

- 6a Calder Valley
- 6b West Pennine Foothills
- 6c Cliviger Gorge
- 6d Adlington-Coppull

Summary

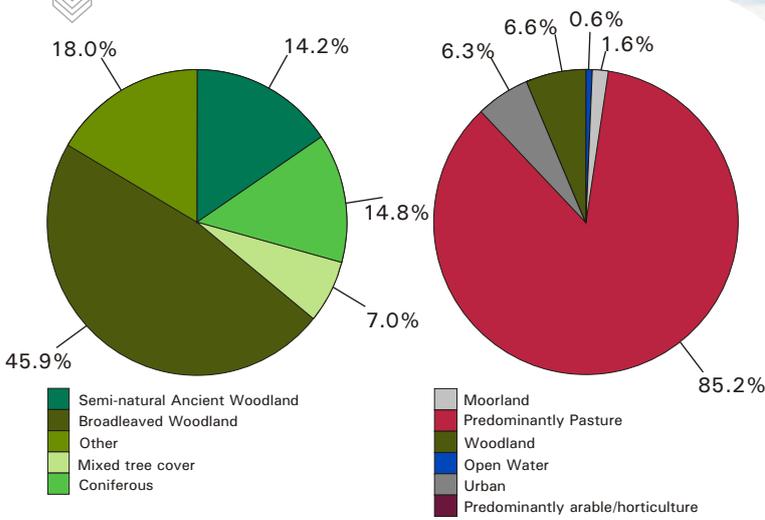
This is a landscape of intensive settlement with industrial origins that pre-date the sixteenth century, being greatly accelerated by the onset of the industrial revolution. The growth of industry and related settlements has led to a relatively fragmented landscape of limited nature conservation value. Today a mixture of rural, agricultural and industrial landuses is predominant. Many of Lancashire's main urban settlements are located within the industrial valleys, a number of which suffer from high levels of deprivation. There is pressure to develop new residential and commercial areas which may lead to the 'suburbanisation' of the countryside and loss of the existing landscape character. There are remnant areas of nature conservation value, particularly semi-natural woodlands alongside watercourses, which have become an increasingly rare and important component within the landscape. Large country houses also contribute to the diversity of the landscape and demonstrate the former importance of the urban fringe to wealthy industrialists.



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Woodland Resource

Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest 0.1%



Woodland area 1,490.6 ha.

Character type area 22,715 ha.

Vision and Objectives

To develop a well-wooded, functional landscape in and around residential, commercial and industrial developments to improve the image of the area, provide opportunities for outdoor recreation for those who live and work in the area, and enhance environmental quality, particularly along transport corridors.

Opportunities

- ⇒ Improve the quality of life for communities living in areas of multiple deprivation.
- ⇒ Enhance the urban fringe landscape by bringing pockets of derelict, underused and neglected land back into positive use through woodland reclamation.
- ⇒ Create striking gateway planting along key strategic transport corridors to improve the image of the area.
- ⇒ Provide an attractive backdrop to urban settlement and give the impression of a well-wooded landscape.
- ⇒ Contribute and add value to local regeneration initiatives including Elwood, the emerging East Lancashire Regional Park and the 'Elevate' housing market renewal initiative.
- ⇒ Harness resources arising from new development for woodland creation and management through planning obligations.
- ⇒ Improve natural capital by strengthening the existing woodland resource through natural regeneration and management, and supplementing existing woodlands through extensive new planting.
- ⇒ Reverse the fragmentation of woodlands by buffering and linking existing woodlands, particularly those of semi-natural origin.
- ⇒ Visual containment of unsightly development.
- ⇒ Use best practice case study examples; the Forest of Burnley is a positive approach to woodland creation and management in the Industrial Foothills and Valleys.
- ⇒ Improve and enhance accessibility to woodlands via woodland management and creation activities.
- ⇒ Highlight the past market value of timber in fuelling the industrial revolution and the potential that timber has for the future e.g. wood fuel.

