

Seldon Wood

Management Plan

Date:	July 2009	to	Jan 2029
Date of last review ¹[2.1.3]	July 2004		
Owner / tenant:	London Borough of Croydon leased from the National Trust		
Agent / contact:	Simon Levy – Agent, Richard Edwards – Tree and woodland Officer		
Signed declaration of tenure rights and agreement to public availability of the plan² [UKWAS 1.1.3/1.1.5/2.1.2]	S Levy		

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Location

Nearest town, village or feature	Sanderstead / Croydon	
Grid reference	TQ 366 615	
Total area (ha)	60.3 ha woodland 95ha total with meadows	

1.2 Description of the woodland(s) in the landscape

Seldon Wood lies in the extreme south of the London Borough of Croydon on the dip slope of the North Downs. And lies at the northern edge of a ridge. The site slopes in the north down to the bottom of a valley where the opposite side is covered by the housing of Seldon. The wood is also bordered by houses to the east, west and south east. In the case of the latter the wood is very much part of the Court Wood estate where it again slopes south down to housing.. The exception is its south western edge where the wood borders woodland and fields.

Because of its size (Croydon's largest wood) and raised elevation Seldon Wood is a very important feature in the local landscape and forms an highly visible urban rural interface at the edge of the Borough.

1.3 History of Management

Seldon Wood is an Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) most of which appears to have been continuously wooded since the area was first mapped. Rocque's map of Surrey in 1726 shows the majority of the wood clearly. In fact the wood appears to be a collection of adjacent woods, of which Seldon Wood is one, Steven's Larch, The Gorse, Court Wood, Broom Wood, Greenhill Shaw and Hillocks Wood being others. Formerly part of Seldon Park Estate it was sold in 1899 passing through various hands until the 1930s, when threatened with development, it was acquired by public subscription and given to the National Trust who still own it. However, being without an endowment

¹ The plan must be reviewed at a minimum frequency of five-yearly

² As owner, tenant or manager, you have the right to manage the wood in accordance with this plan. At least a summary of the management plan must be made publicly available on request.

Croydon Council manage it on a long lease (999 years).

In the past appears to have been universally managed as coppice with standards with the onus in the late nineteenth century being on its use as a shooting estate. By the 1920s Steven's Larch and The Gorse had largely been coniferised (larch and scots pine) a process which was continued with norway spruce at Greenhill Shaw. Prior to the sites sale to the National Trust much of the principal timber in Court Wood had been removed. Once in Council control the site continued to be managed with second rotations of conifers and also planting middle gorse with a beech oak mix and some coppicing.

However, active management stopped some 35 years ago and was only revitalised in the late 1990s with the resumption of coppice on the southeast face of the wood, this established some 4 hectares of hazel coppice with standards which is now in its second rotation. Other recent work includes removing the larch block in East Gorse 2008, some work on the beech/ oak plantation removing squirrel damaged trees, thinning scots pine at Steven's Larch. Felling norway spruce at Greenhill Shaw and opening up rides. The meadows are cut and arisings lifted late August every year.

WOODLAND INFORMATION

2.0 Areas and features

2.1.1 Designated Areas	In Woodland	Adjacent to Woodland	Map
Special Areas for Conservation (SACs)			
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)			
Ramsar Sites (see note on Guidance)			
National Nature Reserves (NNRs)			
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)			
Other designations eg: National Parks (NPs), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	Yes		
Details: Site of Metropolitan Importance			
2.1.2 Rare and important species	In Woodland	Adjacent to Woodland	Map
Red Data Book or BAP species			
Rare, threatened or SAP species		Yes	
Details: No especially rare species but good selection of ASNW indicators excellent bluebells herb paris and orchids and the nationally rare greater yellow rattle in the meadows. Alder Kitten moth recorded 2003 – nationally scarce			
2.1.3 Habitats	In Woodland	Adjacent to Woodland	Map
Ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW)	Yes	Yes	1
Other semi-natural woodland			
Plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS)	Yes		2
Semi-natural features in PAWS	Yes		
Woodland margins and hedges	Yes		1
Veteran and other notable trees	Yes		
Breeding sites	Yes		
Habitats of notable species or subject to HAPs			
Unimproved grassland			
Rides and open ground	Yes		1

