

Claypatch Wood
Wyesham
Management Plan
2014-2024

FIRST DRAFT OCTOBER 2014

Prepared on behalf of

Transition Monmouth

By

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Claypatch Woods, Wyesham

Vision

Claypatch Wood will be an easily accessible native woodland managed to benefit both wildlife and people. The woodland will become more natural in character, with a canopy and understory of mixed native species of varying age and size, plenty of deadwood and numerous open sunlit areas where new trees can germinate. The grassland will be usable for activities by local groups and residents and more wildflowers encouraged. Accessible paths, gates and benches will be provided for people to enjoy the woodland. Boundaries will be properly maintained to prevent nuisance to surrounding properties and all will be encouraged to visit, understand and participate in managing the woodland.

1.0 Description

Claypatch woods comprise approximately 2ha of planted mixed deciduous woodland with scattered older specimen trees and area of open grassland. It is surrounded by private residences on 3 sides and a main road on the 4th. Formally a clay pit, the site was restored with tree planting and then with subsequent housing development the wood has remained as an isolated green space. The woodland slopes at a gentle and consistent gradient to the south and is prone to water logging in places. Soils are generally wet and heavy, a reminder of the previous clay pit workings. The floodplain of the river Wye is directly to the west with Wyesham developed on the higher ground east of the valley. This eastern valley side is well wooded along its length and so while surrounded by urban development, adjacent woodland habitat is only 100m or so distant. The offers potential for habitat connection and arrival of new woodland species.

Planting consists of native species and is dominated by Ash, Birch sp and Field Maple, with lesser numbers of Oak sp, Rowan, Elder, Beech, Sycamore, Holly and Hawthorn. Some elements of birch, sycamore and hawthorn are likely self-seeded and some beech potentially seeded from the larger specimens of this species present on site. Some sycamore and field maple appears to be potentially cultivated varieties of unknown provenance. Planting has created a diverse range of species, broadly similar in character to native woodlands that might be expected to occur on this site.

However, the woodland lacks any structural diversity. Planting has created a single age structure of close spaced line planted trees, resulting in a uniform height canopy, very crowded distribution of trees, low light levels, little regeneration and an absence of understory and ground flora. Trees exhibit accelerated vertical growth with limited horizontal development and in places have begun to lean and deform in response to light availability around boundaries. Deadwood is also largely absent apart from some recent felling along boundaries and the occasional failed planting. The overall success rate of planting has been very high. There is now a well-developed and uniform canopy throughout, which creates a sharp transition from surrounding gardens to high canopy forest.

The woodland extends directly up to private boundaries, though on the west and south sides, a gap has been created/retained to act as a firebreak. The northern boundary borders a busy main residential road and the eastern boundary consists of trees very close to neighbouring properties.

The area of established grassland receives annual mowing and provides a contrasting area to the otherwise dense planted woodland, forming a sheltered by sunlit glade.

1.1 Key features

Feature	Notes
Young plantation	Poor age structure; absence of understory; poor regeneration; heavy shading; low deadwood volumes; requires active management to improve;
Extensive boundaries to private residences	Carefully management of boundaries; need to identify and remove potential problem trees; potential issues with garden extensions, access from gardens and dumping of garden (and other) waste; need to create/maintain firebreaks and access.
Boundary to road	Safety considerations for felling; identification of problem trees and need to remove; gated access points to maintain.
Drainage	Wet ground and standing water; potential damage from vehicle access
Public access and use	Condition of paths; assuring safety while undertaking operations within the woodland; security of access points; maintenance of boundaries; maintenance of paths and provision of facilities such as benches; determine approach to biking and the creation of jumps and obstacles.
Grassland	Maintaining amenity grassland; increasing species diversity and effective on going management of species rich areas.

