

# Harrocks Wood

(Plan period – 2024 to 2029)



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

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

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

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

## The Public Management Plan

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

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

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

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

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

or contact the Woodland Trust

[operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

to confirm details of the current management programme.

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

## Location and Access

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

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

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

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

# The Management Plan

1. Site Details
2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
  - 4.1 F1 Informal Public Access
  - 4.2 f2 Ancient Woodland Site
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

## 1. SITE DETAILS

### Harrocks Wood

Location:	Rickmansworth, Watford Grid reference: TQ066978 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 166
Area:	42.70 hectares (105.51 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	N/A

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The Harrocks Wood complex comprises four broadleaf woodlands: Harrocks Wood, Merlin's Wood, Newland's Spring, and Dell Wood, extending to some 44 hectares. They are linked with footpaths and are adjacent to the Whippendell Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), owned and managed by Watford Borough Council. Together they comprise a significant and large block of species diverse mature woodland.

This surprisingly wooded area lies adjacent to the village of Chandler's Cross with Watford only 2 miles away and the M25 in earshot. It is served by a small car park, Whippendell Woods' car park and numerous public footpaths, making it a popular natural resource on the doorstep of a major urban centre.

Most of the Harrocks Wood complex is ancient apart from the majority of Newland's Spring and the northern section of Harrocks Wood. The woodlands contain a mixture of species such as oak, ash, birch, sycamore, sweet chestnut and wild cherry. Previously sections were planted with conifer, although the majority of these have now been removed. Much of the ash here is in significant decline due to ash dieback, especially in Harrocks Wood and Newland's Spring. The Harrocks Wood complex has a high forest canopy, relatively even in age. The majority of regeneration in Harrocks and Newland's is ash or sycamore. Hazel and holly are the most common understorey species throughout. The entire site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and classified as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) due to its historical and floral interest. The soils are typically well drained clay with flints over gravel; and scattered throughout parts of the wood are deep pits, which are the remains of gravel and flint excavations. Most notably, Dell Wood contains a steep-sided pit. The topography is generally flat but undulates in places.

The car parks are found on Rousebarn lane, which is in itself an interesting environment. The overhanging trees provide dark, damp conditions ideal for many woodland plants such as the rare coralroot bittercress. Veteran hornbeams line the verge. The lane had been designated a countryside heritage site in the 1990s by Hertfordshire County Council and the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust because of its outstanding ecological value. Heritage verge designations no longer exist and the verge is included in the Local Wildlife Site designation.

To the south are grazing paddocks and arable farmland. A rabbit fence has been erected on the boundaries with arable fields to reduce crop damage. Numerous public and permissive footpaths cross the wood and management access is directly off Rousebarn Lane.

The Woodland Trust has identified the following key features relevant to this site as being: Informal Public Access and Ancient Woodland Site.

### 3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long-term intentions are to maintain and enhance this superb area of diverse woodland for the benefit of wildlife and visitors. The four ancient woodland sites that make up the Harrocks Wood complex should remain as a native species dominated broadleaf woodland with a developing uneven-aged woodland structure and abundant understorey and ground flora habitats.

Ash is a dominant species here and is in decline due to ash dieback. The long-term aim is to manage the decline of ash to create conditions for a mix of other native species to succeed in its place, where possible through natural regeneration.

The non-native conifers will gradually phase out through very low intensity thinning operations and natural senescence. There will be a small number of feature trees retained as specimens adding to the natural aesthetics. Oak regeneration should be encouraged where possible; sycamore and coniferous regeneration and rhododendron should not be allowed to dominate the understorey.

The verge along Rousebarn Lane will remain an attractive and ecologically important site, rich in flora and local character.

Inspiring people is one of the Woodland Trust's core objectives. By providing and maintaining this freely accessible site we aim to inspire, build loyalty and capture the hearts and minds of an ever-increasing number of people and organisations to support our cause.

The wood will remain open to the public in perpetuity and will be welcoming to visitors with clearly signed entrances and a well-managed path network.

