COED CADW
WOODLAND
TRUST

Coed Letter

Management Plan
2016-2021

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 Letter
Location:	Myddfai
Grid reference:	SN771305, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 146
Area:	5.09 hectares (12.58 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park, Planted Ancient Woodland Site

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

An Ancient Woodland comprising of planted native broadleaves and high canopy conifers in places. Coed Letter has abundant and varied ground flora including bluebells, broad-leaved helleborine and enchanter's nightshade found at various locations across the site and alongside the 2 streams which border and cut through the site.

2.2 Extended Description

Coed Letter was semi-natural woodland, which was clear felled in 1969-70 and replanted with Douglas fir and Norway Spruce and which is now being restored to native woodland. The small woodland is located to the north of the village of Myddfai, surrounded by pastureland on three sides and a council maintained road. An area of ancient semi natural woodland is found on the opposite side of the road to Coed Letter. Soils are slowly permeable silts and clays on drift from Palaeozoic slat mudstone and siltstone. It is at an altitude of 150m above sea level.

The key features of the site are planted ancient woodland and informal public access. The conifers in the southern two thirds of the site were clear felled in 1998 and replanted with native broadleaves. Birch and willow have also regenerated naturally in this area. Acid-loving plants such as heather, tormentil and heath bedstraw grow along the paths. Mature oak, beech, ash and aspen occur along the stream valley adjacent to the public road. The mature conifers in the northern third of the site have been retained in a mixed stand with scattered broadleaves, mainly ash. Windblow has affected the part of the stand of Douglas fir. Where broadleaves survive in the canopy, hot spots with remnant patches of semi-natural woodland vegetation can be found beneath. Typical species include wood anemone, lady fern, broad buckler fern, wood speedwell, bugle, yellow archangel, enchanter's nightshade, dogs mercury, broad-leaved helleborine, common dog violet and bluebells.

There are several active badger setts and a large rabbit warren present on the site.

Public access along a permissive path has been provided by the Woodland Trust since 1993.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General Location: Coed Letter is about 200m from the village of Myddfai and three miles from Llandovery. To reach the site from Myddfai walk up Myrtle Hill up the quiet B road without a pavement. It is a small rural site in an area with two much larger Forestry Commission access sites.

Paths and Entrances: There is one entrance with a squeeze gap and locked vehicle gates. There are two looped paths which are uneven and sloping in places although not muddy. There are footbridges over the stream and over some ditches..

Parking: There is no car park at the site but there is space for one or two cars to pull off the road. Alternatively there is a car park at the Community Hall in Myddfai 200m away.

Public transport: There is a bus stop in Myddfai which has two post buses a day from Llandovery and one a day which goes up Myrtle Hill. Information on the bus can be accessed by texting 84268, or from www.traveline.org.uk and phone number 0870 608 2 608.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The Woodland Trust intends to revert the site back to a predominantly native broadleaved woodland with areas of high woodland canopy and shrubs along certain edge 'features'.

Many of the conifers will have been removed from the canopy to favour native broadleaves. The conifer stand in compartment 2 will be gradually change to favour broadleaves by thinning and allow the recovery of native flora hotspots and natural regeneration. Thinning practices will have to be gradual and light as wind throw is a real risk at this site with risk of coarse vegetation such as bramble and bracken becoming dominant and shading out ancient woodland ground flora.

Selected mature conifers will be retained as individuals or groups where they are no longer posing a threat to the ancient woodland ground flora. An open canopy will be maintained over the stream valley in both compartments 1 and 2.

A circular permissive path will be maintained to provide public access to the site.

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 Planted Ancient Woodland Site

Description

With the exception of a thin strip of semi-natural woodland along the stream valley following the SW boundary, the ancient woodland was cleared in 1969 and replanted with conifers. Conifers were clear-felled in cpt 1 in 1998 and replanted with native broadleaves. Conifers remain in cpt 2 with scattered native broadleaves, mainly ash and birch with scattered oak, willow, rowan and hazel. Where broadleaves survive in the canopy, remnant patches of a semi-natural woodland flora occur beneath. Typical species include wood anemone, lady fern, broad buckler fern, wood speedwell, bugle, broad-leaved helleborine, enchanters nightshade, common dog violet and bluebells. Wind throw has affected some of the conifers especially along the stream valley.

