

32 Bagley Dyke



Introduction

Bagley Dyke consists of a long, thin stretch of broad leaved woodland that runs along the side of Barnsley Road in the hospital grounds. The wood contains many ancient woodland indicators, a wide range of birds and invertebrates and a water source, ecologically it is of major ecological importance.

The wood has unlimited public access and is well used.

Site details

Site name

Bagley Dyke, generally known as the hospital woodland.

Location

The woodland is situated at Grid Reference: SK 365 905.

Land owner

The Northern General Hospital Trust owns the woodland from the junction of Barnsley Road and Herries Road up to the bend in the road. After this, leading up to Longley Park, it is owned by the council.

Nearest road/street

Barnsley Road to the east of the site.

Adjacent land use

To the east of the site over Barnsley Road are houses and gardens, to the west of the site is the Northern General Hospital, to the north is Longley Park, a large green open space. South of the site is a major road junction and small shopping area surrounded by houses and gardens.

Present management

The site is checked regularly for falling branches, dead trees etc by the hospital grounds staff; anything that might be a danger to the public is removed. Litter is cleared from the site regularly.

A fence has recently been erected around a section of the wood near the hospital incinerator.

Song thrush eggshells have been found near the boundary where the fence has been erected. This is clearly an example of the valuable wildlife that could potentially be affected if any more building work were to take place. Although the ground flora in this area isn't particularly valuable it acts as a

protective barrier from the hospital and the rest of the wood; most of the rest of the wood does contain valuable ground flora.

The paths are in good condition but it is not known how regularly they are maintained.

UDP designations

Open Space Area. Area of Natural History Interest.

Location map



Ecology

Phase I ecological survey

Site description

The site consists of a long narrow woodland strip with steep sides, especially on the eastern bank, leading to the stream. It is mature broadleaved woodland with unrestricted access. (The dike now travels alongside Owler Lane; through Grimesthorpe crossing Upwell Street by the chapel and under the bridge at Back Lane it disappears into a culvert).

The woodland is made up of a range of mature, deciduous native species such as oak, hazel, lime, rowan, blackthorn and elder, there are also a number of non native trees especially around the edges of the wood such as sycamore and cockspur thorn. Many of the trees have obviously been planted but are

mature enough, in excess of 100 years old, to be classed as semi-natural. There is a lot of beech in the wood but there are several instances around Sheffield where ancient woodland has been thinned out in the past and planted with beech, either for timber or to create a more open park like appearance. Therefore the incidence and amount of beech in a wood may not be a reliable indicator of the age of the wood only the uses or history.

There are numerous more open areas dominated by semi-natural woodland ground flora.

The ground flora contains a number of ancient woodland indicator species such as wood melick, (*Melica uniflora*), native bluebell, (*Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*), ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*) and dogs mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*). There are also many patches of bramble and ivy, these are both important for many species, especially invertebrates.

Footpaths, steps and revetments are in good condition and there is unrestricted pedestrian access.

The stream is well used by mammals in the area but it does not look very appealing to people as there are drainage pipes leading into it so it does not smell pleasant and there are regularly rats around it.

Habitats of interest

The woodland appears to be ancient although there is no documentary evidence of this, the woodland does contain many ancient woodland indicators. The position of the woodland on steep banks leading down to the stream is typical of ancient woodland habitat; on old maps where streams or rivers are found relics of ancient woodland are usually left as the banks are too steep for building or clearing for agriculture. The woodland and the stream are very important for wildlife including birds, mammals and invertebrates and should be protected.

Species of interest

Grade A Local Red Data Book Species

Speckled wood butterfly

Lesser-spotted woodpecker

Grade B Local Red data Book Species

Greater Spotted Woodpecker

UK BAP Priority Species

Song thrush

UK BAP Species of Conservation Concern

Blue tit, blackcap, dunnock, wren, nuthatch, and greater & lesser-spotted woodpeckers.

Lily-of-the-valley, bluebells, ramsons and wood melick are all ancient woodland indicators.

Invertebrate survey

A full invertebrate survey was not carried out on this site as, due to limited funding, only a few sites could be chosen. The sites that were surveyed are believed to hold greater invertebrate interest.

A full invertebrate survey is recommended in the future. Species were noticed during site visits.

Butterflies on site include: speckled wood, small tortoiseshell, peacock, orange-tip, small white and brimstone.

Vertebrate Survey

Mammals

Squirrel

Fox

Rat

A full mammal survey is recommended for this site in the future.

Bird survey

Species recorded between May 2003 and August 2003	Possible Breeding Species ¹	Probable Breeding Species ²	Confirmed Breeding Species ³	Number of territories held by selected species
Blackcap 5 Long tailed tit Grey wagtail Magpie Wood pigeon Blackbird Dunnock 5 Robin Wren 5 Nuthatch 5 Carrion crow Mistle thrush Song thrush 4 Blue tit 5 Great spotted woodpecker 5 Lesser spotted woodpecker 5		Song thrush 4 Great spotted woodpecker 5 Lesser spotted woodpecker 5 Wren 5 Robin Dunnock 5	Blue tit 5 Mistle thrush Nuthatch 5 Carrion crow	Lesser spotted woodpecker 5 2 Blue tit 5 2

¹ Evidence: present on more than one occasion in suitable breeding habitat.

² Evidence: singing/displaying male in suitable breeding habitat on more than one occasion; pair in suitable habitat showing courtship or territorial behaviour; bird visiting probable nest site; nest building; anxiety calls; recently used nest.

³ Evidence: Adult carrying food or faecal sac; adult sitting on nest; nest with eggs/young; eggshells found away from nest; recently fledged young.

