



**Keith Wood**

**Management Plan  
2012-2017**

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# THE WOODLAND TRUST

## INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

## PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations. Please either consult The Woodland Trust website [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk)) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

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## WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland. Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk). Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) through independent audit. In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open-ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential to generate income from our estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we allow our woods to be used to support local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
- 10 Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

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## SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site - their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

## 1.0 SITE DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Keith Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Bassingbourn
<b>Grid reference:</b>	TL337427, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 154
<b>Area:</b>	1.67 hectares (4.13 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

This attractive wood sits on the low rolling lands of the Cambridgeshire/Hertfordshire border. Comprising a mixture of broadleaf trees, it is easily accessed via footpath from the village of Bassingbourn.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Planted in 1995 on the corner of a very large arable field leased to the Trust on a 999-year lease by Bassingbourn Parish council. This new wood has developed surprisingly well on poor soils in a relatively exposed position. Located on the low rolling chalk lands of the Cambridgeshire/Hertfordshire border in all 1408 trees were planted by volunteers on the 4th of March 1995. The wood is named after John Keith the clerk to parish council.

The planting comprises of the following mix Ash (380), Beech (268), Field Maple (250), Wild cherry (250), Hornbeam (120), Hazel (100), Hawthorn and Wayfaring Tree (20 each). Within this mix there are three small glades left unplanted adjacent to path intersections.

The east, west and southern boundaries are defined by a hedge planted in 2004, the north boundary is a mature un managed section of the prehistoric route way the Icknield Way here called Ashwell St. This feature is approximately 10-15m in width and runs right across Cambridgeshire and is the only piece of unmanaged semi natural grassland in the locality.

The wood lies approximately 1/2 mile out of the village but is connected to the public rights of way network.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Both public and management access is via a public road at the south end of the site and via a public byway off Ashwell Street (Icknield Way).

No barriers to access and paths are level and although unsurfaced generally in good condition.

Parking available next to entrance

Nearest public transport is a bus stop next to the village hall in the main street of Bassingbourne village some 2km to the north along minor roads with no footpath. For times and routes contact Travel Line on [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or 08712002233

No public toilets in vicinity

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In the long term the wood is to be managed as continuous cover high forest consisting of primarily native broadleaved tree and shrub species. It is also our intention to maintain the network of paths and transitional habitats such as glades, hedge/scrub communities on the northern edge of the wood associated with Ashwell St and dead wood (both standing and fallen). Natural regeneration of trees and shrubs is to be positively encouraged to gain a wide range of age and size classification. The woodland will be open to the public in perpetuity. The paths, signs and other furniture that allow safe access are to be maintained in good order. The wood is primarily for the use and enjoyment of the people of Bassingbourn and surrounding area.

Community involvement has been important in the woods establishment and this should be continued in the future so long as local interest exists.

## 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 Informal Public Access

#### Description

Keith wood was planted up as part of the Trust's Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund project. Local people were involved in the fundraising, design, planting and early maintenance. Within walking distance of the village of Bassingbourn it is accessible from Spring Lane and Ashwell St. There are 450m of paths throughout the site and small areas of open grassland near the path junctions. The wood is well used for quite enjoyment

#### Significance

The wood was very much a product of the local communities interest to create local woodland and has proved a great success in only its first 8 years of life. There is very little woodland of any kind in the locality, the nearest being approximately 1/2 mile away in Littlington. The nearest semi natural woodland is 10km away to the north. There is no woodland open for public access within 10km's other than other small Woodland trust Woods

#### Opportunities & Constraints

##### Constraints

It is a small wood in an exposed site on drought prone, poor land surrounded by an intensive arable landscape.

Missuse by motorcycles

##### Opportunities

The wood paths are linked in with parish public rights of way system

#### Factors Causing Change

Scrub encroachment

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

Open safe access that links into the public rights of way network

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

That the 450m of paths and rides be maintained by annual mowing and removal of encroaching woody vegetation and that the signs at the wood entrance are in good state at all times. To create a new site entrance from Ashwell St in the NE corner of the wood by 2013, to limit access by motorised vehicles, but provide a formal and inviting entrance to foot traffic.

