



Bagger Wood

Management Plan 2019-2024

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Bagger Wood
Location:	Hood Green
Grid reference:	SE303026, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 110
Area:	27.34 hectares (67.56 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Ancient Woodland Site, Community Forest, Green Belt

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Just ten minutes from busy Barnsley and easily accessed from several local villages, Bagger Wood is a rural haven. Visitors can follow a circular path from the car park or explore the central area via a forest road which is also open to horse riders.

2.2 Extended Description

The site was acquired by the Woodland Trust on the 15th April 1992 with contributions to its purchase by the Countryside Commission and local fundraising. The wood is located in an attractive area of countryside, designated as an Area of Landscape Value, to the west of the M1 and the town of Barnsley. The landscape is dominated by small pastures surrounded by dry stone walls and relatively large blocks of private estate and Forestry Commission woodland. The woodlands are mainly confined to the steeper slopes, with many, including Bagger Wood, forming prominent skyline features. Bagger wood has a considerable impact on the local landscape especially when viewed from the north and the village of Dodsworth. The pine trees on the higher of the north-west facing slopes are particularly noticeable, a landscape feature which is reflected in several other woods in the area.

The Woodland Trust also owns the small woodland to the west, Lower Lee Wood, which is linked by a permissive footpath across the one small field which separates the woods. Nabs Wood, which is situated only 1 mile to the north of Bagger Wood, alongside the road to Silkstone Common is also owned by the Trust. The site is situated within Barnsley Borough Councils, Green Belt and area of Great Landscape Value as well as being within the South Yorkshire Forest area.

A small seasonal stream bisects the site in a north west / south east direction, deeply incised in places. Just outside the northern boundary of the site is Bagger Wood Dyke which is a small stream which appears to have been converted into a straight dyke in places.

The wood is exceptionally well used by local people with an estimated number of 6000-10,000 visitors per year. It is located close to several villages and is only 5 miles from Barnsley. A car park at the south western corner of the woodland provides good access to the site. There are no designated public footpaths or bridleways within the woodland, but the wood is well served by a network of permissive (unsurfaced) paths and a wide, surfaced permissive bridleway.

The wood, though clearly Planted Ancient Woodland, is on the English Nature's Ancient Woodland Inventory as ancient woodland and is listed by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council as Semi-natural Ancient Woodland - this includes a 2 ha compartment of predominately beech. Two disused adits are recorded by British Coal but no visible sign on the ground, apart from the remains of a brick powder house in a dense area of Corsican pine.

No doubt as a result of the high visitor numbers mammal activity within the woodland is limited to common species. The site has large flora diversity but no species list is currently available.

Little management history is currently available but it would appear that the wood was mainly broadleaved until the 1960's when pine and larch were planted by the Forestry Commission following large scale felling. Some of the larger hardwoods including oak, beech, sycamore and sweet chestnut date from previous restock planting in the 1930's.

Thinning of the approximately 50% of the woodland was undertaken by the Trust in 1997 with further thinning of pine in compartment 2a & 2b undertaken in 2002 and again in 2008, although some areas of larch remained unthinned where dense rhododendron prevented access.

Open agricultural land, mostly pasture surrounds the woodland on all sides. Bagger Wood Road runs along half of the south eastern boundary with Bagger Wood Hill road running alongside the northern boundary.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

ACCESS TO THE SITE

The wood is located approximately 5 miles to the west of Barnsley, close to the village of Hood Green and within easy access of the M1 motorway. Access from the M1 is from junction 37, following the A626 towards Penistone. Follow the A626 for about 3 miles to the hamlet of Noblethorpe. Turn left on a minor road sign posted Silkstone Common. After a mile the road meets the B6449 at a crossroads in the centre of the village. Pass straight forward and follow this minor road for 2 miles until the village of Hood Green. Turn right on entering the village and follow the road (Bagger Wood Road, which links the villages of Hood Green and Thurgoland) for another mile, alongside Bagger Wood, to the car park which signed posted from the road.

Those arriving by bus to Hood Green, the wood is only a short walk, 500m from the centre of the village. Head in a westerly direction and turn right at the end of the village on the lane sign posted to Silkstone Common. The entrance to the wood is on the left after about 200m.

ENTRANCE AND FOOTPATHS

From the car park a 1 mile (1.5km) circular permissive footpath runs around the wood with a surfaced forest track running through the centre of the wood, which is also a permissive route for horses and riders. The footpath accessed via a pedestrian gate and squeeze stiles. The grass paths have gentle slopes but are rough in places. The forest track through the centre of the wood is surfaced and contains only gentle slopes.

PARKING

Parking is only available at the car park on Bagger Wood Road.

PUBLIC TOILETS

No toilets known within 5 miles of the wood..

BUS STOPS

Hood Green - centre of village.

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 intentions are to return the wood to a predominantly native broadleaf high forest with a diverse species and age structure.