Valuable wildlife communities	Yes		
Feeding areas			
Lowland heath			
Peatlands			
Others			
<p>Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the site is considered to be ASNW and adjacent Pulpit Wood is also ASNW Most PAWS has now been addressed but larch still remains as isolated trees throughout the wood and there is a stand at E.Gorse. Steven's Larch contains Scots Pine and Greenhill Shaw some Norway Spruce. Good woodland margins around the meadows dominated by blackthorn and several hedgerows Large veteran beech pollards along the Vale Border in the North East of the Wood Large areas of meadow around Steven's Larch and south at Davids Crook Greater Yellow Rattle is nationally rare 			

2.1.4 Water	In Woodland	Adjacent to Woodland	Map
Watercourses			
Lakes			
Ponds	Yes		1
Wetland habitats			

Details: Artificial mains fed pond in the centre of the wood however, this is now in poor condition and does not permanently hold water. Artificial pond holding water in Jubilee Plantation.

2.1.5 Landscape	In Woodland	Adjacent to Woodland	Map
Landscape designated areas			
Landscape features			
Rock exposures			
Historic landscapes			
Areas of the woodland prominent from roads	Yes		
Areas of the woodland prominent from settlements	Yes		

Details: Positioned on a ridge the road is very visually prominent both from Old Farleigh Lane, Selsdon and Forestdale Estate

2.1.6 Cultural Features	In Woodland	Adjacent to Woodland	Map
Public rights of way			
Prominent viewing points			
Permissive footpaths	Yes		1
Areas managed with traditional management systems	Yes		

Details:

Free access to whole site and there are rides over the site as well as numerous desire lines
Active coppice rotation alongside The Wend .

2.1.7 Archaeological Features	In Woodland	Adjacent to Woodland	Map
Scheduled monument			
Historical features	Yes		3

Details: Wood banks are the main historical feature in this woods with the old borough boundary being the most significant.

2.2 Woodland resource characteristics

Amenity: Selsdon wood has a high potential for both recreation and education by virtue of its location near urban settlements, structure and ASNW characteristics. This is already realised via permissive or official access.

Biodiversity: This is a good example of an ASNW and is a Site of Metropolitan Importance

Timber: As with all London Borough of Croydon's woodlands the primary objectives of management are biodiversity and amenity. However, the timber and wood products from Selsdon are a valuable resource and sales are made every year of produce. For example in 2009- 60 tonnes firewood, 80 tonnes softwood chip wood, 3500 hazel pieces were sold

To this end every effort will be made to create quality product whether sawlog or bean stick. Sawlogs would be produced as a result of continuous cover forestry where the canopy is opened to recruit a new age class of tree. Hazel products are the result of annual coppice rotation.

2.3 Site description

Selsdon Wood lies at the northern end of a ridge which is capped with clay and flint. This comprises most of the level area of the wood, however where at the edges of the wood where there are steep slopes underlying chalk is revealed.

The north of the wood Court Wood retains the best ASNW character. Formerly coppiced, these areas have largely gone over to high forest with a weakening understorey in which hazel is the most frequent species. The largely flat central area on clay with flint is dominated by oak (mainly pedunculate but also sessile) with sweet chestnut also present. Ground flora in these heavily shaded conditions tends to be dominated by monocultures. In the spring these are largely wood anemone and bluebell being followed by bramble and some bracken. Within these areas are the occasional small areas of good hazel coppice.



High Forest in Court Wood with little understorey

Where the land drops down north west and east ash-maple woodland is dominant where the chalk is exposed. The often thin canopy is dominated by ash, field maple and oak with yew, whitebeam, birch and sweet chestnut also featuring. There is a good thick understorey dominated by hazel often as on the south eastern slopes not long out of rotation. Both hawthorns, elder, spindle and crab apple are also present. The ground flora here is rich with wood spurge, yellow archangel, dogs mercury, wood melick, goldilocks, primrose, sanicle and bluebell. Also recorded is herb paris, early purple orchid and birds nest orchid.

