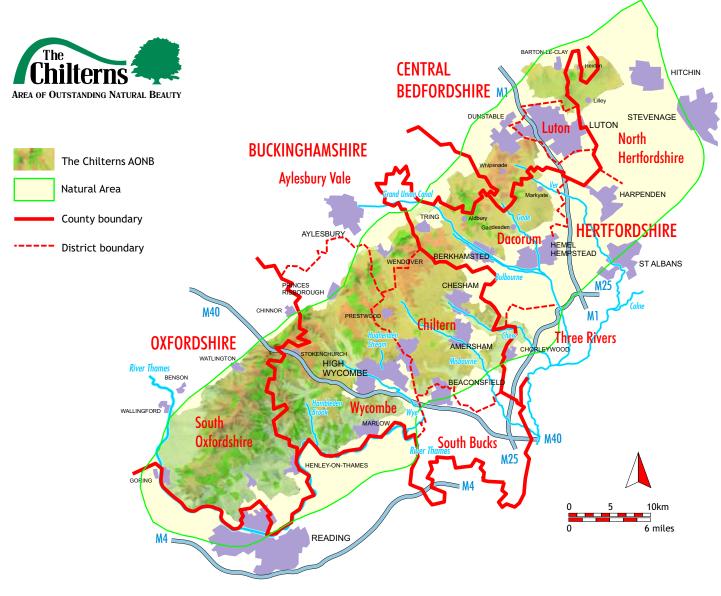


Looking after the woods of the Chilterns



April 2009 - March 2012



Prospectus and Business Plan

April 2009 - March 2012

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Contents	
Chairman's Introduction	1
Executive Summary	2
Our Vision	4
Our Aims	4
Successes, Challenges and	
Opportunities	5
Activities	8
Knowledge and Resources	10
Financial	1
Annexes	
History, Background and	
Current Position	12
Woodland Advice	13
Sources	14
Chiltern Woodlands Project/	
Chilterns Conservation Board Accord	15)

Chairman's introduction

We need your support so we can help to look after the woods of the Chilterns.

We are fortunate to have a wonderful landscape with its rich woodland heritage. It is the reason many of us choose to live, work in or visit this fabulous countryside.

We are planning how we can help look after the woods of the Chilterns in the long term. Who knows what lies ahead? However, if people hadn't found the trees of the Chilterns useful the woods would have disappeared long ago. Our challenge, once again, is to find ways of ensuring the woods are productive and useful, so they survive as a valuable resource for future generations. As we look to renewable forms of energy, perhaps our local woods will again be an important source of firewood.

It is no longer economic to manage many of the woods of the Chilterns which is why the work of the Project, as a local charity, is so important. In particular we are here to help owners of small woods, which provide so much public benefit, but which are expensive to look after.

The Chiltern Woodlands Project has had a long record of success since it was set up in 1989. We have only been able to do this with the support of woodland owners, the general public, sponsors and many partner organisations. We need your continuing support to help look after the unique woodland heritage of the Chilterns.

Mrs Cherry Aston, Chairman June 2009





Executive Summary

The Chilterns are recognised nationally as a unique and important landscape, through protection as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Chiltern Woodlands Project (CWP) was established to promote and encourage the sympathetic management of woodlands in the Chilterns and in surrounding areas, in the primary interests of protection of the landscape and the conservation of nature, having regard to woodland economy. CWP promotes and encourages the sensitive and sustainable management of woods in order to protect the landscape and to enhance the biodiversity of the Chilterns.

CWP is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Founded in 1989 by The Chiltern Society, it operates through a small, expert staff, supported by an independent Chairman and Board, comprising nominated representatives from Local Government, the Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB), The Chiltern Society and a number of independent members.

CWP's main stakeholder groups are: woodland owners, local authorities and the general public.

CWP has offered advice and assistance to well over 500 woodland owners, owning on average about 4ha of woodland, and keeps in contact with them.

CWP's main activities and areas for development are set out in this business plan for the three years 2009 - 2012.

