



Park Coppice

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Park Coppice
Location:	Middleton Scriven
Grid reference:	SO672869, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 138
Area:	1.91 hectares (4.72 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Small but beautifully formed, this small wood is an important landscape feature. There is a simple but enjoyable circular walk within the wood although it can get boggy during the winter. There is evidence of the historic management of the wood in the number of multi-stemmed hazels to be found. It is well used by local people and, despite being somewhat isolated, would repay the effort of a visit.

2.2 Extended Description

Park Coppice is Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland forming an important landscape feature approximately three miles south-west of the town of Bridgnorth. The site is quite isolated and surrounded by arable land on three of its four boundaries with the public highway (a quiet lane) forming the boundary to the north of the site. Despite its small size, the wood holds tremendous visual appeal with some beautiful paths interspersed amongst the range of woodland trees, shrubs and ground flora present. Historic management through coppicing is evident in parts of the site, in particular along the western boundary and at the ride edges in the northern portion of the site, where a number of large multi-stemmed Hazel specimens are present.

The wood consists of two different stand types. The northern half is mature oak woodland with birch and an under-storey of Hazel and Sallow. The southern half of the site is dominated by Ash, Alder, Oak and Birch with an under-storey comprising of Hazel, Holly, Elder, Field maple and Sallow. There is an ancient pond in the north-west corner of the site adding to the bio-diversity of the wood. There is a simple but very attractive circular walk taking visitors through the two different stands types. This is easily negotiated in the drier months but can become wet and boggy in wetter winter weather. The wood is not heavily used perhaps due to its more isolated location. Access for both public and management purposes is directly off the main public highway at the northern entrance point and includes a stile and a 12 foot management gate. There is no formal parking available at the site.

The Key features which largely determine the nature of the management of the site are; F1 Informal Public Access. F2 Ancient Semi-natural Woodland.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Park Coppice lies on the edge of the village of Middleton Scriven. The main entrance is against a minor road running west out of the village. Access into the wood is gained by going over a stile. There is a lovely short lollipop shaped circular ride running through the site. Which is mostly flat and quite dry underfoot in anything but very wet weather conditions when it does get a bit saturated up along the first stretch of ride just inside the main entrance. There is no parking available easily nearby with exception of pulling in just in front of the main gate where, if you're careful you can get one vehicle off the road. Care should be taken in wet weather conditions however, as it can be easy to get stuck there!

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 or 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 Trust's objective to ensure no further loss of ancient woodland will be achieved through maintaining Park Coppice as an area of SNAW high forest. Park Coppice will be a structurally and species diverse woodland with a mix of tree age classes.

There are recent indications that the level of natural regeneration of both trees and shrubs is not sufficient to ensure the long-term future of the wood, consequently, some judicial enhancement planting may be necessary to maintain its status.

The woodland Trust's corporate objective of increasing enjoyment of woodland will be achieved at Park Coppice by ensuring that public access is maintained at the site. This will involve making sure that the entrance point is well maintained and welcoming to visitors with appropriate signage which identifies the wood and that the existing paths are kept free of encroaching vegetation and fallen trees.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

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

5.1 Informal Public Access

Description

Public access is via a stile located along the northern boundary of the site, off the main public highway. There is signage welcoming visitors at this entrance point including a wooden name plaque. There is a very pleasant circular walk that takes visitors through the site including the glade area and the two distinctive stands of woodland.

Significance

Despite the size of the site, the wood provides a very pleasant and tranquil place to visit. There is much to see in terms of the variety of trees and shrubs species that grow here, which adds to the sites considerable visual appeal to visiting members of the public.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:-

Wetness of site for long periods of the year can make access on foot or by vehicle for maintenance purposes difficult and potentially damaging.

The sites location and size i.e. surrounded by arable fields means it is more susceptible to the side effects of intensive management (e.g. pesticide spray drift), and as such could make the site sensitive to change due to surrounding agricultural pressures.

Opportunities :-

Path and open areas have responded well to management work to maintain and enhance them e.g. mowing and clearance of overhanging vegetation. Provision of access also appears to be adequate in terms of the level of visitor use at the site.

