

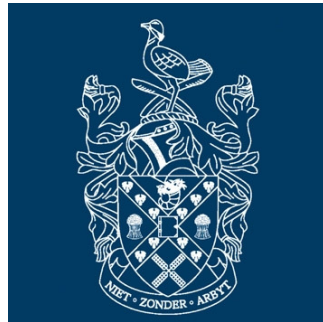
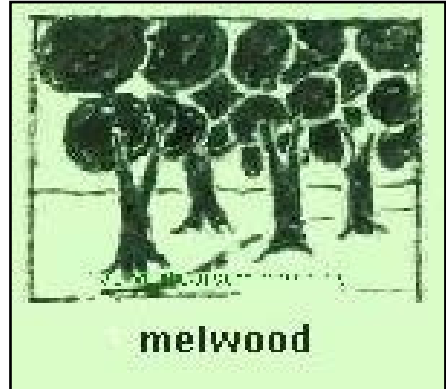


**Melwood Local Nature Reserve
and Melmeadow Management Plan
2011—2015**





Cambridgeshire
County Council



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council



Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire
Peterborough

Prepared by the Wildlife Trust BCNP
for Melwood Conservation Group and
Cambridgeshire County Council.

Ruth Hawksley
January 2011

Executive Summary

This management plan covers the recently-designated Melwood Local Nature Reserve plus an adjoining strip of land known as Melmeadow. Melmeadow incorporates an area of restored grassland which is essentially a woodland glade.

This small area (2 acres) of woodland habitat forms part of a larger area of woodland along the River Mel, at least some of which is currently managed by non-intervention. It supports a number of woodland and grassland plants, insects, birds and bats, and may be used as a refuge area by river species such as water shrew, water vole and otter. Three old hedge lines are still visible as lines of mature trees.

The site is very popular with local people and is particularly well used by dog walkers.

Management challenges:

- The wood is very small, publicly visible and well-used. It has limited opportunities for tree work or ride creation.
- Many of the trees are similar in age meaning that the ground is very shaded, with a relatively poor cover of woodland plants, and few saplings survive.
- The grassland plants in the meadow are limited in area by the shade of nearby trees. Shorter trees or shrubs at the edge of the meadow would allow more light in.
- Two of the old hedge lines are protected with Tree Protection Orders so any work on these trees must be done in consultation with South Cambridgeshire District Council. The trees in the hedge lines are older and larger than most in the rest of the wood; some cast a considerable amount of shade.
- Public use means that there are many well-trodden paths and very few inaccessible areas.
- As a local nature reserve, the woodland owners wish to engage with the local community and involve more people in managing and enjoying the wood.

Management operations:

- Work on a relatively small number of trees to increase light reaching the woodland floor and the meadow. This will be spread over a number of years and involve a relatively small number of trees. Details are in Appendix 1. More light will allow more flowering plants and shrubs to grow, which will in turn benefit insects, including butterflies, and insect-eating birds. Concentrating on a few small areas will allow

maximum benefits with minimum tree work and will increase the diversity within the wood.

- Methods used will be a combination of coppicing (felling and allowing the stumps to re-grow), pollarding (similar to coppicing but leaving a length of tree trunk standing), crown reduction (removing a few large, shading branches) and very limited felling (not allowing the tree to re-grow).
- Maintain a circular path, including the public footpath, and discourage use of other paths. Concentrating public use in particular areas will keep them open and allow others to become denser and more secluded.
- Manage the meadow by annual mowing, removing the cuttings. It may be possible to use the cuttings to add seed to newly sunny areas of the meadow or paths.
- Provide information and publicity and work with Meldreth Primary School to increase local knowledge and understanding of the wood.
- Involve more people as volunteers in the monitoring and management of the wood.
- Work with neighbouring landowners and the River Mel Restoration Group to share information and discuss any common issues.

The aim of the on-the-ground management work is to encourage some areas to become more dense and shrubby and others more open, light and airy. Ideally some of these areas will be adjacent, so that towards the edge of the meadow or a path, short grass becomes longer grass, then bushes and small trees, then finally tall trees. Once established, this structure is maintained by cutting at varying intervals.

Allowing more light to the meadow will allow the grassland plants to spread more extensively and increase the meadow's wildlife value.

Summary Management Plan 2011-2015

Site Details:

Name:	Melwood Local Nature Reserve and Melmeadow
Area:	0.81 Ha (2 acres)
Grid Reference:	TL378459
Local Planning Authority:	South Cambridgeshire District Council
District:	South Cambridgeshire
Conservation Status:	Tree Protection Orders on some trees.
Nature of legal interest:	<p>Cambridgeshire County Council owns Melwood. Meldreth Parish Council is the leaseholder of Melwood. The adjacent Melmeadow is owned by Miss Margaret Hunter.</p> <p>South Cambridgeshire District Council has protected two of the old hedge lines with Tree Protection Orders. Any work on these trees must first have consent from the District Council.</p>
Current Management:	Melwood Conservation Group carries out the practical management of Melwood and Melmeadow. Miss Hunter also carries out some independent management on the site. Miss Hunter has kindly arranged that Melmeadow will ultimately become part of the LNR.
Byelaws:	None at present.
Access:	The adjacent public footpath (footpath Number 6 on the definitive map) provides open access to the woodland which is available to the public at all times. The nearest entrance is via the footbridge at the end of Flambards Close.

Site Description

Melwood is a small woodland nestled in the village of Meldreth in South Cambridgeshire. The OS map published in 1887 shows that Melwood was one of the few fields in the area not planted as an orchard. As Melwood

formed part of the same parcel of land as Meldreth village school at enclosure, it is possible that regular grazing may have ceased when the school was built in 1910. This would have resulted in the gradual encroachment of the grassland by scrub, leading to the development of secondary woodland. The old hedge lines were clearly marked as field boundaries on the Inclosure Award Map of 1820.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the woodland had become increasingly dominated by scrub to the detriment of ground flora.

A conservation group was formed in 1986 by Miss Hunter, the owner of Melmeadow. Volunteers cut back dense thickets of scrub to enable light and air to enter the woodland again. New trees were planted, some of which were native species (such as hazel, field maple and beech) and some of which were non native species (such as ornamental cherries).

The site forms part of a larger, linear woodland along the east bank of the river. This larger wood is owned by a number of different landowners and consists mainly of former orchards, with some damper areas and a variety of trees including willow. Management is largely by non-intervention. The River Mel flows into the River Cam (or Rhee) 2 – 3km downstream and forms an important wildlife corridor. The River Mel Restoration Group, a group of local volunteers, manage the river.

Secondary woodlands such as Melwood which are near to towns or villages often have a history of use by local people for informal recreation and play. Such woodlands have more direct value to society than biologically rich but remote ancient woodland with no public access. These woodlands, even very small ones, provide areas for recreation and relaxation and can sometimes be the only accessible 'wild' space for play, learning and adventure that local children may have. Many secondary woodlands, including Melwood, are ecologically robust. The fact that they may contain fewer of the sensitive and specialist species that occur in ancient woodland means that the woodlands themselves are less sensitive to the pressures of recreational use and as such have a higher carrying capacity in terms of visitor usage before unacceptable ecological damage is done.

High levels of public use have led to the existence of many well-worn paths through the wood. The woodland is directly adjacent to a public right of way which runs alongside the river for approximately 1 km.

