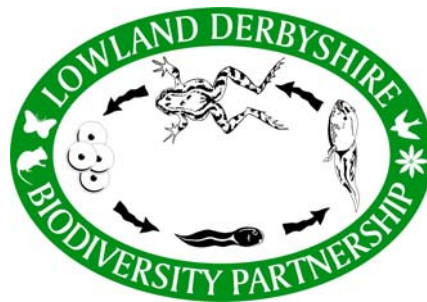


**LOWLAND DERBYSHIRE
LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN**

**WOOD-PASTURE, PARKLAND AND VETERAN
TREES
HABITAT ACTION PLAN
2008 - 2010**



Prepared by the Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Partnership



Completed following consultation May 2008

WOOD PASTURE, PARKLAND AND VETERAN TREES HABITAT ACTION PLAN

TREND IN LOWLAND DERBYSHIRE: Historic wood-pasture and parkland is a finite resource which in some areas of the LBAP area through a lack of recognition and management is declining in value. Whilst some individual veteran trees in the wider countryside are maintained and managed others are being lost through neglect and felled through health and safety concerns.

ESTIMATED EXTENT IN LOWLAND DERBYSHIRE: Current knowledge has identified in excess of 7,800ha of wood pasture and parkland within the Lowland Derbyshire LBAP area and more than 3,000 individual veteran trees.

NATIONAL BAP HABITATS: Wood-pasture and Parkland

ASSOCIATED NATIONAL BAP PRIORITY SPECIES:

Species which occur in Derbyshire: Oak Polypore, Bullfinch, Linnet, Spotted flycatcher, Song Thrush, Barbastelle bat, Brown long-eared bat, Noctule, Soprano pipistrelle bat,

ASSOCIATED LOWLAND DERBYSHIRE BAP AUDITS: A historic wood-pasture and parkland GIS layer has been established which contains details of historic parklands. This layer identifies 66 sites in the LBAP area which totals 7,874ha. The Great Trees of Derbyshire project has recorded in excess of 4,150 veteran trees in Derbyshire, a large majority of these are within lowland Derbyshire

SPECIES FOR WHICH WOOD-PASTURE, PARKLAND AND VETERAN TREES IN LOWLAND DERBYSHIRE ARE A KEY HABITAT: See Appendix 2 in the accompanying document 'Woodland Habitats in Lowland Derbyshire'.

A vision for the future for wood-pasture, parkland and veteran trees in lowland Derbyshire.

Wood-pasture and parkland are an important part of the cultural landscape of lowland Derbyshire. An aim for the future is to have this habitat fully mapped showing these historic landscape features. This is important as some of these sites are still intact with their veteran trees and grazing management. However, many have been disbanded and only have remnant features which are not necessarily managed as a whole landscape.

The managers of these sites should have an appreciation of their ecological value including their value for deadwood invertebrates, as well as their cultural and landscape character value and manage them positively for the future. In addition to the enhancement of existing parkland and wood pasture consideration should be made to the impact that climate change may have on the habitat and where appropriate new wood-pasture and parkland should be created.

There is a recognised age gap in the veteran tree community within parkland landscapes, this issue needs to be addressed by viewing today's mature trees as tomorrow's veterans and by planting, and safeguarding, new parkland trees from local provenance stock.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background information on wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees including distribution in the LBAP area can be found in the accompanying document “Woodland habitats in Lowland Derbyshire”.

2. FACTORS WHICH HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON WOOD-PASTURE, PARKLAND AND VETERAN TREES

ADVERSE IMPACTS

✓ An impact ✓✓ Significant impact

	Historic	Current
Land Management		
Cessation of management, e.g. pollarding /coppicing leading to trees collapsing or being felled for safety reasons	✓	✓✓
Pasture loss through conversion to arable or pasture improvement causing damage to trees, roots and compaction by ploughing, reseeding and agro-chemicals	✓	✓
Changes to ground water levels as a result of drainage, development, climate change of abstraction		✓✓
Isolation and fragmentation leading to poor dispersal of dependent species	✓✓	✓✓
Inappropriate grazing levels and stock type leading to either scrub development or compaction, bark damage and loss of nectar plants	✓	✓
Lack of clarification concerning ownership and management where trees are on a boundary	✓	✓✓
Lack of recruitment of younger trees resulting in a skewed age structure	✓	✓✓
Health and safety issues		
Inappropriate lopping, tidying or felling as a response to access issues, vandalism and tidiness	✓	✓
Car parking under veteran trees resulting in pressure to fell or lop in addition to damage by compaction	✓	✓✓
Roadside trees being lopped, pollarded or inappropriately pruned	✓	✓✓
Others		
Removal of too much deadwood where lack of understanding of management needs		✓✓
Development pressure including removal, root compaction, damage by machinery, effect of pollution	✓	✓✓
Disease (eg dutch elm and oak dieback)	✓	✓
Vandalism		✓
Accidental fires eg due to the build up of bracken		✓✓

3. CURRENT ACTION

3.1 Designated sites

Table 1 shows the amount of wood-pasture, parkland and veteran trees in SSSIs in the LBAP area.

