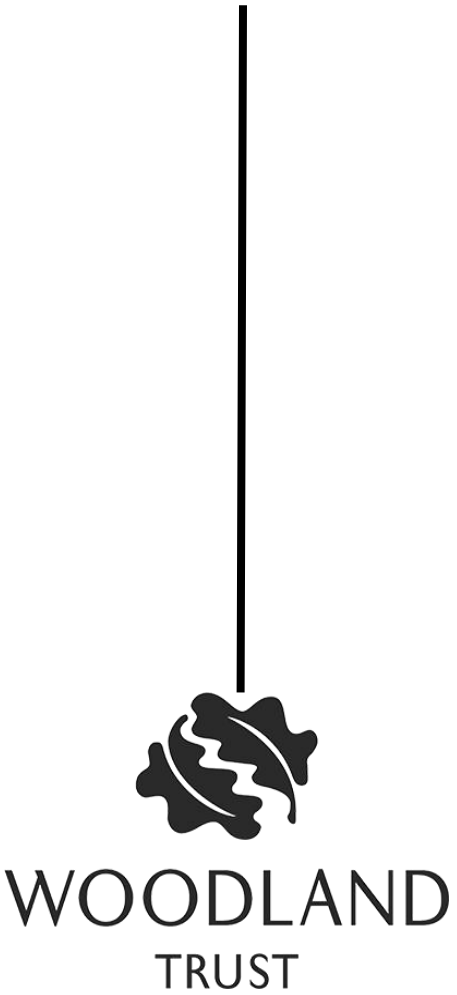
Home Farm

(Plan period – 2025 to 2035)



Management Plan Content Page

Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

"A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife."

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK's native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.

2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.

3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.

4. The long term vision for all our ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.

5. Existing semi-natural open ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.

6. The natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.

7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities to generate income from our Estate to help support our aims.

8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we encourage our woods to be used for local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.

9. We use and offer the Estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.

10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

The Management Plan

1. SITE DETAILS

Home Farm

Location:	Burkham, Bentworth Grid reference: East:SU658421 /West:SU650418 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 185
Area:	136.08 hectares (336.26 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc)
Internal Designations:	Trafalgar Wood commemorative site, Welcoming Sites Programme

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Home Farm is a 136 hectare (336 acre) site in rural north-east Hampshire, between Alton and Basingstoke. It is situated within the Hampshire Downs National Character Area (NCA), a rolling landscape dominated by large arable fields with hedgerows on thin chalk soils and scattered woodland blocks, including pockets of ancient semi-natural woodland and flower and invertebrate-rich remnants of chalk grassland.

Home Farm is typical of this landscape with all of the aforementioned habitats present on a variety of depths of clay over chalk soil. It covers approximately 136ha, divided into two parts east and west of Burkham Lane, which runs from Burkham to Bentworth. It is loosely connected by hedgerows and small woods (where they are not separated by the A339 and other minor roads) to the wider landscape of predominantly arable agricultural land, with scattered copses and woodlands, notably Preston Oak Hills, Herriard Common (a planted conifer wood), Middle Common Wood and New Copse to the north, and Bradley Wood, Mayhew's Wood, Stubbins Copse and South Lease Copse to the south.

Formally an arable farm, the site is now a mixture of 60% (80ha) planted secondary woodland, including mature broadleaf stands and remnant conifer plantations, 38% (53ha) open grassland and scrub, with one small area of ancient semi-natural woodland, known as Wigdell Copse at 2% (3ha). Marl pits throughout the site and the remains of a historic tree-lined avenue near the centre of the site provide added interest. Much of the secondary woodland was planted with mixed native broadleaf trees and shrubs between 1991 and 1994, following the sites' acquisition by the Woodland Trust in 1990. In 2006 and 2007, a further two hectares were planted with trees as part of the Trafalgar Woods and Scouts Centenary projects. With 67,000 trees planted Home Farm remains one of the largest native woodland creation sites in southern England.

The open grassland was sown with a grass and wildflower mix between September 1994 and April 1995 to improve its diversity following years of intensive agricultural management and sheep grazing prior to the Trusts' ownership. It is now grazed with a small number of cattle whose browsing keeps self-sown trees and scrub from the surrounding woodland and other coarse vegetation in check. However, some of the vegetation succeeds, and this deliberate form of management ultimately results in patches of scrub, small stands and occasional open-grown trees that blend the large swathes of mixed ground flora including chalk-grassland flowers and grasses with the surrounding woodland.

This mosaic of habitats provides a rich haven for wildlife and the site is notable for its breeding populations of skylark, yellowhammer and summer migrants such as chiffchaff, willow warbler and tree pipit, alongside more common woodland birds and birds of prey such as buzzard, red kite, kestrel and the occasional hobby. A wide variety of grassland plants has been recorded at the site from notable chalk grassland species such as ploughman's spikenard, fairy flax, field scabious, wild basil and pyramidal orchid, to the unusual woolly thistle, alongside more common species such as bird's foot trefoil, common knapweed and agrimony. Such a rich variety of plant life also attracts good numbers of butterflies with small blue, clouded yellow and painted ladies recorded alongside an abundance of marbled whites and silver-washed fritillaries on woodland edges.

The site has ten entrances and over 12 kilometres of permissive footpaths including three waymarked circular trails, with two car parks giving access to both sides of the site,

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) is scarce within the Hampshire Downs due to historical clearance for agriculture, and unimproved species-rich chalk grassland is confined to marginal land out of the reach of machinery, or land managed primarily for conservation. Therefore, though modest in size, Home Farm is large enough to be of significant value in the landscape being that the priority habitats of ASNW and remnant chalk grassland are present and that the site is under FSC certification, managed primarily for nature conservation and recreational access. The fact that this form of management is in contrast to much of the surrounding intensively managed land means that Home Farm is a sanctuary and potential hub from which wildlife may populate the surrounding land. Therefore, Home Farm will be managed as a diverse and resilient mosaic of viable habitats that benefit wildlife and visitors for the long-term.