Melwood is well used by the public and forms a significant public amenity for the village, particularly for regular dog walkers.

The Melwood Conservation Group and Meldreth Village Association organised events for local people over the years 2003-2009.

Meldreth County Primary School is very close to Melwood but the wood is only occasionally used by the school. This may be because there is no easy access across the river, so getting to the wood requires a relatively long walk.

Groups of younger people gather in one particular area near the ditch and regularly light fires and leave litter. Log piles created for environmental purposes have often formed the main fuel source for these fires.

The site, although small, is sub-divided into areas that reflect the habitats present; these are used as management compartments within the plan.

Area – H1 Secondary Woodland

Secondary woodland covers most of the site (age estimated 40 – 100 years). The habitat community is typical of the area, dominated by ash and hawthorn. It includes several non-native species such as ornamental cherry. Native trees and plants support a greater diversity of fungi and invertebrates than non-native species, which in turn will support a greater number of insect-eaters such as birds and bats. The woodland has a dense canopy and many narrow paths, resulting in a limited ground flora. In some areas ivy dominates the ground cover while in others there are areas of sedge and ground ivy with patches of dog's mercury. There are also planted daffodils and bluebells, some of which are non-native. There are signs of heavy rabbit grazing, and Muntjac deer are known to be present.

Area – H2 Ancient hedgerows

Three parallel old hedge lines run southwest to northeast, which are now lines of large ash and hawthorn trees and form the site boundary on two sides. There is evidence that these trees have been coppiced in the past.

Area - H3 Meadow

There is a meadow area known as Melmeadow. The south-western end of Melmeadow has an area of cleared land which has been seeded with grass and meadow plants. For management purposes this may be thought of as part of the woodland habitat, as it is essentially a woodland glade.

Area – H4 River

The River Mel forms the south-west boundary to the site. The River Mel Restoration Group is working to restore the river and improve its biodiversity. River species such as otter, water vole and water shrew are known to be present and may also benefit from the habitat in Melwood and Melmeadow. A ditch forms the eastern boundary and contains water seasonally.

Objectives & Evaluation:

1) To maintain and enhance the different habitats of the site.

H1 & H2 Secondary woodland

Woodland management will increase the variation in woodland structure. Tree work such as coppicing (cutting down and allowing to re-grow) will produce gaps (effectively glades), which allows more light in and encourages

regenerations and a flush of growth. This in turn provides habitat for a wide range of birds and insects.

A varied habitat will attract a greater variety of plants and animals and therefore have a greater wildlife value. This means having variety in the age and height of trees, including dead wood, as well as the amount of light and shade. Many species of bird and insect thrive in the transitional areas at woodland edges where increased sunlight allows more flowers and berries to grow. Similar habitat may be created at the edges of woodland paths or glades. Dead wood provides a home for wildlife including bats, birds, fungi, lichens and mosses as well as a large range of insects. Standing deadwood and fallen trees provide different habitats, as do the rot-holes and hollows in older living trees. Ivy on trees provides nest sites, winter shelter and food for birds and insects. As ivy flowers late in the year, it provides nectar when little else is available.

Because the site is a Local Nature Reserve and so the local community is encouraged to visit, there may be a need for additional intervention if trees become a safety risk to users.

H3 Meadow Management

The meadow will benefit from work reducing adjacent tree cover. More light reaching ground level will allow more grasses and flowering plants to flourish.

Grassland and grassland plants will be encouraged by annual mowing, removing the cuttings. Green hay from the more flower-rich areas of the meadow may be used to enhance other areas which were previously shaded.

H4 River management

The footpath adjacent to the River Mel is the widest path in the wood. Managing trees here will lead to a larger gap created per tree. Allowing light to reach the footpath and would also increase light to the water, benefitting river habitat as well and diversity of species.

Work near the river will be done in consultation with the River Mel Restoration Group and the school.

2) To maintain and enhance the public access of the site for local people.

The site is currently well used by local people for informal recreational activities including walking and observing wildlife.

A circular path around the wood, including the public footpath, will be selected and maintained. An inviting path should mean that fewer people walk in other areas, so that denser growth can establish in places.

Re-instating the bridge across the river to the school may be an option, but needs to be discussed with the school and other stakeholders.

3) To increase involvement of the local community in the management of the site

An understanding of the work done in the wood and of the long-term aims will reduce the number of complaints from people who use the wood, especially if they feel they have had the chance to express their views. It will also lead to a greater appreciation of the work put in by volunteers. A key part of getting people involved will be the local consultation on this management plan. Involving local people may lead to changes in the way they use the wood. As a Local Nature Reserve the success of the site depends on the involvement of local people. The activities of some young people are causing damage to the wood. Engaging with them may lead to ways to address this issue. Some ideas for events have already been collected from Meldreth Primary School.

4) To enhance interpretative/educational opportunities of the site for local people.

Whilst the site is well used by local people, there is scope to improve awareness of the LNR and encourage its use. This can be achieved through appropriate interpretation, running a programme of events and engaging with groups that could use it as an educational resource.

The school is very close to the wood, so there are opportunities for working with the school, to teach children both about the site and about the responsible use of woodland. Achieving an understanding at the primary school level could go a long way to avoiding problems in later years.

5) To work with neighbouring landowners and the River Mel Restoration Group to create a coherent management strategy for Melwood as part of a wider vision.

While Melwood has intrinsic value for wildlife, it is also part of a greater habitat network. Working with neighbours provides the opportunity to look at links between Melwood and nearby habitats.

6) To ensure that the agreed management plan is implemented and record all activities relating to the management plan.

Details of the management operations need to be finalised and recorded, as well as any activities that take place. This means that the success of the plan can be assessed in future and updated as necessary.

Main Management operations:

1a) Maintain and enhance the secondary woodland habitat

- Carry out selected tree work to allow more light to reach Melmeadow and other small areas (see Appendix 1 and work plans). Includes

reduction of yew trees adjacent to Melmeadow, which already has Miss Hunter's agreement.

- Protect tree stumps with brash (tree cuttings) unless fencing is really necessary.
- Fell one tree in the area designated for "encouraging denser growth at shrub level". Allow it to make a hole in the canopy as it falls to create a small glade, and leave all or most of the tree where it fell. Coppice or layer nearby trees to allow them to take advantage of the light.
- Allow scrub to develop in front of the old hedge line to the northwest of Melmeadow so that it can be coppiced in sections in future.
- Update the management plan map once work has taken place.
- Leave dead wood and some ivy in place and/or create habitat piles.
- Carry out annual inspection to identify any trees that are potential safety hazards.
- Maintain circular access path by cutting back over-hanging vegetation. Manage any path edges (where appropriate) by rotational cutting to develop a graded edge.

1b) Maintain and enhance the meadow habitat

- Cut the meadow in September/October and rake off cuttings. If part of the meadow is cut earlier in the year, ensure a different part is cut early the following year.
- Use cuttings as "green hay" to enhance areas of reduced shade following tree work.
- Cut a path through the meadow regularly to maintain access, as part of the circular walk. If possible, cut a different route each year.

1c) Maintain and enhance the riverside habitat

- Identify small groups of trees to coppice in agreement with the River Mel Restoration Group and Meldreth Primary School. Repeat after approximately 10 years.

2) Maintain and enhance the public access of the site for local people.