The south eastern corner of the wood from Courtwood Lane running along Baker Boy Lane consists of good hazel coppice with a few standards (oak/ash). Here regular coppicing results in swaths of wood anemone and wood spurge.



Steven's Larch from the adjacent meadow

Moving south the wood has had more recent intervention, intervention and contains the four large meadows. Several areas of the woodland such as Stevens Larch and The Gorses were heavily planted in recent years with scots pine/ beech (Steven's Larch), larch (East Gorse), oak/beech (Middle Gorse) and a small block of oak/larch (adjoining Steven's Larch). East Gorse has now been felled and bar the occasional native is now an open glade. There are also some norway spruce remaining at Greenhill Shaw and some other planted non natives scattered throughout the wood. These areas have all been neglected with the consequence of squirrel devastation of the beech and the consequences of no thinning for the conifers. However, all areas retain ASNW characteristics with native regeneration and ground flora and the last ten years have seen the removal of larger areas of softwood monoculture with only Steven's Larch retaining significant amount of Scots Pine in a broadleaved mix.

Broom Wood in the south east has seen little intervention and retains good ASNW characteristics largely being old oak standards over hazel coppice with cherry ash birch and field maple also being present.

Hillocks Wood also appears more native in structure varying between areas of high forest dominated by oak and sweet chestnut to dense ash with some sycamore regeneration often where very large beech has collapsed or been blown over.

In recent years there has been some re-instatement of management with some coppicing, there is now a regular rotation of 0.5 ha per annum along the woods south eastern border. PAWs work has been carried out with the removal of much norway spruce, the main block of larch at East Gorse has been felled and Steven's Larch thinned. Selsdon may now have a resident deer population of roe deer and a dead Muntjac has been found. London Ecology Units 1988, Nature Conservation in Croydon handbook also notes that species such as the pygmy shrew, weasel and adder were also present although the presence of the latter is now unlikely.

Surveys carried out in the 70s indicate there were as many as 30 species of woodland birds present in the wood including Marsh Tit and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. This is supported by more recent survey. There is also a comprehensive survey of Lepidoptera from June 2003 which recorded over 70 species of butterfly and moth including the nationally rare Alder Kitten moth.



Recent PAWs work in Steven's Larch

The wood also contains some 13 hectares of semi-improved grassland in four blocks, which although not particularly diverse in terms of flora, do contain greater yellow rattle, and pyramidal orchids as well as a reasonable mix of herbs. (sweet vernal grass, bulbous buttercup, field scabious and crested dogs tail).

The wood also contains wood banks with the old Addington Borough boundary being the most pronounced. There is also a more recent and more incongruous feature the memorial pond and rock garden in the centre of the wood (now in disrepair).

A small piece of woodland (Jubilee Plantation) on the east of Greenhill Shaw is surrounded by picket fencing to form a non intervention zone.

Selsdon Wood is bordered by housing bar along its southern edge where it meets Puplet Wood (Surrey CC) from which there are hedgerow links to a series of small woodlands.

The wood is principally used for recreation particularly by dog walkers and has numerous formal access points around its perimeter as well as a cark park off Old Farleigh Road. There is a network of permissive paths (many marked with rustic name plates) as well as numerous desire lines giving access to most areas of the wood.

2.4 Significant hazards, constraints and threats

Hazards – slopes on edge of the site,

Constraints –

- 1) Houses and gardens bordering the site
- 2) Narrow paths that do not accommodate vehicular access.
- 3) Concerns, from local residents. re active management.

4) Archaeological features

Threats –

- 1) Arson, graffiti and malicious damage by vandals, dumping of garden and other rubbish by local residents and fly tipping.
- 2) Pest damage especially squirrel is a major issue.
- 3) Deer browsing of regeneration and coppice re-growth does occur but is not of a severity that requires the use of temporary deer fencing in all cases the large coppice blocks on the edge of the wood regenerating well. However, smaller areas within the wood now require protection.

