

Midgey Gill

(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

Midgey Gill

Location:	Whitehaven Grid reference: NX980177 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 89
Area:	3.59 hectares (8.87 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Planted Ancient Woodland Site
Internal Designations:	Ancient Woodland Restoration Project

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Midgey Gill is situated to the east of Whitehaven town centre, just off the Loop Road South. The wood is on a steep slope and is an intrinsic feature in the landscape, highly visible from the town. The wood is roughly triangular with its base along Whitehaven Loop Road to the north-east and its apex some 300 metres to the southwest. The site slopes south-westwards and there is a fall in elevation of approximately 40m.

There are houses to the north and west and garden allotments to the south. To the east across the Loop Road remnant ancient woodland flanks the Gill. Midgey Gill itself is deeply incised and has many of the characteristics of a flashy watercourse. Adjacent to the southern entrance is an open area, which when the capacity of the culvert is exceeded by the storm flow of Midgey Gill tends to create a temporary pond. In the north western corner of the wood is an electrical sub-station.

Midgey Gill is 3.60ha in size, and although varying in structure and species composition is treated as one compartment for the purposes of management. This small ancient semi-natural oak woodland has been planted and colonised by Scots pine and sycamore with some larch. The wood is dominated by sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) with sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*), English elm (*Ulmus procera*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Scots (Pinus *sylvestris*) and Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra ssp.laricio*). The under storey includes holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). *Rhododendron* (*Rhododendron ponticum*) has been controlled but occasionally still regrows or regenerates in small pockets especially in the ghyll. Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) has also been found, as a result of dumping of garden waste, and is controlled. There is also some regeneration of rowan, ash, sycamore and beech. The ground flora is indicative of the dense shade with male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) being the major species; also mosses, bryophytes, wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). However, also to be found are bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), enchanter's nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*), herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), wild raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) and willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*).

There are several areas, particularly along the north western boundary, where large amounts of garden rubbish has been dumped and the consequent colonisation of the margins of the wood by exotic plants, particularly *Montbretia* (*Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora*), has occurred.

Access to the wood can be gained direct from the Loop Road South and from the southerly entrance opposite Castle Close, where there is limited roadside parking. There is a short pleasant walk through the wood on approximately 350m of permissive footpath and a circular route can be completed on the adjacent public footpath (431044) along the southern boundary. The wood is in an urban location and is heavily used by local people for recreation and as a through route into the town.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

It is the Trust's aim to enable the woodland to develop naturally thereby protecting the continuity of the ancient woodland and the biodiversity of the whole ecosystem; as well as increase people's awareness and enjoyment of this ancient habitat.

The Trust aims to maintain the overall high forest continuous-cover structure of this mixed woodland retaining both native and non-native canopy species. Thereby upholding the variety and character of this ancient woodland and sustaining the landscape value of a continuously wooded system. Species regeneration and development of the understorey through natural processes will be monitored to ensure succession. Rhododendron has been removed and regrowth controlled, and Japanese knotweed is also being treated as both are invasive, altering soil conditions, preventing regeneration of tree seedlings severely affecting ground flora. In line with the Woodland Trust management principles invasive non-native species such as rhododendron and Japanese knotweed will be controlled with the aim of eradicating them.

The Trust aims to enhance the biodiversity of the ancient woodland characteristics by supporting the natural woodland development which includes conserving old growth, deadwood communities, mosses and lichens and good aquatic conditions by adopting working practices that do not impact adversely on the integral environment and protecting the ancient woodland from adverse practices and degradation from tipping of garden waste.

The Trust will maintain the informal access to the woodland on the permissive paths with provision of welcome signs at entrances. Public access will be encouraged with paths and structures maintained and improved where necessary so that local users and visitors can continue to share in the wood's beauty, gain an understanding of the woodlands importance in the landscape and it's rich wildlife habitat, which is irreplaceable. Public information and promotion of the woodland both nationally through the Trusts publications and directory's and locally will be enhanced where possible to inform and involve visitors with the woodland.

