

# Twenty Acre Wood

## (Plan period – 2018 to 2023)



WOODLAND  
TRUST

# 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](http://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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

or contact the Woodland Trust

[operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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 Informal Public Access
  - 4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

## 1. SITE DETAILS

### Twenty Acre Wood

Location:	Warrington	Grid	reference:	SJ583896	OS	1:50,000	Sheet	No.	108
Area:	2.25 hectares (5.56 acres)								
External Designations:	Community Forest, Local Wildlife Site								
Internal Designations:	N/A								

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Twenty Acre Wood is a small (2.25ha) mature broadleaved woodland in Warrington, Cheshire. It is located in the Old Hall area of Warrington, approximately 3 miles to the north west of the town centre. The local land use is urban and the woodland is surrounded by housing on all sides. The northern and southern boundaries abut garden fences; the eastern boundary is alongside a tarmac footpath with a pond and wooded area owned by Warrington Council; and the western boundary is formed by a hawthorn hedge adjacent to a tarmac footpath.

The wood is on flat, low lying ground with predominantly sandy-silt-loam soils containing a high humus and organic matter content. There is a network of shallow drainage ditches through the wood which dry out in the summer. The ditches drain towards the north east corner of the wood into the pond on the north eastern corner. The wood was owned by the Warrington New Town Development Corporation from the 1970's until about 1995 when it was given to the Woodland Trust along with several other woodlands in the area.

Secondary broadleaved woodland is a key feature of the site. The canopy is dominated by oak, beech, with ash, Silver birch, alder, sycamore and lime. The under storey is well established with natural regeneration and under planting from the 1980's of oak, ash, birch, alder, rowan, cherry, hazel, hawthorn and dog rose. The shrub layer includes holly, hazel, elder, hawthorn and dog rose. Rhododendron used to be widespread in the wood, but has been largely removed in recent years with just a few small plants regrowing. The ground flora is not particularly rich with large areas dominated by bramble. A notable feature of the woodland is the quantity of deadwood which is good for fungi and invertebrates. The site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site for its semi-natural broadleaved woodland, dead wood and standing water habitats.

Informal public access is another key feature of the site with approximately 750m of permissive gravel surfaced footpaths and several entrances from the adjoining housing estates. The site is used by local people, mainly for dog walking.

### 3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long term policy for Twenty Acre Wood is to maintain a high forest broadleaved woodland, with a mixed structure, diverse shrub and ground flora layers. It will be managed as a landscape feature, woodland habitat and for informal public recreation for local people to visit and enjoy.

Management operations will be guided by the Woodland Trust's woodland management principles, conservation and access policies to seek a balance between conservation and public enjoyment and safety. The key drivers for management operations will be to maintain public access and safety, whilst allowing the woodland to develop through predominantly natural processes. Tree safety and woodland management will aim to reduce long term tree safety liability and to promote natural regeneration.

Public access will be managed in line with the Trust's access standards, with welcome signage at the formal entrance points and approximately 940m of footpaths maintained to provide access for visitors. The Trust's duty of care to visitors and neighbours will be addressed through on-going tree safety and site risk assessment inspections. The health and condition of the woodland will be monitored to identify any threats from tree disease, pests, invasive species and human impacts.

## 4. KEY FEATURES

### 4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

<b>Description</b>
There is approximately 750m of permissive stone surfaced footpaths with 8 entrances to the site from the neighbouring housing estates on Tasman Close, Franklin Close and Ellesworth Close. The entrances are open access with no barriers apart from a wooden gate for management access on the western boundary from a tarmac pathway off Twenty Acre Road. It is relatively quiet and mostly used by local people for dog walking and as a cut through from the housing to nearby shops. Within the wood there is also network of open ditches in the wood with piped culverts where the paths cross the ditches.
<b>Significance</b>
Increasing access to and enjoyment of woodland is one of the Woodland Trust's key outcomes and Twenty Acre Wood provides local people with easy access to woodland and nature in an urban environment. The wood is a prominent landscape feature in the local area and is visible from the A574 Cromwell Avenue. It also provides a range of amenity benefits including helping to "soften" the surrounding urban landscape, absorption of pollution and acting as a barrier against noise from nearby roads.
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
The woodland is small and surrounded on all sides by houses and a road resulting in it being isolated from other nearby woodlands and green spaces. The site is flat and the existing surfaced path network make it accessible all year round for local people to use.
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
The urban location of the wood results in occasional anti-social problems and issues including vandalism, fires, litter and fly tipping. The woodland and footpaths have flooded in the past requiring the ditches and culverts to be cleaned out regularly to maintain water flow.
<b>Long term Objective (50 years+)</b>
The long-term objective is to maintain the current level of public access to the site to ensure it is welcoming and accessible for visitors all year round. Access infrastructure including 750m of surfaced footpath, 8 entrances, signs, fences, gates, bridges and culverts will be maintained in good condition. The site will be made as safe as practicable for visitors and neighbours through regular safety inspections of trees in high risk zones, site hazards and access infrastructure. Any threats to the wood arising from public recreation or misuse will be monitored and appropriate measures taken if necessary.



