



E Wood

**Management Plan
2016-2021**

MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

ITEM Page No.

Introduction

Plan review and updating

Woodland Management Approach

Summary

1.0 Site details

2.0 Site description

2.1 Summary Description

2.2 Extended Description

3.0 Public access information

3.1 Getting there

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 Long term policy

5.0 Key Features

5.1 Informal Public Access

5.2 Natural Secondary Woodland

6.0 Work Programme

Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Glossary

MAPS

Access

Conservation Features

Management

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	E Wood
Location:	Blackburn
Grid reference:	SD681252, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 103
Area:	1.71 hectares (4.23 acres)
Designations:	Smoke Control Area, Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Located in the heart of Blackburn E Wood provides a wildlife haven in the middle of an urban area. This wood is on two levels, the higher dominated by mature broadleaf trees, the lower by young broadleaves. A popular location with locals, a small stream known locally as the 'Mill Race' meanders through the site flowing at a slow and steady pace. The woodland is home for many creatures such as foxes, woodpeckers and owls.

2.2 Extended Description

This small wood is situated in a triangle of land between a busy urban and light industrial area along two roads on the edge of the town of Blackburn. The land is on two distinct levels, both of which are relatively flat and separated by an old Mill Race and a short, steep slope. The higher, southern level has an even-aged stand of mature, broadleaved trees, mainly beech and sycamore, probably dating back to the nineteenth century. Flora within this part of the woodland includes bluebell, creeping buttercup, broad buckler fern and cow parsley. Secondary Woodland is one of the sites Key Features.

The lower, northern level used to be part of a pasture field, but at the time of acquisition had been disused for many years and reverted to tall, rank vegetation, mainly willowherb. Since then, it has been planted with native broadleaf trees (1994) with the help of the local community, and these are growing well. Despite its small size and relatively awkward access, the wood is extremely popular and well used by local people, many of whom are elderly, and also many dog walkers. This is because there is little other official public open space in the area and many of the local houses only have small gardens. The paths through E Wood do link with a small area of adjacent council land, and unofficially carry on through an adjacent field and beyond. Informal Public Access is one of the sites Key Features.

The Mill Race provides an interesting feature, with a wooden pedestrian bridge across the centre. There is a surprising amount of local wildlife, with foxes, woodpeckers and owls occasionally seen.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

E. Wood is located around 1 mile to the south of Blackburn town centre. The site has six pedestrian access points in total. 2 access points are on the southern boundary bordering grassland, 1 pedestrian access is located on the sites western boundary on Bolton Road, 1 pedestrian access point can be found on the sites northern boundary adjacent to Mill Race Wood and 2 access points are on the sites eastern boundary adjacent to Branch Road. The path network is about 600m long with 1 bridge over the Mill Race. The Mill Race is an attractive and unusual feature, providing a historical link. The path network is on the whole level; however it is unsurfaced and can become muddy and slippery when wet.

Parking is available on nearby roads such as Bolton Road but may be limited.

Nearest Public Toilet: Located approximately 3 miles away at Asda Superstores, Grimshaw Park Road, Blackburn. The toilets are suitable for disabled users.

Nearest bus stop: Located on Bolton Road, Cravens Brow which is opposite the entrance to the wood. Information from Traveline website.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline- www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2 608

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

E Wood will be managed as broadleaved high forest, gradually moving towards a woodland with a diverse range of ages and species. This will be a very long process as the wood currently consists of two groups of very even aged trees. Tree safety will be the prime management driver in both the mature woodland and the young woodland area, the existing mature trees will be retained as long as it is feasible, whilst the area of young woodland develops. Regeneration of all species will be encouraged wherever possible, including non-natives which are part of the history of the site and relatively stable. Currently there are virtually no shrubs or understorey in this area, which gives it a certain character. It is not intended to deliberately try to create these, although they may develop naturally, and the balance between character, history and biodiversity is not rigid.

Access to the site will be maintained at the current level at least. Access consists of 6 pedestrian entrances and approximately 600m of paths, with 2 pedestrian bridges over the Mill Race.

The Mill Race will be retained as a feature of historical interest, and as an area of open water which adds to the wildlife interest. It is also useful in guiding visitors around the site, leaving some areas less disturbed and allowing regeneration to succeed. Local people will be involved in the care and management of the site where possible.

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

This small wood is extremely well-used by local people and unofficially paths link to a much wider area of urban countryside. There are a total of 6 entrance points. The path network is about 600m long with 2 bridges over the Mill Race. The Mill Race is an attractive and unusual feature, providing a historical link. The main users are dog walkers, children playing and people taking a short cut and avoiding the busy main roads.

