



# Shillbrook Wood

## Management Plan 2017-2022

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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.

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## 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>	Shillbrook Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Bampton, Witney
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SP319021, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 164
<b>Area:</b>	3.69 hectares (9.12 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Shillbrook Wood was planted as native broadleaf woodland using ash, willow and alder with grassy circular routes around the wood. There are welcome signs and an information board at the main entrance on the public footpath south from Bampton.

## 2.2 Extended Description

The majority of Shillbrook Wood was planted in November 2000 with a 0.6ha extension added to the south in February 2002. The creation of the wood was part of the Trust's Woods on Your Doorstep initiative (WOYD) with the local community involved in the initial planting. The site is situated in the west of Oxfordshire on the outskirts of the village of Bampton (1km / 0.6 miles) and south west of the town of Witney (10.1km / 6.3 miles).

Soils are described as loamy with naturally high groundwater, indeed Shillbrook is a low lying, wet site and historically was a water meadow before being drained in the 19th century and used to grow crops. The site is named after the stream, the Shillbrook, which runs through Bampton, the nearby village.

With considerable support from the local community, the site was planted with a mix of native trees and shrubs including ash, oak cherry, lime, alder, field maple and guelder rose as well as two pure blocks of osier and hazel. The site also contains a component of more uncommon species such as black poplar, walnut and disease resistant elm. There is a network of wide grassy rides within the young woodland, which preserve views of Bampton and Aston church whilst mature hedgerows run along most of the boundaries.

Shillbrook Wood can be accessed via several public rights of way in the surrounding area, one of which leading south from Bampton passes the council-owned playing fields off Buckland Road (where there is a car park). There is good network of permissive paths throughout the site along the grassy rides which offer quiet, short walks in a scenic landscape. The Trust owns a management access track running east from the main woodland to Buckland Road which is not available for public access.

The Woodland Trust has given the site a category C for access (low usage site where we do maintain paths).

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Getting there: Buses stop in the main square at Bampton from Oxford and Witney from Monday to Saturday. Shillbrook Wood lies approximately 3/4 of a mile to the south of Bampton and can be accessed via public footpaths from the village. A footpath runs through the parish council-owned playing fields where there is a car park. The footpaths running to the site are accessed via a series of kissing gates.

Access within the site: the site is level although some of the ground can become muddy during periods of wet weather.

There is also a public footpath passing through the Trust's roadside management access gate. This passes close to the start of the management access strip and then runs in a south westerly direction. The vendor requires that the management access strip is not used as a public access route and this is specifically excluded in the Transfer - therefore the Trust must actively discourage such use if it arises.

Public conveniences: At the Town Hall, Bampton. For further details contact West Oxfordshire District Council on tel. 01993 861000 or by using their website : [www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/Publicconvenience.cfm](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/Publicconvenience.cfm) .

For more information on public transport, please contact Traveline - [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or phone 0871 200 22 33 .

## 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The woodland will largely be allowed to develop naturally though silvicultural intervention will take place where necessary to improve conditions for selected retained specimens and to maintain open spaces. Areas primarily along the ditches where Himalayan balsam has colonised will be managed to eradicate this non-native species from the woodland.

Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is evident within Shillbrook Wood which will affect the species composition of the wood over time. Oak is likely to be the dominant tree species in the woodland as it grows and develops with willow and alder in the wetter areas.

On-going monitoring will ensure access remains easy and safe. This will be achieved through a managed path and entrance network and regular safety inspections of site infrastructure and of higher risk tree zones. Where anti-social behaviour has previously been experienced, we will continue to develop relationships with the local volunteer warden, PCSO and wider community to ensure we react to any incidents quickly and actively discourage future occurrences.



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## 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

Description
Significance
Opportunities & Constraints
Factors Causing Change
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

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**5.2**

**Description**

**Significance**

**Opportunities & Constraints**

**Factors Causing Change**

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

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

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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	3.64	Ash	2000	Wood establishment			

Broadleaved woodland planted in 2 waves, the majority in 2000 and a 0.6Ha southern block in 2002. Main species are ash (30%), oak (20%) with minor components of wild cherry, lime, willow, alder, field maple, black poplar, walnut and elm. Also contains a good proportion of native woody shrubs such as guelder rose and hawthorn, especially on the woodland edges. There are 2 blocks of pure osier and hazel totalling 0.2ha. Paths and open glades comprise approximately 15% of the site with a wide spread of cowslips planted by the local community. The woodland is developing well with canopy closure in most places and an array of common wildlife observed by the volunteer warden.

## 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.