1.2 Access

The woodland is freely accessible to all and at all times. There is an established network of paths around the boundary and across the middle of the wood, with plans to surface these paths in future. The heavy soils lead to water logging in places that has made access difficult in the past. The proposed thinning work should help reduce standing water through a combination of increase airflow and evaporation. Crown lifting, thinning and shaping of trees adjacent to paths can also be effective to increase light levels and aid drying.

The constant gradient is perhaps 1 in 10 and as such does not pose a problem for wheelchairs, push chairs or people with limited mobility. The surfacing of paths will create suitable conditions for wheeled access, though some consideration on changing or adjusting access points might be required. Kiss gates are very awkward for either wheelchairs or pushchairs.

Cycling is not currently discouraged and the woodland is frequently use by young people on bikes and has resulted in some modification to paths to create jumps and obstacles. Once the paths are surfaced, decision will need to be made regarding whether to encourage or discourage such activity or to provide space for use by bikes.

1.3 Agreement of landowner

Monmouthshire County Council as landowner is supportive of community management and they should have opportunity to comment on, revise and ultimately approve this plan. Approving the plan will grant overall approval of the management work, but the landowner may still require additional

detail and information, may require to be informed when work is carried out and might require method statements and risk assessments for tasks. It will be important to become clear on which works can proceed and which will require further dialogue with the landowner.

1.4 Preparation for management

Management should always be flexible and adapt to changing conditions. As well as approving this plan in its first draft, the management group, landowners and surrounding residence should have an opportunity to shape revisions, alterations, additions and changes to the plan. Management plans should never be seen as static, fixed documents and they must be able to reflect changing priorities, approaches and the outcome of decisions.

Before work begins, the following groups should be contacted and informed:

- Local community council
- Local residents association or similar groups if present, such as the Scout Association
- Properties surrounding or overlooking the woodland

The local group has been able to engage effectively so far through the use of its Facebook page and website, including undertaking quick surveys to gauge opinion on management options, such as the creation of the pond in compartment 6.

1.5 Obtain other permissions

UK and European Protected Sites and species	Not a UK or European protected site. The confluence of the rivers Wye and Monnow is approximately 150m south of the woodland. Protected species likely to be present on site limited to bats that are likely to use summer roosts in dense ivy/clematis growth as large trees with splits and rot holes are absent from site. The woodland does offer some cover and foraging opportunities but better habitat is likely to be found in the adjacent river valley. Surrounding properties likely to support populations of pipistrelle and other house dwelling species. It is likely that otters will utilise areas of woodland along the valley sides and connected to the river corridor. It is unlikely that this species would move through the urban areas to reach Claypatch Wood even though it is only perhaps a little over 100m away. Traffic, noise, domestic pets and a lack of cover make the woodland relatively unsuited for occupation by otters, but it is certainly possible that evidence in terms of tracks might reasonably be found in the wood.
Tree preservation orders	None believed to be present, nor is the wood believed to be part of the Conservation Area of the town. This should be confirmed with Monmouthshire CC.
Felling license	5 cubic metres of wood can be removed from the site per calendar quarter without needing a felling licence, provided no more than 2 cu m is sold - making a total of 10 per felling season October-March. Dead trees, wind blown trees do not count towards this limit nor do thinnings and coppice below 12cm diameter (at 1.3m from the ground). Proposed management work would remain within this limit meaning that no felling license is required, but harvested volumes should be monitored and a felling license

	obtained if required. The application will be for thinning works and will likely be granted without problem.
Burning woody material	An exemption under waste regulations must be obtained before doing so. It may be necessary to undertake burns on site to remove large amounts of brash. This is generally straightforward but suitable burning sites are limited and should occur only at designated, fixed sites. It is known as a D7 Exemption available from NRW. It is good practice to inform neighbours of any intention to burn and to make careful consideration in terms of wind strength and fire management before deciding to burn.
Application of pesticides	May require consent from Natural Resources Wales for application near water. Only approved pesticides to be used and suitably qualified contractor to apply. Where the aim is to prevent regrowth of stumps, painting directly onto fresh cut stumps is preferred over spray application and this is likely to be the only pesticide application. In future the presence of invasive and/or non native species might require pesticide use.
Health & Safety	Community group training in risk assessment procedures and safe working practices. Written risk assessments provided to group. Group provides proof of insurance cover and governance procedures.
Insurance	It is essential that any group undertaking operations on site is appropriately insured to cover the workforce, public and surrounding property.

