your favourite woodland – the earthy scents, soft sounds and sunlight filtered through green leaves. You may have fond childhood memories of exploration and discovery; you might be lucky enough to be able to visit regularly, perhaps for exercise or dog walking, or to simply breathe deeply and unwind from the stresses of modern life.

Our precious woodlands face huge challenges – from escalating climate change and loss of biodiversity to relentless development and the terrible impact of deadly tree diseases and pests. We are at a defining moment in the fight to tackle global warming and the nature crisis and I am very proud that the Woodland Trust is right at the forefront offering solutions.

I am excited to be working for a cause that will leave our landscapes and wildlife better than we found them. I simply cannot think of a more powerful legacy. Remembering the Woodland Trust in your will can help save amazing, irreplaceable woodland havens and create new wooded landscapes for future generations of people and wildlife. And it doesn't need to cost a penny now.

Thank you for considering leaving a gift in your will. Please read on to find out more about our vital work and how your legacy could make a truly extraordinary difference.

**Tony Hall CBE, Lord Hall of Birkenhead
Chair**

Why leave a gift in your will to the Woodland Trust?

Have you ever thought about how you'd like to be remembered – what legacy you'd like to leave? You can keep changing the future for the better, without it costing you a penny now.

After taking care of your family and friends, you can help the nature you love by remembering the Woodland Trust in your will. Your future legacy will have an impact which lasts for generations and could:

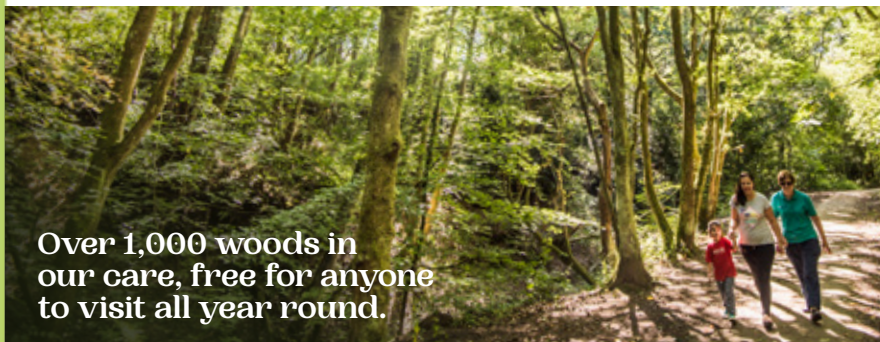
- **PROTECT** the wild places you love; saving woods and trees from pests, diseases and destruction
- **RESTORE** irreplaceable ancient woods and Atlantic rainforests to their former glory
- **CREATE** new native woodland and plant the trees we all need
- **SUPPORT** our mission to build a UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.

One out of
three trees
we plant is
funded by
gifts in wills

Together, gifts in wills make transformative changes. They consistently support about a third of everything we do – that's one in every three trees planted, ancient trees mapped and a third of all the woodland we rescue and restore.

Legacies have already saved hundreds of threatened ancient woodlands, created wonderful new habitats for wildlife and planted millions of trees. Just think what yours could achieve.

Over 1,000 woods in
our care, free for anyone
to visit all year round.



What your legacy gift could do

Many woodlands only exist because of the passion and generosity of people who choose to remember the Woodland Trust in their will. Why not join them and make a real difference to the future of UK trees and wildlife?

PROTECT WOODS AT RISK

Ancient woods are unique. They are irreplaceable ecosystems, supporting more wildlife than any other UK land-based habitat. We must protect them and ensure these precious habitats thrive for generations to come.



RESTORE WOODS TO HEALTH

Many ancient woodlands have been planted with non-native trees and damaged by invasive species. Without our help, they may disappear. A gift in your will could sensitively restore them to their former glory.

CREATE NEW WOODLAND

The UK's woodland cover is just 13%, making us one of the least wooded countries in Europe. Planting native trees is central to what we do. Your legacy gift could help us plant trees and mobilise communities, landowners and volunteers to get even more trees in the ground.



OPEN UP WOODS FOR PEOPLE TO ENJOY

There are over 1,000 woods in our care, and your gift could ensure they're kept open and accessible for visitors to explore free of charge.



