

Habitats & Heritage in Hyndburn



A brief summary and snapshot of the 8 woodlands in the programme. Please use the separate location map as a guide to the location of each woodland within the district of Hyndburn, east Lancashire

Site: **Rushton House Farm**
Location: Adjacent to Fielding Lane / Broadfield, Oswaldtwistle
Grid Reference: SD 7492 2655
Size of site: 1.83 hectares
Initial Planting Year: 1965 Age: 52 years



Description

A disused pottery clay workings planted in 1965. Mixed species (lodgepole pine and broadleaf) on undulating terrain. Much holly regeneration. A long (250 metres) road frontage and rear boundary with farmland. Two ponds (one silted up). Short length of public footpath through the site at the southern end. Generally, an undisturbed woodland with potential for habitat protection and development and increased diversification of tree species.

- Post and rail boundary fence (250 metres) along highway frontage is in need of repair / replacement and trees overhanging footway all along frontage
- Northern boundary (with a house garden) is indistinct and in need of clarification
- Rear boundary (post and stock-netting) with farmland must be maintained (adjoining owner's responsibility)
- There are fishing rights (lease) on pond held by Broadfield Angling Club – need to clarify LCC intentions
- A number of fallen / hanging trees – mainly pine
- There are a number of areas of invasive species (Himalayan balsam / Japanese knotweed)
- No vehicular access at present

General comments about the site

Some weed control has already been carried out by Woody volunteers. A relatively isolated site with no internal paths apart from the PROW at the southern end. Has habitat potential. A good candidate for "leave it alone" management approach after initial maintenance.

Site: **Abbott Clough**
Location: Blackburn Road, Intack,
Oswaldtwistle
Grid Reference: SD 7111 2820
Size of site: 1.98 hectares
Initial Planting Year: 1979 Age: 38 years



Description

The woodland forms the eastern side of a small river clough on the northern side of Blackburn Road (opposite Wynsors Shoes). Originally planted with broadleaf species by LCC in 1979 following reclamation of adjoining derelict paintworks. The site adjoins a landscape belt of major employment site currently under development. Main road frontage. Housing estate and primary school (in Blackburn) to west.

- Concentrated area of invasive species (Himalayan balsam).
- No vehicular access at present.

- Front hedgerow along main road will have to be maintained / controlled.
- Single age woodland structure in need of thinning and diversification.
- An important green space given the very large development being built between the site and Mother Redcap.

General comments about the site

Subject to the usual urban edge pressures. Some weed control has already been carried out by Woody volunteers. Opportunities for community involvement with the adjoining school and housing estates.

Site: **Whinney Hill No.1 (East)**
(Cricket Club End)

Location: Main access points on Livingstone Road and Thorneyholme Road, Accrington

Grid Reference: SD 7617 2991

Size of site: 8.61 hectares

Initial Planting Year: 1987 Age: 30 years



Description

Flat land associated with the former brick-shale quarry / waste tip reclaimed and planted by LCC in 1987 and 1989. A large urban broadleaf woodland with good footpath access and intense public usage. Crossed by many public footpaths. Preponderance of willow and alder. Much potential for community involvement and habitat development. PROSPECTS' involvement to date with grant funded management and improvement has been very positive and demonstrates what can be achieved in one year with volunteer effort.

- The Lancashire Environmental Fund funded the first phase of woodland management work completed under arrangement with LCC by PROSPECTS with Woody CIC as contractor and Roger's volunteer team.

- Large areas of invasive Himalayan balsam and some knotweed – control / eradication in hand by volunteers.
- Boundaries – extensive and varied. Some fences require to be maintained as stockproof (already underway), some to prevent vehicular access (already partly done), but long lengths are not sensitive (with adjoining LCC or HBC land for example). Some trees overhanging residential boundaries in need of assessment and agreed action by LCC.
- Footpaths are generally well surfaced and in good order with some improvement required along short lengths.
- Need to diversify the age structure and species mix in the woodland – has commenced with further work required.
- Vehicular access – main points are secure (locked steel gates). There is a need for a kissing gate to exclude motorbikes at the Thorneyholme Road footpath entrance next to Accrington Cricket Club.
- There are a number of landfill gas monitoring wells on-site associated with deep ground conditions from former use and the adjoining landfill site– installed by LCC. To be excluded from any leaseholder agreements.

General comments about the site

Massive potential for community involvement and habitat development. PROSPECTS' involvement to date with grant funded management and improvement has been very positive and well received by residents and demonstrates what can be achieved in one year through volunteer effort. The improvements have been nominated for an LEF Annual Event Award. Very significant improvements have been achieved, much commented on by site users. A further phase would be appropriate.

Site: **Whinney Hill No.2 (West)**
(Pond End)

Location: Livingstone Road / Whinney Hill Road, Accrington

Grid Reference: SD 7574 3023

Size of site: 6.50 hectares

Initial Planting Year: 1993 Age: 24 years



Description

A former brick-shale quarry / waste tip and associated land, reclaimed and planted by LCC in 1993.

- Extensive access improvements have already been carried out under agreement with LCC by PROSPECTS volunteers (Roger's Monday & Tuesday teams) and under a tender let by PROSPECTS with Lancashire Environmental Fund grant funding. We have upgraded and resurfaced the main footpath linking Whinney Hill Road to Livingstone Road (625 metres) and installed waymarkers, seating and bird & owl boxes. A flight of steps (to create a circular walk) has been cleared and improved by Roger's volunteer group.

