

The State of  
Hyndburn's  
Woodlands  
2023



# Introduction

This booklet has been produced as part of a project run by The PROSPECTS Foundation with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Windfall Community Benefit Fund and Lancashire County Council. This booklet contains information about woodland cover in Hyndburn and in particular the eight woodland sites managed by the PROSPECTS Foundation on behalf of Lancashire County Council. Information includes the species composition of the woodlands, the timber volume and management objectives to ensure that the sites are safe, accessible and of benefit to wildlife.

## **The State of Hyndburn's Woodlands**

The area of woodland in the United Kingdom at 31 March 2022 is estimated to be 3.24 million hectares; 1.42 million hectares (44%) are independently certified as sustainably managed.

The borough of Hyndburn covers 73.01km<sup>2</sup> which equates to 7301 hectares (ha) of land. The wooded area within Hyndburn is 632 ha with 50 ha of woodland cover managed by PROSPECTS through the Hyndburn's Woodlands project on behalf of Lancashire County Council.

These sites are as follows; Abbott Clough, Huncoat East and West, Martholme Greenway, Rushton House Farm, Warcocks Green and Whinney Hill. These sites are a mixture of broadleaf and coniferous woodlands, planted between 1965 and 1987.

## **Ancient Woodland in the Borough**

Ancient woodlands are sites that have been continuously wooded since at least 1600 and are home to rich areas of biodiversity and complex ecosystems. Only 2.5% of UK land area is covered by ancient woodland making them vulnerable and a priority for protection. In Hyndburn just 8.7% of the borough's woodlands are designated as ancient woodland, a total of 55 ha.

There are a multitude of other woodland sites within the borough, owned and managed by a variety of private, public and third sector organisations. Information on these sites can be found in this booklet and on the Hyndburn's Woodlands website [www.hyndburnwoodlands.org.uk](http://www.hyndburnwoodlands.org.uk)

# Abbott Clough

## Location

The woodland forms the eastern side of a small river clough on the northern side of Blackburn Road (opposite Wynsors Shoes). It was originally planted with broadleaf species by Lancashire County Council in 1979 following reclamation of the adjoining derelict paintworks. The site is squeezed between a major industrial development site to the east and a housing estate to the west. To the south the woodland has a main road frontage.

## Species

Composition of the site includes: Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*) and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), species which thrive in the wet and boggy nature of the site. The site hosts several species of birds including Blackbirds, Wrens and Mistle Thrushes, which make use of the trees for cover.

## PROSPECTS

PROSPECTS management of the site has included several litter picks, removal of Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) which over shadow and displace native species on site. The road facing hedgerow has been planted up with Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) within gaps in the hedgerow to increase the security of the boundary.

## Positives

- The site has a good age distribution of trees with seedlings, saplings and young trees present with natural regeneration occurring across all species of trees.
- There are 10 native species of trees on site making up over 80% of the trees in the woodland.
- Due to the small amount of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) on site, tree health is good with low mortality among the other trees.
- The woodland structure is made up of the shrub to medium pole stage. As the woodland ages the structure will increase to include veteran trees.
- There is a significant amount of dead wood across the site, both standing and on the ground, providing valuable habitat for wildlife.
- The site is a haven locally for wildlife as it is a very scarce and valuable habitat in an otherwise built up environment.

## Negatives

- There is Himalayan Balsam on site, which requires ongoing management.



**Location:** Blackburn Road, Intack  
**Grid reference:** SD 7111 2820  
**What3Words:** landed.prompting.future  
**Nearest postcode:** BB1 3NJ



# Huncoat East and West

## Location

The woodlands are on either side of Altham Lane immediately to the north of the M65 motorway bridge in Huncoat. There is a public right of way signposted off Altham Lane into Huncoat West woodland leading directly to the towpath on the Leeds Liverpool canal. There is no public access into Huncoat East woodland.

