

## OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 16TH OCTOBER 2024 AT 5.00PM

### COMMITTEE ROOM 2, Council Offices

To: Councillors Campsall, Fryer, A Gray, B Gray, Infield, Smidowicz, D Taylor,  
Worrall

RB, RE, DG, GM, CN,

### AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS
3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING pages 2 - 6  
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2024.
4. OFFICER UPDATE REPORT pages 7 - 85  
An update from the Head of Contracts, Leisure, Waste & Environment
5. FINANCE UPDATE pages 86 - 87  
An update regarding finance.
6. RANGERS REPORT pages 88- 93
7. A.O.B
  - Kissing Gate – use by motorcycles
  - Car parking on Woodhouse Lane
  - Art classes – use of the covered outdoor space

### DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates for 2024-25 are: 29th January 2025, 16 April 2025.

**Please note:**

**WALK AROUND THE OUTWOODS – 3.30pm – start from the Outwoods car park.**

**OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**24TH JULY 2024**

16 Oct 2024 Item 03
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PRESENT: Councillors Campsall, A Gray, Smidowicz, D Taylor, Worrall,  
RB, RE (Vice-Chair), DG, GM and CN

Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment  
Senior Green Spaces Officer  
The Head Ranger  
Democratic Services Officer (NC)

APOLOGIES: Cllrs Fryer, B Gray, Infield.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

In accordance with the Trust Deeds, the Mayor of Charnwood had been invited and declined to be appointed as the chair of the Outwoods Management Committee.

**AGREED** that Cllr Fryer be appointed as the Chair of the Outwoods Management Committee for the period of 2024-25.

**AGREED** that RE be appointed as the Vice-chair of the Outwoods Management Committee for the period of 2024-25.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

Disclosures of personal interests were made as follows:

- (i) PB who farms land adjacent to the Outwoods.
- (ii) Cllr Taylor as a Leicestershire County Councillor.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th April 2024 were agreed.

Matters arising:

The Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment noted that as a report on the position of the trampers and garages had not been submitted to this meeting, he would provide an update during the next item on the agenda.

4. OFFICER UPDATE REPORT

A report of the Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment was submitted (item 5 on the agenda).

The Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment explained that the completion of the double yellow lines on the brow of the hill near the car park had not yet been completed (as indicated in the submitted report).

He provided a summary as follows:

- a National Forest Survey had been agreed to be undertaken, on behalf of the Committee, as a quick response had been required.
- the Outwoods Management Plan was still at the draft stage and that comments received from trustees would be included. The comments regarding bracken had been particularly welcome as this had been missed in the draft.
- Green gym volunteers could help with managing bracken and it was noted that at present volunteers often came from corporate 'away days' or referred by Physical Activity officers. The 'away days' had been successful in the past and a recruitment drive for more volunteers was planned although it would be necessary to ensure that the number of volunteers could be managed within health and safety guidelines.
- updating the payment machine, notice boards and completion of legal notices for increasing car parking charges had been completed and the charge increase implemented on 1st May. A quote was in progress for the installation of a third payment machine. No adverse comments regarding the charge increase had been received.
- the installation of a gate and crocodile teeth across the entrance was being scoped and costed to prevent anti-social behaviour in the car park at night. There would be a revenue cost to open/close the gates each day which was not currently in the budget.
- a long-term decision was required for the replacement of the garage building and trampers. This would be capital expenditure and subject to approval by the Council.

Discussion of key points:

- the National Forest Survey would not include a survey of wildlife and birds. A survey of wildlife could be completed by the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) who had performed a survey previously in 2017. There was a national shortage of wildlife recorders.
- the chemical spraying of bracken provided patchy results and was not favoured for large areas. It was used for small areas located close to saplings and enabled the contractor to manage bracken promptly after replanting of the felled areas. The preferred option was to cut the bracken back, but it was noted that this task required regular repeating and it had been challenging to maintain consistency in recent months due to changeover of staff.
- whether volunteers could be sought from fitness clubs, community service recruits and from the Carpenters Arms. It was important that the recruitment, training and supervising of volunteers did not detract from the work of the rangers and added value to the team.
- Social media could be used to advertise, and Trustees wished to see the advert prior to it being circulated. The provision of a separate website or Facebook page for the Outwoods was challenging to resource but that options would be investigated with the Council's Communications Manager.

- an automated gate could be more cost effective than installing manual gates that required opening/closing. It would be a 'one-off' payment and unlikely to require much maintenance although a service contract could be required. Council officer experiences with automated gates on other green spaces had been mixed and as it would require capital expenditure it would need Cabinet approval. Both options could be considered.

Mrs Taylor CC noted she would seek clarification on the installation of double yellow lines on the brow of the hill near the car park.

*POST MEETING Note: a combination of requiring traffic management to enable the work to be carried out safely and the need for re-lining following surface dressing had resulted in some delay but the work should be completed within the next two weeks.*

**AGREED that**

1. the Head of Contracts, Leisure, Waste and Environment contacts LRWT to investigate if a wildlife survey could be completed in the Outwoods.
2. the Head of Contracts, Leisure, Waste and Environment provides updates on the following at the next meeting of the Committee on 16th October 2024:
  - a. finalised Outwoods Management Plan
  - b. the recruitment plan for volunteers
  - c. costing options for installation of a manual or automated gate,
  - d. options for the replacement of garage and purchase of trampers.
3. that the report be noted.

5. FINANCE UPDATE

A report of the Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment was submitted that covered the revenue budget (item 6 on the agenda).

The Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment presented the report and stated that it was three months into the new financial year and there was no significant issues to report. He provided a brief overview, noting that the car park income had suffered from a wet Spring, fencing around the rangers yard was being replaced and that work with felling and restocking would progress this winter.

**AGREED that** the report be noted.

6. RANGERS REPORT

A report of the Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment was submitted (item 7 on the agenda). The Ranger presented a brief overview noting that the new rangers were getting to know the Outwoods and its seasonal maintenance requirements. In response to a question he confirmed that the rangers did wear uniforms so were identifiable to visitors of the woods.

**AGREED that** the report be noted and circulated to all councillors after the meeting.



7. A.O.B

Trustees discussed the importance of following up actions given to housing developers to increase biodiversity and mentioned examples where this did not appear to be occurring. The Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment noted that the County Council were developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy which was still in its early stages and, if finalised, could be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 29th January 2025.

Trustees requested an update on the position of the GeoPark. The Head of Contracts: Leisure, Waste and Environment explained that the five year programme was well underway and was expected to finish in 2025. As the programme had been interrupted by the COVID 19 restrictions, an 18 month extension was being applied for which would also enable the GeoPark team to organise legacy arrangements for continuing its work. The UNESCO park status application was ongoing and its submission to UNESCO was intended in 2025. Concerns were raised about the submission of plans for a solar farm near to its boundary, it was noted that the GeoPark was a partnership of local organisations and could only comment on planning applications on a factual basis. It was suggested that Julie Attard be invited to a future meeting to provide a status update.

It was suggested that the timing of scheduled meetings in late July could result in the meeting having no quorum so an earlier meeting date would be scheduled in July 2025.

**AGREED** that

1. Julie Attard be invited to attend a future meeting to provide a status update about the GeoPark.
2. the Local Nature Recovery Strategy be scheduled for consideration of the Committee to its meeting on 29 January 2025 subject to its availability.
3. the Secretary of the Committee schedule an earlier July meeting for 2025.

## **ADDENDUM - DECISIONS WHEREBY A VOTE WAS TAKEN**

*At the meeting of the Committee held on 6th September 2017 it was agreed that when the Committee voted by a show of hands on decisions made by the Committee that this information was documented as an addendum to the minutes (minute 2.2 2017 refers).*

### **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

In accordance with the Trust Deeds, the Mayor of Charnwood had been invited and declined to be appointed as the chair of the Outwoods Management Committee.

It was proposed that Councillor Fryer be nominated as chair of the Committee.

8 voted in favour  
2 voted against  
None abstained

It was proposed that Councillor Worrall be nominated as chair of the Committee.

1 voted in favour  
8 voted against  
1 abstained

**AGREED** that Cllr Fryer be appointed as the Chair of the Outwoods Management Committee for the period of 2024-25.

It was proposed that RE be nominated as vice-chair of the Committee.

7 voted in favour  
2 voted against  
1 abstained

It was proposed that Councillor Worrall be nominated as vice-chair of the Committee.

1 voted in favour  
8 voted against  
1 abstained

**AGREED** that RE be appointed as the Vice-chair of the Outwoods Management Committee for the period of 2024-25.

## OUTWOODS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 16<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2024

### Report of the Head of Contacts, Leisure, Waste and Environment

#### ITEM 4                    OFFICER UPDATE REPORT

##### Purpose of Report

To update the Outwoods Management Committee on issues raised at previous meetings of the Committee and to bring new issues to the attention of the Committee.

##### Management Plan Update

A final draft of the Outwoods Management Plan is appended to this report for approval. The Management Plan set out how officers and the Council intend to conduct the management of the Outwoods over the coming years. Officers intend to provide an annual update on progress against the Management Plan to the OMC at the spring meeting. Trustees have had the opportunity to make comments on previous versions of the draft plan.

**Community Use/Accessibility:** The Plan will cover issues relating to Community Access.

**Conservation & Environment:** The Plan will cover the conservation priorities for the Outwoods.

**Financial Viability:** The Plan will include issues relating to the financial viability of the Outwoods.

**ACTION:** Trustees are requested to approve the Management Plan from adoption.

##### High Wind Policy

Following advice from the CBC Health and Safety Officer, it is not possible to amend the wind speed gust threshold for closures to the Outwoods.

##### Wildlife Survey

No progress since the last meeting, regarding contacting LRWT to investigate if a wildlife survey could be completed in the Outwoods.

##### Volunteer Recruitment

No progress since the last meeting regarding a plan for volunteer recruitment.

##### Installation of a Manual or Automated Gate

Officers are in the process of obtaining quotes for the installation of the gates at the entrance to the woods which will control access to the car park. Any installation will need to be made after the final phase of restoration has been

completed. The cost of the gates is unlikely to be funded from within the revenue budget for the Outwoods. Capital funding is likely to be required from CBC whose Capital Programme is next up for consideration in 2025/26.

#### Replacement of Garage and Purchase of Trampers.

Officers are in the process of reviewing options for the replacement of the garage and purchase of trampers. The cost of a replacement garage and trampers cannot be funded from within the revenue budget for the Outwoods. Capital funding is likely to be required from CBC whose Capital Programme is next up for consideration in 2025/26.

Solutions and costs will be presented at a future meeting, and a decision made as to whether the Committee should seek funding through CBC's Capital Programme.

#### Geopark Update

Julie Attard has been asked to provide an update at a future meeting of the OMC. The date for this is yet to be confirmed.

#### Appendix: Outwoods Management Plan

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# THE OUTWOODS

ITEM 04  
APPENDIX

## Management Plan 2024-2029



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Document Control Sheet

Ciaran Fern (document coordinator), Charnwood Borough Council

Document Title: The Outwoods Management Plan

Rev.	Document Status	Approved	Date
Ciaran Fern	Updated		03.07.2023
Ciaran Fern	Updated		20.11.2023
Ciaran Fern	Updated		18.03.2024
Ciaran Fern	Updated		30.09.2024

## **Section 1: Introduction, Background & Strategic Context**

- 1.1 Introduction
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- 1.3 Management Structure for the site
  
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## **Section 3: Vision**

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- 2. Compartment Map
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- Appendix 4 PAWS Survey



## **Section 1: Introduction, Background, and Strategic Context**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The people of Charnwood have good reason to be grateful to Alan Moss and George Bowler. It was through the generosity of these two local benefactors that the Outwoods came into public ownership, and as a result thousands of local people have had an opportunity to enjoy the peace and beauty of this very special place.

Despite their many competing interests, visitors to the Outwoods continue to report high levels of satisfaction with the way the woods are managed. We are proud of the high esteem in which the Outwoods is held, and the special place it has in the hearts of local people.

We believe that, above all else, the Outwoods is valued for its informal, natural appearance and we will continue to protect its rich ecological and geological heritage whilst at the same time striving to improve facilities wherever appropriate.

This management plan sets out the policies and procedures in operation at the Outwoods, and our vision for its future development. We trust that through the hard work and commitment of our staff, contractors, and volunteers, the Outwoods will continue to enchant and delight generations to come.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Management Plan**

This Management Plan has been written in order to develop a vision for the direction, development, and management of the Outwoods, to ensure its sustainable management and to protect and enhance its ecological value.

The Plan relates to the Outwoods and Bluebell Wood SSSI (collectively known as the Outwoods), a 45ha ancient woodland site situated 2 miles west of Loughborough in the Charnwood Forest area of Leicestershire. The original framework of this plan was developed by Charnwood Borough Council's Green Spaces Team in consultation with the Outwoods Management Committee, Natural England, site visitors and other stakeholders. The plan was adopted by the Outwoods Management Committee on 5th June 2013 and revised in August 2015 as part of an interim review. The plan was further updated to include a PAWS survey and Forestry Commission standard plan in 2018, which was approved by the Outwoods Management Committee and has also been adopted for this latest update. This latest version, to cover 2024-2029, holds to the long-term vision of the Outwoods.

The Operational Objectives contained within this management plan will be constantly monitored to ensure that they are being met; management aims will be reviewed in year 3/4 in order to inform future planning.

### **1.3 Management Structure for the Site**

The Outwoods is managed by the Environmental Services section, part of the Contracts, Leisure, Waste & Environment Directorate within Charnwood Borough Council.

In 2014 the Council outsourced its grounds maintenance and Ranger function to an external provider, Quadron Services Ltd, who were then acquired by *idverde* in 2016, as part of the Management of Open Spaces contract. Operations such as the removal of accumulated waste,

after litter is collected by the Ranger Service, are undertaken on site by Serco Ltd as part of the Environmental Services contract. The day to day running of the contracts is the responsibility of the Council's Contracts team.

Although the Outwoods has no formal 'Friends of Group,' the Outwoods Management Committee was created in 1947 under the terms of the Deeds of Trust, to represent the views of the local community and park users. The Management Committee consists of 5 local residents and 8 district councillors. The Management Committee is responsible for strategic decisions regarding the management of the site. The Management Committee's business meetings are open to members of the public to attend, and on two occasions each year these meetings are preceded by a site visit which users of the Outwoods are invited to attend. These site visits, which are advertised on the Outwoods' notice board and on the Charnwood Borough Council website, offer visitors an opportunity to question members of the Management Committee and to pass on their comments or concerns.

## **1.4 Relevant Strategies and Policies**

### **1.4.1 National Context**

It is important to understand the current political and policy context in which site managers and maintenance teams are operating when developing a management plan for the Outwoods. Green spaces have risen in importance on the political agenda in recent years, and there are now various national strategies that set out a framework for the future management of open spaces and help determine aims and objectives for the site's future management. Some of the current and relevant publications and policy guidance notes are outlined below.

*The UK Forestry Standard (2017)*

*National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF),2021*

The National Planning Policy Framework (revised) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. It replaces previous guidance in Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes. At its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which promotes development that improves economic, social, and environmental outcomes. Paragraph 174 states that 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);'
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures

### National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 is underpinned by a suite of Planning Practice Guidance which is regularly updated, added to and amended. This information is designed to support the interpretation of NPPF policies.

National Planning Practice Guidance includes **open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and the new Local Green Space designation**. This guidance (2021) contains the requirement for local planning authorities to assess the need for open space and opportunities for new provision in their areas. It recommends that authorities and developers refer to Sport England's guidance on how to assess the need for sports and recreation facilities and consult Local Sport England in certain cases where development affects the use of land as playing fields.

Planning Practice Guidance on **Healthy and Safe Communities** (2021) outlines a range of issues that could be considered through the plan-making and decision-making processes, in respect of health and healthcare infrastructure. It includes the consideration of opportunities for healthy lifestyles e.g. planning for an environment that supports people of all ages in making healthy choices, helps to promote active travel and physical activity, and promotes access to healthier food, high quality open spaces, green infrastructure and opportunities for play, sport and recreation.

Planning Practice Guidance **Natural Environment** (2019) covers landscape, biodiversity and ecosystems, green infrastructure, brownfield land, soils and agricultural land. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. High-quality networks of multifunctional green infrastructure contribute a range of benefits, including ecological connectivity, facilitating biodiversity net gain and nature recovery networks and opportunities for communities to undertake conservation work.

### Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement (2013)

This is the key policy document as set out by the Forestry Commission England. The following are the key objectives (in priority order):

- protecting the nation's trees, woodlands, and forests from increasing threats such as pests, diseases, and climate change
- improving their resilience to these threats and their contribution to economic growth, people's lives, and nature
- expanding them to further increase their value

### The Forestry England Biodiversity Action Plan (2022-2026)

This plan identifies that there is currently a gap between the amount of habitat that our nation provides, and the amount of habitat biodiversity needs to thrive. The pledge is to increase the diversity of species, diversity of habitats, and increase trophic complexity. Trophic complexity is when a diverse range of species from all trophic levels are present within an ecosystem, from large herbivores to dung beetles, through to predators. We will balance disturbance. Disturbance creates dynamism and provides opportunities for wildlife to flourish. Too little disturbance creates climax habitats that barely change with low levels of dynamism, while too much does not allow time for species to recolonise and prevents natural succession.

The plan also recognises the need for connecting habitats to allow individuals to move and populations to link.

#### **1.4.2 Local & Regional Context**

This management plan complements the strategic context of a number of local and regional policies to which Charnwood Borough Council has developed or signed up that are appropriate to the management of the site. These include, but are not limited to:

##### *The National Forest Strategy, 2014 – 2024*

The National Forest Strategy sets out the key objectives for the Forest. It prioritises making the most of the asset created and securing the forest's future, through:

- sensitive achievement of the landscape change, with increased targeting to get the greatest benefits;
- making the most of forest sites (woodlands and other habitats, attractions, connections, and views);
- increasing engagement, enjoyment, and well-being by the widest range of people effective partnerships taking the forest to the next stage;
- bringing in new income and investment the national exemplar role, research and being a centre of excellence;
- securing a sustainable lead body into the future based on a balanced funding model and the reputation of the National Forest Company (NFC).

##### *Charnwood Forest Partnership*

The Council is committed to supporting the Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership. After a successful Round 1 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid the Partnership is working on its two-year Development Phase, during which studies to provide key information and to work up the detail of how projects will be delivered will be undertaken.

The Charnwood Forest Landscape Scheme proposes to bring about a major change in how we protect, manage and celebrate the heritage of Charnwood Forest. It will celebrate the area's internationally important volcanic legacy, encouraging people to explore Charnwood Forest's rich landscape and diverse heritage.

The Outwoods, a SSSI ancient woodland managed by the Council lies within the Charnwood Forest area and is a key site within the scheme. Proposals include improved access and better linkages between this site and others within the Forest Area, connecting people to its history and securing its sustainable future.

##### *Open Spaces Strategy 2018-2036*

Charnwood Borough Council has produced the Open Spaces Strategy for the provision of open spaces up to 2036. This is a strategy for the management of open spaces in the borough of Charnwood. It provides a review of the 2013 Open Spaces Strategy and a current Action Plan based on an up-to-date assessment of provision, user consultation and local needs analysis. It aims to provide a clear framework for practical action to protect and improve open spaces. It will guide prioritisation, management, and resource allocation for the improvement of open spaces and will deliver good practice in all aspects of provision. It will also exploit opportunities to increase the

provision of open space, and support bids for funding to improve the network of open spaces to meet current and future needs.

The Strategy will ensure the Council's commitment to high quality open spaces is fully integrated into its strategies, plans and programmes, by influencing and informing policy development and implementation across the Council's activities.

