



The Old Park

Management Plan 2015-2020

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 Old Park
Location:	Thorndon, Brentwood
Grid reference:	TQ620905, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 177
Area:	54.33 hectares (134.25 acres)
Designations:	Community Forest, Essex County Council Nature Conservation Zone, Grade II Outstanding Historic Park, Green Belt, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Special Landscape Area

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This mosaic of new and mature woodland, open grassland, wood pasture and wetland was once part of the historic Thorndon Estate. Today, it links the north and south sections of Thorndon Country Park. The combination of lovely woodland and the Council's visitor centre, ponds and Gruffalo Trail makes for a great family day out!

2.2 Extended Description

The Old Park lies within the Thames Chase Community Forest and is the central connection between Thorndon Country Park North and South. The whole of the Country Park is a registered grade II* Historic Park, first recorded as a deer park in about 1412 but with additional major developments taking place in the early 18th Century, under the 8th Lord Petre, and with later mid to late 18th century developments by Lancelot "Capability" Brown and Richard Woods. Most of Thorndon Country Park is owned by Essex Country Council and was designated a country park in 1971. Immediately to the north and south west (Menagerie Plantation) of The Old Park are extensive areas of SSSI designated woodland.

The Park is well used by the public; it lies only 5km east of the M25 on the north side of the A127

that runs from the London Borough of Havering to Basildon and Southend. The Old Park is entirely enclosed within the boundaries of Thorndon Country Park which as a whole has the A127 forming its southern boundary, while the majority of the north-eastern boundary being formed by the A128 which runs from the A127 to Brentwood, situated just to the north of the site. A minor country road runs along the north-western boundary with a mixture of farmland and woodland enclosing the site to the west. The park as a whole covers about 243 ha in a heavily developed part of Essex, on undulating ground which has a gentle rise from the south to the north as far as Thorndon Hall before falling again towards the northern boundary.

The soils are permeable loamy-clays. There is a distinct change in the soils from the north to the south of the site, the north being more loamy and stony than the wetter more clayey south. The soils are prone to winter water-logging and are naturally acid as a result of liming over 40 years by the former landowner. Until its acquisitions much of the land now owned by the WT was under arable agriculture for the previous 40 or so years, prior to which it appears to have been grazed.

Since 1992 the Trust has planted around 25,000 trees and shrubs using a design that reflects its historic parkland traditions, with blocks of woodland, open grazing land and wood pasture. Modifications to the original design were made in 2000/01 to overcome a number of practical concerns, including extensive encroachment by Ragwort, which developed over the years. Grazing and grassland restoration work was financed under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. The scheme's objectives focused on the restoration of the historic landscape of which the grazed area is a key component. Overall the site is well used by the public who visit in increasing numbers either to walk, ride or cycle.

Surrounded as it is by Thorndon Country Park North and South, the Woodland Trust site does not have its own car parking facilities as there is no private vehicle access to the site. The Thorndon Country Park car parks to both the North and South of the site are the primary car parks to access the site (pay and display parking charges).

Multiple gently undulating surfaced and unsurfaced footpaths cross the site. The two primary surfaced multi-user tracks run along the NE and part of the SW boundary. Numerous pedestrian footpaths cross the extensive grazed areas and link to a network of wooden kissing gates to allow access through the cattle proof fencing. Two Public Rights of Way cross parts of the site and these are well signposted with one passing through The Rookery, an older growth secondary woodland and part of the original historic design.

In 2014/15 further capital works have been undertaken to reinforce the design of the historic landscape where distinctive and formalised tree plantings ("platoons") have started to merge with the other larger regimented planting blocks ("battalions").

Key Features:

Historical features

Informal public access

Mixed habitat mosaic

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

By bus: 565 from Brentwood town centre towards Halfway House

By train: Brentwood Station is around 4.8km (three miles) from Thorndon North Countryside Centre.

For up-to-date information on public transport, visit traveline.org.uk (0871 200 22 33).

By car: From Brentwood High Street (A1023), turn south onto the A128 towards Ingrave. Turn right after the railway crossing, following signs to Thorndon Country Park North or South. Both have pay and display car parks.

For more information, go to visitparks.co.uk/places/thorndon-country-park.

