



Mannings Wood

Management Plan 2013-2018

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 Secondary Woodland	
5.3 Watercourses	
6.0 Work Programme	
Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions	
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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 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:	Mannings Wood
Location:	East Dundry
Grid reference:	ST583665, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 172
Area:	14.82 hectares (36.62 acres)
Designations:	Community Forest

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Set on a hillside overlooking Bristol, this wood is really valued by the local community. It is also popular with walkers who start here from the source of the Malago River en route to the Avon. There is a mysterious ruined farm building within the wood and it has also been home to an arts project. There are some important habitats within the wood but it is a great place for a family outing.

2.2 Extended Description

Manning's Wood lies within the Dundry Hills character area which encircles the south of the Bristol basin. They rise up to 230m above sea level and give extensive views northward over the city. The site is a matrix of new broadleaved planting, unimproved neutral grassland, springs and streams, scrub areas, hedges which include old ash pollards and some existing mature woodland. Viewed from below the coalescence of these features gives the site, especially the lower part, a very wooded appearance.

The bedrock is limestone; Upper Inferior Oolite from the Jurassic period. The soil is free draining with a spring line across the site resulting in several streams which run most of the year. The site slopes, steeply in parts with valleys created from the streams eroding the soil. Due to the absence of available parking visitors come from either the local community or are longer distance walkers.

At its planting Manning's Wood was used as the focus of a community arts project known as The Malago Spring Project. With the help of a local artist the main springhead was transformed. The water emerged through a stone arch in the wall before splashing onto boulders and flowing over the limestone slabs that have been carved with evocative words and the footprints of native animals however in 2012 the stream took a natural diversion and instead flowed round the outside of the artwork.

The site was previously farm land and an old ruined building can still be found buried in the new woodland. Little is known about the history of this old farmstead but it was derelict for many years before acquisition by the Trust.

The site is on a hill and therefore most parts are on some gradient of slope. There are parts that gently drop away to the north whilst others are much steeper. A deep sided stream valley is surrounded by more mature woodland that was not part of the agricultural history of the site.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General Location

The wood lies on the hill above the Hartcliffe estate of south Bristol and enjoys wonderful views.

Overview

There is a network of public footpaths that connect the villages of Dundry, East Dundry and Hartcliffe to Manning's Wood which sits in the middle of this network of paths. Although there are no PROW's within the site, a network of permissive paths has been created to link the public footpaths together. Access into the site is over stiles and there are no flights of steps on the sections of the steeper sections of path. A number of local springs mean some paths are crossed by wet flushes even in summer.

Facilities

A public toilet is located in the village of Dundry. From here it is approximately 2km to Manning's wood. Alternatively toilets can be found in the local ASDA in Whitchurch 2km to the north, or the Sports Centre in Hartcliffe.

Public transport

The closest bus stop is the frequently served one on Bishport Avenue, Hartcliffe which is 1km from the wood, although this is via a steep walk. Alternatively there is a stop at Maiden Head on Broadoak Hill which allows a more level walk, firstly along 1km of country road without pavements, then along a bridleway for a further 1.5km (information from www.travelinesw.co.uk on June 2013)

Parking

Unallocated suburban parking is available in Hartcliffe, 300m walk via footpath.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

This site will develop and mature, retaining its mosaic of habitats with scrubby successional areas linking the grassland to the woodland. The woodland areas will continue to develop naturally and over time the site will eventually become native broadleaved high forest, with varied age and species structure and a steady accumulation of deadwood.

Public enjoyment of the site will slowly increase as the site develops and takes on a more wooded feel. Through working with local communities and groups it is hoped to expand use and minimise misuse of the site which occurs, mainly by motorbikes. To date this has proved to be a difficult task.

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 footpath network within the site consisting of grassy maintained paths, in some areas the paths are muddy and can be slippery after rain. Access to the site can be gained via various public footpaths that run between Dundry, East Dundry and Hartcliffe. The upper path that runs past the wood is part of The Forest of Avon Community Forest Path. The site is on a slope but the steepness of paths within the site is prohibitive.

Space exists to greatly increase the number of paths through the site if the demand warranted maintenance of more path options.

The woodland planting has been designed to allow views across Bristol and beyond to Wales by leaving sight lines unplanted.

