

Tree and Nature Conservation Management Plan for Manor Park

Tree and Nature Conservation Management Plan

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Appendices

(The appendices of the plan are available for viewing on request)

- 1 Plan indicating extent of TPO and Conservation Area
- 2 Plan showing location of compartments and table of management recommendations
- 3 Species List
- 4 Action Plan

Revised October 2007

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Manor Park is a major park within Glossop, it has local historical and landscape importance. The park provides a variety of semi-natural habitats and is a valued resource for the residents of Glossop.
- 1.2 A management plan for the park has been prepared and this document supplements this overall plan with a detailed assessment of the arboricultural and nature conservation aspects of the park. A 5 year action plan has also been prepared which prioritises action that needs to be taken to achieve the aims as set out in the Park Management Plan. Funding for the refurbishment of the park is available from the Liveability fund.
- 1.3 The Parklands Consortium produced a detailed grounds development plan including landscape assessment and historical survey of the park which has been considered in the development of this plan.
- 1.4 A survey of the trees and woodlands in the park has been undertaken the results of which have informed this document.
- 1.5 An ecological survey and assessment of the park was undertaken by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust in July 2005 and the results of this have been included in this document.

2.0 The Planning Perspective

- 2.1 Manor Park covers approximately 14.5ha and is located within Old Glossop, close to the border with the Peak District National Park.
- 2.2 Manor Park is within the Old Glossop Conservation Area (Local Plan Policies BC7 and BC 8). Derbyshire County Council Tree Preservation Order No 61 covers trees to the north of the site, the extent of these areas is shown on the plan at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 In the High Peak Local Plan Manor Park is designated as a Protected Major Park (local plan policy LT3). An area of the park is also designated as a flood plain.
- 2.4 The site is transected to the western side of the park by 2 rights of way designated as Glossop footpaths 13 and 14.

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3.0 Historical Development of the Landscape

3.1 1157 –1606

Glossop lay within the Forest of The Peak a royal forest. However, trees did not cover the whole of the land and royal hunting forests were a mosaic of woodlands, wood pasture and open glades.

3.2 1601 –1787

The Howard family become the owners of the 'Manor of Glossop' and constructed a hall in what is now the north western corner of the park. Construction started around 1729 and it may have been near completed in 1734 when Howard ordered '*a good quantity of trees in that part of the field we are talking of taking*', perhaps this was the planting of the trees which are now in what is known as the Hanging Beeches.

In 1755 the gardens of the hall were being developed and separated from the park by ha ha. It is thought the paths through the wood may have been developed at this time and there are records of '*Fine avenues of beech and chestnut and large firs trees*'

3.3 1787-1842

Bernard Edward 12th Duke of Norfolk inherited the estate and further improved the landscape.

In 1801 6000 'scotch firs', probably Scots Pine, were purchased and planted across the estate this was the start of massive tree planting program some 50,000 larch, pine and beech. These were introduced annually in the early years of 19th century. The larch was probably used a nursery stock to help establish the beech and pine which were not only to provide shelter and to soften and enhance the natural attractiveness of the landscape. It is possible that some of these trees remain as the copse on the edge of shelf brook (T625, T626 and T628).

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3.4 1842 –1925

The 13th Duke constructed a new hall that was built between 1851 and 1852. The Yew trees in the walled garden (G4, T544, T552, T561 - T566) probably date from this era and are possibly a remnant of a yew hedge. Around this time the grounds may have been come more extensively manicured with the introduction of various *Rhododendron* species that have unfortunately now reverted to *Rhododendron ponticum*.

The OS map dated 1881 shows completed planting (broadleaves and conifers).

3.5 1926 to Present

In 1926 the Howard family sold Glossop hall and the grounds to the Corporation. The hall was leased to Kingsmoor School which opened in 1927. Following the sale there are records of dead trees and tree roots that needed clearing, indicating that many of the trees that had been planted had begun to die. In particular it is noted that none of the Scots Pine or Larch remain although there are other remnants of the original planting, such as the beech. At this time the major park infrastructure was constructed such as the pavilion and tennis courts.

There has been sporadic planting since 1926 mainly of ornamentals species, also it seems that a lot of self seeded sycamore has been allowed to establish and now are mature trees forming significant belts of trees. It is possible that these have replaced areas once dominated by elm that were lost to Dutch Elm Disease, although a few Elms do remain.

