



Great Hill Wood

Management Plan

2020 – 2025

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Great Hill Wood
Location:	Chillington
Grid reference:	SX796423, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 202
Area:	4.67 hectares (11.54 acres)
Designations:	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Great Hill Wood is a 4.7–hectare woodland planted with native broadleaf trees species in December 1998 as part of the Woodland Trust’s ‘Woods on Your Doorstep’ (WOYD) project, to mark the millennium. The wood is located in the South Devon AONB, 0.5km south of the village of Chillington, on a prominent hill rising from 45 m to 80 m above sea level and is connected to the wider landscape by a public right of way footpath. The wood also features open grassland areas of ride, glade a small orchard with rare, local varieties of apple tree. The wood lies within the South Devon National Character Area (151), and the South Hams Landscape Character Area (LCT 3B), which is characterized by gently rolling hills with flat valley floors braided with freshwater streams along which small mixed woodlands (including ancient), coppice, and traditional orchards can be found. This

wooded, agricultural landscape is connected by a network of historic, species rich hedgerows-with-standard trees, bordering a complex mixture of arable, pasture and semi-improved grassland fields. The soil geology is of limestone, sandstone and clay with basal outcrops. The woodland has several 'Millennium features' chosen as part of the original design plan consultation with the local community. These include a circular network of managed rides throughout and an open glade which provides a viewpoint near the hill top, several benches, and an apple orchard, managed by a volunteer group, which also hosts events such as apple pressing days. The site and its path network are well used by the local community and long distance walkers for recreation. There are many links into the rights of way network from the site entrances, which lead to the main A379 road.

2.2 Extended Description

Great Hill Wood is a 4.7-hectare woodland planted with native broadleaf trees species in December 1998 as part of the Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' (WOYD) project, to mark the millennium. The wood is located in the South Devon AONB, 0.5km south of the village of Chillington, on a prominent hill rising from 45 m to 80 m above sea level and is connected to the wider landscape by a public right of way footpath. The wood also features open grassland areas of ride, glade a small orchard with rare, local varieties of apple tree. The wood lies within the South Devon National Character Area (151), and the South Hams Landscape Character Area (LCT 3B), which is characterized by gently rolling hills with flat valley floors braided with freshwater streams along which small mixed woodlands (including ancient), coppice, and traditional orchards can be found. This wooded, agricultural landscape is connected by a network of historic, species rich hedgerows-with-standard trees, bordering a complex mixture of arable, pasture and semi-improved grassland fields. The soil geology is of limestone, sandstone and clay with basal outcrops. The woodland has several 'Millennium features' chosen as part of the original design plan consultation with the local community. These include a circular network of managed rides throughout and an open glade which provides a viewpoint near the hill top, several benches, and an apple orchard, managed by a volunteer group, which also hosts events such as apple pressing days. The site and its path network are well used by the local community and long distance walkers for recreation. There are many links into the rights of way network from the site entrances, which lead to the main A379 road.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Public transport (buses) are available from Kingsbridge and make a stop at Chillington Village 0.5 km from Great Hill Wood. Further information about public transport is available from Traveline – www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2 608. There are five signposted entrance gates accessible from public rights way (Stokenham Byway 37, Footpaths 12 and 25). The site has no adjacent parking provision. The nearest maintained public car park and public toilets are at Torcross (SX823 424) which are a 3km drive on a busy rural road to the coast. The site has a well-maintained internal network of paths and gates but most routes are not hard surfaced and there is a 35m rise in elevation that may prove challenging to some visitors, particularly if path conditions are wet and muddy in winter. The path through the orchard from the byway at the (Stokenham 37) to the public footpath to the north (Stokenham no. 12) has a level hard surface.

