



# Muchwood & Mary's Wood

## Management Plan

# 2011-2016

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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>	Muchwood & Mary's Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Ramsey
<b>Grid reference:</b>	TL294869, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 142
<b>Area:</b>	2.06 hectares (5.09 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Muchwood and Mary's Wood is one of The Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' woodlands, planted to commemorate the Millennium. This young woodland lies 1.5 miles north-east of Ramsey in Cambridgeshire, and includes a wildflower meadow, which provides great views of Peterborough Cathedral.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Muchwood and Mary's is a small 2 hectare site, located 1.5 miles Northeast of village of Ramsey in Cambridgeshire. It was purchased by the Woodland Trust in December 1997 as part of The Woodland Trust's Woods on Your Doorstep' (WOYD) millennium project. It was planted in November 1998, the main species being oak, ash and field maple. A public tree planting event took place on 14th November. The name Muchwood comes from the name of the road forming the southern boundary of the site. Mary's comes from Mrs K Mary Burstall (nee Simmons) the late mother of Miss Patricia Burstall, a local resident and donor towards the site. The northern third of the site is known as Mary's Wood, and present in this area is a small meadow. The meadow is the Millennium feature, a unique element built into the design of all the Millennium WOYD sites. Views over to Peterborough Cathedral (eleven miles away) can be had from this point.

The site is on the fenland edge and is comprised of fertile organic soils. The landscape is fairly flat but is relatively well hedged with trees within them. There are few other woods locally though.

Local people were instrumental in the design and raising funds towards the site. A car park for up to six vehicles is available off Bodsey Toll Road, the eastern boundary. A circular path can be taken through the site from the car park

The site was formerly part of a large arable field from which it was split. Immediately to the west is a designated green burial site, where the first burials and tree planting took place in 2002.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Muchwood and Mary's Wood lies 1.5 miles north-east of Ramsey, Cambridgeshire along minor roads with no footpaths. A gravel car park is provided off Bodsey Toll Road with a 2 metre high height barrier. There is over 600m of paths forming a circular walk around the site. The paths are level and generally in good condition although not surfaced.

The nearest public transport stops (buses) are in Ramsey. For bus times contact Travel Line on 0871 2002233 or [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

Public toilets are available in the Library, School Lane, Ramsey, 1.5miles away. For opening hours see [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The intention is to develop Muchwood & Mary's Wood into a mature broadleaved, woodland composed of mainly native species. The woodland will be regenerating with a diversity of native tree species and support a healthy deadwood habitat, both standing and fallen. The retention of standing deadwood will only be considered where this does not pose a safety risk to visitors. A diversity of species and age class of trees will ensure the wood remains resilient to any future changes imposed on it (especially tree diseases). Some silvicultural intervention may be required in the future to ensure these conditions are maintained.

Oak is likely to be the major canopy species when the wood reaches maturity. The percentage of ash in the wood is likely to decrease in the next 10 years due to the impact of ash dieback. Any ash trees unaffected by disease will be retained and natural regeneration of ash will also be retained - within a mixture of other species. A component of other species will also be present and this is likely to include field maple, hazel and hawthorn.

Public facilities at the site will be of a good standard but low key, in view of the site's small size and limited local interest. The wood will remain fully accessible for pedestrian access in perpetuity, with welcoming signage and a well-managed path network. The wood will be made as safe as practical for visitors through regular tree safety inspections in high risk zones, such as the boundary roads. Periodic management of the boundary hedge will be undertaken to ensure it does not become outgrown and therefore a greater safety risk.



## 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

This wood is managed for public access. A small car park is provided off Bodsey Toll Road for six vehicles, with a 2m height barrier restricting access to taller vehicles. There are over 600m of managed paths, providing a variety of short walks for local visitors. A small grass meadow in the Northwest corner, with associated bench, adds variety for the visitor. There are 2 other entrance points into the wood in addition to the car park.