(July 2017)

3.2 Access / Walks

The Old Park can be reached by public footpaths from Ingrave and from both the Thorndon Country Park sites. As it is within the Park, it is subject to Thorndon's opening times: 8am until dusk.

There are several footpaths, including two public rights of way. Wheelchair access is only possible in the summer when the paths are dry. A four-wheeled battery-powered scooter is available through the Parkmobility scheme from Thorndon North Countryside Centre (pre-book through Essex Wildlife Trust on 01277 232944).

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In the long term The Old Park will develop into a wooded parkland which respects the historic laid out design set out by Lord Petre in the early 18th century and refined by "Capability" Brown and Richard Woods in the mid to late 18th century.

It will contain significant elements of open parkland grazing, wood pasture, wetland areas and ultimately sustainable, structurally diverse woodland areas incorporating both the woodland creation patches and the older woodland area known as The Rookery.

The old Park will remain a freely accessible site seamlessly linked into the Country Park's network of paths and bridleways. Access onto and within the site will be maintained and improved as necessary. The main views out over the Thurrock Plain need to be preserved.

During the lifetime of this management plan it is anticipated that the on-going and day to day management of the site will be transferred to the Essex County Council Rangers that currently manage both North and South Thorndon County Park.

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 Historic Features

Description

The Land at Old Park forms part of Thorndon Country Park, a grade II* Historic Park. The first contrived landscape at Thorndon was established in c1412 under the ownership of Lewis John, who built a brick lodge and obtained permission to enclose 300 acres of parkland. In 1576 John Petre, who bought the estate in 1573, was knighted and started an ambitious programme to rebuild the house and remodel the garden. On its completion John Walker Snr was commissioned to survey the estate and surrounding Thorndon Hall (Walker Map 1598). During the 17th Century little activity occurred on the Thorndon Estate and in 1706 when the 7th Baron succeeded, the landscape had changed little for 100 years.

The 8th Lord Petre, in relatively a short life, became a notable plantsman and garden designer. He was at the forefront of a movement to fund and organise importation of seeds from America. He devised an extensive and highly elaborate formal scheme for the Thorndon landscape which is depicted on a plan of 1733, drawn by the French surveyor Sieur Bourignon. The 8th Baron was succeeded by his nine year old son who came of age in 1762 and the following year embarked on the building of a new hall, designed by James Paine, on a site north of the old one. Lancelot "Capability" Brown was commissioned to bring the landscape up to date and between 1766 and 1772 he received over £5000 for his work in the park. In 1783 Richard Woods was appointed as Lord Petre's surveyor, during which time the New Hall Pond created by Brown was adapted to improve the view of it from the Hall.

When the 10th Lord Petre inherited the estate in 1801 it was burdened with debt from all his fathers spending. Throughout the 19th century the family maintained the Hall and its park with few alterations but in 1878 the Hall was virtually destroyed by fire and in 1919, following the early death of the 16th Lord Petre, the family moved to Ingatestone Hall and began to dispose of Thorndon. Immediately after the First World War the Hall and 240 acres of the park to the south were acquired from the Trustees of the 17th Baron by Thorndon Park Golf Club, the 18-hole course being designed in 1921 by Cole and Alison. Much of the remainder of the park was acquired by Essex County Council in 1939 and 1951. It was opened as a Country Park in 1971. The burnt Hall was converted to private flats in 1975.

The Woodland Trust acquired The Old Park in 1992 at which time much of it was under arable cultivation. The Trusts land was very much on the edge of the Park and it appears to have been a 'working' landscape. The first edition OS map shows two ponds on the Trusts land, presumably for grazing animals. The adjacent Hatch Farm was built in 1776 as an animal feeding place for Thorndon Park. Since the fragmentation of the Park in 1919 the land owned by the Trust had been continuously farmed. Initially it was a stock farm, when many of the former trees were retained. The majority of the parkland trees were felled from the late 1940's onwards and only about 10 remain.

Although there are number of prominent features on the site; The Rookery (as established area of woodland), three ponds and a number of mature open grown oak trees, overall there were no key features from the former parkland designs at the time of purchase. However, the area acquired was at one time the site of a large part of the 8th Lord Petre's formal parkland designs which, if implemented, were largely obliterated by Browns work which adopted a less formal design but still retained the prominent 'platoons' and the avenue which appear to have been left to help 'focus the eye' towards the site of the Old Hall.

