Woodland Condition Self-assessment Form

Please read the guidance before starting! Additional space for notes at the end of the document.

Woodland name/coordinates/address:

Compartment ID:

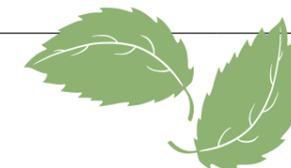**Borough:**   **Date:**

Surveyor(s):

What is the main use of the space? Nature conservation / community woodland / cemetery / _____

Do you know if the site is currently managed?
If **yes**, how (e.g. signs of coppicing, thinning)? You can use % of the area.

Is it a young woodland? Approx. 90% of the trees have less than 8cm of diameter at chest level, and less than 5 metres high. Plantations included.   **Yes / No**   If yes, jump to **2.1**

1. Trees

Assessment	Criteria	Score	Tick box
1.1 **Canopy cover**	No gaps in the canopy, no light reaching the ground (>90% of canopy)	0	
	Canopy very open (max 20%) or no canopy	0	
	Very close canopy (75-90%); little amount of light arriving to the ground	1	
	Some gaps in the canopy, (25-75%); light scattered on the ground	3	
1.2 **Dominant (most common) tree species**	Canopy of a mix of more than 4 dominant species (tick & jump to **1.3**)	3	
	Canopy of mostly 3-4 dominant species	2	
	Canopy of mostly 1-2 dominant species	1	
1.3 **Age variation of dominant trees**	All trees evenly aged (similar size: e.g. only old trees present). No saplings	0	
	Most trees evenly aged. No saplings	1	
	Most trees evenly aged. At least some saplings	3	
	Even mix of ages; some saplings	4	
	Even mix of ages; plentiful saplings	5	
Total score (sum all the numbers)			

2. Native shrub

Assessment	Criteria	Score	Tick box
2.1 **Native shrub composition**	No shrub layer present (jump to **3**)	0	
	The only species is bramble (jump to **3**)	1	
	All shrubs of same species (not including bramble)	2	
	2-4 species of shrubs	3	
	5 or more species	4	
2.2 **Native shrub density**	Dense covering of shrubs over most or all of woodland	1	
	Scattered throughout	3	
	Even combination of dense covering of shrubs in places, with scattered shrubs elsewhere	4	
2.3 **Native shrub age variation**	All shrubs even aged (similar size within a species)	2	
	Most shrubs are evenly aged	3	
	Age variable (different sizes within a species)	4	
Total score			

7. Use of site

Assessment	Criteria	Score	Tick box
7.1 **Site activities** tick all that apply	Unsociable behaviour (including infrastructure damage)	0	
	Fly tipping (including garden waste)	-1	
	Significant levels of dogs running off path off lead	0	
	Regular light littering	0	
	Presence of dog waste (on ground and/or in trees)	-1	
	Mismanagement or general misuse (inappropriate and unauthorised planting, ivy clearance from tree trunks, tree works etc or localised wildlife damaging activities)	0	
	Responsible site usage (people walking on path, dogs under control, no littering)	2	
	Evidence of positive outdoor usage (general usage for exercise, enjoyment of open space, children's play etc)	3	
	Evidence of positive local management (by council, site manager, volunteers…). For instance dead hedging, fencing of sensitive areas, restoration projects.	4	
Total score			

Is there any evidence of tree diseases or pests present? E.g. ash die back, Dutch elm disease, oak processionary moth. If yes, what is the frequency (frequent; occasional; rare) and could you locate it in the map of the woodland?

Is there any conflict of interest regarding the use of the site? E.g. some people using motorcycles.

Other notes:

3. Ground layer

Assessment	Criteria	Score	Tick box
3.1 **Bare ground** (<u>not</u> including designated/official paths)	No vegetation covering the ground, <u>all</u> bare ground	0	
	<u>No</u> bare ground, all covered by vegetation (jump to **3.3**)	1	
	<u>Small</u> areas of bare ground, scattered between the vegetation on the ground layer	4	
	Other	1	
3.2 **Erosion and compaction** (<u>not</u> including designated/official paths)	None	4	
	Small areas (e.g. some paths have been slightly widened; dogs frequenting one specific area)	1	
	Large areas	0	
3.3 **Ground cover vegetation** (herbs, wildflowers, bulbs, bramble… from the floor till 0.5m)	Dominated by grasses, nettles or cow parsley (jump to **section 4**)	0	
	Dominated by ivy, bracken or bramble (jump to **section 4**)	1	
	Dominated by <u>more than 2</u> typical woodland species, other than ivy, bramble, nettles and grasses (see species guidance)	4	
	Mix of bracken, ivy, bramble, cow parsley & at least <u>more than 1</u> typical woodland species (see species guidance)	2	
3.4 **Ancient Woodland Indicator species** Only if the woodland is listed; to be completed between mid-March & mid-May	No AWI species	0	
	<u>Infrequent</u> patches of 1-3 AWI species	1	
	<u>Frequent</u> patches of 1-3 AWI species	2	
	<u>Infrequent</u> patches of 4 AWI species, or large areas of 1-3 AWI species	3	
	<u>Frequent</u> patches of 4 or more AWI species	4	
Total score			

