



The Jockies

Management Plan 2013-2018

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	The Jockies
Location:	Garway Hill
Grid reference:	SO447254, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 161
Area:	3.76 hectares (9.29 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

The Jockies is a rectangular woodland sitting on the steep east slope of Garway Hill, Herefordshire. It comprises mixed, native broadleaf woodland and a variety of woodland plants, including several species of moss. Lichens are also abundant here.

2.2 Extended Description

The Jockies is a broadly rectangular woodland totalling 3.74 Ha situated on the steep east slope of Garway Hill, Herefordshire. The site was purchased by Woodland Trust in 1997 as a Millennium Wood. The site is adjacent to mature broadleaved woodland to the north and the surrounding hedgerows provide connectivity to a rich local hedgerow system. Surrounding land use is mainly stock farming, to the north, west and south, with a public road forming the southern boundary.

Management access to the wood is direct from the council road to the south, immediately into the small car park. From here management access is via an open field gate. This access route (concreted track) is shared by the resident of the above farm. Pedestrian access is via three points; from the north-east corner, from the north-west corner and from the aforementioned management access. These three points lead into a broadly circular walk that serves the whole site. There is no permitted horse or bicycle access. The permissive routes through the site do connect to a public right of way running through the mature broadleaved woodland to the North of the site. You could put this detail in the summary of access provision.

The site supports two small areas of mature mixed broadleaf woodland, to the west on the steepest slopes, and these have been assimilated into one large woodland block by the planting of the greater part of the site with native broadleaves. The larger of these two blocks is of high conservation value with a good representation of ancient woodland indicator plants and a well developed community of bryophytes, lichens and ferns.

The remainder of the site, particularly the lower, eastern slope is managed as open grassland identified as unimproved meadowland. This supports a small number of mature and recently planted (circa 2005) local apple orchard trees. Bracken can dominate parts of the Jockies, notably the grassland area but through the establishment phase of the new native plantation area also. There are spring water points at the base of the larger woodland area (compt. 1b) which have formed a running water stream through the site.

Hedgerows around this site support a diverse range of trees, shrubs and verge plants and the roadside boundary to The Jockies is a good example of a species-rich hedge boundary.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

The Jockies is located in a rural landscape within two miles of the village of Garway. It has a permissive internal path network for pedestrians only and this links to the contiguous external public right of way network outside of the site. This network offers links to Garway Hill Common, a large area of public open space.

There is a small parking area at the site.

There is a service linking Ross-on-Wye with Hereford (Service number 38) but it does not stop within 2 miles of The Jockies.

There are no public conveniences within 5 miles of The Jockies.

The eastern boundary of the site has a lengthy frontage to a country lane. A field gate provides both management and public access direct from the public highway.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

To maintain the whole site as a rich mix of semi-natural habitats, both woodland comprising of native species and unimproved grassland with riparian habitats.

Protection of the existing mature woodland will occur through the successful establishment of the further woodland areas by protecting planting trees and ensuring adequate stocking levels. This will provide connectivity between woodland habitats and will buffer the more sensitive older woodland. Hedgerow management, through cyclical laying will further improve connectivity. Pleached hedges will be trimmed every 3 years to increase their value in association with unimproved grassland, providing a valuable grassland/shrub margin. Hedgerow standard trees will be maintained and emerging standards permitted to develop.

Management on the grassland areas will aim to maintain the unimproved habitat; namely grazing at low levels (less than 2.5 livestock units per Ha). Traditional methods would be an annual hay cut and aftermath grazing, but the uneven ground surface of the surveyed area would make this difficult with tractor mounted or drawn machinery. The exact extent of rough grazing will vary annually depending on the season and the stock used.

The potential to extend the grassland communities over the areas of bracken and bramble areas within the grazing areas will be realised. Bracken and scrub development control annually over the grassland areas will prevent further encroachment and will gradually improve the richness of the grassland already covered by bracken. It is not intended to use chemical sprays. Maintenance of the sites riparian feature will be secured through non-intervention. To protect these areas whilst undergoing management of the key features around them it is likely that the provision of a low-impact bridge method will be necessary.

Public access will continue in line with the Woodland Trust corporate objective of increasing people's enjoyment of woodland. Three pedestrian access points and a broadly circular route exist within the wood at the time of writing this plan (2011). Path management in the future should aim at maintaining this access at its current level with path clearance twice per year. These paths, particularly in the wooded areas, will provide structural diversity as internal edge zones. Through sensitive management the wood and meadow will remain important habitats, in keeping with the surrounding landscape, as well as a pleasant amenity feature for the locality.

