COED CADW
WOODLAND
TRUST

Coed Geufron

Management Plan
2018-2023

MANAGEMENT PLAN - CONTENTS PAGE

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MAPS

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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 Geufron
Location:	Penparcau
Grid reference:	SN601801, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 135
Area:	9.79 hectares (24.19 acres)
Designations:	Site of Special Scientific Interest

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

This wood houses otter habitats on the river and high invertebrate interest, particularly beetles and spiders. Wet woodland, grassland and shingle banks see willow, alder, gorse, oak, hawthorn and other species flourish.

2.2 Extended Description

Coed Geufron is located on the flood plain of the Afon Rheidol and includes a steep north-east facing slope on the eastern edge of Aberystwyth. It comprises of just over 5 hectares of newly planted woodland and 5 hectares of open scrubby ground. The site was acquired as part of the Woods On Your Doorstep Initiative. The site provides an accessible woodland and open space within walking distance of Aberystwyth, complete with cycleway also running along its northern boundary. Surrounding the site lies industrial land to the east, residential development to the south and sporting facilities to the west.

As well as the newly established woodland and areas of grassland, scrub and gorse the site is bordered by the Afon Rheidol. The site can divided into three distinct areas.

On the flood plan an extensive area of scrub dominated by common gorse with patches of marshy grassland has developed on the flood plain between a tributary of the Rheidol and the cricket field. Wet woodland has developed along the tributary and this whole area provides excellent natural cover for otters active in the area. Two woodland ponds added to the wildlife interest of the site. An area south of the railway track was planted with native broadleaves in 2000.

The area lying between the railway line and river is a river shingle bank which has become colonised by scrub, mainly gorse. Otters are present on this stretch of the river and may use the bank-side scrub for cover. This small tract of land is part of the SSSI designated partly for its outstanding invertebrate interest, particularly beetles and spiders, associated with unmodified river shingle.

The bracken covered north-east facing steep slope to the south of Geufron House has scattered scrub and native broadleaves were planted in April 2000. Some of the slope is still dominated by bracken but now the planted trees have started to seed and regenerate in the gaps.

It is a well visited accessible site with a network of footpaths and a longer distance cycle path running through it. Ceredigion County Council has produced the Pen Dinas and Rheidol Circular walk: a varied four mile circular walking linking Coed Geufron to four other nature reserves on the southern fringe of Aberystwyth, taking in woodland, riverbank and hilltop.

The key features of Coed Geufron are:
Wet woodland
River shingle banks (semi natural open ground habitat),
Gorse and grassland areas (mixed habitat mosaic),
New native woodland
Informal public access (connecting people with woods and trees).

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

General Location
Coed Geufron is on the edge of Aberystwyth located between the Penparcau housing estate, the Cricket Ground, the Rheidol Railway, the Afon Rheidol and the Glanyrafon Industrial Estate. Access to the site is either via the Sustrans path from the A4120 just south of the Pen y Bont roundabout, along the Sustrans path from the Industrial estate or along Geufron lane through the housing estate.

Entrances and paths
The three entrances are open with no barriers. The footpath from the Penparcau housing estate is fairly steep close to the entrance and can get wet and muddy, otherwise the paths are flat.
Public footpath nos. 16/1 and 12/20 cross the site from the Penparcau housing estate. The path is shown on the Ordnance Survey as crossing the railway and the river and joining the A44, there is a gate at the point where it crosses the railway line but the river is not easily fordable and the path is not open on the north side of the river.
There is part of a Sustrans cycle route (along the Rheidol Valley) running across the site from the river, along the side of the cricket ground and out through the Glanyrafon industrial estate, this is flat and finished with tarmac although there are some speed bumps betweem Coed Geufron and the industrial estate. There are also some permissive grassy tracks around the site which are flat.

