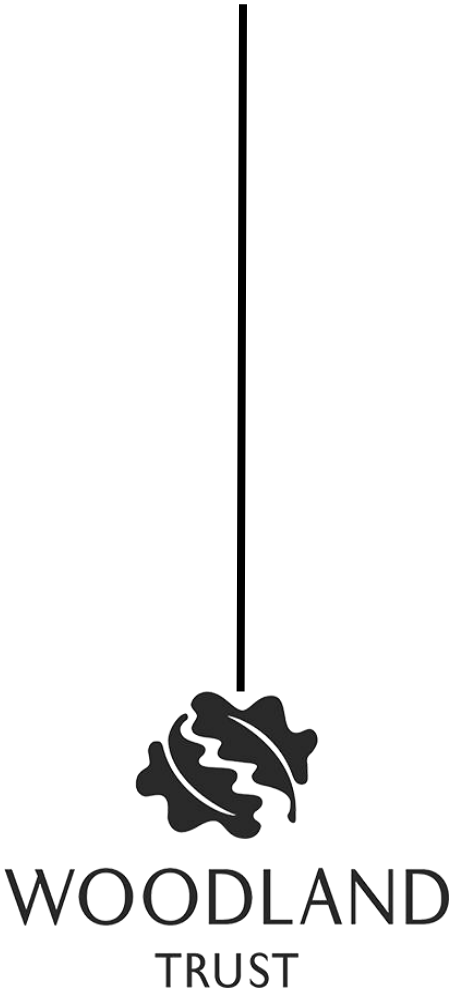
Friezland Wood

(Plan period – 2025 to 2035)



Management Plan Content Page

Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

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

Our Vision is:

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

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

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

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

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

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Public Management Plan

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

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

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

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

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

Location and Access

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

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

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

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

The Management Plan

1. SITE DETAILS

Friezland Wood

Location:	Tunbridge Wells Grid reference: TQ562383 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 188
Area:	7.48 hectares (18.48 acres)
External Designations:	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Internal Designations:	N/A

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Friezland Wood is situated on the Kent/East Sussex border just south-west of Tunbridge Wells. The site was acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1986 with a substantial part of the purchase price being donated by the Friends of Charlie Payne, a group of conservation volunteers, in memory of one of their friends.

The whole of Friezland Wood Wood lies within the High Weald National Landscape. The entire site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site, Biodiversity Opportunity Area and follows within the London Green Belt. The majority of the site is ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) with only cpt. 1a, (1.49 ha) not classified as ancient woodland.

Most of the site lies on a north-facing slope, running steeply down to the River Grom. The varied geology is matched by a very diverse woodland flora both in tree species and ground flora, which includes spectacular displays of bluebells and wood anemones. Alongside the river is an area of secondary woodland dominated by alder, with a ground cover of lesser celandine and yellow pimpernel. The western end is dominated by outcrops of sandstone rock with some spectacular examples of English yew. The higher slopes are varied with a high proportion of ash, much of which is showing advanced signs of ash dieback.

Compartment 1c has 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI) status, due to the Ardingly Sandstone rock outcrops known as ‘High Rocks’ at the western end. The rocks are of importance due to the sandstone weathering features on the highest cliffs in the Weald, and are comparatively rare in the British Isles

Compartment 1b and 1c also have Scheduled Ancient Monument status, 'High Rocks Camp Scheduled Monument' the monument includes an Iron Age multivallate hillfort with some earthworks visible in the south-western part of the wood indicating that the fort was occupied in about 150 BC - 100 BC and again in the 1st century A.D. The rocks also show evidence of human habitation, with evidence of Mesolithic (10,000 BC - 4,000 BC) and Neolithic (4000 BC - 2200 BC) occupation.

The geology is very variable for a relatively small site and has been recorded in some depth. The main part of the wood sits on Tunbridge wells sands of the Lower Cretaceous age with the western part of the wood on Ardingly Sandstone rock. The woods away from the rocks have Grinstead Clay overlaying the sandstone along the north facing slope and alluvial clays follow the valley floor alongside the River Grom. The area east of the rocks is very wet despite the slope. There are a number of springs in this part of the wood and the clay soils inhibit drainage. A lot of the flora is consequently associated with damp woodland and there is a rich lower plant flora (ferns, mosses, liverworts and lichens) as well as fungi and slime moulds can be found on or around the rocks, some of which are very rare.

