



Coed Glyn Gwennws

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 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 Glyn Gwennws
Location:	Pen y Cae, Ystradgynlais
Grid reference:	SN842137, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 160
Area:	3.01 hectares (7.44 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, National Park

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This woodland lies to the south west of the village of Pen y Cae within the Brecon Beacons National Park. The woodland, although relatively small in nature, is home to ancient wood pasture and newly created woodland in 2000 as part of the Woodland Trusts 'Woods on Your Doorstep' project offering an opportunity view a wealth of lichens and liverworts which cling to the sides of the remnant dry stone walls, rocky outcrops and ancient and veteran trees which encircle and dominate the north western corner of the woodland.

2.2 Extended Description

Coed Glyn Gwennws lies in the upper reaches of the Afon Tawe catchments within the Brecon Beacons National Park. The site is surrounded by poorly drained land except where agricultural improvement has taken place to the south east. Building development occurs to the east. A rocky tor with extensive bracken, scrub and patchy acidic grassland dominates the site with slopes extending to the site boundaries. The upper part of the tor was planted with mixed broadleaves in 2000 as a local community millennium wood as part of the Woodland Trust's Woods on your Doorstep scheme (WOYD).

The key features of the site are wood pasture, new native community woodland and public access.

The wood pasture arises from a long history of grazing within a historic landscape with much evidence of old field systems in the form of old walls and boundary banks. Old oak standards and pollards are frequent along the boundary banks and a small stand of mature semi-natural ancient wood pasture dominated by sessile oak occurs on the northern and western slopes. The woodland has been grazed until recently by cattle and sheep maintaining an open structure with well-lit standards supporting an assemblage of lower plants, lichens in particular. In general, the field layer is fairly species-poor in this community type as a result of poor soil fertility and grazing. Typical species are wavy hair grass, creeping soft grass, common bent, bracken and wood sorrel. There is a small stand of alder towards the northern extremity of the site where it extends onto damper soils.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General Location:

Coed Glyn Gwennys is on the outskirts of Pen-y-cae village, south of Glyntawe in the Brecon Beacons National Park. The wood is a short walk from the centre of the village. The wood is located approximately 50 metres up a track running next to Pen-y-Cae County Primary School off the A4067 at the southern end of the village.

Overview of paths and entrances:

A bridlepath runs down the management access track from the main road and through the southern end of the site. In addition there is a circular permissive footpath running around the site and one path crosses through the centre of the site from south to north. A number of kissing gates are on these paths where they cross into the fenced-off areas of broadleaved planting. The circular path is fairly gentle, the path cutting across the site leads the visitor to the top of a small hill.

Parking:

Parking is very difficult as there is no space to park at the entrance to the management access track off the main road since this would block the entrance to the primary school. It is therefore better to find parking in the village and walk to the wood. The Pen-y-Cae Pub a few hundred metres from the site has ample car parking space for customers. Alternatively there is a public car park at Ystradgynlais on Station Road, however this is approximately 3.8 miles away.

Public Transport:

The nearest bus stop is between the pub and the primary school just a few metres from the entrance to the site. It is serviced by Tawe Drt Bus Service (Tel: 01639 844880, or 0808 2020144) running approximately every two hours between YstradCross and Tafarn y Garreg (information from personal visit March 07).

Public Toilets:

The nearest public toilet is at Ystradgynlais Car Park & Public Toilets, Station Road, Grid reference 278823/210195, approximately 3.8 miles from the site. There is a disabled toilet, which requires a RADAR key. (Source: Powys County Council, December 2006)

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Coed Glyn Gwennws will be an oak dominated wood pasture, maintained by periodic grazing by sheep or cattle and characterised by an open structure with well-lit mature trees to provide optimal conditions for the growth of lichens.

Approximately two thirds of the existing canopy gaps in ct. 1a (excluding open bracken dominated area in the N of the cpt) will be filled by site native trees recruited from natural regeneration to improve structural diversity in the wood. The remaining gap will maintain better-lit conditions around existing mature trees for lichen growth. Natural regeneration will have been initially encouraged by the removal of grazing but grazing will be reintroduced as soon as viable saplings can be protected by stockproof exclosures.

