



# Laund Clough

## Management Plan 2016-2021

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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>	Laund Clough
<b>Location:</b>	Baxenden
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SD770272, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 103
<b>Area:</b>	2.19 hectares (5.41 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Laund Clough is a popular local wood for nearby residents, mainly used by dogwalkers and children playing. Mature trees such as beech and ash share ground with regenerating elm, beech, ash and sycamore.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Laund Clough is a long, narrow wood running SE-NW, mainly on a very steep slope. Access into and within the wood is severely limited by the surrounding houses, degree of slope, and the stream. It is almost completely surrounded by a residential area, but it does continue as woodland and other open land to the north. The Woodland Trust owns the majority of the wood, but not a small triangular area in the NW where ownership is unknown. On acquisition it consisted of large, tall, mature, broadleaved, even-aged trees, but since then regeneration and planting have taken place, beginning to diversify the age range, species, and introduce a shrub layer. The mature trees are sycamore, beech, ash, Turkey oak ( and horse chestnut, with regenerating elm (from stumps), beech, ash, sycamore, rowan and hawthorn. The health of the remaining mature trees is variable. Many have already been felled and others continue to suffer from disease, damage (some of it deliberate) and potential instability. It is a major landscape feature in the area, protected by a Tree Preservation Order since 1952. As the wood is narrow (less than 20m wide for 150m) and surrounded by housing along all of its long boundaries, it has many neighbours (approx. 90) on several different roads. Tree safety is a high priority and many trees were felled initially, although the situation appears to have stabilised now with felling at natural replacement levels. Ancient Semi Natural Woodland is one of the sites Key Features.

On acquisition access into the wood was very poor, and was first improved and formalised by the Woodland Trust. The wood now has 5 pedestrian access points, enabling good access from all the surrounding roads, but virtually no vehicular access at all. Within the wood, access is limited to the most part by the terrain and shape of the wood to a single linear route running SE to NW, with two wooden pedestrian bridges and a ford crossing the stream. The paths are relatively level, but either on the top or side of a steep slope and stream. However, at the northern end of the wood, the path forks, one path steeply descends to cross the stream and the 2 paths continue north, into adjoining council owned land which is also open for access. By following these paths, people from the nearby estates walk towards the town centre of Accrington, avoiding a long detour and the main road. The wood is also used by local dog walkers, children frequently play here too, and it is very popular and well used at all times. There are some large and spectacular beech trees and the stream cutting through the rocks and over a waterfall is also an attractive and unusual feature in an urban wood. Informal Public Access is one of the sites Key Features.

The freehold of the wood was gifted to the Woodland Trust by Hyndburn Borough Council on 30 October 1986. Very little is known about the history of the wood except that its boundaries date from at least the 1930s and are probably much older. Remains of an iron boundary fence exist at the northern end close to the stream. It takes its name from The Laund, a house now demolished (Laund means clearing), and Clough, a steep sided little valley. Laund Clough is pronounced 'lornd cluff'. Like a lot of similar woods in the local area, it occupies land that was too steep to farm easily, and so was probably never cleared but may have been under grazed. Fields were obviously created up to its boundaries, and these were later developed for housing. An old house, The Laund, was close to the wood but does not appear to have any formal links with it and on old maps the wood seems to be simply an unmanaged wood with defined boundaries but no paths or tracks.

