



Shell Brook Wood

Management Plan 2017-2022

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Shell Brook Wood
Location:	Overton on Dee
Grid reference:	SJ348409, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 117
Area:	2.40 hectares (5.93 acres)
Designations:	NULL

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Shell Brook Wood lies on sloping ground alongside Shell Brook, a tributary of the River Dee, which also forms the eastern boundary. It was replanted in 1990 with native mixed broadleaf trees including ash, sessile oak, and wild cherry.

2.2 Extended Description

Shell Brook Wood lies on sloping ground alongside Shell Brook, a tributary of the River Dee which also forms the eastern boundary. The wood is an integral part of a wooded valley.

The Trust acquired the site, formerly an area of woodland creation, in early 1987 shortly after most of the trees including Elm, Ash, Beech and Sycamore had been clear felled in 1985. Following acquisition, singling of native natural regeneration and the cutting of sycamore regrowth was undertaken along with further restocking with native mixed broadleaved including Ash, Sessile Oak, Wild Cherry, Alder, Hazel and Field Maple in 1990. Although Shell Brook Wood is not officially listed within the Ancient Woodland Inventory (England), its close proximity to neighbouring ancient woodland and the quantity of ancient woodland features it contains suggest its origin may indeed be ancient but overlooked as part of the original Ancient Woodland Survey. There are a number of large, old deadwood stumps dense areas of ancient woodland ground flora. Immediate surrounding land use is a mixture of pasture and secondary woodland with Ancient Woodland lying in close proximity just a few fields away to the west and south of the site.

The wood falls into two distinct areas in terms of species distribution and structure. All but a small section in the very south of the site forms the area previously cleared and then replanted by the Trust. In addition to the restocking there is a great deal of successful natural regeneration within this area. Alder is particularly prevalent in the wet flush which traverses the southern section of the site. The sub canopy is developing well and dominated by Elder, Hazel and Holly. The other distinct but small area forming the southernmost extension of the wood consists of more mature trees species including Ash, Sycamore, Small Leaved and Common Lime, Alder, Beech with a few Norway Spruce and European Larch.

The site was acquired with management access only and is, therefore, not open to the public at this time.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

No public access

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The Woodland Trusts objectives and long term intentions for Shell Brook Wood are determined after balanced consideration of 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 50 years time, Shell Brook Wood will be a well-structured, species diverse predominately native broadleaved high forest woodland. Natural regeneration will be frequent as will be standing and fallen deadwood with a number of specimens developing into mature and veteran trees of the future. The shrub layer will include regenerating native tree and shrub species. Ancient woodland flowers and plants will have spread and be well represented within the ground flora along with an array of bramble, ferns, mosses, honeysuckle and Ivy. Invasive species e.g. Himalayan Balsam will be absent or rare.

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 Secondary Woodland

Description

A semi-mature area of woodland containing a mixture of species including Ash, Sycamore, Small-Leaved and Common Lime, Alder, Beech with a scattering of Norway spruce and European Larch. Hazel and Holly form a discontinuous sub-canopy and as a consequence of low light levels the ground layer is sparse being composed of Ivy, Mosses, Dog's Mercury, Bluebell, Lesser Celandine and Herb Robert.

An area of woodland creation consisting of a mixture of native and non-native broadleaved trees including Ash, Sessile and Pedunculate Oak, Wild Cherry, Small-Leaved and Common lime, Alder Beech, Sycamore and a scattering of Norway Spruce and European Larch.

The majority of the site (2.22ha) was felled and subsequently replanted in 1990 with natural regeneration occurring throughout the site.

Significance

The site while small, forms part an important area of woodland along the valley and the edges of the River Dee. The site has already shown positive signs towards the development of a rich and interesting conservation mix of woodland and associated flora and faunal communities.

Opportunities & Constraints

The opportunity exists to allow naturally paced development within the wood thus minimising interruption to the intimate and complex cycles between lower plants/ fungi/ invertebrates and the larger woodland structure allowing the widest possible range of species and habitats to evolve and survive.

Factors Causing Change

Frequent wind damage, invasive species e.g. Himalayan Balsam

Long term Objective (50 years+)

In 50 years time, Shell Brook Wood will be a well-structured, species diverse predominately native broadleaved high forest woodland. Natural regeneration will be frequent as will be standing and fallen deadwood with a number of specimens developing into mature and veteran trees of the future. The shrub layer will include regenerating native tree and shrub species. Ancient woodland flowers and plants will have spread and be well represented within the ground flora along with an array of bramble, ferns, mosses, honeysuckle and Ivy. Invasive species e.g. Himalayan Balsam will be absent or rare.

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

Development towards this sites long term objective by way of its species and stand structure is currently proceeding well through natural processes. As such, no intervention is required within the next plan period.

Monitoring through the Woodland Condition Assessment will continue to be undertaken as part of the sites systematic plan review cycle (10 years time for Category 3 sites such as Shell Brook Wood). This will ensure any undesirable or unexpected changes are noted and any appropriate action taken as required.

In addition to this, two further interim Key Feature observation visits will be undertaken within the next 4 years (2017-21) to monitor presence of Himalayan Balsam with active control management initiated if required.

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	2.20	Alder species	1990	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Secondary Woodland	
<p>An area of Woodland creation, the majority of which (Elm Ash, Beech and Sycamore) was clear felled in 1985 by the previous land owner, and restocked with a mixture of native broadleaved species including Ash, Sessile Oak, Wild cherry, Alder, Hazel and Field The canopy is augmented by Alder, Sycamore, and Lime coppice together with a small number of Beech trees. The Alder is particularly prevalent in the wet flush which traverses the southern section of the site. Elder, Hazel and Holly are present in the understorey.</p> <p>The ground flora is diverse and has many of the characteristics of that of ancient semi-natural woodland. At higher levels bramble and honeysuckle predominate, but closer to the river, the following species are common and widely dispersed; Dog's Mercury, Ivy, Ground Ivy, Ramsons, White Deadnettle, Herb Robert, Snowdrop, Wood sedge, Lesser Celandine, Bluebell, Cleavers, Sweet Woodruff and Opposite-Leaved Golden Saxifrage.</p>							
1b	0.21	Ash	1950	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Secondary Woodland	
<p>A semi-mature area of woodland containing a mixture of species including Ash, Sycamore, Small-Leaved and Common Lime, Alder, Beech with a scattering of Norway spruce and European Larch. Hazel and Holly form a discontinuous sub-canopy and as a consequence of low light levels the ground layer is sparse being composed of Ivy, Mosses, Dog's Mercury, Bluebell, Lesser Celandine and Herb Robert.</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.