## Species

Species on the site include Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and Aspen (*Populus tremula*). Birds which have been spotted on site include Great, Blue and Long Tailed Tits. The sites act as a resting point for species making their way along the canal, which acts as a green corridor through east Lancashire.

## PROSPECTS

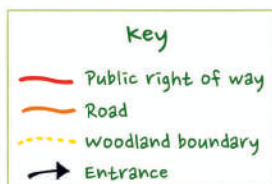
PROSPECTS' management has included tackling invasive Himalayan Balsam alongside the canal boundary; a significant number of hazel 'stools' have been coppiced (a traditional form of woodland management) to open up the woodland floor to sunlight and allow overshadowed flowers and plants to grow; an outdoor area has been created with dead hedging forming a boundary; and the beginnings of a wildflower glade has been established.

## Positives

- The site has a good distribution of tree ages with natural regeneration of native species as seedlings, saplings and young trees.
- As the site continues to grow over time veteran trees will emerge as well as an increased amount of dead wood to encourage various wildlife.
- The site is surrounded by farmland and the canalside, which is of benefit to wildlife, especially as the M65 motorway runs along the south of the site.

## Negatives

- There is significant evidence of browsing by wildlife on the naturally regenerating trees, which will impact on their growth. Due to the large number of Ash trees on the site there is a high prevalence of diseased Ash with dieback, some preventative felling along the public right of way may be needed.



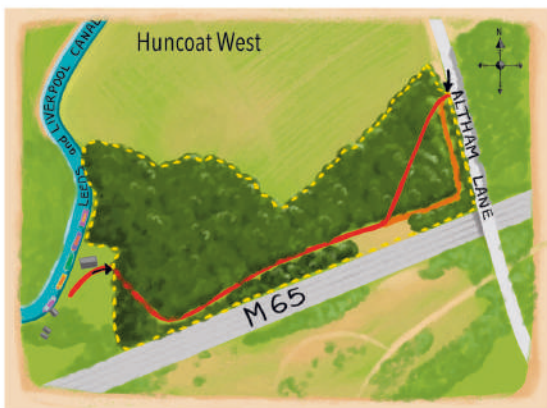
### Huncoat East

**Location:** east side of Altham Lane, Huncoat past the M65 motorway bridge

**Grid reference:** SD 7777 3165

**What3Words:** clean.winks.toys

**Nearest postcode:** BB5 5JF



### Huncoat West

**Location:** west side of Altham Lane, Huncoat past the M65 motorway bridge.

**Entrance:** from public footpath signposted off Altham Lane or from the canal.

**Grid reference:** SD 7744 3146

**What3Words:** happy.loss.hulk

**Nearest postcode:** BB5 5JF

# Martholme Greenway

## Location

Martholme Greenway is a stretch of former railway line in Great Harwood from Mill Lane to Martholme Viaduct, planted with broadleaf species by Lancashire County Council following reclamation. It is a very well used and beautiful walkway and cycle track through the woods.

## Species

Species on site include; Snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*), Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Cowslip (*Primula veris*) and Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*), which take advantage of the lack of canopy cover in the spring. Dawn chorus walks in spring have resulted in over 20 species of bird being recorded including; Blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*), Bullfinches (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*) and Eurasian Jays (*Garrulus glandarius*). The site acts as a 'green corridor' for many species providing habitat and cover.

## PROSPECTS

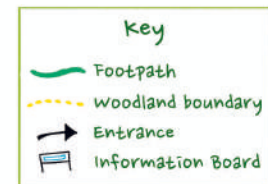
PROSPECTS' management on the site has included; non-native species removal, coppicing of Hazel and the creation of habitat piles from deadwood to encourage invertebrates on the site. There is also a dedicated Friends of Martholme Greenway group who are very active and work in partnership with PROSPECTS and Lancashire County Council.