On acquiring the land in 1992 the Trust put in place a restoration plan agreed between key partners including Thames Chase Community Forest , Essex County Council and English Heritage. The plan aimed to restore the wooded parkland feel through the use of clump planting of appropriate species in a way that reflects the sites historic past but also reflected current use and needs. Particular actions taken were:

- Recreation of the "platoons" and "battalions" as incorporated by Brown from the 8th Lord Petre's design;
- Extension of The Rookery to reflect it's once larger extent;
- Clump plantings of varied extent and species composition across the site;
- Restoration of grazing over much of the site;
- Desilting and general restoration works undertaken on three ponds.

A number of difficulties became apparent following the implementation of the 1992 restoration plan. These made it necessary to revise the original design and management of the Old Park. Issues included:

- Ragwort & other noxious weeds establishing in the large areas of fenced vacant ground;
- Views off the site to Thurrock Plain were obscured by both restoration and plantings by neighbours. These are dramatic and important views, the loss of which would be regrettable;
- Clump plantings in many locations were either too close to each other or to those of adjacent to woodland. The result being that as they mature they would not be visually distinguished as separate components in the landscape;
- The species composition of many clumps was also not suitable to the intended aim of opening them to grazing and called in question the long-term viability of this future.

Since 2000, with the agreement of English Heritage (EH), work has been undertaken to mitigate some of the problems arising from the initial design. In particular a number of the original clumped plantings have had their intervening areas planted so as to either form distinct woodlands or copses. This helped to address the problem of noxious weed control in the short to medium term at the same time as recognising the landscape implications in reality on the ground. More challenging is securing the views off the site onto the Thurrock Plain. In 2004 the former Subt cmpt 1d had much of its treed area cleared and ten smaller treed clumps enclosed by a fence. This opened up vistas onto the Thurrock Plain.

In 2014, with the support and agreement of EN & EH, a number of capital works have been undertaken to further address the design anomalies created during the implementation of the original restoration design. These have included:

- Physical separation of the "platoons" from the "battalions" & installing individual metal parkland

tree guards around the "platoon" trees to create a highly distinctive formal parkland landscape feature;

- Removal of fencing around mature coups of trees in the wood pasture area and pollarding of a significant number of trees to maintain vistas and create a more traditional wood pasture landscape;
- Improve access across the site for both cattle and visitors.

Significance

Grade II* Historic Park within the Thames Chase Community Forest and adjacent to important semi-natural SSSI ancient woodland areas with a notable veteran tree population.

Opportunities & Constraints

C1 Parkland status and historic design may restrict some aspects of woodland creation that the Trust may in "normal" circumstances wish to implement;

C2 Long term grazing of the open ground could prove difficult if present circumstances change;

C3 Trust land is a small part of the wider Historic Landscape. Meaningful landscape restoration has to involve working across several different land ownerships of widely different management objectives and needs.

O1 To continue to add to the publicly accessible area of the historic parkland;

O2 To continue to return a degraded part of the park to a condition more in keeping with its past.

O3 To collaborate with neighbours in promoting a comprehensive restoration plan to the park.

O4 To extend the habitat diversity of the area through large scale woodland and grassland creation as well as more local scale enhancement through pond restoration and creation.

Factors Causing Change

Cessation of grazing

As woodland creation areas mature, removing/relocating fencing to increase gazed areas

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The creation of a wooded parkland respecting the historic design, including maintenance of the historic view between the New Hall and site of the Old Hall. No actions will be taken that will prejudice any future restoration of the historic park as a whole or the way visitors today enjoy and use the site.

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

Maintain form, shape and essential fencing of historic planted features as funded by HLS (battalions, platoons & wood pasture areas)

Continuation of historic grazing areas

Continue to move towards the transfer of management to the Essex County Council Thorndon Country Park Rangers

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

The purchase of the site in 1992 was the Trusts first acquisition within the Thames Chase Community Forest and was a highly significant one as it added a further 135 acres of publically accessible land to the adjacent Country Park. It is a key linking route for people moving between North and South Thorndon Country Parks. Especially prominent in people's appreciation of the site today is the spectacular view over the Thurrock Plain.

