

Scottish Borders
WOOD PASTURE and PARKLAND
HABITAT ACTION PLAN



Our Scottish Borders
Your environment



WOOD PASTURE and

Current Status

Lowland wood-pastures and parkland are the products of historic land management systems and represent a vegetation structure rather than being a particular plant community. Typically this structure consists of large, open-grown or high forest trees (often pollards) at various densities, in a matrix of grazed grassland, heathland and/ or woodland florae. Veteran trees may be a feature of this habitat and may date from medieval forests and parks and old commons. Policy woodlands and designed landscapes are included in this habitat. The Borders holds some important wood pasture sites that can be identified as existing at the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps (1850).

National Vegetation Communities (NVC) associated with this habitat:

W10 *Quercus robur*-*Pteridium aquilinum*-*Rubus fruticosus* woodland and W16 *Quercus spp*-*Betula spp*-*Deschampsia flexuosa* woodland.

Key Species (Species of Conservation Concern SoCC)

Bats, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, song thrush *Turdus philomelos*, spotted flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*, tree sparrow *Passer montanus viridis*, several nationally scarce and UKBAP priority beetles - e.g. lesser stag and rhinoceros beetles and lichens e.g. *incompta*.

For full list of SoCC see:

<http://www.scottishborders.gov.uk/environment/naturalheritage/>

Key Issues

- loss of and lack of protection for veteran trees
- lack of pollarding
- fragmentation of habitat
- undergrazing
- overgrazing
- agricultural improvements
- removal of deadwood
- lack of long-term replacement
- importance as a landscape feature.

Opportunities

- relevant elements of Land Management Contracts
- Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy implementation.

Current Action

- Borders Forest Trust has conducted a wood pasture creation and restoration project at Laidlawsteil in the Tweed Valley and Mountbenger and Sundhope farm in the Yarrow Valley
- Borders Forest Trust and SNH carried out a veteran tree survey in 1999 (Smith 2000) identifying 59 veteran trees
- Rural Stewardship Scheme contains a prescription to maintain and enhance old wood pastures (as identified from 1st edition OS maps and a SNH inventory)
- there are a range of outstanding designed landscapes maintained in the region including Ancrum Park, Mertoun Estate, Philiphaugh, Bowhill, Torwoodlee and Sunderland Hall near Selkirk, Lothian Estates and Roxburgh Estates.

Objectives

1. determine the status of wood pasture and parkland in Scottish Borders
2. restore and where appropriate enhance existing wood pasture and parkland in Scottish Borders
3. increase area of wood pasture and parkland in Scottish Borders
4. promote education and awareness initiatives focussed on wood pasture and parkland.
7. seek further opportunities to grant-aid/ support wood pasture management
8. develop and adopt robust guidance for management of wood pasture and parkland
9. survey priority invertebrate and lower plant communities of wood pasture and parkland
10. ensure that all relevant species and habitat data are made available to Scottish Borders Biological Record Centre and the Council's Ecology Officer
11. develop and initiate education and awareness projects, including events to improve biological recording, focussed on wood pasture and parkland.

Targets for Scottish Borders

1. complete SNH inventory of wood pasture sites by 2008
2. complete inventory of veteran trees by 2008
3. restore and enhance 200ha of wood pasture and parkland by 2010
4. create an additional 120ha of wood pasture and parkland in appropriate areas to reverse fragmentation by 2010
5. initiate one major education and awareness initiative focussed on wood pasture by 2008.

Key Actions

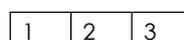
1. assess the status and extent of wood pasture and parkland in Scottish Borders
2. complete the Borders Forest Trust veteran tree inventory
3. ensure all veteran trees are covered by Tree Preservation Orders adopting Scottish Executive planning guidance
4. complete the SNH wood pasture inventory
5. promote the uptake of appropriate prescriptions for wood pasture and parkland through Land Management Contracts
6. promote the management of wood pasture and parkland on Scottish Borders Council's estate

Linkages to other HAPs, plans and strategies

Boundary features HAP
Lowland grassland HAP
Native woodland HAP
LBAP Information Action Plan
Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy
Scottish Forestry Strategy
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy

Front Cover Photos:

1. Borders Forest Trust
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to discuss your needs.**

It is also available on our website:
[www.scottishborders.gov.uk/life/
environment/naturalheritage/2715.html](http://www.scottishborders.gov.uk/life/environment/naturalheritage/2715.html)



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