



Hedgerow, Whalton © NBP Photographer John Williamson



*Working with Wildlife*

## Trees & Hedgerows Habitat Action Plan

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Plan Lead	Local Authorities
Latest version	January 2008

### Conservation Status

Hedgerow Regulations 1997  
Tree Preservation Orders (Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended)

### Description

This action plan covers the following:

**Parkland** - Parklands are the products of historic land management. They usually consist of large, grown on high forest trees (often pollards) at various densities. Most of the trees are usually native, but there may be non-native species, which have been planted or home grown naturally.

**Roadside Trees** - Trees and shrubs in streets, recreation areas or private gardens play an important part in making our urban area a more pleasant place to live. Trees perform a number of functions: reducing air and noise pollution, creating shade, softening the built environment and creating local distinctiveness. In urban areas, with few wooded habitats, roadside trees are especially important for wildlife.

**Deadwood** - Deadwood is valuable for wildlife, providing a range of habitats including dead limbs on living trees, decay columns in trunks and branches. Deadwood habitats become homes for a variety of invasive organisms such as bacteria, lichens and fungi these organisms make the habitat more easily accessible for other birds and animals for breeding or shelter.

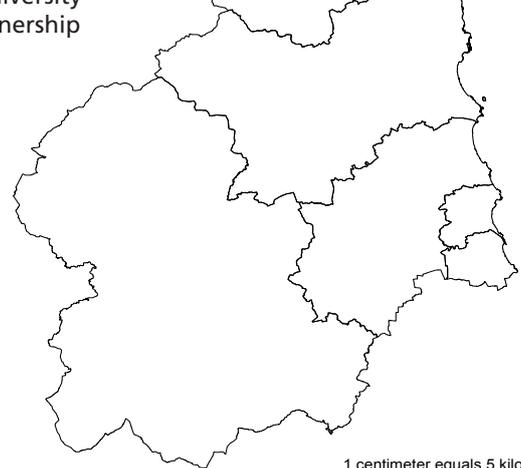
**Scrub** - Scrub can be defined as vegetation made up of either native or non-native shrubs and tree saplings ranging from scattered bushes to closed canopy vegetation, usually less than five metres tall, occasionally with a few scattered trees. Scrub is often a stage in the natural succession to woodland. The value of scrub for wildlife depends on the species present and their age range, therefore it varies over time.

**Hedgerows** - Hedgerows resemble woodland edge and scrub habitat; they are important habitat for insects, birds and mammals. Hedgerows also act as wildlife corridors for many species. Hedgerows are the primary habitat for at least 47 species of conservation concern nationally.

### Current Extent in Northumberland

The exact extent of urban trees and hedgerows within Northumberland would be difficult to identify. There are however a number of protected trees and hedgerows which are known to local authorities.

A map of protected trees and hedgerows distribution in Northumberland is currently being developed by the Northumberland Biodiversity Partnership



1 centimeter equals 5 kilometers

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## Trees & Hedgerows Habitat Action Plan

### Current Factors Causing Loss or Decline

- Conflicting pressure for hard use and consequent loss of habitat
- Public perception that management of trees and woodland, however beneficial, may be damaging – despite increasing public interest in trees
- Public perception that land not managed intensively is not cared for
- Lack of management – numerous small and dispersed sites increase management costs
- Disturbance, trampling and heavy use on sensitive sites
- Inappropriate management to overcompensate for public safety and to create “tidy” landscapes
- The deliberate removal of trees during and following development
- Poor specifications for urban tree management, (planting and maintenance) and lack of resources to take offending contractors to task
- Severance of roots during the laying of cables and pipes
- Laying of impermeable surfaces around the base of the trees and so cutting off their water supply
- Excessive strimming, causing damage to the cambium under the bark, the part of the tree where growth occurs
- Failure to remove ties and stakes from planted saplings
- Conflicts between trees and the foundations of older houses, especially prevalent in areas with high clay content in soil
- Pressure from property holders for removal of mature trees because of shading of domestic gardens, heavy leaf and sap fall, and faecal deposits of feeding, nesting and roosting birds
- Introduction to exotic pests with planted exotic species – sometime disastrous for native species (e.g. Dutch Elm disease, sudden Oak Death fungus (*Phytophthora ramorum*))
- Damage to roadside tree roots from soil compaction and erosion can be caused by people walking and car parking
- If Scrub is left unmanaged it will eventually turn into woodland and the important habitat that Scrub provides will be lost
- Neglect or poor management of hedgerows (no cutting or laying) leads to them changing into lines of trees and the development of gaps
- Removal of hedgerows in advance of development for housing, industry, road building and mineral extraction (opencast coal mining)
- The use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers up to the base of hedges

### Associated Action Plans

Recreational and Amenity Land  
 Transport Corridors  
 Bats  
 Hedgehog  
 Garden Birds  
 Barn Owl

### Further Information

The Woodland Trust website -  
<http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/>

The Tree Council website -  
<http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/>

### Targets

**Maintain the current extent of protected trees and hedgerows in Northumberland by 2015 (no net loss)**

Code	Priority Actions	Date
TH A01	Identify the current extent and condition of protected trees and hedgerows in Northumberland	2008
TH A02	Use the survey results to quantify the target to maintain the current extent and create targets for achieving condition	2008
TH A03	Promote 'best practice' management of Northumberland's tree and hedgerow resource	ongoing
TH A04	Encourage the establishment and development of a Tree Warden scheme for Northumberland	ongoing