



# Berry Wood

## Management Plan 2016-2021

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## MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

### ITEM Page No.

Introduction

Plan review and updating

Woodland Management Approach

Summary

1.0 Site details

2.0 Site description

2.1 Summary Description

2.2 Extended Description

3.0 Public access information

3.1 Getting there

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 Long term policy

5.0 Key Features

5.1 Informal Public Access

5.2 Natural Secondary Woodland

6.0 Work Programme

Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Glossary

### MAPS

Access

Conservation Features

Management

## 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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>	Berry Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Warrington
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SJ621839, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 109
<b>Area:</b>	1.07 hectares (2.64 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Community Forest, Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

This small broadleaved wood provides a refuge for wildlife in particular birds in an urban setting. It consists of a mix of tree species including oak, birch, sycamore, ash, alder and willow with hazel, holly and elder in the understorey. The western half of the site remains wet most of the year and has a stream, pond and network of ditches, while the eastern half is drier ground with more diverse woodland ground flora including bluebells in spring. An informal unsurfaced footpath goes through the eastern part of the wood.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Berry Wood is a small (1.07 ha) mature woodland in Appleton to the south of Warrington. It is a flat site with a slight south westerly gradient and the surrounding landscape is suburban housing estates, open spaces and small blocks of woodland. To the north and west it is bordered by houses and gardens, to the south is an access track/ public footpath (Old Pewterspear Lane) and to the east of the wood is a tarmac footpath with street lighting.

The wood is a landscape feature of value to both people and wildlife in the local area. It was given to the Woodland Trust by the Commission for the New Towns in 1995 along with several other woodlands in the area.

Secondary broadleaved woodland is the key feature of the site. It consists of mature trees predominantly sycamore, silver birch, oak, willow, alder, rowan, and occasional ash and beech. Wych elm had been present in the canopy but was lost to Dutch elm disease although there is now some regeneration occurring. The understorey includes natural regeneration particularly sycamore, ash and beech along with the shrub layer of hazel, holly and elder which includes some under planting from the 1980s. There was extensive stands of rhododendron ponticum but this has been removed although some small amounts of regrowth are still present. The ground flora is quite sparse due largely to the previous domination of rhododendron and seasonal flooding, although there are patches of common woodland species in particular bluebells and some bramble in the areas of drier ground. There is a Tree Preservation Order covering the wood.

There is a stream linked to a network of shallow drainage ditches in the western half of the site which causes this part of the wood to remain wet for much of the year. This wetter area contains alder/ willow carr and also has a heavily silted and shaded pond by the western boundary. The stream flows out of the site through a piped culvert which passes under Old Pewterspear Lane to the south. In the past this culvert has been blocked causing water to back up and flood large areas of the wood and the neighbouring properties. There is a large privately owned ornamental pond outside the wood adjacent to the south western boundary which has an overflow into the stream.

Public access is permitted and there is an informal unsurfaced footpath in the eastern part of the wood with two access points from the tarmac path along the eastern boundary. It is thought the wood is only lightly used by local people for dog walking and sometimes by youths particularly in the summer. In the past the wood has suffered from littering and other anti-social issues including fires and vandalism to trees, but this is not a significant problem now.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Berry Wood is located off Old Pewterspear Lane near Longwood Road in Appleton.

There are two entrances into the wood from a tarmac footpath, off Old Pewterspear Lane. The footpath in the wood is unsurfaced and can be wet and boggy in places.

There is no official parking at the wood, although there is some limited parking available on nearby roads.

The nearest bus stop can be found on Longwood Road, about 100 metres to the south of Old Pewterspear Lane and near the Stoneacre Gardens turning. It is a short walk of a few minutes along pavements and paths to the woodland.

For more information on bus routes and locations of bus stops visit the Traveline website <http://www.traveline.org.uk/index.htm>

There are no public toilets in the vicinity.

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long term intention for Berry Wood is to maintain the continuity of high forest of mixed broadleaves with a diverse structure, species and age composition and sufficient natural regeneration to ensure the perpetuity of the woodland habitat.

Where possible the woodland will be allowed to grow and develop naturally as a refuge for wildlife, with mature and veteran trees retained and deadwood left on site where safe to do so. In order to develop a more diverse woodland structure natural regeneration will be encouraged across the site, however some intervention may be necessary to ensure the woodland is resilient for the future.

The main drivers for woodland management will be for tree safety, stand stability and public access. Public access will continue to be maintained at current levels with two public access points, signage and unsurfaced footpath providing informal public access to the site.



## 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

There is approximately 150 metres of unsurfaced permissive footpath in the wood which can be accessed from two entrances off the tarmac footpath along the eastern boundary. The wood has low numbers of visitors and is mainly used by local people for dog walking and youths to hang out in the summer months. Woodland Trust welcome signs are located at the entrances. There is a post and wire fence along the south western boundary beside Old Pewterspear Lane and the partial remains of an old metal Cheshire railing fence along the boundary beside the tarmac footpath.

