

Appendix 1: Nagshead SSSI plan

District West England District Forest District

Name of SSSI Nagshead

Compartment Numbers 3333 / 34 / 35 59Ha / 14Ha / 44Ha
3342 / 3332 (part) 20Ha / 3Ha

Grid Reference SO 638089
SO 647091

Natural England Unit ID unit 1: 1013276 unit 2: 1013277

Period of Plan 2013 – 2023 (10 years)

Agreed on behalf of

Forestry Commission England

Forest Management Director
Forestry commission England

Date _____

Agreed on behalf of

Natural England

Gloucestershire
Land Management Team

Date _____

The signing of this plan by Natural England gives the necessary consent under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), as amended, for the management prescriptions detailed in this plan to be undertaken without necessity to consult prior to each operation for the duration of this plan.

FE will keep a written record of work carried out during the period of the plan.

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Sites of Special Scientific Interest

SSSI unit information

Nagshead - Unit 1

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[View Map](#)

Staff member responsible for SSSI unit:

Ann Harris

Unit ID:

1013276

Unit area:

75 hectares

Main habitat:

Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland

Condition:

Favourable

Latest assessment date: 24 November 2009

Condition assessment comment:

Favourable although a need to monitor presence of sweet chestnut & sycamore. Lack of grazing may impact on woodland structure required for some breeding birds. Age-structure skewed towards older trees. Bird assemblage favourable.

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Forestry Commission woodlands have been certified in accordance with the rules of the Forest Stewardship Council.



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Sites of Special Scientific Interest

SSSI unit information

Nagshead - Unit 2

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[View Map](#)

Staff member responsible for SSSI unit:

Ann Harris

Unit ID:

1013277

Unit area:

55 hectares

Main habitat:

Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland

Condition:

Favourable

Latest assessment date: 24 November 2009

Condition assessment comment:

Favourable but management should structural variety and potential for more deadwood. As with unit 1, limited grazing since FMD. potential benefits from retention of dead trees and their development to post-maturity. Bird assemblage favourable.

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COUNTY: GLOUCESTERSHIRE

SITE NAME: NAGSHEAD

DISTRICT: FOREST OF DEAN

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authority: GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, Forest of Dean District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 608090

Area: 120.12 (ha.) 316.6 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 162

1:10,000: SO 50 NE, SO 60 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1972

Date of Last Revision: 1974

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Within the Forest of Dean Forest Park. Part held as a Reserve by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Boundary alteration (addition and reduction).

Reasons for Notification:

The extensive woodland of Forest of Dean has been managed for timber production for many centuries, with planting and careful management maintaining a mosaic of woodland types. The central region lies on the Coal Measures and supports oak woodland with a fairly restricted calcifuge ground flora. Surrounding this acid area are the limestone and Old Red Sandstone rocks which give rise to more fertile soils with a variety of woodland types over a richer ground flora.

This is one of three sites in the Forest of Dean representing the national nature conservation importance of this extensive woodland area. Nagshead provides an excellent example of the broad-leaved woodland habitat typical of the Coal Measures and the site is of major ornithological importance.

Although this is a site of primary woodland the present trees have nearly all been planted. The oldest part of the site was planted in 1814 and is dominated by both pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and sessile oak *Q. petraea*. A later planting of oak occurs in the eastern part of the site. Vegetation of the understorey and field layer varies according to whether or not the woodland is grazed by sheep. In the ungrazed section a dense shrub layer dominated by holly *Ilex aquifolium* and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* has developed while the grazed section is much more open in character. The herb layer largely consists of bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and soft grass *Holcus mollis* with tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, wood sorrel *Oxalis acetosella* and blue-bell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* locally abundant. Patches of semi-natural woodland dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* occur along the Cannop Brook and in these damper areas the vegetation includes species such as soft rush *Juncus effusus*.

Some small ponds and streams add to the overall habitat diversity of the site and less common plants present include ivy campanula *Wahlenbergia hederacea*, heath spotted orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata* and broad-leaved helleborine *Epipactis helleborine*.

The woodland is particularly rich in bird life and supports good populations of breeding pied flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*, wood warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* and redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* as well as abundant great tits *Parus major* and blue tits *P. caeruleus*. Hawfinches *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* nest occasionally. Some thirty years of research into the breeding biology of blue tit, great tit, pied flycatcher and wood warbler has been carried out at Nagshead and nestboxes are provided throughout the RSPB reserve.

