

Reach Wood Management Plan 4694
Plan period: 2003 to 2008
This copy printed on: 04 March 2004



Reach Wood Management Plan

Standard Management Plan – Contents Page

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Maps

The Woodland Trust

Introduction

The Trust's objectives and management principles guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 3. 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 where possible. The Woodland Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

Any confidential 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. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please contact the Woodland Trust to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years.

Woodland Management Principles

We believe that our organisation and our objectives are unique, therefore, the style of management of our woods must also be unique. These principles outline our individual style of management. It is important however that these principles are not looked at in isolation.

All Woodland Trust woods are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

1. The Trust's main focus is the protection and conservation of ancient woodland. It also cares for other important habitats.
2. The Trust will identify and conserve the most important features of every site it owns, whether historical, cultural or ecological.
3. The Trust wants people to enjoy its sites. It will provide free, quiet, informal public access, primarily for walkers.
4. The Trust will take the views of local people and other stakeholders into account before making any decisions about a site.
5. The Trust will create new woods in sympathy with their surroundings.
6. The Trust recognises that woodland is a renewable and sustainable resource.
7. The Trust aims to fulfil its responsibilities and its legal obligations to its neighbours.

Site Details

Reach Wood

Location:

Reach
 Grid reference: TL565658
 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 154
 Clunch Pit Lane, Reach, Cambridgeshire.

County / District:

Cambridgeshire

Area:

10.67 acres (4.32 hectares)

Designations:

Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund
 Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund

Altitude: Max 14 (m) Min 11 (m)
 Aspect: Flat

Summary Site Description

Reach Wood was planted on an arable field in November 1994, the whole wood (3200 trees) was planted in a single day by volunteers from the nearby villages of Reach and Swafham Prior. It consists of two distinct areas- the northern wooded section planted on a slightly undulating site which was once partially quarried for clunch a type of chalk used as a building material locally and the lower southern section which is a newly created chalk grassland surrounded by some small areas of planting and natural regeneration. The underlying soil is thin and poor.

The planting was at a density of 1100 trees per hectare in a random mix of beach, ash, cherry, field maple, crab apple and yew with a variety of shrub species including hazel, dogrose, wayfaring tree and spindle on the path edges.

Beech is the dominant tree- there is an area of pure beech in a slight hollow in the centre and most of the ash was planted in the north western section.

A electricity powerline runs along the extreme north eastern boundary of the site.

The wood is linked into the public rights of way network and is only a 2 minute walk from the centre of Reach via Clunch Pit Lane. There are some chalk cliffs on the edges of the wood left over from the quarrying activity There are some small areas of scrub associated with these. To the outh west the ground falls away to form a steep chalk cliff with regenerating ash and thorn scrub.

The southern most half of the site is a created chalk grassland on a previously arable field under a countryside stewardship agreement.

The field was seeded with a mixture of chalk loving grass species and it is possible that other species have moved into the sward from the surrounding area.

Since seeding the grassland has received intensive managed being mown twice a year once in the spring and again in the late summer, The grassland is bounded to the east and west by a small amount of plant carried out in 1993/4 and to the south by a low chalk cliff which has a naturally seeded ash/thorn scrub habitat developing on it.

The trees have struggled since planting due to the poor drought prone soil but although slow progress towards canopy closure has been made.

Summary Description of Access Provision

Access can be gained from Reach via clunch pit lane in the extreme north-west and from the south-east corner of the site via a public right of way

Public Rights of Way

Type of ROW	Description of route

Facilities available

Facility	Yes/No
Woodland Trust car park at site	No
Parking nearby	No
Local parking difficult	Yes
Good views	No
Waymarked walk	No
Information board	Yes
Free leaflet available	No
Well worth a visit	No

Long Term Intentions

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 Reach and Swafham Prior and the other immediately neighbouring parishes.

Community involvement has been important in the woods establishment and development over the first 10 years and must be continued in the future. In the long term the wood is to be managed as continuous cover high forest consisting of primarily native broadleaved tree and shrub species. However it is important to maintain the network of paths glades and the chalk grassland as well as the variety of biological niches that they provide for wildlife, this includes dead wood lying and fallen (in a safe condition) hedge/scrub communities on the outer edges of the wood near the cliffs. Natural regeneration of trees and shrubs is to be positively encouraged to gain a wide range of age classes of trees.

The meadow has developed well over the last 10 years under fairly intensive mowing management and some rabbits grazing, but it will really only diversify from its present species poor state if either the cuttings are removed after each mow or if grazing is incorporated into the management. The expense of fencing and the difficulty of finding a suitable grazer will exclude the latter option but it may be possible to locate a contractor with the right equipment to cut and remove the grass at least once a year, it may even be possible to make hay which would offset the cost to some extent.

If both of these options are proved to be unsustainable the grassland does still contribute to the sites wildlife appeal by providing seminatural grassland for all kinds of common invertebrates including grasshoppers, beetles and butterflies. It also provides a

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usefull picincing resource for the locals so must be retained by biannaull mowing at the very least.

Compartments and Sub-compartments

(Compartments are permanent subdivisions marked by permanent boundary features such as rides, streams etc. Sub-compartments are divisions of compartments and are not necessarily permanent units; their boundaries may change as a result of management or natural processes.)

