

Stanground

(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

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

Stanground

Location:	Stanground, nr Peterborough Grid reference: TL210972 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 142
Area:	6.27 hectares (15.49 acres)
External Designations:	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund
Internal Designations:	Tree For All Site

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Stanground Wood lies right on the outer edge of the Peterborough fens. It was planted into arable land in 1996, entirely by volunteers. The mix of trees species and the layout of the wood were governed by its close proximity to the Nene washes SSSI and SPA (special protection area). This is an internationally important habitat for breeding and over wintering birds, and it was felt that planting of the full area would encourage predatory birds and corvids, which would negatively impact many of the other washland birds. This, along with the 10m management access strip required by Mid Level, sees over 50% open space on the site. This also ensures a softer landscape impact of the site, allowing a smoother transition from fenland into high forest.

The largest woodland block is located away from the SSSI at the far southern end of the wood and was planted with a mix of mainly ash, alder and four varieties of willow which tolerate the waterlogged conditions that occasionally occur in this virtually treeless fen edge landscape. The canopy has reached a height of up to 20 meters and is dominated by ash and willow. Beneath the canopy there are grasses and nettles or bare ground.

The open ground is managed as a meadow and mown to prevent scrub growth and encroachment. High nutrient levels and historic poaching of the grassland area mean weed (stinging nettle and common dock) growth is a significant issue.

A substantial pond was created in 2015 by FrogLife, as part of the "River Nene Dragon Finder project". This is located in the northeastern quarter of the wood.

Kings Dyke, a tributary to the Nene, forms the southwestern boundary and is managed by Mid Level drainage board. Beyond this to the south there is housing on the rising ground formed by an old river terrace. To the north and east is the Nene River valley, a managed landscape of intensively farmed arable land with brick pits and the sliver of SSSI/SPA washland which brackets the river and was created to buffer against flood waters. Although Stanground wood is low lying, it is protected from serious flood by the Nene Washes barrier bank to the north (reinforced in 2015). However, Kings Dyke does overtop its banks on occasion.

The key features of the site are:

Informal Public Access

Mixed Habitat Mosaic

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Stanground Wood will be allowed to develop naturally into a well structured and resilient native broadleaved woodland.

The Woods dominant tree species will be willow with a mix of Ash, Field Maple , Alder and Sycamore.

Ash will still be a component of the site, but will provide the important feature of, standing and fallen deadwood habitat within the wood due to Ash Dieback. The areas where the Ash have died and opened up the canopy, will provide areas for ground flora and natural regeneration to flourish, and provide an understorey layer.

The shrub component of the site will include species such as Hazel, Elder , Hawthorn and coppiced osier (willow).

The pond on the site will provide habitat diversity to the site and the adjacent phragmites will provide habitat for breeding warblers such as Reed and Sedge Warbler.

The open grassland component of the site will be kept open to allow access for the Middle level Drainage boards maintenance as well as providing an important wildlife habitat adjacent to the Nene Washes SSSI.

The woodland will be open to the public in perpetuity. Low key public access will be maintained at the site and the paths, signs and other furniture that allows safe access for the public will be maintained in good order. The wood is primarily for the use and enjoyment of the people of Stanground and the other immediately neighbouring boroughs of Peterborough. The wood will continue to link to the local public footpath networks and will be part of the much wider access provision in the area.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
Stanground Wood is situated on the outskirts of a suburb of Peterborough. The entrance to the wood is close to Stanground Lock and is adjacent to the Peterborough Green Wheel. The site is readily accessible on foot from the nearby public rights of way network. There are 1200m of unsurfaced paths and a large amount of open grassland within the site.
Significance
There are no other open woodlands in the area, the wood is situated on a surfaced cycle track (Green wheel) and is a significant feature in a sparsely wooded fenland landscape, there was a great deal of community involvement in the planting of this wood
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The wood is overlooked by many newly built houses.- There are no other open access woodlands in the immediate vicinity- provides linkages to the local path & cycle network <p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Due to fertility of the site grass growth on the paths can make it difficult to maintain easy access.-There is only one entrance and exit- small size of site- site can become waterlogged
Factors Causing Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Antisocial behaviour-Encroaching vegetation- illegal vehicle access- camping, fires & BBQ's-seasonal flooding
Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland will be open to the public in perpetuity. Low key public access will be maintained at the site and the paths, signs and other furniture that allows safe access for the public will be maintained in good order. The wood is primarily for the use and enjoyment of the people of Stanground and the other immediately neighbouring boroughs of Peterborough. The wood will continue to link to the local public footpath networks and will be part of the much wider access provision in the area