### *The Charnwood Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2028*

The Council's Core Strategy is the primary document of the Charnwood Local Plan providing a strategy for delivering growth for Charnwood up to 2028.

The Strategy provides the vision, objectives, and strategic policies for delivering growth for Charnwood. It will help shape and consider major developments, deliver infrastructure, and influence economic investment decisions. It will play a significant part in delivering homes and jobs, regenerating the borough's towns, and protecting the countryside, environment, and heritage.

The Core Strategy reflects the Government's requirements as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Strategy has been developed within these requirements to support and deliver the Council's Corporate Plan and supporting strategies for Charnwood, particularly the Sustainable Community Strategy and Regeneration Strategy.

The Core Strategy provides policies for both the built and natural environment, including green infrastructure, biodiversity, open spaces, sport, and recreation.

The Strategy notes that 'access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation contributes to the health, well-being, and cohesion of our communities as well as civic pride. As our population increases, the pressure on current provision will mount, and there will be a need to provide significant areas of open space and long-term management arrangements.'

The Council's Open Spaces Strategy forms an evidence base for the Core Strategy which adopts the standards for Open Space, Sport, and Recreation.

The Core Strategy will see major areas of new development accompanied by significant areas of open space. This will have a major impact on open space provision in the Borough, and this Open Spaces Strategy will address the management implications of these developments.

### *Charnwood Local Plan 2021-2037*

This Local Plan is in the advanced stages of planning and once agreed by the Planning Inspectorate, the document will replace the current Charnwood Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2028.

### *Charnwood Climate Change Strategy 2018 – 2030*

The Climate Change Strategy 2018-2030 sets out the Council's aim of influencing and empowering residents, community groups, schools and businesses in the Borough to help them to mitigate climate change by reducing their carbon emissions and also aims to implement carbon reduction projects to reduce the carbon emissions of its own buildings.

The Strategy sets out how the Council will work to increase the resilience and capacity of the Council's services to a changing climate and will support the residents and businesses of the Borough to adapt to climate change by helping them to prepare and increase their resilience to the possible impacts of climate change.

The Strategy recognises that specific actions are needed to address different climate change issues. The Climate Change Strategy is based around three themes:

- raising awareness
- reducing our impact on climate change
- resilience

The Strategy ensures that Council owned open spaces and habitat are well adapted to the changing climate.

### 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy (2010)

The GI strategy set out a strategic green infrastructure (GI) network for the three counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, and Nottinghamshire, and for the three cities of Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester (The 6Cs). The strategy also sets out a vision for GI in the area, fitting with strategic objectives and providing recommendations for the content of GI policies within Local Development Frameworks.

Charnwood Borough Council's Cabinet endorsed a response to the Draft 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy in November 2009, and in so doing supported the proposed strategic Green Infrastructure Network that was set out in the consultation document.

### Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan, 2016 – 2026

In 2016 the Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Plan (LLRBAP) was updated. All the 19 Priority Habitat Summaries have been revised to include opportunities / conservation measures, an explanation of the link to Local Wildlife Site criteria, and to update the status of the habitat, where known.

The revised LLRBAP provides a summary of the current extent of habitats, including an assessment of the current trend in quality and extent for each, where evidence exists. The list of core LBAP species remains, but the definition of an LBAP species has been widened to include species listed in Local Red Data Books or identified as 'rare' in a County or VC55 checklist.

The 2016 LLRBAP includes a new Species Action Plan, for Swifts, Swallows and House Martins. The rest of the document is largely unaltered, apart from minor updates.

### Charnwood Strategy 2020-2024

The Borough Council's Corporate Plan sets out the Council's priorities and objectives until 2024, which make clear reference to the need for quality open spaces, whilst recognising the need to lead and work with partners. Particularly relevant to this management plan is the ambition of protecting our natural resources to provide a Borough which is clean and tidy and has a variety of green, open spaces for the benefit of all our residents.

Within the strategy, Charnwood Borough Council state that they have already reduced their carbon footprint and pledged to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 to help tackle climate change. Their parks and open spaces are award-winning and treasured by communities and will continue to care for them so they can be enjoyed by everyone. There is a commitment to develop and improve open spaces, supported by the pledge to ensure 100,000 trees are planted.

### *The Landscape Character Assessment for the Charnwood Forest Regional Park*

The Charnwood Landscape Assessment provides a structured evaluation of the landscape of the borough including a landscape strategy with guidelines for the protection, conservation, and enhancement of the character of the landscape, which will inform development management decisions and development of plans for the future of the Borough.

### *Charnwood Borough Council Tree Policy*

The tree policy sets out how the Borough Council manages its tree stock and the standards to which work is undertaken.

## **1.5 Statutory Designations and Site Constraints**

### *Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981(as amended)*

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA) is the principle legislative instrument for the protection of habitats and species in the UK, prohibiting actions that may harm or endanger specified species of conservation concern. Because of its important ecological and geological features, Natural England has designated the Outwoods (along with Hangingstone golf course and Beacon Hill Country Park) as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Any management or development operations carried out within the site must therefore be approved by Natural England.

### *Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000*

This act increases protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest and strengthens existing legislation under the WCA, making the reckless disturbance of a place of rest or shelter of a protected animal an offence.

### *Forestry Act 1967*

A felling licence is required from the Forestry Commission if more than 5 cubic metres of timber is felled in any one calendar quarter (2 cubic metres if the timber is sold).

### *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*

This item of legislation places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity, including restoring or enhancing a population or habitat. A key purpose of this duty is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector.

### *National Character Areas*

The site falls within the 'Charnwood' (NCA Profile 73), as defined by Natural England (1996). National Character Areas (NCAs) were previously known as Joint Character Areas (JCAs).

## Charnwood Borough Council Management of Open Spaces Contract 2014

Within the MOS contract the Outwoods are designated as a 'Natural & Semi Natural' site.

### Public Rights of Way (PROWs)

There is a public footpath which follows the northern boundary of the Outwoods.

### Leases, Wayleaves and Covenants

HM Land Registry Title Number LT246850, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1992 details the property register or the site.

### Rights of Easement

There is a right of easement granted to Leicestershire County Council along the route of a gravity sewer running from Charnwood Hall.

#### **1.5.1 Deed of Trust**

In accordance with the Deed of Trust drawn up between the Loughborough Corporation and Mr Alan Moss, a Management Committee was formed to oversee the management of the Outwoods. This Committee is made up of elected members of the Council and nominees from the local community.

The following obligations fall on the Management Committee:

1. The property to be preserved in perpetuity as a public open space by the Borough upon Trust.
2. Proceeds from the sale of timber to be paid to the Management Committee firstly for the management of the Outwoods. Any surplus monies to be used towards any purpose which may benefit or improve the Outwoods. An insufficiency of money for the management of the Outwoods to be made good by the Borough, the amount to be determined by the Borough Council.
3. To keep the Outwoods unbuilt upon except structures necessary for the management of the Outwoods.
4. To preserve the natural aspect, features, state of rural beauty and plant life of the Outwoods.

The Management Committee has the power:

1. To thin, crop and replant the wood in accordance with approved methods of forestry under the direction of some competent person.
2. To drain and improve the Outwoods as necessary for the enjoyment of visitors subject to clause 4 above.
3. To maintain the existing pathways.
4. To make and maintain new pathways but only to the extent that they will be used by persons on foot.
5. To plant timber, or other trees and shrubs for the purpose of shelter or ornament and lay down turf.
6. To make temporary enclosures for the protection of any trees, plantation, shrubs, turf, gorse, or heather.



7. To control ground game and vermin to prevent damage to the wood.
8. To encourage and preserve wild bird life in the Outwoods.
9. To make bylaws and regulations for the protection of the Outwoods.
10. To take any legal and other proceedings for the protection of the Outwoods. To regulate access by the public to any portion of the Outwoods as necessary for management purposes.

As a result of the deed of gift made between Loughborough Corporation and Mr Alan Moss the following obligations fall upon the Borough Council:

1. The property to be preserved in perpetuity as a public open space.
2. The footpath to be used only as footways.
3. Access to bicycles, horses, and all other vehicles (except invalid carriages and vehicles required for management purposes) to be prohibited and prevented by the erection of suitable notices, fences, barriers, gates, and posts. The acquisition of a right of way by anyone except on foot to be prevented.
4. To maintain boundary walls, hedges, and fences contiguous with the vendor's property.

The Outwoods was conveyed to the Loughborough Corporation in two parts, the following obligation falling upon the Borough Council as a result of the 1947 Conveyance:

1. The vendor reserves any easement of right of light, air or otherwise which would restrict the use of any adjoining land for building or any other purpose.
2. The owners and occupiers of Pocket Gate Cottage have the right to take water from the spring marked and to inspect, clean and repair the tank, filters and pipes used in supply of the water.
3. There are also three general clauses stating that the land is held subject to any rights under any planning scheme, any public rights of way or any right of easement and any liability to repair boundary walls and bridges, roads etc.

The following obligations fall upon the Borough Council as a result of the 1950 Conveyance:

1. To erect and maintain three suitable notices warning persons against trespassing on adjoining land.
2. To preserve the land in perpetuity as an open space.
3. The land is held subject to rights described in an earlier Conveyance which are the same as the rights described above.

### **1.5.2 Byelaws**

The byelaws which were adopted in 1946 relate to the use of the wood by the public rather than the management of the woods (see Appendix 2). Plans to update these byelaws are being progressed.

## Section 2: Site description and Evaluation

### 2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

#### 2.1.1 Description

The Outwoods are situated in the north-eastern part of Charnwood Forest, 2 miles west of Loughborough. The woods occupy the eastern escarpment of the Charnwood Forest, forming a prominent landscape feature above the town. The site is popular with local walkers and naturalists who benefit from a network of surfaced footpaths throughout the site.

The Outwoods forms part of Beacon Hill, Hangingstone and Outwoods Site of Special Scientific Interest. The SSSI was first notified in 1956 under The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 but was re-notified in 1987 under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The Outwoods were included because it holds important geological outcrops, stands of ancient semi-natural alder woodland, breeding bird communities, a breeding site of palmate newt and plants characteristics of ancient semi-natural woodland on dry acidic soils.

The Outwoods can be divided into two broad woodland types - plantation and ancient semi-natural woodland – divisions that reflect the site's recent history. Between 1900 and 1945 much of the Outwoods was clear felled, with the land being either replanted or left to regenerate naturally. As a result, approximately a quarter of the woodland is conifer or mixed plantation whilst the remainder is semi-natural woodland.

Mature conifer plantations established across the site are mainly European larch with beech and/or sycamore, whilst more recent plantations are predominantly Scots pine and Norway spruce. Because of the dense shade created by the conifer's regeneration and ancient woodland ground flora in these areas is sparse. The wood has two characteristic types of semi-natural woodland. The first is a distinctly wetter, neutral woodland and the second a more acidic, drier woodland. The former is associated with several watercourses draining a shallow valley and is characterised by alder and downy birch with ash, aspen and the occasional oak. The main shrubs are hazel, hawthorn, holly, and crab apple. Pendulous sedge, meadowsweet, wood anemone, yellow archangel, dog's mercury, greater woodrush, and wood melick are some species of the rich ground flora layer. An impressive amount of standing and fallen deadwood has developed to benefit a richer invertebrate fauna.

The acidic type of woodland occurs along the ridge on the eastern edge of the wood. The native composition of the wood has been heavily altered by felling and replanting with species such as beech, and later with inappropriate species such as rhododendron, sycamore, and conifers. Sessile oak, pedunculate oak, birch and rowan are the main trees that survive along with a ground flora of bramble, bracken, wavy hair grass and wood sage. In some areas bluebell and greater woodrush also occur. Notable plants include common cow-wheat, a county rarity.

#### 2.1.2 Site Statistics

Name of Site	The Outwoods
Address	Woodhouse Lane, Loughborough, LE11 3YG
Location	Approximately 2 miles west of Loughborough
Grid Ref	SK 5116 4113
Size of site	44.6 ha
Site Owner	Charnwood Borough Council

Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</li> <li>ii. Natural &amp; Semi Natural Site typology – MOS Contract</li> <li>iii. National character area</li> </ul>
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### 2.1.3 Location and Context

The Outwoods is located 2 miles to the west of Loughborough, fringed by Woodhouse Lane to the west. It is part of a larger woodland complex adjoining Jubilee Woods which is owned by Leicestershire County Council. It sits on an escarpment overlooking Loughborough with agricultural fields on the eastern side, dropping down to Loughborough. These fields and the Outwoods were once part of the original medieval park.

The site is part of the ancient Charnwood Forest and sits within the National Forest area.

### 2.1.4 Ownership

The management of the Outwoods is the responsibility of the Outwoods Management Committee. The Committee can be contacted via Charnwood Borough Council, Southfields, Southfields Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire.

The Outwoods is wholly owned by Charnwood Borough Council. It was acquired by the former Loughborough Corporation and passed to the Borough Council on 1st April 1974. The woods were conveyed to the Corporation in three phases:

- The first area was conveyed to the Corporation in 1946 by Deed of Gift. The donor was Mr Alan Moss of Park Farm Nanpantan. At the same time the Corporation entered into a Deed of Trust setting up a committee to manage and administer the Outwoods in accordance with the Deed of Trust.
- The second area was purchased from the Beaumanor Estate in 1947. The money to purchase this area was donated by Mr George Harry Bowler, who wished the land to be held in trust along with that donated by Mr Alan Moss.
- The third area was sold to the Corporation by Mr Moss in 1950. This area was never made the subject of a formal Deed of Trust but is administered by the Management Committee along with the other parts of the Outwoods.

### 2.1.5 History/Past Usage

The Outwoods has been woodland since the later medieval period and is included in the Inventory of Ancient Woodland. It was originally dominated by Sessile Oak until clear felling operations between 1900 and 1945 introduced conifer plantations. These now cover about a quarter of the woodland. It has remained relatively untouched, although there have been localised plantings of other tree species, e.g., cherry. There has also been the introduction of rhododendron which was probably introduced in the Victorian era for pheasant cover.

Within the eastern fringe of the wood there are a number of ‘hollows’ which represent localised quarrying. There is also an extensive network of redundant stone walls across the site, representing an earlier period when the site would have been periodically grazed by livestock.

More recent use of the site is predominantly recreational.

## **2.1.6 Charnwood Forest Geopark**

The Outwoods sits within the Charnwood Forest, which, since the 1930's has been considered, though not officially recognised, as a National Park. In 2007 an Officer Steering Group and Stakeholder Group were established to look at ways to manage and promote the area. In 2012 the Charnwood Forest Regional Park Board met for the first time and one of the actions agreed was a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme.

After an initial National Lottery Heritage Fund bid in 2013, a successful first round application for funding was made in 2017 and the project plans were developed over 18 months to write a round two submission in October 2019. National Lottery confirmed the grant award in March 2020, but the Covid Pandemic meant the start date was deferred until July 2020.

By spring 2021 the full delivery team for the Landscape Partnership Scheme had been recruited and the Regional Park Board had approved the first stages of an application to UNESCO. Charnwood Forest is now an aspiring Geopark.

## **2.2 Physical Information**

### **2.2.1 Geology**

The unique character of the Outwoods and Charnwood Forest in general, is determined by the Precambrian rock that underlies the area. These rocks were formed some 600 million years ago and are some of the oldest in Britain. Because they are hard and resistant to weathering the rocks frequently form craggy outcrops.

Most of the Outwoods stands on Precambrian rock of the Maplewell series (British Geological Survey 1976 and 1982). These outcrop in several places, the largest crags being in the northern part of the woods. Rare impression fossils have been found in the Outwoods, which are of international importance in the study of early life forms. Lower down the slopes from the Precambrian outcrops, particularly in the southern part of the wood, are deposits of gravelly material laid down in the Ice Ages.

The south-eastern section of the wood is underlain by Keuper Marls which are younger rocks of the Triassic age. These are covered by glacial deposits of boulder clay and in the area by the stream, alluvial deposits.

The famous Charnia fossil was found close to the boundary of the Outwoods in the 1950's. This find was the first conclusive evidence for life existing in the Precambrian and is now known to be one of the oldest animal fossils.

### **2.2.2 Topography**

Topography is typical of the Charnwood Forest area. It generally slopes from west to east and there are numerous outcrops of Precambrian rock throughout the site.

### **2.2.3 Hydrology**

The site falls under the Woodbrook Catchment, which is a tributary to the River Soar and covers 24.5 square kilometres. There are no major water courses through the wood, although there is a small central stream feeding downslope. There are numerous small water courses although many

of these are storm runoff channels. All water from the wood feeds downslope into the more clearly defined Woodbrook channel.

#### **2.2.4 Soils**

Although there is no detailed soil map of the Outwoods, the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983) shows the area to be covered by soils from the Claverley Soil Association. Within the Association, Iveshead Series soils are found on the brows of hills and steep slopes where bare rock is common. They are shallow, acid, loamy soils; very stony and well drained.

On the lower slopes are found Claverley Series soils. These are also acid soils with coarse, loamy topsoil containing large stones over a loamy but only slowly permeable subsoil. These soils are usually seasonally waterlogged. In the lowest lying Pocket Gate area of the Outwoods the soils may be of the Clifton and Salop Series. These are similar to the soils of the Claverley Series but of a finer texture, less stony and also only slowly permeable and hence prone to water logging.

### **2.3 Habitats and Biodiversity**

#### **2.3.1 Flora**

Noteworthy species present include common cow-wheat, which can be found under the mature oaks in the southwest corner of the wood. This species is declining within the Outwoods but is abundant along the adjacent road verge. Yellow loosestrife can be found in the marshy Pocket Gate area of the woods. Both these species are rare in Leicestershire, occurring at only a few locations.

Because the Outwoods are situated on hard, acidic rock (unusual in the Midlands) a number of plant species present are almost entirely confined to the Charnwood Forest Area within Leicestershire. These include sessile oak, green-ribbed sedge, heath rush and pill sedge.

#### **2.3.2 Key Habitats**

##### **Woodland**

The main habitat within the Outwoods is woodland, which can be divided into two broad types - plantation and semi-natural woodland - divisions that reflect the site's recent history.

Between 1900 and 1945 much of the Outwoods was clear felled, with the land being either replanted or left to regenerate naturally. As a result, approximately a quarter of the woodland is conifer or mixed plantation while the remaining is semi-natural woodland.

##### **Plantations**

The older plantations are mainly European larch with beech and/or sycamore. The younger plantations are largely Scots pine and Norway spruce. Because of the dense shade created by the conifers the ground flora in these areas is sparse.

In 1983 the plantation in compartment 4A (Figure 2) was clear felled and replanted with a variety of native and non-native broadleaved trees as well as some examples of Sequoia. Natural regeneration has also taken place in this area with birch, ash, oak, and sycamore occurring throughout the compartment. In many places the birch and sycamore have overtopped the planted

trees. Where there are open areas in this compartment, the ground flora is dominated by sedges and rushes.

Compartment 10A (Figure 2) was clear felled in 1992/3 and replanted with sessile oak grown from acorns collected in the Outwoods; there is also considerable birch regeneration in this area.

In addition, part of compartment 7A (Figure 2) was subject to severe wind-throw in 1993 following thinning. Small scale thinning and felling of conifers in compartments 1A, B & C, 6A & B, 7A & B, 9C, 12A, B & C has been taking place since 2003 under an agreement with Natural England. Where conifers have been removed, they have been replaced by sessile oak of local origin.

### **Semi-natural woodland**

Three of the woodland types within the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) can be found within the Outwoods.

