



Seton Dean

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Seton Dean
Location:	Longniddry
Grid reference:	NT425755, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 66
Area:	1.14 hectares (2.82 acres)
Designations:	Special Landscape Area

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Seton Dean lies close to the coast at Seton Sands and is dominated by sycamore with some: elm, ash, oak, elder and yew. Ground flora is predominated by a profusion of wild garlic radiating out from alongside the burn, along with several scattered clumps of bluebells. The pleasant path within the wood follows the burn as it meanders north towards the coast.

2.2 Extended Description

This narrow strip of woodland and stream is part of a series of small parallel valleys that have remained wooded in an otherwise agricultural landscape. Seton Dean is located, 100m north of the A198 between Longniddry and Tranent in East Lothian. The site is bound to the north by a strip of woodland, to the east by arable fields, to the west by a caravan park and to the south lies the settlement of Seton Mains. The northern edge of the wood is approximately 200m from the Firth of Forth coast at Seton Sands.

The woodland slopes very gently from south to north, towards the sea. However, the more noticeable topography is the slope on either side of the Dean towards the burn. The burn itself flows in a relatively deep, steep-sided channel. The altitude of the woodland varies from approximately 25m above sea level (a.s.l.) in the south to 15m a.s.l. in the north.

The underlying geology of this part of East Lothian is from the Namurian carboniferous period. The rocks formed are sandstones, marine limestone's and coals. This area is also characterised by Lingula bands of igneous intrusions. The soils in the area are brown forest soils with some gleys.

The land around Longniddry, including Seton Dean, is described as warm, dry lowland. The area is moderately exposed with fairly mild winters.

The woodland cover at Seton Dean has been very badly depleted through Dutch Elm Disease (DED). Much of the boundary is delineated by widely spaced mature ash, sycamore, and limes with an occasional horse chestnut, yew and beech. The main body of the site has a number of mature examples of these species, but the majority of the area is covered by pole stage sycamore, ash, elm and a few oak with mixed scrub, dominated by elder, hazel, willow sp, holly and hawthorn . Ivy covers many of the trees and shrubs.

Near to the location of the overhead power line crossing the site, are four mature yew trees. The age of these trees is difficult to ascertain, but their size would tend to indicate that they have been growing on site for a substantial period of time.

Parts of the site are dominated by scattered groups of ground flora, such as: a nettle, bramble, thistle, hedge bindweed and ivy, which is abundant throughout the site. Wild garlic dominates the ground flora and patches of bluebells occur, suggesting a relatively long history of woodland cover. Since the Trust first began managing Seton Dean, the majority of the dead elms have been removed for safety reasons and some broadleaf replanting (oak/ash/hazel) has been carried out. Natural regeneration is sparse throughout the woodland but there is a dense group of regenerating ash at the south western corner.

The water quality in the burn in Seton Dean has improved substantially, following the installation of mains sewers to all properties at Seton Mains. A survey carried out by SEPA in March 2000 found the burn to be highly polluted with bacteria associated with raw sewage out flowing from septic tanks up stream. With this pollution source removed the burn can now develop naturally and hopefully this will lead to increased aquatic biodiversity in the burn.

Very little is known about the history of Seton Dean. The presence of wild garlic and bluebells indicate a long history of woodland cover, however it is not included on the Inventory of ancient and Long established woodland sites in Scotland.

The site was acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1996.

Located between Longniddry and Port Seton, this area of East Lothian is well catered for with informal and formal paths as well as good links to longer distance routes such as the John Muir Way. Seton Dean forms an integral part of this network lying adjacent to Core Path 141 (CP 141) between the A198, through Seton Mains, and the coast road (B1348).

Due to the small size of the wood, it is not generally the destination for access but rather an integral part of longer through or returns routes for local residents.

There are three entrances to the wood all reached from the CP 141. Within the wood there is approximately 380m of generally firm, un-surfaced paths, running parallel with the burn.

