



COED CADW  
WOODLAND  
TRUST

# Garth Dingle & Fron Wood

## Management Plan

# 2015-2020

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) or contact the Woodland Trust ([wopsmail@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto: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.

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## 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](http://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.

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## 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

<b>Site name:</b>	Garth Dingle & Fron Wood
<b>Location:</b>	Llowes
<b>Grid reference:</b>	SO190421, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 161
<b>Area:</b>	7.56 hectares (18.68 acres)
<b>Designations:</b>	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Summary Description

Ancient semi-natural wood with lots of mature oak and ash trees. Attractive site comprising of two woods adjoined. Some steep terrain, and local parking not that easy, but worth a visit.

## 2.2 Extended Description

Garth Dingle forms the western part of the wood. It occupies the very steeply north and south facing slopes of a deeply incised eastward flowing tributary of the River Wye. It is ancient semi natural woodland and has a mainly oak and ash dominated canopy of mature trees. Wych elm was abundant prior to the 1980s and a few large mature sycamores grow on the southern side of the stream.

Fron Wood forms the eastern side of the wood, and is a much more gently sloping south facing hill slope, forming part of the rising ground on the northern flanks of the valley of the river Wye. It is ancient semi natural woodland and has an oak dominated canopy, the western end adjacent to Garth Dingle was felled in 1985 by the previous owner. This felling caused vigorous local protests and led to the purchase by the Trust. The felled area was replanted by the Trust several years later. A number of very large multi stemmed oaks are scattered through Fron Wood. Their form of growth suggests previously open park-like conditions.

Garth Dingle and Fron Wood are part of Moity and Garth Dingles and Fron Wood Site Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and are therefore of national importance. The special feature is the broadleaved semi-natural woodland. Such undisturbed ancient woodlands are now rare and provide a valuable refuge for a range of bird, mammal and insect species.

The woods forms an attractive wooded backdrop to the small village of Llowes on the main A40 road between Brecon and Hay on Wye. The lower parts of Garth Dingle are largely hidden from view but Fron Wood is a prominent feature on the hill slope above the village. Adjacent land is mostly improved pasture, occasionally ploughed for arable crops. The steep wooded valley continues further upstream from Garth Dingle, widening out into Moity Dingle, and then is nearly continuous with ancient semi-natural woodland going north following the same dingle that is another SSSI.

The boundary between the two woods is marked by an old sunken lane which used to lead from the village but is now partially blocked between the wood and the village. Public and permissive footpaths provide access from the village and on to higher land above the wood. A side path runs up the edge of the stream through Garth Dingle to the site of a well. A circular permissive path runs through Fron Wood and links to Garth Dingle paths.

## 3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

### 3.1 Getting there

### General location

Fron and Garth Dingle woods are located in Llowes off the A438. Entering into Llowes opposite the Radnor Arms pub, take the second right which is a dead end (road U1400). Follow this right to the end and here is the entrance to the wood. If arriving by car, it is best to find parking within the streets of Llowes rather than driving down the dead end as there is no room to park without blocking entrances to houses.

### Overview of paths and entrances

The U1400 (unclassified road) continues through the wood and as a green lane although there have been proposals to downgrade this track to a bridleway in the past. To the left of this at the entrance to the site there is a gated permissive access into the wood which joins up with a public footpath and then links in with a circular permissive footpath through the centre of the site. This footpath is quite steep in places and there are stiles to cross.

Alternatively there is a permissive footpath which leads down along the stream and into the western part of the site - but it should be noted that this stops after several hundred metres due to the steep bank edge, and walkers along this route should take care.

### Public Transport

Stagecoach Route 39 stop at the bus-stop on the A438 opposite the Radnor Arms at Llowes. For details of times search on [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or telephone 0870 608 2 608.

### Car Parking

See above regarding parking. Parking is difficult to find in the narrow streets of Llowes. Alternatively there is a public car park at Glasbury approximately 1.9 miles away: Glasbury-On-Wye Public Toilet & Car park (grid reference 317850/239253). (information from Powys County Council December 2006)

### Public Toilets:

Public toilets are located at the above mentioned Glasbury Car Park - there are disabled facilities which require a RADAR Key. (information from Powys County Council December 2006)

## 3.2 Access / Walks



## 4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

This semi-natural ancient woodland is managed largely through non-intervention with natural processes, maintaining a diverse age and species composition; there is frequent natural regeneration and standing and fallen deadwood. The woodland will comprise of mostly site native species, and also include sycamore that may have to be accepted as a component of the canopy. Mature oaks will continue to develop veteran tree characteristics. The 1989 planted oak in Fron Wood will have canopy closure and the desired open areas also be present here.

Note: introduced tree diseases (Dutch elm disease affecting elm, Chalara affecting ash), leads to uncertainties as to what the long-term woodland community will look like.

The network of public and permissive footpaths are available and in good condition and horse riding is only permitted on the old sunken lane through the wood subject to suitable access available along this track on the adjoining land.

