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WOODLAND
TRUST

Tyn yr Heol

Management Plan 2018-2023

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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:	Tyn yr Heol
Location:	Bryncoch
Grid reference:	SS742991, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 170
Area:	0.79 hectares (1.95 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, NULL, Special Landscape Area, Tree Preservation Order

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Tyn yr Heol is an Ancient Semi-natural Woodland along the Afon Clydach river. Access is from Dyffryn Road by footpath off the bridge with a Woodland Trust sign at the entrance. The paths are un-surfaced and fairly level although uneven in places

2.2 Extended Description

Tyn yr Heol is a narrow woodland along the Afon Clydach river in Bryn Coch, Neath. Residential properties line the southern boundary, the western boundary is marked by the Dyffryn Road, the northern boundary is the river and the eastern boundary meets contiguous riparian woodland. Broadleaf woodland covers the areas outside the Woodland Trust boundaries on the northern side of the river and west of the road. Tyn yr Heol is a Special Landscape Area and trees within the site are under a Tree Preservation Order. The key features of the site are public access and Ancient Semi-natural Woodland, with the waterway and otter habitat as conservation features.

A Public Right of Way runs the length of the woodland from east to west, along the plateau on the southern boundary. From the small plateau the land slopes down steeply to the floodplain of the river. The plateau area is dominated by oak with some sycamore, ash, beech and scattered Scots pine. The under story includes ivy, bramble, harts tongue, lady fern, bilberry, and sedges. There is excellent down and standing deadwood habitat. In the floodplain the canopy is still dominated by oak, but also includes sycamore, hazel and alder. Sycamore, ash and alder are regenerating abundantly. In general, trees on the site are regenerating naturally and there are diverse species and age classes.

In the river there are a number of islands separated by narrow channels. Some of these islands have patches of invasive Japanese knotweed.

Access to the site is through the gate on the road and along the Public Right of Way on the southern boundary. Several desire line paths cross the islands in the river. Parking is on neighbouring residential streets. There are Woodland Trust signs at road-side and at the eastern boundary to the wood.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General location:

Tyn yr Heol wood is a narrow woodland along the Afon Clydach river in Bryn Coch, Neath. Access is direct from public highway (Dyffryn Road) or the public footpath that runs just inside the entire length of the southern boundary and continues through adjacent woodland. To reach Dyffryn Road, take the A474 off the A465 at Neath. Turn left onto Main Road, and left again onto Tyn yr Heol road. Reaching a small roundabout at the end of this road turn right into Dyffryn Road. The entrance to the site is on a bridge a few metres from this turning.

General overview of paths & entrances:

The entrance to the site is by footpath off the bridge along the river. There is a Woodland Trust sign at the entrance. This is a public footpath which runs in both directions along the river. The footpaths are unsurfaced and fairly level although uneven in places.

Parking:

There is no car park at the site, which is located off a very narrow road. Car parking can be found on neighbouring streets.

Public Transport:

First Cymru buses run regularly from Neath Bus station to Brynglas at Bryn Coch - Service 122 or 132 (Information at www.traveline.org.uk, or telephone 0870 608 2 608).

Public Toilets:

The nearest public toilets with facilities for disabled users are in Neath at the following locations: Market, Victoria Gardens, Neath Station, Platform 1 (Station hrs) (Arriva Wales), and "David Protheroe", Windsor Road (Trading hrs) (Wetherspoons). In Skewen there is a public toilet on Queens Road. These require a RADAR key.

None visited. Information accessed 25th April, 2007.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

This ancient woodland will continue to consist predominantly of oak and other native species in the canopy, with abundant natural regeneration, interesting riparian habitats and excellent deadwood habitat. Natural regeneration, should continue to produce a tree community with diverse age classes and maintain the variety of species already present in the canopy.

Japanese knotweed will be absent or confined to outer boundaries of site where possible to do so.

As a site on the edge of a residential area, Tyn yr Heol will be widely used by local residents, primarily accessed by the existing public footpath.

