



# Watkins Wood

(Woodleigh, Devon)

## A living tribute to Kenneth Watkins' vision

The extensive views from this young woodland in the beautiful Avon Valley Woods show just what the Woodland Trust is all about: providing inspiration for people to visit woods, plant trees and treasure wildlife. Watkins Wood was named after Woodland Trust founder, Kenneth Watkins, who bought his first wood in the Avon Valley in 1972. He witnessed the widespread planting of conifers replacing native species and saw that the ancient woodland habitat and its rich and varied life was in danger of disappearing. Semi-natural and ancient in origin, Watkins Wood epitomises Devonian woodlands. They are predominately oak based, hanging on a steep-sided valley with open farmland above on the highest ground.

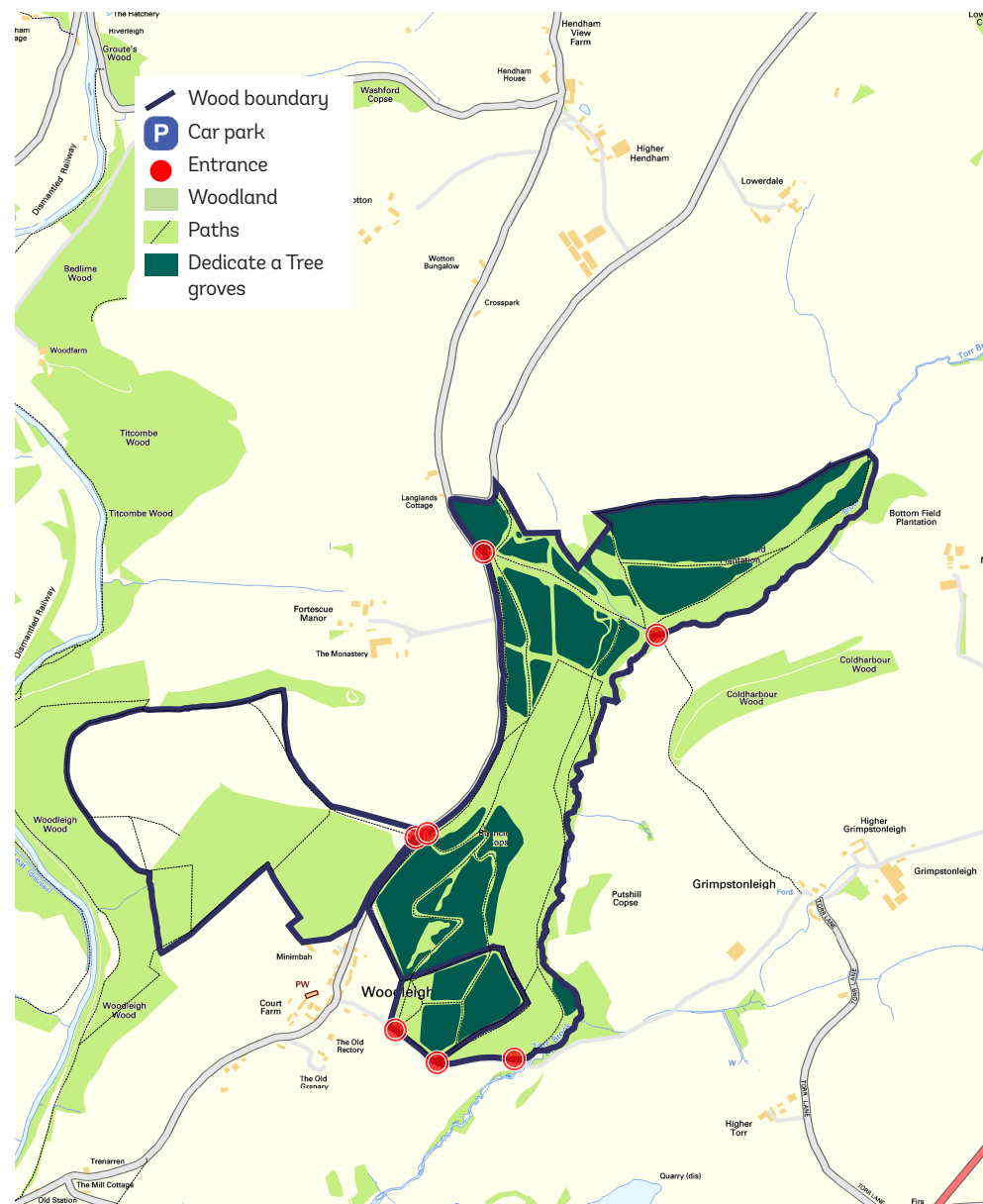
The Avon Valley Woods comprise four historic woods that run along the slopes of the Avon Valley and its neighbour, Torr Brook. Their 344 acres (nearly 140 hectares) provide an ideal green corridor for wildlife, a myriad of footpaths and bridleways for walkers and the historic Primrose Line, which traces the route of the Victorian railway that would run from Loddiswell to Topsham. Watkins and Centry Woods link the two river valleys together.

Watkins Wood is in the south east of this family of woods with ash, maple and oak planted between 2000 and 2004 on what were arable fields, a small copse, isolated trees and the lightly wooded Torr Brook. Much of the wood is divided by Devon Banks and hedges, which are noted for being both distinctive features in the landscape and particularly interesting sites for a wide range of plants and wildlife. Watkins Wood is already prized as a home to the dormouse and the greater horseshoe bat, both in need of protection. The hedges are managed using traditional techniques and livestock can sometimes be found grazing the woodland floor.

**In order to keep our woods as natural as possible, individual trees are not marked in any way.**

How to get there: Between Exeter and Plymouth lies the Dartmoor National Park. A few miles south you will find the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is here, about 10 miles east of Dartmouth, you will find the Avon Valley Woods and to their south lies Watkins Wood. Access to Watkins Wood is via the lane running north from Woodleigh village. Several entrances allow access to these sites with either field and hunting gates on the permissive and public bridleway routes, or kissing gates on the footpath route. Loddiswell Village is 1.5km away. Limited parking for cars visiting the Avon Valley Woods is provided at all the key entrances off the highway.

For advice on travel by public transport, contact the national helpline on 0871 200 2233. More information about this wood can be found at [woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk) or call us on 0330 333 3300



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