



Springfield Copse

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Springfield Copse
Location:	Strines, Marple
Grid reference:	SJ972863, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 109
Area:	2.50 hectares (6.18 acres)
Designations:	Woods on your Doorstep

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A secluded, quaint patch of native woodland, Springfield Copse is set back from Strines Road, Marple. For such a small pocket of woodland, Springfield Copse is surprisingly rich in wildlife and recently planted oak trees will provide extra habitat. Approximately 400m of informal paths, and two footbridges allow access within the copse. Much of the path network is located on fairly steep slopes and un-level ground. The paths are not surfaced and consist of natural grass and unmodified earth, they can get muddy and slippery when wet.

2.2 Extended Description

Springfield Copse is a small broadleaved native woodland created as part of the Woodland Trusts millennium project 'Woods on Your Doorstep' (WOYD). Prior to planting the site was a mixture of rough pasture with areas of bramble, horsetail, fern (on wet flushes), thorn scrub and small stands of sycamore, willow and oak. The surrounding landscape is predominantly pasture with housing along the eastern boundary and two small blocks of mature beech woodland (Dingles) abutting the western boundary.

The site was purchased in October 1999 and designed and planted with the aid of the local community in 2000. The new woodland was planted with a selection of native tree species common to the region; these included sessile & English oak, common ash, downy birch, common alder, goat willow, wild cherry, rowan & hazel. 40% of the site was originally planned as open space, which includes areas of permanently wet ground, cut grass sward and uncut grassland forming a mosaic of habitats. Tree growth on the site has been vigorous and the area now has a distinct woodland feel about it. Squirrel damage throughout the woodland is severe and has, and will continue to affect the mature height that the woodland reaches.

The site has a varied terrain, the southern third is formed by an area of relatively flat well drained land higher than the rest of the site, this drops steeply on a northern facing to one of three streams that cross the copse from west to east. The northern two thirds of the site is a mixture of small mounds and wet pockets. The presence of an overhead power line running SE to NW across the copse has shaped its layout resulting in a large central ride. Approximately 16% of the site (or 0.4ha) was mixed woodland before the new planting, this comprised of sycamore, oak, alder, ash, goat willow, and blackthorn. The new plantings covered approximately 44% of the site or 1.15ha, the remainder 1.036ha is open ground and comprises of a mixture of grassland, wet flushes dominated by horsetails and reeds and bramble patches.

Access to the site is through two entrance points on the southern boundary (Off turf lee/Peers lane). Approximately 400m of informal paths, and two footbridges over the southern stream allow free movement within the copse. The site is well used by local people for informal recreation. As a millennium feature a semi-circular stone bench concealed in a grassed mound was erected on a viewpoint over looking the copse from its southern plateau. Informal public access is a Key Feature of the site.

Previous owners of the site have included the Egertons of Tatton, and the Calico Printers Association. On the Tithe map this landed is called 'Higher Rough Piece' and on other old maps it is called 'Springfield'. In the past it was used for grazing, and before mains water was available in Strines a well was dug in the field and drinking water piped from it to cottages near the Calico Printing Works.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Springfield Copse is located at in the village of Strines half way between New Mills and Marple, on the western slopes of the Goyt valley and on land sandwiched between the B 6101 and The Peak Forest Canal. Pedestrian access to the Copse is through two kissing gate entrance points on the southern boundary from Turf Lee/Peers Lane. Approximately 400m of informal paths, and two footbridges over the southern stream allow free movement within the copse. Much of the path network is located on fairly steep slopes and un-level ground. The paths are not surfaced and consist of natural grass and unmodified earth, they can get muddy and slippery when wet.

Parking is available on nearby local roads such as Turf Lee & Peers Lane but may be limited.

Nearest public toilet: Located at Derby Road in Marple which is approximately 2 miles away from the site. Toilets are suitable for disabled users with a RADAR key and are open form 7.30am - 5.00pm. Information provided by Stockport Metropolitan Council. www.stockport.gov.uk

Nearest bus stop: Located at Strines Road Post Office which is opposite the wood. Information from Traveline website.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2 608

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Our long term intention for Springfield Copse is to create and maintain high forest of mixed (likely to be predominantly native broadleaves). The wood will be managed primarily as a recreational and landscape feature. Regeneration of both natives and non-native species will be accepted and transitional habitat from planned and existing open space through to woodland is expected. Public access will be maintained at least its current level with two entrance points and approximately 400m of maintained paths. Consultation and involvement of local people will continue to be important.