The secondary woodland will comprise actively managed areas with ride-side coppicing and silvicultural interventions carried out where appropriate, particularly where management of tree diseases such as ash dieback are required, supplemented with non-intervention areas that develop naturally. This will result in a variety of woodland structures including high forest with shrub and understorey layers well represented in parts, coppice areas, and wide rides and intersections with flower and scrub-rich margins and occasional open grown trees.

Wigdell Copse, Home Farms ASNW compartment, will be managed with minimum intervention, regenerating naturally following the effects of ash dieback and supplemented and buffered by surrounding secondary woodland, with coppicing only carried out when it will aid the diversity and regeneration of the wood.

Hedgerows will be diverse in structure and composition following a variety of management from laying to flailing on roadside boundaries, and minimal intervention in some areas. Boundary and hedgerow trees will be plentiful with new trees recruited and established after losses from disease such as ash dieback. These habitats will form corridors connected to the wider landscape, which will also be integrated into the site with transitional habitats such as scrub and long grass swards.

Dead wood will be retained on the ground or left standing where it does not pose a safety risk and will be plentiful following the natural aging of trees and some tree works operations which allow the retention of dead hedging and habitat piles.

This variety of woodland management will provide a diversity of age classes of trees and habitats for a range of invertebrate, fungi, bird and mammal species, including woodland specialists which rely on temporary open space and those that benefit from the continuity of non-intervention and dead wood retention.

The open grassland areas will be as equally diverse as the woodland, using grazing cattle as a management tool and sympathetic scrub and tree management (rotational cutting), with chalk grassland plant communities and a range of grasses and meadow flora well-represented. Retained scrub and occasional trees will provide a transition between the surrounding woodland and grassland, but will not dominate the grassland which will remain primarily open, supporting invertebrates and breeding populations of ground and scrub nesting birds.

The sites diverse habitats and structure will provide resilience, particularly to single species threats such as ash dieback disease (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus). However, pests and diseases will be monitored and management

undertaken where essential to prevent detrimental impact to the overall condition of the site and its key features.

Herbivore impact (e.g. deer browsing) will not be preventing succession and establishment of native trees and understorey from natural regeneration, or resulting in significant losses of established trees, following appropriate assessment and management to prevent a detrimental impact, if required.

Archaeological features such as the marl pits and remnant tree-lined avenue will be preserved.

Signed entrances, two car parks and the permissive path network will be maintained to facilitate access at the site. Orientation panels at car park entrances and interpretation panels and way-marked trails will enhance the visitor experience.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Secondary Woodland

Description
This key feature is made up of sub-compartments 1a, 1b, 1d, 1e, 2a, 3a, 3b, 3d, 3e and 5a. See compartment descriptions for detail recorded in the last woodland ecological condition assessment (2023). The majority of the key feature (sub-compartments 1a, 1b, 1d, 3a, 3b and 3d) comprises mixed native broadleaf plantations, planted between 1992 and 1995. Wide rides are present throughout, although some sections are narrowing from the establishing trees. Ride edges and triangular glades at path intersections provide space for a developing herb layer, scrub and occasional natural tree regeneration (e.g. oak, birch and goat willow). Some young oaks at these glades have been singled out for long-term retention as open grown trees. There is little understorey in the plantations as most of them are at a high planting density and will remain so through pole stage until natural thinning or silvicultural interventions take place. The current exception is where ash is diminishing from ash dieback disease and scrub and understorey species are already establishing in their place. Sub-compartments 1e, 2a and 5a are areas of older secondary woodland, of predominantly beech and sycamore, with Norway spruce and larch. All of the secondary woodland compartments have been fenced to exclude grazing deer and cattle through the establishment phase, with sub-compartments 1d, 3b and 3e incorporating open margins to allow natural colonisation of self-sown trees to increase the woodland footprint gradually and naturally and to provide transitional areas on the margins of open grassland compartments.
Significance
Secondary woodland makes up the largest proportion of habitat (60%/80ha) at Home Farm. It provides a diversity of predominantly native woodland habitats and structure, bridging previous gaps in tree cover across the landscape and complementing the small amount of ancient woodland on site. A low proportion of conifers provides diversity in an otherwise predominantly broadleaf landscape. A number of Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedule 1 bird species have been recorded at the site which benefit from conifers for nesting sites: hobby, red kite, and firecrest.
Opportunities & Constraints
Constraints: Wet periods and seasons (autumn/winter) limit the timing of operations and timber extraction, due to the risk of ground damage from vehicles and forestry activity.
Factors Causing Change

