



# Polyphemus

## Management Plan 2017-2022

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## THE WOODLAND TRUST

### INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

### PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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

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

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## WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland. Our strategic aims are to:

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

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

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

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

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

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

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## SUMMARY

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

## 1.0 SITE DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Polyphemus
<b>Location:</b>	Darwen, Lancs
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SD696235, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 103
<b>Area:</b>	15.43 hectares (38.13 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Other

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Created in 2005 to mark the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar and named after one of Nelson's fleet, this broadleaf woodland with 15,000 trees includes oak, ash, alder, birch, rowan, hazel, hawthorn and holly. A variety of flora has also been encouraged by deep ploughing and seeding open areas to provide a visual display. It occupies a prominent position with good views of Darwen Tower and visitors can enjoy a network of paths, open ground, meadow areas and a small pond, which has been restored.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Situated approximately 3km south of Blackburn town centre and 1km to the north east of Darwen, the site occupies a prominent position in the landscape, being an area of former pastureland highly visible from the M65 forming part of a green wedge between two populations centres. The site is a 16ha gently sloping, mostly north facing area of former improved grassland, bounded on all sides by agricultural land, rising from 130m in the north to 210m at the highest point in the south.

The land was a gift from a local farmer Thomas Bailey who generously left the site to the Trust in his will. Funding for planting and managing the site came from The Forestry Commission, Elwoods, SITA, Blackburn and Darwen MBC and private individuals.

The site was planted as part of the Trafalgar Woods Project which celebrated the bicentenary of the battle of Trafalgar in 2005 by planting 27 woodlands named after ships in Nelsons celebrated fleet, one of which was HMS Polyphemus. The name Polyphemus seems to originate from Greek Mythology, Polyphemus was a Cyclops in Homers Odyssey. The Trafalgar Woods Project was part of Tree For All, a project which aimed to involve one million school children planting 12 million trees, and many of the trees at Polyphemus have been planted by children. In fact the planting of the site was phased over three years to maximize the potential for as many local school children as possible to be involved in the planting.

Polyphemus was planted with approximately 15,000 trees and consists of 12.35 hectares of young mixed native broadleaved trees. Species such as oak, ash, alder, birch, rowan, hazel, hawthorn and holly were planted. The site also has approximately 2.5 hectares of open ground consisting of footpaths, meadow areas and a small pond which the trust restored in 2005. A small section of the north west corner of the site was left unplanted as records courtesy of Lancashire Wildlife Trust showed this small area to have some limited floristic value.

The land use around the site is predominate pastoral farmland on all sides.

A public footpath runs along the full extent of the sites southern boundary, there is also a network of permissive footpaths on site and in total there is around 1000 meters of mowed grass footpaths. The site is well used by local people and it is within easy reach of local housing.

The Woodland Trust has strived to involve local people with the site from the beginning. The design of the woodland was developed in consultation with local people, many of whom also attended several community tree planting events. The Woodland Trust will continue to develop further links with local people where opportunities arise.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Polyphemus lies approximately 3km to the south of Blackburn and 1km to the east of Darwen. There are 3 pedestrian access points available to the site. A pedestrian squeeze gap is located on the south west boundary of the site at the end of Knowle Lane. 2 pedestrian stiles are located on the south east and north east boundaries respectively. The site itself contains a network of around 1000 meters of mown, level grass paths, the paths are not surfaced and can get slippery and muddy when wet.

Parking is available on nearby local roads such as Knowle Lane (part tarmac/ loose gravel) but is very limited in availability and is important for access to the houses along its length, being a single track lane.

Nearest public toilet: Located approximately 2 miles away at Blackburn motorway services which is just of Jct 4 of the M65 motorway.

Nearest bus stop: Located at approximately a quarter of a mile from the site outside the Punch Bowl public house on Pot House Lane.. Information from Traveline website.

