



Sanctuary 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Sanctuary Wood
Location:	Gorran Churchtown, nr Mevagissey
Grid reference:	SW999431, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 204
Area:	13.90 hectares (34.35 acres)
Designations:	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Sanctuary Wood is a broadleaf wood with excellent views available from the plateau. It adjoins a Nature Reserve and has a small stream running through the valley. The wood spans two steep-sided valleys so visitors should be fit and active!

2.2 Extended Description

The largest single site created during the Trust's Woods On Your Doorstep project Sanctuary Wood was planted in late 2000 with native broadleaf species on an area of improved grassland.

It is located between the communities of Gorran (Highlanes, Church Town and Haven), Port Mellon and Mevagissey on the south coast of Cornwall. Standing on steeply undulating and exposed coastal land close to and looking out over Mevagissey and St Austell Bays the wood forms a prominent feature in the landscape and offers extensive views of surrounding coastal and agricultural areas. Soils are generally of a clay loam with elements of shellat over sedimentary base rock (middle and upper Devonian) that in places lies close enough to the surface to make soils thin.

The wood adjoins an ancient semi-natural wood designated as a Local Nature Reserve and forms a 'hub' from which several other small valleys containing elements of secondary woodland, scrub and rough pastures extend. It is bounded by established hedges on all sides and some twenty mature oaks and sycamores remain on the site on the lines of two derelict and eroded internal hedges. It has a small stream running west east through a small shrub lined gully in the bottom of the valley. The grassland was partially improved during past agricultural management and has limited conservation value however the steeper areas do appear to be naturalising rapidly following planting.

A narrow country lane runs along the north boundary of the wood and a single management access enters the site from this highway. A stoned track inside this entrance then provides access up to a flat 'plateau' where a large open area offers space, views and seating for visitors. From there the wood 'drops' down into a valley where open grassland with planted shrub clumps replicates the wet meadows in adjacent areas which due to low intensity management are succeeding towards woodland with shrub and scrub growth. The stream marks the valley bottom from where the land rises sharply towards the southern boundary where some smaller open spaces and 'aligned' paths offer more views across the coast. Due to its location and topography and the need for visitors to be active walkers to reach it and walk around its steep slopes the site is not well used, but there is a small number of locals who do visit regularly.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Sanctuary Wood lies approximately 2 miles southwest of the seaside fishing town of Mevagissey on the south Cornwall coast. It is also close to the villages of Portmellon (1 mile), Gorran High Lanes and Gorran Churchtown (1 mile). It can be reached via the public footpath networks from Gorran and Portmellon and via country lanes from Mevagissey although it is probably easier to keep to the main roads if driving and follow the B3273 from Mevagissey to Tregiskey then along the highway to Gorran Haven and Heligan. At Gorran Highlanes either turn left to Treninick and follow the lane down hill to the woods entrance on the right or ideally continue into Gorran Churchtown, park in the village and walk along the public footpaths to the wood. All public footpaths to the wood cross agricultural land which may be steep in places and all require the negotiation of stiles. There is a small area at the main entrance to the wood which provides parking for 2 cars

The wood spans two small but steeply sided valleys and therefore access to and within the wood requires visitors to be relatively fit and active. Access within the site takes the form of wide grass surface tracks and open spaces within the planted area with an additional narrow public footpath which enters the site in the south west corner and exits again along the eastern boundary. The third entrance point is on the northern boundary. There is a limited amount of parking space at this entrance and the local concerns about irresponsible parking blocking the lane has led to the discouragement of visitors from using this entrance. Instead, and in line with the objectives of the Woods on your Doorstep project, the Trust encourages visitors to use the public footpath from Gorran Churchtown along the stoned track past the church and then across agricultural land towards Port Mellon as the access route. There is limited shop, public house and other facilities at both Gorran Church Town and Portmellon and both can be reached by public transport services however the walk to the wood from either is at least 1.5 miles over often steep, uneven and agricultural land. During the local consultation for the community woodland the proprietors of the pub in Gorran Churchtown offered the use of the pub's carpark to visitors however that was in 2000 and it is felt courteous by the Trust that permission is sought at the pub before using the carpark.

