



Dutchie's Orchard

Management Plan 2012-2017

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Dutchie's Orchard
Location:	South Petherton
Grid reference:	ST433171, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 193
Area:	0.42 hectares (1.04 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Dutchie's Orchard is a mixture of native broadleaves and fruit trees. A small loop path crosses the wood and includes a stone bench en-route where you can pause to enjoy the views. Access is via a public footpath running adjacent to Mare Lane.

2.2 Extended Description

Dutchie's Orchard is named in memory of the previous owner. It is located on the edge of the village of South Petherton, Somerset, on a west-facing slope surrounded by housing and open fields. Access is via a public footpath running adjacent to Mare Lane. Within the Orchard a circular grassy path is maintained around the site. Vehicle access within the Orchard itself is impractical due to the small size and slope of the site.

The majority of woodland in the surrounding area is made up of old orchards so this site fits well into that context.

As part of the Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' millennium project, Dutchie's Orchard was designed and planted with the help of local people in 1996. The planting mixed native broadleaves and fruit trees to augment the existing mature boundary trees and fruit trees on the site. The ground cover is dominated by nettles and ivy.

To celebrate the millennium a seat made by a local stone mason was installed on the higher part of the Orchard, near the entrance. The material used is locally sourced limestone known as 'hamstone' as it comes from the nearby Ham Hill.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General Location

This small wood is within the town of South Petherton

Overview

Public access to the site is via the public footpath which runs adjacent to the eastern boundary, from Silver Street. There is a large kissing gate allowing access to wheelchairs and pushchairs; but this is over a small bridge which may prove difficult for some. The track is a mud surface on a mild slope, this will become slippery in periods of heavy rain. A small loop which includes two sets of steps has been established which passes a stone bench en route where you can pause to enjoy the views. The wood adjoins the River Parrett Trail, which is a long distance footpath.

Parking

A large free car park in the centre of South Petherton is a 250 metre walk from the wood via a pavement.

Public Transport

The village is well served, the nearest bus stop being at the church on Palmer Street.

Facilities

Public and disabled toilets exist in the car park

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Dutchie's Orchard will be managed as broadleaved woodland whilst the history of the site as an orchard is recognised with productive fruit trees being present as part of the overall composition. The site will be valued and enjoyed by local residents as an open green space available for quiet, informal recreation and education.

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

Dutchie's orchard was designed and planted as part of the 'Woods on Your Doorstep' millennium project and is open at all times to visitors. A short section of path leads from here to the millennium seat. Two flights of steps have been constructed to facilitate access on the steeper sections of the short looping path.

Although the site is small it has an uneven woodland structure with denser areas of young trees, fine mature specimens and a small open glade, this variety makes the site a pleasant place to visit.

Significance

Local people were involved in the design and planting and now enjoy visiting the wood. The wood is an area of accessible green space within the village and links directly onto the public footpath.

Opportunities & Constraints

An opportunity exists to foster local involvement and projects could be undertaken to strengthen the sense of ownership. This could include highlighting the existing wildlife and enhancing the habitat by such ideas as the installation of owl boxes or bulb planting; and focussing on the fruit available.

Factors Causing Change

Natural decline of the fruit trees and domination by other broadleaf trees

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Dutchie's Orchard will provide a small woodland habitat in the village for local people to enjoy. The wood will remain welcoming to local visitors as it develops to maturity.

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

1. Annual site inspection to ensure the site is welcoming and appropriate for level of use.
2. Annual maintenance of entrance, bench and path as appropriate to ensure they remain usable and safe.
3. Undertake pruning of fruit trees and overhanging branches of neighbouring trees to improve the health and vigour of the fruit trees. The removal of ivy where it dominates a tree will be beneficial to the productivity and longevity of the trees.
4. Undertake control of the nettles by cutting regularly to reduce their vigour in order to keep the site welcoming. This cutting will be at a minimum of once annually. This will also facilitate access to all parts of the site and allow people to 'wander'
5. Encourage the local residents to participate in the management of the site. This could include highlighting the existing wildlife and enhancing the habitat by such ideas as the installation of bird boxes or native bulb planting; and focussing on the fruit available.
6. Within the life of the plan, and if supported locally, then new fruit trees will be planted to maintain continuity of the site as an orchard.

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	0.40	Mixed broadleaves	1997	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access	

The site was planted in 1996 with oak, ash, beech, field maple, cherry, crab apple and pear with a shrub component comprising hawthorn, hazel, holly, guelder rose and spindle. Existing trees on the site include mature specimens of horse chestnut, ash, oak, pine, beech, silver birch, willow and maple. These are mostly round the boundary of the site. The ground flora is mainly ivy under the shade of the canopy and nettle in the open areas. Patches of more interesting flowers occur throughout such as snowdrop and buttercup.

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.