

Nature in the Dales:

# 2020 vision

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The second Biodiversity Action Plan for the  
Yorkshire Dales National Park

## **Native Woodland Habitat Action Plan**

Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum, 2011  
Amended Feb 2015

## NATIVE WOODLAND ACTION PLAN

### DEFINITIONS

**Upland mixed ashwoods** are found on base-rich soils in the north and west of upland Britain. Ash is a major species, although locally oak, birch, elm, small-leaved lime and even hazel may be the most abundant species. Yew may form small groves in intimate mosaics with the other major tree species and alder may occur where there are transitions to wet woodland. Despite variations in canopy composition the ground flora remains broadly similar.

In terms of National Vegetation Classification (NVC) plant communities this habitat is characterised by W8 *Fraxinus excelsior* - *Acer campestre* - *Mercurialis perennis* woodland, sub communities d. *Hedera helix*, e. *Geranium robertianum*, f. *Allium ursinum* and g. *Teucrium scorodonia*, and W9 *Fraxinus excelsior* - *Sorbus aucuparia* - *Mercurialis perennis* woodland, together with W13 *Taxus baccata* woodland for the yew groves on the Carboniferous and Magnesian limestones. Less frequent sub-communities that may occur in mosaic with the above are the relatively dry alder- ash stands W7c and the more southerly and eastern sub-communities of W8 (a-c).

**Upland oakwoods** are characterised by a predominance of oak (most commonly sessile, but locally pedunculate) and birch in the canopy, with varying amounts of holly, rowan and hazel as the main understorey species. The amount of birch varies but tends to increase towards north-west Scotland. The range of plants found in the ground layer varies according to the underlying soil type and degree of grazing from bluebell-bramble-fern communities through grass and bracken dominated ones to healthy moss-dominated areas. Most oakwoods also contain areas of more alkaline soils, often along streams or towards the base of slopes where much richer communities occur, with ash and elm in the canopy, more hazel in the understorey and ground plants such as dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, Ramsons *Allium ursinum*, Enchanter's nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, and tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*. Elsewhere small alder stands may occur or peaty hollows covered by bog mosses *Sphagnum* spp. These elements are an important part of the upland oakwood system.

**Wet woodland** occurs on poorly drained or seasonally wet soils, usually with alder, birch and willows as the predominant tree species, but sometimes including ash, oak, pine and beech on the drier riparian areas. It is found on floodplains, as a succession habitat on fens, mires and bogs, along streams and hill-side flushes, and in peaty hollows. These woodlands occur on a range of soil types including nutrient-rich mineral and acid, nutrient-poor organic ones. The boundaries with dryland woodland may be sharp or gradual and may (but not always) change with time through succession, depending on the hydrological conditions and the treatment of the wood and its surrounding land. Therefore wet woods frequently occur in mosaic with other woodland key habitat types (e.g. with upland mixed ash or oakwoods) and with open key habitats such as fens. Management of individual sites needs to consider both sets of requirements. In terms of National Vegetation Classification (NVC) plant communities this habitat is characterised by W1 *Salix cinerea* -

*Galium palustre* woodland, W2 *Salix cinerea* - *Betula pubescens* - *Phragmites australis* woodland, W3 *Salix pentandra* - *Carex rostrata* woodland, W4c *Betula pubescens* - *Molinia caerulea* woodland: *Sphagnum* sub-community, W5 *Alnus glutinosa* - *Carex paniculata* woodland, W6 *Alnus glutinosa* - *Urtica dioica* woodland, and W7 *Alnus glutinosa* - *Fraxinus excelsior* - *Lysimachia nemorum* woodland.

## STATUS IN YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK 2011

ESTIMATED AREA IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK IN "GOOD CONDITION"

SSSI (Favourable, Unfavourable-recovering):	92%
Non-SSSI (Condition A):	13%
Total (SSSI Favourable, Unfavourable-recovering, Non-SSSI A):	55%

## UK & REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY TARGETS 2011

UK BAP Targets	Priority Actions for YDNP LBAP
Maintain the existing area of ancient broadleaved woodland, which qualifies as native woodland; i.e. no change in the existing area of 251kha (leaving 88kha of conifer and mixed plantations on ancient woodland sites.	Yes
No net loss of native woodland; i.e. the area of non-ancient broadleaved woodland totals at least 284kha.	Yes
Achieve favourable or recovering condition of 350kha (65%) of native broadleaved woodland by 2010.	Yes
Ensure by 2010, 19kha (22%) of the 88kha of coniferous or mixed PAWS have been restored or are under gradual restoration.	Yes
Ensure by 2020, a further 14,000ha (10%) of the coniferous or mixed PAWS are being actively conserved.	Yes
Expand the area of native broadleaved woodland by 26,000ha by 2010, through a combination of converting (restocking) existing plantations and creating native woodland on ex-agricultural land.	Yes

Regional Biodiversity Targets	Priority Actions for YDNP LBAP
Restore 3780ha (requiring 2473ha additional gain).	Yes
Expand by 7154ha (requiring 6386ha additional gain).	Yes

## NATURE IN THE DALES: 2020 VISION OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS, TARGETS & MILESTONES

### Objectives

**NW1:** To have 95% of Native Woodland in “Good Condition” (Favourable, Unfavourable-recovering in SSSI, A outside SSSI) by 2020.

**NW2:** To create 400 ha of new Native Woodland by 2020.

### Actions & Targets

Actions	Target (% of total target)	Main Delivery Mechanism	Lead Organisation	Indicator
<b>NW1.1:</b> No net loss of Native Woodland.	-	Woodland Management Agreements	YDNPA	No net loss of area of native woodland
<b>NW1.2:</b> Maintain existing area of SSSI Native Woodland in "Good Condition".	92%			
<b>NW1.3:</b> Maintain existing area of non-SSSI Native Woodland in "Good Condition".	13%	Woodland Management Agreements	YDNPA	Area of habitat in "Good Condition"
<b>NW1.4:</b> Enhance degraded SSSI Native Woodland to “Good Condition”.	3%			
<b>NW1.5:</b> Enhance degraded non-SSSI Native Woodland to “Good Condition”.	39%			
<b>NW2.1:</b> Create 400ha of new Native Woodland.	400ha	Woodland Creation Grants	YDNPA	Area of New Native Woodland

### Milestones

Actions	Target	When?
<b>NW1.1:</b> No net loss of Native Woodland.	-	Ongoing
<b>NW1.3:</b> Maintain existing area of SSSI Native Woodland in “Good Condition”.	92%	Ongoing
<b>NW1.4:</b> Maintain existing area of non-SSSI Native Woodland in “Good Condition”.	13%	Ongoing
<b>NW1.5:</b> Enhance degraded SSSI Native Woodland to “Good Condition”.	2%	2016
	3%	2020
<b>NW1.6:</b> Enhance degraded non-SSSI Native Woodland to “Good Condition”.	20%	2016
	39%	2020
<b>NW2.1:</b> Create 400ha of new Native Woodland.	200	2016
	400	2020

*Nature in the Dales: 2020 Vision* was written and co-ordinated by Tim Thom, Ian Court, Frances Graham & Hannah Fawcett of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in 2011, following consultation. The production of the plan was steered, advised and supported by the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum who will be responsible for ensuring that the actions and targets in *Nature in the Dales: 2020 Vision* are achieved. Minor revisions made Feb 2015.

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