The site has multiple footpaths throughout. Public rights of way surround the site with a main multi-use surfaced track running along the eastern boundary zone. A network of permissive footpaths run within the grazing areas. Numerous public access points can be found throughout the site.

The site itself does not have car parking but there are large car parks close by in the Country Park and the land lies on a number of key trails across and around the Country Park. The eastern boundary of the site is Thorndon Park Golf Course.

Significance

The site lies within the Thames Chase Community Forest and is an effective link and extension of a popular and long established Country Park. Especially important for its role in strengthening links between North and South of Thorndon Country Parks.

Opportunities & Constraints

C1 The wide range of recreational users sometimes leads to some conflict between users of the site;
 C2 The Trust land is a small part of the whole Country Park and public access can not be undertaken without clear reference to them;
 C3 The high dog use restricts some aspects of conservation management, e.g Horse Pond where the persistent dog use dictates the nature of the pond and it environs;

O1 Thorndon is an exciting and important historic and public amenity and additional interpretation of the site would be of benefit to visitors. Currently only the "Wildside Walk" skirts the eastern boundary edge of the Woodland Trust site;
 O2 The Trust land offers opportunities to create a number of linking and circular routes in Country Park for local riders, pedestrians and cyclists.

Factors Causing Change

1. Over usage of key entrances and bottlenecks causing soil poaching;
2. Overall management of the wider site will make joined up planning of footpaths, bridleways and access easier;
3. Greater interpretation of the historical elements of the Old Park site should be encourages and potentially lead to greater usage.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A freely accessible site seamlessly linked into the Country Park's network of paths and bridleways. Access onto and within the site will be maintained and improved as necessary. The main views out over Thurrock Plain need to be preserved.

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

Five path cuts each year to planted areas, grazed areas and through Rookery Wood (min 3m width) and maintain accessible/welcoming entrances.

Discuss opportunities for additional integrated interpretation with the Thorndon Country Park Rangers in anticipation of management transfer.

5.3 Mixed Habitat Mosaic

Description

A large part of Thorndon Country Park is former pasture woodland with a notable population of veteran trees. In contrast, at the time of acquisition, 90% of the Trusts landholding was in arable agriculture with the remaining 10% being Rookery Wood which was predominantly suckering Elm which has succumbed to Dutch Elm disease with young suckering Elms growing and a mix of other native broadleaf species (20-100 years old).

The parkland restoration works undertaken in the past and more recently (2014/15) emphasised the designed historic landscape though a mix of formal and informal plantings; on the fringes of the Trust site, within sub-cmpt 1a and as an extension to the former extent of Rookery wood. Some of the planted coupes within 1a originally fenced to protect from grazing pressure have developed well enough to allow fencing to be removed and create pollards (to maintain vistas and be the ancient trees of the future). There are currently 10 veteran oak trees growing on the sites and some of these have been fenced to protect them from livestock grazing, compaction damage or protect the public from falling limbs.

The site contains various wetland habitats including three ponds and two brooks, one that divides cmpts 1a and 2a and another that runs through The Rookery woodland. The site also has patches of scrub habitat both within the grazed areas and developing woodlands.

Significance

Apart from being a Historic Park, Thorndon is also a former pasture woodland sites with a population of veteran trees. This habitat and these trees are an internationally scarce resource and the subject of specific national biodiversity action plans.

Maintaining a mixed mosaic habitat dominated by wood pasture and numerous ancient trees but with wetland areas, older growth woodland and developing new woodland areas is highly valuable as a linking habitat on a landscape scale for a plethora of species.

Opportunities & Constraints

C1 The nature of the historic design adopted restricts more naturalistic successional development;
 C2 The site has a very high public use and there are tree safety concerns with ageing and veteran tree populations;

C3 High usage by dogs of one pond has limited its value as a wetland resource:

O1 As the areas of woodland develop, natural canopy opening will appear creating more of a mosaic of woodland with open glades and allowing natural regeneration;

O2 Some coupes of trees will be allowed to develop naturally whilst others will be pollarded with a view to not only maintain important vistas but also to be develop into veteran trees and veteran pollards of the future

Factors Causing Change

Cessation of grazing would require intensive human management intervention to maintain the valued wood pasture landscape.

