



Whitethorn Wood

Management Plan 2010-2015

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Whitethorn Wood
Location:	Litlington
Grid reference:	TL309415, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 153
Area:	1.33 hectares (3.29 acres)
Designations:	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund, No designations for this site

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Less than twenty years old and planted by volunteers, this wood is beginning to get established despite less than ideal circumstances. The wood provides a contrast to the surrounding intensively managed arable land and is close to two public rights of way.

2.2 Extended Description

A Cambridgeshire woodland fund site created in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District, Cambridgeshire County council and local people. A rectangular wood planted entirely by volunteers on the 3rd of December 1994. The wood was arable field that was reseeded with grass mix prior to planting.

Because of the exposed situation, dry summers and poor chalk soils on the low rolling chalk land the planting has struggled to develop over the last 15 years, there have been numerous replacement of dead trees in the early years but a few of the original planting have now reached 3m in height. There is ample evidence of repeated hare browsing and wind damage on the young trees. In 2000 a new hedge was planted along the western edge of the wood to try and create a windbreak for the rest of the wood and in 2008 the existing hedges were part coppiced and the gaps planted up

The wood abuts two public rights of way, the public byway of Ashwell St to the north and a public footpath to the south. It is 1/2 a mile outside the village of Litlington accessed via Ashwell St or the public footpath. The wood is surrounded on all sides by intensively managed arable land the only semi natural habitat is Ashwell St which as well as having enclosing hedges does have some interesting chalk grassland species in the verges

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Public access is via Ashwell St (Icknield Way) from south of Litlington village. Quite a walk over unsurfaced byway

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

To establish a mixed broadleaved woodland which is to be managed as high forest, the internal paths and glades to be maintained by mowing and ride edge coppice.

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

Whitethorn wood was planted up as part of the Trust's Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund project. Local people were involved in the fundraising, design, planting and maintenance. Within walking distance of the village of Litlington it is accessible via a public footpath between Litlington and Ashwell and via Ashwell St a public byway and long distance footpath. There are 450m of paths throughout the site in a figure of eight layout with a small area of open grassland near in the south eastern corner. The wood is used for quiet enjoyment but is a good distance from the village

Significance

The wood was a product of the local communities interest in creating local woodland. There is very little woodland of any kind in the locality with the nearest semi natural woodland 6km away to the north. There is no other woodland open for public access within 8km

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints

Management access for vehicles is difficult as the byway can be muddy in winter
Public access is via the same un-surfaced byway so may be difficult for the less able
It is very small and has been slow to develop due to the soils and exposed position
Very exposed, small site reducing biodiversity opportunities

Opportunities

The wood paths link in with parish public rights of way system
It is adjacent to the long distance foot path Icknield Way.

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Open safe access that links into the public rights of way network and to provide some open space for informal recreation

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

To maintain site as an area of public open access, with ride system cut to a minimum of 2m to allow unhindered access for the public, areas of open space are not allowed to scrub up with natural regeneration. Entrances kept in a presentable and tidy condition.

Work Programme - Cut paths September.

5.2 New Native Woodland

Description

Secondary woodland which has struggled to develop over 90% of its planted area, there has been much replacement of dead trees. Few of the originally planted trees have survived although ash seems to have fared better than most of the other species. Despite this slow start the wood is still in its early stages and already does provide biodiversity in a locality that is by and large intensively managed arable farmland. The wood abuts the ancient Icknield way green lane on whose wide verges chalk grassland does still survive.

Significance

In a locality with little semi natural habitat the wood helps protect the species that had hung on in the scrub habitat of Ashwell ST. Cambridgeshire is one of the least wooded counties in England and this part of Cambridgeshire is one of the least wooded districts in the county

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints - It's a very small area which still has intensive arable management on three sides. The soil and wind exposure and predation by deer and hare are a constant stress on the young trees
 Opportunities - The hedges grasslands and scrub of Ashwell St, which forms the northern boundary already, contain small populations of notable plants and animals which could move into the new woodland.

Factors Causing Change

Deer Damage, Frequent Wind Damage

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Broadleaved woodland with a variety of species and ages of trees. The woodland to include Old and over mature, dead wood lying and fallen as well as young seedlings and saplings and all ages in between. The wood to include some open space and edge habitat

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

The woodland area will be placed under minimal intervention apart from any health and safety issues that could arise pose a threat to public safety.

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	1.30	Ash	1994	High forest		Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund

This compartment comprises the whole of the site. A new native woodland planted in 1994 a total of 1225 trees were planted at a density of 1100 per hectare in a random pattern with beech and ash in groups of 20-30 the species mix is as follows: - 40% beech, 30% ash, 10% field maple, 10 % cherry and small leaved lime, with 10% shrubs including hazel, wayfaring tree, hazel and crab apple planted in ride edges, growth has been generally poor..There is a figure of eight path and glade system included in the design and three public entrances. Hedges border the site on three sides; the northern boundary is a dense un-managed hedge marking the edge of the ancient byway of Ashwell St part of the old Icknield way. The open western boundary was planted up with a thick hedge in 2000.The soil is thin chalk previously arable that was grass seeded prior to planting. The wood has an exposed position having little respite from the prevailing wind.

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.