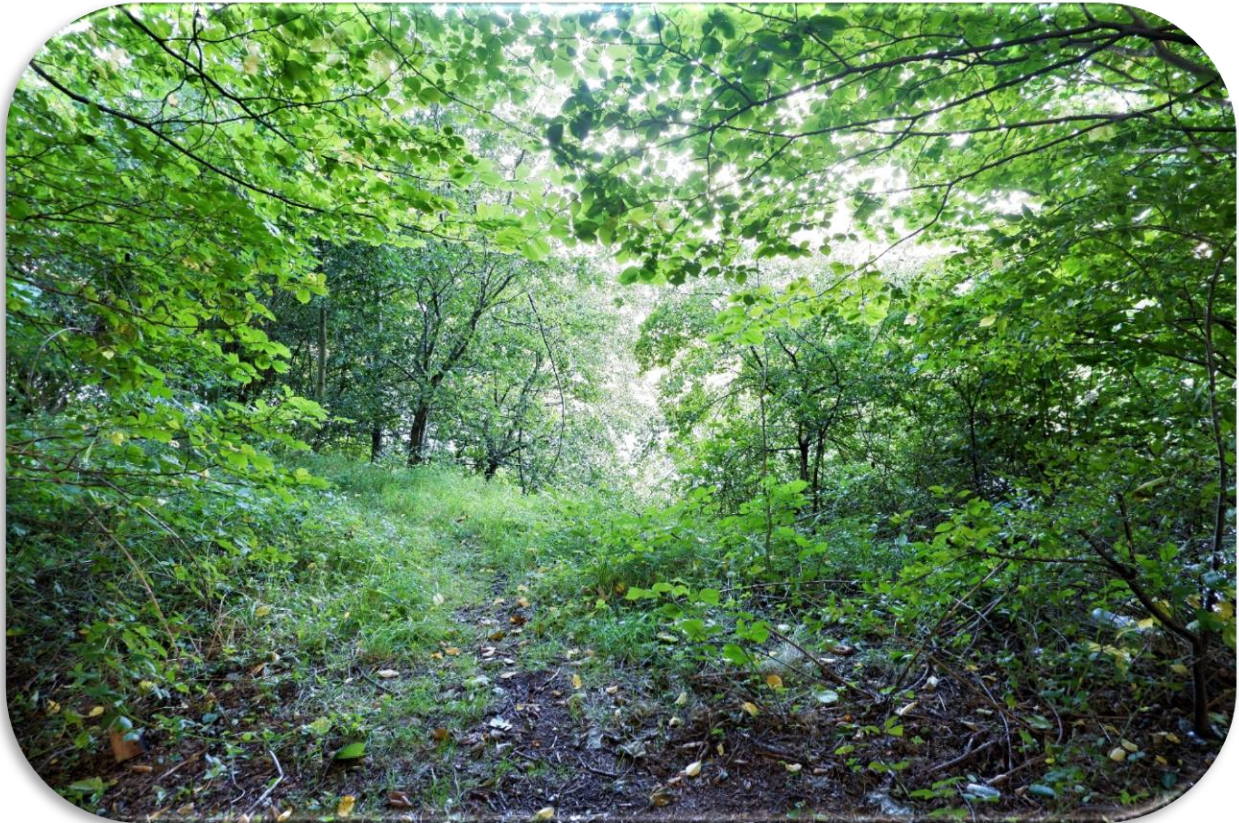


# Westburn Wood

Management Plan 2020 - 2025



Produced by the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust

On behalf of Prospect Community Housing



## Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Site Summary</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Site Description</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Geography and Landscape</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>History</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Strategic context</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Soils and Drainage</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Habitats and Wildlife</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3.5.1</b>	<b>Woodland</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3.5.2</b>	<b>Shrub</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3.5.3</b>	<b>Glades, rides and grassland</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3.5.5</b>	<b>Non-Native Invasive Species</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Access, Facilities and Infrastructure</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Community and Events</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Aims and Objectives</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Management Prescriptions</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Habitats and Wildlife</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>5.1.1</b>	<b>Woodland</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>5.1.2</b>	<b>Shrub</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>5.1.3</b>	<b>Glades and rides</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>5.1.4</b>	<b>Nature Conservation Value</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>5.1.5</b>	<b>Non-Native Invasive Species</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Access, Facilities and Infrastructure</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Community and Events</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Action Plans and Maps</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Annual and Regular Actions</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Actions 2020</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>6.3</b>	<b>Actions 2021 – 2022</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>6.4</b>	<b>Actions 2023 – 2025</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>7.2</b>	<b>Appendix 2</b> .....	<b>16</b>

## 1.0 Site Summary

Site Name:	Westburn Wood
Site Address:	Westburn Ave, Morvenside, Edinburgh EH14 2TB
Grid Reference:	NT 194 699
Size:	1.23 hectare (3.03 acre)
Owner:	Prospect Community Housing

## 2.0 Site Description

### 2.1 Introduction

Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust (ELGT) were appointed by Prospect Community Housing, a locally based Housing Association, to develop an up-to-date Management Plan for Westburn Wood for the period 2020 to 2025. The creation of this plan was made possible thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

A previous plan was created by the Edinburgh Green Belt Trust (EGBT) covering a five-year period from 2005 to 2010. Where appropriate, information from EGBT's Plan has been incorporated into this plan. The 2020 plan covers the current state of the site and its aims and objectives over the next five years, including annual actions which should be carried out going forwards.

Westburn Wood is a relatively small and isolated area of woodland, set within an urban environment on the edge of the Union Canal. It is open to public use and highly valued by sections of the community, although suffers from anti-social behaviour.

This Management Plan aims to:

- Determine what actions are required to meet agreed aims and objectives.
- Give focus and direction to the improvement of Westburn Wood and enable funding and resources to be allocated.
- Provide opportunities for people to be involved in the development of their local greenspace.

### 2.2 Geography and Landscape

Westburn Wood is next to a housing estate and the Union Canal. The woodland is located on a whinstone outcrop which forms a raised knoll on the west and central section of the site, giving the site a raised profile and prominence in the local landscape.

