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WOODLAND
TRUST

Coed Nant y Berws

Management Plan
2014-2019

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 Nant y Berws
Location:	Ysbyty Ystwyth
Grid reference:	SN736718, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 135
Area:	3.16 hectares (7.81 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Environmentally Sensitive Area

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Sessile oak, downy birch and rowan dominate this small area of woodland, with wetter areas supporting ash with hazel. Bluebells are common as are mosses and heather. The red kite is found within the local area. A circular path provides valley views.

2.2 Extended Description

Coed Nant y Berws is an attractive small and narrow strip of woodland in a very prominent position alongside the B4343, between the two adjacent villages of Ysbyty Ystwyth and Pont-rhyd-y-groes. It is on the southern margins of a large concentration of ancient woodlands within the upper Ystwyth Valley and although not formally designated in the Ancient Woodland Inventory, it is characteristic of ancient upland oakwood with sessile oak, downy birch and rowan. Wetter areas support ash with a hazel under storey.

Mosses and bilberry dominate the ground flora on the damp acidic soil and bluebells are present on the richer soils. There is a small area in the south west corner which was largely open and dominated by bracken until 2005, when the bracken was controlled. Since then the area has become wooded through a combination of planting and natural regeneration. Two large cleared strips (Wayleaves) cut through the woodland below the electric power lines which run SW-NE and NW-SE. Adjoining land use includes farmland to the east of the woodland, a disused quarry to the north, a dwelling to the south and the public road to the west. A Public Right of Way runs through the woodland and links with a circular permissive path that provides view points over the whole valley. The woodland lies in the Cambrian Mountains Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), an area renowned for its birds of prey - especially the red kite.

The key features of the site are Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and Public Access.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General Location

Coed Nant y Berws is opposite the village hall in the village of Ysbyty Ystwyth adjacent to the B4343 between Devil's Bridge and Tregaron. Although it is a B road it is fairly busy, including lorry traffic. There is also a large public access site nearby (Hafod Estate) owned by Natural Resources Wales.

Paths and entrances

There is a pedestrian gate at the main entrance by the road at the southern end of the wood, and stiles at the southeast and northeast corners. There is a public footpath through the site and this joins a permissive path to form a circular path around the wood which is mainly quite flat but steep in a few places and uneven in others. It is muddy in places in winter.

Public transport

There is a bus stop half a mile up the hill at the top of the village. The road is fairly steep and has a pavement some of the way. The T21 runs between Tregaron and Aberystwyth. . Call 0800 464 00 00 or see www.traveline.cymru for more details. (Information valid from July 2019).

Parking

There is no Woodland Trust car park but the village hall opposite has a car park which can be used by visitors to the site when no event is going on at the hall. Otherwise there is street parking in the village.

Toilets

There are public toilets with disabled access at Devil's Bridge, approximately 5 miles away and toilets without disabled access at Pont-rhyd-y-groes approximately 1 mile away.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The wood will be allowed to develop naturally without silvicultural intervention, with the exception of tree safety works along permissive paths or along the boundary with the road where necessary. Low key public access will be maintained in its current form and stock will continue to be excluded from the woodland.

5.0 KEY FEATURES

The Key Features of the site are identified and described below. They encapsulate what is important about the site. The short and long-term objectives are stated and any management necessary to maintain and improve the Key Feature.

5.1 Informal Public Access

Description

There is a public footpath (PROW) bisecting the site. It runs SW-NE and links up to a circular permissive footpath with good views over the Ystwyth valley. There are some wooden sculptures and benches at the Southern end of the site and an information panel at the entrance.

Significance

Public enjoyment of woodlands is a Woodland Trust priority and this is an unusually attractive wood situated in a village, opposite the village hall.

Opportunities & Constraints

There is the potential to recruit volunteers from the local community.

Factors Causing Change

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To maintain the existing footpath network which runs through this attractive woodland, giving good views within the wood and across the valley. This walk will continue to be a popular local amenity.

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

Annual footpath maintenance and regular tree safety inspections will continue. The sculptures and benches will be left in place and the vegetation kept clear around them as long as they remain safe.

5.2 Ancient Semi Natural Woodland

Description

An attractive small native woodland, dominated by oak and birch, on the southern margins of large woodland area designated as Ancient Woodland. It is regenerating well with a range of native species and it has a good understory and ground flora.

Significance

Conserving Ancient Woodland is a Woodland Trust priority.

Opportunities & Constraints

The adjacent road and the two power lines crossing the wood require a relatively high level of tree safety inspection at this site.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive rhododendron, ash dieback, periodic wayleave tree clearance

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A healthy, self-sustaining woodland with natural regeneration in canopy gaps and a diverse ground flora and understory.

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

Minimum intervention in this plan period other than rhododendron control where necessary. Coppicing of natural regeneration around the sculptures/benches area by hand to favour slower growing species such as oak and to alleviate roadside tree safety concerns. There is the potential to carry out very small-scale thinning/coppicing work in the south west corner as the young trees develop.

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	2.81	Oak (sessile)	1920	Min-intervention	Landscape factors, No/poor vehicular access within the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Environmentally Sensitive Area
<p>Towards the northern end the wood is more or less pure semi mature oak. It is fairly even aged with no very large old trees; some trees are of coppice origin. It has a more diverse age structure in the south east with more ash and hazel on wetter flushes. There are scattered sycamore throughout. Towards the south and west there is a 1.2 Ha area of younger birch (about 20 years old) which was previously compartment 1b. The ground flora is a patchwork of mosses, heather and bilberry, ferns and bramble. There are excellent displays of bluebells. Rhododendron is encroaching from adjoining land on the northern boundary.</p>							
1c	0.27	Birch (downy/silver)	2005	Coppice	Landscape factors, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Environmentally Sensitive Area
<p>Formerly open area in the south-western corner. In 2005 this was dominated by bracken but was sprayed as part of a project run by Nant yr Eos Woodland Group who also put a number of wooden sculptures in this area. Through a combination of natural regeneration and planting, the area has since become a young woodland of birch, oak, rowan, ash and hazel which will require some light thinning/coppicing work in the future.</p>							

Appendix 2: Harvesting operations (20 years)

Forecast Year	Cpt	Operation Type	Work Area (ha)	Estimated vol/ha	Estimated total vol.
2021	1c	Thin	0.26	12	3
2027	1c	Thin	0.26	19	5
2033	1c	Thin	0.26	27	7

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.