The transfer of management from the Woodland Trust to Essex County Council Thorndon Rangers will have an impact, however, with planning and co-ordination this should be minimal.

Opportunities to open up additional woodland creation areas to grazing will need to be carefully investigated as it may lead to greater interaction between multiple users and grazing animals.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Retention of both the wood pasture habitat through grazing and all existing veteran/ancient trees on site to their full natural life and onto their subsequent decay and decline. Management of new woodland areas to favour long term development to sustainable mature wood habitats. Maintaining wetland areas as appropriate within their location (i.e restrict siltation where necessary, maintain current levels of shading and maintain at least 70% open water).

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

Opening up of some treed areas within what was compartment 1d and now subsumed into the larger compartment 1a, to allow grazing opportunities and create an extended pasture woodland habitat (2014/15).

Pollard some trees in cmpt 1a to maintain vistas (initial pollarding 2014/15, re-pollard 2026/29).

Maintain existing conservation grazing of the wood pasture habitat.

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	8.30	Open ground	1993	Wood pasture		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Other, Special Landscape Area
<p>Former arable field sown to rye grass in 1993 and managed subsequently as part of a Countryside Stewardship Scheme for hay, silage or grazing. Whole area stock fenced with the fence line amended in 2000/01 to remove dangerous (for livestock) pinch points. Whole area currently grazed with rare breed cattle.</p> <p>During the life of previous plans an additional wooded area (Sub cmpt 1d) was brought into this compartment. This was done by enclosing ten 25m square plots of trees and removing all trees outside of the fences to establish a more open vista onto the Thurrock Plain. In 2014, with capital funding under HLS, the fenced tress were considered large enough to cope with grazing pressure and most of the fencing was removed apart from a number of veteran/ancient trees where protection was still deemed necessary. In addition a significant number of the trees were pollarded to maintain the vista and establish more of a wood pasture habitat.</p> <p>Two permissive paths run through the compartment.</p>							
1b	2.10	Mixed broadleaves	2000	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area

The outside north-western boundary planted up, as described below, in two phases with woodland. Little visited by the public and no paths within the sub-compartment currently exist. There are two old oaks in the Sub-Cmpt.

Phase One

P-1993 Broadleaved woodland. Species mix POK(46%), SWC (13%), HBM (30%), WSH (11%) planted at 3m spacing in approx 40 plant groups. Planting took the form of a large block along the edge and a number of treed clumps dotted about internal to this.

Phase Two

P-2001 Mixed Broadleaved Woodland. Species mix 50:50 POK/HBM. All trees planted 2m spacing in Tubex Sleeves with WT cleft chestnut stake. Original design which endeavoured to create open parkland with clumps of trees resulted in a considerable area of fenced vacant ground that became dominated by ragwort. As it transpired visually, despite the prevalence of treed clumps, the area would only ever appear as a solid block of woodland from most parts of the site and in 2000 it was agreed with English Heritage that the fenced vacant ground be planted so as to reduce long term management problems with noxious weeds.

1c	4.00	Mixed broadleaves	1993	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area
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The outside north-eastern boundary planted, as described below, in two phases. Main route for public walking through the site, especially dog walkers who value the fact there is an enclosed path as well as the surfaced bridleway. A large pond within the fenced area is a favourite for dogs to swim in. This pond has become much more intensely used by dogs than originally envisaged and it is not thought practical to try and change this situation due to the very large use by dogs. There was report in 2001 of Blue Green Algae poisoning of dogs attributed to the Pond. No other incidents have been recorded since 2001. A public right of way runs along the eastern boundary just outside the Woodland Trusts boundary. In 2001 a proposal to establish a cycle/bridal route along the eastern boundary, but outside the WT fence, was consulted, supported and created. There is a single large old oak within the Sub-Cmpt.