There are no other mature woodlands within 700m of Westburn Wood. The nearest woodlands are 800m south west of the site at Baberton Golf Club, and 1,100m south east of the site at Kingsknowe Golf Club. The Riccarton Estate is 1,600m away, an estate on which Heriot Watt University is situated. It is a Local Biodiversity Site with mixed plantation, broadleaved plantation, amenity grassland, coniferous plantation and standing water (The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) data, 2020).

The boundaries of Westburn Wood are, for the most part, clearly defined by built features such as pavements, public roads, gardens, fences, and by the Union Canal.

The Canal forms the northern boundary of the site. It is likely that the canal banking is owned and managed by Scottish Canals and thus does not form part of the woodland. There is no towpath on the southern side of the canal, although there is one on the opposite bank.

The southern edge of the site is defined by the road Morvenside, making the site easily accessible by vehicle. The southern woodland edge has a path running along the entire length.

The eastern boundary of the site is demarcated by an established hedge. The Woods Youth Centre used to be just outside the eastern corner of woodland, but this was demolished and is likely to be replaced with housing.

The western boundary is partially fenced with 6-foot-high timber panel fencing. To the north the fence encloses a dwelling and garden. South of this house the fence forms a boundary with Quarrybank End. A gap in the fence provides access to a set of timber sleeper steps leading into the woodland. The fence finishes at the end of an adjacent parking bay area on the roadside.

## 2.3 History

The site used to be known as Baberton Quarry and was quarried for sandstone. It is shown as active on the 1855 Ordnance survey map for the area, but the exact period of the quarrying activity is not known. The limited size of the excavations suggest that the stone was required for local use.

## 2.4 Strategic context

### **City of Edinburgh Council Open Space Strategy**

This is Edinburgh's Strategy to protect, look after and expand the city's network of greenspaces for the next five years.

### **City of Edinburgh Council City Plan 2030**

The Council is preparing a new Local Development Plan for Edinburgh called City Plan 2030. This will set out policies and proposals for development in Edinburgh between 2020 and 2030. This will include plans for greenspace and active travel routes.

### **Edinburgh Living Landscapes**

This is a partnership project with a long-term vision to ensure that nature is at the heart of the city's future. It aims to do this by connecting green infrastructure at multiple scales, from large parks and urban woodlands through to window boxes, green roofs and street trees.

### **Edinburgh & Lothians Forest & Woodland Strategy and Trees and Woodlands Action Plan**

In 2012 the Edinburgh & Lothians Forest & Woodland Strategy was published. In response, the City of Edinburgh Council produced a locally focused action plan in 2014, the Trees and Woodlands Action Plan. Some of the aims in the plan include:

- Expanding the region's woodland resource
- Enhancing biodiversity and delivering green networks
- Enhancing air quality
- Protecting and enhancing character
- Securing resilience to climate change and enhancing quality of life

## Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan

Woodland falls under 'Green Networks', one of the key aims and actions highlighted in the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2021 (EBAP).

The EBAP set the following Green Network objectives relating to woodland for the Edinburgh area:

- Continue to deliver woodland network expansion projects
- Identify key woodland projects and sites to direct FCS WIAT (Woodlands in and Around Towns) funding
- Identify sites or projects which require a woodland management plan and can be funded under WIAT
- Identify sites or projects which would benefit from woodland management as part of the WIAT scheme from FCS

The Westburn Wood Management Plan will help to meet Edinburgh's strategic aims and objectives highlighted in the above projects, plans and policies. This plan also aims to enable an application to the Forestry Grant Scheme which offers financial support for managing urban woodlands in Scotland – WIAT.

### 2.5 Soils and Drainage

Due to the site historically being a quarry, it has several levels and ground conditions. The soil depths over the whole site are limited, with a shallow cover extending from 10-30 cm in places.

The highest level of the site is located towards the centre of the site. Soils in this area are friable but stony, extending to a depth of 10-20cm, and overlying weathered, broken stone bedrock which forms a hard but freely draining sub-layer.

The edges of the centre knoll form a light friable soil containing a high proportion of weathered whinstone, sandstone and shales overlying the whinstone bedrock. The soil depths on these quarried slopes are again limited to 10-30cm.

To the east of the site, at the foot of the rocky knoll, soils consist of a thin layer of humic clay soil overlying boulder clay, forming a flat open area of grassland.

On the edge of Quarryview Road to the south of the woodland area, a grassed verge slopes down from the level of the road to the main footpath which runs through the site. This verge consists of rich dark humic soils 20-30cm deep, again overlying a hard-stony base of boulder clay and in some sections towards the roadside edge, builder's rubble from construction works nearby.

Most of the site is freely draining, draining into the Union Canal. However, on the lower level of the woodland, where the knoll creates a sharp slope down to a low area in the south west of the woodland, a large boggy area regularly forms.

### 3.5 Habitats and Wildlife

#### 3.5.1 Woodland

The woodland consists primarily of semi-natural mixed broadleaf woodland aged 30-40 years, together with fragments of older woodland, dating from the 19th century. The younger woodland cover appears to have naturally regenerated, probably following felling operations during which most of the previous woodland was felled.

Remnants of older woodland take the form of individual mature trees. These appear to be relics of policy woodland planting originally comprising of ash, oak, elm and sycamore. Most of the elm has been removed owing to the advent of Dutch elm disease (*Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*), and only one oak tree remains. The ash and sycamore representing the remaining mature woodland have also provided the main seed sources for the regenerated successional woodland, which is dominated by these two species. There is evidence of coppicing in the woodland, mainly consisting of elm and hazel.

A number of ash trees have ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), a fungus originating from Asia which has devastated the European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and is predicted to kill around 80% of ash trees across the UK.

Sycamore is prolific throughout the woodland and is shading out other tree and plant species. Sycamore is non-native but has been shown to have benefits for wildlife. However, if left to take over an area it can reduce vegetation diversity and overall biodiversity of the woodland.

