



COED CADW  
WOODLAND  
TRUST

# Big Wood

## Management Plan 2016-2021

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## THE WOODLAND TRUST

### INTRODUCTION

The Trust's corporate aims and management approach guide the management of all the Trust's properties, and are described on Page 4. These determine basic management policies and methods, which apply to all sites unless specifically stated otherwise. Such policies include free public access; keeping local people informed of major proposed work; the retention of old trees and dead wood; and a desire for management to be as unobtrusive as possible. The Trust also has available Policy Statements covering a variety of woodland management issues.

The Trust's management plans are based on the identification of Key Features for the site and setting objectives for their management. A monitoring programme (not included in this plan) ensures that these objectives are met and any necessary management works are carried out.

Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

### PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING

The information presented in this Management plan is held in a database which is continuously being amended and updated on our website. Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations. Please either consult The Woodland Trust website [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk)) to confirm details of the current management programme.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and a summary of monitoring results can be obtained on request.

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## WOODLAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management of our woods is based on our charitable purposes, and is therefore focused on improving woodland biodiversity and increasing peoples' understanding and enjoyment of woodland. Our strategic aims are to:

- Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future
- Work with others to create more native woodlands and places rich in trees
- Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees

All our sites have a management plan which is freely accessible via our website [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk). Our woods are managed to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and are certified with the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) under licence FSC-C009406 and through independent audit.

In addition to the guidelines below we have specific guidance and policies on issues of woodland management which we review and update from time to time.

We recognise that all woods are different and that the management of our sites should also reflect their local landscape and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives. Guidelines like these provide a necessary overarching framework to guide the management of our sites but such management also requires decisions based on local circumstances and our Site Manager's intimate knowledge of each site.

The following guidelines help to direct our woodland management:

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland using both natural regeneration and tree planting, but largely the latter, particularly when there are opportunities for involving people.
3. We provide free public access to woods for quiet, informal recreation and our woods are managed to make them accessible, welcoming and safe.
4. The long term vision for our non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites is to restore them to predominantly native species composition and semi-natural structure, a vision that equally applies to our secondary woods.
5. Existing semi-natural open-ground and freshwater habitats are restored and maintained wherever their management can be sustained and new open ground habitats created where appropriate.
6. The heritage and cultural value of sites is taken into account in our management and, in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Woods can offer the potential to generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We will therefore consider the potential to generate income from our estate to help support our aims.
8. We work with neighbours, local people, organisations and other stakeholders in developing the management of our woods. We recognise the benefits of local community woodland ownership and management. Where appropriate we allow our woods to be used to support local woodland, conservation, education and access initiatives.
9. We use and offer the estate where appropriate, for the purpose of demonstration, evidence gathering and research associated with the conservation, recreational and sustainable management of woodlands. In particular we will develop and maintain a network of long-term monitoring sites across the estate.
- 10 Any activities we undertake will conform to sustainable forest management principles, be appropriate for the site and will be balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

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## SUMMARY

This public management plan briefly describes the site, specifically mentions information on public access, sets out the long term policy and lists the Key Features which drive management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site - their significance is outlined together with their long (50 year+) and short (5 year) term objectives. The short term objectives are complemented by a detailed Work Programme for the period of this management plan. Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. A short glossary of technical terms is at the end. The Key Features and general woodland condition of this site are subject to a formal monitoring programme which is maintained in a central database. A summary of monitoring results is available on request.

## 1.0 SITE DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Big Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Hendre
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SJ189672, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 116
<b>Area:</b>	8.24 hectares (20.36 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Big Wood lies tucked away among a wooded landscape of old mines and quarries, and is home to badgers, dormice and a host of other wildlife.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Big Wood lies tucked away and is not especially prominent in this locally well-wooded disturbed landscape of old mines and quarries. Occupying ground gently sloping down to the north; it is free draining into the underlying limestone. Limestone outcrops are scattered throughout the site and there are remains of lead mining activity, numerous spoil heaps and a number of shafts, across the site. The woodland extends beyond the Trust's boundary to the north and a large disused quarry lies immediately adjacent and forms part of the eastern boundary.

This semi-natural ancient woodland consists of relatively uniform mature Oak and Ash, with Wych elm and Cherry and scattered exotics, especially Sycamore which has colonised the disturbed ground. It has a rich shrub layer comprised of Hazel, Holly, Hawthorn, Beech and some Sallow and Yew, with Ash and Sycamore regeneration. It has a diverse limestone woodland ground flora. The woodlands are of likely importance to small mammals, particularly rodents. The North Wales Wildlife Trust has included the site in a local dormouse survey, these being a European Protected Species, and has erected a number of boxes. A small area of open ground exists (Cpt 1b) which is predominately calcareous grassland/tall herb vegetation in a triangle of land between the track and adjacent properties which adds to the habitat diversity. A badger sett is also present.