The most extensive of these NVC types is W10, oak/birch woodland. Because of the extensive felling that has taken place in the past, these areas are dominated by young birch and oak with rowan frequent throughout. The ground flora in these areas is dominated by brambles or bracken with bluebells and creeping soft-grass frequently found beneath the bramble layer. The oak is mainly sessile with some pedunculate and some hybrids of the two. In the northern section of the wood are two areas of mature oak/birch wood (compartments 3A and 5A).

National Vegetation Classification type W16 (lowland oak-birch woodland with bilberry) is present in small fragments associated with the rocky outcrops throughout the woodland. The best examples of this type of woodland can be found in the areas on the south-western edge of the wood which escaped felling (compartment 13a). This area is dominated by mature sessile oak with a ground flora dominated by wavy hair-grass.

The south-eastern part of the wood is wet alder and alder/sycamore woodland, NVC type W7. The ground flora of the wetter alder areas includes yellow archangel, opposite-leaved golden saxifrage, remote sedge, and large bittercress. In the alder/sycamore areas the ground flora is dominated by bramble with wood anemone and broad buckler fern. Two small sections in this area have been clear-felled (compartment 11A). Compartment 11A was partially replanted with ash and alder and sessile oak.

### **Bracken**

Scattered throughout the semi-natural woodland areas are open glades dominated by bracken with a few oak and birch trees. Bluebells and creeping soft-grass are frequent and there are also patches of rosebay willowherb. Some areas notably compartment 2, have been planted with groups of specimen trees and non-native broadleaves such as Swedish whitebeam, and Norway maple.

### **2.3.3 Fauna**

There are many species of birds breeding within the Outwoods and in the past woodcock and tree pipits, identified as rare and threatened in the draft Leicestershire Red Data Book, have been recorded, though there have been unofficial sightings of woodcock, no officially recorded sightings have been made of these birds for several years.

There are several badgers' setts in the north-eastern part of the wood, which have statutory protection. There are also a small number of hare and grey squirrels in the woods and visitors

have reported seeing muntjac deer on the site. Stoats and weasels have also been recorded in the woods.

A survey carried out in the Outwoods by Rebecca Faulkner from Nottingham University (2012) identified 239 Lepidoptera species (moths and butterflies). This included 202 macromoth species, 72 micromoth species and 16 butterfly species. Incidental to the Lepidoptera survey a further 26 species of insect were also identified. A number of uncommon moth species were found during the survey including one, *Harpella forficella*, which has only been recorded in Britain on three other occasions. In addition, several nationally notable species of invertebrate are known to occur on the spring lines of Buck Hill just to the west of the Outwoods, and it is possible that they also exist along the spring zones within the Outwoods. A further survey should be undertaken within this management plan period to identify whether these species remain present.

### **2.3.4 Fungi**

The Outwoods has been identified as an important habitat for fungi and the Leicestershire and Rutland Fungi Study Group have conducted guided 'Fungal Forays' through the Outwoods in the past, which are open to the public to attend. A detailed survey of the Outwoods that was carried out by the Leicestershire and Rutland Fungi Study Group in October 2012 found 80 species of fungi including many specimens common to Charnwood Forest, though no red book species were found. A further survey should be undertaken within this management plan period to update records.

## **2.4 Cultural Value**

### **2.4.1 Recreational Use and Community**

The Outwoods were given to the Borough to be preserved in perpetuity as public open space and is popular with visitors from Loughborough and further afield. As well as the formal path network, there is an extensive network of smaller, informal footpaths within the Outwoods which have been created by the public. Primary paths tend to have compacted stone surfaces. Some secondary paths have stone surfaces, while tertiary paths have no surface.

A visitor survey carried out in 2012 indicates that approximately 89% of visitors travelling to the Outwoods do so by car while 11% walk or jog. Over 70% of visitors live within 5 miles of the Outwoods, while 14% of visitors travel over 10 miles to reach the site. Over 60% of the people visiting the Outwoods do so on a regular basis (more than once a month) with most visits lasting for less than 2 hours (68%). Over half of the visitors surveyed said they came to exercise or walk the dog (58%), while most of the others came to enjoy the woods, their wildlife, and the peace and quiet. Visitors particularly valued the 'natural,' informal appearance of the woods.

Since this last survey was completed, the demographic of visitors has changed somewhat with the introduction of the children's playground (2019), Olivia's Café (December 2021) and since the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, many local visitors used the woodland for the first time as the country was placed into 'lockdown' and advised by the government to exercise in the local area. The woodland has continued to remain a popular place to visit since the pandemic, particularly during weekends, which has led to pressure on the car park area.

As well as attracting casual visitors the Outwoods are regularly used for group activities including corporate events, conservation volunteering, rock climbing, walking, and orienteering. Because of its close proximity to Loughborough University, the Outwoods attracts a considerable number of

runners who use the woods for training. An annual guided Bluebell Walk, led by *idverde* staff, also takes place each year.

## 2.4.2 Site Infrastructure

There are 5 main access points into the Outwoods. The most popular access route is via the car park but there are also access points via gates and stiles in the north-west, north-east and south-west corners of the site and along its eastern edge. Due to increased pressure on the car park, due to the recent increase in visitor numbers, Charnwood Borough Council and the Outwoods Management Committee are encouraging visitors to use the car park at Nanpantan Sports Ground, situated approx. 600m to the NW of the Outwoods. However, the Public Right of Way between this car park and the Outwoods can be difficult to negotiate, particularly during wetter months, due to poor drainage creating infrequent areas of erosion along the route. As CBC are not the landowners of the land of the PRow, improvements are beyond their control. However, Leicestershire County Council have been approached by CBC senior management to request improvements to this route.

In addition to these formal access points there are several informal access points along the northern boundary of the Outwoods where the site adjoins Jubilee Woods. Jubilee Woods comprises ten hectares of mixed woodland with rocky outcrops which was presented to Leicestershire County Council in 1977 to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

There is no public transport directly to the Outwoods; however, it is possible to travel to Woodhouse Eaves by bus from Leicester or Loughborough and walk to the Outwoods via the footpath networks from Woodhouse Eaves or Nanpantan. Footpaths to link Nanpantan Reservoir via the Outwoods and through to Beacon Hill Country Park are being improved via a Landscape Partnership programme supported by £2.75m Heritage Lottery Funding. A footpath along Breakback Road has been completed in 2023 under this project to link the Outwoods with Beacon Hill Country Park.

There is a designated disabled parking space in the Outwoods car park, and the toilet has disabled facilities. In 2010 two all-terrain mobility scooters (Trampers) were procured by the Council to allow disabled people to access the whole of the Outwoods. One of these scooters was sponsored by a local charitable trust (the Cope Memorial Trust); the other was funded directly by Charnwood Borough Council. In 2022, a further Trampler was purchased through 50% grant funding through the National Forest Company with the remaining 50% being provided by Charnwood Borough Council. However, one of the original Trampers was deemed beyond economical repair in 2022 and decommissioned. These scooters have been a remarkable success and have generated considerable media interest, being the first of their kind in the area. The scooters are free to use and can be booked through the *idverde* Ranger Service.

There are Sheffield cycle racks in the car park for the use of visitors, as well as a basic timber cycle rack outside of Olivia's Cafe, but because of the environmentally sensitive nature of the Outwoods cycling is prohibited within the woods themselves. Off road cycling facilities are however available at the nearby Beacon Hill Country Park, directions to which are displayed in the Outwoods car park.

In Spring 2019, a Natural Play Area and covered Events Barn was installed in the events space outside of the SSSI area adjacent to the car park, following a successful funding bid from European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF).



In 2021, work began to extend the derelict Rangers Cottage to create a café/Visitor Centre. The café has been successfully operating since December 2021. Coupled with the new play area, this has attracted more visitors to the site and has particularly introduced the woodland experience to those with young children.

Free access exists over most of the Outwoods. However, an area adjoining the car park is closed to visitors in order to provide a refuge for wildlife and to encourage the regeneration of native oak woodland.

Throughout the site are a number of seats which are mainly memorial seats with some form of commemorative plaque on them. These have been surveyed in terms of location, description, and condition. They vary in age and design and are in varying states of repair. The car park has three new picnic tables with one being designed specifically for wheelchair use.

### **Footpaths**

There is an extensive and well used footpath network throughout the woods. Paths can be classified into primary, secondary, or tertiary depending on usage and style.

**Primary-** These are the main, key paths that tend to be used and are usually the widest paths. They have formalised crushed stone surfaces and are well maintained.

**Secondary-** These can be well used and are sometimes as wide as primary paths. Some of these have crushed stone surfaces.

**Tertiary-** Tertiary paths are usually narrow and do not have stone surfaces. They are not as well used and can be transient in nature. There is no formal management of these paths.

Due to the topography of the Outwoods, many footpaths include very steep inclines, which makes the site difficult for visitors with low mobility capabilities to explore. There is a range within the demographic of visitors who, although enjoy and are capable of walking unaided, find the long, steep footpaths difficult to manage.

As the car park is situated at the highest point of the site, this can be a barrier to visitors within this demographic. In recognition of this, funding to create an interlinking footpath between the two existing footpaths to the east of the car park, to decrease the gradient of the footpath, has been obtained by Charnwood Borough Council from the Charnwood Forest Geopark Landscape Partnership Scheme. This accessible footpath, as well as an improved Tramper route to the North of the site, is planned for completion in March 2025 pending consent from Natural England.

Further to the construction of the accessible footpath, to assist those visitors with lower mobility/fitness levels, benches along the route will be considered at a later stage by the Outwoods Management Committee.

### **Dry Stone Walls**

There are extensive low-level dry-stone walls fringing the eastern and western boundaries. They are built of locally sourced stone and are of a Leicestershire style. The eastern wall also acts in some places as a retaining wall separating the Outwoods from the adjacent field.

Their condition is extremely variable and there are numerous sections in the eastern wall that have collapsed, and gaps appeared.

There are also a number of remnant internal walls, which although do not need rebuilding are of historic value.

### **Water Courses**

The site has a number of minor water courses, although there are no sizeable streams running through the site. Some are formalised in ditches with various pedestrian bridges over them to allow access. Some are storm channels that run after heavy rainfall.

They add an intrinsic aesthetic and ecological value to the site and are regularly maintained. A full survey of the water courses needs to be completed in order to understand this resource better.

## **Section 3: Vision**

### **3.1 Vision**

The Outwoods are important not just as an amenity for local people but also as a unique geological and ecological resource, and so conserving the natural heritage features of the site is the primary management objective. Most visitors value the Outwoods for its informal, “natural” appearance and, whilst wanting to see facilities improved, express an ardent desire to see the existing character of the area maintained. Management of the site must therefore seek to balance the needs of visitors with the need to protect and enhance important habitat features and safeguard the informal character of the site.

The vision for the woodlands is to manage and improve the two characteristic types of woodland that exist here - acid oak woodland and wet alder woodland, and their associated species. To achieve this, there would be an ongoing programme of conifer removal and replanting (as outlined by the recent PAWS survey, Appendix 4). There would also be the phased control of other non-native species, e.g., sycamore and rhododendron. Thinning of target areas would be undertaken to improve regeneration and create a more diverse age structure and composition to the overall woodland. Good public access will continue with regular improvements to footpaths, infrastructure, and interpretation. The important geological resource will continue to be monitored, and any recommended management works e.g., vegetation removal will be undertaken with consultation from Natural England.

### **3.2 The Outwoods Restoration Project**

In 2016, Charnwood Borough Council officers explored opportunities for several sites under their ownership to be part of Higher-Level Stewardship and Countryside Stewardship grant schemes. During onsite meetings with Natural England, it was proposed to CBC (Charnwood Borough Council) officers that the SSSI would benefit from the removal of the conifer blocks to increase biodiversity and therefore wildlife habitat value. Following these meetings, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust were invited to survey the Outwoods to offer their independent views on the current status of the woodland and offer advice on how the Outwoods could be ecologically improved. The results of these surveys can be found as Appendices 3 and 4.

Following the receipt of these independent surveys and recommendations, Charnwood Borough Council entered a 5-year Countryside Stewardship scheme with Natural England in 2018 to predominantly remove rhododendron and conifer species from certain areas, followed by a restock of native species, which are prescribed via the Forestry Commission under terms and conditions of the felling licence.

The scheme launched in 2019 and was initially a 10-year project comprising 12 compartments. In January 2024, the Outwoods Management Committee voted to reduce this to 9 compartments, which is planned to be completed in 2026.

### **3.3 Work Operations**

Day to day operations at the Outwoods are carried out by the Ranger Service, who are managed by *idverde* as part of the Council's Management of Open Spaces Contract.

Large-scale tree works are carried out by arboriculture contractors. This work includes major felling operations, including wind-blown trees. Further works, including path construction and car park and buildings maintenance is carried out by appropriate specialist contractors.

In addition, work is also carried out by conservation volunteers and employees of local organisations engaged in community volunteering events. The work carried out by these groups includes planting trees, clearing rhododendron and sycamore, repairing walls, paths and fences, and tree thinning.

## **Section 4: Management Strategy**

### **4.1 Aims and Objectives of Management**

Based on the above site-based information and its evaluation, together with regional and national policy, the aims, and objectives for the Outwoods have been identified as follows:

#### **Aim 1: Woodland Management**

##### ***Objectives***

##### **Coniferous Plantations**

Clear fell and replant with native species, predominantly oak. The majority of the woodland is oak, birch and rowan dominated, and it is these species that would be replanted. Both sessile and pedunculate oak would be used to give more diversity. Small amounts of other species could be planted, for example holly and hazel, again to increase diversity in the shrub layer. Planting stock would be sourced locally within the Charnwood and National Forest area. Any bracken incursion would be treated by spot spraying with a selective herbicide to prevent shading out of new plantings. Planting densities would be approximately 1100/ha or as agreed with the Forestry Commission. Trees would be individually guarded, and planting densities would not be uniform across a clear-felled section. Planting would be in different sized groups to try and replicate the structure of a natural woodland. Some open spaces would be incorporated into any planting, along with rides where appropriate. These would be decided after felling has occurred in order to assess ground conditions and where these features would be best placed.

##### **Acid oak woodland**

Gradual thinning to favour oak and increase structural diversity. This would concentrate on birch dominated areas. Open pockets would be created to allow oak to establish well. Natural regeneration would be favoured, although some supplementary planting could be undertaken if establishment is poor.

## **Wet alder woodland**

Little management required - low intervention. Remove any sycamore and rhododendron as necessary, in order to maintain wet alder pocket. There is no designated public access.

## **Sycamore**

Gradually remove all sycamore and treat stumps. Stumps would be treated with the appropriate chemical, in order to prevent coppice regrowth. Areas of sycamore coppice would be targeted initially, as well as large seeding sycamores to help reduce the seed source.

## **Birch dominated areas**

Compartments 3A, 4A, 5A, 9A and 10A have a large density of birch. Birch is one of the key understorey trees in this type of woodland, but it would be beneficial to thin birch areas, particularly to favour oak. Although some thinning of compartments 4A, 5A and 10A have undergone some light thinning in years 2018 to 2021, with the Green Gym volunteers working with the Ranger Service, there is yet more open space to be created. Opportunities should be taken where possible to create small glades within these areas.

## **Aim 2: Biodiversity**

To conserve and encourage the ancient semi-natural characteristics of the site and their associated wildlife and maintain or increase populations of key species and habitats.

## **Objectives**

### **Rhododendron**

Rhododendron is present throughout the wood but has been particularly prevalent in compartments 8A, 9A, 12A, 12B and 12C. However, since 2018, much work has been completed by the Ranger Service working alongside the weekly Green Gym volunteer group, corporate groups and with Brooksby Melton College as part of their Countryside Management diploma studies.

The aim is to gradually remove all rhododendron and treat stumps. Untreated regrowth and large stands of major seed sources have been targeted first. Treatment has been with an approved herbicide to poison stumps or new growth. Where possible, stumps are removed as this is more environmentally sensitive than herbicide application.

However, we should not be complacent in our battle with the rhododendron. Once an area has been cleared, these areas need to be monitored for regrowth and managed whilst the plant is in its early growth stage.

### **Bracken**

Bracken is present in large areas of the wood and is inhibiting native flora. Whilst not presenting a significant problem, it needs to be regularly monitored to see if bracken areas are expanding. Consideration should be given to various control methods in bracken dominated areas – chemical treatment (**spot spraying only at bases of new saplings**) or rolling/cutting in larger areas. Areas that are going to be replanted following conifer removal should be targeted first, to assist in the success of new plantings.

In compartment 7C, since 2020, bracken has been managed by cutting with a Power-scythe in late June/early July in the glade area to reduce the amount of bracken and encourage native flora. **This**

was successful in terms of allowing previously suppressed native wildflower to flourish, though this needs to be continued for longer term improvement to biodiversity.

### **Deadwood**

Increase amount of both standing and fallen deadwood wherever possible. Dead trees should be left in situ unless they pose a risk to the public. Some dead wood should be left in any clear-fell operation. Mature and over mature trees should be left wherever possible, to have the potential to become veteran trees in the future.

### **Rides/glades**

The ride is situated between the north entrance from Nanpantan and runs along the woodland edge towards Woodhouse Lane. There is a glade in compartment 7C, behind the charcoal kiln, which is managed to remove any self-set growth and bracken to encourage native wildflower species.

### **Replanting**

Following conifer removal, all restocking of native broadleaf species is prescribed per compartment within the Forestry Commission Felling Licence and is therefore a mandatory requirement. **These restocked areas will be monitored, and failed saplings replaced for the subsequent 3 years.**

Areas left for open glade areas should be monitored for natural regeneration and managed for early intervention, **particularly around young oaks**, as birch and rowan are likely to regenerate well in these spaces.

### **SSSI Management**

Always maintain the site to SSSI standard as set out by Natural England (see Appendix 1). Permission should be sought for all operations where it does not currently exist. Maintain dialogue with NE to improve management of the site and seek advice where necessary.

### **Aim 3: Landscape**

To maintain and protect the landscape value of the site.

### **Objectives**

Any operations carried out on site must take into consideration the landscape aesthetics and the Outwoods in its wider setting, that is part of the ancient Charnwood Forest. It is also part of an important woodland fringe that dominates the skyline to the south of Loughborough.

### **Felling Operations**

These should be planned sensitively and the public need to be kept informed as to the reasons and vision for the area.

### **Stone Walls**

These historic boundary walls are a unique feature to the wider area. They are constructed in the local stone almost certainly quarried on site. Many of these walls are in disrepair and have large sections where they have fallen. Whilst not serving any stockproof function, it is important to retain this feature and implement a programme of restoration for heritage purposes.

All walls need to be accurately surveyed so the priority sections can be addressed. There are several redundant internal walls, which although it would be unfeasible to restore them, they should be mapped to give the historical context to the site as a whole.

### **Rock Outcrops**

The importance of the geology is mentioned in the SSSI citation and reflected in the RIGS status of the site. Outcrops should not be damaged and need little management. However, there may be times when some sensitive vegetation clearance would be beneficial, but this should be done in full consultation with Natural England.

### **Aim 4: Recreation and Access**

To provide for safe, welcoming, and sustainable access and leisure for all

#### ***Objectives***

##### **Path network**

There is an extensive path network through the Outwoods, consisting of primary, secondary, and minor/temporary paths. Primary paths are the most used and have improved surfaces of crushed stone. Secondary paths are less used and only some of these have been improved. Minor paths are not improved.

A full survey of the whole path network needs undertaking and mapping as currently this information does not exist. This should also include current condition.

Primary paths should be maintained with similar stone as required, ideally with a different section being stoned every year. Drainage is often the problem and improving this in key areas would improve conditions underfoot.

Secondary paths should be considered for a formal surface if the walking conditions are consistently difficult. However, drainage improvements may well alleviate the problem as priority for stoned paths should be the primary network.