The oldest trees on site today are probably the Beech trees which date from the planting in the late 18th century and which may be as much as 270 years old. The indications from the history are that prior to the establishment of the hall and gardens, this site was not wooded.

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4.0 Nature Conservation aspects

4.1 Location

The park is within an urban area but close to the boundary of the Peak District National Park. The park has close linkages with the open moorland and countryside around. The Shelf Brook tributary comes from the moors through the park before joining the Etherow. The wooded areas are continuous with the mature trees in adjacent gardens areas, many of which were also within the original estate. The park comprises formal recreation areas, gardens and semi-natural areas such as the brook, woodland and acid grassland. The formal areas of the park are concentrated to the east and the semi-natural areas on the western and northern fringes of the park.

4.2 Geology and Natural Area

The park is within the Urban Mersey Basin Natural Area which is characterised by a varied assemblage of habitats and species, many of which have been modified and created by human activity (Tomlinson, 1997). The underlying geology of the park is Namurian gritstone with drift deposits of alluvium, river deposits and boulder clay. The gritstone is exposed in some areas to the west of the site (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, 2005).

4.3 Compartments

For the purpose of the nature conservation and arboricultural features of the site the area has been divided into 12 compartments as shown on the plan at Appendix 2. Also in Appendix 2 is a table listing a description of each compartment, comments on its condition and recommendations for future management.

4.4 Nature conservation status of the site

The site has no formal nature conservation status. The range of habitats within the site contributes to a moderately high botanical diversity within the site (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, 2005). A list of species recorded on the site is appended at Appendix 3. No species of any particular rarity were noted. There is potential to enhance the nature conservation value of the site to increase species and structural diversity of selected habitat areas. These recommendations are outlined in the table at Appendix 2.

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4.4 Nature conservation status of the site (continued)

In addition to the specific habitats identified by the ecological survey, the green space that the park provides close to the centre of Glossop is an important refuge for wildlife such as birds, small mammals and invertebrates. The trees, woodland and shrubbery in the park offer roosting and nesting sites for birds as well as being a source of food. The diversity in the height and types of trees has been shown to be important at providing a variety of niches for bird species. The management of the trees and woodlands will endeavour to enhance the opportunities for encouraging a variety of bird species to the park.

Mature trees are important for bats and it is likely that the trees in this park will be used as roosts during the summer. The lake is sufficiently large to attract Daubenton's bats which feed from insects close to the surface of the water. There is a known pipistrelle bat roost within 500m from the park, bats from this roost are likely to use the park for foraging and roosting. All bats are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

4.5 Recommendations for woodland areas

The semi-natural area of the park are dominated by woodland in addition to any specific management recommendations for certain compartments the following recommendations are made that apply to woodland generally across the site.

- Many of the woodland areas have a sparse understorey and are dominated by mature trees with few younger trees or diversity of shrub species. Some areas have many non native species which are inappropriate. Any woodland management, including thinning should aim to encourage regeneration and understorey development. By encouraging regeneration where it exists and some planting where gaps in the canopy exist. The species suitable for planting are

Pedunculate oak
Sessile oak
Rowan
Ash
Field maple
Hazel
Dogwood
Holly
Wild cherry
Bird cherry
Willows
Beech*

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4.5 Recommendations for woodland areas (continued)

* Whilst beech is not native to the area it grows well in the park and has a connection with the heritage of the park, as such the regeneration of beech within the hanging gardens (compartment 8) will be encouraged to ensure the continuity of these woodlands. There are patches of regeneration of seedlings in this wood and any planting of beech should, where possible, be from seeds sourced from this woodland.

- As well as tree and shrub planting the introduction of field layer species to the woodlands would enhance their diversity. The following species are particularly suitable:

Bluebell
Wood anemone
Lesser celandine
Red campion
Greater stitchwort
Wood avens
Wood false-brome
Wood melick
Herb Robert
Yellow archangel
Wood forget-me-not
Wood sorrel

- Deadwood in trees and on the ground is important for invertebrate, fungi and for recycling of nutrients. The formal areas of the park are well used and the retention of significant deadwood in the crowns of trees in these areas, needs to be considered carefully in relation to the risk it poses should it fall. However where possible mature trees will be allowed to decline naturally and if necessary for reasons of safety retrenchment pruning may be undertaken. In the semi-natural areas there is more scope for the retention of deadwood where it is appropriate trees will be allowed to decline naturally and deadwood left in woodlands where it falls.
- There are already some bird boxes in the park, further boxes, for both bats and birds could be installed where suitable sites exist.
- Invasive species within the woodlands will be controlled in particular Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan balsam. The control of Rhododendron is also required to allow the development of a more diverse woodland understorey.