Ash dieback: Ash was a significant component of the secondary woodland composition, however, it has diminished from natural decline and death and tree safety works between 2018 - 2024.
Natural regeneration: Tree and scrub colonisation and growth reduce open space and along rides and glades, requiring continual management to maintain habitat diversity and access.
Bramble scrub and old man's beard are present in the natural regeneration enclosures of sub-cpts 1d, 3b and 3e and can inhibit and/or dominate tree and ground flora regeneration.
Herbivores: Deer (muntjac and roe) are becoming an increasing presence as the site and its woodland matures, with a corresponding increase in risk of vegetation damage from browsing.
Climate change: Warmer, wetter winters may result in significant changes to the water table and saturation of soil. Conversely, longer drought periods and increased temperatures are also anticipated through spring and summer. This increases the likelihood of knock-on effects such as drying or waterlogging of soils, increased vulnerability to tree pests and diseases and changes in species composition to those that are best adapted to the changing conditions. Beech, a significant component of the mature secondary woodland at the site, are particularly vulnerable because of their shallow root system.
Spruce Bark Beetle: Home Farm falls within the demarcated area for the risk of an outbreak of the beetle Ips typographus. If left uncontrolled, the beetle (in association with fungi), has the potential to cause significant damage to Britain's spruce-based forestry and timber industries and therefore, proactive removal of spruce at Home Farm to control the spread of the beetle is endorsed by the Forestry Commission.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The secondary woodland will comprise a variety of stand-types and structures including high forest with shrub and understorey layers well represented in parts, coppice areas, wide rides and intersections with flower and scrub rich margins and occasional open grown trees. This will be the result of actively managed areas with ride-side coppicing and silvicultural interventions carried out where appropriate, particularly where management of tree diseases such as ash dieback are required, supplemented with non-intervention areas that develop naturally.
Coppicing will enhance existing scallops and individual trees will be retained as open grown specimens/long-term veterans on ride edges and glades where possible. Ash on ride edges affected by ash dieback will also be removed as part of the ride widening works, however, ash that do not present a risk to visitors will be left to decline naturally, increasing dead wood within the stands.
It is anticipated that the majority, if not all ash within the compartments will be affected and lost as a potential canopy component. The loss of individuals, groups or small stands of ash will provide canopy gaps for other tree and understorey species to regenerate and establish in. Dead wood will increase and will be left standing or fallen where safe to do so, but removed where it could present a risk to visitors (e.g. adjacent to maintained footpaths). The variety of tree species present across the majority of the key feature will provide resilience to diseases and maintain canopy cover, with oak, beech and rapid colonisers such as sycamore and birch present. A small proportion of conifers will be retained where they benefit the diversity of the site and are not threatening native ancient or priority habitats.

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

To safeguard, diversify and assess the secondary woodland over the 5 year period 2025 - 2030. This will be achieved through the following:

•Felling and extraction of all Norway spruce in sub-cpts 2a, 3e 4a and 5a in 2026, to prevent the spread of the spruce bark beetle.
•Annual coppicing of up to 500m of ride-side trees in sub-cpts 1a and 3a to increase the diversity of edge structure.
•Mowing of rides three times a year to maintain wide corridors with a variety of sward heights including close cropped

grass and herb and scrub margins.
•Annual ragwort control in sub-cpts 1d, 3b and 3e with pulling or mowing, to prevent excessive levels that dominate tree and ground flora regeneration and to prevent spread to neighbouring land.
•Biennial mowing (cut and collect) or topping in sub-cpts 1d, 3b and 3e, if required to prevent dominating species (e.g. bramble) from smothering tree and ground flora regeneration.
•Annual removal and disposal of redundant tree guards.
•Herbivore impact assessments in 2027 and 2029 to determine impacts and inform management taking place within the plan period.
•A survey of breeding bird populations and ground flora in 2026.
•An assessment of the key feature in 2029 as part of the whole site woodland ecological condition assessment, to inform the next management plan review in 2030.

4.2 f2 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

Description

This key feature is made up of sub compartments 1c, 1f and 3c totalling 53ha/38% of Home Farm. See compartment descriptions for detail recorded in the last woodland ecological condition assessment (2023).

It comprises open grassland with scrub and hedgerows on thin layers of mildly acidic to neutral clay over chalk, with the current approximated composition:

Approx. 9ha (17%) of tree/scrub cover (birch, oak, goat willow with hawthorn, bramble, dog rose and clematis) mainly in sub-cpts 3c and 1f, with a lesser proportion in 1c.
Approx. 31ha (60%) of open space (chalk grassland and flora) mainly sub-cpts 1c and 3c with a lesser proportion in 1f.
Approx. 13ha (23%) of temporary open space (grassland recovered from previous tree/scrub cover) mainly sub-cpt 3c with a lesser proportion in 1c and 1f.

Compartments 1c and 3c are grazed year-round with cattle; mainly rare breeds such as Devon, Gloucester and Highland, chosen for their docility and suitability for conservation management.

Compartment 1c has been grazed for the longest period and together with aspect and soil types the scrub and tree regeneration has been slower to colonise. By comparison compartment 3c, which had a cessation in grazing for 7 years, is abundant with scrub and colonises readily.

There is a diverse range of ground flora across the key feature, from semi-improved and grass-dominated swards, to remnant chalk grassland communities partly naturally colonised, and partly supplemented with a grass and wildflower mix sown in 1994/95. Notable species include the chalk grassland indicator ploughman's spikenard, fairy flax, dropwort, sainfoin, wild basil and bee orchid, along with kidney vetch, cowslip, salad burnet, wild basil, field scabious, small scabious and woolly thistle. More common species include Yorkshire fog, red fescue, rough meadow-grass, meadow buttercup, dandelion, bird's foot trefoil, common knapweed, agrimony and common-spotted and pyramidal orchids. Ragwort is also present, with red bartsia (Odontites vernus) on path edges.

There are also mixed native hedgerows on the sub-compartment and meadow boundaries, and historic excavated marl pits (chalk/clay quarry pits) sporadically spaced across the key feature, naturally colonised with ash and oak. In addition, two very small planted mixed broadleaf stands and chestnut post and rail enclosures housing 4 oak and 2

walnut trees each were planted across sub-compartment 1c in 2015 to commemorate the battle of Agincourt.

The smallest area of grassland, sub-compartment 1f, has been excluded from grazing since the Trusts ownership, leaving a natural regeneration area mainly colonising with hawthorn scrub.

Hedgerows are a mixture of formally managed on external boundaries (e.g. the perimeter of car parks and roadside) to previously laid or fallow on internal boundaries, interspersed with outgrown or self-sown trees.