Significance

There is very little public open space in the local area, which has a high population density (a lot of terraced housing) with little space and often no transport or gardens. The mature trees in particular are large and striking, the Mill Race is also attractive. Many people walk in the wood daily and greatly value it and the wildlife it supports.

Opportunities & Constraints

Access from the 6 permissive points is not ideal, either because it means using a route at the back of properties (from the terraced housing on Branch Road), it encourages access onto adjacent land (fields to the south), or because it leads off a very busy road (A666). However, all of these routes have been used for many years, and upgrading their status would be desirable. Since the Trust erected boundary fencing in 1991 access and use by motorbikes has virtually ceased, which has been a marked improvement on safety and damage to flora and regeneration. The existing network of paths uses as much of the wood as possible whilst still allowing ground vegetation and young trees to survive in areas. Surfacing of these paths may be needed if the level of use increases, and this may also make them easier to use for less abled people. The Mill Race has standing water, and to retain the feature will need periodic cleaning out, but should not be made too deep otherwise it could present a hazard to children who do use the wood regularly.

Factors Causing Change

Vandalism, Mill Race silting up

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain the existing path network of 600m, and 2 pedestrian bridges over the Mill Race. Maintain the 6 official entrances where possible. Maintain the Mill Race as a linear water feature going through the wood, with a water depth of about 2 feet.

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

Annual clearance and maintenance of paths, entrances, signs and bridge. Mill Race will be de-silted every 2 years to retain the feature and ensure that it is capable of transferring water through the site.

5.2 Natural Secondary Woodland

Description

The southern half of this small wood consists of existing broadleaf woodland, mainly mature beech and sycamore, with a few other broadleaves, dating probably from the late nineteenth century. This has a sparse ground flora, although it does contain a scattering of bluebells. Here, regeneration is limited to areas with sufficient light (which have increased as tree safety felling has taken place) and that are not trampled, but in these areas birch and beech have been prolific with some oak. The northern half of the wood is on a lower level, and consists of mixed native broadleaf woodland planted in 1991. This area is a former field, but at the time of planting had not been managed for many years and had reverted to rank vegetation, with a lot of willow herb. The planted trees are growing very well in the rather damp ground. The wildlife in the wood is good for an urban wood, with foxes, woodpeckers and owls occasionally seen in the area.

Significance

There is very little woodland at all in the local area. The Borough of Blackburn has only 6% woodland cover, and only 4% broadleaf woodland cover. Many of the woods are very small, and non-native broadleaves such as sycamore and beech are very common (sycamore is the most common species in the whole area). Therefore, this wood is rather typical of the area, and one of only a few. The Community Woodland strategy specifically identifies as a target the creation of new woodland in this area (Blackburn/Darwen & Branch Road)

Opportunities & Constraints

As the young planting develops it will effectively double the total area of woodland on the site and create a second generation of trees to replace the even-aged stand that currently exists (but is in decline). The older trees can be allowed to reach senescence naturally. The level of use of areas of the site where young trees are developing needs to be managed carefully.

Factors Causing Change

Senescence of older trees, tree disease particularly ash dieback.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

High forest of mixed broadleaves, including non-native trees common to the local area. The wood will be managed predominantly as a landscape and conservation feature, with tree safety needs taking a high priority.

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

Active thinning work will be undertaken in 2016 & 2021 to ensure long term stand stability, this work will be focussed on the northern boundary of the wood where the site borders housing.

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	0.90	Beech	1890	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, Natural Secondary Woodland	Tree Preservation Order
<p>0.9 Hectare (2 acres) of secondary woodland composed mainly of native mature and over mature broadleaved species (p. year 1890) such as beech, sycamore and ash located in Blackburn, East Lancashire. The compartment is flat and level in nature and a small river known as the Mill Race runs along the border the compartment. The compartment has a permissive path running through it which is well used by local people.</p>							
1b	0.80	Ash	1991	High forest	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	Informal Public Access, Natural Secondary Woodland	Tree Preservation Order
<p>0.8 hectares (1.8acres) former pasture field that had been left unmanaged and grown over with rank vegetation. It was planted with mixed native broadleaves in 1991, shortly after acquisition by the Trust, with help of local people. The aim is to increase the woodland area, and provide the next generation of trees on the site, before the existing mature stand disappears.</p>							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2016	1a	Thin	0.50	40	20
2021	1a	Thin	0.50	40	20

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.