The path network has become very limited due to safety concerns with ash dieback. There is permissive path alongside the River Grom and a path loop in the eastern end of the wood. The site is well used by local people (WT access category B) but it has a long history of misuse including motorcycles, vandalism and fly-tipping.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The Long Term policy for Friezland Wood is to ensure a woodland with a mosaic of habitats, including native broadleaved high forest, managed in a sustainable way (for people, nature and the economy) in compliance with UKWAS requirements. This will be achieved by the ancient woodland senescing naturally through minimal intervention management, the continuity of a diverse species woodland with an improving structure and age composition which will be primarily dominated by native species as well as a well-developed typical shrub layer. Management on the site will concentrate on dealing with the effects of ash dieback on visitor safety and ride management, whilst conserving biodiversity, in addition to maintenance of the High Rocks SSSI and the provision of low-key public access by maintaining entrances and infrastructure as necessary.

A network of wide rides will continue to be managed with the ride edges being coppiced, cut on rotation with zone 2 on a 3-5 year rotation and zone 3 on a rotation of 12-15 years. Creating woodland edge habitat that will exhibit a good range of specialist woodland plants as well as woody shrub species and enhance the overall biodiversity. Wide rides will also benefit public access by allowing the tracks to dry out quicker in the spring/summer months as well as creating a diverse mosaic of habitats for wildlife and flora.

The Woodland Trust will ensure that the public can enjoy good and appropriate open access to Friezland Wood by maintaining the numerous entrances and cutting back vegetation along the main paths each year. Management of tree safety hazards and threats brought on by pests and diseases will be on going, next to the path network and along the boundary shared with the railway. Trees which have shown resistance to ash dieback will have been retained and become a new seed source to create future resistant generations of ash. Through on going regular tree safety inspections dangerous trees, particularly ash within falling distance of path edges and the railway will be removed if practical or paths closed or diverted where necessary over the coming years. Dead and decaying wood, standing and fallen, will be retained for its biodiversity value wherever it is safe to do so.

The presence of invasive non-native invasive species such as himalayan balsam and rhododendron/ laurel will continue to be monitored and controlled.

For the management of the sandstone outcrops (subcompartment 1c) the focus of advice from Natural England is to protect the sandstone outcrop by keeping it largely free from vegetation so that it is visible and not excessively damp. There is the additional Woodland Trust aim to maintain light and humidity levels suitable for the continued growth of the rare lower plant flora (ferns, mosses, liverworts and lichens) associated with the rocks. Occasional removal of some holly, birch and sycamore regen which is obscuring or excessively shading the rocks, should achieve this. Further protection of the rocks and their associated geological features and flora from physical damage will be achieved by continuing to enforce a ban on rock climbing on the Woodland Trust property.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

The majority of the site is designated as ancient semi natural woodland apart from (1a) alongside the River Grom that was previously cleared, possibly when the railway was built.

The woodland is complex for such a small site, grading from dry sandstone in the west to much wetter woodland through the centre and eastern edges. There are 3 basic groups of plant communities present. On the upper slopes (Subcpt 1b) there are base-poor to slightly base rich soils supporting W10 oak/bracken/bramble and W8 ash/field maple/dog's mercury woodland types. Other main tree species in this area are birch and alder. The sandstone outcrops (Subcpt 1c) have a non-classifiable community which includes beech, sessile oak, yew and holly. Finally on the flat alluvial soils along the river, (Subcpt 1a) and in the area of secondary woodland, there is W7 alder/ash/yellow pimpernel woodland with some willow and oak.
The alder carr on the lower slopes has previously been partially drained by plastic and clay pipes running under the path into the river and bramble is developing in the drier patches. These areas of wet woodland have declined over the last century as a result of sites drying up & being invaded by scrub but remain extremely rich invertebrate habitats as well as for species including marsh tit, barbastelle bats.
Ground flora includes species strongly associated with ancient woodland including bluebell, wood anemone, yellow archangel and wood sorrel. Towards the western end of the site where the soils are more base-rich the W8 woodland consists more of ash and birch over hazel, holly and maple with a ground flora including dogs mercury, enchanters nightshade, wood speedwell and ivy. There is also rare coral root (Cardamine bulbifera) recorded along the banks of the river.