## Positives

- Active group working regularly at the site

## Negatives

- Not much regeneration due to browsing by wildlife and public accessibility



**Location:** Martholme Lane.  
**Entrances:** Mill Lane; Martholme Lane via entrance to Copy Wood; and Martholme Lane steps in front of viaduct.  
**Grid reference:** SD 7506 3344  
**What3Words:** loafing.cabbies.gestures  
**Nearest postcode:** BB6 7TD

# Rushton House Farm

## Location

The woodland sits on the site of a disused pottery clay workings and was planted in 1965. It has a long (250 metres) road frontage and the rear boundary is farmland. There are two ponds on the site, one silted up and the other actively fished by a local angling group. There is a short stretch of footpath along the southern boundary.

## Species

Species on site include a mixture of coniferous Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus contorta*) and broadleaf woodland on an undulating terrain from previous workings. There's a lot of Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) regeneration but the site also suffers from Himalayan Balsam along the roadside boundary and some small stands of Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) along the southern boundary.

## PROSPECTS

PROSPECTS' management of the site has included pulling Himalayan Balsam and organising for contractors to stem inject Japanese Knotweed. The roadside boundary has been planted with a Hawthorn hedge with a view to this being 'laid' in the coming years.

## Positives

- The woodland is largely inaccessible to the public, making it a haven for wildlife, particularly for nesting birds.
- The large amount of standing deadwood and deadwood on the woodland floor serves to create a great habitat for invertebrates on site.

## Negatives

- The site is predominantly Lodgepole Pine, which being a non-native species is of limited value to wildlife.



**Location:** Adjacent to Fielding Lane, Broadfield, Oswaldtwistle.

**Entrance:** via a public footpath signposted from Fielding Lane.

**Grid reference:** SD 7492 2655

**What3Words:** regretted.join.allergy

**Nearest postcode:** BB5 3RY



# Warcocks Green

## Location

This site is an undulating former sand and gravel workings planted in 1965 by Lancashire County Council following reclamation. There is a small pond within the woodland, which increases the habitat value of the site. It is a rather isolated site just off Haslingden Old Road and adjoining the M65 motorway, making it rather noisy. The site can suffer from anti-social off-road motorbikes at times.

## Species

Towards the west of the woodland the predominant tree species is Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus contorta*) with more broadleaved species planted in the east. There is also Himalayan Balsam along the Sough Lane side of the wood.

## PROSPECTS

PROSPECTS' management of the site has included pulling Himalayan Balsam, repairing post and rail fencing and improvements to the pond, mainly through dredging. Several large litter picks have removed a significant amount of accumulated litter and fly tipping from the woodland.

## Positives

- Presence of deadwood as a habitat for wildlife
- The pond enriches the habitat value of the site

## Negatives

- The presence of the non-native Lodgepole Pine and the resulting lack of ground flora
- Anti-social behaviour and fly tipping.



**Location:** Sough Lane, off Haslingden Old Road, Oswaldtwistle

**Grid reference:** SD 7150 2683

**What3Words:** riding.face.shut

**Nearest postcode:** BB1 2RJ



# Whinney Hill

## Location

Whinney Hill woodland is associated with the former brick-shale quarry/waste tip that was reclaimed and planted by Lancashire County Council between 1987 and 1993. It is a broadleaved woodland with good footpath access. There is a large pond in the western corner of the site. The woodland is within walking distance of Accrington town centre and the main entrance points are off Livingstone Road, Whinney Hill Road and Thorneyholme Road near Accrington Cricket Club.

## Species

There is a preponderance of Willow species (*Salix* sp.) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) in the east of the woodland and Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) to the west. Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) lines many of the pathways and other species such as Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) can be seen on the path towards the pond. White-letter Hairstreak butterflies amongst others have been spotted in the newly created glades to the west of the site.

## PROSPECTS

PROSPECTS has carried out tree planting, woodland management, pond management, removal of invasive species, access improvements and created glades and rides for butterflies. There is potential for more community involvement in the management of the site.