Public transport services travel from Mevagissey to Gorran Churchtown, stopping at Gorran Highlanes, near the lane to Treninick, and Gorran Churchtown near the church leaving a walk of approx. 1.5 miles as described above. There is a bus stop in Portmellon near the footpath leading to the wood.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long term vision for Sanctuary Wood is of an attractive mature broadleaf woodland with an understorey of woodland shrubs complimented by other habitats such as rough grassland and open glades, clumps of shrubs and scrub, wide rides, over mature trees and adjacent hedges. The maturing woodland will generally be managed as high forest under a continuous cover regime allowing the main tree species to develop and to start diversify in age and size structure. It is intended that the species mix will allow alder to recede naturally due to dry conditions at around 30-40 years allowing the ash and gean to mature 80-100years with the oak forming the climax woodland species with minor trees and shrubs forming the understorey and woodland edge element. The path and tracks will be managed to maintain appropriate access levels for the community needs. Areas of land planted with clumps of minor trees and shrubs will to be managed to maintain wood edge and colonising woodland appearance and keep canopy heights sufficiently low that future roadside tree safety will be reduced and vistas not lost too quickly. The edges of the wide rides will be managed by irregular mowing regimes to encourage naturalisation to rough grassland habitat that will improve nectaring for insects and will colonise to scrub and natural low level woodland habitat types to provide nesting cover and food sources for birds and animals. The large open grassland areas will be managed by annual mowing that will gradually reduce the nutrient levels in the soils and reduce grass species vigour. This will allow the colonisation of less competitive grassland and woodland plants. The stream and its shrubby edges will be managed to maintain water flow and quality allowing fish and other wildlife within it to create sustainable populations and the wood edges will be managed to maintain appropriate levels of dapple shade, shelter and sunlight. Deer damage will be monitored and the local population managed when damage becomes sufficient to reduce the sustainability of the wood. The wood will be inspected for damage, abuse, anti-social behaviours and non-native invasive species and appropriate action taken where these will affect the woodland's values to conservation or public access values. Deadwood will be created gradually over time by retaining log and brash material and standing dead trees created by on-going management and natural processes. As such it helps to fulfil 3 of the Trust's aims of creating native woods and places rich in trees, protecting native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future and inspiring everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees.

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

Native broadleaf woodland planted in 2000. Species mix is of predominantly Oak and Ash with Gean and Common alder with lower proportions of woodland shrubs and minor trees. Small groups of Monterey pine were planted around the woodland to replicate the many similar hilltop clumps planted in the county and to create winter colour and feature trees for the future. The area is quite exposed and with soils depths being shallow over rock in places tree growth and size will become varied as the woodland develops. The wood stands adjacent to an Ancient Semi-Natural woodland designated as a Local Nature Reserve and forms a 'hub' to other small valleys radiating from it all of which have good woodland and or scrub cover. The mature hedges around the woodland and the mature trees remaining on the lines of two eroded internal hedges add extra conservation interest. The woodland was designed to 'mirror' the local landscape with open agricultural land on the upper 'plateaus', woodland and scrub on the valley slopes and small sheltered wet meadows in the valley bottoms. These latter areas have, due to reduced levels of grazing, started to succeed towards woodland, with scrub, bramble and tree regeneration gradually developing and so the lower valley open grassland spaces were partially planted with shrubby clumps and allowed to naturalise afterwards. The gully at the bottom of the valley contains a small shrub lined stream and it too offers additional habitat value to the wood as well as some visitor interest in the places where it can be seen from the stream crossings.

Significance

Woodland and woodland edge habitats created and linking to several other such areas including ASNW in the locality will improve the sustainability of the present conservation resources. . The Woodland Trust believes that there should be twice as much native tree cover in the UK as there is at present. Through the creation and management of Sanctuary Wood we aim to create an exemplar to encourage other land owners locally to plant and manage their woodland and therefore help deliver our aims of protecting native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future. This area of woodland helps to achieve National, regional and Local biodiversity action plans for the creation of new lowland broadleaved woodland

Opportunities & Constraints

Exposure to winds off the sea may constrain future development and growth of trees, but with its conservation values this need not be of major consequence.
The steep valley side nature of the wood will be a constraint to management unless substantial tracks are created to allow vehicular access around the slopes

Factors Causing Change

Squirrel damage

Deer damage reducing the establishment and development of natural regeneration and woodland flora.

Ash Die back

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A healthy native broadleaf species high forest with open glades and woodland fringe areas in rides and boundary edges providing a diverse age and size structure with a good proportion of mature trees having large spreading 'open grown' type crowns . Common alder will have receded allowing ash and Gean to mature and oak to form climax woodland species. Minor trees and shrubs will form a diverse understorey and woodland edge element around glades and wide rides. Areas of land planted with clumps of minor trees and shrubs will have naturalised with a reduced canopy height and size to retain views and reduce roadside tree safety issues in the future. Mature trees on old remnant hedge banks will have matured and developed as veteran trees. Open glades, grassland area and wide ride sides will have become colonised by rough grasses, wild flowers and scrub and graduate the height up to the high forest canopy providing varied habitats, and nectaring areas for wildlife. Deadwood will be developing within the young woodland as well as within the mature trees.

