WOODLAND
TRUST SCOTLAND

# St Ronans Wood

# Management Plan
# 2020-2025

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## MAPS

# 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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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

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|---|---|
| **Site name:** | St Ronans Wood |
| **Location:** | Innerleithen |
| **Grid reference:** | NT327368, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 73 |
| **Area:** | 26.92 hectares (66.52 acres) |
| **Designations:** | Scheduled Ancient Monument, Tree Preservation Order |

# 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

## 2.1 Summary Description

St Ronan's wood is situated on the eastern slopes of Caerlee hill, extending onto the south-eastern slope of Lee Pen. The wood is on the outskirts of the town of Innerleithen, and lies between the altitudes of 175m above sea level on the road in the east and 310m above sea level on the slopes of Lee Pen. The wood faces in a general easterly direction.

The geology of the area is mainly lower Palaeozoic greywacke's and shale, with an igneous intrusion. This geology gives rise to thin, slightly acid soil on the higher slopes becoming deeper and more neutral lower down. The MLURI climate map identifies this area as cool, rather wet lowland and foothill, being exposed with severe winters.

The strip of mature broadleaved woodland that forms the eastern boundary (cpt 1a, total 4.86ha) is diverse in terms of species, age and structure. This plan classes it as LEPO (Long Established of Plantation Origin) as it is clearly present on 1st ed. OS maps c.1857 (although has not been mapped as LEPO on the SNH Ancient Woodland Inventory). There are frequent mature beech, oak and ash, and occasional mature birch, lime and pine. These are set in a matrix of younger trees from sapling to early mature consisting mainly of beech, ash, birch, rowan, sycamore and hawthorn. The canopy is variable, ranging from beech stands with little ground flora, through areas of more open woodland with a more typical woodland ground flora, to small glades dominated by grasses and ruderals. In partial shade the ground flora has some woodland specialist species and appears to be in transition

from a secondary woodland flora to that more commonly associated with ancient woodlands. Beech, ash and sycamore are regenerating in patches despite the heavy rabbit presence. There is frequent deadwood from fallen trees and branches. On the south side of the site (cpt 6a) is a single species block (1.5ha) of mature European larch with a grassy ground flora and a small area of sycamore regeneration.
North east of this there is a small area of semi-mature Scots pine and sycamore (cpt 6b 0.3ha).

There are few areas of broadleaved woodland in the area, which includes oak and beech on the lower slopes of Pirn Hill (0.5km), and the Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) at Woodland Trust Scotland's Plora Wood (19.71ha) on the south side of the Tweed (1.5km) opposite Walkerburn. Semi-natural woodland is scarce in the borders, occupying only 1.4% of land area. The only direct woodland habitat link is with the mixed woodland shelterbelts around Glenormiston farm to the west (also present on maps c.1860).
There are substantial productive conifer plantations throughout the Tweed Valley, including nearby Glentress, Cardrona, Elibank, and the plantations on the Leithen Water Estate.

In 1991/92, 9.1ha of new woodland was planted on part of the east-facing slope of St. Ronan's Wood (cpts 2a and 5a ) consisting mainly of native species (ash, oak, birch, and cherry with smaller amounts of alder, rowan, lime, hawthorn and hazel) and a few Scots pine, beech and sweet chestnut. The original spacing was 3m on lower slopes, increasing to 4.5m spacing on upper slopes. The northern half of the planting forms a mosaic with dense gorse thickets, The southern part is set in a mix of acid grassland and more patchy gorse. Within the gorse the stocking density is very variable, with some well-established groups of trees and some areas with only scattered individuals, giving a diverse fringe woodland structure.

The relatively new areas of Secondary woodland (cpt 2a&5a planted 1991/92) were planted to extend the woodland area and connect to the belt of LEPO woodland below. This has more than doubled the area of woodland cover on site and allowed the gradual spread of woodland specialist species to occur. It provides a transition into the gorse/grass mosaic on the hill slopes above, creating woodland fringe edge habitat. These trees have grown well and are now approaching pole stage. The trees were planted at a relatively wide spacing. This wide spacing has allowed for the gradual transition from mature woodland to a gorse/grass/fringe woodland mosaic to occur. Gorse has heavily colonised some areas and the trees are now requiring respacing in places to favour the native species.

A new area of predominately native woodland was recently established to the north of St Ronan's and Caerlee Hill at nearby Lee Pen by the Woodland Trust Scotland, which has increased the amount of broadleaved woodland in the area and improved the local broadleaved woodland habitat network.

Acid grassland and gorse covers 11.1ha of the site, on Caerlee Hill (cpt 4a) and on the broad ridge leading up towards Lee Pen (cpt 3a). The gorse is dense on the lower slopes where it forms an impenetrable thicket over much of the area. Several areas were cleared of gorse in 2000 and fire breaks mown between open areas (tractor mulcher plus herbicide follow-up). These areas stayed clear of gorse for a while but were gradually recolonized over time. The gorse continues to gradually spread and has increased as the rabbit population declined. The open ground consists of a dense tussocky acid sward dominated by wavy hair grass with occasional woodruff, wood sage, bedstraw, tormentil, thistles, yarrow and ragwort. Semi-natural grassland dominates the non-forested upland areas above the Tweed valley, and occupies the hill ground on the slopes of Lee Pen and the hills to the north.

An iron-age hill fort (SAM) occupies the summit of Caerlee Hill, and approximately half of its extent lies in WTS land. The fort is a SAM, first scheduled in 1969, the area then revised in 2003 to cover the remains more accurately. The ramparts measure 60m by 45m and a system of banks and ditches are visible encircling the fort. Within the ramparts the site has been disturbed by more recent quarrying, but several building platforms are visible west of the dyke. It was probably occupied between 500 - 0 B.C. The fort is a popular destination and resting place with walkers and commands spectacular views down the Tweed Valley. It is unusual in forming a pair with a contemporary fort on Pirn Hill on the opposite side of the Leithen Water.

The presence of the hill fort attests to the length of human habitation in the area, which is probably at least 2,500 years. Previously the site belonged to the Traquair estate, and the wood is thought to have been planted in the late 18th century. The Woodland Trust bought a small part of the wood in 1987 and the rest in 1989.

