

Moss Leach Wood

(Plan period – 2020 to 2025)



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

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

1. Site Details
2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
 - 4.1 f1 Secondary Woodland
 - 4.2 f2 Archaeological Feature
 - 4.3 f3 Informal Public Access
5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Moss Leach Wood

Location:	Preston	Grid	reference:	SD544339	OS	1:50,000	Sheet	No.	102
Area:	1.61 hectares (3.98 acres)								
External Designations:	Scheduled Ancient Monument								
Internal Designations:	N/A								

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Moss Leach can be found in Fulwood, Preston and consists of approximately 2.2 hectares of secondary broadleaved woodland. The site borders pasture fields to the north, a large industrial unit to the south, the M6 Motorway to the east and a housing estate to the west. It is part of a cluster of Woodland Trust sites in this area including Midgery Wood, Fernyhalgh Wood & Masons Wood.

The whole site is flat apart from Cromwell's Mound and lies on poorly drained clay soil. Moss Leach brook flows along the northern boundary of the site just outside Woodland Trust ownership.

The woodland was planted in the early 1980s by the Commission For New Towns with mixed broadleaved species such as field maple, oak, ash, cherry, willow, hawthorn, hazel, dogwood and spindle. The woodland also contains some older hedgerow trees in the form of oak, ash, cherry and alder. Secondary woodland is a key feature of the wood.

The site was transferred to The Woodland Trust by the development corporation as part of a package of several sites in 1996. Prior to planting the previous land use was mixed farming. Cromwell's Mound is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and is located on the northern boundary of the wood. It is a Civil War fieldwork and remains in good condition, a rare surviving example of a monument of this class which is associated with the Second Civil War of 1648 and is another of the sites key features.

Both compartments have informal access in the form of an unsurfaced grass path and a public right of way which runs through the woodland for approximately 500 metres. The path network is well used by local people for informal recreation and links Moss Leach to other Woodland Trust sites nearby such as Midgery Wood and is one of the site key features.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Moss Leach will be managed as a mixed broadleaved, predominantly native high forest under a minimum intervention management regime. Both native and non native regeneration will be accepted within the woodland. Gaps created by trees gradually reaching senescence, or by trees been felled for safety reasons will be filled by natural regeneration. The woodland will require little active management other than ensuring that natural regeneration levels remain adequate. Periodic selective felling will also take place approximately once every 10 years where the site borders the M6 motorway & footpaths for safety reasons. We will retain older trees of any species across the whole site as long as safety allows.

Public access and facilities will be maintained at least at its current level with paths accessible for year round use. These consist of just over 500 metres of paths, 1 bridge and 3 formal entrances.

The open area around Cromwell's Mound must be maintained so as to retain the integrity of this scheduled ancient monument. Moss Leach is part of a patchwork of similar woods established or retained by the New Town development corporation, which now form a network of opportunities for recreation which will be maintained for the enjoyment of local people.

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

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Secondary Woodland

Description
Planted (circa 1980) native species broadleaved woodland abutting much older hedgerows. Moss Leach forms part of the structure planting carried out by the New Town Development Corporation as part of their overall landscape strategy.
Significance
<p>Broadleaved woodland cover is very low nationally, regionally and locally. Around 7% of land use in Britain is taken up by broadleaved woodland, regionally and locally the figure is around 3%. Therefore Moss Leach provides an important habitat for local flora and fauna in a very urban landscape.</p> <p>Without woodland planting this part of East Preston would be dominated by light industrial buildings, Moss Leach and other woods break the landscape down into small areas bounded by woodland and other landscape features.</p>
Opportunities & Constraints
The woodland is small, and its long thin shape means its value to wildlife will always be limited, the fact that it does not buffer or extend other habitats and is surrounded in the main by light industrial units compounds this fact. However locally the woodland is an important landscape feature, and also acts as a sound barrier between the industrial units and the M6 motorway.
Factors Causing Change
Ash dieback
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Mature, stable broadleaved high forest, with a continuous canopy and diverse age and species range and succession by natural regeneration. As trees gradually reach senescence or are removed for tree safety purposes the gaps left in the canopy will be colonised by natural regeneration of oak, ash, birch etc.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
<p>Selective felling work will be undertaken (once every 10 years next operation planned 2028) where the woodland borders the M6 motorway and along side footpaths and industrial units in response to ash dieback. This work will ensure the long term stand stability and species and age diversity on site.</p> <p>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.</p>