<b>Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)</b>
<p>During the plan period the short term objectives are to:</p> <p>Maintain entrances and footpaths by cutting back encroaching vegetation and trees; inspect signs, gates and fences; cut back the hedge along the western boundary to maintain sight lines; inspect ditches and culverts; remove litter &amp; fly tipping (annually).</p> <p>Undertake regular safety inspections of site hazards as per the Trust's safety inspection regime, undertaking any remedial safety work identified.</p> <p>Carry out coppicing along paths and boundaries to improve sight lines and public safety.</p> <p>Monitor public use of the site during the current plan period to review the standard of access provision and identify any issues/ threats to the wood from public usage, taking appropriate action to address them if necessary.</p>

## 4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland

<b>Description</b>
The wood consists of mature and semi-mature oak, beech, sycamore, ash, Silver birch, horse chestnut and lime with a reasonably diverse understory of oak, ash, beech, rowan, birch, lime, wild cherry, hazel, hawthorn, field maple, some of which was planted in the 1980's by the Commission for New Towns. The ground flora is sparse although there is a range of common woodland flora present including bluebell, but with widespread bramble.
<b>Significance</b>
Twenty Acre Wood is a significant landscape and conservation feature within a very urban environment and provides a valuable habitat for a range of urban wildlife. Along with other nearby Woodland Trust owned woodlands it is part of the local ecological landscape in the area which includes ponds, streams and ditches, formal and informal scrub and shrubs, rough and managed grassland. The importance of the site for wildlife has been acknowledged by Warrington Borough Council who have designated it as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Local Wildlife Site).
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
<p>It is a small woodland surrounded by housing on three sides and a road on the other side and so cannot be extended in any direction.</p> <p>There is only one vehicle access route into the wood along a narrow pathway which limits access for carrying out management work; other access is available on foot via footpath ginnels from the neighbouring housing estate roads. The close proximity of the woodland to housing brings with it greater tree safety risk which needs to be managed and has significant cost implications. Tree safety work and boundary coppicing will create opportunities for natural regeneration and to diversify the woodland structure.</p>
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
<p>Tree disease, particularly ash dieback disease will impact on the woodland with a high proportion of ash trees along boundaries next to houses.</p> <p>Fly tipping, fires and vandalism/ damage to trees.</p> <p>Rhododendron encroachment.</p>
<b>Long term Objective (50 years+)</b>

The long term objective is to maintain the mix of broadleaved woodland with a diverse structure, age classifications and species. Management operations will focus on maintaining public access and safety along boundaries next to houses and paths, whilst allowing the woodland to develop through predominantly natural processes with succession promoted through natural regeneration. Boundary tree work and coppicing will be undertaken to maintain a graduated woodland edge structure and to reduce the long term tree safety liability. Threats to the wood from pests, tree disease and invasive species will be monitored and appropriate action taken to control them where it is practical and achievable.

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

During the plan period the short term objectives are to

Carry out a Woodland Condition Assessment to monitor the health and resilience of the woodland including the mix of species and natural regeneration, to monitor threats from tree disease, pests, non-native invasive species and to take appropriate action where necessary.

Undertake tree safety inspections as part of the site risk assessment regime for public safety in high risk zones (i.e. by buildings, footpaths and roads) and carry out any remedial work identified.

Carry out felling operations in response to tree health monitoring along boundaries next to houses and footpaths for long term tree safety and stand stability.

## 5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
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## APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	2.25	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Community Forest
<p>The compartment is flat, roughly square shaped situated on low lying ground surrounded by housing on all boundaries. The woodland canopy consists of mature oak, alder, ash, beech, birch, sycamore and occasional lime. There is a well developed understorey of natural regeneration and planted species in the early 1980's including oak, ash, birch, alder, rowan, cherry, field maple, hazel, hawthorn, dog rose. The path and woodland edges were densely planted in the early 1980's with mixed broadleaved shrubs. There was previously a significant amount of rhododendron in the understorey, but this has now been cleared.</p> <p>Public access is via a network of surfaced permissive paths through the wood. There is a network of small shallow drainage ditches which link into a pond (owned by Warrington BC) located just outside the eastern boundary of the woodland.</p>						

**Ancient Woodland**

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

**Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland**

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

**Ancient Woodland Site**

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

**Beating Up**

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

**Broadleaf**

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

**Canopy**

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

**Clearfell**

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

**Compartment**

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

**Conifer**

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

**Continuous Cover forestry**

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

**Coppice**

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

**Exotic (non-native) Species**

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

**Field Layer**

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

**Group Fell**

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

**Long Term Retention**

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

**Minimum Intervention**

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

**Mixed Woodland**

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

**National vegetation classification (NVC)**

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

**Native Species**

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

**Natural Regeneration**

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

**Origin & Provenance**

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

**Re-Stocking**

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

**Shrub Layer**

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

**Silviculture**

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

**Stand**

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

**Sub-Compartment**

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

**Thinning**

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

**Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes**

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

**Weeding**

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established.

**Windblow/Windthrow**

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.

**Registered Office:**

**The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL.**

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