



# The Dingle

## 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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.

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## 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](http://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.

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## 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

<b>Site name:</b>	The Dingle
<b>Location:</b>	Middleton Scriven
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SO677881, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 138
<b>Area:</b>	3.10 hectares (7.66 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Planted Ancient Woodland Site

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

The Dingle is an Ancient Woodland site which was partly landscaped in the past with formal paths and a lake. Whilst the lake has gone a number of exotic species remain, including Copper Beech. These, together with the small brook, slightly remote location and low visitor numbers, make it a particularly beautiful and peaceful place to visit. The 325 yard linear path through the wood tends to get wet in sections throughout the year. A steep drop by the gate means that parking there needs care.

## 2.2 Extended Description

The Dingle is an Ancient Woodland Site situated in a predominantly arable landscape four miles to the south west of Bridgnorth. It lies alongside a small brook part of which has steep valley sides and contains a number of ancient woodland indicator species including toothwort, Yellow Archangel, Ramsons and Bluebell. The site also plays an important role in the local green corridor network, providing connectivity between small pockets of broadleaf woodland in the area.

Much of the Eastern half of the wood has been landscaped in the past as a garden/arboretum with formal paths and a lake although the lake no longer exists, the weir having broken with the stream now flowing through the site. A number of exotic species remain in this portion of the wood e.g. Copper Beech and Lawsons cypress adding visual appeal and making it particularly enjoyable for visitors to walk through. Alder and willow are now colonising the former lake area which remains very wet.

In terms of historic planting and silvicultural activity at the wood, planting of Larch, Norway Spruce, Beech and a mixture of other conifers was undertaken in the late 1970's. A stand of Larch and Beech subcomp 1C (60 years old ) was clearfelled by the Trust in 1988 under a felling licence. This was then replanted with native broadleaves. The majority of the western portion of the wood remains as semi-mature Ash woodland with a small area of predominantly Oak. The Elm, which was dead or dying at the time of acquisition, was felled and most of the ash (50 years old at the time) was thinned also.

Despite the sites size, it is a very beautiful and peaceful place to visit, however, its slightly remote location means that it has a low level of use by the public. There is one public access (wicket gate) and management access point (10ft gate) for the wood off the main highway to the east of the site.

Key features:

KF1 - Ancient Woodland Site

KF2 - Informal Public Access

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

The Dingle lies on the edge of the village of Nearest Middleton Scriven. The Main entrance to the wood is off a minor road leading out of the village and through a 12ft field gate. There is a linear route through the site approximately 300 metres in length which tends to get wet in sections right through the year as there is a stream which runs through the site which periodically overflows in the wood.

There is nowhere close to the site which is easy to park. You can pull on vehicle up in front of the gate, but care should be taken as there is a steep drop off the right hand side which your car could disappear down!

Nearest bus stop - ½ mile away at the T junction in the middle of Middleton Scriven village

Nearest railway station - No stations within 5 miles.

Nearest toilet - 5.5 miles away in Bridgnorth, Inneth Lane,. Open 7am to 6pm with disabled facilities.

You can also try [www.transportdirect.info](http://www.transportdirect.info) or [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) on the internet for the most up to date details for public transport in the area.

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The Woodland Trusts objectives and long term intentions for The Dingle are determined after balanced consideration of a number of points relating to our Woodland Management Approach (WMA) and seek to conserve key features in relation to our outcomes. Where there is conflict, the interests of biodiversity take precedence over people. We do not intervene at our sites unless there is evidence that it will improve woodland biodiversity and/or public understanding and enjoyment.

In accordance with the Woodland Trust WMA as a restored Ancient Woodland Site (AWS), The Dingle will be allowed to develop naturally with exception of essential tree safety work, ride edge coppicing where appropriate to enhance visitor enjoyment and small operations where necessary to remove invasive species such as Rhododendron from the site. This will allow space for the regeneration of native broadleaf trees, shrubs and ground flora.

In accordance with the Trust WMA, free public access will be provided for quiet, informal recreation and the woodland managed to make it accessible, welcoming and safe. Paths will be kept open and clear.

Regular tree inspections will be undertaken by competent people. Tree safety works will be implemented in accordance with recommendations from inspection reports and in line with current best practice.

## 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 Ancient Woodland Site

#### Description

Majority mixed broadleaved woodland including Alder, Sycamore, Ash with occasional oak ranging from 20- 60 years in age. Understorey species include Hazel (predominantly), Sallow and Rowan. Sycamore is regenerating along the edge of the ride (compt 1a ). Ground flora is sparse and includes Broad buckler fern, Male Fern and Dogs mercury.

