

# Heald Wood

(Plan period – 2021 to 2026)



WOODLAND  
TRUST

# Management Plan Content Page

Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

The Public Management Plan

Location and Access

## 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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

or contact the Woodland Trust

[operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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

1. Site Details
2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
  - 4.1 f1 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
  - 4.2 f2 Informal Public Access
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

## 1. SITE DETAILS

### Heald Wood

Location:	Burnley Grid reference: SD837350 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 103
Area:	2.86 hectares (7.07 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	N/A

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Heald Wood is located close to the town of Burnley in an urban area of East Lancashire. The wood is remnant semi-natural ancient woodland, a Site of Biological Importance and covered by two Tree Preservation Orders. The wood is bordered by a river known as Pendle Water to the west, pasture land to the north and south and by a large housing estate to the east.

It slopes sharply from the east to west towards Pendle Water and the prominent soil type is loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater.

The predominant tree species are sycamore, ash, oak and beech, with some horse chestnut, alder and elm. Understorey includes hawthorn, elder, holly, rowan, and blackthorn. Regeneration consists of a mixture of the dominant species. Two areas cleared of dead elm were planted with native broadleaves in the 1990's, and as well reflecting the existing tree species these also included additional ones such as wild and bird cherry, willows, alder dog rose and wild privet. 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 woodland was gifted to The Woodland Trust in 1986 and unfortunately little is known with regard to the sites history prior to our ownership.

Heald Wood is well used, mainly by local people from neighbouring houses within walking distance. There are 6 access points entering the wood directly from the neighbouring estate, and another pedestrian access can be found on the north western boundary adjacent to Pendle Water, making a total of seven entrances. Paths run the length of the wood, and link to the wider countryside beyond via a public footpath which crosses the river on a bridge. Informal Public Access is a Key Feature of the wood.

### 3. LONG TERM POLICY

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

Public access will be maintained at its current level of 7 access points and 600m of paths and steps on steep slopes. 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 Semi Natural Woodland

<b>Description</b>
Mature, mixed, broad leaved woodland on a steep north-west facing slope above Pendle Water (a river). Originally the woodland was probably NVC W8 ash/field maple/dog's mercury. However, the canopy is now dominated by sycamore, accompanied by frequent ash, oak and beech with infrequent horse chestnut. Alder is locally frequent by the river. The understorey comprises hawthorn, elder, holly, rowan, wych elm and bird cherry. Regeneration of sycamore, ash, beech, horse chestnut and coppice regrowth from elm are common. On the upper slope the ground flora is dominated by bramble, creeping soft-grass and tufted hair-grass, with bluebell, wood-sorrel, wood anemone, red campion, hedge woundwort, wood avens and rosebay willowherb. The lower slopes and areas of flat ground by the river support ramsons, herb-robert, wild angelica, marsh hawk's-beard, enchanter's nightshade, opposite-leaved golden saxifrage, lady fern, broad buckler fern, and hairy brome.
<b>Significance</b>
For it's size and location (urban fringe) this is a rich and viable ancient woodland which can also provide recreational facilities. The wood is isolated, but also self contained and stable. 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.
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
The relatively small size of Heald Wood and the fact that it is surrounded by housing and the River means that there are no opportunities to extend or buffer the woodland with further tree planting. However it is a mature and stable ancient woodland which provides a refuge for urban wildlife.
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
Ash die back
<b>Long term Objective (50 years+)</b>
To develop the wood as predominately native high forest, with a mixed range of ages and species. It is anticipated that as trees gradually senescence or are removed for safety reasons natural regeneration will fill the gaps. Hence the wood will require little active management, beyond ensuring that regeneration is sufficient. Throughout the wood, older trees of any species will be retained as long as safety allows.
<b>Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)</b>
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. Ash dieback is well established on site and further selective felling removing badly infected ash is likely to be required particularly along boundaries and footpaths.



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

<b>Description</b>
The wood is long and thin and borders a private housing estate, largely constructed in the 1960's. There are 6 pedestrian access points entering the wood directly from the housing estate along the eastern boundary and one on the north western boundary making a total of 7 entrances to this 5.5 acre wood. A mixture of permissive paths and a Public Right Of Way run through the wood and there are 2 pedestrian timber bridges crossing over small streams as well as a timber staircase. This is an attractive wood within easy reach of many local people.
<b>Significance</b>
Lancashire has relatively little woodland, and even less semi-natural ancient woodland of this quality. The wood is especially attractive in spring, with wild garlic and bluebells, and Pendle Water is a substantial and attractive river, with heron and kingfishers regularly seen.
<b>Opportunities &amp; Constraints</b>
The steep slope limits the type of access that can be created, and to get back from the bottom of the wood it is necessary to be reasonably fit. However, many young families live in the adjacent houses and the wood is very well used.
<b>Factors Causing Change</b>
Other - normal wear and tear
<b>Long term Objective (50 years+)</b>
Public access will be maintained at its current level of 7 access points and 700 metres of paths and steps on steep slopes. 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.
<b>Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)</b>
Maintain 7 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 - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	July
2021	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	December
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	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	August
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	2.86	Sycamore	1890	High forest	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Tree Preservation Order
<p>2.23 Hectares (5.5 acres) of mature mixed broadleaved ancient woodland. Its is located in East Lancashire in an urban area close to the town of Burnley. The woodland is in a steeply incised valley which slopes sharply in a westerly direction towards the Pendle Water River. Much of the woodland to the east is surrounded by housing and a permissive path network is well used by local people.</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.**

The Woodland Trust is a charity registered in England and Wales no. 294344 and in Scotland no. SC038885. A non-profit making company limited by guarantee. Registered in England no. 1982873. The Woodland Trust logo is a registered trademark.