The native broadleaves planted in ct 2a in 2000 will have extended the area of oak dominated woodland onto the tor. In the long term the area of new woodland will be managed as wood pasture with widely spaced well-lit mature trees, to allow for the spread of lichens and other associated ecological features. The open ground to the south of the tor will be grazed, although natural progression to scrub will be acceptable if grazing pressure is low.

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 Wood Pasture

Description

The wood pasture arises from a long history of grazing within a historic landscape with much evidence of old field systems in the form of old walls and boundary banks. Sessile oak dominates the canopy as a mix of ancient pollards, coppice stools and maidens. Many of the trees have large spreading crowns forming a fairly open canopy with gaps. Grazing has limited the development of a shrub and field layer; the canopy trees are therefore often well-lit supporting an interesting lichen flora. In a survey 1999, 32 species of lichen were recorded including *Micarea alabastrites* which is scarce and confined to these woods with high rainfall; and the liverwort *Tritomaria exsecta*, which is very scarce in mid Wales and the first record for S. Brecknock. 13 species of liverwort and 24 moss species were recorded.

The field layer is species poor - wavy hair grass, creeping soft grass, common bent, bracken and wood sorrel occur with a fairly luxuriant cover of mosses.

Old oak standards and pollards are frequent along the boundary banks. There is a small stand of alder towards the northern extremity of the site where it extends onto damper soils.

Significance

Wood pasture with large mature trees supporting rich lichen communities are of high nature conservation importance (Biodiversity Habitat Action Plan). Maintenance of high light levels around the trunks and canopies of mature trees to allow spread and long term conservation of lichens. This woodland pasture is a scarcity within the local area and includes veteran and ancient trees within the hedgerows and canopy. Other similar wood pasture habitats locally are confined to small areas of shelter belt or field margins such as hedgerows and are limited in number.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints: 1 Mature well-lit trees with limited shading of the trunks support interesting lichen communities. 2 The stand of wood pasture is very small. 3. Cattle grazing is undesirable on such a small site as cattle are likely to have a detrimental impact by rubbing on tree trunks supporting lichens, removing lower branches and causing damage to young trees. Sheep grazing is more suitable although they tend to impoverish the field layer composition. Opportunities: 1 Removal of grazing periodically to allow natural regeneration of oak and ash and subsequent protection of saplings prior to reintroduction of grazing, will provide for establishment of young trees but still maintain grazed conditions.

Factors Causing Change

Grazing maintains open character for lichens, Dense ash regeneration in absence of grazing - shade trunks, Lack of ash/oak seedlings under grazing regime., Natural gap creation - structural diversity under controlled grazing.
Potential development of former country primary school may potentially impact upon woodland if adjacent veteran wood pasture trees are removed.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Aim to maintain, long term an area of high canopy and mature wood pasture dominated by oak characterised by an open structure with mature well-lit trees to provide optimal conditions for the growth of lichens. The Canopy in 50 years should feature trees which have established by natural regeneration means since acquisition in 1999.

Approximately two thirds of the existing canopy gaps will be filled by site native trees (oak and ash) recruited from natural regeneration to improve structural diversity in the stand. These groups should be thinned to one young tree at 10-15 yrs of age if natural regeneration successful.. Natural regeneration will be encouraged by the removal of grazing for a period as necessary and monitored.

Reintroduce grazing as a preferred management option once the site has achieved sufficient natural regeneration but also consider mechanical options to maintain conditions if grazing not successful. A selection of native tree seedlings will be protected from grazing by installing fenced enclosures. Grazing regime to be throughout summer months to control coarse vegetation such as bramble which alters the open structure of the site. If in 25yrs the regeneration in gaps has progressed well, a plan review may need to consider structural diversity again by felling some of the regeneration in order to recruit from new seedlings although this will be a limited option, preferably being managed by sustainable grazing

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

Select groups of seedlings which appear during the plan period where possible and enclose by one shockproof enclosure for each group. Keep stock proof until sufficient regeneration to fill approximately two thirds of canopy gaps.