SAVE TREES THROUGH RESEARCH

Your gift could support vital research into land use, tree diseases and woodland management, leading the way in UK conservation.

LOBBY GOVERNMENT

Your support could help us keep trees and woodland on the government's agenda by lobbying for protection and planting schemes.



**Every single legacy gift
brings a world where woods
and trees thrive for people and
nature a step closer.**



BEN LEE/WTML

A lasting woodland legacy

In 1972, retired farmer and nature-lover Kenneth Watkins was becoming increasingly alarmed at the destruction of precious woodlands, spinneys and copses near his home in Devon. The Woodland Trust was created around his kitchen table and in 1989 he was awarded an OBE for services to conservation. Just three years later 500 woods had been saved.

Ken sadly died in 1996 and his ashes were scattered in his favourite woodland, Watkins Wood. Many of the woods we enjoy today are part of Ken's legacy.



By 2002, we had planted our five millionth tree and brought hundreds of woods into our care. By 2011, 10,000 ancient trees had been recorded, and 10 years later we published our seminal report: State of the UK's Woods and Trees 2021.





More than 50 years since the Trust began, we have planted over 60 million trees, brought thousands of acres of precious ancient woodland back to life and, in the last decade alone, saved nearly 1,200 threatened woods for people and wildlife.



TERRY WHITAKER/NATUREPL



JOHN BRIDGES/WTML

Thanks to the passion of those who care about woods and trees, we are the UK's largest woodland conservation charity, with more than half a million members and supporters.

When you leave a gift in your will to the Woodland Trust, you build on the legacies of Ken and many others who've gone before us. You play a vital part in the stewardship of the UK's special woods, helping to protect them far into the future.



Gifts in wills are at the heart of everything we do

Every single one of our woods across the UK has been supported by wonderful, forward-thinking people who kindly left a gift in their will.

From fighting development threats and restoring damaged ancient woodland to acquiring new sites and planting native trees, gifts in wills are essential for our work.

Featured over the next few pages are the legacy stories behind some of our favourite sites and projects.

Discover more about the woods that have benefited from gifts in wills by visiting woodlandtrust.org.uk/giftsinwills



ADAM BURTON/WTML


Derek and Fiona from London say that:

"You can plant gardens for today and next week but you plant trees not for now but for children and grandchildren. That's really important to us, that legacy, and making a commitment to the Woodland Trust is an opportunity really to think about the future and not just now."