⁴ Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan

⁵ Species of Conservation Concern in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan

Further bird surveys are recommended for this interesting site, there are constant sightings of many species, including priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, by staff, patients and dog walkers.

Evaluation

Bagley Dike is an extremely important habitat that needs to be protected from development or destruction.

The woodland is rich in ancient woodland indicators such as: native bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*), ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*) and dogs mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*).

The woodland is extremely important for wildlife and people- many birds use the site and foxes are common, the site is especially important for hospital patients who may not be able to walk far but can enjoy the freedom and therapeutic benefits of nature. Many dog walkers use the site as it links Fir Vale and Firth Park with Longley park.

The woodland needs to be managed sensitively, some dead wood needs to remain on site and the woodland should not be encroached upon by any further hospital developments.

Woodland and wildlife are valued more and more for their therapeutic values in making people feel at ease and in overcoming physical and mental illnesses, the wood is a sanctuary for many hospital patients who cannot venture too far from their wards but need a positive change from the hospital environment.

Species found

A (tree or shrub)

<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	sycamore
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	horse-chestnut
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	alder
<i>Berberis darwinii</i>	bayberry
<i>Betula pendula</i>	silver birch
<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	hornbeam
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	hawthorn
<i>Crataegus x lavalleyi</i>	hybrid Cockspur thorn
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	beech
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	ash
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	holly
<i>Laburnum anagyroides</i>	laburnum
<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i>	garden privet
<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	crab apple
<i>Prunus avium</i>	wild cherry
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	blackthorn
<i>Quercus petraea</i>	sessile oak
<i>Quercus robur</i>	pedunculate oak
<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	rhododendron
<i>Rosa canina</i> agg.	dog rose
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	bramble

	<i>Salix fragilis</i>	crack willow
	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	elder
	<i>Sorbus aria</i> agg.	common whitebeam
	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	rowan
	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	yew
	<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i>	large-leaved lime
	<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	wych elm
B (herb)		
	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	garlic mustard
	<i>Allium ursinum</i>	ramsons
	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	cow parsley
	<i>Arenaria serpyllifolia</i>	Thyme-leaved sandwort
	<i>Arum maculatum</i>	lords-and-ladies
	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	daisy
	<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	wavy bitter-cress
	<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>	hairy bitter-cress
	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	rosebay willowherb
	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	spear thistle
	<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	lily of the valley
	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	foxglove
	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	great willowherb
	<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	broad-leaved willowherb
	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>	Japanese knotweed
	<i>Galium aparine</i>	cleavers
	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	wood avens
	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	ground-ivy
	<i>Hedera helix</i>	ivy
	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	hogweed
	<i>Hieracium murorum</i>	Few leaved hawkweed
	<i>Hieracium umbellatum</i>	leafy hawkweed
	<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>	Spanish bluebell
	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	bluebell
	<i>Lapsana communis</i>	nippelwort
	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	honeysuckle
	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	dog's mercury
	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>	cultivated daffodil
	<i>Polygonum bistorta</i>	sommon bistort
	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	creeping cinquefoil
	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	lesser celandine
	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	creeping buttercup
	<i>Ribes uva-crispa</i>	gooseberry
	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	common sorrel
	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	curled dock
	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	broad-leaved dock
	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	common ragwort
	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	bittersweet
	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	hedge woundwort
	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	dandelion
	<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>	wood sage
	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	common nettle
	<i>Viola riviniana</i>	common dog-violet
C (grass)		
	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	cock's-foot
	<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>	wavy hair-grass
	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	red fescue
	<i>Holcus mollis</i>	creeping soft-grass
	<i>Melica uniflora</i>	wood melick
D		
	<i>Luzula sp</i>	woodrush

E (Pteridophyte)

Dryopteris dilatata
Dryopteris filix-mas
Pteridium aquilinum

broad buckler-fern
male-fern
bracken

Habitats/species of nature conservation importance

UK BAP/Sheffield LBAP Priority Habitats

None

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UK BAP Priority Species

Song thrush

Sheffield LBAP Priority Species

Song thrush

Lesser spotted woodpecker

Greater spotted woodpecker

UK BAP Species of Conservation Concern

Blue tit

Blackcap

Dunnock

Wren

Nuthatch

Greater spotted woodpecker

Lesser spotted woodpecker

UK Red List Birds

Lesser spotted woodpecker

Song thrush

UK Amber List Birds

Duncock

Mistle thrush

Local Red Data Book Species

Grade A Local Red Data Book Species

Lesser-spotted woodpecker

Speckled wood butterfly

Grade B Local Red data Book Species

Greater Spotted Woodpecker

Previous Surveys

Author/Recorder	Date	Coverage	Location
J.Westfold	6/8/87	Sheffield Inner City Phase 1 Habitat Survey	Sheffield Wildlife Trust & Sheffield City Council Ecology Unit File #138
R.S & LES	26/6/92	Sheffield Inner City Phase 2 Habitat Survey	Sheffield Wildlife Trust & Sheffield City Council Ecology Unit File #8C35

History and Geology

Geological survey

The site is underlain by sedimentary rocks from the Lower Coal Measures series, deposited during the Upper Carboniferous period. No geological outcrops exist on the site.

Archaeological survey

No archaeological features are known about this site. There are no records in the City Council Archaeology files.

Historical survey

Bagley Dike is not listed as an ancient wood but it does contain many ancient woodland indicators. The hospital was built at the turn of the century and the woodland edge has been protected from any further development.

Community

No community survey was carried out.