Minor paths do not require any work but should be monitored as problems arise. To discourage 'desire lines', consideration for installing dead hedges should be taken following thinning works.

##### **Trampers**

There are currently two 'Trampers' which are available for people to book which allow users of limited mobility to access the wood. The most recent of these was purchased in partnership with The National Forest Company through matched grant funding with Charnwood Borough Council in 2022. These should be maintained, and the service continued.

##### **Interpretation**

New orientation and information panel was installed in the car park in 2018. Other orientation panels at the entrances were replaced in 2019 in line with the main one in the car park.

The current waymarked routes are inadequately signed and not fit for purpose. Three key walks have been identified and are shown on the orientation panel. The short walk is waymarked by carved wooden sculptures. The other two walks need to be waymarked with appropriate posts along each route.

### **Infrastructure**

Seats and picnic benches should be surveyed on an annual basis and any improvements carried out as and when required. Dilapidated memorial benches should be removed by the Ranger team after consulting the Council to prevent potential injury. The Outwoods Management Committee should be consulted prior to installing any replacement benches.

Wooden fencing on site around the edge of the car park should be maintained to a good standard as and when it becomes damaged. Consideration should be given to replacing wire fencing around the conservation area of the site.

### **High winds procedure**

There is currently a High Winds Policy, though this is under review since the opening of the cafe as this is located in the high usage area. The policy to close the site is based on a usage zone map and rationale and identifies a process for closing the woods and car park area when gust speeds reach 40mph by the Ranger Service. These forecast gust speeds should be obtained from the Met Office website. The site will remain closed until after a safety inspection by suitably trained staff has been undertaken to identify and manage any hazards.

### **Tree Survey**

Based on the usage zone map, the Outwoods, including the car park area will be formally surveyed on a 5-yearly basis. The car park and primary paths would be the focus, and any works identified would be actioned within a designated time-period. The Ranger team carry out a weekly inspection of trees on primary routes and within the car park, playground, and events space.

### **Aim 5: Community Involvement and participation in site management**

The regular meetings with the Outwoods Committee are proving to be a good forum in which to discuss management of the site. These should continue at the current frequency (every three months).

Work should continue to involve all relevant stakeholders, particularly the National Forest, LCC and Bradgate Park. With the development of the Charnwood Forest lottery bid, communication has been good but needs to remain.

Volunteer involvement is good on site, and this should be maintained by the Ranger Service.

## Section 5: Management Implementation

### 5.1 Annual (cyclical) Maintenance Programme

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY
<b>Woodland Management</b>		
Bracken	Control around new plantings either by hand or spray	Mar-Sept. Monthly
New plantings	Check for losses and replace	Annual
Glades/rides	Cut rides/glades. Strimming and power-scythe in compartments 7A and 7B.	July (pre-bracken spring)
Tree risk	Survey primary network and action any tree work as required.	Formally-5 yearly Rangers-weekly
Rhododendron/ sycamore control	Treatment with an approved herbicide to poison stumps or new growth. Where possible, remove stumps.	Annual
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
Water courses	Clear 50m of primary water course Clear blocked primary culverts/drains/bridges	Annual
Furniture	Survey all countryside furniture Undertake priority repairs or removal deriving from survey	Annual
Signage	Clean all signage	Spring
Car park	Fill potholes as necessary with similar, local stone	As required
Stone walls	Repair/rebuild 20m section	Summer
<b>General Maintenance</b>		
Footpaths	Strim and prune edges of primary and secondary paths	Apr-Sept
	Leaf blow primary paths on slopes	Autumn
Litter	Litter pick and empty bins	As required
Toilets	Check and clean toilets as necessary	Daily
Entrance	Prune back ivy and cut back branches at the vehicle entrance	Annually
High winds procedure	Review procedure Post storm checks	Annually As required
<b>Engagement</b>		
Walks/events	Deliver a programme of public walks/events	When required
Information	Refresh notice board with information on management operations	When required
Trampers	Manage Trumper service	When required



## 5.2 5 Year Work Programme 2024 – 2029

The following table itemises coppicing planned for the life of this plan, and therefore is not cyclical in nature as further compartments on a 10-year cycle have not been included. All other works (bar conifer) may be cyclical.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PLAN YEAR (with compartment)				
		1	2	3	4	5
Coniferous plantations	Clear fell plantations (proposed)	12B 7A	1C	1B		
	Restock plantations with specified broadleaf mix following clear fell of conifer sp.		12B 7A	1C	1B	
Birch areas	Thin birch	5A	4A	3A	9A	10A
Rhododendron	Clear rhododendron	9A phase 1	9A phase 2	5A	8A	7A
Bracken	Control bracken	7B & C	12B, 7A, B & C	12B, 1C, 7A, B & C	1B & C, 12B, 7A, B & C	1B & C, 7B & C
Path network	Monitor and maintain section of primary footpath	Any	Any	Any	Any	Any
	Install 2 'grips' on primary paths to help remove water	Any	Any	Any	Any	Any
Watercourses	Monitor all water courses. Clear in sections.	Any	Any	Any	Any	Any
Stone walls	Monitor all external stone walls. Repair in sections	Any	Any	Any	Any	Any
Sycamore	Remove young sycamore as part of other operations. Particular attention on wet alder woodland area (11a)	Any + 11a	Any + 11a	Any+ 11a	Any + 11a	Any + 11a
	Fell or ring bark (where appropriate) 2 mature specimens	Any	Any	Any	Any	Any

Hazel	Coppice on a 10-year rotation	3A	8A	9A	5A	11A
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## **SECTION 6: Monitoring and Review**

### **6.1 Monitoring**

To effectively assess the planned benefits of the various management works proposed, a monitoring programme is proposed:

#### *Habitat Management*

A “before” and “after” photographic record will be kept during all major management works, particularly the pollarding programme. Section 8 of the Forestry Commission Woodland Management Plan sets out the monitoring responsibilities as required under the terms of the Countryside Stewardship agreement.

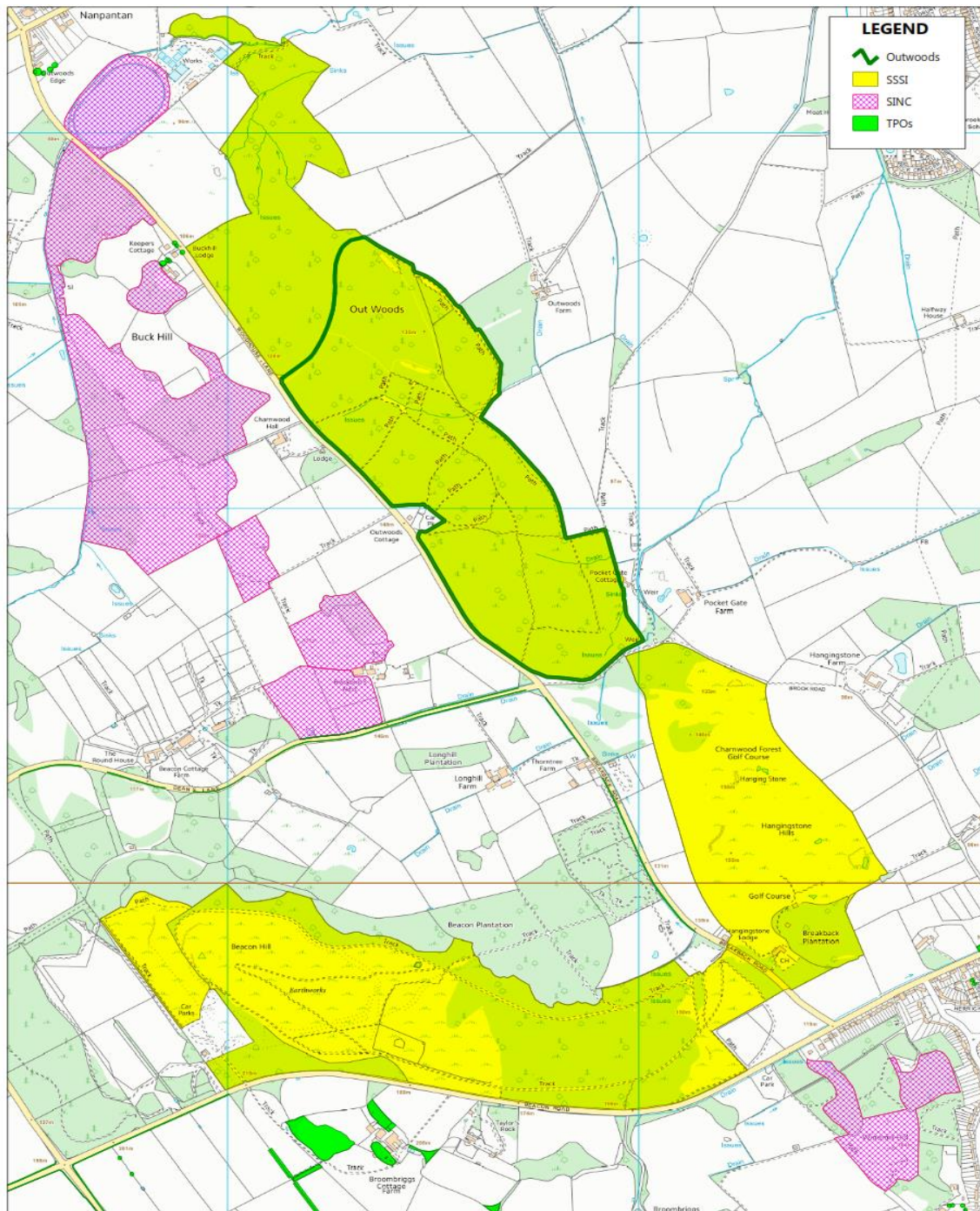
As required, flora and fauna surveys of these areas where management works are concentrated will be undertaken, again to help to quantify/identify the proposed benefits.

#### *Health and Safety*

The safety of trees, structures and banks within the site will be assessed as outlined in the site maintenance programme.

Routine visits will inevitably identify unpredictable issues and concerns that need addressing as they arise, such as litter, vandalism, the unrecorded presence of new species of importance etc. This information will be fed into the Lagan customer management system and maintenance and management work programmed as appropriate.

**Figure 1 Site location**



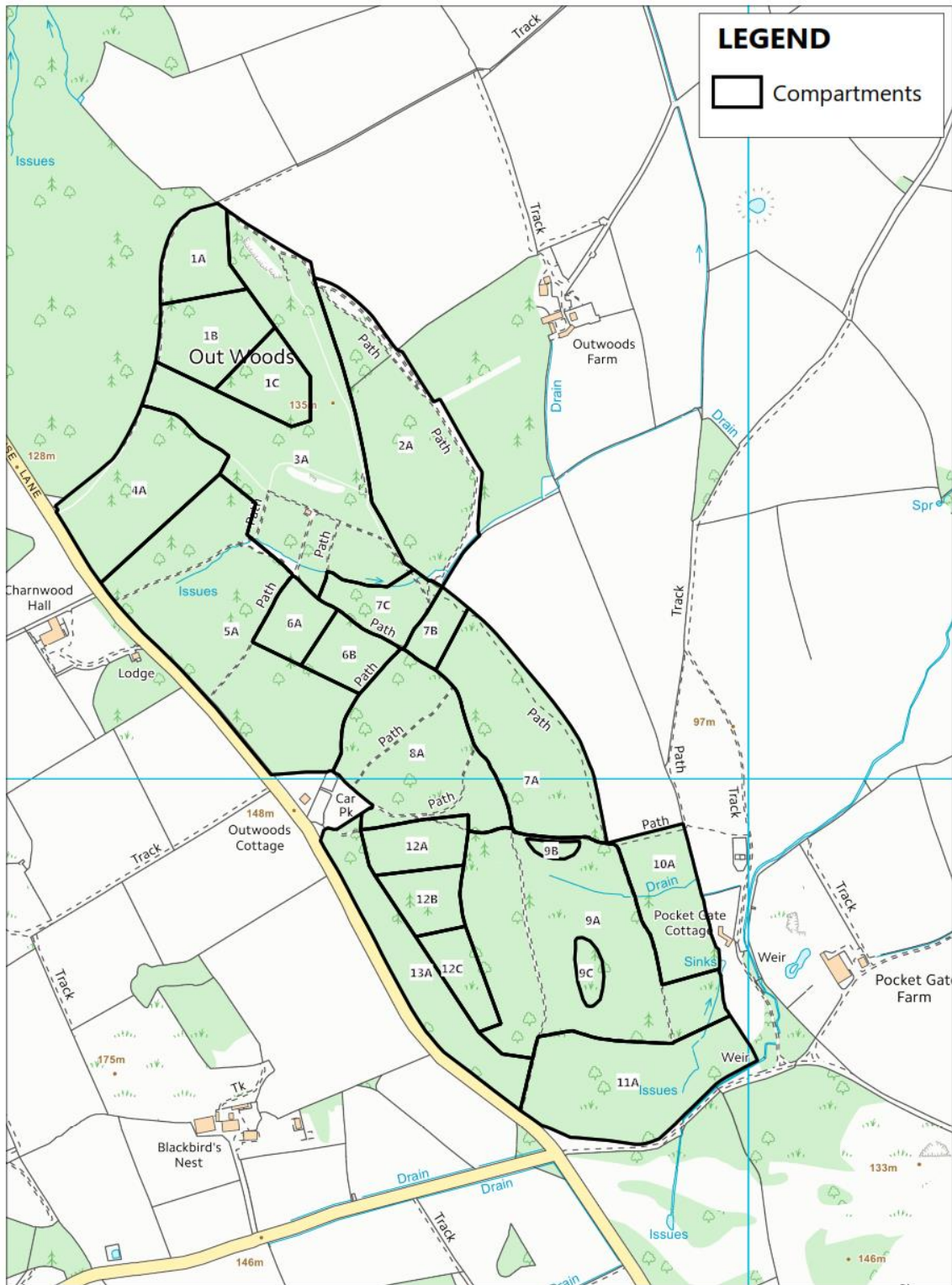
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 Leicestershire  
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 tel: (01509) 263151  
 www.chamwoodbc.gov.uk



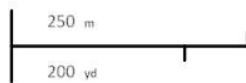
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**Figure 2** Compartment map

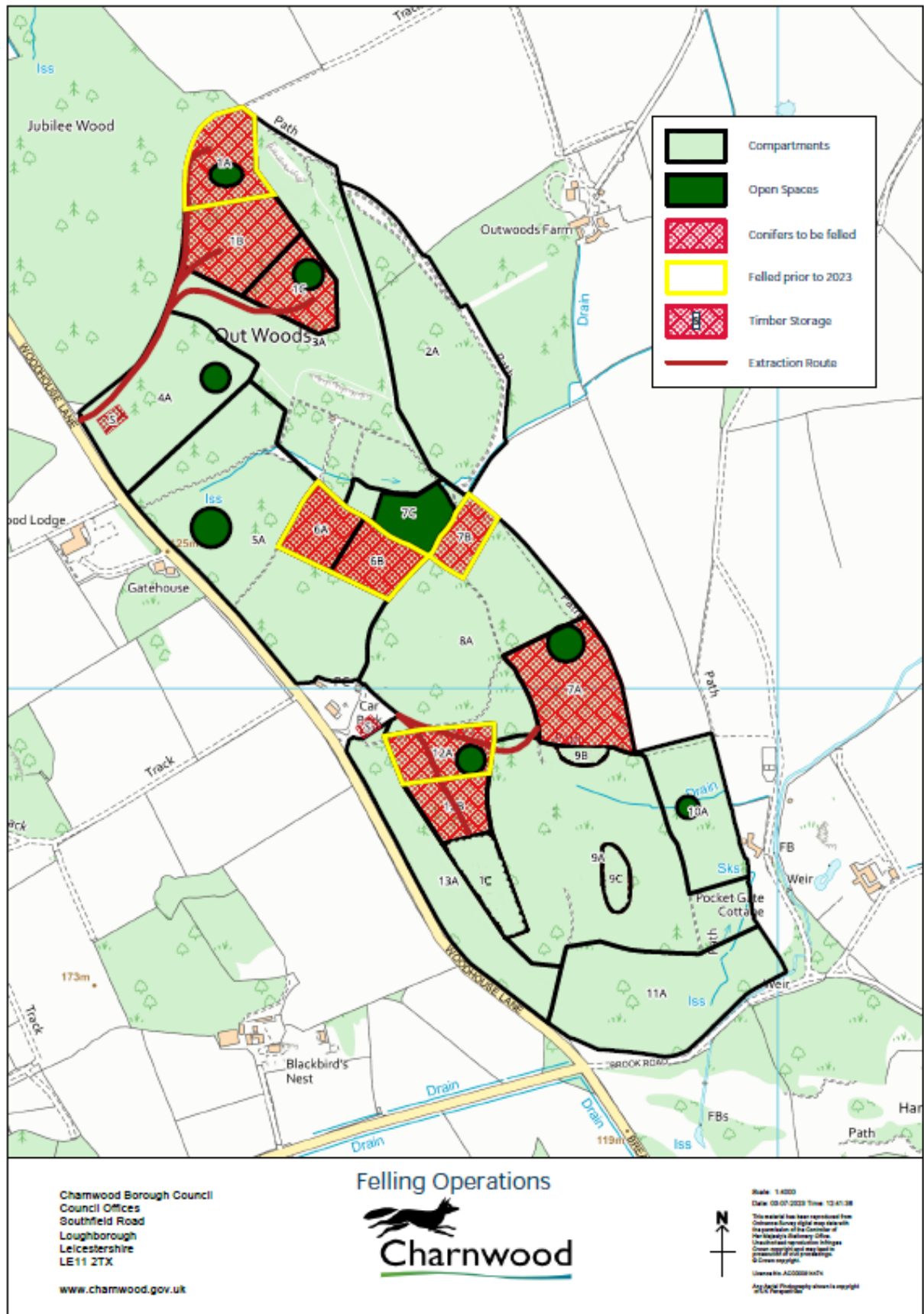


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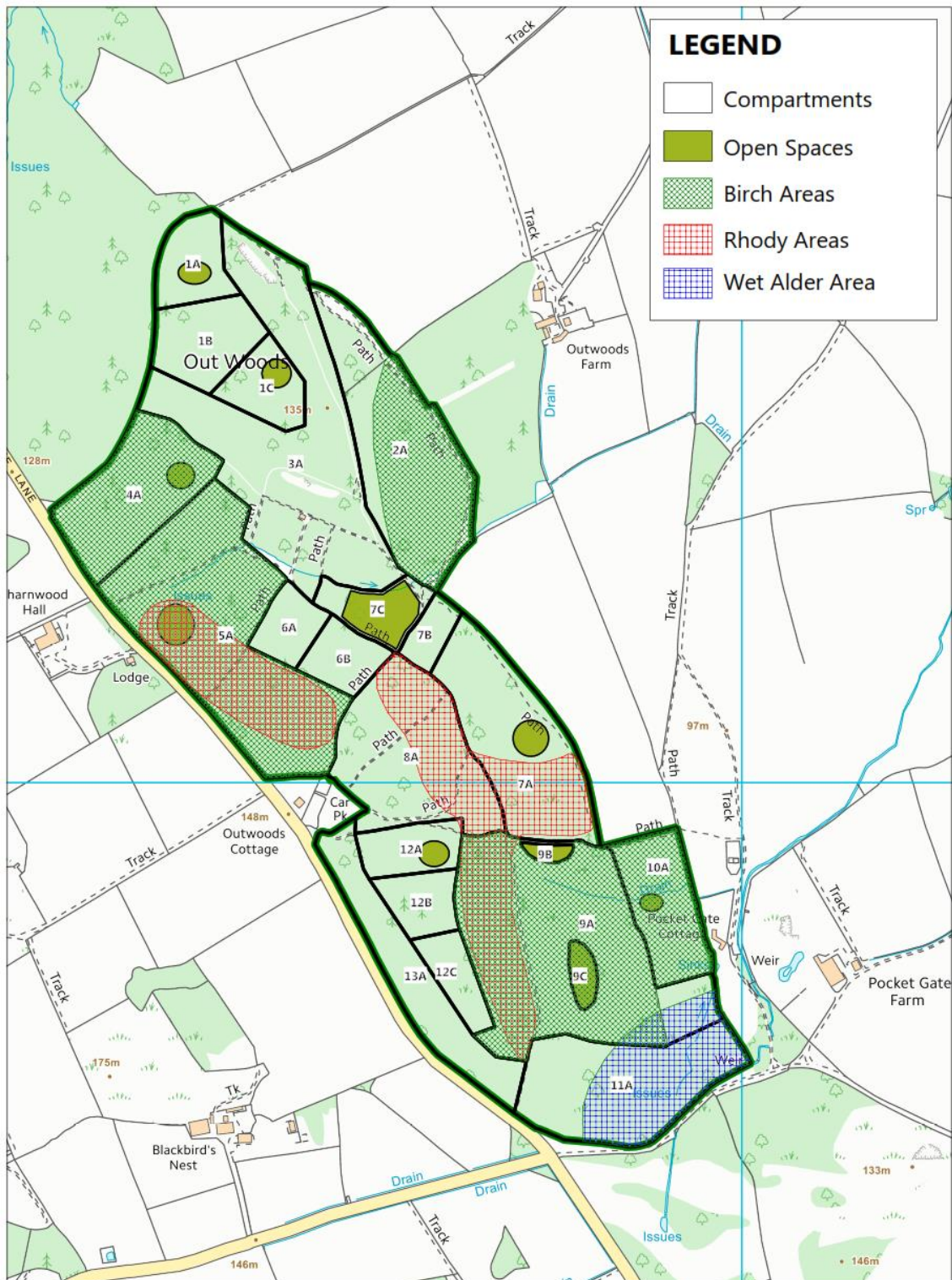
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**Figure 3 Felling operations**