Most of the wood shows a coppice with standards structure however after decades of little or no management this structure is becoming a two storied high forest with much ash and alder coppice now forming the canopy. There are several overstood coppiced ash stools on the upper slopes that are deteriorating with significant decay at the bases. These stools are severely affected by ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus), with a large amount of branch drop and extensive crown die back. The level and rate of tree mortality from the disease varies from site-to-site but current research suggests up to 85% mortality, which seems likely to be the case at Friezland.

A small area of hazel has been coppiced piecemeal in the past by volunteers resulting in an open structure with a bramble layer.

Significance

Friezland Wood is a good example of a small but very diverse woodland habitat. Its diversity is a result of its underlying geology and soils combined with a very long existence as woodland. The amount of ASNW left in Britain has been drastically reduced over the last century. Approximately 40% of England's ASNW is found in the South East. ASNW is

very important due to the continuity of woodland cover over hundreds of years which allows for a diverse range of wildlife and vegetation to develop over time that cannot be found in new woodland creation sites. Friezland Wood is situated within the High Weald National Landscape which has at least 25% woodland cover with a high proportion of ancient woodland. In a heavily wooded area where woodland has become fragmented, larger areas of woodland are able to withstand external pressures such as climate change much better. Ancient woodland is irreplaceable and the prevention of its loss is one of the main aims of the Trust.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
- Poor management access for machinery, limited by the railway bridge, culvert and topography.
-Scheduled monument and SSSI consent required for certain operations
- Uneven Terrain
- Invasive species such as cherry laurel, buddleja and Himalayan balsam taking advantage of the newly open up areas.
- Silvicultural management is restricted by the steep terrain, small size, and regularly waterlogged soils.
-Poor access combined with safety issues from decline/death of ash trees along internal paths due to ash dieback disease make any management beyond safety works very hazardous.
Opportunities:
- To work with local visitors on improving river health (i.e. litter removal, weed pulling, education to limit dogs entering the river.

Factors Causing Change

-Ash dieback - the upper part of compartment 1b is approx 40% ash almost all of which shows extensive dieback, branch drop and canker resulting in the closure of ~0.5km of paths.
-Invasive species – Himalayan balsam and potential for rhododendron from neighbouring property
-Deer browsing of coppice regrowth
-Increase in tree safety hazards as coppice stools degenerate and are windblown.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To secure and enhance the ancient woodland components of the site; aim to achieve a resilient woodland with structural diversity (using the Modules 4 and 5 Ancient Woodland Restoration guides) by implementing woodland management techniques and encouraging natural colonisation.
In 50 years' time Friezland Wood will have been managed with the long term objective of developing a varied and robust native woodland with diverse and complex structure all well represented within the different woodland habitat types. This includes managed high forest, coppice, standards, rides, dead and decaying wood but with a significant part of the site left to develop by natural processes. Intervention will be required in parts of the wood to address tree safety issues caused by diseases such as ash dieback or over-mature coppice collapse adjacent to paths. Ash dieback fungus could still be present causing issues, however ash will likely be a minor component of the wood due to this. The long-term objective will be to support structurally diverse robust ancient woodland, comprising predominately native broadleaf species such as oak, beech, birch. Ancient woodland components will continue to be evident and lower storeys secured by natural regeneration. The understory will comprise of native shrubs with a ground layer of specialist woodland plants and ancient woodland indicator species including bluebell, dog's mercury and wood anemone. The collapsing coppice stems that are lost from the upper canopy will help encourage this diversification of the lower storeys. An increasing amount of dead and decaying wood habitat will be present through standing and fallen dead

trees and ancient living trees. Veteran trees of the future will be developing in character and mature oaks will have been halo thinned around to ensure they are not shaded out by other species.
The presence of invasive non-native and threatening species to be absent or minor with containment and eradication work still continuing.

