COED CADW
WOODLAND
TRUST

Coed Ystrad

Management Plan
2013-2018

MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

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MAPS

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Coed Ystrad
Location:	Johnstown, Carmarthen
Grid reference:	SN394188, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 159
Area:	11.99 hectares (29.63 acres)
Designations:	Planted Ancient Woodland Site

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Ancient woodland of mixed broadleaves and occasional planted conifers define this site. Beech, sweet chestnut and oaks are an example of tree species found here. An extensive path network make it popular with local walkers.

2.2 Extended Description

Coed Ystrad is a moderately steep north and east facing mixed broadleaved woodland with some planted conifers. The key features are ancient woodland site, plantation on ancient woodland site and informal public access. The woods are a significant landscape feature and form the backdrop to Johnstown, a part residential, part business suburb of Carmarthen. They can also be seen clearly from the western approach to Carmarthen along the A40, and from the southern side of Carmarthen town itself.

The woods contain an old disused quarry and once formed part of the Ystrad estate; the house has since been demolished and the land used for modern housing estates, making the woods very popular with local children and walkers. The wood was acquired by the Forestry Commission who planted most of it with Douglas fir in the 1960s. Coed Ystrad is designated as an ancient woodland site and since coming under the ownership of the Woodland Trust most of the planted conifers have been removed, with only a relatively small portion of the site still undergoing active restoration.

The eastern block of woodland reflects its gentrified origins with a mature stand of beech with occasional mature sweet chestnut and an under-storey of laurel and holly. The views from this part have a remnant parkland feel with mature standard oaks in the pastures that lead down to the Tywi estuary, and in the distance Green Castle Woods, another Woodland Trust site. The western side has a more disturbed feel due to the recent removal of conifers and the general lack of mature broadleaves. The views from this part are of Carmarthen town, with the college playing fields and industrial estate in the foreground.

There is an extensive network of paths but access into the site is not straight forward as the most commonly used routes from the adjacent housing estates pass over land which is not owned by the Trust. There is only roadside car parking on Alltycnap Road. It is a wood you can see from everywhere but can't easily find your way to.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General Location:
Coed Ystrad is on the edge of Johnstown, Carmarthen and can be accessed from both Alltycnap Road at the western end and from Llansteffan Road to the east. It lies on a steep hillside above Johnstown, on the southern side of the Cillefwr industrial estate. The only other public access land nearby is Greencastle Woods, another Woodland Trust site to the south.

Overview of paths and entrances:
There are two public entrances, one at the eastern end through the Trinity Fields housing estate on Llansteffan Road via Coed y Plas and the other at the western end on Alltycnap Road. There are squeeze gaps at the entrances and an extensive network of paths and circular routes at this site. The paths are unsurfaced and are steep and uneven in places, but there is also a reasonably level track along the bottom of the slope. There is a long flight of steps at the Eastern end of the site.

Parking:
There is no car park and parking nearby is not easy, although it is possible to park in the housing estate or in the industrial estate on Alltycnap Road.

Public transport:
There are bus stops in Johnstown by the Leisure Centre and on the Allt Cnap Road at the Industrial Park with buses into Carmarthen, see https://www.traveline.cymru/ or telephone 0800 464 0000 for details of services. There is a train station approximately 1.5 miles away in Carmarthen and a footpath runs along the river to the Plas Ystrad housing estate entrance to the site.

Public Toilets:
There are toilets run by the Community Council in Johnstown on the Llansteffan Road but no disabled toilet. The nearest disabled (RADAR key) toilets are 2-3 miles away in Carmarthen at either Carmarthen Market (09:00 – 17:00 Mon to Sat), St Peter's Car Park or John St Car Park. The toilets in the market are free but there is a 20p fee for the other two toilets (except for users with a RADAR key). (Information from Carmarthenshire County Council June 2019)

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Coed Ystrad, as an ancient woodland site, will be composed primarily of native species such as oak and ash with typical understorey shrubs and a thriving ground flora. Occasional conifers will remain, most having been removed through a gradual programme of thinning to enhance and restore ancient woodland features. A small proportion of beech, sweet chestnut, and hornbeam will be present to reflect the ornamental parkland history of the site, and will be sustained by acceptance of their natural regeneration. Previously present invasive species, such as Cherry laurel and Rhododendron, will be absent.

An extensive network of paths and tracks linking welcoming access points will continue to provide safe public access and enjoyment of the site, with appropriate interpretation available.

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

Coed Ystrad is a well-used site, particularly by children and dog walkers. Some parts have an undisturbed quality; others, due to conifer extraction, have been disturbed in the recent past and the increased light levels have brought about vigorous growth. Open glades provide excellent views out of site.