3.2 Access / Walks

The wood is located in the South Devon AONB, 0.5km south of the village of Chillington. Access for quiet recreation is permitted across the whole site, with a well maintained network of around 800 meters of unsurfaced, circular paths providing a clear route to the majority of the woodland. There are five signposted entrance gates accessible from public rights way (Stokenham Byway 37, Footpaths 12 and 25), connecting to the wider landscape. Walkers utilizing the rights of way network can access the wood via these entrances, however the woodland is predominately used for recreation by the local community at Chillington 0.5 km to the north. A circular route allows visitors to tour the full boundary of the wood, via the orchard, glade and woodland areas. The path through the orchard from the byway at the (Stokenham 37) to the public footpath to the north (Stokenham no. 12) has a level hard surface. The site has a sloping topography, ranging from 45 m to 80m above sea level. The higher ground to the south of the site provides splendid views of the local landscape, there are also some benches provided in the wood for rest and enjoyment.

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

To encourage the development of a mature, native broadleaf woodland with a diverse range of species and structure, including managed, open rides and glades, an abundance of understory woodland shrubs, naturally regenerating trees and biodiverse ground flora managed under a mixture of high forest, continuous cover principles and rotational coppice. Continue to contribute toward the Woodland Trust's target of increasing permanent UK woodland cover and supporting biodiversity recovery and climate change mitigation, by promoting resilience and structural diversity in the wood, including edge habitat, essential for a range of plant, fungi, invertebrate, reptile, bird and mammal species. Maintain open access, infrastructure and paths to an appropriate and safe standard to meet the Woodland Trust's corporate objective of engaging people with woods and trees, and providing woodland spaces for recreation and health. Establishing and supporting a productive and resilient fruit orchard of rare apple tree varieties that is enjoyed and managed by the local community as a source of sustainable food, education and wellbeing. To safeguard the wood against increasing threats such as non-native invasive species, pests and diseases and extreme climate events by vigilant monitoring, intervention and proactively creating resilience within the wood to increase its ability to 'bounce back better' following disturbances. To create a woodland that is a safe, highly valued resource to the local community, providing mental and physical health benefits through its active volunteer group, and permanent open access and well maintained infrastructure such as paths, benches and gates.

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 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Public Access

The wood is located in the South Devon AONB, 0.5km south of the village of Chillington. Access for quiet recreation is permitted across the whole site, with a well maintained network of around 800 meters of unsurfaced, circular paths providing a clear route to the majority of the woodland. There are five signposted entrance gates accessible from public rights way (Stokenham Byway 37, Footpaths 12 and 25), connecting to the wider landscape. Walkers utilizing the rights of way network can access the wood via these entrances, however the woodland is predominately used for recreation by the local community at Chillington 0.5 km to the north. A circular route allows visitors to tour the full boundary of the wood, via the orchard, glade and woodland areas. The path through the orchard from the byway at the (Stokenham 37) to the public footpath to the north (Stokenham no. 12) has a level hard surface. The site has a sloping topography, ranging from 45 m to 80m above sea level. The higher ground to the south of the site provides splendid views of the local landscape, there are also some benches provided in the wood for rest and enjoyment. Ash Dieback is currently present in the wood and poses an issue along Zone B tree safety paths, with many Ash trees around 20 – 30 cm in width and 15 – 20 m in height approaching collapse within the currently plan period. The site is welcoming upon approach and features signage and numerous benches for rest and reflection created and installed by the sites resident volunteer group.

Volunteers

Great Hill Wood has a well and long established group of volunteers, the ‘Chillington Wood Volunteers’, who carry out the majority of activity on the site. They perform a wide range of active tasks from wardening, creating and erecting bespoke signage and infrastructure such as benches, and wildlife monitoring in spring and summer to practical management

of the rides, coppice and orchard areas in winter. The group currently has around 20 members, but also host public events such as a community apple pressing day, harvesting the fruit grown in the orchard in autumn. The volunteers play a central role and are key to the continuing, long-term health and diversity of the site. In particular, the group is vital to working towards containment and eradication of the 'Three Cornered Leek', a significantly invasive, non-native species that is present on the site and threatens native ground flora.

There are significant opportunities for education and guided walks at the wood, particularly with the site knowledge and skills held within the volunteer group. Approaches by 3rd party groups or businesses would be considered.

