



Silver 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 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:	Silver Wood
Location:	Kentisbeare
Grid reference:	ST063083, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 192
Area:	4.31 hectares (10.65 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Silver Wood is located on the edge of the village of Kentisbeare. It is a popular and successful part of the 'Woods on Your Doorstep'(WOYD) community woodland creation project, and was planted in early 1999 with mixed native broadleaves species. Formerly a grazed water meadow of improved grassland, the area is now slowly developing characteristics of wet woodland. The River Ken meanders through the site which also features wide rides and open ground.

The wood is within the Devon Redlands National Character Area, with soils derived from red Permo-Triassic sandstone. It is in a lowland area which is characterised by a rolling mixed farming landscape of villages, farmsteads and prominent hedgerows, with a scattering of towns and villages, and the scarp of the Blackdown Hills rising to the east. Typical flood plains in the area have little tree cover, so this was reflected in the design of the wood, with little tree planting on the banks of the River Ken leaving it un-shaded.

The local community were involved in the woodland from its inception, helping to choose its name and design, participated in the initial tree planting and chose a short surfaced track and seating area close to the eastern entrance as a feature to mark the Millennium. The wood is used by local walkers both for short walks and as part of a longer circular route linking in with access across surrounding land.

2.2 Extended Description

Silver Wood is located on the edge of the village of Kentisbeare. It is a popular and successful part of the 'Woods on Your Doorstep'(WOYD) community woodland creation project, and was planted in early 1999 with mixed native broadleaves species. Formerly a grazed water meadow of improved grassland, the area is now slowly developing characteristics of wet woodland. The River Ken meanders through the site which also features wide rides and open ground.

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3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Public and management access is via a bridle gate, directly from the public highway (Machine Lane, off Silver Street). A small unsurfaced area in front of the gate provides parking for one car. The site is generally flat, but can get boggy after heavy rain and regularly floods. A short stretch of surfaced path leads from the gate to an informal seating area. There is a circular route of grassy tracks within the woodland. To link in with the public footpath at the north west corner which links to a wider network one needs to cross the river which is via a bridge with steep steps, and on leaving the site you have to pass over a step over stile and informal boardwalk.

Nearest public toilet: Motorway Services, Junction 28 M5 Cullompton (accessible without going onto the motorway)- approximately 5 miles by road - open 24 hours, facilities for disabled people - not open 24 hours. Information as at march 2015 - locally gathered.

Nearest bus stop: Bus services to Kentisbeare are very limited. Nearest bus stop Post Office Kentisbeare approximately 150m along village roads.

For further information on transport see the Traveline website www.traveline.com or phone 0871 200 22 33

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long-term vision is for Silver Wood to be attractive, mature native broadleaf woodland with characteristics of wet woodland. Under the canopy of healthy trees there will be an understory of mixed shrubs and wet woodland ground flora. These will be integrated with the other habitats provided by the hedges, wide rides and the meandering river. Due to the design of the site there will be many wood edge habitats, which are important for birds, invertebrates and grassland flora.

Located in an attractive village, with high local use, Silver Wood will be an important open access area where the public are always welcome. The entrance signs, and maintained paths will encourage public use and enjoyment of the woodland; fulfilling the Trust's corporate objective of people valuing woodlands. doubling native woodland cover, and protecting trees, woods and their wildlife.

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

Silver Wood is a well-used WOYD woodland situated on the edge of the village of Kentisbeare, providing the opportunity for easy public access to a green space. Although the land is flat, it can be wet and boggy, and flooded during the winter, and this will limit use by some user groups. The millennium feature chosen by the community is a short surfaced path from the road entrance leading to a seating area, which gives some all-weather access.

Significance

Informal public access to Silver Wood raises people's awareness and enjoyment of woodland, fulfilling one of the Trust's objectives.

It adds accessible green space to Kentisbeare village and provides an excellent place for locals to walk and enjoy quiet recreation in itself as well as linking wider access routes in the area.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity:

Constraint: Occasional flooding and boggy conditions may limit use of the site by some user groups. These conditions also cause the infrastructure to deteriorate more quickly than normal.

