



The Burn Walk

Management Plan 2018-2023

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 Secondary Woodland

6.0 Work Programme

Appendix 1: Compartment descriptions

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	The Burn Walk
Location:	Drumrallagh
Grid reference:	H357966, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 12
Area:	1.25 hectares (3.09 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

The Burn Walk is one of just three of The Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep' woodlands in Northern Ireland, created to commemorate the Millennium. This site is part of a wooded glen on the Cavanalee River above a housing estate near Strabane village in County Tyrone.

2.2 Extended Description

This site was started under the Woyd programme in Oct. 1998 and it was only the third Woyd site to be created in NI. It is part of a wooded glen on the Cavanalee River above a housing estate to the SE of Strabane village in County Tyrone. This one hectare planting was gifted by the NIHE to use as open space and new planting with the communities support. The Fountain Street CDA has been actively involved from the beginning and the creation and management works have been previously undertaken under contract with them. They have installed a loop going from the Drumrallagh estate into the glen and back.

The trees that were planted have all been maintained by the group with a New Deal team. Shrubs have been planted under the power lines and trees in the open spaces of the glen. There is a continuous layer of hazel and ash woodland stretching up the glen alongside the Cavanalee River and its waterfalls, which are just above this planting. This small wood already contains some signs of long established native flora spreading from the glen into the new native woodland e.g. Bluebell, foxglove and lesser celandine.

In 2016 parts of the existing paths were upgraded along with installing some new and repairing existing steps as well as 3 new wooden benches and the view point restored. The Fountain Street CDA continue to be involved in the site through regular volunteer work parties, since which the litter and vandalism issues have dramatically reduced.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

The public have access to the whole site and have accessed the site informally for many years. The path loop has been developed by the Fountain Street CDA to allow the public, and more especially the locals, to walk around the lower glen and see the planting and its wildlife.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

This area is accessed off the Drumrallagh estate and this link should be retained in the long term. The 1ha planting area is to establish as high forest in the long term to link and buffer the woodland in Pattens Glen above. The primary focus of management in the long term will be to provide unlimited public access across the site. The creation of woodland on the site will add to the visitor enjoyment. It is intended that the woodland will develop into high forest with minimal intervention. The present issue of Himalayan balsam and four leek invasive species will be eradicated.

There will be minimal access maintenance, however paths will be retained throughout the site so the public can access it.

It may be appropriate, in future years, to explore alternative management/ownership of this community woodland, this could be via the local community group at Fountain Street, who presently run volunteer work parties in the woodland. However, this would be dependant on the continuation of the Trust's main aims and FSC certification being adhered to.

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 paths loop around the glen to access the riverside woods and waterfalls in Pattens Glen. There are three small sections of wooden steps, some graduating slopes, a series of wooden animal sculptures, a view point and three wooden benches. This site has been previously maintained by the Fountain St. CDA under contract and now as volunteer work parties alongside a private local contractor. The access leads off the Drumrallagh estate into the glen.

Significance

This is an important path link to the Pattens Glen woods and this access could be improved if any more land was agreed upon. This woodland provides local access to woodland and a much valued local green space.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opp - The access is restricted to return back to the estate and there is no through route either up or down the glen, thus there would be an opportunity to link this path either down to Strabane or up to the Pattens Glen woods.

Continued management through the Fountain st CDA.

Const - Dumping from the road.

Factors Causing Change

Natural Succession to...ash and hazel, anti social behaviour, litter, dumping

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Regular maintenance of access features and paths. The path maintenance will be reviewed once canopy closes, with the intention of a reduction or cessation of path cutting.

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

The 2m x 2m path corridor will be cleared by cutting back grass & bracken. This will be reviewed upon canopy closure when it is hoped no cutting will be needed. Continue to support volunteer work parties on the site through the Fountain st CDA.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

1 hectare of new native woodland was planted in 1999 as part of the Woods On Your Doorstep community woodland creation project. This compliments the existing wooded glen on the Cavanalee River, with already existing woodland flora e.g. Bluebell and lesser celandine colonising the new woodland.

Significance

The aim of the Woods On Your Doorstep project was to create community woodland. This also fulfils one of the Woodland Trust's key aims to "increase new native woodland". In addition, woodland creation will add a variety of habitats to the site and improve its biodiversity value. It also buffers the existing woodland glen.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints: Restricted access

Opportunities: The development of native secondary woodland. The development of a valuable habitat for local biodiversity. The possibility of extending the planting and further buffering the existing woodland.

Factors Causing Change

Himalayan balsam, dumping, tree disease, climate change.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To encourage the development of a self-sustaining native woodland as a good habitat for local biodiversity. To look for opportunities where possible to extend and or link to new patches of woodland.

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

Establishment of the trees is of primary importance. The trees will be managed with minimal intervention. Ash will be monitored for signs of ash disease, as this may affect the structure of the wood and under/inter-planting may be required.

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	1.25	Ash	1999	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	

The site is part of Pattens Glen and has small areas of existing scrub woodland including hazel and ash; thus it is mixed ash woodland under the BAP. It has steep slopes to the east, with the path being on the lower moderate slope to the west. Most of the site has bracken, which the local community New Deal group are keeping strimmed down.

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.