



Peppard 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Peppard Wood
Location:	Rotherfield Peppard
Grid reference:	SU696818, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 174
Area:	5.96 hectares (14.73 acres)
Designations:	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A young woodland that has been planted on the site of a former hospital and mirrors the local beech woods. The local community was involved in the design and some of the mature trees that were on the hospital site have been retained. These provide a contrast with the more newly planted trees and some areas have been left unplanted to create parkland. This wood links with Kingwood Common and the woods beyond.

2.2 Extended Description

Peppard Wood is located in the village of Rotherfield Peppard, South Oxfordshire. The site was acquired by The Woodland Trust in 1994 and forms part of the grounds of the former Peppard hospital. The land was set aside for woodland creation as part of a planning agreement to develop the housing estate next to the wood.

This 6 hectare wood was planted in 1996 with a mixture of native broadleaves such as beech, oak, birch and wild cherry. The local community were involved in the design of the wood, which contains an open grassy glade in the centre. The wood also contains a number of mature specimen trees, such as Corsican pine and lime, which were growing in the former hospital grounds. There is also an old orchard containing apple and plum trees.

The wood has a good network of pedestrian paths through it and is well used by the local community.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Getting there: Buses from Woodcote to Henley-on-Thames stop at Peppard Common (approx. 1.5miles away) and Sonning Common (approx 2 miles away) after which some walking by road will be needed.

Facilities: Parking close to the site is difficult, as there is no public car park nearby, but roadside parking may be possible away from the private roads in Rotherfield Peppard. There are no public footpaths but there is a network of permissive paths. Entrance into the site is via squeeze gaps off Wyfold Lane and Dove Lane. The site is flat with no steep slopes, but all paths are un-surfaced. There is a good network of managed paths.

Public conveniences: Sonning Common village hall (approx. 2 miles away) has toilets that are normally open to the public. The village hall is at the junction of Woodlands road and Wood Lane.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline - www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0871 200 22 33 .

All distances are approximate.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The wood will contain a good variety of native broadleaved species such as oak, beech and birch. An open grassy glade will continue to be managed in the centre of the wood and there will also be open and sunny rides. The woodland edge next to the rides and glade will be of a lower growing 'shrubby' nature. The older mature trees will be allowed to age naturally and grow on to become veterans, if they survive.

The Woodland Trust has given Peppard Wood a category B for access provision which translates to a moderate usage site with 5 - 15 people using one entrance per day. Informal public access will therefore remain in perpetuity, through a managed path network. Entrances will be clearly signed and made welcoming, and the site will be made as safe as practicable for visitors. As the site is mainly used by local people the information for visitors will be relatively low key.

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 Secondary Woodland

Description

The majority of the wood was planted in 1996 with a mixture of native broadleaved trees such as oak, beech, cherry, field maple, ash, and hazel. Scattered throughout the site are several dozen mature trees which are part of the landscaping of the former hospital grounds, and these include Scots pine, lime, oak and silver birch. There is also the remnant of an orchard with 15-20 old apple and plum trees. The fruit trees have not been pruned or managed traditionally for many years. The wood also contains an element of open grassland in the centre (approximately 15% of the area) which was part of the original design plan to maintain views over the surrounding landscape.

Significance

The wood adjoins other woodland in the surrounding landscape, which offers the possibility of species migration.

Opportunities & Constraints

The woodland edge of the open ground could be enhanced ecologically by allowing scrub/young trees to develop on its margins.

Factors Causing Change

The loss of ash from the wood in the near future, due to 'ash dieback' (although the percentage of ash in the wood is low overall)
 The possibility of increased deer numbers and browsing affecting natural regeneration of trees in the future.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

As the wood matures it will continue to contain a good mixture of native broadleaves such as oak, birch and beech, which may require some silvicultural intervention in the future. The small component of ash in the wood is likely to succumb to the threat of 'ash dieback' disease. The deadwood habitat will become enhanced overtime as some trees die through natural competition or disease. An element of open ground (a central glade and wide rides) will be retained and managed on the site and this will cover approximately 1.5ha of the site area. Younger woody growth will be encouraged on the edges of the open ground. The older pre-plantation trees will be retained for as long as possible with the hope that some may become veterans if they survive. The small remnant orchard will also be retained and competition from neighbouring tree growth will be managed.

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

During this plan period the short term objective is to encourage more structural diversity in the woodland and to conserve the special features and habitats present. This will be achieved by:

- Mowing the central glade (approx. 1ha in size) annually to keep it open and grassy.
- Allowing scrub to naturally develop on the margins of the glade, covering an area no greater than 0.25ha.
- Carrying out monitoring in 2017 to ensure that the old orchard trees are not overtopped or threatened by any other younger ones. Resulting work will be undertaken, as required.
- Carrying out monitoring to determine any risks to the wood, eg from tree diseases or deer browsing. An informal monitoring visit is scheduled for 2016 and a more thorough woodland condition assessment will be undertaken in 2019.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

The wood has a network of approximately 1.5km of permissive paths for pedestrian-only use, and there are 3 main entrances which link to local roads. Open ground in the wood allows good views over the surrounding countryside to the south. There is a community living right next to Peppard wood, and the site is well-used by the people living there.

Significance

The site enriches the local area by providing a publically accessible green space and wildlife area.

Opportunities & Constraints

The wood is very close to many residential properties and there is the opportunity to involve people more greatly in the management of the wood in the future, should there be an interest. The limited parking available at the site means that the wood is unlikely to be used by visitors from further afield.

Factors Causing Change

Antisocial activities such as flytipping and dog fouling could increase in the future.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access for informal and quiet recreation will be maintained in perpetuity. The wood will kept as safe as possible for visitors and there will be a managed network of paths, together with visible and clearly signed entrances.

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

During this plan period the short term objective is to provide low key public access which is safe and enjoyable. This will be achieved by:

- Annual mowing of the main paths (total length of 1.5km).
- Keeping the 3 main entrances to the wood open, ensuring the associated signage is well maintained, and ensuring any infrastructure repairs are carried out.
- Annual tree safety surveys along high risk zones such as roadsides and garden boundaries.

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	3.36	Oak (pedunculate)	1996	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Plantation of mainly oak, birch, beech and wild cherry. The area contains wide rides, some of which follow the lines of service wayleaves. Contains a clump of mature orchard trees (plum & apple) and occasional mature specimen trees.							
1b	1.59	Oak (pedunculate)	1996	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Plantation of mainly oak, birch, beech and wild cherry. The area contains wide rides, some of which follow the lines of service wayleaves. Contains a clump of mature orchard trees (plum & apple) and occasional mature specimen trees.							
2a	1.02	Open ground	1996	Non-wood habitat		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
An area of open ground in the centre of the wood, containing mature specimen trees such as lime and birch.							

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.