



Crumpton Hill Wood

Management Plan 2010-2015

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Crumpton Hill Wood
Location:	Great Malvern
Grid reference:	SO760488, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 150
Area:	1.58 hectares (3.90 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Other, Site of Special Scientific Interest

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A small ancient woodland site, one of a series along the ridges of Wenlock limestone north of the Malvern Hills. The main woodland canopy is high forest sessile oak but ash, cherry and downy birch also grow here together with the wild service tree.

2.2 Extended Description

Situated at the northern end of the Malvern Hills, Crumpton Hill Wood lies within the Malvern Hills AONB and National Character Area 103. This area features a long ridge of prominent hills of varying geology, dominating the landscape across Herefordshire and Worcestershire but also visible from Shropshire to Gloucestershire, Gwent and Powys. Crumpton Hill sits on calcareous soils formed over Silurian shale and siltstone. Due to the heavy clay content in the deep soils, the ground is often saturated during winter months and may remain damp for much of the year, with the water table not far below the surface.

The landscape of NCA 103 is characterized by its mixture of small pastoral systems, orchards, small woods and old hedgrows giving way to heathland and scrub on the higher hills.

Surrounded by hedges and banks, the wood is primarily oak of former coppice origin, which was converted to high forest in the 1930's. Whilst oak makes up the dominant canopy species, the wood also contains wild service, ash, lime, wych elm, birch, field maple and aspen in lower number, either within or beneath the canopy. Hazel would have been a key shrub within the former coppice but is now more sparse, with holly becoming dominant. Other shrubs include spindle, wild privet, dogwood and guelder rose. In total, 22 species of trees and shrubs have been recorded at Crumpton Hill and over 100 species of ground flora including herb paris, sanicle, woodruff and violet helleborine. The rich and diverse ground flora lead to this Ancient Semi-Natural Wood (ASNW) being designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1975.

With a gently sloping north-easterly aspect, the wood is sheltered from the worst of the prevailing winds, and on deep soils remains wind firm.

The wood is approached via a public footpath (directly linked to the Worcestershire Way long distance path) south of the wood and then NE along the field edge behind houses to a management gate. The whole woodland is open to informal public access but a circular path around the northern half is maintained for easy access. Parking is limited locally and most access to the wood will be on foot. The wood is less than 2 miles from Great Malvern and 1 mile from the village of Storridge on the A4103 (the 417 bus from Worcester to Ledbury stops at Storridge Church).

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Crumpton Hill Wood lies within the community of Crumpton Hill, some 2 miles NW of Great Malvern. Just in Herefordshire, it is on the Worcestershire border at grid reference SO 760489.

Car parking near the wood is limited and care should be taken not to obstruct gateways and entrances. The wood is approached via a public footpath (directly linked to the Worcestershire Way long distance path) south of the wood and then NE along the field edge behind houses to a management gate. The whole woodland is open to informal public access but a circular path around the northern half is regularly cut for easy access. There are no other entrances to the wood.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long term policy for Crumpton Hill Wood is to maintain this rich and diverse SSSI woodland with the abundance of ground flora, shrub and tree species it was originally designated for. The woodland will be maintained under a continuous cover system, allowing new canopy trees to regenerate from seed, diversifying the structure of the wood and providing sufficient light levels for the rich ground flora to thrive. This irregular system will require small interventions to thin the canopy trees at intervals driven by our woodland condition assessments and SSSI condition assessments from Natural England.

Informal public access will be maintained and a circular footpath, along with gates and entrance infrastructure will be maintained annually.

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

Access to the wood is via a public footpath from either Crumpton Hill Road or Great Malvern. A management and pedestrian gate provide access into the wood where a maintained circular footpath takes the visitor around much of the wood. The footpath is on level and gently sloping ground with some areas becoming wet during winter months. Although small in size, Crumpton Hill Wood provides a pleasant and quiet experience, and a chance for visitors to explore an ancient woodland with displays of bluebells in the spring. The entrance gate has a plaque to commemorate the help of Mr Donald Parr in acquiring the woodland.

Significance

Crumpton Hill Wood provides a chance for visitors to explore a quiet ancient woodland site, with displays of woodland flowers during the spring. There are many such small woods within the wider landscape but not all provide public access or contain the rich flora recorded at Crumpton Hill.

Opportunities & Constraints

Access via public footpaths
 Proximity to urban centres
 Lack of parking facility

Factors Causing Change

Impact of tree diseases such as ash die back or acute oak decline

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Crumpton Hill Wood will remain open to informal public access, with a maintained circular footpath, and will remain a pleasant and safe woodland for visitors to walk and explore.

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

Crumpton Hill Wood will remain open to informal public access, with a maintained circular footpath, and will remain a pleasant and safe woodland for visitors to walk and explore.

5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Crumpton Hill Wood has had a wide diversity of species recorded, including over 22 species of tree and shrub and over 100 species of ground flora. The closed canopy woodland is leading to a decline in structure, the abundance of ground flora and an increase of holly in the shrub layer, which leads to further declines in light, ground flora and diversity.

The woodland contains a boundary bank and remnant hedges on both the northern and southern sides. Some of the oldest oak trees can also be found here c150-200 years. A typical ancient woodland flora can be found throughout but particularly where light levels are higher around the woodland margins and away from areas of dense holly growth. Herb paris, lesser celandine, enchanters nightshade, bluebell, yellow archangel and dogs mercury are good examples.

Significance

The Woodland Trust believes that ancient woodland is irreplaceable and aims to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future. Crumpton Hill Wood has been designated a SSSI for its importance and species diversity within the landscape. It is important for the Woodland trust to maintain this status and diversity through resilience in the face of climate change and an increased threats from pests and diseases.

Opportunities & Constraints

The development of veteran and ancient trees
 A woodland containing a diverse structure and rich ground flora
 Favourable SSSI status
 Limited management access via a neighbours field

Factors Causing Change

Tree disease, including ash die back or acute oak decline
 Climate change
 Impact from rabbits and deer on regeneration and ground flora

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain woodland cover with good structural diversity and ageing veteran trees, rich and diverse ground flora and abundant levels of deadwood; providing a resilient woodland ecosystem rich in wildlife and species diversity.

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

To restore structural diversity and increase light for ground flora by thinning the canopy and allowing natural regeneration to develop. The heavily shading holly within the shrub layer will be thinned to increase species diversity in both the ground flora and the shrub layer.

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	1.54	Oak (sessile)	1930	High forest		Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Other, Site of Special Scientific Interest

Primarily consisting of singled oak coppice stools with planted oaks in between, creating an even aged closed canopy woodland with poor structure. Wild service and ash form secondary canopy trees, scattered throughout, with wych elm and small leaved lime present in small numbers sub-canopy. Shrub species include sparse and scattered guelder rose, wild privet, hazel and elderberry with holly becoming dominant. declining light levels from the closed canopy oak and increasing abundance of holly has lead to a marked decline in the abundance of ground flora, which remains diverse but is now scattered and less abundant. AWI species still present include herb paris, bluebell, dogs mercury, primrose spurge laurel and wood spurge. Historically noted for its rich ground flora (including over 100 species, many of which are classed under Section 41) and diversity of trees and shrubs (22 species recorded) many of which were present below the dominant canopy of oak.

Grey squirrels are present but damage appears to be minimal. Rabbit presence is seen throughout the wood, along with slots and droppings of Muntjac deer, but damage from both also appears minimal. As of summer 2019, the mature canopy ash appear to be unaffected by ash die-back and there are no sub-canopy ash present, which might be more susceptible.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2020	1a	Thin	1.58	111	175

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.