WOODLAND TRUST

Scar & Castlebeck Woods

Management Plan

2015-2020

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MAPS

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Scar & Castlebeck Woods
Location:	Harwood Dale
Grid reference:	SE950977, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 94
Area:	51.99 hectares (128.47 acres)
Designations:	National Park, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Area

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

These secluded woods straddle a steep ravine carved by the streams and small rivers that run off the moors. It is cited as one of the best inland exposures of dinosaur footprints. A public footpath provides good access but wellingtons recommended.

2.2 Extended Description

Scar and Castlebeck Woods are one of the largest ancient semi-natural woodlands within the Scarborough District. Situated within the North York Moors National Park, approximately 10km to the north west of Scarborough. The woods occupy the western and eastern sides of the ravines of Jugger Howe, Helwath, Castlebeck and part of the adjoining Bloody Beck.

This 130 acre ancient semi-natural woodland is characterised by a multitude of ancient woodland indicator species, the site being particularly noted for invertebrate fauna and its rich ground flora, having 21 nationally scarce invertebrates and 35 locally rare species. It has a very natural appearance and very few non-native species. The woodland is a remnant of the once widespread mixed oak forest that occupied these moors, and has survived due to the inaccessible terrain it now occupies, ancient woodland on this scale being rare in North Yorkshire.

The huge importance of the woodland and its location are further enhanced by other additional

designations on the site and the surrounding land. The whole woodland was identified as an Important Bird Area - identified in the Important Bird Area Programme of Birdlife International for 2000 review, published in the report - 'Important Bird Areas in Europe 2000'. The north western section of the site also borders land with designations including SAC - Special Areas of Conservation (designated by directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora), SPA - Special Protection Areas (EC Directive 79/409 - Conservation of Wild Birds). With a continuation of Ancient and Semi Natural Woodland upstream and downstream following the river valley of Jugger Howe Beck.

The wood lies on an area of sandstones and shales lay down in a deltaic environment. The streams flowing north to south from the central watershed, as with Jugger Howe Beck, have eroded down to the underlying shales. Exposure of grey limestone series occurs between the various sandstone strata giving a variety of soil types across the slopes, with acidic soils on the valley sides and more fertile less acidic soil at the base of the ravines which accounts for the diverse range of plant species found through across the slopes. The water table remains high throughout the year, proving heavy going along the muddy riverside tracks even in summer. A majority of the woodland within the Trust ownership has been designated as SSSI. Oak and ash predominate - elm having all but disappeared due to the effects of Dutch Elm Disease, with an under storey of holly, hazel, rowan, hawthorn, guelder rose and honeysuckle. There is evidence of hazel coppice in the southern part of the woodland, alder is plentiful and dominates the banks of Jugger Howe and the adjacent damp woodland areas west of the beck. A variety of additional habitats can be found through the woodland with wet flushes, damp marshy land, along with open heathland, craggy rock outcrops and moorland dominated by bracken, heather and bilberry. Prior to Woodland Trust ownership the site was degraded through grazing - both sheep and cattle, which still graze surrounding land which is pasture, with conifer plantation to the east and open moorland to the west. Public access is available via a public footpath entering the woodland from the east, close to Castlebeck Farm. Footpaths also enter from the north-east and north-west following the stream valleys of Jugger Howe and Helwath Beck, utilising a number of bridge crossings. The footpath also runs south following the course of Jugger Howe Beck, exiting the woodland close to Park Hill Farm. A permissive route continues following the course of Jugger Howe, linking with a footpath and bridleway to the south of the woodland, which runs east-west, meeting the minor road close to Chapel Farm. None of the footpaths are surfaced and are often wet and muddy. The terrain, as the wood follows a deep valley, is also difficult in places. Parking is limited to the roadside verge to the east of the wood. Reasonably well used despite the relatively remote location, with all the routes showing good signs of use. The bridleway crossing the southern part of the site is especially well used by local riders.

Historic records show that this area was within the bounds of Whitby Forest, owned and managed by the influential Whitby Abbey during the middle ages. During the 17th century the woods were reportedly managed as coppice with standards, and stocked with oak, hazel, ash, thorn and alder.