- Woodland management required to main wooded area to improve age structure and diversity
- Pond and former quarry face – very interesting features that remain from the days of quarrying and may have some industrial archaeology interest. Pond has been assessed as having habitat development potential by LWT. Explore potential for raptor nest sites on quarry face
- Boundary fence along Whinney Hill Road (opposite landfill site) is in need of repair in places – could be planted behind progressively to establish a hedgerow
- There are a number of landfill gas monitoring wells on-site associated with deep ground conditions from former use and the adjoining landfill site– installed by LCC. To be excluded from any leaseholder agreements

General comments about the site

Again, huge potential for community involvement and habitat development. PROSPECTS' involvement to date with grant funded management and improvement has been very positive and well received by residents and demonstrates what can be achieved in one year through volunteer effort. Very significant improvements have been achieved, much commented on by site users. A further phase would be appropriate.

Site: **Huncoat No.1 (West)**
(Canal Moorings side)

Location: West side of Altham Lane, Huncoat

Grid Reference: SD 7744 3146

Size of site: 5.75 hectares

Initial Planting Year: 1983 Age: 34 years



Description

Large area alongside M65 motorway to the west of Altham Lane. Planted as mixed broadleaf species by LCC in 1983. The site has a long boundary with the motorway along the southern edge, with farmland to the north and a short canal frontage to the west. Post and rail fence to Altham Lane. Locked steel gate from Altham Lane and secure surfaced access road alongside motorway, shared with residential property near the canal.

- Need to clarify responsibility for boundaries, particularly along motorway and canal.
- Need to clarify status of access and responsibilities.
- Whole site would benefit from comprehensive thinning / coppicing / management

- Risks of large scale fly-tipping or encroachment/occupation should be small due to secure shared access and difficult level changes.
- No invasive species seen

General comments about the site

An important valuable part of broken belt of woodland linking to sites to east and west into Huncoat and Altham and southwards towards Hameldon and the Coppice. Great wildlife potential. The value to the community could be greatly enhanced by access improvements. May offer scope for small-scale sole-trader commercial operations eg. coppice products, charcoaling, firewood, beekeeping - but would need a vehicular access.

Site: **Huncoat No.2 (East)**
(Graffiti Wall side)

Location: East side of Altham lane, Huncoat

Grid Reference: SD 7777 3165

Size of site: 4.50 hectares

Initial Planting Year: 1984 Age: 33 years



Description

A large rectangular area of single age mixed broadleaf species, including some hazel coppice, planted by LCC in 1983. The site has one boundary with Altham Lane, one with the M65 (noisy), one with the Leeds and Liverpool canal and one with adjoining farmland. There is currently no workable vehicular access. Extensive areas of Himalayan balsam. Frontage post and rail fence in good condition. Ground conditions quite wet in places.

- Need to clarify responsibility for boundaries, particularly along motorway and canal

- Invasive species control must be priority – already controlled significantly during 2017 by Woody volunteers, with LCC agreement.
- Whole site would benefit from a comprehensive thinning / coppicing / management.
- Risks of large scale fly-tipping or encroachment/occupation should be small due to lack of access and difficult level changes.
- Clarify responsibilities where on-site watercourse crosses under canal

General comments about the site

Important valuable part of broken belt of woodland linking to sites to east and west into Huncoat and Altham and southwards towards Hameldon and the Coppice. Great wildlife potential. The value to the community could be greatly enhanced by access improvements. May offer scope for small-scale sole-trader commercial operations e.g. coppice products, charcoaling, firewood, beekeeping - but would need a vehicular access.

Site: **Warcocks Green**
Location: Haslingden Old Road, Oswaldtwistle
Grid Reference: SD 7150 2683
Size of site: 2.94 hectares
Initial Planting Year: 1965 Age: 52 years



General comments about the site

This site is an undulating former sand and gravel workings planted in 1965 by LCC following reclamation. Predominantly lodgepole pine. The site adjoins the M65. A rather isolated site. Some wet areas and ponds.

- Need to clarify boundary responsibilities particularly along motorway frontage.
- Lodgepole pine has little timber value and limited habitat importance so need to consider management options – including clear fell and re-plant or diversify.
- Appears to be mountain bike / possibly scrambler use going on.
- Need to consider that the site may be vulnerable to encroachment or fly-tipping due to isolation and ease of access.

Site: **Martholme Greenway**
Location: Mill Lane, Great Harwood
Grid Reference: SD 7506 3344
Size of site: 8.00 hectares
Initial Planting Year: Unknown Age: Unknown



General comments about the site

Stretch of former railway line from Mill Lane to Martholme viaduct, planted with broadleaf species by LCC following reclamation. A very well used and beautiful walkway and cycletrack through woods. There is already a very active local group currently implementing a management scheme with Lancs Env. Fund and Windfall assistance and chainsaw training provided by Woody CIC. Potential for opening the viaduct to public access and linking to greenway north- and east-wards into Read and Simonstone (outside borough).

- Boundaries need assessing.
- Great potential for working with group to enhance and improve habitat and community value.
- Potential to work with the local group through an agreement or sub-letting arrangement.