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 Archaeological Feature

Description
Cromwell's Mound is an earthwork constructed to divert water to the moat of Broughton Tower, the mound is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The mound takes the form of a 'T'-shaped earthwork measuring approximately 37m long by 8m-12m wide and up to 1.9m high with its longest side orientated north west-south east. The tail of the 'T' shape is formed by an embankment sloping down south westwards from the highest point of the mound.
Significance
The siting of this feature at some distance from the moat is unusual and the historical context is unclear and may demand further research. The obscuring of the feature by tree cover would diminish its' value.
Opportunities & Constraints
The maintenance of this feature requires that it not be covered by trees.
Factors Causing Change
Encroaching vegetation, especially dogwood.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Cromwell's mound will be safeguarded by maintaining it within a clearing in the wood.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
The clearing around Cromwell's mound will be mown annually in August and the dogwood cut back and possibly eradicated if it proves to be particularly invasive.

4.3 f3 Informal Public Access

Description
The wood has approximately 500 metres of unsurfaced permissive footpaths/ public rights of way and three entrances for public access. Compartment 1a has a metal pedestrian kissing gate located on its eastern boundary. Compartment 2a has a pedestrian metal kissing gate located on its western boundary, and a squeeze entrance to a more wooded path, plus an open entrance on its eastern boundary. The wood is relatively quiet and mostly used by local people for dog walking.
Significance
Opportunities for informal recreation in urban areas are highly valued by local people.
Opportunities & Constraints

The ground can be very wet in winter, this sometimes may limit access. Many people work in the immediate area and woods including Moss Leach are good places to pass break-times.
Factors Causing Change
Fly Tipping
Long term Objective (50 years+)
Moss Leach will continue to be used by local residents and workers for informal recreational purposes.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
<p>Maintain 3 pedestrian entrances and 400 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Refresh entrances and signage as deemed necessary by Site Manager.</p> <p>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.</p>

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2020	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	July
2020	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	October
2020	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	October
2021	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	October
2022	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	February
2022	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	February
2022	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,	February
2022	SL - Routine Safety Work	Works associated with undertaking planned visitor and structure safety orientated actions, such as erection/creation or maintenance of safety features such as fencing, rails, re-pointing of retaining walls etc	May
2022	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Works associated with the construction of a new or extension to existing car parking facilities.	May
2022	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	August
2022	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	October
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone B	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside routes such as paths and rides within the woodland	March
2023	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,	March

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	March
2023	LC - Fly Tipping	Works associated with removing fly tipped waste – one off /unplanned litter and rubbish removal	April
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	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,	May

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	0.58	Ash	1980	Min-intervention	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	Scheduled Ancient Monument
<p>Compartment one is bounded by the Moss Leach Brook to the north and to the south by a factory. The eastern boundary is Midgery Lane and the western boundary is Preston Borough Land which abuts Eastway (an arterial road.) It consists of field maple, oak, ash, cherry, willow, hawthorn, hazel, dogwood and spindle which were planted circa 1980. The compartment is regenerating well with broadleaved species such as oak, ash and birch. In addition there are three hedgerow remnants dominated by hawthorn with some hazel, in which are found some older field boundary trees such as oak, ash, cherry and alder which show the common characteristics of local hedgerow trees, they are small, pollarded and have numerous cavities. The herb layer is to an extent suppressed by the dense canopy and shrub layer however woodland plants such as bluebell can be seen. A path leads from the entrance on Midgery Lane to an area of open grassland in the west of the compartment which contains an earthwork known as Cromwell's Mound which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).</p>						
2a	1	Ash	1980	Min-intervention	People issues (+tve & -tve)	
<p>Compartment two lies between Midgery Lane and the M6 motorway. The northern boundary is again the Moss Leach Brook, to the south the land has been developed for light industrial use. This section is L shaped, continuing the orientation of the western compartment until it meets the M6 where it continues south eastwards. It consists of field maple, oak, ash, cherry, willow, hawthorn, hazel, dogwood and spindle which were planted circa 1980. The compartment is regenerating well with broadleaved species such as oak, ash and birch. The herb layer is to an extent suppressed by the dense canopy and shrub layer however woodland plants such as bluebell can be seen.</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.