



Hagg Wood

Management Plan 2017-2022

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THE WOODLAND TRUST

INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations. Please either consult The Woodland Trust website www.woodlandtrust.org.uk or contact the Woodland Trust (wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland. Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

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

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.

In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, 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.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on 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 heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential 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 allow our woods to be used to support 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. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
- 10 Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site - their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

1.0 SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Hagg Wood
Location:	Moorsholm
Grid reference:	NZ687154, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 94
Area:	4.83 hectares (11.94 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Community Forest

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

North of Moorsholm village, where there is on-road parking, Hagg Wood is a narrow strip of ancient semi-natural woodland. It follows the steep eastern bank of Hagg Beck and forms an important part of a larger wooded valley complex. Two public access routes (a public bridleway at the southern end and a footpath from the north-east) cross Hagg Beck via a footbridge and are well-used by local people.

2.2 Extended Description

Situated approximately one kilometre north of the village of Moorsholm, Hagg Wood consists of 4.95 hectares of predominantly valley side Ancient Semi-Natural oak woodland with an extensive hazel under storey. The woodland holding is a narrow strip, following the steep eastern bank of Hagg Beck with a north westerly aspect. As valley woodland it is not very prominent in the landscape, but does form an important part of a much larger wooded valley complex, which is composed of a mixture of semi natural woodland and planted ancient woodland. It is bounded to the east and south by grazing land and by plantation woodland to the west and north.

The central and southern sections of the wood are dominated by over-mature hazel coppice with oak, ash, alder, cherry and sycamore standards. The ground flora is indicative of semi natural woodland and is dominated by dog's mercury, grasses and mosses. Within the wood there are a great number of wet flushes, dominated by alder with some willow species also present. The woodland edge to the east consists of blackthorn and hawthorn scrub, whilst to the north of the wood the proportion of sycamore increases, along with occasional ash and alder. These areas (approx 0.5 ha in total) appear to have been clear felled and replanted in the mid-to-late 1970's with sycamore and then left un-thinned. Some of the hazel coppice (approximately 0.5 ha consisting of a number of small coupes) was re-coppiced in 1994 but many of the stools have died.

A public bridleway running along Uxto Lane from Moorsholm village provides access to the southern end of the wood where a footbridge allows walkers to cross Hagg Beck. A public footpath passes through the north eastern end of the wood and across Hagg Beck via a footbridge. Both these access routes were substantially upgraded in 2006 and are well used by local people and longer distance walkers. No other routes exist within the woodland due to the inaccessible terrain. Management access to the woodland crosses existing grazing land and enters the wood via an old management gate midway along its southern boundary. There is an old track leading into the wood at this point but it is narrow and was probably only used for access to remove coppice and other woodland products during past management.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Public access to the wood is gained by following the track (a public footpath) that joins the road at the northern end of Moorsholm village at the bend just beyond the Toad Hall public house. After about 50m, a public bridleway leaves this track and heads off along Uxto Lane providing access to the southern end of the wood after walking about 500m. Alternatively, by following the public footpath along the track then across the fields for around 1km, the northern end of the wood is reached. The track the footpath follows to reach the northern end of Hagg Wood is particularly muddy in places and difficult to walk. No other routes exist within the wood due to the inaccessible terrain.

For visitors wishing to reach the wood by public transport, a bus stop exist on the High Street/Freebrough Road running through Moorsholm village from where the wood can be reached on foot within about a 10-15 minutes walk. For those needing public conveniences, public toilets can be found in Lingdale on Kilton Lane about 3 miles away from Moorsholm. Two RADAR toilets are located in Saltburn-by-the-Sea at Cat Nab and on the pier (summer only). Car parking is limited to on-road parking in Moorsholm village.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long term vision for Hagg Wood is in line with the outcomes in the Trust's Action Plan 'Keeping Woodlands Alive'. This is to maintain, improve and restore the biodiversity of this rich ancient semi natural woodland and increase people's awareness and enjoyment of woodland.

Key to the Woodland Trust objectives is the provision of informal public access commensurate with the level of use the woodland receives. Access will be maintained and improved where necessary so that a wide variety of local users and visitors to the area can continue to share in its beauty, gain an understanding of the woodlands importance in the landscape and its rich wildlife habitat, which is irreplaceable.

The ancient semi-natural woodland will be conserved, the planted areas restored, and the coppicing continued whilst sustainable, to achieve the greatest biodiversity in this ancient wood. This will be achieved by perpetuating the predominantly broadleaf high forest continuous cover woodland within the landscape. Improving stand conditions by reducing the impact of the planted Sycamore; reverting the woodland slowly back to predominantly mixed broadleaves. Although it is expected that Sycamore will always be present in the mix. As long as it is feasible it is desirable to continue the reinstatement and maintain the traditional coppice regime. This will maintain and improve the rich wildlife sustained by the long term continuity of the traditional practice of coppice. Maintaining small-scale structural diversity to the woodland with trees at different points of establishment and growth, with cycles going no longer than 30 years and ideally at approximately 15 years. The key to the success of this vision will be successful regeneration of the coppice coupes. Retention of decaying and dead fallen and standing timber to provide a habitat for many fungi and wood boring beetles which help the wood to decay and form an essential part of the woodland ecosystem. To enhance biodiversity maturity and uneven aged structure within the woodland working practices that do not impact adversely on the integral environment will be adopted using minimum intervention where possible.