The restoration of PAWS is one of the Trust's major objectives for its own sites as well as those in other ownerships. Our approach is to restore the canopy to native broadleaved trees over the long term to avoid the sudden change in conditions that comes from clear-felling. This will take the form of an ongoing programme of thinning the conifers, usually on a 5-10 year cycle. Rather than maximising timber production the thinning will favour existing broadleaved trees, ground flora hotspots that still survive and other ecological features that are being damaged by the conifers. The adoption of a continuous cover silvicultural system will avoid the need for clear-felling and should ensure a successor broadleaved canopy is developed, using natural regeneration wherever possible. This approach should encourage a more resilient woodland capable of better withstanding pressures from climate change, pests and diseases.

A small percentage of conifers will be retained as conservation features and to reflect the management history of the site.

The site's extensive network of paths will be suitably managed to encourage safe, enjoyable access wherever possible, with the circular paths and central surfaced track forming the main access routes with 5 entrance points. Infrastructure such as signs, bridges and steps will be kept to a minimum to maintain the rural nature of the site. The car park will be maintained at the present capacity.

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 site is well used by the public for informal recreation, with between 6-10,000 visitors annually, predominantly local dog-walkers, many of whom are daily visitors, although the wood does link well with the network of paths and bridleways locally. The wood has a small car park located at the southern corner suitable to accommodate at least 10 cars. A circular permissive footpath extends around the perimeter of the wood for approximately 1 mile (1.5km) with 4 access points in addition to the car park entrance. A wide ride runs through the centre of the site which surfaced for use as a permissive route for horses and riders.

Significance

The provision of the car park and the close proximity of local villages and the town of Barnsley makes this a popular woodland for the local community, with limited appeal beyond the immediate villages. Accessible woodland in the immediate area is plentiful, with the vast accessible and equipped woodlands of North Sheffield - Greno and Wharncliffe Woods only a few minutes drive away to the south west.

Opportunities & Constraints

The hard surfacing of the central ride has improved greatly access for both walkers and horses all year round. Unfortunately unauthorised use of the boundary paths by the horses occurs regularly which can result in the path being in a poor condition for walkers, during wetter periods throughout the year. Further work to erect barriers to prevent horse could be undertaken if the situation deteriorates further.

Factors Causing Change

Increased use by horses riders and local stables not keeping to designated tracks.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The site should be well used and much appreciated by both the local population and visitors from further afield. It should be known for its wildlife interest, landscape, history and habitats. The site should be accessible and safe but not over-managed with excessive infrastructure and signage. In details, the circular 1500m footpath to be maintained for walkers with 5 access points.

The surfaced central access track from Bagger Wood Hill to the car park to be maintained in a suitable condition for maintenance vehicles, horse riding and walkers, and the car park to be maintained for year round use.

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

Inspect and maintain the entrance points (including cutting vegetation to the sight lines at the car park entrance), signs and undertake at least one litter pick annually.

Annually monitor the disturbance to the permissive footpaths by horses with a view to undertaking measures to prevent horses use should the level of damage warrant such action.

At least once per plan period maintain the central surface track and ditch so that vehicles, horses and pedestrians have suitable all year round access, and at least one one occasion maintain the surface to the car park and apron to the road to ensure accessibility. All other site infrastructure such as culverts, will be inspected on at least one occasion per plan period, or after active use (felling/ extraction work) and remedial work undertaken in the appropriate timescale.

5.2 Planted Ancient Woodland Site

Description

The wood is designated in English Nature's Ancient Woodland Inventory as an ancient woodland site, and is managed by the Woodland Trust as a planted ancient woodland. The wood contains a small percentage of native tree species having been coniferised by the Forestry Commission in the 1960's with larch and Corsican pine, as well as introductions of sycamore and beech during the 1930's, still containing a small component of rhododendron in the understorey. Ancient woodland ground flora is present throughout the wood.

Significance

Woodland cover in the Yorkshire area is one of the lowest in the country at about 2.7% (source NCC 1989). Only 6% of this figure is considered to be ancient woodland. The site is therefore especially important for this area of the country. This particular area of South Yorkshire does however have one of the highest concentrations of ancient woodlands in Yorkshire and Bagger Wood therefore forms part of this network. Many of the ancient woodlands in the immediate locality are managed by private estates/ landowners and the Forestry Commission and are managed as productive woodlands.

Opportunities & Constraints

Broadleaved trees and regeneration, including a high percentage of (planted) oak are in sufficient numbers and distribution to return the site to a predominately broadleaved woodland. Thinning of the conifer element as well as the sycamore and beech, to favour native broadleaved species and management of natural regeneration will be needed to be undertaken for many years to come in order to achieve this aim, and with few management constraints this will be achievable, whilst also producing a saleable timber product. Protected species present on the site impose strict conditions on working practices and timing of operations in a very small portion of the woodland.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive rhododendron, mammal damage (increasing deer numbers and species, squirrel damage), threat of tree disease (larch phytophthora, pine red band needle blight and ash dieback) is a major concern, though the current diversity of broadleaved species could reduce the impact these diseases have on the woodland canopy. Holly regeneration has been noted as a potential shading issue on the acidic soils, with prolific regeneration in some areas and rapid growth of established copses.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

In the long term (50 years+) the PAWS areas within Bagger Wood should all be predominantly broadleaved in character, with a small percentage of retained conifers to reflect the sites management history. All other major ancient woodland components in a secure and improving condition. These include ground flora, deadwood, streams and other wetland features. Rhododendron should have been eliminated or reduced to a rare component of all woodland areas. Following the restoration programme, areas managed by minimum intervention will develop by natural processes with some canopy collapse followed by natural regeneration. There should be an increasing volume of coarse woody debris (standing and fallen) throughout the site including in watercourses.