- Maintain a chosen network of paths and discourage use of others.

3) Involve the local community in the management of the site

- Recruit and train volunteers, if necessary, to help with the management of the wood and to survey for birds, invertebrates, bats, small mammals and plants.
- Publicise the work of Melwood Conservation Group, for example in the village magazine, as well as opportunities to get involved with work parties.

4) Enhance interpretative/educational opportunities of the site for local people.

- Organise one event, such as a guided walk, per year.
- Consider installing an interpretation board in an appropriate location.
- Use temporary boards to explain ongoing management work.

- Encourage Meldreth Primary school and/or Melbourn Village College to use the woodland as a resource for teaching and recreation. Use these contacts to promote increased understanding of woodland management and ecology amongst the students (i.e. help them understand why the management is taking place, which activities cause damage to the wood and which do not).
- Investigate the possibility of a young people's project involving a youth worker.
- Produce a leaflet for the site.

School projects could include:

- Collecting tree seeds, growing these on and then planting out, either somewhere in Melwood or at another site.
- Monitoring changes to the ground flora following any tree work.
- Looking for creative ways to use any felled trees. For example an art event, a school project, making faggot bundles for river work with the river restoration group, habitat piles etc.

5) Work with neighbouring landowners and the River Mel Restoration Group to create a coherent management strategy for Melwood as part of a wider vision.

- Discuss buffering and spray drift with the neighbouring farmer.
- Remain in contact with other neighbours and be aware of their long-term plans.
- Share information and plans with the River Mel Restoration Group and look for opportunities to work towards common goals.
- Consider working with neighbouring landowners to control rabbits.

6) Ensure that the agreed management plan is implemented and record all activities relating to the management plan.

- Keep a management diary to record all work done on site.
- Develop a funding bid to help with the implementation of the management plan.
- Undertake yearly monitoring of site management operations to ensure objectives are being met and to inform future management plan reviews.

7) Additional maintenance work

- Cow parsley cutting: decide whether there are areas where cow parsley needs control and manage by cutting or pulling. Manage the rest as part of path edge or meadow edge, as it can form a useful part of the edge structure. The standing dead seed heads are important over-wintering refuges for insects.
- Dead hawthorn trees: leave in place as standing dead wood.
- Bird boxes: replace towards the end of winter. Clean at the start of the following winter, or remove and repair if necessary.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1:

Summary of structure management ideas.

Appendix 2:

Species list for Melwood and Melmeadow.

Appendix 3:

Diagrams showing suggested management regimes for path and glade edges and the structure that this management is aiming for.

Appendix 4: Site Maps:

Map 1: Melwood and Melmeadow Location Plan. This location plan shows the extent of the area and its relationship to adjacent woodlands, arable fields, school grounds, the railway line, waste water treatment works and the river.

Map 2: Melwood and Melmeadow Habitat Plan. This shows some habitat details of the site. It needs to be updated as it is not based on recent survey.

Map 3: Map of Tree Protection Orders (provided by South Cambridgeshire District Council)

Map 4: OS map 1887: Extent of orchards in Meldreth.

Map 5: Inclosure Award Map of Meldreth (1821).

Appendix 5: Meadow restoration:

Use of green hay to encourage the spread of flowering plants, particularly into areas which are now less shaded.

Appendix 6: Responses from consultation event:

Summary of questionnaire results.

Appendix 7:

Meldreth Primary School, Chaffinch class, Children's wish list for Melwood.

Appendix 8:

Management structure of the Melwood Conservation Group.

Appendix 9:

Glossary of woodland terms

Appendix 1: Summary of structure management ideas

(Existing) Open Spaces

- Manage central areas as grassland. Remove all cuttings.
- Manage all edges on rotation where possible (using a combination of coppice and mowing) to achieve a graded edge (see Appendix 3).

Potential Open Areas

Look for opportunities to widen paths and create glades in these areas, to allow more light to reach the ground. As Melwood has a limited seed bank, it is necessary to let as much light in as possible so that imported seed can establish.

- Remove trees and coppice or pollard others to let more light in.
- Use green hay (see Appendix 5), seed and/or plug plants (native species, sourced as locally as possible) to establish ground flora.
- Consider the use of fencing and signage in the early stages.
- Manage edges of the new open spaces as above.

Denser Growth Area

Encourage the growth of saplings and understory in this area.

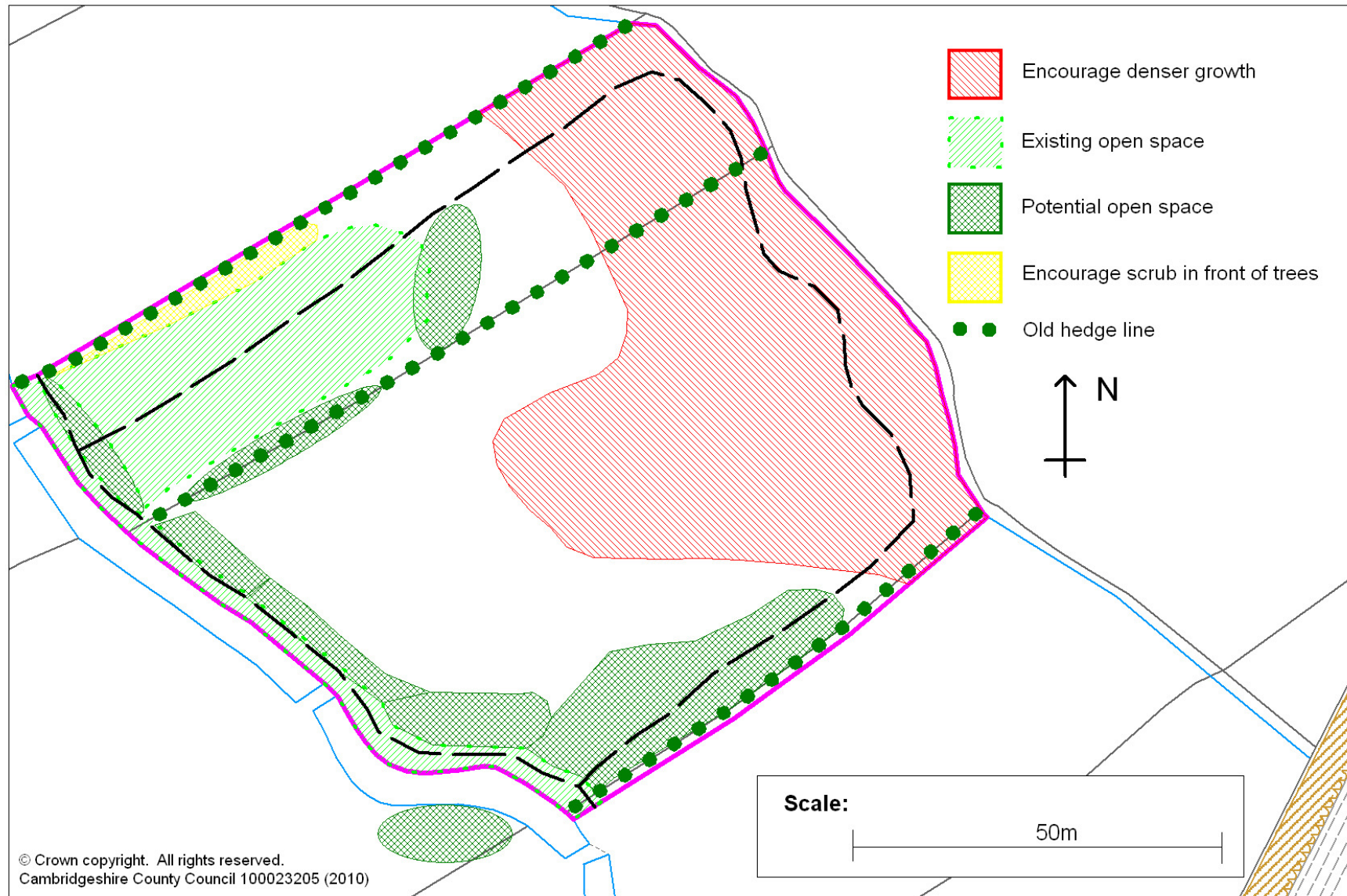
- Choose paths to keep clear and maintain them (and try to make other paths less appealing to walkers).
- Identify and protect saplings (this could involve using tree guards and clearing a small amount of ivy around each).
- One-off coppicing to improve the density of the shrub layer.
- Look for hazel, blackthorn or hawthorn for layering.
- Allow shrubs and tall vegetation to grow.
- If there is too much shade from tall trees, fell one and allow it to make a hole in the canopy as it falls. Leave all or part of the tree in place as fallen dead wood. Coppice some trees at the edge of the new clearing.