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

In the next 10 years' the main objective for the ancient woodland areas is to retain the varied composition and structural diversity. This can mostly be achieved through a programme of minimal intervention, but the following management activities will be required in targeted areas:
-Maintain path closures where felling unsafe ash would be to the severe detriment of woodland structure and biodiversity. Allow the ash in these areas to naturally senesce and collapse, increasing valuable deadwood habitat, monitor for any signs of resistance.
-Halo thinning around potential strong healthy oak and beech trees within cpt.1b and 1c starts in this plan period by by selecting oak, beech, wild cherry and rowan to thin around, 15-20 trees, in total. To create a 5 metre gap extending out from the existing crowns in 2027. Trees will be felled to nature, leaving the decaying wood to naturally decompose on site, a valuable habitat.
- Holly to be felled within cpt.1b and 1c, at a 30% thin in 2028, 2031 and 2035 to allow more light and space onto the woodland floor.
- Invasive Non-Native Species control will be undertaken annually to eradicate Himalayan Balsam and Cherry Laurel from site. Himalayan Balsam dominate within 1a.
- Deer impacts will be monitored annually through a Herbivore Impact Lite Assessment assisted by drone thermal surveys when deemed necessary. The deer population should not be impacting on coppice regrowth, natural regeneration or ground flora as determined by a Herbivore Impact Assessment (HIA) by the end of the plan period. Drone survey to be undertaken in 2030.
- Selective fell of dead and dying ash trees along the southern boundary (1b) in 2026.
-Alder to be thinned in Cpt.1a, south side of the path about (0.3ha) 30% thin to nature by ring barking to encourage an understory in 2026 and 2034.

Ridge Edge Management:
Ride side coppicing/widening programme, this work will protect and enhance the biodiversity interest and the internal woodland structure through:
- There will be an annual programme of works to cut the vegetation within the zone 1 annually, Zone 2 areas, 5- 6 metres width to be cut on a rotation of 3-5 years:
- Sections 1, 5 and 9 totalling 141 meters will be cut in 2028 & 2033
- Sections 3 and 7 totalling 73 meters will be cut in 2029 & 2032
- Sections 2, 4, 6 and 8 totalling 157 meters will be cut in 2030 & 2034

- Selective coppice of species: hazel and alder along the river's edge 5-8 metres distance either side of the Grom in 2026.

- 5-yearly formal woodland condition assessment to be undertaken in 2029 to inform the next management plan review. Assessments will cover the range of threats outlined in factors causing change above.

4.2 f2 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

With its meandering stream, footpath connections, spectacular spring flowers and geological features the wood provides a tranquil rural escape less than 10 minutes from Tunbridge Wells town centre by car. There are also 3 other Woodland Trust woods close by, namely: Hurst Wood, Nellington Wood and Hargate Forest.

The site contains a selection of rides and paths with suitable infrastructure which improves access. This includes some surfacing and drainage. The Sussex circular and Speldhurst circular routes and part of the Tunbridge Wells Circular walk crosses the site from east to west and the site is also linked via High Rocks lane to the local footpath network. The site is in close proximity of the town of Tunbridge Wells, which has approximately a population of over 60,000 people. The proximity to such a large local population mean the site is subject to a variety of antisocial behaviour including fly tipping, vandalism and motorcycle trespass. The site is defined as a Woodland Trust category B site (Moderate usage site: Regular usage, 5 – 15 people using one entrance per day) whereby people are thought to be using the site on a daily basis. It is therefore managed as medium priority site in terms of access.

Significance

The site allows for quiet informal recreation as a contrast to the more active pursuits taking place on and around the privately owned High Rocks. One of the Woodland Trust's main objectives is the promotion of public access to, and enjoyment of, woodlands. The site also provides a permissive link to the local public footpath network allowing people in the urban part of Tunbridge Wells direct access into the countryside.

The area has been designated as part of the Metropolitan Green Belt and as a Local Wildlife Site and Biodiversity Opportunity Area within the High Weald National Landscape. The western part of the wood sits within the High Rocks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which connects to the wider landscape of High Rocks. The eastern side of the woods connects to Three Acre Wood joining a path network leading to residential area of Ramslye, which can then lead onto Ramslye Wood and Hargate Forest.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities: to provide access to a site of high conservation and historical interest to the large local population.

Constraints
- The lack of any formal car-parking limits the site to local use only
- The quiet, isolated nature of the wood has resulted in acts of vandalism, anti-behaviour and fly tipping.
- The river riparian habitat has become heavily eroded due to footfall and bank erosion from dogs entering the river.
- The path network becomes very waterlogged in the winter months resulting in paths becoming very wide.
- The small size and small path network of the woods limits the expansion or development of further public access facilities or increased visitor numbers.
- The extensive levels of ash dieback has limited the path network considerably. Due to a large number of mature ash severely affected by ash dieback, a significant proportion of the paths on the upper slopes of the site required closure (approx 500m). Paths in this area have been closed.

