



Linnets Wood

Management Plan 2014-2019

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Linnets Wood
Location:	Ugley Green
Grid reference:	TL518272, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 167
Area:	4.80 hectares (11.86 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A small, maturing mixed woodland. Local people were involved in the development of the wood and continue to be interested in its management. Much of the planting was done under the Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' project. The wood provides an interesting visual contrast to the surrounding agricultural land.

2.2 Extended Description

Linnets Wood is a small, maturing mixed woodland in the village of Ugley, a few miles north of Stansted. It was planted in three phases - the first two under Essex County Council's Landscape Conservation Programme in 1973 and 1988, and the latter in 1998 as part of the Woodland Trust's 'Woods on your Doorstep' (WOYD) project. The majority of the wood comprises mixed native broadleaves such as oak, ash, hornbeam and wild cherry, all establishing very well.

The oldest part of the wood contains a notable proportion of Scots and Corsican pine. This section of the wood was given to the Trust by the Trustees of the late Rosalind 'Linnet' Latham's will in 1992. Her family are well known and respected locally. Following the death of her husband in 1997, the field which was most recently planted under WOYD was gifted to the Trust.

Local people were involved in the woodland creation from the outset - with public events having been well supported. Questionnaires were sent out to many households seeking people's input and views, which are reflected in the new woodland design. A yew tree was planted in the centre of the WOYD as the chosen Millennium Feature.

The surrounding agricultural landscape comprises a patchwork of huge arable fields stitched together with sparse hedgerows and copses producing an open but wooded feel. The undulating countryside is incised by small river valleys with occasional pasture and willow pollards. Soils are typically variable with chalky boulder clays common on the Essex plateaux.

There are two access points for both public and management - via 12ft field gates and kissing gates in the west and south of the site with further formal public access to the north. A number of informal access points have been established off the public footpath to the east of the site and to the south at the western end of the cottages on Pound Lane.

The Key Features for the site are:

Informal Public Access

Secondary Woodland

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Linnets Wood lies a few miles north of Stansted, a semi rural landscape characterised by numerous small towns and villages. There are no public footpaths within the site (one run along the eastern boundary)but a small network of paths weave through the wood with kissing gate entrances off the highway on the east and south boundaries. The site is flat and ground conditions are normally very good but can be seasonally wet and muddy in places.

Nearest car park: No car parks within 4 miles but limited parking easily available adjacent to the site or nearby.

Nearest toilet: Approximately 5 miles away at Tesco supermarket - Bishops Park Centre, Bishops Stortford. Baby changing facilities and disabled toilet are available in the main block. Open Mon-Sat 24 hours, Sun 10am - 4pm.

Nearest railway station: Elsenham - 1.5 miles away along quiet country roads.

Nearest bus stop: On Cambridge Road, 150m from western entrance along quiet country road without pavement.

Information from National Rail and Traveline websites as at Sept 2014.

Further information about public transport is available from www.nationalrail.co.uk or www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2 608.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long term vision at Linnets Wood is for attractive, mature and predominantly native broadleaf woodland. A healthy resilient woodland with a canopy of trees containing a mix of ages and structures and with an understorey of woodland shrubs, integrating with the hedges and open space habitats. The coniferous element in the older stand has been mechanically reduced in the past and will continue to be reduced where possible through natural wastage and processes.

Located in an attractive village where locals take a keen interest, Linnets Wood will be managed as an important open access area where the public are welcome. The signs and well-kept paths will all encourage public interest and participation in the woodland; fulfilling the Trust's corporate objective of increasing people's awareness and enjoyment of woodland.

The rides and paths will be kept open and mowed as necessary to provide appropriate access and valuable ride side habitats. The existing structural diversity on site as well as many wood edge habitats are important for nesting birds, invertebrates and woodland/grassland flora and fauna and these will be maintained.

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 well used wood easily accessible from the village of Ugley. Several access points connect with mown rides and woodland paths, providing a pleasant stroll for many villagers. The attractive central glade provides added interest and an ideal resting place.

Significance

Informal public access to Linnets Wood raises people's awareness and enjoyment of woodland, fulfilling one of the Trust's key objectives.

It compliments the existing public rights of way network, adds interest to the village of Ugley and provides an excellent place for locals to walk and enjoy quiet recreation.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity to retain the involvement and interest of the local community by making the site interesting, attractive and easy to visit for a wide range of people.

Factors Causing Change

Vandalism/litter - although rare has occasionally taken place.

Green waste dumping is taking place just off Pound Lane, to the immediate east of the Pound Lane cottages. To prevent this fencing will be required.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Woodland that contains a network of well-maintained attractive paths and an open central glade. The wood will remain open to the public for quiet informal recreation predominantly by locals from Ugley.

