

Snidley Moor, Woodhouse Hill & Frodsham Hill Woods (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

Snidley Moor, Woodhouse Hill & Frodsham Hill Woods

Location:	Frodsham Grid reference: SJ513752 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 117
Area:	54.12 hectares (133.73 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Special Landscape Area, Tree Preservation Order
Internal Designations:	N/A

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Snidley Moor, Woodhouse Hill and Frodsham Hill Woods are three broadleaved woodlands owned by the Woodland Trust near the village of Frodsham in North Cheshire. The woods are situated on the steep north-west facing escarpment of the Sandstone Ridge that runs from Frodsham in North Cheshire to Whitchurch in Shropshire. From the ridge there are panoramic views across the River Mersey to Liverpool and the Wirral, north east towards the West Pennine Moors and Winter Hill, west towards the Welsh border hills and east to the Cheshire Plain, The local landscape is predominantly agricultural with grazing pasture and arable farming, but only a few miles away is Runcorn with its industrial and chemical works beside the River Mersey. The underlying geology of the area is sandstone with free draining, slightly acidic sandy-loam.

Cheshire is one of the least wooded counties in England with only about 5% woodland cover. The North of Cheshire has the largest concentration of woodland than elsewhere in the county, including these woodlands on the Sandstone Ridge, other ancient semi-natural woodlands a couple of miles to the east in the Weaver Valley and Delamere Forest, about 5 miles to the south of Frodsham and at 972 hectares it is the largest area of woodland in the county.

Snidley Moor, Woodhouse Hill and Frodsham Hill woods are managed as one site by the Woodland Trust and in total cover 54 hectares. Frodsham Hill Wood is situated on the western slope of Overton Hill, directly above Frodsham, while Woodhouse Hill and Snidley Moor Woods are about 1 1/2 miles further to the south, separated from Frodsham Hill by an area of broadleaf woodland called Dunsdale Hollows, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). They are all broadleaved woodland and include areas of ancient semi-natural woodland on the steep western slopes, areas of secondary woodland that developed by natural regeneration and younger planted broadleaved woodland along with areas of scrub and grassland. For the purposes of the management plan the site is split into four main compartments:

Snidley Moor Wood (Compartment 1- area 14.17 ha) has been managed by the Woodland Trust since 1987. It is secondary woodland which developed by natural processes after grazing on the site ceased. The main tree species are Silver birch with oak and rowan. The shrub layer is dominated by rhododendron with holly, hawthorn and there are a few small areas of bilberry and heather. The name "Snidley Moor" indicates it was historically a heathland/moorland habitat.

Woodhouse Hill Wood (Compartment 2 - area 11.68 ha) is predominantly on the steep western escarpment of the Sandstone Ridge and has some very steep slopes, rocky outcrops and cliffs. It abuts Snidley Moor Wood to the south east and has been managed by the Woodland Trust since 1991. It is mainly similar aged semi-natural secondary birch woodland with oak, rowan. The shrub layer is again dominated in some areas by rhododendron with holly and hawthorn. On the eastern flank of the hillside there is a section of stone/ earth ramparts which was part of an Iron Age hill fort on the top of Woodhouse Hill, although much of the rampart is covered by vegetation, particularly bracken in the summer. The area of the hill-fort is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).

Frodsham Hill Wood (Compartment 3 - area 11.97 ha) is located on the hillside above Frodsham. The western two-thirds of the wood has been managed by the Trust since 1992 and eastern one-third since 2006. It is directly above the village of Frodsham and has the war memorial on the top of the hill next to the Forest Hills hotel. There are the remains of an old sandstone quarry workings and several cliff edges along the top of the wood. It is mainly oak,

sycamore, beech, birch, holly & rowan.

Woodhouse Hill Extension (Compartment 4 - area 16.3 ha) is to the south west of Woodhouse Hill and west of Snidley Moor. The land was previously used for grazing pigs and was purchased by the Trust in 2001. It was planted in 2002 with mix of native broadleaf trees and shrubs (oak, birch, rowan, holly, alder buckthorn, hawthorn, elder) and some areas were left as open ground habitat and for natural regeneration to develop.

