

Laund Clough

(Plan period – 2021 to 2026)



WOODLAND
TRUST

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Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

“A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.”

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK’s native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

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.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, 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. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.
4. The long term vision for all our 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 natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities 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 encourage our woods to be used for 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. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.
10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/>

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

The Management Plan

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GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Laund Clough

Location:	Baxenden	Grid reference:	SD770272	OS	1:50,000	Sheet	No.	103
Area:	2.19 hectares (5.41 acres)							
External Designations:	Tree Preservation Order							
Internal Designations:	N/A							

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Laund Clough is located in the town of Accrington, in East Lancashire. It is a major landscape feature in the area and has been protected by a Tree Preservation Order since 1952. The wood is very narrow (less than 20m wide for 150m) and surrounded by housing along all of its long boundaries, it has many neighbours (approx. 90) on several different roads. Another Woodland Trust site Sycamore Grove is located nearby. Local soil type consists of slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils.

It is a long, narrow ancient woodland running SE-NW, mainly on a very steep slope with a small brook running along the valley floor. Access into and within the wood is severely limited by the surrounding houses, degree of slope, and the stream. It is almost completely surrounded by a residential area, but it does continue as woodland and other open land to the north.

The predominant tree species are beech, sycamore, oak, horse chestnut and ash. Understorey includes hawthorn, elder, holly, and blackthorn. Regeneration consists of a mixture of the dominant species. The health of the mature trees is variable. Many have already been felled and others continue to suffer from disease and damage (some of it deliberate). The ground flora is typical of ancient woodland on steep, damp slopes in north west England, with prolific bluebells and wild garlic, as well as wood sorrel, wood anemone, wood avens on the upper slopes and enchanter's nightshade, opposite-leaved golden saxifrage on the lower slopes and wetter areas. Ancient Semi Natural Woodland is a key feature of the site.

The freehold of the wood was gifted to the Woodland Trust by Hyndburn Borough Council in 1986. Very little is known about the history of the wood except that its boundaries date from at least the 1930s and are probably much older. It takes its name from The Laund, a house now demolished (Laund means clearing), and Clough, a steep sided little valley. Laund Clough is pronounced 'lornd cluff'. Like a lot of similar woods in the local area, it occupies land that was too steep to farm easily, and so was probably never cleared but may have been under grazed. Fields were obviously created up to its boundaries, and these were later developed for housing.

The wood has 5 pedestrian access points, enabling good access from all the surrounding roads, but virtually no vehicular access at all. Within the wood, access is limited to the most part by the terrain and shape of the wood to a single linear route running SE to NW, with three wooden pedestrian bridges and a ford crossing the stream. The paths are relatively level, but either on the top or side of a steep slope and stream. However, at the northern end of the wood, the path forks, one path steeply descends to cross the stream and the 2 paths continue north, into adjoining council owned land which is also open for access. By following these paths, people from the nearby estates walk towards the town centre of Accrington, avoiding a long detour and the main road. The wood is also used by local dog walkers, children frequently play here too, and it is very popular and well used at all times. There are some large and spectacular beech trees and the stream cutting through the rocks and over a waterfall is also an attractive and unusual feature in an urban wood. Informal Public Access is one of the sites Key Features.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Laund Clough 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 trees naturally reaching senescence and tree safety operations.

Public access will be maintained at its current level of 5 access points and 700 metres of paths and 3 footbridges. These will be maintained and upgraded as necessary where there is an opportunity to provide defined, safe, all year access for pedestrians.

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

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Ancient Woodland Site

Description
<p>On acquisition the wood consisted of large, tall, mature, broadleaved, even-aged trees, but since then regeneration and planting have taken place, beginning to diversify the age range, species, and introduce a shrub layer. The mature trees are sycamore, beech, ash, oak (including Turkey) and horse chestnut, with regenerating elm (from stumps), beech, ash, sycamore, rowan and hawthorn. The beech is almost certainly planted and was introduced into local woods, probably by the Victorians, horse chestnut and Turkey oak will also have been introduced at about the same time. Sycamore is extremely common as a naturalised tree throughout the whole of Lancashire. Mature elms were present but were affected by Dutch elm disease in the 1980s –1990s and felled. Tree safety is a high priority and many trees were felled initially, although the situation appears to have stabilised now with felling at natural replacement levels. The health of the remaining mature trees is variable, and the amount of dead wood is gradually increasing. The ground flora is very sparse, mainly due to shading, and also some trampling, but where it does occur there are patches of ancient woodland species such as enchanters nightshade, and opposite leaved golden saxifrage, with lady and broad buckler ferns and Polytrichum moss. Bird species have not been closely studied, but surprisingly include dipper and tree creeper.</p>
Significance
<p>Its main value is as varied, mature ancient woodland. Lancashire has only 3.7% woodland cover and only about 0.77% ancient woodland cover, which is one of the lowest in the country, therefore this habitat is scarce. Its wildlife value has not been thoroughly investigated, but the ground flora is sparse and likely to remain so. There are some birds of interest, but other animals are restricted to common, robust, urban species such as grey squirrels. However, the wildlife is very visible and much appreciated by the many people living locally, where there are few natural green spaces.</p>
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Laund Clough is a fairly small, long, narrow wood, largely surrounded by housing (apart from woodland to the north), it is isolated from other woods, and cannot be extended. Management access is very difficult and any works are expensive. Certain parts of the wood are heavily used and trampled, or have garden rubbish dumped in them frequently. The wood is also shaded, being in such a steep valley. The valley also means that any problems within the wood e.g. dumped rubbish, tend to end up in the stream. The stream has been very badly polluted in the past (raw sewerage) and still occasionally appears to suffer minor pollution (domestic effluent). However, the wood has demonstrated that it will regenerate readily, and planted trees have also grown. Defined paths have reduced the effects of heavy use. 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.</p>
Factors Causing Change

