



Capton Wood

**Management Plan
2008-2013**

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Capton Wood
Location:	Dittisham
Grid reference:	SX835539, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 202
Area:	4.24 hectares (10.48 acres)
Designations:	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Capton Wood lies on the southern slopes of the Barberry Valley, running steeply uphill above a small brook. Parking is very difficult and public use of the bridleway through the wood is therefore mainly confined to local riders and walkers.

2.2 Extended Description

Capton Wood is a remote wood in a quiet part of the South Hams of Devon. It lies on the southern slopes of the Barberry Valley running steeply uphill above a small brook. The Trust owns two distinct blocks of secondary mixed broadleaf woodland, intimate with neighbouring woodland in private ownership. Boundaries are demarcated by old field/hedge banks but are not immediately obvious on site.

The surrounding landscape is typical of the South Hams with other woods and pasture on the surrounding valley slopes and arable land on the plateau above. The site was probably enclosed pasture in the past with areas of trees and coppice, and a history of periodic grazing. The wood has also been intermittently coppiced in the past but not recently, and suffered from severe storm damage in the 1980s. The wood is now developing a more diverse structure with pockets of natural regeneration.

Management access is particularly difficult. Rights from the south are across farmland stocked with cattle, along a very wet and muddy bridleway. Access from the north is also documented but is limited to certain times of year along the continuation of the bridleway and had not been exercised in recent years. This also runs across pasture which is often wet and the right becomes unclear once entering neighbouring woodland. Therefore management access is practically limited to foot, along the public bridleway. Parking in the area is also very difficult and public use of the bridleway through the wood is not high and mainly only used by local riders and walkers.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

A Public Bridleway which follows a contour through the wood is the only managed path, and general steepness of ground, heavy undergrowth and lack of connectivity to other rights of way precludes any other access.

Capton wood is located outside the village of Capton. Take the lane to your right as you are heading out of the village towards the Tidford - Hemborough road and follow it down to the farm at the bottom. There is a gate with CAPTON WOOD marked on it. This gate is used by the farm and apart from a shallow pull in there is no parking in the vicinity. The bridleway that runs from this gate runs through Capton Wood and on through to the track from Broadridge Farm. The road out of Capton is narrow and does not have a footpath. The nearest bus stop is in Cornworth, just along from the pub and the road from Cornworth to Broadridge is also narrow, hilly and without a pavement.

The internal footpath / bridleway is mainly level with a shallow decent to the river. It can get sodden after rain and there are a couple of boggy places. There are a couple of obstacles such as a small wall that needs climbing over and a couple of gates.

There are three public toilets in Totnes on Civic Square, Coronation Road and Steamer Quay. The toilets at Totnes Station are RADAR accessible (Direct Enquiries website www.directenquiries.com)

This information was correct on 18/12/08. For up to date local travel information see the travel line website www.travelline.org.uk

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

To provide and maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for users of the public bridleway that is appealing as they pass through the woodland. No other paths or tracks will be created into the woodland for public access. Use of public bridleway is fairly low being mainly accessed by the local population.

To maintain broadleaf woodland cover, (high forest) over the site, accepting natural processes and non-native species. Natural processes will, for example, allow the woodland to develop a process of natural regeneration and gradual restructuring. Trees will only be considered for felling if they present a risk to the public or there is a recognised need to open up areas that will allow natural regeneration to occur.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

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

5.1 Informal Public Access

Description

Access within a pretty wood along a public bridleway. Low level use.

Significance

Enjoyment of woodland is a core WT objective and access to woodland is important in this area of Devon with limited woodland cover.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Poor condition of bridleway surface to north and south of the wood (outside WT ownership) limit enjoyment of accessing the wood. Steep ground and heavy undergrowth limits access for most users to the Bridleway only.

Opportunities:

The quiet and remote wood does allow the adventurous visitor an opportunity to experience woodland in an area where it is in short supply.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive knotweed

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A safe and accessible bridlepath through the wood, maintained to highways requirements, that is also accessible to walkers.

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

Ensure that the woodland continues to provide a safe, well maintained environment with good accessibility that the public can enjoy.

Access points and public footpaths remain in good condition appropriate for the level of use and type of public demand from the local population.

5.2 Landscape Value

Description

Whilst not obvious in the wider landscape Capton Wood is contiguous with other woodland in the valley, in this pretty area of the South Hams AONB, and is very visible from local rights of way, in an area with limited mature woodland.

Significance

Maintenance of woodland as a local landscape feature further enhances the value of the site, for those that cannot directly access the site, for public enjoyment of woodland (A core WT objective and complimentary to South Hams AONB management plan)

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Extremely limited management access precludes timber extraction and limits harvesting/silvicultural operations to felling to waste. High presence of non-native trees on site and neighbouring land precludes the adoption of a purist native species policy.

Opportunities:

Access situation provides an opportunity to practice high forest continual cover by the acceptance of natural processes and species variability. Maintaining woodland cover within the local landscape. Current levels of regeneration from fallen trees are providing a varied and developing structure.

Factors Causing Change

natural processes

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Continuation of woodland cover over at least 80% of site with areas of growth from regeneration to over maturity.

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

1. Re assess woodland structure at next plan period review (2008).

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	3.87	other oak spp	1900	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, Landscape Value	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Mixed species, broadleaved high forest secondary woodland cover (W10c) notably Oak sp (p1900) with non-native species present. Canopy gaps following storm damage in 1980s are dominated by Sycamore or regeneration from fallen standards. Some overstood mature coppice (Sweet chestnut) occurs. Shrub layer is mixed broadleaved species with areas of dominant Holly or Hazel. Bramble and bracken occur throughout and a reasonable ground flora of wood rush, Bluebell and Primrose are spread throughout. The area appears to have been open grazed until around the 1970s.</p>							
2a	0.38	Sweet chestnut	1930	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, Landscape Value	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Principally a block of overstood mature Sweet Chestnut Coppice (p1930) with Oak sp. over a mixed broadleaved shrub layer (hazel dominant). A poor field layer with occasional bramble and bracken. Bluebell dominates the ground flora which is otherwise generally poor.</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.