There are 2.9km of maintained paths and tracks, as well as several desire lines through the woodlands and across Caerlee Hill. The path network encompasses a variety of landscapes including mature woodland, young woodland, gorse-grass mosaic and the grassy open hill-side below Caerlee hill fort. There are spectacular views over Innerleithen and down the Tweed valley from the upper parts of the site. Most of the paths are un-surfaced, except for a tarred road leading to the communications mast. Many of the routes are steep in places and some sections become muddy in winter. Most visitors enter from St Ronan’s Terrace through one of the three entrances on the eastern boundary. A Core Path (Area 31 CP 157) traverses the site from east to west (along the tarmaced road leading up to the communications mast) and a short section of a Public Right of Way joins the Core Path from the mid-entrance access point along Innerleithen Terrace.

The internal path network links Innerleithen with routes into the countryside to the west towards Glentress and northwards along Kirklands Hill up to the ridge of Lee Pen. Successful growth of the 1992 planting offers scope for creating a couple of other managed routes within St. Ronan’s Wood to link up with existing paths and the wider path network beyond. The gorse is gradually restricting some of the access paths across the hill.

The site is very well used by mainly local people from Innerleithen, as well as walkers accessing the countryside beyond. Users are mainly pedestrian but there is some use by horse riders, and occasional wild camping. There is a well-attended annual bonfire event as part of the Cleikum Ceremony and Border Games, celebrating St Ronan's victory over the devil. The hill provides the spa waters available for tasting at the St Ronan’s Wells visitor centre. Innerleithen is also used as base for walkers linking into the Southern Upland Way to the south.

## 2.2 Extended Description

St Ronan’s wood is situated on the eastern slopes of Caerlee hill, extending onto the south-eastern slope of Lee Pen. The wood is on the outskirts of the town of Innerleithen, and lies between the altitudes of 175m above sea level on the road in the east and 310m above sea level on the slopes of Lee Pen. The wood faces in a general easterly direction.

The geology of the area is mainly lower Palaeozoic greywacke’s and shale, with an igneous intrusion. This geology gives rise to thin, slightly acid soil on the higher slopes becoming deeper and more neutral lower down. The MLURI climate map identifies this area as cool, rather wet lowland

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North east of this there is a small area of semi-mature Scots pine and sycamore (cpt 6b 0.3ha).

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There are substantial productive conifer plantations throughout the Tweed Valley, including nearby Glentress, Cardrona, Elibank, and the plantations on the Leithen Water Estate.

In 1991/92, 9.1ha of new woodland was planted on part of the east-facing slope of St. Ronan's Wood (cpts 2a and 5a ) consisting mainly of native species (ash, oak, birch, and cherry with smaller amounts of alder, rowan, lime, hawthorn and hazel) and a few Scots pine, beech and sweet chestnut. The original spacing was 3m on lower slopes, increasing to 4.5m spacing on upper slopes. The northern half of the planting forms a mosaic with dense gorse thickets, The southern part is set in a mix of acid grassland and more patchy gorse. Within the gorse the stocking density is very variable, with some well-established groups of trees and some areas with only scattered individuals, giving a diverse fringe woodland structure.

The relatively new areas of Secondary woodland (cpt 2a&5a planted 1991/92) were planted to extend the woodland area and connect to the belt of LEPO woodland below. This has more than doubled the area of woodland cover on site and allowed the gradual spread of woodland specialist species to occur. It provides a transition into the gorse/grass mosaic on the hill slopes above, creating woodland fringe edge habitat. These trees have grown well and are now approaching pole stage. The trees were planted at a relatively wide spacing. This wide spacing has allowed for the gradual transition from mature woodland to a gorse/grass/fringe woodland mosaic to occur. Gorse has heavily colonised some areas and the trees are now requiring respacing in places to favour the native species.

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An iron-age hill fort (SAM) occupies the summit of Caerlee Hill, and approximately half of its extent lies in WTS land. The fort is a SAM, first scheduled in 1969, the area then revised in 2003 to cover the remains more accurately. The ramparts measure 60m by 45m and a system of banks and ditches are visible encircling the fort. Within the ramparts the site has been disturbed by more recent quarrying, but several building platforms are visible west of the dyke. It was probably occupied between 500 - 0 B.C. The fort is a popular destination and resting place with walkers and commands spectacular views down the Tweed Valley. It is unusual in forming a pair with a contemporary fort on Pirn Hill on the opposite side of the Leithen Water.

The presence of the hill fort attests to the length of human habitation in the area, which is probably at least 2,500 years. Previously the site belonged to the Traquair estate, and the wood is thought to have been planted in the late 18th century. The Woodland Trust bought a small part of the wood in 1987 and the rest in 1989.

There are 2.9km of maintained paths and tracks, as well as several desire lines through the woodlands and across Caerlee Hill. The path network encompasses a variety of landscapes including mature woodland, young woodland, gorse-grass mosaic and the grassy open hill-side below Caerlee hill fort. There are spectacular views over Innerleithen and down the Tweed valley from the upper parts of the site. Most of the paths are un-surfaced, except for a tarred road leading to the communications mast. Many of the routes are steep in places and some sections become muddy in winter. Most visitors enter from St Ronan’s Terrace through one of the three entrances on the eastern boundary. A Core Path (Area 31 CP 157) traverses the site from east to west (along the tarmaced road leading up to the communications mast) and a short section of a Public Right of Way joins the Core Path from the mid-entrance access point along Innerleithen Terrace.

The internal path network links Innerleithen with routes into the countryside to the west towards Glentress and northwards along Kirklands Hill up to the ridge of Lee Pen. Successful growth of the 1992 planting offers scope for creating a couple of other managed routes within St. Ronan’s Wood to link up with existing paths and the wider path network beyond. The gorse is gradually restricting some of the access paths across the hill.

The site is very well used by mainly local people from Innerleithen, as well as walkers accessing the countryside beyond. Users are mainly pedestrian but there is some use by horse riders, and occasional wild camping. There is a well-attended annual bonfire event as part of the Cleikum

Ceremony and Border Games, celebrating St Ronan's victory over the devil. The hill provides the spa waters available for tasting at the St Ronan's Wells visitor centre. Innerleithen is also used as base for walkers linking into the Southern Upland Way to the south.

# 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

## 3.1 Getting there

St Ronans Wood is located on the slopes of Caerlee Hill, overlooking the western edge of Innerleithen, and can be accessed from any of 3 entrances on St Ronans Terrace.