Parts of Woodhouse Hill and Frodsham Hill Woods are recorded as ancient woodland, although photographic records from the late 19th Century indicate that for at least a short period compartment 3a (Frodsham Hill) had far less tree cover than present and was mainly open ground habitat. The species mix for sub-compartments 2c (Woodhouse Hill) and 3a (Frodsham Hill) is similar to that of compartments 1 (Snidley Moor), 2a & 2b (Woodhouse Hill) but with birch far less dominant in the canopy. Both sub-compartments 2c (Woodhouse Hill) and 3a (Frodsham Hill) have quite a number of mature beech trees, Sub-compartment 2c (Woodhouse Hill) has a scattering of mature Corsican pine and 3a (Frodsham Hill) has a high incidence of sycamore. The shrub layer in Snidley Moor, Woodhouse Hill and Frodsham Hill is dominated by holly and rhododendron. The ground flora spares in many areas and dominated by bracken particularly at Snidley Moor and Woodhouse Hill, but there is some ancient woodland indicator species (bluebells) found in the ancient woodland areas. Collectively these woods provide important habitats for a wide variety of fauna and flora.

Public access is available to explore the woods with an extensive network of public and permissive footpaths of approximately 3 km across the site. There is also a public bridleway passing through Snidley Moor and another at Frodsham Hill Wood. The Sandstone Trail long distance footpath passes through the woods from Frodsham on the way to Whitchurch. Paths are well used and enjoyed by local people and visitors from further afield. Mountain bikes are a problem in some parts of Woodhouse Hill and Snidley Moor riding on footpaths and creating downhill trails on the steep slopes resulting in loss of vegetation cover, soil cover and occasionally damage to trees.

The key features for the site are:

Informal public access

Ancient semi-natural woodland

Archaeological feature

Secondary woodland.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The long term intention is to maintain the high forest broadleaved woodland with a diverse structure in terms of species mix and age structure. It will be managed as a woodland landscape feature and for informal public access.

Management of the site will aim to seek a balance between conservation and public enjoyment, guided by the Woodland Trust's woodland management, conservation and access policies. Management operations will primarily focus on work to maintain public access and safety and to enhance the biodiversity conservation value of the site. Natural regeneration will be promoted for the long term sustainability of the woodland and dead wood retained where safe to do so. The Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and secondary woodland will be largely left to natural processes, but silvicultural intervention may be required to diversify the age structure and encourage natural regeneration and ground flora to develop, particularly in the younger planted woodland area. Open ground areas and rides will be maintained through annual cutting. The health and condition of the woodland will be assessed regularly to identify any threats from tree disease, pests, mammals, invasive species and human impacts, and where appropriate intervention will be taken if necessary.

Public access will be maintained at the current level with the network of paths, entrances and site infrastructure regularly maintained. Paths will be maintained for visitors to use and follow by annual cutting back of vegetation. The Trust's duty of care to visitors will be addressed through on-going tree safety and site risk assessment inspections. The Trust will take appropriate measures to protect and limit degradation of the hill fort archaeological features, in consultation with the appropriate statutory agencies such as Historic England & Cheshire West Council. Opportunities to engage local people in the management of the woods will be encouraged through volunteering where resources allow.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Informal Public Access