The open rides are attractive to butterflies and those recorded include white admiral *Limenitis camilla*, purple hairstreak *Quercusia quercus*, pearl-bordered fritillary *Clossiana euphrosyne*. There is a good range of other woodland invertebrate species, especially in the vicinity of Cannop Brook.

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Forestry Commission
woodlands have
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accordance with the
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Stewardship Council.



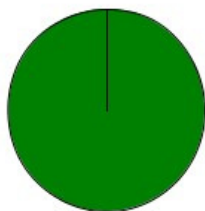
SSSI condition summary

Compiled: 01 Jun 2013

See the [SSSI glossary](#) for an explanation of terms.

SSSI name: Nagshead

% Area meeting PSA target	% Area favourable	% Area unfavourable recovering	% Area unfavourable no change	% Area unfavourable declining	% Area destroyed / part destroyed
100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%



Report completed.

Condition of SSSI units

Compiled: 01 Jun 2013

See the [SSSI glossary](#) for an explanation of terms.

Team - Gloucestershire And Wiltshire - SSSI name - Nagshead - Staff member responsible for site - Ann Harris

Region	County	District	Main habitat	Staff member responsible for unit	Unit number	Unit ID	Unit area (ha)	Latest assessment date	Assessment description	Condition assessment comment	Reason for adverse condition
South West	Gloucestershire	Forest Of Dean	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland	Ann Harris	1	1013276	75.20	24 Nov 2009	Favourable	Favourable although a need to monitor presence of sweet chestnut & sycamore. Lack of grazing may impact on woodland structure required for some breeding birds. Age-structure skewed towards older trees. Bird assemblage favourable.	
South West	Gloucestershire	Forest Of Dean	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland	Ann Harris	2	1013277	55.65	24 Nov 2009	Favourable	Favourable but management should structural variety and potential for more deadwood. As with unit 1, limited grazing since FMD. potential benefits from retention of dead trees and their development to post-maturity. Bird assemblage favourable.	

Report completed.

Operations requiring Natural England Consent

Site name: Nagshead

OLD1002445

Ref. No.	Type of Operation
2	The introduction of grazing and changes in the grazing regime (including type of stock, intensity or seasonal pattern of grazing and cessation of grazing).
3	The introduction of stock feeding and changes in stock feeding practice.
4	The introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation and changes in the mowing or cutting regime (including hay making to silage and cessation).
6	Application of pesticides, including herbicides (weedkillers).
7	Dumping, spreading or discharge of any materials.
8	Burning.
9	The release into the site of any wild, feral or domestic animal*, plant or seed.
10	The killing or removal of any wild animal*, other than pest control.
11	The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant or plant remains, including tree, shrub, herb, dead or decaying wood, moss, lichen, fungus and leaf-mould.
12	Changes in tree and/or woodland management+.
13b	Modification of the structure of watercourses (eg streams), including their banks and beds, as by re-alignment, re-grading and dredging.
13c	Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes.
14	The changing of water levels and tables and water utilisation (including irrigation, storage and abstraction from existing water bodies).
15	Infilling of ponds.
16a	The introduction of freshwater fishery production and/or management and changes in freshwater fishery production and/or management, including sporting fishing and angling.
20	Extraction of minerals, including topsoil and subsoil.
21	Construction, removal or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hardstands, banks, ditches or other earthworks, or the laying, maintenance or removal of pipelines and cables, above or below ground.
22	Storage of materials.
23	Erection of permanent or temporary structures, or the undertaking of engineering works, including drilling.
26	Use of vehicles likely to damage or disturb features of interest.
27	Recreational or other activities likely to damage the woodland or disturb the birds.
28	Introduction of game or waterfowl management and changes in game and waterfowl management.

* 'animal' includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.

+ including afforestation, planting, clear and selective felling, thinning, coppicing, modification of the stand or underwood, changes in species composition, cessation of management.