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

Operational Objective:

Easily accessible, attractive, well-maintained and safe woodland that a wide range of public frequently enjoy. Entrances, facilities and path network are appropriate for level and type of use and in line with access category B.

Work Programme:

Cut all paths to maintain a minimum width of 1.5m and maintain the existing central glade area. Cuts to take place twice a year, along with cleaning and maintenance of signs.

Carry out tree safety inspection of zones A & B every 2 years and arboricultural work as required. Damaged fences, gates and signage will be replaced as and when necessary. Current minor damage (September 2014) will be undertaken in early 2015.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

The three phases of planting throughout the site has created attractive, diverse, uneven-aged woodland, the oldest with a significant but reduced coniferous element. The mature boundary hedges, open areas and early successional woodland provide a tremendous variety of existing and potential woodland habitats.

Significance

Early successional woodland with a diverse structure can help sustain and enhance biodiversity, fulfilling one of the Trust's key objectives.

It is an important area of woodland for the people of Ugley Green and relations of the donor are keen and generous supporters of the Trust.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity to enhance an attractive and developing native broadleaved woodland in an area where such habitats have not been common in recent times. The reduced percentage of conifers will promote broadleaf regeneration and help break up the stand structure. It will become more aesthetically pleasing and increase biodiversity.

Constraints:

Some rabbit damage to trees in cmpt 1c will require on-going monitoring to see if the historic damage is still affecting the trees.

Green waste dumping is taking place just off Pound Lane, to the immediate east of the Pound Lane cottages. To prevent this fencing will be required.

Factors Causing Change

Ash Die Back is suspected on site and monitoring of it's impact will be required.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Healthy, mature, attractive and species diverse native broadleaf woodland of varying structure and habitats. A mixture of trees, woody shrubs and tall-herb communities, all integrating with the open space and associated flora and fauna to produce an excellent woodland habitat.

A minor proportion of specimen Scots pine will be retained into the long term, but overall the wood will be predominantly broadleaved. Many of the rides will be open and structured to maximise the benefits of woodland edge habitat in the wood.

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

Operational Objective:

To ensure successful establishment and maturity of attractive and structurally diverse secondary woodland that is positively integrating into the existing habitats and landscape.

Work Programme:

To ensure the resilience of the woodland additional monitoring will be undertaken and includes: the level and extent of natural regeneration, impacts of Ash Die Back, level and extent of both the shrub layer/ground flora and any on-going impact from historic rabbit damage.

Fencing to prevent on-going green waste dumping will be installed in 2015.

During this plan period the majority of the larch will be felled to stabilise the mixed stand and reduce the tree safety risk posed by continuous windblow of larch trees. A proportion of the pine (up to 20%) will also be felled to promote the development of healthy broad leaves especially oak and hornbeam.

Approximately 100m of main ride side coppicing will be carried out.

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	1.97	Mixed conifers	1973	High forest		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>Compartment 1a contains an intricate mix of Scots and Corsican pine, larch, hornbeam, oak and wild cherry. It was planted in 1973 under Essex County Council's Landscape Conservation Programme. The stand is well stocked with healthy trees of average form which are maturing into interesting and diverse woodland. A selective thin of approximately 30% of the pine and larch took place in 2010 (priority for removal was given to those trees nearest the woodland edge and/or track sides). Hawthorn hedges make up the external boundaries with arable farmland to the east and rough grassland to the north. A series of paths wind through the trees with links to the public footpath just over the eastern site boundary.</p> <p>A number of veteran trees run along the eastern boundary and although not on site contribute considerably to the landscape and biodiversity value of the wider area.</p>							
1b	0.55	Mixed native broadleaves	1988	High forest	Services & wayleaves	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>A small stand of mixed native broadleaves planted in 1988 under Essex County Council's Landscape Conservation Programme. Species include oak, ash, hornbeam, wild cherry, field maple, and woody shrubs such as guelder rose, dogwood and wayfaring tree. The well established trees integrate nicely with the different aged woodland on either side. An overhead powerline cuts diagonally through the sub-compartment, below which is a 10m unplanted strip.</p>							
1c	2.26	Mixed native broadleaves	1998	High forest		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	

Mixed native broadleaves planted in 1998 under the Woods on your Doorstep (WOYD) scheme. Principle species include oak, ash, hornbeam, wild cherry, field maple and woody shrubs (hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, holly, dog rose and buckthorn).

The trees were planted in sinuous lines at an average of 3m x 3m spacing to give 1100 trees / ha. The open glade in the centre surrounds the Millennium Feature yew tree.

A 10m unplanted strip lies beneath an overhead powerline crossing the site. A roadside hedge forms the external boundary and significant veteran tree can be found off the south west corner boundary and although not on site, contribute considerably to the landscape and biodiversity value of the wider area.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2019	1a	Thin	2.00	25	50

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.