Phase One Planting

P-1993 Broadleaved woodland. Species mix POK(46%), SWC (14%), HBM (30%), WSH (10%) planted at 3m spacing in approx 40 plant groups planted along the eastern boundary under a FC WGS scheme, In addition a number of treed clumps with approx 950 trees were created under a CSS Scheme. These latter clumps were established using tubex quills as guards. An approx 0.5 ha area on the south of the Sub Cmpt was left to establish through colonisation, with a proposed species mix of POK/HBM with woody shrubs. This latter area had sponsorship from the Colin Reid Environment Trust.

Phase Two Planting

P-2001 Mixed Broadleaved Woodland. Species mix 50:50 POK/HBM. All trees planted 2m spacing in Tubex Sleeves with WT cleft chestnut stake. Original design which endeavoured to create an open parkland with clumps of trees resulted in a considerable area of fenced vacant ground that became dominated by ragwort. As it transpired visually, despite the prevalence of treed clumps, the area would only ever appear as a solid block of woodland from most parts of the site and in 2000 it was agreed with English Heritage that the fenced vacant ground be planted so as to reduce long term management problems with noxious weeds. At the same time vistas out from the site, overlooking the Thurrock Plain, were retained. The 0.5 ha colonisation area was planted in 1999 as no trees had established in the 5 years.

2a	10.40	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area
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Former arable field sown to rye grass in 1993 and managed subsequently as part of a Countryside Stewardship Scheme for hay, silage or grazing. Whole area stock fenced with the fence line amended in 2000/01 to remove dangerous (for livestock) pinch points. Whole area currently grazed with rare breed cattle. A cattle watering trough is located in the southern half of the compartment.

At the highest point of the Sub-Cmpt is a seat sculpted specially for the Old Park. At present there is an impressive view over the Thurrock Plain from this seat, however tree planting both on an off our land will potentially obscured this view in the future.

Two permissive paths run through the compartment.

2b	7.20	Mixed broadleaves	1993	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area
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New woodland area established in two phases, as described below. A Public right of way runs along the northern boundary but just outside WT ownership. A new designated bridleway was constructed on the western boundary as part of a joint project with Essex CC and Brentwood BC.

Phase one Planting

P-1993 Broadleaved woodland. Species mix and approximate net percentages were POK(46%), SWC (14%), HBM (30%), WSH (10%) planted at 3m spacing in approx 40 plant groups and a large element of open ground. Eleven individually fenced plots were established with trees in an area itself surrounded by a fence giving a large area of fenced vacant ground. The larger clumps were paid for under a FC WGS with the smaller ones covered by a CSS Agreement. The long-term intention was to create a parkland with treed clumps and livestock grazing between them.

Phase Two Planting

P-2001 mixed broadleaved woodland. Species mix 50:50 POK/HBM. At 2 x2 m spacing in tubex sleeves supported with a cleft chestnut tree shelter stake. Approx 5500 trees planted. It was realised that the vacant ground was unlikely to be grazed in the near future and that visually the area, which abuts the older Menagerie Wood and the mature treed boundary of the Thorndon Golf Course, tends to be seen as a woodland rather than treed clumps. There were also fears over the spread of noxious weeds, thistles in particular. In 2000 English Heritage gave agreement for the clumps to be interplanted so that a solid block of woodland is established with a wide central ride. The western boundary is limited as it continues the line of a ride through Menagerie Wood.

Two permissive paths run through the compartment.

2c	1.10	Mixed broadleaves	1993	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area
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Eastern 'Battalion' and 'Platoon' planting. Planted 1994 at 3 x 3m spacing. Whole area rabbit and stock fenced. Species as described below. Recreation of planting designed by the 8th Lord Petre (1733) which was preserved and included by Capability Brown in his landscaping (1778) to frame the vista from the site of the new Thorndon Hall to the site of the Old Hall. Species choice based on advice from English Heritage: POK (30%) HBM (25%) SC (10%) BI (10%) FM (10%) WSH (15%). The woody shrubs were Holly, Hazel, Rowan and Hawthorn. Platoons planted with nine Small Leaved Limes at approx 6 x 6m spacing and enclosed by a rabbit and stock fence.

In 2014, under capital funding from HLS (i.e with NE and EH support/approval) individual metal tree guards were installed to protect each of the 9 Small leaved limes in each of the platoons. In addition two rows of trees in each of the battalions were removed to emphasise the historic design element within the landscape. Fencing around the platoons has been removed and the fencing along the battalions reinstated two rows back.

