Courtenay Wood

Devon

A varied woodland with an attractive stream that forms part of a valley that has been wooded for over 400 years.

Details

Price: £89,000 Freehold
Location: Portsmouth Arms, Near South Molton, Devon
Size: About 6 acres for sale
OS Landranger: OS No 180
Grid ref: SS 629 192
Nearest post code: EX18 7HH

Local manager

Stuart Brooking
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Description

Courtenay Wood lies within the wooded valley of the River Taw and is recorded as an Ancient Replanted Woodland, meaning it has been continuously wooded since at least 1600 AD. While the original native tree cover was historically felled and replanted predominantly with conifers, the woodland now includes areas of planted wild cherry, along with a mixed hedgerow and hazel coppice to the east.

The previous owner initiated an Ancient Woodland Restoration project, selectively removing pockets of Sitka spruce to encourage the natural regeneration of native species. This process has been further supported through targeted planting of additional native trees.

A picturesque stream flows through the heart of the woodland before joining the River Taw, enhancing both its ecological and visual appeal. The land is well drained and benefits from fertile soils.

Despite its peaceful and secluded character, Courtenay Wood is conveniently located within easy reach of the A377 and Portsmouth Arms railway station.

The purchasers of the woodland will be asked to enter into a covenant to ensure the quiet and peaceful enjoyment of adjoining woodlands and meadows.

Trees

Along the western fringe of Courtenay Wood stand mature conifer trees planted in 1967. Species such as Japanese larch and Douglas fir have thrived, forming an impressive canopy and providing a valuable timber resource. This offers the purchaser opportunities for small-scale forestry and timber projects, or the option to market the timber commercially.

The remainder of the woodland was largely planted with Sitka spruce in 1968, with areas along the eastern boundary developing into a more naturalised mix of native broadleaved species. As part of the ongoing Ancient Woodland Restoration, most of the Sitka spruce has now been removed. In several areas, natural regeneration—particularly of birch—is progressing well.

The naturalised woodland includes species such as birch, beech, rowan, and hazel, while other cleared sections have been recently replanted with native broadleaved trees including sessile oak, rowan, silver birch, hornbeam, and hazel.

In the central part of the woodland lies an established grove of wild cherry, planted in 1988, which adds seasonal interest and further biodiversity value.

Wildlife

The mixed woodland habitat, together with the stream, creates an excellent mosaic of habitats that supports a wide range of wildlife. The stream provides a reliable water source for resident mammals, including red and roe deer, while badgers are also known to frequent the woodland.

Flowing from south to north through the central part of the site, the stream offers high-quality habitat for frogs and other amphibians, as well as a variety of water-associated bird species, further enhancing the ecological value of the woodland.

Features

A rustic picnic bench is situated within a charming open glade, providing an ideal setting for family picnics and quiet enjoyment of the woodland.

An old hedge bank runs along the eastern boundary and supports a number of important mature trees, playing a valuable role in the natural spread of seed and the regeneration of new woodland.

A small footbridge crosses the stream, allowing easy access through the woodland while adding to its traditional rural character.

Access, tracks and footpaths

From the main road, a tarmac drive leads to a shared entrance gate. Beyond the gate, a shared stone forestry track provides access to a generous parking area.

Within the woodland, an internal private track runs along the western side, offering convenient access through the site. A pedestrian track crosses the stream and leads up to the centre of the woodland, where it connects with a further track running through the heart of the trees.

There are no public footpaths crossing the woodland, ensuring a high degree of privacy and seclusion.

Rights and covenants

The purchasers of the woodland will be asked to enter into a covenant to ensure the quiet and peaceful enjoyment of adjoining woodlands and meadows.

Activities

The woodland offers a peaceful retreat, ideal for occasional camping with family and friends, providing a welcome escape from the pressures of everyday life.

Wildlife is abundant both within the woodland and the surrounding area and can be enjoyed through the construction of a simple wildlife hide or by discreetly positioning wildlife cameras to capture special moments in the natural environment.

Subject to the necessary permissions, a forestry store could be installed to provide secure storage for tools and equipment, as well as shelter during inclement weather.

Local area and history

Courtenay Wood is well placed with many services nearby and is conveniently located in mid-Devon with easy access the north Devon coast. Unusually this is a woodland you can visit by train to reduce your "carbon footprint" - the Portsmouth Arms train station within a 10 minute walk!