The Chillington Wood Volunteer group is always looking for new volunteers and there is scope for a variety of volunteering roles and activity based on the skills and aspirations of the individual

Significance

- An accessible source of nature for the local community providing mental and physical health benefits, in a local area relatively lacking in free, accessible areas of significant woodland.
- WOYD site with significant input from local people, great example of woodland providing long-term community cohesion opportunities.
- Site meets the Trust's corporate target of providing people with more freely accessible woodland for recreation, education and volunteering.
- Home to one of the Woodland Trust's most well established and active volunteer groups in Devon, carrying out regular activities and events on site and performing a key role in the management of the wood.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities

- Thinning and ride management work will improve path conditions by drying them out, allowing easier access.
- Close proximity to a local population providing the opportunity for people to engage with nature and provide health benefits.
- Establishing canopy will create a more aesthetic woodland experience for visitors.

- Opportunity to increase environmental sustainability by only using untreated, ethically sourced materials for access infrastructure.
- Excellent opportunity to engage more people with woods and trees through inclusion in the volunteer group tasks and events run by trained, tasked volunteers. Opportunity to expand the activities and opportunities of the volunteer group with support from the Woodland Trust.
- Opportunities for public, environmental education due to close proximity with local settlement.
- Volunteers building and installing new benches within the wood, improving the visitor experience

Constraints

- Some paths are uneven and can become muddy in wet weather, limited access to southern parts of the site where the ground is higher.
- The site has no parking provision at or in close proximity, limited visitor access from wider landscape.
- Ash Dieback posing a risk to visitor safety.
- No local facilities for volunteer groups and events such as shelter or hygiene facilities.

Factors Causing Change

- Canopy closure over some paths leading to loss of ground vegetation and increase in muddy walking conditions underfoot.
- Canopy establishment eliminating aesthetic viewpoints and sightlines established in the design consultation of WOYD project.
- Increasing visitor numbers putting pressure on the site access infrastructure such as gates.
- Ash Dieback and other tree diseases creating a risk to access and public safety and affecting the short term aesthetic value of the woodland.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access to be maintained providing a free, recreational resource for locals in the Chillington area and long-distance walkers, improving health and providing greater opportunities for connecting with nature and wildlife. Paths and access infrastructure to be maintained to a safe and aesthetic standard, providing access to the majority of the woodland. Any increase in visitor pressure will be managed with suitable, proportionate

infrastructure provisions, safeguarding the natural feel of the woodland. Any new infrastructure such benches are installed with the wider wood in mind and maintained to an environmentally friendly and safe standard, viewpoints and landscape site lines will be maintained to offer the best aesthetic experience for visitors. Tree diseases such as Ash Dieback posing a threat to public safety will be managed sensitively and diligently, with consultation and involvement from local community to ensure a balance of public access, safety and wildlife are provisioned for. The volunteer group will be supported with funding and training opportunities provided by the Woodland Trust. Management of the wood will continue to involve a key and active role from the local community, with support for practical activity and events. Scope will be maintained to increasingly develop Great Hill Wood as a sustainable resource for the community. Interpretation will be considered to provide education to public where needed, such as on the importance of not introducing non-native, invasive species.

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

Operational Objective:

Maintain an easily accessible, attractive and safe Woodland (and Orchard) that all members of the public can enjoy. Entrances, path network and access infrastructure such as benches and viewpoint are appropriate for the access category of the wood (Category B) using local, sustainable materials and maintained to a safe and high aesthetic standard, fitting with the wider woodland. Utilise ride edge coppicing and thinning works to improve path conditions for walkers, particularly in muddy and wet areas. Manage Ash Dieback disease through a program of thinning over the 5-year plan to ensure public safety and access is secured. Support volunteer group with resources and training where required and facilitate new opportunities to improve their experience of the wood.

1. Maintain good level of access by cutting or flailing encroaching path vegetation, removing fallen trees and both checking and repairing access infrastructure 2–3 times per year when needed.
2. Manage public safety through regular tree surveys and works, improve conditions of path and ride edge habitats through thinning of Ash (infected with Ash Dieback) two tree lengths either side of Zone B paths.
3. Support the volunteer group in their activities with staff time, resources and training.
4. Explore new opportunities for volunteers such as enrichment tree planting to increase resilience if natural regeneration is compromising tree species diversity.

