



# Meadow Park

## Management Plan 2013-2018

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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>	Meadow Park
<b>Location:</b>	Willand
<b>Grid reference:</b>	ST033105, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 192
<b>Area:</b>	1.13 hectares (2.79 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Three small chunks of woodland enclosed within a housing estate form Meadow Park Woodland in Willand. The surrounding houses benefit from pathways through shady woodland and local people can see squirrels just outside their front doors.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Meadow Park, Willand consists of three small blocks of pole stage secondary woodland isolated by housing development in the mid-1980s. The land was passed to the Trust as a development gift in 1988 for the long term retention as woodland and protected by a Tree Preservation Order at that time. The woodland borders mainly domestic gardens and the B3181 a busy main road through the village, an effective trunk road link to the M5. Willand Parish Council has a close interest in the wood and local councillors and the tree warden provide a link to the local community.

The woods are level and the soils heavily compacted by constant foot traffic. Seasonal flooding takes place in the northernmost corner of Compartment 1a and wet weather of 2012 highlighted the absence of any accommodation works to deal with site drainage at the time of the housing development, which truncates the old boundary ditch.

Pedestrian entrances in and out of each separate block of woodland are linked with paths providing shortcuts between housing areas and as a means of avoiding the main road. Along the southern edge the wood borders farmland and footpath from which informal access is possible.

The secondary woodland is dominated by pole state sycamore and beech with occasional mature trees confined to historic field boundaries.

Management access is available into each block.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Meadow Park consists of 3 small separate blocks of woodland, situated in the village of Willand (population approximately 3750)

Access can be gained at several points to the plots, from the B3181 which runs adjacent to the south-east boundary, and from surrounding estate roads. Access points are mainly pedestrian squeeze gaps and the path network is flat but of an unmodified natural earth and grass surface so there will be locally uneven areas. On street parking is possible in the surrounding residential streets.

There is a bus stop just outside the main woodland block on the B3181 and others on Meadow Park Road. The nearest train station is found at Tiverton Parkway, approximately 2 miles to the north. Information taken from Traveline website May 2007. Access to the woodland blocks from the bus stops is via estate roads with pavements, although 2 of the blocks are accessed by crossing short stretches of public verge/open space.

For more information see [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or phone 0871 200 22 33

The nearest public toilets are approximately 4 miles away at Station Road in Cullompton (facilities include those for disabled people with a RADAR key; not open 24 hours) Information taken from Mid Devon District Council website [www.middevon.gov.uk](http://www.middevon.gov.uk) as at May 2007

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## 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

To develop a structurally diverse broadleaf woodland. Informal public access will be encouraged by maintaining safe paths and entrances.



## 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

Surrounded by modern housing, the woods are used regularly as a short-cut between areas of houses and to the main road but also for recreation by local dog walkers and children.

#### Significance

Corporate objective: Aim 3 - Inspiring everyone to enjoy and values woods and trees.

The paths through the woods avoid the use of roads so are safer to use. The close proximity of the housing means that the woods are easily accessible to a large number of people.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Dumping of waste and vandalism to trees spoils the enjoyment of others. Dog litter.

Opportunities: Engage local community through parish councillors and parish tree warden.

#### Factors Causing Change

1. Soil compaction on paths
2. Waterlogging.
3. Site abuse

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

The woods will be enjoyed by local people for years to come. It is likely that there will further housing development in the immediate area which will mean that the site becomes one of the few public access woodlands in the area.

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

The short term objective here is to ensure that the level of public access provision is maintained and limit deterioration. This level of access will enable year-round use of the site for all able bodied members of the public.

1. There will be regular visits (3 times a year) to collect litter and broken branches, repair vandalism etc.
2. Paths and entrances will be maintained twice a year
3. Simple methods of communication with local people will be considered, e.g posters and responding to local enquiries.
4. Seek to resolve some localised flooding of paths by reforming drainage ditch and creating drainage lines in part of the wood.

## 5.2 Local Woodland Habitat

### Description

The woods are set amongst relatively recent (1980/1990s) housing developments, near the M5 on the edge of Willand village. The woods provide a "green" infrastructure and landscape feature amongst the housing development.

### Significance

Corporate objectives: Aim 2 - Protecting native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future

The woodland contributes to the habitat action plans at local, regional and national level, no BAPs species known to be on the site, however, next boxes for bats and birds have been erected and are monitoring by enthusiasts locally.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

1. Close proximity of housing limits conventional "management"
2. TPO restricts free management.
3. Seasonal flooding (site drainage restricted by development).

Opportunities:

1. Link to local parish council and local tree warden.

### Factors Causing Change

1. Constant safety issues requiring action.
2. Self actioned "tree surgery" by neighbours.
3. Invasive non-native species, including garden escapees.
4. Site abuse, vandalism, fly tipping, dog fouling etc.
5. Soil compaction

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To develop a structurally diverse broadleaf woodland, supporting a range of species,

To minimise "urbanisation" and attendant abuses and garden exotics

Older trees will be retained where they do not pose a tree safety risk to help diversify the age structure within the wood.

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

1. During the plan period the woodland will be thinned to reduce overstocking of tall pole stage stems, in order to limit future tree safety issues and to allow significant trees to develop more stable canopy structures, especially along garden boundaries.
2. Inspect the site annually for tree safety issues
3. When tree safety works are carried out, take the opportunity to open up the canopy for natural regeneration
4. Control urbanisation and attendant site abuses, including the control on non native species.
5. Contact Mid Devon DC to request lifting of TPO to free management options.

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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	0.53	Mixed broadleaves	1950	High forest		Informal Public Access, Local Woodland Habitat	Tree Preservation Order
<p>Mainly even-aged pole and late pole stage sycamore, with beech, hornbeam, sweet chestnut, ash and occasional mature boundary oaks. There is a sparse under-storey of regenerating sycamore, holly, ivy and bramble. An extensive area of "bamboo" has been developing but this has recently been treated to control its spread. Ground cover is limited due to compaction, shading, ad hoc path development, dogs etc.</p>							
1b	0.20	Mixed broadleaves	1998	High forest		Informal Public Access, Local Woodland Habitat	Tree Preservation Order
<p>Restocked in 1998 with Wild Cherry, Rowan and Birch and now established. The area is quite brambly, regenerating sycamore and ash forms part of the stocking component. This small area adds diversity to the canopy structure of the main wood.</p>							
2a	0.39	Mixed broadleaves	1950	High forest		Informal Public Access, Local Woodland Habitat	Tree Preservation Order
<p>This compartment comprises the small outliers of the main block. As elsewhere canopy is dominated by late pole stage sycamore although ash, oak, cherry form a relatively greater component in the north eastern block and its structure is more broken. In the far western block the understorey is dense with holly but laurel is a potential threat on the margins.</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.