There will be no non-native invasive species and browsing or damage by pests and diseases will be managed to within acceptable limits.

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

Develop a healthy and vigorous, well stocked young woodland with a varied size structure, range of habitat types and open rides and glades.

Manage the young trees to maintain vigour and health, by removing tree shelters by the end of the plan period, control competing bramble and scrub where it adversely affects trees

Develop wood edge structure around the wood edges, glades, boundaries and tracks by selective thinning and coppicing of trees and shrubs and by raised height and rotational cutting of grass sward and coarse vegetation

Develop natural regeneration and colonisation of scrub and tree species throughout the woodland by selective thinning and coppicing to increase light levels

Coppicing of some localised areas of predominantly willow and alder where they are impeding access, or where their shading is affecting richer floral areas or they are suppressing preferred or individual tree species.

Undertake limited amounts of form pruning or pruning to best 1 or 2 trees within tree species groups to promote some better form trees for the future. Monitor existing mature trees in old internal hedges and along roadside boundary for tree safety issues

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

A network of naturally surfaced and grassy management tracks and pedestrian paths linking two areas of open ground. Amounting to 20% of the wood's area, one glade lies on top 'plateau' above management entrance from lane while the other spans the small stream at the bottom of the valley with its southern boundary indicated by one of the lines of retained hedgerow trees. The open ground was built into the design in order to replicate the local landscape of agricultural land on tops of hills, with trees on slopes and rough wet meadow with wood edge effect and encroaching shrubs in the valley bottoms. While the glades will be managed as permanent open space shrub clumps have been planted around edges to create encroaching woodland effects and this will be encouraged to develop but managed so that over time the dynamics will vary and habitats can be 'regenerated'. . Extending from these in line with the best views are strips of ground where planting has been in the form of shrub/ minor tree clumps. The site has a short section of public footpath crossing it and it is hoped that this will encourage use by linking it to local communities and the coastal path

Significance

The site is located between Gorran and Mevagissey and has footpath links to both communities and the long distance coastal path. Although not well used at the present time its presence in the landscape and location will allow it to develop in the future. Open grassland will contribute to woodland associated habitats in the area, and provide open space for visitors 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. This will be achieved at Sanctuary Wood through access being a Key Feature of the site.

Opportunities & Constraints

There is the possibility of the local primary school and forest school leaders living locally 'adopting' the wood for forest school type activities.

Factors Causing Change

Anti-social behaviour, vandalism, abuse and fly tipping taking place in the improved entrance and parking area.

Unauthorised horse riding

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A network of attractive and safe tracks maintained to provide the required level of community and management access. Managed open grassland and shrub clump areas and woodland glades with naturalised plants and shrubs along their margins graduating between the differing heights and benefiting wildlife but also being aesthetically pleasing to visitors.

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

An easily accessible network of naturally surfaced and grassy tracks and paths that will sustain and maintain the steady but relatively low level of access required. Currently the site is judged to be Category C

Manage track centres for access, but edges for biodiversity by mowing the central 3-5m wide strip, raising cuts between track mow and wood edge and developing a rotational cut to diversify age and species structure.

Manage open grassland areas by mowing bulk of the grass once annually and as with tracks raise cut heights and or reduce cut numbers to once every 2-4 years to develop naturalised vegetation of differing heights to graduate from mown grass to shrub/tree heights.

Maintain gates, stiles, footbridges, information boards and signs annually to encourage safe access.

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	13.80	Mixed native broadleaves	2000	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Secondary Woodland	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Planted in November/ December 2000 with native broadleaved species on improved grassland. It spans two small valleys and has an undulating appearance with a flat partly unplanted 'plateau' on the higher ground above the management entrance and a small stream in the valley bottom again in an unplanted area. Predominantly of Oak with Ash and Gean as minor components with native broadleaf shrubs and minor tree species as an understorey and to form wood edges/encroaching woodland effects into the open areas. The site lies in a fairly open, exposed area especially to the sea. Due to the steepness of the slopes wide grass management rides have been incorporated into design to allow access without excavating and creating proper access tracks. Primarily the design is intended to replicate the landscape of the surrounding valley slopes with agricultural land on the tops, woodland on the slopes and rough meadow/grassland areas with encroaching woodland/scrub in the bottoms.</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.