Significance

This site is the only open woodland within walking distance for several thousand people in some of the most deprived areas of Bristol. This fulfils the Trusts corporate objective of increasing awareness and enjoyment of woodland for a large number of people.

The prominence of the site in the landscape for the population of Bristol increases the amenity value even if not physically used.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity:

- Local parking is difficult but a large community lives within a few minute's walk.
- The wood is situated between the urban fringe of Bristol and the rural setting of Dundry and could become the link between them.

Constraint:

- Abuse and vandalism have been a real problem for many years with varying degrees of intensity
- The access footpath from the housing estate is very steep and slippery and would benefit greatly from improvement.
- As the site has been used by motorbikes for many years a concern over safety of other users may inhibit increased usage

Factors Causing Change

Illegal usage including motorbikes, litter and camp fires

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To ensure that the site remains enjoyable with an attractive network of paths through the variety of woodland and open ground, with occasional far reaching views of the local landscape.
The site is used regularly and respectfully as an attractive green space by the local community.

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

The short term objective is to ensure that the site is suitable for quiet, informal use. This will be achieved by:

- Cutting the paths twice each year and ensuring the entrances remain accessible for pedestrians whilst deterring motorbikes.
- Liaise with neighbouring landowners to maintain effective boundaries and reduce inappropriate access.

Regular litter picks to prevent an unsightly build up

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

The newly planted native woodland is now well established. Together with the mature woodland block, the areas of scrub and the grassland there is structural diversity and a range of potential habitats for flora and fauna within the site.

Species planted are mainly ash and oak. Pre-existing hedges are still present bounding the site, those inside the site are now overgrown and incorporating into woodland. Dominant species in the hedges are hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel. Within the hedges are a number of old ash pollards which have been re-pollarded recently. Patches of interesting flora including bluebell are beginning to spread through the new woodland areas.

The name Dundry reflects the history of the site, coming from 'Dundreagh' literally Hill of Oak. The increase of native woodland is in context.

A small amount of additional planting of shrubby species was done in 2010 but a significant proportion of this was vandalised.

Large open areas exist within the site and this complements the habitat options although levels of misuse have drastically reduced the quality of the grassland in these areas.

Significance

The existing mature woodland and the hedges are mature areas which provide an important biological reserve from which wildlife may colonise the new planting areas, fulfilling the Trust objective of increasing woodland biodiversity and native woodland coverage.

The site helps achieve the targets of the Community Forest placing it into a regional context

Opportunities & Constraints

Factors Causing Change

Vandalism

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Healthy predominantly native broadleaf woodland with a diverse age and size structure and a good proportion of mature trees. It will have a rich understorey of woodland shrubs and support a healthy population of woodland flora.

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

The new planting will be allowed to develop naturally with minimal intervention. The site will be checked annually to ensure damaging factors are dealt with, and the police involved where this is caused by vandalism and illegal activity.

External hedgerows will be secured where vandalism has created gaps, new planting occurring to support any other physical works. Internal hedges will be laid to block gaps where secure boundaries are still required, and again planted in support of this.

In 2014 a consultation will take place to determine the future of the large field. the grassland has reduced in value and it would now be appropriate to convert this to woodland which would help to reduce the level of motorbike activity in future. Planting could take place in the winter of 2014 if it is decided to proceed.

5.3 Watercourses

Description

Along the Dundry slope are a number of hard water springs that produce Tufa. Two are within the woodland. Tufa formation is a relatively rare phenomenon in the UK. It is associated with areas where groundwater rich in calcium bicarbonate comes to the surface. On contact with the air, carbon dioxide is lost from the water and a hard deposit of calcium carbonate (tufa) is formed over objects in its course. The springheads can support mats of rare mosses.

The spring flows into the Malago which is one of the last uncovered waterways in Bristol, the others having been culverted under development. As the footpaths cross the streams in several places these points receive regular disturbance.

Advice was sought from the Somerset Environmental Records Centre on managing the springhead. Their suggestions included creating a pool area and allowing more light to reach the site by thinning the tree canopy. These suggestions were incorporated into the final design of an art project that used the springhead as its focal point. Unfortunately this artwork is also an attraction for vandalism. In the last year of the previous plan the watercourse naturally changed its course and now runs to the side of the installation eroding the soil here.

