



Nine Acre 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Nine Acre Wood
Location:	Haddenham
Grid reference:	TL444722, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 154
Area:	3.69 hectares (9.12 acres)
Designations:	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Nine Acre Wood is home to a great diversity of butterflies and dragonflies, as well as bats and barn owls. With a diversity of habitats, wildlife and great views across the fens, there is plenty to see and do here.

2.2 Extended Description

Nine Acre wood was planted in 1995 mostly by community effort, into a peat-based soil arable field, in the wide shallow valley of the River Great Ouse (Old west River). Mixed broadleaved woodland designed primarily to attract breeding golden oriole; which at the time were breeding a few miles away to the SE. Today, it also provides a much needed habitat for many other more common species of wildlife such as common butterflies and dragonflies. Barn owl is regularly seen in the vicinity and has been known to forage over the wood.

The trees have had immense success since planting with an estimated top height of 15m+ & the poplar is upwards to 20m. There has also been some development in a vertical structure thanks to the carefully planned design which included many shrubs on the ride edges. This is being periodically coppiced/ scalloped by local volunteers to maintain this.

The wood lies at approx 2m ASL (elevationmap.net) and is protected from flooding by the northern barrier bank of the Ouse which is adjacent to the wood boundary.

A public path runs along the top of the bank and a public byways Church Fen Drove connects this path and the wood to the village of Aldreth to the north.

There are good views across the open arable fen landscape, the Ouse Washes SPA is only 1 mile away to the west.

The key features are:

- Planted secondary woodland
- Informal public access

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Public and management access is available from Church Fen Drove which is a by-way open to all traffic - this means that although it is a highway the Local Authority are not obligated to provide a metalled surface. Parking is available next to the wood entrance but the last section of the track can get in very poor condition and so sometimes only suitable for 4x4

Further public access is available from the public footpath running along the outside of the southern boundary of the property, adjacent to the River Ouse.

The paths are level and in good condition but can get very wet.

There are no public toilets in the vicinity

A very limited bus service is available to the village of Aldreth some 2km to the north along Church Fen Drove. For routes and times contact Travel Line on 0871 2002233 or www.traveline.org.uk

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

High Forest:

Managed high forest made up a diverse and resilient mixture of (predominantly) native broadleaf species and exhibiting a range of age classes, including mature and over mature standards as well as naturally regenerated saplings, and everything in between. Deadwood will be retained in situ both standing and fallen, where ever possible and safe.

Public access:

The woodland will be open to the public in perpetuity. The paths, signs and other furniture that allow safe access are to be maintained in good order and in line with standard WT specifications. The wood is primarily for the use and enjoyment of the people of Haddenham and Aldreth and surrounding area. Community involvement has been important in the woods establishment and development; this should be continued in the future.

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

Nine Acre Wood wood was planted up as part of the Trust's Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund project. Local people were involved in the fundraising, design, planting and early maintenance. Today they undertake minor practical task, such as ride edge coppice. Within walking distance of the village of Aldreth it is accessible from Church Fen Drove. There are 1400m of paths throughout the site and small areas of open grassland at the path junctions. The wood is well used for quiet enjoyment

Significance

The wood was very much a product of the local communities interest to create local woodland and has proved a great success. There is very little woodland of any kind in the locality, the nearest woods of any kind are two Woodland Trust WOYD's 10kms away . The nearest semi natural woodland is also 10km away at wicken Fen to the east.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints

It is 1.2km away from the village centre

Opportunities

The wood paths are linked in with parish public rights of way system ,the linking drove is hard surfaced

It is level enough for wheeled access in good weather

It is quiet and has excellent views of the surrounding fen landscape

Factors Causing Change

Paths becoming blocked by overgrown vegetation.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

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

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

Paths and rides be maintained by annual mowing at least 3 times during the growing season to a minimum width of 2m. Removal of overhanging vegetation as required and identified through biennial inspection by the site manager. Signage should be appropriate, in line with latest WT guidelines and in a good state of repair at all times.

Rides/ paths kept open, dry and light through periodic ride edge coppice/scalloping. Scallops will be between 2 and 4 meters wide (beyond the path edge) and at least 8 meters long. Priority will be given to muddiest/ darkest areas of path, to maintain a welcoming and safe walking environment for visitors. Works to be undertaken by the local community group in agreement with the Site manager.

5.2 New Native Woodland

Description

A young woodland which has shaded out the ground covering grasses in many areas, though nettle and goose grass are still dominant due to the water table and high nutrient levels. A range of tree and shrub species has aided the woods development, but the wood is primarily a poplar woodland but in addition to the 4 varieties of poplar there are another 8 tree species and 4 shrub species planted giving a significant amount of scrub habitat on the wide ride margins.

Significance

Cambridgeshire is one of the least wooded counties in England and the fenland area is one of the least wooded districts in the county- the nearest ancient wood is 18km away to the west. Being in the middle of the fens there is virtually no woodland in the locality although there are the extensive semi natural washland systems of the Ouse washes to the west and the Cambs Washes to the east.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints

It's a relatively small area which still has intensive arable management on three sides

Opportunities

The drains/river banks and drove verges which form boundaries already act as wildlife havens for common species which could move into the new woodland

There has been very rapid growth of the planted trees and there is now (2015) a full canopy

Ideal location to create some standing dead wood habitat in the form of willow pollards along the river bank

Factors Causing Change

Poplar dominating more desirable but slower growing broad-leaved trees.

climate change - increased pests and diseases (e.g. chalara dieback of ash)

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 scrub edge habitat

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

To increase the age and species structure of the woodland a silvicultural crown thin will be carried out of the Poplar dominated main canopy. The thinning will target the poplar in the main canopy with the aim of releasing other broadleaved species from the sub-canopy. Following the thinning operations biannual inspections of the canopy are to be undertaken by the site manager to monitor the reaction of the ecosystem and success of the thin to achieve the objective. The results from these observations will guide future thinning operations.

Monitor effects of climate change, with specific focus on ash dieback for the immediate future. Ash is a relatively small component of the planting, but standards are large enough in places to cause safety concerns once dead, although should be retained as standing deadwood where safe to do so. Their decline should therefore be monitored though biennial summer inspection by the site manager, also noting natural regeneration in any resultant canopy gaps. Actions as required to retain a fully stocked, diverse woodland.

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	3.80	Mixed native broadleaves	1995	High forest		Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund

A roughly rectangular shaped wood on peat derived arable soil. It was planted in 1995 with 7145 trees (approx 2250 per ha).

The planting mixture is very varied the key species being the 500 poplars planted to encourage the Golden oriole to breed in the future.

The remainder of the planted trees and shrubs being chosen to reflect the local tree cover- 20% ash and 20% alder with a number of other tree species and a mix of native shrubs.

Several Dutch elm disease resistant Elms have also been included- provided by the Cambridge botanic garden.

There is an internal figure of eight path and a perimeter path which has good views out into the surrounding fenland.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2016	1a	Selective Fell	4.00	9	36

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.