WOODLAND TRUST

Greta Wood

Management Plan 2015-2020

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MAPS

THE WOODLAND TRUST

INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.
Please either consult The Woodland Trust website www.woodlandtrust.org.uk or contact the Woodland Trust (wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland.

Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website www.woodlandtrust.org.uk. Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open-ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential to generate income from our estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we allow our woods to be used to support local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
10. Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

1.0 SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Greta Wood
Location:	Burton in Lonsdale
Grid reference:	SD648716, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 97
Area:	2.65 hectares (6.55 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A small wood set in rolling countryside, this is part of a longer, broken chain of ancient woodland that runs along the river. Some excellent views along and down the river.

2.2 Extended Description

Situated in rolling countryside to the south west of Burton In Lonsdale (0.3 km), this small wood sits on the southern bank of the River Greta. Clifford Gill, a deeply incised stream enters the woodland from the south and runs north to meet the River Greta; it also forms the western boundary to the Woodland Trust ownership. Hard limestone bedrock is exposed along the northern boundary where the river has eroded a small river cliff -but its geology includes sandstones, ironstone, mudstones and shale, a thick clay layer and narrow seams of coal part of the Ingleton coalfield, exposed as Clifford Gill cuts through the softer underlying rocks. Stepped outcrops of shale and sandstones occur along the course of the stream, creating cascades providing further habitats for bryophytes and mosses which thrive in this dark gully.

The whole site is included within an area of Great Landscape Value, and has also been designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland as part of the NCC Draft Inventory of Ancient Woodland 1987. Ancient woodland in this part of the county is a scarce resource, and Greta Wood does form part of a longer broken chain of ancient woodland along the course of the river, much of it remaining due to inaccessible locations. Land use to the north south and east is improved grassland/ pasture land. The woodland is composed of two blocks which are only just connected by the public footpath / access route.

The tree species are dominated by ash and oak, with elm regeneration. Large beech and sycamore are locally significant within the woodland with ages estimated at up to 150 years. Other species such as willows and alder occur in wetter areas and along the river and streamsides. The understorey is composed of holly, thorn, guelder rose and frequent hazel coppice. The hazel coppice does appear to have been worked in the past, although not for many years. The ground flora is particularly rich, much of it indicative of ancient woodland, dominated by dog's mercury and wild garlic, it does include notable species such as twayblade and herb paris. Little is known about the site history, although there is documentary evidence to show the wood was the location of at least two pottery kilns, utilising local clay for earthenware pots, and presumably fired with locally mined coal, which cuts through the geology in narrow seams. Other minerals mined included ironstones which outcrop throughout the woodland, the mining may well have gone on for the last 3-400 years. The remains of shafts, adits, bell pits and spoil, litter the woodland. Despite the rich ground flora there are relatively few ancient trees, suggesting that this woodland has been felled to some extent- perhaps during the period of quarrying, and left to regenerate.

Visitor access to the woodland is via the minor road from Burton In Lonsdale. There is parking available in and around the village, approximately 5 minutes walk. Access to the woodland is marked by the Woodland Trust welcoming sign on the roadside along with a public footpath signpost. The footpath runs along the northern boundary of the woodland along an un-surfaced path, past Greeta House and alongside the River Greta. There are some excellent views across and down the river. A second short section of footpath runs to the east of Greta Mount (House).There is also a path along the eastern bank of Clifford Gill, where pottery waste from the kilns is clearly visible in the stream and in the path and banks. The public footpath through Greta Wood is well used, as it continues following the course of the River west.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Situated only 300m to the south west of Burton In Lonsdale, public access is available along the public footpath running east to west along the northern boundary of the woodland, adjacent to Greta House and alongside the River Greta. The path is for the most part unsurfaced, narrow in sections and often very wet and muddy.. A second short permissive path runs north south, meeting the minor road immediately to the south of Greta Mount House, which is very narrow, following the edge of a deeply incised stream, unsurfaced and with several short steep sections.. Public Footpath markers are positioned at the roadside to the east and woodland to the west of the Woodland Trust property. Easy roadside car parking is available within the village of Burton in Lonsdale. Worth a visit as part of a longer walk following the River through farmland and woodland to the south of the river.
Bus services run through to the main street in Burton in Lonsdale, from where it is a 300m walk following the public road to reach the woodland. Information from the traveline website.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline- www.traveline.org.uk or phone 0870 608 2608. The nearest public toilets are situated in the local authority car park in Ingleton approximately 5km to the east.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

At Greta Wood we will implement a minimum intervention approach to conserve and maintain this site as broadleaved woodland. As senescence and on-going windthrow occurs on the thin/ loose quarried soils it will provide opportunities for the ample regeneration thereby creating and maintaining a diversity of age structure within the woodland. The site is, and will remain important as an ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) in an area of great landscape value, and in a part of the county with little remaining ancient woodland cover. Access will be maintained at the present levels via the unsurfaced public footpaths marked by Woodland Trust welcoming signs.