Pockets of recent planting are located on the outer edges of the main woodland, extending the wooded boundaries. These plantings vary from 10 years to 20 years of age and have generally established successfully. These recent plantings have diversified the species composition of the woodland by introducing species such as birch, rowan, field maple, oak and scots pine which were previously scarce or absent within the woodland. Younger trees are generally present as dense thickets. Most trees are of poor form and would benefit silviculturally from thinning.

The NVC (National Vegetation Classification) Woodland Types which would be expected on such a site is NVC W8 (Lowland mixed broadleaf woodland with dogs mercury).

The woodland area is recorded in the Scottish Semi-Natural Woodland Inventory (SSNWI) as an area of broadleaf semi-natural woodland (SSNWI reference 3266079). However, the woodland is not contained within the more authoritative 'Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland Inventory'. The woodland is not thought to be covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

A survey of the woodland and a tree survey was carried out in 2005 to assess the composition and condition of the woodland. For results of this survey please refer to the Westburn Wood Management Plan 2005, Section 4 and Appendix 1.

### 3.5.2 Shrub

Amenity shrub planting has been undertaken on the woodland edges and along some of the path routes through the site. These shrub areas provide visual diversity and help to channel access. Shrub and hedgerow are also good for wildlife, providing food and shelter.

However, some areas have been planted with non-native laurel which has grown into dense thickets, shading out other species and acting as a visual barrier. Native shrub species such as hawthorn and elder would be more favourable.

An avenue of trees planted (using heavy standard tree stock) has been successfully established on the roadside verge along the edge of Morvenside.

### 3.5.3 Glades, rides and grassland

Woodland glades and rides diversify the habitats in a woodland and are excellent for wildlife such as butterflies, dragonflies, birds, reptiles and small mammals.

In the north to centre of the woodland (see Map 3) there is a large open ride which has long semi-improved grassland leading to substantial scrub at its edges. At the eastern side of the ride there is an open area off the path under the tree canopy. There is not much growing in this area except for scattered tufts of grass.

To the east of the woodland there is a good-sized glade. A path runs through the centre but is becoming overgrown. Most of the glade is semi-improved grassland which has not been cut for a long time. It is also starting to be taken over by scrub. If left, succession will lead to the glade becoming a woodland.

Wildflowers have been identified in the glade and ride grass sward including patches of ribwort plantain, germander speedwell, hypericum, and umbellifers. Small patches of native woodland flora are also present below the woodland canopy in the form of herb bennet, bluebells and wood anemone, but are generally scarce as a result of shading.

South of the woodland there is an improved grassland area, which is maintained by seasonal mowing for amenity use and public access.

#### **3.5.4 Nature Conservation Value**

The woodland forms a small 'island' of semi-natural habitat within a built environment. The fringes of the site have been subject to formal landscaping in the form of amenity grassland and ornamental shrub planting.

The small size of the woodland, coupled with the lack of woodland or other semi-natural habitats in the surrounding area, greatly restricts its biodiversity value, although it will act as an important refuge for wildlife. Additionally, the adjacent Union Canal provides a degree of habitat interest.

Westburn Wood and the Union Canal (Hermiston to Slateford and Ratho to Hermiston) are Local Biodiversity Sites (LBS) (TWIC data, 2020). An LBS is a non-statutory site recognised to be of importance for biodiversity in the local context.

Levels of disturbance resulting from antisocial behaviour limits the value of the site as a wildlife habitat, but areas of dense woodland thicket offer a degree of refuge and shelter, particularly for small birds. The ride and glade also provide important habitat and the woodland ground flora contains some species worthy of note, including bluebells, herb bennet, and wood anemone.

Birds such as swallows and kingfisher have been spotted along the canal. Long-tailed tits and great spotted woodpecker have been seen nearby and are likely to be present in the woodland (TWIC data, 2020), and a bullfinch was spotted in the woodland in December 2020 by an ELGT staff member.

The tree bumblebee, a recent addition to the UK's fauna, was identified in Westburn as well as the West European hedgehog (TWIC data, 2020). In the past, foxes and badgers have been captured on night cams installed by the community. There are currently no signs of badgers, but given the opportunity, they may return to the area.

#### **3.5.5 Non-Native Invasive Species**

The few-flowered leek is an invasive species found across Scotland and is prolific throughout Westburn Wood. It spreads easily and grows in dense clumps, out competing native species. It is an offence under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Scotland) to plant or otherwise cause to grow this species in the wild.

Infestations can be removed by digging about a spade's depth of soil out where the plants are growing. This is best done in spring when surface vegetation is present, ensuring that all plant material and bulbs are removed. This may need to be followed by cutting over a number of years to exhaust the seed bank.

Waste materials containing the few-flowered leek are considered 'controlled' waste and must be disposed of appropriately.

Giant hogweed has been located roughly 750m away from Westburn Wood, near the Calder junction on the A720 (TWIC data, 2020). This plant is found along riverbanks, can grow up to 5m tall and its leaves are sharply serrated and 1m or more in diameter. In the summer, it has white flowers about 80cm across. It is dangerous to humans and pets as the sap is photo-toxic, which means that it increases the skins sensitivity to light which can lead to severe blistering.

Giant hogweed is listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause this species to grow in the wild. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, giant hogweed is also classified as controlled waste.

### 3.6 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

The site is open to public use and heavily used as a through route for access between the neighbouring housing areas and local services. There are no asserted rights of way recorded on the site.

There are entry points into the woodland in the south west and south east corners, and at the east side of the woodland, but it is hard to see and overgrown.

The site has footpaths providing both through routes and 'loop' paths across the area. The site is served by formal as well as informal footpaths. The formal paths, labelled on Map 3, lead through the glade and ride (path 2 and 3) and areas of the woodland (path 2 and 4). These paths vary in terms of surfacing and width. There used to be a 1.5m whinstone surfaced path along path 2, where you enter the woodland into the glade, but this has become overgrown with grass and vegetation. The rest of path 2 was not surfaced and used to be 1m wide but has become overgrown in parts.

