



Dedridge Wood

Management Plan 2019-2024

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 or contact the Woodland Trust (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.

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. 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

Site name:	Dedridge Wood
Location:	Livingston
Grid reference:	NT050660, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 65
Area:	3.72 hectares (9.19 acres)
Designations:	Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Dedridge Woods is one of the many accessible areas of woodland in the Livingston area. This mixed woodland is popular with dog walkers, joggers and cyclists. The area is served by buses and all woods offer barrier free access.

2.2 Extended Description

Dedridge Woods form part of the Woodland Trust's holding in Livingston, West Lothian. They consist of two woodland blocks, compartments 38 and 39 forming the Dedridge Strip located within housing areas either side of Dedridge Road and compartment 42, further south or adjacent to Williamston Primary School. The woodlands consist of mainly mature policy plantings that have been retained for shelter and screening of housing developments. The woods lie between the altitudes of 130m and 147m above sea level and are generally flat.

The underlying geology of the area is sedimentary sandstones/ limestone's/ shale of the Carboniferous-Dinarian period. Soils are derived from a glacial till of carboniferous sedimentary sandstones and shale. They are generally brown forest soils with gleying, of the Rowanhill association and are characterised by slowly permeable clayey horizons at varying depths between 40 and 80cm. The MLURI climate map identifies the area as fairly warm moist lowland and foothill, being moderately exposed with moderate winters.

Dedridge Woods are principally remnants of an older policy woodland and shelterbelt landscape probably dating from around the late 19th century. The relatively small area of woodland of compartment 42 forms part of a wider complex of woodlands originally associated with Bankton House, which now link into the Murieston Water Greenway, a wildlife and recreational corridor. Mature Scots pine is a major component in most of the stands, being dominant in compartment 39 and in mixture with beech, ash and sycamore in compartment 42. Compartment 38 is made up of 3 areas of mixed age mature woodland connected by an area of new mixed native broadleaved planting (2004) which was planted by 1st year pupils from James Young High School. The amount of under storey and regeneration varies considerably and is generally better in stands with higher proportions of broadleaves.

There is a small burn running through compartment 38 that will add some diversity to the flora of the woodland. Elsewhere grasses and bramble are found in most areas, with blaeberry and heather present in compartment 42. Unfortunately dumping of garden waste continues to be a problem within the woodland blocks which is encouraging species such as nettles to colonise these areas. The woodland blocks provide good opportunities for local users and contain a number of informal paths and desire lines, accessed from entrance points which link to the formal tarmac footpath and cycleway networks serving local residential areas and also connecting into the wider complex of Livingston paths and Greenways. The woods also connect onto the Mains path which connects the woods to the Bankton Mains Leisure park and associated open space. There are no on site car parks at any of the small woodland blocks however parking is available nearby on adjacent streets.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Dedridge Woods are located in the Dedridge area on the southern side of Livingston, either side of Bankton Park. The three woodland blocks are generally accessible directly from the surrounding suburban roads and pavement network, two of them centred around Dedridge West Road and the James Young High School, the other off Bankton Lane by the Williamston Primary School.

Due to the layout of the woods, most routes are linear, but return routes are available on tarmac paths outwith the woodland boundaries and the paths link into a wider network of paths and Greenways throughout Livingston. Many of the tracks are adopted streetlit tarmac routes, but there are also a number of informal beaten earth paths, particularly around the school playing field and through the centre of Block 42 - these routes can be muddy in places. The site slopes gently from south to north.

There is no on-site parking, but parking is available in many surrounding suburban streets - there is access to all sites by tarmac floodlit pavements and Greenways.

Nearest public toilet: Almondvale Shopping Centre, Almondvale South, approximately 0.5km away - toilets suitable for the disabled, not open 24 hours.

Nearest bus stop: Dedridge West Road, immediately adjacent to Blocks 38 & 39 along pavements. Livingston South train station is also approximately 300m away from Block 42 along pavements.