Factors Causing Change

Change in level of visitor usage.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

In accordance with the Woodland Trusts Management Approach the site to remain open to the public for quiet informal recreation and is welcoming with appropriate signage at the public entrance point, and paths which are clearly visible and easily negotiated through the site.

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

Paths will be mown twice annually through the annual Estate Management programme following EMC specification 2.1. While carrying out this work, the entrance point will be inspected and maintained to ensure that it is welcoming and in good order with signs cleaned and replacement or repairs undertaken as necessary. Fallen birch trees will be sectioned where they obstruct footpaths or open areas.

5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Park Coppice is Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland forming an important landscape feature approximately three miles south-west of the town of Bridgnorth. The site is surrounded by arable land on three of its four boundaries with the public highway (a quiet lane) forming the boundary to the north of the site. Despite its small size, the wood holds tremendous visual appeal with some beautiful paths interspersed amongst the range of woodland trees, shrubs and ground flora present. Coppice management is evident in parts of the wood, in particular, along the western boundary and at the ride edges in the northern portion of the site, where a number of large multi stemmed Hazel specimens are present. The wood consists of two markedly different stand types. The northern half is mature oak woodland with birch and an under-storey of Hazel and Sallow. The southern half of the site is dominated by mature and semi-mature Ash, Alder, Oak and Birch with an understorey comprising of occasional Hazel, Holly, Elder, Field maple and Sallow. In both stand types a recent Woodland condition assessment indicates that the level of natural regeneration of both trees and shrubs may not be sufficient to ensure the long-term future of the wood. Consequently it will be necessary to undertake some enhancement planting where canopy gaps allow during this and subsequent plan periods.

Significance

No further loss of ancient woodland" is one of the Woodland Trusts four core objectives. The importance of Park Coppice as a SNAW is made greater by the absence of similar woodland nearby. It is a site that despite its size had a great richness and variation in terms of woodland and plant communities that exist here.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

The sites size and location, rather like an island amidst a sea of arable land, makes it somewhat isolated and sensitive to the side effects of treatments to the surrounding land e.g. pesticide spray drift.

Lack of natural regeneration of both trees and shrubs.

Factors Causing Change

Pollution through pesticide/chemical drift through neighbouring agricultural land

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Native mixed broadleaved woodland which is structurally and species diverse and capable of long-term sustainability. Structural diversity is desired to stimulate natural regeneration and maintain wood edge habitats along the ride sides. Dead wood levels to be increased through retention of standing (where safe to do so) and fallen deadwood and also through no produce from any silvicultural operations being extracted.

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

Control of bracken in canopy gaps through mechanical processes (cutting or rolling) to create a better environment for enhancement planting and potential native regeneration.

Enhancement planting of both native trees and shrubs in canopy gaps to be undertaken in 2020/21 where appropriate to ensure sufficient long-term recruitment. Species planned to include Birch, Oak, Field maple, Hazel and Holly in the gaps which have been created by the collapse of bracken dominated senescent Silver birches in the central part of the site. These will have been sectioned in 2016-2017. See F1 above.

Further planting of both native trees and shrubs will occur if further canopy gaps are created by collapse during the rest of this plan period. Opportunity gaps to be monitored as part of Key Feature Observations.

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	1.14	Oak (pedunculate)	1930	Min-intervention	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
<p>This compartment consists of 0.94 hectares of mature oak and birch woodland with Hazel and sallow as the dominant understorey species, and 0.2 ha of open ground dominated by bracken. There is also an old pond in the north-western corner of this compartment.</p>							
1b	0.86	Alder species	1960	Min-intervention	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
<p>Predominantly ash woodland (60 years) with alder and birch. The understorey consists of hazel, holly, elder and field maple. Alder and sallow are dominant where the ground is wet along the southern boundary. Guelder rose and aspen are present. Pedunculate oak and ash are regenerating through out this area. The ground flora, in which bramble is common, is diverse and includes Gypsywort, Ragged robin, Dog's mercury, Bugle, Wild Angelica, Meadow sweet, Enchanters nightshade and Marsh bedstraw.</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.