

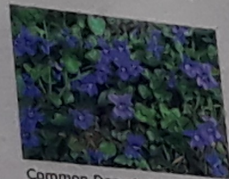
# Owlthorpe Heritage & Nature Trail

## Ancient Woodland

Ancient woodland is a term used in the UK to refer to woodland that has existed continuously since 1600AD or before. Before those dates, planting of new woodland was uncommon, and was likely to have developed naturally. Survey work carried out on the flora has established that both Hanging Lea Wood and the Ochre Dyke corridor are the remnants of ancient woodland. The surveys have identified the following 7 Ancient Woodland Indicators:



Native Bluebell



Common Dog-violet



Greater Stitchwort



Ramsons (Wild Garlic)



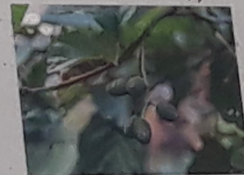
Wood Anemone



Yellow Pimpernel



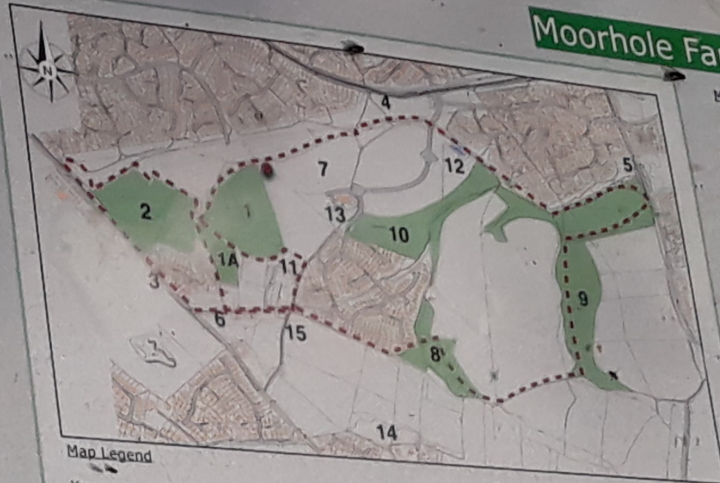
Remote Sedge



Alder Tree

The name Owlthorpe is derived from the Old English word *alor* for the Alder Tree while Thorpe is a variant of the Middle English word *thorp*, meaning hamlet or small village. Therefore Owlthorpe means the hamlet where Alder Trees grow. They are most commonly found next to a body of water such as the Ochre Dyke.

There are two types of Oak in Owlthorpe: The acorns of the Sessile Oak have short stalks and the leaves have long stalks. The acorns of the English Oak have long stalks and the leaves have short stalks.



### Map Legend

You are here

Trail

- Owlthorpe Grazing Project:
- No. 1 Phase 1
  - No. 1A Phase 1A
  - No. 2 Phase 2

- No. 3 Moor Valley (A616)
- No. 4 Donetsk Way (A57)
- Supertram Station
- No. 5 Moss Way
- No. 6 Moorhole Lane
- No. 7 Ochre Dyke
- No. 8 Hanging Lea Wood
- No. 9 Westfield Plantation
- No. 10 Owlthorpe Forest Setting
- No. 11 Owlthorpe Wild Orchard
- No. 12 Owlthorpe Wetland
- No. 13 Owlthorpe Medical Centre
- No. 14 3-Way Stone Stile
- No. 15 Bridle Way



Sessile Oak



English Oak

The oak held sacred by the Druids has always been important. From early days it's strong and durable timber ideal for shipbuilding and timber frames for buildings.

## Moorhole Farm & Hanging Lea Wood

### Moorhole Farm



Moorhole Farm House

The farm house was demolished 1984 Approximately after John Pratt and his family moved to Spinkhill Farm.

The 1881 Census shows the resident of Moorhole Farm as John Lee a farmer of 150 acres aged 39. He lived there with his widowed mother Hannah aged 79, his wife Sarah A. aged 30, his two sons George R. aged 7, Edwin aged 4 months and his daughter Rose A. aged 2. He employed two labourers and a boy. Also living at the farm was Clara Rose an unmarried general servant aged 26. All of those named above are listed as being born in Eckington, Derby, England.

Additionally living at the farm was John Easten an unmarried agricultural labourer aged 20 born in Hibaldstowe, Lincoln, England

### The Story of Zulu Ned

The white settlers in Natal employed local people as we see with the Zulu mentioned widely in British newspapers in October 1859.

The local newspaper had to apologise for spreading rumours, regarding a Zulu the servant of a man named Thomas Handley who was visiting Sheffield, and far from being an escaped slave as it earlier suggested, came from Natal 'where, of course, slavery is as unlawful as in England itself'.

The Zulu named Ned was a refugee from the Zulu wars, had worked as a servant for two years, and was employed to care for Handley's two sons Tom and Harry on their voyage to England.

All went well during the visit until he overheard his master making plans to return to Natal. The voyage to England had made him so sea-sick that he vowed never to set foot on a ship again. His great dread was of having to be sent over the sea again.

Therefore, on Sunday, August 28, 1859 the young African left his masters house and took to the woods. Ned was living rough in the Sheffield area and he had begged a couple of times, had had dogs set on him, and was hiding. 'The African is perfectly harmless and inoffensive' and people were asked to rescue him from 'perishing by cold and hunger'.

Ned was known to the Anti-Slavery Society which asked the police to inform when he was found.

George Hellewell, a farmer from Hackenthorpe, found that Ned had stolen a lamb from John Jubb's field, and when police and villagers searched Hanging Lea Wood they found the remains of a fire, cooked lamb and potatoes. Ned was apprehended in the wood. After being remanded for a few days T. Need, Esq., one of the Justices on the Eckington bench, paid the expense of Ned's removal to London in charge of Superintendent Chawner, of Eckington. Ned was killed in a railway accident the following year.



Farm Barn shortly before demolition in 1995



Impression of the layout of Moorhole Farm based on photographs and sketch in the leaflet issued by Mostborough Village Action Group titled 'A Rural Ramble along Bridlestile and a Walk in the Past in Mostborough Village'.

### Hanging Lea Wood

Hanging refers to woodland on the side of a hill, typically on the steep slopes just below the crest and Lea refers to grassland or a meadow.