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4.6 Recommendations for Grassland areas

There are some areas of grassland (compartments 1,2 and 8) on the western fringes of the site which Derbyshire Wildlife trust have suggested could be improved, Work has already been undertaken in compartment 8 and further improvements will be considered as resources allow. As well as sympathetic cutting regimes any future seeding should use the following species

Grasses

Sheep's fescue
Red fescue
Crested dog's-tail
Sweet vernal grass
Heath grass
Common bent
Smooth meadow-grass

Herbs

Tormentil	acid
Heath Bedstraw	acid
Bitter vetch	acid
Common bird's-foot-trefoil	neutral – acid
Cat's-ear	neutral – acid
Autumn hawkbit	neutral – acid
Harebell	neutral – acid
Meadow vetchling	neutral to mildly acid
Common knapweed	neutral to mildly acid
Betony	neutral to mildly acid
Devil's-bit scabious	neutral to mildly acid
Meadow buttercup	neutral to mildly acid
Pignut	neutral to mildly acid
Creeping cinquefoil	neutral to mildly acid
Germander speedwell	neutral to mildly acid
Field scabious	Drier acid to neutral soils
Wood anemone	neutral areas (glades)
Bluebell	neutral areas (glades)
Water avens	neutral areas (glades)
Wild daffodil*	Glades
Cuckoo flower	Damp neutral areas (glades)
Bugle	Damp neutral areas (glades)
Sneezewort	Wetter areas
Ragged robin	Wetter areas

Types of Grassland

**Narcissus pseudonarcissus* subsp. *Pseudonarcissus*.

It is also very important to ensure that no fertilisers, herbicides or lime are applied to this area of grassland or if possible adjacent to it where edge effects could occur.

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5.0 Survey Technique Manor Park

- 5.1 The park was surveyed in over the summers of 2004 and 2005. The aim of the survey was to establish the condition of the trees and woodlands within the park. The survey also recorded any works that may be required either to manage health and safety considerations, improve the aesthetics or longevity of the trees or to enhance the nature conservation value of the park. The survey has established the approximate age of the trees to help pinpoint the original planting and identify those that are of historic or cultural importance.
- 5.2 Trees were recorded as individuals where they are clearly specimen tree, or of particular note. Individually recorded trees are tagged with a metal number plate.
- 5.3 The other trees in the park were recorded as groups or woodlands as they will best be managed in this way. For woodlands general descriptions of the structure and nature of the woodland made.
- 5.4 The location of the trees has been recorded on a plan. This is only for illustrative purposes to help to identify the location of specimens and it cannot be relied upon as an accurate plotting of the trees.
- 5.5 The survey sheet includes information such as the species, approximate age of the tree, condition and any works required, details of survey data and plan can be viewed on request.

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6.0 Results of survey

6.1 The survey has identified the following key issues

- The park has two distinct types of tree cover, woodland and naturalistic planting (eg the hanging gardens) and formal planting around the central areas of the park.
- The park probably has in excess of 1500 mature and semi mature trees; 435 trees were recorded as individuals. Also 12 groups of trees have been surveyed and there are 7 distinct woodland areas. The final phase of the survey is to identify individually important trees within the wooded areas to be included in the individual tree survey. This is particularly important for the hanging beech woodlands where many of the trees date back original planting, circa 1730 (as outlined in section 3.2). Some of these trees are declining in health and their condition is being monitored.
- The graph below (Fig. 1) shows the estimated date of planting of the trees. Some early planting, pre 1800 remains within the park, much of which isn't reflected in this chart as these trees are within woodland areas and are as yet to be surveyed in detail. Over 80% of the individual trees in the park are considered to be less than 80 years old.

