



Ash & Luckhurst Wood

Management Plan 2016-2021

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Ash & Luckhurst Wood
Location:	Stone in Oxney
Grid reference:	TQ932277, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 189
Area:	2.15 hectares (5.31 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Seven miles north of Rye, Ash Plantation and Luckhurst Wood are two separate woodlands about 275 yards apart known as Ash and Luckhurst Wood. It comprises ash as the predominant species, together with oak, hazel, hornbeam, field maple and hawthorn. There are six entrances, three with stiles, and paths with permissive access run the whole length of both woods but the ground, which slopes gently in places, may be muddy and slippery when wet. There is no parking at the wood.

2.2 Extended Description

Ash Plantation and Luckhurst Wood, known as Ash and Luckhurst Wood, are 2 separate woodlands approximately 250 metres apart totalling 2.1 hectares surrounded by agricultural fields. This wood is situated on the 'Isle of Oxney', a raised area within the River Rother valley on the edge of the Romney Marsh on the Kent and East Sussex border, and within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Woodland Trust acquired this wood in 1986.

Luckhurst Wood is a semi natural ancient woodland which has been actively coppiced in the past with ash as the predominate species, along with hornbeam, hazel, field maple and hawthorn. It also has a rich ground flora typical of an ash-field maple woodland or National Vegetation Classification (NVC) 8a, with species present like creeping buttercup, forget-me-not, early purple orchid, thistle, common bird's-foot-trefoil, common centaury, dock, bramble, primrose, bugle, bluebell, ragged robin, willow herb with common rush and pendulous sedge.

Ash Plantation is recorded as secondary woodland although has an ancient woodland type ground flora dominated by bluebell and dog's mercury, primrose, yellow archangel, ground ivy, hogweed, bramble and nettle. The most noticeable veteran trees are found beside the sunken track through Ash Plantation which has a line of mature oak trees on its western side.

Paths with permissive access run through the entire length of both woodlands, from which Public Rights of Ways can be joined.

Ash and Luckhurst Wood is best reached along the track which leads into Ash Plantation at its northern end past the house called Luckhurst. From Ash Plantation, Luckhurst Wood can be reached by crossing over the small stream at the southern tip of Ash Plantation and then walking along the field headland to Luckhurst Wood.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General location:

Ash and Luckhurst Wood is situated approximately 1.5 miles west of Stone in Oxney, and approximately 7 miles north from the centre of Rye.

From Stone in Oxney, Ash and Luckhurst Wood can be reached by road or Public Footpath.

By road from Stone in Oxney: follow Catts Hill north and at the road junction at the north end of the village take Lower Road westwards. Continue for approximately 0.25 mile and turn left onto a stone track with the house name of Luckhurst. Continue for 150 metres and pass over the stile situated on the bend before you arrive at the property called Luckhurst. Continue along the path beside a pond, and Ash and Luckhurst Wood will be found shortly after our sign.

By Public Footpath (PRW) from Stone in Oxney: Take PRW heading northwest from the junction of The Street and Catts Hill. Follow this route and when it divides either route will take you to Ash and Luckhurst Wood, approximately 0.3 mile from Stone in Oxney. For more information on PRW's in Kent, look at "Explore Kent" found on the main Kent County Council website.

General overview of paths & entrances:

Entrances: There are 6 entrances to Ash and Luckhurst Wood, three of which have stiles. The majority of the paths are unmodified grass and earth surface, which can get slippery and muddy when wet. The ground is flat in Ash Plantation but is gently sloping down from Luckhurst Wood to the south.

Parking:

Parking of cars is not available at this wood.

Public Transport:

The nearest bus stop: The Crown in Stone in Oxney. There are bus links to Rye via Wittersham (The Stocks). This is approximately 1.5 miles away from Ash and Luckhurst Wood by public road or 0.3 mile by PRW - see General Location above.

The nearest train station: Rye station which is on the Ashford - Hastings line. Rye station is approximately 7 miles from Ash and Luckhurst Wood along the public roads.

This information is from Traveline website as at October 2016. Further information about public transport is available from Traveline - www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0871 200 22 33.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Over the next 50 years, Ash and Luckhurst Wood will be allowed to grow and develop naturally, as a refuge for wildlife. This will be achieved through minimum management intervention, allowing deadwood to accumulate, old trees to remain and continue to develop deadwood features and young trees to regenerate where there are losses. Ash will probably not be one of the dominant species due to ash dieback fungus causing a decline in individual ash trees and then these trees eventually dying due to other fungal infection. Ash is likely to be replaced by other species already on site such as field maple, hornbeam, hawthorn and aspen. Sycamore is not present on site, but could be a potential replacement species. Due to this threat, tree safety felling during the period 2015-2025 may well be required.

Low key public access will continue to be provided at a level appropriate for this small quiet woodland.

Statutory obligations will continue to be met with respect to managing tree safety along the wayleave boundary.

Regular woodland condition monitoring will occur to record any changes which are noted within this woodland habitat.

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

Description
Significance
Opportunities & Constraints
Factors Causing Change
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

Significance

Opportunities & Constraints

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

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

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	0.85	Ash	1900	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access to the site		Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Known as Ash Plantation, it contains principally ash with small quantities of hornbeam, field maple, hawthorn, hazel with elder confined mostly along the stream edge. A stream flows in a northerly direction along its eastern boundary. The northern half was thinned in 2004 to store the coppice, and the southern part was coppiced in 1999. It is classified as a secondary woodland.</p>							
2a	1.29	Ash	1900	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access to the site		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Known as Luckhurst wood, it contains predominately ash with hornbeam, field maple, hazel and hawthorn. A stream flows in a northerly direction along its western boundary in a pronounced ditch. This ditch is in places up to 2.5 m deep and is fringed by hornbeam, field maple, ash, hawthorn and oak. Luckurst Wood was last coppiced between 1997 and 1999. It is classified as an ancient semi natural woodland.</p>							

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.