It is anticipated that this approach will safeguard and enhance the existing environmental value of the wood and maintain and enhance the level of public access in the woodland.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
Midgey Gill is well used by local people as a route into Whitehaven town centre but is not known to attract visitors from further afield. There is one entrance to the wood from the Loop Road from the north east, which connects to the other entrance at the south western tip of the wood leading into the centre of Whitehaven. At the south west entrance limited roadside parking is available. At the entrances Woodland Trust signs welcome visitors to the wood. Through the wood the path is steep and has steps in places. This permissive route runs parallel to the Ghyll through the wood, extending to some 350m. The internal landscape to the woodland is interesting and varied. A surfaced, easily accessible public footpath runs along the southern boundary just outside the wood and meets the permissive route at the extreme western tip.
Significance
Midgey Gill provides informal recreation opportunities for the local community. Providing access to quiet accessible and welcoming woodland is one of the Trust key outcomes and a cornerstone to the vitality of the woods. Encouraging access to Midgey Gill can be particularly instructive given the importance of its habitat on both a local and national scale. The woods intrinsic qualities make it an important local resource and an informal educational resource for visitors and organised groups. Public appreciation of ancient woodlands is good for the well being of those visiting the wood and ultimately, good for the wood itself through increased public understanding of the plight of ancient woodlands. Midgey Gill is a small but significant feature within the town's landscape.
Opportunities & Constraints
The footpath network at Midgey Gill is limited by the size of the wood. Although limited the woodland attracts many local users and is a well-used route taking people from the houses to the east directly into Whitehaven town. In winter the ground conditions may become muddy and this may deter through users going into town, although the adjacent public footpath offers an alternative surfaced route. There is an opportunity to inform the public of management practices and the importance of this ancient wood through posters, local leaflets and other local initiatives.
Factors Causing Change
Fly tipping and garden waste dumping. Note: ash is not a significant component of the canopy or regeneration, and ash dieback (which reached the area in 2017) will have limited impact.
Long term Objective (50 years+)
The Trust will maintain the informal access to the woodland, with welcome signs at entrances. Public access will be encouraged with paths and steps maintained so that local users and visitors can continue to share in the wood's beauty, gain an understanding of the woodlands importance in the landscape and it's rich wildlife habitat. Public information and promotion of the woodland both nationally through the Trusts publications and directory's and locally will be

undertaken where possible and posters will be used to inform and involve visitors with the woodland. The Trust will continue to promote the woodland amongst people in the region and members nationally so long as the primary objective of 'no further loss of ancient woodland' (in terms of both quality and quantity) is not compromised.

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

Clear litter and garden waste annually and as necessary. Maintain two entrances and the path network annually to the Woodland Trust Management Specifications.

Undertake regular safety inspections at defined intervals and clearance of roadside vegetation to Highways guidelines, working with the local Council where they retain responsibility.

4.2 f2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Midgey Gill 3.58ha (8.85acres) varies in structure and species composition. The wood slopes to the south-west and there is a fall in elevation of approximately 40m. There are houses to the north and west and garden allotments to the south. To the east across the Loop Road remnant ancient woodland flanks the Gill. Midgey Gill itself is deeply incised and has many of the characteristics of a flashy watercourse. Adjacent to the southern entrance is an open area, which is prone to flooding. This small semi-natural ancient oak woodland has been planted/colonised by Scots pine and sycamore with some larch and could be classed as PAWs (planted ancient woodland). The wood is dominated by sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) with sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*), English elm (*Ulmus procera*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Scots (*Pinus sylvestris*) and Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra ssp.laricio*). The understorey includes holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and minor regeneration of rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*). Rhododendron was present in large patches on acquisition, it has been controlled and is much reduced. There is also some regeneration of rowan, ash, sycamore and beech. The ground flora is indicative of the dense shade with male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) being the major species, with mosses, bryophytes, wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). However, also to be found are bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), enchanter's nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*), herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), wild raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) and willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*).

Significance

The woodland is designated as ancient semi natural and has been wooded for many, many years although more recently has been planted with broadleaves and conifers. Sites of ancient woodland provide a continuous habitat for our native species and are protected through national and regional forest strategy. Many of these species can live nowhere else and the continuity of their woodland habitat is crucial. Some plants and animals have very specialised requirements and spread very slowly, if at all, into new woods. Midgey Gill is an important semi-natural resource and within Whitehaven there is remnant ancient woodland extending east up the Gill across the Loop Road and also the within Crow Park (also managed by the WT). However the sites exist as island habitats separated by roads. It is increasingly important therefore that threats to the ancient habitat from excessive garden waste tipping and pollution are minimised to allow the ecological communities still surviving within the wood to thrive.

Opportunities & Constraints

Midgey Gill is an ancient woodland site and classed as PAWs with rhododendron being a particular threat to ancient woodland communities rather than the conifers which are scattered pine so low shade bearing properties and scattered population. Rhododendron control has been undertaken to conserve and enable expansion of the ancient woodland communities with the aim of eradicating it. Rhododendron was present in large patches on acquisition, but it has been difficult to access and control especially on the gill sides where chemical usage is limited on the steep slopes close to the stream.

A small area of Japanese knotweed has been found and controlled almost to eradication which is important as it is a very invasive non-native species.

There is an opportunity to retain old growth native and non-native; sycamore is a naturalised species and with Corsican pine has probably been brought and planted by previous owners is a legacy and a living heritage. All will be retained where safe to do so for their own ecological value. All are important to the continuity of the wooded canopy. Wind damage has occurred in the past and managing the risk may constrain the retention of some trees.