**Figure 4 Themed areas**

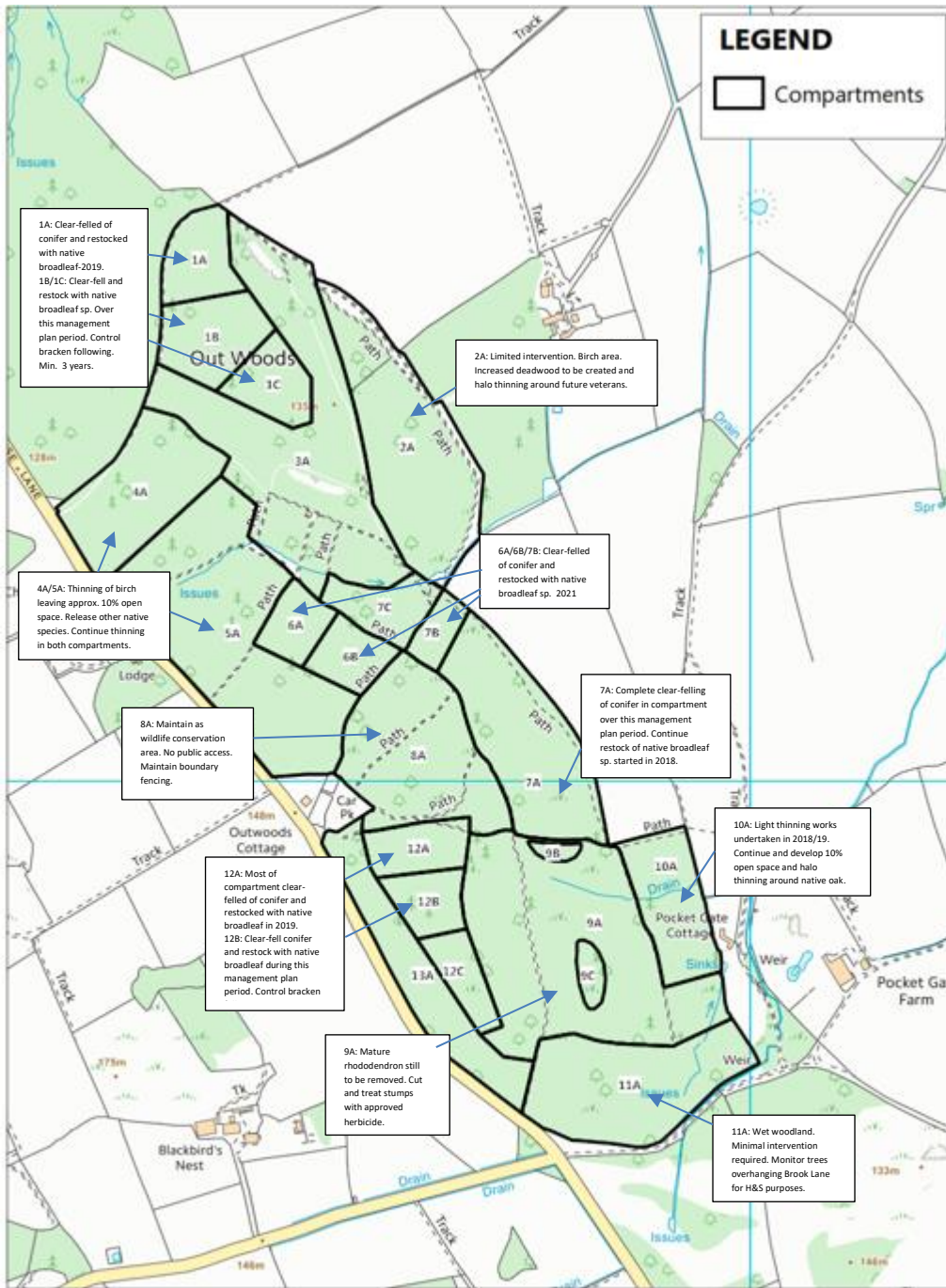


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**Figure 5 Concept map**



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## Appendix 1

Site of Special Scientific Interest

COUNTY: LEICESTERSHIRE

SITE NAME: BEACON HILL, HANGINGSTONE & OUTWOODS

DISTRICT: CHARNWOOD

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.

Local Planning Authority: CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: SK 512147, SK 523152

Area: 140.8 (ha.) 348.00 (ac.)

SK: 512165

Ordnance Survey Sheet: 1:50,000: 129 1:10,000: SK 51 NW, SK 51 SW

Date Notified: (Under 1949 Act): 1956 Date of Last Revision: 1981

Date Notified: (Under 1981 Act): 1987 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Beacon Hill is managed by Leicestershire County Council as a public open space. Parts of the Outwoods are also open to the public.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Beacon Hill and Outwoods provide some of the best habitat in Leicestershire for breeding birds. The Outwoods support one of the most interesting stands of ancient semi natural alder woodland in the County. The Hangingstone Hills and Outwoods area includes some important geological exposures that have yielded coelenterate impression fossils unique in the British Isles and of world-wide significance in the study of early life forms.

Biology: Beacon Hill supports a succession of semi-natural habitats ranging from acidic grassland around the rocky outcrops at the summit, down through bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* covered slopes into areas of secondary oak *Quercus robur* and birch *Betula pendula* woodland.

A pond at the eastern end of Beacon Hill feeds a small stream. Associated marshy ground supports bog moss *Sphagnum* spp., marsh pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* and violet *Viola palustris* all of which are scarce in Leicestershire. A second pond on the hill is one of only three known breeding sites in the County for the palmate newt *Triturus helveticus*. Such habitat diversity makes the hill attractive to a wide variety of breeding birds including tree pipit, grasshopper warbler, redstart, cuckoo, green woodpecker, lesser spotted woodpecker, whitethroat, and tawny owl. Hangingstone golf course supports a similar range of habitats, but the areas of close mown acidic grassland are more extensive and heather *Calluna vulgaris* occurs in places. The area supports a high density of badger setts. Although much altered by recent replanting the Outwoods retain many of the plant's characteristic of ancient semi-natural woodland on dry acidic soils, including common cow-wheat *Melampyrum pratense*.

A large stand of coppice grown alder *Alnus glutinosa* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior* occupies the wet ground in the north of the wood. The shrub layer here contains redcurrant *Ribes rubrum* and guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus*. The ground flora is diverse and includes pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*, opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, water avens *Geum*

rivale, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* and ramsons *Allium ursinum*. Another breeding site of the palmate newt is located in this area. The Outwoods support a variety of breeding birds including tawny owl, nuthatch, redstart and three species of woodpecker.

**Geology:** The Hangingstone Hills – Outwoods area includes a type section for the Hanging Rocks Conglomerate Member of the Brand Hill formation and exposures of the volcanoclastic Hallgate Member of the Maplewell Group (Charnian Supergroup). The latter have yielded the best examples of the late Precambrian fossils for which the Charnian sequence is framed. Exposures in North Quarry, Hangingstone contain the first British Precambrian metazoan fossils to be discovered and studied. The forms present are *Charnia masoni*, (frondose), *Charniodiscus concentricus* and a variety of discoidal impression fossils.

The crags in Outwoods contain complex impression fossils of probable coelenterate origin, namely ovoid medusoid jellyfish in strong relief. The only specimen of arthropod-like *Pseudovendia charnwoodensis* was also found here. The complex structure of the “medusoids” is uniquely exhibited at this locality. As fossils found at Hangingstone and Outwoods are closely comparable with those found in Newfoundland, Russia and South Australia, the site is of great importance in the study of Precambrian palaeontology.

## Appendix 2

### Byelaws

Made by the Outwoods Managing Committee under the Town Garden Protection Act, 1863, applied by s.15 (3), of the Open Spaces Act, 1906, at the Regulation of "The Outwoods", in the Borough of Loughborough.

1. In the construction of the byelaws "the committee" means the Outwoods Managing Committee appointed by a Deed of Trust dated the Sixth day of June, 1946, made between Alan Moss, Esq., J.P., and the Mayor Alderman and Burgesses of the Borough of Loughborough in the county of Leicester and the "Outwoods" means the land thereby entrusted to the committee, and the lands adjoining for the time being under control of the committee.

"Unauthorised person" means any person except –

- a) A person for the time being duly authorised by the committee in writing for any purposes in connection with the management, maintenance, or administration of the Outwoods.
  - b) A person acting in the legal exercise of some right, in over or affecting the Outwoods, or
  - c) A person duly authorised by a person entitled so to act as a foresaid.
2. No unauthorised person shall enter or quit the Outwoods otherwise than through some one of the gates, wickets, passages, steps, or openings appointed by the committee as the authorised means of entrance to or egress from the Outwoods.
  3. No authorised person shall climb any tree in the Outwoods.
  4. Where the committee set apart a sanitary convenience for the use of one sex, as indicated by a Notice affixed or set up in a conspicuous position near to such sanitary convenience, a person of the opposite sex shall not improperly enter or use such sanitary convenience.
  5. No unauthorised person shall dig, cut, or take turf, sods, gravel, sand, clay, or other substance on or from the woods, or dig up or remove, cut fell or wilfully or negligently injure any gorse, heather, timber, or other tree, shrub, brushwood, flower, or other plant growing thereon.
  6. No person shall light any fire, or place or throw or let fall any lighted matches any substance or thing, in, among or near to the fern, bracken, heather, furze, bushes, or trees in the "Outwoods," so as to be likely to cause damage by fire to anything growing there.
  7. No unauthorised person shall in the Outwoods fire or discharge any firearm or to the danger of any other person therein throw or discharge any missiles.
  8. No unauthorised person shall deposit in the Outwoods or in any pond or stream therein, any wood, stone, road sand, materials for the repair of the roads, or any drug use rubbish or other offensive matter, or leave or scatter about the Outwoods any bottles, eggshells, orange peel, tins, wastepaper, or other litter. \*
- \* NOTE – it is particularly objectionable and dangerous to leave bottles, tins, and broken glass in the Outwoods, as these may cause fire in hot weather, and may injure children or animals that tread on them.

9. No unauthorised person shall injure, deface, or otherwise tamper with any hydrant or other firefighting appliances provided or maintained by the Committee in the Outwoods, nor use the same except for the purpose of fighting an outbreak of fire.
10. No unauthorised person shall injure, deface, or remove any building, structure, shelter, commemoration stone, seat, gate, fence, implement, notice board or other things put up or maintain by the committee in the Outwoods or deface any rock, tree, or turf by cutting or otherwise writing or marking words or marks thereon.
11. No unauthorised person shall post or paint any bill, placard, advertisement or notice on any hedge, wall, enclosure, tree, fence, rock, building, seat, notice board or any other erection in the Outwoods.
12. No unauthorised person shall catch or kill any bird or animal, or set any trap, net, or line, or lay any snare for birds or animals, or take, injure, or destroy any birds' eggs or nests, shoot, chase, or drive game or other animals or fish in any waters in the Outwoods or use the Outwoods for the purpose of fishing in any waters adjacent thereto.
13. No person shall cause or suffer any dog belonging to him or in his charge to enter or remain in the Outwoods unless such dog can be and continue to be under proper control and be effectively restrained from causing annoyance to any person and from worrying or disturbing any animal.
14. No person shall bathe in any lake or pond that may be made or constructed or in any stream in the Outwoods, or use the Outwoods for bathing in any lake, pond or stream adjacent to the Outwoods.
15. No unauthorised person shall enter the Outwoods otherwise on foot or draw, drive, or propel across or over or place upon any part of the Outwoods any carriage, cart, caravan, truck motor car, cycle, or other vehicle, or permit to enter the Outwoods any horse, cattle, sheep, or other animal except dogs as aforesaid.
16. Whereby notices exhibited in the Outwoods the committee set apart any parts of the Outwoods for specific purposes, no unauthorised person shall resort to assemble with other persons on or attempt to occupy any such part.
17. No unauthorised person shall erect or permit to remain in the Outwoods any building, shed, tent or other structure.
18. No unauthorised person shall place in the Outwoods any show, exhibition, swing, roundabout, organ, or other like thing.
19. No unauthorised person shall on any part of the Outwoods hawk or sell or expose or offer for sale or hire any article or thing.
20. No person shall play or take part in any game in the Outwoods in such place or in such fashion as to cause danger or annoyance to others.
21. No unauthorised person shall hold any meeting or assembly in the Outwoods.

22. No person shall in the Outwoods use any indecent or obscene language to the annoyance of any person in the Outwoods, or behave in an indecent or offensive manner.

23. Every person who shall offend against any of the foregoing Byelaws shall be liable for such offence to a penalty of £5.

Provided nevertheless, that the Justices or Court before whom any complaint may be made or any proceedings may be taken in respect of any such offence, may, if they think fit, adjudge the payment, as a penalty, of any sum less than the full amount of the penalty imposed by this Byelaw.

24. Nothing in or done under any of the provisions of the foregoing Byelaws shall in any respect prejudice or injuriously affect the rights of any person acting legally by virtue of some estate, right or interest in, over or affecting the Outwoods.



## Appendix 3



**Leicestershire  
& Rutland  
Wildlife Trust**

### **Report on a survey of The Outwoods**

Surveyed by Sara Botterell, John Bristow, Hazel Graves & Claire Install of Leicestershire and Rutland  
Wildlife Trust, 02.05.17 & 04.05.17

Written by Sara Botterell, December 2017

Owner: Charnwood Borough Council    Grid Reference: SK 5158 1603

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## 1. Summary

The Outwoods is composed of a mixture of conifer plantation and large areas of semi-natural woodland on an ancient woodland site. Although subject to considerable intervention in the past, the woodland retains significant areas of ancient woodland ground flora, a botanically diverse area of wet Alder woodland and some areas of mature Oak woodland including Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*). Also present are large areas of naturally regenerating Oak/Birch woodland. Many of the plant species identified are typical of Charnwood Forest and now largely confined to this area within Leicestershire and Rutland. These include the red data book species Common Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum pratense*). Also present are some small streams and open glade areas.

Of particular value for wildlife are the following habitats, some of which are LLRBAP (Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan) and/or UKBAP (UK Biodiversity Action Plan).

Broadleaved woodland - LLRBAP & UKBAP (section 4.1.1.1, 4.1.1.2 & 4.1.1.3)

Wet woodland - LLRBAP & UKBAP (section 4.1.1.1)

Streams – UKBAP (section 4.1.3)

Ancient woodland ground flora (section 4.1.1)

Woodland Glades (section 4.1.2)

**As The Outwoods is a SSSI, any management should be agreed with Natural England.** Management should aim to retain and enhance these habitats with particular emphasis on the old woodland ground flora, the wet woodland and the mature Oak woodland. Continued expansion of the semi-natural Oak/Birch woodland should be achieved by removal of non-native species and replacement with native species, preferably by natural regeneration. Further enhancement of the diversity of the site and hence its wildlife potential should be achieved by an increase in the number of glades and creation of woodland rides. Efforts should be made to protect new glades and rides from human / canine disturbance to allow vegetation to establish.

## 2. Introduction

The Outwoods is part of the Beacon Hill, Hangingstone and Outwoods SSSI and is included in the Inventory of Ancient Woodland. It is situated at the north-eastern edge of Charnwood Forest, approximately 1km south-west of Loughborough and separated from it by mostly arable farm land. It covers approximately 45ha and is part of a larger block of woodland totalling approximately 74ha, most of which is also part of the SSSI. Rocky outcrops typical of Charnwood Forest and of high geological interest are present. In addition to the woodland, the SSSI also contains acid grassland, heath and scrub.

The woodland was originally dominated by Sessile Oak, but between 1900 and 1945 was mostly clear-felled and either replanted with conifer or left to regenerate naturally resulting in Oak/Birch woodland. Planting with some non-native broadleaf trees also occurred. In later years the area of conifer woodland has been further reduced and is gradually being replaced with native trees by either planting or natural regeneration. Currently approximately 25% of the woodland is conifer plantation. The small areas that were not clear felled contain mature Oak or Oak/Birch woodland or wet Alder woodland.

Some habitat diversity occurs with the presence of small streams, springs and open glades in close association with the woodland. Habitat diversity increases the wildlife potential of the site. For example, open glade areas can support a rich invertebrate community including butterflies and damselflies and provide important feeding areas for birds and bats, that nest and roost in the woodland.

### 3. Methods

Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust surveyed the site in May 2017 to assess habitat quality and to give advice on management. This was primarily a botanical survey. The site was divided into compartments based on the 1989 management plan. A map (Appendix 3) is included at the end of this report which shows the compartment boundaries and broad habitat type. Photographs are included in Appendix 2. Species lists (Appendix 1) were compiled for each compartment or feature where required. A list of incidental fauna was also compiled where it was noted, but no specific survey was undertaken.

Red data book plant species were defined as described in the Guidelines for the selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (2011, 4<sup>th</sup> edition) in accordance with the most recent Checklist and Rare Plant Register (Jeeves, 2011).

This report splits the site into its key habitats. For each habitat, the conservation value of the habitat is explained, a description of the areas where this habitat occurs within the site is included and finally, management recommendations made to maintain or improve the habitat for wildlife.

### 4. Results

#### 4.1 Habitats

##### 4.1.1 Woodland

In Leicestershire and Rutland woodland is a rare habitat extending over about 4% of the counties. Only 1% is ancient woodland and a large part of this has been damaged by felling and replanting. All ancient woodlands, including replanted ones, are important due to their rarity and because of the large number of animals and plants that are largely confined to this habitat. The LLRBAP identifies wet woodland and broadleaf woodland as priority habitats. Deadwood found in these woodlands provides important sites for hole-nesting birds and bats and also good habitat for saproxylic invertebrates and fungi. Old stumps and root plates provide good habitat for ferns and bryophytes.