3. LONG TERM VISION, MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

3.1 Long term vision

For an ancient semi-natural woodland with diversity of native structure ranging from areas of varied age high forest to in-rotation coppice as well as including features such wide rides and good quality meadows. The wood should also provide both safe amenity and interest for local people as well as timber products

3.2 Management Objectives

No	Objective
1	Increased diversity of structure
2	A regular and effective health and safety inspection regime
3	Reduced vandalism, litter and dumping.
4	Good amenity value
5	Maintain and enhance biodiversity values
6	Production of timber and coppice products.
7	Control of invasive non natives
8	Support and encouragement of Friends Group
9	Maintenance of FC grants and FSC certification

3.3 Strategy

General: The majority of the wood is to be managed as High Forest with the coppice restoration only extending as far as there are markets for their products

- 1) Diversity of structure to be achieved by
 - a) Continuous Cover Forestry i.e. the felling of individual or group trees and small coups.
 - b) A regular coppice cycle
 - c) wide rides
 - d) cut and lift on meadows every august
- 2) Inspection of the site and its boundaries every three years for hazardous trees
- 3) Leafleting surrounding houses who dump in the wood and maintaining barriers
- 4) Maintaining paths and rides. (annual strimming)
- 5) As 1 but including retention of standing and fallen deadwood where safe, the retention of large

- over-mature veterans including conifers
- 6) Marketing produce where viable, ensuring high quality product via dense planting, formative pruning and thinning.
 - 7) Continuing sycamore and laurel control.
 - 8) Consultation and working with community partnerships officer, training days and funding for insurance and tools.
 - 9) Woodland Improvement Grants will be sought for appropriate capital works and the Woodland Management Grant Maintained by continued FSC certification
 - 10) Squirrel control is currently deemed unviable however, this will be reviewed every five years (next review 2010). Sacrificial species esp. beech will be retained. Deer are not yet a problem and browsing is regularly monitored. Deer fencing to be used if necessary.

4. MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS/OPERATIONS

4.1 Silvicultural systems

3.1.1 Harvesting

CCF motor manual thinning and select fell opening up small areas of woodland floor (max 0.25 ha) to light. Extraction by forwarder
 Clear fell work has now been completed (PAWS site only)
 Coppice – motor manual/ hand tools 0.4 ha annually

Stacking area at second gate from north on the Old Farleigh road

4.1.2 Phased felling and restructuring of plantations

Further thinning work to be carried out at Steven's Larch and Greenhill Shaw to foster broadleaf NR.

Otherwise remaining conifers to be retained to senescence.

Broadleaved plantation at The Gorse to have further thinning of squirrel damaged beech to allow natural regeneration.

4.1.3 Establishment, restocking and regeneration

Restocking – natural regeneration will be the favoured method with planting of local provenance native whips if there is no good evidence after three years.

Regeneration of hazel coppice is always supplemented by layering/planting of whips to achieve a density of one stool every 2 or 3 square metres.

4.2 New planting

No new planting

4.3 Other operations

None although gorse may be replanted in East Gorse subject to regeneration

Maintaining public access via ride and path work as well as an organised programme of tree safety inspections.

Coppicing of small areas by Friends Group

Annual cut and lift of meadows

4.4 Protection and maintenance

4.4.1 Pest and disease management

Deer fencing is now required for example on old ash stools in the coppice area to prevent serious browsing damage. It is also required on small internal coppice coups although the larger coups as yet are regenerating well without protection. Whips are planted in 1.2m tubes with stakes as a precaution.

Squirrel control will not be considered for the first five year period of this management plan because of the difficulties of maintaining effective control in an urban setting. However, this will be reviewed especially as regards the effect on young oak and ash.

Invasive species such as laurel, rhododendron and sycamore will be controlled by cutting and stump treatment.

4.4.2 Fire plan

In general this wood represents a low fire risk as with most broadleaved woodlands with arson the most likely cause of fire. There is no history of serious fires in this wood.

In the event of a fire being reported the Fire Brigade must be contacted immediately.