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

The Jockies is used at a low level by local people, mainly for dog walking. Three pedestrian access points link the internal permissive footpaths of the Jockies to the county roads and public rights of way network. A small car park (4-berth) is located at the main entrance. The site has been given the access category B. The internal path network allows an enjoyable circular route of the site through all of the 3 different habitats though the steep slopes, narrow often boggy paths and uneven terrain suit the more enabled visitor.

Significance

The Woodland Trust believes that everyone should recognise that trees and woods are an essential part of a healthy environment and that there should be a wood with open access close to everyone's home. We aim to achieve that through the provision of public access to the Jockies.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

The steep slopes across the western areas of the site constrain possibilities for expanding the permissive route network within the site.

The density of the paths through the site and the open nature of the grass areas both provide a constraint to the development of any new paths through the site.

Opportunities:

To continue to provide permissive access along the existing internal routes providing the visitor with an opportunity to experience each of the habitat types.

Factors Causing Change

The types and frequencies of public use.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Continued informal public access via the existing path network is the future aim at the Jockies. The site should be safe and welcoming to visitors. It is not expected that the use of interpretation at the site is relevant. Opportunities to engage with local communities and interest groups in furthering mutual aims will be taken as they arise.

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

Aim: To provide the best possible resource for existing users of the site, wider local communities and new visitors to the site.

Strategy: To ensure that the Jockies is clearly signed as an accessible Woodland Trust wood including contact details providing a link between visitors and owners/managers. And that paths are accessible and easy to use. To act on development ideas arising through public contact/networking.

Measure of Success: 1) Continued public visitation and appreciation gauged through signs of visitor use such as footpath wear and tear, numbers seen during management visits. 2) The number of initiatives developed through public interest that attract new user groups or improve conditions/accessibility for visitors.

5.2 Open Ground Habitat

Description

1.7 Hectares of open grassland situated at the base of the wooded slopes, and occupying the eastern portion of the wood (Sub-compartment 2A). Survey of July 1998 identified species rich grassland that can be classified as unimproved grassland. In National Vegetation classification terms it closely resembles the mesotrophic grassland MG5 Centaureo-Cynosuretum. 20 traditional cider apple trees are found across the meadow. The Jockies is not an attractive piece of land to graze on a commercial basis but in recent years we have had success working with local people willing to graze for other reasons. This has visibly improved the grassland by reducing the prolific nature of bracken. There is also an annual control of bracken across the grassland through topping. It seems like the grassy water course through 2a serves adequately as a water source for the grazing animals.

The hedge along the external boundary with the county road is a good example of a species rich hedge. This is flailed annually and was laid circa 2004. It is expected that the grazing unit will require some fencing investment over this plan period to keep it sheep proof

Significance

Unimproved grassland has evolved over a long period of time through low intensity traditional land use. The grassland here supports, in total, 16 grass and 64 other plant species. If lost this habitat is irreplaceable and bracken encroachment and cessation of traditional management both threaten this locally valuable ecosystem. Traditional orchards are diminishing annually so mature trees such as these are uncommon.

The Woodland Trust recognises the importance of the landscape distribution of semi-natural habitats such as this grassland in its publication 'Space for Nature'.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

To provide continuity of the historic cider apple trees. To reduce the abundance of competing species through the grassland area such as bracken, bramble and scrub.

To ensure the health of the species rich road side hedge.

To formalise a water supply to facilitate grazing.

repetition

Formalise an appropriate grazing regime.

Maintain the unimproved status of the grassland habitat.

Constraints:

Encroachment of bracken, bramble and scrub at the expense of the grassland habitat.

As local properties receive natural (non-mains) water supplies there is a strong consensus against the use of pesticides.

Factors Causing Change

Grazing regimes.

Bracken, bramble and scrub fecundity.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

It will be desirable over the long term to maintain a grassland broadly resembling MG5. A continuity of apple trees is anticipated with older examples being retained throughout their natural senescence. Young apple trees will be planted and protected in crates to replace dead ones, it is expected that 20 orchard trees should be present over the long term. The ancient hedge should remain a species rich feature, it is expected that management through laying will be required. Continued grazing will be required to prevent encroachment of vigorous competing species such as bracken. The unimproved status of the grassland will be maintained by not permitting fertiliser application.