Public Transport
Aberystwyth railway station is 1.5 miles away and there is a stop on the single gauge railway line close to the A4120 about 0.25 miles from the site. There are bus stops along the A4120 at Morrisons and by the Penparcau estate on Heol Bryn.
For more information call Traveline on 0870 6082608 or see www.traveline.org.uk

Parking
It is possible to park on the industrial estate at the eastern end of the site and then walk to the site along the Sustrans path. There is a small parking area at the eastern end of Penparcau Housing Estate with room for two cars.

Public Toilets
The nearest toilets are at Penparcau Playing Fields, there are no disabled toilets at this facility. The nearest disabled access toilets are in Aberystwyth at Park Street, Park Avenue, and on Bath Street.

3.2 Access / Walks

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

This high profile "Woods On Your Doorstep" site provides an important public access opportunity for the local community of Llanbadarn and Aberystwyth. The public right of way and additional permissive footpaths and viewpoints will be maintained for walkers. The cycle route is maintained by the Highways Department of the County Council.
The approximately 3.4ha planted with native broadleaves in 2000 will continue to establish as woodland and will be allowed to gradually regenerate naturally.
The large tracts of semi-natural scrub and wet carr form a biologically interesting mosaic with small areas of acid and semi-improved marshy grassland which will be managed to enhance their nature conservation value. A mosaic of scrub and grassland will be maintained by periodic scrub/grass cutting. The wet carr which has developed along the edge of the tributary will be left undisturbed as a long term retention/minimal intervention area. Semi-natural features such as existing hedgerows will be retained.
Public access into the shingle bank area will not be actively encouraged. This small shingle bank dominated by dense gorse scrub forms part of a larger SSSI and supports rare invertebrate species and provides useful cover for visiting otters. This area will be treated as a minimal intervention area apart from the control of Japanese knotweed.

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 Wet Woodland

Description

Wet carr dominated by alder and willow coppice along a small tributary of the river. The field layer is flooded for part of the year. Hemlock water dropwort (Oeananthe crocata) (last recorded in 2018) and reed canary grass (Phalaris arundinacea) are abundant in the field layer. Uncommon species include the bryophyte Calliergon cordifolium (last recorded 2000) and chalkstream water crowfoot (Ranunculus penicillatus) which has been recorded on the stream close to the confluence with the river but not since 1979. Two small shaded ponds choked with aquatic vegetation add biodiversity interest to the site.

Significance

The wet carr may have high invertebrate interest. Only known location of Calliergon cordifolium in 10km square. Although the ponds are small they contribute to the biodiversity of the site and are accessible to the public.

Opportunities & Constraints

Japanese knotweed at the confluence of the tributary and river should be controlled. The ponds are over-shaded and choked with aquatic vegetation reducing their conservation value. Sensitive management to increase the extent of open water and reduce shading is necessary.

Factors Causing Change

Natural Succession to carr in ponds

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The area of wet carr bordering the stream is designated as a long term retention/minimum intervention area. Canopy cover should be at least 70% dominated by alder and willow with a well developed field layer in which Japanese knotweed is absent. The moss Calleirgon cuspidatum should be abundant in the ground layer. Continuation of areas of wet woodland by digging scrapes (small ponds) in areas adjacent to the woodland.

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

Japanese knotweed will be controlled if it reoccurs. Monitor new ponds created.

5.2 Mixed Habitat Mosaic

Description

A large area of scrub dominated by common gorse in cpt 2a which has developed on the river floodplain with small stands of acid grassland dominated by fescues (Festuca spp), sweet vernal grass (Anthoxanthum odoratum), bents (including Agrostis capillaris) and Yorkshire Fog (Holcus lanatus) and tracts of ungrazed marshy grassland (NVC M23 & M25) dominated by purple moor grass (Molinia caerulea), soft rush (Juncus effusus) and sharp flowered rush (J. acutiflorus) on damper soils. There was botanical survey in May 2018 by the Aberyswyth botanical society which is saved to file.

