Ketchley Copse

(Plan period – 2019 to 2024)

Management Plan Content Page

Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

"A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife."

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK's native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

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.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.

2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, 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. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.

4. The long term vision for all our 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 natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.

7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities 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 encourage our woods to be used for 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. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.

10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

The Management Plan

1. SITE DETAILS

Ketchley Copse

Location:	Lydd Grid reference: TR046208 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 189
Area:	0.81 hectares (2.00 acres)
External Designations:	N/A
Internal Designations:	N/A

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Ketchley Copse is situated on the edge of the ancient town of Lydd in the Romney Marsh area of Kent. The Woodland Trust acquired both The Little Vicarage Field and Bass Field in 1984, and planted these with native broadleaved trees in 1986 to create the site now known as Ketchley Copse. The wood is a small 0.81ha (2 acres), but it remains one of two significantly wooded areas in Lydd and as such is well used by local residents and dog walkers. Ketchley Copse has also been dedicated to the memory of the crew of the Herald of Free Enterprise by the Calais Yacht Club & Friends. A plaque with this dedication is erected on site.

Lydd sits in the Romney Marsh National Character Area (NCA) specifically in Denge Marsh, typically a flat, agricultural landscape with distinctive drainage dykes, marshes and open skies. Much of the low lying, reclaimed marshland is treeless, and piecemeal scattered settlements based along long, straight, open roads can be found throughout. Ketchley Copse can be found along one such area, nestled next to the meeting point of Robin Hood Lane and Dungeness Road in the eastern area of Lydd. Close to nearby housing developments, the site is bordered by agricultural fields and a large garden on the southern side, and a small, abandoned plot once known as Apple Tart Orchard on the eastern boundary.

The site is comprised of a mix of broadleaved tree species, including ash, wild cherry, alder, hornbeam, sycamore and oak, with Guelder rose, elder, hazel and dogwood scattered throughout the understorey. Non-native Lombardy and white poplars can also be found along the roadside boundary, and were planted up prior to the Trust's ownership. A line of pollarded willows which are a remnant of one of the field boundaries, lead down to a seasonally wet pond found adjacent to the eastern edge near the abandoned orchard. The site has freely draining sandy soils over deposits of shingle and marine alluvium, and as illustrated by the ephemeral pond, can become wet and boggy in the winter months. There is a grassy, circular path network within the site, which joins up the two entrances on the west and east boundaries.

Ash Dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus) has been present at Ketchley Copse since at least 2013. Ash is a frequent species at the site, and those impacted trees have shown variation in decline, ranging from early stage symptoms (<5%) to advanced (>50%).

Although the site itself does not fall under any designations, the Romney Marsh area holds a SSSI designation, along with Dungeness and Rye Bay. This is due to significant coastal geomorphology and nationally important habitats, including saltmarsh, vegetated shingle and basin fens, each supporting a diverse range of species. Around a quarter of the Romney Marsh National Character Area (NCA) is also classified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Ketchley Copse will continue to grow and develop naturally, providing both a refuge for wildlife and an important wooded space within the local landscape. This will be achieved with minimum management intervention, entailing regular path and access point works, safety inspections of site infrastructure and higher risk tree zones along the path network and site boundaries. Although ash dieback will not have a significant impact on this woodland, its effects will support the development of a valuable deadwood habitat. Young trees and shrubs will continue to regenerate where there are losses, and where natural gaps are appearing in the canopy. Appropriate management of semi mature trees will support their development into future veterans.

The provision of safe and informal public access will remain across this site and it is expected that local residents will continue to make up the main visitor demographic. All Woodland Trust sites are focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing people's understanding and enjoyment of woodland, to help create a UK rich in native woods and trees, for people and wildlife.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Secondary Woodland