Significance

The only accessible woodland adjacent to Carmarthen and one of the few public access areas of any sort in Carmarthen.

Opportunities & Constraints

Some damage to paths and also the creation of undesirable pathways. Den building and rope swings are popular and there have been occasional instances of vandalism to trees and fires at the base of trees. The old quarry is popular but has an unstable face. It is the only area of public informal recreation in the town. An unofficial access route from Cwm Ystrad, located in the housing estate on the eastern boundary of the wood, has been blocked. This potentially limits access to the site by residents of the estate. The unofficial access route goes through a small area of woodland under third party ownership which sits between the housing estate and Coed Ystrad. The accessibility of the pedestrian entrances on Coed Ystrad's eastern border is therefore not under the Woodland Trust's control..

Factors Causing Change

Access to the eastern end of Coed Ystrad via the unofficial route from the adjacent housing estate is outside of the Woodland Trust's control as it runs through third party land. If the unofficial route was unblocked in the future, it would make it easier for residents of the housing estate to access the wood.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the current level of permissive and public access provision. Formal permissive footpaths will be kept open for walkers and, where appropriate, surfaces maintained. Informal permissive paths (i.e. desire lines, etc.) will be allowed to come and go over time and will not be maintained. No further public rights of way should be created within the woods.

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

Footpaths and tracks will be kept clear of encroaching vegetation by cutting back vegetation at least once a year to provide walkers with unobstructed access. Entrances, steps and other access furniture will be inspected periodically by the Site Manager and maintained in a safe and serviceable condition by carrying out repairs/replacements as required. Woodland Trust welcome signs will be erected and maintained at all formal entrances and visitor safety will be protected by carrying out periodic tree safety surveys along the wood's boundaries and along paths inside the woods.

5.2 Ancient Woodland Site

Description

The whole woodland is classified as an ancient woodland site. The woodland has been much disturbed in the past and not many ancient woodland features are now visible. Sycamore, ash and rowan now dominate the varied canopy, with mature broadleaved trees and some conifers also present. Evidence of the sites history as an estate can also be seen in the presence of species such as sweet chestnut and hornbeam. Several open areas are present but are dominated by coarse vegetation, in which natural regeneration is occurring, as well as some coppice regrowth. Ground flora is abundant but with few ancient woodland specialist species, but bluebells are abundant, with willow herb, rush, ivy, bracken, bramble and moss.

Significance

Important local landscape feature with commanding presence in the local area. This site forms part of a network of other local ancient woodland sites.

Opportunities & Constraints

Timber extraction difficult. Most of the plantation crop was removed in 1999 mostly using a temporary access across adjacent land and further timber extraction should not be necessary and will likely cause damage to sensitive woodland specialist species.

Factors Causing Change

Natural regeneration of woodland. Spread of cherry laurel/rhododendron and coarse vegetation such as bramble.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A naturally developing broadleaved woodland, taking on a more semi-natural character with a diverse shrub and ground layer. The deadwood component will develop further and be retained. Invasive species such as Rhododendron and laurel will decline through control with the aim of eventual eradication.

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

Compartment 1 will be allowed to mature naturally with minimal silvicultural intervention except for the management of ash trees for tree safety reasons – e.g. larger diameter ash trees showing advanced signs of ash dieback on footpaths and proactive management of younger ash trees along the boundary with the road.

Given the lack of access in the eastern part of the wood, its history as part of the Ystrad estate and its current use as an amenity woodland, intervention here will be limited. Tree safety operations will be carried, as well as the creation of a small number of canopy gaps to encourage natural regeneration by halo thinning some of the mature sycamore and beech around some mature oak specimens.

Invasive species such as Rhododendron and laurel will be managed in order to minimise their impact on the Ancient Woodland. Particular attention will be paid to areas close to the boundary with neighbouring land, from which these species are likely to come .

5.3 Planted Ancient Woodland Site

Description

The whole woodland is classified as an ancient woodland site, although it has been much disturbed in the past and not many ancient woodland features are now visible. Compartment 2a in the centre of the wood is categorised as a Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS). Whilst ash and sycamore are dominant in the canopy, there are still some pockets of planted conifer (Douglas Fir) that remain in this compartment. Much of the Douglas Fir was removed by the Woodland Trust in 1999 and the small areas of relatively dense conifer that now remain fall under the Trust's PAWS restoration programme.

Significance

Restoration of Replanted Ancient Woodland (PAWS) to native ancient woodland is considered a priority e.g. in the UK native woodland Habitat Action Plans. The increase in the number of species associated with ancient woodland habitat following the previous removal of conifer in this compartment indicates that further restoration is likely to continue to be successful.

