



Dunscar Wood

Management Plan 2015-2020

MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

ITEM

Page No.

Introduction

Plan review and updating

Woodland Management Approach

Summary

1.0 Site details

2.0 Site description

2.1 Summary Description

2.2 Extended Description

3.0 Public access information

3.1 Getting there

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 Long term policy

5.0 Key Features

5.1 Informal Public Access

5.2 New Native Woodland

6.0 Work Programme

Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Glossary

MAPS

Access

Conservation Features

Management

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Dunscar Wood
Location:	Bolton
Grid reference:	SD713136, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 109
Area:	5.70 hectares (14.09 acres)
Designations:	Community Forest, Green Belt

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Dunscar Wood is located about three miles north of Bolton, Greater Manchester, close to the village of Egerton. The site was acquired in 1998 and planted by the Woodland Trust in 1999. It forms part of the Red Rose Forest. New native woodland is a key feature of the site, it consists of 4.6 hectares of mixed native broadleaved planting including species such as oak, ash, birch, cherry, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and dog rose, as well as 1.1 hectares of grassland. Dunscar Wood slopes down to its western and southern boundaries and affords excellent views towards Winter Hill. The planting has been designed to enhance the inherent site features, such as old walls and hedgerows and to good views across the valley.

The site is bounded to the south by Dunscar Industrial Estate, to the west by the A666 trunk road, to the east by pasture land and to the north by a housing estate. Although the site contains no formal public rights of way, the informal path network is well used by local people and informal public access is one of the sites key features. The paths consist of a mowed grass surface and can become muddy when wet. The Woodland Trust has involved local people in the design and creation of new woodland from an early stage. The site forms part of the Woodlands On Your Doorstep project (WOYD), which created 200 new community woodlands throughout England and Wales to celebrate the new millennium. Dunscar Wood also has a sundial which was chosen as the site millennium feature and designed by a local craftsperson. The Woodland Trust aims to continue to develop further links with local people where suitable opportunities arise to help deliver this management plan.

2.2 Extended Description

Dunscar Wood is located approximately five kilometres north of Bolton, Greater Manchester, close to the village of Egerton. The site is bounded to the south by Dunscar Industrial Estate, to the west by the A666 trunk road, to the east by pasture land and to the north by a housing estate. Dunscar Wood is approximately 2 kilometres to the east of the Smithills Estate which is the Woodland Trusts largest site in England. It also forms part of the Manchester City of Trees Community Forest.

Dunscar Wood slopes gently down to its western and southern boundaries and affords excellent views towards Winter Hill. The woodland was planted on slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils which are found in this area.

New native woodland is a key feature of the site; it consists of 4.6 hectares of mixed native broadleaved tree planted in 1999 including species such as sessile oak, ash, birch, cherry, rowan, aspen, holly, alder, hawthorn, blackthorn and goat willow, as well as 1.1 hectares of grassland. There are also a small number of mature sycamore on site which were most likely field boundary trees prior to the woodland been planted.

The site was acquired in 1998 and planted by the Woodland Trust in 1999. Little is known about the sites history prior to Woodland Trust ownership and its thought to have been used formally as pasture land for grazing. The site is part of the Woodlands On Your Doorstep Project (WOYD), which created 200 new community woodlands throughout England and Wales to celebrate the new millennium. Dunscar Wood also has a sundial which was chosen as the site millennium feature and designed by a local craftsman.

Although the site contains no formal public rights of way, the informal path network is well used by local people and informal public access is one of the sites key features. The paths consist of a mowed grass surface and can become muddy when wet.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Dunscar Wood is located about three miles north of Bolton, Greater Manchester, close to the village of Egerton. The wood can be accessed from a pedestrian squeeze gap entrance which can be found just off Dunscar Fold which is in turn just off Darwen Road on the sites northern boundary. On site there is a circular, unsurfaced path, which consists of mown grass, the paths can get muddy and slippery when wet.

Parking is available on nearby local roads such as Darwen Road but may be limited.

Nearest public toilet: Located around 5 miles away from the wood at Asda Superstores, Manchester Road, Bolton. Toilets are suitable for disabled users.

