



Royd Wood

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Royd Wood
Location:	Meltham
Grid reference:	SE098096, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 110
Area:	3.38 hectares (8.35 acres)
Designations:	National Park

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Royd Wood is one of The Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' woodlands, created to commemorate the Millennium. It lies just inside the border of the Peak District National Park, and comprises mixed woodland and meadowland. It is easy to reach from town centre and offers spectacular views of the surrounding countryside.

2.2 Extended Description

The Woodland Trust purchased the land from a neighbouring Farm on the 20th December 1999 as part of the Woods on Your Doorstep Project (WOYD) with financial assistance from the Millennium Commission, Sainsbury's Homebase and other donations. The site, located just inside the border of the Peak District National Park is composed of six fields surrounded by dry stonewalls. Royd Wood occupies the north facing, gently sloping meadowlands on the edge of the Meltham moor plateau and will represent a prominent feature in the landscape.

Surrounding fields are mainly used as pasture. Two small seasonal streams pass through the easterly spur of the site whereas to the north and west the site immediately overlooks Royd Edge, a steep sided bilberry and heather covered stream valley with many footpaths running from the moor land to the south west down to a finger of birch scrub into Meltham. To the north fine views extend out over Meltham to a rural landscape of valleys dotted with broadleaved woodland, pasture and industrial architecture.

A circular path is maintained by the Trust linking to 3 pedestrian access points. A squeeze stile to the east serves as the main public access. Two-step stiles serve the public footpath, which passes through the middle of the site, from the moorland and adjacent pasture to the south down into Royd Edge valley and into Meltham to the north. The scenic views provided from the site are within easy walking distance of the town centre making it a popular destination for dog walkers and an important local amenity. The track running just outside the north east boundary (Hebble lane) is like most farm tracks in the area, a public right of way.

The site has been grazed for many years. The land was purchased by the Trust in 1999 as a site for its “woods on your doorstep” project. This scheme was designed to create 200 new woodlands for the millennium with public involvement and recreation being the primary objectives. Local fundraising and public consultation on the design and name of the wood culminated in a planting event. The site adopts its name from its immediate locality, which takes its name from the old English word “Royd” used to describe a woodland clearing.

Most of the site previously being improved pasture land is of little floristic value however the small streams to the east which have been incorporated into the 15% (0.5ha) open ground element of the design appear to be developing an interesting herb mix. Similarly the predominantly bilberry and heather flora from the neighbouring valley may well colonise the north-western fringe if encouraged. The site was planted as mixed native broadleaved woodland in Dec 2000. Deer and hares frequent the site.

A section of stock fence (180m) portions off 0.14 Ha of the site, which is leased out for grazing. This area in the northern corner of the site had to remain unplanted due to the presence of converging overhead services.

A viewpoint complete with a millennium feature bench was created at the top of the site in the south west corner. Where the site drops from one field to the next along the eastern boundary stone steps have been created in the wall gaps.

All boundaries are now under Trust ownership and responsibility. The small fields which make up the site are bounded by dry stonewalls of local grit stone. Lengths of top fencing (double strands of barb on posts) have been added along the northern, southern and eastern boundaries (325m) where they neighbour pastureland and the dry stonewall is not sufficiently stock proof in itself. This stock proofing serves a deed of covenant required for the boundaries neighbouring the Lower Royd Farm’s land (all the east and south facing boundaries from the main site entrance up to the southern footpath style). Despite these measures there is evidence of top grazing on site presumed to be by deer. Internal walls will be allowed to succumb to natural deterioration, becoming less intrusive and further increasing access throughout the site, they may well provide a source of material for future perimeter repairs.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

ACCESS TO THE SITE

Royd Wood is situated 5 miles southwest of Huddersfield and 0.5 mile south of Meltham. From the centre of Meltham travel east for approximately 0.25 miles along the B6107 towards Holmfirth. Turn right in to Royd Road, which is a no-through road, that heads up hill. Follow the road for approximately 500m until the junction of Hebble Lane which leads to Intake Farm. The entrance to the site is a squeeze stile at the junction of these two lanes.

ENTRANCE AND FOOTPATHS

A squeeze stile serves as the main public access from Royd Road and an information board is sited at this eastern entrance. A public footpath, which leads from Meltham and passes through the centre of the site in a straight line from north to south, entrance, is via two step stiles. Welcome signs are present at all public access points. The scenic views provided from the site are within easy walking distance of the town centre making it a popular destination for dog walkers and an important local amenity.

The site is on a gentle slope and a circular path of approximately 650m runs around the perimeter. The path contains 3 steps and a short section boardwalk.

PARKING

Roadside parking in Royd Road.

PUBLIC TOILETS

No public toilets known within 5 miles

BUS STOPS

Meltham - Nearest bus stop to be confirmed.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Further information about public transport contact Traveline on www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2 608

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long-term intention is to develop and maintain a species diverse, secondary predominately native upland oak wood. This will be achieved by management of the existing trees or shrubs, through minimum intervention and the introduction of new plants through natural regeneration. The wood to be dominated (80-100%) by native broadleaved species with a mixed shrub layer. Public access will be available throughout the site with the existing footpaths, and open spaces maintained.

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 contains 1km of internal path; this internally links the 3 formal pedestrian access points. A squeeze stile linking to Royd Road in the east serves as the main public access point. A further two step stiles serve the footpath that passes north-south through the middle of the site. Welcome signage is present at all public access points with an information board located besides the main eastern access. Internal access includes two boardwalk style footbridges. A bench is sited in the south west corner of the site provides a view to the north over Meltham to a rural landscape of valleys dotted with broadleaved woodland, pasture and industrial architecture.