Description
The Woodland Trust acquired both The Little Vicarage Field and Bass Field in 1984, planting these up with a range of native broadleaf trees in 1986 to create the site now known as Ketchley Copse. A line of pollarded willows can be found on site, and are a remnant feature of the old field boundary. The tree composition is chiefly composed from ash, alder, birch, wild cherry and sycamore, all bordered by a number of pre-planted white and Lombardy poplars which line the woodland edge. Shrubby species such as elder, dogwood and hawthorn can be found, and one example of a Guelder rose. The site has been impacted by ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus), and a number of the ash trees on site are now showing mid- advanced stage symptoms. A small number of pathside and boundary trees with advanced signs of ash dieback were felled in late 2019, including a significant tree located in the centre of the site which lost over half its stem following poor weather. Although some ash regeneration is taking hold, it is difficult to ascertain how disease impacted any new seedlings will be, and as such the site could see significant changes to the overall species composition, with regeneration of wild cherry, alder, birch, elder, white poplar and hawthorn further taking hold to gradually replace any ash that has been lost. Although the wood is pocket sized at 0.81ha, it is significant as one of only two wooded areas in the local landscape. Lydd also features arable and pasture fields, predominantly grazed by sheep, alongside traditional wet grazing marsh. The area is home to several nationally scarce and rare species, including water voles, the medicinal leech, the hairy dragonfly and the Sussex Emerald moth. Ketchley Copse sees a good number of butterfly and bird species which rely on the availability of shrub flowers and fruits, and the site provides quite a spectacle of invertebrates in the summer months. Woodcock, firecrest and pied flycatcher have all been sighted in recent years, and historical records indicate that the site has been frequented by a lesser spotted woodpecker. Lydd falls within the Romney Marsh National Character Area (NCA), an open landscape of reclaimed, low lying marshland. The soils are predominantly loamy, and are liable to waterlogging because of the high ground water levels. Due to its small size and limited path network, the ground at Ketchley is liable to poaching and as such ride edge ground flora can be impacted, although honeysuckle, herb Robert, wood speedwell and pendulous sedge have established well. Although important, bramble and ivy do tend to dominate in areas of dappled light. Trees best suited to wet conditions such as alder, willow and poplar seem to have the most longevity here.
Significance
There is a low level of woodland cover throughout the Romney Marsh NCA, with clumps of trees and small patches of woodland found only on areas of higher ground and directly around settlements. Ketchley Copse is one of only two wooded areas in Lydd, so despite its small size, provides significant habitat for wildlife and diversity within the

landscape.

The unique geomorphology of the local area means that it is considered of vast importance for wildlife, and it is home to many rarities including the Sussex Emerald moth.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

-Dense layer of coarse vegetation including ivy and bramble can dominate and smother out opportunities for more diverse ground flora. These can also spread out from the adjacent unmanaged plot of land.

-Lapsed pollards- the crowded nature of branch formation above the pollard heads means that these mature trees are susceptible to significant structural issues

Opportunities:

-The impacts of ash dieback may result in a greater diversity of tree species taking hold at the site, whilst providing an increasing deadwood habitat. The creation of more mixed and resilient stand will also increase biodiversity potential and will encourage a wider range of birds, invertebrates and key pollinators.

Factors Causing Change

Ash dieback- Although there is a good mix of tree species within this small wood, those ash trees present will eventually be lost to ash dieback. This will help to increase the level of deadwood habitat on site, and allow for regeneration of other species through increased light levels in those areas.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Ketchley Copse will be encouraged to grow and develop into resilient, native broadleaf tree and shrub cover, benefiting wildlife and enhancing the aesthetics of the site.

Although any disease tolerant ash trees will be retained where possible, it is likely that ash will become a very minor species within the next 50 years due to the impacts of ash dieback. Natural regeneration of other native broadleaves such as oak and wild cherry will establish in the areas where ash has died, to close up any significant gaps in the canopy and achieve greater structural diversity within the planted woodland.

In 50 years the secondary woodland managed by minimum intervention will be showing the development of semi natural woodland characteristics with increasing signs of regeneration and a developing woody shrub layer. The growing accumulation of decaying wood from dying ash will also provide an important habitat for invertebrates and fungi, which will in turn support the development of a healthy woodland ecosystem. Periodic interventions maybe necessary to encourage the development of a diverse understory. The presence of threatening invasive species to be absent or minor with containment and eradication work as necessary.

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

The short term objective is to contribute towards the maintenance of a structurally diverse woodland, aiming to continue to maximise biodiversity potential and woodland resilience, particularly in relation to ash dieback.

This will be achieved by:

-The development and progress of ash dieback will be monitored through an annual tree inspection programme looking at both crown foliage (every summer) and for evidence of fungal fruiting bodies (alternate autumn inspections). It is likely that the majority of remaining ash within falling distance of the housing and roadside boundaries (Zone A) or path network (Zone B) will require felling. Given Ketchley Copse is such a small site, this will be a high percentage of the ash found here.

-The state of the five Lombardy poplars and surrounding white poplars will also be a focus of the zone A survey inspection, given these are spaced along the boundary parallel with the 2 roads

-Monitor regrowth/natural regeneration in areas with recently felled impacted ash trees to ensure full stocking by 2022. This may dictate the need for some additional planting on site.

-To ensure that bramble and ivy don't become the dominant vegetation on site, impacting the establishment of other more diverse ground flora and preventing natural regeneration from taking hold. Ongoing observations will assess the need for trial areas with bramble removal, monitored for the response of tree regeneration as compared to other areas with remaining bramble and ivy.