Key features at the site are:

- Ancient semi-natural woodland, upland mixed Ashwood. Of likely value for small mammals, badgers and rodents, in particular dormice, the site is included in a North Wales Wildlife dormouse project.
- Informal public access- the site is moderately well used by local residents following the creation of a circular path.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

The site is situated some 400 metres south of the hamlet of Hendre which is on the A451 4 miles east of Mold. Vehicular access to the site is via a small, unsigned track off a minor public road which runs east-west south of the site. There is a small area of verge upon which cars can park near to the main entrance to the site. Access on foot is more difficult. A number of public footpaths encircle the site but access into the site is only available from the southern track which also serves as access to number of properties.

There is a circular path of approximately 800 metres in length which easily negotiable in the most part but has a number of steep or muddy sections. Considerable care must be taken if visitors stray of the paths as the site is pocked with old mine workings, steep spoil heaps, small quarries and mine shafts. There has been erected a barbed-wire fence running 150 metres parallel the eastern boundary but set some 40 metres from it in order to discourage visitors from straying close to the large abandoned quarry which lies immediately to the east of the site.

Public transport: the nearest bus stop is on the A451 at Hendre. Contact Flintshire Busline for further details on (01352) 704035 or contact Traveline at [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or (0870) 6082608.

Nearest public toilets are in Mold. There are 3 in the town centre close to New Street/Chester Street.

### 3.2 Access / Walks

## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The main management objective at this site will be to maintain the semi-natural ancient woodland through minimal intervention in line with the Trust's management principles outlined on page 3 of this plan. Existing conifers will be maintained for their lifetime where safety permits.

The present footpath will be maintained along with public protection measures associated with mining activities. Open ground will be maintained as limestone grassland /tall herb communities in order to maintain wayleaves and an open approach to adjacent property.

## 5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

### 5.1 Informal Public Access

#### Description

The site is accessible by a public bridleway which also provides access to adjacent properties from the minor public road. An information board is located at the main entrance. From the main entrance a permissive footpath follows a circular route around the site. The site is fairly well used locally.

#### Significance

The construction of the circular route and small area in which to park provides a greater degree of public access than in surrounding woodland.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

Lack of nearby parking means that visitors are likely to be locals / visit as part of a longer walk using the local footpath/bridleway network. The lack of signage from the public road would make it hard to find for visitors without local knowledge.

#### Factors Causing Change

#### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Public access is retained on site through the maintenance of the existing circular path and mine shaft fencing to ensure the safety of visitors.

#### Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

Maintain circular walk and mine shaft fencing annually as part of the estates maintenance contract.



## 5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

### Description

The site is designated as Semi Natural Ancient Woodland. It is described as W8 Upland Mixed Ashwood (ash-field maple-dog's mercury sub-class). The overall structure of the woodland is fairly uniform. Despite the introduction of Sycamore, Beech, Sessile oak and some conifers, much of the original Ash canopy remains and Ash regeneration is frequent. Ground flora is diverse and typical of this habitat.

### Significance

Upland Mixed Ashwood is subject to a UK Habitat Action Plan. Site has a rich understorey and diverse ground flora. Selected by the North Wales Wildlife Trust as a favourable site for dormice and consequently boxes have been erected by them as part of an ongoing survey project.

### Opportunities & Constraints

The progress to High forest is already well-established.

### Factors Causing Change

Natural succession to ash woodland

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Natural progression to High forest.

### Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)

No intervention required during this plan period.

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## 6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By
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## APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	8.10	Oak (sessile)	1951	High forest	Archaeological features, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
<p>Gently sloping, north facing sub-compartment which comprises the majority of the site. The canopy is dominated by even-aged mature sessile oak, leading to the assumption that this was once a productive plantation. Younger Oak, Ash and Sycamore are also present in quantity in the canopy, along with several other broadleaf species and a small number of conifers, mostly situated near the western boundary. Sycamore is most abundant in the vicinity of the old lead mine workings. The sub-compartment has a rich understorey which consists of Hazel coppice and Ash regeneration, although Beech, Sycamore, Yew, Hawthorn and Holly are present in smaller quantities. Ground flora is rich throughout and species include bluebell, Sweet woodruff, Wood anemone, Early purple orchid, Dog's mercury, Ivy, Ferns, Mosses and Dog rose. Several piles of dead-wood are also present creating a valuable fungal habitat. Mine shafts present, fenced and noted in safety.</p>							
1b	0.14	Open ground		Min-intervention	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Services & wayleaves	Informal Public Access	
<p>Small area of open ground calcareous grassland and tall herb communities on the SE edge of the site occupying an area between the track and garden boundaries of adjacent properties. Several large Norway spruce trees present. Area crossed by underground/overground services.</p>							

