

Normanton Wood

(Plan period – 2025 to 2035)



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 10 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

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

Location and Access

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

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

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

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

The Management Plan

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2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
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 - 4.2 f2 New Native Woodland
5. Work Programme

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GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Normanton Wood

Location:	Earl Shilton Grid reference: SP483981 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 140
Area:	6.78 hectares (16.75 acres)
External Designations:	N/A
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Normanton wood lies to the east of Earl Shilton and the south west of Leicester. It sits in a largely arable landscape with minimal woodland cover, also lacking in public access land. The site was acquired in 1999 as part of the "Woods on Your Doorstep " initiative and it is currently situated around 0.6 km from the edge of Earl Shilton however the village is expanding. The site is only accessible from two minor roads. There are two points of public and maintenance access, the northern one from the Thurlaston Road and the southern from the Huncote Road. Both have small pull-offs which accommodate two or three cars.

The hedged boundary along Huncote Road has a number of mature standard trees within it. These being principally Oak. Adjoining the site in the SE corner is a small copse of Sycamore, Ash and Oak thought to have been planted in the 1930s, there is currently public access through onto this area and onto the Thurlaston Road. The site is bounded by arable agricultural to the east and the nearest large woodland is Burbadge Common and Woods which is 5km South East which contains around 60 hectares of Ancient Woodland with the nearest Woodland Trust site being Croft Glebe which is located 3km to the South West.

The linear open areas are a consequence of underground and aerial electricity power cables and a high pressure gas pipeline which traverse the site.

The planting is of native broad leaves, roughly 40% ash 40% oak with goat willow, field maple, silver birch and wild cherry making up the rest of the mix. These species have been drift planted across the site with two linear open areas that coincide with underground and overhead electricity power cables and a high pressure gas pipeline. The hedged boundary along Huncote Road has a number of mature standard trees within it.

The key features of the site are Informal Public Access and New Native Woodland

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The wood will be allowed to reach maturity and will develop the characteristics of more naturally occurring woodland, as opposed to a plantation of single aged trees. For this reason silvicultural intervention will take place to ensure the wood is diverse in tree species and structure, to promote a good mixture of both young and mature trees. This will enable the wood to be more resilient to change in the future, and will ensure it supports the greatest range of wildlife.

Open habitats will also remain and be managed within the woodland matrix, including the linear areas but also sunny rides.

A good standard of access provision will be maintained at Normanton Wood. The entrance will be accessible and clearly signed as per WT Spec 1.1 It shall be clearly visible from approach routes, attractive and inviting, easy to use and safe to use. The existing path network will be kept open for use and any new desire line paths that are created and are sensible will become official paths and be maintained.

The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections as per Woodland Trust Internal Guidance and best practice .

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
There are two public access points, one off the larger Huncote Road and the other of the minor Thurlaston Road. They are both wooden kissing gates and are not suitable for wheel chairs. Both have small parking areas suitable for two or three cars. The site has a boundary footpath and wide grassed open areas which traverse the site NW-SE beneath the electricity transmission lines. There are one or two desire lines that have appeared within the woodland compartment. The footpaths cover a total area of approximately 1.89km and are all unsurfaced.
Significance
Although not a large site, it is one of the only areas of publicly accessible woodland within a large area and therefore particularly well-used by dog-walkers.
Opportunities & Constraints
Aesthetically the major constraint is the high voltage transmission lines and pylons which dominate the site. Their dominance is reinforced by the fact that the ground beneath is unplanted and remains as open grassland. This situation imposes an un-natural angularity to the design of the site.
Factors Causing Change
Encroachment of shrubs and trees adjacent to paths which restrict access.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
A good standard of access provision will be maintained at Normanton Wood. The existing path network will be kept open for use and any new desire line paths that are created and are sensible will become official paths and be maintained. The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections as per Woodland Trust Internal Guidance and best practice . Maintain the open rides and pathways, entrances and information boards. The site will be maintained under terms and conditions laid out in the Woodland Trusts Estate Maintenance contract. It is not envisaged that additional paths will become necessary as the wood matures.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
A regime of annual management will keep the site safe, accessible and welcoming, this will include: Cut all path/rides three times per year and the large open areas each Summer in line with Woodland Trust Specification

2-01.

