



# Gillbeck Farm Wood

## Management Plan 2015-2020

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## THE WOODLAND TRUST

### INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

### PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations. Please either consult The Woodland Trust website [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk)) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

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## WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland. Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

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.

In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, 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.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on 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 heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential 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 allow our woods to be used to support 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. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
10. Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

## SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site - their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

## 1.0 SITE DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Gillbeck Farm Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Pateley Bridge
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SE146639, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 99
<b>Area:</b>	4.68 hectares (11.56 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Other, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Set in a steep-sided valley with great views out to the east and the North York Moors and Vale of York. There is a mixture of ancient woodland and some more recently planted areas, set amidst dramatic rocky outcrops. The wood is set on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and provides a different environment to the surrounding open moorland. Not the most easily accessible wood for casual visitors but it is crossed by footpaths that are generally used by long distance walkers.

### 2.2 Extended Description

The site was acquired on the 28th January 1986 as a freehold gift from Mr T Keighley (now deceased). The wood is situated in open moorland in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Nidderdale AONB) on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, approximately 1.5 miles to the south west of the town of Pateley Bridge.

The woodland lies in a steep valley and is characterised by large rocky outcrops, which were formed from drift from Palaeozoic sandstone, mud stone and shale. Middle Tongue Dike runs swiftly between steep rocky banks through the centre of the wood in bottom of the valley. Backhouse Gill is located in the north-western section of the site and flows into Middle Tongue Dike. The mature woodland area extending to 2.22ha consisting of mainly oak and birch is located mainly on the lower slopes of the valley and is most probably ancient in origin, being designated as ancient semi-natural woodland (Carter, A 1987, Nature Conservancy Council). From 1987-1990 planting of mixed broadleaved trees and shrubs was undertaken on both sides of the upper slopes of the valley, extending to an area of 2.37ha on what was previously rough pasture.

The woodland adjoins Strikes Wood on its eastern boundary, which is also an ancient woodland site. There are two power lines running through the site north to south and east to west. The power line running east to west terminates when it meets the north/south power line. Heather Cottage is located just outside the woodland boundary in the southwest section of the site, with a private water supply situated to the north of the property. Gillbeck Farm (small farm conversion of 5-6 properties) is located just outside the woodland boundary on top of the northwest bank, with vehicle access along the surfaced tack which weaves through the site. Situated on the south eastern boundary on the opposite side of the road is extensive open moorland, an area designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and called the West Nidderdale, Barden and Blubberhouse Moors.

The site has had very low public use, no doubt due to its isolated position and difficult parking and access down a small farm track. A Public Footpath runs through the site (north west to south west), which is mainly used by long distance walkers.

Before the Trust acquired the woodland in 1986 the site was heavily grazed by livestock and the woodland was traditionally used as shelter for livestock. The upper sides of the valley were devoid of any trees and any natural regeneration within the existing wood was grazed.

The Wood, which has been dedicated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation and is dominated throughout by mixed-age downy birch (*Betula pubescens*) with sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). There is a sparse under-storey of holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and, locally, goat willow (*Salix caprea*).

The ground flora is a mixture of common grasses with extensive areas of bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and under the new plantings of ash, oak, birch, on the higher parts on the south-eastern edge is a mingling common dog-violet (*Viola riviniana*) and tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*). The damp areas along the beck have opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) and lady-fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*). Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) is frequent on the scars. Moss-covered rocks on the less steep slopes are bespangled with wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*). Natural regeneration of mainly ash, rowan and holly has occurred in recent years. Killarney Fern may be present in the woodland which is a Red Data Species.