#### Significance

In accordance with the Woodland Trust's general aims the wood is open to the public for quiet informal recreation. Although it is only small and surrounded by housing the wood serves as a valuable amenity and landscape feature in the local area and provides the opportunity for people to access woodland and nature close to where they live.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

The small size of the wood limits opportunities for increasing public access and community involvement.

Management access is limited and no vehicle access within the site is possible due to the wet ground, extensive ditch network and ponds.

The Trust will continue to encourage neighbours to take an interest in the wood.

#### Factors Causing Change

There is occasionally anti-social problems such as littering, camp fires and vandalism, but currently only at low levels.

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

The existing level and quality of public access will be maintained. The safety of visitors and our neighbours will be addressed through on-going tree safety inspections and site risk assessment generating remedial works as required.

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

The entrances and signs will be maintained annually and vegetation cleared along the footpath each year.

Litter will be removed and the site monitored for anti-social issues (fires, vandalism) annually as part of the EMC.

An assessment will be undertaken of the condition of the footpath, entrances and signs once during the plan period.

## 5.2 Natural Secondary Woodland

### Description

Berry wood has a mixed canopy of broadleaf species including oak, sycamore, silver birch, alder, willow, ash and localised beech. It has a reasonably diverse structure that includes mature and senescent trees, areas of young to semi-mature canopy, alder/ willow carr and patches of under planting from the 1980s. Wych elm was present in the canopy until the 1970s/80s when Dutch elm disease caused the loss of all the mature elms, however there is regeneration of young elm within the understorey which also includes sycamore, ash and beech regeneration along with rowan and field maple. The shrub layer is patchy and includes holly, hazel, hawthorn and elder. Rhododendron has been removed during the past few years although small patches of regrowth occur. The ground layer consists of bramble, localised patches of woodland ground flora species including bluebell, lesser celandine, ramson and areas of bare ground.

### Significance

The woodland provides an important habitat for wildlife, particularly for bird life, as well as acting as an amenity feature in the local landscape. Cheshire is one of the least wooded counties in England with less than 5% woodland cover. Even small woodlands such as this provide important landscape and ecological features. Some of the mature trees notably oak, ash and alder could be classed as veterans.

### Opportunities & Constraints

The woodland is small and surrounded by housing developments which is a constraint on management work.

Management access is limited (from Old Pewterspear Lane) with no vehicle access possible on site due to wet ground conditions, extensive ditch network and dense vegetation.

Opportunistic tree safety work may create gaps in the canopy to encourage natural regeneration and development of shrub/ ground flora.

There is a TPO which constrains carrying out silvicultural work.

### Factors Causing Change

Regrowth of invasive rhododendron which will spread if not controlled.

Flooding and standing water in parts of the wood due to the culvert being blocked has resulted in the early death of trees from waterlogging.

Fires and vandalism to trees has been an problem in the past although this is not currently an issue.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain a high forest canopy of mixed, broadleaved species with a varied structure in terms of species and age class distribution. The wood will be allowed to develop as naturally as possible and where safe to do so mature trees will be retained into senescence and standing columns of dead wood will be kept on site to provide important deadwood habitat. Tree safety will be a priority and may provide opportunities for natural regeneration of desirable species to develop as future canopy trees and the development of woodland ground flora. Rhododendron will be eradicated to encourage natural regeneration and the development of woodland ground flora.

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

Tree safety inspections will be undertaken biannually as part of the site risk assessment process for public safety in high risk zones (i.e. by houses and roads) and remedial work carried out. No silvicultural management work is planned during the plan period.

The culvert and silt trap by Old Pewterspear Lane will be inspected annually and debris/ blockages removed to prevent flooding in the wood.

Rhododendron regrowth will be monitored and controlled if necessary during the plan period.

The health of trees will be monitored at least once per plan period through the woodland condition assessment for any diseases, pests or other threats.

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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	1.04	Sycamore	1950	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Legal issues, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access, Natural Secondary Woodland	Community Forest, Tree Preservation Order

The compartment is on mainly flat ground with a gentle gradient running towards the south west of the site. It abuts housing to the west and north, an access track to the south and a surfaced footpath to the east. The canopy is dominated by oak and sycamore with other broadleaf species including silver birch, alder, willow, ash, rowan, field maple and beech. The understorey is slowly developing after the removal of rhododendron which was widespread. There is widespread natural regeneration, predominantly of sycamore, ash and beech along with some elm and the shrub layer consists of holly, elder and hazel (some of these were planted in the 1980's). Some areas of the compartment are very wet and a number of trees have become standing dead wood or collapsed. The ground flora contains a small range of typical woodland flora including bluebells, herb robert, nettle, bramble and ground ivy. There is a pond by the western boundary which is linked by a stream/ ditch network to an outflow culvert on the south eastern boundary next to Old Pewterspear Lane.

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**Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)**

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2016	1a	Ride edge Coppice	0.03	40	1
2017	1a	Selective Fell	0.01	200	2
2018	1a	Ride edge Coppice	0.03	40	1
2023	1a	Ride edge Coppice	0.03	40	1

## 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.