Check and maintain information board and WT welcome signs as well as both entrance points as per specification 1-01.

Trim hedges and crown-lift planted trees where they might restrict the path width.

4.2 f2 New Native Woodland

Description

A native broadleaf woodland with four tree species. Oak, ash, field maple and hazel in four blocks separated by grass rides and footpaths. The trees are planted in drifts of 50 to 100 trees across the site. This reduces competition from faster growing species.

Significance

Leicestershire is one of the least wooded counties in England and this area, being principally agricultural, is virtually devoid of any significant woodland. Therefore within a larger scale this small woodland contributes significantly to the biodiversity of the surrounding landscape.

Opportunities & Constraints

As with most small-scale planting sites there is inevitably a homogeneity of structure and age class. In the early years of establishment, Oak roller moth and Powdery mildew did much to create structural diversity between the Oak and the more vigorous Ash. But now with the advent of chalara and squirrel damage to the oaks and field maple, the future health of any of the trees on this site is in question.

A 30% thin is planned for 2030 and a second 30% in 2040 to encourage natural regeneration.

Factors Causing Change

Pests and diseases to oak and ash. Chalara will be the main factor causing change in the years to come and this will need to be managed carefully. Squirrel damage to the oaks and field maples is extensive, and these two challenges must be addressed. A grey squirrel activity assessment should be conducted during this period.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will be allowed to reach maturity and will develop the characteristics of more naturally occurring woodland, as opposed to a plantation of single aged trees. For this reason silvicultural intervention will take place to ensure the wood is diverse in tree species and structure, to promote a good mixture of both young and mature trees. This will enable the wood to be more resilient to change in the future, and will ensure it supports the greatest range of wildlife.

Open habitats will also remain and be managed within the woodland matrix, including the linear areas but also sunny rides. The end goal is a native broadleaved woodland with some structural diversity despite narrow age class distribution.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (10 years)

The short term objective is to produce a wider age structure in the woodland to increase resilience and ecological value. A first thinning operation will be undertaken in 2030 across the whole site removing 30% of the canopy during this plan period, including the coppicing of the hazel coupes. This will create the open woodland habitat desired and bring about

an increase in biodiversity. It will not focus on any species, despite the presence of Ash Die Back on site. This will allow the ash to set seed for as long as possible and then to provide standing deadwood across the site. The exception to this will be ash removal along the roadside if ash die back is found to be present. Any ash that are close to footpaths will also be more intensively thinned in order to make tree safety works more economically viable.

The open meadow areas will be cut annually. If a possible candidate for baling and removal of the arisings can be found then this will be preferable, if not then it will simply be cut and left.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2025	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	December
2026	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	March
2026	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	June
2026	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	September
2026	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	December
2027	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	March
2027	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	June
2027	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	September
2027	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	December
2028	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	March
2028	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	June

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2028	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	September
2028	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	December
2029	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	March
2029	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	June
2029	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	September
2029	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	December
2030	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	March
2030	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	March
2030	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	June
2030	LC - Hazardous Waste	Works associated with the removal of site debris where specialist contractors are needed to remove waste deemed hazardous or difficult to handle.	September

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	4.81	Mixed native broadleaves	1999	Min-intervention		
Sub-compartment 1a is made up of the 4 separate blocks of planting which were undertaken in 2000 on former arable land. The tree species are principally Oak and Ash with Hazel providing the woody shrub element. A small number of Yews were planted in the northern section close to the entrance as a millennium feature.						
2a	1.92	Mixed native broadleaves	1999	Min-intervention		
Compartment 2a comprises of those areas of the site which remain un-planted with trees and have been left as open space. These areas include those broad expanses of grass beneath the electricity transmission lines and along the line of the buried gas main together with the grass rides/footpaths which encircle and traverse the site. Prior to planting the site was cultivated and sown with a non-aggressive grass seed mix consisting of creeping red fescue, hard fescue, chewing fescue, brown top bent and smooth stalk meadow grass applied at 20 kg's per acre.						

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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