



Woodland View

Management Plan 2018-2023

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Woodland View
Location:	Bowtown Estate, Newtownards
Grid reference:	J505737, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 15
Area:	3.74 hectares (9.24 acres)
Designations:	Woods on your Doorstep

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Woodland view is one of The Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' woodlands, created to commemorate the Millennium. It lies on a drumlin on the outer edge of Bowtown housing estate, just outside Newtownards in County Down.

2.2 Extended Description

Woodland view is a small woodland creation site positioned on a drumlin on the outer edge of Bowtown housing estate on the SE edge of Newtownards town, in County Down. Housing surrounds the site and this edge of the town will continue to expand outwards.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive gifted the land in 1997 as one of the 50 Woods On Your Doorstep (WoyD) sites in Northern Ireland. The development and first 5 years maintenance of the 50 sites was 50% funded by the Millennium Commission.

Once agricultural land, most of the site had been maintained as grass with a twice yearly cut for 25 years by the Housing Executive. Following consultation with the local community, facilitated by Bowtown Residents Association, the 3.76 ha site was planted in 1998/99. Volunteers from Bryson House Urban Environmental Unit, contractors and the local community planted it. Planted with a mixture of native broadleaved trees dominated by oak, a few Horse Chestnut have been planted at the community's request.

Public access is integral to this WoyD site. A circular grass path network was drawn up in consultation with the local community and following lines of preference. Access is gained from Abbot Drive. Forest Service granted community Woodland Supplement and woodland planting grant for the site.

Each WoyD site had a feature created to mark and celebrate the millennium. In Woodland View this is an open area at the top of the hill with a panoramic view over Strangford Lough, Newtownards airfield and to Scrabo Tower. In the centre of this area is an upright log with a face made up of bronze oak leaf shapes. Artist Betty Newman-Maguire created it in the winter of 2001/2002. Unfortunately the face has long disappeared and only the log remains. A mature hawthorn mixed species hedgerow remains denoting the field boundaries on site and provides a feature interest for both the history of the site and the wildlife e.g. song birds and wood mice. The path rides and open rough grassland provide forage for butterflies, moths and other pollinators.

The site suffers from some localised fly tipping including green waste which can introduce unwanted ornamental species from time to time that need to be removed. Despite this the site remains popular with local dog walkers in the surrounding area.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Public access exists along Abbot Drive. Regular cutting and maintenance of all paths will maintain public access, however these paths are due for an upgrade to gravel, early in 2008. These paths will be allowed to grass over and will continue to be cut. This will be re-assessed when the tree canopy closes. Access features should be maintained to a high standard.

Management access is gained through management gates erected on Abbot Drive.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In the long term, whilst maintaining the site for public access, it would be intended to encourage the site to become a self-sustaining mixed deciduous woodland dominated by upland oak. Thinning of the woodland to encourage a diverse structure and stability in terms of species presence will be considered in the next few years. It is unlikely that it will ever produce quality timber as it is small and vandalism levels will continue to be high due to its urban nature.

The open area at the top of the hill will require annual mowing to retain it for public use and the view over Strangford Lough should be retained. The hedge should be left to mature and where possible encourage native hedgerow flora to thrive and encroach into the woodland e.g. pignut, herb robert.

Regular cutting and maintenance of all paths will maintain public access until the canopy closes. At this time, path maintenance should be reassessed, as regular use of the paths should retain these paths as access routes. Widening of paths to create woodland rides and glades to encourage flora and invertebrate diversity will be considered in the next few years. Access features should be maintained to a high standard.

Community involvement where possible in reducing the unwanted fly tipping and communication around the reduction of unwanted green waste in helping to maintain a sustainable local woodland /greenspace resource for future generations of the Bowtown community.

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 from Abbot Drive via a fenced squeeze gap and from an alley from The Meadows. Within the site there is a network of grass paths, including a looped circular route around the top edge of the steep site and sloping paths down and around the base of the grassy hill. The woodland provides a panoramic view over Strangford Lough, Scrabo tower and Newtownards Airfield.

Significance

This public access provides the opportunity to increase people's awareness and enjoyment of woodland, to connect people with woods and trees, one of the Woodland Trusts key objectives. The area provides a woodland experience for local people. As this was created as a Woods On Your Doorstep site, it will be important to retain informal public access facilities within the site including paths and signage.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Management of access features is necessary due to vandalism including burning, theft, graffiti and the use of bikes and quads.

Opportunities:

As an urban fringe wood, this site provides an opportunity for many local people to enjoy woodland. The views over the lough provide a perfect opportunity for a summer picnic "tree party" event. There is an opportunity to develop further access facilities over time as finances or local eagerness allows.

Factors Causing Change

Visitor use of path, sporadic use of path by scramblers, quads and bikes, climate, Removal of signs by vandals, fly tipping

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain informal public access to the whole site by maintaining the paths and open areas. To encourage local involvement in the ongoing management, monitoring and enjoyment of the developing local woodland.

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

Regular cutting and maintenance of all paths should maintain public access. With the canopy now encroaching and closing a row or two rows of trees will be taken out either side of the path where necessary to maintain access and open woodland rides throughout the site. Access features should be maintained to a high standard.

5.2 New Native Woodland

Description

A total of 3.76 hectares of new woodland was planted in 1998/99. This was planted by volunteers from Bryson House Urban Environmental Unit, a contractor (CVNI) and local people. Planting days were held for local schoolchildren from Castle Gardens Primary and Abbey Primary. The site is made up of an existing mature hawthorn hedgerow boundary that bi-sects the site denoting the field boundaries throughout with blackthorn scrub spreading out from these areas creating regeneration and scrub layer in the wood. To the south east of the site there is an open scrub area dominated by gorse with an open rough grassland view point to the top of the steep site. The canopy is dominated by oak, ash and silver birch with some feature trees like crab apples, wild cherry and horse chestnut requested by the community.

Significance

The aim of the Woods On Your Doorstep project was to create community woodland. This also fulfils one of the Woodland Trust's key aims to "increase new native woodland". In addition, woodland creation will add a variety of habitats to the site and improve its biodiversity value.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Vandalism, fires.

Gorse regrowth

Opportunities:

The development of native secondary woodland.

The development of a valuable habitat for local biodiversity.

Factors Causing Change

Tree growth, tree disease, climate, green waste dumping.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To encourage the development of a self-sustaining native woodland with public access and a good habitat for local biodiversity. Gorse has been a firerisk on several occasions, an extensive area was removed in 2010 and the regrowth will continue to be monitored until the trees are fully established.

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

Establishment of the planted areas is of primary importance.

It may require restructuring in the future to encourage age and structural diversity.

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	3.72	Birch (downy/silver)	1999	High forest		Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland	Woods on your Doorstep

The whole site is presently managed as one compartment. NI Housing Executive previously maintained the site for 25 years as improved grassland, cut twice per year. A mature hawthorn mixed species hedgerow remains denoting the field boundaries on site. It was planted in 1998/99 with 60-80 stock of native species with 70% trees, 10% shrubs and 20% open space as required by the WGS. Following initial problems with vandalism to the trees, which resulted in the decision not to spray the trees for 2 years, they then began to develop well. It was given a WGS new planting grant in 1998 with the final installment paid in 2005. A grass path network runs through the site and was granted Community Woodland Supplement to complement the WGS.

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.