There is a small car park on site which is capable of holding three to four cars. The car park is reached along the private road through Seton mains and is at the end of the road on the left. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site can be gained by this route. Management access to the site is good with access from the south along the private road through Seton Mains and then along the farm track running along the east of the wood for its entire length. Access along the western boundary is also available subject to the owners consent. There is no vehicular access within the wood but due to its narrowness this is generally not required.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Seton Dean is located approximately 400m south east of the Seton Sands Holiday Park and is reached off Core Path 141 (CP141) running between the coast road, B1348 and the dual carriage way section of the A198 between Longniddry and Port Seton. A small car park for three to four cars is reached at the end of the private road through Seton Mains off the A198.

There are three entrances to the wood, from the south the wood can be accessed just to the north of the track leading to 'Stepping Stones' house at Seton Mains. The second entrance is at the car park approximately 70m north of the southern boundary of the wood. The northern entrance is right at the north of the wood and leads back onto the CP 141 and onto the coast with links onto the John Muir Way.

Nearest public toilet - <1km east on B1348 at Longniddry Bents public car park

Please check East Lothian Council website www.eastlothian.gov.uk for opening times and facilities.

Nearest bus stop - A198 - Longniddry, approximately 1km east.

Nearest train station - Longniddry, approximately 2.3km.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline - www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0871 200 2233.

(Information correct at August 2016)

3.2 Access / Walks

The path within the wood generally follows the burn as it meanders north towards the coast. Initially from the south there is a steep section and the path from the car park has some dilapidated steps leading down the slope. The remaining paths is relatively barrier free until the northern end where there is a steep sided hump to negotiate before returning to the farm track. The woodland path is unsurfaced but generally free draining and firm and is used by horses, cyclists and pedestrians. The site slopes gently down from south to north.

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Secondary Woodland

The site will be allowed to develop naturally using minimum intervention, with the aim of allowing a diverse age structure to develop. The original long-term intention was to regenerate the site as an oak-ash woodland (NVC type W8/W10), with small open areas for diversity. The intention being that this would gradually replace old growth, and infill any gaps created as a result of removal of the dead and dying elm trees and eventually return the site to mature high forest. However, with the spread of ash dieback it is likely that much of the ash will eventually succumb and die, and the main successional tree species is likely to be sycamore. Should significant gaps in the canopy occur as a result of ash dieback then the recruitment of natural regeneration will be favoured, although re-planting with native broadleaves (predominately oak) may be considered.

Informal Public Access

Existing on site access facilities will be maintained to suit the existing local demand, which is classed as Grade C - low use, responding reactively with changes in demand and with consideration to the development of East Lothian's Core Path Network.

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

Seton Dean is a small woodland with a through path. As such it is used as part of a circular return route, generally by local users rather than a destination in itself. The woodland path offers an alternative to the CP 141 which is the farm track forming the eastern boundary of the wood as well as offering an attractive diversion off the longer distance route of the John Muir Way only 200m to the north, which runs along the entire length of East Lothian's coast. There are also a number of more informal desire lines, formed as return routes around the fields to either side of the wood and around the holiday park to the north west which also link in with the woodland path. The current level of public use is defined as WT Access Category C (low usage sites where we do maintain paths)

Significance

The footpath through the woodland forms part of a longer walk from Seton Mains right through to the coast at Seton Sands. This is well used by the residents of Seton Mains to gain access to the sea front.

The local area in East Lothian is dominated by agricultural land. There are, therefore, limited opportunities for participating in recreation in wooded areas.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

The change of ownership to the wood and fields either side may offer opportunities in the future (should development be considered) to include the woodland path within a more formal network of paths.

Constraints:

Small scale nature of site means that there are no opportunities for expansion of the internal paths. Steep and narrow path sections.

Factors Causing Change

Ash dieback, Dutch Elm Disease, Neighbouring Development

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain and enhance safe public access facilities for the purposes of informal recreation. The site will continue to offer the opportunity for quiet informal recreation for principally local users.