## Positives

- Good coverage of native ground flora and deadwood
- Good range of native broadleaved species
- The pond and the butterfly glades and rides provide additional valuable wildlife habitats

## Negatives

- Lack of mature trees
- In some areas the canopy is shading out natural regeneration.

**Location:** near Livingstone Road, Thorneyholme Road, Whinney Hill Road, Accrington.

**Entrances:** Livingstone Road, Thorneyholme Road and Whinney Hill Road.

**Grid reference:** SD 7617 2991

**What3Words:** buddy.impose.perky

**Nearest postcode:** BB5 5BW





# The State of Hyndburn's Woodlands Report 2023

## Woodland Facts & Figures (as of March 2022)

- 3.24 million hectares woodland in the UK
- 1.32 million hectares woodland in England
- 10.2% of total land area in England is wooded
- 74% broadleaf species and 26% coniferous species in England

## Woodland Cover in Hyndburn

- Total woodland cover for the borough of Hyndburn is 632 hectares out of 7,301 hectares (the total area of the borough).
- The percentage area covered by woodland in Hyndburn is 8.6%. This is below the woodland cover for England as a whole.
- 8.7% of this is designated as 'ancient woodland' i.e. areas that have been continuously wooded since 1600.
- 42% of the population has accessible woodland within 500m of where they live.

## Hyndburn's canopy cover by ward:

Altham:	13.8%
Barnfield:	18.1%
Baxenden:	13.9%
Church:	17.7%
Clayton-Le-Moors:	21.1%
Huncoat:	25.7%
Netheron:	23.3%
Overton:	11.7%
Peel:	4.3%
Springhill:	24.0%

The most densely populated areas of the borough are unsurprisingly the least wooded. Peel ward has the least amount of woodland cover in the borough, however Peel Park and the Coppice Local Nature reserve is easily accessible to the local community. Huncoat ward is the most wooded with Huncoat East and West woodlands adding to the overall coverage in the ward. Condition assessments were undertaken by Lancashire Wildlife Trust on behalf of PROSPECTS in 2019 and act as a baseline against which future work can be measured. The condition assessments give a score out of 100.

These condition assessments assess the composition of the woodlands accounting for the diversity of species, the number of layers and the instances of natural regeneration on the site as positive outcomes. Negative outcomes include; presence of non-native trees and plants. These factors inform the management works which need to be undertaken in order to improve the score of the woods in question. Over time with management from PROSPECTS sites can be improved, such as by increasing the amount of deadwood on site and replacing non-native species with native species of local provenance. Further condition assessments of these woodlands will be carried out every few years with the aim that the scores increase due to continued positive management of the woodlands.

## 2019 condition assessment scores

- Whinney Hill (West - Pond end) 88%
- Whinney Hill (East - Cricket club end) 80%
- Huncoat West 81%
- Huncoat East 70%
- Martholme Greenway 77%
- Warcocks Green 66%
- Abbots Clough 66%
- Rushton House Farm 63%

Biodiversity Net Gain is a strategy to develop land and contribute to the recovery of nature. It is a way of making sure that habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development. Biodiversity Net Gain assessments have been undertaken in several woodland sites in Hyndburn. This is another measurement of the quality of habitat of the sites alongside the Lancashire Wildlife Trust condition assessments. The scoring system enables evaluation of the sites scoring either poor, moderate or good. The aim of woodland management in the borough is to increase the scores and move sites from being poor/moderate to good wherever possible. Below are some examples;

## 2023 Biodiversity Net Gain ratings

- Abbots Clough: Score 33 - Moderate
- Copy Wood (Martholme Greenway): Score 33 - Moderate
- Huncoat West: Score 30 - Moderate
- Rushton House Farm: Score 30 - Moderate
- Warcocks Green: Score 31 - Moderate

