



Pewterspear Wood

Management Plan 2016-2021

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Pewterspear Wood
Location:	Warrington
Grid reference:	SJ622836, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 109
Area:	2.78 hectares (6.87 acres)
Designations:	Community Forest, Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This small mature broadleaf woodland comprises oak, birch, sycamore and an understorey of rowan, elder, holly, yew, hazel and hawthorn. Ground flora includes nettle, bramble, red campion, ivy, fern and patches of bluebell and foxglove. There is a pond and ditches in the northern part of the wood. A surfaced footpath route provides good public access in the wood. Although it is only small the woodland provides a wildlife refuge in the increasingly urban surroundings of Appleton to the south of Warrington.

2.2 Extended Description

Pewterspear wood is located in Appleton about 3 miles to the south of Warrington. The site was acquired by the Woodland Trust as part of a package of several sites handed over as a gift by the Commission for the New Towns in 1991. It is an area that is becoming more urbanised with new housing developments and roads being built as part of the expansion of Warrington. It is close to other green spaces and woodland in the local area including several other Woodland Trust owned woodlands at Lumb Brook Valley, Berry Wood and The Dell which are within a mile of the site.

It is secondary broadleaved woodland with the main canopy species comprising oak, silver birch, sycamore, rowan, Scots pine and ash. Alder and willow can be found around the pond, and other damp areas in the wood. The understory is well established and contains species such as hazel, holly, elder and yew, though much of this has been planted. Rhododendron used to dominate in parts of the woodland but was removed by the end of 2006, although occasional regrowth has occurred from cut stumps. The ground flora is typical of lowland mixed broadleaved woodland and contains species such as bluebell, bramble and red campion.

The soil tends to be loamy/clay with pockets of peat which makes the soil acidic. The site is flat with a ditch along the northern western and eastern boundaries with two ponds in the north corner of the wood. It is bounded by houses to the north and west, Longwood Road to the south, and an area of grassland and woodland to the east.

The wood is well used by local people mainly for dog walking and as a link to the local footpath and green space network. There is a circular path through the wood with two entrances; one in the south east corner of the wood via a footbridge and kissing gate from an adjoining green space/ wooded area which is owned by the local council; the other is in the north west corner of the wood via a crossing over a stone culvert and kissing gate that links onto Old Pewterspear Lane and Hatfield Gardens.

Informal public access and natural secondary woodland are the key features of the site. The woodland forms an important mature woodland landscape feature in the local area and provides a valuable habitat for wildlife in this urban area. There is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) covering the wood.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Pewterspear Wood is a 2.78ha urban woodland in the suburb of Appleton to the south of Warrington.

The site is accessed via footpaths leading to the entrance points from Longwood Road to the south of the woodland, Hatfield Gardens to the north west corner of the wood and an area of green space to the east of the site's eastern boundary. The woodland has two formal entrance points in the western corner and northern eastern boundary. They both have wooden kissing gates leading to the circular surfaced route around the wood.

There is no official parking at the wood. The nearest bus stop can be found on Longwood Road, just to the south of the Hatfield Gardens turning. It is a short walk of just a few minutes along pavements and tarmac paths to the woodland entrance. 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 Pewterspear Wood is to maintain the continuity of high forest and regeneration of an oak/birch canopy with a mix of species composition, age distribution and size classification 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 public access, tree safety and stand stability.

Public access will continue to be maintained at current levels with two public access points, signage and surfaced 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 a permissive surfaced footpath of approximately 500 metres which forms a roughly circular route through the wood. There are two entrance points, one at the western corner from Old Pewterspear Lane and the second at the eastern end of the wood is via a wooden footbridge from the adjoining green space owned by Warrington Council. Both entrances have Woodland Trust signs and kissing gates. There is a bench located in the wood along one of the footpaths.

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 local people to access woodland and nature close to where they live. The wood forms part of a network of recreational paths in the area.

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 are 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)

Vegetation encroaching onto paths will be cut back annually and maintenance of all woodland fixtures, including, signs, gates, entrances, fences and litter control will be a part of an annual estate maintenance contract.

Path edge coppicing will be carried out during the plan period to improve sight lines for visitor access.

The condition of footpaths, entrances, site fixtures and levels of fly tipping, vandalism, etc will be monitored once during the plan period.

5.2 Natural Secondary Woodland

Description

Pewterspear Wood has a mixed canopy of broadleaf species including oak, silver birch, alder, willow and sycamore. It has a reasonably diverse structure that includes mature and senescent trees, areas of young to semi mature canopy and patches of natural and planted regeneration. A number of trees are in the early stages of decline or bearing wounds, cavities and other damage resulting from misuse. The understorey is good in places and includes rowan and sycamore regeneration, holly, hawthorn and yew. Much of the woodland floor is shaded resulting in areas of bare ground with only small patches of shrubs and ground flora.

Significance

The woodland provides an important biodiversity habitat for wildlife particularly birds in an urban location as well as acting as an amenity feature in the local landscape.

Opportunities & Constraints

The small size of the woodland is a constraint on management work. Limited management access to the site from Longwood Road or Hatfield Gardens and no vehicle access on the site due to wet ground conditions, dense shrub layer planting and ditches. 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

Vandalism/misuse of the woodland has been a problem in the past, but 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. 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 work may provide opportunities for gaps in the canopy to encourage natural regeneration to develop as future canopy trees and to encourage the development of woodland ground flora.

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

Tree safety inspections will be undertaken on a regular basis and work carried out if necessary for public safety. Apart from this no silvicultural management work is planned 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.

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	2.78	Oak (pedunculate)	1950	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Legal issues, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access, Natural Secondary Woodland	Community Forest, Tree Preservation Order

The compartment is roughly rectangular shaped on flat ground with a stream along the north west and north east boundary. Houses abut the north west and south west boundaries, with council owned green space along the south east and north east boundaries. The canopy is dominated by oak and silver birch, other species include rowan, Scots pine, ash and sycamore. The understory is well developed and species to be found include holly, elder, yew and hazel can be seen, however most of this has been under-planted. Natural regeneration of rowan and sycamore is also thriving in patches. Ground flora includes bluebells, herb robert, nettles, bramble and red campion. There is a large pond and smaller seasonal pond in the northern corner of the wood which are linked by a stream/ ditch.

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	0.50	6	3
2018	1a	Ride edge Coppice	0.50	4	2
2022	1a	Ride edge Coppice	0.50	4	2
2026	1a	Ride edge Coppice	0.50	4	2

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.