Significance

This is a potentially interesting extra habitat that increases the diversity of the site although no notable species have yet been identified. The artwork has resulted in increased public engagement which helps further one of the Trusts objectives.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraint:

- The springs are easily disturbed by human activity, and as such this contrasts with a desire to increase use of the site. No record has been made of any of the rare flora which can associate with these springs.

Factors Causing Change

Vandalism and erosion

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The streams will continue to meander through the maturing woodland areas, supporting a range of plants and insects not found elsewhere on the site, the tufa deposits creating ever more interesting shapes.

The artwork to become a cherished feature of the site, and a pleasant spot to sit and relax.

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

Checks will be made to determine if the infrastructure is adequate for the level of usage and if not additional works such as stepping stones could be installed as deemed appropriate. Safety will be considered at this time, especially potential erosion to the artwork which may undermine structural integrity.

No other intervention is thought to be needed during this plan period.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
------	--------------	-------------	--------

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	0.67	Hazel	1900	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access, Watercourses	Community Forest
<p>A mixture of mature woodland, shrub, old hedge banks and a few mature trees located in the north west corner. Oak and hazel are the dominant species; sycamore, hawthorn, ash, blackthorn, field rose, elm, guelder rose are all present. The ground flora includes dog's mercury and lesser celandine. The compartment is deeply gullied by a stream. This area of the woodland is well used by local youngsters resulting in camps, litter and fires.</p>							
2a	5.97	Oak (pedunculate)	1996	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, Watercourses	Community Forest
<p>These scattered blocks were planted upon acquisition in '96 with native broadleaved species, mainly oak and ash with understorey shrubs and all are developing well and now feel like young well established woodland. The ground vegetation is currently dominated by grass species, reflecting its former use as grazing paddocks, although these are now being shaded by the closed canopy they will continue to be the most dominant species for a few more years. Mature hedges form the boundary to parts of this area, which are spreading, it is under these hedges that typical woodland flora is present, and is now colonising outward under the new planting.</p> <p>The area is gently sloping. The clay soils can hold water in areas not draining into the streams, becoming slippery and making access difficult after rain.</p> <p>There are the remains of an old farm building in the centre of the site</p>							
3a	1.62	Open ground		Non-wood habitat	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, Watercourses	Community Forest
<p>This area was left unplanted to provide an open feel to the site. It slopes and gives views to the north and is bordered by old hedges.</p> <p>The flora is dominated by grass species on the flatter areas, and by rushes, nettles and brambles alongside the stream.</p> <p>The eastern end is unimproved damp neutral grassland once known to contain a diverse range of species including devils bit scabious, betony, and square stalked St. Johns wort.</p>							

3b	2.00	Open ground		Non-wood habitat	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access, Watercourses	Community Forest
<p>This area was left unplanted. It is mostly very steeply sloping with a flatter area which the paths follow. Some good views can be had of the Bristol basin from the higher points.</p> <p>The slopes are scrubbing up as they have not been cut since acquisition. This is mostly blackthorn and bramble, although ash is noted within the thickets. This benefits the internal landscaping, softening and complimenting the new woodland.</p> <p>Several spring heads flow out of the slope and run into the new planting.</p>							
4a	1.66	Open ground		Non-wood habitat	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access, Watercourses	Community Forest
<p>A gently sloping and undulating meadow area, which was identified as semi-improved neutral grassland by the Avon Wildlife Trust. Species recorded here in 1996 include black knapweed, sorrel and meadow pea. The meadow is bounded on all sides by hedges.</p> <p>This area is a target for motorbike activity and has been used as a racetrack. This has been happening for years despite various attempts to reduce usage. This activity has destroyed most of the value of the grassland, although some of the species are still present in small numbers.</p> <p>The adjacent field is hired out as an off-road course, leading to added pressure to access this area as a through route.</p>							

GLOSSARY

Ancient Woodland

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

Ancient Woodland Site

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

Beating Up

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

Broadleaf

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

Canopy

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

Conifer

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

Continuous Cover forestry

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

Coppice

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

Exotic (non-native) Species

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

Field Layer

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

Group Fell

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

Long Term Retention

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

Minimum Intervention

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

Origin & Provenance

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

Re-Stocking

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

Sub-Compartment

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

Thinning

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

Weeding

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

Windblow/Windthrow

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.