Paths 3 and 4 are not surfaced and used to be 1m wide, but both have become overgrown. Paths 1 and 1a are also not surfaced and the woodland edge along path 1 is starting to obstruct the path.

There are informal unsurfaced paths in areas of the woodland which are generally short routes formed between the main formal paths. They seem to be formed by local children who use the woodland as a play and recreational area, but also by groups of people displaying anti-social behaviour.

The woodland cover provides screening from adjacent housing, public roads, and the canal towpath, providing cover for anti-social behaviour. There is evidence of unwanted access in the north west corner of the woodland where there is an open area under the tree canopy and which is screened from the canal towpath, with signs of fires and glass which has been broken on a very large stone.

Littering and fly-tipping are major problems in the woodland and along the woodland edge. There is broken glass and litter around the engraved stone feature next to path 2 (see Map 3) and evidence of a fire along path 4. Illegal drinking takes place within the woodland as left-over drink containers testify. These activities take place throughout the day and act to discourage recreational use of the site.



There is a lot of dog fouling in and around the woodland which is unpleasant and unsafe for children playing on site. There is one dog fouling bin which is emptied by the council but is regularly overflowing.

The site is an important recreational area for local children, especially because there is a lack of playground provision in the area. The formal play areas which are located nearby are vandalised, lack equipment and are generally uninviting.

### 3.7 Community and Events

The woodland and its associated areas of open space provide an attractive 'green oasis' within what is otherwise an urban environment, and in an area otherwise lacking in semi-natural habitat. These factors mean that the site has a high local amenity value. However, fire damage, dog fouling, vandalism, litter, and fly-tipping somewhat detract from the amenity value of the area.

The woodland is heavily used by residents, primarily for walking and dog walking, and by children as an informal playground. It is the primary area of recreational and amenity space within Westburn, with its importance heightened by the enclosed nature of the housing estate.

There used to be the Woods Youth Centre next to the woodland which delivered activities and events for youths. Unfortunately, this closed about ten years ago after which the building was used by Social Services, and then became a sorting office for the City of Edinburgh Council before the building was demolished a few years ago.

The woodland is highly valued by sections of the local community. Westburn used to have an active Residents Committee, which plays an active role in supporting the woodland, but they stopped about five years ago. There is a Wester Hailes Facebook group where activities and sightings at Westburn Wood are shared, including from their night cams. Furthermore, WHALE Arts, a community-led arts charity and social enterprise, have recently been working in Westburn Woods as part of their National Community Lottery funded project. Their intention is to engage the local community with the Wood, finding out their opinion of the site and what they would like to see there.

They have also organised events on site, such as a Bioblitz and litter picking. They have created a website called the 'Explorers of Westburn Woods':

(<https://explorersofwestburnwoods.wordpress.com>) where you can find out more about the woodland and what to do and see there, share photos, videos and stories, and read poems and see drawings.

School sessions regularly take place in the woodland in the spring and summer and there is an appetite for family orientated woodland activities.

### 3.8 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

Westburn Wood is within a residential area that ranks among the highest 50% in the country on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation rankings. The surrounding areas rank in the highest 10-20%. This means that the level of car ownership and health standards are relatively low. These factors combined give the site a higher status as a local amenity, providing opportunities for informal recreation with access for local people on foot.

## 4.0 Aims and Objectives

1. Ensure Westburn Wood is a welcoming and accessible open space for visitors.
2. Conserve and improve the wildlife of Westburn Wood.
3. Increase the biodiversity of Westburn Wood.
4. Increase community engagement and encourage participation in local community events.
5. Maintain Westburn Wood as a clean, safe and secure open space.

## 5.0 Management Prescriptions

### 5.1 Habitats and Wildlife

#### 5.1.1 Woodland

Areas of the woodland would benefit from thinning, removing less healthy or less desirable trees to allow other trees to develop. This will also allow more light to the woodland floor which encourages an 'understorey' of small plants, shrubs and trees to develop.

In the newly planted areas, trees are dense and have become tall and spindly. Less desirable trees should be removed from these areas, giving the remaining trees more space to develop (see Map 3 for management proposals).

The young woodland and shrub areas on the woodland edge, running adjacent to path 1, the south eastern corner of the woodland and the area adjacent to path 3, would all benefit from thinning. This will open up the woodland edge helping the site to feel more visible, safer and welcoming. It may also help deter fly tipping and anti-social behaviour.

The semi-mature woodland in the north west corner of the site, would benefit from thinning to discourage anti-social behaviour. This area is a particular hotspot for fires, drinking and littering, so if some vegetation were cleared to open the area towards the canal, it would be more visible and may act as a deterrent.

In the more mature areas of woodland, sycamore and ash should be removed due to their prolificacy and ash die back respectively. They should be replaced with native species such as oak, hazel, hawthorn, rowan, blackthorn, scots pine and common alder (in damp areas). There is also the opportunity to plant beech, a non-native but does well in eastern Scotland.

In areas which will be enriched with native species after thinning, newly planted trees should receive after care for 5 to 10 years after being planted (see Appendix 1 for more detail).

There is a large mature sycamore which needs its crown lifting in the south west corner of the woodland.

#### 5.1.2 Shrub

There is a lot of thick shrubs along the woodland edge which blocks your view into the woodland. Removing or thinning these areas will enable people to see into and out of the woodland, making it feel safer and more welcoming. If the woodland is visually more penetrable, antisocial behaviour will be discouraged. This should be done sensitively however, as shrubs provide an important habitat for wildlife. Thinning should take place outside of the bird nesting season (March until July).

The laurel along path 1 and path 2 should be removed and replaced with native species, planted sparsely to ensure the woodland feels open and safe.

Where paths and entrances have become overgrown, the vegetation should be cut back to allow for easy access and visibility. If vegetation is cut back during the bird nesting season, care and caution should be taken.

### 5.1.3 Glades and rides

To prevent the glade and ride being lost to succession, scrub and vegetation growing in the centre and along the edges should be removed/cut back.