Factors Causing Change

- Vandalism & fly-tipping especially around entrances and High Rocks SSSI
- Litter, swings and camp fires on High Rock SSSI
- Motorbike encroachment
- Path creep and development of desire lines along informal path network
- Ash dieback
- River bank erosion
- Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The site will continue to provide low key public access, mainly for visitors from the immediate surrounding area. There will be a safe, maintained network of paths throughout the site with appropriate entrance infrastructure. The site will continue to have regular daily visitors but with no anticipated major increase in numbers.

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

During this plan period, the short term objective is to continue to provide public access at Friezland Wood which is safe and enjoyable.

- Approximately 1.10km of path and entrances will be maintained annually to allow continued access across the site. This will include strimming path edges and entrances, and appropriate tree safety work identified by Zone B safety inspections.
- Carry out tree safety inspections in Zone A: annually, alternating summer and autumn and in Zone B: Minimum every 2 years due to tree disease. Follow up arboriculture work to be carried out as appropriate.
- Entrance infrastructure and signage will be monitored and refreshed when appropriate.
-Annual inspections of site access points, hazards, signage, furniture and general infrastructure to ensure that all are in good condition and adequate for visitor numbers and all user groups
- Incursion by quads and motorbikes will be monitored and if necessary the Trust will liaise with Kent Police to try and prevent this from occurring at this site.
-Periodic removal of rope swings and litter near the rocks when deemed necessary.
- Steps will be replaced at the western entrance TQ55903836 in 2026.
- A large wooden welcome sign will be reinstalled at the western entrance TQ55903836 in 2026.
- Southeast entrance TQ56653835 will have the stile removed in 2026.
- Fencing across the culvert crossing shallow stream near access TQ56453845, will be extended with one metre of rustic 2 rail sweet chestnut timber post and rail fencing in 2026.
- Following the coppicing along the river Grom's edge, small sections of dead hedging will take place along the river bank in areas eroded due to dog access the water, in 2026.

4.3 f3 Geological Feature

Description

Subcpt 1c (1.1ha) is part of High Rocks SSSI, first notified in 1953. It is a key geomorphological site for sandstone weathering features developed on the highest cliffs in the Weald. The Cretaceous Ardingly Sandstone is gently cambered (deformed) and the joints have opened out to form spectacular gulls (tension cracks) which are wide enough in places for a person to enter. Open gulls are comparatively rare in Britain, except in the central Weald with High Rocks having some of the best examples. The Ardingly sandstone is friable and poorly cemented, but the surface develops a

protective crust and displays a variety of micro-weathering features, notably honeycombing and polygonal cracking. The origin of this cracking may relate to freezing and thawing under peri-glacial conditions during the Pleistocene period. This is only found in the UK on sandrock outcrops in the Weald.

In addition to the geological interest these sandrock outcrops are a very important habitat for lower plants (ferns, lichens, mosses and liverworts). Many of these are rare in the SE of England and some are internationally rare, surviving here only with the right levels of light, warmth and humidity.

Another feature of the rocks is the number of large trees such as yew and oak that grows on the edge of the vertical slopes. The roots of these trees frequently grow over the rocks into the cracks in the rocks and can extend for considerable distances from the tree.

It is recognised by Natural England that the Woodland Trust area of SSSI is NNW facing and so the rocks will be damp and prone to becoming moss covered, although the advice to maintain a favourable condition centres around encouraging operations that would protect the sandstone outcrop by preventing it becoming excessively damp or mossy and keeping it largely free from vegetation so that it is visible and available for scientific study.

This area is also part of High Rocks Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). This designation relates to the use of the rocks as temporary shelter by Mesolithic/Neolithic man and the resultant archaeology likely to be present at the foot of the rocks, as well as its use as an Iron Age hill fort. Cpt.1b contains part of the High Rocks Camp SAM - earthworks in SW corner.

According to Historic England; the hillfort measures about 470m north west to south east and 350m north east to south west. There is a double bank and ditch on the north east, south east and south west sides, while the north west side is defined by the High Rocks escarpment. The site was partially excavated in 1940 and between 1954 and 1961. A variety of Mesolithic and Neolithic material was found in association with the rock shelters, and the Iron Age hillfort yielded pottery which indicated that the fort was occupied in about 150 BC - 100 BC and again in the 1st century A.D. Evidence for later Romano-British occupation site was also found in the eastern part of the hillfort.