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

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The Woodland Trusts long-term intention is to create and maintain a diversely structured (in terms of age and size classification) native broadleaved high forest woodland. This will be interspersed with areas of transitional and permanent open ground providing a mosaic of habitats and environments that will be a benefit to native flora and fauna.

The development of natural secondary woodland will be promoted through the encouragement of any further areas of natural regeneration, on areas not designated as long-term open spaces, and through the management of existing areas through minimum intervention.

The new plantings in compartment 1 will be managed following standard silvicultural practices until fully established, at which time the feasibility of minimum intervention approach will be considered. Any areas of appropriate natural regeneration which occur within the planting areas will be encouraged and protected.

The present network of open access for pedestrian use will be maintained through a regular mowing regime in the summer months under the sites Estates Management Contract.



## 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 has three public access points in total. A squeeze gap is located on the south west boundary of the site at the end of Knowle Lane and 2 pedestrian stiles are located on the south east and north east boundaries respectively. The site itself contains a network of around 1000 meters of mown, level grass paths, the paths are not surfaced and can get slippery and muddy when wet. Three benches can also be found on site and excellent views are afforded to the east towards the Pennines.

#### Significance

In accordance with the Woodland Trusts general aims the site is open to the public for quiet informal pedestrian activities. The site links into the wider public footpath network and provides recreational opportunities for people living in the heavily populated towns such as Darwen and Blackburn.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

The site is relatively small and is most likely to be used by local people who live close to the site, however the site does link into a public footpath network. The site has suffered isolated incidence of vandalism, most notably many tree guards were removed from the trees soon after planting.

#### Factors Causing Change

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

The existing level and quality of access will be monitored and maintained by the Trust. The Trust will endeavour to be flexible and adapt to any increase in recreational use.

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

Paths continue to be cut 3X annually to maintain easy public access. Other facilities such as welcome signs at the entrance will be maintained at least once annually.

## 5.2 New Native Woodland

### Description

The site consists of approximately 12.35Ha of native broadleaved planting. There is also approximately 2.5Ha of open ground in the form of meadow, footpaths and a pond.

### Significance

This is a small native broadleaved wood in an area with very little woodland at all and certainly very little native woodland, and hence it will provide a important new area of native woodland, which may encourage further planting in the local area.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Initial tree growth has been rapid and the basic structure of the woodland will develop quite quickly. The surrounding land use is predominantly agricultural which does isolate the site from other semi natural habitats.

### Factors Causing Change

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The aim is to create a high forest of mixed predominantly native broadleaves. The wood will be managed predominantly as a recreational and landscape feature. Regeneration of both natives and non-native species will be accepted.

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

Under this plan period the trees will be under minimum intervention with management limited to woodland condition observations once in the 5 year plan period.

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## 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	16.00	Ash	2005	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access, New Native Woodland	

The site is approximately 16ha and consists of broadleaf trees planted on former pastureland. The land is gently sloping, mostly north facing and is bounded by agricultural land on all sides. The site was planted in three phases, phase 1 November 2005, phase 2 November 2006 and phase 3 November 2007. The site was planted with native trees and shrubs of regional provenance. Planting density varies across the site but averages out at 1100 trees/ha. A mixture of 1.2 metre tubes and 0.6 metre spirals were used to protect the trees from predation from deer, hares and rabbits. Species planted on site were Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Cherry (*Prunus avium*), English oak (*Quercus robur*), White willow (*Salix alba*), Goat willow (*Salix caprea*) and Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). The site also has 20% of open ground which is mainly concentrated on the easements for overhead services, footpaths and a pond. This site can be accessed from the pedestrian entrance point located on the south western boundary at the bottom of Knowle Lane, the south eastern boundary and the north eastern boundary. On site there is a public footpath and several permissive paths which create a circular route. At the highest point on site there are good views of the surrounding area including local landmark Darwen Tower. Three seats provide resting points around the site. Parking is available on local roads but may be limited. The wood is used mainly by local people who arrive on foot, for quite informal recreation.

## 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.