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 New Native Woodland

Description

Springfield Copse was planted in 2000 as part of the Woodland Trusts millennium project "Woods On Your Doorstep" (WOYD). The area of new woodland planted was approximately 1.15 ha, this serves to buffer and increase the core area of the existing stands of scrub and trees that occupied approximately 16% of the site. The new plantings were planted at 3m centres (1100 trees/ha) and were of a mix typical to the local consisting of sessile & English oak, common ash, downy birch, common alder, goat willow, wild cherry, rowan & hazel. Now well established with a clear woodland feel.

Significance

Through joining and buffering two existing mature woodland blocks (neighbouring land) the plantation has added value to local biodiversity by increasing the area and variety of permanent woodland habitat niches in which native flora and fauna can survive and develop.

Opportunities & Constraints

The copse's small size coupled with the presence of overhead power lines and a complex mosaic of wet flushes, streams and steep banks means that there is little room for modification of the present stand layout, and little possibility of commercial timber returns from this copse.

The site is too small to make a significant impact on the overall landscape's ecology, but does add value to the more local mosaic of habitats and by buffering the mature neighbouring woodland.

Factors Causing Change

Mammal damage - occasional minor deer damage, but particularly extensive grey squirrel damage through bark stripping. Ash dieback.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The aim is to create a high forest of mixed predominantly native broadleaves. The wood will be managed predominantly as a recreational and landscape feature. This will involve maintaining the diverse mix of species, regeneration of both natives and non-native species will be accepted.

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

Minimum intervention approach will be adopted, the trees will be monitored once during this plan period for signs of mammal damage, although it is unlikely given the scale of the woodland itself, given the surrounding mature woodland habitats that any effective control of squirrel and the damage caused could be adopted without a landscape scale collaborative approach.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

The site has 2 main public access points adjacent to Turf Lee/ Peers Lane on the sites southern boundary which lead to approximately 400m of informal level and steeply sloping mown grass paths, two footbridges cross the stream and a stone bench (millennium feature) provide informal recreational opportunities for local people and the site is well used. Parking is available on nearby local roads but may be limited.

Significance

The Copse was planted as community woodland during the Trusts millennium project "Woods On Your Doorstep" (WOYD) and generated considerable energy and input from the local community during the purchase, planning and planting phases of its creation generating a strong sense of local ownership. Further to this, its location on the edge of the village of Strines and on the route of popular walking loops from Marple, New Mills and Disley means Springfield Copse it easily accessible to a large population.

Opportunities & Constraints

The local community were very involved in the purchase; design and planting of the wood suggesting that further organised involvement would be met with enthusiasm.

Legal constraints on the access route, its topography and small size coupled with numerous wet flushes mean that greater provision of paths, parking and facilities is limited. There is the possibility of negotiating a permissive route from the north over neighbouring land linking the copse with the children's play ground, this met with a mixed response when suggested during design meetings and would require comprehensive public consultation.

The woodland is extremely slippery during wet weather given the steepness of some of the slopes and the unsurfaced nature of the paths, although the level of access provision is adequate given the present usage of the woodland.

Factors Causing Change

Access is limited to 2 entrance points and the small wood is tucked away. However, there is a little pleasant little network of paths around the site with seat that will encourage people to linger. The woodland is also links into a wider recreational path network.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The long-term intention is to maintain the present levels of access with improvements made where new opportunities are identified. Guided by the parameters set out in the Woodland Trusts woodland management principles management will continue to seek a balance between conservation and public enjoyment.

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

The two entrance points, 400 metres of path, bridges, boundaries, access signage and litter will be managed on at least once annually through an estates management contract.

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	2.48	Oak (sessile)	2000	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Services & wayleaves, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/ mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland	Woods on your Doorstep

2.59 hectares (6.39 acres) planted with a mixture of native broadleaves p.2000 including oak, ash, birch, cherry, willow & alder on former agricultural land, it is located at Strines half way between New Mills and Marple, on the western slopes of the Goyt valley and on land sandwiched between the B 6101 and The Peak Forest Canal. It has a north-eastern aspect with numerous springs and watercourses crossing it. The fences of St Paul's church and domestic properties define the eastern boundary with a short section in the southeast abutting Strines Rd. The southern boundary abuts Turf Lee/Peers Lane and is defined by a post and wire fence. The eastern and northern boundaries abut a mixture of pasture and woodland and are defined by a post and wire fence.

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.