



Primrose Wood

Management Plan 2019-2024

MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

ITEM	Page No.
Introduction	
Plan review and updating	
Woodland Management Approach	
Summary	
1.0 Site details	
2.0 Site description	
2.1 Summary Description	
2.2 Extended Description	
3.0 Public access information	
3.1 Getting there	
3.2 Access / Walks	
4.0 Long term policy	
5.0 Key Features	
5.1 Informal Public Access	
5.2 New Native Woodland	
5.3 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat	
6.0 Work Programme	
Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions	
Glossary	
MAPS	
Access	
Conservation Features	
Management	

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Primrose Wood
Location:	Boxford
Grid reference:	TL950405, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 155
Area:	11.59 hectares (28.64 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This is a young woodland with wet meadow which is situated alongside the River Box. Purchased as a 'Woods on Your Doorstep' site, it is long and thin. The meadow areas are in two blocks which support important plant communities including Southern Marsh Orchids and Greater Birds foot trefoil. Access is only from Dakin Avenue in Boxford and there is a long walk to the site over difficult ground. However the bank vole and otters are known to use the adjacent river so it could be well worth a visit.

2.2 Extended Description

Primrose wood is a long, thin site (850m) positioned on the western edge of the village of Boxford in southeast Suffolk. Purchased as a Woods on Your Doorstep site, it comprises of woodland creation planted in 1998, small areas of mature Alder Carr and wet meadow. Arable and livestock farming surround the site on all sides. The site slopes down from the southern boundary to the river Box, where the river bank extends along the entire northern boundary.

Planted on wet clay soils, the wood comprises of native species, dominated by Oak, Ash and Alder, which are all typical to the area. The Alder Carr is represented by a small group of stools in the middle of the site, and nearly 500m of the riverbank is continuously lined with mature Alder trees. The meadow areas, in two blocks supports important plant communities associated with wet grazing meadows. Plants include Early Purple and Southern Marsh Orchids, Marsh Marigold, Musk Mallow and Greater Birds foot trefoil. Although not heavily fertilised in the past, this habitat also has many dominant grass species. The majority of the meadows are fenced for grazing cattle.

The site was extended to the East with the addition of 2.66 ha (6.57acres) grassland meadow during the last agreed management plan. The meadow will be planted with mixed broadleaves during this next five year management plan.

A good sized badger set is also within the wood. Also of interest at the wood is large tussock grasses and the bank vole (Listed on Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan), and otters are known to use the river.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Primrose wood is a young woodland with wet meadows that stretches along the river Box in Suffolk. The site can only be accessed from Dakin avenue in Boxford and is a long walk to the site over difficult ground (public access over third parties land). The site itself is on the side of a river valley so the topography is mainly steep slopes with the bottom being mainly very wet under foot all year round.

Bus services

90 Ipswich - Hadleigh - Sudbury (Beestons).

91 Ipswich - Hadleigh - Sudbury (Beestons).

Link: www.travelineeastanglia.co.uk

There are no train stations within the area.

There are no known public toilets but the closest toilets are at the White Hart pub in Boxford.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Primrose wood has now become a young established secondary woodland and has been allowed to develop naturally through minimal intervention, except for essential health and safety works and access works. The onset of Ash Die Back has allowed increased levels of light to the woodland floor and aided the growth of ground flora and resurgence of natural regeneration. However in blocks where no Ash is present the canopies have closed over which has prevented the growth of any vegetation below. In order to create a diverse stand structure and promote natural regeneration active management is essential and small scale thinning's will be utilised where appropriate to achieve those features. The Alder Carr will also be managed under minimum intervention, allowing the stools to collapse and re-grow. This option, as opposed to active management has been selected due to the small area of habitat involved to reduce disturbance and to develop more deadwood habitat.

The long term intention for the meadow areas will be to retain as much as possible of the 5.91 Ha as a floristically rich habitat. The meadow quality in the long term will depend on both management, and the influence of outside factors such as hydrology and climate. Although little can be done on a sustainable basis for the latter, sensitive management will be essential in the long term to promote floral diversity of this area.

Regular cutting and maintenance of all paths will maintain public access, and access features maintained to a sustainable level. An information board will continue to inform new visitors about the wood and its history.

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

Access for the public is provided at one entrance to the eastern end of the site, however access extends across the whole area by wide rides and open access to meadows.. Access is via a path leading from Dakin Avenue, approximately 4ft wide and 150m in length. Good views are attainable from the higher parts on the site, across the meadows and to Boxford Church.