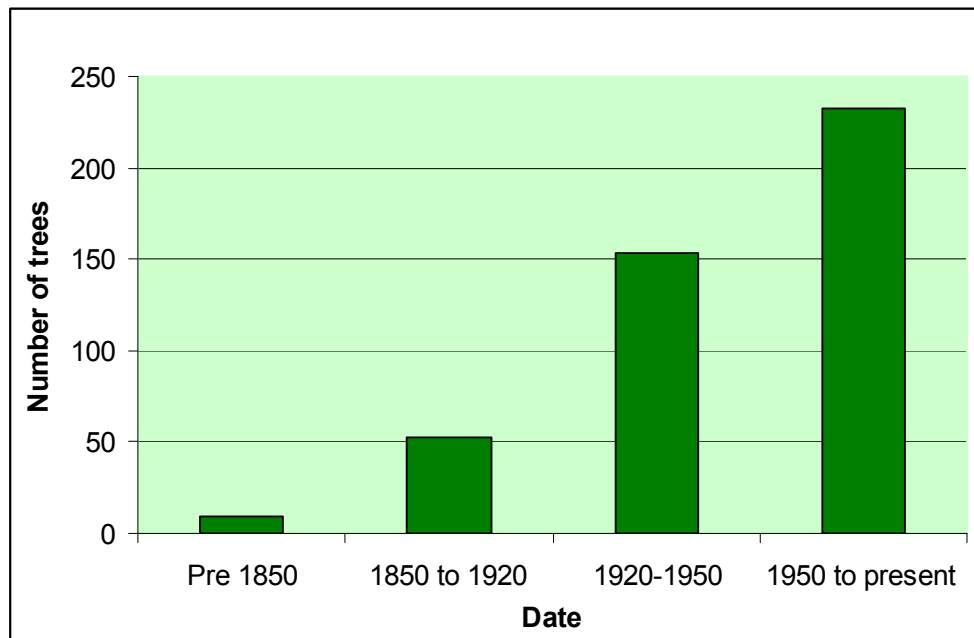


Fig 1. The estimated planting date of trees in Manor Park (excluding mature trees in groups and woodlands).

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- The graph below (Fig. 2) shows the distribution of tree species in the park. Sycamore is the most common species, 97% of these trees are dated as less than 80 years old and a great deal are probably self seeded rather than deliberate planting. Beech, horse chestnut and lime make up much of the structured planting in the park. With cherry, yew and holly and other ornamental species making up the understory and feature planting in formal areas.

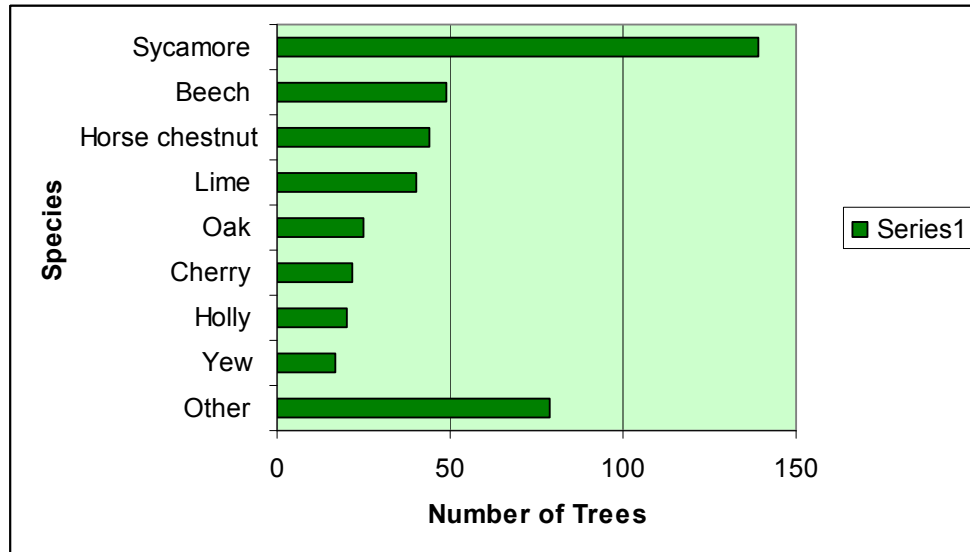


Fig. 2 Distribution of species of trees in the park

- Many of the sycamores suffering from a variety of minor pests and diseases; principally tar spot and horse chestnut scale. This is exacerbating their condition and contributing to their premature decline.
- About 10% of the trees in the park area horse chestnuts, a significant percentage of these trees have symptoms of infection by bleeding canker. This infection could lead to the death of these trees and the condition of these trees needs to be monitored.
- There is the occasional interesting specimen tree within the park, but overall the arboricultural interest of the park could be improved. The majority of less common species are in the formal areas, of particular interest is an Adam's Laburnum (+*Laburnocytisus adamii*), this Victorian curiosity has the flowers and foliage of both the purple broom and laburnum on the same tree.

