



TRING
TOWN COUNCIL

Millennium Wood Management Plan

2022 – 2027



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The Site

Millennium Wood is situated on the west side of Tring, off Duckmore Lane and shares the open space with Tring Allotments.

The open space comprising - Millennium Wood, the Allotments and The Community Garden is owned and administered by Tring Town Council. Millennium Wood is approximately 7.2 hectares (18 acres) in size. .

The allotment area is accessed by allotment holders only while the rest of the space can be accessed by the general public via three entrances. (see photograph 1)

There is a vehicular entrance and car park for general use 80 metres up Duckmore Lane, a pedestrian entry (with closed field gate) 350 metres up Duckmore Lane and a pedestrian entrance from Aylesbury Road (opposite Donkey Lane) The west side of the site between Duckmore Lane and Aylesbury Road and central path through the wood are served by statutory footpaths with numerous smaller paths providing access within Millennium Wood.

History of the Site

In the 1920's Lord Rothchild asked a local farmer to release land for an allotment site, its status as an allotment was strengthened by 1925 Allotments Act.

There was some scout camp activity on the site but in 2000, Millennium Wood was formed of old allotment land.

With commendable vision, the temptation to plant the whole site with trees was resisted; the site was planted in part with trees and shrubs while the remaining areas were left as open meadows.

In 2017, a 5 year plan was written and subsequently adopted by Tring Town Council. In order to undertake some management work and involve local residents, The Friends of Millennium Wood (F of M W) was formed.

The Grasslands

Approximately 40% of Millennium Wood is open grassland.

In addition to the existing meadow plants, the Tring in Transition group undertook additional stocking of native Chiltern plants in 2000 (see Appendix 2 – list of Annual and Herbaceous Plants, compiled by F of M W)

Left to nature and without grazing or taking hay crops, the meadows at Millennium Wood need to be managed by cutting and removing the cut vegetation. If not managed in this way, these areas would come to be dominated by coarse grass species, invasive species such as Canadian goldenrod and scrub (e.g. bramble, hawthorn, blackthorn), eventually becoming wooded with trees such as ash, field maple and native cherry becoming the climax vegetation.

Grassland mowing and raking maintains the rich botanical diversity and prevents the areas, rich in traditional meadow plants, being over taken by scrub and trees.

During 2017 to 2022, The Friends of Millennium Wood have mowed many of the main areas within the site but also created some smaller open areas. The results have been encouraging with more than 100 greater butterfly orchids counted during summer 2022 as well as many other species of wild flower. Weather permitting; mowing is undertaken during September and October.

The Woodlands

The wooded part of Millennium Wood has been in place since 2000 when local residents donated and planted trees that were suited to the Chilterns. They were planted in the style of a forestry plantation on a 3 metre grid and in the main, established well forming wooded swathes during the early 2000 s.

The Town Council were mindful that some managing work would be required and in 2017 the Friends of Millennium Wood (F of M W) were established to undertake management work on behalf of the Town Council.

Left to its own devices, a closely stocked plantation results in trees growing up for the light and eventually forming a woodland of 'beanpole like' trees. In order to prevent this happening, several phases of thinning are needed until the required density of trees has been achieved. This density can vary from a closed canopy i.e. where all the crowns are touching/overlapping or trees with greater gaps between them.

In addition to the original intended trees, a significant amount of natural regeneration has arrived and where trees have been felled, in some cases, the stump has regenerated (coppice).

During the first 5 years between 2017 and 2022, F of M W have been undertaking the first phase of thinning and this process needs to continue into the next 5 years in order to:

- continue the process of thinning towards the required density
- provide diversity to the woodland structure

Threats

Woodland

The original mix of trees planted in 2000 was sufficiently diverse to be able to withstand some species not doing as well as was hoped.

Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) was first scientifically described in 2006 and has become evident throughout the UK.

We are told that it will eventually spread to 95% of the population and that the UK will be repopulated with ash from the remaining 5% said to be resistant.

It certainly hasn't been like Dutch elm disease that swept through particularly southern Britain in a few years in the early 70's, wiping out many 1000 s of mature elms.

In 2020, ash die back seemed to be advancing but from my observations in 2021, 22, many trees have recovered and are pushing out new growth. However, the original advice has not changed and we may expect to see ash dieback advancing again.

The site has many fine native cherry and field maple should the ash succumb.

There were a few English oak in the original mix, where they have found themselves in a deeper seam of soil, some are growing while others haven't enjoyed the chalky soils of this area.

Grassland

Canadian Goldenrod is a non-native species which can quickly out compete native plants in sensitive habitats such grasslands, meadows and alongside riverbanks (there is a native golden rod but not on this site)

Canadian goldenrod *Solidago canadensis* forms dense stands of plants that out competes native flora, leading to a reduction in biodiversity. Areas within the site already have dominant stands supporting decreased cover of native species. This plant species can spread by wind-borne seed and via rhizome resulting in large monocultures.

This species has gained ground in Millennium Wood and requires management control in botanically diverse grassland areas of the wood. A method of control is being considered.

Volunteering

In 2017 Tring Town Council were mindful that while it had established well, the site required some management input.

In autumn 2017 The Friends of Millennium Wood were established in order to undertake works in accordance with the 2017 – 22 management plan.

The group which is made up of Tring residents meets between September and April, meeting at least once a month. Tools, refreshments and guidance are provided.