## 5.2 New Native Woodland

### Description

An 8 year old woodland which has begun to shaded out the ground covering grasses in some parts despite very difficult environmental conditions such as wind exposure, predation by muntjac and hare as well as drought conditions in the first 2 years. The use of a range of tree and shrub species has aided the woods development

### Significance

In a locality with little semi natural habitat the wood helped protect the species that had hung on in the ditch/stream habitat and old hedgerow. Cambridgeshire is one of the least wooded counties in England and this part of Cambridgeshire is one of the least wooded districts in the county

### Opportunities & Constraints

#### Constraints

It's a very small area which still has intensive arable management on all sides  
Tree growth will be affected by the exposed position for some years yet

#### Opportunities

The old Ashwell St hedgerow which forms the northern boundary already contains small populations of notable plants and animals which could move into the new woodland

### Factors Causing Change

Rabbit Pressure

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Broadleaved high forest with a diversity of species, age and size classification. The community to include old and over mature, dead wood lying and fallen as well as young seedlings and saplings and all ages in between. The wood to include the present range of other habitat types. Conserve the scrub edge to protect the integrity of the old hedge on Ashwell St and open grassy glades.

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

Ongoing monitoring of rabbit damage to understory and headge through anual condition survey.

## 6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
2012	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	24/04/12
2012	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	31/07/12
2012	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Path mow and open ground	25/09/12
2012	WMM - Ride Management	coppice path edge where necessary	25/09/12
2012	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Ride edge coppice to spec provided.	30/11/12
2013	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	24/04/13
2013	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	install robust, low barrier along Northern boundary to prevent motorbike access to wood. + repair/formalise entrances as discussed	30/04/13
2013	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	31/07/13
2013	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Path mow and open ground	25/09/13
2013	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Create pedestrian entrance to wood in south east corner as discussed.	08/11/13
2014	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	24/04/14
2014	PC - Rabbit Control - Ferrets /Nets	Ferretting in Keiths wood / possible contribution to rabbit fencing to be installed by Neighbouring farmer.	01/05/14
2014	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	31/07/14
2014	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Path mow and open ground	25/09/14
2015	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	30/05/15
2015	SL - Legal Obligation Work	one off materials contribution for rabbit fencing on eastern boundary. (preventing on-going damage to crops)	01/07/15
2015	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	31/07/15
2015	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Path mow and open ground to full width	25/09/15

2015	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Tree guard removal across site (1 day)	31/12/15
2016	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	24/04/16
2016	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Cut paths and open areas.	31/07/16
2016	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Path mow and open ground to full width	25/09/16

## APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	1.60	Ash	1995	High forest		Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund

This compartment consists of the entire site. New native woodland roughly rectangular in shape planted on a corner of a previously arable field in march of 1995. It has approximately 450m of paths and rides for public use. The wood lies adjacent to the ancient Green Lane Ashwell Street (Icknield Way). Management access is from Bassingbourn village and along a short section of Ashwell St to the gate in the NW corner of the wood. The wood comprises of mainly ash but includes field maple, wild cherry, beech, hornbeam and broadleaved shrubs such as hazel and blackthorn. The rides and paths have been well managed since planting. The trees which were planted at a density of 1100 trees per Ha have not been as vigorous in there growth as hoped, most likely because the wood is quite exposed to the wind and lies on soil prone to drought in the summer. There has been damage from muntjac, rabbit and hare, which are common in the locality. The wood is abutted to the north by the mature hedgerow running west to east along Ashwell St and there has been some expansion of scrub into the wood from this direction mainly blackthorn, bramble and hawthorn there is a little dead wood in the hedge and also strips of unmanaged unimproved grassland/tall herb. The young wood is a good reserve of natural habitats in an otherwise intensive arable landscape.

## 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.