



Cornfield Wood

Management Plan 2017-2022

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Cornfield Wood
Location:	Coleraine
Grid reference:	C854335, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 4
Area:	3.86 hectares (9.54 acres)
Designations:	

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Cornfield Wood is a small site well used by local people and dogwalkers. Good view to Coleraine and the northern coastal hills.

2.2 Extended Description

A small site on the eastern edge of Coleraine and gifted to the trust by the Coleraine Borough Council in 2000. It has good access to the housing estates at Ballysally (which means town of the willows) and for the local schools for educational use. It is an open space next to housing and near to an old quarry off Calve lane, clearly visible from the housing and is quite well used by local people for walking and dog walks. There are views out west to Coleraine and the North L"Derry coastal hills beyond.

The feature of a mini giants causeway made with telegraph poles was placed there by local pupils in 2001 using poles donated by NIE and it was unfortunately burned down in 2002.

It was planted with 4500 trees in winter 2000 as part of the Woyd scheme and several community planting days were held that year. This site fulfils the trust key outcomes of peoples enjoyment of woods and the new planting of sites.

Coleraine Borough Council installed several tarmac paths and street lights to reduce anti-social behaviour, this has proven very successful.

In 2015 a local group, Focus on Family approached the trust about their community plans for the Ballysally and Millburn housing areas. This included entering the site into a UK wide competition - Grow Wild, funded by the Heritage Lottery and Kew Gardens, a focus on community engagement with young people through the medium of wild flowers. The group were successful and won the title for the NI Grow Wild flagship site putting Cornfield Woodland firmly on the map.

As part of the Grow Wild NI flagship competition there were a number of improvements and additions to the site including; wildflower planting, integrated natural seating, sensory planting area, bog garden, natural and man made sculptures, improved entrances, signage and a community growing garden.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

There are several public access points already on site from the Ballysally estates.

There is a though route in the wood between the housing estates, running from east to west.

The entrance off Cloyfin Road is attractive as it has an ornate stone wall and metal gates. We understand that Coleraine Borough Council maintain this gate and that they are happy to retain responsibility for the entrance and the tarmac path running from it to Hartford Park (PQ on the attached plans).

There is a conifer block on the hill above these gates.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In the long term the aim is to create an active community woodland with public access along the existing pathways throughout the site. To continue to work alongside Causeway Coast and Glens Council and both community associations - Focus on Family and Millburn Community Association in supporting them to continue their work and management of the site as a valuable community resource.

To thin the more mature sections of the wood e.g. conifer block and sycamore on the site, widen path rides throughout the site allowing marginal areas running North and South to continue to be managed by local volunteers for their plant diversity through the Grow Wild UK wildflower planting.

The trees in most of the planted areas are yet to close canopy and some of these could be used as small hazel or willow coppice for use by the community volunteers to build natural fences, repair and work with the natural sculptures on the site and or in the community growing gardens.

To control any sycamore saplings to less than 5% of the woodland in order to maintain a native broadleaf mix and to remove all garden invasives e.g. Monbretia, Spanish Bluebells, etc. To continue to work with the local community volunteers and both housing areas to eradicate any fly tipping including green waste.

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

There are 5 entrance points four of which are to the North West off the housing estate via Rosemary Place and Hartford Park passing through a wooden sculptured archway. Another adorned with a willow sculptured entrance and wildflower beds off the Cloyfin Road to the East of the site. In xxxx the council upgraded some of the paths to a concrete and included lighting at points. There are mown grass and woodland paths that snake through the site leading to a picnic bench and a circular outdoor classroom nestled in an area of hazel and willow. A metal sculpture was designed by local artist - and can be found further into the woodland, along with a bug hotel, bog garden and the community growing garden area off the NIHE green area along the North site boundary.

Significance

It fulfills an access role in providing people with open land for quiet informal recreation and it may provide a screen of trees between the housing estates on Ballysally. The site was developed as a 'Woods on Your Doorstep' with the long term intentions of being a community woodland. Through public consultation as part of the WOYD project and Grow Wild it was apparent that local people were keen to get involved and creating a lasting and useable greenspace. To provide access to a local woodland. To connect people to trees and woodland, to raise the profile of "local woodlands" and the voice for trees and woods in the landscape character area.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities - This being a small site it has few opportunities to link to other land areas but it does fulfil a role as a link into the housing estates and a buffer to the housing on Ballysally and Millburn estates.

Management of paths through the volunteer groups and community association via the Cornfield Project.

Constraints - It is well used but it also suffers some abuse from motorbike trails, however this has greatly reduced since the council installed tarmac paths and street lighting, and the housing executive downsized the estate.

Factors Causing Change

Fly Tipping and dumping by locals, Fire - localised small fires regularly, increased use on the site through the community group, climate change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The access continues to be used by both children as a school route and by locals as a through route between the housing estates in the Ballysally area. As well as now the local community association through the Cornfield Project and the regular volunteers working on the community growing gardens. To look at options for community supported management.

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

The tarmac paths are well used by locals, they have their edges cut 3 times per year. The access, fences, trees and signs are regularly vandalised and need repairs regularly. To continue to manage in partnership with the council and the Cornfield Project until there is a plan in place for supported management of the site by both community associations.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

Cornfield was previously a grazed grassland site between Ballysally and Milburn housing estates in Coleraine. Site was previously maintained by the council for over 10 years. It comprises 2.5 Ha in total. A total of 5000 trees were planted in 2001 with further planting in 2011. To the Eastern boundary the NIHE/Council planted an area of scots pine and sycamore which is now approximately 30-35 years old and beginning to self thin, the remaining sections were planted with a mixture of rowan, oak, birch, ash and hazel with a large proportion of the site dominated by willow scrub and alder in the wetter parts of the site. Some garden ornamental invasives have been recently recorded on site e.g. monbretia and Spanish Bluebell. In 2016, the community associations through Grow Wild NI enhanced the woodland rides through the site by planting native wildflower seeds including; oxeye daisy, knapweed, red campion.

Significance

The aim of the Woods on your Doorstep project was to create community woodland. This also fulfills one of the Woodland Trust's key aims: "to increase new native woodland". In addition, woodland creation will add a variety of different ecological niches to the site and improve its biodiversity value. To connect people to trees and woodland, to raise the profile of "local woodlands" and the voice for trees and woods in the landscape character area.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:

Numerous constraints exist for the site: flytipping is a major problem, fires are sometimes set alight and quad bikes ride through the site.

Opportunities:

There is an opportunity to manage Cornfield as a woodland for people to enjoy through the community associations and resources in the area, and to create a significant area of woodland in the area.

Opportunities through small funding applications

Factors Causing Change

Fly Tipping and dumping by locals, Fire - localised small fires regularly, tree disease, climate change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To establish a mixed woodland, managed as high forest and a community resource. Canopy composition will be mixed dominated by oak and ash. This provides a multitude of important habitats encouraging a greater biodiversity.

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

The wood has now been established, the canopy has still yet to close in most areas. A survey and condition assessment will be carried out in the next few years.

The small area of conifer will need thinned in the near future, and interplanting with Oaks may be an option. To continue to work alongside the council and the community in regards to management of the site through volunteers, local groups and contractors.

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	3.50	Hazel	2000	Wood establishment	People issues (+tve & -tve)	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	

These sloping fields were taken on as part of the Woyd project in Jan 2000 as a gift from Coleraine BC. They were then mown open space with a small planted conifer block above the Cloypin Road. In 2000/01 they were planted with native trees in blocks in the western part of the site. There are through route paths along the northern parts and four access gaps from the estates.

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.