Hedge Lines

These include many of the larger trees in Melwood. All but the southeast line are protected with TPOs.

- Consider coppicing some of the larger trees in the southeast hedge line near the main path, as part of creating a small glade or path widening.
- One or two of these trees may be left to lie (with a gap for the path) to provide deadwood habitat.
- Plan whether to re-establish any of the old hedge lines, particularly the meadow end of the two protected ones. This could involve
 - Establishing a coppiced area in front of the existing trees along the northwest hedge line (yellow on map);
 - Coppicing or pollarding some of the existing trees in the middle hedge line (with optional gapping up); or
 - Planning to plant new trees and establish a hedge in future, once the older trees have died.

Melwood and Melmeadow Management Areas



Appendix 2: Species lists

Birds

Mallard
Buzzard
Sparrowhawk
Kestrel
Hobby
Pheasant
Moorhen
Woodcock
Wood Pigeon
Collared Dove
Cuckoo
Tawny owl
Swift
Swallow
House Martin
Kingfisher
Green woodpecker
Great Spotted
Woodpecker
Pied wagtail
Grey wagtail
Spotted Flycatcher
Wren
Duncock
Robin
Blackbird
Mistle thrush
Song thrush
Fieldfare
Redwing
Blackcap
Chiffchaff
Goldcrest
Long-tailed tit
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Jay
Magpie
Jackdaw
Rook
Starling
House Sparrow
Chaffinch
Green finch
Gold Finch
Little Egret

Butterflies

Large White
Small White
Green veined White
Brimstone
Orange tip
Meadow Brown
Hedge
Brown/Gatekeeper
Ringlet
Speckled Wood
Red Admiral
Peacock
Small Tortoiseshell
Painted Lady
Comma
Common Blue
Holly Blue
Large Skipper
Small / Essex Skipper
Small Skipper

Fungi

Morchella esculenta
Trametes versicolor
Flammulina velutipes
Xylaria hypoxilon
Polyporus squamosus
Psathyrelia candolieana
Auricularia auricula-judae
Coprinus micaceus
Calocera cornea
Armillaria mellea
Inocybe spp
Inocybe geophylla
Cortinarius spp
Mycena spp

Mammals

Water Shrew
Pygmy Shrew
Yellow necked field
mouse
Wood mouse
Vole (unidentified)
Bank Vole
Water Vole
Rabbit
Grey Squirrel
Fox
Muntjac deer
Hedgehog
Pipistrelle bat
Mole
Otter
Weasel

Herbs

Few-flowered Leek
Hedge Parsley
Lords-and-Ladies
Spreading bellflower
Nettle-leaved Bellflower
Pond Sedge
Great Pond Sedge
Cyclamen
Spurge laurel
Snowdrop
Goosegrass / cleavers
Dusky Crane's-bill
Field Crane's-bill
Herb Robert
Ground Ivy
Stinking Hellebore
Bluebell
Stinking Iris
Yellow Flag Iris
Oxeye Daisy
Birds-foot Trefoil
Dog's Mercury
Daffodil / narcissus
Common reed
Oxlip
Cowslip
Primrose
Lesser Celandine
Creeping buttercup
Broad-leaved Dock
Wood Dock
White Clover
Red clover
Nettle
Lesser periwinkle
Vinca major
Viola odorata

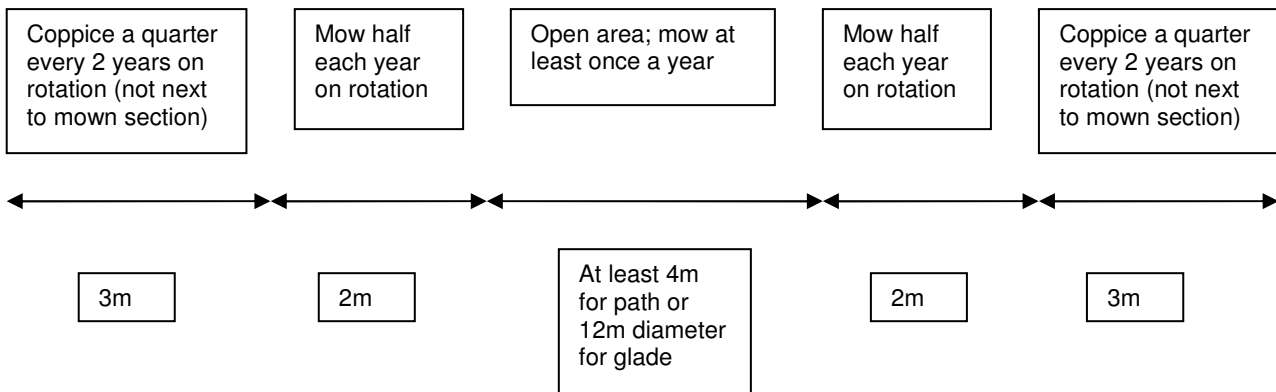
Trees

Field maple
Sycamore
Silver Birch
Hazel
Hawthorn
Ash
Ivy
Privet
Honeysuckle
Cherry
Blackthorn
Red Currant
Rose (introduced)
Dog-Rose
Dewberry
Bramble
Elder
Rowan / Mountain Ash
Yew