Standing deadwood has ecological importance but retention may be constrained in places by safety. Excessive garden waste is posing a threat to the continuity of ground flora particularly in tipping hotspots off Park Drive along the northern boundary, at the southern entrance and down into the Gill. It is particularly noticeable that the population of bluebells decreases in areas of tipping possible due to the smothering effect of the waste, increased fertility of soil conditions and colonisation of nettles and brambles more adept to the altered conditions. Also invasive exotic garden species particularly Montbretia (*Crococsmia x crocosmiiflora*) are colonising the northern boundary. This continuous activity is the single biggest constraint to the restoration of the woodland. Opportunities to work in partnership with the local Council, local community organisations and local people are necessary to reduce this problem.

The Gill running through the woodland has suffered from pollution (sources unknown) in the past leaving the sides of the Gill can be quite thick with sludge. This constrains the maintenance of a good riparian habitat but steps taken by the Environment Agency have improved the water quality in recent years. There is an opportunity to continue to work with the EA to enable this to continue.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive non-native species such as Rhododendron and Japanese knotweed, fly tipping and dumping of garden waste, wind damage, land slippage, pests & diseases.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The long term aim is to maintain the continuity of this ancient woodland and through natural processes enable the woodland to develop good structure with a well developed shrub layer, regeneration and a good ground flora communities. Management will seek to reduce and control any threats which may result in an on-going loss of habitat of this ancient woodland in line with the Woodland Trust management principles.

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

The steps to achieving the vision include:

Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica* syn. *Fallopia japonica*): present in just one location, on the bank just south/south east of and about 5m from the old culvert grill. In 2021 there were just 2 small plants. Control with the aim of eradication.

Rhododendron ponticum. Continue control with the aim of eradicating it.

Montbretia (*Crocoshia x crocosmiiflora*). Control with the ultimate aim to maintain the population at near 0% density, if feasible. Note that some of it is growing on the landslips where access is extremely difficult and this may not be possible.

Work with the local Council to reduce the impact of garden tipping and improve the aquatic habitat.

Retention of mature trees to promote longevity and retention of deadwood both standing and fallen, where safe to do.

Monitor woodland conditions throughout and the impact of any management works or factors causing change.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	May
2024	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	June
2024	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	July
2024	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
2024	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	August
2024	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	September
2024	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
2024	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	October
2024	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Works associated with the construction of a new or extension to existing car parking facilities.	October
2024	WMI - PAWS Restoration	Works associated with the restoration phase of Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) such as halo thinning around existing native trees, thinning and felling works, ride restoration, access improvements to aid restoration.	October
2024	AW - Visitor Access Infrastructure	Works associated with the construction of a new or extension to existing car parking facilities.	November
2024	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	December
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	January

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	February
2025	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	February
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,	March
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	April
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	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	June
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	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,	July
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	August
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	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,	September
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	October
2025	WMI - PAWS Restoration	Works associated with the restoration phase of Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) such as halo thinning around existing native trees, thinning and felling works, ride restoration, access improvements to aid restoration.	October

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2025	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	December
2026	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	January
2026	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	February
2026	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	February
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,	March
2026	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	April
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
2026	LC - Routine Litter Picks	Planned/routine litter picks using contractors	June

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	3.6	Sycamore	1920	High forest	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Planted Ancient Woodland Site

Compartment 1a, the whole wood, is roughly triangular with its base along Whitehaven Loop Road South to the north-east and its apex some 300 metres to the southwest. The site slopes south-westwards and there is a fall in elevation of approximately 40m. There are houses to the north and west and garden allotments to the south. To the east across the Loop Road remnant ancient woodland flanks the Gill. Midgey Gill itself ancient woodland is deeply incised and has many of the characteristics of a flashy watercourse. There is a gabion wall to the east of the wood, above the Gill and a sluice gate to the west. Adjacent to the southern entrance is an open area, which when the capacity of the culvert is exceeded by the storm flow is prone to flooding. In the northern corner of the wood is an electrical sub-station.

This small ancient semi-natural woodland has a central core dominated by sycamore, which is naturalised throughout, an understorey of holly and elder and a sparse ground layer of bramble and fern. On the upper slopes to the northwest and northeast the canopy also includes sessile oak, English elm and ash with an understorey of hazel, holly and rowan. Within the deep valley, which is heavily shaded the ground layer is composed of mosses, bryophytes, wood sorrel and bracken. Along the eastern margin the more open canopy includes sycamore, Corsican and Scots pine with an understorey of elder, hawthorn, hazel and holly. As a consequence of higher light values the ground flora is composed of bluebells, wild raspberry and willowherb. Rhododendron was present in large patches on acquisition, it has been controlled but is difficult to access and control especially on the gill sides as no chemicals can be used on the steep slopes close to the stream. Occasional regrowth or regeneration occurs and needs regular control.

The permissive route through the wood extends to some 350m and links with the public footpath along the southern boundary. The paths are stepped in places and there are some steep drops down to Midgey Gill. There is a small lay-by at the southern entrance.

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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