Portsmouth Arms station is part of the Tarka line which is famous for being one of the most beautiful train journeys in the country. It also links directly to Exeter. Conveniently near the main entrance which to Courtenay Wood is the Portsmouth Arms Inn, handily sited for refreshments after a day in your woodland.

As an alternative to camping, perhaps during colder weather, when visiting your woodland there is Northcote Manor country hotel within a 5 minute walk. You can also eat here in the evenings.

Courtenay Wood is situated about 8 miles south from the busy town of Barnstaple which is the gateway to explore the rugged coast of north Devon with many beautiful beaches such as Westward Ho! and the surfing beaches of Croyde and Woolacombe. The City of Exeter is approximately 20 miles south and has many shops and historic buildings such as Exeter Cathedral and the remains of the roman city wall.

The small Saxon market town of Chulmleigh is a few miles south and is referred to in the Doomsday Book of 1086 as 'Calmonlevge', meaning a 'woodland clearing' (Leah in Old English). Chulmleigh was passed by marriage to the Courtenay family in 1188, and John Courtenay granted the right to hold a weekly market and an annual fair in Chulmleigh in 1253. The fair was held on 22 July which is St Mary Magdalene's feast day which implies there was already an existing church at this location dedicated to that saint.

Particulars and plans were prepared by our local manager, Stuart Brooking.

How to find this woodland

You are welcome to visit this wood by yourself, but please ensure that you have a copy of these sales details with you - many of our woodlands do not have mobile phone reception or internet access so we recommend either printing the details or downloading them to your phone/tablet/laptop.

Do remember to also check that it is still available for sale. If you have seen the woodland and wish to be accompanied on a second more detailed visit please contact our local manager.

Directions

- Travelling from Exeter, follow the A377 Barnstaple road through Crediton.

- Continue on to the village of Eggesford and after about 5 miles you will enter the village of Portsmouth Arms.

- The entrance to the wood is opposite the Portsmouth Arms Inn via the tarmac drive shared with Northcote Manor Hotel.

- Follow the tarmac drive up the hill for about 300 metres, past the first gate immediately on the left, then passing another gate on the left until you you see a small 'woodlands for sale' sign on a post pointing left to a gate with another 'woodlands for sale' sign on the gate. This is the entrance.

- Park outside this gate, leaving the tarmac drive clear (the purchaser will be provided with a key for the gate) and climb carefully around this gate onto the access track.

- Follow this track down a slight hill for about 40 metres, turning sharp left until you see a ride stop on your left with a 'Courtenay Wood' name sign on it. This is the entrance to the wood.

- To access the eastern side of the woodland go passed the ride stop and walk down the track until you see a track on your right that heads over the stream via a small bridge and up to the main part of the woodland.

- From Barnstaple follow the A377 south towards Crediton.

- Pass the turn to Umberleigh and continue into the village of Portsmouth Arms.

- Turn right opposite the Portsmouth Arms Inn into the tarmac drive which leads to Northcote Manor. You will see a sign for the hotel and restaurant at this entrance. Then follow the directions to Courtenay Wood as above.

Satnav/GPS note: the postcode EX37 9LZ is for the point shown by the red dot on the location map.

what3words for the gate at the highway is dandelions.force.reverse and the entrance to actual wood are rejected.loyal.presuming

Boundaries:

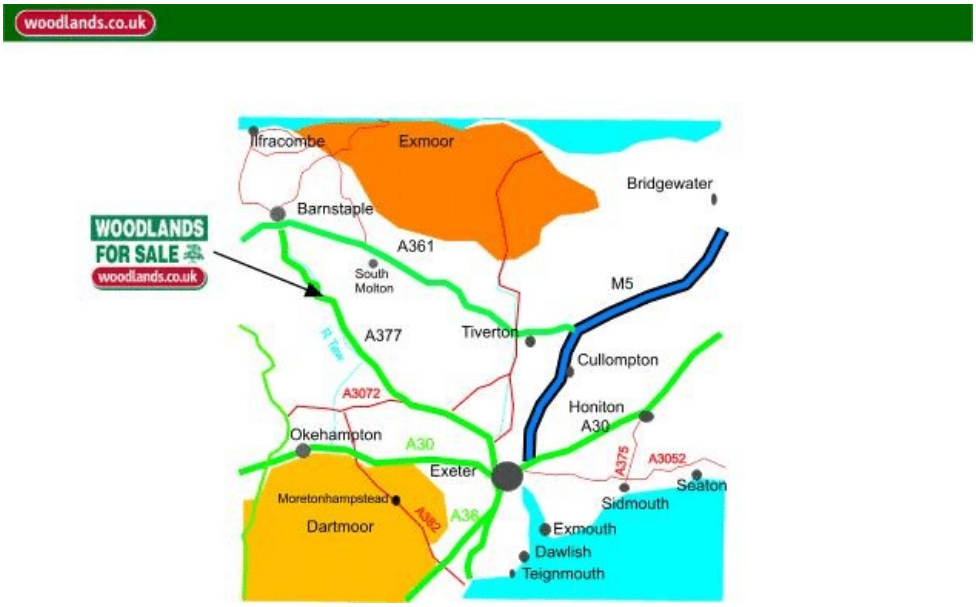
All boundaries are indicated with blue markings on posts and trees.

