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WOODLAND
TRUST

Trafalgar Wood

Management Plan 2017-2022

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 or contact the Woodland Trust (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.

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. 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.

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

Site name:	Trafalgar Wood
Location:	Porthcawl, Mid-Glamorgan
Grid reference:	SS816775, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 170
Area:	0.42 hectares (1.04 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Originally planted to mark the Battle of Trafalgar, and adjacent to Porthcawl Rugby Football Club, this wood is dominated by sycamore and ash with some wych elm. Access is via the south-eastern corner from South Place.

2.2 Extended Description

Trafalgar Wood extends to 0.4 Ha and was originally planted to mark the Battle of Trafalgar. It was gifted to the Trust in 1987. It is one of few woodlands in Porthcawl town. On three sides is housing and on the fourth side is Porthcawl Rugby Football Club. As a result of its location it is intensively used by the public, in particular dog-walkers and children. As a consequence there is a high density of informal and ever-changing footpaths.

The wood is dominated by sycamore and ash with some wych elm. The under storey consists mainly of regenerating sycamore, hawthorn and hazel. The ground flora consists of lesser celandines and bluebells. Bramble is dominant in the glades. Listed as Restored Ancient woodland on the 2011 Ancient Woodland Inventory.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Access is via the south-eastern corner from South Place or from the Rugby Club. An information board is present. While this is showing some signs of wear, there are no plans to replace it as the site is used by frequent local visitors, who know the site well.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The woodland will be managed to provide a safe local woodland amenity. Quiet informal recreation will be encouraged through the provision of footpaths and low signage.

Silvicultural management will be limited to that required on the grounds of public safety.

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

This is one of few woods within the boundaries of Porthcawl town. The surrounding land use is housing, communal gardens and a rugby club. A circular path, with a network of other desire lines, gives access to all parts of this small wood. It is regularly used for dog walking, as a thoroughfare and as a play area for children.

Significance

Trafalgar wood was planted to mark the battle of Trafalgar. It is one of few woods within the boundary of Porthcawl town. The value of the site for public access is heightened by its proximity to residential areas and the local Primary School. The visitor numbers are very high to the site although they have never been formally counted but is demonstrated by the high 'wear' of the footpaths and woodland floor.

The wood provides a natural area within the Urban context, and is therefore important to the local residents and children of the local school to study wildlife.

Opportunities & Constraints

General misuse and vandalism will act as a constraint to management options.
Links with local schools and community groups will be encouraged where possible.

Factors Causing Change

Litter and dumping of hazardous waste (e.g. glass and syringes from drug abuse). This is an ongoing and considerable threat to the intrinsic appeal of the site, Inappropriate activities including camp building, fires and vandalism to trees.

Ash Dieback is noted and observed on site and will change canopy composition in some places and will likely be replaced by sycamore.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will be enjoyed, by local residents, through quiet recreation and, through increased awareness. The site will be kept in as near litter free state as possible. Signs of vandalism will be rectified/removed. Maintenance will ensure that boundaries are distinct, and regular tree inspections and remedial works ensure that users are safe.

The footpath network will be distinct and desire lines will be discouraged where possible, with distinct footpaths being maintained/created through regular site maintenance..

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

The site will be kept in as near litter free state as possible. Signs of vandalism will be rectified/removed. Maintenance will ensure that boundaries are distinct and regular tree inspections and remedial works ensure that users are safe.

Maintenance to footpath network will continue keeping formal paths open and free from obstruction.

5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

Trafalgar wood was planted to mark the battle of Trafalgar in 1905 and comprises of high canopy of predominantly Sycamore, Ash and Elm

The site is one of few woods within the boundary of Porthcawl town and has good displays of ancient woodland ground flora in spring months.

Significance

The site is listed as a Restored Ancient Woodland (RAW) under the 2011 Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) and is the remnant of larger woodlands which have been lost through housing developments in the town.

Opportunities & Constraints

Due to being within the curtilage of the urban area of Porthcawl, the site is cut off from other ancient woodlands and has very limited connectivity with other woodland habitats. Constraints also are due to location of nearby houses with regular interventions for tree safety being an issue resulting in regular dramatic change to what is a very small woodland.

Factors Causing Change

Tree safety works changing canopy composition regularly along with onset of Ash dieback observed within canopy and likely to be replaced by Sycamore.

Other factors causing change include trampling of ground flora by visitors and mis-use of site creating anti social behaviour issues impacting upon trees and the woodland (litter and fly tipping)

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Manage and sustain high canopy where possible and appropriate to maintain woodland 'condition' by maintaining health of standing trees through arboricultural interventions where necessary.

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

Manage and sustain high canopy where possible and appropriate to maintain woodland 'condition' by maintaining health of standing trees through arboricultural interventions where necessary. Remove litter build up from site and try to control and influence mis-use of site by working with neighbours and communities as well as define a footpath in part of the site to alleviate trampling of groundflora issues.

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	0.40	Sycamore	1900	Min-intervention	Diseases, Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, People issues (+tve & -tve), Site structure, location, natural features & vegetation	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Tree Preservation Order

Trafalgar Wood is on level ground in the centre of Porthcawl surrounded by housing on three sides and a rugby pitch on the fourth. A circular path, with a network of other desire lines, gives access to all parts of this small wood. It is regularly used for dog walking, as a thoroughfare and as a play area for children. Listed as Restored Ancient woodland on the 2011 Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI), it was planted to mark the battle of Trafalgar consisting of predominantly mature sycamore and ash with wych elm. Where the canopy has been opened up, the shrub layer is dense with regenerating sycamore, hawthorn and vigorous bramble growth. The ground flora is sparse in the majority of the wood, but lesser celandine and bluebell feature in the spring where ground trampling doesn't occur.

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.