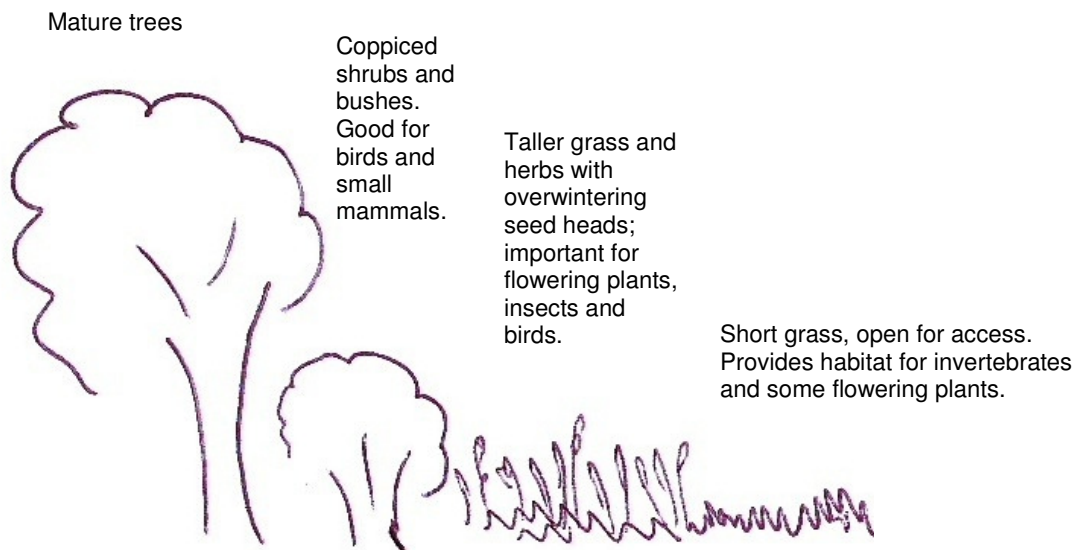
For most up-to date records, see the online documents:
<http://tinyurl.com/MelwoodCG>

