



Allardices 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Allardices Wood
Location:	Warrington
Grid reference:	SJ616847, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 109
Area:	0.14 hectares (0.35 acres)
Designations:	Community Forest, Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This small woodland is alongside the A49 in Appleton, south of Warrington. It is a narrow strip of woodland comprising mainly mature broadleaved trees and visible to thousands of people as they drive by each day. There are no public footpaths or access points into the wood due to its small size, but it is easily viewed from the adjoining tarmac footway alongside the road. Although only small in size the woodland provides a valuable habitat for wildlife and for people to enjoy in an urban landscape.

2.2 Extended Description

Allardices Wood is a very small (0.14 hectare) woodland in the suburb of Appleton to the south of Warrington. It is a narrow strip of woodland on flat ground that is slightly elevated above the surrounding land. To the west is a busy main road (the A49) and footpath, to the east is a private access track with housing, and to the north and south it merges into other areas of woodland that are privately owned.

The wood is a landscape feature and one of several small blocks of woodland in the area that are now surrounded by housing developments. It is highly visible to people driving or walking by on the A49 from Stretton to Warrington. Little is known about the wood's history prior to given to the Woodland Trust by Mr Allardice who lived locally.

It is secondary broadleaved woodland consisting of mature trees, predominantly sycamore and oak with occasional beech, lime, horse chestnut and Scots pine. Elm was a component of the canopy but these died from Dutch elm disease and had to be felled although there is some elm regeneration occurring. The understorey is quite well developed and consists mainly of holly, elder, rowan and natural regeneration particularly of sycamore and beech. Rhododendron ponticum was widespread in the shrub layer, but this has been removed now apart from the occasional regrowth. The ground flora contains a range of woodland species including bluebells, herb robert, brambles, nettles and ground ivy. The wood is covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

Public access is permitted within the wood although it contains no formal footpaths or access points and due to the small size of the wood it is thought to only be lightly used by local people. The roadside footpath that runs along the western boundary next to the A49 provides good views of the wood.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Allardices Wood is located by the A49 London Road in Appleton, about 1/4 mile to the south of the junction with Lyons Lane. It is about 3 miles to the south of Warrington town centre.

There is no official car parking at the wood. There is a private access road behind the woodland that leads to houses, but there is no parking on this.

For more information on the bus routes and location 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 Allardices 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.

The main driver for management intervention will be tree safety due to the close proximity of the main road, footpath and houses and to make the woodland more resilient to cope with future pressures from climate change, pests and tree diseases.

Public access will be continue to be maintained at the current level with low key signage at boundaries and no access points or footpaths within the wood.

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 Natural Secondary Woodland

Description

Allardices Wood contains a mix of broadleaf species, with the canopy dominated by mature/ semi-mature sycamore and oak with the occasional beech, horse chestnut and pine. There is a well developed understorey of holly, rowan, hawthorn, elder and natural regeneration of young sycamore, beech and elm. There has been rhododendron in the wood, but this has all been cleared although some regrowth is still occurring from the cut stumps. The ground flora has typical woodland species including a few patches of bluebell, herb robert, nettle, bramble and ground ivy as well as some garden escapes/ dumped plants including daffodil and crocus.

Significance

The wood provides an important habitat for wildlife in an urban location 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 and small woodlands such as this are important landscape features and as wildlife refuges. Some of the mature trees, notably beech and lime, are becoming veterans.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

The very small size of the wood constrains be able to make any significant structural changes in the woodland.

Tree safety particularly near the main road is an important consideration which can be a constraint. There is a TPO on the wood which is a constraint on carrying out silvicultural work.

Factors Causing Change

Sycamore regeneration could out compete other species and reduce the diversity of tree species in the woodland.

Rhododendron regeneration will need controlling to prevent it from spreading.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The long term objective is to maintain a high forest of mixed native, broadleaves with a diverse structure in terms of species composition, age/size classes. The wood will be allowed to develop as naturally as possible and dead wood will be retained where safe to do so. Tree safety will be a priority and the key driver for management intervention and may provide opportunities for natural regeneration of desirable species to develop as future canopy trees and to encourage the development of woodland ground flora. Rhododendron will be controlled within the wood to encourage more natural regeneration of native tree and shrub species and ground flora.

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

During the plan period the main short term objectives are to manage the woodland through minimal silvicultural intervention. This will be achieved by:

1. carrying out a woodland condition assessment once during the plan period to monitor the health and resilience of the woodland and identify any threats from tree disease, pests, mammals or people including to monitor the impact of any dumping of garden waste/ plants.
2. monitoring sycamore regeneration as part of the woodland condition assessment to ensure it is not dominating the species composition.
3. undertaking regular tree safety inspections and carry out any safety work if necessary for public safety.
4. monitor regeneration of rhododendron and if necessary carry out work to control any new growth.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

Public access is permitted, but there are no formal footpaths or entrance points and it is thought that very few people visit the wood. On the western boundary is a 1.5m high sandstone wall next alongside a well used public footway (not on Woodland Trust land) by the A49. The eastern boundary is next to a private access track leading to houses.

Significance

Whilst no formal public access routes exist in the wood the public can still access the site for informal recreation.

Opportunities & Constraints

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

Factors Causing Change

Fly tipping of garden waste from nearby houses along the eastern edge of the woodland, although it is not a significant problem at present.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the current level of low key public access with no formal access point or footpaths maintained within the wood.

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

During the plan period two Woodland Trust signs at site boundaries will be maintained annually. Litter and fly tipping levels will be monitored and removed annually, and contact made with neighbours where tipping is a serious issue.

The sandstone boundary wall will be inspected and encroaching vegetation or trees cut back at least once during the plan period.

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	0.14	Sycamore	1900	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	

The compartment is approximately 100 metres long by 15 metres wide and is raised approximately 1.5 metres above the surrounding land. It is a flat site with a very slight gradient towards the eastern boundary which abuts a private track leading to domestic properties across the track from the wood. The western boundary is adjacent to the A49 main road, and the short northern and southern boundaries abut further small areas of woodland which are a continuation of the woodland but privately owned.

The canopy is dominated by sycamore (approx 70%), oak (approx. 15%) with the remaining 15% comprising a mix of broadleaf species including small-leaved lime, beech, horse chestnut, although these are only present in small numbers and there is also a single Scots pine. The understorey is a mixture of rowan, elder, holly, hawthorn and natural regeneration of sycamore, beech and elm. Ground flora includes bluebells, herb robert, nettles, bramble and ground ivy. There are a few isolated garden escapes including daffodil and crocus and a small amount of rhododendron regeneration.

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.