The wood is in the middle of a residential area, close to the main road of Baxenden and the town centre of Accrington. It covers both sides of a very steep sided little valley, which has a stream flowing from south to north. It is close to another Woodland Trust site, Sycamore Grove, although the two are very different.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Laund Clough is situated in the suburb of Higher Baxenden about one mile from the town of Accrington in East Lancashire. The woodland is situated on Southwood Drive which is just to the east of A680 (Manchester Road). Pedestrian access is available from 3 main entrance points, 2 are located on the eastern boundary off Southwood Drive & Shap Drive and 1 is located on the western boundary off Laund grove. Within the wood, access along 700m of paths is limited to the most part by the terrain and shape of the wood to a single linear route running SE to NW, with two wooden pedestrian bridges and a ford crossing the stream. The paths are relatively level, but either on the top or side of a steep slope and stream. Approximately 350 metres of path was re-surfaced in 2011 from the Laund Grove entrance to the footbridge close to the Southwood drive entrance. However, at the northern end of the wood, the path forks, one paths steeply descends to cross the stream and the 2 paths continue north, into adjoining council owned land which is also open for access. The pedestrian entrances lead onto a circular even surfaced path network; however the path network can become muddy and slippery when wet.

Parking is available on nearby local roads such as Laund Road and Southwood Drive but may be limited.

Nearest public toilet: Located at Asda Superstore Hyndburn Road which is located approximately 2 miles away from the wood.

Nearest bus stop: Located at Laund Road, which is approximately 200 metres away from the wood. Laund Road is a suburban road with a pavement. Information from Traveline website.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline- [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or phone 0870 608 2 608

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

To manage the wood as a mixed, broadleaved high forest, with a diverse range of ages and species.

Tree safety is important and will probably continue to dictate when and where gaps are created in the canopy for regeneration.

Public access will be maintained at its current level of 5 access points and 700m of paths, steps on steep slopes, and 3 stream crossings. These will be maintained and upgraded as necessary to provide defined, safe, all year access for pedestrians.

Local people should be informed of and involved with the site management where appropriate, especially to help understand the management needs of the wood, and the negative effect of some activities such as dumping garden and fencing rubbish, damage to trees, and encroachments which have had a major impact in certain areas.



## 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 Woodland Site

#### Description

On acquisition the wood consisted of large, tall, mature, broadleaved, even-aged trees, but since then regeneration and planting have taken place, beginning to diversify the age range, species, and introduce a shrub layer. The mature trees are sycamore, beech, ash, oak (including Turkey) and horse chestnut, with regenerating elm (from stumps), beech, ash, sycamore, rowan and hawthorn. The beech is almost certainly planted and was introduced into local woods, probably by the Victorians, horse chestnut and Turkey oak will also have been introduced at about the same time. Sycamore is extremely common as a naturalised tree throughout the whole of Lancashire. Mature elms were present but were affected by Dutch elm disease in the 1980s -1990s and felled. Tree safety is a high priority and many trees were felled initially, although the situation appears to have stabilised now with felling at natural replacement levels. The health of the remaining mature trees is variable, and the amount of dead wood is gradually increasing. The ground flora is very sparse, mainly due to shading, and also some trampling, but where it does occur there are patches of ancient woodland species such as enchanters nightshade, and opposite leaved golden saxifrage, with lady and broad buckler ferns and Polytrichum moss. Bird species have not been closely studied, but surprisingly include dipper and tree creeper.

#### Significance

Its main value is as varied, mature woodland. Its wildlife value has not been thoroughly investigated, but the ground flora is sparse and likely to remain so. There are some birds of interest, but other animals are restricted to common, robust, urban species such as grey squirrels. However, the wildlife is very visible and much appreciated by the many people living locally, where there are few natural green spaces.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

Laund Clough is a fairly small, long, narrow wood, largely surrounded by housing (apart from woodland to the north), it is isolated from other woods, and cannot be extended. Management access is very difficult and any works are expensive. Certain parts of the wood are heavily used and trampled, or have garden rubbish dumped in them frequently. The wood is also shaded, being in such a steep valley. The valley also means that any problems within the wood e.g. dumped rubbish, tend to end up in the stream. The stream has been very badly polluted in the past (raw sewerage) and still occasionally appears to suffer minor pollution (domestic effluent). However, the wood has demonstrated that it will regenerate readily, and planted trees have also grown. Defined paths have reduced the effects of heavy use. The wood is stable and mature enough to provide for a good variety of urban wildlife, and large areas of it are inaccessible and therefore not disturbed. Regeneration here is very good, and limited amount of deadwood can be retained in these areas.

