

Woodland Trust Management Plan

# Fernyhalgh Wood

(Plan period – 2023 to 2028)



WOODLAND  
TRUST

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## Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

“A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.”

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK’s native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

# Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.
4. The long term vision for all our ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities to generate income from our Estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we encourage our woods to be used for local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the Estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.
10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

## The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

or contact the Woodland Trust

[operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

## Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/>

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

# The Management Plan

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2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
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  - 4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

## 1. SITE DETAILS

### Fernyhalgh Wood

Location:	Preston	Grid reference:	SD553326	OS	1:50,000	Sheet	No.	102
Area:	4.58 hectares (11.32 acres)							
External Designations:	N/A							
Internal Designations:	N/A							

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Fernyhalgh is located in Fulwood an urban area of the northern half of the City of Preston. Fernyhalgh Wood is part of a cluster of Woodland Trust owned sites in northwest Preston. Located in Fulwood Row on the southern slopes of the Savick Brook valley between Midgery Lane in the west and the M6 motorway to the east. Recent development has situated domestic housing along the extent of the southern boundary whilst the northern boundary opens onto public open space managed by Preston Borough Council.

The wood is long and narrow in nature; it is approximately 1.1km long and 60m across at its widest point and the land slopes gently from North to South.

The planting is typical of the late 1970s, with oak, ash, cherry, field maple, hazel, birch, rowan, willow, three species of alder, dogwood, guelder rose and dog rose, within this planting a number of hedgerows and older trees have been retained, especially fringing the stream. Some ornamental species such as snowberry have been planted close to paths and a group of Red Oaks have been planted in a glade area.

Poor management access and areas of permanently wet ground make management operations with machinery challenging.

Fernyhalgh is one site in a network of woods which were gifted to the Woodland Trust by the Commission for New Towns in 1996. It was planted in the late seventies, as part of the overall structure plan of the Central Lancashire New Town. The Wood is part of a larger open access area (owned and managed by the Local Authority), as a result no paths are provided through the woodland blocks but a well-used network of surfaced paths and the Guild Wheel Cycleway runs adjacent to them. The path network also link Fernyhalgh Wood with other nearby Woodland Trust sites.

The woodland has two Key Features Informal Public Access & Secondary Woodland.

The site is well used by local people and a network of Public Footpaths link the woodland to areas of open space managed by Preston City Council as well as several other Woodland Trust sites including Masons Wood, Midgery Wood & Moss Leach.

### 3. LONG TERM POLICY

Fernyhalgh Wood will be managed as a mixed broadleaved, predominantly native high forest. The wood will continue to be composed of largely native broadleaved species such as oak, ash, cherry, rowan, field maple & birch. However, it is likely that the percentage of ash will decrease substantially over the next decade due to ash dieback. Despite this ash will continue to be encouraged within the species mix as some of the native stock may exhibit a degree of natural resilience. The wood will be managed so that it is as diverse as possible in terms of structure and species which will ensure that it is as resilient as possible to future changes imposed upon it such as climate change and tree diseases. Both native and non-native regeneration will be accepted within the woodland. Gaps created by trees gradually reaching senescence, or by trees been felled for safety reasons will be filled by natural regeneration non-native regeneration will be accepted as part of the canopy. We will retain older trees of any species across the whole site as long as this does not conflict with tree safety needs.

Threats to the woodland habitat will be monitored and managed, if possible, the woodland will be assessed for tree diseases particularly ash die back and species composition and levels of regeneration will also be monitored via regular Woodland Condition Assessments.

Open access will be retained at the wood in perpetuity and there will be a well-managed network of approximately 1300 metres of surfaced paths and 9 high quality entrances. The wood will be made as safe as possible via regular safety inspection and any necessary corresponding remedial works. Well defined routes will discourage the creation and use of desire lines thus helping to minimise any negative effect on the woodland.

Local people will be informed of and involved with the site management where appropriate, especially to help understand the management needs of the wood, and the negative effect of some activities such as dumping garden rubbish, which have had a detrimental impact in some parts of the woodland.