Appendix 3

Management of woodland path and glade edges

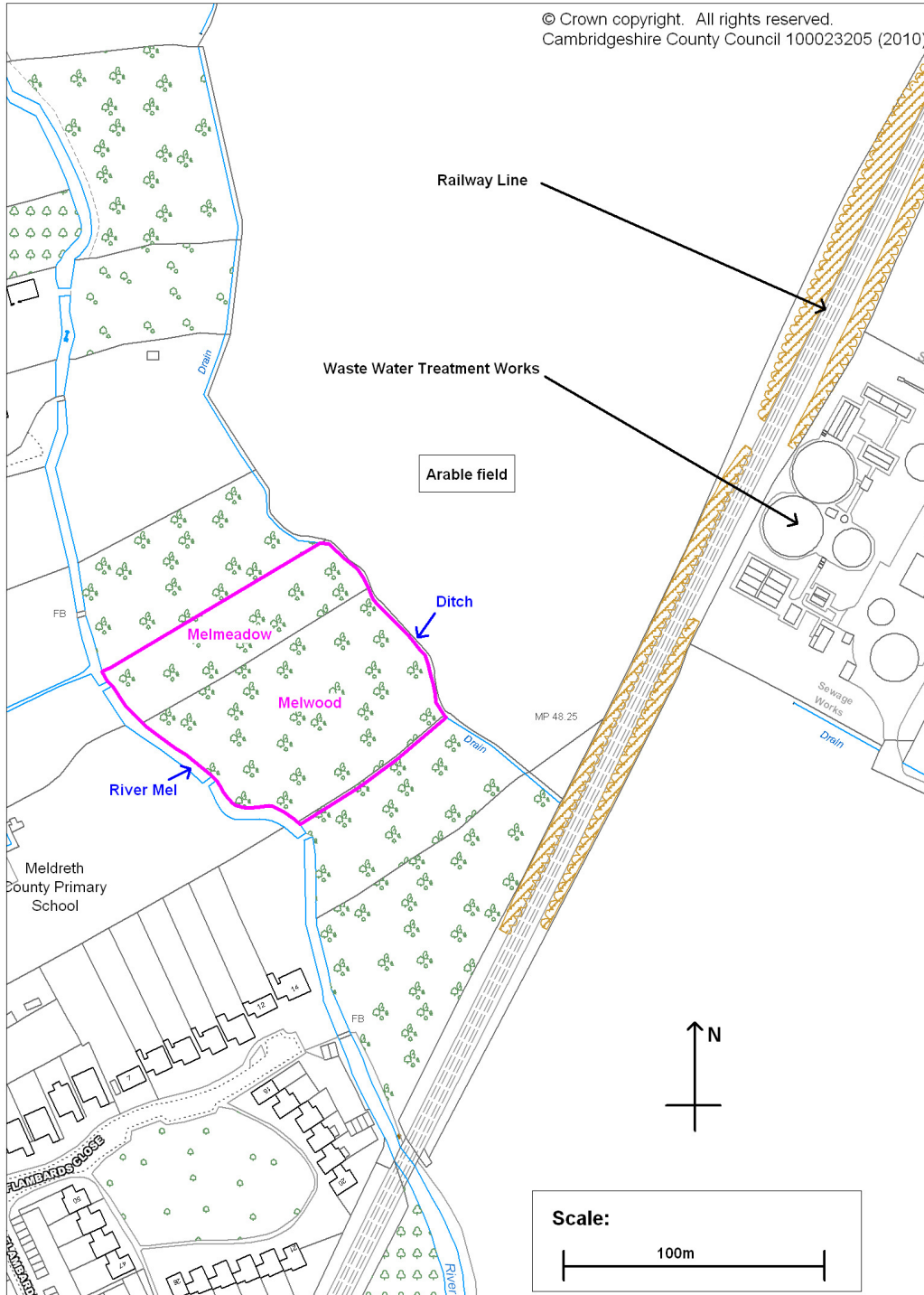


Structure of a path or glade edge



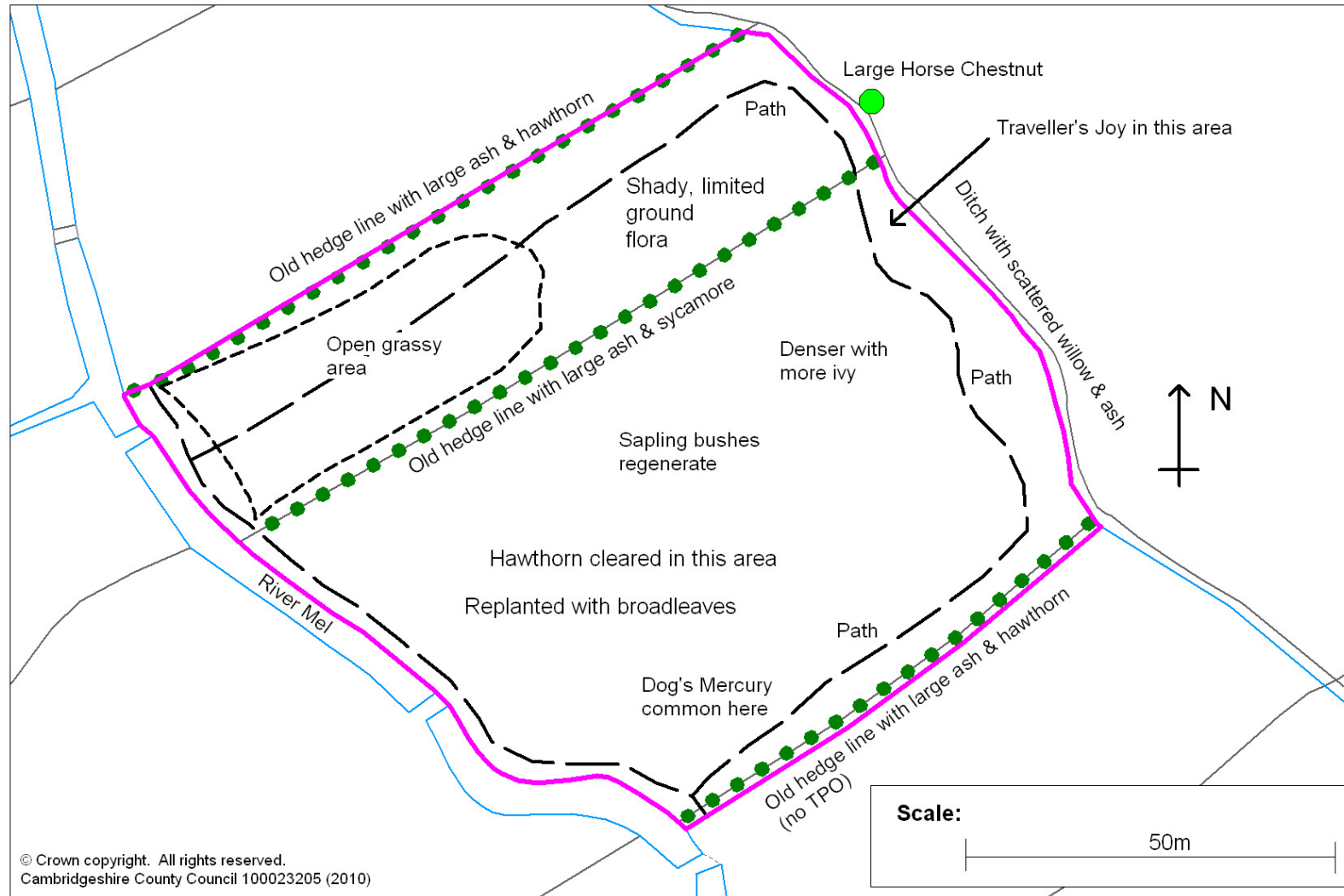
Appendix 4: Map 1 – Location

Melwood and Melmeadow Location Plan



Appendix 4: Map 2 – Habitats

Melwood and Melmeadow Habitat Plan



Appendix 4: Map 3 – Tree Protection Orders (marked in blue)



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Scale 1/1000

Date 27/5/2010

Centre = 537835 E 245945 N

Appendix 4: Map 4 – Extent of orchards in 1887

Extent of orchards in Meldreth: OS map of 1887



Appendix 5: Meadow Restoration with Green Hay

The existing Melmeadow or other nearby flower-rich grassland could provide a valuable resource for increasing the plant diversity in parts of Melwood with available light but a poor seed bank. The easiest way which seed could be transferred from a more species-rich donor site to species-poor receptor sites is through the use of Green Hay. This refers to grass which has been cut after flowering and once seeds have matured, however has not yet dried out and so is still “green”. Cutting and collecting the hay when green prevents mature seed from dropping from the plants, allowing it to be transported from a donor site to a receptor site.

Because the hay is green it rapidly starts to decompose and this process creates heat which kills the seeds. It is therefore only useful as a method for transferring seed between relatively nearby sites. The green hay should be cut, collected, transported and strewn in the new area within approximately 2 hours.

A rough guide is spreading ratio of 1:2, in other words green hay may be spread on an area of the recipient site that is twice that of the area cut from the donor site.

Ground preparation

- It is necessary to have completed all required tree work to establish optimum light levels.
- The area cannot be dense nettles as this indicates high nutrient levels and it will be difficult for wildflower seedlings to compete.
- The area should be cut and raked immediately prior to green hay being strewn, to expose as much bare soil as possible to encourage establishment of the new seed bed.
- In hay meadows grazing stock would normally be used once green hay was strewn, or the area rolled, to consolidate seeds in bare ground. However simply walking over the recipient area a few times by volunteers should suffice.
- The green hay should be raked up from the recipient site after 2/3 weeks and removed.

Aftermath Management

The area strewn should be managed with frequent mowing the following year, to ensure that existing vegetation does not out-compete the seedlings trying to establish. All cuttings should be removed each time.

Approximate times the vegetation should be cut are end of April, early June, early August and late September. Plants will establish better if they are kept in a rosette formation, and sward height should not exceed 8 inches.

Following years cutting regimes should fit in with path/glade management, with rotational cuts and cuttings removed.

Appendix 6: Summary of Melwood Local Nature Reserve Consultation Questionnaires

Questionnaires were distributed to as many local people and users of Melwood as possible, in conjunction with a public consultation event. The event (on 13th November 2011) included maps, displays and opportunities to for people to have their say. There was also a walk to look at the wood and explain some of the management options.

Responses to the questionnaire are summarised below:

TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES: 33

Question 1

Do you visit Melwood LNR?

Yes, with family	14 (42.42%)
Yes, alone	8 (24.24%)
In addition, ticked both above yes answers	8 (24.24%)
No	2 (6.06%)

I have been unable to visit Melwood but hope to soon (because of problem walking). Would be handy having more slats but these may be vandalised. We have heard there is now access from our local pub. A few years ago we had a model boat race on the river and scarecrow competition- my husband attended your recent meeting at the village hall. Signed E Eggleton.

Blank	1 (3.03%)
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Question 2

Why do you not visit Melwood?

One answered – Didn't know it was there. (3.03%)
One E Eggleton wrote comment in box above.(3.03%)

One Blank
Rest skipped question to No 3

Question 3

How often to you visit Melwood LNR?

Every day	2 (6.06%)
1-6 times a week	14 (42.42%)
1-3 times a month	14 (42.42%)

One form written and ticked **1-3 times a year** (3.03%)
Two blanks (from people who haven't visited) (6.06%)

Question 4

How long do you spend when you visit?

Less than 30 mins	13 (39.39%)
30 mins – 1 hr	16 (48.48%)
1-2 hrs	1 (3.03%)
2-4 hrs	1 (3.03%)
More than 4 hrs	0

One questionnaire with 2 answers both 30 mins to 1 hr and 1-2 hrs ticked.
One blank from person who hasn't visited. (3.03%)

Question 5

How do you get to Melwood LNR (pls tick all that apply)

Foot	31 (93.94%)
Bicycle	1 (3.03%)
Horse	
Mobility scooter	
Public transport	
By car/motorbike	1 (3.03%%)
Other specify	

Question 6

What do you currently visit Melwood LNR for? Tick all that apply

Going for a walk	30 (90.91%)
Walking your dog	7 (21.21%)
Walk to school	0
Play/ children's activity	2 (6.06%)
Enjoy peace and quiet	18 (54.55%)
Carry out conservation work	10 (30.30%)
Watching wildlife	17 (51.52%)
Picnics	0
Jogging	0

Question 7

What improvements could be made? Tick all that apply

Management of woodland habitat	22
Management of meadow habitat	18
Management of river bank	12
Improvements to paths	5
Improvements to access points (e.g.gates and footbridges)	4
Benches	1
Parking	
Signposts	1
Information panels	15
Info leaflets	2
Info on internet	3
Audio info	
Dog bins	8
More events	6

Other please specify:

Not too many info panels as they are intrusive X 2

Litter bins too X 2

Improvement to access for pushchairs

One person has written "happy" on this section – no other answers.

Spring, summer and autumn walks

Question 8

What is your opinion of the following?

