



Charlton Beeches

Management Plan 2013-2018

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THE WOODLAND TRUST

INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations. Please either consult The Woodland Trust website www.woodlandtrust.org.uk or contact the Woodland Trust (wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland. Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

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

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

In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open-ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential to generate income from our estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we allow our woods to be used to support local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
- 10 Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site - their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

1.0 SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Charlton Beeches
Location:	Charlton Marshall
Grid reference:	ST897040, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 195
Area:	0.73 hectares (1.80 acres)
Designations:	Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This is a small, broadleaf woodland set among housing in the village of Charlton Marshall. It is now recognisable by a few enormous beech along with smaller beech, sycamore, a few ash, horse chestnut and yew trees. The wood is bounded by a disused railway line, two housing estates and a minor public road. It is freely accessible to passing walkers and several paths weave through the wood, connecting the housing estates with the road and railway.

2.2 Extended Description

Charlton Beeches is 0.72ha, mixed broadleaf woodland situated amongst housing in the village of Charlton Marshall, just off the A350 south of Blandford Forum. The wood was gifted to the Trust in 1981 and is now characterised by a few enormous beech. Smaller beech and sycamore dominate the majority of the canopy with a few ash, horse chestnut and a considerable amount of yew. The stand contains a mixed under storey and some standing dead elm. Triangular in shape, the wood is bounded by a disused railway line, two housing estates and a minor public road.

Being in such close proximity to housing, the wood is freely accessible to passing walkers. In fact many houses back directly onto the wood, promoting tree safety as an important issue. Litter, dumping, fires and vandalism are all fairly common and can be a constant problem. Several paths weave through the wood, connecting the housing estates with the road and railway. Management access is directly off the public highway.

Charlton Beeches is just outside the Cranbourne Chase AONB and the whole site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (C1). The wood was once part of Charlton House and the wood's recognisable shape can clearly be seen on maps dating back to 1891.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Parking is limited but a small amount of space is available on the roadside. There are three access points - via the housing estate, off the railway banking and the main access directly off the road.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Charlton Beeches will be managed as native mixed broadleaf woodland . Continuous cover management will provide a mature canopy and at the same time allow young trees and regeneration to develop.

The paths through the wood will be kept open and maintained in accordance with the level of use. The few large, attractive beech, which provide a characteristic woodland feature, should be retained for as long as possible in their current state, dependant on tree safety issues. The younger beech in the stand will one day provide suitable replacements, continuing the history of the land and retaining the local landscape value of the wood.

The wood's small size means that wildlife value may be limited, but as an island of green in amongst housing it may be a haven for some local species. Deadwood, both standing and fallen will be encouraged, providing much needed favourable conditions for woodland wildlife.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

5.1 Informal Public Access

Description

A network of short paths around the wood join up the three access points. It provides a small green link between the housing estates and the highway. The disused railway line running along the south-western boundary is also a Sustrans cycle route.

Significance

This small woodland is well used by many locals, principally dog walkers and children

Opportunities & Constraints

The wood is commonly used by local children which can lead to littering and vandalism. Dumping and burning of garden rubbish is also a problem. Opportunity to remove dead elm from boundaries and reduce tree safety risk.

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland and paths will remain open to the public for quiet informal recreation predominantly by locals from the surrounding estates. It will be maintained in accordance with the level of use.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

The wood is welcoming and safe for use by locals, paths and entrances will be maintained at current levels consistent with access category B. Tree safety survey and any necessary works carried out annually to ensure all boundaries are safe and mature beech are in a healthy condition.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

Mixed woodland mostly replanted in the 1980's with notable very large, mature beech trees, two near the western boundary and one at the very eastern tip of the wood. They are all at least 150 years old and currently appear to be in a healthy condition. There are occasional garden escapees and the two areas of laurel have been subject to control, but have not been eradicated.

Significance

The huge trees have clearly been an important feature in the surrounding area for many years and is clearly the reason behind the name of the wood. Other mature beech can be found nearby and it should be important to continue this theme and constantly retain an element of beech in the wood.

Opportunities & Constraints

Large beech can present a serious tree safety concern as they mature and they will require careful annual monitoring.

Opportunity to conserve these trees for many years to come and to ensure younger beech trees are establishing in order to act as a suitable replacement and continue the landscape tradition. Laurel control should continue to prevent it dominating the increasingly shady understorey

Factors Causing Change

Squirrel Damage

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland is attractive and still locally prominent. The existing mature beech should last for several decades yet and should be preserved in order to do so.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

Necessary tree safety works on mature beech

Laurel control to prevent spread and eradicate if practical. Take action if cover exceeds 5% of site area

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
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APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	0.72	Beech	1945	High forest	People issues (+tve & -tve), Services & wayleaves	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Tree Preservation Order

The main features in this small urban woodland are the few over-mature beech. Two huge specimens are located near the road and railway entrances. Some time in the past one such beech has been felled or windblown, now providing a large deadwood habitat. Typically the wood is made up of beech and sycamore with a varying age range, mainly 35 - 50 years. Ash and yew are the other principle species but field maple, holly, lime and cherry are also noticeable inclusions. Significant amounts of dead elm remain standing throughout the stand, contributing to the main tree safety concern around the boundaries. Natural regeneration is frequent; beech, holly, sycamore and especially ash are doing well. A small amount of hawthorn, elder and some mixed aged hazel contribute to the scrubby understorey. There are two areas of laurel persisting. Wooden fences make up the housing and railway boundaries and a mature sycamore, hawthorn and field maple hedge occupies the north-western roadside boundary. This has been recently laid. A network of paths weaves through the wood joining up each entrance. A sunken path with trees arching over runs parallel to the northern fringe. An underground water pipe cuts through the site and a low voltage overhead line touches the branches of the roadside hedge.

GLOSSARY

Ancient Woodland

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

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

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

Ancient Woodland Site

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

Beating Up

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

Broadleaf

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

Canopy

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

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

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

Conifer

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

Continuous Cover forestry

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

Coppice

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

Exotic (non-native) Species

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

Field Layer

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

Group Fell

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

Long Term Retention

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

Minimum Intervention

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

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

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

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

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

Origin & Provenance

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

Re-Stocking

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

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

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

Sub-Compartment

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

Thinning

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

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

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

Weeding

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

Windblow/Windthrow

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