



Gillham's Wood

Management Plan 2015-2020

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Gillham's Wood
Location:	Linchmere
Grid reference:	SU864321, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 186
Area:	7.92 hectares (19.57 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This wood is accessed via a small private road (Gillham's Lane) but can also be accessed by a public footpath and a bridleway. It is well worth the effort to get there and has a good network of paths within it. It was badly affected by the storms of 1987 but has recovered well and is an attractive place to visit. There is a good network of public footpaths in the area linking this wood to others that are also worth a visit.

2.2 Extended Description

Acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1992 Gillham's Wood is situated between Liphook (Hampshire) and Haselmere (Surrey), very close to the Hampshire, West Sussex and Surrey county boundaries. The site extends to 8 hectares and occupies the northern slopes of acidic sandstone ridge overlying clay within an intimate landscape of open common land, equestrian fields and large wooded gardens of the substantial surrounding dwellings.

The wood lies in a tranquil location off a minor private road (Gillham's Lane) accessed from the Liphook Road (B2131). One public bridleway and one public footpath cross the site from east to west in compartment 3a. The woodland has a very good network of well maintained permissive and public paths offering access to all parts of the site, however the only public access is along the rights of way network. For this reason the level of public use is relatively low and is mainly used by locals who live within walking distance. The northern boundary is a railway line.

Gillham's Wood was severely damaged in the storms of 1987 and 1990 during which significant numbers of mature oak and beech were blown. Most of the timber was salvaged at the time although significant quantities of standing and lying deadwood remain as testimonies to these dramatic events. Following clearance of the timber, profuse birch natural regeneration established in the canopy gaps and now forms dense thickets. Gillham's Wood is a visually diverse woodland due to the combination of species, interesting terrain and the mix of age-classes now present. The understorey is well developed due to the high levels of side light and the field layer is dominated by dense carpets of bracken with small colonies of heather on the drier sandy plateau in the south, possibly a remnant of the former "Moor".

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Gillham's Wood is located near Hammer on the western edge of Haslemere in south Surrey. The wood is accessible off Gilham's lane (from Liphook Road B2131) in 2 places via kissing gates. There are 3 other entrances into the wood, at points where a public footpath and bridleway cross the wood (east to west): 2 of these are on the west side of the wood and one on the east. Entrances on the west side have narrow entrances whereas the entrance on the east is wide and unimpeded. In addition to the 2 public rights of way there are a network of permissive paths which enable circular walks around the wood. All paths are unsurfaced and some of the terrain is quite steep in places with flights of steps to traverse. There is no official parking at the wood and Gilham's Lane is a private road which makes roadside parking difficult; there is also no pavement along the road. The nearest public car-park is off Weydown Road in Haslemere, which is approx 2 miles away.

The nearest public toilets are approx 2 miles away in Haslemere, on Weyhill. The toilets have disabled facilities which can be used with a RADAR key, but no baby changing. The nearest bus stop is at Hammer Bottom, at the junction of Hammer Lane and Sandy Lane. From here the wood is a short 10-15 mins walk by following Sandy lane until it meets the B2131, then turning right on to this road. Take the first right onto Gilham's Lane and the first entrance to the wood is approx 200m on the right.

This information was gathered on 18th August 2007.

For further information about public transport please contact Traveline - www.traveline.org.uk Tel: 0870 6082608

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In 50 years time Gillham's wood will be a healthy, thriving woodland with a good range of native trees from saplings to veterans. The woodland will have a good mixture of high forest, understorey, woodland edge and more open areas. There won't be any non-native invasive species present and there will be a good level of both standing and fallen deadwood.

The bracken will not be allowed to dominate the field layer, ensuring that a mixture of woodland and heathland plants are able to thrive and that natural regeneration of native trees is facilitated. Deer and rabbits will be maintained at levels that will not negatively impact on natural regeneration.

The woodland will contribute to a resilient landscape which is well wooded with interconnected semi-natural habitats allowing the free movement of wildlife.

The network of public and permissive paths will be maintained and enhanced to suit the local demand which is currently classed as Grade C - low usage.

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 Natural Secondary Woodland

Description

A well developed secondary woodland on a northerly aspect site with an acid, dry heathy character on the southern plateau, well drained soils on the slopes with damper conditions in the low-lying north. Vigorous natural birch regeneration following the 1987 & 1990 storms, specimen conifers of European larch and western hemlock as well as mature oak, beech and sweet chestnut standards dating from the 1900's add visual interest. Note: approximately 1/3 of the woodland (the sloping central area) is designated as ancient semi-natural woodland . This is not easily distinguished on the ground.