## 4. KEY FEATURES

### 4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

<b>Description</b>
In accordance with the Woodland Trusts general aims the site is open to the public for quiet informal pedestrian recreation. The Wood is part of a larger open access area, as a result no paths are provided through the woodland blocks but a well used network of surfaced paths runs adjacent to them allowing easy access to both compartments. The paths also link Fernyhalgh Wood with other nearby Woodland Trust sites.
<b>Significance</b>
The pressures of development in the local area means that these green spaces will become important wildlife corridors and the main areas for informal outdoor recreation. Further more the value of the wood to the local population will not just be derived its from provision of wildlife habitat and public amenity, but through its services as a filter for airborne pollution, light, and noise. As the woodland matures its value as habitat for a range of wildlife will increase providing greater opportunities for observation and enjoyment.
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
The site provides an opportunity for informal recreation in a densely urban area and also links into Public Open Space which is cared for by Preston City Council and the Public Rights Of Way Network. The close proximity of a large population means that the site is subject to intense use and sometimes misuse during the summer months. Wear and tear on open spaces; fires; den building; vandalism; fly tipping; dog excrement, and horse/motorbike riding are perennial problems that need to be taken into consideration when carrying out any management operation (particularly access work).
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
Increased pressure from public use & growing population.
<b>Long term Objective (50 years+)</b>
The long-term intention is to maintain the present levels of access with improvements made where new opportunities are identified. Guided by the parameters set out in the Woodland Trusts woodland management principles and access policy management will continue to seek a balance between conservation and public enjoyment.
<b>Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)</b>
Signs or plaques welcoming the general public to make use of the site will be maintained at the nine entrance points. Vegetation encroaching onto 1300 metres of paths will be cut back and annual maintenance of all woodland fixtures; including, signs, gates, and fences will be undertaken. The site will be kept clear of litter and fly tipping.

### 4.2 f2 Secondary Woodland



<b>Description</b>
Fernyhalgh Wood is predominantly a new broadleaf plantation (planted circa 1975) with some relics of old hedgelines and a small block of mature woodland in compartment 1A. The planting mix used reflects stand types typical of oak-ash woodland, with ash, alder, oak, field maple, birch and cherry as the main species planted. The site is an integral part in a local mosaic of habitats that includes the stream and meadows of the Savick Brook valley/local nature reserve; with a further 6.5ha of Woodland Trust owned woodlands within 300m; and an expanse of domestic gardens along its southern boundary.
<b>Significance</b>
The local area has been extensively developed with the loss of numerous hedgerows, mature trees and farmland. The effects and changes typical of an urban environment will continue to be a disturbance to local wildlife. The creation of Fernyhalgh Wood although small provides a replacement for lost tree cover. Its management as woodland for perpetuity along with other near by Woodland Trust sites (Midgery Wood, Clough Copse and Asda Wood) and the Savick Brook local nature reserve will provide a stable core of wildlife habitats in an otherwise changing landscape.
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
The opportunity exists to ensure a continuity of valuable woodland habitat in an area under intense pressure from development. The existing habitat value can be improved upon through the retention where suitable of standing and fallen dead wood. Thinning work and tree safety operations will help to ensure the long term stability of the stand and diversify the age and species structure
Access onto site is hampered by poor management access and areas of permanently wet ground.
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
Ash dieback.
<b>Long term Objective (50 years+)</b>
Mature, stable broadleaved high forest, with a continuous canopy and diverse age and species range and succession by natural regeneration. As trees gradually reach senescence or are removed for tree safety purposes the gaps left in the canopy will be colonised by natural regeneration of oak, ash, birch etc.
<b>Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)</b>
Active thinning work will be undertaken in 2029 ensure long term stand stability and a diversification of the age and species structure , this work will be across the whole site but particularly focused where the site borders housing along the southern boundary. This will be subject to the findings of the condition assessment and the health of the ash and regeneration in the understorey, as such no work programme or observations have as yet been planned in
A Woodland Condition Assessment will be carried out in the final year of the current plan period. This will make recommendations as to the management of the site, key elements of which are likely to include the effects of ash disease, the development of natural regeneration and any future thinning requirements.