Area of trees planted 1988 (1c ) following clear fell of larch and beech stand. Species include predominantly Oak, Ash, Wild cherry, Rowan, Hawthorn, Hawthorn, Holly. A few Beech and semi-mature wild cherry have been retained.

Largely open on site of former lake (1b ). Now dominated by nettles, Hogweed and Rosebay Willow herb with meadowsweet, Buttercup , Water Mint and Lesser Celendine common in marshy areas. Mature Ash, Cherry, Beech and oak are found along the boundary on drier ground, together with occasional exotic species including Laurel, Rhodendron, Lawsons Cypress and Copper Beech. Self-grown semi-mature Alder and Willow are dominant to the south and are gradually encroaching open damp ground.

#### Significance

An isolated AWS in an otherwise arable land use dominated landscape. Serves as an important part of the local green network, providing connectivity between other small areas of native broadleaf woodland.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

Access through the site is very difficult due to terrain and ground conditions which are wet almost all year round. Any silvicultural work involving the use of forestry equipment , will stand a high chance of badly damaging the site.

Also, while the site does have AWS status, its previous management over a proportion of the site as an arboretum/landscaped has internal landscape appeal such that it is preferable to retain and replace where appropriate specimen exotics.

#### Factors Causing Change

Invasive Rhododendron, Invasive Sycamore

#### Long term Objective (50 years+)

A predominantly native mixed broadleaved Woodland which is both resilient and robust towards changes and threats and where ancient woodland characteristics of deadwood and ground flora continue to remain secure.

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

To ensure the area of AWS is maintained in a secure condition with any threats removed as required.

2017 - 1b, c and e remove invasive rhododendron on the site. Two follow up treatments to be undertaken in 2018 and 2019.

2018 - 1b - coppice willow on edge of ride.

The woodland will be also monitored during the plan period to note any changes or new threats that may require further action/intervention.

## 5.2 Informal Public Access

### Description

One public kissing gate entrance and linear path, along associated WT welcome signage.

### Significance

Because it is used by local people and increasing enjoyment of sites is one of the Woodland Trusts priority objectives.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Flat and easily negotiated, although paths are generally very wet from Subcompt 1a heading west to the remainder of the site.

### Factors Causing Change

Change in level of  
Deterioration of entrance furniture over time  
Encroaching vegetation hindering public access.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain path and entrance points to ensure they continue to be welcoming safe and inviting.

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

Annually - Carry out annual maintenance work and undertake path cutting (x 2 a year) with rides cut to a minimum of 2 metres in width.

Entrances to be kept clear and maintained so that they are welcoming and inviting with estate works in good order and operating correctly.

2016 - replace footbridge in 1b

2017 - replace kissing gate and management gate at main entrance. Replace wooden name board sign at main entrance.

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## 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	0.30	Alder species	1930	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
Majority mixed broadleaved woodland including Alder, Sycamore, Ash with occasional oak ranging from 20- 60 years in age with some specimen exotics including Lawsons cypress. Understorey species include Hazel (predominantly), Sallow and Rowan. Sycamore is regenerating along the edge of the ride. Ground flora includes Broad buckler fern, Male Fern and Dogs mercury.							
1b	0.50	other willows	1985	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
Largely open on site of former lake. Now dominated by Nettles, Hogweed and Rosebay Willow herb with meadowsweet, Butterbur, Water Mint and Lesser Celendine common in marshy areas. Mature Ash, Cherry, Beech and oak are found along the boundary on drier ground, together with occasional exotic species including Laurel, Rhodendron, Lawsons Cypress and Copper Beech. Self grown semi-mature Alder and Willow are dominant to the south and are gradually encroaching open damp ground.							
1c	0.40	Ash	1988	null	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
Area of trees planted 1988 following clear fell of larch and beech stand. Species include predom. Oak, Ash, Wild cherry, Rowan, Hawthorn, Hawthorn, Holly. A few Beech and semi-mature wild cherry have been retained.							
1d	0.50	NULL	1993	null	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site

Small area of oak woodland some of which has been coppiced and an understorey of Hazel. Originally underplanted with Norway spruce and other mixed conifers but these were felled in 91 and underplanted in '93 with Oak, Wild cherry, Rowan, Field Maple and Hazel.

1e	0.90	Ash	1930	null	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
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Ash stand planted circa 1945 and thinned 1988, with understorey of elder and hawthorn. Bramble, bluebell and yellow archangel also present. Some rhododendron but this is not spreading rapidly. Compartment largely inaccessible steep, very wet, with high risk of damage if further felling operations were to take place.

1f	0.30	Ash		null	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
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Stand of AH with occasional Oak approx 60-80 yrs old. With understorey of elder and HZ on very steep slope. Ash is regenerating through out. The ground flora is dominated by dogs mercury, Male Fern, and Broad Buckler Fern.

## 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.