Sign/waymarker posting	Good 5	Fair 7	Poor 8	No opinion 13
Path condition	Good 22	Fair 10	Poor 0	No opinion 1
Accessibility	Good 25	Fair 6	Poor 1	No opinion 1
Reserve events (walks etc)	Good 8	Fair 4	Poor 1	No opinion 16
Current habitat mgt wk	Good 14	Fair 13	Poor 0	No opinion 6
Seating	Good 8	Fair 13	Poor 4	No opinion 8
Litter/dog bins	Good 2	Fair 3	Poor 13	No opinion 15
Nature reserve general	Good 24	Fair 6	Poor 0	No opinion 3

If question left blank, I have logged as "No Opinion".

Two people have written "not necessary" / "no need" for Sign/waymarker posting – I have logged these both as No Opinion

Question 9

Prioritising: where 1 is least important

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Sign/waymarker posting	10	7	4	3	5
Path condition	4	3	7	9	7
Accessibility	3	6	2	8	6
Nature Reserve events (walks etc)	3	5	10	7	5
Seating	6	5	9	3	5
Litter/dog bins	5	8	7	4	6
Woodland habitat management	4	3	1	9	10
Meadow habitat Management	6	4	3	9	10
Riverside habitat management	4	3	3	9	12

Two people left this question (9) totally blank

Question 10

(Would you like to get involved in activities at Melwood LNR?)

(Joining the conservation group	14	NOTE: 2 Qs combined
Family activities	4	
Community events and activities	8	
Guided walks or health walks	13	
Art/craft activities	7	
Music events	6	
Learning about wildlife/archaeology	9	
Volunteer wardening	7	
None	1	

2 Blanks for this question

If other specify:

Three additional people said they were already members of Melwood Conservation Group.

Weekend camps or BBQs etc
Fungi/Wildlife recording

11 Any other comments?

The wood seems to me to be fairly well managed at present, though more variety of flora and fauna would always be welcome.
A signed path around the far side (i.e. further from the river) might encourage me – and others – to explore that area. I tend to keep to the river path, and I think that most people do the same.

I would like to have a park for children to play in but....

An excellent opportunity to understand the dynamics of management of this wood (and river bank). Seeing it “on the ground” was very helpful.
Very encouraged by the volume of interest.

Well done!

It's a lovely resource, and to this non-expert eye rally well looked after. I miss the music/poetry events that used to be run in the meadow – the last one it poured with rain and there hasn't been one since, but it was hugely enjoyable.

A very informative morning and well organised. Thank you very much.

I would like the woodland the way it is, and I am not knowledgeable enough to give an opinion on present management or the effects of any changes (i.e. I am not against changes).

I would prefer any activity to be unobtrusive: i.e. no signs, bins etc.

The reserve looks very tidy at present. I would like to see more dead wood left in situ.

This is a very young wood, with few mature trees (at least from the point of view of insects and fungi).

Thinning of the canopy may be advisable, but not at the expense of all the potential future veteran trees. At least some should be pollarded to provide mature boles for the future.

Ash is not a mycorrhizal tree so it does not support many fungi on the woodland floor. Thinning of the canopy would be a positive action if young saplings are encouraged which would enhance the diversity for the future.

Remember that coppicing hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, prevents them flowering and fruiting for several years. Don't work on too large an area at any one time!

Very enjoyable morning

Additional comments from feedback posters etc

Please give us some of your opinions on Melwood LNR:

- Would be good if it was bigger!
- Involve other owners along Mel!
- Does need some wilderness
- Website with info is better than the boards! Can show off all the lovely photos – good idea!
- It will get better with time
- Remove non-native species
- Everything is wonderful to explore
- It is very beautiful

What sort of Events would you like to see on the reserve?

- Guided walk to listen to birds
- Bat walk
- Fungus foray
- Halloween ghost stories
- Christmas wreath workshop

- Music and poetry – yes!
- Community Weekend Camp
- Wildlife spotting for children

Other additional comments:

I vote for a Dog Bin at the end of Flambards

Thanks that the habitat is now “noisy”. The river now makes a noise – and that is GREAT!

Additional List

- Vandalism
- Leave it natural
- Signs/interp boards
- Dead wood garden
- Ivy on trees
- ??? coppice by CCV
- Bringing in seed
- Grazing from deer/rabbits
- What happens in wood affects river:

Introducing fish

Margaret – lovely trees

Yew hedge

Hay crop from cultivated field – don’t necessarily want same

Grazing

Young people

Events

Questionnaires

Question 12. Gender

Female	15 (45.45%)
Male	17 (51.52%)
Blank	1 (3.03%)

Question 13. Age group?

Under 16	0
16 – 24	0
25 -39	1 (3.03%)
40 – 59	10 (30.0%)
60 and over	20 (60.61%)
Blank	2 (6.06%)

Q 14 Ethnic origin?

White British/Irish 22 (%)
 White European 4 (%)
 White other (American) 1 (%)
 Blank 6 (%)

Q 15 Do you have any kind of long term impairment, illness or disability?

Yes 2 (6.06%)
 No 27 (81.82%)
 Blank 4 (12.12%)

Q 16 If yes, is this

Mobility 1 (3.03%) On one this question left blank although problem with walking mentioned at beginning of questionnaire

Hidden 1 (3.03%)

Q 17

Where do you live?

1	SG8 6	Meldreth	e-mail address
2	SG8 6		
3	Blank		
4	Blank		
5	SG8 6LA	Village	
6	SG8 6	Village	
7	SG8 6		
8	SG8 6		
9	SG8 6LA	Meldreth	
10	SG8 6MU		
11	Blank	Meldreth	
12	CB4 1	Cambridge	Hymol2@cam.ac.uk
13	SG8 6		
14	SG8 6	Meldreth	janerem@aol.com
15	SG8 6		
16	SG8	Melbourn	
17	SG8 6	Meldreth	nickaskham@hotmail.com
18		Meldreth	
19	SG8 6	Village	
20	SG8 6	Melbourn	(already on mgt committee)
21	SG8 6JW	Meldreth	janerem@aol.com
22	SG8 6	Meldreth	
23	SG8 6		
24	SG8 6	Meldreth	chris@chriswest.info
25	SG8 6	Meldreth	

26	SG8 6	Meldreth	
27	SG8 6	Meldreth	(you have it already)
28	SG8 6	Meldreth	laracward@yahoo.co.uk
29	SG8	Shepreth	Frog.end@virgin.net
30	SG8 6	Meldreth	
31	SG8 6	Meldreth	
32		Meldreth	
33		Meldreth	

Appendix 7: Children's wish list

Chaffinch class, Meldreth Primary School

WISH LIST		
<i>Nature/Outdoor</i>	<i>Art</i>	<i>Other</i>
Wooden Tree House X 6	Painting	BBQ
Making a raft	Pads and Pencils	Cars powered by nature
Bird Watching Centre	Famous Statue out of Wood	Swing on Tree
Maze X 3	Elves	Bonfire
Mini Rafting X 3	Pictures of Landscape	Fencing
Tree Climbing x 4	Making Castles	Dog Play Area
Tree Climbing Lessons	Mud Sculptures X 2	Dog Training Class
Binoculars	Collecting Sculptures	Skate Board Park
Bat Hunting	Wind Chimes	Bouncy Castle X 2
Bug Hunting	Paint with berries etc	Surfing Pool
Bug List	Collage	Zip Wire X 2
Slug Races	Twig Pictures X 2	Tyre
Bird Racing	Workshop	High Ropes from Trees X 2
Lady with Activity Pack	Guitar	Go Ape X 2
Maps and guides	Treasure Trails	Bungee Jumping X 2
Animals	Photos	Abseiling down trees
Castle made of Conkers	Theatre	BMX track x7
Nocturnal Hunting	Floor Picture/mosaic	Adventure Play Area
Lake X 2	Fair	Canoeing
Camping X 3		Mountain Parachute
Obstacle Course		Quad Bike Off-Roading
Relay Races		Mound x 2
Dens x5		Sailing X 2
Races		Trampolining
		Punting X 2
		Paint Balling X 2
		Underground tunnels
		Park
		Log Roll
		Pigeon Shoot
		Castle made of sweets
		Twirly stairs
		Little Fence