The exposure of the underlying shales by the streams has also exposed fossils - most notably the fossilised footprints of dinosaurs, which can clearly be seen in certain areas of the woodland, first noted by the Victorians and reputed to be one of the finest inland exposures of fossils in Britain. The fossils are found in the same rock strata as can be seen exposed at the sea cliffs, famous along this part of the Yorkshire coast.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Situated approximately 10km to the north west of Scarborough, access via minor road from the main A171 coast road between Whitby and Scarborough.

Public access is available via a public footpath entering the woodland from the east, close to Castlebeck Farm. Footpaths also enter from the north-east and north-west following the stream valleys of Jugger Howe and Helwath Beck, utilising a number of bridge crossings. The footpath also runs south following the course of Jugger Howe Beck, exitting the woodland close to Park Hill Farm. A permissive route continues following the course of Jugger Howe, linking with a footpath and bridleway to the south of the woodland, which runs east-west, meeting the minor road close to Chapel Farm. None of the footpaths are surfaced and are often wet and muddy. The terrain, as the wood follows a deep stream valley, is also difficult in places, with steep sections and a variety of surfaces including rock, roots and vegetation.. Parking is limited to the roadside verge to the east of the wood.

The nearest bus stop is at 'The Falcon' public house on the A171, approximately 2km to the north east of the woodland. Access from there is via a number of unsurfaced paths and bridleways through Harwood Dale Forest (Forestry Commission). Information from the traveline website as of May 2007, Further information about public transport is available from Traveline- www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2608

The nearest public conveniences are approximately 10km to the south in Scarborough, available in 6 locations within the town, details can be found at www.scarborough.gov.uk

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

As an Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) of such value and as part of a one of the largest ancient semi-natural woodlands (ASNW) in the area, the intention is to maintain native broadleaved woodland cover. The majority of the woodland will be managed through minimum intervention, as on-going wind throw and senescence providing opportunity for the ample natural regeneration, creating and maintaining a diversity of age structure within the woodland. The lower slopes of open grassland/ scrub woodland will be left to develop into oak/ ash high forest, as a continuation of the wooded upper slopes. Woodland to be maintained under a minimum intervention regime, allowing natural succession through natural regeneration. The level of natural regeneration, in relation to threats to its establishment such as bracken and deer damage is to be monitored. Intervention in the form of deer and bracken control to be implemented if natural regeneration appears to be unsuccessful.

Access will be maintained at the present levels via the public footpath, bridleway and un-surfaced permissive path.

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

Situated within the North York Moors National Park the woods occupy the western and eastern sides of the ravines of Jugger Howe Beck, Castlebeck and part of the adjoining Bloody Beck. This 130 acre ancient semi-natural woodland is characterised by a multitude of ancient woodland indicator species. It has a very natural appearance and very few non-native species. The woodland is a remnant of the once widespread mixed oak forest that occupied these moors, and has survived due to the inaccessible terrain it now occupies, Ancient Semi Natural Woodland on this scale being very rare in North Yorkshire.

Significance

Scar and Castlebeck Woods are one of the largest Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands within the Scarborough District. The extensive list of both nationally scarce and locally scarce species underlines its importance as ancient semi-natural woodland and a hugely important habitat, that should remain as undisturbed as possible. It is also classified as an Important Bird Area (IBA), and borders both Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) as well as a continuation of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland upstream and downstream following the banks of Jugger Howe Beck. More information on which is provided in the summary description.

Opportunities & Constraints

The site has very diffcult internal access for management, and limited management access to the woodland edge. However, except for the maintenance of boundaries and the new planting areas little management access is required. This large area of ancient woodland with very few non native species is a great opportunity to allow natural processes to take charge through minimum intervention, allowing the woodland to develop as naturally as possible.

Factors Causing Change

Deer damage, suppression by bracken, invasive Sycamore and Beech, potential loss of ash trees through ash dieback and the disease spreads to the North York Moors.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain native broadleaved woodland on this SSSI site. The woodland will be managed through minimum intervention towards a high forest.