Opportunities & Constraints

Timber extraction is difficult. Most of the plantation crop was removed in 1999 using, for the most part, a temporary access across adjacent land. Further timber extraction should not be necessary and will likely cause damage to sensitive woodland specialist species.

Factors Causing Change

Natural regeneration of woodland in areas thinned previously. Effect on ground flora and natural regeneration caused by the shading from remaining stands of conifer. Spread of cherry laurel/rhododendron and coarse vegetation such as bramble. An industrial estate forms a large part of the northern boundary, which limits the access available for effective woodland management. These access limitations restrict the options available for operations such as timber extraction. The ownership of different industrial units will change from time to time and new neighbours may result in different pressures on the site such as rubbish/fly tipping. The fields along the southern boundary are being managed intensively as dairy pasture – as well as limiting woodland expansion, there is a risk of diffuse pollution reaching the woodland from the ammonia-based fertilizers being applied on adjacent land.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The proportion of conifers will be gradually reduced through further thinning and their regeneration controlled. Occasional conifers may still be a very small component of the overall canopy but their numbers will be at such low levels that there will be no detrimental impact on the site's native tree species. Interventions will seek to be attentive to light levels to avoid development of coarse vegetation. Deadwood will be retained and the woodland will develop a more semi-natural character, in keeping with its PAWS status. Invasive species such as Rhododendron and laurel will decline through control with the aim of eventual eradication.

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

Continuation of the PAWS restoration project. The remaining pockets of Douglas Fir within compartment 2a will be thinned (to encourage broadleaved species to get a foothold in these areas. This will take place only where practicable and where it does not risk damage to adjacent desirable trees. Where there are any over topped broadleaved species, the Douglas Fir surrounding them may be halo-thinned. There may be a possibility of extracting some of the Douglas Fir if the PAWS restoration work takes place at the same time as the ash dieback remediation works in the adjacent compartment, but this will need further investigation. Rhododendron and laurel will continue to be present due to spread from neighbouring land but will be minimal and controlled.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	1.50	Mixed broadleaves	1985	High forest		Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
Adjoins Alltycnap road at the western end of the wood, and known as Scott's Wood. Gently to moderately sloping, north west facing sub compartment. Following the removal of most Douglas fir in 1999, young broadleaved species, such as sycamore hazel and rowan now dominate the varied canopy, with mature broadleaved trees and some conifers also present. Several open areas are present, in which natural regeneration of ash, hazel and holly is occurring, as well as some coppice regrowth. Ground flora is abundant and species include bluebell, willow herb, rush, ivy, bracken, bramble and moss. Power lines run along this compartment boundary with Alltycnap road.							
2a	5.50	Ash	1960	PAWS restoration	Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Services & wayleaves, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
Gently to steeply sloping, north facing sub compartment containing a substantial old quarry. The western end is dominated by mature sycamore, but ash and sweet chestnut is becoming predominant elsewhere. Some Douglas fir is present, retained when the Trust thinned the woodland in 1999 and now forms part of the canopy structure for this compartment. Other broadleaf species include oak, rowan, birch, and beech. Sycamore is regenerating freely and ash regeneration is also present. Ground flora is abundant and bluebell is dominant in the area to the south of the track. Other ground flora species include bluebell, bracken, ivy, honeysuckle, willow herb and bramble. Split into 4 sub compartments in earlier plans.							
3a	1.60	Mixed broadleaves	1999	PAWS restoration	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site

Moderately sloping, north east facing sub compartment, formerly covered with dense Douglas fir, but felled and re-planted with broadleaves in 1999. Tree regrowth, is even aged and vigorous. Ground flora is abundant; species include bramble, bracken, grasses, bluebell, rush, willow herb and moss.							
3b	3.30	Sycamore	1950	High forest	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Informal Public Access	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
Moderately sloping, north and east facing sub compartment of mature broadleaves at the south and eastern end of the wood. Sycamore and beech are dominant, with oak, sweet chestnut, European larch and downy birch also present. The understorey is beech, ash and holly regeneration. A very mature sweet chestnut is located next to the track on the western side. An open area is present on the western side. Ground flora is abundant and bluebell dominates. Other ground flora species include bracken, ivy, honeysuckle, bramble and moss.							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2013	3a	Selective Fell	0.10	45	4.5
2016	2a	Thin	3.00	2	5
2020	1a	Selective Fell	0.30	33	10
2020	2a	Thin	1.00	100	100
2020	3a	Thin	1.00	5	5
2021	3b	Selective Fell	0.25	40	10
2025	2a	Thin	1.00	50	50
2027	3a	Thin	1.00	8	8
2029	3b	Selective Fell	0.25	40	10
2032	2a	Thin	1.00	25	25

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.