



The Spinney

Management Plan 2018-2023

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	The Spinney
Location:	Kingston St. Mary
Grid reference:	ST222293, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 193
Area:	2.94 hectares (7.26 acres)
Designations:	Archeological Site, Conservation Area, Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

The Spinney is popular with the local people, with a path network throughout. An ornamental garden planted in the 1800s retains an arboretum feel in the centre of the native woodland. An old mill and a wildlife corridor provide additional interest.

2.2 Extended Description

The Spinney is level site located on the southern edge of the village of Kingston St. Mary, near Taunton, and is adjacent to a busy minor road. Surrounded by rural housing and fields, it is bounded by hedgerows, fencing, and a high stone wall by the road. An old mill leat runs along the western edge of the wood, adding further historical interest to the site.

The wood sits within the Vale of Taunton and Quantock Fringes natural character area (no 146). This is typified by a lowland mixed farming landscape, with dense hedges, some with abundant oaks, sparse woodland and frequent settlement. The Spinney fits into this. There is woodland to the north and east of Kingston St Mary however The Spinney is the only block of woodland in the immediately local area, making it valuable both visually and as a recreation resource.

During the late 1800's, ancestors of the politician Anthony Eden owned the Grange, and created a 5-acre ornamental woodland garden containing exotic trees and shrubs surrounding an open meadow, buffered by a strip of broadleaved woodland on its western edge (Compt 1a). When the land was given to the Trust in 1986, it included an additional two acre field to the south which was planted with native broad-leaved trees (Compt 1b) at that time. Consequently the overall impression is of an arboretum bounded by native woodland. There is a large active badger sett on the western side of compt 1a.

There has been a strong community involvement at The Spinney with a group of volunteers helping in the maintenance of the site.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

The Spinney is on the southern edge of the village of Kingston St Mary. It is adjacent to a busy road to Taunton which is 3 miles away to the south. This road is without pavements There are two pedestrian entrances from the road, one at the northern end accessed via the adjacent property called the Grange and one at the southern end.

Access along the road and within the site is generally level underfoot. Paths within the site are of a natural nature, predominantly grassy and even, although muddier in the woodland blocks where it is shaded.

Nearest bus stop: The Green, Lodes Lane - approximately 250 metres from the northern entrance, walking along the tarmac road, and then through the grounds of the Grange. Information as at September 2018 from Traveline website - www.traveline.org.uk

Nearest public toilet (as at September 2018) - various public toilets are available in Taunton - including at Tancred Street & the Paul Street multi storey car park approximately 3 miles away- both of which have facilities for disabled users, accessible via a RADAR key. Information as given on the Taunton Deane Borough Council website www.tauntondeane.gov.uk

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The unique character of this site will be maintained with the mixture of mature exotic trees and open ground to view their splendour. New specimens will be planted where suitable canopy gaps occur to continue the history of the site. Upkeep of the entrances, meadow and paths within the woods will be at a level consistent with a relatively high use by the local population. The signs, seats, well-kept paths, open areas and entrances will all encourage public interest and usage of the woodland by making it welcoming and accessible. This will help fulfil the Trust's aim of inspiring everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees.

The woodland planted in 1986 will develop into native broadleaved high forest with a diverse ground flora. This increase in native woodland cover is part fulfilment of another Trust aim.

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

Despite a limited number of local residents the Spinney is well used. This is because of the ease of access from the heart of the village, the lack of other open woodland locally and to the attractiveness of the site. There are circular paths and benches within the wood.

Significance

The Woodland Trust believes that everyone should recognise that trees and woods are an essential part of a healthy environment and that there should be a wood with open access close to everyone's home. We aim to achieve that through our ownership of The Spinney.

Opportunities & Constraints

Factors Causing Change

As the specimen trees decline the feel of the site will change considerably.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A woodland that contains well-maintained & attractive paths & entrances & associated furniture. The wood will remain open to the public for quiet informal recreation and particularly valued by locals

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

The short term objective is to maintain open attractive, welcoming and safe woodland that the public frequently enjoy. Entrances and paths should be appropriate for the level of use.

Work programme:

1. Regular tree safety inspections with reactive and proactive work as appropriate to keep the trees safe.
2. Maintain paths and seats.
3. Trim back the hedge by the main entrance to enable better vision when pulling out onto the road.