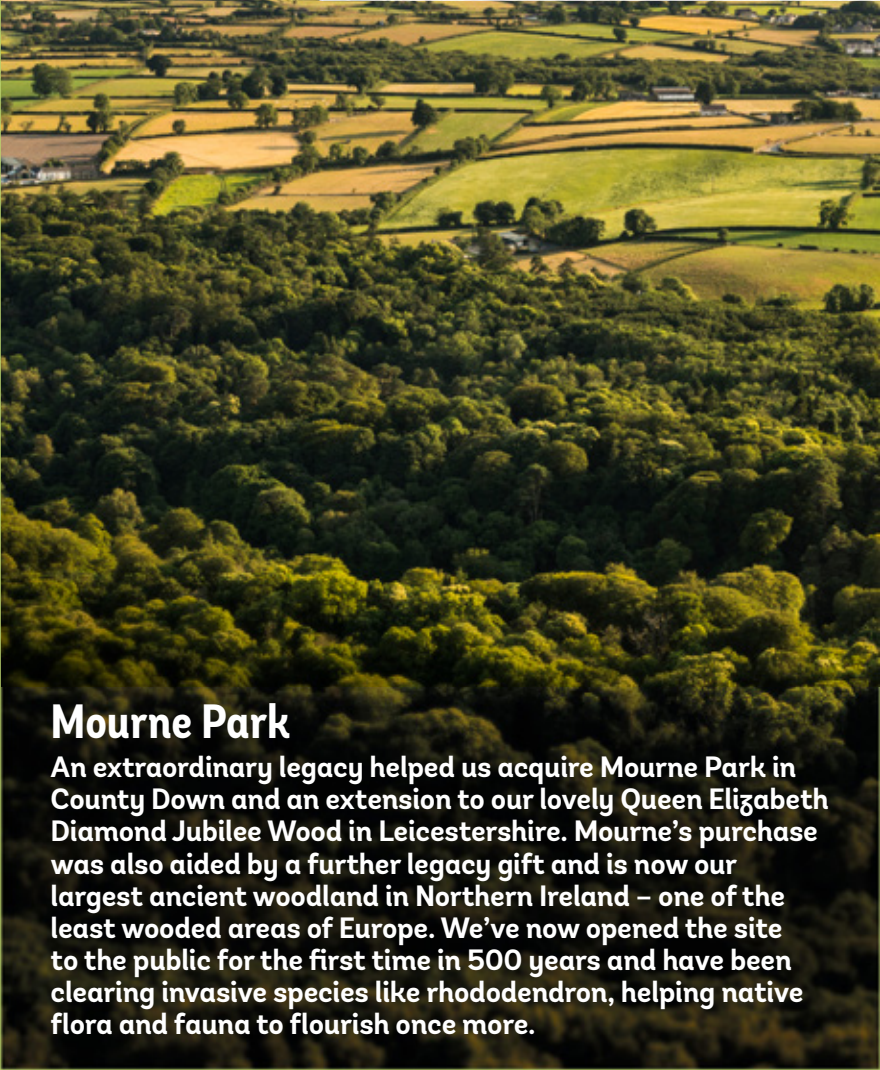
Ben Shildaig, Gleann Shìldeag Estate

A generous gift in a will, alongside support from players of People's Postcode Lottery and a national fundraising campaign, was instrumental in acquiring Ben Shildaig, a mountain rising from the shores of Upper Loch Torridon in the North West Highlands in Scotland. It boasts two contrasting ancient woodlands: a patch of upland birchwood dripping with mosses and layered with liverworts and lichens, and a Caledonian pinewood which has existed since the end of the last Ice Age. Further south, open heathlands are dotted with small lochs, blanket bog, ravines and pockets of broadleaf trees.

We are carefully restoring and expanding the scattered woodland remnants and establishing healthy and resilient habitats, creating havens for vulnerable native species including red squirrels, otters and golden eagles.




Amanda C from Oxfordshire said: *"I trust the Woodland Trust – I know that my legacy gift will be put to good use, to protect woodlands for future generations and for all the wildlife that relies upon them."*



Mourne Park

An extraordinary legacy helped us acquire Mourne Park in County Down and an extension to our lovely Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood in Leicestershire. Mourne's purchase was also aided by a further legacy gift and is now our largest ancient woodland in Northern Ireland – one of the least wooded areas of Europe. We've now opened the site to the public for the first time in 500 years and have been clearing invasive species like rhododendron, helping native flora and fauna to flourish once more.




David from Colwyn Bay vividly remembers his first trip to a Trust wood: "Walking through dappled shade inspired my love of woodland, and seeing it protected remains very important to me. I want ancient trees and woods to have the same protection as listed buildings in future, if not more, as they can never be replaced. Knowing that a small area of woodland is preserved by my legacy gives me great peace of mind."

Wentwood

Wentwood was part of the hunting grounds of Chepstow Castle. Sadly, many of its native trees had been felled and replanted with non-native conifers.

Thanks to four gifts in wills and a hugely successful fundraising appeal, Wentwood's 870 acres (350ha) of precious woodland is regenerating and is now home to a huge variety of wildlife, with over 70 species of birds and 23 butterfly species recorded. The wood ant nests alone are spectacular, as is the remarkable range of colourful fungi and flora. Without our generous supporters, the chance to restore this vast area of Welsh woodland may have been lost forever.

