



Theydon Bois

Management Plan 2017-2022

MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

ITEM	Page No.
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Introduction

Plan review and updating

Woodland Management Approach

Summary

1.0 Site details

2.0 Site description

2.1 Summary Description

2.2 Extended Description

3.0 Public access information

3.1 Getting there

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 Long term policy

5.0 Key Features

5.1 New Native Woodland

5.2 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

5.3 Informal Public Access

6.0 Work Programme

Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions

Glossary

MAPS

Access

Conservation Features

Management

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Theydon Bois
Location:	Abridge Road, Theydon Bois, Essex
Grid reference:	TQ458980, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 177
Area:	38.29 hectares (94.62 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

The mixed broadleaved trees of this young woodland are now establishing themselves and forming a bridge between the ancient and mature woods nearby. Animals and birds are moving in and the wildflower meadows are a visual treat in spring and summer. There's a spectacular giant earth sculpture to explore too.

2.2 Extended Description

The land is gently sloping grade III agricultural land immediately west of the M11 near Theydon Bois. It is close to Epping Forest and is believed may have once formed part of it. The land was bought in two tranches of 61.51 acres to the north and 27.9 acres to the south. Apart from one field on the north the site was largely planted with mixed native broadleaves between 2006 and 2009. Substantial numbers of trees were planted by local people from a wide range of groups across Essex and London. Essex County Council paid for 30 000 trees to be planted as part of a wider initiative in Essex

A small stream cuts through the site and on its southern edge a wildflower meadow has been sown and an orchard, comprising 45 apple trees, planted. This area is cut annually. A large field has been left unplanted as we explore the potential of the site for a substantial public artwork. In the process of constructing the artwork it is planned that new aquatic and wetland habitats will be formed on the northern side of the stream in 2011.

The land is sold without entitlement to Single Payment Scheme payments.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

The site is accessible on foot via public rights of way from both Abridge and Theydon Bois.

By bus: Regular buses run between Theydon and Abridge. Alight at the cemetery on Abridge Road.

By train: The nearest London Underground station is Theydon Bois on the Central Line. The site is approximately 1.6km (one mile) from the station, either along the roadside pavement or via a public right of way.

For up-to-date information on public transport, visit traveline.org.uk, or telephone 0871 200 22 33.

By car: From the M11, take Exit 7 onto the A414 towards Chelmsford/Harlow. At the roundabout, take the exit to the B1393 (London Road). Continue through three roundabouts, then turn left onto Theydon Road and continue to Piercing Hill. Turn left onto the B172 (Coppice Row) and continue on to Abridge Road. The site is on the right just before the M11 flyover.

There is no car park at the site. Nearby car parks include the Woodland Trust's Hainault Forest.

(December 2016)

3.2 Access / Walks

The entrance to the site is on the Abridge Road, heading out of Theydon Bois just before the M11 flyover. There is a good network of paths through the wood, including two linked public rights of way and a surfaced path.

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

New Native woodland: The aim is to ensure establishment of the planted woodland blocks and to develop them towards mature native woodland, which is resilient to change. This will be done by ensuring a diverse range of native tree species as possible. Management of the woodlands will respond to any changes and threats imposed on them, for instance from tree diseases. Restocking and the use of alternative species to ensure a robust and diverse tree mix will be undertaken where appropriate, and especially in areas affected by ash dieback. The new woodland will provide an ecological link to two existing woodland areas and hopefully promote the idea of further woodland creation in the local area. Any further tree planting will seek to retain the prominent view out over to London.

New Semi-natural open ground: A diverse semi-natural open ground habitat will be managed comprising grassland, stream, ponds, wetland and orchard. This land will be managed to promote its value for wildlife and will seek to make use of local farmers in the long-term management of the grassland.

Informal Public Access: The landscape artwork will be managed to maintain its long term impact on the locality and visibility from the M11. Public access will be kept low key but a network of well managed paths and entrances will be retained at the site.

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

Approx 26ha (70%) of the site is made up of newly established woodland. The woodland links established woodland at either end of the site with Long Shaw an ASNW on the south of the site and mature mixed broadleaved woodland on the north west

Archaeological assessments highlighted that the site has lower than would be expected background finds and that there was no barrier to widespread treeplanting.

While initially the intention was to plant the bulk of the site with new woodland the views over London from the highpoint on the site were subsequently identified by key stakeholders as notable and their preservation desirable. This resulted in a large area remaining unplanted and becoming the focus of a potential landscape artwork. Some of this unplanted land may be available for tree planting in subsequent years.

All trees were planted at 2.1x 2.1m spacing in long curved rows. All planted areas were pre-sown with a fescue dominated grass mix and the planting area subsoiled at 2.1m intervals to break up any plough pan and to mark out the planting rows.

Significance

Increasing the area under native trees and improving woodland biodiversity are corporate objectives of the WT

The linking of native woodland habitats by the proposals increases capacity for native woodland flora and fauna.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints

- C1: Unrestricted deer browsing;
- C2: Unrestricted rabbit grazing
- C3: Need to retain key views;
- C4; FWPS precludes coppicing/grazing within the 15 year FWPS period.