St Ronans can be reached by public transport. There is a regular bus service on the Edinburgh-Peebles-Galashiels-Melrose route that stops at Innerleithen post office. From the post office, follow the high street SW (towards Peebles) for 200m and turn right up St Ronans Terrace. After 100m St Ronans Terrace branches. Continue straight ahead for a further 100m to reach the nearest entrance to the wood (via kissing gate).

By car, proceed to the centre of Innerleithen, and follow the brown tourist signs to the St Ronan's Wells Centre, which is at the top of Wells Brae. There is limited parking at the Wells Centre and on nearby residential streets, and the entrance to the wood is immediately adjacent up a short flight of steps. There is also ample off-street parking in Hall Street (opposite the B709 Traquair turn from the High Street).

There are 2.9km of maintained paths and tracks at St Ronans, as well as several desire lines through the woodlands and across Caerlee Hill. The path network encompasses a variety of landscapes including mature woodland, young woodland, gorse-grass mosaic and the grassy open hill-side below Caerlee hill fort. There are spectacular views over Innerleithen and down the Tweed valley from the upper parts of the site. Most of the paths are unsurfaced, except for a partly tarred road leading to the TV mast. Many of the routes are steep in places and some areas become muddy in winter. Most visitors enter from St Ronans Terrace through one of the three entrances on the eastern boundary: The northern-two are via short flights of steps, and have information boards. The southern entrance leads via a kissing gate onto the access track to the TV mast, which provides a firm, dry but steep route to Caerlee Hill. On the western boundary a right of way continues north-westwards through a kissing gate. At the far northern tip of the site a stile over a dyke gives access to Lee Pen.

There are public toilets (with disabled facilities by RADAR key) in Hall Street, approx 300m from the southern entrance to the wood.

## 3.2 Access / Walks

# 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Mature Woodland
The long-term vision (100+ years) is that the woodland will remain a diverse, mixed age and mixed species woodland habitat. The canopy will be predominantly broadleaved, with mainly native species and a scattering of veteran trees. There will be a diverse ground flora including woodland specialist species consistent with NVC W10. There will be frequent deadwood. In this plan period the woodland will be allowed to develop naturally without intervention (unless for safety purposes).

New native woodland
The long term aim is to create a mainly native woodland of diverse structure and semi-natural character. Canopy species will be mostly ash oak and birch. The structure will vary from areas of closed canopy through to areas of open gorse, providing valuable woodland edge and scrub habitats. There will be a diverse ground flora that will include some of the woodland specialists that may spread from the mature woodland below. In the short term it is important to ensure establishment of the young trees by splitting tree shelters on all accessible young trees (but leaving shelters in place to prevent rabbit damage to bark). In dense gorse trees will be left to develop naturally creating a semi-natural structure of variable density.

Archaeology
The SAM area will remain undisturbed and its surrounding area will remain free of gorse and other woody vegetation. Caerlee Hill will remain a focus for visitors and the open aspect will be maintained to show the above-ground features of the fort as well as its context in the landscape. In the short term this will be achieved by maintaining a gorse-free buffer zone at least 50m from the SAM boundary.

Public Access
The site will continue to provide quiet informal access to mainly local users as well as visitors, and will be as accessible to as wide a range of users as is practical. The managed path network will be maintained as well-drained and clear of obstacles and overhanging branches. It will offer an interesting internal and external landscape, with experience of woodland, gorse-grass mosaic and open hill. It will provide access to Caerlee Hill Fort and offer panoramic views down the Tweed Valley. It will link into the wider path network where practical. In the short term this will be achieved by annual path management and improvements to the path drainage where necessary. Dog fouling will be addressed by a combination of signage and liaison with SBC re provisions of bins and dog warden patrols. Monitoring of distribution of gorse will be continued to ensure that the site retains a varied internal landscape and that the area around the hill fort keeps its open feel.

Mature Woodland
The long-term vision (100+ years) is that the woodland will remain a diverse, mixed age and mixed species woodland habitat. The canopy will be predominantly broadleaved, with mainly native species and a scattering of veteran trees. There will be a diverse ground flora including woodland specialist species consistent with NVC W10. There will be frequent deadwood. In this plan period the woodland will be allowed to develop naturally with minimal intervention (except for safety purposes and to encourage natural regeneration of native trees).

Secondary Woodland

The long term aim is to create mainly native woodland of diverse structure and semi-natural character. Canopy species will be mostly oak and birch along with a mixture of other species. The structure will vary from areas of closed canopy through to areas of open grassland and gorse, providing valuable woodland edge and scrub habitats. There will be a diverse ground flora that will include some of the woodland specialists that may spread from the mature woodland below. In the short term it is important to ensure establishment of the young trees. This will be followed by splitting and removing the tree shelters on the accessible well grown trees (but leaving shelters in place on slower growing trees to prevent over browsing and excessive fraying damage to the bark by deer). Any pockets of gorse growing among the trees will be left to develop naturally, creating a semi-natural structure of variable density. The area of Secondary Woodland will be increased by approximately 1ha during 2022/23 by the planting of a narrow ribbon of woodland on the lower slope within the open ground of cpts 3a (to the west of cpt 2a) and 4a (to the north of cpt 5a). These areas will connect directly with cpt 2a and cpt 5a and will be made up of mixed native species planted at irregular spacing to create a species rich woodland edge open ground fringe habitat of woodland that gradually melds into the open ground habitat. The planting will be designed so as not to obstruct the views from Caerlee Hill and the Hill Fort and the planting will involve local school children, families and volunteers.

Semi-Natural Open Ground Habitat
The area includes part of the Iron Age Hill Fort Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) which occupies the summit of Caerlee Hill in cpt 4a and extends across the large open grassland/gorse areas in cpts 4a and 3a. The Hill Fort will remain undisturbed and its surrounding area will remain free of gorse and other woody vegetation. Caerlee Hill will remain as an open aspect focus point for visitors and the area will be maintained to show the above-ground features of the fort as well as its context in the landscape. In the short term this will be achieved by maintaining a gorse-free buffer zone at least 50m from the SAM boundary. A narrow ribbon of fringe edge native woodland habitat will be established on the lower slopes of Caerlee Hill to improve the transition from Secondary Woodland to Semi-Natural Open Ground Habitat.