2d	2.30	Mixed broadleaves	1993	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area
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Western 'Battalion' and 'Platoon' planting. Planted 1994 at 3 x 3m spacing. Whole area rabbit and stock fenced. Species as described below. Recreation of planting designed by the 8th Lord Petre (1733) which was preserved and included by Capability Brown in his landscaping (1778) to frame the vista from the site of the new Throrndon Hall to the site of the Old Hall. Species choice based on advice from English Heritage: POK (30%) HBM (25%) SC (10%) BI (10%) FM (10%) WSH (15%). The woody shrubs were Holly, Hazel, Rowan and Hawthorn. Platoons planted with nine Small Leaved Limes at approx 6 x 6m spacing and enclosed by a rabbit and stock fence.

In 2014, under capital funding from HLS (i.e with NE and EH support/approval) individual metal tree guards were installed to protect each of the 9 Small leaved limes in each of the platoons. In addition two rows of trees in each of the battalions were removed to emphasise the historic design element within the landscape. Fencing around the platoons has been removed and the fencing along the battalions reinstated two rows back.

2e	1.40	Mixed broadleaves	1993	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Special Landscape Area
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Also includes the original sub-cmpt 2f. P-1993 Broadleaved woodland. Species mix and approximate net percentages were POK (46%), SWC (14%), HBM (30%), WSH (10%) planted at 3m spacing in approx 40 plant groups. Sub-compartment in two blocks each enclosed with a rabbit fence. Permissive path with stile and bridge leading to Cmpt 1 bisects the two halves.

2g	1.10	Mixed broadleaves	1993	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area
<p>P-1993 Broadleaved woodland. Species mix and approximate net percentages were POK (46%), SWC (14%), HBM (30%), WSH (10%) planted at 3m spacing in approx 40 plant groups. Sub-compartment enclosed with a rabbit fence. Ditch/watercourse forms the northern boundary of the compartment and surfaced bridleway the eastern boundary. Fence line realigned in 2001 to reduce area of vacant ground.</p>							
3a	3.90	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area
<p>Former arable field sown to rye grass in 1993 and managed subsequently as part of a Countryside Stewardship Scheme for hay, silage or grazing. Whole area stock fenced with the fence line amended in 2000/01 to remove dangerous (for livestock) pinch points.</p> <p>Whole area currently grazed with rare breed cattle.</p> <p>Two permissive paths run through the compartment and a public right of way crosses a small section to the west of the compartment.</p>							
3b	1.40	Mixed broadleaves	1993	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area

The compartment can effectively be divided in two with new woodland area established in the northern half created in two phases, as described below.

Phase one Planting

P-1993 Broadleaved woodland. Species mix and approximate net percentages were POK(46%), SWC (14%), HBM (30%), WSH (10%) planted at 3m spacing in approx 40 plant groups and a large element of open ground. Covered by a CSS Agreement. The long-term intention was to create a parkland with treed clumps and livestock grazing between them.

Phase Two Planting

P-2001 mixed broadleaved woodland. Species mix 50:50 POK/HBM. At 2 x 2 m spacing in tubex sleeves supported with a cleft chestnut tree shelter stake. It was realised that the vacant ground was unlikely to be grazed in the near future and that visually the area, which abuts Menagerie Wood tends to be seen as a woodland rather than treed clumps. There were also fears over the spread of noxious weeds, thistles in particular.

The southern half was allowed to naturally regenerate and is dominated with ash saplings with two small compartments fenced and planted with similar species mix as above.

A Public right of way, upgraded to a surface bridleway, runs along the eastern boundary and is maintained by Essex CC. and a permissive footpath runs along part of the western boundary before cutting south across the compartment.

3c	0.17	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Special Landscape Area
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An area registered as part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Old Hall remains of). Erroneously planted with trees in 2001 and cleared of trees in 2014 under the HLS Capital Grant. The area will be maintained as open grassland.

4a	0.50	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Special Landscape Area
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Former arable field sown to rye grass in 1993 and managed outside of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for hay, silage or grazing. Partially stock fenced, open on the west.