In the north of the site, along the ride/path 2, there used to be a path going towards the canal which would have opened to attractive views and provided visibility into the woodland. This should be re-established by cutting back the overgrown bramble bush and other vegetation.

Wildflower seeds and bulbs, such as snowdrops and harebells, should be planted in the glade and ride to diversify the flora and provide a nectar source for insects.

### 5.1.4 Nature Conservation Value

In addition to the management suggested for the site's habitats, bird, bat and owl boxes could be installed (see Appendix 2 for advice on making and putting up the boxes). Numerous birds have been sited at the woodland and given its proximity to the canal and the existence of mature woodland areas, it is an ideal habitat for bats and owls.

Dead wood is also an important feature in woodlands, providing a habitat for many fungi, plants and animals, including insects which provide food for birds and bats. Some wood from the thinning activities should be left on site and wildlife habitats made from cut back vegetation.

Decreasing disturbance at the site and planting more rowan and elder, may encourage badgers to return. More widely, the creation of wildlife corridor networks linking to the site and other greenspaces will also aid their return.

### 5.1.5 Non-Native Invasive Species

Although giant hogweed is unlikely to establish in Westburn Wood, the bank along the northern edge of the woodland, along the Union Canal, should be surveyed for it and if found, removed by a professional specialist organisation.

## 5.2 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

In general, Westburn Wood needs to become a more welcoming place. This can be achieved by making it safer, cleaner and more accessible.

There is an attractive stone bench feature with the word 'Westburn' engraved in it along path 2 on the edge of the glade. More should be made of this feature by, for example, tidying the surrounding area, including removing litter and cutting back vegetation.

There is fly-tipping at several areas along the woodland edge and along path 2 which needs clearing. The entire woodland would also benefit from regular litter picking. To help prevent littering bins could be installed along path 1 and by the engraved stone bench.

Path 2 should be upgraded to a 1.5m wide whinstone path, starting from the south eastern entrance and ending where it meets path 3. Path 1 and 1a should also be upgraded to a 1.5m wide whinstone path. This will provide easier access for all including people who are less mobile.

To the west of the site there is a path and some wooden steps leading to Quarrybank End which have become overgrown and inaccessible. The vegetation needs cutting back to re-establish the path and to allow access to the steps. The steps need to have grips fitted and a survey of the steps condition should be carried out.

Trees and vegetation should be cut back along the edge of path 4 to ensure the sharp drop is visible. The path should also be layered with wood chippings to prevent hazardous mud. The south west entrance to path 4 should be opened up by cutting back the vegetation.

Path 2 needs to be maintained by cutting the vegetation along its edges back. Path 3 needs to be re-established by removing vegetation and its entrances need clearing.

In the north west area of the woodland where there is a problem with anti-social behaviour, the large stone should be removed to stop glass bottles being smashed on it. Native thorny hedge species, such as blackthorn and hawthorn, could be planted at the entrance to the 'unwanted access' area (see Maps 2 and 3) to discourage access.

More dog fouling bins are needed, although the ability to empty them will need to be discussed with the council. Signs could also be erected to remind people to pick up their dog's mess and of the fine given if caught.

### 5.3 Community and Events

Evidently, there is already some good community engagement with the Wood from residents, schools and through the WHALE Arts project. It is important to build on this, promoting the Explorers of Westburn Woods website and organising more educational events within the woodland.

Family orientated woodland activities should be organised in the evenings and weekends when families are available.

The Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust has started organising a regular volunteer group to help deliver elements of this plan, such as vegetation clearance, litter picking and bulb planting. The aim is to establish the group and then give them the means to continue without ELGT.

Through WHALE Arts' and ELGT's activities it is hoped that a Friends group may be established. Having a Friends group will help increase engagement with the woodland, give ownership to the community, create community cohesion, give the Wood more of a voice and help improve its management.

## 6.0 Action Plans and Maps

Abbreviations:

ELGT = Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust, CT = Contractor, PCH = Prospect Community Housing, WHALE = WHALE Arts,

V = Volunteers

### 6.1 Annual and Regular Actions

Ref no.	Action	Objective no.	When	Delivery
1.1	Deliver family orientated woodland activities	4	April – September	ELGT/V
1.2	Regularly mow amenity grassland to south of woodland	1 & 5	May – September	PCH
1.3	Where needed, cut back vegetation along paths and entrances	1 & 5	October - January	ELGT/V
1.4	Open up glades and rides – remove scrub growth and cut back vegetation along glade and ride edges	2 & 3	October - January	ELGT/V
1.5	Improve engraved stone feature - remove litter and clear vegetation	1 & 5	October - January	ELGT/V
1.6	Cut back vegetation at opening from glade to canal in northern area of woodland	1 & 5	October - January	ELGT/V
1.7	Clear vegetation along steps and path	1 & 5	October - January	ELGT/V
1.8	Clear along path 4 edge to make sharp drop visible	1 & 5	October - January	ELGT/V
1.9	Clear fly tipping	1 & 5	Monthly	PCH
1.10	Litter pick where necessary	1 & 5	Monthly	ELGT/V
1.11	Once installed, empty waste and dog fouling bins	1 & 5	Weekly	Council/PCH
1.12	Encourage continued use of the woodland by WHALE arts and support in any way	2, 3 & 4	Ongoing	WHALE & ELGT/V

## 6.2 Actions 2020

Ref no.	Action	Objective no.	When	Delivery
2.1	Establish a regular volunteer group to carry out woodland management activities	2, 3 & 4	November 2020	ELGT
2.2	Cut back vegetation along path 2	1 & 5	November – December 2020	ELGT/V
2.3	Plant bulbs and sow wildflower seeds in appropriate places glades and rides	2 & 3	November – December 2020	ELGT/V