Significance

Chalk grassland is a nationally rare habitat and is scarce within the Hampshire Downs. It is the Trust's aim and one of Natural England's Landscape Opportunities for the Hampshire Downs National Character Area to protect, restore and enhance this priority habitat. A 2016 flora survey reported that this Key Feature has remnant chalk grassland plant communities and indicator species, and indicated that the site has the potential to restore and sustain these with a modest amount of proactive management, with a proportion of scrub and occasional trees and wildlife-friendly hedgerows providing a transition to the surrounding woodland.
A 2016 bird survey recorded many species of conservation concern including an estimated 11 pairs of skylarks breeding in the grassland, along with other ground nesting birds such as tree pipit, chiffchaff, willow warbler, pheasant and partridge. A number of other scrub and hedgerow nesting birds are also present including yellowhammer, whitethroat and dunnock.
This is the only area of habitats of this type in the immediate vicinity, with intensively managed arable farmland comprising the majority of open habitat in the landscape. Therefore, these habitats provide a sanctuary and potential hub from which flora and fauna may populate the surrounding land.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
The habitat condition is partly dependent upon grazing, stock density suitable for conservation grazing, suitable graziers and stock. Stock related pests and diseases and outbreaks may result in the postponing of grazing for required or enforced periods.
Wet periods and seasons (autumn/winter) limit the duration and number of cattle suitable for grazing and timing of operations, due to the risk of poaching and ground damage from livestock and vehicles.

Factors Causing Change

Natural scrub and tree regeneration: Succession to scrub and woodland is inevitable without intervention to maintain the open grassland.
Invasive/noxious species: Ragwort is present and in this agricultural setting with livestock on site and potentially present in neighbouring properties, along with horses, requires management.
Climate change: Drier, hotter summers increase the risk of fires, however, breaks in grassland are maintained through annual mowing of rides through open spaces.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The open areas will predominantly comprise grassland (approx. 60%/30ha) with a complimentary balance of regenerating scrub and trees (approx. 40%/21ha) following continual grazing with cattle, rotational scrub and tree cutting and cut and collect mowing, outside of bird nesting season. No more than 30% of the scrub or 30% of the sward (15ha) will be cut in any one year. Chalk grassland plant communities and a range of grasses of varying heights and

meadow flora will be well-represented.
Scrub and trees will provide a transition between the surrounding woodland and grassland, but will not dominate the grassland which will remain primarily open, supporting breeding populations of ground and scrub nesting birds. Hedgerows will be diverse in structure and composition following a variety of management from laying to flailing on roadside boundaries, and minimal intervention in some areas. The diverse management will integrate the hedgerows into the grassland with transitional habitats such as scrub and long grass margins. Boundary and hedgerow trees will be plentiful, with new trees recruited and establishing after management and losses from disease such as ash dieback.

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

To maintain predominantly open grassland (approx. 60%/30ha) with a sward of varying heights and a complementary balance of scrub in patches, wavy lines and individual bushes (approx. 40%/21ha). This will be achieved through the following:

•Installation of new grazing access to sub-cpt 3c (west side of site) from Burkham Lane car park via sub-cpt 3a and new trough bases in sub-cpts 1c and 3c in 2027.
•Year-round grazing of sub-cpts 1c and 3c with a maximum of 20 cattle in each sub-cpt at any one time.
•Annual self-sown tree and scrub cutting in sub-cpts 1c and 3c, outside of bird nesting season, where young tree growth threatens the grassland and scrub mosaic by succession to closed canopy woodland. No more than 30% of regenerating trees and scrub will be cut in any one year.
•Biennial cut and collect mowing or topping in patches of up to 3ha, in sub-cpts 1c and 3c outside of bird nesting season. No more than 30% of the sward (15ha) will be cut in any one year.
•Annual non-native invasive species/injurious weed (e.g. ragwort) control with pulling or mowing, to prevent excessive levels that dominate tree and ground flora regeneration and to prevent spread to neighbouring land.
•Annual inspection of perimeter boundary fencing and gates and fence repairs to ensure the site is secure for grazing livestock.
•Annual inspection of troughs and water supply for grazing livestock.
•A survey of breeding bird populations and ground flora in 2026.
•An assessment of the key feature in 2027 and 2029 as part of the whole site woodland ecological condition assessment, to inform the next management plan review in 2030.

4.3 f3 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

This Key Feature consists of one compartment (4a) known as Wigdell Copse. It is the only area of ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) at Home Farm, totalling 3ha.
The canopy is comprised of overstood ash coppice interspersed with occasional oak standards dating from the 1920s. The understory is dominated by hazel coppice with frequent elder, occasional hawthorn, and ASNW ground flora including bluebells, wood anemone, Solomon's seal, supplemented by more common woodland species. An ephemeral pond is located at the east end of the copse which temporarily fills in winter or prolonged periods of rainfall as a result of land drains from the WT land to the north, and remains largely empty for the remainder of the year. The south west of the compartment consists of a small belt of mature Norway spruce and Douglas fir with emerging scrub beneath (mainly blackthorn and hawthorn) which is open to grazing, though barely accessible to livestock and consequently rarely grazed if ever.
Ash dieback disease (Hymenoscyphus fraxinea) is present, affecting the majority of the copse due to the dominance of

ash which makes up the majority of the canopy. In the last plan period (2019 - 2024) the ash have significantly declined and many are dead, hung-up or fallen as dead wood on the woodland floor. The former ride to the north of the copse which was closed in 2019 has largely scrubbed over and is merging the copse with the adjacent planted woodland.

Significance

ASNW is a nationally rare habitat and is scarce within the Hampshire Downs due to historical clearance for agriculture. It is the Trust's aim and one of Natural England's Landscape Opportunities for the Hampshire Downs National Character Area to protect, restore and enhance this priority habitat. This is the only ASNW compartment and the pond is the only significant natural water source at Home Farm. There was a high density of potentially breeding birds recorded at the copse in 2016 including tawny owl, song thrush, mistle thrush, nuthatch and marsh tit. Therefore, the mature habitat and continuity that this copse provides is a sanctuary and potential hub from which wildlife and ground flora may populate the surrounding land.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
The small size of the copse means that it is vulnerable to any impacts such as pests and diseases and silvicultural works. Wet periods and seasons (autumn/winter) limit the timing of operations and timber extraction, due to the risk of ground damage from vehicles and forestry activity.

