

Kingston Embankment Small Woodland Management Plan

Woodland Property Name	Kingston Embankment		
Unique Reference	KPCWMP01		
Plan Period dd/mm/yyyy (ten years)	Approval Date: 07/04/2025		To: 07/04/2035
Five Year Review Date	07/04/2030		

Approval Criteria – FC Office Use Only

The UKFS states that a management plan should:

UKFS	Approval Criteria	FC Approval & Notes
State the objectives of management, and how sustainable forest management is to be achieved	Have objectives of management been stated? Consideration given to economic, environmental and social factors (Section 2.2)	
Provide a means to communicate forest proposals and engage interested parties	Have work proposals been communicated in the management strategy (section 6) and felling & restock table (section 8) and potential interested parties identified in Section 7	
Serve as an agreed statement of intent against which implementation can be checked and monitored	Has a five year review period been stated below and achievements recorded in section 3	
Approving Officer Name		Plan approved

Property Details

Name	Kingston Parish Council		Owner: Yes	Tenant N/A
Email	kingstonpcclerk@gmail.com		Contact Number	07808 020720
Address	Garden Flat, 7 Wellington Terrace, Sandgate Esplanade, CT 20 3DY			
Agent Name (if applicable) N/A				
Contact Number	N/A		Email	N/A
County	Kent		Nearest Town	Canterbury
Grid Reference (e.g. ST 625 785)	TR1968 5117 (The Street, Recreation Ground entrance) TR 1987 5103 (Covet Lane entrance)		Local Authority	Canterbury City Council
Management Plan Area (Hectares)			0.815	
List the maps associated with this management plan (PLEASE NOTE: Google Maps/ images of maps will not be accepted because they are copyright protected and should not be used commercially without the appropriate licencing from Google).			Map 1: Location map	
Do you intend to apply for a felling licence with this management plan?			Yes	No ✓ Licence already in place

Vision and Objectives

To develop your long term vision, you need to express as clearly as possible the overall direction of management for the woodland and how you envisage it will be in the future.

2.1 Vision

Describe your long term vision for the woodland(s).

This small woodland site is located in the heart of Kingston parish in a Conservation Area and AONB and contains an important connective pedestrian route between the parallel roads of The Street and Covet Lane. The overall aims are:

1. To maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the Kingston Embankment site with an emphasis on protecting the existing habitat for adders and maximising the prospect of ash dieback (ADB) recovery.
2. To manage and develop the current public footpath as a woodland ride to provide: an accessible and enjoyable site for parishioners and countryside users; opportunities for parish engagement with the Embankment woodland as a community area; benefits to public health.
3. To seek a Kent Wildlife Trust 'Wilder Kent Award' and enter any other appropriate competitions (e.g. Trees in Bloom).

2.2 Management Objectives

State the objectives of management, and how sustainable forest management is to be achieved. Objectives are a set of specific, quantifiable statements that represent what needs to happen to achieve the long term vision.

No.	Objectives (including environmental, economic and social considerations)
1	To identify, support, and encourage current native plant communities to maintain and enhance biodiversity appropriate for the woodland site. This encompasses trees (e.g. ash, hazel, maple, beech and yew trees), shrubs (e.g. dogwood, hawthorn), and other flora.
2	To maintain and enhance existing open ride areas which currently support butterfly (e.g. Speckled Wood) and insect populations: Establish a narrow, cut path with two zones to either side which maintain a light gradient to the shaded wood behind through rotational cutting (annually cut inner zone, 2-4 yearly outer zone).
3	To protect adders on the site, a conservation priority species in the UK.
4	To monitor and support the current ash tree population to maximize the prospect of ADB recovery through development of resilience.
5	To maintain path access, including steps, ramps and railings along designated footpath CB542 which runs the length of the woodland and links to other local footpaths CB270 and CB272.
6	To raise local awareness of the woodland as an asset for recreation and appreciation of its significance to East Kent cultural heritage, seeking opportunities for public engagement via educational display boards etc.
7	To develop the site to meet the criteria for the Kent Wildlife Trust's Wilder Kent Awards.

Add Box

Plan Review – Achievements

Use this section to identify achievements made against previous plan objectives. This section should be completed at the 5 year review and could be informed through monitoring activities undertaken.