Conifer plantation woodland has little conservation value. Lack of light allows for virtually no ground flora or understorey to develop. The woodland therefore supports limited native wildlife.

##### 4.1.1.1 Wet woodland

At the southern end of the wood lies compartment 13 which is largely composed of semi-natural wet woodland dominated by young high forest Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). A network of small, shallow streams, some with gravelly beds, cross this area and arise from a natural spring. The understorey contains mainly Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*). Regenerating Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) is frequent in places. The ground flora is particularly species-rich containing seven ancient woodland indicator species. These include locally frequent Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) on the stream banks. Species that prefer more acidic soils are frequent and include Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), Great Wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*), Ramsons or Wild Garlic (*Allium ursinum*) and Wood Sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*). Wood Sage is now largely confined to Charnwood Forest. Large Bitter-cress (*Cardamine amara*), a plant of wet places which is becoming scarce in the county, is locally frequent in this compartment. Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is more common in the drier areas around the edges which also contain large patches of Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and Broad Buckler-fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*) with Birch and Oak in the canopy. Some tree planting, including Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) has taken place. Deadwood is present, but this is limited due to the relatively young age of the trees. See Appendix 1 for species list, Appendix 2, Photos 1-5 for photographs and Appendix 3 for a map.

A separate survey indicates that this area contains a diverse bryophyte flora including species indicative of old, wet woodland including a number of rare species and Charnwood Forest specialties (Hamzaoui, 2017).

Previous records of Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*), in this area (Jeeves, 2011) were not repeated in this survey, but this may have been due to the season in which the survey took place. Yellow Loosestrife is a red data book plant listed as rare in Leicestershire and Rutland.

#### 4.1.1.2 Mature Oak woodland

Within the Outwoods lie a number of small areas of mature Oak woodland. The ancient woodland indicator species Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) is present as are Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) and the hybrid of the two, *Q. petraea* x *Q. robur* = *Q. x rosacea*. Due to time constraints, the exact distribution of Oak species for each compartment was not determined.

At the south-western edge of the wood lies compartment 10. This narrow strip of land is separated from Woodhouse Lane by a dry-stone wall. A gravelled path runs roughly along its centre. The ground rises to outcrops on the east side. It is dominated by mature Oak which include Sessile Oak and Hybrid Oak. A more detailed survey would be required to determine the relative distribution of Oak species and whether or not Pedunculate Oak was also present in this compartment. The northern third of Compartment 10 contains an understorey dominated by Holly with frequent Rowan. Bramble is dominant in the ground flora with occasional Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and large patches of Bluebell are present. In the south little understorey is present except in the far east side of the compartment. The ground is largely bare to the east of the path and to the west of the path it contains mainly short grasses and bryophytes. **This area also contains a large colony (100+ plants) of Common Cow-wheat (SK5154 1578 - SK51611569). There is a further small colony at the southern end (SK5170 1560). Common Cow-wheat is a red data book species, listed as rare in Leicestershire and Rutland (Jeeves, 2011) and is a plant of old woodland on acidic soils now confined to Charnwood Forest.** Across the compartment, in addition to Sessile Oak, four further ancient woodland indicator species are present, Wood Sorrel, Yellow Pimpernel (*Lysimachia nemorum*), Wood Anemone and Great Wood-rush. Also present are Greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*), a plant of old woodland and Pill Sedge (*Carex pilulifera*) a plant of heath grassland that is nearly confined to Charnwood Forest. See Appendix 1 for species list, Appendix 2, Photos 6 & 7 for photographs and Appendix 3 for a map.

Compartment 5 is a small area containing mature Oak and some Birch with mainly Holly in the understorey. There is a small open area with wet-loving plants including Rushes. A larger open area is present by the road where coppicing of Hazel, Sycamore and Rhododendron has taken place. A large old Hazel coppice is present. See Appendix 1 for species list and Appendix 3 for a map.

Compartment 4 is composed of predominantly semi-natural Oak and Birch woodland containing some mature trees (e.g. A Pedunculate Oak at ~3.8m, SK5144916337) and regenerating Oak/Birch woodland. Mature Beech were also seen, some with evidence of decay. A very large specimen of Sycamore is present (SK5148816305). The understorey includes Holly and Elder. Honeysuckle is frequent. Hornbeam and Sycamore regeneration was noted. Bramble and Bracken are the dominant ground flora and the ancient woodland indicator species Wood Sorrel and Yellow Pimpernel were also seen. A single specimen of Hard-fern was observed adjacent to a path (SK 5139 1621). Some deadwood is present. A small stream (see Section 4.1.3) crosses the compartment and is surrounded by a richer ground flora than that seen elsewhere in the compartment. This includes two additional ancient woodland indicators, Great Wood-rush and Yellow Archangel which was only seen in this area. Also present are Wild Angelica, which again was only observed in this area, Bugle, Wood Sage and another single specimen of Hard-fern on the stream bank (SK51401629). Compartment 4 also

contains an open area (see Section 4.1.2). See Appendix 1 for species lists (one for the general compartment and one for the area adjacent to the stream), Appendix 2, Photos 8-12 for photographs and Appendix 3 for a map.

Additionally, a small area of mature Oak is situated in the north-east of Compartment 1 and some mature Oak line the small stream that runs along the south-east side of Compartment 3, along the eastern edge of Compartment 7 and the northern edge of Compartment 12. See Appendix 3 for a map.

#### 4.1.1.3 Semi-natural regenerating Oak/Birch woodland

Within the wood there are a number of areas where felling has taken place then the woodland allowed to regenerate naturally. These areas are largely dominated by Birch and Oak woodland in varying proportions. The extent of old woodland ground flora is variable.

Compartment 2 is an area dominated by young regenerating Birch. Frequent Rowan and Sycamore and rare Beech and Oak regeneration also occur. Holly is frequent in the understorey and Bramble is the dominant ground flora. Cherry and Lime are also present with rare frequency. No Bluebell or other old woodland species were noted in the ground flora. This woodland composition extends into a small section of Compartment 1. See Appendix 1 for species list, Appendix 2, Photo 13 for photograph and Appendix 3 for a map.

Compartment 3 is an area of semi-natural regenerating woodland where Oak is dominant. Some mature Oak trees are present. Also present are Birch, Rowan and Sycamore. Younger trees are present in the southern part with more mature trees also present further north. Bluebells are locally dominant and extensive, covering the majority of this compartment with Bramble being more dominant in the far south. Bracken is occasional. Outcrops are present on the higher elevation. Some old, coppiced Hazel and Holly are present. Pathways and digging likely due to badger activity were noted. See Appendix 1 for species list, Appendix 2, Photos 14 & 15 for photographs and Appendix 3 for a map. There is a small stream running along the south-eastern boundary. This is lined with mature Oak and Scaly Male-fern, Wood-sorrel and Great Wood-rush are present on the banks. See Appendix 1 for an additional species list, Appendix 2, Photo. 2 for a photograph and Appendix 3 for a map.

Compartment 6 can be split roughly in half with the north-eastern half being composed of Larch plantation (see Section 4.1.1.4). The south-western half is composed of semi-natural woodland with regenerating Birch the dominant species. Also present are Rowan, Cherry and occasional mature Oak with Holly in the understorey (noted as Larch plantation in 1989 management plan). Rhododendron, Sycamore and Larch are also present as are Beech, some of which are mature. The ground flora is fairly sparse, but Great Wood-rush is locally frequent and Yellow Pimpernel is also present. Also observed were one specimen of Slender St. John's-wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*), a plant of open woodland on acid soil that is becoming scarce and a few clumps of Green-ribbed Sedge (*Carex binervis*), a species of heath grassland and woodland on acid soils which is almost confined to Charnwood Forest in Leicestershire. A possible badger trail was also noted going towards the road where a gap is present in the dry-stone wall. See Appendix 1 for species list, Appendix 2, Photo 16 for photograph and Appendix 3 for a map.

Compartment 8 is an area that is currently fenced containing semi-natural Oak/Birch woodland with Holly, Rowan, Elder and Sycamore regeneration in the understorey with frequent Rhododendron. Bramble, Bracken and Bluebell are frequent in the ground flora. See Appendix 1 for species list and Appendix 3 for a map.

Compartments 9 and 11 are largely composed of semi-natural regenerating Birch, Oak and Rowan with Birch generally the dominant species and variable amounts of Oak. Cherry and Sycamore regeneration are also common. Mature Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) occur rarely. Holly and Hazel are present in the understorey. Bramble is dominant in the ground flora, beneath which Bluebell and Wood Anemone are locally abundant (more common in the south of the compartments). Wood-sorrel also occurs with rare frequency and Yellow Pimpernel is common along the path edges. In general, the ground flora is more species rich in the south of the compartments. Rhododendron occurs with rare frequency. Blocks of mature Scots Pine and European Larch plantation also occur (Section 4.1.1.4). See Appendix 1 for species list, Appendix 2, Photo 17 for photograph and Appendix 3 for a map.

Compartment 12 is mostly composed of young birch regeneration with Rowan and Holly in the understorey. Also present are occasional Oak; some young planted specimens and some more mature trees (up to ~2m in diameter) particularly along the northern border and also scattered across the compartment. This compartment previously contained Scot's Pine plantation with Sycamore plantation at the eastern boundary according to the 1989 management plan. It has retained some ancient woodland ground flora with extensive areas of Bluebell along with 4 ancient woodland indicator species and Ransoms. Mature Sweet Chestnut are rare and non-native invasive species including Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) and Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* sp.) occur. Also, young sycamore regeneration is frequent. See Appendix 1 for species list, Appendix 2, Photo 18 for photograph and Appendix 3 for a map.

#### 4.1.1.4 Conifer plantation

Compartment 1 is largely composed of mature Larch with a narrow strip of mature Scots Pine around the edge. Mature Beech occurs at the far northern end amongst the conifers. Here there is virtually no understorey or ground flora, likely due to heavy usage by people. Outcrops are present. There are patches of dense Holly, Broad Buckler-fern and Bramble. Occasional Oak are also present. See Appendix 2, Photo 19 for a photograph.

Compartment 7 contains a mature European Larch plantation with a dense understorey dominated by Holly and some Rhododendron. Spruce are planted around the edge. Approximately half of the plantation (at the north) has recently been clear felled (leaving a strip of conifer at the far north) and replanted with broadleaf trees. Natural regeneration including Rowan, Oak and Birch is also taking place.

Compartments 9 and 10 contain blocks of mature Scots Pine and European Larch with Bramble dominant in the ground flora, Broad Buckler-fern is common, and some Bracken is present. Rhododendron is present occasionally.

#### 4.1.2 Glades and Rides

Woodland glades and rides, provide two important sheltered habitat types within a woodland, those of unimproved species-rich grassland and woodland edge habitat where tall herbs and grasses transition into scrub then high forest.

Species-rich grassland can support a rich invertebrate community including butterflies and damselflies and also provide important feeding areas for birds, bats and small mammals.

A greater diversity of species is found in the first 10m from the woodland edge due to higher levels of sunlight. Increased sunlight allows for a greater range of nectar and pollen producing plants providing food for invertebrates. In turn this means more berries and seeds will be available as food for birds and small mammals. Additionally, the structural diversity given by a scrubby layer at the

edge of the high canopy grading into tall herbs then a shorter sward provides a wide range of microhabitats leading to greater biodiversity than is generally seen in the high canopy areas alone. Scrub also provides shelter. Native scrub will provide these benefits even at the edge of a conifer plantation on an ancient woodland site.

Due to heavy usage by people throughout the Outwoods, there is little ground flora present on pathways so grassy rides are not present. However, some open glade areas are present containing taller herbs and grasses and the potential exists to generate further areas of glades and rides in areas where conifer are removed.

At the north-east edge of Compartment 4, by a Charcoal burning kiln, is a large, open area (~0.6 ha) dominated by Bracken in one part and Red Campion (*Silene dioica*) in the other. Here a number of butterflies were observed including Peacock, Orange tip and Brimstone. Rhododendron and Sycamore regeneration are occurring at a low frequency. See Appendix 2, Photo 20 for a photograph.

As described in Section 4.1.1.4 a large section of Compartment 7 has been clear felled. Although still largely open this area has been planted with broad-leaf trees and natural regeneration is also occurring.

Compartment 5 contains a couple of small glade areas (Section 4.1.1.2).

#### 4.1.3 Stream/springs

Springs and small streams provide important wet conditions for moisture loving plants found in wet woodland including bryophytes. With associated woodland the streams form important wildlife corridors. Woody debris, leaf litter and a gravelly substrate provides important food and shelter for invertebrates within the stream.

The streams and springs that are situated across the wetter part of Compartment 13 are responsible for the presence of the wet woodland and support a wide community of wet-loving higher plants and bryophytes (see Photos 2,3 & 4 in Appendix 2).

An additional small stream provides a wildlife corridor across Compartment 4 and along the south-eastern edge of Compartment 3. This stream supports a more diverse ground flora on its banks and in the adjacent area than is found across the remainder of the compartments (see Sections 4.1.1.2 & 4.1.1.3). In places where the water level drops below the surface (see Photos 11, 12 & 21 in Appendix 2).

#### 4.2 Red data book species summary

Species	Common name	Status	Location
<i>Melampyrum pratense</i> <sup>1*</sup>	Common Cow-wheat	Rare	SK5154 1578 - SK51611569 & SK5170 1560

As noted above Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgare*) was not found during the course of this survey.

## 5. Management Recommendations

Due to its status as part of the Beacon Hill, Hangingstone and Outwoods SSSI all management within the woodland should be performed in agreement with Natural England.

### 5.1 Habitats

#### 5.1.1 Woodland

The priorities are:

- To retain the remaining areas of ancient woodland ground flora.
- To retain the wet woodland and mature Oak woodland, in particular those containing Sessile Oak.
- To generate an increased diversity of structure across the woodland.
- To protect rare species such as Common Cow-wheat and species largely confined to Charnwood Forest such a Hard-fern
- Removal of non-native species

For areas of semi-natural broadleaf woodland, the woodland should be managed to maintain and enhance the diversity in the canopy, understorey and ground flora. This would be best achieved by minimal intervention allowing natural processes to take place. Additional recommendations include:

The wet woodland ground flora found in Compartment 13 is particularly species rich and sensitive to damage from overuse by people. It is therefore of importance to limit access to this area and if it is anticipated that increased numbers of people will be using the site to further protect the area by either fencing or explanation of why the area should not be entered.

Protection of remaining areas where ancient woodland ground flora is present across the site by controlling access.

Control of invasive species. Sycamore regeneration occurs throughout the woodland and should be removed where it will become a dominant influence. Particular care should be taken in Compartment 13 so as not to damage the ground flora. Rhododendron is present in Compartments 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. Cotoneaster, Cherry Laurel and Snowberry are all found in Compartment 12. These species should be completely removed by cutting and treating the stumps with a suitable non-residual herbicide to restrict re-growth. **This should take place outside of the bird nesting season between November and February.** Secondary treatment of new growth may be required using non-residual herbicide and suitable adjuvant. The Snowberry may need to be dug out rather than cut.

Retain all dead wood in situ, both standing and fallen, unless causing a safety hazard, to provide habitat for saproxylic invertebrates and fungi. Cut logs and brash should be retained in the wood where possible.

Remove non-native species, in particular conifer. Staged removal of conifers followed by natural regeneration of native broadleaved species would be of most benefit to wildlife. If planting is required this should be of tree species native to the Charnwood Forest area and of local provenance. If a block of conifer is not being cleared, priority should be given to removal of conifer from the compartment edges (10m minimum) to allow the natural regeneration of a scrubby woodland edge composed of native species with the associated wildlife benefits described in Section 4.1.2. Additionally, where native trees are present amongst conifer plantation such as in Compartment 1, priority should be given to remove conifer from their surroundings to allow them to flourish.

Possibly close some of the walkways that appear to have been made unofficially. There are lots of these and some may not be needed so could be closed to allow ground flora to establish.

### 5.1.2 Glades and Rides

The priorities are to

Retain open areas as woodland glades.

To generate further glades and connecting rides amongst naturally regenerating woodland in areas where conifers are felled.

The aim of management is to maintain open sunny conditions and a structurally diverse, shrubby woodland edge. Sunlight should be able to reach the central grassland area and the south facing shrubby woodland edge if present.

For the greatest benefit rides and glades should be maintained as a three-zone system

A central zone of short grassland

Tall herbs and grasses bordering the central zone

A scrub zone allowed to develop into dense thickets in places, that grades into high forest

### **Control of scrub should take place outside of the bird nesting season between November and February**

Efforts should be made to ensure that newly created glades and rides are not used as footpaths as this would prevent ground flora from becoming established.

For further information on creation and management of rides, glades and scallops please refer to:

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ewgs-on011-ride-mangt.pdf/\\$FILE/ewgs-on011-ride-mangt.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ewgs-on011-ride-mangt.pdf/$FILE/ewgs-on011-ride-mangt.pdf)

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/owning-a-wood/managing-your-woodland-for-wildlife/06-chapter-4---improving-woodland-habitat-for-wildlife.pdf>

### 5.1.3 Stream/springs

No management is required to maintain the high wildlife value of these natural habitats. Dynamic processes such as bank erosion of woodland streams and decomposition of woody debris continually provide new areas of habitat and should be left to continue. Fallen wood should be left in situ providing it does not cause a hazard. It is particularly important that the hydrology of Compartment 13 should be left unchanged to maintain the diverse wet woodland habitat.

## 6. References

Jeeves, M. (2011). *The Flora of Leicestershire and Rutland: Checklist and Rare Plant Register*. Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, Leicester.

Guidelines for the Selection of Local Wildlife Sites (previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation or SINC)s in Leicestershire and Rutland. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (revised 2011). Available from <http://www.lrw.org.uk/what-we-do/local-wildlife-sites/>

Hamzaoui, U. (2017). Report on a bryophyte survey of the wet woodland at The Outwoods



## Appendix 1: Species Lists

Surveys performed by Sara Botterell, John Bristow, Hazel Graves and Claire Install on 02.05.17 and 04.05.17.

DAFOR Abbreviations: D – dominant (75-100% cover), A - abundant (25-74% cover), F – frequent (10-24% cover), O – occasional (5-9% cover), R – (<5% cover), LA – locally abundant, LF – locally frequent, P – present.

Local Wildlife Site (LWS) species lists as defined in the Guidelines for the selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (2011, 4<sup>th</sup> edition).

List Z1 – Ancient Woodland Indicator species

\* Red data book species: As defined in the Guidelines for the selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (2011, 4<sup>th</sup> edition).

