



# Baileys Wood

## Management Plan 2015-2020

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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](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>	Baileys Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Biddulph
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SJ887595, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 118
<b>Area:</b>	2.69 hectares (6.65 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Baileys Wood is a small, semi-natural ancient woodland. Although the footpaths through this wood are well maintained it can get quite sticky after a wet spell of weather. The car parking area is on Fold Lane, off the A527.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Baileys Wood is a small but highly visible semi-natural ancient woodland wood occupying east and north facing slopes alongside the Biddulph Brook and overlooking the A527 immediately north of Biddulph, Staffordshire. The wood is protected by a Tree Preservation Order through Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (Ref. No W5 - 1972). Bailey's Wood has been colonised quite densely by sycamore in places. Two main NVC woodland types exist; W7c *Glutinosa-Fraxinus excelsior-Lysimachia nemorum* on the soils associated with wetter ground and W10a *Quercus robur-Pteridium aquilinum-Rubus fruticosus* woodland on the more free draining soils. The wood has been quite densely colonised by sycamore in places. Within areas of W7a, Alder and Sycamore dominate the canopy with the occasional mature Ash, providing a well structured and diverse stand with abundant regeneration of Ash, Willow and Sycamore. In areas of W10a woodland, to the south the canopy is dense and dominated by Sycamore with frequent Pedunculate Oak. The shrub layer is sparse with occasional young Hazel, Rowan and Downy Birch. Young beech can be found around the Baileys Castle, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), which lies in the south-east corner of the site. Ground flora within the areas of W7c woodland is varied and not dominated by any one species. W10a woodland is more frequently dominated by Wood millet, Bluebell and Tufted hair-grass.

The soils are quite complex with sandy, clay loam interspersed by a series of small springs that produce soils of a more alluvial nature. Biddulph Brook runs along the north-east boundary of the site and is lined with Alder and Sycamore, many of which are coppiced. Bank side vegetation is well represented providing an important feeding corridor for Otter and Pipistrelle bat, both of which have been recorded locally.

There is no parking facilities at the wood. Access can be gained to the north of the site from Congleton Road (A527), and to the west of the site from the public footpath following the dismantled railway. The site has no public rights of way but an informal linear footpath runs the length of the wood from the north-east access point and follows the western boundary around to Baileys Castle (scheduled ancient monument - SAM) in the south east corner of the site. The Woodland is protected by a tree preservation order (TPO) applied  
Land use to the south is mostly pasture grazed by cattle, to the west a disused railway line and to the north, primarily residential gardens.

The Key features at this site are:-  
Ancient Semi Natural Woodland  
Informal Public Access

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Nearest town is Biddulph which is approximately 1 mile away to the south. Access gained off a dead end road (Baileys Bank) which leads off the A527. Access is available directly off the minor road and through a management gate and also to the south of the site through an opening which links to a Public Footpath that runs just outside the boundary of the wood along the route of an old railway line. There is also an entrance point over a stile after following a short stretch of path directly off the A527. There is a short linear route through the wood which has steps and is quite steep in places. Sections of path are also prone to being quite wet underfoot, particularly in the winter. There is no parking available nearby.

Nearest bus stop - 50yrs away at end of Baileys Bank Road

Nearest railway Station - Congleton, Approx 3 miles away

Nearest Public Toilet - Biddulph Grange (National Trust property) - 1 mile away. Steps to get into public toilet.

You can also try [www.transportdirect.info](http://www.transportdirect.info) or [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) on the internet for the most up to date details for public transport in the area.

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Bailey's Wood will be maintained in perpetuity as a woodland feature offering an ongoing amenity to the local population while ensuring the continuity of woodland habitat as an integral part of the areas greater ecological landscape. The wood will exhibit a good structural and species mix with a range of ages in tree cover across the site thus supporting greater resilience in the face of threats such as climate change, pollution and pest and diseases.

Where safe to do so the development of stand structure, species mixture and the rise and decline of mature trees will be allowed to develop naturally. This natural rate of change will enable the widest possible range of habitats and species to survive and evolve. The soil and moisture regime across the site is variable and has encouraged a good range of natural regeneration. This process will be allowed to continue in order that natural selection and succession be amongst the key drivers for species distribution across the site.