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

Within this plan period 2019-2024, thinning works are proposed throughout the entire site, concentrating on the larch, beech and Corsican pine stands, selectively thinning to the best of stems and to favour broadleaved species. All PAWS stands will be then thinned selectively on a 5-10 year cycle to secure and bolster remaining ancient woodland components (broadleaved trees, ground flora, decaying wood habitats)

The approximate tree species composition in 2018 is approximately 60% conifers and 40% broadleaves. It is proposed to undertake thinning operations to reduce the dominance of conifers to less than 50% by 2020 and 25% by 2050. Natural regeneration will be monitored and if re-spacing operations are required these will favour native species.

Selective, motor-manual thinning to waste will be undertaken around other biodiversity hotspots such as streams and wet woodland areas as well as areas with protected species that cannot be included in the main mechanised thinning contracts.

Rhododendron control by herbicide application will be continued annually on approx 1ha of regeneration and cut stumps. All remaining uncut/untreated rhododendron should be incorporated into the annual control programme and removed by the end of 2015.

Deer and other mammal impacts will be monitored at least once per plan period.

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	2.00	Beech	1939	High forest	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Informal Public Access, Planted Ancient Woodland Site	Ancient Woodland Site, Community Forest, Green Belt
<p>Compartment situated on a gentle north-west facing slope to the east of the car park. Bounded to the southeast by Bagger Wood Lane, public footpath to the northeast and a permissive path to the northwest. Ancient woodland indicator species are present throughout, though the ground flora appears markedly different to the rest of the woodland. The canopy consisting of approximately 80% planted beech (p. 1939), with oak birch and rowan making up approx. 15%, with 5% larch in the eastern and western portions of the compartment. This compartment has been subject to some unauthorised felling during 1984/5 prior to Woodland Trust ownership.</p>							
2a	1.21	Corsican pine	1961	High forest	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access, Planted Ancient Woodland Site	Ancient Woodland Site, Community Forest, Green Belt
<p>A small north west facing compartment, following a steep rock outcropping, consisting of predominantly Corsican pine 80% (P1962) with every 4th line being larch (15%) and a small number of Scots pine and naturally regenerated oak and sweet chestnut (5%). Ancient woodland indicator species in the limited ground flora. Thinned in 1997, 2002 and 2008. The westernmost end of the compartment has remained unthinned, surrounding both artificial and natural badger setts as well as the remains of a brick powder house. The compartment is bounded by permissive bridleway and path to the north west and southwest, by pasture grassland to the southeast and a minor road to the north east</p>							
3a	23.42	Hybrid larch	1962	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Informal Public Access, Planted Ancient Woodland Site	Ancient Woodland Site, Community Forest, Green Belt

Mixed broadleaved and conifer woodland, forming the main body of the woodland on a gentle north-west facing slope. Consisting of: hybrid larch 60%, Corsican pine 5%, sycamore 15%, oak 15%. The vast majority is 1961 and 1962 restock planting with some remnant oak and sweet chestnut from the previous planting in 1930. A small element of mixed species such as birch, rowan, holly and cherry account for approximately 5%. The compartment was thinned in 1997 followed up with a limited second thinning in 2008. Natural regeneration of oak, ash and other species is occurring throughout the compartment where light levels allow, with ancient woodland indicator species throughout. Small amounts of rhododendron are still present following the clearance (cut and spray regrowth) of some 5-6ha during 2011/12/13. This compartment is bounded to the north west by Bagger Wood Dyke and pasture, to the north east by a minor road, to the west by pasture and cpt 3b and a small car park, and to the south east by compartments 1a and 2a.

3b	0.71	Oak (pedunculate)	1939	High forest	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Informal Public Access, Planted Ancient Woodland Site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Community Forest, Green Belt
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Small rectangular section of woodland sticking out from the western boundary, gentle north facing slope, containing only broadleaved species, mainly oak (80%) but with 1960's sycamore and other broadleaved species including birch, rowan and holly, with ancient woodland ground flora indicator species throughout, however dominated by bramble. Bounded by pasture to the west and cpt 3a to the east.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2020	1a	Thin	2.00	43	85
2020	3a	Thin	11.71	21	250
2023	2a	Thin	1.21	17	20
2023	3a	Thin	11.71	21	250
2033	1a	Thin	2.00	43	85
2033	3a	Thin	11.71	21	250

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.