



# Prehen Wood

## Management Plan 2015-2020

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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.

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## 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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk). Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

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.

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## 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

<b>Site name:</b>	Prehen Wood
<b>Location:</b>	The nearest large town is Derry City
<b>Grid reference:</b>	C425148, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 7
<b>Area:</b>	7.48 hectares (18.48 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Local Nature Reserve, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

This rare and irreplaceable ancient woodland has a magical feel, with carpets of bluebell, celandine and wood anemone in the spring. It is home to the red squirrel, sparrowhawk and long-eared owl and offers terrific views overlooking Derry/Londonderry city and the River Foyle. Prehen Wood is one of our Top Ten bluebell woods. If you'd like to visit and see a superb bluebell display, check our live map for bluebells at [Nature's Calendar](#) as flowering times do vary around the UK. However, mid-April to early-June is usually an ideal time for most woods.

## 2.2 Extended Description

The wood at Prehen was acquired by the Woodland Trust in 2003. The Prehen Historical Environmental Society (PHES) had been actively campaigning to save the woodland from the ever increasing development pressure on the wood. It was the PHES that brought the plight of the woodland to the attention of the Trust. Prehen is classed as Ancient Semi-natural Woodland. The wood stretched as far as Strabane in the original Bodley maps of 1609. Only 18 acres remain. The wood had been systematically cut down to allow for increased development in the L'Derry area e.g. golf clubs, housing etc.

The site is located opposite the Everglades Hotel. It comprises predominately of beech with an oak canopy and hazel/holly under storey. There is good beech and oak regeneration. A mass of wildflowers bloom every year - carpets of bluebells, celandine, wood anemones etc. Prehen is also home to the threatened red squirrel. Previously volunteers left squirrel food in specially designed red squirrel feeders every day to encourage their stay. Recently the numbers have dropped and visual records of grey squirrels have increased. The entire wood has Tree Preservation Order status and was designated as a Site of Local Conservation Nature Importance in the 1990's. The wood has terrific views overlooking the city and River Foyle.

Free public access is provided across the entire site. The routes are way marked and have been kept informal to fit in with the Trust's minimal intervention policy. There is parking nearby at the Everglades Hotel. The official entrance is located to the north of the wood at Summerhill.

The PHES still take an active interest in the woodland and have become involved in organising guided walks etc. to inform people of some of the historic and natural features within.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

### By bus

The only local service is the FY6 which runs from the Foyle bus station in Derry city to New Buildings, getting off at Prehen Park stop. From here, walk until you come to Sandringham Drive, then follow this to the top and take a left along Summerhill Drive. The woodland entrance is at the end of this street (approx.. 10 - 15 minutes walk).

If travelling from Belfast by Ulsterbus to Derry City, take the 212 Goldline Express. Full details from [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk)

### By train

If travelling from Belfast, you can get the train from Belfast Central Station to Derry/Londonderry city.

For further information on public transport, contact [www.translink.co.uk/Routes-and-Timetables](http://www.translink.co.uk/Routes-and-Timetables)

### By car

Prehen Wood is just over 3 km from Derry/Londonderry's city centre. Take the A5 Victoria Road from Derry to Strabane, along the bank of the River Foyle.

Approaching the Everglades Hotel you will see a signpost for Prehen at the left-hand side of the road. Follow this slip road and when you reach the Everglades Hotel, park here. After exiting the main entrance of the hotel on foot, continue along the slip road, following the next signpost for Prehen on your left hand side. This takes you to Prehen Park. Then take the second left turn into Sandringham Drive. At the top of Sandringham Drive turn left into Summerhill Park and at the end of the cul-de-sac you will see the official entrance to the wood.

## 3.2 Access / Walks

The public have access to the majority of the site and the paths have been way-marked. There is one official access point off Summerhill Drive which has a kissing gate, management gate and information board.

The existing public path, called The Bolies after the townland name, runs from Victoria Road and is managed by Derry/Londonderry City Council. It's a lovely wooded walk up a glen.

Throughout the woodland there are a series of numbered way-markers which relate to the Eco-trail. This environmental trail encourages young people to develop an awareness and appreciation of the natural and built environment. It is also linked to the sport of orienteering. Further information can be obtained at [www.ecotrails.co.uk](http://www.ecotrails.co.uk) . There are also two circular walks which are suitable for those who enjoy a gentle stroll.

Wet pathways and steep slopes restrict access for wheelchairs and less-abled persons but the wood is well used and provides a wide range of interesting flora and fauna.

As you enter the wood you will see a large, wooden red squirrel carving. Follow the path straight past the squirrel and continue straight ahead, with the golf course to your right. Follow this until you come to the first stone bridge where there's a pool of water with an island in the middle on which an alder tree stands. This is where you can decide which route to take.