Description
<p>There is an extensive network of public and permissive footpaths, with approximately 3 km of paths throughout the woods which are well used. There is also public bridlepaths at Snidley Moor and Frodsham Hill Wood. The paths link into the wider countryside path network and provide opportunities for circular walk routes around the woods and for the more adventurous there is the 34 mile (55km) long distance Sandstone Ridge Trail (https://sandstonetrail.co.uk). There are four formal public access points to Snidley Moor and Woodhouse Hill Woods: to the south from the Ridgeway (adjacent to Ridgeway country holiday park with limited roadside parking nearby), from Tarvin Road to the west, which involves a very steep climb up the western slopes of Woodhouse Hill, from Manley Road to the east along a farm track past Shepherd Houses into the woods, and to the north from the adjoining woodland at Dunsdale Hollow and the Sandstone Trail.</p> <p>Frodsham Hill Wood has eight formal public access points to the wood from adjoining land. These are from the south west from Carriage Drive, from the south east via a footpath from Dunsdale Hollow, entrances on the eastern boundary from Forest Hills hotel car park, two entrances from near the war memorial on top of the hill, from the 'Bellemonte' hotel and from Middle Walk off Bellemonte Road, and an entrance from Howey Lane. There are Woodland Trust welcome signs at these entrances. There are a number of wooden benches around the site for visitors to relax and enjoy the views and surrounding woodland.</p>
Significance
<p>Public access to the woodland helps fulfill one of the Woodland Trust's corporate objectives, to "Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees". It enables access to a landscape containing ASNW with great variety and interest and offers good views across the Mersey Estuary and towards the Welsh hills. It also provides an opportunity for the Woodland Trust to promote the message of ancient woodland habitats and the importance of its protection. The woods are within walking distance of Frodsham and Helsby and only a short drive of nearby towns including Runcorn and Chester. The popular Sandstone Trail long distance path passes through the woods and attracts visitors from further away.</p>
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Constraints:- Parts of the path network become muddy in the winter months which makes some areas of the wood less easy to access. Management access by vehicle is very limited in some areas due to the steep slopes and terrain.</p> <p>Opportunities:- The site is well used and valued as a recreational resource by visitors. Paths are easy to follow and there is a good network of paths across the site to provide a variety of routes to take. Where path conditions in specific locations are very muddy and difficult to use, maintenance work could be undertaken to improve the visitor experience particularly</p>

during the winter.
Factors Causing Change
<p>Unauthorised mountain bike trails and riding mountain bikes (and some horseriding) on footpaths is causing damage to path surfaces, soil erosion and loss of vegetation. Attempts have been made to stop or deter this from happening, including signage and removing bike jumps and trails that have been created, but with limited success due to the remote locations of where these activities are taking place.</p> <p>Increased usage of paths by visitors since the Covid pandemic is resulting in greater wear and tear on path surfaces and the creation of unofficial path routes.</p>
Long term Objective (50 years+)
To provide free public access to the woodland with a good network of footpaths and made welcoming with appropriate signage and information for visitors. The footpaths and bridleways will be maintained to make them easy to use and safe. The site will be made as safe as practicable for visitors through regular safety inspections of site hazards, access infrastructure and trees in high risk zones. Any threats to the wood arising from public use/ misuse will be monitored and appropriate measures taken if necessary.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
<p>Paths and entrance points will be maintained through cutting and strimming during the spring/ summer so they are welcoming and easy for visitors to follow.</p> <p>Access infrastructure (steps, benches, signs, etc) will be inspected annually and maintenance carried if necessary</p> <p>Regular safety inspections of trees in high risk zones and site hazards will be carried out as per the Trust's safety inspection regime to ensure safety of visitors and neighbours, and undertaking any remedial safety work identified.</p> <p>Monitoring of public use and access in the woods to assess the condition of the access provision and identify any threats from public use/misuse (in particular from mountain bikes/ horseriding), and taking appropriate action to address them if necessary.</p>

4.2 f2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description
<p>Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) covers compartment 2c at Woodhouse Hill wood and 3a & 3b at Frodsham Hill Wood. These woodlands are part of a continuous wooded escarpment on the Sandstone Ridge that runs from Frodsham Hill southwards and includes an area of privately owned ASNW at Dunsdale Hollow. The ASNW woodland on the site is typical of NVC type W16 lowland acid oak woodland and is dominated by sessile oak with beech, sycamore, silver birch and rowan. Rhododendron is widespread with holly, elder and hawthorn in the shrub layer. The ground flora is dominated by bracken and fern, with some ancient woodland ground flora including bluebell.</p>
Significance

Ancient woods have been in existence for over 400 years and have developed ecosystems that are rich, complex, and irreplaceable. Management and protection of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland is a core objective for the Woodland Trust. Because they have developed over such long timescales, ancient woods have unique features such as relatively undisturbed soils and communities of plants and animals that depend on the stable conditions ancient woodland provides, some of which are rare and vulnerable. The woodland from Frodsham-Dunsdale Hollow-Woodhouse Hill on the Sandstone Ridge forms the second largest continuous block of broadleaved woodland in Cheshire, which has low (5%) woodland cover. Dunsdale Hollow is also designated as a SSSI because it is an acidic lowland birch and sessile oak woodland on Keuper Sandstone which is very unusual, with only one other site in Cheshire. The wooded Sandstone Ridge escarpment above Frodsham is a notable feature in the North Cheshire landscape and is highly visible to anyone travelling along the M56 motorway as well as from further away across Merseyside and South Lancashire.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:- The site can be challenging to work due to limited and difficult access conditions with very steep slopes/ cliff faces.