Factors Causing Change

Ash dieback disease: As ash forms the majority of the canopy of the copse, the presence of ash dieback is highly significant, and the disease and natural regeneration is being left to progress naturally.
Spruce bark beetle: Home Farm falls within the demarcated area for the risk of an outbreak of the beetle Ips typographus. If left uncontrolled, the beetle (in association with fungi), has the potential to cause significant damage to Britain’s spruce-based forestry and timber industries and therefore, proactive removal of spruce at Home Farm to control the spread of the beetle is endorsed by the Forestry Commission.
Herbivores: The southern end of the copse is open to grazing, though it is rarely used by the cattle. The closure of the copse from public access in 2019 may be providing sanctuary for deer, through lack of disturbance.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The copse will ultimately retain a mixed broadleaf tree canopy with an abundance of understorey, shrub species and ASNW ground flora, with no invasive species present. However, the composition of the copse will be directly influenced by the effects of ash dieback and the copse's natural response to it. It is anticipated that the majority, if not all ash within the copse will be affected and lost as a canopy component. The remaining oak (approximately 10% of the current canopy) may then serve as a seed source, providing some natural regeneration in the more open conditions following canopy loss. The oak is only likely to establish in the long-term, and in intervening years may either be nursed by coarse vegetation (e.g. bramble) or suppressed by it, along with the significant woody debris from the collapse of ash. Other nearby tree species such as birch and particularly sycamore are likely to colonise the wood and form a significant or even dominant proportion of the canopy. This process will be monitored over the plan period and subsequent years, and if a successive canopy does not naturally establish it is possible that some intervention will be required, such as enrichment planting of UK sourced and grown native oak.
Any non-native conifers present will have no adverse impact on native species and will provide a beneficial addition to the diversity of the copse.

Herbivore impact will also be assessed to determine any management required to prevent a detrimental impact to the key feature.

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

To safeguard and assess the ASNW over the 5 year period 2025 - 2030. This will be achieved through the following:

•Felling and extraction of all Norway spruce within the copse in 2026, to prevent the spread of the Spruce bark beetle.
•An assessment of the progress of ash dieback disease and the succession of habitat in 2027.
•Herbivore impact assessments in 2027 and 2029 to determine impacts and inform management taking place within the plan period.
•A survey of breeding bird populations and ground flora in 2026. However, the risk to surveyors from ash dieback may prevent a detailed assessment of this key feature.
•An assessment of the key feature in 2029 as part of the whole site woodland ecological condition assessment, to inform the next management plan review in 2030. However, the risk to surveyors from ash dieback may prevent a detailed assessment of this key feature.

4.4 f4 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Home Farm is a WT access category A site (high usage, regularly used at all times of the year, with more than approximately 15-20 visitors using one entrance every day).

Situated in the well-wooded countryside of the Hampshire Downs in north-east Hampshire, Home Farm is a 136 hectare (336 acre) site mid-way between the towns of Alton (pop. 19,425) and Basingstoke (pop.113,766). It is 1km (0.5 miles) south of the hamlet of Burkham and 3km (2 miles) north-west of the village of Bentworth, just west of the A339 Basingstoke Road.

The site is divided into two 'halves' east and west of Burkham Lane, which runs from Burkham to Bentworth. The main car park is at the southern end of Spain Lane, via either of two turnings on the west side of the A339, signposted for Burkham. Nearest postcode: GU34 5RT. The car park is free and has space for approximately 24 cars. A second, smaller car park is situated on the west side of Burkham Lane, approximately 1.5km north of the junction of Ashley Road and Drury Lane in Bentworth. Nearest postcode: GU34 5RP. This car park is also free and has space for approximately 10 cars.

The site has ten pedestrian kissing gate entrances, with RADAR (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation) key kissing gates allowing access for all abilities to each side of the site from both car parks.

There are no public rights of way over Home Farm, but there is a network of more than 12km (7.5 miles) of maintained permissive paths, including three waymarked circular trails that can begin from either of the wood's two car parks. Paths at Home Farm are mostly natural and can be muddy during winter or prolonged periods of rainfall. There are a number of benches along the main paths, including a large picnic table/bench which seats up to approximately 12 people, suitable for rest-stops or picnics.

There is also a public footpath that connects the north boundary of the west half of Home Farm to Bradley, a small

village approximately 1km to the west of the wood. From Bradley, visitors can pick up the Three Castles Path, a long distance route from Windsor to Winchester, providing 60 miles of easy walking through peaceful historic and beautiful countryside.

There is a plentiful choice of pubs and cafes within a 5 mile radius of the site, the nearest being the Sun Inn, Bentworth, and The Departure Lounge Café on Basingstoke Road just off the A339.

Gilberts White's house and gardens are also situated only 10 miles away in Selborne, a celebration of 'The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne' for which the author is best known.

For additional woodland visits there are also two Forestry Commission sites in the area: Weston Common, approximately 3km north east and Chawton Park Wood, approximately 5km south east of Home Farm. The Woodland Trusts Binswood Common SSSI is also approximately 11km to the east on the outskirts of Bordon (see the Woodland Trust website for more information).

Significance

Home Farm is close to the hamlet of Burkham, on the northern side of Bentworth parish. The land passed through different ownership over the centuries until it was put up for sale in 1965. At that time the Home Farm area of the estate consisted of farmland, copse and uncultivated land. A part of this predominantly arable farm was earmarked for landfill use, but local opposition and a substantial donation by Lord and Lady Sainsbury enabled the Trust to buy the land in 1990 and remove the threat.

Between 1992 and 1995, the Trust planted 67,000 trees and shrubs on the site. Then in 2011 a Queen's Diamond Jubilee project to plant six million trees across the UK was launched and to mark the occasion, the Princess Royal planted the first of the Jubilee Woods' trees at Home Farm and wrote a personal letter of support that was buried in a time capsule.