The wood is bounded on all sides by a mixture stock wire fencing and drystone walls

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## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

#### ACCESS TO THE SITE

Access is gained off the B6265 (Pateley Bridge - Grassington). Heading out of Pateley Bridge towards Grassington, take the 2nd turning to the left after approximately 2 miles, near the top of Greenhow Hill (An old smelt mill chimney can be seen adjacent to the junction). From here a single-track road crosses the moorland, heading back down hill. The woodland is located on the left hand side of the road after about 1 mile. There is a sign for Gillbeck Farm and a Woodland Trust sign at the entrance. A prefabricated garage can also be seen approximately 5 metres from the entrance. Roadside parking near the entrance is difficult, although it is available at certain locations along the lane. However, consideration must be given to ensuring parking does not restrict access for other road users including wide farm vehicles and lorries

#### ENTRANCE AND FOOTPATHS

Within the wood, permissive pedestrian access is available from the entrance gate down the farm track to join the public footpath near the stream in the bottom of the valley. Three public footpaths from the north, west and south meet at Gillbeck Farm where then join and follow the farm track through the wood to stream in the valley bottom, where it divides with one path leading to Heather View and the lane, and the other leaving through a gate on the north side of the stream to gain access to open moor before also joining the lane.

The site is in a steep valley and even the farm track has some steep slopes.

#### PARKING

Roadside parking near the entrance to the site, but space limited.

#### PUBLIC TOILETS

Public toilets in the centre of Pateley Bridge, near the car park.

#### BUS STOPS

In the centre of Pateley Bridge to the east and Greenhow village to the west.

#### TRAVEL INFORMATION

Further information about public transport contact Traveline on [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or phone 0870 608 2 608

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long-term intention is to develop and maintain a diverse broadleaved high forest encouraging a self-sustaining woodland, dominated (90%) by native broadleaved species, with a mixed shrub and ground layer and diverse age structure reflecting that of a native upland oak woodland (W11).

Compartment 1a contains the existing mature woodland and will be managed by minimal intervention. Periodic monitoring will verify that an adequate amount of natural regeneration is occurring throughout the compartment.

Compartment 1b, planted from 1987-1990, is to be developed and maintained as a diverse, secondary predominately broadleaved native high forest. This will be achieved by management of the existing planting and any trees or shrubs introduced through natural regeneration, thus encouraging self-sustainability of the compartment. The compartment to be dominated (90-100%) by native broadleaved species with a mixed shrub layer. Given time the new planting will blend with the existing woodland in compartment 1a and increase the overall age diversity of the whole woodland. Public access will be available throughout the site and along the existing footpaths.



## 5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

### 5.1 Informal Public Access

#### Description

Within the wood, permissive pedestrian access is available from the entrance gate down the farm track to join the public footpath near the stream in the bottom of the valley. Three public footpaths from the north, west and south meet at Gillbeck Farm where then join and follow the farm track through the wood to stream in the valley bottom, where it divides with one path leading to Heather View and the lane, and the other leaving through a gate on the north side of the stream to gain access to open moor before also joining the lane.

A total of approximately 450m of footpaths exist within the woodland.

#### Significance

Although the woodland is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, public usage is limited due to its isolated position and difficult parking. The area is a popular tourist/day-tripper destination, however, the problems listed above will restrict usage to the more serious walkers utilising the public footpaths in the western section of the site

#### Opportunities & Constraints

At present the site has limited public use, no doubt due to its isolated position and parking facilities. The main people to visit the woodland will be those using the public footpath, which only skirts the western section. Footpath creation would be difficult and expensive due the sites steep slopes and is perhaps unwarranted given the level of public interest in the site.

#### Factors Causing Change

Increase in public usage.

#### Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the existing paths so as to enable access all year round from the 3 path access points, plus the vehicle access track.

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

The access provision will be inspected at least once during the current plan period. Improvements to the welcoming signs will be carried out at each of the access points by 2016.

## 5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

### Description

Semi-natural native broadleaved high forest in compartment 1a, consisting of mixed-age downy birch (*Betula pubescens*) with occasional sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). There is a sparse under-storey of holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and, locally, goat willow (*Salix caprea*). Existing woodland is mainly located along the valley bottom and sides of Middle Tongue Dike

### Significance

The species diversity in this wood makes this woodland a valuable habitat and landscape feature of the surrounding area. Ancient woodland sites are rare in this area of Yorkshire and the Gillbeck Farm Wood contributes to this valuable habitat. The site also abuts the SSSI, dwarf shrub heath habitat and has the benefit of linking into other areas of ancient woodland and is also relatively undisturbed by human activity.

