

Woodland planting in Greenhow

Guidance Note for applicants to the Greenhow Biodiversity & Enhancement Scheme

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Guidance Note is to provide advice about the design of new planting and the selection of tree species for people who are applying for grants to establish new woodland in the eligible area.

The Guidance Note is only intended to be an introduction. Please refer to the Appendix 1 for further information and sources of practical help.

Proposals for new woodland should comply with the following principles:

1. Land that supports grassland with a wide range of wild grasses and herbs, or marshy or seasonally waterlogged land, will not normally be considered suitable for new woodland. Old grasslands and wetlands are valuable habitats for wildlife, including butterflies and moths for example. The value of these habitats could be damaged by woodland cover.
2. Care should be taken to avoid damaging local archaeology and features of the historic environment.
3. Land that is suited to new woodland should be planted with a mixture of native tree and shrub species that are characteristic of the area.
4. The character of the local landscape must be considered when planning the design and location of new woodland.

DESIGNING YOUR NEW WOODLAND

The first thing to do is to look around at existing woodlands or groups of trees in the vicinity. Native woodlands in the eligible area include:

- Guisecliffe
- Skrikes Wood
- Gillbeck

All three are examples of semi natural ancient woodlands. They are on land that has been more or less continuously wooded for a very long time, and although they have been managed on and off over past centuries, they have a 'natural' quality. They are important refuges for wildlife, and are attractive features in the landscape.

There are several smaller plantations around Greenhow. Most contain one or two species of conifers, and are of only very limited value for wildlife. Some of the large plantations go against the grain of landscape character.

Secondly, find a vantage point and study the pattern and distribution of existing broadleaved woodlands in the area. We will give priority to native woodland proposals that join up or extend isolated blocks of broadleaves, and to proposals to establish new woodlands on valley sides, in side valleys or gills. Small blocks of trees around farmsteads are a characteristic feature in some places.

CHOICE OF SPECIES

You should aim for a mixture of native trees and shrubs, plant in species groups, typically between 3 & 7 and include lower growing species on the edge. Planting density, and the spacing between trees will need to be carefully considered, and this will depend on the site and your choice of species (see Appendix 1 for more information). You will need to protect the new plants from grazing animals, and you should aim to include a strip of unplanted land between the fence and the edge of the new woodland.

This list is a guide only, and is designed to reflect the often limited and simple mixtures of trees and shrubs growing in the vicinity. You may need outside help to produce a detailed design (see Appendix 1 for more information). The choice of oak species depends on your site, and alder will grow best in wet conditions along stream sides for example. Non-native species, including conifers as well as broadleaves such as sycamore and beech, are not included in the list.

English Name	Scientific Name
Pedunculate oak	<i>Quercus petraea</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Rowan or Mountain Ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Cretageus monogyna</i>

MAINTENANCE

Looking after newly established trees is just as important as site preparation and planting, and maintenance will need to be carried out for at least three years or until the new trees become established. Protecting new trees against damage by grazing and browsing (by rabbits, sheep and deer for example), and by clearing grasses and other plants from around the base of the new trees are the most important tasks. The Trustees of the Fund will normally require a commitment to maintenance, and replacement of trees that die in the course of the first three years.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

Forest landscape design guidelines (HMSO, London, 1994) ISBN 011710325X

Harrogate Biodiversity Action Plan (in press)

You can get practical help and advice with your project by contacting the Nidderdale AONB Office on 01423 712950 (nidderdaleaonb@harrogate.gov.uk)