Opportunity to raise awareness with visitors of the importance of ancient broadleaved woodland and the need to protect it.

Factors Causing Change

Rhododendron is widespread in parts of the woodland which has a negative impact on the development of natural regeneration and ground flora.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To protect the ancient woodland characteristics and maintain a high forest continuous canopy cover of predominantly oak/ birch. The woodland should have a diverse age structure and species mix including a varied shrub layer and ground flora to ensure the wood’s resilience in the face of threats such as climate change, pests and tree diseases. It will develop largely through natural processes with sufficient natural regeneration of native species and the retention of old trees and dead wood.

Monitoring of potential threats to the woodland will be undertaken and appropriate intervention action taken if necessary. Invasive rhododendron will be controlled to allow healthy levels of natural regeneration.

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

Monitor the health of the ancient woodland and identify any threats such as tree disease, pests and invasive species through carrying out a woodland condition assessment.

Continue to monitor and control invasive rhododendron so that it is no longer a threat to the woodland.

Retain mature trees and deadwood, both standing and fallen, where safe to do so given the level of public access.

4.3 f3 Archaeological Feature

<p>Description</p>
<p>The remains of an Iron Age hill fort occupy the summit of Woodhouse Hill (compartment 2b) with fortifications comprising a stone-faced rampart that curves around the gentler slopes to the north and east, with cliffs and steeper ground to the west and southwest.</p> <p>Advanced dating techniques suggest the ramparts were originally built during the Late Bronze Age. Apparent breaks in the eastern defence rampart had been interpreted as evidence of either unfinished work or military catastrophe; but current thinking suggests they are simply the result of erosion and historic stone-robbing as nearby land was enclosed for farming in the late 18th century. The enclosures at Woodhouse, Helsby Hill and nearby Bradley may have been part of a network, each with a different purpose and status.</p>
<p>Significance</p>
<p>The fort is a "slight univallate fort" meaning one with a singular line of earthworks, of which there are only 150 examples recorded nationally. They date from a period between the eighth & fifth centuries BC. The importance of this feature lies in the value such sites have in understanding the transition between Bronze Age & Iron Age communities. It is recorded by English Heritage as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) No 25694.</p>
<p>Opportunities & Constraints</p>
<p>The Scheduled Ancient Monument carries a number of management constraints designed to limit degradation of the monument. These are outlined in an agreement between the Woodland Trust and English Heritage.</p> <p>The hill fort provides a feature of interest for site visitors and was part of an archaeological excavation in 2008/09 as part of a HLF project called Habitats and Hillforts across the Sandstone Ridge area. This project provided the opportunity to develop some interpretation about the hill fort including an information board located by a footpath below the eastern rampart and a leaflet. Future funding opportunities may arise to refresh and renew the on site interpretation.</p>
<p>Factors Causing Change</p>
<p>The hill top and area of the hill fort is now covered in birch/ oak woodland.</p> <p>Damage to archaeological remains from tree roots growing on the rampart.</p> <p>Misuse of the site - there have been problems in the past with mountain bikers riding within the area of the hill fort and on the ramparts causing damage to the archaeological remains and ground flora. This is not currently a problem but should be monitored.</p>
<p>Long term Objective (50 years+)</p>
<p>To ensure the continued protection of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) feature of Woodhouse Hill to avoid damaging activities or operations so that it remains available for future generations to visit and enjoy.</p> <p>Public access will be permitted to the hill fort SAM so that the public can enjoy the site as an amenity, subject to advice from Historic England.</p>

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

The SAM will be monitored for natural regeneration growing on the rampart wall which is damaging to the earthwork and will be removed by strimming as necessary.