Table 1: Wood-pasture, Parkland and Veteran Trees within SSSIs

SSSI	Wood-pasture & Parkland	Veteran trees
Kedleston Park	55ha within SSSI. (More outside SSSI)	286 (whole park SSSI and non SSSI)
Calke Abbey	59.09ha within SSSI (More outside SSSI)	653 (whole park SSSI and non SSSI)
Hilton gravel pits	None	A few black poplar pollards
Hulland Moss	None	2
Shining Cliff Woods	None	157 mainly coppice sweet chestnut and oak
Moss Valley	1.55ha	Yes – unquantified but probably no more than 20
Moss Valley Woods	None	Unknown
Mercaston Marsh	None	Yes – some
Ogston Reservoir	None	Yes - some
Hollinhill & Markland Grips	1ha	Yes - some
Total	116.64ha	1100+

Local Wildlife Sites can be identified and designated for their wood-pasture and parkland interest. In addition there is also a veteran tree criteria.

English Heritage has established a Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, including 20 entries for Derbyshire. These encompass historic parklands.

3.2 Current Initiatives

- A Historic Wood-pasture and Parkland GIS layer has been established which contains details of historic parklands. This layer identifies 66 sites in the LBAP area which total 7,874ha
- The aim of the Great Trees of Derbyshire project is to locate and survey all veteran trees in the county, and to celebrate our veteran tree heritage. The project has recorded in excess of 4,150 veteran trees within Derbyshire. This includes trees in parkland and within the wider countryside. To record the trees the project recruited and trained over 100 volunteers. In addition the project raised awareness of the value of veteran trees and their management needs.
- Planning Policy Statement 9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation) states *“Aged or ‘veteran’ trees found outside ancient woodlands are also particularly valuable for biodiversity and their loss should be avoided. Planning authorities should encourage the conservation of such trees as part of development proposals.”*
- The England Woodland Grant Scheme and the Environmental Stewardship Scheme offers opportunities to grant aid landowners with wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees.
- The Woodland Trust’s national Ancient Tree Hunt has encouraged recording of veteran trees and has provided a national support for the local Great Trees of Derbyshire Project.
- The Ancient Tree Forum, founded in 1993, is a national organisation, providing a national forum for discussion on veteran trees and their management.
- Within the life of this plan the National Trust will be planting 900 new successor trees at Hardwick all grown from trees within the park itself, producing a Park Conservation Plan for Kedleston, producing a long term tree planting plan for the Calke estate and under HLS beginning to create an additional 40ha of wood-pasture at Calke.

3.3 Land management by LBAP Partners

- **Derbyshire Wildlife Trust** has a number of reserves with veteran trees including Hilton Gravel Pits, Hollinhill and Markland Grips, It also manages Spring Wood, which falls within the Leicestershire and Rutland LBAP.
- **Derbyshire County Council's Countryside Service** is responsible for a number of sites with veteran trees including Shipley Country Park and Elvaston Castle. Individual veteran trees may be found on other sites.
- **Chesterfield Borough Council** owns a number of sites which have veteran trees including Westwood.
- **Amber Valley Borough Council** owns a number of countryside sites which include woodland such and Belper Parks LNR.
- **Derby City Council** owns a number of countryside sites which have parkland and veteran trees including Allestree Park LNR, Chaddesden Wood LNR, Chaddesden Park, Markeaton Park and Darley Park
- **Severn Trent Water** owns a number of sites where veteran trees have been recorded including Linacre Reservoirs, Carsington Water, Ogston Reservoir and Foremark and Staunton Harold Reservoirs.
- The **National Trust** owns large estates at Calke Abbey, Kedleston, Hardwick Hall and Sudbury Hall. All of these estates have areas wood pasture, parkland and individual veteran trees
- The **Woodland Trust** owns a number of woodlands which contain veteran trees in the LBAP area including Sledge Wood, Bow Wood, Nor, Cookspring and Oowler Carr in the Moss Valley and Kitchen Wood.
- **Sheffield Wildlife Trust** manages woodland within the Moss Valley area which contain veteran trees.
- **Forest Enterprise and Forestry Commission** manages a number of large areas of woodland in the LBAP area including the large area of ancient woodland at Robin Wood, Repton Shrubs, and Shining Cliff Woods.
- Members of the **Small Woods Association** own private woodlands some of which contain veteran trees which they manage for a variety of objectives including conservation.