## 4. KEY FEATURES

### 4.1 F1 Informal Public Access

<b>Description</b>
<p>A network of approximately 4750m of unsurfaced public and permissive footpaths weave around the Harrocks Wood complex. The adjacent Whippendell Woods, SSSI, is also open to the public and combined they make an attractive destination for nature enthusiasts from the surrounding towns and villages. The site has 11 pedestrian entrances and a permanently open car park for up to 8 vehicles. The Harrocks Wood complex is mainly used by dog walkers. Through Harrocks Wood also runs an ancient path known as Finches Avenue and a circular walk of any length is possible in the woods. There are also good footpath links to Watford, especially the paths from Cassiobury which cross the West Herts Golf Course. One passes between Dell and Merlin's Woods on its way to Redheath and the other goes through Whippendell Woods to Harrocks Wood and Chandlers Cross. The mainline and underground station (Metropolitan Line) at Croxley Green is 3.2km (2 miles) to the south of the woods via public footpaths or Rousebarn Lane.</p>
<b>Significance</b>
<p>The woodland's size and convenient location make it a natural attraction for residents of the highly populated suburbs of Watford who can enjoy and appreciate the varied woodland and its associated habitats. It adds to the local rights of way network and provides an excellent recreational resource.</p> <p>Inspiring people is one of the Woodland Trust's core objectives. By providing and maintaining this freely accessible site we aim to inspire, build loyalty and capture the hearts and minds of an ever-increasing number of people and organisations to support our cause.</p>
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
<p>Constraints:</p> <p>Rousebarn Lane and the car park suffer from regular fly tipping and littering.</p> <p>Fires and barbeques / anti-social behaviour in Dell Wood.</p> <p>Oak Processionary Moth – Nests reported in 2022. Constraint on location of benches, dwelling areas.</p> <p>Opportunities:</p> <p>To maintain a prominent local amenity for the local community.</p> <p>To continue to grant permission for local Forest School activities.</p>
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
<p>Fly tipping, littering.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour/fires.</p>



Increasing levels of commercial dog walking resulting in pressure to the site, its wildlife and visitors.

### **Long term Objective (50 years+)**

The Woodland Trust has assigned an access category 'A' for Harrocks Wood, which is the highest category and equates to: High usage sites which are regularly used at all times of year, more than 15 - 20 people using one entrance every day. Hence a high standard of access provision will continue to be provided here. The path network will be kept open for use through annual maintenance and the entrances will be welcoming, accessible and clearly signed. Access infrastructure such as gates and stiles will all be of a good standard and well maintained. The car park will provide a warm welcome to visitors with prominent welcome signage and information displayed about the wood and its management. The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections in high risk zones.

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

Operational objective:

Within the plan period continue to provide an accessible, well maintained, and safe woodland regularly used and enjoyed by the public. Path network, car park, entrances and benches will be maintained in good condition for level and type of use, assessed through annual observation visits.

Visitor access maintenance -

Mow/strim all paths May/June and August each year removing any fallen trees/limbs and obstructions to maintain path accessibility. Strim around all entrances and internal and external site infrastructure, clean all signage and undertake site litter, rubbish removal.

Monitor all internal and entrance infrastructure. Repair and replace any damaged or worn infrastructure when required.

Litter pick and remove fly tipping to maintain the car park as tidy and inviting as possible as to not attract more fly tipping.

Tree safety inspections -

Undertake tree safety inspections along our zone A boundaries every 2 years (roads, properties etc where someone could be 24 hours a day). Undertake tree safety inspection along our zone B areas every 3 years (footpaths, areas used by people in normal weather conditions). Annually assess ash dieback in summer as part of tree safety inspections.

Dog walking communications -

Monitor the impacts of dog walkers, check signage remains in place to educate about best practice for dog walking. Keep record of complaints regarding dogs.

Oak Processionary Moth -

Path network surveyed by Woodland Trust volunteers every summer. Action taken as appropriate to remove nests posing a risk to the public.

Fires and barbeques / anti-social behaviour in Dell Wood - Regular visits by volunteer warden to this area. Check 'No Fires' sign intact and no evidence of a new log circle seating area being created.