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

Public access on foot is available along a public footpath along the northern boundary of the woodland, This footpath is bounded to the north by River Greta, and a path does exist to the south along the line of Clifford Gill, exiting to the south of Greta Mount Farm, well used as a short circular route. No car parking is available on site, although the village centre and ample car parking is only 5 minutes walk.

Significance

The woodland although small and with limited access apart from the public footpath provides some very fine views over the River Greta. It has a quiet setting and undisturbed feel, combining with streams and river to create a very special woodland . Whilst increasing the access provision is not feasible, access into the wood on at least one route is important as one of the objectives of the Woodland Trust and to allow people to enjoy this woodland experience.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints include very steep slopes/ river cliff, deep gullies, rock outcrops along with Clifford Gill - a small stream in a deep narrow gully that cuts through the site. Combined with the generally recently undisturbed and rich ANSW ground flora , the possibilities for extending the current path network are very limited.

Factors Causing Change

Encroaching vegetation, Path erosion from seasonal water issuing from woodland

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain access to the woodland via the two public footpaths. No future path creation to be undertaken due to the inaccessible terrain, mining history and the disturbance to the ground flora

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

Maintain the current routes ensuring the Woodland Trust areas of ownership are marked with welcoming signs to either end of the public footpath. Paths and routes are to be maintained through at least annual inspection for tree safety, vegetation clearance and litter.

5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Current designation from NCC Inventory of Ancient Woodland 1987. Predominantly oak and ash with areas of beech and sycamore . Much of the elm which once dominated the woodland has died due to the effects of Dutch Elm Disease. Understorey of elm suckering, holly, hazel and guelder rose with a very rich and diverse ground associated with Ancient Semi Natural Woodland. To be managed as minimum intervention high forest.

Significance

ASNW within this part of the county is also limited in area, much as in this case restricted to inaccessible terrain and along riversides. Greta Wood forms part of a quite extensive chain of woodlands following the course of the River Greta for approximately 4km, very little woodland cover exists downstream from this section of the river, upstream is a similar picture except for Thornton and Twisleton Glens (part Woodland Trust, SSSI, ASNW), approximately 5km upstream.

Opportunities & Constraints

Difficult topography, with outcropping, steep unstable slopes and extensive former mining and quarrying activity, difficult access within the compartment - both management and pedestrian would prevent most work in this woodland. The disturbance to the woodland and relatively rich ground flora in an area untouched for many years would be inappropriate. Periodic (10 year) monitoring of the regeneration should highlight any need for control, should any non-native regeneration be classed as invasive to the significant detriment of the woodland.

Factors Causing Change

potentially invasive Sycamore, invasive Beech on the shale and sandstone areas. Ash dieback may well have a greater impact on light levels in the coming years.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland will be managed as high forest. Maintaining predominantly native broadleaved woodland, accepting the presence of sycamore and beech.

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

Monitor the woodland on a ten-year basis to assess any regeneration of non-native species including sycamore from the existing mature trees on site, in the light of ash dieback. Then to take a decision as to any requirement for intervention. Otherwise management will be limited to tree safety.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	2.64	Mixed broadleaves	1900	Min-intervention	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/ Rocky ground, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value
Broadleaved high forest, predominantly oak and ash, occasional elm regeneration with areas of beech and sycamore. Understorey predominantly of scattered hazel. Designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland, as is the woodland which bounds it to the south and west. The remainder of the site is bounded by the River Greta and private gardens to the north, a minor road to the east, with further private gardens and improved pasture land to the south and south east. Large amounts of standing and fallen deadwood - predominantly elm due to the effects of Dutch Elm Disease. Much of the compartment has a dense ground flora, with an exceptional range of species, many indicative of ancient woodland, despite having been greatly affected by mining for coal, clay and ironstone, and kiln production of earthenware pottery. Public access is limited to a public footpath running along the northern boundary close to the River Greta and up Clifford Gill to the west.							

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.