<sup>1</sup>Axiophyte: Considered a species of good quality habitat in Leicestershire and Rutland (Jeeves, M. (2011))

<sup>2</sup>W&C: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Sch 8 species

### Compartment 13

Species	Common name	DAFOR
<b>List Z1 – LWS ancient woodland indicator species</b>		
<i>Anemone nemorosa</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood Anemone	LF
<i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i> <sup>1</sup>	Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage	LF
<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i> <sup>1</sup>	Yellow Archangel	P
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i> <sup>1</sup>	Great Wood-rush	P
<i>Lysimachia nemorum</i> <sup>1</sup>	Yellow Pimpernel	P
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood-sorrel	P
<i>Veronica montana</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood Speedwell	R
<b>W&amp;C<sup>2</sup> and axiophyte<sup>1</sup> species not included above</b>		
<i>Ajuga reptans</i> <sup>1</sup>	Bugle	P
<i>Allium ursinum</i> <sup>1</sup>	Ramsons	P
<i>Cardamine amara</i> <sup>1</sup>	Large Bitter-cress	LF
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> <sup>2</sup>	Bluebell	P
<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood Sage	P
<b>Additional species</b>		
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	P
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder	P
<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Lords-and-Ladies	P
<i>Betula sp.</i>	Birch	P
<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	Wood-sedge	P
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	P
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	P
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove	P
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Broad Buckler-fern	P

<i>Ficaria verna</i>	Lesser Celandine	P
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	P
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft-rush	P
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's Mercury	P
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild Cherry	P
<i>Ribes rubrum</i>	Red Currant	P
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	P
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	P
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge Woundwort	P
<i>Tilia sp.</i>	Lime	P
<i>Viola reichenbachiana</i>	Early Dog-violet	R

### Compartment 10

Species	Common name	DAFOR
<b>List Z1 – LWS ancient woodland indicator species</b>		
<i>Anemone nemorosa</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood Anemone	R
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i> <sup>1</sup>	Great Wood-rush	R
<i>Lysimachia nemorum</i> <sup>1</sup>	Yellow Pimpernel	R
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood-sorrel	R
<i>Quercus petraea</i> <sup>1</sup>	Sessile Oak	D (Oaks combined)
<b>W&amp;C<sup>2</sup>, Red Data Book* and axiophyte<sup>1</sup> species not included above</b>		
<i>Carex pilulifera</i> <sup>1</sup>	Pill Sedge	R
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> <sup>2</sup>	Bluebell	LF
<i>Melampyrum pratense</i> <sup>1*</sup>	Common Cow-wheat	LF
<i>Stellaria holostea</i> <sup>1</sup>	Greater Stitchwort	R
<b>Additional species</b>		
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	R
<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>	Enchanter's-nightshade	
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	R
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Broad Buckler-fern	O
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	R
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb-Robert	
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens	
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Common Ivy	LF
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	D
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle	O
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild Cherry	R
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	O
<i>Q. petraea</i> x <i>Q. robur</i> = <i>Q. x rosacea</i>	Hybrid Oak	D (Oaks combined)
<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Rhododendron	R
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	D
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	F
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle	

Compartments 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 & 11 and 12

Species	Common name	Compartment							
		2	3	4	5	6	8	9 & 11	12
		DAFOR							
<b>List Z1 – LWS ancient woodland indicator species</b>									
<i>Anemone nemorosa</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood Anemone	-	-	-	-	-	-	LA	R
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i> <sup>1</sup>	Great Wood-rush	-	-	-	-	LA	-	-	-
<i>Lysimachia nemorum</i> <sup>1</sup>	Yellow Pimpernel	-	-	R	-	R	-	LF	O
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood-sorrel	-	-	R	-	-	-	R	O
<i>Quercus petraea</i> <sup>1</sup>	Sessile Oak	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-
<i>Veronica montana</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood Speedwell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R
<b>W&amp;C<sup>2</sup>, Red Data Book<sup>*</sup>, axiophyte<sup>1</sup> species not included above and other notable species</b>									
<i>Allium ursinum</i> <sup>1</sup>	Ramsons	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard-fern	-	-	R	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Carex binervis</i> <sup>1</sup>	Green-ribbed Sedge	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-
<i>Carex pilulifera</i> <sup>1</sup>	Pill Sedge	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> x <i>laevigata</i> = <i>C. x media</i> <sup>1</sup>	Hybrid Hawthorn	-	-	R	-	-	-	R	-
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove	-	-	-	-	P	-	-	-
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> <sup>2</sup>	Bluebell	-	A	R	-	-	F	LA	A
<i>Hypericum pulchrum</i> <sup>1</sup>	Slender St John's-wort	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-
<i>Luzula campestris</i> <sup>1</sup>	Field Wood-rush	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-
<b>Additional species</b>									
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	-
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	F	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
<i>Betula</i> sp.	Birch	D	P	P	P	D	F	P	D
<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	Wavy Bitter-cress	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	Hornbeam	-	-	P	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet Chestnut	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	-	P	-	P	-	-	P	-
<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp.	Cotoneaster	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Scaly Male-fern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Broad Buckler-fern	-	P	-	-	-	P	P	-
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male fern	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	P
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech	R	-	P	-	P	R	-	-
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	F	P	P	P	P	O	P	P
<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>	Compact Rush	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	-
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft-rush	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	-
<i>Larix decidua</i>	European Larch	-	-	-	-	LD	-	LD	-
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle	P	-	F	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Malus</i> sp.	Apple	-	R	-	P	-	-	-	-
<i>Moehringia trinervia</i>	Three-nerved	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P

	Sandwort								
<i>Picea sp.</i>	Spruce	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	-
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots Pine	-	-	-	-	-	-	LD	-
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild Cherry	R	-	-	-	P	-	P	-
<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	Cherry Laurel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	-	O	P	-	-	F	O	-
<i>Quercus robur</i>	Pedunculate Oak	-	-	P	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Quercus sp.</i>	Oak	R	D	P	P	P	D	P	-
<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Rhododendron	-	-	P	P	P	F	R	-
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Bramble	D	P	P	-	P	F	P	P
<i>Schedonorus gigantea</i>	Giant Fescue	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	-	-	P	-	-	P	-	-
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	F	P	-	P	P	P	P	P
<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	Snowberry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Tillia sp.</i>	Lime	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Ulmus sp.</i>	Elm	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common Dog-violet	-	-	P	-	-	-	-	P

Compartment 4, area surrounding the stream

Species	Common name	DAFOR
<b>List Z1 – LWS ancient woodland indicator species</b>		
<i>Lamiastrum galeobdolon</i> <sup>1</sup>	Yellow Archangel	R
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i> <sup>1</sup>	Great Wood-rush	R
<i>Lysimachia nemorum</i> <sup>1</sup>	Yellow Pimpernel	R
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood-sorrel	LF
<b>W&amp;C<sup>2</sup>, Red Data Book* and axiophyte<sup>1</sup> species not included above</b>		
<i>Ajuga reptans</i> <sup>1</sup>	Bugle	LF
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	Wild Angelica	R
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard-fern	R
<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood Sage	R
<b>Additional species</b>		
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	P
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic Mustard	P
<i>Arctium minus</i>	Lesser Burdock	P
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male fern	P
<i>Malus sp.</i>	Apple	P
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's Mercury	P
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Campion	P
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle	P
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common Dog-violet	P

Compartment 3 wet ditch

Species	Common name	DAFOR
<b>List Z1 – LWS ancient woodland indicator species</b>		
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i> <sup>1</sup>	Great Wood-rush	P
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i> <sup>1</sup>	Wood-sorrel	P
<b>Additional species</b>		
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove	P
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Scaly Male-fern	P
<i>Ficaria verna</i>	Lesser Celandine	P
<i>Quercus cerris</i>	Turkey Oak	P
<i>Quercus sp.</i>	Oak	P
<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Rhododendron	P

Incidental records

Mammal	Birds	Amphibian	Insect
Grey Squirrel	Blackbird	Frog	Brimstone
	Bluetit		Orange tip
	Chiff chaff		Peacock
	Cuckoo		
	Great tit		
	Greater spotted woodpecker		
	Jay		
	Robin		
	Wren		



## Appendix 2: Photographs



Photo. 1: Compartment 13, drier section.



Photo. 2: Compartment 13 spring.



Photo. 3: Compartment 13 stream



Photo. 4: Compartment 13 stream



Photo.5: Compartment 13



Photo. 6: Compartment 10  
Looking southeast





Photo. 7: Compartment 10 looking northwest.



Photo. 8: Compartment 4



Photo. 9: Compartment 4



Photo 10: Sycamore

Photo 12: compartment 4, mature

Photo 11: compartment 4, stream







Photo 13. Compartment 2



Photo. 14: Compartment 3 southern end



Photo. 15: Compartment 3 northern end.



Photo. 16: Compartment 6, Great Wood-rush



Photo. 17: Compartment 11



Photo. 18: Compartment 12





Photo. 19: Compartment 1



Photo. 20: Compartment 4, glade.



Photo. 21: Stream at edge of Compartment 3.



Map



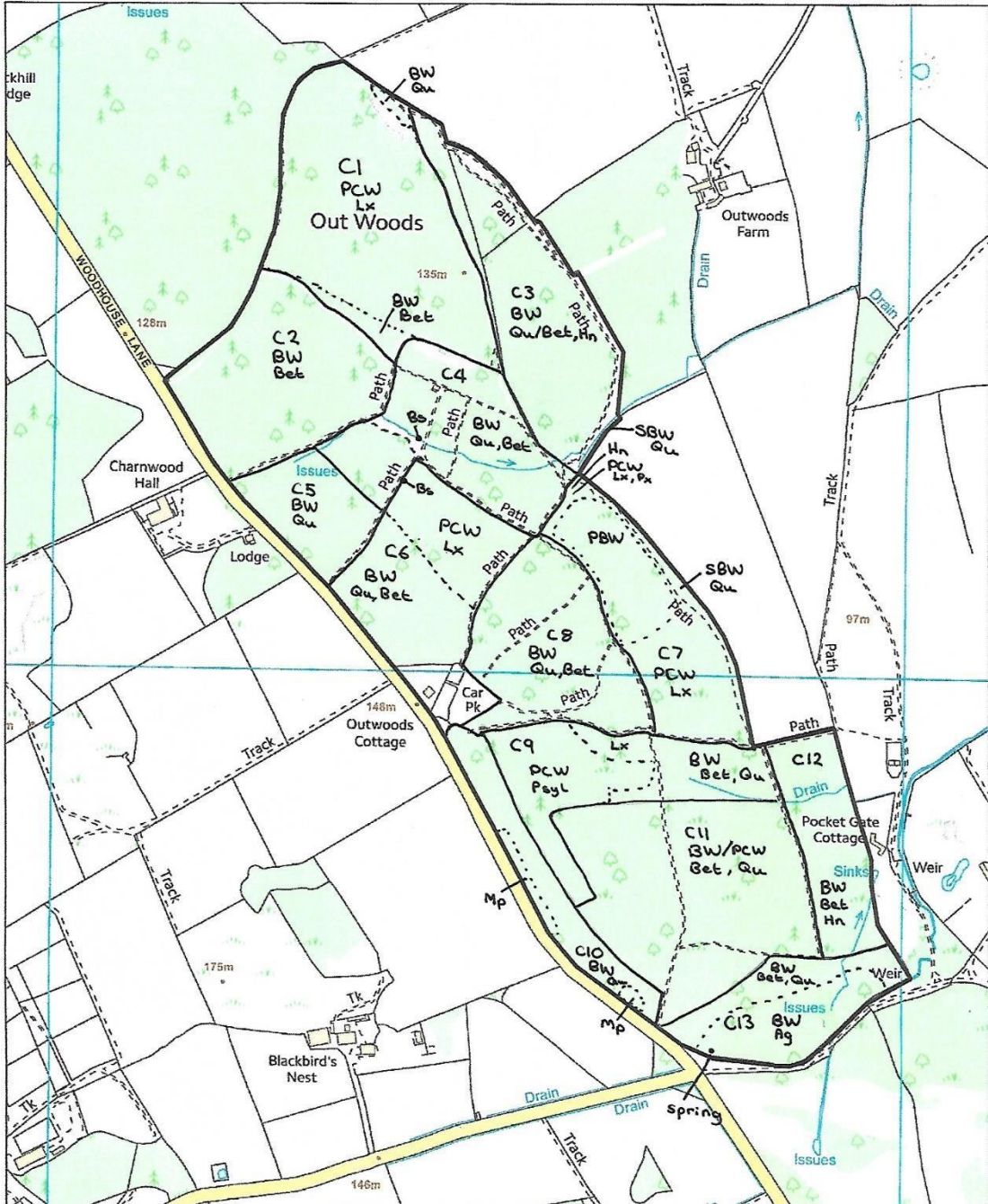
Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust

### Charnwood Forest Habitat Survey 2017

#### Outwoods

Drawn by Uta Hamzaoui on 27/04/2017

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*Habitat codes*

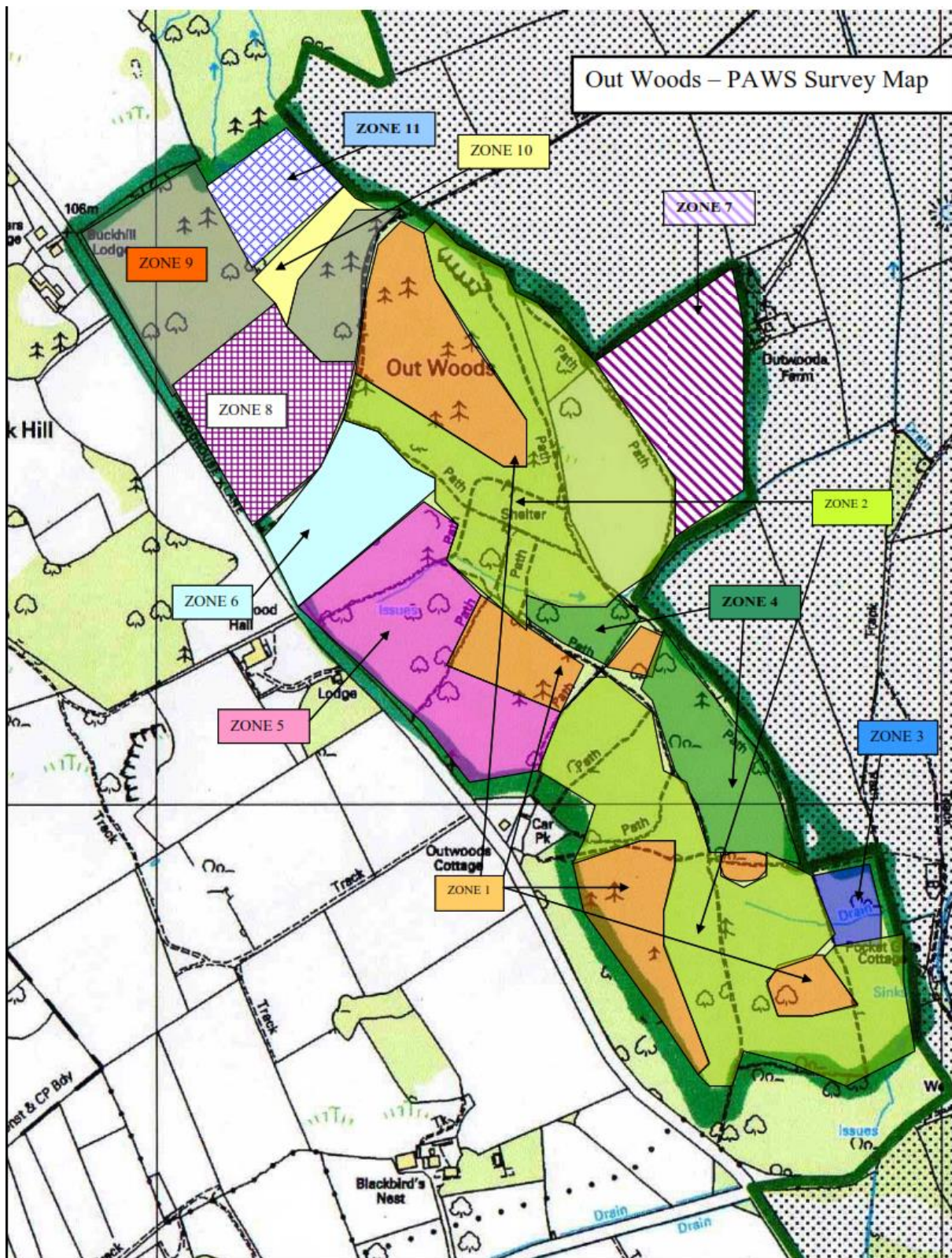
BW	Broadleaf woodland	- - - -	Habitat boundary
PBW	Broadleaf plantaion	_____	Compartment
PCW	Conifer plantation	C1	Compartment label, eg. compartment 1
SBW	Scattered broadleaf woodland		

*Dominant species codes*

Ag	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder
Bet	<i>Betula sp.</i>	Birch
Bs	<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard-fern
Hn	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	Bluebell
Lx	<i>Larix sp.</i>	Larch
Mp	<i>Melampyrum pratense</i>	Common Cow-wheat
Px	<i>Picea sp.</i>	Spruce
Psyl	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots Pine
Qu	<i>Quercus sp.</i>	Oak



# Appendix 4



PAWS ZONE SURVEY TABLE					
Wood	Out Woods	Zone No.	1	Surveyor/date	GW 23/6/16
Grid Ref: SK515159					

STEP 1		Stand Notes				
<p>Description: This wood is jointly managed; Zones 1 to 6 by Charnwood Borough Council &amp; Zones 8 to 10 by Leics County Council. Zone 7 is privately owned. This zone consists of blocks of mature conifers, mainly SP and larch and some NS. Understorey is generally light with holly and birch. In a few areas it is stronger with young oak, ash &amp; sycamore coppice and rowan present. Ground flora is predominantly bracken and bramble with scattered patches of bluebells. Very few other AW plants present. Some old stumps noted.</p> <p>Rhododendron is present both as large bushes and young saplings.</p> <p>The main paths through this wood are generally good although a bit narrow in places.</p>						
Crop Species?	Conifers: SP/larch/NS			Broadleaves: oak/bi/ash/syc		
Semi natural composition	>80%	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5% X	
Understorey- Hazel etc	>80%	50-80%	20-50%	<20% X	1-5%	
Tree Regeneration (<30yrs)? DAFOR	Conifer	Semi Natural: canopy		:understorey	R	:ground
Invasive species? DAFOR	Rhododendron X	H Balsam	J Knotweed	Snowberry	Other	
Risk of invasion of coarse vegetation?	Species: bramble & bracken			High	Medium X	Low
Grazing/Browsing Damage?	Species: Old squirrel damage noted on hardwoods.	Damage assessment needed Y/N? N	Fence repair needed Y/N? N	Other comment		
STEP 2		Assessment of Ancient Woodland Remnant Features				
	DAFOR or absent	Threat Category S/T/C *	Agent of threat			
Woodland specialist Flora	O	S				
Deadwood	R	S				
Pre Plantation trees (semi mature onwards)	None in zone					
Archaeology Y/N?	N	Category:	Threat S/T/C	Agent of threat:		

STEP 3		Assessment of Work Required	
Standard work Proposals – choose A-H	D		
Work Priority – choose 1(high)-5(low)	4		
Site specific work proposals (max 254 characters/spaces)	<p>Where there is a strong understorey these areas could be thinned over a long period of time in order to release the broadleaves. Where there is little or no understorey either clearfell or group fell and replant in tubes with native species of trees and shrubs. Rides and tracks could be improved by some internal landscaping during thinning/felling operations.</p> <p>Rhododendron should be eradicated from whole wood.</p>		



\***s** = **secure** ie no threats to long term survival    **t** = **threatened**- under stress but surviving just now    **c** = **critical**-  
severely threatened and could disappear shortly



PAWS ZONE SURVEY TABLE					
Wood	Out Woods	Zone No.	2	Surveyor/date	GW 23/6/16
Grid Ref: SK515163					

STEP 1	Stand Notes				
<p>Description: This wood is jointly managed; Zones 1 to 6 by Charnwood Borough Council &amp; Zones 8 to 10 by Leics County Council. Zone 7 is privately owned. This is a large area of the wood made up of broadleaves, mainly semi-mature birch with some rowan and oak of similar age. Also scattered throughout are much older specimens of 'Charnwood' oak, sweet chestnut and beech. In the centre, near 'The Shelter' are some particularly large specimens. There is a small area of alder coppice in the southern section. Understorey is generally good and some broadleaved regen was noted. Ground flora is predominantly bracken and bramble with scattered patches of bluebells, creeping jenny and herb robert. Very few other AW plants present. Some old stumps noted.</p> <p>Part of this area is designated as a conservation area and fenced to exclude public access.</p> <p>An important feature in this zone are the two outcrops of rock that are present.</p> <p>Rhododendron is present and quite strong in places. Some attempt has been made to remove it but has re-grown from stumps</p> <p>The main paths through this wood are generally good although a bit narrow in places. There are a number of small open spaces particularly round the specimen trees.</p> <p>The main stream that runs through this area has a good mix of light and shade.</p>					
Crop Species?	Conifers:			Broadleaves: Bi/oak/SwCh/rowan/Be	
Semi natural composition	>80% X	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5%
Understorey- Hazel etc	>80%	50-80%	20-50% X	<20%	1-5%
Tree Regeneration (<30yrs)? DAFOR	Conifer	Semi Natural: canopy :understorey O :ground O			
Invasive species? DAFOR	Rhododendron X	H Balsam	J Knotweed	Snowberry	Other
Risk of invasion of coarse vegetation?	Species: Bracken and bramble			High	Medium X
Grazing/Browsing Damage?	Species: Some minor (mainly old) squirrel damage noted	Damage assessment needed Y/N? N	Fence repair needed Y/N? N	Other comment	
STEP 2	Assessment of Ancient Woodland Remnant Features				
	DAFOR or absent	Threat Category S/T/C *	Agent of threat		
Woodland specialist Flora	O	S			
Deadwood	O	S			
Pre Plantation trees (semi mature onwards)	F	S			
Archaeology Y/N?	N	Category:	Threat S/T/C	Agent of threat:	
STEP 3	Assessment of Work Required				

Standard work Proposals – choose A-H	D
Work Priority – choose 1(high)-5(low)	4
Site specific work proposals (max 254 characters/spaces)	Gradual thinning of birch areas favoring oak and allowing any regen to develop. Although some open areas exist tracks and rides would benefit from some internal landscaping to encourage more floral diversity. Rhododendron should be eradicated from whole wood.

