

Cheddar Gorge Woodland Management Plan Summary 2023-2033



National
Trust

Compartment C2



**39.97 hectares of native
woodland in Somerset**

Habitats and Species

Cheddar Gorge is internationally important for its limestone grassland and wooded slopes. It has a nationally important assemblage of plants, including almost all the British population of Cheddar Pink, an abundance of Slender Bedstraw, and a unique complex of whitebeams. The National Trust estate, on the north side of the gorge supports good numbers of these plants and many of other limestone specialists.

Designations

All of the woodlands sit within the Mendip Hills AONB.

The Cheddar woodlands sit in the Cheddar Complex SSSI designated for the wide range of semi-natural habitats it supports, including unimproved grassland, calcareous dry dwarf-shrub heath, semi-natural broadleaved woodland and dense and scattered scrub. These woodlands also sit in the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC.

Management Approaches

Our aim is to manage our woodlands to create a mosaic of woodland, scrub, and grassland habitats across the Mendip Hills and Mid Somerset. This will involve applying active and targeted woodland management over the area to join up vital corridors between the Mendip Woodland SACs, priority ancient woodland and improve existing woodland habitats.

Areas of semi-natural woodlands in good condition with no issues will be managed with little or no intervention.

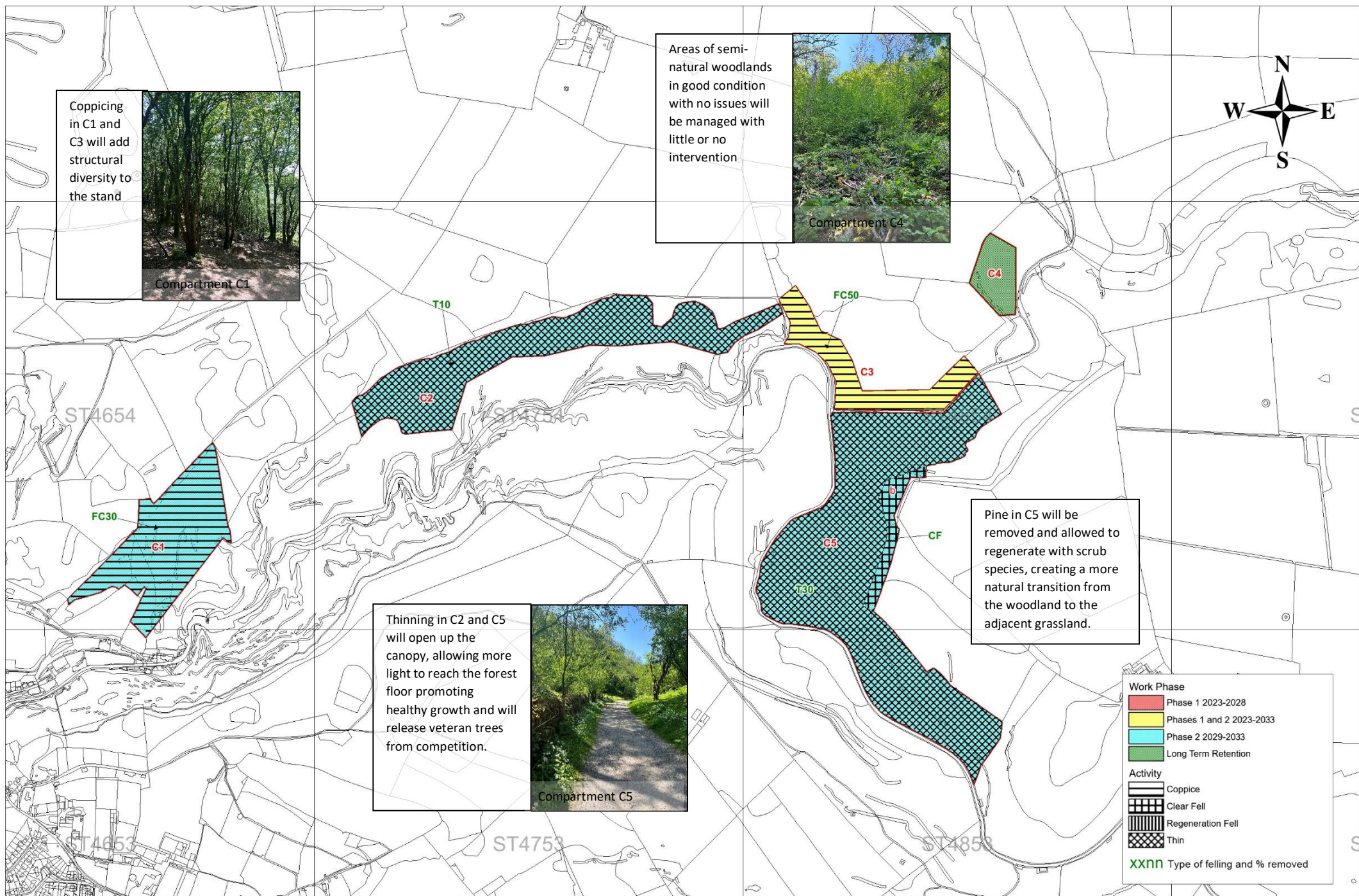
The importance of semi-natural woodland and veteran trees will be recognised due to their importance for wood decay and epiphyte communities. Veteran trees will be identified and protected from competition for light from adjacent trees through targeted thinning and pruning.

Where thinning takes place, regeneration will be achieved through natural processes where possible. This includes allowing natural regeneration from seed or management to encourage coppice regrowth.

Coppicing will be used to maintain and enhance structural diversity.

Scots Pine will be cleared from the eastern edge of compartment C5 and the area will be allowed to regenerate with scrub species, creating a more natural transition from woodland to the adjacent grassland.

This abridged plan provides a summary of a detailed plan covering the National Trust owned woodlands across Mid-Somerset. This full plan can be seen by visiting <https://forestplans.co.uk/midsomerset/>.



Coppicing in C1 and C3 will add structural diversity to the stand



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Thinning in C2 and C5 will open up the canopy, allowing more light to reach the forest floor promoting healthy growth and will release veteran trees from competition.



Pine in C5 will be removed and allowed to regenerate with scrub species, creating a more natural transition from the woodland to the adjacent grassland.