Monitor for regrowth of rhododendron within the SAM area and undertake control if necessary, but the roots will not be grubbed out to prevent potential damage to any archaeological remains.

Monitor the site for any human impacts/ damage from visitors, and in particular from mountain bike/ horseriders riding on the SAM, and take appropriate action if necessary.

4.4 f4 Secondary Woodland

Description

Secondary broadleaved woodland covers 21 hectares of the site in compartments 1a and 1b (Snidley Moor) and 2a and 2b (Woodhouse Hill). These compartments were historically heathland and farmland for grazing livestock, but during the last 40-50 years they have developed as birch/ oak woodland through natural processes with birch being the dominant species. Within compartments 1a and 1b, rhododendron is widespread along with some holly, elder and hawthorn forming the shrub layer. The ground flora is dominated by bracken and fern, with some ancient woodland ground flora including bluebell.

In addition a further 12 hectares of new native woodland was planted in 2001/2 in compartment 4b called Woodhouse Hill Extension. The species planted were oak, birch, rowan, holly, alder buckthorn, hawthorn and elder. A further 4 hectares (compartment 4a) was left for natural regeneration to develop as a buffer to the adjoining ancient semi-natural woodland. The natural regeneration was not very successful and supplementary tree planting took place after a few years.

Significance

These woodlands along the western escarpment of the Sandstone Ridge form the second largest continuous block of broadleaved woodland in Cheshire, which has very low (5%) woodland cover. They provide an important wildlife habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna within the local ecological network.

The wooded escarpment on the ridge above Frodsham is a notable feature in the North Cheshire landscape and is highly visible to anyone travelling along the M56 motorway as well as from further away across Merseyside and South Lancashire.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints:- The site can be challenging to work due to limited and difficult access conditions with very steep slopes/ cliff faces.

Opportunities:- To raise awareness with visitors of the importance of broadleaved woodland and the need to protect it. Within the more recently planted area (cpt 4b) there is the opportunity to start thinning the trees to allow more light to reach the woodland floor, diversify the woodland structure and encourage the growth of natural regeneration and ground flora.

Woodland management work may provide opportunities to engage local people in the practical management of the

woods through volunteering where time and resources allow.

Factors Causing Change

Rhododendron is widespread in parts of the woodland which has a negative impact on the development of natural regeneration and ground flora.
Mountain bike trails are causing damage in some areas leading to loss of vegetation and soil erosion. Attempts have been made to stop this from happening, but with limited success due to the remote locations of where these activities are taking place.
Increased usage of the site by visitors since the Covid pandemic has resulted in new unofficial paths being created in some areas resulting in trampling of vegetation and erosion.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the established secondary woodland as High forest with minimal intervention and create a more open woodland habitat within the newly planted areas, leading to an increase in ground flora and biodiversity. Across the woodland it will have a broad range of different native species with a diverse age structure, shrub layer and ground flora. Natural regeneration will be encouraged and dead wood will be retained where safe to leave it. Monitoring of potential threats to the woodland will be undertaken and appropriate action taken if necessary. Invasive rhododendron will be controlled to allow healthy levels of natural regeneration.