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

Access provision will remain in keeping with WT Access Guidelines and site access coding. Reviewed with the management plan every 5 years or if a significant change in local circumstances.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

Although the site is not recorded in the Inventory of Ancient Woodland, the presence of wild garlic, bluebells, dog's mercury & other indicator species on site suggests that it has been under woodland cover for several centuries. Although the canopy has been drastically altered by the loss of many mature elms to Dutch elm disease (DED) there are still widely spaced mature ash, sycamore, and limes with an occasional horse chestnut and beech. Within the site there are also four mature yews, their size indicating that they have been growing on site for a substantial period of time. The majority of the area is covered in mixed scrub, dominated by: sycamore, elm, ash, oak, hazel, willow sp., with elder, holly and hawthorn all present to greater or lesser degrees. Larger gaps created through the loss of trees to DED have been replanted with oak, ash, hazel, hawthorn, guelder rose, blackthorn and rowan.

The burn running through the site provides another habitat for wildlife and further contributes to the biodiversity of the site .

There is no evidence of ash dieback in the wood-as of August 2016

Significance

Locally, the woodland is extremely significant and is an integral part of the local designation 'Special Landscape Area'. Much of the rest of the land around Seton Mains is agricultural and thus this small area of trees is a relative local rarity.

The site has obviously been under tree cover for a substantial period of time and thus should be maintained as woodland. This is particularly important in East Lothian, where there is very little woodland in the agricultural landscape. The burn can provide further diversity, through the presence of aquatic and semi-aquatic life.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

Following change of adjacent land ownership there remains a possibility to expand the woodland area as part of any proposed developments.

Encourage movement of the woodland structure towards NVC classification W8/W10 'oak, ash, hazel' woodland. However, it is accepted that ash dieback may have a significant impact upon moving the woodland structure towards NVC W8/W10 and the presence of sycamore will continue to be a major component of the woodland.

To involve the community at Seton Dean more in the on-going management of the site.

Constraints:

Ash Dieback

Dutch Elm Disease

Small scale of woodland and limited 'core area'.

Factors Causing Change

Dutch Elm Disease

Ash Dieback

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To enhance the biodiversity of the site through the restoration of mature high forest, with a varied age structure and species composition. There will be a range of ground flora and shrub species developing under the mainly native tree canopy. To try and increase the wooded area of the site through negotiations with the neighbouring landowner.

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

Wood continues to mature into mainly native mixed broadleaved woodland with planted trees achieving successful establishment. Open areas will be allowed to develop and regenerate naturally with predominantly native species. Oak will be favoured and a small amount of respacing will be carried out, as required, by 2021, to reduce competition from surrounding species e.g. sycamore, etc.

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	1.20	Sycamore	1900	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Special Landscape Area

Canopy (30% cover) of: mature sycamore, ash and limes with an occasional horse chestnut and beech, the majority delineating the woodland boundary. Within the wood to the south there are 4 mature yew trees.

The pole stage/scrub understorey (70% cover) is dominated by sycamore, with elm, ash, oak, sycamore, hazel, willow sp., and elder, holly and hawthorn all present to greater or lesser degrees, some planted in '1997, 2000 and '2004. Ground flora is dominated by wild garlic with patches of bluebells, ivy, nettles and dog's mercury. Brambles, thistles and buttercup are also present along with hedge bindweed.

There is abundant dead wood; both standing and lying.

Small groups of tree planting of varying ages are establishing well (with oak, ash, hazel, hawthorn, guelder rose, blackthorn and rowan). There is also an area of naturally regenerated ash on the south west corner of the wood.

The boundaries are unfenced except for the south east corner which in 2010 had a successful planning application for one house. This boundary has been marked to prevent incursion from any subsequent development. Building work commenced on the foundations of the house in May 2013 but ceased several weeks later for reasons unknown. As of 2016 the house remains the same as it was left in 2013, incomplete and unoccupied. As of 27-10-17 the house is now two thirds built. There have been no issues with builders spreading over onto our boundary or damaging trees to date. Photographs on file.

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.