### Opportunities & Constraints

The whole of the Gillbeck Wood, both the Trust's and the continuation of the wooded valley to the northeast are designated as ancient woodland, together with the adjacent Strikes Wood in the next small valley to the east. These areas represent a significant area of ancient woodland in an area of relatively low woodland cover. Colonisation by certain woodland species is likely to occur from these areas into the adjacent planted areas of compartment 1b. Unchecked bracken growth could inhibit the growth of planted trees and natural regeneration.

### Factors Causing Change

Damage by uncontrolled bracken growth, Deer damage, Squirrel damage, Rabbit damage

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The vision is to develop and maintain the exiting mature semi-natural ancient woodland area through natural regeneration with minimal management intervention.

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

The short-term objective is to ensure that natural regeneration is occurring throughout the woodland area, sufficient to ensure its continuity. Natural regeneration will therefore be monitored over the next 10 -20 years, and the control of bracken may be required if it is found to be restricting the development of seedlings - both of which will be assessed on at least one occasion in the current plan period. In addition the protection of regeneration and ground flora from deer and rabbits will be required, with deer and rabbit control will be carried out throughout the plan period.

## 5.3 Secondary Woodland

### Description

Mixed native hardwoods planted in 1987-1990 with, 65% sessile oak, 8% birch, 10% ash, 3% rowan, 8% cherry, 2% hazel, 2% holly and 2% goat willow. Mainly located on the upper slopes of the southern bank.

### Significance

Compartment 1b provides an ideal expansion of the woodland and is likely to benefit over time from its close relationship with the ancient woodland area. This newly planted section will also help diversify the age structure of the existing woodland.

### Opportunities & Constraints

The newly planted areas links well into the ancient woodland area and hopefully will help to provide a suitable extension to this woodland area. Over time colonisation by certain woodland species from the ancient woodland area is likely to occur. A major constraint over this would be unchecked bracken growth which could inhibit the growth of natural regeneration and in a few cases the newly planted trees and shrubs.

### Factors Causing Change

Increase public use, Damage by extreme weather conditions, Damage by uncontrolled bracken growth, Squirrel damage, Deer damage, Rabbit damage

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The vision is to develop and maintain the new planting in order to achieve a diverse broadleaved high forest encouraging self-sustaining woodland, dominated by 90-100% native broadleaved species, with a mixed native shrub layer and diverse age structure. The wood will contribute to the area as a valued landscape feature and wildlife habitat.

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

Ensure that the planted woodland establishes and that natural regeneration is occurring throughout the woodland area, sufficient to ensure its continuity. Natural regeneration will therefore be monitored over the next 10 -20 years, and the control of bracken may be required if it is found to be restricting the development of seedlings - both of which will be assessed on at least one occasion in the current plan period. In addition the protection of regeneration and ground flora from deer and rabbits will be required, with deer and rabbit control will be carried out throughout the plan period.

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## 6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
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## APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	2.22	Oak (sessile)	1950	Min-intervention	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Area of Landscape Value, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, Tree Preservation Order
<p>Ancient semi-natural broadleaved high forest consisting of mixed-age downy birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>) with sessile oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>), ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) and rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>). There is a sparse under-storey of holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>) and hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) and, locally, goat willow (<i>Salix caprea</i>). Existing woodland is mainly located along the valley bottom and sides of Middle Tongue Dike. Bounded to the northwest and southeast by pasture grassland (generally unimproved) and by cpt2a to the south east, with ASNW to the northeast. Bracken and grasses dominate the more open areas of woodland.</p>							
2a	2.37	Birch (downy/silver)	1990	Min-intervention	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Area of Landscape Value, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<p>Mixed native broadleaves planted in 1987-1990 with, 65% sessile oak, 8% birch, 10% ash, 5% rowan, 8% cherry, 2% hazel, 2% holly and 2% goat willow. Mainly located on the upper slopes of the southern bank. Scattered ground flora of bracken, grasses and scattered bilberry and heather, all heavily browsed by rabbits. Much of the tree stock shows considerable rabbit damage and many losses have led to an open scrub woodland feel to the area.</p>							

## GLOSSARY

### **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. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

## **Windblow/Windthrow**

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