1.6 Site Risk Assessment

A basic site risk assessment is provided which identifies hazards present on site. This should be used in conjunction with risk assessments for individual operation. This risk assessment should only be considered as a draft outline and it must be checked, adjusted and adopted by any organisation performing operations on site, in line with their own procedures. The risk assessment should be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains complete and relevant.



Figure 1 - CLAYPATCH WOODS

NOTES: Map above shows locations of features and management compartments. It does not intend to define landownership or should be used for any other legal purpose. Map not scaled.

1.7 Annual timetable

Groups will only have a limited amount of time available across a year to deliver management work. With some tasks limited to certain seasons, it is important that each group considers the work across each year and allocates time accordingly. The following table provides an outline for each year. It is just a guide that indicates when certain actions should take place and can be used to help prioritise works.

MONTH	TASK	Suggested other tasks & notes
January	Felling, thinning, coppicing	Hedge laying
February	Felling, thinning coppicing	Tree felling should end 1 st March
March	Clear up and make good, clear tracks and paths	Hedge/ tree planting
April	Access work	Other maintenance tasks; litter collection
May	Timber extraction	Record volumes harvested
June	Admin, events and activities	Wildlife surveys
July	Admin, events and activities	
August	Admin, events and activities	Summer BBQ and events
September	Review site and risk assessment, identify work and priorities for coming season	Inspection of previous years work. Check along entire length for spot tasks to be completed first; inform neighbours of proposed works
October	Felling, thinning, coppicing	Tree felling commence 1 st October, but beneficial to wait until leaves have fallen
November	Felling, thinning, coppicing	Hedge laying
December	Felling, thinning, coppicing	Hedge laying; Christmas event

Compartment 1 - Wysesham Road boundary

This is the area formed between the north boundary and the adjacent, parallel path. Remnants of a hedge form the north border, planted on a small but steep <1m high bank. Trees, mostly field maples have been planted right up to the boundary and are now quite crowded between path and boundary. As growth continues, trees are likely to begin to lean and then have the potential to fall over the boundary, blocking pavements and highway. This growth also makes this area quite dark and difficult to see into from residences across the road.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Hedge	Create secure and wildlife friendly boundary	Clear hedgeline of unwanted growth; clear overhanging vegetation; Gap up where required; Lay in any suitable growth; dead hedge gaps with materials from adjacent thinning work	Start Autumn 2015
Entry gate (east end)	Provide easy access point	Clear overhanging vegetation; ensure easy access down from pavement; Monitor condition of gate, posts and fixings	Monitor monthly
Paths	Create then maintain surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage
Tree line	Limit potential of trees to fall onto road; create scrub dominated boundaries	Check for leaning trees and remove where possible; thin out to prevent development of leaning growth; coppice or pollard trees to limit growth height; consider replacements of some species with smaller trees/shrubs	Start Autumn 2015

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Compartment 2 – The Paddocks boundary

The area formed between the eastern boundary of the site and the adjacent, parallel path. The boundary with the adjacent houses is a panel fence, which is irregularly shaped in places due to the angle of neighbouring gardens and the drainage ditch. There are frequent semi-mature trees along the length of the compartment, some which have begun to lean.

