



Willoughby 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Willoughby Wood
Location:	Willoughby on the Wolds
Grid reference:	SK643254, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 129
Area:	2.48 hectares (6.13 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Willoughby Wood is one of The Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' woodlands, planted to commemorate the Millennium. This young woodland lies on the north-eastern edge of the village of Willoughby-on-the-Wolds. It has a medieval 'ridge and furrow' earthworks running across it, and a spring-fed pond at its centre.

2.2 Extended Description

Willoughby Wood was created in 1999 as part of the Woodland Trust's 'Woods On Your Doorstep' project, which was supported by the Millennium Commission, and which created 200 new community woods within walking distance of towns and villages. The wood is located on the north-eastern edge of the village of Willoughby-on-the-Wolds and is within easy walking distance from the village.

The wood was been planted with a range of broadleaved species typical of the local area. The main tree species are ash, oak, birch and field maple. Other minor species include hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn. Several specimen trees have been planted, including horse chestnuts on the ride close to the main entrance. A Millennium yew, donated by the previous owners Mr and Mrs Thornalley, was also planted near the entrance to the wood as part of a community planting event on 11 December 1999.

The site was formerly part of a slightly larger field, and has a medieval 'ridge and furrow' system running across it, indicative of historic agricultural management. Many fields around the village also retain this landscape feature.

In the centre of the wood is a spring-fed pond connected to a small glade, which forms an attractive focal point. The pond also adds considerable wildlife value to the site, especially attracting invertebrates and plants. A seat is provided in the glade and near the pond. Native hedgerows are present around most of the wood boundary and sections of these have been traditionally laid.

There is a network of managed permissive footpaths around the wood, providing the scope for a short circular walk for local people.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Visitor access is available only on foot from Main Street, Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, via the public footpath & bridleway along Bryan's Lane. A further footpath from Back Lane adjoins the western end of the site and joins Bryan's Lane at the entrance to the wood. The entrance to the site is a kissing gate, which is unsuitable for disabled access. Within the site the permissive footpaths are well defined grassy rides, and therefore un-surfaced. The terrain is generally flat but with undulating sections. This may prove inaccessible for some users.

The wood does not provide a car park and therefore parking would have to be on the village roadside. Main Street is approximately 200 yards from the wood entrance.

For public transport information in getting to the site please access the traveline web link www.traveline.org.uk for further information and timetables or contact 0871 200 22 33.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The wood will be allowed to reach maturity and will develop the characteristics of more naturally occurring woodland, as opposed to a plantation of single aged trees. For this reason silvicultural management will take place to ensure the wood is diverse in tree species and structure, with a good mixture of both young and mature trees being present. This will enable the wood to be more resilient to change in the future, and will ensure it supports the greatest range of wildlife.

Open habitats will also remain and be managed within the woodland matrix, including the pond and associated glade, and also sunny rides.

A good standard of access provision will be maintained at Willoughby Wood. The path network will be kept open for use and the entrance will be accessible and clearly signed. The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections in high risk zones.

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 woodland is an established broadleaved plantation which was created in 1999. The major tree species is ash, which occupies at least 50% of the planted area, followed by oak (20%) and minor components of other trees such as birch, field maple, crab apple, lime, crack willow, hazel and blackthorn. A small number of specimen trees, yew and horse chestnut, have also been planted close to the rides.

The wood has an element of open space present (approx 20% of the land area) in the form of a pond and glade, together with a network of rides. A power-line crosses the site from north to south, and partially follows the line of one ride.

The woodland flora is dominated by coarse species such as nettle and cow parsley but there is more diversity in parts of the site, especially close to the pond, including lesser celandine, primrose and rushes in the wetter zones. Bramble is also common beneath the tree canopy.

A small element of thinning, especially of ash, has taken place in the last 5 years and this has produced some lower coppice re-growth and occasional structure to the woodland. Clearance underneath the power-lines has also added a small amount of coppice re-growth. The structure over most of the woodland, however, is a single-aged high forest dominated by ash.