Dumping of garden rubbish, Invasive Himalayan Balsam & Japanese Knotweed.
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 senesce 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)
Undertake tree safety inspections as part of the site risk assessment regime for public safety in high risk zones (i.e. by buildings, footpaths and roads) and carry out any remedial work identified. remove accumulations of litter & fly tipping as necessary - to be done via the Estates Maintenance Contract 3 visits per calendar year.
Carry out a Woodland Condition Assessment towards the end of the current plan period to assess the health and resilience of the woodland including the mix of species and natural regeneration, to monitor threats from tree disease, pests, non-native invasive species and to take appropriate action where necessary.

4.2 f2 Informal Public Access

Description
On acquisition access into the wood was very poor, and was first improved and formalised by the Woodland Trust. The wood now has 5 pedestrian access points, enabling good access from all the surrounding roads, but virtually no vehicular management access at all. Within the wood, access along 700m of permissive paths is limited to the most part by the terrain and shape of the wood to a single linear route running SE to NW, with two wooden pedestrian bridges and a ford crossing the stream. The paths are relatively level, but either on the top or side of a steep slope and stream. However, at the northern end of the wood, the path forks, one paths steeply descends to cross the stream and the 2 paths continue north, into adjoining council owned land which is also open for access. By following these paths, people from the nearby estates walk towards the town centre of Accrington, avoiding a long detour and the main road. The wood is also used by local dog walkers, children frequently play here too, and it is very well used and popular at all times. There are some large and spectacular beech trees, and the stream cutting through the rocks and over a waterfall is also an attractive and unusual feature in an urban wood.
Significance
Its main value is as relatively natural urban woodland, accessible and used by hundreds of people from all directions. Its paths cover the whole of its length, passing some spectacularly large beech trees, a tumbling stream, waterfall, and interesting routes over the stream via bridges and a ford. It has obvious, robust wildlife, and looks good throughout the changing seasons as well as providing an alternative to walking along the main road into Accrington.
Opportunities & Constraints
Laund Clough is a long, narrow wood running SE-NW, mainly on a very steep slope. Access into and within the wood is severely limited by the surrounding houses, degree of slope, and the stream. There is little scope for creating new paths, links, or extending access to users other than pedestrians. Management access is very difficult and any works are

expensive. However, the wood is very well known and popular with local people and access improvements are likely to have substantial support.

Factors Causing Change

Other - normal wear and tear

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access will be maintained at its current level of 5 access points and 700m of paths, steps on steep slopes, and 3 stream crossings. These will be maintained and upgraded as necessary to provide defined, safe, all year access for pedestrians. Local people should be informed of and involved with the site management where appropriate, especially to help understand the management needs of the wood, and the negative effect of some activities such as dumping garden and fencing rubbish, damage to trees, and encroachments which have had a major impact in certain areas.

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

Maintain 5 pedestrian entrances and 700 metres of Permissive Path and Public Right of Way by cutting back encroaching vegetation and trees; inspect signs, gates and fences; remove accumulations of litter & fly tipping as necessary - to be done via the Estates Maintenance Contract 3 visits per calendar year.

Carry out regular safety inspections of trees in high risk zones (i.e. next to buildings, roads and footpaths) and site hazards as per the Trust's safety inspection regime to ensure safety of visitors and neighbours, and undertaking any remedial safety work identified.

Monitor public use of the site before the end of the current plan period to review the standard of access, identify any work required and assess if there are any issues/ threats to the wood from public usage, taking appropriate action to address them if necessary.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2021	SL - Emergency Safety Works	Works associated with unplanned emergency safety works, other than tree safety, such as repairs/restoration works after damage caused by storms / floods /landslips	August
2021	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	September
2021	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	September
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	May
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	July
2025	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	September
2026	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	May

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	2.19	Sycamore	1900	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, No/poor vehicular access to the site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Tree Preservation Order
<p>2.43 Hectares (6 acres) of mature mixed broadleaved ancient woodland. It is located in East Lancashire in an urban area close to the town of Baxenden. The woodland is in a steeply incised valley which slopes sharply on both sides down towards a small stream. To the South, West and East the woodland is entirely surrounded by a housing estate, to the north it borders parkland owned by Hyndburn Borough Council.</p>						

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.

Windblow/Windthrow

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.

Registered Office:

The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL.

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