Significance

The scenic views provided from the site are within easy walking distance of the town centre making it a popular destination for local people, especially dog walkers and therefore forms an important local amenity.

Opportunities & Constraints

The site is a short distance from Meltham (0.5 miles away to the north) and offers outstanding views. The site has excellent links with the local network of public rights of way. Its location situated alongside the picturesque Royd edge valley and adjacent moorland to the south means the site can serve as both a short circuit from town or the start of a long distance walk into the moors. It is expected the woodland will become more used by walkers as the tree cover develops. Path maintenance within the site ties in with (but not exclusively) the control of vegetation beneath powerlines and the restrictive covenant on planting within 6m of the eastern leg of the south eastern boundary. The wood is of a reasonable size to visit and the surrounding land may provide ample opportunity for expansion in future years.

Factors Causing Change

Development of canopy may obscure viewpoints within the site. Usage is expected to increase with canopy development and this may lead to increased maintenance requirements for site furniture. Anti-social activities such as camps, fires and litter.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To create a woodland environment for informal public access retaining views down the valley from key locations within the site. Access facilities will, on the whole, be low key and appropriate for this quiet locally visited site. However a good standard of access provision will be maintained throughout Royd Wood: a path network will be kept open for use and the 3 main entrances will be accessible and clearly signed.

As the wood matures, it will need to be made as safe as practical for visitors through more regular tree safety inspections, which will become more frequent as the trees increase in age.

Any threats to the wood (eg anti-social activities) will be monitored and managed as necessary, with the intention of lessening their impact.

Opportunities to involve the community in the management of the wood will continue to be explored

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

Maintenance of footpaths, three site entrances and associated signage, footbridges, steps and bench will be undertaken on at least one occasion per year.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

An upland oak woodland which will occupy a prominent position on the side of the hills above Meltham and overlooked from the surrounding moor land. This 2.89ha ex-pasture site was planted in 2000 with oak, birch and rowan mix (to simulate NVC class 17). Alder was planted next to wet flush areas with hawthorn on exposed site edges. A shrub mix of holly, dogwood, hazel and guelder rose was used to soften edges under power lines and next to farm buildings and wet flushes. Self-set ash and sycamore is now taking hold in limited areas around the boundary of the woodland, these have clearly blown in from surrounding trees situated within the wider environment.

Significance

In line with Trust objectives to increase new native woodland and restoring and improving woodland biodiversity. The development of woodland in this location will complement the wooded nature of neighbouring valleys. The wood occupies a prominent position in the landscape both from the perspective of Meltham and the moorland above.

Opportunities & Constraints

The site is extremely exposed to a strong southwesterly wind and trees may be prone to windblow. It is expected that the site will produce a low canopy of gnarly trees serving public access, community involvement and landscape objectives. The site's biodiversity is currently unremarkable and its isolation from other woodlands means colonisation by other tree species is unlikely, however ground flora has potential to improve. Many hares have been seen on the site and there is evidence of deer grazing. Overhead powerlines (11kV) cross the compartment at 3 locations; the longest section is across the eastern spur (running north to south), the other sections are short and clip across the site's corners to the south east and to the east (above the main pedestrian and management access) A spring is located at the woods southern boundary and a disused water pipe appears to run across the site from the south east corner to just outside the Trust's boundary feeding a cattle trough. The east facing leg of the southeastern boundary has a restrictive covenant preventing the planting of trees within 6m of the boundary to protect the water supply for Lower Royd Farm. However some of the footpaths coincide with these sensitive areas and vegetation maintenance will therefore be partially taken care of as a result under the mowing regime. A further area (0.14Ha) in the north has been let as pasture and forms part of the open ground element of the planting design. It also serves to buffer the farmhouse from the effects of recreation getting too close.

Factors Causing Change

Deer, hare and rabbit damage may increase in as the woodland develops. The exposed location of the site may lead to the potential for wind blow and stunted growth.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Establish an upland oak woodland of mixed species composition and uneven age structure which contributes to the local wooded landscape of the area

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

The short term objectives during the plan period will be to monitor the development of the woodland, through key features and woodland condition. This will include assessing potential threats to the establishment of the wood such as deer and hare damage and also damage from livestock if boundary walls were breached.

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	3.25	Birch (downy/silver)	2000	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site, Services & wayleaves	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	National Park
<p>A woodland creation area composed of 0.36ha open ground and 2.89ha woodland planting. The site was initially ripped and planted in December 2000 mainly with oak (35%), birch (20%) and rowan (20%) mix with some cherry (5%) so simulating national vegetation classification woodland type 17 community. The compartment was initially planted at 1600 plants per hectare on slightly wet, acid soil. Alder (5%) was planted next to wet flush areas with hawthorn on exposed site edges. A shrub mix (10%) of holly, dogwood, hazel and guelder rose was used to soften edges under power lines, next to farm buildings and wet flushes. Being ex-pasture the ground flora is unremarkable but shows potential to improve, neighbouring as it does a bilberry and heather covered valley to the northwest and containing small streams within the site's eastern bounds.</p>							
2a	0.14	Other	2000	Non-wood habitat		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	National Park
<p>The northern corner of the site neighbouring the farmhouse, which was fenced off after purchase. The area is leased out as a paddock and represents part of the open ground element of the WGS scheme.</p>							

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.