Connection people with woods and trees
The site will continue to provide quiet informal access to mainly local users as well as visitors, and will be as accessible to as wide a range of users as is practical. The managed path network will be maintained as well-drained and clear of obstacles and overhanging branches. It will offer an interesting internal and external landscape, with experience of woodland, gorse-grass mosaic and open hill. It will provide access to Caerlee Hill Fort and offer panoramic views down the Tweed Valley. It will link into the wider path network where practical. In the short term this will be achieved by annual path management and improvements to the path structure and drainage where necessary. Dog fouling will be addressed by a combination of signage and liaison with Scottish Borders Council re provisions of bins and dog warden patrols. Monitoring of distribution of gorse will be continued to ensure that the site retains a varied internal landscape and that the area around the hill fort keeps its open feel.

# 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 Connecting People with woods & trees

### Description

The site is made up of two distinct areas; St. Ronan's Wood 16.04ha (40acres) and Caerlee Hill 11.10ha (27.40acres), which is acid grassland and gorse. The Woodland Trust bought the site in two lots (in 1987 and 1989) and the total area is 27.14hectares (67.10acres).
The site is situated on the easterly facing slope of Caerlee hill and extends towards the south-eastern slope of Lee Pen, on the outskirt of the town of Innerleithen, Scottish Borders and is within easy reach of the bustling town of Peebles 12km and many of the small towns and villages in the central area of the Scottish Borders. It is 47km south of Edinburgh.
An iron-age Hill Fort (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) occupies the summit of Caerlee Hill. It was probably occupied between 500 - 0 B.C. The ramparts measure 60m by 45m and a system of banks and ditches are visible encircling the fort. Within the ramparts part of the site has been disturbed in the past by quarrying. However, several building platforms are visible west of the dyke. The presence of the hill fort attests to the length of human habitation in the area, which is probably at least 2,500 years. The fort is a popular destination and resting place with walkers as Caerlee Hill commands spectacular views across Innerleithen and down the Tweed Valley.
There are 2.9km of maintained paths and tracks, as well as several desire lines through the woodlands and across Caerlee Hill. The path network encompasses a variety of landscapes including mature woodland, young woodland, gorse-grass mosaic and the grassy open hill-side below Caerlee hill fort. There are spectacular views over Innerleithen and down the Tweed valley from the upper parts of the site. Most of the paths are un-surfaced, except for a tarred road leading to the communications mast. Many of the routes are steep in places and some sections, especially in the woodlands, become muddy in winter. Most visitors enter from St Ronan's Terrace through one of the three entrances on the eastern boundary. A Core Path (Area 31 CP 157) traverses the site from east to west (along the tarmaced road leading up to the communications mast) and a short section of a Public Right of Way joins the Core Path from the mid-entrance access point along Innerleithen Terrace. On the western boundary a right of way continues north-westwards through a kissing gate. At the far northern tip of the site a stile over a dyke gives access onto Kirklands Hill and Lee Pen. The woodland and hillside offers an excellent opportunity for informal walking. The current signage and main access points are scheduled to be updated in 2020.
The site is well used, mainly by local people. Innerleithen is often used as base for long distance walkers who wish to link into the Southern Upland Way to the south. Most users are on foot, though there is occasional use by horse riders and mountain bikers. Some wild camping occurs during the summer months. There is a well-attended annual bonfire event in late July as part of the Cleikum Ceremony and St Ronan's Border Games, celebrating St Ronan's victory over the devil. St Ronan's provides the natural spring water (thought to be therapeutic) which is available for tasting at the St Ronan's Wells pavilion & visitor centre – which runs a series of annual events at the site.
The nearest school is St Ronan's Primary School which is a 20 minute walk away.
There is currently one Woodland Warden.
There are public toilets (with disabled facilities by RADAR key) in Hall Street, approx 300m from the

southern entrance to the wood.
St Ronan's can be reached by public transport. There is a regular bus service on the Edinburgh-Peebles-Galashiels-Melrose route that stops at Innerleithen post office. From the post office, follow the high street SW (towards Peebles) for 200m and turn right up St Ronan's Terrace. After 100m St Ronan's Terrace branches. Continue straight ahead for a further 100m to reach the nearest entrance to the wood (via kissing gate).
By car, proceed to the centre of Innerleithen, and follow the brown tourist signs to the St Ronan's Wells Centre, which is at the top of Wells Brae. There is a small area for parking at the St.Ronan's Wells visitor centre and on nearby residential streets, and the entrance to the wood is immediately adjacent up a short flight of steps. There is also ample off-street parking in Hall Street (opposite the B709 Traquair turn from the High Street).
The nearest rail link is at Galashiels - 20km (12.3 miles) away on the re-opened Tweedbank to Edinburgh Borders Railway.

## Significance

St. Ronan's Wood and Caerlee Hill is well used and appreciated by the local community, population estimate approximately 3,000. Other users also come from surrounding towns and villages. A visitor numbers survey in 2001 estimated that there are approximately 9000 visits to the site per year. The population within a 20 minute drive is estimated to be over 38,000 and within a 40 minute drive over 353,000.
There are numerous paths through the woodland and out on to the open hill and the countryside beyond. Users are mainly pedestrian but there is some use by horse riders and mountain bikes and occasional wild camping. The views from the upper parts of the site are exceptional. There is historical interest re the hill fort and a well-attended annual bonfire event as part of the Cleikum Ceremonies. The hill provided the spa water, which is still available for tasting at the St Ronan's Wells Centre.
The nearest other Woodland Trust wood in the area is Plora Wood, an Ancient Semi Natural Woodland which sits just across the Tweed, facing Walkerburn. It is surrounded by productive forests managed by Forestry & Land Scotland.
Innerleithen has an official and well known mountain bike trail centre, known as Glentress and Innerleithen Bike Park. It attracts over 350,000 mountain bikers to the region per year and has some extreme and renowned downhill trails. It is one of the trail centers that make up the 7 Stanes mountain bike destinations situated throughout South Scotland. In addition, there are numerous forests and sites of interest in the area including; Tweed Valley Forest Park and the Glentress Visitor Centre, and nearby Traquair House and Gardens Dawyck Botanic Gardens and Arboretum - which houses one of Scotland's finest tree collections. And Kailzie Gardens at Peebles.

## Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:
Opportunity to make the site more accessible & welcoming by improvements to the steps and sections of the unsurfaced paths, especially boggy areas, cutting back encroaching gorse and by updating and renewing the main entrance points & installing new signage.
To involve the community in a tree planting event to establish a new area of native fringe habitat woodland across the lower slopes of cpts 4a & 3a which will provide an opportunity to outreach to the community and increase the area of contiguous woodland and wildlife habitat.
Consideration is being given to recruiting a further volunteer warden.

Constraints:
Terrain limits access for many disabled visitors and the heavy clay and often wet soil within the woodland makes much of the woodland unsuitable for horse riding. The steep terrain limits the opportunity to extend the path network within the site.

## Factors Causing Change

Vigorous growth of gorse spreading into open ground and encroaching across paths.
Deterioration and damage to paths as a result of increased usage, especially from horse riding.

## Long term Objective (50 years+)

The site will provide quiet informal access, mainly to local users and visitors, and remain accessible to as wide a range of users as is practical. The managed path network will continue to be maintained and kept clear of obstacles and overhanging branches. The site will continue to offer an interesting and diverse landscape, with experience of woodland, gorse-grass mosaic and open hill. It will provide access to Caerlee Hill Fort and continue to offer panoramic views down the Tweed Valley and link into the wider path network. Co-operation and opportunities to work together with other access groups e.g. Scottish Borders Council Countryside Rangers, Scotways, etc will continue. Access management will be in line with WT access guidelines and site access and in accordance with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

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

The site will be kept safe and welcoming by:

• Upgrading and improving of the main access points by restructuring and renewal of the old entrance gates, fencing and steps will take place during 2020 along with improvements to path drainage, crossing points and consolidating the several
boggy sections within the woodland. These will be monitored every two years and maintained as necessary. Entrance renewal will take place every 10 years thereafter.
• Routine safety inspections and path maintenance will be conducted to ensure the managed path network remains open. Managed paths will be cut back and kept clear of obstacles and overhanging branches as necessary (annually).
• Gorse encroachment will be monitored and managed to ensure all managed paths remain open and to reduce the spread of gorse across the site. Establish limits of acceptable change and continue to monitor and take action as required. A
gorse photo-survey will take place in 2020 and compared with photo-monitoring of 2007. Gorse will be controlled if (a) path-side cover exceeds 50% in 3a or (b) gorse-line in 4a becomes visible from hill-fort or encroachment onto open grassland
has significantly increased. A further survey will take place at the end of the plan period in 2023 and compared with 2020 photo-survey.
• Liaise with SBC Access Ranger to consider ways of reducing dog fouling on the site e.g. by installing dog waste bins and signage at entrances and encourage the SBC dog warden patrol to routinely patrol the site (2020).
• Continue to liaise with SBC Access Ranger in regard to trying to manage horse riding to reduce damage along the boggy parts of the woodland path.
• Volunteers and the local public will be engaged by:
• Holding a public planting event (by 2023) and consider options for promoting the site and holding other events and volunteering days during period of this plan.
• Consider increasing the number of volunteer wardens from one to two.
• Routine activities for volunteers will be considered by the Site Manager in liaison with other departments. These may include; litter collection, removal of old tree shelters from trees, cutting back and clearing of small branches along paths,
minor repairs and drainage improvements to path network.

## 5.2 Secondary Woodland

### Description

There are several areas of Secondary Woodland on the site. Two areas (9.1ha total) were planted in 1991/92 on the lower slopes of Caerlee Hill (cpt 5a and cpt 2a). They connect with the mature LEPO woodland which runs along the eastern boundary. Both areas are now well established areas of woodland consisting mainly of ash, oak, birch, and cherry with lesser quantities of Scots pine, beech, alder, rowan, lime, sweet chestnut and shrubs such as hawthorn and hazel. The original spacing was 3m (1100/ha) on lower slopes, tending to 4.5m (500/ha) spacing on upper slopes. The northern half of the planting is almost entirely embedded in dense gorse, and generally inaccessible for management purposes, except at the far north end. Some trees in the dense gorse were allowed to develop without any silvicultural management. These have created a semi-natural fringe woodland structure of variable density and spacing.
The southern part is set in a mix of acid grassland and patchy gorse. Within the gorse the stocking density is very variable, with some well-established groups of trees and some areas with only scattered individuals.

Compartment 6a (1.46ha) is a single species block of mature European larch planted circa 1900 which is unable to withstand further thinning and may require clearfelling within the period of this plan due to the spread of Phytophthera ramorum. If this occurs the area will be replanted with mixed native species.

Compartment 6b (0.33ha) is a small area made up of mature Scots pine and sycamore which will be retained with minimum intervention during the period of this plan.

### Significance

The existing secondary woodland forms a habitat network from the areas of more mature woodland to the open grassland and gorse scrub, while providing a valuable habitat and landscape feature in its own right.

The new area of native woodland will create a transition woodland habitat, increase the area of woodland coverage and link up with the established new woodland in cpt5a and cpt2a, and allow for the gradual spread of woodland specialist species between the two compartments. It will provide a more gradual transition into the gorse/grass mosaic on the hill slopes above, creating woodland edge habitat and a habitat link into the semi-natural grassland on the hill ground on the slopes of Lee Pen and the hills to the north. The visual transition from mature woodland to gorse/grass mosaic will have a positive impact on the landscape without obscuring the view from Caerlee Hill. Native woodland is scarce in this part of the Scottish Borders. Establishing the new area of woodland supports the Trust's corporate objective of 'creating new native woodland'.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:
To increase the area of native woodland in the area, expand the existing woodland, provide linkage to aid the spread of woodland specialist and contribute to the enhancement of the habitat and landscape.

Constraints:
Gorse encroachment is an issue. It will require some cutting back prior to planting and on-going management will be required until tree canopy closure eventually shades it out.

## Factors Causing Change

Excessive natural regeneration of non native species
Pathogens; ash dieback and Phytophthora ramorum on larch

Invasive gorse may encroach in to the new native woodland and require control.
Ash dieback-tree disease will result in loss of most if not all ash in the young woodlands. However species diversity is high enough that this will not affect the woodland structure.
Phytophthera ramorum-the single species block of European larch in cpt 6a may require clearfelling within the period of this plan should it become infected with Phytophthera ramorum. If this occurs the area will be replanted with mixed native species.

