

Clough Woodland

Planting new woodland



What we hope to achieve through the clough woodland project

The Moors for the Future Partnership is working to restore native broadleaf woodland across the Peak District and South Pennine moors. Clough woodlands are made up of native broadleaf species located along fast flowing upland streams and surrounding steep sided valleys or 'cloughs'.

These areas can offer the greatest potential to deliver multiple benefits for people, the environment, water and biodiversity.

BENEFITS

The key benefits of clough woodlands include:

- Creating shelter and shade for livestock
- Reducing soil erosion
- Improving water quality
- Mitigating downstream flood risk
- Supporting woodland and upland birds
- Increasing habitat and species diversity
- Storing carbon
- Increasing resilience of the landscape in the face of climate change
- Enhancing the landscape
- Enhancing visitor experience and well-being
- Providing an evidence base for the future

'Clough' is a local term used in the Peak District and further north. It describes the steep sided moorland valleys and their connected streams which carry water from the moors to rivers.

The Moors for the Future Partnership works alongside several partner organisations to help with grant

applications to fund capital works. We are working with farmers, landowners and land managers to develop woodland aimed at delivering benefits to people and wildlife locally and nationally.

Clough woodland creation

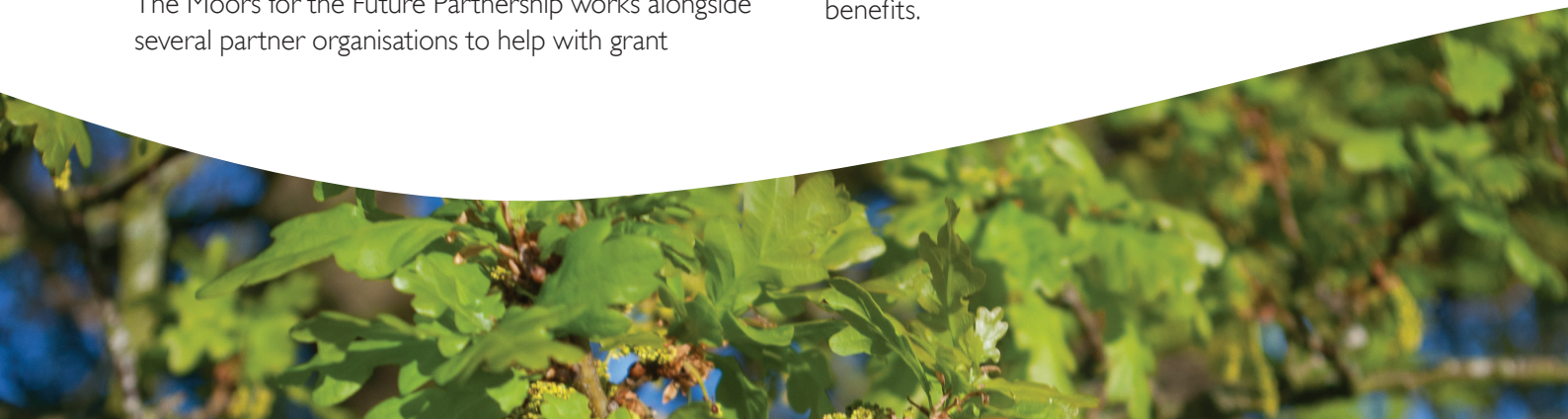
Native clough woodlands are typically made up of a mix of species such as Oak, Birch, Rowan, Aspen, Alder, Willow, Hawthorn and Holly. They are open in nature and have varied structures. This can include dense thickets, sparse tree cover and open ground. They are very different to traditional commercial forestry plantation blocks. Before historic land clearances, clough woodland would have been the native land cover, and there have been several factors that have prevented trees and shrubs from regenerating naturally.

Woodland creation often will involve planting trees suited to the site conditions but can also include allowing woodlands to be created naturally by removing grazing pressure and allowing seed sources from nearby trees to settle.

Woodlands created through natural regeneration take longer to establish but do give a more natural looking woodland. In reality creating woodland can be a combination of both planting and natural regeneration. New woodland can be created on areas of bracken, in cloughs and on acid grassland.

The majority of new woodland should be made up of native species but can include a proportion of non-native or advancing/honorary species.

The amount of trees planted per hectare will vary if planting is carried out and a proportion of woody shrubs will normally be included to provide additional wildlife benefits.



Will the creation of woodland on a large scale impact on the existing open landscapes of the Peak District National Park?

Woodland creation will in most cases be limited to small woodland sites not prominent in the landscape (such as clough sides). Where larger or more visible sites are selected, thorough consultation with all stakeholders will take place. Sound landscape design principles will be implemented when planning all new woodland. It is worth noting that the open landscape that is visible today, not so long ago, would have been covered in more trees and is itself a landscape totally altered by people's actions and intervention.

Will new woodland creation pose an increased fire risk to the area?

Woodland will often be created adjacent to existing woodland and so woodland cover may be increased. New woodland creation will be mainly broadleaved trees at relatively low-density planting. Such woodland is less likely to catch fire (compared to many conifers). A fire would not readily spread through such new woodlands because they are not planted at tight spacing.

Will creating woodlands on some sites remove habitat that is suitable for species (of conservation interest) that are used to more open habitats?

All the partners working to promote clough woodland creation either represent the interests of certain species, such as the RSPB, or have very good knowledge of important sites for conservation, such as Natural England. All this experience will be used during the consultation period and the point of views of other groups will be considered. This is to ensure important, threatened or rare species or habitats are not negatively affected by woodland creation. In all cases it will be our goal to see the right tree in the right place!

Will the creation of woodland limit walker's rights on Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) designated land?

On land designated as open access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 there will be a right of access maintained in newly established woodland. If deer or stock fencing is needed initially to establish new woodland then adequate stiles, gates or through passes will be designed into the fence layout to give access. Once fences have done their job and trees are established the fencing can be removed and open ground within the woodland would still be accessible.

What will happen to woodlands once they are established?

Once woodlands have become established (probably between 5 and 10 years), then they will require little other early management. It will be important to prevent damage such as bark stripping to the trees by livestock or red deer. Eventually it will be beneficial to remove some trees either by thinning out the trees or perhaps coppicing to produce low shrubby growth of benefit to wildlife and game birds. This early work will produce wood fuel for use on the farm or for sale locally. As the trees mature their value and the range of uses they can be used for generally increases.



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This is one of three factsheets about clough woodland creation, which are part of a series of factsheets produced by the Moors for the Future Partnership. For more advice and information, please contact either:

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