Bottles, broken glass, burnt out cars and illegal fly tipping all add to the risk that a fire can be started accidentally. Litter will be reported or removed immediately.

In general the larger woodlands have good access to most areas sufficient for fire brigade access. Smaller woodlands are usually close enough to roads and tracks for fire brigade hoses to reach all areas.

There are relatively few watercourse and supplies within the woodlands suitable for fire fighting. Permanent water sources are marked on the attached map.

Rendezvous points for staff and contractors will be at the nearest entrance to the site of the fire, or if it is obvious, at the fire site.

In the event of the Fire Brigade being called out it must be borne in mind that they will not have a detailed knowledge of the wood and the various woodland areas so a well known location should be used. In addition, someone with up to date knowledge of the quickest, and best, route to the fire through the effected woodland should meet them.

The rendezvous point to meet the fire services are: main woodland access points nearest the fires. (See Maps). Site Keys are Croydon gun keys and FB 1 keys (car park)

4.4.3 Waste disposal and pollution

Litter is not a huge problem in this wood although where gardens abut the wood there is the traditional dumping of garden waste. Litter and dog waste bins are located at the car park and emptied regularly

Contracts with contractors state penalties for leaving waste and also require the use of biodegradable lubricants where practical and the carrying of spillage kits on all vehicles.

Chemicals will only be used to treat non natives.

4.4.4 Protection from unauthorised activities

Dumping of garden waste is an issue. An attempt will be made to tackle this problem by leafleting houses concerned.

Vandalism is not a serious issue in this wood. Motorbikes/quads can be an occasional problem but have been dealt with, for example, by a recent example of a helicopter search and crushing of offending machines.

The Borough's ranger service does monitor this site on a regular basis.

4.4.5 Protection of other identified services and values [4.1.1]

Health and safety inspection of trees on all paths (not desire lines) with subsequent remedial work. Last inspection 2008.

4.5 Game management

No game management

4.6 Protecting and enhancing landscape, biodiversity and special features

4.6.1 Management of designated areas

Designation as a Site of Metropolitan Importance does not carry any legal requirements see 4.6.2 to 4.6.5

4.6.2 Measures to enhance biodiversity and other special features [2.1.1k and 6.1.1]

- Maintenance of regular coppice cycle ad infinitum (minimum of 0.5ha per annum)
- Thinning and opening up of canopy in high forest areas to create a more varied structure in a currently even aged canopy. This will apply to all high forest areas shown on map 3
- Both standing and fallen dead wood will be maintained to give an average of 20m³ per hectare over the site as a whole. Coppice blocks will have less fallen dead wood so as to promote ground flora. Where possible trees requiring safety works will continue to be left as hulks where it is safe to do so rather than being felled.
- One cut and lift on meadows per annum to maintain and enhance flora
- Edge environment (blackthorn etc.) around meadows to be maintained at present levels

- Two non intervention areas to be maintained (see map 3) One being Jubilee Plantation (fenced) and one area in Court Wood see map 3.
- Ex Larch Plantation East Gorse to be scarified to promote a more Heathland environment.

Sycamore will be controlled as in this wood it is likely to be dominant if not removed as well as the squirrel population preventing timber trees being grown.

4.6.3 Special measures for ASNW and SNW

As 4.6.2.

4.6.4 Special measures for PAWS

Significant areas of PAWs have largely been addressed. Steven's Larch requires further thinning which will be undertaken during the period of this plan on the same CCF principles as other high forest areas. However, a light scattering of largely mature conifers in some areas of the wood brings benefit both in terms of landscape and biodiversity and as they are not seeding will be retained until senescence.

4.6.5 Measures to mitigate impacts on landscape and neighbouring land [3.1.2]

Continuous Cover Forestry will be the main management technique and consequently there will be no significant landscape issues during the course of this plan.

4.7 Management of social and cultural values

4.7.1 Archaeology and sites of cultural interest

Woodbanks are the primary archaeological interest in the wood. Location will be marked on any maps given to contractors who may be working in their vicinity. In the unlikely event of their being crossed by machines protective ramps at fixed crossing points will be installed.