- Continue to provide a range of expert advisory and training services supporting woodland owners, to improve management skills and knowledge so that a greater area of woodland is included within long term sustainable management plans.
- Expand CWP's influence to ensure that woods in the Chilterns get the support they need, and to build a sustainable rural economy, including energy resources.
- Raising awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the Chiltern woodlands through the website, newsletters, publications, and events.
- Help owners commence restoration of ancient woods including plantations on ancient woodland sites, a policy to be maintained over the next 20 years.

Specific areas of work include:

- Implementing the Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2008-13.
- Support the Government's 'Keepers of Time' woodland policy to protect ancient trees and woods.
- Continue to manage our 'Special Trees and Woods' project after the funding from Heritage Lottery runs out in 2010.
- Promote the management of grey squirrels, deer and other pests.
- Promote the planting of trees in hedgerows, orchards and for wood fuel.

This will be achieved by:

- Seeking service level agreements with public sector partners.
- Launching major new projects in support of CWP's aims.
- Applying appropriate charges for services provided to private sector users.
- Raising funds through charitable donations, legacies and gift-aid.
- Minimising costs by sharing facilities and other arrangements wherever possible.
- Utilising CWP's extensive volunteer network to best effect.

Woodlands in the Chilterns

- Woodland covers over 20% of the Chilterns landscape. It is one of the most densely wooded areas of England and has been for a thousand years.
- The wooded area amounts to over 17,500 hectares.
- Over 75% is in private ownership, ranging from less than one hectare to over 400 ha. This excludes woods owned by the Forestry Commission, Local Authorities, the National Trust and the Woodland Trust.
- The Government's "Keepers of Time" policy for ancient woodlands is important as it sees nearly 10,000 ha of ancient woodland as a priority for conservation with over 4,000 ha of this classified as Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites in need of restoration over the next 20 years.
- need of restoration over the next 20 years.

 Forestry Commission figures (Feb 2009) show that

 11,068 ha of woodland in the Chilterns AONB
 have been included in their grant schemes
 (from 1995 present). This is about
 59% of woods in the AONB.
 However, nearly 40% of
 woods were not in a
 Forestry Commission
 approved scheme.

 Woodland cover
 Forestry Commission woods in dark green



Our Vision

Our vision is to achieve a cherished and thriving natural woodland resource across the Chilterns and surrounding areas, through the promotion of effective and sympathetic woodland management, so protecting the landscape and conserving nature, and promoting a sustainable woodland economy.



Bird's-nest orchid

Our Aims

- A. Landscape: to protect and enhance the landscape of the Chilterns.
- B. **Biodiversity:** to maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the Chilterns.
- C. **Economy:** to promote a sustainable woodland economy in the Chilterns.
- D. **Community:** to increase awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of the Chiltern woodland.

We work across the whole of the Chilterns Natural Area including towns and villages as well as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Sharpenhoe Clappers, Central Beds





Successes, Challenges and Opportunities

The Chiltern Woodlands Project is in a unique position to provide expert services to bear upon a range of strategic local, regional and national objectives.

CWP has expertise in both ecological and historic environment assessment and may be able to charge owners for assistance grant aided by the Forestry Commission where they consider it necessary.

CWP has been successful in promoting the management of small woods in the Chilterns since its formation and has developed a national reputation for its work.

CWP works closely with the Chilterns Conservation Board and its work supports the actions outlined in the Management Plan for the Chilterns AONB.

The work of this project helps meet the governments policies outlined in the Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests (defra 2007) - our Special Trees and Woods project is case study 7, and its Delivery Plan (2008 -12) and also the Regional Forestry Frameworks for South East (Seeing the wood for the trees) and East England (woodland for life). Biodiversity HAP targets. Deer Action Plan. Keepers of Time - Ancient woodland policy.

Planning Policy Statement 9 (2005) states that local planning authorities should identify any areas of ancient woodland in their areas that do not have statutory protection, as once lost ancient woods cannot be recreated.

Special Trees & Woods

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) approved £268,000 for a Special Trees and Woods of the Chilterns project, started in January 2006 for four years; with £10,000 from the Chilterns Conservation Board and £10,000 from project reserves. The balance is made up of volunteer time contributions (already met). A full time coordinator organises a programme of voluntary work to tap into local knowledge and enthusiasm about important trees and woods.