\*s = secure ie no threats to long term survival    t =threatened- under stress but surviving just now    c=critical- severely threatened and could disappear shortly







PAWS ZONE SURVEY TABLE					
Wood	Out Woods	Zone No.	3	Surveyor/date	GW 23/6/16
Grid Ref: SK518159					

STEP 1		Stand Notes				
Description: This wood is jointly managed; Zones 1 to 6 by Charnwood Borough Council & Zones 8 to 10 by Leics County Council. Zone 7 is privately owned. This zone is a small area of a mainly failed broadleaf planting (circa 20 years old). A few oak have survived but is mainly made up of natural regen birch and rowan. There is little understorey and ground flora is light bramble.						
Crop Species?	Conifers:			Broadleaves: Bi/oak/rowan		
Semi natural composition	>80% X	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5%	
Understorey- Hazel etc	>80%	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5% X	
Tree Regeneration (<30yrs)? DAFOR	Conifer	Semi Natural: canopy		:understorey	:ground	
Invasive species? DAFOR	Rhododendron	H Balsam	J Knotweed	Snowberry	Other	
Risk of invasion of coarse vegetation?	Species: Bramble & bracken			High	Medium X	Low
Grazing/Browsing Damage?	Species:	Damage assessment needed Y/N?	Fence repair needed Y/N?	Other comment		
STEP 2		Assessment of Ancient Woodland Remnant Features				
	DAFOR or absent	Threat Category S/T/C *	Agent of threat			
Woodland specialist Flora	None					
Deadwood	None					
Pre Plantation trees (semi mature onwards)	None					
Archaeology Y/N?	N	Category:	Threat S/T/C	Agent of threat:		

STEP 3		Assessment of Work Required	
Standard work Proposals – choose A-H	D		
Work Priority – choose 1(high)-5(low)	4		
Site specific work proposals (max 254 characters/spaces)	Future thinning to favour oak and open canopy to encourage development of understorey. Some enrichment planting could be considered.		

\*s = **secure** ie no threats to long term survival      t = **threatened**- under stress but surviving just now      c=**critical**- severely threatened and could disappear shortly





PAWS ZONE SURVEY TABLE					
Wood	Out Woods	Zone No.	4	Surveyor/date	GW 23/6/16
Grid Ref: SK517161					

STEP 1		Stand Notes				
Description: This wood is jointly managed; Zones 1 to 6 by Charnwood Borough Council & Zones 8 to 10 by Leics County Council. Zone 7 is privately owned. This zone is made up of two open areas. The larger one is a recent larch clearfell site which has not yet been re-stocked. There is some regen/regrowth of birch, sycamore and rowan and an occasional seedling was noted. The other area which has been felled for some time and is also mainly bracken shows some signs of colonisation by trees and scrub. There are more signs of a broader spectrum of woodland flora round the edges including red campion and rosebay willowherb.						
Crop Species?	Conifers:			Broadleaves: Bl/rowan/oak		
Semi natural composition	>80%	50-80%	20-50%	<20% X	1-5%	
Understorey- Hazel etc	>80%	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5%	
Tree Regeneration (<30yrs)?	DAFOR	Conifer	Semi Natural: canopy O :understorey O :ground			
Invasive species? DAFOR	Rhododendron	H Balsam	J Knotweed	Snowberry	Other	
Risk of invasion of coarse vegetation?	Species			High	Medium	Low
Grazing/Browsing Damage?	Species:	Damage assessment needed Y/N?	Fence repair needed Y/N?	Other comment		
STEP 2		Assessment of Ancient Woodland Remnant Features				
	DAFOR or absent	Threat Category S/T/C *	Agent of threat			
Woodland specialist Flora	O	S				
Deadwood	None noted					
Pre Plantation trees (semi mature onwards)	None					
Archaeology Y/N?	N	Category:	Threat S/T/C	Agent of threat:		

STEP 3		Assessment of Work Required	
Standard work Proposals – choose A-H	F		
Work Priority – choose 1(high)-5(low)	3		
Site specific work proposals (max 254 characters/spaces)	Unsure what plans are for this site but would recommend treatment of bracken (if not able to use chemical other methods, e.g. rolling, could be used.) and re-stocking. The other block is interesting as some regeneration is taking place. In time it may become more wooded and in the meantime this transitional phase is a useful addition to the wood as a whole.		



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severely threatened and could disappear shortly

t = **threatened**- under stress but surviving just now

c=**critical**-



PAWS ZONE SURVEY TABLE					
Wood	Out Woods	Zone No.	5	Surveyor/date	GW 23/6/16
Grid Ref: SK513161					

STEP 1	Stand Notes				
Description: This wood is jointly managed; Zones 1 to 6 by Charnwood Borough Council & Zones 8 to 10 by Leics County Council. Zone 7 is privately owned. This zone is almost pure pole stage birch with a few oak and rowan, with a light understorey and medium bracken and bramble beneath. There a few large beech trees scattered throughout. Some work has been done to thin out the birch and is looking quite promising. The track is rather narrow although some small scallops have been created.					
Crop Species?	Conifers:		Broadleaves: BI/be		
Semi natural composition	>80% X	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5%
Understorey- Hazel etc	>80%	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5% X
Tree Regeneration (<30yrs)? DAFOR	Conifer	Semi Natural: canopy		:understorey	:ground
Invasive species? DAFOR	Rhododendron	H Balsam	J Knotweed	Snowberry	Other
Risk of invasion of coarse vegetation?	Species: bramble			High	Medium X
Grazing/Browsing Damage?	Species:	Damage assessment needed Y/N?	Fence repair needed Y/N?	Other comment	
STEP 2	Assessment of Ancient Woodland Remnant Features				
	DAFOR or absent	Threat Category S/T/C *	Agent of threat		
Woodland specialist Flora	R	S			
Deadwood	None noted				
Pre Plantation trees (semi mature onwards)	O	S			
Archaeology Y/N?	N	Category:	Threat S/T/C	Agent of threat:	

STEP 3	Assessment of Work Required	
Standard work Proposals – choose A-H	D	
Work Priority – choose 1(high)-5(low)	3	
Site specific work proposals (max 254 characters/spaces)	Continuation of thinning of birch and favoring oak. Could consider some enrichment planting of both trees and shrubs.	



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severely threatened and could disappear shortly

t=**threatened**- under stress but surviving just now

c=**critical**-



PAWS ZONE SURVEY TABLE					
Wood	Out Woods	Zone No.	6	Surveyor/date	GW 23/6/16
Grid Ref: SK512163					

STEP 1		Stand Notes				
Description: This wood is jointly managed; Zones 1 to 6 by Charnwood Borough Council & Zones 8 to 10 by Leics County Council. Zone 7 is privately owned. This zone is an area planted in 1985 and has a wide spectrum of trees including cherry, oak, red oak, whitebeam, birch and a few redwoods. There are also a few old beech trees scattered throughout. There is an understorey developing and the ground flora is mainly bramble. Track is very narrow and boxed in.						
Crop Species?	Conifers: redwood			Broadleaves: Cherry/oak/ROK/Bi/W.Beam		
Semi natural composition	>80% X	50-80%	20-50%	<20%	1-5%	
Understorey- Hazel etc	>80%	50-80%	20-50%	<20% X	1-5%	
Tree Regeneration (<30yrs)?	DAFOR	Conifer	Semi Natural: canopy :understorey :ground			
Invasive species? DAFOR	Rhododendron	H Balsam	J Knotweed	Snowberry	Other	
Risk of invasion of coarse vegetation?	Species Bramble			High	Medium X	Low
Grazing/Browsing Damage?	Species: None noted but squirrels present in wood.	Damage assessment needed Y/N? N	Fence repair needed Y/N?	Other comment		
STEP 2		Assessment of Ancient Woodland Remnant Features				
	DAFOR or absent	Threat Category S/T/C *	Agent of threat			
Woodland specialist Flora	R	S				
Deadwood	None noted					
Pre Plantation trees (semi mature onwards)	O	S				
Archaeology Y/N?	N	Category:	Threat S/T/C	Agent of threat:		

STEP 3		Assessment of Work Required	
Standard work Proposals – choose A-H	D		
Work Priority – choose 1(high)-5(low)	4		
Site specific work proposals (max 254 characters/spaces)	Standard thinning operation, removing red oak as a first choice. Widening of the track with some scalloping will help encourage wider ground flora diversity.		

\*s = secure ie no threats to long term survival    t =threatened- under stress but surviving just now    c=critical- severely threatened and could disappear shortly





## OUTWOODS MANAGMENT COMMITTEE – 16<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2024

### Report of the Head of Contacts, Leisure, Waste and Environment

#### ITEM 5 FINANCE UPDATE

##### Purpose of the Report

To update the Trustees on finance issues relating to the Outwoods.

##### 2024/25 Year to Date (07 Oct 2024)

The table below provides details of the spend for the year up to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

Account (T)	Total Spend Inc Commits	Current Orig Budget	Variance
Buildings Repairs and Maintenance	1,239.15	5,000.00	3,760.85
Car Park Machine Purchase, Repairs and Maintenance	406.00	1,900.00	1,494.00
Grounds General Maintenance	0.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
Fencing and Gates	0.00	400.00	400.00
Seats	0.00	400.00	400.00
Maintenance of Trees and Shrubs	5,000.00	4,800.00	-200.00
GF Electricity	236.09	600.00	363.91
GF Metered Water Charges	141.73	500.00	358.27
GF Unmeasured Water Charges	0.00	300.00	300.00
Equipment Purchases, Repairs and Maintenance	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Signs	225.00	800.00	575.00
Printing, Stationery and Copying	834.08	300.00	-534.08
Security Services and Charges	1,326.29	800.00	-526.29
Promotional Activities	211.80	400.00	188.20
Cesspit Emptying	0.00	11,900.00	11,900.00
MOS Contract - Basic	70,429.19	145,100.00	74,670.81
MOS Contract - Variations	815.16	1,700.00	884.84
Grant Contribution	0.00	-4,000.00	-4,000.00
Fees and Charges Miscellaneous	-1,357.70	-10,000.00	-8,642.30
			-
Car Parking Charges	-32,756.87	-70,000.00	37,243.13
Rent General	-10,300.00	-14,000.00	-3,700.00

## **Car Parking Income**

Please find below the car parking income up until September 2024. The figures exclude income from season tickets.

	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
<b>April</b>	Covid19	3,918.10	4,012.60	3,766.20	6,124.40
<b>May</b>	Covid19	2,790.95	4,143.10	3,612.90	3,912.90
<b>June</b>	Covid19	2,405.40	3,835.80	3,341.65	5,552.50
<b>July</b>	Covid19	2,423.40	4,663.30	2,818.45	5,432.00
<b>August</b>	2,956.40	2,588.35	4,146.80	3,123.85	6,360.25
<b>September</b>	3,177.30	1,880.10	4,253.80	2,890.45	4,176.22
<b>October</b>	3,106.30	1,991.60	3,192.14	3,303.00	
<b>November</b>	3,761.90	351.10	2,455.55	2,632.70	
<b>December</b>	3,192.85	3,139.80	3,086.05	2,426.90	
<b>January</b>	2,533.35	3,445.20	2,370.90	2,659.80	
<b>February</b>	2,364.40	2,656.90	3,289.70	2,430.70	
<b>March</b>	3,039.75	2,973.65	1,941.40	3,064.70	
<b>TOTAL (£)</b>	<b>24,132.25</b>	<b>30,564.55</b>	<b>41,391.14</b>	<b>36,071.30</b>	<b>31,558.27</b>

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# Outwoods Quarterly Report July-September 2024

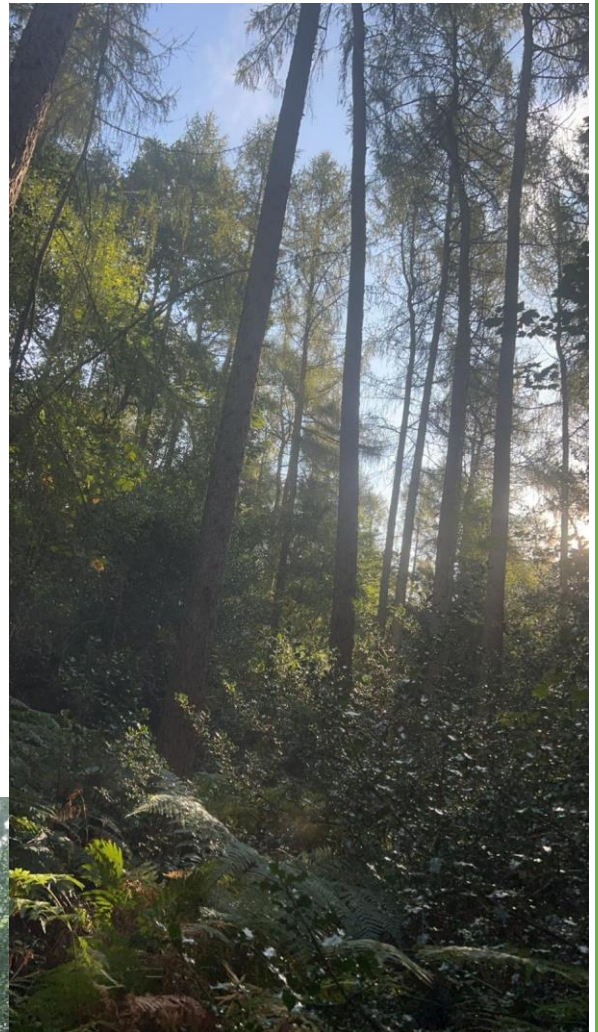


## July

The Outwoods were fairly low maintenance during the summer months, higher visitor numbers are the biggest potential concern, but thankfully there's very little anti-social behaviour to report.

The rangers have replaced a damaged metal dog foul bin with a wooden structure made from recycled fencing materials, recovered during the spring clean.

The wooden designs keeping with the woodland theme and helping to give the site a sense of place.





The team have strimmed natural glades within the woodland, these areas have been selected due to their high coverage of bluebells. These glades have been formed naturally with trees falling either due to poor health or high wind events. It's expected that strimming dominating bracken and bramble will increase the number of bluebells, thus giving an enhanced showing during the spring.

Bracken is a dominant plant that will outcompete most ground flora, therefore it's very important to manage and control growth in select areas. The main glade within the Outwoods has seen management before, while bracken remains in high quantities, this glade is one of the better areas in terms of diversity due to this management. The Green Gym supported by the rangers have been pulling and bashing bracken to reduce the plants energy and growth, hopefully allowing other plants to come through.



After a few months absence, the Green Gym got back to doing the ancient craft of dry-stone walling. Fixing one gap at the Woodhouse Eaves end of the boundary that was the start (or end) of a rather annoying desire line. The line cutting its way through a carpet of wild garlic and bluebells. Hopefully the reconstruction of wall will stop whoever the suspect is from taking their usual route through this part of the woodland.

Presumably this desire line has been a problem for some time as a short section of post and wire fencing was found.



## August

The Outwoods were closed due to high winds from 4pm Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> to midday Friday 24<sup>th</sup> of August. The Café and Car Park remained shut until both the high winds receded, and the ranger team deemed the woodland safe to reopen. No significant trees were lost, and nor was there damage to property.

The ranger team appreciated the understanding and assistance of the Olivia's Café staff, who, at the ranger teams request, waited until the car park was safe before re-entering to begin opening of the café.

One rotten memorial bench was replaced for a new bench. The previous being removed and put to one side with a plan to salvage timber that's sound enough to be reused within the Outwoods, the previous memorial plaque added to the 'monolith' in the car park.

Pothole repairs took place with the busy summer period making the holes wider and deeper, the ranger team used cold lay tarmac as a temporary fix while we wait for a more permanent solution.



Another round of den destruction took place, one session by the Green Gym and another with chainsaws operated by the ranger team.



## September

Late September saw the return of the Green Gym at The Outwoods, the group have been busy at other Charnwood sites for much of late summer but once surveying and meadow clearances were complete, they were happy to be back in the woods. The group were firstly on the Brook Road boundary wall, completing another session of dry-stone walling and steadily working their way down the boundary. September also saw the start of the Car park and café fencing improvements, the Green Gym assisting with the installation of fence post and rails.

The end of school holidays and a decrease in visitor numbers presented an opportunity to tidy up the site while foot traffic was low. The car park and 'events area' around the café getting some attention. Fresh woodchip installed around the new path, information board and picnic benches, weeding around the events barn and deep clean of the toilet block.

The heavy rain towards the end of the month saw a depreciation of conditions to the car park surface, potholes again becoming an issue. The team set about filling problem holes with type 1 stone to reduce the impact on vehicles.

The shed drainage, created from scrap material in April managed to withstand yellow and amber weather warnings for rain, in previous events the shed would have been overwhelmed with rainwater and runoff, damaging kit and possibly draining fuel into the woodland. This is no longer the case despite wet conditions.

The wet conditions also highlighted how well the Trent River Trust natural flood management scheme was working within the Outwoods. Leaky dams visibly slowing down the flow of water, protecting not just populated areas of Loughborough but the water courses within the woods. Slower water flow means less erosion to water courses, lessening the chances of culverts being overwhelmed and thus protecting paths from runoff and erosion.









The gents' toilets continue to be one of the best places to spot wildlife at the Outwoods.

A Long-Eared Bat was discovered clinging to the ceramic tiles of the gents' toilets. Obviously not being an ideal place for a bat to be during the day, RSPB's Ross Bray was contacted who put us in touch with Peter who leads bat walks at the Outwoods and other Charnwood sites. Peter came, collected said bat to take home for a health check. The bat, a female of good health was deemed fit to be released back into the Outwoods that same evening. As far as the team are aware, she hasn't visited the gents since.

