

The Wildwood.

10,000 years ago the Ice Age was coming to an end and the great ice sheet which had once covered the area began to thaw. The resulting torrents of melt-water began to carve out the deep valleys we see here today.

As the climate warmed, tree seeds spread north from Europe and took root in the glacial clay. A wildwood eventually covered the whole of Britain.

The character of the woodlands we see today has been shaped by the local communities. Bronze Age farmers first began to make clearings, but it was the following 4,000 years of progress that left the Loftus valleys with only echoes of the wildwood.

Today, these ancient woodlands support a diversity of life. Trees such as oak, ash, hazel and alder are common but rare species such as spindle and small-leaved lime trees can also be found. The lucky visitor may catch sight of great spotted woodpecker, long tailed tit, tawny owl or sparrowhawk. In spring, the fertile soils beneath the trees provide a habitat for ancient plants such as dog's mercury, wood anemone, primrose and toothwort.

In the past, people sustainably harvested the natural resources of the woodland. Coppiced timber provided the raw materials for a variety of crafts and industries. Stout oak poles made good pit props, oak bark was used for making the liquor used by leather tanners and hazel rods were woven into hurdles. Alder, which is easily worked and waterproof, made excellent clog soles, ash and hazel made springy brush and tool handles. The keen-eyed visitor to the woodlands can still find evidence of these past traditions today in the form of coppiced stumps, pollarded trees and old trackways.

Protecting the Woodlands.

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council play an active role in the management of the ancient woodlands of Loftus.

Safety

Visitors to the woodlands should be aware that footpath conditions change with the weather, it is recommended that suitable footwear should be worn.






Detailed information about all footpaths in the area can be found on the Ordnance Survey Explorer map; **NORTH YORK MOORS** Eastern Area OL27.

The Ancient Woods of Loftus



CARLIN HOW

KEY

- Footpath 
- Road 
- Railway 
- Watercourse 
- Woodland 
- Farmland 
- Built Up Area 

0 Metres 500

KILTON

Deepdale Wood

LOFTUS

Whitecliff Wood

Swalwell Wood

Clarkson's Wood

LIVERTON MINES

Hancock's Wood

Rosecroft Wood

Loftus Wood