Significance

The large expanse of scrub and wet/dry acidic grassland provides immense ecological interest if managed appropriately. Likely to be of value for invertebrates, particularly along the river frontage.

Opportunities & Constraints

Dry and wet grassland will eventually be replaced by scrub if natural succession is allowed to progress. Control of scrub by cutting as necessary.

Factors Causing Change

Invasive Knotweed, Natural Succession scrub/secondary woodland, Fire

Long term Objective (50 years+)

A mosaic of Gorse scrub and acidic dry and wet grass land in patches. Scrub should be retained along the river bank to discourage public access. The species composition and sward structure of the grassland is not likely to improve as long term grazing management will be difficult to maintain in this part of the site because the area is so small. However the mosaic of rough grassland and scrub should provide some interest for invertebrates.

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

Each year the area of scrub will be assessed in order to determine whether or not cutting is necessary. It will be ideal to have a 50/50 mix.

5.3 New Native Woodland

Description

Approximately 3.4ha in cpts 1 and 2b were planted with native broadleaves in Spring 2000. High level of community involvement in the planning, design and implementation of the project. Establishment has been good and canopy closure achieved in some areas by 2011.

Significance

Strong community involvement and provision of a natural resource for local people.

Opportunities & Constraints

The project has generated considerable local interest and has encouraged residents of the area to visit the site.

Factors Causing Change

Uncontrolled Grazing, Fire

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To allow the gradual natural development of native woodland and scrub on the slope in cpt 1 and in the improved grassland in cpt 2b

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

Allow natural processes to develop. Outcomes of woodland condition monitoring to determine if any thinning is required of new native woodland.

5.4 Semi Natural Open Ground Habitat

Description

A river shingle bank (cpt 3) with large tracts of gorse scrub which forms part of the larger Rheidol Shingles and Backwaters SSSI (62.1ha) designated partly for its outstanding invertebrate interest, particularly beetles and spiders, associated with unmodified shingle. Otters use the river and bankside scrub for cover.

Significance

Part of the Rheidol Shingles and Backwaters SSSI. It is important for the community of invertebrates including rove beetle and diving beetle. The shingle habitats may support protected species such as otter, red data book invertebrate species.

Opportunities & Constraints

The scrub may provide valuable cover for otters using the river and is designated as a Minimal Intervention Area. The river shingle-based habitats are important for invertebrates. River defence work in autumn 2000 resulted in the loss of the shingle bank in this area but it has now largely recovered at least structurally. This is already leading to a recovery of the invertebrate fauna with a survey in 2004 reporting nationally important species found on all shingle banks investigated.

Factors Causing Change

Natural Succession to scrub, Invasive Knotweed

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain a succession of shingle-based habitats ranging from unstable bare shingle through stages of colonisation to acid grassland and scrub. Dense scrub will hopefully limit public access to the river shingle banks.

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

Long Term Retention / Minimal Intervention Area apart from control of invasive species.

5.5 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

Public access is provided using a series of grassy permissive paths and a public right of way. A Sustrans cycle route also passes through the site. An information board about the nature conservation interest of the site is sited in cpt 2b. Benches are provided in cpt 1 and 2b. The visitor survey carried out in 2004 estimated that approximately 29,000 people visit the site per year, this was based on a manual count sample survey.

Significance

Improvement of public access provides a valuable local resource for residents and visitors. The open grassed areas provide an opportunity for picnics and informal games environments for children. The sustains route 81 enables easy access to wide range of user groups. potential for scientific studies comparing the different wetland areas on site river/woodland ponds/open ponds (KS3-4).

Opportunities & Constraints

Permissive tracks enable visitors to reach most parts of the site. Access to cpt 3 should not be actively encouraged to the general public to ensure that the river shingle habitat here is undisturbed. Unfortunately a railway crossing for pedestrians is provided onto the railway. Cpt 1 is also not well suited for public access due to difficult access, steep slopes and dense cover.