Significance

Secondary woodland can be a very valuable habitat, supporting a large range of species. The value of Gillham's Wood lies in the fact that it is a very well developed secondary woodland with a good species mix, a well developed understorey and improving age-class diversity, significant quantities of standing and lying dead wood habitat and areas of open ground.

Opportunities & Constraints

The terrain with a steep north facing slope is the primary constraint to management as vehicular access to the north is not possible except in the very driest conditions. Opportunities exist for the biodiversity potential of this site to increase now that the canopy has been opened up and a vertical structure is developing.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive Rhododendron, bracken encroachment, deer & rabbits

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The aim is to maintain a woodland structure of mixed broadleaved species. There will be a good variety of native broadleaved species with a range of ages providing structural diversity. Any future management interventions should always favour native species over exotics and the site will be free of non-native invasive species.

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

To increase structural diversity the following works will be completed within the next 5 years.

- Rideside coppicing along approximately 300m of track (scalloping edges from 5 - 15m width) Brash will be left on outer edge to form a dead hedge (increasing deadwood habitat).
- All rhododendron (aprox 0.5 hectares) will have been cut and any regeneration sprayed with herbicide. It will have been eradicated from the site by end of this plan period.
- Holly will be monitored and if it becomes invasive it will be thinned - no more than 10% of the total area of woodland will be dominated by holly.
- A further Woodland Condition Assessment will be undertaken in 2019 and the level of bracken will be assessed. If it is inhibiting ground flora and native tree regeneration a suitable management regime will be incorporated into the next work programme.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

Gillham's Wood is used mainly by local walkers and horse riders (on the bridleway). A good network of permissive and public paths is in place and maintained in line with a Category C access site: Low usage sites where we do maintain paths

Significance

Gillham's Wood provides a wide variety of contrasting habitat types for visitors, from the heathy southern plateau to the steep slopes with dense holly and the magnificent towering oak, beech and specimen conifers in the north. It is visually a very attractive woodland.

Opportunities & Constraints

The site's location off a minor private road with limited off-street parking will restrict visitor numbers from further afield. The steep slopes also make for difficult walking in order to reach all parts of the site. Horse trespass on the footpaths is an intermittent problem

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Gillham's Wood will continue to have its existing network of public and permissive paths maintained in a safe condition for pedestrian and equestrian visitors (the latter on the bridleway only). There will be no active promotion of the site other than standard Woodland Trust media.

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

Site safety and access will be maintained in line with visitor numbers.

- All paths will be cut once per year (July/August)
- Access infrastructure will be inspected annually and replaced/repared when necessary
- Zone A tree inspections will be undertaken annually and zone B inspections undertaken every 2 years. Any remedial work will be completed within the designated time scales.

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	1.23	Birch (downy/silver)	1987	High forest	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc		
<p>This compartment forms a band along the eastern edge of the woodland and suffered the worst of the storm damage in 1987. The higher canopy comprises scattered individual stems of beech, oak and yew with significant quantities of standing dead wood and natural pollards. The balance of the tree component is made up of very dense natural regeneration which is dominated (95%) by birch but also includes holly, gorse, rhododendron, sweet chestnut and rowan. In the few remaining open pockets bracken, bramble, hazel, thistle and nettle can be found.</p>							
2a	4.35	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc		
<p>This is the largest compartment and stretches from the level plateau in the south, through the steep, north facing slope to the public bridleway which forms the northern boundary with compartment 3a. The present stands comprise of largely oak high forest (70%) with beech, birch and sweet chestnut all dating from the 1900s making up the balance. Most of this area except for the eastern section, now dominated by birch regeneration, survived the storms which devastated neighbouring 1a. The understorey includes hazel, birch, elder, rhododendron, gorse, rowan, sweet chestnut and holly which is very dense in the west. The ground flora includes bramble, nettle, dock, honeysuckle, goldilocks, forget-me-not, heather and wood sorrel. The western boundary is a prominent wood bank.</p>							
3a	2.43	Oak (pedunculate)	1900	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site		
<p>Despite the relatively sheltered location at the foot of a steep valley with deep soils, this compartment also suffered storm damage in the west with a consequent broken and open canopy. The remaining trees of oak (70%) and beech (10%) dating from the 1900s are of magnificent stature and the canopy gaps are being colonised by bracken, birch and some remnant rhododendron. Most of the windblown trees appear to be sweet chestnut, many of which have been left in situ to leave valuable deadwood habitat whilst others have continued to grow despite their upturned root plates. Specimen conifers of European larch and western hemlock add visual interest. An abandoned structure is in the north-eastern corner.</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.