A mature hedge is present on the whole boundary of the site, and this pre-dates the planting of the woodland. Hawthorn is the major species in the hedge. Parts of this hedge have been laid recently, most notably the eastern boundary in 2016.

Significance

The wood is important as a resource for local wildlife, in a part of the country where the percentage of woodland cover is low.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints/threats: The wood is very ash dominated and the oak within the woodland matrix is now becoming suppressed or dying. If ash dieback progresses in the UK this wood could be badly affected with large parts of the stand dying and collapsing.

Opportunities: There is the opportunity to carry out silvicultural management of the wood to create a more diverse structure and balance of tree species. This will ultimately make the wood more resilient to future change and enhance its wildlife value.

Factors Causing Change

The following future threats could cause change in the wood: browsing damage by deer and grey squirrels, ash dieback disease.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To create a mature wood which is diverse in tree species and in structure, enabling it to be resilient to change. Through this the proportion of ash will be lower than the initial planting level.
To maintain a proportion of open space (rides, glades & open water). Approximately 20% of the wood will be open habitat.

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

During this plan period the short term objective is to begin the process of making the wood more diverse in structure and species, to improve its resilience and wildlife value, and to maintain open habitat. This will be achieved by:

- The majority of the woodland area (2ha) being thinned by approximately 20% in 2017. The majority of trees felled will be ash, especially those that are competing with and dominating other broadleaved species.
- Carrying out ride-edge coppicing along parts of the main path network (approximately 150m in total length). This will include the path that runs alongside the power-lines (to be carried out by the utility company) and the hazel dominated area towards the southeast corner. The coppicing will be carried out in a scalloped fashion so the rides vary in width between 6 and 12m. This work will be started in 2016 and completed by 2017.
- Carrying out annual mowing of the small glade on the south & west side of the pond to keep it open (approx 0.1ha).

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

The wood benefits from being easily accessible on foot from the village of Willoughby-on-the-Wolds. Willoughby wood is a small quiet space for local visitors to enjoy. There is good network of managed paths around the wood, together with a pond and associated glade which adds interest and wildlife to the site.

The Trust has given this wood a Category B for access provision, which equates to: a site with regular usage, with 5 - 15 people using one entrance per day.

Significance

The wood provides a quiet area for informal recreation - especially suitable for local people living close to the nearby village.

Willoughby wood has involved the local community in its design and planting and it is important that local people continue to enjoy the wood and be involved in its future care and management.

Opportunities & Constraints

The wood is likely to remain of interest for local visitors only, owing to its small size. However there is the opportunity for local people to take a greater role in the management of the wood in the future.

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Access facilities will, on the whole, be low key and appropriate for this small locally visited site. However a good standard of access provision will be maintained at Willoughby Wood: a path network will be kept open for use and the main entrance will be accessible and clearly signed. The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors and neighbours through regular tree safety inspections, which will become more frequent as the trees increase in age.

The Trust will continue to support and encourage involvement by the local community in the management of the wood. Support will be given to projects that help to both widen public engagement and develop the site appropriately.

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 management of the main paths, a total of approx 1km.
- Improving accessibility at the main entrance and ensuring it is clearly signed and welcoming.
- Conducting a tree safety survey along the main path network at least once during this plan period.
- Continuing a dialogue with the local community about further ways they can be involved in the management of the wood. This will involve meeting with the voluntary warden once a year to discuss and take forward any community projects.
- Organising a community event in 2017 to gap up the hedge on the eastern boundary (following its laying in 2016) and to coppice hazel along the ride in the southeast corner.

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	2.48	Ash	1999	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	

A broadleaved plantation which was created in 1999. The major tree species is ash, which occupies at least 50% of the planted area, followed by oak (20%) and minor components of other trees such as birch, field maple, crab apple, lime, crack willow, hazel and blackthorn. The wood has an element of open space present (approx 20% of the land area) in the form of a pond, glade and rides.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2017	1a	Thin	2.00	10	20

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.