



Galgorm Wood

Management Plan 2015-2020

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Galgorm Wood
Location:	Galgorm
Grid reference:	D058049, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 8
Area:	3.00 hectares (7.41 acres)
Designations:	Scheduled Ancient Monument, Woods on your Doorstep

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Galgorm Wood is one of The Woodland Trust's 'Woods On Your Doorstep' woodlands, created to commemorate the Millennium. A mature woodland, the Trust has improved the site by increasing public access and restoring old pond habitats.

2.2 Extended Description

Galgorm Wood is a mature woodland between Galgorm Manor Hotel and Cullybackey in Northern Ireland. Galgorm Manor has leased the land to the Woodland Trust for 25 years as one of the 50 Woods On Your Doorstep (WoyD) sites in Northern Ireland. Formerly overgrown with laurel, this lease has enabled the Woodland Trust to restore the woodland and pond habitats and to develop public access routes through the site. The development and first 5 years maintenance of the 50 sites was 50% funded by the Millennium Commission. The site is steeped in history. A rath (a fortified farmstead of the Early Christian period 500-1100 AD) stands within compartment 1B. This has a flat top with steeply sloping edges descending to a second flat ring, which then has steeply sloping edges down to ground level. Part of the bank of the rath has been cut through along one edge by a millrace. This millrace was created around 1700. It originally flowed from Cullybackey through the site to power a mill, and then back out into the River Main. The section of the millrace between Cullybackey and the site has been filled in over time and is now covered by a bridle path. Within the site itself the millrace was cleaned out back to the original clay lining as part of the Woods on you Doorstep project to develop the site. A sluice gate was recreated and a small stream - Jenny Wiley's Burn - now feeds the race. The race once fed the Low Park bleach mills, the oldest mill on the river and part of the extensive linen industry in the area. Erected by John Dickey, it was one of 9 bleach mills between Dunminning and Gracehill. A small portion of the wall of the old engine-house is all that remains of what was the centre of commercial activity of the district in the 18th century. The remainder of the Lowpark House residence and Bleach Works of Lowpark stood where the artificial lake now stands.

The lake was created at the end of the 1800s. It also had become filled in and was dredged as part of the Woods on you Doorstep project. Each WoyD site had a feature created to mark and celebrate the millennium. The rejuvenated mill race and pond form the feature in Galgorm Wood. In the 18th Century the wood was part of the Fenaghy House demesne owner by the Young family and, as such, was part of a landscaped estate. This landscaping included the artificial pond and the mature woodland that consisted mainly of elm and beech when it was taken over by the Woodland Trust.

All of the elm in the wood had died (Dutch elm disease) and the elm on the rath was therefore removed to ensure that it would not fall over with the resultant lifting root plate damaging the rath. The significant coverage (50% of site) of laurel and rhododendron were cleared and treated. Where canopy light allowed, these areas were under planted with a mixture of native broadleaved trees dominated by oak, with a willow/alder/birch mixture in the wetter areas. This work was grant aided through the Forest Service's Woodland Improvement Grant. The woodland to the north of the site towards Cullybackey has signs of being semi-natural ancient woodland with its associated ground flora, as has the woodland in compartment 1C. It is hoped that the associated biodiversity will spread to the remainder of Galgorm wood now that the laurel has been removed.

A path network has been established through the site. Ballymena Borough Council has developed a surfaced public footpath and bridleway from Cullybackey along the River Braid, through the site and on to Fenaghy Road. In the future it is hoped that this will continue to Galgorm Castle where the path then continues into Ballymena, through Keel Wood (WT) to the ecos Millennium Environmental Centre. It is then hoped to extend this path to Broughshane and Little Acorn Wood (WT). This Council path is supplemented within Galgorm Wood with an informal woodland walk along the mill race and over the rath. Several log seats provide resting areas and good views.

Galgorm Wood is surrounded by farmland on both sides of the River Main which runs along the western boundary of the site.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Formal access for pedestrians and horse riders is provided to the site along the 3-metre wide surfaced paths created and maintained by Ballymena Borough Council from Fenaghy Road to Cullybackey. An informal woodland path was created and is maintained by the Woodland Trust along the edge of the millrace and through the woodland. All of these paths are permissive paths.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

In the long term, it is intended to encourage the site to become a self-sustaining high forest of mixed deciduous woodland with a well developed woodland understory. This will be achieved through minimum intervention as natural regeneration is presently prolific in areas where there is no laurel/rhododendron. Rhododendron and laurel will continue to be controlled, it will not be allowed to reach levels greater than 5% ground cover, this will help to encourage natural regeneration and to improve conditions for native ground flora. Given the presently high proportion of beech the canopy composition will be flexible in the future allowing tree species best suited to the site to form the climax community.