Opportunities

- O1: To expand the area of site native woody species;
- O2: To temporarily expand habitat opportunities for non-woodland species

Factors Causing Change

Deer damage

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The aim is to ensure establishment of the planted woodland blocks and to develop them towards mature secondary native woodland, which is resilient to change. This will be done by ensuring a diverse range of native tree species as possible. Management of the woodlands will respond to any changes and threats imposed on them, for instance from tree diseases. Restocking and the use of alternative species to ensure a robust and diverse tree mix will be undertaken where appropriate, and especially in areas affected by ash dieback.

In the future further woodland creation will be considered on the open ground areas of the site.

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

Beating up and restocking will be carried in 2019 within the central planting block (approx 10ha) with the aim of planting any significant gaps greater than over 20x20m, especially in those areas affected by ash dieback. 2500 trees will be planted in total consisting of oak, hornbeam, cherry, birch and field maple.

Maintenance of new planting will be carried annually over the plan period and this will consist of annual weed control of trees not yet at the establishment phase and any new planting. The progressive removal of redundant tree guards will be carried out in the planting blocks over the course of the plan period.

5.2 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

Description

A small stream bisects the site. Along the south side a 50m wide wildflower meadow has been established with widely spaced apple trees planted. The stream eventually runs under the M11 at which point the meadow merges into a wide woodland ride.

A small field pond abuts the stream and meadow on the north-west.

Plans for the land on the north side of the stream are still pending development of the artwork but are likely to include the following:

- Establishment of a wildflower meadow and orchard on the north side of the stream to a similar extent as that on the south;
- The creation of a large pond and wetland through the need to supply material on-site for the artwork
- Possible establishment of a large area of grazed open ground to maintain the artwork in an open condition

At present the open ground is managed by cutting however the option of grazing will be looked at to see if it provides a more cost effective sustainable management option for the open ground. The apple trees have been individually protect with guards sufficient to protect from sheep but will require upgrading to protect from cattle.

Significance

Opportunity to create a locally significant biodiversity reserve with good prospects to facilitate the spread of species along the river valley.

Grazed semi-natural grassland is a nationally declining habitat.

In landscape terms grazed grassland in the river valley restores a landscape that is increasingly being lost in Essex but which locally is moderately prevalent due to historical reasons where river valley marshland was favoured for fattening livestock prior to being sold to the London meat markets.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints

- C1: The management needs for maintaining the artwork;
- C2: The availability of appropriate graziers to use the site;
- C3: Natural succession leading to woodland;
- C4: Control of noxious weeds

Opportunities

- O1: To create a diverse range of semi-natural habitats complementary to native woodland.
- O2: To work with neighbouring landowners in the management of the site through grazing and/or hay cutting;
- O3: To work with local people in the management of the orchard and the use of the fruit.

Factors Causing Change

Uncontrolled grazing, Other - Sculpture project, Other - Cemetery project

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The creation of significant area of conservation grassland and association riparian and aquatic habitats managed to increase populations and opportunities for plants and animals.
Community Orchard established with the help of local residents in its ultimate management.

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

1. Annual cutting of grassland areas to promote botanical diversification (2011-2016)
2. Creation of new wetland areas as part of the sculpture development works; (2011)
3. Improvement of existing wetland areas through desilting field ponds by up to 75%. Silt to be used for sculpture; (2011)
4. Plan developed for the sustainable management of the open ground areas; (2012)
5. Extension of Orchard onto the northern bank of the stream, subject to landscape needs of the Sculpture. (2012)

5.3 Informal Public Access

Description

The site has open public access across it. This has meant that two previously unlinked PROW are now linked greatly improving the access opportunities for local people. A new surfaced path has been established through the site and links with a well used PROW through to Debden. There is no car park at the site for the public but a hard standing area is available for keyholders for use on events and is capable of accommodating coaches. The remote location of the site and the high risk of fly-tipping has meant that there are no plans to open up the parking area. Nearby there are a number of large public access woodland that people can park at, including the Woodland Trust Managed Hainault Forest

Part of the site is very visible to the M11 motorway and a landscape art project has been proposed that has as its main audience users of the M11. While it is not proposed that we encourage people to actually visit the site it could transpire that the artwork may inspire visits and the issue of no public parking will need to be readdressed. The artwork is planned for construction in 2011 and we will need to monitor the subsequent site usage.

Significance

Increasing public awareness and enjoyment of woods and trees is one of the Trust's core objectives.

The site creates useful links within the local access network.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints

- C1: Area is very prone to fly-tipping;
- C2: Area is prone to settlement by travellers
- C3: Lack of parking restricts visitor accessibility;

Opportunities

- O1: To improve path linkage in the local access network;
- O2: To create a prominent local landmark in the landscape

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The site is proposed as a focus for quiet informal access for local people who can walk or cycle to the site. No specific encouragement to visit the proposed sculpture is planned. It is intended that local people will in the medium to long term be the main means of managing the site.