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7.0 Arboricultural Management Principals

7.1 Sustainability

As with the overall management plan of the park the aim is to practice more sustainable methods of arboriculture. The key principal of the management of the trees, woodlands and other habitats within the woodland is sustainability. For example to ensure that the mature trees, such as the hanging gardens, which have been inherited from past generations are there for the next. Unfortunately it will be necessary from time to time for trees to be felled because they are unsafe. Where felling does occur the wood and arisings from the tree works will be reused wherever possible within the park and trees felled replaced either with natural regeneration or planting.

7.2 Programmed tree works

The survey has identified tree works that are required in the park and this includes some tree felling. Some trees need to be removed as they are others are just in poor condition and detract from the overall appearance of the park. But there are also areas where the trees that were planted in the past have become too overcrowded, such as near the lake, and these groups of trees need to be thinned.

The survey has generated a lot of tree work as the park has not been fully surveyed for some time and only essential tree works have been undertaken for several years. It is estimated that in the region of £18,000 will be required over the next 5 years to deal with tree works highlighted by survey. This exceeds the existing budget available and the works will need to be carefully reviewed and prioritised and where possible some works will be re-phased. Works required for reasons of health and safety arising from the initial survey have been completed but new issues arise from time to time which need to be given priority. Tree works required to comply with statutory duty or to maintain long term health of the existing trees are also prioritised. In addition to the above it is necessary to allow for a sum in the region of £1,500 per year for undertaking reactive works such as storm damage and other issues that arise from time to time.

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7.2 Programmed tree works(continued)

Some areas of the park would benefit from the phased removal and replacement of trees, however the first priority is to ensure that works prioritised by the survey are attend to. When resources allow the works will be phased over several years. These works will be subject to review in response to comments from community and changing circumstances. All trees will be re-inspected before programmed works are issued to ensure that the recommendations are still appropriate.

7.3 Standard of Tree works

All major works to trees in the park will be undertaken by the council's approved contractor to the current industry standards and best practice. Some minor works will be undertaken by the parks staff.

7.4 Planting

In section 4.5 above the species suitable for planting in the semi-natural areas is discussed.

In the formal areas (compartment 10) there is little scope for adding to the existing density of trees. In particular in locating new planting care will be taken to ensure that existing areas of open space and vistas are retained. It is also important to avoid planting close to the oldest trees in the park as young trees will compete with these mature specimens and shorten their potential life spans.

Planting of species such as Beech, Lime, Ash, Norway Maple and Oak are all in keeping with the park. Nevertheless there is scope to increase the arboricultural interest of the park in the formal areas. In selecting species for planting consideration should be given to the trees characteristics particularly in terms of appropriate scale and they should compliment the other features in the park.

Planting of trees potentially attracts grants and other sources of funding and as such the Arboricultural Officer will assist with the Friends of the Park in accessing these grants.

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7.5 Risk assessments and re-inspections

As the park is constantly used by the public, it is important that the risk from falling limbs etc. is assessed, and action is taken to minimise the hazard. As such a walk over survey of the park is undertaken every year which concentrates particularly on the trees which have been highlighted for monitoring and the survey up dated accordingly. A full re survey of all trees in the park will be done every 5 years using the current survey as a basis.

7.6 Heritage trees

The oldest trees in the park have been identified in the survey. Old trees such as this are an important connection with the past and have given pleasure to generations of Glossop residents. These trees are potentially important veteran and ancient trees of the future and important for wildlife and biodiversity as some species are only associated with trees of this age. The condition of these trees will be monitored and wherever appropriate be allowed to decline naturally. Nevertheless, from time to time it will be necessary because of safety issues that some trees may need to be pruned or felled. Felling will be the option of last resort.

7.7 Tree work and wildlife

Trees, particularly mature trees are important for wildlife and in particular nesting birds and bats roosts. Where possible tree works, particularly felling, will be scheduled to avoid nesting the season (March – August) although from time to time it will be necessary to do works within this period. These works will be limited to minor pruning works or essential works.

Where the presence of bats is suspected a bat survey should be undertaken. If it is concluded that it is unlikely that bats are present and works can proceed care should still be taken.

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8.0 References

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