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Views About Management

A statement of English Nature's views about the management of Nagshead Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

This statement represents English Nature's views about the management of the SSSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the site's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. English Nature has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of SSSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the SSSI. Also, there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation. English Nature's written consent is still required before carrying out any operation likely to damage the features of special interest (see your SSSI notification papers for a list of these operations). English Nature welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the SSSI to ensure that the management of this site conserves and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

Management Principles

There may be several different ways in which the wood can be managed to best conserve its value for wildlife - by promoting an appropriate woodland structure, by ensuring regeneration and by looking after the things that make this wood special particularly the western oakwood bird populations. The attached notes give broad views on a range of regimes that may be appropriate on your site.

A diverse woodland structure with some open space, some areas of dense understorey, some areas of open grazed woodland and an overstorey of more mature trees is important. A range of ages and species within and between stands is desirable.

Some dead and decaying wood such as fallen logs, old hollow trees or old coppice stools is essential for providing habitats for fungi, dead wood invertebrates and nesting birds. Work may, however, be needed to make safe dangerous trees where they occur in areas of high public access.

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Open spaces, either temporary gaps created by felling or coppicing or more permanent areas such as rides and glades, benefit other groups of invertebrates such as butterflies. They should be of sufficient size to ensure that sunny conditions prevail for most of the day. Rides and glades may require cutting to keep them open.

Felling, thinning or coppicing may be used to create or maintain variations in the structure of the wood, and non-native trees and shrubs should be removed at this time. To avoid disturbance to breeding birds the work is normally best done between the beginning of August and the end of February. Work should be avoided when the ground is soft, to prevent disturbing the soil and ground flora. Wet woodland by streams and other waterbodies is often best left undisturbed. Normally, successive felling, thinning or coppicing operations should be spread through the wood to avoid too much disturbance in one area. However, where there is open space interest (e.g. rich butterfly populations) adjacent plots may be worked to encourage the spread of species that are only weakly mobile.

Natural regeneration from seed or stump regrowth (as in coppice) is preferred to planting because it helps maintain the local patterns of species and the inherent genetic character of the site.

An open woodland structure (currently produced by grazing livestock) is traditional in parts of the site and should be maintained. However, management of livestock and deer and protection from rabbits will be necessary to ensure regeneration of the woodland in the long-term.

Parts of the wood may be left unmanaged to benefit species that do best under low disturbance. In addition, lack of management allows for the operation of natural processes such as windblow. Within these areas some trees will eventually die naturally and dead wood will accumulate

Where they are a threat to the interest of the wood, invasive introductions such as *Rhododendron ponticum* or Himalayan balsam should, where practical, be controlled.

Woodland streams add to the habitat diversity of the woodland and result in increased humidity in areas adjacent to them making them important sites for mosses and liverworts and a range of invertebrate fauna. Particular care should be taken to avoid over-shading of streams and ditches to maintain the distinctive flora and fauna these habitats support (though long-shaded woodland streams have their own distinctive fauna and should not be opened up). Care should be taken when carrying out woodland management operations in the vicinity not to cause any damage to or obstruct the watercourses or any of the associated communities they support.

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MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FROM THE FOREST PLAN

1. **Management of the woodland will be to the standards required to maintain FSC and PEFC accreditation.**
2. **To retain Nagshead SSSI in favourable condition, whilst maintaining and enhancing biodiversity values in and around the RSPB reserve (with particular reference to management of birds), GWT Reserves and the wider plan area.**
3. **Continued production of sustainable marketable woodland products that also allows delivery of a range of other public benefits whilst providing future opportunities for the substitution of wood products for fossil fuels and other energy intensive materials.**
4. **Undertake management in line with Biodiversity 2020 and other nature conservation policies that protect and enhance both woodland and open habitats and their associated species fostering and facilitating their resilience and adaptation to projected climate change and disease threats.**
5. **The enhancement of internal landscape through diversification of age class structure, integrated with nature conservation projects that will provide further conservation benefits.**
6. **Conservation and protection of heritage features through identification, and recording.**

MANAGEMENT OF THE SSSI

GENERAL - The SSSI will be managed in accordance with the RSPB management plan that will sit alongside the FC Forest Plan. Together these will both be used to inform decisions on woodland management within the SSSI and reserve areas. Work inside the reserve and SSSI will be done with reference to the RSPB management plan and in consultation with the RSPB. Use of volunteer groups such as RSPB or The Dean Green Team will help in management of Deadwood and other habitat types.

