



Stevney Spinney

Management Plan 2019-2024

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Stevney Spinney
Location:	Outgate, Hawkshead
Grid reference:	SD355999, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 97
Area:	0.18 hectares (0.44 acres)
Designations:	National Park

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A very small triangle of wood used mainly by local people. It is also used by walkers who use it as a link between the public right of way to the south and another public right of way to the north so that they can avoid the busy and narrow road that runs alongside the wood.

2.2 Extended Description

Stevney Spinney is a small triangular shaped mature woodland located on the northern outskirts of the tiny village of Outgate near Hawkshead, Ambleside. It is a small but significant landscape feature in a relatively quiet area in the heart of the Lake District National Park. The wood is bounded by the B5286 to the west, buildings and gardens to the south and unimproved pasture to the east. It was gifted to the Woodland Trust in 1989 and is thought to have been part of the grounds and entrance to Stevney House. This is reflected in the trees planted in the 1920s, including deodar cedar, beech and horse chestnut as well as small leaved lime, sessile oak, Lawson Cypress and European larch. There is just one mature ash tree approx 20ft tall (2018) in the south-west corner. Planting and regeneration since then has been mainly of native species with hazel, wild cherry, rowan, yew, ash, hornbeam, hawthorn and blackthorn and the wood is now very mixed. The ground flora is fairly diverse, mainly consisting of native woodland species with a small number of introduced exotics. It is well visited by local people and also by walkers who use it as a link between the public footpath in the south and Spicka Lane (public bridleway) to the north of the wood, thus avoiding the busy narrow road.

Tree safety is extremely important and dominates most management considerations.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

A pedestrian gate provides public access with two stone steps leading from the road. There is a permissive path running north south within the woodland which is used by walkers as a link from the public right of way on the southern boundary to Spicka Lane (bridleway) to the north; avoiding use of the busy narrow road through the village. Access from the south is via a wall gap. No parking exists adjacent to the woodland and in the village parking is restricted. However, the Outgate Inn in the village is nearby and does have a car park for use of customers.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The Trusts long term vision is to conserve this mature woodland as mixed mainly native high forest, as a landscape feature, for its wildlife value and for public access and amenity, with a mixture of native and non-native trees to reflect its history and current situation. The mixture of species is likely to move slowly towards more native and naturalised species through natural processes as many of the non-native trees will not regenerate. Tree safety requirements, both long and short term, are likely to dominate most management considerations. Invasive non-native species will be monitor and controlled as necessary, to conserve and increase the native ancient woodland elements.

Informal access will be maintained at least current levels with two entrances and a single north-south path especially as the wood provides a safe path linking two public rights of way in a well visited area by locals and tourists.

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

The main public access to Stevney Spinney is from the public right of way along the southern boundary through a wall gap the B5286 via a wooden gate and two stone steps, and also from the wooden gate located in the north west corner of the wood. The wood is used regularly by locals and also walkers as a link from the public footpath adjacent to the southern boundary through to Spicka Lane (bridleway) to the north thus avoiding use of the busy narrow road through the village. There is no parking adjacent to the woodland and in the village parking is restricted. However, the Outgate Inn in the village is nearby and does have a car park for use of customers.

Significance

The woodland is extremely important as a link between the public rights of way to the north and south of the woodland and to provide a safer route than the busy public road. In its own right Stevney Spinney offers a small area of woodland for informal and peaceful recreation for locals and visitors to the area; this is one of the Trusts key outcomes. Both activities promote the Woodland Trusts aims and objectives and also make people aware of woodlands managed by the Trust thus encouraging enjoyment of woodland and gives the public the opportunity to experience and appreciate wildlife.

Opportunities & Constraints

Two public rights of way exist around the woodland and walkers accessing Lake Windermere and Hawkshead frequently use both using the wood to avoid walking on the road. Overall public access is constrained by the size of the woodland although there may be opportunities to extend the woodland and the footpath. As the woodland is very small and parking in the locality restricted extending the path network within the woodland is not considered to be important and would be difficult without altering the nature of the site.

Factors Causing Change

Tipping of garden waste

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The Trust will maintain informal access to the woodland it line with current low level of use.

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

Maintain pedestrian access annually. Litter pick site and remove material as necessary. Undertake regular safety inspections to ensure safety of visitors, surrounding dwellings and road frontage, as per safety database. Continue to involve local people by consultation and posters where appropriate. All work to be carried to to standard Woodland Trust specifications.

5.2 Natural Secondary Woodland

Description

The woodland is mixed high forest, with native and non-native species trees and shrubs, many of which are mature, and a predominantly native ground flora. See reference file for species lists. For a small site, it provides a good predominantly native wildlife habitat, and has a varied age structure. The non-native trees will generally not regenerate. There are some potentially invasive non-native plants, introduced from planting or garden rubbish. Regeneration of trees and shrubs is varied, and browsing levels relatively low as it is adjacent to a busy road and has frequent use, so the regeneration will succeed where light levels allow. It has high tree safety requirements.

Significance

Whilst the surrounding area is extensively wooded the immediate locality around Outgate has few woodland areas consequently Stevney Spinney is an important local landscape feature within a rural mosaic of hedgerows and low intensity grazing and large gardens. The woodland provides cover, food and nesting sites for a variety of bird species and small mammals, as the woodland matures and develops, the diversity of the habitats will increase for both flora and fauna.

Opportunities & Constraints

The opportunity exists to demonstrate how a wood retains its mature canopy and is conserved as stable high forest, whilst moving gradually towards native or naturalised species with a diverse mix of a range of species and ages of trees and shrubs, through natural succession. It can also demonstrate how this can be achieved with major constraints of a small wood that has high tree safety considerations due to the proximity of neighbouring houses, gardens and road frontage. In the past, and if garden rubbish dumping occurs, it is possible that non-native species may colonise the woodland. This is an opportunity to engage people to inform people of the threats posed to native woodland by invasive non-native plants, but also how benign non-natives can be accepted.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive non-native species, tipping of garden waste, removal of trees for safety reasons. Ash dieback (appeared in the area in 2017, but only 1 mature ash in the wood).

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will be managed as continuous canopy high forest, and it is envisaged that composition will slowly change naturally as the non-natives die naturally and do not regenerate, to be replaced by regenerating native and naturalised species. Deadwood is likely to accumulate due to this and the high tree safety needs. Invasive non native species may be a problem but should be localised and controlled. The boundaries will remain secure, and stock proof to the grazing field on the east.

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

Continue to monitor invasive non-native every plan period. Assess medium-term tree safety needs by end of 2020, and plan for silvicultural work to mitigate these by selecting and thinning if appropriate. Regularly inspect all boundaries (every three years) and assess maintenance needs; working with neighbouring owners as appropriate.

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	0.99	Mixed broadleaves	1920	High forest	Legal issues, People issues (+tve & -tve), Services & wayleaves	Informal Public Access, Natural Secondary Woodland	National Park

This small wood, extending to 0.19ha, is made up of a number of mature trees dating from 1920s, many of which are non-native with younger mainly native tree species planted and regenerated since the 1950s. The wood is now high forest, with a varied mix of native and non-native trees and shrub species, of various ages, with a good, varied structure.

The ground flora is fairly diverse, mainly consisting of ancient woodland species with a small number of introduced exotics which are controlled if invasive.

There is a short, single permissive footpath through the wood, which is surprisingly well-used and an alternative route to walking along the busy rural road adjacent. Management access is direct from the road through a ten foot wooden gate which has a Woodland Trust Welcome sign.

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.