Home Farm remains one of the largest native woodland creation sites in southern England and is one of few nature reserves in the area. Much of the woodland planted in the 1990's was planted through a dedication scheme which still attracts visits from those who donated. It also attracts visitors from a wide range of places, including the local villages Bentworth and Lasham, but also larger towns such as Alton and Basingstoke. The car parks, range of walks available, views across the site and varied habitats are key elements in attracting visitors. It is a place where visitors can experience the historic landscape character and wildlife that the richest areas of the Hampshire Downs have to offer.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:
To engage with more visitors to promote interest and connection with the habitats and management, (e.g. grazing cattle and protection of ground nesting birds).

Constraints:
Although there are footpaths through the whole site, these are largely natural and unsurfaced, meaning that many of the paths are muddy during the winter or prolonged periods of rainfall. The feasibility and cost of permanent surfacing is prohibitive and would spoil the natural rural aesthetic of the site and damage the ecology.
The rural location means that the site is only accessible by car for the majority of visitors.

Factors Causing Change

The current increase in housing developments in the southeast is likely to increase the local population. Increased visitor numbers could potentially bring positive and/or negative effects e.g. conflicts with cattle/ground-nesting birds and dogs or increased interest in the welfare of cattle/ground-nesting birds and dogs, incidences of fire and littering, damage to paths and trampling of specialist ground flora.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The site will provide a safe, enjoyable and varied woodland experience for visitors, with a network of well-maintained and accessible footpaths, entrances and car parks.
The site will be well used and appreciated by both the local population and visitors from further afield. It will be known for its wildlife, varied habitats, and historic interest, and should retain its largely natural, rural aesthetic, with sympathetic infrastructure, signage and interpretation.

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

To provide a safe, enjoyable and varied woodland experience for visitors. This will be achieved through the following:
- Mowing of rides three times a year, including maintenance of signs and way-markers.
- Annual entrance maintenance and car park and roadside hedgerows to maintain access and sightlines.
- Monthly litter picks.
- Annual infrastructure inspections and maintenance.
- Annual tree safety inspections in line with the Trusts Tree Risk Management Policy and remedial works as required.
- Replacement of signs, noticeboards and interpretation panels in 2028.
- An assessment of access infrastructure and signs in 2027 and 2029 as part of the whole site woodland ecological condition assessment, to inform the next management plan review in 2030.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2025	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December
2025	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	December
2025	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	December
2025	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Works associated with the construction of a new or extension to existing car parking facilities.	December
2026	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	February
2025	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	February
2026	NWH - Grazing Work	Works associated with the maintenance of grazing of a non-woodland habitat to protect and enhance its conservation value – grazier costs, fence repairs, water supply costs etc	February
2026	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	February
2026	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	February
2026	NWH - Grazing Work	Works associated with the maintenance of grazing of a non-woodland habitat to protect and enhance its conservation value – grazier costs, fence repairs, water supply costs etc	March
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,	March
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing	April

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		pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	
2026	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	May
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,	May
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	May
2026	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	June
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,	July
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,	September
2026	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	September
2026	WMM - Secondary Silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within secondary woods to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	September
2026	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	September
2026	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December
2027	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	February

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2026	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	February
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2027	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December
2028	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	February
2027	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	February
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2028	PE - Interpretation & Signage	Works associated with the provision of visitor signage, waymarking, interpretation features and leaflets	September
2028	NWH - Maintenance Work	Works associated with the maintenance of non-woodland habitats – mechanical management, hay cutting, fence and wall maintenance etc	September
2028	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December
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2034	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	February
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2034	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,	April
2035	NWH - Grazing Work	Works associated with the maintenance of grazing of a non-woodland habitat to protect and enhance its conservation value – grazier costs, fence repairs, water supply costs etc	April
2035	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,	May
2034	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,	May
2034	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	May