## Long term Objective (50 years+)

To create a mainly native woodland of diverse structure and semi-natural character. Canopy species will be most mostly be sessile oak, hazel, rowan, lime, silver birch and Scots pine. The structure will vary from areas of closed canopy through to areas of open grassland and gorse, providing valuable woodland edge and scrub habitats. There will be a diverse ground flora that will include some of the woodland specialists that will gradually move into the new area of woodland from adjacent woodland.

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

All remaining tree shelters will be removed from the 1991/2 plantings (where accessible) and disposed-of off-site (2a, 5a, by 2023).

Prepare and plant a small area of native woodland (approximately 1.0ha during 2022-2023) along the lower part of the open ground in cpts 3a & 4a next to the Secondary Woodland (cpts 2a, 5a) to create a fringe woodland habitat. Plant with mixed native species; predominately sessile oak and silver birch with a mixture of hazel, rowan, lime, gean, and Scots pine with occasional hawthorn, blackthorn, holly, field maple, guelder rose and elder. Planted at 2.0m x 2.0m spacing at the bottom of the hill, increasing to more irregular spacing (approx'3m x 3m) further up the slope, then gradually feathering out in a randomly scattered open pattern to create a species rich woodland edge open ground fringe habitat that melds into the open ground habitat. Trees will be cell grown, local sourced provenance where possible. Planting will be by notch planting done by hand, all trees will be in 1.2m tree shelters & staked. This will be followed by annual weeding, tree and shelter maintenance and beat up until the trees are established. Once assessed and mapped the designated area will be assigned its own sub-cpt. The planting will be designed so as not to obstruct the views from Caerlee Hill and the Hill Fort and the planting will involve the local community, school children and families by holding a public tree planting event and activity day.

The new area of woodland to be created in 2022/23 will require some gorse encroachment to be removed and controlled prior to planting (2021/22).

## 5.3 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

### Description

Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat is an important component of the site. On the hilltops and across higher levels large expanses of open ground habitat are deliberately left unplanted to protect the ancient Iron Age Hill Fort, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), maintain the mosaic of open ground upland habitat for associated wildlife and to retain the outstanding view from the Hill Fort and Caerlee Hill across Innerleithen and down the Tweed valley and surrounding hills.
Caerlee Hill is a dominant feature on the western edge of the town. The open hill has a variety of access routes and provides unrestricted views down the Tweed valley.
The main feature of the open ground is a mosaic of acid rich grassland accompanied by dense swaths of gorse across cpts 3a & 4a. The open ground habitat connects with neighbouring open ground across the hills. Lower down the slope the grassland/gorse habitat merges with the woodland fringe which provides a habitat corridor for flora and fauna to move freely between the open ground and woodland habitats.

### Significance

The Hill Fort SAM dominates the summit of Caerlee Hill. It was first scheduled in 1969; the area was then revised in 2003 to cover the remains more accurately. The Hill Fort ramparts measure 60m by 45m and a system of banks and ditches are visible encircling the fort. Within the ramparts the site has been disturbed by more recent small scale quarrying, but several building platforms are visible west of the dyke. It was thought to have been occupied between 500 - 0 B.C. It is unusual in forming a pair with a contemporary fort nearby on Pirn Hill on the opposite side of the Leithen Water. Its banks and ditches are clearly visible and its proximity to Innerleithen makes it highly accessible. The fort is a popular destination and resting place with walkers and commands spectacular views down the Tweed Valley.
Managing the fort follows the Trust management principle of 'conserving important historical and cultural features' and fulfilling our legal obligations.
The extensive open ground habitat is a significant aspect of the site and an important habitat in its own right.
Caerlee Hill is integral to the towns annual Cleikum Ceremony and St. Ronan’s Border Games. The variety of access so close to the town enables the community to make full use of the site.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:
To enhance and diversify the habitat and managed the spread of gorse effectively by extending the woodland fringe habitat on the lower slope and include the local community in a tree planting event designed to enhance the habitat and diversify the open ground aspect.
Continue to work with the community, neighbours and other interested parties to maintain the site.

Constraints:
All operations require SAM consent from Historic Scotland.

### Factors Causing Change

Gorse incursion across the hill.
Increased risk of moorland fires and other environmental impacts as a result of climate change.

## Long term Objective (50 years+)

The Hill Fort (SAM) will remain undisturbed and its surrounding area will remain free of gorse and other woody vegetation. Caerlee Hill will remain as an open aspect focus point for visitors and the area will be maintained to show the above-ground features of the fort as well as its context in the landscape. In the short term this will be achieved by maintaining a gorse-free buffer zone at least 50m from the SAM boundary. A narrow ribbon of fringe edge native woodland habitat will be established on the lower slopes of Caerlee Hill to improve the transition from Secondary Woodland to Semi-Natural Open Ground Habitat.

Continue to maintain and enhance the mosaic of semi natural open ground habitat and the newly established woodland fringe habitat.

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

Ensure that the SAM continues to be protected and conserved. This will be achieved by ensuring that gorse does not encroach on the SAM by periodically cutting out all gorse and following up with stump treatment & spot weeding as necessary with appropriate herbicide (Glyphosate) to create a buffer zone at least 50m from the SAM boundary (2020- 2023). Liaise with Historic Scotland prior to commencement to ensure that our management is appropriate and complies with their requirements.
The gorse areas in cpts 3a and 4a will be assessed in 2020 for rate of spread. A limit of acceptable change will be accepted. We will intervene if gorse level on open ground habitat within cpt 3a is found to exceed 50% of total coverage. In cpt 4a we intend to maintain a gorse habitat of no more than 35% to ensure grassland habitat continues to be maintained. Produce an up to date photographic survey record of the spread of gorse (2020) and continue biannual monitoring and carry out gorse control as necessary (2021-2023).
Consider establishing Volunteer Wildlife Recorder(s) for the site to monitor and record flora and fauna.

