

Upper Dearne Woodlands Conservation Group

Management Plan 2015

1. Introduction

The Management Plan was produced in July 1998 and has been updated several times. This edition sets out the current thinking of the Group as at summer 2015.

2. Management Priorities

The following Management Priorities for the Group have been formally adopted.

Priority 1. Wildlife Conservation

Priority 2. Boundary and Access Improvements

Priority 3. Education and Information

3. Management Objectives

The Management Objectives are as follows.

3.1 Woodland Management

To manage the tree population of the woods in order to ensure the long-term survival and health of the woodlands. A separate document entitled "Tree Management Strategy" sets out more detail on this.

3.2 River and Stream Management

To conserve, protect, rehabilitate and improve the upper River Dearne and associated systems which might influence their fauna, flora, water quality and hydrology. A separate document entitled "River and Stream Management Strategy" sets out more detail on this.

3.3 Habitat Management

To adopt and promote a management approach that will conserve, protect and enhance all of the wildlife habitats of the woods, including woodland and watercourses.

To seek to improve our understanding of the wildlife and habitats, in order to guide any habitat-changing activities.

3.4 Boundaries

To create and maintain secure boundaries for the woods, in agreement with boundary/adjacent landowners, using methods appropriate to the landscape and habitats.

To inhibit access to the woods other than at recognised access points.

3.5 Access Points

To create and maintain access points as defined in the Access Agreement.

To seek to confine access to pedestrians only, but with due regard to varying physical abilities.

3.6 Footpaths

To develop and maintain a network of footpaths in order to improve access to the woods in all weather conditions and for people with varying physical abilities.

To channel the bulk of pedestrian traffic into areas which can sustain a high level of access and away from more sensitive and/or fragile environments, by appropriate selection of the footpaths to be improved.

3.7 Cultural heritage

To explore and understand the cultural heritage of the woodlands, including historical, recreational and industrial usages.

3.8 Education and Information

To take steps to make Management Plans open and available to the public.

To seek ways of informing the local community about the woods and their value as a community resource.

To involve young people in the woods with the aim of fostering and developing understanding and appreciation of the environment.

4. Management Tasks

The Group creates and maintains a list of Management Tasks, by which we seek to achieve the Management Objectives. The list is reviewed annually.

Working Parties are held approximately twice a month, or as appropriate, and planned on a monthly basis. We attempt to cater for a range of physical abilities.