## GLOSSARY

### **Ancient Woodland**

Ancient woods are defined as those where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. In Scotland ancient woods are defined strictly as sites shown as semi-natural woodland on the 'Roy' maps (a military survey carried out in 1750 AD, which is the best source of historical map evidence) and as woodland all subsequent maps. However, they have been combined with long-established woods of semi-natural origin (originating from between 1750 and 1860) into a single category of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland to take account of uncertainties in their identification. Ancient woods include Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (see below). May support many species that are only found in ancient woodland.

### **Ancient Semi - Natural Woodland**

Stands in ancient woods defined as those consisting predominantly of native trees and shrubs that have not obviously been planted, which have arisen from natural regeneration or coppice regrowth.

### **Ancient Woodland Site**

Stands in ancient woods that have been converted to plantations, of coniferous, broadleaved or mixed species, usually for timber production, including plantations of native species planted so closely together that any semi-natural elements of the understorey have been suppressed.

### **Beating Up**

Replacing any newly planted trees that have died in the first few years after planting.

### **Broadleaf**

A tree having broad leaves (such as oak) rather than needles found on conifers (such as Scots pine).

### **Canopy**

The uppermost layer of vegetation in a woodland, or the upper foliage and branches of an individual tree.

### **Clearfell**

Felling of all trees within a defined area.

### **Compartment**

Permanent management division of a woodland, usually defined on site by permanent features such as roads. See Sub-compartments.

### **Conifer**

A tree having needles, rather than broadleaves, and typically bearing cones.

### **Continuous Cover forestry**

A term used for managing woods to ensure that there are groups or individual trees of different ages scattered over the whole wood and that some mature tree cover is always maintained. Management is by repeated thinning and no large areas are ever completely felled all at once.

### **Coppice**

Trees which are cut back to ground levels at regular intervals (3-25 years).

### **Exotic (non-native) Species**

Species originating from other countries (or other parts of the UK) that have been introduced by humans, deliberately or accidentally.

### **Field Layer**

Layer of small, non-woody herbaceous plants such as bluebells.

### **Group Fell**

The felling of a small group of trees, often to promote natural regeneration or allow planting.

### **Long Term Retention**

Discrete groups of trees (or in some cases single trees) that are retained significantly past their economic felling age. Operations may still be carried out within them and thinning is often necessary to maintain stability.

### **Minimum Intervention**

Areas where no operations (such as thinning) will take place other than to protect public safety or possibly to control invasive exotic species.

### **Mixed Woodland**

Woodland made up of broadleaved and coniferous trees.

### **National vegetation classification (NVC)**

A classification scheme that allows an area of vegetation to be assigned to the standardised type that best matches the combination of plant species that it contains. All woodlands in the UK can be described as being one of 18 main woodland types (W1 - W18), which principally reflect soil and climatic conditions. For example, Upland Oakwoods are type W11, and normally occur on well drained infertile soils in the cooler and wetter north and west of Britain. Each main type can be subdivided into numerous subtypes. Most real woods contain more than one type or sub-type and inevitably some woods are intermediate in character and can't be properly described by any sub type.

### **Native Species**

Species that arrived in Britain without human assistance.

### **Natural Regeneration**

Naturally grown trees from seeds falling from mature trees. Also regeneration from coppicing and suckering.

## **Origin & Provenance**

The provenance of a tree or seed is the place where seed was collected to grow the tree or plant. The origin is the geographical location within the natural range of a species from where seeds/tree originally derives. Thus an acorn collected from a Turkey oak in Edinburgh would have an Edinburgh provenance and a southern European origin.

## **Re-Stocking**

Re-planting an area of woodland, after it has been felled.

## **Shrub Layer**

Formed by woody plants 1-10m tall.

## **Silviculture**

The growing and care of trees in woodlands.

## **Stand**

Trees of one type or species, grouped together within a woodland.

## **Sub-Compartment**

Temporary management division of a compartment, which may change between management plan periods.

## **Thinning**

The felling of a proportion of individual trees within a given area. The remaining trees grow to fill in the space created.

## **Tubex or Grow or Tuley Tubes**

Tubes placed over newly planted trees or natural regeneration that promote growth and provide protection from animals such as rabbits and deer.

## **Weeding**

The control of vegetation immediately around newly planted trees or natural regeneration to promote tree growth until they become established. Either by hand cutting or with carefully selected weed killers such as glyphosate.

## **Windblow/Windthrow**

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.