Factors Causing Change

Undesirable consequences of moderate levels of public access include rubbish left on site, unauthorised camping and fires. Often at the end of school exams in July.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

To provide safe access throughout the site using the public right of way and mown permissive paths. Two benches (cpt 1 and 2b) are provided for public use. A millenium feature (hay rake) is sited close to the cricket pavilion. To develop the use of the sites through 3rd party community groups, such as active woods and forest schools.

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

Strim paths regularly. Top grasses open areas. Collect litter regularly. Maintain benches, interpretation board as necessary. To run 1-2 events in this plan period that engage with the desires of the local community and potentially work with the services on arson reduction and education.

6.0 WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type of Work	Description	Due By

APPENDIX 1: COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Key Features Present	Designations
1a	2.08	Oak (sessile)	2000	Wood establishment	Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/ mine shafts/sink holes etc		
Compartment 1 extends over 2.1ha on the north facing steep slope above Geufron House. The slope was originally covered in bracken and scattered scrub. Native broadleaves (sessile oak (64%), ash (15%), silver birch (7%), cherry (5%), beech (2%), rowan (3%), hazel (3%) and elder (1%) were planted across the site in spring 2000 as part of the Woods On Your Doorstep initiative. The planting was partially successful in establishing and this compartment is now a mixture of trees and scrub. Bracken is still common on the hillside but its area declines as the planted trees grow and cast seed which regenerates. The slope is steep and the vegetation impenetrable with no practical access from the bottom so it is not well suited to public access. As a consequence the footpaths have not been kept open.							
2a	4.12	Other		Non-wood habitat	Mostly wet ground/exposed site		
A large area of scrub dominated by common gorse which has developed on the river floodplain. This forms a biologically interesting mosaic with small stands of acid grassland dominated by fescues (Festuca spp), sweet vernal grass (Anthoxanthum odoratum), bents (including Agrostis capillaris) and Yorkshire Fog (Holcus lanatus). Drier areas support abundant ant hills. Wet carr dominated by alder and willow coppice grows along a small tributary of the river. The field layer beneath the wet woodland canopy is flooded for part of the year. Hemlock water dropwort (Oeananthe crocata) and reed canary grass (Phalaris arundinacea) are abundant with other species typical of a base-rich soil, enriched by regular flooding. Calliergon cordifolium, an uncommon bryophyte (moss) in Ceredigion is very abundant here. Chalk stream water crow foot (Ranunculus penicillatus) has been recorded on the stream close to the confluence with the river (Chater 1979, 1986). Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam occur at the edge of the carr woodland where the tributary meets the river. A small pond heavily shaded by alder and willow occurs just below Geufron House.							
2b	2.71	Oak (sessile)	2000	Wood establishment			

Three old field enclosures with extensive improved grassland planted with native broadleaves (Spring 2000). They have now achieved canopy closure. A number of relict hedgerows with mature hawthorn, sessile oak and elder occur south of the track. A large crab apple tree stands in the field adjacent to the railway line. Small tracts of ungrazed marshy grassland (NVC M23 & M25) dominated by purple moor grass (Molinia caerulea), soft rush (Juncus effusus) and sharp flowered rush (J. acutiflorus) have developed on damper soils. A shallow derelict pool choked with aquatic vegetation and shaded by grey willow lies adjacent to the cricket pavilion. Drier neutral grassland with birdsfoot trefoil (Lotus pedunculatus), creeping buttercup (Ranunculus repens), sorrel (Rumex acetosa), black knapweed (Centaurea nigra) and ribwort plantain (Plantago lanceolata) occurs along side the southern edge of the railway.							
3a	0.88	Other		Non-wood habitat	No/poor vehicular access to the site, Sensitive habitats/species on or adjacent to site		Site of Special Scientific Interest
A river shingle bank which has become colonised by scrub occurs between the railway line and river. Forms part of the Rheidol Shingles and Backwaters SSSI.							

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.