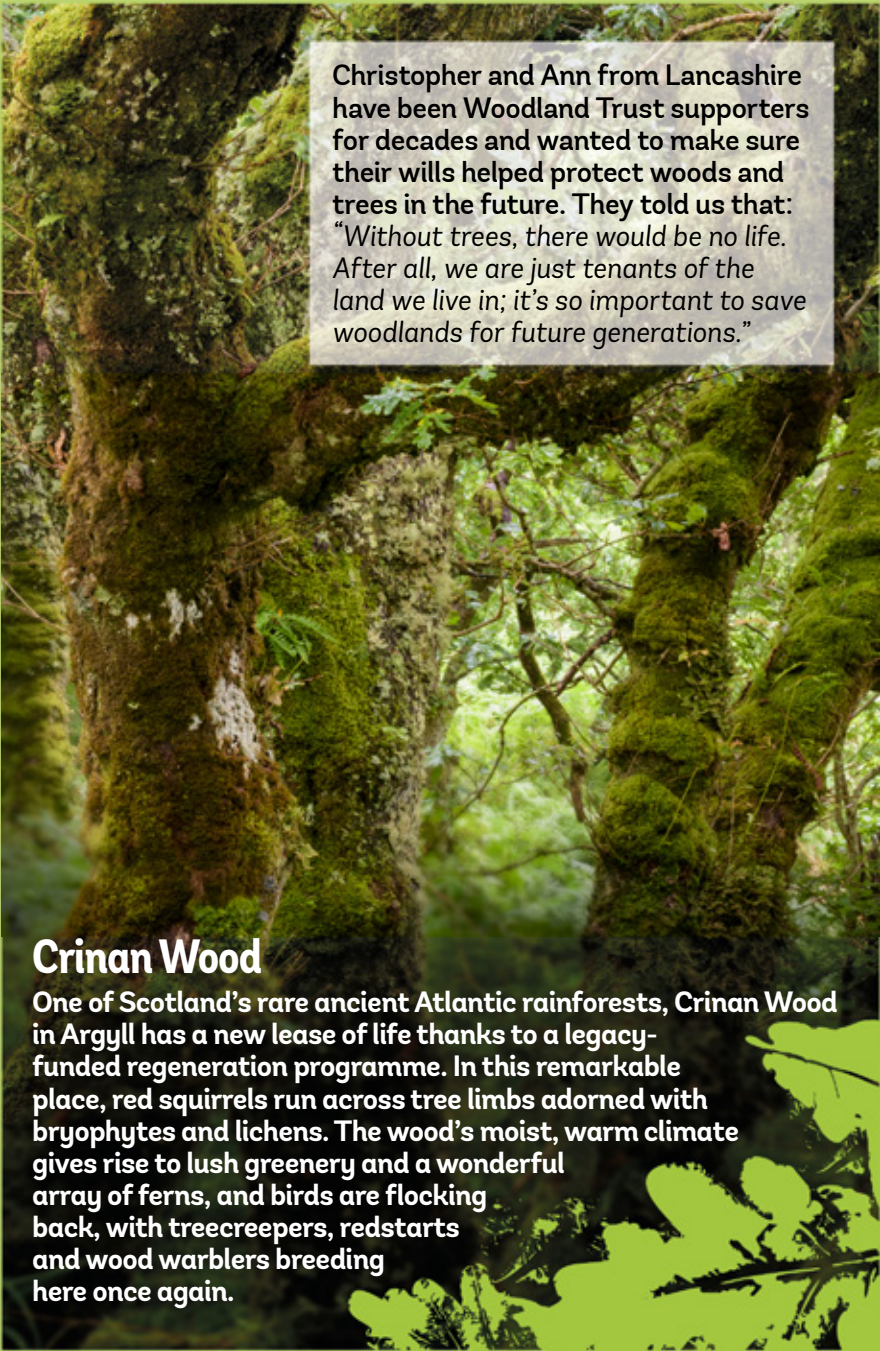


Lucy and Andy C from North Yorkshire are long term members and volunteers. They told us that: “Woods are so important to us and leaving a gift to the Woodland Trust just seemed right. They are doing so much important work, it was the natural thing to do. They protect the trees, create new woodlands and restore ancient woodlands. Climate change is rushing up against us and we need woods to mitigate that. We hope our legacy gift will help see much more woodland for everyone to enjoy in the future.”

Heartwood Forest

Just north of St Albans in Hertfordshire is Heartwood Forest, a very special place. Four gifts in wills were absolutely vital in acquiring this 857-acre (347ha) site, and a fifth has been instrumental in its transformation into England's largest planted native woodland.

Tens of thousands of volunteers have planted over half a million trees. The resulting mosaic of connected habitats – rare ancient woodland, wildflower meadows and new woods – makes it one of our top sites for people and wildlife.