Challenges

- ⇒ Balance the pressures of settlement expansion with the need to provide an integrated landscape and woodland resource for existing and future communities.
- ⇒ Ensure that the quality and ecological integrity of existing woodlands is not compromised by increases in recreational use.
- ⇒ Ensure that soft end use reclamation of derelict, underused and neglected land is balanced with competition for hard end use development opportunities in the urban fringe.
- ⇒ Control damage from grey squirrel and deer grazing which requires educating the public as current public perceptions limit the scale of control.
- ⇒ Promote woodland as a valuable tourism commodity in an area affected by blight.
- ⇒ Secure commitment for the many different landowners as condition and accessibility of woodlands is variable and dependent on land ownership. Ensuring all woodlands provide highest environmental, social and economic benefit will be a long-term activity.
- ⇒ There is a need to encourage long-term community stewardship of the existing woodland resource as many woodlands are under threat from vandalism, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour

Target Areas for New Woodland

The Industrial Foothills and Valleys have high capacity for woodland uplift. Woodland planting should be extensive and focused in urban fringe locations and along strategic transport corridors, particularly where there are opportunities to screen unsightly development. The Community Forestry model should be applied to this area to ensure that multi-functional woodlands deliver a wide range of public benefits. Ambitious gateway planting should be considered at strategic locations to provide distinctive statements of Lancashire's dynamism, using distinctive species and planting arrangements where this is appropriate. In particular, opportunities to reclaim derelict, underused and neglected land through woodland creation should be maximised. The existing woodland resource should be brought into active management to ensure that opportunities to improve local image are maximised. New woodland planting will not deliver significant benefit for some years, so it is important to harness the potential of existing resources to maximum effect at an early stage.

Character Areas

- 7a Mellor Ridge
- 7b Upholland Ridge
- 7c Langthwaite Ridge

Summary

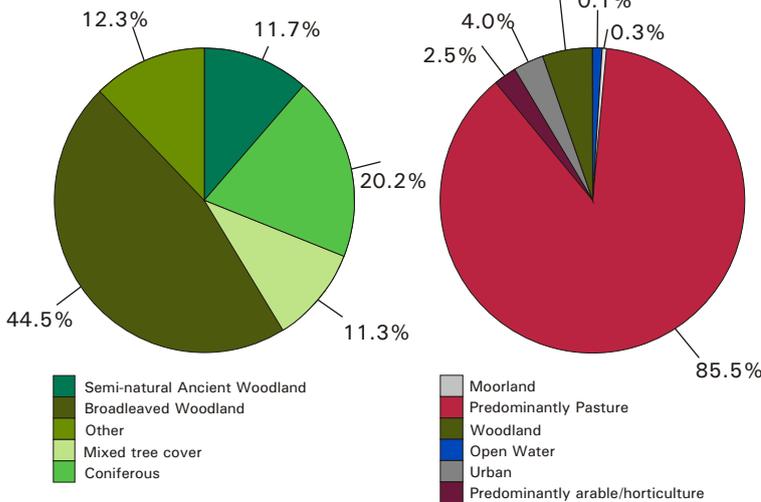
The Farmed Ridges are a highly visible element within the landscape, providing a textural backdrop to the lowland valley plains. The ridges are a mosaic of farmland and woodland rising from the farmed plains. Intensive farming practices, including beef, dairy cattle and sheep grazing limit the nature conservation value of Farmed Ridges. However, woodlands associated with steeper slopes and hedgerow boundaries are valuable ecological resources, and are intrinsic to the landscape. The Farmed Ridges afford long views which have made them attractive to residential development over many years. The ridges also provide sites for reservoirs and, more recently, communication masts, which can damage the distinctive ridge profile.



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Woodland Resource

Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest 0.1%.



Woodland area 461.9 ha.

Character type area 6,945 ha.