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

Aim: To maintain the unimproved character of the grassland.

Strategy: To provide continuity of grazing across the site with local graziers. To prevent application of fertiliser and localised nutrient enrichment of soils through animal dunging. To implement bracken and scrub flailing of vigorous vegetation.

Measure of Success: 1) Extent of bracken at the height of the growing season, this should be no more than 60% by area for this plan period.

5.3 Mixed Habitat Mosaic

Description

The woodland habitat occupies the steeper west portion of the site and is comprised of mature and newly planted native broadleaves. The smaller area (1B) is mature mixed native broadleaves, although not designated as ancient woodland, an ecological survey from 1998 shows that these areas possess characteristics of ancient woodland, with a supporting flora species list. The larger percentage of the woodland area (1A) is occupied by recently established mixed native broadleaves. These trees have established well and in 2010 are touching canopy across much of the site. The woodland flora is dominated by bramble and bracken, although this is less abundant under the mature canopy of 1B where bryophytes, lichens and ferns are prevalent.

The established woodland blocks and the new native broadleaved plantation provide an interwoven mosaic of woodland habitat. Squirrel and deer damage in the plantation and through the site have not yet been witnessed. It is not thought that the potential for tree damage is high enough to impact on woodland regeneration or to warrant monitoring in this plan period

Significance

The Woodland Trust believes that there should be twice as much native tree cover like that at Jockies wood in the UK. Through managing Jockies wood we aim to provide it as an example of this and deliver our aim of protecting native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

Allow species diversity and abundance to increase through permitting natural succession.

Constraints:

Overhead power supply through both mature and newly created woodland areas.

Factors Causing Change

Mammal Damage

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland element of The Jockies will continue in its development to resemble the locally typical NVC W10 woodland. Structural diversity will be provided through the open areas underneath power lines. The natural development of the existing mature woodland blocks will provide for veteran tree and dead wood habitat development and will allow the rate of change within them to be dictated by natural processes. It is expected that any canopy gaps created by natural processes would be colonised through natural regeneration. The new native woodland plantation will also develop naturally.

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

Aim: To permit the natural process of woodland succession.

Strategy: To avoid intervention that may prevent natural succession such as wholesale increases in light levels that could bring about domination of competitive ground flora.

Measure of Success: A full canopy cover should be maintained across the woodland key feature.

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	2.30	Oak (sessile)	1999	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access to the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access	
<p>Formerly divided into two sub-compartments, to separate the younger planted woodland (Cpt. 1a - 1.8ha) from the older pre-existing stands (Cpt. 1b - 0.5ha). The new Cpt. 1a encompasses these under one management regime. The younger stand was planted in 1999 by local residents, using a mixture of ash, sessile oak, rowan, hazel, hawthorn and holly. The rough steep ground combined with some planting failures, have lead to a more uneven structure to the woodland, with small patches of open ground amongst closed canopy. Open ground has a tendency to convert bracken. in 2019, with the onset of ash die-back, much of the young ash is infected and showing signs of decline. The older areas of woodland consists of sessile oak, ash, holly, rowan, wych elm with hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and field Maple present. These mature ash trees show no sign of infection at this stage. Prior to planting, the whole site was formerly unimproved grassland (MG5) with bracken, and these small areas of woodland formed naturally as areas inaccessible to grazing animals due to the steep ground and rocky out crops. Despite the difference in age, these areas are becoming indistinguishable as a ground flora rich in mosses, ferns, dogs mercury and bluebells spreads throughout.</p>							
2a	1.70	NULL		Non-wood habitat		Informal Public Access	
<p>Sub-compartment 2a is unimproved grassland (MG5 community) occupying the eastern, lower portion of the site, at the base of the wooded slopes. Once a common type of grassland in the area (both as pasture and meadow) it has now become rare, and more so for a grassland to still contain an abundance of any hills that would otherwise have been destroyed through topping or other mechanical use. A spring line and a seepage cross the grassland towards the northern end, creating two narrow but distinct strips of M23, containing sharp-flowered rush, ragged robin, brooklime, water mint and meadow sweet. In total 16 grasses and 64 vascular plants were identified in 1998 but has not been recorded since. Traditional cider apple trees have been planted across the meadow with 11 mature, 3 dying and 6 were more recently planted in 2010, along with a walnut tree.</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.