HLF have given approval to extend the project until end of March 2010. We want to maintain the active pool of 50 volunteers beyond this date. Information is on the Chilterns AONB website at www.chilternsaonb.org/special



Oak at Bulstrode Camp - a 'special tree'

The Chiltern Woodlands Project offers the following services (see page 13)

- Woodland Management advice
- Woodland Management plans
- Woodland Surveys
- Woodland Grant applications
- Marking trees for felling
- Supervising Contractors
- Training
- Events
- Talks
- Guided walks



Financial Challenges

CWP's work is important and worthwhile, but securing grant funding for general support of this type of work in the present day is difficult, particularly from Local Authorities with many other competing demands. For this reason, CWP has adapted to a project-funded regime and is now seeking support for its activities along these lines. This has been successfully achieved and delivered, through the winning and running of the Special Trees and Woods project.

Partnerships

CWP works in a complementary way with a number of local consultants and contractors. Efforts are made to work in partnership with local businesses and councils wherever possible. CWP also works across borders and with other related organisations in the region, such as other charities and woodland initiatives which have similar aims and objectives.





Challenges

CLIMATE - storms, droughts, hotter summers, milder winters. Trees and woods have a part to play in mitigating these impacts. However the trees and woods can also be harmed by the more extreme weather events. CO₂ - young growing trees absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere and lock it into their wood.

PESTS AND DISEASES - new pests and diseases are developing due to global trade and a changing climate. Introduced species such as grey squirrels, edible dormouse, muntjac etc also damage the trees and woods.

TIMBER - markets have declined, contractors costs (including transport) have increased so it is now harder to make woods pay.

WOOD FUEL - needs careful selective harvesting, not large scale clearance. It can replace the use of fossil fuels and produce lower harmful emissions.

HERITAGE - features are not known and therefore not protected on many sites.

TOURISM - It is an ideal area for recreation and tourism because it is close to metropolitan areas, including London. (CCB Visitor survey 2007 shows 55 million visits to the Chilterns).

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE - particularly among owners of smaller and unmanaged woods.

LACK OF SKILLS - among some owners and contractors can lead to harm.

HEALTH - supporting health and fitness by encouraging use of woodlands.

VOLUNTEERS / COMMUNITY COHESION - through developing and working with volunteers, links within and between people and communities are fostered and facilitated.

CULTURE, FILM and TV - facilitating locations and access to special woodland environments.

CULTURE - arts, literature, music, photography inspired by or linked to trees and woods.

ORCHARDS / BEES - traditional cherry and other fruit production have declined but there is growing interest in reviving the resource.

SCHOOLS / EDUCATION - the woods are a potential resource for teaching and learning.

FUNDING - CWP can support with specialist expertise grant schemes being developed by government agencies such as FC EWGS, HLS, LEADER.





Activities

CWP provides a range of services across the activity themes:

	Theme	Training	Education	Woodland Consultancy	Facilitation	Wood Fuel	Events	Information
Ses	Landscape	•		•	•		•	•
Services	Biodiversity	•	•					•
	Economy		•	•		•		•
	Community		•				•	•

	Theme	Climate Change	Pests and Diseases	Health and Leisure	Heritage	Support	Natural Heritage	Community Cohesion	Tourism
\ \s_	Landscape	•			•	•	•		•
Sectors	Biodiversity		•			•	•		
	Economy	•	•			•			•
	Community	•	•			•		•	•

ke

CWP's main activities / expertise

CWP's secondary activities / expertise

Strategic Objectives

Over the next three years CWP has the following key strategic objectives supporting the work of others.

Some activities operate on a more commercial basis charging hourly or event based fees.

- Woodland related advice and assistance (see appendix).
- Free first visits supported by local authority funding & SLA's.
- Follow up visits chargeable for help marking trees for felling, arranging felling licences and grant applications including:-
 - Long term woodland management plans for EWGS - the revised grant scheme (2009) offers a management plan grant of £1000, for woods between 3 and 30 ha.
 - Woodland assessments for historic environment and nature conservation interests.