## 5.4 Long Established Woodland of Plantation Origin

### Description

The strip of mature predominately broadleaved woodland that forms the eastern boundary to the site is clearly present on 1st ed. OS maps c.1857 and although not mapped as Long Established of Plantation Origin (LEPO) on the SNH Ancient Woodland Inventory it is  a diverse piece of woodland in terms of species, age and structure and is being managed as LEPO woodland. There is frequent mature beech, oak and ash, and occasional mature birch, lime, sweet chestnut and pine. These are set in a matrix of younger trees from sapling to early mature consisting mainly of beech, ash, birch, rowan, sycamore and hawthorn. Ash is a significant component in the lower parts of the wood (cpts 1a & 2a) and ash dieback is present throughout the site. The ash dieback is being monitored to ensure dying trees do not present a high risk along footpaths, at access points and to bordering properties. All mature trees within the narrow protruding spur to the east of cpt 1 are covered by TPO 23 W1. Canopy structure is variable from; occasional beech stands with little ground flora to areas of more open woodland with honeysuckle, broad buckler fern, wood avens and occasional patches of wood sorrel. In addition occasional small glades occur with grasses, bramble, foxglove, barren strawberry, nettles and wood sage. Beech, ash and sycamore have regenerated in patches and deadwood is frequent and scattered throughout. The only known archaeological features are the linear drystone  boundary dykes. The adjacent larch woodland (cpt 6a) and mixed woodland (cpt 6b) are more recent in origin, but now reaching maturity. They have value as buffers to the mature LEPO woodland and as Secondary Woodland habitats in their own right and enrich the diversity of woodland structure and landscape.

### Significance

The woodland appears on some of the earliest OS maps although it does not appear on the SNH AWI. The ground flora has some woodland flora specialist species and but much of it appears to be secondary woodland in nature. The small amount of broadleaved woodland that there is in the surrounding area includes oak and beech on the lower slopes of Pirn Hill (0.5km), and the Trust's Plora Wood on the south side of the Tweed (1.5km). There are substantial conifer plantations throughout the Tweed Valley, including nearby Glentress, Cardrona, Elibank and the plantations on the slopes east of the Leithen Water. The only direct woodland habitat link is with the mixed woodland shelterbelts around Glenormiston farm to the west (also present on maps c.1860). Management supports the Trusts corporate objectives of 'protecting ancient woodlands' and 'improving woodland biodiversity'.

### Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunity:
To improve canopy and age structure by enhancing the naturally regenerated "hot spot" areas.
Red squirrels are often seen in the woodland. There is potential to increase their number and establish a permanent colony by continuing the effective programme of grey squirrel control (Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels carry out effective control of grey squirrels and monitor the populations and movements of red and grey squirrels at a landscape level throughout much of Scotland. The Borders is considered the "front line" in the protection of red squirrels from the spread of the non-native grey squirrel and prevent the pox virus carried by grey squirrels from decimating the Scottish population of red squirrels. We liaise and cooperate with this coordinated landscape-scale red squirrel protection project).
Constraints:
Steep terrain, dense gorse in some areas and poor management access makes woodland management difficult in some areas.
Ash dieback will reduce woodland composition and structure and we may have to retain more non-native tree species to ensure woodland resilience.

## Factors Causing Change

Natural regeneration of beech
Pathogens; ash dieback and the potential for Phytophthera ramorum on larch which may reduce woodland composition and structure
Invasive non-native grey squirrels will increase in number if control is not maintained and cause damage to many of the younger native woodland trees and push out the small colony of red squirrels.

## Long term Objective (50 years+)

The woodland will remain diverse. Made up of trees representing a range of ages and species and a woodland fringe habitat where the wood melds into the Open Ground Habitat. The canopy will be predominantly native broadleaved and other species along with a scattering of specimen and veteran trees. There will be a diverse ground flora including woodland specialist species consistent with NVC W10 and frequent deadwood.

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

Much of the mature woodland will continue to develop by minimum silvicultural intervention. However, there are several "hot spot" areas, often where elms have died and been removed, where natural regeneration of broadleaved species is occurring. These are small (predominately 1.5ha to 0.3ha) areas randomly scattered throughout cpt 1a which would benefit from a gradual process of phased light selective thinning to improve side light through the surrounding canopy space and respacing of the natural regen' to reduce canopy competition among the drawn up trees and to favour native species (the first phase will occur in 2020 followed by further enhancement work in 2021 and reviewed in 2023). The trees will be felled to recycle and will increase the deadwood habitat. Occasional intervention will also be required to fell and make safe any severely deteriorating ash near to paths and houses as they gradually succumb to ash dieback (annual monitoring and any resulting safety work will be carried out).

## 6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

| Year | Type of Work | Description | Due By |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | SL - Tree Safety Emergency Work | Emergency tree work along path behind houses | 31/10/20 |

## APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Key Features Present | Designations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1a | 5.14 | Mixed broadleaves | 1900 | High forest | | Connecting People with woods & trees | Tree Preservation Order |
| A strip of mixed broadleaved woodland on east-facing slopes bordering the houses of St. Ronan's Terrance. This is a diverse piece of woodland in terms of species, age and structure. There are frequent mature beech, oak and ash, and occasional mature birch, lime, sweet chestnut and pine. These are set in a matrix of younger trees from sapling to early mature consisting of frequent beech, ash, birch, rowan, sycamore and hawthorn, with occasional wild cherry, goat willow and field maple, elm and elder. Many of the younger trees near the north end were planted by volunteers in 1988 and a number are still in shelters. Where gaps have occurred in the canopy there is abundant natural regeneration of ash, sycamore and rowan. The canopy structure varies from sporadic areas of dense beech stands with little ground flora, through to more open woodland with honeysuckle, broad buckler fern, wood avens and occasional patches of wood sorrel, to small glades with grasses, bramble, foxglove, barren strawberry, nettles and wood sage. The woodland and adjacent houses on St Ronan’s Terrace provide roosting and feeding zones for several bat species. Woodland birds are well represented. Brown hare, fox, roe deer and grey squirrel are occasionally seen. There is abundant deadwood. There are several drystone dykes running along the north and west boundaries, the latter being in a state of collapse. There is also a section of drystone dyke and fence boundary along part of the eastern boundary adjoining properties on St. Ronan's Terrace. All mature trees within the easterly protruding narrow spur of cpt 1a which leads down to St. Ronan’s Terrace are covered by TPO 23 W1. Included within TPO 23 are also the mature trees within the gardens of the adjacent private properties along St Ronan’s Terrace and Well’s Brae. | | | | | | | |
| 2a | 6.60 | Mixed native broadleaves | 1991 | High forest | Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation | Connecting People with woods & trees | |