5. Maintain sightlines and viewpoints conceived as part of the original WOYD community consultation plan.
6. Volunteers to build and install new benches within the wood, in line with FSC procurement policies and subject to site manager approval.
7. Provide interpretation on tree-diseases and non-native, invasive species to help volunteer group educate members of the public.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

The secondary woodland was planted on agricultural land by the Woodland Trust in 1998/99, with a native broadleaf species mixture including Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Cherry (*Prunus* sp.), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), Large Leaved Lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*) and features other species such as Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Wayfaring Tree (*Viburnum Lantana*). Since planting the wood has also been enriched with natural regeneration of shrub and tree species from the existing hedgerows in field boundaries. The ground flora is mostly a legacy of the sites past as an agricultural field, featuring open-grassland species, however this community has been slowly moving towards a more woodland species mixture over time. Recorded species include, Broadleaved Willowherb, Harts Tongue Fern, Scaly Male Fern, Hedge Woundwort, St John's Wort, Enchanters Nightshade, Red Campion, Wood Avens, Foxglove, Ox Eye Daisy, Fleabane, Common Nettle, Dock, Great Hairy Willowherb, Meadowsweet, Tufted Vetch, Teasel, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Ragwort, Thistle spp., Cleavers, Bramble, Common Vetch, Common Fumitory, Water Mint and Borage. Ash Dieback has created greater light levels by thinning out the canopy which has increased the abundance of ground floral vegetation including bramble. The open glades are dominated by grass species such as *Agrostis* spp. and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), but woodland rides are developing into more species rich corridors of herbaceous ground floral species. The wood also contains Three Cornered Leek (*Allium triquetrum*) which is a highly invasive, non-native Schedule 9 (W&CA 1981) species and can outcompete native ground flora such as Primrose and Violets. Identified by PlantLife as a 'critical risk'.

Significance

- Establishment of new woodland meeting the Trust's corporate objective of increasing UK tree cover.
- Important site and habitat corridor for wildlife in a local landscape area that is relatively lacking in large areas of woodland or tree cover.
- Proximity to a watercourse in an otherwise agriculturally dominated landscape, improving water quality and slowing rain run-off.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities

- Ash Dieback creates an opportunity for silvicultural intervention to structurally diversify the establishing secondary broadleaf woodland, increase deadwood volumes, create more understory light to benefit ground flora and natural regeneration (particularly from species rich hedgerows) of a wider range of regenerating native tree species. Sessile oak already well established in areas identified for ash dieback safety works (thinning).
- Opportunities for continued coppice rotation carried out by volunteers creating habitat for species adapted to this management type.
- Opportunities for continued ride creation and management increasing biodiversity value of the woodland.
- Opportunity to test the soil in open glades for phosphate levels and assess feasibility of restoration to species rich grassland.
- Opportunity to carry out enrichment planting with volunteers to increase resilience and diversify tree species mix in the wake of loss of ash canopy to dieback.
- Opportunity for the wood to act as a connectivity hub for future habitat corridors and tree planting in the wider landscape.

Constraints

- Non-native, invasive species such as the Three Cornered Leek (*Allium triquetrum*) spreading and outcompeting native vegetation.
- Visitor pressure including dog walkers potentially disturbing ground nesting bird and mammal species.
- Lack of species diversity in natural regeneration.

Factors Causing Change

- Ash Dieback (*Hymenosyphus fraxineus*) Disease
- Canopy establishment of planted trees
- Deer and Grey Squirrel damage
- Increasing visitor numbers, including dog walkers potentially impacting on wildlife.
- Invasive species – ‘Three Cornered Leek’ encroaching on native ground vegetation
- Natural regeneration producing a homogenous species mixture

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A mature, biodiverse, aesthetic, multi-age structure broadleaf woodland providing an abundance of species-rich woodland and open habitats for wildlife, and offering a range of ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water quality improvement and shelterbelt from wind borne pollutants and prevailing weather conditions. Managed under a mixed regime of thinning (where tree disease becomes an issue) and coppicing to maximize biodiversity potential. A mixture of trees, woody shrubs, open space and ground flora fully integrating as part of the overall woodland habitat and wider landscape of hedgerows and habitat corridors.