Vision and Objectives

To conserve the existing woodland resource through active management, supplemented by buffer planting, hedgerow enhancement, and extensive woodland creation that complements the topography of the landscape.



Opportunities

- ⇒ Soften harsh urban edges with woodland screen planting, and link existing hillside woodlands to urban areas to reverse the fragmentation of the woodland resource.
- ⇒ Extend woodlands on ridge sides through native planting and the modification of grazing regimes to assist with natural regeneration, particularly in areas where woodland seed banks may remain on the sites of former woodlands.
- ⇒ Strengthen local and long-distance ecological linkages to increase opportunities for species migration.
- ⇒ Increase the robustness of the woodland resource by focusing natural regeneration and new planting in close proximity to existing woodland.
- ⇒ Contribute and add value to the East Lancashire Regional Park.

Challenges

- ⇒ Ensure that productive cattle and sheep grazing can be maintained whilst enhancing nature conservation interests and maximising opportunities for woodland regeneration.
- ⇒ Control agricultural intensification and chemical applications in close proximity to deciduous woodland that can adversely affect the existing woodland resource.
- ⇒ Ensure that local land managers have the skills and support necessary to undertake effective woodland management activities.
- ⇒ Guide infrastructure development, particularly prominent vertical elements such as communication masts, to appropriate locations.
- ⇒ Ensure that opportunities for woodland development do not impact detrimentally on the valuable habitats that are present.

Target Areas for New Woodland

The Farmed Ridges have high capacity for uplift, particularly on the ridge sides where woodland creation and restoration should be prioritised. Natural regeneration should be encouraged wherever possible, principally through the implementation of grazing restrictions and management agreements with farmers. The conservation and restoration of existing Ancient Woodlands should be a priority.

Summary

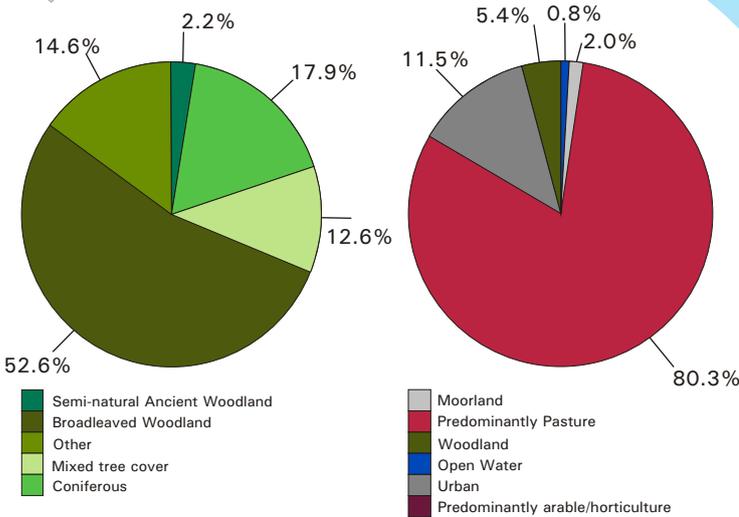
The Settled Valleys form narrow, high-sided valleys of the River Irwell and its tributaries. The Valleys dissect the moorland plateau of the Rossendale Hills forming a distinctive landscape type, characterised by steep wooded sides and a linear settlement pattern along the valley floor. Broadleaved woodlands cling to steep slopes providing a valuable nature conservation and visual resource. The Valleys have a strong industrial legacy with many remnant signs of their industrial past still present in today's landscape, including large industrial buildings which dominate the urban skyline. The pattern of urban development has been moulded and defined by the surrounding landscape, with a characteristic linear pattern of terraced urban settlement progressing up the south facing slope.



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Woodland Resource

Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest 0.1%.



Woodland area 146.7 ha.

Character type area 2,708 ha.

Vision and Objectives

To create a well-wooded landscape that enhances the sense of enclosure and provides a tree rich environment for the valley communities.