Sub Cpt No.	Sub Cpt Area Ha	General Description	Management Regime	Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1A	2.9	<p>The compartment consists of the northern wooded section of Reach wood which was planted in 1994 on a slightly undulating site which was once partially quarried for clunch chal. As a result the soil is thin and poor.</p> <p>The planting was at a density of 1100 trees per hectare in a random mix of ash, beach, cherry, field maple, crab apple and yew with a variety of shrub species including hazel, dogrose, wayfaring tree and spindle on the path edges.</p> <p>Beech is the dominant tree- there is an area of pure beech in a slight hollow in the centre and most of the ash was planted in the north western section.</p> <p>A electricity powerline runs along the extreme north eastern boundary of the site</p> <p>There are three public access points in to the compartment which are interlinked by 900m of permissive paths, . There are some small areas of scrub and hedges on the borders of the</p>	<p>continuous cover high forest with ride edges</p> <p>thinning/coppicing to keep the paths open</p>		<p>Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland</p>	Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund

1B	1.4	<p>compartment to the south west the ground falls away to form a steep chalk cliff with regenerating ash and thorn scrub.</p> <p>The southern most half of the site created as a chalk grassland in april of 1994 on a previously arable field under a countryside stewardship agreement.</p> <p>The field was seeded with a combination of the following grass species:- Shheps fescue, red fescue, common bent, smooth meadow grass, crested dogs tail, Yellow oat grass, Samll leaved timothy In the contract it also states that the grassland was to be further enhanced by the spreading of seed collected from nearby devils Ditch SSSI, it is not known whether this was carried out.</p> <p>Since seeding the grassland has received intensive managed being mown twice a year once in the spring and again in the late summer, however the cuttings are not regularly removed. The grassland is bounded to the east and west by a small amount of plant carried out in 1993/4 and to the south by a low chalk cliff which has a naturally seeded ash/thorn scrub habitat developing on it.</p>	<p>Manage as open grassland habitat with sheltered scrub edges to benefit chalk loving plants and invertebrates.</p>	<p>difficult to get cutting removed</p>	<p>Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland</p>	<p>Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund</p>
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Key Features

(The Key Features of the site are identified and described in the table below. They encapsulate what is important about the site, and which site management is aimed at conserving.)

Key Feature Name	Ref. No.	Key Feature Description	Constraints and opportunities	Evaluation - Why is it important?	Cpt No.
Informal Public Access	f1	<p>Reach wood was planted up as part of the Trust's Cambridgeshire Woodland Fund project. Local people were involved in the fundraising, design, planting and maintenance. There was a great deal of community involvement from the very start. Within easy walking distance of the village of Reech it is accessible from the village square via an old green lane. There are 900m of paths throughout the site and a large area of open chalk grassland near the southern edge. The wood is well used for quite enjoyment being far enough away from the village to provide protection from vandalism yet close enough to be accessible to most people.</p> <p>The wood is also linked to nearby village of Swaffham Prior via the public right of way network. There is added interest in that the site of the wood was an old quarry from which clunch a special type of chalk was</p>	<p>Constraints</p> <p>None</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <p>Links to public rights of way network to create circular walks</p> <p>Community involvement</p> <p>Accessible to disabled visitors</p>	<p>The wood was very much a product of the local communities interest in creating local woodland. There is very little woodland of any kind in the locality, the nearest being approximately 4 miles away in wicken fen. There is no woodland open for free public access within 10km's other than the Trusts wood at Burwell</p>	Whole Site

		extracted. The cliffs are still visible nearby.			
New Native Woodland	f2	A 10 year old woodland which has not yet attained canopy closure over most of its planted area although some trees have reached 3-4m in height it is a mixed broadleaved woodland dominated by beech and ash with a variety of scrubs and other trees including some yew. The design also complements the existing hedge and scrub areas adjacent to the site and includes wide paths and a large chalk grassland created in 1994, Planted at a wide spacing on poor thin soils	Constraints It's a very small area which still has intensive arable management on three sides The soils are thin and the young trees have suffered in dry summers Opportunities The cliffs and hedges which form boundaries already contained small populations of chalk loving plants and animals which could move into the new woodland.	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- the nearest ancient wood is 12km away to the south. Being on the edge of the fens there is little woodland in the locality	Whole Site

Management Objectives for each Key Feature

Section 7 provides a concise non technical statement of the overall long term intentions for the whole site. In this sub section are the long and short-term objectives applying to each key feature.

Key Feature Name	Ref. No.	Vision	Factors causing change	Prediction / Short term objective
Informal Public Access	f1	Open safe access that links into the public rights of way network and to provide a large open grassland space for informal recreation	Natural Succession To...scrub	That the 900m of paths and rides be maintained by annual mowing and removal of overhanging vegetation and that the signs at the wood entrances are in good state at all times.

New Native Woodland	f2	Broadleaved high forest with a variety of species and ages of trees. The woodland 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 a range of other habitat types in roughly the same proportions as exist at present		To remove all redundant trees guards by 2005 and to protect any natural regen from predation if required. To mow the main grassland and the path intersections twice every year, remove cuttings if possible.
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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.