Factors Causing Change

The erosion of the path along the river bank, by the river, could become an issue as could the general ground conditions of the site if long periods of wet weather occur.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain this site as a safe and attractive facility used and enjoyed by a wide range of the local community who value it in its own right. The users are interested and active in the future of the site.

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

Objective: The site is to remain easily accessible, attractive and safe so a wide range of the public can enjoy it. The facilities remain appropriate for level and type of use. The entrance is to be welcoming and clearly signed.

Work programme:

- Check annually for safety the condition of bridge, boardwalk, surfaced track and entrance furniture. Repair and maintain them as necessary or undertake preventative work where feasible and cost effective.
 - Remove the hand rail from the sleeper bridge as this is unnecessary and increase width by 1 sleeper.
 - Install a new footbridge from the forest school area across the river and create a path to the other footbridge.
 - To move the path away from the edge of the river where bank side erosion is occurring, though controlled mowing to allow vegetation to grow up forming a barrier.
 - Move the path to the middle of the ride along the south western part of the wood.
 - Cut ride widths to standard Woodland Trust specifications along all main paths to keep them easily accessible. Includes the area used by the forest school and strimming around the millennium stone, approximately 3 times a year if necessary.
- Cut 4 areas of approximately 30m length where the river banks are low to allow access to the river.

5.2 Mixed Habitat Mosaic

Description

Silver Wood has established as floodplain woodland containing mixed native broadleaved trees and shrubs, mostly planted in 1999. The ground flora is still in the main that of species poor grassland but will develop further as the trees shade out the grasses. The nature of the site keeps it damp most of the year and it is likely it will develop characteristics of wet woodland. The mature boundary hedges, river and open areas provide additional woodland & wetland habitats that will become well integrated.

Significance

One of the Trust's corporate objectives is to see an increase in the area of new native woodland - this objective is furthered at this site.

Wet woodland habitat contributes to a number of Biodiversity Action Plans, both locally and nationally.

Opportunities & Constraints

Factors Causing Change

Flooding, Deer Damage and squirrel damage, tree diseases and invasive species such as Himalayan balsam.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To establish a healthy and attractive native broadleaf woodland with characteristics of a wet woodland type. Varying structure and habitats will be evident but well intermixed with the open space. A healthy river habitat following natural erosion processes with associated flora and fauna runs through the site.

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

Objective: manage the woodland as necessary to enable it to mature into a structurally and species diverse wood. Maintain the river as a mainly open water course with dappled shade in places.

Work programme:

- The health of the trees will be checked for known threats, such as Phytophthora on the alder. Where this is seen to affect more than 5% of the tree population and is thought likely to threaten the continuing establishment of the wood then action shall be taken to remove the diseased trees, burning or removing residue.
- Hand pull Himalayan Balsam throughout the site, once in late May and once in late June/early July.
- Mow and rake the area of bramble and nettle to north of the river annually to improve the diversity of the flora.
- Cut all open space at the end of August each year but leaving a 3m uncut margin around all woodland excluding the northern edge of the wood adjacent to the river for the Forest School to gain access.

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	4.33	Ash	1999	Min-intervention	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	Informal Public Access, Mixed Habitat Mosaic	

Mixed native broadleaves planted 1999 on former water meadow (previously poor quality pasture). Main species Pedunculate oak, ash and silver birch, with goat willow & common alder. The planted area is 3.5ha leaving large areas of open space and wide rides. The deposited silt from river flooding has created fertile soil and the trees have generally established very well. Occasional trees have grown too fast and become unstable in the wet ground, as these split and fall they create interesting character trees which freely sprout new growth.

There are wide rides managed for access and to provide views out to the surrounding landscape. They form a circular route around the wood, and link the road with a permissive path in the NW corner.

Further habitat diversity is added by the River Ken, which crosses the site. A wide margin was left unplanted so easily visible for user safety and to provide a pleasant internal landscape. The river is generally in a good habitat condition, although Himalayan balsam continues to have a strong presence on site.

The site also holds water after periods of heavy rain, this sits in boggy areas which can make walking difficult and vehicle access impossible

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.