Opportunities

- ⇒ Soften harsh and degraded urban edges with woodland screen planting to provide a sense of enclosure and frame communities within the wider rural context.
- ⇒ Make a positive contribution to the catchment management priorities of the River Irwell and its tributaries through riparian planting.
- ⇒ Increase the percentage of upland oak and wet woodland cover.
- ⇒ Enhance nature conservation and landscape quality through the removal of non-native species within woodlands.
- ⇒ Allow natural regeneration in locations close to existing woodland resources to improve landscape connectivity and reverse the trend of fragmentation.
- ⇒ Utilise new residential and commercial development as a delivery mechanism for new woodland planting, particularly through the use of planning obligations
- ⇒ Safeguard existing woodlands through active management, targeting activity in the first instance to UK BAP priority species and the removal of exotic and invasive species.
- ⇒ Allow natural regeneration and new woodland planting to create a soft transition between the valley floor and the steep valley sides to strengthen visual, ecological and recreation benefit.
- ⇒ Contribute and add value to the East Lancashire Regional Park.
- ⇒ Exploit the social benefit of woodlands adjacent to the top 20% most deprived areas within the country.

Challenges

- ⇒ Overcome the culture of woodland neglect and poor stewardship which is undermining existing woodland resources.
- ⇒ Reduce reliance in the agricultural community upon intensive grazing regimes which restrict the potential for natural woodland regeneration.
- ⇒ Reduce competition from hard end use development for land on the urban fringe.
- ⇒ Reverse the trend of woodland loss as a result of development.
- ⇒ Secure the resources and commitment necessary to eradicate invasive species.

Target Areas for New Woodland

The Settled Valleys have medium capacity for uplift. Catchment planting along the Irwell and its tributaries should be a priority to reduce flood risk. Woodland planting should be wet woodland along the valley floor and mixed ash along the steep tributaries with upland oak woodland along the steepest valley slopes.

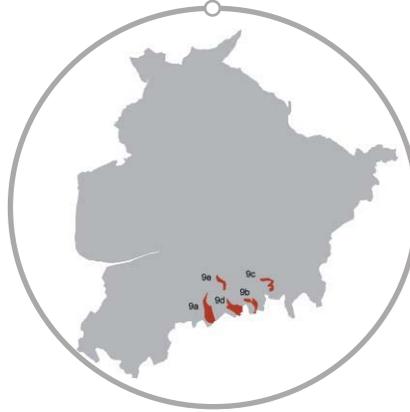
Screen planting of inappropriate development together with woodland planting of neglected sites within the urban fringe will increase the visual amenity of the valley settlements and provide a recreational resource for local communities.

Stewardship of the existing woodland resource should be secured to ensure that ecological and visual benefits are maintained. Advice, training and support should be provided to land managers to allow them to become long-term guardians of woodlands.



Summary

Interlocking with the West Pennine Moors in the south of Lancashire, this character type is dominated by a series of large reservoirs constructed during the mid to late nineteenth century to meet the needs of burgeoning urban populations. The reservoirs are enclosed by planted woodland, created as 19th century catchment plantings by water companies. The woodlands provide a robust landscape that has the capacity to absorb large numbers of visitors undertaking a variety of recreational activities without conflict and overcrowding. Native woodlands of the Reservoir Valleys also provide a valuable nature conservation resource. These complement species-rich hay meadows, pastures and grasslands, which form a habitat mosaic containing nationally rare and important flora and fauna. The area has historically been exploited for mineral extraction, with some former quarries now providing a recreational resource for climbers.