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Long term intentions and vision: the objectives for the next 25 years are:

- To conserve and protect the core ancient semi-natural woodland, trying to buffer the existing woodland by acquiring adjoining land and planting with appropriate mixes of broadleaf trees.
- Seek to protect existing species and improve the biodiversity in the long term.

Maintain the dominant beech and oak mixture according to natural succession. The long term management will ideally be through minimal intervention, allowing the natural regeneration to establish within canopy gaps as they appear.

The entire wood will be kept as a conservation zone due to its ancient woodland status, and its range of rare/priority species, including, red squirrels, badgers, long eared owls and sensitive ground flora.

Opportunities for a comprehensive species survey through student research or consultation will be explored in relation to future management of the site.

Access;

The aim is to use the established path network with minimal work to maintain it long term. The paths are to be minimal and natural, yet way-marked at junctions. Some of the paths have become wetter over the past few years so the routes of streams and water runoff on site are currently being reviewed.

Invasive species;

The long term aim is for no invasive species in the wood, because there are so few invasives at present it will be possible to control them. At present there are only a few rhododendrons located near the quarry, these shall be removed and monitored to ensure total eradication.

## 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 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

#### Description

Predominantly Beech wood with some Oak, Silver Birch and Sweet Chestnut forming the high canopy, while the understorey is made up of beech and oak regeneration, holly and hazel.

#### Significance

These woods are very valuable being part of Northern Ireland's surviving ancient woodlands. They are also valuable on a local level, being the only significant area of mature woodland in the south east district of Derry City. The woodland is of great recreational value to the neighbouring Prehen estate.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

##### Opportunities:

Extend the woodland on the adjoining fields to the East.

Link the wood with the Bolies wooded walk at the top of the site leading onto Victoria Road.

Acquire the upper field and laneway beside the new houses at Iveagh, this could be planted and again would act as a buffer for the woodland.

#### Factors Causing Change

Natural regeneration of beech/oak

Water on site

Sycamore regeneration

Development

#### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain the dominant beech and oak mixture according to natural succession. The long term management will ideally be through minimal intervention, allowing the natural regeneration to establish within canopy gaps as they appear. Where possible look for potential planting areas and linking this habitat with other existing woodland within the area.

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

In the short term fell any dangerous trees along the boundary adjacent to the housing, as and when required. This will open up areas that should allow natural regeneration. The regeneration will be monitored and if it is not evident it will be actively stocked. Tree safety checks will be carried out along the path edges on an annual basis. Map out the current locations of water courses on site and divert/manage where needed. Survey site again for species present / absent.

## 5.2 Informal Public Access

### Description

Access provision will be via Summer Hill, and it will be in keeping with access guidelines. The site is a category A site and the paths and entrances will be kept at an appropriate level for their usage.

The management gate will be wide enough for the use of wheelchairs.

There has been fly tipping near the entrance in the past, but this has significantly reduced and will be monitored.

There are fences and warning signs put up around the quarry to provide a safety barrier to protect the public and provide a safe view point.

### Significance

The access facilities provide the opportunity to "increase peoples awareness and enjoyment of the wood", one of the Trust's key objectives

### Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Wet pathways and steep slopes restrict access for wheelchairs and less-abled persons. But the wood is well used and provides a wide range of interesting flora and fauna.

Opportunity:

Continue to work with Derry City Council to look at opportunities for links and improvements to access.

### Factors Causing Change

Increased numbers of visitors

Scramblers / mountain bikers

Water on site

Development

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The aim is to use the established path network with minimal work to maintain it long term. The original path work (gravel) will be allowed to cover over with leaf litter to keep the paths looking minimal and natural, yet waymarked at junctions.

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

To ensure easy access for pedestrians through the entire wood. Informal routes will be waymarked according to existing desire lines and wet spots drained. Signage will be installed for visitors. Map out the current locations of water courses on site and divert/manage where needed.

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## 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	7.58	Beech	1800	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Local Nature Reserve, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order

The whole wood is one compartment which is mainly a beech wood, with some mature oak and an abundance of beech/oak regeneration. It has been identified as an ancient semi-natural woodland. In May the wood comes to life with a mass of bluebells throughout the site. An old quarry is situated just outside our boundary to the west of the site, providing a fantastic view point. There are also spectacular views overlooking the River Foyle and the City of Derry. Two old air-raid shelters are situated on the northerly edge of the site just outside our boundary.

The wood has housing on two sides, but is protected on the southerly and easterly side by a buffer of undeveloped land, either golf course or farmland.

The entire wood has a Tree Preservation Order on it.

The wood provides a natural habitat for the Red Squirrel, Badger, Sparrowhawk and Long-eared owls.

## 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.