



Scarcroft Plantation

Management Plan 2014-2019

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Scarcroft Plantation
Location:	Scarcroft
Grid reference:	SE362414, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 104
Area:	2.89 hectares (7.14 acres)
Designations:	Green Belt

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Very pleasant mixed woodland just off the A58, 7 miles outside Leeds. A small Woodland Trust sign indicates the entrance. Paths are quite uneven and would be tricky for those less confident with walking. The loop path is perfect for a short stroll.

2.2 Extended Description

The site was donated to the Trust on the 29th December 1995 from Mrs Vera Watson. Scarcroft Plantation lies on a gently sloping site within the village of Scarcroft. Residential properties border on the north and south sides of the wood, with a golf course to the west and Wetherby Road (A58) to the east. A small strip on the southern side of woodland, immediately adjacent to the houses, and to the north adjacent to the golf course, is not owned by the Trust.

Limited management work appears to have been undertaken in the past. In 2001 the Trust completed the thinning of sycamore trees along a strip 20-30m wide adjacent to Wetherby Road. In addition extensive tree pruning over the highway has undertaken in the interest of highway safety. Few historical notes are currently available on the woodland although it is thought to have been planted by Bramham Park, a large estate in the area. The site contains a small-disused quarry no doubt dug to provide local building material.

The site is well used by local people being within walking distance of the village. A circular path runs through the wood, with two access points off the main road. A third access comes across private woodland on the southern boundary from the housing estate.

The woodland comprises of mixed broadleaved species and a varied age structure. The main tree species are birch and oak with rowan, sycamore and beech also present. These species are regenerating naturally with many young seedlings throughout the woodland. The majority of trees are in the 40-60 year age range, with a number of fully mature beeches of approximately 150 years plus throughout the site.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

ACCESS TO THE SITE

Scarcroft Plantation is situated within the linear village of Scarcroft approximately 5 miles north of Leeds on the A 58(T) Residential properties border the northern and southern sides of the wood with a golf course to the west and Wetherby Road (A58T) to the west. A small strip of woodland, which borders the houses on the southern side, is not owned by the Trust. Pedestrian access to the wood can be gained from two points off the Wetherby Road, one at the northern end and one at the southern end.

ENTRANCE AND FOOTPATHS

The entrances are open gateways. The wood contains a circular footpath of approximately 300m in length which is rough and uneven in places. The site is generally flat.

PARKING

Roadside parking is very difficult as the A58 is busy.

PUBLIC TOILETS

No public toilets known within 5 miles

BUS STOPS

Scarcroft - 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 diverse broadleaved high forest encouraging self-sustaining woodland, dominated by native broadleaved species, with a mixed shrub layer and diverse age structure. Open public access to be maintained with maintenance of a circular path and two entrance points.

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 is popular, with a single unsurfaced but generally dry earth/ grass circular footpath around the perimeter of the site being well used throughout the year.

Significance

The dominance of the birch trees coupled with the open space areas and provides attractive woodland. Accessible woodland within easy walking distance of the village is scarce, hence the popularity of the woodland which can be reached direct off the road and pavements, with a generally dry path network within the wood.

Opportunities & Constraints

This small wood does require a high level of management to maintain the paths due to encroachment by vegetation, mainly by bracken. The wood is also fairly small in size and therefore benefits from a modest level of use so as not to become overused.

Factors Causing Change

Other Increased public use, Mountain bike and occasional motorbike use causing damage

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To have a well-maintained circular footpath and two access positions that enables good access all the year round.

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

Maintain footpaths by annual cutting on at least two occasions, ensure welcome signs (x2) are clean and visible on entry to the Woodland from the road.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

An attractive predominately birch / oak woodland that appears to have developed from natural regeneration and as a result has a very natural feel with irregular spacing and a variety of ages and sizes of trees. The wood forms an isolated block of woodland in Scarcroft, with housing and a road on 3 sides. However, it does have the benefit of linking on to the local golf course to the west, which, with its tree lined fairways contributes to the overall local habitat for wildlife and the landscape of the area.

Significance

Sycamore tends to dominate many secondary woodland in this area that have been left to develop naturally. The dominance of the birch and oak in Scarcroft Plantation gives it a distinct characteristic.

Opportunities & Constraints

Management intervention appears unnecessary with the wood developing well with young seedlings throughout the site. Monitoring of the regeneration will be required to ensure its continued success given the dominance of bracken in some areas of the site.

Factors Causing Change

Squirrel Damage, Rabbit Damage, Bracken suppressing natural regeneration

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland to be managed through minimal intervention as senesces and on going wind throw provides opportunity for natural regeneration and therefore ensures the self-sustainability of the woodland with a diverse age and species structure.

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

The woodland will be managed through minimum intervention with any works limited to tree safety - either reactive or proactive, likely to be along the roadside and adjacent to housing to the north.

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	2.88	Birch (downy/silver)	1950	High forest		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Green Belt

The wood, situated on a gentle slope, has an attractive mix of trees species of different ages from young saplings to individual trees over 150 years of age. The predominate species is birch, accounting for approximately 50% of the tree species with oak, rowan and sycamore also plentiful. Sycamore is generally confined to a strip alongside the main road. Other species include beech, holly, willow, alder and sweet chestnut, with occasional regeneration of rhododendron and laurel. The ground flora is variable including bluebells, foxgloves, willow herb and bramble, although dense bracken occupies a large area of the site. The site has areas of open canopy, which accounts for approximate 10% of the woodland area. Bounded to the northeast, southwest and east by housing and the A58, with golf course making up the remainder.

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.