



Great Chart 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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: | Great Chart Wood |
| Location: | Ashford |
| Grid reference: | TQ982418, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 189 |
| Area: | 2.32 hectares (5.73 acres) |
| Designations: | NULL |

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A small wood between Great Chart village and the A28. The road is rather noisy. Long distance paths of the Stour Valley Walk and Greensand Way are near by. There are enough paths for about 15 minutes of walking.

2.2 Extended Description

Great Chart Wood (2.3ha) was planted in 2000 as part of the Woodland Trust's Millennium project 'Woods on your Doorstep' to create a new community woodland on the edge of Great Chart village, close to Ashford.

The land was given to the Woodland Trust by Ashford Borough Council and a number of organisations sponsored the planting of Great Chart Wood including Sainsbury's Homebase, The National Lottery and the Forestry Commission along with help from the local community. Species of trees and shrubs planted were a mixture of oak, ash, wild cherry, field maple, hornbeam, rowan, hazel, blackthorn, hawthorn and holly.

Prior to planting an archaeological survey revealed a number of earthworks of historical interest which have been left as found and incorporated into the ride network.

Public access is available from two entrances at either end of the site, and these lead onto a permissive path network of wide grassy paths through the site.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Great Chart Wood is situated on the edge of Great Chart village approximately 2 miles west of Ashford.

Great Chart Wood can be reached by road or by Public Footpath from Ashford.

By road: follow the A28 west towards Tenterden out of Ashford, and follow signs for Great Chart down Chart Road from the roundabout on the A28, 0.5 mile east of Great Chart village. As you approach the village turn left down Singleton Road which is a No Through Road. Park at the end of this road beside the playing field. Enter the playing fields and walk to the far end where our woodland called Great Chart Wood can be found. This route from Ashford follows the route of an A road with pavements where there are no significant slopes.

By Public Footpath (PRW): The public footpath AW234 crosses Great Chart Wood in a westerly direction from Singleton Road in Great Chart village. This is an unmodified grass and earth surface, which can get slippery and muddy when wet.

Great Chart Wood can also be found by walking along the Stour Valley Walk heading west out of Ashford and taking a diversion off AW234 to the wood.

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

General overview of paths & entrances:

Entrances: There are 2 entrances to Great Chart Wood.

- Both entrances are found on Public footpath AW234 which crosses the site. Access is via All Access Kissing gates suitable for pushchairs.

All of the paths within the wood are unmodified grass and earth surface, which can get slippery and muddy when wet.

Public Transport:

The nearest bus stop: Great Chart Church on the The Street of the village with good links to Ashford. This is less than 0.25 mile away from Great Chart Wood - see General Location above.

The nearest train station: Ashford Railway station. Ashford Street station is approximately 2 miles from Great Chart Wood along public roads.

This information is from Traveline website as at June 2016. Further information about public transport is available from Traveline - www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0871 200 22 33.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Over the next 50 years, Great Chart Wood will be allowed to grow and develop, as a refuge for wildlife.

It is highly likely that ash will be a minor species in 50 years' time due to ash dieback fungus. Natural regeneration of other site native broadleaves will have closed up any gaps in the canopy as the ash succumbed to fungal infections and died. Accumulation of deadwood and its associated fungi and invertebrates will help develop the woodland habitat. An understory of site native woody shrubs should also be well established. To achieve this, interventions by thinning of the canopy trees may have been required. Coppicing of ride edges will have produced a good network of sunny rides producing a rich and varied habitat and such management should be continued.

Low key public access will continue to be provided at a level appropriate for this small quiet woodland.

Statutory obligations will continue to be met with respect to managing tree safety along the boundary with the public highway and public right of way.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

5.1 Secondary Woodland

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

| |
|---|
| 5.2 Secondary Woodland |
| Description |
| |
| Significance |
| |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| |
| Factors Causing Change |
| |
| Long term Objective (50 years+) |
| |
| Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years) |
| |

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

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

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Key Features Present | Designations |
|--|-----------|--------------|------|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1a | 2.31 | Ash | 2000 | Min-intervention | | | |
| Mixed broadleaves of ash, hornbeam, oak, wild cherry and woody shrubs planted in 2000. Unplanted areas form the path network with woody shrubs concentrated along the edges. | | | | | | | |

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.