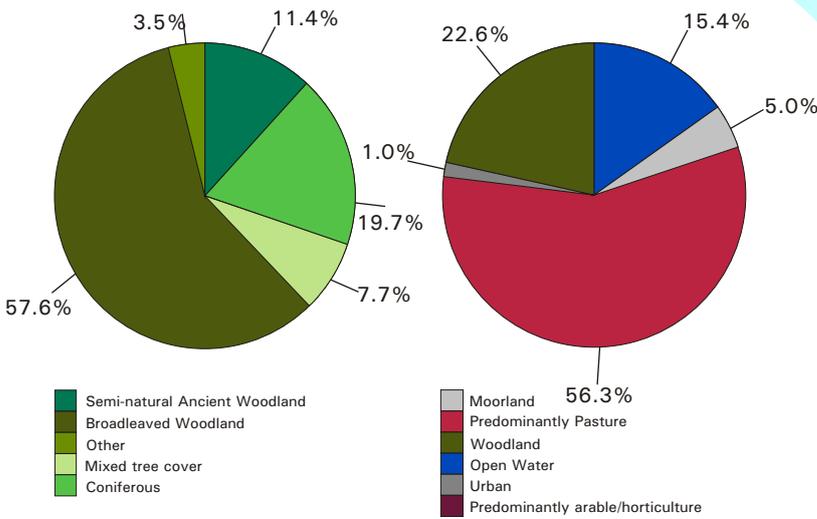
Character Areas

- 9a Rivington
- 9b Turton-Jumbles
- 9c Haslingden Grane
- 9d Belmont
- 9e Roddlesworth

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Woodland Resource

Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest 0.1%.



Woodland area 642.6 ha.

Character type area 2,837 ha.

Vision and Objectives

To establish a highly functional, wood-dominated landscape that serves the recreational needs of a large population, whilst also contributing to catchment management, nature conservation and local distinctiveness.



Opportunities

- ⇒ Restructure larger woodlands to improve age and species composition.
- ⇒ Screen commercial planting with visually striking mixes of native broadleaves to create better wildlife habitats and amenity resources.
- ⇒ Promote the Reservoir Valleys as a prime visitor destination.
- ⇒ Bring all woodlands into active management.
- ⇒ Remove non-native invasive species and replace with native broadleaved species, incorporating rides and glades to encourage diverse ground flora cover.
- ⇒ Encourage new semi-natural woodlands in former wooded cloughs and gullies.
- ⇒ Maximise the role of woodland in contributing to water quality amelioration and sediment control.
- ⇒ Contribute and add value to the East Lancashire Regional Park.

Challenges

- ⇒ Ensure that wetlands, marginal plant communities, species-rich grasslands and hay meadows are preserved.
- ⇒ Balance nature conservation and recreational interests.
- ⇒ Ensure that all local land managers have the skills and support necessary to undertake effective woodland management activities.

Target Areas for New Woodland

The Reservoir Valleys have low capacity for uplift due to the high percentage of woodland cover that currently exists. Priority should, therefore, be afforded to the restructuring of existing plantations to enhance structure and species composition, ensuring that there is no net loss of woodland cover during the restructuring process. Gradual removal of non-native species should be undertaken. Woodlands should incorporate glades, rides and dead wood (where it is safe to do so) to enhance their nature conservation value and visitor experiences. Where it is felt appropriate woodlands of a predominantly coniferous composition should remain, native broadleaved screen planting could be created to provide a better visual quality in the context of the surrounding landscape. Establishment of new woodlands should be small-scale, focused on former wooded cloughs and gullies and should link existing woodlands. The cloughs and gullies are likely to hold remnant seed banks, which by altering current management regimes, could be encouraged to regenerate naturally. Linkages will be made to Ancient Semi-Natural and broadleaved woodlands, to increase their robustness and reverse the fragmentation of the wooded landscape and establish local and long distance ecological corridors.

