

How to...

Look after your community woodland



Who is this guide for?

This is for people who already have an established community group to look after a woodland. If you haven't set up a group you can see our guide 'How to...Create a community woodland group'.

What will this guide help you to do?

It will help you to understand how to look after the woodland for the benefit of the local community as well as the environment and wildlife.

What are community woodlands?

A 'community woodland' refers to any woodland where the local community has some degree of control over how the woodland is run or managed. Such woodlands are usually supported by a community woodland group. The woodland may be owned or leased by the community group, or it may be managed in partnership with another organisation (usually the landowner) through a management agreement.

1 Putting a plan in place

All woodlands should ideally have a management plan in place; these act as a guide as to what is needed to ensure the woodland thrives in the long term. Plans should outline; what the woodland resource is; what's important e.g. certain trees and wildlife; set out management objectives and then outline a plan of agreed work.

This should be a joint plan with the group, local community and the landowner.

Need help writing a management plan?

This useful document provides detailed information on how to create your plan - [//llaisygoedwig.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/AN4-Writing-a-management-plan.pdf](http://llaisygoedwig.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/AN4-Writing-a-management-plan.pdf)

The Forestry Commission has also produced a great guide on how to get to know your woodland - [//forestry.gov.uk/pdf/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf/\\$file/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf](http://forestry.gov.uk/pdf/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf/$file/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf)

As well as a template woodland management plan with examples: [//forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-9bmjwe](http://forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-9bmjwe)

City of Trees also offers a woodland management plan service (at a cost) and can visit the site and create a plan for you to implement. For more information contact [Andy Long](mailto:andy@cityoftrees.org.uk) | 0161 872 1660 | andy@cityoftrees.org.uk

2 Making it happen

Once you have your woodland management plan, the next step is to put it into action!

Volunteer power – It can be useful to break things down into the pieces of work that volunteers can do – which will also help engage the community! – as well what larger pieces of work need to be done that you might need to seek funding for.

Funding – The most likely sources are small community grants such as Tesco Bags of Help, as well as other local pots. A useful starting point is your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) if you have one, or you could try Manchester Community Central which has a portal where you can search for funding (you need to register as a member – it's free) /manchestercommunitycentral.org/support-groups/search-funding

Other things you need to consider when implementing your plan

- Appropriate insurance and risk assessments
- What tools, equipment and training you will need
- The time of year you complete activities, taking into account things like the bird nesting season
- What other work is planned within or around the site so your work complements and adds value to it

Tell us what you're doing!

We'd love to hear about what you're doing to help bring your community woodland back to life! We can help promote your volunteering days and events as well as potentially offer support around tree planting. *Get in touch!*

CASE STUDY: Amberswood common, Wigan



City of Trees helped to manage the 122.5 hectare woodland site including creating invaluable habitat for Willow tits.

Amberswood is located in Ince-in-Makerfield in Wigan and comprises young plantation woodland and other habitats.

City of Trees worked on a plan to help bring the woodland back to life, working alongside The Friends of Amberswood group.

The woodland is home to a small population of Willow tits, which are the most rapidly declining resident bird in the UK and a Red List species of conservation concern. The woodland was managed with the nesting sites in mind, and to encourage further breeding of this rare species.

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