- Education and Training
 Chargeable unless subsidised by others
 eg Chilterns Conservation Board.
- Work includes organising the popular woodland archaeology training days and seminars.
- Organise visits to AONB woodland award winning woods.
- Address lifelong learning aspirations.
- Events and Promotion

Chargeable unless subsidised by others

- Organising an annual Chilterns
 Woodland Conference.
- Woods at Work open days every two years as a show case for local woodland contractors and businesses.
- Publicity & Publishing newsletters, website, booklets.
- Need for sponsors and advertising.
- News of the Woods newsletter, three editions produced per year including annual report.
- Web pages about the CWP and Special Trees and Woods currently on AONB website www.chilternsaonb.org

	Theme	Climate Change	Pests and Diseases	Health and Leisure	Heritage	Support	Natural Heritage	Community Cohesion	Tourism
_	Local Authorities	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Stakeholder	Woodland Owners		•	•		•			•
Stak	Professionals		•		•	•	•		
	General Public			•	•		•	•	•
	FC/NE/CCB	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•



- Special Trees and Woods project HLF funding until end of March 2010.
- Accessibility for disabled, hard to reach and disadvantaged groups.
- Liaison and communications

 Most of these important activities are not fee earning but supported through CWP general funds.

Others eg

- Deer groups supported by Deer Initiative (paid a fee to act as secretary to two groups in south and west Chilterns).
- Applicants Focus Group Forestry Commission (paid fee to represent Small Woods Association at these meetings).
- LEADER funding for Chilterns, has been approved with nearly £2.5 million to spend by 2013. This will support forestry equipment, wood fuel and supply chain work. CWP are on the local action group (LAG) which distributes this money for SEEDA and EEDA.

View towards Stokenchurch from Brush Hill, Princes Risborough, Bucks



Knowledge and Resources

CWP currently has two full time members of staff and has developed a network / team of volunteers to assist its activities.

CWP works in partnership with the landowners, volunteers from other groups, Local Authorities, the Chilterns Conservation Board, The Chiltern Society, the Forestry Commission, the Deer Initiative and others to achieve its work programme.

The charity's work is controlled by a Board of Directors; they are also its Trustees. The Directors are appointed annually at an AGM, usually held in September from nominations by The Chiltern Society, Chilterns Conservation Board and the funding local authorities.

They normally meet at least three times a year together with a steering group drawn from officers of the funding local authorities, Forestry Commission and Chilterns Conservation Board, who offer expert advice.

The Directors have overall responsibility for the financial control of the charity, for agreeing its budget and work plans. The Director produces an annual report each year.

CWP works in partnership with other organisations, landowners, contractors and consultants.

As a registered charity it has to take a clear advisory and educational role.

Its partners are varied and include the woodland owners, local authorities, Chilterns Conservation Board and general public.

Promotion

CWP maintains a high profile through its publications and leaflets including News of the Woods newsletters, its web pages (provided by the CCB on Chilterns AONB site), see

http://www.chilternsaonb.org/caring/woodlands_project.html
displays at events such as shows, a
programme of activities including guided
walks and talks. Limited advertising is
placed in appropriate websites and other
locations and in both press and other
media as opportunities arise.

CWP uses a local designer to help produce its newsletters and other publicity material.



Woods at Work in Wendover Woods

Financial

The financial policies of the Chiltern Woodlands Project are:

- To remain a financially viable charity, operating at appropriate cost levels.
- To charge users for services at an appropriate commercial rate.
- To work in partnership with others, including service level agreements with Local Authorities.
- To raise funds through charitable donations and gift-aid.

CWP's core work is of public interest and therefore not directly financeable through trading.

The plan for the period 2009 to 2012 takes account of the conclusion of the Special Trees and Woods project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and anticipates the beginning of a new project or projects on a similar aggregate scale, beginning in 2010.