Objective	Achievement
As above	To be completed at year 5

Add Box

Woodland Survey

This section is about collecting information relating to your woodland and its location, including any statutory constraints: designations, European Protected Species etc. Woodland information for your property can be found on the [Magic website](#) or the Forestry Commission Land Information Search.

Brief description of the woodland property

Kingston Embankment is a 300m stretch of the old embankment of the Elham Valley Railway Line in the parish of Kingston, Kent. The 0.815ha (c.2.01 acres) non-ancient, lowland broadleaved Embankment woodland lies within the Kingston Conservation Area (designated 6 Jun 1979, extended 28 Mar 1995) and the Kent Downs AONB at an elevation of 50-60m. A designated footpath CB542 runs the length of the woodland with steps, ramps and railings introduced in 2012 to improve access. The location of the woodland is identified on map 1.

The railway was constructed by the South-Eastern Railway company (SER) in about 1888. After use by the MOD during WWII, the line reverted to SER and closed in 1947. Once the track was lifted, the embankment was left to develop naturally. In 2005, Kingston Parish Council purchased the woodland site as a public amenity with a grant from Canterbury City Council.

Kingston Embankment is oriented NW-SE and lies on the north-facing valley side of the Nailbourne stream. Annual rainfall is c.500mm. The Embankment rises approximately 20m above the surrounding landscape. It connects King George V playing field (accessible from The Street) and Covet Lane, the latter noted for landscape beauty, historic interest and variety of flora. The SE end of the woodland connects with the original brick arch railway bridge across Covet Lane, an area which provides a habitat for adders.

The embankment was constructed from transported chalk quarried during the development of the railway. The surrounding landscape includes chalk, alluvium, clay with flints and brickearth areas. Neighbouring land comprises fields, including the village recreation ground and a lowland meadow, domestic gardens and Covet Lane.

Since closure of the railway line spontaneous tree growth has created a mature tree woodland area on the slopes and top of the embankment. This includes core native tree communities of ash, hazel, maple, and beech in the presence of yew which are similar to nearby high-biodiverse woodland habitats. A range of other trees includes common elm, blackthorn, willow, whitebeam, and a small number of oaks. Recent planting includes oak and lime but also the non-native species tulip tree, walnut and horse chestnut. Nearby similar woodland areas (e.g. Knowle Wood) provide the opportunity for further flora seeding and fauna spread into the Embankment woodland. The trees are mostly in good condition though ivy growth is prevalent and an inspection in 2012 noted few dangerous trees. Ash dieback is widespread, but some trees remain reasonably healthy. Sycamore of all ages are present and this, along with adjacent sycamore woodland represents an invasive, shading threat.

There is a shrubby understory including dogwood, privet, hawthorn, wayfaring tree and widespread dense undergrowth of brambles and ivy. The footpath CB542 runs the length of the embankment and space has been created either side of it to form an open ride through much of the woodland. Broad leaved helleborine is present indicating floral potential, however, some invasive garden plants are also present.

Kingston Embankment is managed by the Parish Council and resident volunteers with expert help as required. For example, The Forestry Commission and The Kent Men of the Trees previously provided advice and assistance. A Conditional Felling Licence is in place: 019/2921/2022 (post-May 2018), and previously 019/583/16-17 to fell/thin (pre-May 2018).

Woodland Protection

This section allows you to consider the potential threats facing your woodland(s). Where relevant, under the following headings, describe any potential threats and as informed by both the likelihood of presence and potential impact, communicate any required management response. This could, for example, be providing information in relation to putting in place a plan, monitoring or direct action.

Plant Health

There is widespread evidence of ADB presenting an ongoing high risk to the woodland. Existing and future ash trees are an important element of the desired woodland tree community creating a potentially high impact situation. However, there is a spectrum of apparent resilience to ADB and individual trees exhibit severe damage through to reasonable health. Ash saplings are present and represent an opportunity to protect new - and possibly ADB resistant - trees.

More generally - and specifically with respect to ADB-affected trees - dead wood will be monitored but left in place unless dangerous. A felling licence is in place if tree removal becomes necessary and where possible felled dead wood will be retained to support habitat creation and biodiversity.

Deer

The site is small and in a low woodland risk area for deer though non-neighbouring local areas may hold fallow, muntjac and roe. Proximity to Kingston village also renders the site low risk for the presence of deer. Though the impact of deer activity is low (no planned coppicing etc.) an appropriate plan will be developed if required.