Appendix 8: Management Structure of Melwood Conservation Group

An informal conservation group was started around 1986 by Miss Margaret Hunter. More recently, in 2002, the group was formalised as Melwood Conservation Group with a constitution and an elected committee and officers. The group has been responsible for all of the management of Melwood to date.

The Melwood Conservation Group is affiliated to the Parish Council, from which it gains public liability insurance for volunteering activities and funding for management activities. Funding applications are agreed by the Parish Council on an annual basis.

The management committee of the Conservation Group meets a minimum of three times each year. The group appoints a chairman, minutes secretary, treasurer and conservation group leader each year. The management committee is responsible for arranging a calendar of events each year at which a minimum of one event (ideally several events) will be organised to benefit local people. The calendar of events will also include a number of volunteering activities throughout the year.

The Melwood Conservation Group also includes a large number of Friends. The Friends include local people who treasure the woodland and feel strongly about its welfare and future, but do not wish to be represented on the management committee. It may be possible in the future to extend the role and activity of the friends to include fundraising for management tasks and social events.

Appendix 9: Glossary

Ancient Woodland A woodland that has existed continuously since 1700, and possibly pre-history.

Arisings Cuttings taken from a meadow.

Barking Removing bark from a tree, for use in tanning.

Black heart Discoloration in the centre of a tree, does not always signify rot.

Brash, brish or brushwood The small twiggy branches from coppice poles.

Butt The lowest portion of a stem or pole.

Cant An area of coppice cut or sold in a season.

Cleft A segment of wood split from a round pole.

Coppice Underwood trees, which are cut, close to ground level every few years to allow multiple stems to grow again from the stool.

Coppice-with-standards Coppice overstood by scattered, single-stemmed trees.

Coppicing cycle The number of years between cutting of the coppice.

Copse Another name for an area of coppiced woodland.

Coup Another name for a cant.

Crown Living branches of a tree above the main stem.

Crown reduction Pruning back the crown to its main branches whilst maintaining its overall shape.

Cutting A short length of young shoot or root used to propagate a new plant.

Drifts Cut coppice material or brash laid in rows for sorting or disposal.

Emergent tree Shoots sprouting from dormant or adventitious buds on a tree's main stem.

Encoppice To enclose an area of young coppice, to prevent damage to the young shoots.

Epicormic shoots Shoots sprouting from dormant or adventitious buds on a tree's main stem.

Epiphyte A plant growing on another without being parasitic.

Extraction The removal of felled timber from a woodland.

Feathered tree A young tree well furnished with branches to near ground level.

Felling cut The cut made from the back of the stem which fells the tree. Also known as the back cut.

Field layer The part of the woodland structure containing low-growing shrubs, herbaceous plants, grasses bulbs and ferns.

Flush An area of ground receiving nutrient-rich runoff. The first spurt of growth after the winter.

Forest Was originally a tract of heath, moor or woodland controlled by the Crown for the purpose of conserving deer and other woodland animals. Now used to describe a densely wooded area.

Formative pruning The pruning of branches, usually between 3-10 years of planting, in order to improve timber quality.

Glade An open area.

Greenwood Freshly felled living wood, still retaining its sap.

Ground layer The part of the woodland structure which comprises mosses, liverworts, lichens and fungi.

Hanger A wood growing on the side of a hill.

Hardwood Any broadleaved tree, irrespective of the actual hardness of the wood.

Heartwood The inner wood of a large branches and trunks, which no longer carry sap.

Hewing Shaping a log with an axe or adze.

High forest Woodlands dominated by full-grown trees.

Leader The main top shoot of a tree.

Lopping Cutting branches from a tree.

Maiden tree A single stemmed tree, never coppiced or pollarded. Any tree not grown from a coppice stump.

Mother tree A mature tree left to produce seed to encourage natural regeneration.

Natural regeneration Trees and shrubs which arise from naturally-shed seeds, with no help from man.

Park Originally, land enclosed for the keeping of deer and other animals. An area enclosed for amenity.

Plantation Woodland where the majority of trees have been planted.

Pole A coppice stool shoot of more than 50mm (2in) diameter.

Pollard Tree which is cut at 2-4m (6-12ft) above ground level, and left to produce a crop of poles or branches.

Primary Woodland Woodland that has had a continuous cover of native trees throughout its history.

Prog A stout forked pole used for the pushing and levering trees during felling.

Provenance The place of origin of a tree stock, which remains the same no matter where later generations of the tree are raised.

Pruning Cutting branches from a standing tree, to alter its shape, remove diseased branches.

Recent Woodland Woodland which has grown up since 1600 on land which had previously been cleared, or was previously not a wooded area.

Ride Wide woodland road.

Rod Small flexible underwood stem of less than 50mm (2in) diameter.

Rotation Length of time between cuttings of a coppice coupe.

Roundwood Wood of small diameter used for fencing stakes.

Sapwood Wood which carries sap. This may be all the wood in a young stem, or the outermost layer in an older, larger trunk or branch.

Secondary woodland Woodland growing on a site that was formerly not woodland. It could be ancient, if it grew up before 1600.

Semi-natural woodland In ancient sites, wood made up of native species, where their presence is natural rather than planted. More recently woods which have originated mainly by regeneration.

Set A large unrooted cutting, usually willow or poplar.

Short rotation coppice Coppice grown on a short rotation, of up to about ten years, and is used for hurdle making and other crafts.

Shrub layer The part of the woodland structure which includes shrubs and young growth of canopy trees.

Singling Retaining one stem on a coppice stool and allowing it to grow into a standard tree.

Softwood The timber of a coniferous tree, irrespective of the hardness of the timber.

Stag-head A tree with a clear stem or trunk. In woodland structure, a tree forming the dominant layer of the canopy.

Stem The living trunk of a shrub or tree, from which new shoots grow.

Stool The base of a coppiced tree from which new shoots emerge.

Sucker Shoots growing from the roots of an older tree.

Timber Tree trunk suitable for making beams or sawing into planks.

Thinning A tree removal practice that reduces tree density and competition between trees in a stand. Thinning concentrates growth on fewer, high-quality trees, provides periodic income, and generally enhances tree vigour. Heavy

thinning can benefit wildlife through the increased growth of ground vegetation.

Underwood Coppiced wood growing under standard or timber trees.

Wildwood Ancient forest, untouched by man.

Wood The part of the stem, inside the cambium, which supports the tree, carries water to the crown and stores reserves of food over the winter period. Also poles and branches of smaller diameter than timber.