
WOODLAND MANAGEMENT POLICY



Aerial of winter woodland along the River Wharfe on one of our Yorkshire sites

We have several sites with areas of woodland on them. These are semi-natural stands of lowland native types of varied phytosociology commonly referable to ash– field maple– dog’s mercury woodland (W8) of the NVC or pedunculate oak–bracken–bramble woodland (W10) of the NVC but also areas of alder/willow on wet ground, hawthorn or other scrub and indeterminate stands of trees. Implementation of our Management Plans, as with all our habitat types, is designed to protect and promote biodiversity of the woodland and ensure Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) over time.

Mature woodland is the ecological climax vegetation of inland lowland Britain and it harbours a wealth of associated species. Fungi, lichens and bryophytes are of great importance and some, such as those of riparian woodland along streams and rivers, of which we have several, are of special significance for the epiphytes of these groups and vascular woodland flora.



Woodland in summer on one of our Worcestershire sites

For our newer woodlands we adopt a strategy for the first ten to fifteen years of correcting any undesirable trends, increasing species-richness and structural and habitat diversity. Trees will be thinned as may be necessary to open up denser areas, reduce/remove less desirable or invasive alien increase insolation of the woodland floor where advantageous to the ecological community. We encourage the development of mixed aged stands representative of ecological high quality, native stands. Standing and lying dead wood is left

for saproxylic organisms and the decomposer resource augmented. Areas of wet woodland and glades are encouraged as appropriate to the site.

For established older woodlands and those younger ones we have managed for the first fifteen years or so, we ensure that FCS and BNG management is appropriately sustained, eliminating undesirable impacts and achieving ecological excellence, upholding biodiversity policy. We monitor the stability and condition of the trees, implementing active silvicultural management where required. The enhancement of a woodland ecosystem to establish high quality examples of plant and animal communities appropriate to the edaphic and general environmental conditions of each site is a fundamental tenet of our management.

Please note that there are several significant and widespread tree diseases that occur in Britain (ash dieback, sudden oak death and others). We monitor these and take action where necessary such as removing dead trunks and boughs overhanging paths or roads where safety is an issue.



Mixed woodland in autumn on one of our Shropshire sites

Please also carefully read our other Policies, in particular those on hedgerows and trees.

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Professional service
Sustainable land management
Better planning results
Enhanced biodiversity

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