The Trusts corporate objective to " Increase the public's awareness & enjoyment of woodland" will be achieved through continuing to invite the general public to use the woods for quiet informal pedestrian activities, and by the ongoing maintenance and where practicable the improvement of the current quality of access. In consultation with English Heritage & Staffordshire County Council, the Trust will take appropriate precautionary measures to limit degradation of the site's historic and conservation features as appropriate

## 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 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

#### Description

The whole wood was identified as ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) in the 1993 Staffordshire ancient woodland survey completed by the Nature Conservancy Council (English Nature). The designation was based on map data showing a continuity of woodland coverage, no site visit or species assessment was made by the NCC.

#### Significance

Baileys Wood was acquired in accordance with the Woodland Trusts general aims for no further loss of ancient woodland, and for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. Baileys Wood has a rich ground flora with many indicators of its SNAW status. The woodland adds to local biodiversity, it has a diverse ground flora and is an important part of a wider mosaic of habitats including Biddulph brook, pastureland, and a wildlife corridor created by the dismantled railway to the west.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

The opportunity exists to maintain and improve the biodiversity of Baileys Wood through natural processes. Ensuring the undisturbed continuity of this ancient semi-natural habitat will enable the widest range of species to survive and evolve within it.

In the long term, the opportunity exists to steer the wood towards a natural varied woodland structure through encouraging the re-generation of varied stand types, and through allowing trees to mature, senescence and die naturally. The retention of deadwood habitat and veteran trees will provide important microclimates for specialist plants, animals and fungi adding further value to local biodiversity.

Possibly the main constraint in improving biodiversity is the sites small core area.

#### Factors Causing Change

Invasive Sycamore, Invasive Himalayan Balsam.

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

A structurally and species diverse, resilient area of semi-natural ancient woodland. The Trust adopts a holistic and long-term view towards habitat survival and evolution, and where it is safe and practicable to do so, allows natural processes to dictate the development of this wood. Over the long-term the wood will develop a range of naturally paced vegetation cycles that will include periods of regeneration and decline. In terms of the complex and dynamic cycles between the larger flora and fauna and the micro world of invertebrates, fungi and other lower plants, this process will allow the progression of the widest possible species abundance and diversity.

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

To maintain the area as semi-natural ancient woodland on site.



## 5.2 Informal Public Access

### Description

In accordance with the Woodland Trusts general aims, the wood is open to the public for quiet informal pedestrian activities. Access can be gained to the north of the site from Congleton Road (A 527), and to the west of the site from the public footpath following the dismantled railway. The site has no public rights of way but an informal permissive path running the length of the wood from the north-east access point and follows the western boundary around to Baileys Castle

### Significance

The use of nearly all Woodland Trust owned sites for quiet, informal public recreation forms a core objective to the Woodland Trusts vision for the future. Although there is no convenient nearby parking, access to the wood is relatively easy and visitors can enjoy both the woodland habitat and access to Baileys Castle (Scheduled ancient monument). As a feature in the general landscape, the wood is highly visible to local residents and to highway users passing along the A 527 Congleton Road.

### Opportunities & Constraints

The site is well used by local dog walkers and ramblers. Its size, structure and topography limit the extent of access provision to that already in existence.

The site is wet throughout most of the year making it quite difficult to walk through during the winter months in particular

### Factors Causing Change

Weathering/erosion/waterlogged paths

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The existing level and quality of accessibility will be maintained and monitored, with improvements made where new opportunities are identified.

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

The Trust will continue to advertise its properties through its own publications and the local media. The paths and entrance points will be managed annually through an estates management contract where paths will be cut to a minimum of 2m in width at least once a year. The safety of the site will be addressed through on-going tree safety & site risk assessment regimes, which will generate remedial works as required.

## 5.3 Historic Features

### Description

Baileys Castle (SAM) occupies approximately 0.6ha in the southeastern portion of the site and comprises of the earth works and remains of a medieval ringwork castle that was occupied until the 16th century.