During the first 5 years the group has undertaken

- many hundreds of hours voluntary conservation work
- tree thinning across the whole site
- mowing and grass raking in the main areas of meadow
- creation of smaller open areas
- establishment of 80 metres of native hedge between M W and the allotments

Recommendations

- 1 For the purposes of managing the site, that Tring Town Council continue to support the efforts of Friends of Millennium Wood
- 2 F of M W continue the work already started between 2017 – 2022:
 - continue gradually thinning the trees planted in 2000
 - take opportunities to create a diverse woodland structure such as promoting coppice from felled trees and occasionally favouring natural regeneration
 - cutting and raking off meadow areas
- 3 F of M W, where possible undertake one off projects such as hedge planting or wild flower plantings
- 4 F of M W market themselves better, particularly with on site information when undertaking work



Pyramidal Orchid (*Mike Jennings*)

Appendix 1 – Woody Plants

SHRUBS / TREES:	
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Holly	<i>Illex aquifolia</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>
Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crateagus monogyna</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Swedish whitebeam	<i>Sorbus intermedia</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Guelder rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>
Wayfaring tree	<i>Viburnum lantana</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>
Wild privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>

Appendix 2 – Annual and Herbaceous Plants

Common name	Scientific name
GRASSES:	
Cocksfoot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
False wood brome	<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>
False-oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>
HERBS:	
Agrimony	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>
Black knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Bladder campion	<i>Silene vulgaris</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg</i>
Broad-leaved willowherb	<i>Epilobium montanum</i>
Bulbous buttercup	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>
Bush vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Coltsfoot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>
Columbine	<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>
Comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>
Common broomrape	<i>Orobanche minor</i>
Common figwort	<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>
Common fumitory	<i>Fumaria officinalis</i>
Common spotted orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>
Common vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>
Common twayblade	<i>Listera ovata</i>
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Cuckoo flower	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion sp.	<i>Taraxacum sp.</i>
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina agg</i>
False oxlip	<i>Primula vulgaris x veris</i>
Field scabious	<i>Knautia arvensis</i>
Figwort	<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>
Forget-me-not species	<i>Myosotis sp.</i>
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Glaucous sedge	<i>Carex flacca</i>
Goatsbeard	<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>
Goldilocks	<i>Ranunculus auricomus</i>
Greater butterfly orchid	<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>

Greater plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Green alkanet	<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>
Hairy St Johns Wort	<i>Hypericum hirsutum</i>
Hedge bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Hedge parsley	<i>Torilis japonica</i>
Hedge woundwort	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>
Hemlock	<i>Conium maculatum</i>
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Horse mint	<i>Mentha longifolia</i>
Lanceolate plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Lesser celandine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>
Lesser trefoil	<i>Trifolium dubium</i>
Marjoram	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Meadow vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
Melilot sp. (only in leaf, requires fruit for identification)	<i>Melilotus sp.</i>
Mugwort	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>
Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>
Old mans beard	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>
Orange hawkweed	<i>Pilosella aurantiaca</i>
Ox-eye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Perforate St Johns Wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>
Ploughman's-spikenard	<i>Inula conyzae</i>
Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>
Pyramidal orchid	<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>
Red bartsia	<i>Odontites verna</i>
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Red dead-nettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>
Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>
Rough hawkbit	<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>
Snowdrop	<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>
Spiked sedge	<i>Carex spicata</i>
Sweet briar	<i>Rosa rubiginosa</i>
Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>
Toadflax	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>
Upright hedge parsley	<i>Torilis japonica</i>
Water figwort	<i>Scrophularia aquatica</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
White dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>
White helleborine	<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>
Wild carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>

Appendix 4 – Risk assessment

Friends of Millennium Wood (F of M W)

RISK ASSESSMENT: For Voluntary work at Millennium Wood.			SITE: Millennium Wood, Duckmore Lane, Tring.	
Nature of Hazard	People at Risk	Worst Case Outcome	Advised Control	Estimation of Risk (High / Medium / Low)
Weather: Poor visibility, cold, rain – slippery underfoot, Sunny:/hot – sunburn/heatstroke	F of M W	Injury, illness	If weather is severe cancel visit Wear waterproof clothing and suitable footwear Avoid puddles and icy patches If hot – apply sunscreen, wear hat and drink plenty of fluids	Low
Falling branches Branches on the ground	F of M W Members of the public	Injury	Work in pairs with one person acting as a lookout Keep cut material away from paths Stack cut material as soon as possible Be aware of changing circumstances and surroundings	Low

<p>Personal Injury:</p> <p>Cuts, grazes, minor falls, slips and trips, uneven surfaces</p>	F of M W	Injury	<p>Protect your feet, wear suitable gloves and footwear</p> <p>Cover wounds with waterproof plasters</p> <p>Do not run</p> <p>Have appropriate first aid essentials available in kit</p> <p>For any injury - have a mobile phone available to contact someone.</p> <p>Be aware of the dangers of using tools and other equipment while attending project days. Ask for advice if you are not sure</p>	Low
<p>Personal Safety:</p> <p>Muggers, drunks, drug dealers and aggressive behaviour from general public</p>	F of M W	Injury, death	<p>Keep an eye out for suspicious people</p> <p>If you leave make sure someone knows where you are going and what time you expect to be back</p> <p>Have a charged mobile phone available at all times if possible</p> <p>Call the Police if you feel that you are in a dangerous situation</p>	Low
Medical Condition:	F of M W	Illness, injury, death	Take medical advice from a G.P.	Low

A medical condition that creates an increased risk of injury/accident			<p>Tell someone where you are going and what time you will expect to be back</p> <p>Carry medication if appropriate</p> <p>Carry mobile phone</p>	
Personal injury from carrying heavy objects	F of M W	Injury	<p>Ensure that material is cut up into handle able sizes</p> <p>Ensure that loads are not too large</p> <p>Make use of the barrows wherever possible</p>	Low

Photograph 1 – Aerial Photograph, Millennium Wood



Photograph 2 – Friends Of Millenium Wood, Hedge Planting

