



# Abbey Grove

## Management Plan 2014-2019

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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.

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## 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](http://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

|                        |                                     |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Site name:</b>      | Abbey Grove                         |
| <b>Location:</b>       | Felixstowe                          |
| <b>Grid reference:</b> | TM301358, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 169 |
| <b>Area:</b>           | 3.91 hectares (9.66 acres)          |
| <b>Designations:</b>   | Environmentally Sensitive Area      |

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Abbey Grove was planted as a native broadleaved woodland by the local community in December 1998 as part of The Trust's Woods on your Doorstep project. The design of the four hectare woodland incorporates an area of hazel coppice as a site feature and a small meadow to increase visitor enjoyment and habitat diversity. The tree species which were planted include common ash, pedunculate oak, sweet chestnut, field maple, hornbeam, wild cherry, hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn. There is a wide array of wildlife including 12 species of butterfly, woodland indicator plants such as wood anemone, bluebell and sorrel, and a very rare beetle only found in this wood. The site abuts an area of existing secondary woodland known as The Grove, which is owned by Suffolk Coastal District Council, and which is much used by the public. In 2001 the local community approached the Woodland Trust to create a volunteer group to aid the management of the site. This has developed in to a vibrant active community group which now undertakes all basic management within the wood. Public access is available with rides crossing and circulating the site, and formal entrances have been created from the highway and through the Grove.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Abbey Grove was planted as a native broadleaved woodland by the local community in December 1998 as part of The Trust's Woods on your Doorstep project. The design of the four hectares of woodland also incorporates an area of hazel coppice, and small wildflower meadow.

Abbey Grove abuts to the North East an area of existing secondary woodland known as The Grove, which is owned by Suffolk Coastal District Council, and which is much used by the public. To the East of the wood there is a new doctors surgery that has recently been built and to the west of the wood there are local allotments. The southern edge of the wood abuts a busy road, whilst the northern boundary there are horse paddocks

The key features of for this site are:

Informal Public Access - Abbey grove is open to the public

Secondary woodland - Planted native and naturalised tree species . main species - Oak, ash, sweet chestnut, field maple and Hazel.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Assess from the Grove car park off Grove road (A1021). Also thee are pedestrian entrances from the Grove wood (owned by Suffolk Coastal District Council) and again off Grove road via the allotments entrance.

How to get to Abbey Grove

Via Bus Service: First Buses

75: Ipswich - Felixstowe (Grange Farm)

75A: Ipswich - Felixstowe (Grange Farm)

76: Ipswich - Old Felixstowe

77: Ipswich - Felixstowe Dock

77A: Ipswich Schools - Old Felixstowe

link to first buses: [www.firstgroup.com](http://www.firstgroup.com)

Felixstowe has connections to the railway system and the train operator is National express.

Link to train times: [www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)

Nearest Toilets are situated at the Grove car park close to the site.

The Site is of even topography with the main rides being wide and open all paths are un-surfaced and are cut regularly, some parts of the pathway system get very muddy during the winter months.

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

### Community

Abbey grove is managed by a vibrant and active community group who undertake all current management. The long term intention will be to maintain this close bond between the local community of Felixstowe and Abbey grove.

### Secondary Woodland

The long term intention will be for Abbey Grove is to develop a resilient and well -structured high forest canopy with a wide variety of native and naturalised tree and shrub species. This will be undertaken through the thinning of the single story plantation allowing natural regeneration to create a multi-age canopy and age class within the woodland, with dead standing lying deadwood habitat. The meadow will be maintained as an area of open ground adding further diversity and public open space to the site. The stand of pure hazel will be managed on a 6-8 year rotation to provide poles to the local gardens and allotments.

### Public access

The long-term intention is to maintain a sustainable level of use by maintaining the access features and internal infrastructure appropriately. The long-term management will concentrate on maintaining the current paths and internal structures, such as entrances, benches and sculptures to a safe useable standard.

## 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 well used network of rides that dissect the wood and formal entrances have been created from the highway and through the Grove.

#### Significance

Created as part of the woods on your doorstep project, the local community have been involved in the fundraising, design and planting of the site. Public access is vital to ensure on-going support for the Trust's work.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

The site is adjacent to an existing secondary woodland known as The Grove and owned by Suffolk Coastal District Council. This provides the opportunity to link publicity, share the use of the large car park and help to relieve visitor pressure on The Grove.