## 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

Mature oak forms the predominant cover, although ash remains a frequent component. There is frequent natural regeneration and standing and fallen deadwood is present with older oaks showing veteran tree characteristics. The other main tree types present are birch, wild cherry, and rowan, with alder on the damper stream banks. The shrub layer is typically well developed with abundant hazel, hawthorn, field maple and, in places, wych elm, holly and the locally uncommon spindle. There is rich ground flora, and species include dog's mercury, lesser celandine, wood anemone, bramble, lords and ladies, honeysuckle, cow parsley, yellow archangel, herb-robert, hart's-tongue & soft shield ferns, bluebell, enchanter's nightshade, wood-avens, pignut, twayblade and early purple-orchid. Other habitats include a small area of open ground with scattered trees and a small stream.

#### Significance

The whole site is part of the Moity and Garth Dingles and Fron Wood SSSI, with several woodland types represented in close proximity. All SSSIs are considered to be of national importance. Ancient semi-natural woodland is an irreplaceable and threatened habitat type in Britain. Protection and restoration of ancient woodland is one of the Woodland Trust's objectives.

#### Opportunities & Constraints

Slopes in Garth Dingle are mostly very steep, and there is no access to compartment 1b.

#### Factors Causing Change

Squirrel Damage on sycamore. Colonisation of deer affecting natural regeneration. Chalara having a detrimental impact on ash leading to change in woodland tree species composition.

#### Long term Objective (50 years+)

Mixed-age and species structure woodland of predominantly native broadleaved species. High levels of standing and fallen deadwood with naturally occurring or maintained open gaps in the canopy.

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

Identify colonisation by Chalara and deer on site.

## 5.2 Informal Public Access

### Description

A well used network of public and permissive paths run through the wood and connect with the adjoining village of Llowes. The wood is used as a low key recreational amenity by the village and is regularly used by local residents. The Wye Valley walk runs through the village.

### Significance

The clear felling in Fron Wood by a previous owner alerted local people to the vulnerability and value of the wood, and led to the Woodland Trust purchasing it with the help of local people. Now an important area of open access woodland above the village.

### Opportunities & Constraints

No parking is available near to the entrance to the wood. The main track 'other route with public access' in sunken lane includes legal vehicular access that is incompatible with low key recreational usage of the rest of the site.

### Factors Causing Change

Erosion of stream-side path.

### Long term Objective (50 years+)

The footpath network will be maintained for regular low key usage by people.

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

Existing path network is maintained. Erosion of stream side path in Garth Dingle is monitored and path managed appropriately with full consideration of H & S.

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## 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	2.90	other oak spp	1940	Min-intervention	Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest

Garth Dingle. Steeply sloping, south western facing woodland on the north eastern side of the river. Oak is predominant on the upper slopes, ash dominant on the lower slopes, with sycamore and field maple also present. Wych elm was formerly abundant especially near the stream, no mature trees now remain but regeneration is vigorous. There is rich ground flora, and species include dog's mercury, lesser celandine, wood anemone, bramble, lords and ladies, honeysuckle, cow parsley, yellow archangel, herb-robert, hart's-tongue & soft shield ferns, bluebell, enchanter's nightshade, wood-avens, pignut, twayblade and early purple-orchid. There is a public footpath running north-south and leaving the site on the northern boundary. The sunken lane along the eastern boundary is designated 'other route with public access' where it is legally permitted to have public vehicular access. A permissive footpath links various existing public rights of way, forming a circular walk. Another permissive footpath follows the stream and stops where there is soil slippage into the stream itself.

1b	1.20	Oak (sessile)	1900	Min-intervention	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
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Garth Dingle. Steeply sloping, north east facing strip of woodland above the stream and opposite compt 1a. The canopy consists of sycamore, ash and oak, with wych elm regenerating freely. The rich ground flora includes dog's mercury, bluebell, bramble, honeysuckle, yellow archangel, herb-robert, hart's-tongue & soft shield ferns, bluebell, enchanter's nightshade, wood-avens, pignut, twayblade and early purple-orchid. The boundary stream prohibits any public or easy management access.

2a	3.70	Oak (sessile)	1850	Min-intervention	Landscape factors, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Site of Special Scientific Interest
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Moderately sloping, south facing compartment that is Fron Wood. Approximately 1 hectare at the western end was felled circa 1986 prior to purchase by the Trust, and this was replanted with oak and hazel 1989. A scattering of large mature oaks remain, with some hazel, birch and willow present at the edges, with fallen and standing deadwood present. Ground vegetation in the open areas is dominated by bracken with bramble and bluebell, dog's mercury, nettle, wood violet and gorse. The remainder of the compartment has an open oak dominated canopy, with some mature ash and frequent ash regeneration. The western edge of the compartment boundary is a sunken trackway that is an unsurfaced public highway that is used by vehicles. There is a permissive path that allows access on what is part of a circular route on the western end of this 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.