It is anticipated that these works will safeguard and enhance the existing environmental and historical value of the wood and maintain and enhance the level of public access in the woodland.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

5.1 Informal Public Access

Description

Public access is available along a bridleway to the south end of the wood and via a public footpath to the north. Both routes quickly leave the Trust's part of Hagg Wood but a permissive path running through Hagg Wood on the west side of the valley allows a circular walk to be taken from Moorsholm village. No official car parking is available on or near to the site and the village centre is about a 15 minute walk.

Significance

Providing public access to woods is a cornerstone of the Trust's management approach to its properties and is encapsulated in its corporate objective of increasing enjoyment of woodland. Although small and with limited access within the wood itself, it affords some nice views along Hagg Beck in an area dominated by farmland and does provide a means of access to a wider area of woodland beyond the Trust's ownership.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities - When both the public bridleway and footpath were upgraded in 2006, a permissive path was also established through the wood laying on the west bank of the beck, that provides a good circular walk from the village. This could be improved and made better known in the area.
 Constraints - Steep slopes, rock outcrops and wet ground conditions due to frequent wet flushes and the quality of the ASNW ground flora would make extending access into the rest of Hagg Wood undesirable.

Factors Causing Change

Ongoing water erosion on public bridleway.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To enhance public access to Hagg Wood following the significant improvements made to both the public footpath and bridleway during 2006 and the establishment of a permissive path through the neighbouring landowner's part of Hagg Wood to link these two routes together, future work will concentrate on maintaining these routes to this new improved standard, to allow a wider range of people to enjoy the wood.

The Trust will continue to promote the woodland amongst people in the region and members nationally so long as the primary objective of 'no further loss of ancient woodland' (in terms of both quality and quantity) is compromised.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

During this plan period the short term objective is to:

- Improve the path/track network in the wood.

This will include the following operational works:

1. Renew entrances and signage,
2. Install steps on the steeper ground and some drainage and/or boardwalk in wet areas along the path network.
3. Ensure the surfacing of the path network does not degrade and vegetation does not block paths.

5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

The current designation comes from the NCC Inventory of Ancient Woodland 1987. Woodland of predominantly oak with willow, alder and a dense understorey of hazel coppice with a small area of planted sycamore at the northeast end. Contains a rich and diverse ASNW ground flora.

Significance

Ancient Semi-natural Woodland, a nationally rare habitat type whose preservation is both a local and national target within biodiversity action plans. Such woodland in the Teesside area is scarce and therefore is a particularly rare habitat locally. Because it links into and forms part of a larger area of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland its value both for flora and fauna is increased.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities - The reintroduction of coppicing into the wood will increase the resilience of the woodland and improve the biodiversity. Ring barking to remove the sycamore not only stops the spread of this species into the wood but provides the opportunity to create a valuable standing deadwood resource.

Constraints - Steep slopes, difficult access and very long extraction routes make thinning out and extracting the sycamore for sale probably uneconomical.

Factors Causing Change

Presence of invasive sycamore
Mammal browsing (deer)

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain mostly continuous broadleaved high forest woodland across the site which is predominantly native in character. Given the dominance of sycamore on part of the site, any future woodland arising from natural regeneration in this area is also going to be sycamore dominated. However, by favouring the regeneration of other native broadleaves over sycamore where this occurs, greater species diversity will be encouraged over the long-term. In areas that have had previous coppice management, the reintroduction of this method will be encouraged, to increase the age structure and promote a greater species diversity within the wood.

Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

During this plan period the short term objective is to:

- Continue with the restoration programme in the sycamore dominated area,
- Restore a coppice structure to a small proportion of the wood, subject to a local demand for the product/ volunteer group activity or woodland condition assessment highlighting the opportunity to re-work the established coppice areas

This will include the following operational works:

1. Thinning and ring barking of approximately 0.5ha of sycamore-dominated woodland. Dates given in the harvesting schedule.
2. Restoring traditional coppice management progressively coppiced over the 5 year plan period.
3. Control of the deer and grey squirrel populations will be undertaken. The impact of deer on the wood will be re-assessed every 2 years and results of this will be fed into the level of deer control.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
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APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	4.95	Oak (pedunculate)	1950	Coppice	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Community Forest
<p>North and north-west facing mature broadleaved woodland on the east bank of Hagg Beck consisting of predominantly oak with an extensive understorey of hazel coppice. Alder and willows dominate along the streamside and in wet flushes that occur throughout the wood. The very rich ground flora is indicative of Ancient Semi-natural Woodland (ASNW). At the northern end of the wood, immediately west of the footpath is approximately 0.5 hectares of planted semi-mature sycamore, with some regeneration of ash, alder and willows. MANAGEMENT LIMITATIONS: No vehicular access within the woodland, steep slopes, persistently wet areas.</p>							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2018	1a	Selective Fell	0.10	5	0.5
2020	1a	Selective Fell	0.50	10	5
2020	1a	Coppice	4.80	2	10
2020	1a	Selective Fell	0.50	8	4
2021	1a	Coppice	4.80	2	10

GLOSSARY

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. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

Windblow/Windthrow

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