## 4.2 f2 Ancient Woodland Site

<b>Description</b>
<p>Harrocks Wood (except the northern tip), Merlin's, Dell Wood and the southern part of Newland's Spring are all ancient woodland sites. Prior to Woodland Trust ownership parts of the complex had been felled and replanted with conifers. Most of the conifers were removed as part of the ancient woodland restoration programme or had naturally died off and have been replaced with sycamore, ash, and birch regeneration.</p> <p>Ash dieback is present within the Harrocks woods complex and has caused significant decline in many of the ash-rich stands, especially within Newlands and Harrocks. During the winter of 2022/23 the first phase of ash management started. Ash has been removed from within falling distance of Rousebarn Lane, and along the main path routes of Harrocks Wood and Newland's Spring, reducing the safety risk to visitors and road users. As part of the felling licence these will be restocked with native broadleaves.</p> <p>There is deadwood habitat present throughout and as ash dieback develops within the woodland deadwood will significantly increase.</p> <p>Scattered throughout parts of the wood are deep pits, which are the remains of gravel and flint excavations and an important feature of ancient woodland.</p> <p>Until quite recently, these sites had greater ancient semi-natural characteristics and carried a SSSI status until a previous owner undermined the ecological value of the site by over-wintering cattle in the woods. Despite that, they still contain some important flora including bluebell, dog's mercury, primrose, wood sorrel, yellow archangel, red campion, and the rare coralroot bittercress. The core ancient woodland components remain strong and resilient. The Rousebarn Lane roadside verge is recognized for its outstanding ecological value, situated between the ancient woodlands of the Harrocks Wood complex and Whippendel Woods</p>
<b>Significance</b>
<p>Ancient semi-natural woodlands have been in existence for many hundreds of years and unfortunately are a declining resource. As well as being a traditional feature in the landscape they support an abundance of plants, mammals, birds, insects and fungi. It is one of the Woodland Trust's main objectives to protect ancient, veteran and valuable woods and trees, to stop the loss of irreplaceable habitat and carbon stores and preserve our natural heritage.</p>
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <p>Opportunity to maintain and enhance this ancient woodland and its associated habitats by encouraging native broadleaf regeneration and seeking opportunities to buffer the ancient woodland from the intensive arable farmland beyond.</p> <p>Diversify woodland structure and species variety through low-intensity felling of trees worst affected by ash dieback.</p> <p><b>Constraints:</b></p> <p>Non native invasive species such as rhododendron can be damaging to ground flora, as is the bracken and bramble in some areas which may undermine the natural regeneration potential.</p>

Deer browsing is suppressing tree and shrub regeneration.

**Factors Causing Change**

Deer browsing is one of the factors in causing the suppression of natural regeneration within the Harrocks complex.  
Ash dieback.  
Competition with non-native invasive species: Japanese knotweed (in Harrocks Wood), rhododendron (in Harrocks Wood), bamboo (in Newland’s Spring), three-cornered garlic (in Newland’s Spring and Merlins) and lesser periwinkle (in Harrocks Wood).  
Oak Processionary Moth - Nests reported in 2022. Health impacts to forestry workers.  
Ash dieback altering composition of the woodland and posing a safety risk to visitors along path edges and to road users along Rousebarn Lane.  
Holly may be dominating the scrub regeneration and shading out the woodland flora.

**Long term Objective (50 years+)**

Mixed broadleaf uneven aged woodland of varying stand structure, including areas of open and dense high forest and a mixed, multi-aged understorey. Attractive maturing woodland continuing to develop its ancient woodland characteristics and components. The species mix given the decline of ash in the wood will contain oak, birch, sycamore, sweet chestnut and wild cherry.  
Natural regeneration levels should remain sufficient to ensure sustainable continuous cover management. Thriving communities of specialist woodland flora will occur throughout the wood, much of it concentrated along ride sides, which will be scalloped to create diversity.  
Many of the large oak and chestnut will reach senescence and beyond providing numerous veteran trees and valuable dead wood habitats. Retain dead trees, including dead and dying ash trees where they do not pose a health and safety threat to the public.

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

Within this plan period, in order to manage the immediate threats to the wood from invasive species and unsustainable levels of deer browsing we will carry out the following:

Deer Management:  
Carry out thermal imaging survey to provide deer counts for the entire Harrocks Woods complex. Quarter 1 2024.  
Undertake herbivore impact assessment to monitor deer browsing impact within the woodland. Quarter 1 2024.  
Put in place a deer management contract, reviewed annually, with appropriately qualified and vetted deer stalkers.  
Deer cull targets will be set based on the results of our survey and monitoring.

Invasive species:  
Japanese knotweed - Remove Japanese knotweed from Harrocks Wood using chemical control. Monitor annually and continue if the knotweed returns.  
Rhododendron – Cut and spray rhododendron regeneration within Harrocks Wood. Monitor annually and continue

chemical control if rhododendron returns.

Bamboo – Dig out bamboo from Newland’s Spring. Monitor annually and continue if bamboo returns.

Three-cornered garlic – Pull/dig out bulbs in Newland’s Spring and Merlin’s each spring until it has been removed.

Lesser periwinkle – Mechanical control by strimming 4-5x per year (in Harrocks Wood).