UKWAS - Management of the districts woodlands is undertaken to the standards required under UKWAS as endorsed and certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. Compliance to these standards is monitored through various national and district policies, guidance, field surveys, use of GIS and other IT software, internal support audits and external audits carried out by SGS (Société Générale de Surveillance) which is an independent auditing company.

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MONITORING - The SSSI and reserve is routinely surveyed by RSPB staff and its volunteers, giving a good handle on the dynamics of habitats and species. The information gathered can be used to inform any changes and improvements to management methods.

DEADWOOD HABITATS - In line with district policy and existing practice guide "managing deadwood in forests and woodlands". As forestry operations are undertaken throughout the area, measures to increase the number and variety of deadwood habitats will be put in place. For example, this may include retaining felled material on site, creation of new standing dead wood where it is safe to do so or eco-piles created by volunteers such as the Dean Green Team or RSPB volunteer groups. Deadwood habitats will be maintained subject to operational and safety requirements.

STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY - Structural diversity will be encouraged through:

- Careful management of the overstorey that will encourage natural regeneration to continue to develop.
- Thinning to open up regeneration where required, allowing cones of regeneration to expand and develop.
- Retention of existing veteran trees and retention of a proportion of oak to become future veterans. These will not be individually identified due to threat of natural agents like disease or wind.
- ride sides being diversified through heavy and variable thinning and subsequent mosaic coppicing.

SPECIES DIVERSITY - Currently 90% of trees within the SSSI are Oak, with mixed broadleaf accounting for a further 7% of species. The high proportion of oak is of benefit to bird species such as Pied flycatchers and Red starts. Whilst in the overall Forest Plan area it is estimated that broadleaf cover will increase by around 20%, within the SSSI broadleaf cover will remain comparatively static.

Oaks predominantly in the SSSI and RSPB reserve are to be managed on a long rotation of around 400 years and with continued use of the uniform shelterwood system, diversification of structure through this method will occur; acting on existing advance regeneration of oak where apparent.

THINNING - When areas within the SSSI are flagged up for thinning, assessment for thinning intervention will NOT automatically qualify an area for thinning. Thinning maybe carried for silvicultural benefit and in conjunction with the RSPB management plan for the reserve and in order to establish a crop density likely to promote better chances for regeneration as prescribed in the FOD Broadleaved Management Plan.

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SITE PLANNING AND CONTRACTS - FC site planning will be used to:

- Inform forestry and nature conservation projects of site constraints likely to affect the proposed work.
- Outline suggestions to avoid and minimise adverse impacts.
- Highlights opportunities where conservation benefits can be delivered.

Contract special conditions, ongoing contract management & supervision and the contract closure review system ensure that operations can be undertaken smoothly minimising risk of any adverse impact resulting from forest operations.

VEGETATION – Since FMD, grazing has drastically reduced. This is likely to have an impact on ground vegetation both in terms of type and density. Whilst pigs are good at controlling vegetation by trampling and rooting, the feral boar population within the Dean main block do not stay long enough in one place to have this kind of effect, and the rooting that occurs is very localised. With this situation bracken and bramble are likely to become the dominant vegetation type. RSPB have already indicated that to protect the habitat for certain species bracken control will need to be carried out in targeted areas. This will likely entail spraying and grazing. (Sections 2, 2a.3, 3.2 and 4 of RSPB plan refers) Spraying would be with Asulox, which is bracken specific. Approval for the control of bracken using Asulox maybe completely withdrawn at some point. Until then, Asulox would be the preferred choice for chemical control. If approval is completely withdrawn other control methods may need looking into and would be discussed between RSPB and Forestry Commission.

RIDE SIDES – Control of ride side vegetation woody scrub maybe carried out periodically through mechanical means to maintain habitats in favourable condition. The “Linking the Pearls” project that runs along the northern boundary of the SSSI will contribute to temporary open habitat on a cyclical basis of coppicing and shrub clearance that will help in promoting structural diversity within the woodland.

FOREST ROAD NETWORK - The forest road network should be capable of taking 44 tonne haulage vehicles. Routine maintenance should be undertaken to ensure a road infrastructure that is capable of meeting management objectives is maintained.