Significance

The site once supported ancient semi-natural woodland. Although this was cleared and replanted with conifers, the canopy in cpt 2 retained a native broadleaved component with hot-spots of a native woodland flora. Through sensitive management, it will be possible to restore semi-natural woodland with a native species-rich flora typically found beneath ash which is likely to dominate the site. The conifers in cpt 1 have been cleared and the site replanted with native broadleaves.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints: Access difficulties in cpt 2. Felling to waste is likely to be the only option. The site is close to the village of Myddfai. Management techniques should be sensitive to the landscape. Large scale clear-fell as in cpt 1 is no longer the preferred option. Opportunities: Remnant areas of native woodland flora survive beneath broadleaves in cpt 2. Light thinning of surrounding conifers to extend these semi-natural areas will aid the gradual recovery of semi-natural woodland with elements of the ancient woodland ground flora spreading into the nearby compartment (Cpt 1).

Factors Causing Change

Wind throw - natural gaps, structural diversity, Squirrel/rabbit damage to naturally regenerating broadleaves (not considered a significant issue)

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To restore and protect an Ancient Woodland site, encouraging native woodland trees and ground flora with the establishment of a predominantly native high canopy structure with selected individual and groups of conifers remaining within cpt 2.

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

Generally minimum intervention in compartment 1 (replanted with native trees) but active management of path edges/ride sides to develop varied structural composition within broadleaf species. In compartment 2, gradual thinning of conifers around existing native broadleaves and woodland flora hotspots, to encourage spread of native woodland. Maintain an open semi-natural canopy along the watercourse in cpts 1 and 2 by periodic thinning as necessary. Protect the boundary hedgerows by thinning conifers growing alongside.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

A circular permissive path provides access to the whole woodland.

Significance

Provides a peaceful, natural area for enjoyment by local people and offers an opportunity to view ancient woodland indicators such as ground flora within compartment 2.

Opportunities & Constraints

Parking is limited to the main access gateway and the circular walk is short. Brambles along the paths make it popular for blackberry picking. Rabbit burrows frequently appear on the path and can become obscured by vegetation.

Factors Causing Change

Rabbit burrows appear on path, Brambles encroaching and trees developing causing obstructions.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain a low key local amenity for the village of Myddfai with a circular walk in a varied woodland site within easy walking distance of the village.

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

Maintain routes by annual path maintenance and cutting back where appropriate.

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	3.82	Mixed broadleaves	1999	Min-intervention		Informal Public Access, Planted Ancient Woodland Site	
Southern two thirds of the site is included within this compartment. The main part of the site was a pure stand of Douglas fir that was clear felled in 1998 and replanted with native broadleaves. There is also considerable natural birch regeneration. A small stream valley occurs along the western boundary adjacent to the public road. Mature oak, aspen, ash and beech occur along the valley sides. Open fields surround the compartment to the south and east. Native woodland lies to the west.							
2a	1.27	Noble fir	1977	PAWS restoration	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Informal Public Access, Planted Ancient Woodland Site	
The northern third of the site is a mixed dense stand of mature Noble Fir and other mixed conifers with patchy native broadleaves, mainly ash, hazel, willow and rowan scattered within compartment. Broadleaves tend to occur along the boundaries and internal watercourses but regeneration is occurring where canopy gaps have been created through restoration processes. The canopy is open along part of the stream valley which passes diagonally across the compartment. This is the result of 'wind blow' in the conifer stand. Along this clearing in the canopy broadleaf trees occur with a diverse woodland flora beneath including wood anemones, bluebells, wild arum, bramble etc. The northern and eastern site boundaries are marked by native hedgerows consisting of Ash and Hawthorn. The western boundary is marked by a public road. Open fields lie to the north and east. Native woodland lies to the west.							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2019	2a	Thin	0.00		5
2020	2a	Thin	0.00		5

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.