

Westway

(Plan period – 2022 to 2027)



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

1. Site Details
2. Site Description
3. Long Term Policy
4. Key Features
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5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Westway

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Location: | Chorley Grid reference: SD568186 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 108 |
| Area: | 3.47 hectares (8.57 acres) |
| External Designations: | N/A |
| Internal Designations: | N/A |

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Westway is a long (750m.) thin (80m. at widest) mixed broadleaved shelterbelt beside the Westway arterial road on the edge of Chorley. It was planted in the late 1970s as part of the overall Landscape plan of the Central Lancashire New Town and was acquired as a gift from the Commission for the New Towns in the mid 1990's.

The wood is divided in two by the access road to the Fire Brigade training centre at Washington Hall, which the northern part of the wood serves to screen. The southern part of the wood abuts a farmyard and fields on its western side and a busy roundabout road junction at the southern end. The tree planting on the eastern edge of this southern section abuts directly onto the footpath of the Westway road. The wood is open to the public but there are no formal paths within it.

The planting mix is typical of the late 1970s, with alder, oak, ash, cherry, birch, lime, Norway maple, sycamore and field maple, the under storey consists of hawthorn, hazel, elder and dog rose. There is a small area of ornamental planting close to the roundabout at the south of the site. Natural secondary woodland is a Key Feature of Westway. Two areas of formerly open ground were blocked by an earth bank in 1997 in response to unauthorised use and were planted with trees and shrubs at that time. The wet subsoil exposed has been freely colonised by both common and grey alder. Use of the site is minimal with some evidence of den building and other play in the southern section. Staff and trainees at the Fire brigade training centre enjoy watching the wildlife in the adjacent section, particularly mentioning foxes.

Westway serves mainly to give a rural feel to a busy road in an urban fringe setting and provides a significant urban wildlife habitat.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Westway will be managed as a mixed broadleaved, predominantly native high forest. Both native and non native regeneration will be accepted within the woodland. Active thinning work will take place to promote long term stand stability and this work will be focussed where the woodland borders the adjacent B5252 on the southern boundary. Gaps created by trees gradually reaching senescence, or by trees been felled for safety reasons will be filled by natural regeneration. We will retain older trees of any species across the whole site as long as safety allows.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Secondary Woodland

| |
|--|
| Description |
| Planted (circa 1980) native species broadleaved woodland abutting much older hedgerows. Westway forms part of the structure planting carried out by the New Town Development Corporation as part of their overall landscape strategy. |
| Significance |
| Without woodland planting this part of Chorley would be dominated by housing and other urban development. Westway and other woods break the landscape down into small areas bounded by woodland and other landscape features. |
| Opportunities & Constraints |
| Westway's form follows its' function. It is long, thin and densely planted. This structure gives it a high landscape impact in relation to it's' area. However the small size of this site and the fact that it is surrounded by buildings and roads means its value as a wildlife habitat is very limited. Unfortunately the woodland does not link with any other habitats, and there is no opportunity to extend it. However it does provide a refuge for urban wildlife. |
| Factors Causing Change |
| Tree disease - especially chalara, which could have a significant impact on tree safety and woodland composition |
| Long term Objective (50 years+) |
| Establishing a mixed broadleaved high forest with associated woodland edge habitat, regeneration of both native and non native species will be accepted. |
| Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years) |
| Thinning work will be carried out in 2022 to promote age & species diversity on site. A Woodland Condition Assessment will be carried out in the final year of the current plan period. This will make recommendations as to the management of the site, key elements of which are likely to include open ground, the effects of ash disease and the development of natural regeneration. |

5. WORK PROGRAMME

| Year | Type Of Work | Description | Due Date |
|------|---------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 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 | September |
| 2022 | SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A | Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries | October |
| 2025 | SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A | Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries | September |
| 2026 | SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A | Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries | September |

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

| Cpt No. | Area (ha) | Main Species | Year | Management Regime | Major Management Constraints | Designations |
|--|-----------|--------------|------|-------------------|---|--------------|
| 1a | 1.4 | Ash | 1977 | High forest | Mostly wet ground/exposed site | |
| <p>The southern area between the fire brigade training centre access road and the roundabout. This consists of alder, ash, field maple, birch, cherry and lime. There is an area in the south west of the compartment, which was planted in the mid 1990s. The planting on the roadside joins directly onto the footway and can cause an obstruction. Vegetation also encroaches along the fire brigade access track. The soil is generally poorly drained clay with some drier ground where the levels have been altered close to the roundabout.</p> | | | | | | |
| 2a | 2.07 | Ash | 1977 | High forest | No/poor vehicular access within the site, People issues (+tve & -tve) | |
| <p>This narrower section extends north-eastwards. It consists of alder, ash, birch oak, cherry and willow with some remnant hedgerow trees and shrubs at the northern extremity. There are two areas on the roadside boundary that were planted with trees and shrubs in 1997 following unauthorised occupation, earth banks were also constructed at the same time. The areas of wet subsoil formed by the construction of the earth banks have been vigorously colonised by alder. In front of the earth banks is an area of grassland serving as a buffer between the road and the wood which is cut regularly.</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:

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