Significance

These sandstone outcrops have been designated as a SSSI for and also contain a rich variety of cryptogram flora that includes lichens, bryophytes and ferns.
Many of the features and plants associated with this site are of regional, national and international importance

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:
- To preserve the geological and botanical interest of the rocks.

Constraints:
-'No climbing' policy is difficult to enforce.
- All work relating to this area needs to be approved by Natural England & Historic England.
- Maintaining appropriate light levels can be difficult due to the terrain.

Factors Causing Change
-Illegal rock climbing, swings and graffiti causing damage to rocks/flora. -Dense shading due to holly, birch and sycamore regeneration and invasive rhododendron spreading from the adjacent property.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
To maintain the geological and botanical features of the rocks in a favourable condition by assessing the regeneration of holly, sycamore, birch and rhododendron on and around the outcrops and where necessary control. An effective rock-climbing ban will remain in place.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (10 years)
To maintain a favourable condition of the rock outcrop. This will be achieved by carrying out monitoring & control of holly, sycamore and birch regen. • The last SSSI condition assessment (2009) recognised heavy shading in the WT owned part of the citation. Following recommendations from that report & subsequent NE advice, some vegetation will be removed to make the rock more visible and less damp. 30-50% removal of small tree regeneration at base and on top of the rocks in 2028, 2031 and 2035. • Subsequent biennial monitoring of the regen and visibility/light levels on rocks to provide favourable geological conditions whilst supporting rare lower plant life. • Any rhododendron found will be removed. • Monitoring of the no climbing policy annually and monitoring for evidence of geological specimen collection.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2025	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	December
2025	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	December
2026	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Works associated with the construction of a new or extension to existing car parking facilities.	April
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	June
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	June
2026	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	July
2026	WMI - Coppice Restoration	Works associated with the initial restoration of redundant/out of cycle coppice such as initial cutting, protective fencing, etc	November
2026	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	November
2026	WMM - Coppice Management	Works associated with the management of coppice areas – such as coppicing, maintenance of protective fencing, etc	November
2027	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	June
2027	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	July
2027	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	November

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2028	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	June
2028	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	July
2028	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	October
2028	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	October
2029	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	June
2029	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	July
2029	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	October
2030	CS - Ecological Survey & Assessment	Use of external consultants to support the provision of ecological surveys, assessment and biodiversity / species monitoring	March
2030	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	June
2030	WMM - Invasive Plant Control	Works associated with the on-going management of invasive plants– such a repeat cutting and control treatments	July
2030	WMM - Ride Management	Works associated with the management of existing rides/open areas for biodiversity - ride edge coppicing and thinning programmes, ditch works	October

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	1.48	Alder species	1950	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt
Wet alder woodland (NVC W7a) on alluvial soils N and S of the river Grom. Other tree species include hazel, sallow, crack willow and occasional oak. Ground flora includes nettles, lesser celandine, yellow archangel, golden saxifrage, ramsons and sedges. Himalayan balsam is also present (pulled annually). Bramble in drier areas.						
1b	4.88	Ash	1950	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Scheduled Ancient Monument
Ancient woodland (W8, W10) on a north facing slope. The sub compartment contains an over-mature hazel understorey with an oak and ash canopy. The ash shows extensive symptoms of ash die back and canker. Birch is frequent and generally of mature size. There are areas of alder on wetter ground. Yew and holly are also frequent particularly in the W of the cpt. Small areas have been coppiced by a conservation group. Bramble is prolific in these areas but regen is establishing. Ground flora includes bluebell, wood anemone, yellow archangel, wood sorrel, honeysuckle. Contains part of the High Rocks Camp SAM - earthworks in SW corner.						
1c	1.33	Yew	1800	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Scheduled Ancient Monument, Site of Special Scientific Interest
Sub compartment 1c forms part of the High Rocks SSSI. In addition to the geological interest these sandrock outcrops are an important habitat for lower plants (ferns, lichens, mosses and liverworts). There are a number of						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
large trees such as yew and oak that grow on the edge of the vertical slopes. Holly, sycamore, beech, ash and birch are also present. Tunbridge filmy fern looked for in 1998 ecological survey but not found. This area is also part of High Rocks Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument.						

GLOSSARY

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

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

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

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

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

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

Clearfell
Felling of all trees within a defined area.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mixed Woodland
Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

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

Native Species
Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

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

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

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

Shrub Layer
Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

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

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

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

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

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

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