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	21.97	Mixed native broadleaves	1993	High forest		
Located in the north half of east side of the site. The northernmost section containing the circular path is known as 'Settlers Wood'. Mixed broadleaf plantation of oak, ash, beech, holly, field maple, silver birch, whitebeam, wayfaring tree, hazel, hawthorn, wild cherry, blackthorn, guelder rose, spindle and dogwood. Natural regeneration includes sycamore, ash (now affected by ash dieback) oak and goat willow. Willow is thriving in the southern section adjoining the west boundary as this area is particularly wet during autumn, winter and prolonged rainy periods. Ash dieback is present within the compartment, mainly affecting boundary trees at the north end and young plantation trees elsewhere.						
1b	2.74	Mixed native broadleaves	1993	Min-intervention		
Located on the west boundary of the east side of the site. Mixed broadleaf plantation of oak, ash, beech, holly, field maple, silver birch, whitebeam, wayfaring tree, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, spindle and dogwood. Natural regeneration of sycamore, ash (now affected by ash dieback) and oak. Ash dieback is present within the compartment, mainly affecting young and semi-mature trees on the west boundary and young plantation trees elsewhere.						
1c	29.85	Open ground	1994	Non-wood habitat	Archaeological features, Management factors (eg grazing etc), Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	
Located in the east side of the site. Sown with grass/wildflower mix in 1994/95 and mown until 2005. From 2006 until 2011 it was grazed by sheep, but is now being grazed by cattle, year round. It is largely comprised of open grassland with emerging scrub (mainly hawthorn and occasional bramble) along the edges and occasional patches throughout. A diverse range of ground flora, from semi-improved and grass dominated swards, to remnant chalk grassland communities are present. Notable species include the chalk grassland indicator ploughman's spikenard (Inula conyzae), upright brome, quaking grass, common centaury, salad burnet, common sedge, hoary plantain, fairy flax, dropwort, sainfoin, and woolly thistle (Cirsium eriophorum). Yorkshire fog, red fescue, rough meadow-grass, meadow buttercup, dandelion, bird's foot trefoil, common knapweed and agrimony are among the more common species present. Ragwort is also present, with red bartsia (Odontites vernus) on path edges. In addition, one marl pit naturally colonised with ash and oak to the north and two very small planted mixed						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
broadleaf stands near the south boundary are open to grazing, with chestnut post and rail enclosures (originally ten) housing four oak and two walnut trees each, were planted evenly across the compartment in 2015 to commemorate the battle of Agincourt. The main car park is located on the eastern edge.						
1d	6.64	Mixed native broadleaves	1993	Min-intervention	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	
Located in the south east corner of the east side of the site. Mixed broadleaf plantation with adjacent open-space areas fenced off to keep livestock out to allow natural regeneration. A mix of oak, ash, beech, holly, field maple, silver birch, whitebeam, wayfaring tree, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, spindle and dogwood. A thin strip of mature beech trees runs along the eastern edge of the plantation along the boundary of the site, and hawthorn, blackthorn and bramble is colonising the edges set aside for natural regeneration. Close-cropped grass from apparent rabbit browsing on the wide ride running north to south through the plantation.						
1e	0.79	Beech	1900	Min-intervention	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	
Located at the centre of the east boundary of the east side of the site. Historically this sub-cpt is likely to have been adjoining sub-cpt 2a as a larger tract of woodland/plantation. A triangular-shaped stand of mature beech and sycamore known as 'Little Hills', with sparse holly and beech regeneration. A large, deep marl pit occupies approximately one-third of the sub-cpt nearest the A339.						
1f	1.17	Open ground	1994	Min-intervention		
Located at the centre of the east boundary of the east side of the site. Grassland adjoining sub-cpt 1c, but excluded from grazing during the Trusts ownership, leaving a natural regeneration area which mainly consists of hawthorn scrub.						
2a	3.03	Beech	1900	High forest	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	
Located in the centre of the east side of the site. Mixed plantation known as 'Lodge Copse'. Overplanted in the mid 1900's (c1960) with Norway spruce and larch, occasional western red cedar, rare Douglas fir and yew, with self-sown beech and sycamore with an understory of hazel with sycamore and beech regeneration. The ground layer						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
comprises a thin layer of bramble and occasional woodland and edge plants including enchanters nightshade, garlic mustard and red campion. The conifers were last thinned in 2011. The north boundary of the compartment comprises a remnant 'avenue' marked by evenly spaced planted mature beech, horse chestnut and sycamore flanking a notably straight ride running east to west. This appears most likely to have been part of a large drive that once lead to Burkham House, a short distance north west of the site, exactly in line with the 'avenue'. Two sizeable marl pits are present at the east end of the compartment, and roughly central to the sub-cpt.						
3a	35.13	Mixed native broadleaves	1993	High forest	Archaeological features	
Located adjacent to the north and east boundaries of the west side of the site. Mixed broadleaf plantation of oak, ash, beech, holly, field maple, silver birch, whitebeam, wayfaring tree, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, spindle and dogwood. Natural regeneration includes sycamore, ash (now affected by ash dieback), birch, oak and goat willow. Ash dieback is present within the compartment, mainly affecting trees at the north end and on the south boundary and young plantation trees elsewhere. A small marl pit is located roughly central to the sub-cpt. A small car park is located to the south-east of the sub-cpt.						
3b	3.35	Mixed native broadleaves	2006	Min-intervention		
Located in the north west of the west side of the site. Mixed broadleaf plantation and natural regeneration area, excluded from grazing in 2006. 'Orion Wood', part of the Trafalgar Woods project, was planted in 2006 and 'Scout Wood' was planted partly by scouts in 2007. Both are a mix of oak, ash, beech, holly, field maple, silver birch, whitebeam, wayfaring tree, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, spindle and dogwood. Grassland surrounds the woods, with mixed flora including orchids, fleabane, scabious, and bramble scrub, with oak and hawthorn self-seeding prolifically.						
3c	21.2	Open ground	1994	Non-wood habitat	Archaeological features, Management factors (eg grazing etc), Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	
Located in the west side of the site. Sown in 1994/95 with grass/wildflower mix and mown until 2005. It was grazed by sheep from 2006 to 2011, but was not grazed from 2011- 2018. Grazing resumed in 2018 with cattle. Largely comprised of open grassland with prolific scrub and tree regeneration colonising the edges from surrounding woodland compartments, with significant patches of scrub and stands of young trees throughout. Scrub mainly consists of hawthorn (with occasional blackthorn) and bramble, with self-sown trees mainly comprising						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
birch, oak, and goat willow. This sub-cpt supports the richest chalk grassland community at Home Farm, which is threatened by encroachment by false brome, bramble, rank grasses and coarse species including wild parsnip, goatsbeard, meadow buttercup, creeping thistle and upright brome. Notable species include the chalk grassland indicators fairy flax, field scabious, wild basil and pyramidal orchid, along with kidney vetch, cowslip, salad burnet, dropwort, wild basil, field scabious, small scabious and common rockrose and nettle-leaved bellflower. Ragwort is also present. There are two small marl pits at the east and west ends, naturally colonised with ash and oak.						
3d	3.26	Mixed native broadleaves	1993	Min-intervention		
Located in the south west corner of the west side of the site. Mixed broadleaf plantation of oak, ash, beech, holly, field maple, silver birch, whitebeam, wayfaring tree, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, spindle and dogwood. Natural regeneration of sycamore, ash (now affected by ash dieback) and oak. The circular ride has close-cropped grass from apparent rabbit browsing. Ash dieback is present within the sub-cpt, mainly affecting young plantation trees in the centre.						
3e	2.17	Mixed broadleaves	2006	Min-intervention		
Located on the west boundary of the west side of the site. Woodland belt (mainly mature beech, sycamore, ash and spruce) along the site edge with grassland margin, excluded from grazing in 2006 to allow natural regeneration to develop. Regeneration consists mainly of old man's beard, bramble and hawthorn. Snowberry is present within the understorey, but has remained confined to this sub-cpt only. Ash dieback is present within the compartment, mainly affecting mature boundary trees at the north end.						
4a	3	Ash	1700	Min-intervention	Archaeological features, Diseases, Management factors (eg grazing etc), Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
Located near the centre of the west side of the site. The only area of ASNW (approx. 2.27ha on the AWI) at Home Farm known as 'Wigdell Copse'. Closed to public access in 2019 due to the decline of ash trees from ash dieback disease. Overstood ash coppice with occasional oak standards dating from the 1920s, occasional field maple and an understory dominated by hazel coppice with frequent elder and occasional hawthorn. ASNW ground flora is abundant with bluebells, wood anemone, lesser celandine, dogs mercury, yellow archangel, Solomon's seal, primroses and greater stitchwort with nettle, ferns, bramble, cleavers, wood avens and honeysuckle. The south-west of the compartment consists of a small belt of mature Norway spruce with emerging scrub (mainly blackthorn and hawthorn) which is open to grazing, though barely accessible to livestock and consequently rarely						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
grazed, if ever. Ash dieback is present within the compartment, affecting the majority of the copse due to the dominance of ash. An ephemeral pond is located at the east end of the copse which temporarily fills in winter or prolonged periods of rainfall as a result of land drains from the WT land to the north, and remains largely empty for the remainder of the year.						
5a	1.79	Mixed conifers	1960	Min-intervention	Management factors (eg grazing etc), Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	
Located in the centre of the west side of the site. Norway spruce plantation with larch and occasional oak. The conifers were last thinned in 2011, leaving the compartment largely open and the ground layer dense with dead wood from felled and windthrown trees. Elder dominates the shrub layer, with hazel on the edges. Oak and beech regeneration and young trees are present. Ground flora is dominated by dog's mercury and nettle, with some patches of bramble, thistle, burdock, ground ivy and coarse grasses. This compartment is open to grazing, though barely accessible to livestock and consequently rarely grazed, if ever.						