#### Factors Causing Change

Dumping of garden rubbish, Invasive Himalayan Balsam & Japanese Knotweed.

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

To develop the wood as predominately native high forest, with a mixed range of ages and species. It is anticipated that as trees gradually senesce or are removed for safety reasons natural regeneration will fill the gaps. Hence the wood will require little active management, beyond ensuring that regeneration is sufficient. Throughout the wood, older trees of any species will be retained as long as safety allows.

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

Tree safety inspections will be undertaken on a regular basis and work carried out if necessary for public safety. The site will be checked once during this plan period to assess whether there is sufficient regeneration to ensure the long term future of the canopy. Garden tipping will be assessed as the tree safety inspections are undertaken every 24 months and EMC contractors make regular visits (at least 2 a year) and they will also report tipping, the site will also be visited at least annually by the Site Manager.

## 5.2 Informal Public Access

### Description

On acquisition access into the wood was very poor, and was first improved and formalised by the Woodland Trust. The wood now has 5 pedestrian access points, enabling good access from all the surrounding roads, but virtually no vehicular management access at all. Within the wood, access along 700m of paths is limited to the most part by the terrain and shape of the wood to a single linear route running SE to NW, with two wooden pedestrian bridges and a ford crossing the stream. The paths are relatively level, but either on the top or side of a steep slope and stream. However, at the northern end of the wood, the path forks, one path steeply descends to cross the stream and the 2 paths continue north, into adjoining council owned land which is also open for access. By following these paths, people from the nearby estates walk towards the town centre of Accrington, avoiding a long detour and the main road. The wood is also used by local dog walkers, children frequently play here too, and it is very well used and popular at all times. There are some large and spectacular beech trees, and the stream cutting through the rocks and over a waterfall is also an attractive and unusual feature in an urban wood.

### Significance

Its main value is as relatively natural urban woodland, accessible and used by hundreds of people from all directions. Its paths cover the whole of its length, passing some spectacularly large beech trees, a tumbling stream, waterfall, and interesting routes over the stream via bridges and a ford. It has obvious, robust wildlife, and looks good throughout the changing seasons as well as providing an alternative to walking along the main road into Accrington.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Laund Clough is a long, narrow wood running SE-NW, mainly on a very steep slope. Access into and within the wood is severely limited by the surrounding houses, degree of slope, and the stream. There is little scope for creating new paths, links, or extending access to users other than pedestrians. Management access is very difficult and any works are expensive. However, the wood is very well known and popular with local people and access improvements are likely to have substantial support.

### Factors Causing Change

Access improvements may encourage additional use, although unlikely to be any significant change in numbers given the 'local' nature of the site and little attraction to wider visitors.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access will be maintained at its current level of 5 access points and 700m of paths, steps on steep slopes, and 3 stream crossings. These will be maintained and upgraded as necessary to provide defined, safe, all year access for pedestrians. Local people should be informed of and involved with the site management where appropriate, especially to help understand the management needs of the wood, and the negative effect of some activities such as dumping garden and fencing rubbish, damage to trees, and encroachments which have had a major impact in certain areas.

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

The main entrances will be inspected in 2016 as part of the Welcoming Sites Project (WSP) and upgraded as necessary. The signs, entrances, and paths will be checked at least annually and litter will be cleared at least annually as part of the Estates Maintenance Contract.

## 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	2.19	Sycamore	1900	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, No/poor vehicular access to the site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Tree Preservation Order

2.43 Hectares (6 acres) of mature mixed broadleaved ancient woodland. It is located in East Lancashire in an urban area close to the town of Baxenden. The woodland is in a steeply incised valley which slopes sharply on both sides down towards a small stream. To the South, West and East the woodland is entirely surrounded by a housing estate, to the north it borders parkland owned by Hyndburn Borough Council.

## 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.