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

Monitor the health of the woodland and identify any threats such as tree disease, pests and invasive species through carrying out a woodland condition assessment.
Continue to control invasive rhododendron so that it is no longer a threat to the woodland.
Retain mature trees and deadwood, both standing and fallen, where safe to do so given the level of public access.
Undertake small scale thinning of the young woodland to create a more open woodland habitat and increase in biodiversity.
Volunteers will undertake woodland management work at Snidley Moor and Woodhouse Hill Woods focusing on removal of rhododendron, coppicing/ thinning and access work including removal of redundant fencing and tree tubes.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
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APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	12.29	Birch (downy/silver)	1970	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Special Landscape Area
<p>Forming the bulk of Snidley Moor sub comp 1a has a steep western aspect, varying from 70 m to 150 m above sea level. The area is secondary woodland with approximately 80% tree cover, which is predominantly Silver birch (approximately 90%) with scattered oak, rowan and an occasional Scots pine & sycamore. These other species only grow in any numbers along the upper slopes and site margins. The understorey contains rhododendron (frequent), holly and hawthorn. Large areas of rhododendron have been cleared in recent years, but it is regenerating. The ground layer is dominated almost entirely by bracken and bramble with some localised patches of bluebell. The sub-compartment is bounded to the S, E & W by agricultural land and in the N & NW by sub-cpt 1b & 2a respectively.</p>						
1b	1.88	Birch (downy/silver)	1970	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Special Landscape Area
<p>Known as the Annex and also locally called "Bluebell wood", this roughly square block of secondary woodland forms the northern end of Snidley Moor wood and slightly pre-dates the rest of woodland in compartment 1. It sits at an elevation between 130 - 150 m above sea level with a north western aspect. It is dominated by birch with some scattered oak and rowan with a limited shrub layer comprising a few elder, hawthorn and patches of bramble. The ground flora is dominated by bracken, but also includes grasses, ferns, bluebells, foxgloves, nettles and willow herb. Bounded to the W, N, & E by agricultural land and to the S by Compartment 1a.</p>						
2a	5.27	Birch (downy/silver)	1970	High forest	Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Special Landscape Area
<p>Comprising of the main body of high ground on Woodhouse Hill the majority of the compartment has a slight SE aspect with an elevation between 110 m - 130 m. The tree cover is mostly mature Silver birch with occasional oak</p>						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
<p>and rowan across the site, but these are most numerous along the N/E & SW boundaries, along with some randomly located Corsican pine. No significant shrub layer except occasional holly, hawthorn. It was previously dominated by rhododendron, but this has now been cleared in the wood. Ground flora dominated by bracken under light canopy and ferns where the canopy is denser. Boundaries - NE defined by an old stone boundary wall & Public Footpath no. 46 - SE defined by old boundary wall (abuts comp 1a) - SW Abuts sub-cpt 4a - W defined by F.P. 43 and the edge of compartment 2c.</p>						
2b	1.74	Birch (downy/silver)	1970	High forest	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access to the site, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Green Belt, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Special Landscape Area
<p>This compartment encompasses the summit of Woodhouse Hill and occupies the earth ramparts & slopes of the ancient hill fort (Scheduled Ancient Monument). The tree cover comprises mostly young/semi mature birch, oak & rowan with a few mature oak & birch scattered across the compartment but mostly near the top of the hill. The shrub layer was dominated in the North and SE by rhododendron, but this has now been cleared. The ground flora is dominated by bracken with a few scattered patches of heathland species such as bilberry & heather surviving. Ferns occur under the denser canopied areas to the north.</p>						
2c	4.67	Birch (downy/silver)	1900	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCI, SINC etc), Special Landscape Area
<p>This sub-cpt of Woodhouse Hill is the western escarpment slope of the sandstone ridge, with very slopes and sandstone cliffs (elevation between 60 m - 120 m and gradients of up to 1 in 2). The woodland is designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) on the English Nature Ancient Woodland Inventory of 1981. The Northern and higher slopes are dominated by mature birch & oak with a closed canopy, but this changes in the southern half of the compartment and lower slopes to large mature beech, oak, the occasional Corsican pine & sycamore with a more open canopy and understorey of birch & rowan. The shrub layer was dominated by rhododendron and although much of this has been cleared, large patches still remain on the steeper slopes and it is regenerating. Ground flora - dominated by bracken where the canopy is open and, ferns under closed canopy,</p>						