There exists only a very narrow <2m wide strip between mature trees and garden boundaries and much of this is filled with loosely stacked cut woody material, either from the woodland or surrounding gardens. This accumulated material causes problems for access to boundaries and prevents the creation of a firebreak.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Boundary trees	Prevent tree falls around boundary; develop scrub boundaries	Identify leaning trees and coppice where practical; formative prune to balance larger trees; crown lift to create space and light beneath; remove new seedlings and consider replanting elsewhere; consider felling any trees that can be done so safely and allow regrowth to create scrub boundaries; carefully select location and stack material for disposal; remove logs fire wood.	Lifting and pruning winter 2015; remove seedlings/sapling in Spring 2015; identify and fell trees Autumn 2015
Fire break	Create and maintain firebreak	Crown lift trees; remove accumulated woody debris and chip/burn; prevent future dumping of waste through dialogue with neighbouring properties; monitor condition and location of boundaries	Clear spring 2015 then maintain annually;
Paths	Create surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge; maintain screen of trees between paths and boundary;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage

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Compartment 3 – Claypatch Road boundary

This is the area between the southern boundary and parallel path. The boundary is formed a panel fence to adjacent private gardens. There is a clear gap between fence and planted trees that should be maintained as a firebreak. As with the other boundary compartments, it would benefit from regular tree management to create a scrub dominated boundary, both to improve wildlife habitat and to limit the potential of tree falls onto boundary fences.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Boundary trees	Prevent tree falls around boundary; develop scrub boundaries	Identify leaning trees and coppice where practical; formative prune to balance larger trees; crown lift to create space and light beneath; remove new seedlings and consider replanting elsewhere; consider felling any trees that can be done so safely and allow regrowth to create scrub boundaries; carefully select location and stack material for disposal; remove logs fire wood.	Lifting and pruning winter 2015; remove seedlings/sapling in Spring 2015; identify and fell trees Autumn 2015
Fire break	Create and maintain firebreak	Crown lift trees; remove accumulated woody debris and chip/burn; prevent future dumping of waste through dialogue with neighbouring properties; monitor condition and location of boundaries	Clear spring 2015 then maintain annually;
Paths	Create surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge; maintain screen of trees between paths and boundary;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage

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Compartment 4 – Ridgeway boundary

This is the area between the western boundary and parallel path. The boundary is formed a panel fence to adjacent private gardens. There is a clear gap between fence and planted trees that has recently been created so that it can be maintained as a firebreak. As with the other boundary compartments, it would benefit from regular tree management to create a scrub dominated boundary, both to improve wildlife habitat and to limit the potential of tree falls onto boundary fences.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Boundary trees	Prevent tree falls around boundary; develop scrub boundaries	Identify leaning trees and coppice where practical; formative prune to balance larger trees; crown lift to create space and light beneath; remove new seedlings and consider replanting elsewhere; consider felling any trees that can be done so safely and allow regrowth to create scrub boundaries; carefully select location and stack material for disposal; remove logs fire wood.	Lifting and pruning winter 2015; remove seedlings/sapling in Spring 2015; identify and fell trees Autumn 2015
Fire break	Create and maintain firebreak	Crown lift trees; remove accumulated woody debris and chip/burn; prevent future dumping of waste through dialogue with neighbouring properties; monitor condition and location of boundaries	Clear spring 2015 then maintain annually;
Paths	Create surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge; maintain screen of trees between paths and boundary;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage

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Compartment 5 - Wyesham Road access

This small area includes the gated vehicle access in the NW corner of the woodland. Access for modern machinery and equipment is essential for effective management of the woodland and access paths. This area is dedicated to providing appropriate means and access for management. As management progresses, there are decisions to be made on what requirements are needed for access and materials storage and whether the ground surface needs to be firmed up to prevent repeated damage from vehicle access.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Access gate	Provide and maintain vehicle access point	Monitor condition of gate, posts, fixings and locks; clear surrounding vegetation and overhanging branches;	Monitor condition of gate, posts, lock and fittings monthly
Turning/storage area	Maintain open, level and firm area for vehicle access and materials storage	Monitor for waterlogging and vehicle damage; consider spreading woodchip to raise surface; consider need and form of storage area for chip, brash, timber or path stone	Monthly check for waterlogging and vehicle damage; consider storage needs in Spring 2015
Paths	Create surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge; maintain screen of trees between paths and boundary;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage

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Compartment 6 – Pond

This is an area of plantation woodland near to the NE access point and also includes a small triangular area of trees formed by the path network. It has been determined to create a pond at this location to provide additional wildlife habitat and a location for pond dipping with suitable groups.