Grey Squirrels
Grey squirrels are present on the site and therefore of medium risk to the woodland though there is currently no evidence of significant damage. The impact of grey squirrels is low, however, trees will be monitored for evidence of bark strip damage and advice sought on control measures if required.
Livestock and Other Mammals
Rabbits are likely present and therefore of medium risk to the woodland. There are no plans for extensive planting or coppicing, so the impact is low. Any risk to new/young plants may be offset by using protective tubes.
Water & Soil (soil erosion, acidification of water, pollution etc)
Sufficient density of trees and undergrowth will be maintained (with the exception of the through ride/pathway) to offset any potential risk for topsoil slippage due to the raised nature of the embankment site.
Environmental (flooding, wind damage, fire, invasive species etc)
Sycamore is an identified invasive species presenting a high risk to the woodland plan objectives with a high potential impact if left unmanaged. Monitoring and action to remove sycamore saplings will be undertaken annually.
Climate Change Resilience (provenance, lack of diversity, uniform structure)
Kingston Embankment has an average risk from climate change. As a diverse, mixed floral community it is likely to have a level of tolerance. Natural regeneration of this community will be encouraged whilst monitoring the overall mix and distribution of tree and plant species

Social Threats	There is a low risk of anti-social behaviour given the designated footpath access through the site and proximity to Kingston village. For example, this may extend to litter, guerrilla gardening, wilful damage. A litter bin is already located at one end of the site (on the Recreation Ground) encouraging correct waste disposal and useful for periodic litter picking initiatives. Educational boards or notices may be installed as required and include relevant public messaging.

Strategy

This section requires a statement of intent, setting out how you intend to achieve your management objectives and manage important features and issues identified within the previous sections of the plan. The information provided should be succinct.

Mgt Objective/Feature	Outline Work Prescriptions/Operations	Year
Maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity	Continue with regular, seasonal site surveys to record present species which may inform future woodland management actions.	Ongoing
Regular woodland maintenance	Undertake regular monitoring and maintenance to create a body of trees in good order. As required:	Ongoing

	(i) remove dangerous trees/branches but retain dead wood where possible to support habitat creation and biodiversity (ii) remove invasive sycamore where possible (iii) ensure any new planting represents native species (iv) undertake light thinning (v) remove garden plants if identified	
Maintain the existing open ride	Maintain a central, narrow cut path. Develop two zones either side of the path: an inner zone cut annually (Sep-Feb); an outer zone cut/coppiced at 2-4 year intervals in winter.	[To be determined]
Adder protection	Maintain and enhance current adder habitat and monitor the population. Support adder protection through local education and expertise which may include information boards.	Ongoing
Manage ash dieback / aid recovery through resilience	Monitor the ash population. Remove dangerous trees but retain healthier ones. Protect dense areas of ash saplings with the potential for ADB resistance.	Ongoing
Footpath access maintenance	Monitor regularly, coordinate with PROW as required and undertake work as necessary.	Ongoing
Local outreach and engagement with the woodland as an asset for recreation and public health	Consider options for public engagement which may include: educational information boards; woodland information on the Parish Council website; development of a QR accessed nature/history trail; other community opportunities.	[2024?]
Kent Wildlife Trust 'Wilder Kent Award' application	Assess the woodland against criteria and prepare application.	[2024?]

Add Box

Stakeholder Engagement

There can be a requirement on both the FC and the owner to undertake consultation/engagement. Please refer to [Operations Note 35](#) for further information.

Work Proposal	Individual/ Organisation	Date Contacted	Date feedback received	Response	Action
Development of Management Plan	Forestry Commission				
Wilder Kent Award application	Kent Wildlife Trust				
Public engagement	Parish council / Kingston parishioners / public				
Woodland work	Neighbouring landowners				
Footpath work	PROW				
Add Box					

8. Felling & Restocking Should you wish to associate a felling licence with your management plan please complete the table below. Set out your felling intentions by identifying individual species where they comprise more than 20% of the volume to be felled. Individual species at or below 20% need to be grouped as MB (mixed broadleaf) and/or MC (mixed conifer).

[illegible]

Indicators of success should be defined for each management objective and then checked at regular intervals. Use the below section to identify when and how monitoring is to be carried out. The data collected will help to evaluate progress.

Add Box