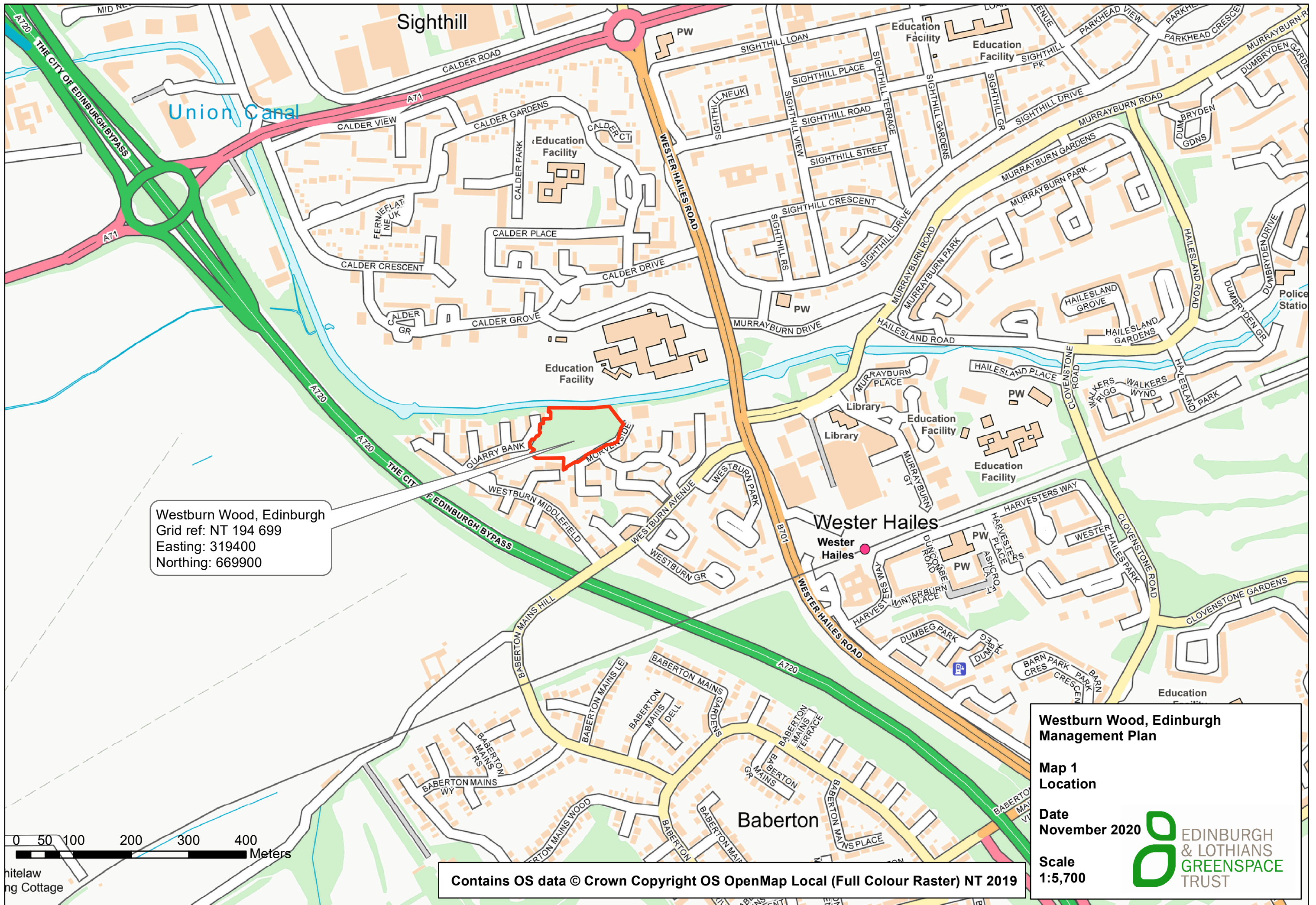
## 6.3 Actions 2021 – 2022

Ref no.	Action	Objective no.	When	Delivery
3.1	Re-establish path 3 – cut back vegetation along path and at entrances	1 & 5	January – March 2021	ELGT/V
3.2	Cut back vegetation to re-establish opening from ride to canal in northern area of woodland	2 & 3	January - March 2021	ELGT/V
3.3	Clear and open up south west entrance to path 4	1 & 5	January – March 2021	ELGT/V
3.4	Start delivering family orientated woodland activities at weekends and in the evenings	4	April – September 2021	ELGT/V
3.5	Put in timber edging and line path 4 with wood chippings to prevent hazardous mud and path erosion	1 & 5	November 2021	ELGT/V
3.6	Upgrade path 2 to 1.5m whinstone from south eastern entrance to where it meets path 3	1	May 2021	CT
3.7	Upgrade path 1 and 1a to 1.5m whinstone	1	May 2021	CT
3.8	Remove large stone in north west of site to discourage anti-social behaviour (see Map 3)	1 & 5	May 2021	CT
3.9	Install waste and more dog fouling bins	1 & 5	July 2021	CT
3.10	Carry out planting (hawthorn and blackthorn) to discourage access in north west corner	1 & 5	November – January 2021/22	ELGT/V
3.11	Improve grip of steps	5	March - June 2021	ELGT/V

3.12	Thin woodland edge to open it up along length of path 1	1 & 5	November - January 2021/22	ELGT/V
3.13	Remove laurel along path 2	1, 3 & 5	November – January 2021/22	CT
3.14	Carry out thinning in north west corner to discourage anti-social behaviour	1 & 5	November – January 2021/22	CT
3.15	Remove laurel along southern edge	1, 3 & 5	November – January 2021/22	CT

#### 6.4 Actions 2023 – 2025

Ref no.	Action	Objective no.	When	Delivery
4.1	Thin south eastern corner	1, 3 & 5	November – January 2022/23	CT
4.2	Carry out thinning adjacent to path 3	1 & 5	November – January 2022/23	CT
4.3	Thin and enrich with native species (see Map 3) - remove ash, due to ash die back, and sycamore. Replace with oak, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, scots pine and elm	1, 2, 3 & 5	November – January 2022/23	CT
4.4	Crown lift sycamore in south west corner	5	November – January 2022/23	CT
4.5	Clear sycamore and enrich with native species in south western area	2 & 3	November – January 2022/23	CT
4.6	Carry out care and maintenance of newly planted trees	2 & 3	From 2023 carry out monthly in late spring and summer. Once in autumn and winter	V