An avenue of Lime Trees has been established along the public right of way that forms the western boundary of the compartment.

4b	7.40	Mixed broadleaves	1800	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Special Landscape Area
<p>The compartment is now a combination of sub-compartments 4b, 4d & 4e and comprises of small areas of woodland creation, now well established, and Rookery Wood; a mixed broadleaved woodland dominated by suckering Elm, with occasional Sycamore and Oak. The Elm is largely dead or moribund as a result of Dutch Elm Disease and during the previous five-year plan two one-acre sections were cleared and replanted with 50:50 Oak/Hornbeam.</p> <p>A spring rises in Rookery Wood and runs along a steep sided ditch. To the south of the wood is a large pond. The pond, which is marked on several old maps, was desilted early in the Trusts ownership but is now dominated with reedmace. A public right of way bisects the wood and there a number of minor circular permissive paths.</p> <p>Historically Rookery Wood was larger than at present and part of the original site design was to enlarge the woodland to as close to its original size as practical. The woodland creation has been on the margins of The Rookery and comprises mixed broadleaved new planting established in two phases.</p> <p>Phase One</p> <p>P-1994 Broadleaved woodland. Species mix POK(25%), ASH(26%), HBM (25%), SWC (10%), FM (10%), WSH (14%) planted at 3m spacing. Planting took the form of two blocks the larger of which to the south of The Rookery was included as part of the WGS.</p> <p>Phase Two</p> <p>P-2001 Mixed Broadleaved Woodland. Species mix 50:50 POK/HBM. All trees planted 2m spacing in Tubex Sleeves with WT cleft chestnut stake.</p> <p>Original design endeavoured to create an open parkland with clumps of trees but resulted in a considerable area of fenced vacant ground that became dominated by ragwort. In 2000 it was agreed with English Heritage that the fenced vacant ground be planted so as to reduce long term management problems with noxious weeds. This led to a coalescence of the two blocks (inc. 4d) on south and east of The Rookery, except for the separating permissive path between them. A number of separate treed clumps on the north-west of The Rookery (4e) as they mature will effectively coalesce with The Rookery and act as an extension of the wood.</p>							
4c	0.98	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Other, Special Landscape Area

Former arable field sown to rye grass in 1993 and managed outside of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for hay, silage or grazing.

An avenue of Lime Trees has been established along the public right of way that forms the western boundary of the compartment.

5a	1.70	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Special Landscape Area
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Former arable field sown to rye grass in 1993 and managed subsequently as part of a Countryside Stewardship Scheme for hay, silage or grazing. The area is stock fenced except for the western boundary which is unfenced. The fence line was amended in 2000/01 to remove dangerous (for livestock) pinch points.

Across the compartment are three P-1994 mixed broadleaved woodland clumps. Planted as part of wider landscaping works to create treed clumps (5b, 5c and a smaller isolated clump). There are separately fenced areas. Planting was at 3m spacing. The sub-compartment is now grazed in co-operation with the Essex County Council Thorndon Country Park Rangers.

5b	0.80	Mixed broadleaves	1994	High forest		Historic Features, Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	Community Forest, Green Belt, Special Landscape Area
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Mixed broadleaved new planting established in two phases.

Phase One

P-1994 Mixed broadleaved woodland clump. Planted as part of wider landscaping works to create treed clumps. The area is fenced and has a number of treed clumps within the fence with a significant area of fenced vacant ground. Planting was at 3m spacing.

Phase Two

P-2001 Mixed Broadleaved Woodland. Species mix 50:50 POK/HBM. All trees planted 2m spacing in Tubex Sleeves with WT cleft chestnut stake. Original design which endeavoured to create an open parkland with clumps of trees resulted in a considerable area of fenced vacant ground that became dominated by ragwort. In 2000 it was agreed with English Heritage that the fenced vacant ground be planted so as to reduce long term management problems with noxious weeds.

A large pond was created around 1994 on the North-western corner. It sits within a relatively deep hollow and despite its rather elevated position does seem to hold some water for much of the year.

The woodland creation area is fenced off and the remaining grassland is grazed in co-operation with the Essex County Council Thorndon Country Park Rangers.

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.