The pond itself will be fenced, and the adjacent woodland area between the paths opened up to create an informal seating/activity area to facilitate use of the pond. The pond location and design has already been determined and so the method of creation below is only brief to form a record of the work.

The small area formed between the paths makes an ideal location for some informal log seating adjacent to the pond. This can then be used by any pond dipping groups to prevent the pond area becoming too crowded.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Pond - create	Create pond	Identify precise location and select trees, fell, and clear brash; Determine route for excavator, identify and fell trees; Determine location for excavated materials to form bund, select trees, fell and clear brash to form space; Excavate pond ensuring steep/shallow margins and deep/shallow areas; Bury pulled out stumps and other logs with excavated material to form useful habitat; Line excavation with carpet and then liner; Once boundaries determined, select trees to remove/crown lift as sources of leaf-fall/shade and to open to direct sun light.	Winter 2015
Pond -fence	Erect fence around pond	Determine extent of fencing, identify trees, fell and clear brash; Install fencing and gate; Ensure gate latch cannot be operated by small children; Identify and remove trees potentially able to fall on fence	Winter 2015m then inspect fence and gate monthly including latches and hinges;
Pond - maintain	Maintain pond for wildlife value and accessibility for groups	Ponds naturally fill in with vegetation and dry out – a process that should be prevented in this instance; Remove emergent vegetation by careful hand pulling to maintain it at no more than 30-40% of pond area; Using rake, remove accumulated leaves and silt, leave piled adjacent to pond for a few days before remove (can make a high nutrient soil improver); carefully remove any fallen branches; monitor surrounding trees and crown lift to prevent branch falls	Vegetation - as required, once established this may be an annual task, for Oct-Nov Desilting - to monitor, perhaps 1 year in 5
Seating area	Create and maintain seating area adjacent to pond	Select trees and fell; bring in larger logs to form seating circle facing to pond; Crown lift remaining trees; Ensure no hung branches	Winter 2015; Check for and remove hung branches before use
Log piles	Create habitat for invertebrates and amphibians	Create permanent log piles near to pond; Create log castle formed of logs stood vertically in a shallow pit and compacted with smaller logs. Leave log piles undisturbed from Oct-Apr as likely hibernation sites for amphibians	Log Castle Spring 2015 with suitable group; Top up log piles as they rot down –

			estimate 1 year in 5
Paths	Create surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage
Survey		Monitor pond via pond dipping activities; identify adult dragon/damselfies; monitor for frog/toad spawn; monitor for newts	Once ponds established

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Compartment 7 – Meadow

A small area of the woodland has been left unplanted and now has an established species poor grassland. It is currently cut annually and is wet in places, which has caused difficulties for cutting machinery. It is intended to maintain this as 2 distinct areas; short grass cut for amenity and so that picnics or other activities can take place; an area of grassland managed as traditional hay meadow and seeded to increase species diversity.