Nearest bus stop: Located at Darwen Road (The Dunscar Arms Pub), which is approximately 200 metres away from the wood. Darwen Road is a suburban road with a pavement. Information from Traveline website.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline- www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2 608

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The Woodland Trusts long-term intention is to create and maintain a mixed aged broadleaved woodland interspersed with areas of transitional and permanent open ground providing a mosaic of habitats and environments that will be a benefit to native flora and fauna.

The development of native secondary woodland will be promoted through the encouragement of any further areas of natural regeneration on areas not designated as long-term open spaces. Thinning work will also occur across the site to help diversify the age/species structure of the site and to promote stand stability.

The relatively short life cycle of birch and willow means that within eighty years the site has the potential to contain a number of veteran trees and significant areas of fallen and standing dead wood.

Transitional zones between the naturally establishing secondary woodland and open spaces will be maintained through a programme of annual cutting of ride/wood edge vegetation.

The present network of open access for pedestrian use will be maintained through a regular mowing regime in the summer months under the sites Estates Management Contract.

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

The wood can be accessed from a pedestrian access point which can be found just off Darwen Road on the sites northern boundary, this is the only pedestrian access to the site. On site there is a circular, unsurfaced path, which consists of mown grass and is approximately 600 metres in length. The site also contains just over one hectare of open space, during consultation local people fed back that they were keen to create a large element of open space to maintain vistas to Winter Hill. The wood is used mainly by local people who arrive on foot, for quiet informal recreation.

Significance

Dunscar Wood is adjacent to many of the northern districts of Bolton such as Dunscar, Eagley, Toppings and Bromley Cross. It is a pleasant peaceful area to spend some time, and gives people the opportunities to easily get away from the urban environment.

Opportunities & Constraints

The wood only has one pedestrian access point, however there is a good network of mowed footpaths and some interesting features such as the millennium sun dial which will encourage people to linger and enjoy the woodland.

Factors Causing Change

Path edges been encroached adjacent by tree growth.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The existing level and quality of access will be monitored and maintained by the Trust at its current level with 1 entrance point and approximately 600m of maintained paths. The open ground element will be retained to maintain the vistas which are an integral part of the sites attraction. Consultation and involvement of local people will continue to be important.

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

Pedestrian access is due to be assessed under the Welcoming Sites Project (WSP) Summer 2015. Paths will continue to be cut as necessary (3 times per year in 2015) to maintain easy public access, grassland mown once annually, and other facilities such as welcome signs at the entrance will be maintained annually under the Estates Management Contract. Trees adjacent to path edges will be crown lifted/coppiced back to ensure site lines are kept open along the paths and that grass paths are not over shaded which will cause the path surface to deteriorate. The site will be kept reasonably clear of litter and fly tipping.

5.2 New Native Woodland

Description

The woodland consists of 4.6 hectares of mixed native broadleaved trees planted in the year 2000. Species include oak, ash, birch, cherry, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and dog rose there is also 1.1 hectares of grassland. It is bounded to the north by housing, its western boundary is marked by the A666, Dunscar Industrial estate lies to the south of the site and to the east lies improved pasture land.

Significance

This is a small native broadleaved wood in an area with very little woodland at all and certainly very little native woodland, hence it will improve the habitat in the local area. As the woodland is located in a Community Forest area there will be continued emphasis on creating new woodland in the future.

Opportunities & Constraints

Initial tree growth has been rapid and the basic structure of the woodland will develop quite quickly. The site was a small pasture field with rank and common plant species before planting, and its small size will limit its conservation value.

Factors Causing Change

Mammal damage, tree disease particularly ash dieback.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

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.

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

Active thinning work will be undertaken during the plan period to ensure long term stand stability and to promote age and species diversity across the site.

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	5.70	Ash	1999	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland	Community Forest, Green Belt
<p>6.07 hectares (15 acres) of well established new native woodland planted in 2000. Dunscar Wood slopes down to its western and southern boundaries and affords excellent views towards Winter Hill. The woodland is bounded to the south by Dunscar Industrial Estate, to the west by the A666 trunk road and to the east by pasture land and to the north by a housing estate. The site contains 1.1 hectares (2.7 acres) of open space in the form of grassland. A well used network of informal paths can be found on site.</p>							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2017	1a	Ride edge Coppice	0.50	4	2
2018	1a	Thin	1.00	5	5
2019	1a	Thin	1.00	5	5
2020	1a	null	1.00	20	20

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 on 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.