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
<p>climbing corydalis is common across the site. Boundaries - N & S by established mature woodland - W by Public Footpath no. 37 and agricultural land - E boundary northern two thirds abut sub compartment 2a (defined by Public Footpath 43) and the southern third abuts sub-cpt 4a. A public footpath (P.F. 43) climbs steeply up from the SW corner via several flights of wooden steps to enter sub-compartment 2a at it's most western point.</p>						
3a	11.97	Birch (downy/silver)	1900	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Community Forest, County Wildlife Site (includes SNCl, SINC etc), Special Landscape Area
<p>Frodsham Hill Wood occupies the northern and eastern edges of Overton Hill (also called Frodsham Hill) directly over looking the village of Frodsham. There are panoramic views from the war memorial at the top of the hill over the River Mersey towards Liverpool, the Wirral, Runcorn and further afield as far as the West Pennines. It has a very steep northerly/ north western aspect with a gradient of approximately 1 in 2 and an elevation from 50 m to 120 m. It has continuous dense woodland cover comprising of oak, sycamore, beech, birch, holly & rowan. Birch, rowan and holly form the understorey on the lower slopes, but are incorporated into the canopy towards the hills rim. The shrub layer consists of holly, rhododendron, elder and bramble, and small pockets of bilberry on the higher slopes. Ground flora is limited with ferns & bracken most common.</p> <p>Boundaries - Northern boundary is defined by a public footpath and abuts Middle Walk, several domestic properties/ gardens and an area of continuous woodland (owned by Valley Cottage). Eastern boundary abuts continuous woodland and a short section of road on a housing estate near the Bellemonde Hotel and is defined by marker posts, then heading south the boundary abuts the war memorial park (owned by Frodsham Town Council), the Forest Hills hotel buildings and car park, horse paddocks (at Overton Hill) defined by a fence line, before the southern section of the eastern boundary abuts the former golf course (now managed by the Woodland Trust and will be planted as a new woodland from 2023/24).</p> <p>Southern boundary abuts continuous woodland leading to Dunsdale Hollow and a domestic property in the SW corner by Carriage Drive.</p> <p>Western boundary abuts several domestic properties at the top of Carriage Drive and follows a stone track along Lower Walk (a public bridle-path which belongs to Cheshire West Council) and several domestic properties all the way to the northern boundary near Howey Lane.</p> <p>There is an extensive network of well used footpaths (public and permissive) through the wood and public bridle-path along the bottom path. It is designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland.</p> <p>The woodland is designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW).</p>						
4a	3.65	Rowan	2002	High forest	Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Community Forest, Special Landscape Area

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
<p>Known as Woodhouse Hill extension, this compartment is on the southern flanks of Woodhouse Hill and to the west of Snidley Moor. It borders sub-cpt 2c to the west, 2a (Woodhouse Hill) to the north, 1a to the east and 4b to the south. This sub-compartment along with 4b was acquired in 2001 and formed part of a woodland creation scheme to create new native woodland to buffer the ASNW at Woodhouse Hill.</p> <p>The sub-cpt is a mix of scrub/ young woodland and open ground and it was initially left as an area for natural processes, but after initial poor natural regeneration development, supplementary planting was carried out in approx. 2009 with a mix of native species. There are two permissive footpaths that pass through the sub-cpt linking to sub-cpts 4b and 2c/2a.</p>						
4b	12.65	Mixed native broadleaves	2002	High forest	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Community Forest, Special Landscape Area
<p>Known as Woodhouse Hill extension, this sub-compartment lies to the south of Woodhouse Hill. It abuts sub-cpt 4a to the north, 1a to the east, and areas of continuous (privately owned) woodland to the south and west. The western boundary is defined by an old stone wall that borders Foxihill woodland and arboretum. This sub-compartment along with 4b was acquired in 2001 and the land was previously used for rearing pigs.</p> <p>It was part of a woodland creation scheme to create new native woodland to buffer the ASNW at Woodhouse Hill. It was planted in 2001/2 with a mix of native broadleaf trees and shrubs (oak, birch, rowan, holly, alder buckthorn, hawthorn, elder) with some areas kept as open ground habitat. There is a network of permissive unsurfaced footpaths across the sub-cpt which can be accessed from the Sandstone Trail path.</p>						

Ancient Woodland

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

Ancient Woodland Site

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

Beating Up

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

Broadleaf

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

Canopy

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

Clearfell

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

Compartment

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

Conifer

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

Continuous Cover forestry

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

Coppice

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

Exotic (non-native) Species

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

Field Layer

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

Group Fell

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

Long Term Retention

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

Minimum Intervention

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

Mixed Woodland

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

National vegetation classification (NVC)

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

Native Species

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

Natural Regeneration

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

Origin & Provenance

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

Re-Stocking

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

Shrub Layer

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

Silviculture

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

Stand

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

Sub-Compartment

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

Thinning

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

Weeding

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established.

Windblow/Windthrow

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

Registered Office:

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