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

This is a riparian woodland along the Afon Clydach waterway, and forms part of a contiguous semi-natural broadleaf riparian woodland. The southern boundary of the site is on a small plateau, from which the land slopes down steeply to the floodplain of the river. The plateau area is dominated by oak with some mixed broadleaf species, including sycamore, and a very few Scots pine. There is excellent fallen and standing deadwood habitat. In the floodplain the canopy is dominated by oak, but also includes hazel and alder. Trees on the site are regenerating naturally and there are diverse species and age classes in the canopy. In the river there are a number of islands separated by narrow channels. Some of these islands have patches of invasive Japanese knotweed. The conservation features are the waterway and the potential for otter habitat.

Significance

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 primary objectives. Floodplain woodland is a rare habitat type in Britain and is a priority Biodiversity Action Plan habitat

Opportunities & Constraints

Vehicle access to the site is limited and would be a consideration for silvicultural work. The Tree Preservation Order for the site is a silvicultural consideration. Afon Clydach is a Statutory Main River and as such a formal Land Drainage Consent is required for any works within seven meters of the waterway. Because the wood is part of the contiguous woodland along the Afon Clydach, it has greater habitat potential than it would as a solitary woodland. In this region of Wales there is a high potential for otters to occupy the habitat.

Controls of INNS are inhibitive due to topography and dynamic changing nature of river bed bringing new sources of invasives into the site and movements in river beds make knotweed control difficult.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive Species such as Cherry Laurel, Japanese Knotweed, Cotoneaster, Rhododendron and garden plants escaping/dumped on site such as garden waste.

Over-use by pedestrians trampling ground flora and regeneration

Long term Objective (50 years+)

This site will continue to be a mixed broadleaf wooded riverbed gorge, but with a mixture of native broadleaf species. Restocking will be through natural regeneration. There will continue to be excellent fallen and standing deadwood habitat and a ground flora dominated by native species. The waterway and floodplain will provide wet habitat and may provide habitat for otters.

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

Monitor Japanese Knotweed nearby and consider control should it spread into woodland from river islands.

Control other invasives on site and maintain litter/fly tipping clearances

5.2 Informal Public Access

Description

This is a relatively high use site due to its bordering on a residential neighbourhood. Access to the site is through the gate on the road and along the well maintained Public Right of Way on the southern boundary. Several desire line paths cross the islands in the river. These paths are accessed by jumping over narrow or shallow parts of the river, which may be a safety and conservation concern in the floodplain habitat. Parking is on neighbouring residential streets.

Significance

Public accessible woodland near a residential area.

Opportunities & Constraints

Wet ground conditions limit the opportunity for expanding the path network along with topography constraints.

Opportunities include making site well known to local people through good signage and welcoming feel around entrances.

Factors Causing Change

Public creation of desire line paths on the islands in the river.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The existing access provision of the Public Right of Way will be maintained. Use and creation of the desire line paths on the islands will be discouraged.

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

Maintain existing provision of the Public Right of Way within the wood, including coppicing/cutting back where necessary to remove obstructing edge vegetation. Discourage the formation of obvious tracks from the Public Right of Way down to the river.

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	1.74	Oak (sessile)	1900	Min-intervention	Gullies/Deep Valleys/Uneven/Rocky ground, Housing/infrastructure, structures & water features on or adjacent to site, Mostly wet ground/exposed site, No/poor vehicular access to the site	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Informal Public Access	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Special Landscape Area, Tree Preservation Order

Tyn yr Heol has only one compartment and sub-compartment.

A Public Right of Way runs the length of the site from east to west, along the plateau on the southern boundary. From the small plateau the land slopes down steeply to the floodplain of the river. The plateau area is dominated by mature oak with some sycamore, ash, beech and scattered Scots pine. The understory includes ivy, bramble, harts tongue, lady fern, bilberry, and sedges. There are good quantities fallen and standing deadwood habitat. In the floodplain the canopy is dominated by oak, but also includes sycamore, hazel and alder. Sycamore and alder are regenerating abundantly. Trees on the site are regenerating naturally and there are diverse species and age classes. In the river there are a number of islands separated by narrow channels and crossed by desire line paths. Some of these islands have patches of invasive Japanese knotweed but due to changing dynamics of the river bed are considered difficult to eradicate and percentage of plant accepted

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.