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

The 1000m of Paths and rides are to be managed annually , ensuring works are carried out as necessary to keep the path network open and easy to use for informal public access as detailed in EMC spec 2.01.

Manage site safety through safety observations and inspections.

-Associated signage (Site name/welcome signs) to be kept in good condition and regularly maintained as detailed in EMC Spec 1.01 , with a five yearly review of access facilities by the Site Manager.

Access inspection - July 2028

Tree Safety surveys

-Zone B Tree Safety Inspections to be carried out every 36 months

4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland

Description

Stanground Wood lies right on the outer edge of the Peterborough fens. It was planted into arable land in 1996, entirely by volunteers. The mix of trees species and the layout of the wood were governed by its close proximity to the Nene washes SSSI and SPA (special protection area). This is an internationally important habitat for breeding and over wintering birds, and it was felt that planting of the full area would encourage predatory birds and corvids, which would negatively impact many of the other washland birds. This, along with the 10 m management access strip required by Mid Level, sees over 50% open space on the site. This also ensures a softer landscape impact of the site, allowing a smoother transition from fenland into high forest.

The largest woodland block is located away from the SSSI at the far southern end of the wood and was planted with a mix of mainly ash, alder and four varieties of willow which tolerate the waterlogged conditions that occasionally occur in this virtually treeless fen edge landscape. The canopy has reached a height of up to 20 meters and is dominated by ash and willow. Beneath the canopy there are grasses and nettles or bare ground.

The open ground is managed as a meadow and mown to prevent scrub growth and encroachment. High nutrient levels and historic poaching of the grassland area mean weed (stinging nettle and common dock) growth is a significant issue.

A substantial pond was created in 2015 by FrogLife, as part of the "River Nene Dragon Finder project". This is located in the northeastern quarter of the wood.

Significance
Woodland of any kind is rare in this part of Cambridgeshire, which is the least wooded county in Britain. Much of the surrounding land is either intensively farmed arable or regularly inundated washland so this wood does provide a resource for wildlife not available to any great extent locally
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>-To develop and enhance the mosaic of habitats</p> <p>Constraints</p> <p>-Vandalism and misuse of site. - Site is a small island of woodland in farmed landscape</p>
Factors Causing Change
<p>-Over browsing of woodland and scrub areas and increase of invasive noxious weeds -Scrubbing over of open areas. -Changes in local drainage and flooding patterns. (climate change or development driven) -Ash Dieback</p>
Long term Objective (50 years+)
<p>Stanground Wood will be allowed to develop naturally into a well structured and resilient native broadleaved woodland complemented by a mixed habitat mosaic.</p> <p>The woods dominant tree species will be willow with a mix of Ash, Field Maple , Alder and Sycamore.</p> <p>Ash will still be a component of the site, but will provide the important feature of, standing and fallen deadwood habitat within the wood due to Ash Dieback. The areas where the Ash have died and opened up the canopy, will provide areas for ground flora and natural regeneration to flourish, and provide an understorey layer.</p> <p>The shrub component of the site will include species such as Hazel, Elder , Hawthorn and coppiced osier (willow).</p> <p>The pond on the site will provide habitat diversity to the site and the adjacent phragmites will provide habitat for breeding warblers such as Reed and Sedge Warbler.</p> <p>The open grassland component of the site will be kept open to allow access for the Middle level Drainage boards maintenance as well as providing an important wildlife habitat adjacent to the Nene Washes SSSI.</p>
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
Woodland Management

Thinning operation

-Undertake a small thinning operation to improve light levels within the woodland and encourage natural regeneration across the site .

