



Tranquil 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Tranquil Wood
Location:	Gt. Buckland, nr Gravesend
Grid reference:	TQ667640, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 178
Area:	1.66 hectares (4.10 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Local Wildlife Site

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Tranquil Wood is found at the head of a wooded valley just east of Meopham. The main entrance to Tranquil Wood is off Lockyers Hill.

2.2 Extended Description

Tranquil Wood (1.61ha) is split into 2 separate areas of land. At the time of purchase in 1997 it formed part of a smallholding of open grazing land and 2 small areas of ancient semi-natural woodland. All the open space land was converted to secondary woodland when trees were established by a combination of tree planting in 1998 and also areas left for natural regeneration to colonise.

The ancient semi-natural woodland is made up of two different stand types. A narrow strip of ash/maple coppice runs beside Lockyers Hill. At the western end of the site is a small area of ancient woodland comprising hornbeam coppice with sweet chestnut and ash standards, which is part of the much larger woodland called Luxon Wood a Local Wildlife Site, which is not owned by the Woodland Trust.

Tranquil Wood is situated at the head of a wooded valley within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

A Public Right of Way (footpath) cuts across the site as does a way leave for an overhead power line.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General location:

Tranquil Wood is situated approximately 2.75 miles east of Meopham, and approximately 8.5 miles due south from the centre of Gravesend.

By road from Meopham at the junction of The Street with A227 (Wortham Road): follow The Street eastwards for approximately 0.75 mile into Foxendown Lane -> Oakenden Road. Turn right into Dean Lane and take the next left into Strawberry Hill. Where Strawberry Hill meets Leywood Road, turn left at this junction onto an un-named road which leads into Lockyers Hill. Tranquil Wood is split into 2 sections with the main part and its entrance being found near the bottom of Lockyers Hill on the right hand side.

By Public Footpath: There are good footpath links to Tranquil Wood from Meopham in the west to Upper Halling in the east.

For more information on PRW's in Kent, look at "Explore Kent" found on the main Kent County Council website.

General overview of paths & entrances:

Entrances: There are 2 entrances to Tranquil Wood off the public road.

- 1 entrance (our main entrance) is off Lockyers Hill.
- 1 entrance beside the drive to the property called Tranklyn, where there is a kissing gate into the smaller part of Tranquil Wood.

All the paths are unmodified grass and earth surface and are not maintained.

Parking:

Parking is available for up to 1 car at our main entranceway.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Over the next 50 years, Tranquil Wood will be allowed to grow and develop naturally, as a refuge for wildlife. This will be achieved with minimum management intervention, allowing deadwood and old trees and young trees to regenerate where there are losses. Ash will probably not be one of the dominant species due to ash dieback fungus causing a decline in individual ash trees and then these trees eventually dying due to other fungal infection. Due to this threat, tree safety felling during the period 2015-2025 may well be required.

Low key public access will continue to be provided at a level appropriate for a small quiet woodland. Statutory obligations will continue to be met with respect to managing tree safety along the boundary with Lockyers Hill and Wrangling Lane, and beside the wayleave route.

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
Significance
Opportunities & Constraints
Factors Causing Change
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

Significance

Opportunities & Constraints

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

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

5.3 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Significance

Opportunities & Constraints

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

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

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	0.94	Ash	1998	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Mixed broadleaves of ash, oak, wild cherry and woody shrubs planted in 1998 east of the Public Right of Way. To the west of the Public Right of Way, natural regeneration has colonised this area and consists mostly of ash and field maple. A Memorial stone with a plaque to the Legator's husband is located in the middle of the sub-compartment and is positioned beside a small clump of oak trees also planted in 1998.</p>							
1b	0.34	Ash	1998	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Mixed broadleaves of ash, beech, oak, wild cherry and woody shrubs planted in 1998. A plaque on a stone dedicated to a number of people by E Berry 1989, is situated next to the gate entranceway off Wrangling Lane.</p>							
2a	0.37	Sweet chestnut	1900	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Area of ancient semi-natural woodland which most closely resembles NVC W8 Woodland Type (ash-field maple-dog's mercury) with ground cover of wood anemones and bluebells with dog's mercury and honeysuckle. The woodland consists of over mature hornbeam coppice with sweet chestnut standards with some single stem ash present in the canopy at the western end. This leads to a narrow strip of ash/field maple woodland with the occasional oak and wild cherry alongside Lockyers Hill. This narrow strip was last coppiced in 2004 for tree safety reasons.</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.