Summary

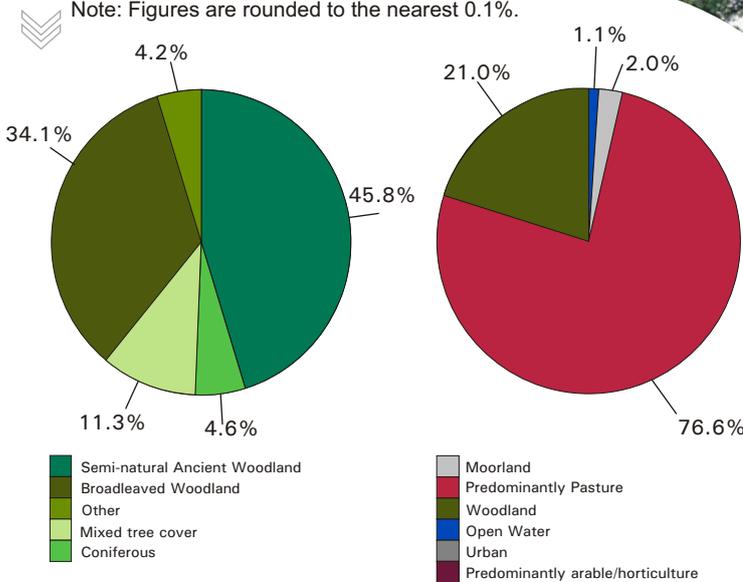
The Wooded Rural Valleys are a product of the erosive forces of fast flowing streams from core upland areas within the Forest of Bowland. This humid environment provides cover and shelter for a wide range of flora and fauna, and woodlands are abundant. Remnant Ancient Woodland sites include base rich ash woodlands, alder and willow woodlands along streams and upland oak woodland along the elevated valley sides. These are interspersed with conifer plantations, wet meadows and herb-rich grassland, to form a valuable mosaic of habitats, many of which are UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) priority habitats and are also designated as SSSIs. Development in the Wooded Rural Valleys is constrained by the steep valley sides. The water resources have historically been used by early industry, utilising water to generate energy.



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Woodland Resource

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Woodland area 868.6 ha.

Character type area 4,131 ha.

Vision and Objectives

To maintain a woodland landscape with abundant natural regeneration and high ecological functionality. Native planting should be allowed to mature along streams and combine with other habitats to create a dynamic mosaic of ecological resources.

Opportunities

- ⇒ Adopt best practice management techniques to ensure the future stewardship of the existing woodland resource.
- ⇒ Contribute to catchment management and flood control by planting new woodlands to act as hydrological buffers to streams, whilst enhancing the existing resource.
- ⇒ Plant on areas of improved pasture as a priority.
- ⇒ Buffer Ancient Woodland through new planting and natural regeneration.
- ⇒ Restore Ancient Woodland, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Biological Heritage Sites to secure the long-term ecological viability of habitat networks.
- ⇒ Increase the cover of UK BAP priority woodlands, including wet woodland and upland mixed ash.
- ⇒ Remove non-native species gradually and replace with native broadleaves through new planting and natural regeneration.
- ⇒ Enhance and extend the existing right of way network, in particular riverside footpaths which are a valuable tourism commodity.

Challenges

- ⇒ Reverse woodland neglect by bringing all woodlands into active management.
- ⇒ Encourage shifts in intensive stock grazing practice to allow opportunities for natural regeneration to be maximised.
- ⇒ Manage rigorously invasion by non-native species.
- ⇒ Balance new woodland creation with the interests of non-woodland habitats and species.
- ⇒ Ensure that all local land managers have the skills and support necessary to undertake effective woodland management activities.

Target Areas for New Woodland

The Wooded Rural Valleys have low capacity for uplift, due to the high percentage of woodland cover that currently exists. Priority should be given to the management and restoration of existing woodlands, ensuring that the necessary skills and resources are available to all land managers. Woodland expansion should be encouraged in the vicinity of existing woodlands, on improved pasture and along streams. Expansion will aim to buffer existing woodlands and enhance ecological and recreational connectivity. Streamside planting would contribute to catchment management reducing flood risk. Priority woodland should be wet woodland and upland mixed ash, both of which are UK BAP priority habitats.