

A brief history of Knavesmire Wood

Wide ridge and furrow can still be seen in the north-eastern part of Knavesmire Wood, indicating that the wood post-dates the medieval period. The earliest evidence for its existence is to be found on John Lund's map of Micklegate Ward and Stray, dated 1772. The main feature of the wood - the central lime avenue on one of the ridges - is clearly marked on White's Plan of the City of York and the Ainsty (1785). Although each line of limes is no longer composed of about 40 mature trees, as shown on an aerial photograph of 1936, the avenue is still very impressive.

Recently it was noticed that 22 old lime trees and 7 old lime tree stumps remained, interspersed with new plantings. The older limes have strong buttressing at the base of the trunk.

The greater part of Knavesmire Wood was given in 1990 by York City Council to The Woodland Trust, which now owns and manages it.



Base of lime tree, showing buttressing.

Come and visit Knavesmire Wood!

Knavesmire Wood can be accessed from Bracken Road, Dringthorpe Road, the Knavesmire, National Cycle Route 65, and Bishopthorpe Road (near Middlethorpe Hall). Several bus routes run along Tadcaster Road, Dringhouses, just over half a mile (800m) from the wood. There are refreshments and toilets at Tesco, three quarters of a mile away.

There is a picnic area at the south end of the Knavesmire, a few minutes' walk from the south end of the wood.

There is a main footpath (usually dry) down the central lime avenue and an informal path follows the perimeter of the wood.

This leaflet has been produced by Dringhouses Local History Group. For more details, telephone (01904) 703970 or 708700, or visit our website: <http://dlhg.weebly.com>

All photographs taken in Knavesmire Wood.



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Exploring KNAVESMIRE WOOD York



The lime avenue

Knavesmire Wood is an area of 13.8 acres (5.6 hectares) of mature broadleaved woodland just outside the south-west corner of the Knavesmire. It is a pleasure to visit in all seasons (especially in spring), has an impressive central lime avenue, and is easily accessible.

Dringhouses Local History Group

Knavesmire Wood

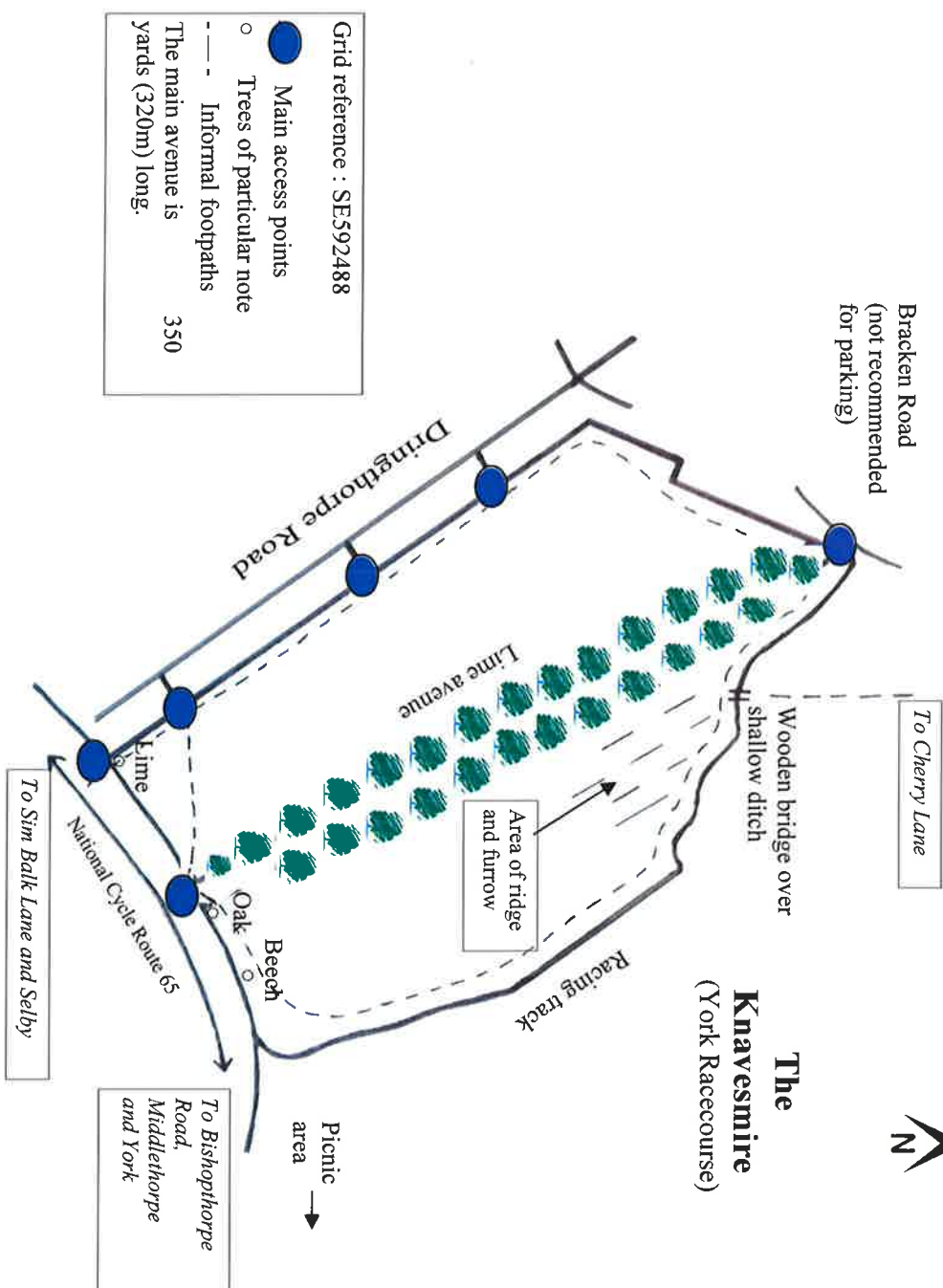
Knavesmire Wood is a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, primarily for its central avenue of veteran lime trees. It is also an example of mixed broadleaved woodland with a good ground flora. Such woodlands are infrequent in the Vale of York and particularly in the City of York.

In spite of the dominance of sycamore, there is a good variety of other tree species including beech, oak and hornbeam at the south end of the wood, and elsewhere ash, horse chestnut and silver birch. Many are notable mature specimens. In spring, drifts of wood anemone and wood sorrel (both of which are indicators of old woodland) delight the eye. The bright yellow flowers of lesser celandine also carpet large areas and goldlocks (a woodland buttercup) and dog violet can be found.

As might be expected, the wood offers an excellent opportunity to hear and see a variety of birds. Grey squirrel and rabbit are common.



The Knavesmire (York Racecourse)



The distinctive flowers and leaves of wood anemone (above left) and wood sorrel (above right).