#### Factors Causing Change

Anti-social behaviour and vandalism. potential continued development adjacent to Abbey grove.

#### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the public access infrastructure at a level where visitors to Abbey Grove will be able to utilise a well maintained path network.

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

To maintain the site as an area of public open access with the ride system cut to a minimum of 2m width 5 times per year to allow unhindered access for the public. Maintain all public access structures in a safe usable condition. Retain continuity within existing meadow as an area of open space. Cut meadow annually after seeding, and then rake and remove arisings and place either in the woodland areas or remove from site.



## 5.2 Secondary Woodland

### Description

A native broadleaved woodland has been planted which includes a small area of hazel coppice. An area has been allowed to regenerate naturally from existing trees adjacent to the site.

### Significance

As a Woods on your Doorstep site the project has been funded on the understanding that a woodland will be established and maintained for future generations.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Coppicing the hazel regularly will ensure views into the site from the road are maintained. However this is subject to the availability of labour which may be constrained by the market for the produce. There is a keen volunteer group on the site, which could perform a number of silvicultural operations.

### Factors Causing Change

Ash Dieback - one of the main species planted was Common ash. There will be potentially a slow decline in the health of this species on site.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To develop the young native woodland with a good diverse canopy and age structure and a good scrubby understorey and ride/woodland edge structure and developing deadwood habitat.

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

The woodland will be thinned periodically to help the development of natural regeneration and break up the current single storey plantation high forest canopy to create a multi structured canopy with developing natural regeneration and deadwood.

The area of hazel has a community value in which the volunteer group have been coppicing on a 6-8 year rotation to supply the local community and allotments.

### 5.3 Community Woodland Group

#### Description

In 2001 the local community approached the woodland trust to create a volunteer group, which can aid the management of the site. This has developed in to a vibrant active community group which now undertakes all basic management within the wood.

#### Significance

Created as part of the Woods on your Doorstep project, the local community have been involved in the fundraising, design and planting of the site. Public access is vital to ensure ongoing support for the Trust's work.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

##### Opportunities

The local community of Felixstowe have agreed to take on the day to day maintenance of the wood and the Woodland Officer can take a supervisory role in the project.

Promote woodland trust within the area of Felixstowe.

Supply local coppice products to other community groups and allotments.

#### Factors Causing Change

Retirement of community group members.

#### Long term Objective (50 years+)

For the community group to continue to evolve and recruit new members to manage and maintain Abbey Grove with the aspiration of eventually handing the site over to the community completely

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

To maintain community involvement and management of Abbey Grove

##### Work Programme:

- Community Hazel coppicing to provide poles to gardens and local allotments.
- Path Cutting central strip to provide good access to pedestrians, whilst cut alternate ride edges on final cut of year.
- Meadow cut and rake after meadow flowers have seeded - August/Sept.
- Ride side coppicing - Coppice ride edge shrubs and coppice on a 5 year rotation.
- Undertake 20% thinning of woodland plantation areas to break up canopy and allow development of natural regeneration.
- Ensure volunteer Risk assessment are reviewed and agreed biannually and any actions agreed as necessary.

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## 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      | 3.20      | Oak (pedunculate) | 1999 | High forest       |                              | Community Woodland Group, Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland | Environmentally Sensitive Area |

The following species were planted as part of the woodland at your doorstep project between 1998 and 2001: Common ash, pedunculate oak, sweet chestnut, field maple, hornbeam, wild cherry, hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn. A small block of pure hazel coppice was planted as a site feature. A strip of land adjacent to the Grove (owned by Suffolk Coastal District Council) was left to natural regeneration and has been colonised by Oak, common ash, aspen and Turkey oak, with common hawthorn as an understorey species. A small meadow situated to the north of the wood provides a valuable area of open space, although of low biodiversity value it does provide another habitat

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**Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)**

| Forecast Year | Cpt | Operation Type | Work Area (ha) | Estimated vol/ha | Estimated total vol. |
|---------------|-----|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 2017          | 1a  | Thin           | 3.00           | 7                | 20                   |
| 2020          | 1a  | Thin           | 0.00           |                  | 0                    |

## 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.