Further information about public transport is available from Traveline Scotland - www.travelinescotland.com

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The woods will be managed as a sustainable natural resource to safeguard their public amenity and biodiversity value and in line with the Woodland Trust's objectives of improving and enhancing biodiversity, encouraging public access and enhancing people's enjoyment of woodlands.

The long term vision is to maintain and enhance the woodland areas using continuous cover silviculture where possible. The woodlands will consist of mixed broadleaves of a mainly native species with a proportion of Scots pine throughout. Native woodland species will establish along watercourses to reduce shading associated with conifers. Some non-native species and their natural regeneration will be accepted although the intention will be to increase the proportion of native species in the overall mixture. Large scale felling intervention is not expected to be utilised unless windblow makes this unavoidable. Instead regular thinning and small scale group felling will be undertaken to diversify the age structure and canopy and to promote natural regeneration and improvement of the ground flora. Where regeneration is not forthcoming or species mix is poor, planting of native species will be undertaken.

Livingston has an extensive network of street lit, tarmac cycleways and footpaths, linking north to south and east to west. Many of the Trust's woods border these routes and this often negates any reason to improve internal woodland paths beyond their beaten earth standard.

Due to the woods location within the central belt and close proximity to large populations, the intention is to use the woods to improve and raise awareness of the biodiversity, recreation and health benefits woodlands provide.

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

Dedridge Woods are a well-used complex of woodlands in the west of Livingston. Internally there approximately 0.9km of more formal tarmacked paths and unsurfaced paths, with 18 entrances. There is no on-site parking, although parking is available nearby. The paths, although generally straight 'through' routes, link directly onto the Greenway and pavement network within Livingston as well as linking directly onto the River Almond giving access to long distance routes as well as providing shorter return routes using soft and surfaced paths.

Significance

The woods provide enjoyable woodland walks, within an urban setting and are used by the local community for walking and running and horse riding. The site provides a chance to promote access to a safe, natural environment close to where people live and work. It forms an essential part of the local access network, providing varied and alternative routes as well as linking to longer distance routes.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities - To further develop access facilities within the site responding reactively to user demand. To further promote and use the woodland as an educational resource with The James Young High School/Williamston Primary./ working with local community groups
Constraints - Linear nature of site constrains potential for circular routes within the site.

Factors Causing Change

Phytophthora cambivora confirmed in 2018, block 42a

Vandalism to signs, posts, benches and other site infrastructure & motorised access,
Paths edges growing in, reducing visibility and potentially resulting in personal safety concerns by users

Increase of public use

Garden waste dumping and fly-tipping

1) Senescing beech - The ongoing senescence of the large mature mainly beech trees which are such a feature in the West Lothian landscape and tend to be of a similar age. They are becoming increasingly vulnerable to storm damage and disease which is becoming a challenge to deal with in terms of tree safety and also maintenance of the treed landscape and is expected to become even worse in coming years.

2) Windblow - Most of the spruce and larch planted as part of LDC landscaping is reaching its terminal height at which it is vulnerable to windblow.

3) Chalara on ash. Ash is a frequent species and is well suited to the clay soils of West Lothian. Young trees already badly affected and some mature trees also. Removes one of the more suitable species for replanting.

4) Phytophthora ramorum. 2 SPNs already issued in the Livingston area and likely to spread.

5) Increased development - various schemes have / are being built and large new developments are currently being planned for north, SW and SE Livingston.

6) Squirrels, rabbits and roe deer are all present and likely to prevent trees developing into healthy, mature trees.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain and enhance public access for informal recreation.