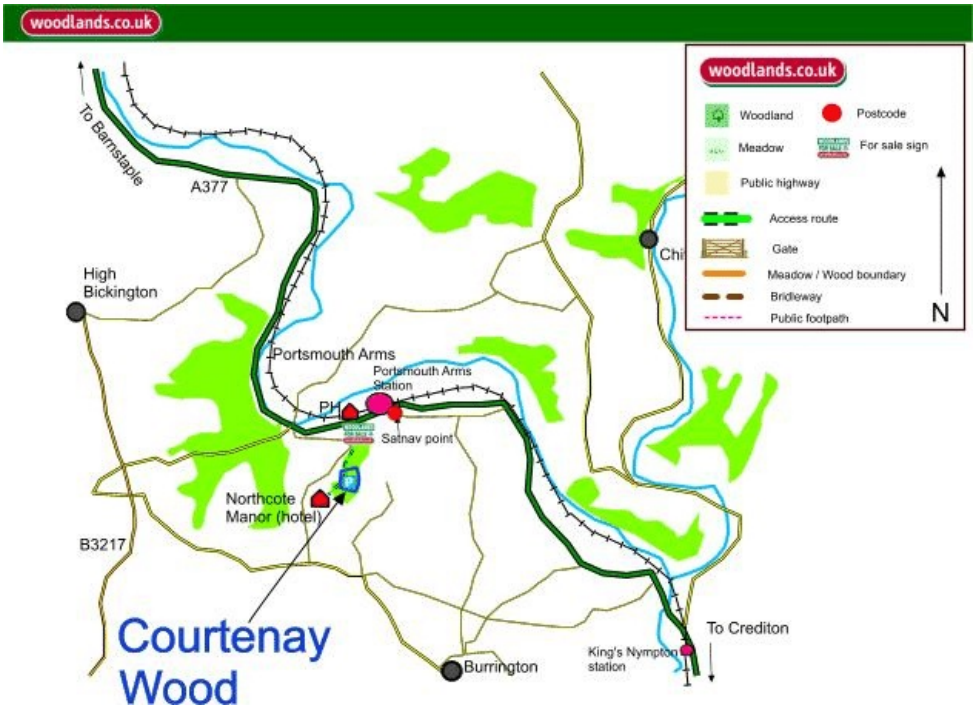
The northern boundary is partly a line of posts and partly a small stream.

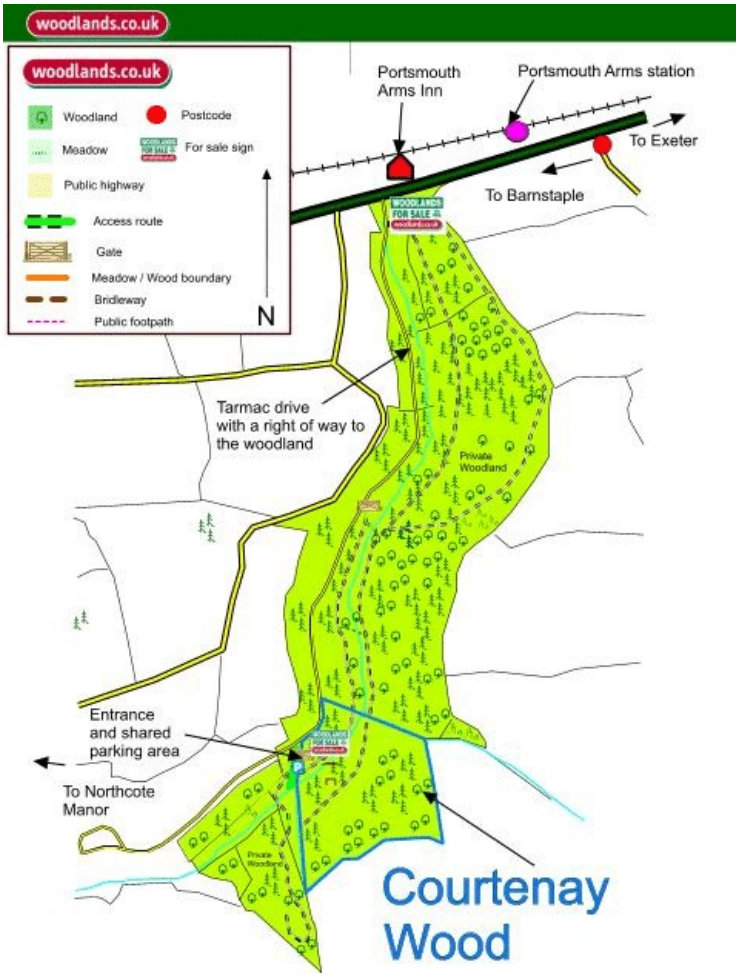
The eastern boundary is an old hedge bank along a meadow edge.