4. Problem species

Assessment	Criteria	Score	Tick box
4.1 **Invasive plant Species** including shrubs & ground vegetation (see species guidance)	None (jump to **4.3**)	4	
	Present in <u>less than 5%</u> of the total area	2	
	Present in <u>more than 5%</u> of the total area	1	
4.2 **Management of invasive plant species**	Present but no control measures in place	0	
	Present but management inadequate, not under control	0	
	Present, management adequate, but not under control	1	
	Present, but management in place, and under control	2	
4.3 **Competitive plant species that tend to dominate and exclude other species** <u>including shrubs & ground vegetation</u>	None (jump to **5**)	4	
	Present in <u>more than 20%</u> of the total area	0	
	Present in <u>less than 10%</u> of the total area	2	
	Present in <u>10-20%</u> of the total area	1	
4.4 **Management of competitive plant species**	Present but no control measures in place	0	
	Present and management in place, but not under control	1	
	Present and management in place, and under control	2	
4.5 **Deer presence and impact**	No signs of presence or impact	4	
	Signs of presence but only minor impact	1	
	Clear browsing evidence but ground and shrub layer present	0	
	Damage to ground flora, shrub layer and bark	-1	
Total score			

Note species that are invasive and/or problematic and why. Please, mark the areas in the map, and take a coordinate if possible.

5. Wildlife features

Assessment	Criteria	Score	Tick box
5.1 **Ivy on trees** (you can tick more than 1)	<u>No</u> ivy on trees (jump to **5.2**)	0	
	<u>Scattered</u> amounts of ivy on trees <u>throughout</u> woodland	2	
	<u>Large</u> amounts of ivy on trees that are close to public right of way or properties	-1	
5.2 **Dead wood content on the ground**	<u>No</u> dead wood except small twigs	0	
	<u>Few</u> >10cm of diameter branches or trunks	2	
	<u>Abundant</u> branches & trunks of all sizes, and/or some <u>standing</u> dead wood present	3	
	<u>Abundant</u> fallen branches & trunks of all sizes, <u>and</u> several standing dead wood present	4	
5.3 **Other features** <u>Can tick more than one</u>	Insect banks (bare sloped soil, often sandy, sunny)	3	
	Woodpecker nesting holes present	3	
	Badger sett – active	3	
	At least one pond, in <u>good</u> condition	3	
	At least one pond, in <u>poor</u> condition	2	
	Presence of at least a few veteran trees	4	
	Ditches with water	3	
	Watercourse in <u>good</u> condition	2	
	Watercourse in <u>poor</u> condition	1	
Total score			

6. Access and interpretation

Assessment	Criteria	Score	Tick box
6.1 **Access – entrances and gates / kissing gates / stiles**	All in operational order (jump to **6.2**)	1	
	Operational but neglected, broken	-1	
	Not operational	-2	
6.2 **Access – paths** acknowledging path surfaces should be as natural/naturalistic as possible, while maximising access to those with restricted mobility. <u>If several access/paths present, mark the option in the worst condition</u>	Designated paths in good condition, at least some of them usable by wheelchairs	5	
	Designated paths in good condition	4	
	Most designated paths in good condition, but difficult to use when muddy	2	
	Designated paths mix of good and poor condition	2	
	Most of designated paths in poor condition but usable	1	
	All designated paths in poor condition and difficult to use	-1	
	Presence of abundant non-designated paths between the vegetation	-2	
6.3 **Interpretation – Signage**	Not seen/not present (jump to **7**)	0	
	Signage missing or badly damaged, unusable, or inappropriate	-1	
	Signage out of date or unprecise but useable	0	
	Signage usable but old/partly damaged, ideally it is replaced soon	1	
	All usable, precise and safe, but more needed	2	
	All usable, precise and safe	3	
6.4 **Inclusive accessibility** (infrastructure/signage)	Clear provision for people with limited mobility	1	
	Clear provision for people with limited mobility & evidence (e.g. signboard) of compliance with standards (e.g. Fieldfare Trust)	2	
Total score			