Income (£k)	2005/6 Actual	2006/7 Actual	2007/8 Actual	2008/9 Actual	2009/10 Budget	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Grants	11.3	9.6	10.7	9.4	10.3	6.0	6.0
Service Level Agreements	11.7	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.5	15.5	16.0
Heritage Lottery Fund	7.1	55.3	79.5	57.3	38.1		
Fees and Donations	31.0	37.9	33.5	29.7	28.0	36.0	40.0
Interest	1.6	1.4	2.8	2.8	0.5	0.5	0.5
New projects						45.0	50.0
Total	62.7	112.4	134.8	107.8	93.6	103.0	112.5
Expenditure (£k)	2005/6 Actual	2006/7 Actual	2007/8 Actual	2008/9 Actual	2009/10 Budget	2010/11 Plan	2011/12 Plan
Staffing	49.0	77.8	81.2	79.1	75.6	44.0	45.0
Operational	8.6	14.8	12.3	22.1	21.4	17.0	17.5
Publicity	9.2	18.6	15.2	16.1	6.0	6.0	6.0
New projects						40.0	40.0
Total	66.8	111.3	108.8	117.3	103.0	107.0	114.0
Surplus/Deficit	4.1	1.1	26.0	9.6	9.4	4.0	1.5

The Directors of CWP have decided to maintain a reserve of around £50,000 to align with Charity Commission recommendations. This same sum also provides a cash balance to allow for claims to be made up to two months in arrears.



Annexes

Annex 1

History, Background and Current Position

The Chiltern Woodlands Project (CWP) started in 1989. It is the only charity in the Chilterns dedicated to promoting and encouraging the sensitive and sustainable management of small woods in the Chiltern Hills, for landscape and conservation reasons, having regard for woodland economy.

CWP is able to listen to the woodland owners' requirements whilst providing advice on woodland management options, regulations on felling, availability of grants, local policies and features of interest that affect woodland management.

CWP can act as a one-stop shop for information and act as an "honest broker" in giving advice.

CWP has an accord with the Chilterns Conservation Board concerning the work programme and provision of office accommodation and other support (see annex 4).

CWP has been involved in larger projects including the European TWIG project from 1999 - 2002 with partners in Germany and Greece, and the Heritage Lottery funded Special Trees and Woods project from January 2006 - 2010.

CWP is a company limited by guarantee (No 2357329) and registered charity (No 1002512) governed by an independent board of trustees which consists of an independent chairman, a vice chairman, treasurer and company secretary, independent directors and also has five directors nominated by County and District Councils in the Chilterns, two directors appointed by The Chiltern Society and one from the Chilterns Conservation Board.

The current staff team is John Morris, Executive Director, and the Special Trees project coordinator, who has a team of about 50 volunteers.

John Morris has recently written "The Cultural Heritage of Chiltern Woods - An illustrated guide to archaeological features" a 60 page full colour book published by CWP.

Woodland Advice

CWP has over the years targeted the owners of small, unmanaged woods (the average size of woods visited is near 4 hectares/10 acres and many are smaller than this) and given priority to helping woods of high landscape and biodiversity value.

The impact is a cumulative one; continuity of advice to woodland owners is a key factor. Over 30 woodland owners are visited each year to offer advice or assistance.

The Chiltern Woodlands Project does not carry out any practical work itself but works with other contractors and consultants (or sometimes volunteers) as appropriate.

Types of advice given during a typical woodland visit may include:

- Type of woodland, methods of management and maintenance of trees
- Woodland biodiversity identification of woodland flora etc.
- Woodland archaeology what features are present e.g. sawpits, banks etc.
- Pest control identification of likely problems and possible solutions
- Timber utilisation what species of tree are present and how they can be used or sold
- Amenity and leisure issues both public and private
- Landscape issues how wood meets local plans and strategies
- Felling regulations and grants
- Contractor contacts or other ways to implement work

The project acts as group secretary, with the Deer Initiative, of two deer control groups in the area to the west of the M40. This brings it in to contact with larger land owners / estates and their managers.