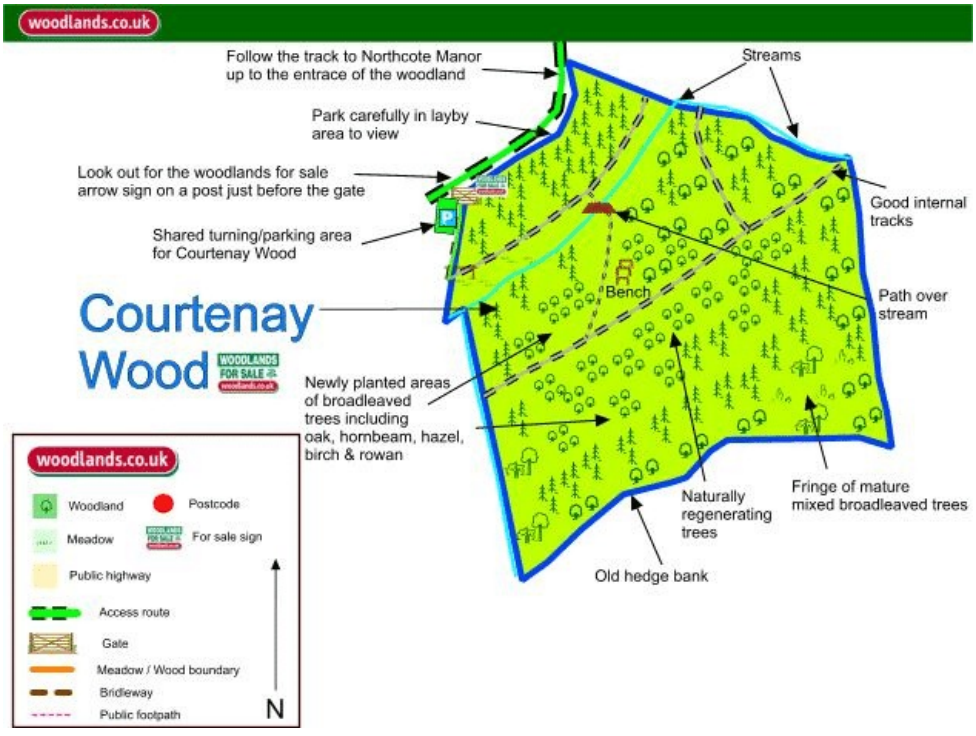
The southern boundary is indicated by a line of posts.

The western boundary is along the edge of the tarmac drive and shared access track/ parking area.









Our regional managers are often out working in our woodlands, so if you email an offer and want to be sure it has been received, please phone our manager on his or her mobile phone. The first offer at the stated price which is accepted, whether by phone or email, has priority.

Please take care when viewing as the great outdoors can contain unexpected hazards and woodlands are no exception. You should exercise common sense and caution, such as wearing appropriate footwear and avoiding visiting during high winds.

All woodlands are sold at a fixed price, and include free membership of the Small Woodland Owners Group and the Royal Forestry Society, as well as £300 towards paying for a course (or courses) to help with managing and enjoying your woodland.

These particulars are for guidance only and, though believed to be correct, do not form part of any contract. Woodland Investment Management Ltd hereby give notice under section 21 of the Estate Agents Act 1979 of their interest in the land being sold.