Woodland thin- Autumn/ Winter 2027/28

Willow Coppicing

Undertake a coppicing operation to include the previously coppiced willow beds in the Northern part of the site to provide a diverse edge structure and natural interface between the grassland and mature woodland. The Willow beds will be coppiced on a 7 year cycle and the willow compartment will consist of four coppice coups.

Coppice Management-

Coppice coup 1-0.07 ha - 2027/28

Coppice Coup 2-0.06 ha- 2028/29

Coppice coup 3- 0.05 ha-2029/30

Coppice Coup 4 -0.05 ha -2030/31

Pollarding Northern Boundary Willows

The northern boundary willows should be pollarded every 10 years to reduce the height and promote regeneration. This will also reduce the number of available avian perching posts immediately adjacent to the Nene Washes SSSI.

Willow Pollarding- Winter 2024/25

Undertake assessments of woodland health every five years, Works to be ordered through observation actions as required.

Woodland Health Monitoring visit - August 2028

Wildlife Management

A habitat impact assessment for browsing mammals should be undertaken during the period of this plan to provide a baseline for mammal impacts on the site and woodland species.

HIA survey- February 2026

Pond Management

The pond will be managed to provide an additional diverse habitat component to the site . The pond should be cleared and the edges opened up over the course of this plan which will aim to provide a mix of open pond and scrub habitat within the pond area. An E-DNA survey of the pond should be undertaken before works are undertaken to check for the

presence of Great Crested Newt.

E-DNA Survey - Spring 2027

Pond management works - September 2027

Open Space Management

The open space will be managed on the site through mowing to reduce the impact of scrub development and keep an open habitat dynamic to the site . The open ares will be mown annually in September.

Open space mowing - Annually in September

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2024	WMM - Ancient / Veteran Tree Work	Works associated with the on-going management of ancient, veteran or culturally significant trees including the creation of next generation of such trees. Activities may include works to prolong the life of the tree, removal of competing trees, the creation of new pollards	February
2027	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	April
2027	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	September
2027	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

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	2.3	Alder species	1996	Min-intervention	People issues (+tve & -tve), Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund
<p>An area of woodland planted in 1996 comprising of the following species, Ash, Alder, White willow, Field Maple with a mix of shrubs including hazel, Hawthorn, Goat willow and Guelder rose, planting density is at the required 1100 per hectare. The trees have thrived since the planting despite strong competition from grasses and other weed species on the rich previously arable soil, many have attained heights of up to 10m. The compartment is very low lying and parts are sometimes under water in wet weather</p>						
1b	3.4	Open ground	1996	Coppice	Management factors (eg grazing etc), Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund
<p>Area of open grassland that surrounds the main planting areas is bordered by the Middle Level Commissioners main drain to the south and east and small feeder drain to the west and north. This grassland was created by natural regeneration of the existing grasses and seed sowing at the same time as the woodland creation. It is managed as unimproved grassland but this has not been very successful due to the species mix, the lack of grazing and the fertile soil. The compartment is very low lying and parts are sometimes under water in wet weather. This compartment also includes a block of willow coppice. This comprises of Osier and white willows. Ad-hock management to date leading to poor form in the block.</p> <p>In the northeast quarter of the wood, a substantial pond was created in 2015 by FrogLife. Part of the "River Nene Dragon Finder project" designed to improve habitat for amphibians within the nine catchment.</p>						

Ancient Woodland

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

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

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

Ancient Woodland Site

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

Beating Up

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

Broadleaf

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

Canopy

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

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

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

Conifer

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

Continuous Cover forestry

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

Coppice

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

Exotic (non-native) Species

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

Field Layer

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

Group Fell

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

Long Term Retention

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

Minimum Intervention

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

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

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

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

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

Origin & Provenance

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

Re-Stocking

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

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

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

Sub-Compartment

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

Thinning

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

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

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

Weeding

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

Windblow/Windthrow

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

Registered Office:

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