



# Burgh Wood

# Management Plan 2019-2024

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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>	Burgh Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Chorley
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SD576152, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 108
<b>Area:</b>	2.67 hectares (6.60 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Great Landscape Value, Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

A designated Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland site, Burgh Wood has a diverse range of ground flora including bluebells and the scarce species 'Touch-me-not-balsam'. Tree species include beech, sycamore, oak, horse chestnut, alder and birch.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Burgh Wood is situated in a densely populated residential area of Chorley, South Lancashire. The wood is part of much larger area of ancient woodland known as the Yarrow Valley which is managed by Chorley Borough Council and can be found directly west of Burgh Wood. The site is currently bounded by green fields to the south west and a large housing development to the east was completed in 2002. The fields to the south west may also be developed for housing sometime in the near future.

It is situated in a small steeply incised valley at the north eastern end of the Yarrow Valley. A small water course runs through the centre of the valley.

Burgh Wood consists of mature mixed broadleaves including beech, sycamore, ash, oak, horse chestnut, alder and birch. There is an under storey of hawthorn, elder, hazel and rowan. The ground flora is indicative of Ancient Semi- Natural Woodland and includes species such as bluebell, dogs mercury, wood speedwell, red campion and herb robert. Touch-me-not-balsam, a nationally scarce plant listed in the Provisional Lancashire Red Data List of Vascular Plants, also occurs here. Unfortunately, some of the ground flora has become impoverished by rhododendron ponticum which was once dominant in the under storey.

Poor management access and areas of permanently wet ground can make any management operations challenging.

The site was part of a package of several sites given to the Woodland Trust by the Commission for New Towns in (CNT) 1996. Unfortunately little is known with regard to the history of the wood prior to our ownership.

The woodland has two key features Informal Public Access & Natural Secondary Woodland.

The site contains no formal right of way, the permissive footpath which runs through the site is poorly defined due to the steeply sloping nature of the woodland. However the woodland is used by local people for informal recreational purposes and use may increase as more housing is built nearby.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

Burgh Wood is located in the village of Birkacre, which is 3 miles south of Chorley town centre. The wood can be accessed from Burgh Hall road which leads west from Lower Burgh way. The woodland only has one pedestrian squeeze gap entrance; this can be found at the south east corner of the site close to a road known as Lower Burgh way, and to the west of Eaves Green housing development. The path, which is unsurfaced, and around 400m in length runs along the eastern boundary of the site parallel with the housing estate. The path can become slippery and muddy in wet conditions. It should be noted that the woodland has no circular route and much of it is steep and inaccessible on foot.

Parking is available on nearby local roads such as Burgh Hall road but may be limited.

Nearest public toilet: Located at Yarrow Valley visitors centre which is located approximately 1 mile away from the wood on Birkacre Road. Toilets are suitable for disabled users and are open from 9.00am-3.15pm. Information provided by Chorley Borough Council. [www.chorley.gov.uk](http://www.chorley.gov.uk)

Nearest bus stop: Located on Lower Burgh way, approximately half a mile from the wood. Lower Burgh way is a suburban road with a pavement. Information from the traveline website. Further information about public transport is available from Traveline- [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or phone 0870 608 2608.

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Burgh Wood will be allowed to grow and develop naturally, as a refuge for wildlife. The wood will be managed as high forest of mixed broadleaves, including non-native trees common to the local area. It will be managed predominantly as a landscape and conservation feature, through minimal intervention. Gaps will be created in the canopy due to senescence and tree safety operations.

Invasive rhododendron will be controlled and eradicated to encourage the development of a more varied and widespread understorey and ground layer which will benefit biodiversity as well improving sightlines in the wood.

Low key public access will continue to be provided at a level which is appropriate for a small urban woodland.

Statutory obligations will continue to be met with respect to managing tree safety and ensuring public access via the permissive path.



## 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 woodland has one entrance; this can be found at the south east corner of the site close to a road known as Lower Burgh Way, and to the west of Eaves Green housing development. The path is unsurfaced and around 400m in length, it runs along the eastern boundary of the site, parallel with housing.

#### Significance

Burgh Wood is well used and well known locally. It is an aesthetically pleasing wood, with mature trees, excellent spring flowers, bird and other wildlife. The woodland is in the heart of the urban conurbation of Chorley. It is close to a large number of homes and people who can freely and easily access the site and enjoy quiet informal recreational activities. It is one of the few natural woodlands of a reasonable size available for people to enjoy in the local area.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

The small size of the site limits the informal recreational opportunities but the path network does link into other areas of open space including the Yarrow Valley County Park.

#### Factors Causing Change

Increased recreational use if the land to the south west is developed.

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

Public Access will be maintained at its current level at least, with one entrance and a linear path within the wood.

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

Signs or plaques welcoming the general public to make use of the site will be maintained at the entrance point. Vegetation encroaching onto paths will be cut back and annual maintenance of all woodland fixtures; including, signs, gates, and fences will be undertaken. The site will be kept clear of litter and fly tipping.

## 5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

### Description

The whole of Burgh Wood is designated as Ancient Semi Natural Woodland. A portion of the site is also protected by a Tree Preservation Order and is designated as a Local Authority Conservation Area. The woodland is located in a steep sided valley, typical of many Lancashire clough woodlands. Its survival as an ASNW is probably linked to its topography, the uneven terrain being of no use for development or agriculture. The canopy is dominated by mature mixed broadleaves; species such as ash, beech, and sycamore tend to dominate. The shrub layer consists of species such as hawthorn, elder and hazel, ground flora is typical of ASNW and includes dog's mercury, bluebell and red campion.

### Significance

ASNW is very rare, locally, nationally and regionally. It is estimated that ASNW cover only 2% of the land surface of Great Britain. Within Lancashire itself this figure drops to just 1%, and again Chorley's total of ASNW is estimated to be around 1% of total land use. Although Burgh Wood itself is relatively small, it forms part of a much larger ASNW in the Yarrow Valley, which is owned and sympathetically managed by Chorley Borough Council. Therefore this area of ASNW provides local people a unique opportunity to interact with a very rare environment, it also provides a uniquely ecologically rich habitat in a very urban area.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Burgh Wood is a fairly small, long, narrow wood, largely surrounded by housing (apart from woodland to the west), it is isolated from other woods, and cannot be extended. Management access is very difficult and any works are expensive. However, the wood has demonstrated that it will regenerate readily and the wood is stable and mature enough to provide for a good variety of urban wildlife, and large areas of it are inaccessible and therefore not disturbed. Regeneration here is very good, and limited amount of deadwood can be retained in these areas.

### Factors Causing Change

Ash dieback & Invasive rhododendron.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To develop the wood as predominately native high forest, with a mixed range of ages and species. It is anticipated that as trees gradually senescence or are removed for safety reasons natural regeneration will fill the gaps. Hence the wood will require little active management, beyond ensuring that regeneration is sufficient. Throughout the wood, older trees of any species will be retained as long as safety allows.

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

Tree safety inspections will be undertaken on a regular basis and work carried out if necessary for public safety. The site will be checked once during this plan period to assess whether there is sufficient regeneration to ensure the long term future of the canopy. Rhododendron will be cleared and stump treated during this 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	2.70	Sycamore	1920	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Great Landscape Value, Tree Preservation Order

2.67 hectares (6.6 acres) of ancient semi natural woodland situated in Chorley, Lancashire. The woodland sits in a steeply incised valley and is part of a larger area of woodland known as the Yarrow Valley. Dominant tree species include beech, sycamore, oak, ash and horse chestnut. The woodland has an informal path running through it which is well used by local people.

## 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.