Timber volume and tree number surveys have been undertaken in all eight of the Lancashire County Council sites and in several Hyndburn Borough Council owned woodlands. Timber volume and tree number surveys aim to calculate the amount of timber on a site with a view primarily for harvesting. This is not the main aim for the surveys undertaken by PROSPECTS. Knowing the volume of timber on a site will inform future management plans, particularly when replacing Ash which has been felled due to dieback. An over or under stocked site is detrimental to environmental conservation as too dense a canopy will reduce the species in the layers below and understocked will allow for undesirable species such as Docks (*Rumex* sp.), Nettles (*Urtica* sp.) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) to suppress natural regeneration. Tree number values will also enable the calculation of carbon sequestration that each site has enabling carbon off setting for the landowner.

The table below has the name of the site, its size in hectares, the number of tree species, the number of 'stems' (trees with additional stems) per hectare, the number of trees per hectare, the number of canopy species trees (such as Oak), the number of stems on the site, volume of timber in metre cubed (m<sup>3</sup>) per hectare and volume of timber per site. These calculations are estimates based on the surveys and are an approximation.

## Timber Volume and Tree Number Surveys

	Size (ha)	Tree spp.	Stems/ha	Trees/ha	Canopy trees/ha	Stems/site	Timber Volume/ha (m <sup>3</sup> )	Timber Volume/site(m <sup>3</sup> )
Abbot Clough	1.98	8	1380	1160	1160	2732	142.3	281.8
Clayton Forest Park	17.1	13	870	730	720	14877	349.9	5982.5
Copy Wood at Martholme Greenway	2	8	1360	620	340	2720	116.2	332.4
Hollins Wood	3.34	9	1410	1020	930	4709	257.3	859.5
Huncoat East	4.5	10	1133	817	700	3676	102.8	462.5
Huncoat West	5.75	8	1660	1340	1140	9545	116.8	671.4
Jubilee Wood	7.21	4	880	800	800	6345	9.8	70.8
Martholme Greenway	6	2	1300	800	800	7800	290.1	1740.6
Miller Fold	3.68	8	1520	1300	1180	5594	130.4	497.7
Rushton	1.83	6	1100	1040	960	2013	280.1	512.6
Warcocks	2.94	4	900	860	860	2646	301.3	885.9
Whinney Hill	15.11	10	1220	980	880	18434	104.7	1581.7
Woodnook	9.77	6	1340	720	720	13092	227.7	2224.9
	<b>81.21</b>					<b>94183</b>		<b>16104.3</b>