Significance

In addition to the Trust's corporate objective of increasing people's enjoyment of woodland, this site is very well supported and used by local people. As a WOYD site public access is Key to the site as supported by many people at acquisition.

Opportunities & Constraints

Public access is constrained due to the long walk required to reach the site. The meadow areas may be subject to cattle grazing, and although there will not be restricted access at these times, may prevent use by all in the grazing season.
There is an opportunity to maintain the site for visitors and as an important local resource through local involvement in the site

Factors Causing Change

Condition of internal paths.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain and enhance public access so that visitors to the site enjoy the experience.

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. Maintain all public access structures in a safe usable condition.

Work Programme: Path cutting - May, June, July and September

5.2 New Native Woodland

Description

2.54 Ha new woodland was planted within the eastern end of the site. Prior to planting, small blocks of mature trees were already present including 2.5 Ha Alder Carr and an almost unbroken strip along the river of mature Alder on the northern boundary of the planting area.

A further 2.66 Ha of neighbouring land has been purchased and added to the woodland to the East of the existing site. During this management planning period it will also be planted and a further block of new woodland shall be created.

Significance

As a WOYD site, woodland is Key to the project. In addition, woodland creation will add variety to the site and improve the potential biodiversity value through complementing important habitats already established.

Opportunities & Constraints

there is an opportunity to maintain a significant area of riverside woodland within a predominantly arable area.

Factors Causing Change

Rabbit Damage, Deer Damage

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Established new native woodland which links into the surrounding landscape.

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

The majority of the woodland area shall continue to be managed under minimal intervention apart from where active management is required to open the canopy to allow the development of groundflora and understorey (fulfilling conservation aims) and to address any health and safety issues that could arise pose a threat to public safety.

Work Programme - 2018 Fell marked trees in dense blocks of oak and cherry. Brash to be spread evenly across woodland floor (below knee height) and timber to be cut to manageable lengths and neatly stacked along nearest path.

5.3 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

Description

A large proportion of the site (6.16 Ha) is valuable wet meadow, described as County Wildlife site standard. This has been fenced to provide two meadows and an open riverside area. Previously grazed by Horses, the site is predominantly Sedges and dominant grasses in addition to many important plant species. Among these are, Early purple and Eastern Marsh Orchid, Marsh Marigold and yellow flag iris.

Significance

Wet meadows, and the plant communities associated with them are a declining habitat nationally. Where many of these wet grazing meadows in Suffolk have been converted to arable, the retention of this significant piece is of great importance.

Opportunities & Constraints

The site is isolated within arable land, however given the size of the area, there is an opportunity to maintain the meadows as important wildlife areas through conservation management.

Factors Causing Change

Grazing intensity, hydrology, invasive herbaceous weeds

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the floristically diverse areas of wet meadow, and retain its current diverse floristic structure.

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

To maintain a species rich wetland meadow, through mechanical cutting with the removal of arisings, and/or aspire to use low impact livestock grazing from July to October to reduce amount of coarse and invasive vegetation within meadow area.

Works Programme: Annually cut a minimum of 1 hectare of wetland meadow and remove arisings from site.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
------	--------------	-------------	--------

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	2.54	Ash	1998	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland, Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat	
<p>Compartment 1 is located to the eastern end of Primrose wood. The northern boundary is the river Box, and other surrounding land is arable and meadowland. This compartment was planted in 1998 using native species as part of the Woods on Your Doorstep project. Many of the trees located to the eastern end of the site were grown by local people from seed of local provenance, and planted out. The northern boundary along the river box is dominated by mature Alder, with some hawthorn</p>							
2a	5.91	NULL		Non-wood habitat	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland, Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat	
<p>Species rich wet meadow. Comprising of two fenced meadows and river edge habitat. Occasional Willow, Alder and planted native black Poplars. The meadow supports species such as Early purple Orchid, Southern Marsh Orchid, Marsh Marigold, Golden Saxifrage and Musk Mallow.</p>							
2b	0.25	Alder species	1800	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland, Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat	
<p>Small area of Alder Carr in the middle of the site. Up to 6 ft silt in places under soil. Alder stools, up to 40 ft high form a dense canopy. Soil remains wet throughout the year. Opposite leaved golden saxifrage is notable in this area.</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.