-Pollarded willows: Targeted pruning of any secondary limbs on a 5-7 year cycle will present a more appropriate management technique in order to address any specific concerns, rather than full pollarding which could significantly impact tree health and cause loss of habitat. Any identified work to take place in late winter or early spring in order to limit encouragement of decay fungi in pruning cuts.

4.2 f2 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Ketchley Copse is a small secondary woodland site located within the town of Lydd (pop. 6567 in 2011 census). Both an ancient town and former Cinque Port, Lydd has a rich heritage, along with an important military history. It forms one of the larger settlements on the Romney Marsh, specifically located on Denge Marsh.

The public have access to the site via two entrances, with the main entrance located at the north west boundary off Robin Hood Lane, and a second squeeze gap entrance off the north east boundary on Dungeness Road. There is a circular, mown grass path taking in the main area of the site (totalling approx 225m), linking the two entrance points.

The site offers informal recreation to local residents and dog walkers, and the occasional rambler. Due its small size, it would not be appropriate for more frequented use. As one of two wooded areas in Lydd, and largely surrounded by residential development it is also provides an important ecological space within the town.

Other nearby outdoor recreational sites include Romney Marsh Nature Reserve and Dungeness National Nature Reserve, one of the most diverse locations for wildlife in the UK and as such is designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The England Coast Path is a national trail and takes in some 20 miles of coastline along Romney Marsh. New sections of path have been established through Hythe and Lydd to provide a new and continuous route around the two large, predominantly inaccessible military ranges on this coast.

Ketchley Copse is around 12 miles from the nearest Woodland Trust Sites- Ash and Luckhurst Wood (Stone-in-Oxney) and Packing Wood (near Ashford). Guestling Wood (near Pett) is 17 miles away, located just over the border in East Sussex.

Significance

A plaque dedicated to the memory of the crew of the Herald of Free Enterprise can be found near the entrance of the site on Robin Hood Lane. The Herald ferry capsized moments after leaving the Belgian port of Zeebrugge in 1987, and 193 lives were lost. This site was selected for dedication by the Calais Yacht Club & Friends.

Ketchley Copse is an important space for quiet, informal recreation, especially given it is one of only two significantly wooded areas in Lydd. Public access to Ketchley Copse helps fulfil one of the Woodland Trust's key objectives; to inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:
- Given the site is so small and within easily accessible distance from a key housing area, it is susceptible to over-use by the public which can threaten the establishment of more diverse ground flora and fauna communities.
- The unsurfaced paths can become fairly waterlogged at wet times of year
- Dog waste, general litter and frequent camp fires

Opportunities:
- The consistent level of regular visitors to this wood offers opportunity for positive community engagement. Some site tasks could be taken on by a small volunteer group including undergrowth management and regular litter picks, supported the Romney Marsh litter picking watch who kindly undertake this task at Ketchley and adjacent Apple Tart Orchard when able

Factors Causing Change

Antisocial behaviour- Small scale flytipping remains a problem in and around the site. Ketchley Copse is also used as a local meeting point for youths and a semi- permanent camp has also been found on site. There has been ongoing evidence of fires, graffiti, tree damage and general wildlife disturbance.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

There will be a well maintained and safe network of paths for informal public access in Ketchley Copse where responsible visitors can appreciate and enjoy the site, utilising it for short local walks. The site will continue to be valued by the local community, particularly for its ease of use and recognised importance as one of a very limited number of wooded spaces in Lydd.

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

During this plan period, the short term objective is to continue to provide public access at Ketchley Copse which is both safe and enjoyable.

This will be achieved by:

-Biannual path cuts to the network of paths on site totalling approximately 225m, and strimming of any overhanging or encroaching vegetation along the paths and entrance points.

- Annual cut of inspection path in spring, approx 65m x 1-1.5m along the south western boundary for tree safety purposes

- Replacement of small entrance and exit signage at both entrances in 2020

-Annual inspections of site access points, signage and general infrastructure to ensure that all are in good condition and adequate for visitor numbers and all user groups

-Annual Zone A (roadside and housing boundary) tree safety inspections, with an annual summer canopy survey and fungal surveys carried out every other autumn. Due to the high percentage of ash on site, Zone B (path network) inspections should be carried out annually, coinciding with Zone A summer inspections

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	0.8	Mixed native broadleaves	1986	High forest		
Mixed broadleaves planted in 1986 such as alder, willow, birch, oak, ash, cherry and Guelder rose. A number of semi-mature Lombardy / hybrid poplars were present when the Woodland Trust acquired the land, and these trees are now a feature along the woodland edge beside the road. In addition there are a number of mature pollarded willows which are growing along an old ditch line in the centre of the wood and around a small pond. A developing understorey of woody shrubs is becoming established and scattered through the wood. A circular path exists within the wood for public access and there are 2 access points onto the public road.						

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.

Windblow/Windthrow
Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.