#### Ash management:

During the plan period we will manage the ash and continue the transition within the ash dominant stands to a mixed diverse broadleaf whilst beginning to develop a range of age structures and where practicable abundant deadwood habitat. This will be undertaken through thinning operations and tree safety surveys to remove the declining ash, whilst retaining the trees that are showing signs of tolerance and allowing natural regeneration to develop.

In winter 2022 a regeneration fell removed ash from within falling distance of Rousebarn Lane and within the main path routes of Harrocks and Newland’s to reduce the safety risk to visitors. As part of the restocking agreement these were restocked in winter 2023 with 3900 native broadleaves. The brash left from the felling operation was mulched to prepare the ground for replanting trees. Due to the deer pressure, a proportion of these are protected by biodegradable tree tubes.

Before the end of 2025 we will undertake a thinning operation as per the felling licence within Newland’s Spring and Harrocks to remove declining ash and open canopy to allow natural regeneration to develop. The focus will be on the main rides in Harrocks, felling up to 80m<sup>3</sup> of ash, totalling up to 4.5ha. Approximately 80m<sup>3</sup> will be felled within 4.5ha of Newlands Spring (compartment 3a), with a focus on the footpaths.

Within these areas, to comply with the felling licence, we will underplant with native broadleaves and leave some areas unplanted to allow natural regeneration. The brash left from the felling operation will be mulched to prepare the ground for replanting trees and a proportion of planted trees will be protected by biodegradable tree tubes.

Holly management: Investigate fixed point photography (or another method) to start monitoring holly, which is beginning to dominate the scrub regeneration in some areas.

## 5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2024	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	March
2024	SL - Tree Safety Emergency Work	Work associated with unplanned emergency tree safety works – such as clearance of fallen trees/branches and associated repairs	April
2024	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	April
2024	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	April
2024	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	April
2024	SL - Tree Safety Emergency Work	Work associated with unplanned emergency tree safety works – such as clearance of fallen trees/branches and associated repairs	May
2024	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	May
2024	PC - Deer Control - Shooting	Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc	May
2024	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of management access infrastructure and tracks Such as repairs to vehicle entrance points, maintaining vehicle bridges and repairing / reinstating surfaced management access routes.	July
2024	PC - Other Pest / Animal Control	Works associated with wildlife control outside of deer / rabbits / squirrel	August
2024	WMI - General Site Restoration Work	Works associated with initial or restoration phases to conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, infield and boundary trees	September
2024	WMI - General Site Restoration Work	Works associated with initial or restoration phases to conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, infield and boundary trees	December
2024	WMI - General Site Restoration Work	Works associated with initial or restoration phases to conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges, infield and boundary trees	December

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2024	WC - Tree / Seed Supply	The supply of trees/seeds for woodland creation sites	January
2024	WC - Tree / Seed Supply	The supply of trees/seeds for woodland creation sites	January
2025	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	March
2025	PC - Deer Control - Shooting	Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc	March
2025	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	April
2025	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	May
2025	WC - Tree Planting / Seeding	Works associated with tree planting / tree seeding for woodland creation sites	December
2025	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	December
2026	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	March
2026	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	April
2025	PC - Deer Control - Shooting	Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc	May
2026	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	December
2026	WC - Tree Planting / Seeding	Works associated with tree planting / tree seeding for woodland creation sites	December
2027	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	March
2027	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	April

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2026	PC - Deer Control - Shooting	Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc	May
2027	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	June
2027	PC - Deer Control - Shooting	Works associated with deer management by shooting – such as stalker costs, high seats, signage, maintenance of tracks and open ground provided specifically for deer management etc	February
2028	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	March
2028	SL - H&S Signage	Provision of on-site signage both temporary and permanent to alert visitor to safety risks or measures	April

## APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	3.6	Ash	1970	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Tree Preservation Order
<p>Compartment 1a forms the southern strip of Harrocks Wood. Despite being ancient semi-natural woodland in origin, the woodland has been subject to many interventions, most recently in the 1960s when large areas were felled and replanted with conifers. Many of these subsequently died leaving quite large open areas, which have become colonised with sycamore and ash. The ash is suffering from ash dieback and a felling operation took place winter 2022-23 along the main path. The well-stocked stand also contains a few cherry, beech, birch and a decent crop of mature larch. The understorey consists of holly, goat willow, hazel, elder and ash and sycamore regeneration. The ground flora is dominated by dog's mercury, bluebells, primroses, bracken and assorted ferns. There are several depressions, the legacy of old gravel and flint extractions, which, despite being quite deep have graded banks and so do not pose a serious risk to the visiting public. A public footpath known as Finches Avenue touches the southern tip of the compartment and a well-used permissive path runs east / west along the entire length of the northern edge. A mains sewer also runs under this path.</p>						
1b	7.9	Sycamore	1970	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Tree Preservation Order
<p>Sycamore, birch, ash, sweet chestnut and Douglas fir are the most common canopy species, aged around 50 years. Thinned in 1997 much of the sycamore is sprouting coppice regrowth which is adding to the already quite dense understorey of holly and occasional rhododendron. The ash is suffering from ash dieback and a felling operation took place winter 2022-23 along the main path. Ground flora includes nettle, dog's mercury, bluebell, primrose, bramble, honeysuckle, moss and bracken. The most important plant in the wood is the coralroot bittercress, which grows along ride sides and likes quite dark damp conditions. The area to the west of Finches Avenue stretching to</p>						



Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
<p>Redhall Lane contains the site of the old woodworker's cottage by the road which is relatively open with a stand of Japanese knotweed. An underground power cable runs the entire length of Finches Avenue with two parallel spurs running east / west through the compartment to the main road. One is underground with a single pole and transformer on Finches Avenue and the other is over ground, suspended on poles from the main cable on Finches Avenue to Potten Cottage.</p>						
1c	7.7	Sycamore	1960	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Tree Preservation Order
<p>1c is a diverse sub compartment containing mostly over-mature coppice with standards. Sweet chestnut, oak, birch, ash, sycamore and European larch are the most common canopy species. The ash is suffering from ash dieback and a felling operation took place winter 2022-23 along the main path. The well stocked compartment has some mature specimen trees. Ground flora is abundant with bluebell dominating. Other ground flora species include bramble, fern, bracken, moss, dog's mercury and honeysuckle</p>						
1d	5.3	other oak spp	1950	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, Tree Preservation Order
<p>Fairly open sub compartment with a diverse canopy of oak, birch, ash and European larch ranging from 50 - 70 years. The ash is suffering from ash dieback and a felling operation took place winter 2022-23 along the main path and roadside. Some beech and cherry aged approx 70 years also exists. The abundant ground flora includes bluebell, bracken, honeysuckle, fern, primrose and moss. The sub compartment also borders Finches Avenue to the west, Rousebarn Lane to the east and improved grassland over the boundary to the north.</p>						
2a	7.2	Birch (downy/silver)	1980	High forest		Area of Landscape Value, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt,

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
						Tree Preservation Order
<p>Compartment 2a is known as Merlin's Wood. This woodland appears scrubbier in structure to Harrocks. Mostly birch with pockets of ash, oak, cherry and sweet chestnut, some of significant size. Merlin's Wood underwent an extensive thinning operation in 1981, which has left some large gaps and promoted colonisation by birch, ash and sycamore. This is also the best woodland to see bluebells in the spring. There is a bank and ditch feature just south of the Whippendell Woods car park across the lane which marks the boundary between the ancient Merlin's Wood and the open ground of Newland's Spring. The slightly more acid soils have allowed bracken to flourish in the numerous gaps enhancing the scrubby appearance. The extensive understorey includes holly, elder and hazel.</p>						
3a	6.6	Ash	1950	High forest		Area of Landscape Value, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Tree Preservation Order
<p>Compartment 3a is known as Newland's Spring. The canopy is dominated by mature ash along with birch, oak, sycamore and wild cherry. The ash is suffering from ash dieback and a felling operation took place winter 2022-23 along the main paths and roadside. A rich understorey is present, mainly consisting of prolific ash regeneration and hazel coppice. Bluebells are to be found along the edges of Newlands Spring in the area of old coppice. Other ground flora species include dog's mercury, moss, bracken, bramble and honeysuckle. The soils are more base rich with less bracken present. There is a well used circular path running from the car park which allows access to Dell Wood.</p>						
4a	4.5	Birch (downy/silver)	1965	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Tree Preservation Order

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
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Compartment 4a is known as Dell Wood for obvious reasons; the area is dominated by the major earthworks in the middle of the compartment. Several large open areas and abandoned quarries are also present. The tree canopy is similar to Merlin's Wood with birch and ash dominating, with oak, cherry and rowan. Ash regeneration, holly and hazel make up the understorey. Ground flora is generally abundant, with bluebell, bracken, bramble, nettle, ivy, dog's mercury, fern, moss and honeysuckle. Dell Wood was described in 1951 as having valuable quantities of beech, oak and ash timber. These trees have since been felled and replacement trees were either never planted or have long since died out. Now mainly birch scrub of about 50 years of age covers the wood.

### **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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