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WOODLAND
TRUST

Coed Pwllgwyn

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 Pwllgwyn
Location:	Afonwen, Caerwys
Grid reference:	SJ127722, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 116
Area:	2.34 hectares (5.78 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

A popular wood with good path networks, Coed Pwllgwyn consists of ancient woodland including species such as ash, oak and sycamore. Diverse ground flora include bluebell, dog's mercury, wood melick and nettle-leaved bellflower.

2.2 Extended Description

The wood lies on the moderately steep, south facing scarp above the Chwiler Valley, with free-draining soils. Overlooking the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Coed Pwllgwyn is part of a generally well-wooded landscape with the surrounding land use being predominately pasture. Apart from a row of mature oaks and sycamore along the southern boundary, the wood consists of ash, oak and sycamore regrowth from felling in the 1960's and 70's. Understorey includes hazel, holly, elder and hawthorn, and ash regeneration is good. The varied ground flora includes Bluebell, Dog's mercury, Wood melick, Herb robert and Nettle-leaved bellflower.

Key features at the site are:

- Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland - structurally diverse with two NVC woodland communities present (upland mixed ashwood and upland oakwood) and a diverse ground flora reflecting changes in underlying geology.
- Public Access- the site is well used, being easily accessible via the public footpath network from the village of Caerwys to the north. Both the public footpath and the circular path created by the Trust are well used.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

Coed Pwllgwyn is surrounded by pastureland and is accessed via the local public footpath network, with a public right of way abutting the western boundary of the wood. Whilst there are no physical barriers into the Trust property from the footpath, the route from Caerwys (approx 0.5km to the north) has a couple of stiles. The footpath to the south joining the A541 at Afonwen has no barriers. There are no public car parks.

Public Transport: For further information contact Flintshire County Council Busline on (01352) 704035 or contact visit the Traveline website at www.traveline.org.uk or contact them on 0871 2002233.

Public toilets: the nearest public toilets are in Caerwys. For further information please visit the Flintshire County Council website at www.flintshire.gov.uk.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

Maintain the ancient semi-natural woodland with a diverse understorey and field layer, allowing the woodland to continue to develop to mature broadleaved high forest, predominately ash with some oak. A proportion of sycamore is expected in the canopy. Little woodland management will be required to achieve this objective. Old maiden trees will be retained as future veterans and the dead wood habitat will be enhanced over time as any safety felling will be left on site. Informal public access will be maintained in the form of the circular permissive path.

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 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

The whole site is in the Wales Ancient Woodland Inventory as Semi Natural Ancient Woodland. The woodland appears to be W8 upland mixed ashwood, grading into W11 upland oakwood, although no formal survey has been carried out. The woodland appears to be in very good condition, with a fairly diverse structure and abundant natural regeneration, although virtually no oak. Sycamore is present in the canopy and understorey. The field layer is abundant and diverse.

Significance

Two UK Habitat Action Plans apply to the site:-

- Upland Mixed Ashwood
- Upland Oakwood

Opportunities & Constraints

Management access route unsuitable for timber extraction.

Factors Causing Change

Mature trees will be prone to wind throw, particularly mature coppice stools. Impact of Ash dieback requires monitoring. Abundance of periwinkle requires monitoring.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will continue to be managed as ancient semi natural woodland habitat, with biodiversity potential maximised within the context of safe public access. It will be developing into a well structured mature broadleaved high forest, of predominately ash with some oak, and sycamore also being a significant component of the canopy. The understorey will be well developed and diverse in terms of species and age structure, containing healthy regeneration. The field layer will also be extensive and species rich. Dead wood will increase in quantity over time as any timber arising from tree safety works will be felled to waste. Old maiden trees present will be retained as future veteran trees.

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

No woodland management work is required in this plan period.
Monitor tree health and natural regeneration through Woodland condition monitoring including condition of ash trees.

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

A public footpath runs along the western boundary of the site and this provides a means of entry for the public. Informal public access within the site exists in the form of a circular permissive path which follows the boundary of the site and links up with the public footpath to provide two means of entry. An information board is also located at the northernmost entrance. The site is well used by the public, mostly local residents from the nearby village of Caerwys.

Significance

The site is well used locally and is located next to a public footpath.

Opportunities & Constraints

Although a number of runs of steps have been constructed on the eastern steeper section there is still the danger of slipping in wet weather.

Factors Causing Change

Natural degradation of estate works

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The site continues to offer informal public access on a local level. The permissive footpath and respective entrances and other estate works are kept open through annual maintenance operations.

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

Annual maintenance of permissive footpath, entrances and estate works, as part of EMC.

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	2.36	Ash	1970	High forest	No/poor vehicular access to the site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Gently to moderately sloping, south facing Sub-Compartment (the whole site) of broadleaved woodland, dominated by ash and sycamore. The Sub-Compartment appears to have been felled several times in the past, between 1940 and 1970 as many canopy trees are of coppice origin, especially sycamore and oak. Several older maiden trees are present on the southern boundary, retained for screening purposes during the felling operations.

Natural regeneration is abundant, with ash (abundant) being the most common species, taking advantage of the many natural gaps in the canopy. Sycamore (occasional/frequent), hazel (frequent) and Wych elm (frequent) regeneration are also notable in the understorey, along with holly (frequent), hawthorn (occasional), elder(rare) and beech (rare).

Ground flora is also abundant and forms a continuous carpet across the Sub-Compartment. Bluebell, Wood anemone and Dog's mercury are most common, with Bramble, Ivy, Ferns, Common nettle, Wood sedge, Wood melick, Lesser celandine, Red campion, Sanicle, Dog violet, Herb bennet, Wild strawberry, Cleavers, Herb robert, Harebell, Nettle leaved bellflower, Woundwort and Figwort also present. Bluebell is more common at the southern end and Dog's mercury is dominant at the northern end, due to a variation in the underlying geology.

There appears to be the remnants of an old lime kiln in the north-western corner and a small quarry in the south-western corner of the site.

A permissive footpath follows the perimeter of the Sub-Compartment.

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.