The artificial pond and stone work are viewed with some sentimentality by some and there is a belief that the former shelter at Davids Crook (now burnt down and removed) was a memorial. The future of both is currently (2009/10) being consulted on.

4.7.2 Public access and impacts on local people

There is free access to all parts of the wood bar Jubilee Plantation. Public access is supported by regular path maintenance (annual strimming where required), a car park, and litter bins (at the car park). The site lavatories in the car park have now been closed due to persistent vandalism but are opened on particular occasions such as open days. .

The ranger service also conducts guided walks.

The wood has a dedicated Friends Group who take an active role in management via coppice work, formative pruning and thinning and who organise open days..

5. CONSULTATION

Organisation/individual	Comment	Response/action
National Trust		
GLA		
Forestry Commission		
Friends Group		
Dedicated Ranger		
Association of Croydon Nature Conservation Societies		

6. MONITORING PLAN SUMMARY

Objective number, issue or UKWAS Requirement	Indicator	Method of assessment	Monitoring period	Responsibility	How will information be used
Coppice regeneration	minimum 1 metre growth per annum/ low levels deer browsing	Visual plus photos	Inspection in June and September	Woodlands Advisor	To assess whether deer fencing required
Natural Regeneration in CCF areas	Regeneration of native trees	Visual plus photos	Inspection in June and September	Woodlands Advisor	To assess whether planting or protection from browsing required
Hazardous tree inspection / tree health	Trees posing a potential hazard/threat	Site inspection	Every three years next inspection 2011	Woodlands Advisor and Tree Officer	To draw up a contract to remove hazard/threat
Flora in meadows	Variety of flora plus level of presence of key species (yellow rattle)	Site inspection	annual	Borough ecologist	Effectiveness of management prescriptions
Contract monitoring	Keeping to terms of contract	Site inspection	Weekly in duration of the contract	Woodlands Advisor	To ensure work being done as per contract and UKWAS requirements met.

7. WORK PROGRAMMES

7.1 Outline long-term work programme (2014 to 20__)

Compartment or area	Activity	Year		
		6-10	11-15	16-20
Steven's Larch	Thin and open canopy	Y		
Selsdon Wood /Court Wood	Thin 3ha of high forest areas each five years plus open gaps for natural regen/restock	Y	Y	Y
Wend	Coppice 0.4ha p/a	Y	Y	Y
Meadows	Cut and lift to prevent encroachment of scrub	y	y	y

7.2 Short-term work programme (2009_ to 2014_)

Compartment or area	Activity	Year				
		1	2	3	4	5
Coppice blocks along the Wend	Coppice 0.5 ha cutting for produce burning brash and restocking to achieve a minimum of 1 hazel stool every three metres	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
33a	Silvicultural thin plus open small glades for regeneration over 3ha	y				
33b	Scarify area to encourage Heathland vegetation	y				
Centenary plantation	Silvicultural thin	y				
Ride Court Wood Lane entrance to Stevens Larch	Widen to allow light to penetrate			y		
Meadows	Cut and lift	y	y	y	Y	y
All	Health and safety inspection			y		
Friends coppice block	Thin canopy and deer fence	y				
Greenhill Shaw	Heavy thin Norway Spruce			y		
All	Open day	y	y			
Jubilee Plantation	Remove some of the over story especially squirrel damaged trees and re-stock to create good understorey to promote bird populations		y		y	

8. COSTINGS [2.2.1]

Selsdon is managed as a compartment on the London Borough of Croydon Estate (450 ha total):

- FC grant income includes Woodland Management Grant £30 per hectare per annum and Woodland Improvement Grant for all capital works
- Timber sales are used to supplement all relevant works.
- Annual budget of £50,000 per annum for health and safety works across the whole estate

These three income streams have maintained the levels of management detailed in this plan for the previous twelve years

9. MAPS

List all maps here and append to plan.

Map No/Title	Description
1	Location map including access
2	Woodland composition
3	Archaeological and cultural features map
4	Hazard map
5	Planned operations map