Informal public access features will be maintained in line with public use of the site, to include paths and seats. The existing paths are to be allowed to develop into informal grass paths.

The mill race and pond will be maintained to ensure that water continues to flow through both.

Trees on the rath will be coppiced as necessary to ensure that none mature to form single stemmed mature trees where the root plate of the falling tree could cause damage to the integrity of the rath.

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

As part of the Woods On Your Doorstep project, Galgorm Wood is a community wood providing informal public access. Pedestrian access is available from Cullybackey, Galgorm Manor and Fenaghy Road. A 3-metre wide surfaced track is provided and maintained through the site by Ballymena Borough Council. This is supplemented by an informal woodland path created by the Woodland Trust along the millrace, and includes a wide culvert over the race. This path was created using woodbark, once the rhododendron cover had been removed. Several drainage pipes have been installed in wetter hollows and the millrace level adjusted to ensure the path drains freely. A series of wooden and log seats are provided.

Significance

The access facilities provide the opportunity to “increase people’s awareness and enjoyment of woodland”, one of the Woodland Trusts key objectives. The area provides a woodland experience for local people. Also, as this was created as a Woods On Your Doorstep site, it will be important to retain informal public access facilities within the site including paths and seats.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities: As a village fringe woodland, this site provides an opportunity for many local people to enjoy woodland, alongside visitors to the hotel. As part of a long distance riverside path from Cullybackey to Ballymena it is likely also to attract visitors from further afield. There may be potential in the future to develop a walking leaflet alongside the Council to advertise the long-distance path and the linkage between the 4 Woodland Trust Woods - Galgorm, Keel, ecos and Little Acorn Wood.

Constraints: use of the paths by horses have seen them badly deteriorate.

Factors Causing Change

Horses - damage to paths and rath, Visitor use of path, Weather, Damage by vandals

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain informal public access to the site by maintaining the paths, seats and open areas. To inform visitors about woodland and the work of the Woodland Trust.

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

Ballymena Borough Council will continue to maintain the surfaced pedestrian and bridle path and the bridge over the burn. The informal woodland path is to be allowed to develop its own character as a woodbark or grass path. The grass on the path and path edges should be cut 4 times per year to maintain a 1.5 metre wide path. The height of the mill race is maintained at least 0.2 metres below the lowest point of the path to allow it to drain freely. Access features should be maintained to a high standard. The culvert is to be inspected annually to insure its safety for use.

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

Much of the existing woodland on the site was probably planted as part of the formal landscaping of the Fenaghy House Estate in the 18th Century with a mixture of native and non-native trees. When the Woodland Trust took over the management of the site in 2000 much of the understory was dominated by laurel, with some rhododendron. This was cut and removed and the regrowth treated. In areas where the laurel had not spread there was a good show of natural regeneration of broadleaves, although this contained some sycamore and beech. Compartment 1C was less overgrown by laurel and has a natural ground flora including bluebells and wood anemone, showing some signs of being part of the semi-natural ancient woodland as in the adjacent land to the north.

The pond forms part of the woodland habitat.

Significance

The aim of the Woods On Your Doorstep project was to create community woodland. The potential here is also to expand and improve the existing habitats in the area and improve their biodiversity value.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities: The development of native secondary woodland with the potential spread of SNAW plants and animals from the adjacent SNAW.
The development of a valuable habitat for local biodiversity.

Factors Causing Change

Natural succession and tree growth, Invasive Himalayan Balsaam, Invasive laurel & rhododendron

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To encourage the development of a self-sustaining woodland with public access and a good habitat for local biodiversity. In the long term, it would be intended to encourage the site to become a self-sustaining high forest of mixed deciduous woodland and to allow the spread of native flora and fauna of SNAW from the adjacent wood to the north. Given the presently high proportion of beech the canopy composition will be flexible in the future allowing tree species best suited to the site to form the climax community, but favouring native species where possible.
Pond: Dredge as necessary to maintain open water at least 30m diameter.

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

Cut back and treat laurel and rhododendron regrowth annually with a glyphosate for the period of this plan to maintain it at below 5% coverage of the entire site. Future clearance may be required.

5.3 Archaeological Feature

Description

The site is steeped in history. A rath (a fortified farmstead of the Early Christian period 500-1100 AD) stands within compartment 1B. This has a flat top with steeply sloping edges descending to a second flat ring, which then has steeply sloping edges down to river level.