Annex 2

Annex 3

Sources

This Business Plan takes into account the following sources:

- Chilterns Conservation Board 2008 Management Plan for the Chilterns AONB (2008-13)
- Chilterns Standing Conference 1992 A Plan for the Chilterns Woodland Policy
- Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests (defra 2007) our Special Trees and Woods project is case study 7
- Forestry Commission England's Trees, Woods and Forests Delivery Plan 2008-12
- Seeing the Wood for the Trees South East Forestry Framework '04
- Woodland For Life East England regional woodland strategy 2004
- Keepers of Time Ancient woodland policy 2005

See also

- Buckinghamshire Woodland Forum 1996 Buckinghamshire Tree & Woodland Strategy
- Buckinghamshire Rural Strategy 1997
- Buckinghamshire Nature Conservation Forum Biodiversity Action Plan
- Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum Biodiversity Action Plan
- Hertfordshire Wildlife Trust Biodiversity Action Plan
- Countryside Commission 1992 The Chilterns Landscape
- Deer Action Plan 2005
- English Nature 1997 Chilterns Natural Area Profile
- Hertfordshire CMS Hertfordshire's Woodland Strategy
- MAFF England Rural Development Plan 2000 -2006
- Forestry Commission UK Woodland Assurance Scheme
- Forestry Commission England Woodland Grant Scheme 2005
- RSPB/ FC Woodland Management for Birds 2005
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan

Chiltern Woodlands Project/Chilterns Conservation Board Accord

Summary of an Accord between the Chilterns Conservation Board and Chiltern Woodlands Project





The Chiltern Conservation Board was established by Parliamentary Order on December 14th 2004. Its statutory aims are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns
- To promote understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Chilterns AONB
- In so far as it is compatible with the first two aims, the Board will seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities.

The Chiltern Woodlands Project is a registered charitable trust (no 1002512) company limited by guarantee (not for profit) founded in 1989.

Its aims are:

- 1. To promote and encourage the sustainable management of woodlands in the Chiltern Hills:
 - a) To protect and enhance the landscape
 - b) To maintain and enhance the biodiversity
- 2. To promote a sustainable woodland economy
- 3. To increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of Chiltern woods.

The Chilterns Conservation Board and Chiltern Woodlands Project have identified their shared priorities as:

- Securing an attractive and sustainable landscape
- Protection of existing woodlands
- Promoting the long term sustainable management of woodlands
- Promoting public enjoyment and understanding of woodlands and woodland heritage
- Encouraging appropriate economic activity which supports the management of woodlands
- Securing the protection of the special woodland heritage of woodlands
- Run the Special Trees and Woods project (until June 2009) with funded agreed by Heritage Lottery Fund and Chilterns Conservation Board. Working with volunteers and community groups to record the tree and woodland heritage of the Natural Area. Results are shown on the Chilterns AONB website.

Annex 4

Annex 4

The Conservation Board and Woodlands Project will work together in partnership to deliver these shared priorities.

We will do this by:

- Working closely and collaboratively at all levels.
- The CCB and CWP will agree an annual joint work programme, in return for funding.
- The CWP will assist the CCB with the preparation and implementation of the Management Plan for the Chilterns AONB.
- CCB has the right to appoint a trustee of the CWP.
- The CCB Chief Officer and CWP Director and staff will hold regular liaison meetings.
- Staff will respond positively to request to attend Board meeting of each organisation and to provide information useful to each organisation.
- The CCB and CWP will invite the other organisation to be represented on any relevant work groups.
- The Conservation Board will provide office accommodation for the CWP.
- The Conservation Board will re-charge direct costs on an annual basis and will consider requires to waive other charges such as rent and rates depending upon the CWP's financial position.
- The Conservation Board will make available to the CWP meeting room facilities and general use of office equipment.
- The CCB will make available general IT support. Direct IT support will be charged directly.
- The CWP manager/staff will provide, on a no cost basis, the Conservation Board and its staff general support and information on woodland issues.
- The Conservation Board will agree with the CWP how it will assist in fund raising efforts to enable it to function effectively and employ a manager.
- CWP helps organise woodland related events and conferences in partnership with CCB
- CCB and CWP will jointly identify priorities for future woodland work in the new Chilterns AONB Management Plan, these might include for example:-
 - Woodfuel
 - Climate Change and wood
 - Pest management
 - Woodland heritage

a copy of this publication can be found on www.chilternsaonb.org/publications.asp

Prospectus and Business Plan

April 2009 - March 2012

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Philipshill Wood.