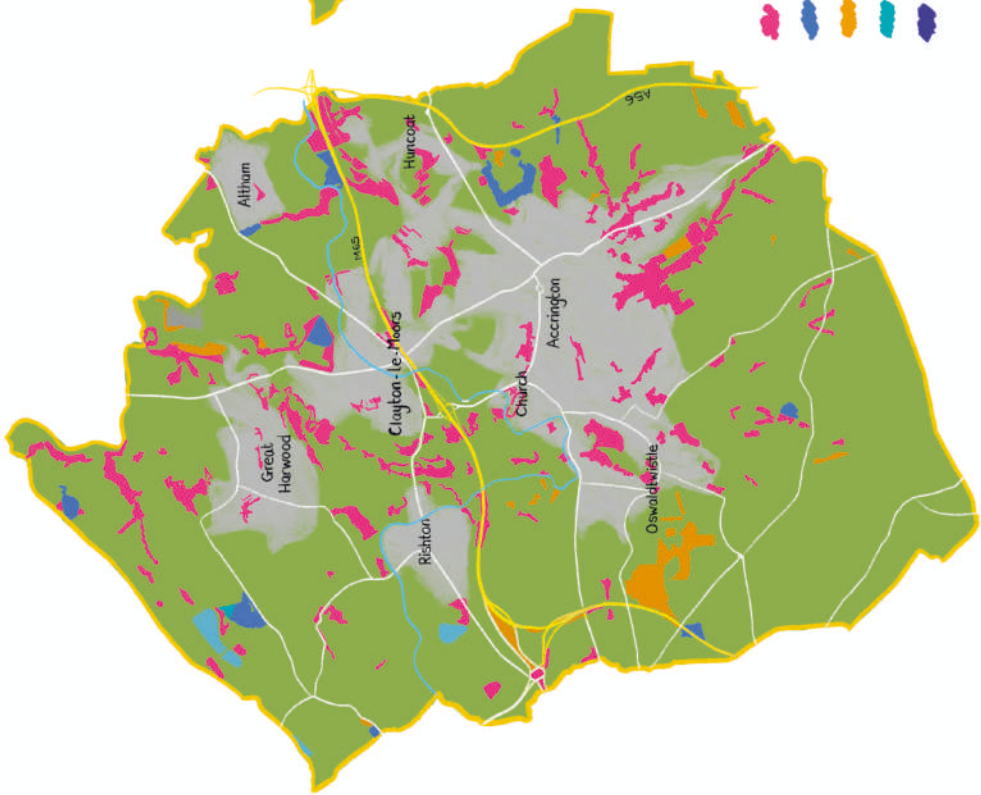
## Conclusion

In comparison with the total tree cover for England, Hyndburn is under wooded at 8.6% compared to the national average of 10%. This can be improved by increased tree planting in the borough, with particular focus on the urban areas with low percentages of tree cover.

The condition of the woodland ranges in terms of the quality from moderate to good. Ongoing management can help improve the sites for the benefit of wildlife, access and safety.

# Woodland Cover in Hyndburn

# Ancient Woodland Cover in Hyndburn



# Here are some of the other woodlands you can visit in Hyndburn

Jubilee Woodland  
Grid ref. SD 76324 27216  
What3words: available.suppers.nicer  
Nearest Postcode: BB5 2JX  
Managed by PROSPECTS

Rothwell Heights Woodland  
Grid ref. SD 75657 26841  
What3words: winter.corrects.testers  
Nearest postcode: BB5 3SD  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council

Hollins Woodland  
Grid ref. SD 76716 26835  
What3words: ashes.loops.outermost  
Nearest Postcode: BB5 2QY  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council

Peel Park & Coppice LNR  
Grid ref. SD 76920 29271  
What3words: farm.budget.counts  
Nearest postcode: BB5 6HL  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council and PROSPECTS

Woodnook Greenway  
Grid ref. SD 75964 27935  
What3words: diet.surgical.equipment  
Nearest Postcode: BB5 0PJ  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council and PROSPECTS

Jackhouse Nature Reserve  
Grid ref. SD 74110 26080  
What3words: rationing.offhand.jubilant  
Nearest postcode: BB5 3RU  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council

Clayton Forest Park  
Grid ref. SD 74806 31468  
What3words: insert.scout.rift  
Nearest postcode: BB5 5RE  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council

Foxhill Bank Nature Reserve  
Grid ref. SD 73900 27900  
What3words: inefficient.destiny.wipes  
Nearest postcode: BB5 3LY  
Managed by Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Miller Fold Woodland  
Grid ref. SD 75630 27278  
What3words: price.cheaply.dislikes  
Nearest postcode: BB5 0NX  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council

Tinker Brook  
Grid ref. SD 74167 26999  
What3words: broker.suitably.city  
Nearest postcode: BB5 3BP  
Managed by Hyndburn Borough Council



For more information and details on how you can get involved:

The PROSPECTS Environment Centre,  
54 Broadway,  
Accrington,  
Lancashire,  
BB5 1EW

01254 230348

[www.prospectsfoundation.org.uk](http://www.prospectsfoundation.org.uk)  
[info@prospectsfoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@prospectsfoundation.org.uk)

Hyndburn's Woodlands website  
[www.hyndburnwoodlands.org.uk](http://www.hyndburnwoodlands.org.uk)



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