This is a woodland creation area of predominately mixed native broadleaves originally planted in tree shelters in 1991/2 and consisting of mainly ash, oak, birch, and cherry, with Scots pine, beech and alder, rowan, lime, sweet chestnut, hawthorn and hazel. Original spacing was 3m on lower slopes, tending to 4.5m spacing on upper slopes. The northern half of the planting is almost entirely embedded in dense gorse, and generally inaccessible for management purposes, except at the far north end. The southern part is set in a mix of acid grassland and patchy gorse. The gorse is gradually spreading out from this area across parts of the acid grassland. Within the gorse stocking density is very variable, with some well-established groups of trees and some areas with only scattered individuals. Due to the density of gorse some trees have remained in tree shelters and have been left to establish themselves. Many of these have split but others are becoming tight. Some were replaced with sleeves in 1995.
The gorse requires more active management to reduce the spread, access the remaining trees, remove tree shelters and diversify the gorse/grassland structure. There is minimal dead wood habitat at this stage.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3a | 6.50 | Open ground | | Non-wood habitat | | Connecting People with woods & trees | |

A mosaic of acid grassland and gorse on the exposed broad ridge of Caerlee Hill leading up towards Kirklands Hill and Lee Pen. The gorse is dense on the lower southern and eastern slopes where it forms an impenetrable thicket with occasional elder as it merges into cpt 2a. The gorse is more scattered on the upper west side and forms a diverse mosaic of habitat with the acid grassland. The north west area of the compartment is mainly grassland but gorse encroachment is gradually occurring. Several areas were cleared of gorse in 2000 and fire breaks mown between open areas (tractor mulcher plus herbicide follow-up). These areas have generally less gorse. In the past the local rabbit colony acted as a good management tool in controlling the gorse but since the demise of the rabbit the gorse has continued to spread. Overall the gorse was estimated to occupy 60% of the compartment in 2007, and there are monitoring (land based) photos on file from both 2000, 2007 and a satellite map image from 2018. Land based photographic monitoring and mapping will be carried out in 2020 to assess the current situation. The open ground flora consists mainly of a dense, tussocky, somewhat-acid sward dominated by wavy hair grass with occasional woodruff, bedstraw, tormentil, thistles and ragwort. Upland bird species, such as; meadow pipet, skylark, oystercatcher and curlew are regular visitors as are kestrels. Brown hare, fox and roe deer are occasionally seen throughout.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4a | 4.60 | Open ground | | Non-wood habitat | | Connecting People with woods & trees | Scheduled Ancient Monument |

An area of grassland dominated by the remains of the iron age hill fort (SAM) on the top of Caerlee Hill, and commanding superb views over Innerleithen and the Tweed valley. The lower slopes of the hill have thick gorse cover with occasional birch; the gorse is more sporadic and less dense higher up. The gorse has gradually been spreading and may now occupy up to 45% of the compartment. Scattered gorse bushes occur across the hill, and the gorse-line nears the SAM boundary on the north and north-east side. A photo record was taken in 2007. At that time gorse occupation was estimated at around 25%. At that time there was a heavy rabbit population which appeared to have slowed the establishment of gorse. However, the rabbit population has been greatly reduced due to disease; as a result the gorse continues to spread unabated. The grassland is somewhat acid in character, with occasional ragwort, woodruff, wood sage, bedstraw, tormentil and yarrow. Atop Caerlee Hill there is a prominent mobile phone and microwave mast, which is utilised by several major mobile phone services. It is situated in an enclosed area near the SAM site. The hill is popular with walkers and there are several desire lines through the grassland.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5a | 2.50 | Mixed native broadleaves | 1991 | High forest | | Connecting People with woods & trees | |

An area of well-established mixed species woodland. Planted in 1991/2 on south-east and east-facing slopes, with a few embedded semi-mature birches. Planted species consist of mainly ash, oak, birch, and cherry, with Scots pine, beech and alder, rowan, lime, sweet chestnut, hawthorn and hazel. The original spacing was 3m to the south, tending to 4.5m nearer the open ground further north. Most of the trees have had their shelters removed and in the area of 3mx3m spacing they have now closed canopy. There is patchy gorse, which is dense in the more open places, throughout, which appears to be slowly spreading. Between the gorse thickets the ground flora is dominated by grasses, with frequent wood sage and occasional rosebay willowherb, as well as rare snowdrops. Occasional deer browsing and fraying has occurs. There is minimal dead wood habitat at this stage.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6a | 1.50 | European larch | 1900 | High forest | | Connecting People with woods & trees | |

A stand of mature European larch, forming a light even-aged canopy in a sheltered location. The larch appears to have been regularly thinned in the past. It was last was thinned in 1991 and 1996. Hence, there is a well-balanced canopy size to tree growth and as a result of regular thinning and a sheltered location the stand has stood up well. The canopy is still fairly open and windblow is rare, being limited to individual trees. However, it is unlikely the larch could support another thinning. Along the south-eastern boundary is a dense patch of pole-stage sycamore regeneration and there are individual saplings frequently throughout the area. There is also occasional elder and rare gorse throughout. The light conditions have resulted in a ground flora dominated by grasses with frequent rosebay willowherb, occasional broad buckler fern, creeping buttercup and foxgloves, and rare bramble and soft rushes. There is occasional browsing by roe deer on sycamore regeneration. Occasional windblown larch and fallen limbs provide suitable dead wood habitat.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6b | 0.30 | Scots pine | 1900 | High forest | | Connecting People with woods & trees | |
| A full canopy of mature Scots pine and sycamore with rare oak and birch on scree slopes beneath a small quarry. There is a scattered understorey of gorse, hawthorn and rowan. The ground flora is dominated by grasses with occasional violets, wood sage, along with wood-sorrel and broad buckler fern. Fallen branches provide deadwood. Rabbits, once common are now rare. | | | | | | | |

## Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

| Forecast Year | Cpt | Operation Type | Work Area (ha) | Estimated vol/ha | Estimated total vol. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 1a | Thin | 0.30 | 33 | 10 |
| 2021 | 1a | Thin | 0.30 | 33 | 10 |

# 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.