Westburn Wood, Edinburgh  
 Grid ref: NT 194 699  
 Easting: 319400  
 Northing: 669900



nitelaw  
 ng Cottage

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright OS OpenMap Local (Full Colour Raster) NT 2019

**Westburn Wood, Edinburgh  
 Management Plan**

**Map 1  
 Location**

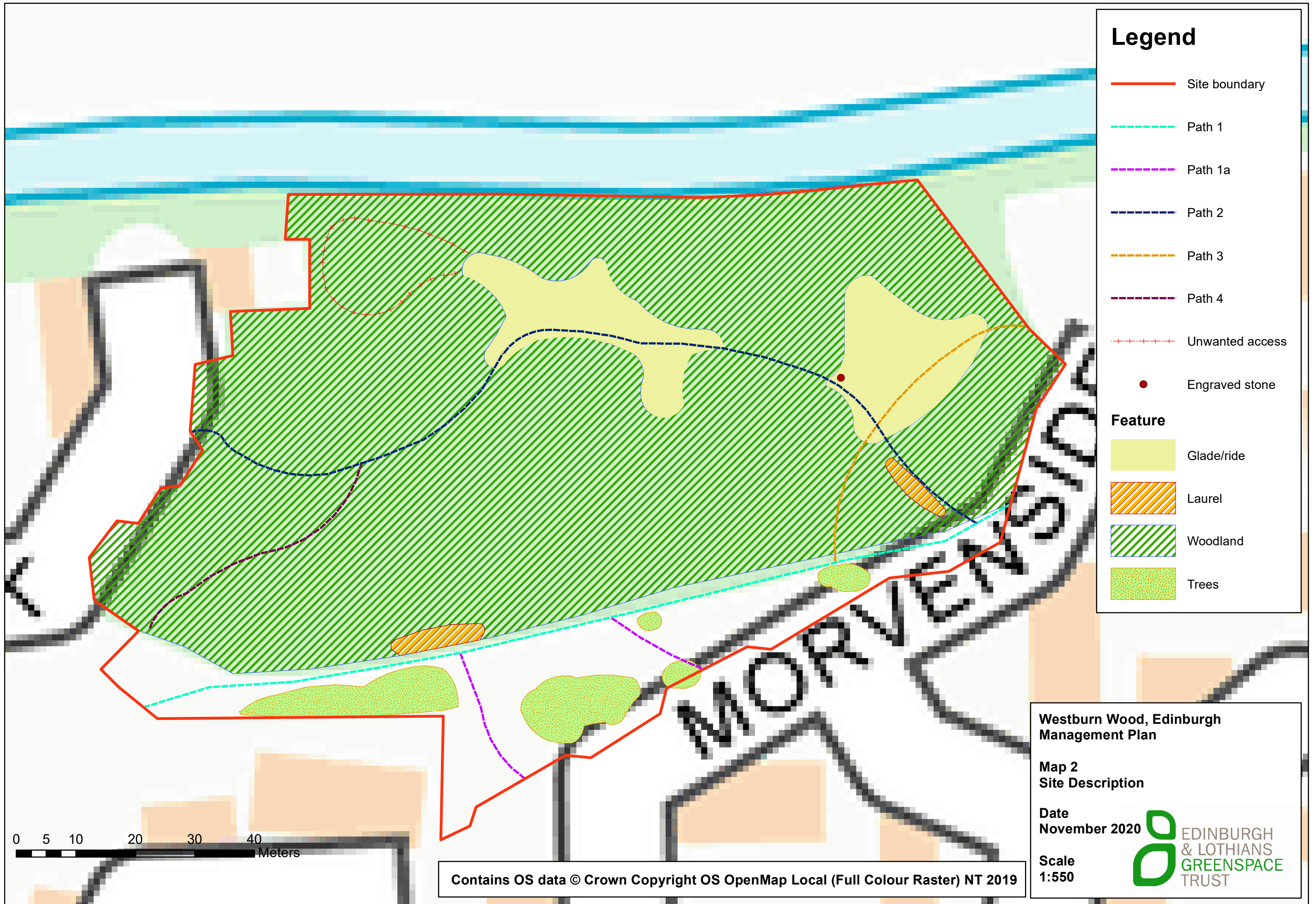
**Date  
 November 2020**

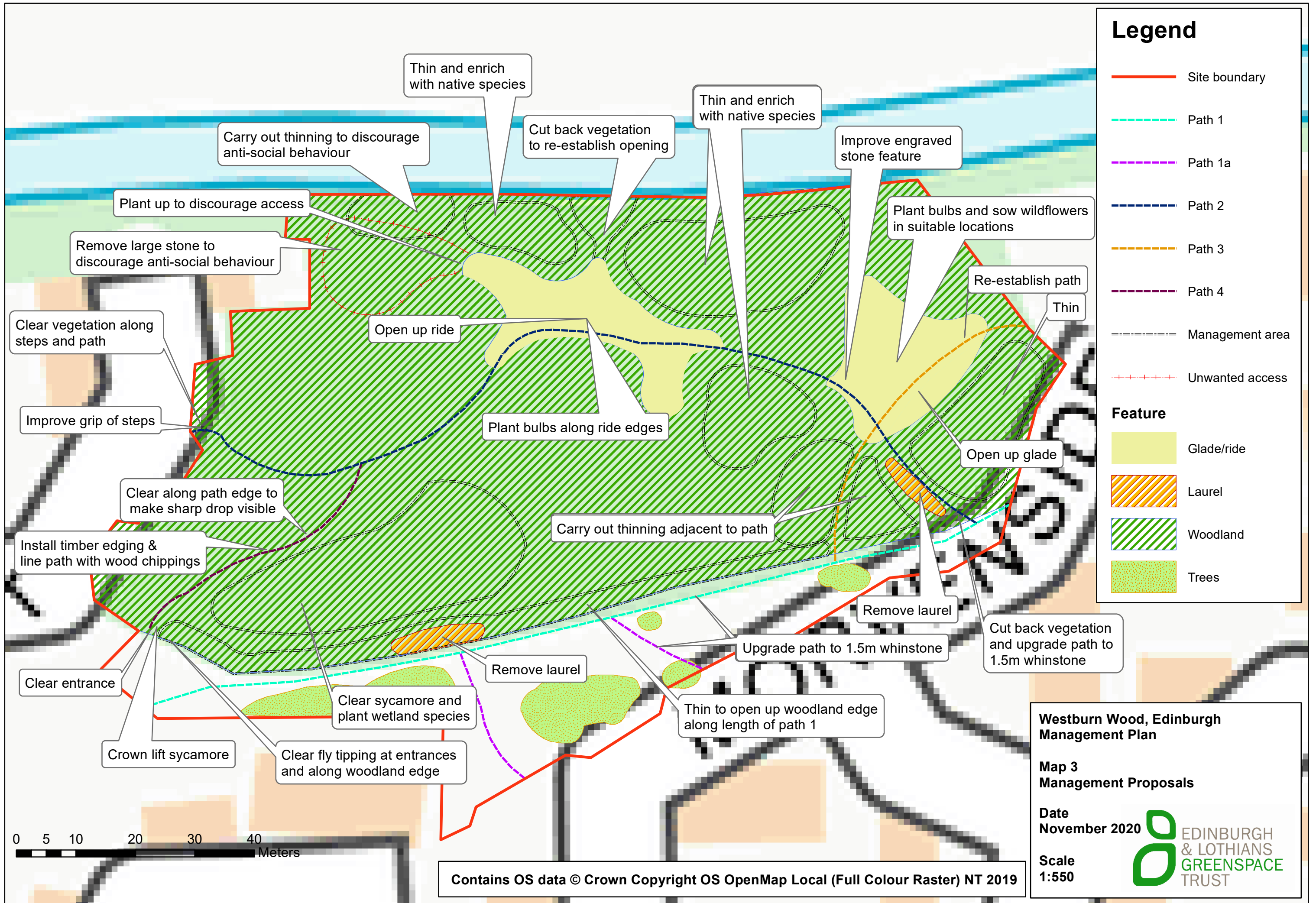
**Scale  
 1:5,700**



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## 7.0 Appendices

### 7.1 Appendix 1

The following is advice from the Woodland Trust (<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/care/> )

#### Year 1-3

Make sure everyone involved in maintenance of the space knows where your trees have been planted to avoid mowing or accidental damage.

#### Weeding

Weeding is the most important step in giving your trees the right start. Keeping a 1 metre diameter around the tree clear of weeds and grass for the first 2-3 years will reduce competition for moisture and nutrients.

You can suppress weeds with mulch, such as bark chips or straw bales. Apply it to a depth of around 10cm to prevent it being blown away or dispersed and top it up annually. You can also buy mulch mats and peg them into the ground to keep them in place.

Alternatively, chemical-based products such as glyphosate will kill weeds. Spray around the base of each tree to create a weed-free ring, approximately 1m in diameter. As with all pesticides, take care when applying and be careful not to touch the tree with the chemical. You must adhere to all instructions and guidance around its use.

#### Watering

Your trees will adapt to natural conditions so should not need watering, especially as it encourages roots to grow up towards the soil surface rather than down towards groundwater. If there is a particularly long dry spell and you feel watering is necessary, saturate the ground to ensure water soaks deep into the soil.

#### Mowing

Regular grass cutting is not advised as it invigorates grass growth and increases competition for moisture. If you do want to mow, take care to avoid damaging the trees and guards.

#### Check your tree guards

Strong winds can blow trees over so make sure your guards, canes or stakes are upright and pushed firmly into the soil. Pull up any grass growing inside the guard and carefully replace the guard.

#### Pests

Pests can cause damage inside the tube so check tree stems and guards for damage. Keeping tree guards firmly pressed into the soil and a weed-free area around your trees will help.