On the fringes of the grassland area are several specimen trees, either planted or remnant from existing vegetation consisting of a crab apple, cherry and weeping willow. The cherry has extensive crown die back but other trees appear to be in good health and have well balanced and developed crowns. There is a sharp definition between the open grassland and surrounding woodland that would benefit from being softened by selective felling to create scrub/coppice. The meadow forms an open, sheltered but sunlit glade that should attract a number of invertebrate species. Some deadwood retained on the fringes would enhance this value.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Specimen trees	Maintain health, vigour and balance of individual trees	Formative prune branches to maintain balanced crowns; remove dead crown of cherry and monitor for regrowth	Monitor monthly for damage and disease; prune as required
Meadow - species	Improve species diversity	Secure suitable source of donor seed from local area; Determine area to be seeded and ensure sward cut short; Rake out area to be seed to expose ground; Sow seed into soft ground in spring or autumn and tread in	Seed and then monitor for 3 years. If limited success consider seeding again
Meadow - management	Maintain meadow habitat and diversity	Cut grass short in early spring and remove cuttings; allow meadow to grow and cut again between mid-July and Mid August; ensure all cuttings are collected and removed; cut again late September to ensure short sward over winter	It is essential that the cycle of management continues annually. On many established meadows it is possible to leave unmanaged occasionally without loss of species provided management resumes in following years. Any period of 2 or more years without management can lead to rapid loss of species diversity.
Amenity areas	Create amenity grassland area	Determine boundaries of area and arrange for regular cutting over Spring/summer; rake and remove cuttings where practical	Cutting undertaken by council, boundaries may need to be marked to ensure cutting area is limited;
Paths	Create suitable path	The stone surfacing planned for the other paths will not extend into the grassland; monitor impact of both vehicle and pedestrian use and consider either stone chip or laid logs to provide a firmer surface in wet areas.	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage
Woodland fringes	Create mixed tree/scrub boundary to meadow	Selectively fell some of the surrounding trees and allow regrowth to form a mix of trees and scrub along the boundary; retain some log piles and deadwood on meadow fringes	Starting Autumn 2014, selectively fell 1-3 trees per year until a scrub fringe of 25-50% is created. Coppice regrowth to ensure a range of growth stages.

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Compartment 8 - Woodland North

The area forms half of the largest part of the woodland and being away from the boundaries can be managed without too much restriction. It is formed of line planted broad-leaved trees, dominated by ash, birch and field maple, with very defined and uniform spacing. Trees, while generally very straight are now crowded, cast heavy shade and are beginning to lean or deform in search of light. Understorey is absent, regeneration and ground cover poor and deadwood occurring only at very low volumes. Active management will aim to improve the quality of the habitat and make it less artificial in character by addressing the undesirable form and structure resulting from the crowded line planting.

It should be noted that the line planting has achieved the desired effect of very low failure rate and rapid, straight growth. 2014 is an ideal time to begin thinning operations.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Mixed deciduous woodland	Improve structure and condition of the woodland habitat	Selective felling to promote the following; Increased light levels; Regeneration of tree species; Diversified structure with stump regrowth and increase survival of saplings; Improved growth habit of remaining trees; Limit leaning growth to reduce windblows; Final desired density likely to be around 30% of existing –or removal of 1 in 3. To prevent creating uniform structure across compartment, areas adjacent to paths favour over thinning and areas central to compartment favour under-thinning	Annual work task until desired density is reached. Annual thinning will look to focus on 2-5 small areas, depending on numbers attending task days; Removal rates to start at 1 in 5 excluding any leaning, dead and wind blows;
Deadwood	Increase volumes of deadwood	Identify suitable locations for creating permanent log piles and clear of trees; Stack mix of logs and brash in straight aligned pile up to 1.5m high, compacting as it's built; consider importing small volumes of rotted deadwood from other non SSSI woodland sites with established woodland	Annually where locations allow; Remove logs as required; Chip excess brash as required/funds allow
Ground flora	Increase diversity of ground flora	In addition to the thinning operations, consider adding plugs/seeds of UK native species if available.	
Paths	Create surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage
Seating area	Create a dedicated area for informal gathering	Select suitable location and select and fell trees; Save widest diameter logs from thinning operations and arrange as seating; Dig out firepit and line with suitable stones	Monitor for use and mis-use monthly

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Compartment 9 – Woodland south

The area forms half of the largest part of the woodland and being away from the boundaries can be managed without too much restriction. It is formed of line planted broad-leaved trees, dominated by ash, birch and field maple, with very defined and uniform spacing. Trees, while generally very straight are now crowded, cast heavy shade and are beginning to lean or deform in search of light. Understory is absent, regeneration and ground cover poor and deadwood occurring only at very low volumes. Active management will aim to improve the quality of the habitat and make it less artificial in character by addressing the undesirable form and structure resulting from the crowded line planting.