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

Operational Objective:

Maintain habitat and structural diversity to support wider biodiversity of the site, and ensure opportunities for the health and development of woodland ground flora and natural regeneration in recently established woodland are implemented.

1. Mow the glade and rides at the same time as the orchard to ensure it remains as open habitat with associated ground flora
2. Manage Ash Dieback to maximize the benefit to wildlife in the wood by increasing deadwood, understory light levels, natural regeneration and structural diversity.
3. Continue volunteer coppicing work on a structured rotation to improve biodiversity.
4. Sample soils in the glade areas to assess for phosphate levels and efficacy of improvement to species rich-grassland by introducing seed mixes.
5. Scarify soils in glade areas and introduce species-rich wildflower seed if phosphate levels are low enough.
6. Eradicate Three Cornered Leek and Buddleia by supporting volunteer group in their efforts to control these species.
7. Monitor species diversity of natural regeneration and make considerations for enrichment planting to increase resilience if necessary.
8. Manage sightlines from the viewpoint by selectively thinning some trees as part of Ash Die Back mitigation works.

5.3 Orchard

Description

The 'Chillington Community Orchard' is a 0.3 hectare fruit tree orchard planted in conjunction with the secondary woodland in 1998/99 with 28 local varieties of fruit tree, all of which are apple. Varieties include; Billy Down Pippin, Blue Sweet, Colemans Seedling, Fair Maid of Devon, Kingston Bitter, King of the Pippins, Langworthy, Longstem, Lucombes Pine, Major, Northcott Superb, Oaken Pin, Paignton Marigold, Pigs Nose (Type 3), Plympton Pippin, Spotted Dick, Sugar Bush, Sugar Loaf, Sweet Bay, Sweet Cleave, Sweet Coppin, Tom Putt, Town Farm No.59, Tremletts Bitter, White Alphington, White Close Pippin, Winter Stubbard and Woolbrook Pippin. It is unknown which exact tree is matched to which variety due to a loss of records, however a number of the breeds are considered rare and part of ongoing conservation efforts by multiple organizations in Devon to preserve their existence. The apple trees are now well established and managed by the local volunteer working group, with pruning occurring in winter and harvesting in autumn. Ground flora has retained its pre-planting species mixture and is dominated largely by *Agrostis* spp, with mowing taking place in late summer before apple harvesting. The orchard is bordered by both species rich hedgerows-with-standards forming the former field boundary, and the secondary woodland area.

Significance

Small-scale apple orchards in the South Devon area have been in ongoing, historic decline, but form a distinctive part of the woodland complex in the South Hams AONB, due to its fertile, brown earth soils and temperate climate. A number of apple varieties planted in the orchard are considered rare and of interest to orchard conservation groups, including Pig's Nose and Sugar Bush. The idea for creating the orchard as a millennium feature was put forward during the Woods on Your Door Step (WOYD) project consultation with the local community prior to the woodlands creation in 1998, and was identified as a key element in the acquisition and design process. Local, sustainable sources of healthy food are integral to developing climate resilience and food security for communities in the 21st century, in which fruit orchards play a role, they can also provide important resources for pollinators and other wildlife.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities

- Great opportunity for education and community cohesion around managing, harvesting

and processing the apples, trees and orchard.

- A source of local, sustainable, healthy food with minimal carbon footprint.
- Opportunity to offer future grafting stock for the conservation of rare apple tree varieties in the local area.

Constraints

- Limited orchard size compared to size of population of local settlements, which are projected to grow.
- Susceptibility of orchard stock to pests and diseases.