5.2 Local Woodland Habitat

Description

The northern end of the Spinney (compartment 1a) was originally planted in the late 1800s as a woodland garden by the owners of the Grange to the north. Planting included a yew and a lime walk, as well as individual specimen trees such as Radiata pine, Monkey Puzzle and Sequoia, as well as a woodland strip including oak and beech. The history of planting specimen trees has been continued in recent years with planting of trees such as Golden Ash and Kingston Black apple. This has created a local landscape feature.

To the south east a small area (Compt 1b) was planted in 1986 with a native mix of Oak, Ash, Field maple, Wild Cherry, Birch, Hawthorn, Hornbeam and Small-leaved Lime. The understory is now developing rapidly with abundant tree seedlings (mostly cherry and ash), ferns, but also some laurel seedlings. Bluebells which were planted by the volunteer group are also present and it is hoped they will spread

Significance

There is little woodland close by, making this important open access woodland. The collection of exotic trees makes it a particular feature locally. It has been designated as a Village Conservation Area and has a TPO on a number of trees due to their value in the local landscape

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints: The site is in a conservation area and a number of trees have TPOs on them, making proactive management work more difficult.

Factors Causing Change

Natural decline of mature trees, Spread of invasive species ie Laurel. Tree disease such as ash die back may affect the site.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain The Spinney in the local landscape as a diverse and unusual planting of exotic species to reflect its past history. The trees will inspire people for many years to come and new planting will flourish.

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

For the plan period the Trust will:

1. Undertake annual inspections and work on trees with the aim to retain all older specimen trees as long as they remain safe, with live growth and crown in a good condition.
2. Remove laurel seedlings where they are outside of main bushes. Control the spread of the mature laurel so they do not threaten other plants nearby.
3. Mow the open areas in Compt 1a to maintain open nature of the north end of the site.
4. Maintain the yew avenue either through the local Parish volunteers or using contractors.

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	2.00	Mixed broadleaves	1850	Min-intervention	Legal issues	Informal Public Access, Local Woodland Habitat	Conservation Area, Tree Preservation Order
<p>The ornamental woodland garden contains a great variety of tree and shrub species with ages ranging from newly-planted to over-mature. Mature specimens include Radiata Pine, Monkey Puzzle, Mulberry, Black Poplar, Yew, Turkey Oak, Beech, Cypress, Sequoia, Douglas Fir and ornamental Cherry. There are two short avenues one each of Lime and Yew.</p> <p>The understorey contains many ornamental shrubs such as Rhododendron, Forsythia and Laurel. The central area is a meadow surrounded by circular paths. A local variety apple tree was planted here as a feature alongside two ornamental maples. The open area has an abundance of flowers at different times of year including Snowdrops, Daffodils, Meadow Saffron, a variety of Squill, Cyclamen, a blue variety of Wood Anemone, Wild garlic and Fritillaries. Many of these are likely to originally have been planted.</p> <p>A small mill leat runs through the western edge of the compartment. An old iron railing marks the boundary with compartment 1B.</p>							
1b	0.80	Oak (pedunculate)	1986	High forest		Informal Public Access, Local Woodland Habitat	Conservation Area
<p>Formerly an open field, this level area was planted in 1986 with a native mix of Oak, Ash, Field maple, Wild Cherry, Birch, Hawthorn, Hornbeam and Small-leaved Lime. The trees have grown well, but have suffered squirrel damage, although the trees that have survived are now healthy. The understorey is now developing rapidly with abundant tree seedlings (mostly cherry and ash), ferns, but also some laurel seedlings. Bluebells which were planted by the volunteer group are also present and it is hoped they will spread</p>							

GLOSSARY

Ancient Woodland

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

Ancient Woodland Site

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

Beating Up

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

Broadleaf

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

Canopy

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

Conifer

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

Continuous Cover forestry

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

Coppice

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

Exotic (non-native) Species

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

Field Layer

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

Group Fell

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

Long Term Retention

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

Minimum Intervention

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

Origin & Provenance

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

Re-Stocking

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

Sub-Compartment

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

Thinning

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

Weeding

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

Windblow/Windthrow

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