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

1. Selected paths cut at least three times a year; (Ongoing)
2. People engagement plan prepared for the site and to include one aim to encourage practical community support for the management of the site; (2011)
3. Creation of the proposed sculpture (2011)
4. Maintenance of sculpture (Ongoing)

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	0.60	Mixed native broadleaves	2006	High forest		Informal Public Access	
<p>Small new woodland planted in 2006 by school children using 1.2m tubex shelters. A small parking area for management use has been constructed by the site entrance and which is normally locked to the public. There is also a need to retain management access for the managers of the Debden woods located on the SW of the site. In addition a neighbour appears to have management access for the delivery of hay for livestock.</p>							
1b	0.50	Mixed native broadleaves	1900	High forest		Informal Public Access	
<p>Mature oak and hornbeam woodland with hawthorn and field maple understorey. Significant woodbank present on the western boundary. One hornbeam pollard present to the south of the compartment.</p>							
1c	9.00	Mixed native broadleaves	2009	High forest		Informal Public Access	
<p>New woodland established 2006-09 on arable land. Essex County Council (2008) funded the cost of planting 30000 trees in the bulk of the cmpt. The Buddhist religious order 'Fo Guang Shan ' paid for and planted (2007-2009) with volunteers a further 4500 trees on a discrete section on the south of the cmpt. Both areas are enclosed within a single deer fence. The scheme was established outside the EWGS. In total between volunteer and contractor planting 35532 trees were planted. Species Mix and proportions as follows: POK 25%, ASH 20%, FM 15%, HAZ 10%, HBM 20%, Crab 0.25%, Grey Sallow 1%, Aspen 0.5%, Bet Pub 1%, Haw 4%, CAR 1%, Holly 1% Pur Buck 0.25%, Dogwood 1%.</p>							
1d	1.25	Mixed native broadleaves	2009	High forest		Informal Public Access	

<p>New native woodland established at the same time as 1c. Trees were protected with treeshelters, and not enclosed by a deer fence. Species Mix and proportions as follows: POK 25%, ASH 20%, FM 15%, HAZ 10%, HBM 20%, Crab 0.25%, Grey Sallow 1%, Aspen 0.5%, Bet Pub 1%, Haw 4%, CAR 1%, Holly 1% Pur Buck 0.25%, Dogwood 1%.</p>							
1e	5.00	Mixed native broadleaves	2009	High forest	Legal issues, People issues (+tve & -tve)	Informal Public Access	
<p>New woodland established 2008/09 on arable land under the EWGS. A total of 14440 trees were planted. Species Mix and proportions as follows: POK 25%, ASH 20%, FM 15%, HAZ 10%, HBM 20%, Crab 0.25%, Grey Sallow 1%, Aspen 0.5%, Bet Pub 1%, Haw 4%, CAR 1%, Holly 1% Pur Buck 0.25%, Dogwood 1%. 45-60cm bare rooted trees and 1.2m tubex trees shelters were used throughout the whole. A part of the southernmost half of the cmpt was planted in memory of John Porter a former staff member of the Woodland Trust.</p>							
2a	8.00	Open ground		Non-wood habitat	People issues (+tve & -tve)	Informal Public Access	
<p>Former arable field, moderately steeply sloping with good views of London from the highest point on the north-east. Across the field are a number of mature oak trees on the field and a small grove of trees was planted by local children in 2006. (The grove was erroneously planted in the location). Along the NW edge of the cmpt the 2009 Booker Prize judges planted an oak avenue. A large landscape artwork was constructed in 2011 if planning permission is approved. Funding for the artwork was provided by the Greenarc project. A section of the field to the north is to be used as an extension to the neighbouring cemetery.</p>							
2b	1.50	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Informal Public Access	
<p>A new orchard planted in 2009/10 by local school children. A total of 45 trees planted, all trees on mm106 root stock - grown in 10 litre pots. Trees have individual metal tree guards supported by wooden posts. Trees thriving in Autumn 2010 with only one failure. The orchard runs along the west side. The ground beneath the trees was previously sown (Spring 2007) to a wildflower meadow mix and managed for hay. Seed mix used was composed of: 20% Common Bent, 20% Crested Dogstail, 20% Sheeps fescue, 10% smooth stalked meadow grass (creeps but not as much as fescue), 15% Red or Chewings fescue (no rhizomes) (not creeping red fescue), 5% small leaved timothy (not the agricultural robust version), 1.0% Yarrow, 2.0% Common Knapweed, 1.5% Birds Foot Trefoil, 0.5% Cowslip, 1.0% Self-Heal, 0.5% Common Vetch, 2.0% Wild Red Clover, 0.5% Lady's Bedstraw, 0.5% Ribwort Plantain, 0.5% Black Medick.</p>							
2c	1.50	Open ground		Non-wood habitat		Informal Public Access	
<p>A linear area of open ground sandwiched between 1c and 1d.</p>							

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.