It should be noted that the line planting has achieved the desired effect of very low failure rate and rapid, straight growth. 2014 is an ideal time to begin thinning operations.

Feature	Objective	Method	Frequency
Deciduous woodland	Improve structure and condition of the woodland habitat	Selective felling to promote the following; Increased light levels; Regeneration of tree species; Diversified structure with stump regrowth and increase survival of saplings; Improved growth habit of remaining trees; Limit leaning growth to reduce windblows; Final desired density likely to be around 30% of existing –or removal of 1 in 3. To prevent creating uniform structure across compartment, areas adjacent to paths favour over thinning and areas central to compartment favour under-thinning	Annual work task until desired density is reached. Annual thinning will look to focus on 2-5 small areas, depending on numbers attending task days; Removal rates to start at 1 in 5 excluding any leaning, dead and wind blows;
Deadwood	Increase volumes of deadwood	Identify suitable locations for creating permanent log piles and clear of trees; Stack mix of logs and brash in straight aligned pile up to 1.5m high, compacting as its built; consider importing small volumes of rotted deadwood from other non SSSI woodland sites with established woodland	Annually where locations allow; Remove logs as required; Chip excess brash as required/funds allow
Paths	Create surfaced path	Excavate and import stone to form path and compact; Monitor for settling and accumulation of standing water – dress up areas with additional stone and compact; Clear overhanging branches and cut back well from path edge;	Monitor and clear hung branches monthly Monitor condition of paths surface early spring annually to determine winter damage

NOTE

SITE: CLAYPATCH WOODLAND, WYSESHAM

WHAT IS COVERED? Site Risk Assessment for organised work parties undertaking management work – used in conjunction with Operations Risk Assessment

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTROLS: Site supervisor and workparty – this is NOT a risk assessment for public use of the site.

What is the Hazard	Who would be injured?	Nature and method of injuries	Frequency of hazard?	Severity of hazard?	ASSESSED RISK	Controls	Risk After Control
Highway and pavement	Work party	Impact with vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians	LOW	HIGH	MED	All to wear long sleeved hi vis when working near the road or using the vehicle access gate; take extra care to anticipate the height/length of branches and ensure they do not fall or swing over pavement or highway unless traffic is held by at least 2 persons in Hi Vis.	MED
Litter/ dumping	Work party	Cuts from sharps; strains from shifting heavy objects; hazardous wastes	LOW	MED	MED	Report any instances of fly tipping to local council Environmental Health; take care to examine any dumped waste to check for hazardous materials and sharp edges from glass or rusted metal; only attempt to move waste wearing suitable gloves; do not attempt to lift heavy items without assistance	LOW
Pedestrians/ cyclists	Work party and public	Impact injuries due to collision between people, cyclists and trees	LOW	MED	MED	All work party to wear hi Vis; Be aware of potential for people and cyclists to appear suddenly from around corners or accessing the woodland via garden gates	LOW
Dogs	Work party	Bites; distraction causing increased likelihood of risk from other hazards	LOW	LOW	LOW	All to be aware that dogs on and off lead are potentially present in the woodland; cease work if dogs loose in work area, until dogs removed or controlled;	LOW
Dog waste	Work party	Infection from toxins and parasites	LOW	HIGH	MED	Check work areas and be aware of potential for dog waste; follow basic hygiene in washing hands before eating, drinking or smoking; consider dry hand wash or wet wipes for use of work party;	LOW

IMPORTANT: The risk assessment above is only a draft. The woodland group must read, revise and adopt a site risk assessment themselves, in line with any requirements or recommendations from either the landowner or insurer.