#### Year 3-10

#### Remove tree guards

Remove guards as soon as they split and before they start to disintegrate (usually after 5-10 years). They have now done their job and may hamper growth. Dispose of the plastics responsibly to protect local wildlife. The tubes are made from polypropylene (PP) and the spirals are PVC. Both can

be recycled where facilities exist; check with your local authority or find a specialist company like Agri.cycle.

### Pruning

This is not essential but will encourage trees to grow upwards rather than outwards once established and help to create a diverse canopy structure.

Invest in a good pruning saw and make a clean-cut close to the tree trunk. The cut should be square to the branch and preserve the bulge at its base, known as the branch collar. To prevent disease and decay, be sure not to damage the tree's bark and never cut the branch flush with the main stem as this creates a larger wound.

Most native trees are best pruned in winter when dormant. However, species such as cherry and walnut need pruning in summer to reduce risk of disease and sap bleeding. If unsure, always seek expert advice.

### Coppicing

This involves cutting a tree at its base to encourage new growth. Coppicing also allows light to reach the woodland floor, helping flowers to flourish. Your trees could be ready to coppice after seven to 10 years, depending on species and growth rate.

### Disease

Your trees may be affected by a variety of common diseases but will rarely kill young trees. A particularly cold winter may result in frost damage, but your trees should recover. You can find out more about tree disease on the Woodland Trust's pests and diseases page.

### Thinning

Thinning is usually done around year 10, or when trees are about 7m tall. The process is repeated on a 5-8 year cycle. Felling around 1 in 5 trees will reduce competition for light, water and nutrients. By giving the remaining trees more room, they develop a better shape and grow stronger and more resilient.

Identify the best growing trees and remove their competition. If your trees have a diameter of more than 10cm at chest height, you may need to apply to the Forestry Commission for a felling licence.

## 7.2 Appendix 2

See here for detailed information on how to make and install bird boxes:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxesfor-small-birds/making-and-placing-a-bird-box/>

See here for more information about bat boxes: <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes>

See here for more information about owl boxes: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxes-for-owls-and-kestrels/>