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

During this plan period, the short term objective is to continue to provide public access at Dedridge wood which is safe and welcoming. This will be achieved by:

- Annual path cut (June) in all blocks where necessary
- Litter pick every month and pro-active fly tipping monitoring
- Path upgrades of 1.2km and 6 entrance improvements (2020)
- Annual inspection of fences/paths and internal structures
- Regular tree safety inspections
- Street light pruning in blocks 38/39 (2018/2020/2022)
- Vegetation clearance for tree safety access (2018/2020/2022)

5.2 Secondary Woodland

Description

The areas of woodland constitute more natural features within the urban landscape. Individually, they provide a backdrop and screening for residential development, but together with other woods in the area they form part of a wider landscape infrastructure. The woodlands consist of predominantly mature Scot's pine (mainly beech in compartment 42), but still provide areas of relatively natural, vegetation within an urban setting.

Significance

The woods are significant features of the local landscape and provide screening and shelter between housing developments. They form an integral component of the local landscape and are important for local biodiversity with potential for improvement

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities - To further increase biodiversity through continued thinning operations particularly in the predominantly coniferous areas to promote continuous cover and establish a mixed aged, windfirm predominantly native broadleaved woodland.

Constraints- access/ services under and over ground

Factors Causing Change

Premature loss of mature specimens/ Rhododendron, death of over-mature trees, regeneration limited to a few shade-bearing species/pests and diseases/climate change/ squirrel damage/ development

Garden waste dumping

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To create and maintain a diverse, mixed age and mixed species woodland habitat in perpetuity. Species composition will be mostly native though a proportion of conifers and non-native broadleaves will be accepted. Improvements to the canopy should help towards supporting a variety of ground flora communities.

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

To maintain the varied composition and structural diversity of the woodland. This will be achieved by:

- The impacts of deer, rabbits, squirrels and tree diseases will be monitored through the Woodland Trust's woodland condition assessment process. Squirrel damage is increasing;
- Monitor garden waste dumping along boundaries in the woodland edge for increasing garden escapes across all blocks every month/every year (hotspots on management map)
- Assess natural tree regeneration and browsing within open areas every 5 years when management plan is reviewed to ensure that native species are abundant or dominant and successfully establishing.

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
38a	0.36	Scots pine	1975	High forest		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>'Dedridge Strip' a stand of semi mature Scots pine with beech and several other occasional species. Bounded by Dedridge North road to the north, to the west by Alexander Way and to the east by the playing fields of JYHS. Ground flora is dominated by bramble where light levels are good. There are good levels of deadwood in the form of felled to waste conifers.</p>							
38b	0.37	Birch (downy/silver)	2004	Min-intervention	Services & wayleaves	Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>'Dedridge Strip' new planting in 2004. Planted by 1st year pupils JYHS as part of T4A. Species include Scots pine, oak, ash, willow, birch, rowan, hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn. Drainage is poor so much of the area is wet throughout the winter months. Ground flora is good mix of semi-improved to wet grassland species.</p>							
38c	1.54	Mixed broadleaves	1900	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>'Dedridge Strip' Mature mixed stand of Scots pine, beech, ash, oak, Norway maple, with Sitka spruce and sycamore. Understorey, predominantly towards the south of the sub cpt includes rowan, sitka spruce, ash, beech and oak. Ground flora comprises of brambles, nettles with broad buckler fern towards the south. Occasional deadwood throughout.</p>							
39a	0.73	Scots pine	1900	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	
<p>'Dedridge Strip South' Stand of mature Scots pine, with occasional sycamore, downy birch, and pedunculate oak. The understorey consists of beech, birch and occasional holly and Scots pine. The ground flora contains soft grasses with areas of bramble. Sparse and limited deadwood.</p>							

42a	0.72	Beech	1900	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access, Secondary Woodland	Tree Preservation Order
<p>'Bankton House Strip' Stand of mature beech with Scots pine and the occasional lime, downy birch, sycamore and pedunculate oak. The understorey contains frequent beech and rowan regeneration with larch, Scots pine, sycamore, holly and occasional ash. The ground flora is comprised of areas of heather and blaeberry mixed with areas of soft grasses. Levels of dead wood are good with numerous large beech trunks from wind damage and tree safety fellings.</p>							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2019	42a	Selective Fell	0.16	241	38.6

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.