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.

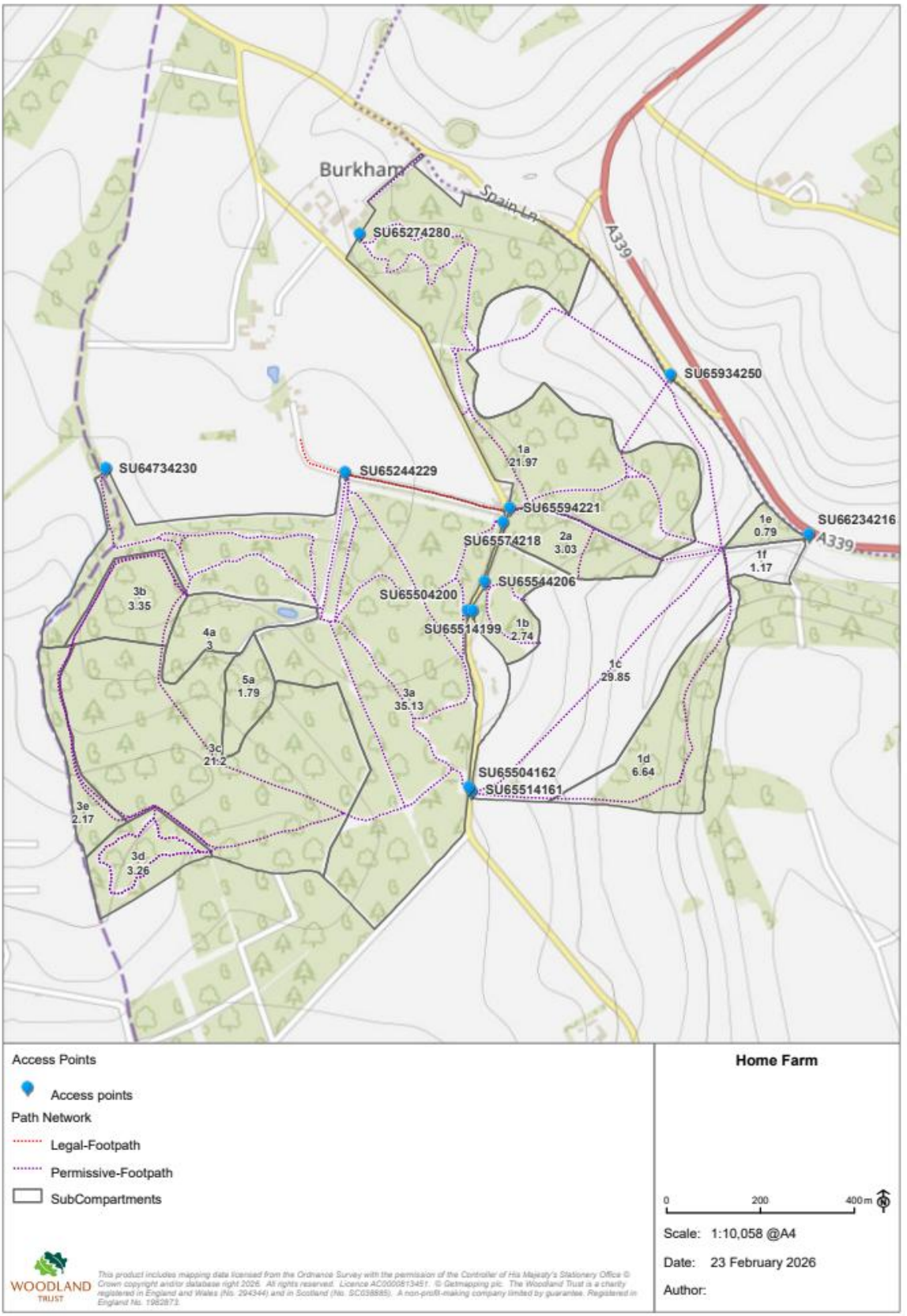
Sub-Compartment
Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

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.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Date: 23 February 2026
Author:
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