3.5 Research and Surveys

- A Provisional Inventory of Parkland and Wood-pasture in the East Midlands. English Nature Research Report No 595 (2004) provides information on parklands with the LBAP area. This information was digitised and added to in order to produce the Historic Wood Pasture and Parkland GIS layer.
- The National Trust commissioned deadwood invertebrate surveys for the parkland habitats at Hardwick Hall, Kedleston Park and Calke Abbey.
- The Great Trees of Derbyshire Project has so far recorded over 4,150 individual veteran trees in the county. All of these records have been passed through to the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Hunt.

3.6 Achievements

Up until the end of March 2008 the following had been achieved on the Wood-pasture, Parkland and Veteran Tree Habitat Action Plan:

- Natural England has worked with the National Trust to achieve favourable condition on wood-pasture and parkland within the SSSI at both Calke Abbey and Kedleston Park
- Since 1999 44.59ha of parkland has been restored/planted/brought back into management and in Derbyshire under the National Forest Tender Scheme
- The National Trust, has extended the area managed as wood-pasture at Calke Abbey by 7.5ha by management work including bracken control and additional fencing.
- Various guidance leaflets and booklets on veteran tree management have been produced by LBAP partners
- The Great Trees of Derbyshire Project recorded over 4,150 individual veteran trees within Derbyshire and raised public awareness of the issues associated with veteran trees
- Under current Higher Level Stewardship Scheme agreements 59.77ha of wood-pasture and parkland will be maintained and 94.33ha will be planted within the next 10 years
- All of the significant wood-pasture and parkland on the National Trust estate at Calke Abbey, Kedleston Park and Hardwick Hall is within a current Countryside Stewardship Scheme

4. ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

4.1 National Targets

T1 - No net loss of or significant damage to the extent of known wood-pasture and parkland sites. To maintain 10,000 sites in the UK (6,000 of which is within England).

T2 – 6,500 sites (65% of the known UK resource), to be in favourable or recovering condition by 2010, 7,000 sites by 2015 and 7,500 by 2020. (3,900, 4,200 and 4,500 in England)

T3 – Restore areas of derelict wood-pasture and parkland to favourable condition (target 250 sites in the by 2010, 500 by 2015 and 1,000 by 2020. (200, 400 and 800 in England)

T4 – Expand the area of wood-pasture and parkland, in appropriate years, to help reverse fragmentation and reduce the generation gap between veteran trees at 50 UK sites by 2010, 150 by 2015 and 300 by 2020 (40, 120 and 240 in England).

4.2 Regional targets

There are regional biodiversity targets in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8):

- Restoration of 5,000ha of lowland wood-pasture and parkland by 2010
- Creation of 240ha of lowland wood-pasture and parkland by 2010 and 346ha by 2020

4.3 National Forest

The targets in the National Forest Biodiversity Action Plan are to:

- Restore/bring back into management a total of 150ha of wood-pasture and parkland by 2010.

4.4 Lowland Derbyshire

Targets

T1 - Maintain the overall extent of wood-pasture and parkland by 2010 – 66 sites (7,874ha)

T2 - To achieve favourable or recovering condition in 42 sites (65% of sites) by 2010

T3 – To restore areas of wood-pasture and parkland to favourable condition in 2 sites by 2010.

T4 – To expand, where appropriate, the area of wood-pasture and parkland, to help reverse fragmentation and reduce the generation gap between veteran trees, at 1 site by 2010.

T5 – To carry out management work on 15 individual veteran trees in the wider countryside outside parklands by 2010.