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

Monitor the woodland every 5 years to assess regeneration of species and potential problems with establishment such as deer and bracken. Assess impact of diseases such as ash dieback and if necessary consider whether intervention in the form of new planting is required.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

Access via public footpath entering the wood from the north east and north west following Helwath and Jugger Howe Becks. Footpath and permissive routes giving access south through the woodland following Jugger Howe Beck, linking with a further footpath and bridleway running east-west. Access is limited as the routes are often wet and the terrain can be difficult. Limited parking is available on the roadsides near to the eastern boundary. Whilst in a remote location the paths are relatively well used - both by locals and visitors taking in longer walks across Fylingdales Moor, especially popular is the bridleway route crossing the woodland at the southern end.

Significance

The woodland although difficult for access provides some of the finest views over and through native ancient woodland in the North York Moors National Park, its remote setting and natural feel are unparalleled in this area. Whilst increasing the access provision is not feasible, access through the wood on the existing routes are important as one of the objectives of the Woodand Trust and to allow people to enjoy this rare woodland experience.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints include steep slopes, deep ravines and gullies, rock outcrops and the four becks/ small rivers that cross the site. Combined with the undisturbed and very rich ground flora and fauna, the possibilities for extending the current path network are nil. Little opportunity to promote woodland access further as this would possible have a detrimental effect on the habitats and wildlife, whilst its remote position and difficult terrain already limit visitor numbers.

Factors Causing Change

Increased or decreased public access.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain the existing quality of path network - both public footpath and permissive route. No future path creation to be undertaken due to the steep slopes and SSSI importance.

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

Maintain the current routes ensuring the Woodland Trust areas of ownership are marked with welcoming signs, paths and routes maintained through at least one operation annually to clear vegetation from the 2 kilometres of footpaths and clear litter.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	20.00	Mixed native broadleaves	1900	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	National Park, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Area
Steeply sloping compartment following the eastern edge of Jugger Howe Beck and the ravine of Castle Beck. Lower slopes adjacent to the water are dominated by alder, through to oak and ash on the upper slopes. Much of the under storey is hazel (some has been actively coppiced in recent history) along with thorn and large amounts of holly. Regeneration on these area of oak is generally poor with more dominant regeneration of birch and also ash on the damper ground. More scattered oak woodland on the fringes of the site has allowed bracken to dominate the ground flora. Still large amounts of standing and fallen deadwood - elm predominantly.							
2a	1.00	Oak (sessile)	1995	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	National Park, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Area
Open ground planted with 70% oak and 30% birch, planted in 1995/6 using locally collected and grown seed. Area formerly heavily grazed steeply sloping ground to the east of Jugger Howe Beck. Dominated by bracken throughout.							

2b	3.80	Mixed native broadleaves	1900	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/ Rocky ground, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/ mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	National Park, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Area
Subject to heavy grazing in the past, large areas of bracken, grassland and heather with scattered oaks and birch. A woodland fringe along the beckside of alder thickening into ash-hazel woodland along Helwath Beck.							
3a	22.00	Mixed native broadleaves	1900	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/ Rocky ground, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/ mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	National Park, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Area
Long continuous compartment following the western valley sides, bounded by Jugger Howe Beck to the east. Mosaic of scrub woodland dominated by oak and birch on the upper slopes with ash and hazel throughout. Heavily grazed areas have regenerated with dense areas of birch. Alder dominated streamside with occasional willow and bog myrtle. Open land within the mosaic is composed of heather, bilberry and bracken, with grasses dominating under the canopy. Rock outcrops are common throughout.							

4a	5.80	Oak (sessile)	1995	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/ Rocky ground, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/ mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	National Park, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Area
Heavily grazed land bordering pasture land and moorland to the west. Dominated throughout by bracken , this has been controlled through spraying to allow replanting with 3.95 Ha of oak and 1.85 Ha of birch in 1.2m deer tubes at 3.0 m spacing. The area was planted in 1995/6 with the tubes removed in 2004 and the trees are now well established.							

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.