## 5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	February
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	February
2023	WMM - General Site Management	Works associated with maintaining conservation and physical features within the sites such as boundary ditches, fences and walls, hedges,	February
2023	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	February
2023	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	March
2023	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	April
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	May
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	May
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	July
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	July
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	September
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	September
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing	May

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
		pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	
2026	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	May
2026	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	July
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	July
2026	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	September
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	September
2027	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	May
2027	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	May
2027	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	July
2027	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	July
2027	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	September
2027	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	September

## APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	2.12	Ash	1980	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, People issues (+tve & -tve)	
<p>Compartment 1A stretches between Midgery Lane and Fernyhalgh Lane. It has a northerly aspect with moderate slopes to the east but steeper ground in the western third of the compartment. Mostly young plantation a small block of mature woodland forms a southern spur following a small clough southwards. The west and east boundaries are defined by the roadside hedges on Midgery and Fernyhalgh Lanes (respectively). The remnants of a hedge line and the boundary fences of neighbouring properties define the majority of the southern boundary; concrete marker posts define the remaining sections of boundary. The compartment is crossed by two footpaths linking the Savick Brook public open space with housing in Fulwood Row, the management responsibility for these lies with Preston Borough Council. The mature wood consists of alder, ash, sycamore, willow, birch and oak with an understory and shrub layer dominated by bramble and nettles. The younger plantations are dominated by ash, alder, and oak with field maple, wild and bird cherry, birch and rowan, the under storey and woodland boundary consists of a mixture of thorn, willow (various), dogwood, hazel, holy, rose bramble, nettle and elder. The ground flora under the mature canopy is dominated by ivy; across the remainder of the plantation the ground flora is the remnant of pastureland species.</p>						
2a	2.09	Ash	1980	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, People issues (+tve & -tve)	
<p>Compartment 2A stretches eastwards from Fernyhalgh Lane to within 100m of the M6 motorway. It is approximately 500m long by 40m wide with a northerly aspect and moderate slope. The roadside hedge on Fernyhalgh Lane defines the western most boundary. The majority of the southern boundary is defined by the boundary fences of neighbouring properties. The remaining sections of boundary are defined by concrete marker posts, and the remains of a hedge in the case of the southwestern block. The compartment is crossed by two footpaths linking the Savick Brook public open space with housing in Fulwood Row, the management responsibility for these lies with Preston Borough Council.</p> <p>The woodland blocks are dominated by semi-mature ash, alder, birch, field maple, wild and bird cherry, with oak, rowan and willow. The under storey and woodland boundary consists of a mixture of thorn, willow (various), dogwood, hazel, holly, rose bramble, nettle and elder. The ground flora of the plantation is the remnant of pastureland species.</p>						



### **Ancient Woodland**

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

### **Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland**

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

### **Ancient Woodland Site**

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

### **Beating Up**

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

### **Broadleaf**

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

### **Canopy**

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

### **Clearfell**

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

### **Compartment**

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

### **Conifer**

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

### **Continuous Cover forestry**

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

**Coppice**

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

**Exotic (non-native) Species**

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

**Field Layer**

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

**Group Fell**

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

**Long Term Retention**

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

**Minimum Intervention**

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

**Mixed Woodland**

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

**National vegetation classification (NVC)**

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

**Native Species**

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

**Natural Regeneration**

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

**Origin & Provenance**

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.



**Re-Stocking**

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

**Shrub Layer**

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

**Silviculture**

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

**Stand**

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

**Sub-Compartment**

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

**Thinning**

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

**Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes**

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

**Weeding**

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established.

**Windblow/Windthrow**

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.

**Registered Office:**

**The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL.**

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