

Plummers Wood

(Plan period – 2023 to 2028)



WOODLAND
TRUST

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Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

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

Our Vision is:

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

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

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

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

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

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

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

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

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.
4. The long term vision for all our ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities to generate income from our Estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we encourage our woods to be used for local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the Estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.
10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

The Public Management Plan

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

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

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

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

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

Location and Access

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

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

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

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

The Management Plan

1. Site Details
2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
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5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Plummers Wood

Location:	Haynes, Shefford Grid reference: TL097414 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 153
Area:	1.00 hectares (2.47 acres)
External Designations:	N/A
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Plummers Copse is a 1.04ha new native woodland and takes its name from Plummers Lane, which forms the western boundary. The presence of wild plum trees within this boundary is a local theory to the name, which is fitting. The site was planted as part of the Woodland Trusts 'Woods On Your Doorstep' initiative and is one of 200 designed to celebrate the Millennium.

The site has a southerly aspect gently sloping up from the entrance and was arable until 1995. The previous owners had tried to plant trees on the site surrounding their caravan but the trees failed. The site was purchased by the Trust in December 1997 with local support and was planted entirely by volunteers in a single day in November 1998. The whole site was grass seeded prior to planting. A public bridleway crosses the site generally east - west and forms the main public / management entrance off Plummers Lane. An information board can be found here.

Two Roman hoards have been found at or near the site, the first in 1946 and latterly in 1997. Substantial numbers of coins rings, spoons etc were found. The site lies close to a known Roman road and encampment.

A bench has been placed within an open glade at a high point towards the north of the site. This bench is the sites Millennium Feature.

Key features are: informal public access and new native woodland.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The intention of this site is the development of a fully established high forest, comprising of native broadleaf species and managed by supporting natural processes in line with Woodland Trust management guidelines. It should exhibit strong community ties and regular enjoyment by local population.

Now that the initial establishment period is over, the woodland will be allowed to develop naturally as far as possible, only intervening when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes in accordance with the Woodland Trusts Management Approach. The aim is to create a diverse mature woodland with a range of native species, age ranges, well structured rides and with deadwood, both standing and fallen, being retained where it is safe to do so. Gaps in the canopy will allow for floral colonisation and regeneration of all species. The main species expected to be present in 50 years are oak, ash, plum, cherry, field maple, hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn.

Low key public access will be maintained in perpetuity but there will be a managed path network and the wood will be as safe as practical. Infrastructure and facilities will be minimal and only essential signage used. Use of the site will be monitored and provisions for informal recreation reviewed accordingly.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
Open public access is available over the whole site for quiet recreational use. In addition, there are about 530m of grass paths forming circular routes within the woodland, including the public bridleway. The grass is regularly mown to keep the paths clear and well defined. There is an information board at the main entrance to the wood and a bench has been provided.
Significance
The site is very much used and enjoyed by local people who worked hard to ensure its planting and serves as a symbol of their successful teamwork. Not much accessible woodland in the locality.
Opportunities & Constraints
Constraint The size of the site limits its potential Opportunity The site is connected to the wider PROW network.
Factors Causing Change
Encroaching vegetation blocking paths. Increase in footfall/site use.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Low key public access will be maintained in perpetuity, with a managed path network. The wood will be as safe as practical. Infrastructure and facilities will be minimal and only essential signage used. Community links will be maintained through the support of local volunteering, so long as there is local interest.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
Mow internal paths to 2m wide, three times each summer and strim around entrances, signs and seats. Check all facilities for stability / safety on a regular basis (24-36 months), taking action as necessary. Support the volunteer warden to undertake minor ride edge coppice and trim back encroaching vegetation as necessary. Community involvement will be sought for larger works (such as hedgelaying).

4.2 f2 New Native Woodland

Description

The woodland was planted with a mixture of broadleaves at a wide 3m spacing in 1998. The main species are oak, ash and hazel, with other native mixed broadleaves (hawthorn, blackthorn, cherry, etc) forming the remainder. A mixed species hedge has been planted against the eastern and northern boundaries and was partially laid by volunteers in 2012/13. A small area of hazel has been planted to the south of the bridleway and is intended to be coppiced (along with some of the ride-side hazel and hawthorn throughout the site) on a short rotation (~7yrs) by the community. There is an open glade to the north of the site.
Significance
The woodland will become an important landmark falling as it does on the junction of two roads in an essentially open, arable landscape.
Opportunities & Constraints
Constraint The small size of the wood will limit its biodiversity potential Opportunity Linked in with the wider environment by the seminatural habitat corridor associated with the stream on its boundary
Factors Causing Change
Deer (if gaining access to the site) Grey squirrel Pests and Diseases, specifically Chalara/Ash Dieback. As a key canopy species in local woodlands and a relatively high percentage of the planting, the loss of this species will effect both the landscape, character and biodiversity of the wood.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
To create a native broadleaf woodland, with a range of species, age ranges and a graded edge habitat. The main canopy species are expected to be oak and ash, with a predominantly hazel understorey (though, with the onset of ash dieback disease, other canopy species, such as cherry, rowan, small-leaved lime and alder, will be added to improve diversity and resilience).
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
Inspections (every 18-36months) will be undertaken to monitor development and tree health (including herbivore impacts), with actions undertaken as appropriate in accordance with Woodland Trust and industry best practice guidelines. 2022-27 Annual halo/light thinning (<5m³) around the better oak and cherries to allow more light to reach floor, hopefully improving development of ground flora, regeneration and that of the remaining trees. Coppice some of the ride-side hazel and hawthorn (throughout the site but predominantly along the main ride following the bridleway, the southern path edges and around the glade) on a short rotation (~7years) to allow the development of a diverse structured understorey. Leave some larger pieces from thinnings/coppicing as fallen deadwood and dice the brash arisings so they lay in a single layer on the floor. Restocking of the areas with significant ash dieback disease to be done in 2023 (including rowan, small-leaved lime, crab apple and alder), aimed at improving species diversity and overall site resilience.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	WC - Site Maintenance	Works associated with routine site management and maintenance works on Woodland Creation sites such as boundary ditches and fencing works , hedge trimming etc	December
2023	PE - Volunteer on site activity	Support for activities at the site of visiting volunteer groups, such as corporate partners, local groups. Support could include tools, external trainers or materials for work parties	December
2024	WC - Tree Planting / Seeding	Works associated with tree planting / tree seeding for woodland creation sites	March

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	1.04	Mixed native broadleaves		Coppice		
The whole site is included within the one compartment. It includes trees and shrubs in a W8 mix (predominantly oak and ash with hazel understorey, but also including cherry, field maple, willow, blackthorn, and hawthorn, all planted in 1998), open space in the form of paths and a single glade. The site has an established mixed species hedge with immature trees along its western boundary (including plums). A new mixed species hedge has been planted along the eastern and northern boundaries by the Trust. Two oak trees have been planted by the local WI near the bench.						

Ancient Woodland

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

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

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

Ancient Woodland Site

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

Beating Up

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

Broadleaf

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

Canopy

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

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

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

Conifer

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

Continuous Cover forestry

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

Coppice

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

Exotic (non-native) Species

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

Field Layer

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

Group Fell

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

Long Term Retention

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

Minimum Intervention

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

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

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

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

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

Origin & Provenance

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

Re-Stocking

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

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

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

Sub-Compartment

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

Thinning

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

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

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

Weeding

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

Windblow/Windthrow

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

Registered Office:

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