#### Significance

The wood is a product of the local community's interest in creating an accessible woodland resource. There is very little woodland of any kind in the locality, making this an important place for local people to enjoy a woodland experience.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

##### Constraints:

- Because of the size of the wood, it is only likely to be of interest to visitors living very locally.
- Litter build up on the road edge can be a problem, as the wood is located at a road junction.

##### Opportunities:

- Community support for the wood could be developed and in the future this could enable the wood to be self-managed by a local community group

#### Factors Causing Change

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

To maintain safe and informal public access in perpetuity. The site will be welcoming with a managed path network, but facilities will be low key for this small local wood.

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

The short term objective for this plan period is to ensure the site remains welcoming, safe and accessible. This will be achieved through the following:

1. The car park and entrances will be kept open, welcoming and adequately signed through annual maintenance visits. New welcome signage will be installed in 2019/20.
2. The build-up of litter will be kept to a minimum through annual maintenance visits.
3. The 600m path network will be accessible for visitors, through annual mowing.
4. Safety checks will be undertaken routinely, especially of trees in high risk zone (falling distance of the roads and paths).
5. The small 1.0 acre meadow will be kept open and grassy, through annual mowing.



## 5.2 Secondary Woodland

### Description

Muchwood & Mary's is a small native woodland (2 hectares) which was planted in 1998. The main trees planted are oak and ash, which make up 50% of the wood. Other tree species include field maple, willow, alder, hazel and crab apple. Overall there is good variation and diversity within the tree stands. Native hedgerows have been planted along most of the boundary and there is a small meadow, left unplanted, in the Northwest corner. The wood is set within an intensive agricultural fenland landscape, but there is a green burial site immediately to the west.

### Significance

There are few woodlands in this part of Cambridgeshire, although ecologically notable ones such as Woodwalton and Monks Wood are within 10 miles. Therefore even relatively small woodlands make a positive contribution to both the landscape and as places for wildlife, dependent on such habitats for survival

### Opportunities & Constraints

#### Constraints:

The small size of the wood, and the intensive agricultural landscape surrounding it, will ultimately limit the ecological value and the range of species that can be supported.

### Factors Causing Change

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The objective is to ensure Muchwood & Mary's Wood develops into a mature broadleaved, woodland composed of mainly native species. The woodland will be regenerating with a diversity of native tree species and support a healthy deadwood habitat, both standing and fallen. A diversity of species and age class of trees will ensure the wood remains resilient to any future changes imposed on it (especially tree diseases).

Some silvicultural intervention may be required in the future to ensure these conditions are maintained. Oak is likely to be the major canopy species when the wood reaches maturity. The percentage of ash in the wood is likely to decrease in the next 10 years due to the impact of ash dieback. Any ash trees unaffected by disease will be retained and natural regeneration of ash will also be retained - within a mixture of other species. It may be necessary to remove ash trees from high risk zones, such as path edges, to lessen the risk as the disease progresses. Some restructuring and gaps within the tree stands may result from the death of ash trees, which will add diversity and opportunities for natural regeneration to occur.

A small open meadow will be retained within the woodland for ecological and amenity reasons.

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

During this plan period the objective will be to maintain stable and safe woodland conditions. Hence, woodland operations will be limited to that of safety.

The following works will be undertaken:

- The removal of all remaining tree guards across the wood, especially on the roadside hedges.

This will be completed by 2020

- The laying or lowering of the roadside boundary hedge during 2021, a length of approximately 250m.

- The annual management of the small 1.0 acre meadow, to ensure it remains as a habitat feature.

- Monitoring for ash dieback in 2022 to assess whether there is any need to carry out safety works.

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## 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	2.00	Ash	1998	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	

Compartment 1 is the whole of the site which includes 1.6 ha of woodland and 0.4 ha of meadow. The woodland is a stand of trees planted in 1998 consisting of mainly oak and ash, but which also includes field maple, hazel, willow and alder.

## 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.