5.2 New Native Woodland

Description

The rocky tor with extensive boulder fields and rock outcrops, dominates the site. Bracken, bramble, and patchy acid grassland is widespread with developing scrub. The upper slopes were planted with native broadleaves including Sessile oak, alder, hazel, ash, birch and rowan, in 2000. The lower slopes, particularly to the south are open with extensive rhos pasture in the damper areas. New stock proof fencing separating the planted tor and open lower slope allows grazing in the rush dominated area.

Significance

This planting area will act as an extension to the nearby woodland pasture habitat and ultimately create new wood pasture longer term. Little or no new woodland pasture is being established locally

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities: 1 Extension of wood pasture by careful future management which may include grazing..

Constraints: Suitable access to water sources for potential livestock might prove to be an issue. Investigations to accessing nearby water course should be explored when suitable.

Factors Causing Change

Rabbit/squirrel damage

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Encourage the development of wood pasture with widely spaced well-lit standards, with a sparse understory, thinned if necessary to maintain high light levels around standards. Further planting of a small number of young saplings approx. 30-40yrs after the initial planting in 2000 may be necessary to achieve some age class diversity unless natural regeneration supersedes this.

The lower slope of 2a will be grazed with 1a. Grazing will be extended into the newly planted area approximately 20 years after initial establishment, ie. 2020.

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

The trees are well established. Non-intervention in the short term except for tree safety reasons due to the limited size of the new native woodland and allowing natural regeneration to develop

5.3 Informal Public Access

Description

The site lies on the edge of the village of Pen-y-cae within close proximity to a residential area. A public bridleway passes through cpt 2a. A circular permissive path with a seat provide access to most of the site. There is an interpretation board close to the entrance.

Significance

Provides a peaceful, natural area for enjoyment by local people..

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints: 1 Grazing livestock within the woodland at certain times. Opportunities: 1 Good local support for the wood developed under the Woods on your doorstep (WOYD) project in 2000

Opportunities: To work more closely with local wildlife 'living landscape' project and nearby wildlife trust reserves in the local area

Factors Causing Change

Recent closure of the adjacent primary school will likely result in increased pressure from potential housing development established on former primary school property. This may result in footpaths becoming increasingly well used in the future and deteriorate the footpath surface (currently un-surfaced)

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Provide and maintain access along public right of way and permissive routes throughout the site.

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

Maintain paths through a mowing regime and seats to encourage a pleasant visitor experience by removing barriers to accessibility where possible and suitable to do so.

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	0.78	Oak (sessile)		Wood pasture	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, National Park
<p>The wood pasture arises from a long history of grazing within a historic landscape with much evidence of old field systems in the form of old walls and boundary banks. Sessile oak dominates the canopy as a mix of ancient pollards, coppice stools and maidens. Many of the trees have large spreading crowns forming a fairly open canopy with gaps. Grazing has limited the development of a shrub and field layer; the canopy trees are therefore often well-lit supporting an interesting lichen flora. In a survey 1999, 32 species of lichen were recorded including <i>Micarea alabastrites</i> which is scarce and confined to these woods with high rainfall; and the liverwort <i>Tritomaria exsecta</i>, which is very scarce in mid Wales and the first record for S. Brecknock. 13 species of liverwort and 24 moss species were recorded.</p> <p>The field layer is species poor - wavy hair grass, creeping soft grass, common bent, bracken and wood sorrel occur with a fairly luxuriant cover of mosses.</p> <p>Old oak standards and pollards are frequent along the boundary banks. There is a small stand of alder towards the northern extremity of the site where it extends onto damper soils.</p>							
2a	2.23	Sessile oak	2000	Wood pasture	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	Informal Public Access	National Park
<p>The rocky tor with extensive boulder fields and rock outcrops, dominates the site. Bracken, bramble, and patchy acid grassland is widespread with developing scrub. The upper slopes were planted with native broadleaves including Sessile oak, alder, hazel, ash, birch and rowan, in 2000. The lower slopes, particularly to the south are open with extensive rhos pasture in the damper areas. A stock proof fencing separating the planted tor and open lower slope allows grazing in the rush dominated area.</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.