Factors Causing Change

- Orchard potentially falling into a period of non-management, compromising productivity of the fruit trees.
- Armillaria spp. (Honey Fungus) or other pest and/or disease such as Xylella fastidiosa becoming established in the wood, directly affecting individual trees.
- Extreme weather events such as droughts associated with anthropogenic climate change threatening survival and productivity of the orchard.
- Short-term increase in exposure to prevailing winds from loss of Ash as a dominant part of the surrounding woodland canopy.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

An established, productive and well managed orchard of rare and conserved local fruit tree varieties providing a source of education, community cohesion and source of sustainable, healthy food for the local population that engage with Great Hill wood in the spirit of stewardship, and derive from it mental and physical health benefits and a greater connection to nature and their surrounding landscape. The threat of pests and diseases has been monitored and managed to ensure the survival of the fruit trees in the long-term. The location and significance of the rare, local varieties present in the orchard have been identified and used as to encourage wider conservation and creation of local apple orchards in the South Hams area. The orchard also features a component of species rich grassland, providing a habitat for associated biodiversity.

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

Operational Objective:

Maintain the development of a healthy, productive, full-stocked Orchard through to maturity, monitoring and responding to threats from pests and diseases, and identifying which varieties are which with associated mapping work carried out.

1. Annual mowing of grass under apple trees before harvest to maintain understory and provide access to trees.
2. Continue winter pruning works to ensure trees are at maximum health and productivity.
3. Harvest apples in autumn.
4. Monitor annually for pests and diseases.
5. Carry out surveying to identify which variety is matched to which individual tree and map the locations.
6. Sample soils in the orchard to assess for phosphate levels and efficacy of improvement to species rich-grassland.
7. Scarify soils in open areas and introduce species-rich wildflower seed if phosphate levels are low enough.

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	4.30	Ash	1998	High forest		Connecting People with woods & trees	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Mostly uniform aged woodland creation block planted in 1998/99, species mixture including Sessile Oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>), Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), Cherry (<i>Prunus</i> sp.), Hornbeam (<i>Carpinus betulus</i>), Sweet Chestnut (<i>Castanea sativa</i>), Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), Scots Pine (<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>), Large Leaved Lime (<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i>) and features other species such as Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>), Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>) and Wayfaring Tree (<i>Viburnum Lantana</i>) have seeded in naturally from surrounding woodlands and species rich hedgerows-with-standards in the landscape. The ground flora is highly variable, shifting over time from open grassland species indicative of its pre-planting ecological legacy to a more woodland dominated community. Ash Dieback has created greater light levels by thinning out the canopy which has increased the abundance of ground floral vegetation including bramble. The open glades are dominated by grass species such as <i>Agrostis</i> spp. and Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), but woodland rides are developing into more species rich corridors of herbaceous ground floral species. The wood also contains Three Cornered Leek (<i>Allium triquetrum</i>) which is a highly invasive, non-native Schedule 9 (W&CA 1981) species and can outcompete native ground flora such as Primrose and Violets. Identified by PlantLife as a 'critical risk'.</p>							
1b	0.30	Other	1998	Min-intervention	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	Connecting People with woods & trees	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>A fruit tree orchard planted in 1998/99 with 28 local varieties of fruit tree, all of which are apple. Varieties include; Billy Down Pippin, Blue Sweet, Colemans Seedling, Fair Maid of Devon, Kingston Bitter, King of the Pippins, Langworthy, Longstem, Lucombes Pine, Major, Northcott Superb, Oaken Pin, Paignton Marigold, Pigs Nose (Type 3), Plympton Pippin, Spotted Dick, Sugar Bush, Sugar Loaf, Sweet Bay, Sweet Cleave, Sweet Coppin, Tom Putt,</p>							

Town Farm No.59, Tremletts Bitter, White Alphington, White Close Pippin, Winter Stubbard and Woolbrook Pippin. It is unknown which exact tree is matched to which sub-variety due to a loss of records. Ground flora has retained its pre-planting species mixture and is dominated largely by *Agrostis* spp.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2020	1a	Thin	1.00	33	33
2022	1a	Thin	1.00	20	20
2024	1a	Thin	1.00	14	14

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.

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