### Significance

Ringworks are medieval fortifications built and occupied from the late Anglo-Saxon period to the later 12th century (and into the 16th century in this case). They are rare nationally with only 200 recorded examples. As such Baileys Castle is one of a limited number and very restricted range of Anglo-Saxon and Norman fortifications, The interior and silted ditches will retain archaeological deposits of significance to the understanding of that period.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 several management restrictions apply to this site. The opportunity exists for the Trust to manage the site in such a manner that the ongoing health of the woodland does not adversely effect the value of the SAM. Further opportunities arise from the possibility of formalised archaeological survey work undertaken with licence from the statutory bodies. And for the continued enjoyment of the sites amenity value by the general public.

### Factors Causing Change

Invasive species including Sycamore, disturbing the integrity of the earthworks.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The Woodland Trust intends to manage the site so that the integrity of the monument and its archaeological deposits are not subject to unnatural degradation and remain available for future generations to interpret and enjoy. The trust will continue to allow public access to the SAM so that the public can enjoy the site as an amenity. Access will be reviewed upon the advice of English Heritage or future legislation regarding the protection of scheduled ancient monument for future generations to interpret and enjoy. The trust will continue to allow public access so that the public can enjoy the site as an amenity. Access will be reviewed upon the advice of English Heritage or future legislation regarding the protection of scheduled ancient monuments.

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

The SAM will be monitored for regeneration which is damaging to the earthwork with removal as required subject to appropriate approval and permission being sought from the relevant authorities e.g. Staffordshire County Council (Tree Preservation Order) and English Heritage with respect to working on the monument itself.

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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	2.89	Sycamore	1960	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Historic Features, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Tree Preservation Order

Baileys Wood is roughly 'L' shaped and situated on the steep western slopes above Biddulph Brook. Springs and wet flushes occur across the site. The soils are quite complex with sandy-clay-loam interspersed by a series of small springs that produce soils more alluvial in nature. There are two main woodland types exhibited, W7c *Glutinosa-Fraxinus excelsior-Lysimachia nemorum* woodland on the soils associated with the wetter ground and W10a *Quercus robur-Pteridium aquilinum-Rubus fruticosus* woodland on the more free draining soils. The W7 c areas have a canopy dominated by Alder and Sycamore with the occasional mature Ash. These areas are quite well structured and diverse with abundant regeneration of Ash, Willow and Sycamore. The shrub layer also supports coppiced Hazel and Willow, Mature Alder has been coppiced. The ground flora in W7c is varied and not dominated by any one species with Red currant, Lesser Celendine, Bluebell, Bramble, Yellow pimpernel, Wood speedwell, Red campion, Yellow archangel all abundant with the occasional Colts foot, Wood millet, Hogweed, Nettle, Broad Buckler fern, Enchanters nightshade, creeping buttercup, Wood avens and dogs mercury.

W10a woodland covers the south eastern section of the wood and a steep bank along the northern boundary of the site. To the south the dense canopy is dominated by Sycamore with frequent Pedunculate Oak. The shrub layer is sparse with occasional young Hazel, Rowan and Downy Birch. Young Beech can be found in the vicinity of the SAM. The bank to the north represents an area of free draining soils that supports a canopy of Pedunculate Oak/Downy Birch and a dense shrub layer of Hazel Coppice and Holly.. The northern bank supports a dense canopy with a ground flora of Wood anemone, Bramble, Dog's mercury, Ivy, Tufted hair-grass, and wood millet. W10a woodland to the south east of the site is dominated by Wood millet, Bluebell, Tufted hair-grass with frequent Bramble, Wood anemone, Lesser celandine, Foxglove, Yellow archangel, Lesser stitchwort, Wood sorrel.

Biddulph Brook runs along the north east boundary of the site and is lined with Alder and Sycamore, many of which are coppiced. Bank side vegetation is well represented providing an important feeding corridor for Otter and Pipistrelle bat of which both have been recorded locally. Fallen deadwood is well represented but there is a general lack of over mature trees and standing deadwood.

There is a substantial open area in the north of the site which extends from the Biddulph Brook to the footpath in the north-west. There is also a large wet hollow in the centre of the wood adjacent to Biddulph brook, heavily shaded by Sycamore and Alder.

## 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.