**Fishponds Wood**

**When is it open?**
Fishponds Wood provides 24-hour access to the public.

**Background to the site**
The area known as Fishponds Wood can be clearly found on early maps of Acomb village dating from 1774. The area at one time had three large ponds possibly used to stock fish for Acomb Hall. A map of the area in 1892 shows the area as woodland. The ponds were subsequently filled in and now remain as wet habitats with little open water.

**What facilities are there?**
The woods are a semi-natural environment and as such have no toilet, catering or playground facilities. There is however free parking on the neighbouring streets and a selection of nearby local shops and pubs on Danebury Drive or in Acomb itself.

**What about disabled access?**
There are many informal paths through the centre of the woods, however the paths are narrow and can often be wet and muddy. There is a hard surface path that would allow wheelchair users and pushchairs to access part of the woodland between Woodlea Avenue and Danebury Drive.

**What can I do there?**
Fishponds Wood provides the perfect setting for an easily accessible wildlife experience. A stroll around the pathways of the woods would enable the visitor to observe many beautiful species of woodland life on the way round. There are clusters of informal seating logs throughout the woods, which provide useful resting points or picnic stops. You may also spot the wood sculptures as you go around that reflect the uses of the wood both past and present.

The City of York Council run an annual programme of events in the woods (see ‘Where can I find out more’) including a range of children’s activities during school holidays.

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**Sights to delight**
1. Ferns are abundant, thriving in damp, moist conditions
2. Characteristic beech foliage provides a canopy for the woods
3. Foxes can be seen passing through and foraging in the undergrowth
4. Wood Mice are the most common small mammal on site
5. Grey Squirrels are a common sight at Fishponds Wood
6. Old Beech trees are home to a variety of bracket fungus
7. Buttercups bloom throughout the summer months
8. Red Admiral butterflies can be spotted in the summer months…
9. …as can the similarly-marked Tortoiseshell butterfly
Where can I find out more?
For general information about Fishponds Wood the Parks and Open Spaces Service can be contacted by email at parks@york.gov.uk or by calling 01904 553392. For information about getting involved in Fishponds Wood contact the Rangers by email at rangers@york.gov.uk or by calling 01904 553423.

Responsible use of the site
We welcome all people but please respect the site and other people by taking all litter home with you and by cleaning up after your dog. Dogs must be kept under close control. Camping, fires and the use of any kind of motorised vehicle are not permitted.

How do I get there?
Fishponds Wood is served by several bus routes along Danebury Drive and Carr Lane and has good cycle links with the rest of the city. For bus details contact the First Bus Group direct. Cycle maps are available from Council receptions and from the City of York Council web site. If you intend to drive, the main entrance to Fishponds Wood is off Woodlea Avenue with other entrances off Danebury Drive.

Where is Fishponds Wood?
Fishponds Wood is in the Acomb Ward of York 3 miles east of the city centre. Rosedale Avenue, Woodlea Avenue and Danebury Drive border the wood.

This leaflet is also available in large print and in black and white.
Some of the original beech trees from the Acomb Hall gardens can be still seen along one side of Beech Grove and there are impressive Beech trees in Fishponds Wood. This proves the existing beech trees in the area are over 100 years old. Although the ponds were filled in during the 1950s, the area is still fed by natural springs and is therefore boggy in places throughout the year.

The animals of the wood

Regular sightings can be made of common birds such as Robin, Long Tailed Tit, Blackbird, and House Sparrow. Other sightings include Tree Creeper, Pied Wagtail, Goldfinch, Bullfinch and Kestrel. Mammals you may spot include Wood Mouse, Common Shrew, Pipistrelle Bats, Grey Squirrel and Fox.

Butterflies and moths are attracted to the woodland edge habitats around the perimeter including Brimstone, Tortoiseshell, Cinnabar Moth and Red Admiral. Amphibians such as frogs and toads are abundant in this habitat.

The plants of Fishponds Wood

Fishponds Wood is a mixture of broadleaved woodland and boggy habitat. The woodland was historically dominated by Beech but a number of other species have been added in the last 15-20 years. Willows and Alder thrive in the wetter areas of the wood.

The boggy ground supports a large variety of mosses and lichens and a variety of wildflowers and grasses suited to wet woodland can be found. The hedgerow borders have hawthorn and hazel shrubs and the grassy paths that snake through the wood have Birdsfoot Trefoil and Buttercups giving a show of yellow flowers as you walk along them.

Management Plan

Fishponds Wood has been extended in many areas with trees and shrubs to encourage wildlife and add to the diversity of the site.

The grass is only cut along paths and boundaries to improve access and to provide cover for small mammals and invertebrates.

Standing and lying dead wood is left to provide habitats for invertebrates and fungi as they slowly rot. Some of the boundary hedges have been replanted to increase the nesting and feeding opportunities for garden birds.