Christopher and Ann from Lancashire have been Woodland Trust supporters for decades and wanted to make sure their wills helped protect woods and trees in the future. They told us that: *“Without trees, there would be no life. After all, we are just tenants of the land we live in; it’s so important to save woodlands for future generations.”*

Crinan Wood

One of Scotland’s rare ancient Atlantic rainforests, Crinan Wood in Argyll has a new lease of life thanks to a legacy-funded regeneration programme. In this remarkable place, red squirrels run across tree limbs adorned with bryophytes and lichens. The wood’s moist, warm climate gives rise to lush greenery and a wonderful array of ferns, and birds are flocking back, with treecreepers, redstarts and wood warblers breeding here once again.

Doreen W and Ali W from Nottingham love the outdoors and watching the beautiful wildlife, as their parents did too. They said that they: "Couldn't think of a better organisation to leave our estate to in the future which believes in the same values as ourselves."



Young People's Forest at Mead

There are few more joyful sights than children wielding miniature spades and planting trees in muddy wellies, and a great many children have got very muddy indeed thanks to numerous gifts in wills left for creating woodland. The pioneering Young People's Forest at Mead in Derbyshire is a great example. Just a decade ago it was an opencast coal mine, but now, 250,000 trees have been planted by young people. A long-standing member thoughtfully left a crucial gift in his will which helped us acquire the land and supported the project costs. He had already told us what he wanted his legacy to be, and we are ensuring his vision becomes a reality.

RICHARD FAULKES/WTML

Chris N from Yorkshire says that for him:
"Protecting and enhancing our nation's biodiversity is the most important priority. I support the Woodland Trust in helping achieve this aim today and, by making a donation in my will, I can support them tomorrow as well."

Brackfield Wood

Brackfield Wood is a tribute to those who lost their lives across Ireland during the First World War. Nestled in the Faughan Valley in Northern Ireland, the site boasts mature and ancient woodland alongside thousands of young trees.

The wood is a living legacy to those affected by the conflict and is a beautiful, peaceful place for quiet reflection. The area supports an impressive array of wildlife including red squirrels, otters and kingfishers. Gifts in wills played a vital role in creating this wonderful place.