4.5 Main factors likely to affect achievement of targets

- 1) Availability/adequacy of financial incentives for wood-pasture, parkland and veteran tree management with the added complication of the requirements for European Protected Species under the Habitat Regulations.
- 2) Competition with agriculture and agricultural support payments.
- 3) Many smaller wood-pasture and parkland sites are within private ownership, as are the majority of veteran trees in the wider-countryside

5. ACTIONS

LDWAG= Lowland Derbyshire Woodland Action group,
 FC= Forestry Commission, NE= Natural England, DWT = Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, GTOD = Great Trees of Derbyshire Project, WT= Woodland Trust, NT = National Trust, LA = Local authorities, FWAG = Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, NF = National Forest, GDD = Groundwork Derby and Derbyshire, LRC = Local Record Centre, WSP = Wildlife Sites Panel, DFRG = Duffield Frith Research Group

Lead partners is shown in **bold**

	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	LEAD AGENCY & PARTNERS
	SURVEY		
WPPVT1	Continue to survey veteran trees within wood-pasture, parkland and wider countryside. Using this information to update the Veteran Tree GIS layer and send to national databases such as the Ancient Tree Hunt.	Ongoing	GTOD, LDWAG
WPPVT2	Through the Local Wildlife Sites system survey wood-pasture and parkland sites on a rolling programme	Ongoing	DWT
	RESEARCH		
WPPVT3	Continue to research historic wood-pasture and parkland sites using primary sources and recognised field survey methodologies. Using this information to update the Historic wood-pasture and parkland GIS layer.	Ongoing	DFRG
	DESIGNATION		
WPPVT4	Compile a list of candidate wood-pasture and parkland SSSIs	By end of 2008	NE/DWT
WPPVT5	Survey candidate wood-pasture and parkland Local Wildlife Sites, assess them against the WS Selection guidelines and designate if appropriate.	Ongoing	DWT/WSP
	CONSERVATION ACTION AND INCENTIVES		
WPPVT6	On land owned by LBAP partners, ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ management plans are written and carried out to maintain and, where possible, enhance the value of wood-pasture, parkland and individual veteran trees ➤ opportunities for habitat restoration and expansion are taken where appropriate, including the recruitment of new ‘veteran’ trees by reducing the age gap on sites ➤ opportunities for involvement of local communities in site management are taken where possible 	Ongoing	All LBAP Partners
WPPVT7	Working with landowners to identify and tag existing trees and ‘future veterans’ and growing and planting new trees where ‘future veterans’ are not present	Ongoing	GTOD
WPPVT8	Promote the use of long term management plans for wood-pasture, parkland and individual veteran trees by land owners	Ongoing	NE/DWT/NF
WPPVT9	Promote appropriate agri-environmental grants to landowners for the management/restoration and expansion of wood-pasture, parkland and individual veteran trees.	Ongoing	NE/DWT/FWAG/NF GTOD

REGULATION AND PROTECTION			
WPPVT10	Ensure all planning applications and General Development Orders, including TPO applications, are adequately assessed in relation to their impact on wood-pasture, parkland and veteran trees; that loss or damage is avoided; and that opportunities for restoration and expansion are considered in relevant planning decisions	Ongoing	LAs/ DWT/NE/FC
WPPVT11	Consider the opportunities for management, restoration and expansion of wood-pasture, parkland and veteran trees in relevant mineral planning decisions, including quarry/opencast restoration schemes.	Ongoing	LAs/DWT/FC/NE
WPPVT12	Ensure all applications for felling licences are adequately assessed against their impact on wood-pasture and parkland.	Ongoing	FC
AWARENESS RAISING			
WPPVT13	Inform landowners/managers of key conservation, restoration and re-creation sites of their importance and management needs, including feedback following surveys.	Ongoing	GTOD
WPPVT14	Raise awareness of the issues and needs associated with veteran trees by events, information and publications.	Ongoing	GTOD
WPPVT15	Develop a toolkit of activities and activity sessions about veteran trees and their associated wildlife for schools	By 2010	GTOD/DWT

6. RESOURCES

It is envisaged that the majority of actions proposed will be carried out by the relevant organisations using current resources. These include:

- Natural England’s additional ‘grant in aid’ to support the Public Service Agreement based target which aims to ensure that 95% of all SSSI’s are in favourable management by 2010, and Wildlife Enhancement Scheme,
- The Forestry Commission’s England Woodland Grant Scheme.
- Surveys and management advice given by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, and the Farming and Wildlife Advice Group (FWAG), although this is limited by the current level of resources.

Additional resources may be required to:

- The Great Trees of Derbyshire Project will be an important delivery mechanism for the Wood-pasture, Parkland and Veteran Tree HAP. This project is currently applying for continuation funding
- Provide adequate financial incentives for the conservation and restoration of existing priority woodlands
- Enhance management of sites in the ownership of LBAP partners.
- Provide advice woodland management advice to owners, especially private woodland owners and to actively promote the England Woodland Grant Scheme.