Part of the bank of the rath has been cut through along one edge by a millrace. This millrace was created around 1700. It originally flowed from Cullybackey through the site to power a mill, and then back out into the River Main. The section of the millrace between Cullybackey and the site has been filled in over time and is now covered by a bridlepath. Within the site itself the millrace was cleaned out back to the original clay lining as part of the Woods on you Doorstep project to develop the site. A sluice gate was recreated and a small stream - Jenny Wiley's Burn - now feeds the race. The race once fed the Low Park bleach mills, the oldest mill on the river and part of the extensive linen industry in the area. Erected by John Dickey, it was one of 9 bleach mills between Dunminning and Gracehill. A small portion of the wall of the old engine-house is all that remains of what was the centre of commercial activity of the district in the 18th century. The remainder of the Lowpark House residence and Bleach Works of Lowpark stood where the artificial lake now stands.

Significance

The Rath is a scheduled ancient monument.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity: to retain the integrity of these features through sensitive management of these features.
Constraint: No heavy machinery may be used on the rath.

Factors Causing Change

Tree growth, Siltation of mill race

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Preservation of the rath without mature single stemmed trees.
Maintenance of a flowing mill race

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

Rath: coppice single stemmed trees in year 15 to prevent single stemmed mature trees from becoming established.
Mill race: observe water level height and flow of race to assess any need for clearance to maintain flow.

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	1.00	Beech		null		Archaeological Feature, Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Woods on your Doorstep
<p>Compartment 1A is composed of existing woodland and an artificial lake (1/3 size of compartment). The woodland around the pond is dominated by beech. However, there is prolific natural regeneration of native broadleaved species under this canopy where the laurel cover had not grown. A small island (4 metres diameter) lies to the SE of the centre of the pond.</p> <p>An informal path runs through compartment 1A from the bridle path to a bridge over the millrace/lead. To the east of this path is an area of wet woodland while to the northeast is an area of conifers. A short path from this path leads uphill to an informal seating area and viewpoint over the pond. The seating area has been created using timber removed from the wood following tree safety work.</p> <p>A seat overlooks the pond from the narrow bank between the pond and the bridleway. A small portion of the wall of the old engine-house of the bleach mill sits in the SW corner between the pond the bridleway and the small waterfall in the millrace.</p> <p>The compartment is bounded to the NE and SE by improved grass farmland and to the W and N by woodland in compartment 1B.</p>							
1b	1.54	Ash		null	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Archaeological Feature, Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Scheduled Ancient Monument, Woods on your Doorstep

Compartment 1B runs N-S, bending west around compartment 1A. The millrace runs along this eastern boundary. The Council-maintained 3 metre wide bridle path runs along the SW and NW boundaries, with an improved grassland field on the other side of this path to the SW and the River Main to the NW. It is relatively flat excluding the rath which is sited in the centre of the compartment.

The compartment has a canopy of mixed mature trees including ash, Scots Pine, copper beech, beech and oak which were probably planted as part of the landscaping of the Fenaghy house demesne. In the area to the south of the rath the understory was dominated by laurel which was cleared in 2000 as part of the initial WoyD works. 60-80 stock of native broadleaved trees were then interplanted where light reaching the ground was sufficient to allow their growth. The remainder of the compartment surrounding the rath and to the north has a more varied understory including hazel, holly, elder and birch. An informal woodland path runs through this area along the edge of the millrace. An informal seating area of logs has been created at the top of the rath using the timber resulting from the tree surgery required to clear the rath of tall trees.

1c	0.37	other willows		null		Archaeological Feature, Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Woods on your Doorstep
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Compartment 1C is a narrow strip of land running N-S. It is bounded to the west by the River Main; to the south by compartment 1B; to the east by improved grass farmland surrounding a pig factory; and to the north by woodland. The compartment runs in 3 N-S strips. The millrace takes up the eastern strip. To the west of this lies the 3-metre wide path created by Ballymena Borough Council. They have erected and maintain a low fence in places where the bank drops steeply on both sides. The path then continues through woodland on to Cullybackey. The Council maintains this path and the bridge over the stream. This stream is the overflow from the water flowing from “Jenny Wilies Burn” into the millrace over the sluice gate when the water is high. The third strip drops from the path to the River Main. This is a wooded strip of hazel and alder. The lower banks occasionally flood. Bluebells and wood sorrel flourish in spring.

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2023	1b	Coppice	0.00		0

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.