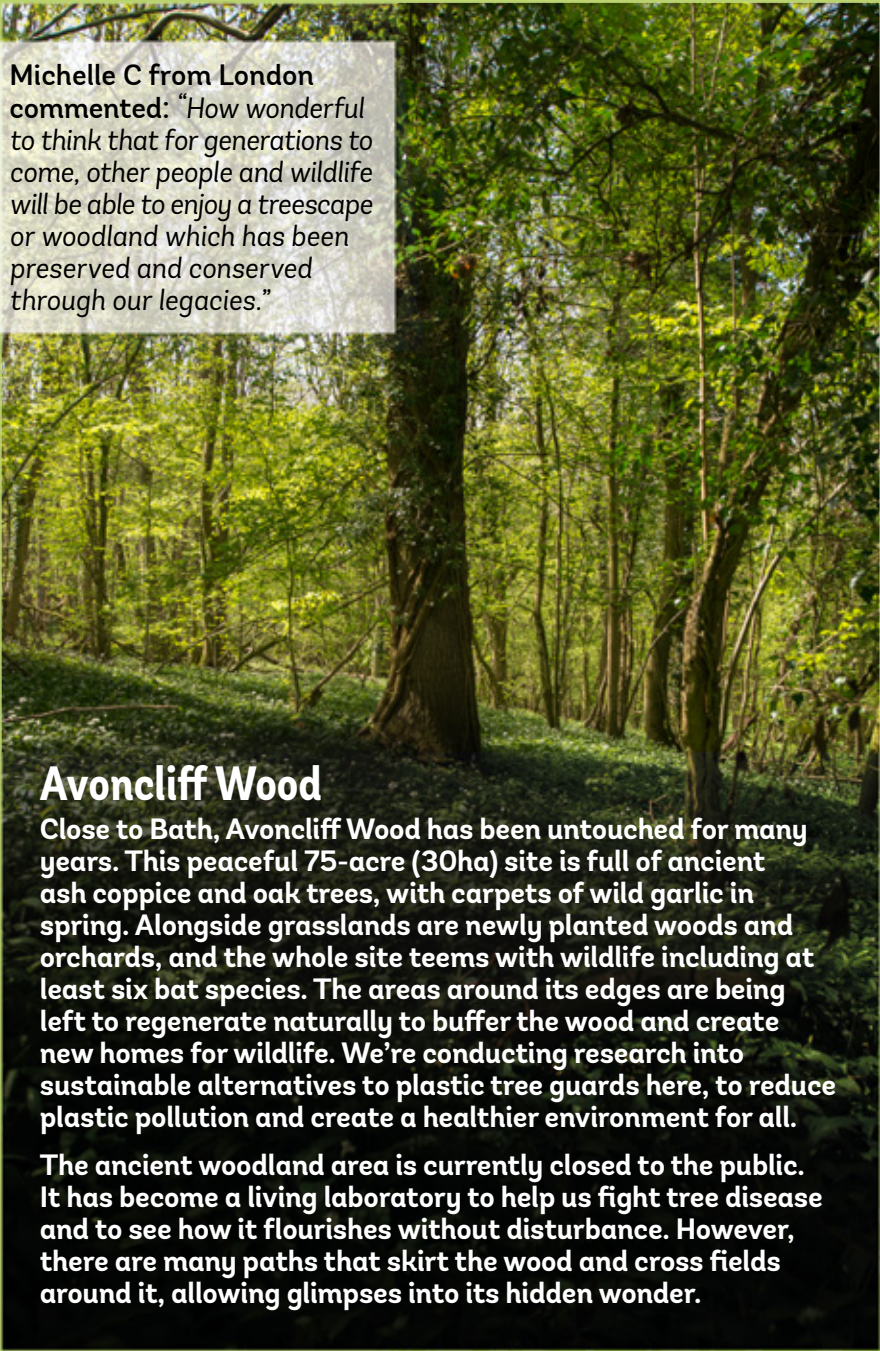
Clive G from Cambridgeshire stated: “My wife and I decided to leave part of our estate, for the work to continue and the number of woods to grow, creating a natural counterbalance to urban development and enhancing the beauty of the countryside.”

Glen Finglas

Three gifts kindly left in wills and restricted to our work in Scotland have been critical at Glen Finglas. At over 10,000 acres (4,095ha) and sitting at the heart of Loch Lomond, it is a wonderful expanse of ancient woodland, lochs, open heathland and wood pasture.

Working with The Great Trossachs Forest National Nature Reserve, we’re helping to restore the landscape and create one of Scotland’s largest broadleaved forests.

For almost 400 years Glen Finglas was a royal hunting forest and today it is home to some of Scotland’s most iconic wildlife, including red deer, golden eagles, red squirrels and black grouse. Its dramatic landscape has been immortalised by poetry and paintings from the likes of Sir Walter Scott and Sir John Everett Millais.




Michelle C from London commented: *“How wonderful to think that for generations to come, other people and wildlife will be able to enjoy a treescape or woodland which has been preserved and conserved through our legacies.”*

Avoncliff Wood

Close to Bath, Avoncliff Wood has been untouched for many years. This peaceful 75-acre (30ha) site is full of ancient ash coppice and oak trees, with carpets of wild garlic in spring. Alongside grasslands are newly planted woods and orchards, and the whole site teems with wildlife including at least six bat species. The areas around its edges are being left to regenerate naturally to buffer the wood and create new homes for wildlife. We're conducting research into sustainable alternatives to plastic tree guards here, to reduce plastic pollution and create a healthier environment for all.


The ancient woodland area is currently closed to the public. It has become a living laboratory to help us fight tree disease and to see how it flourishes without disturbance. However, there are many paths that skirt the wood and cross fields around it, allowing glimpses into its hidden wonder.



Victory Wood

Victory Wood in Kent was saved thanks to gifts kindly left in wills and generous donations, including one incredible individual contribution which secured our purchase. A far cry from the landfill it almost became, the wood is now a tapestry of meadows, grassy tussocks and woodland. One of the UK's rarest bumblebees, the tiny shrill carder bee, has now established a growing population here after suffering greatly from habitat loss elsewhere.

Victory Wood also plays an important role in the Wilder Blean project, our nature recovery partnership with Kent Wildlife Trust and the RSPB which is helping to boost biodiversity on a landscape scale.



Ian, from Leicestershire, spent many happy childhood hours exploring Sherwood Forest – and has loved woodland ever since: “Woods are nature’s cathedrals. They are part of our history, offering so many benefits, and must be preserved. I hope the gift in my will can maintain the history that woodland provides, and keep that heritage alive for future generations.”

Safeguarding our oldest trees

Wonderful, gnarled sentinels – our ancient trees feed the imagination, with C.S. Lewis describing the mighty sessile oak in Kilbroney Park, County Down, as inspiration for Narnia. Over in Wales, the incredible Defynnog Yew in Brecon, as broad as it is tall, could be 5,000 years old but is less protected than the much younger church beside it. Sadly, our incredible living legends don’t have the protection they need. Mapping them is vital and, supported by gifts in wills, our Ancient Tree Inventory now has over 209,000 trees recorded across the UK and Ireland.



Home Farm

Earmarked for landfill, we rescued Home Farm in 1990 thanks to the generous support of our members, including gifts kindly left in wills. Set amidst the rolling hills of the Hampshire Downs, much of the open space is chalk grassland, a special, ancient and increasingly rare habitat. We have carefully restored and nurtured this amazing 336-acre (136ha) site, with grassland species including skylarks, yellowhammers and hares now prospering.

We flexed our management practices to suit this special habitat and removed some woodland species that would have taken over the meadow areas. Without this, the chalk grassland and the distinctive wildlife that depends on it would disappear. We also graze highland cattle here, who nibble back the scrub and create areas of bare soil, encouraging wildflowers.

Alan, from the Wirral, grew up in Surrey and became a Woodland Trust supporter after dedicating a tree in memory of his Aunt Muriel. He hopes that his legacy will: *"Help preserve woodland for future generations, so they can climb trees and explore like I did. I know my daughter, who loves the countryside too, will fully support my legacy."*

Low Burnhall

Three crucial legacies, gifted without restrictions, were essential to securing Low Burnhall in County Durham at auction. Gifts like these are vital in urgent situations when other fundraising simply can't be completed in time. They enable us to move quickly when special sites come onto the market.

Now, the ancient woodland cloaking some of the steep slopes alongside the River Wear has been joined by vibrant, young woodland which expands this special habitat and provides extra space for nature and people to flourish.

What your legacy could achieve

£100

could allow us to plant and care for four new native trees on our land.

£500

could help us care for enough woodland to capture and store around 20 tonnes of carbon.

£1,000

could restore a small woodland pond, helping support a multitude of wildlife.

£5,000

could help us create a five-acre (2ha) wildflower meadow offering food and shelter for pollinators.

£15,000

could build a bridge in one of our woods – opening up access for people to explore.

£25,000

could enable low-impact thinning of non-native conifers on around 18 acres (7ha) of difficult terrain using horses.

£50,000

could enable the purchase and restoration of around five acres (2ha)* of damaged ancient woodland.

£100,000

could fund one mile (2km) of an all-weather access track, helping people of different abilities to enjoy our woods.

£500,000

could fund the purchase of around 50 acres (20ha)** of land for native broadleaf planting.

You can rely on the Woodland Trust to receive your legacy gift with gratitude and use it wisely where it is needed most. Of every pound we received in 2023/24, 84p went towards our charitable objectives. This amount fluctuates year on year and is dependent to a large extent on how much we spend on buying woods and land. In 2022/23 it was 86p.

*depending on location

**depending on location and existing use of the land

**Thank you so much
for thinking about leaving
a gift in your will to the
Woodland Trust.**

**Your support can
change the future for
woods and trees right
across the UK.**

Discuss your wishes

Our friendly team is on hand to talk things through and help you make the choice that works for you.

For a confidential chat please call **0330 333 3300** or email **giftsinwills@woodlandtrust.org.uk**.

Legacies fund a third of everything we do for woods and trees. That's one in every three of the millions of trees we plant each year; a third of all the ancient woods we fight to save; and one in three of all the wildlife havens we create and protect. Your support is invaluable, and helps us protect the woods and trees you love for generations to come.

Thank you.



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

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