

Coed y Bobl

(Plan period – 2019 to 2024)



WOODLAND
TRUST

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Introduction to the Woodland Trust Estate

The Woodland Trust owns and cares for well over 1,250 sites covering almost 30,000 hectares (ha) across the UK. This includes more than 4,000ha of ancient semi-natural woodland and almost 4,000ha of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites and we have created over 5,000ha of new native woodland. We also manage other valuable habitats such as flower-rich grasslands, heaths, ponds/lakes and moorland.

Our Vision is:

“A UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.”

To realise all the environmental, social and economic benefits woods and trees bring to society, we:

- **Create Woodland** – championing the need to hugely increase the UK’s native woodland and trees.
- **Protect Woodland** – fighting to defend native woodland, especially irreplaceable ancient woodland and veteran trees; there should be no loss of ancient woodland
- **Restore Woodland** – ensuring the sensitive restoration of all damaged ancient woodland and the re-creation of native wooded landscapes.

Management of the Woodland Trust Estate

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.

The following principles provide an overarching framework to guide the management of all our sites but we recognise that all woods are different and that their management also needs to reflect their local landscape, history and where appropriate support local projects and initiatives.

1. Our woods are managed to maintain their intrinsic key features of value and to reflect those of the surrounding landscape. We intervene in our woods when there is evidence that it is necessary to maintain or improve biodiversity, safety and to further the development of more resilient woods and landscapes.
2. We establish new native woodland for all the positive reasons set out in our Conservation Principles, preferably using natural regeneration but often by planting trees, 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. Where possible, we pro-actively engage with people to help them appreciate the value of woods and trees.
4. The long term vision for all our 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 natural and cultural heritage value of sites is taken into account in our management and in particular, our ancient trees are retained for as long as possible.
7. Land and woods can generate income both from the sustainable harvesting of wood products and the delivery of other services. We therefore consider the appropriateness of opportunities 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 encourage our woods to be used for 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. We maintain a network of sites for long-term monitoring and trials leading to reductions in plastics and pesticides.
10. Any activities we undertake are in line with our wider Conservation Principles, conform to sustainable forest management practices, are appropriate for the site and balanced with our primary objectives of enhancing the biodiversity and recreational value of our woods and the wider landscapes.

The Public Management Plan

This public management plan describes the site and sets out the long term aims for our management and lists the Key Features which drive our management actions. The Key Features are specific to this site – their significance is outlined together with our long, 50 years and beyond, and our short, the next 5 years, term objectives for the management and enhancement of these features. The short term objectives are complemented by an outline Work Programme for the period of this management plan aimed at delivering our management aims.

Detailed compartment descriptions are listed in the appendices which include any major management constraints and designations. Any legally confidential or sensitive species information about this site is not included in this version of the plan.

There is a formal review of this plan every 5 years and we continually monitor our sites to assess the success of our management, therefore this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme.

Please either consult The Woodland Trust website

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

or contact the Woodland Trust

operations@woodlandtrust.org.uk

to confirm details of the current management programme.

A short glossary of technical terms can be found at the end of the plan.

Location and Access

Location maps and directions for how to find and access our woods, including this site, can be found by using the following link to the Woodland Trust web-site which contains information on accessible woodlands across the UK

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods/>

In Scotland access to our sites is in accordance with the Land Reform Act (of Scotland) 2003 and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and NI, with the exception of designated Public Rights of Ways, all routes across our sites are permissive in nature and where we have specific access provision for horse riders and/or cyclists this will be noted in the management plan.

The Management Plan

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5. Work Programme

Appendix 1 : Compartment Descriptions

GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Coed y Bobl

Location:	Devil's Bridge (Pontarfynach) Grid reference: SN735762 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 135
Area:	6.84 hectares (16.90 acres)
External Designations:	N/A
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Set within an upland landscape of mainly sheep grazed pasture this small site now provides a concentrated wildlife haven. The mixture of pastoral farming with wooded hillsides and valley bottoms is typical of National Landscape Character Area 23 (NLCA23 Rheidol & Ystwyth Hills & Valleys) in which this site is located. The soils are a wet acidic peaty loam (Soilscape 19) with impeded drainage. Other than a similar piece of land on the southern boundary, much of the neighbouring land has been drained and improved and is grazed by sheep.

The land was clear felled of Sitka spruce and lodgepole pine in 1995. The previous owner then planted some broadleaved trees which grew alongside native regeneration. The Woodland Trust acquired the site in 1999 and planted further native stock in the autumn of 2000. The public involvement in the design and planting of the site was enabled through our Woods on Your Doorstep project, and Informal Public Access continues to be a Key Feature of the site. Its development into secondary woodland is the other Key Feature.

Sessile oak, alder, rowan, ash, thorn and hazel that were planted by local people and the Woodland Trust in 2000. This planting mix was based upon the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) W17 for upland oak and birch woodland, which is common in the surrounding landscape. The mosaic of wetland, semi open moorland and dense scrub provides excellent niches for a rich variety of birds, insects, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and plants. There are several other tree species growing on the site as well as the planted native species. These include occasional spindly, mature birch trees which grew within the conifer plantation and have been left to help reseed the site, some lodgepole pines left after the plantation was felled, and natural regeneration which is predominantly birch and willow species with occasional conifers seeded from the old crop of trees. Some unusual saplings including copper beech, laburnum and red oak which were planted by the previous owner following the clear felling of the site.

The land is level and so water tends to stand in low parts and the remains of some ditches. A pond was opened up and is now kept clear. The site is always wet and in the winter is only walkable in wellington boots. A public footpath runs along the southern edge of the site and several permissive footpath give alternative circular routes for visitors around the wood. The wood is accessed through kissing gates from the B4343, and two picnic benches are present just inside the main entrance from Devil's Bridge.

Devils Bridge itself has a high population of summer visitors on holiday, some discover the site, however its main use is by the local residents who can walk to the site. Views to the surrounding hills can be seen from Coed y Bobl and red kite are often seen circling overhead.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

The site will be allowed to grow into a high canopy woodland with a varied structure, allowing for natural regeneration and a diverse ground flora. Some areas will be kept clear of trees, such as the areas around the pond, the entrances and the paths. Occasional thinning work will be required in order to maintain this diverse structure, with some trees grow on into senescence. Levels of deadwood will be allowed to accumulate an increase over time and deer will be maintained at a sustainable levels, not having a detrimental impact on the ecological condition. Monitoring of woodland condition and browsing damage will guide management and decision-making, ensuring an evidence based approach.

The path network shall be managed to allow visitors to explore this small but diverse site. Access infrastructure, such as gates and signs, will be maintained in good working order and both safety and tree safety checks will be routinely carried out in line with the Woodland Trust's policies.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Secondary Woodland

Description
<p>The land was clear felled of Sitka spruce and lodgepole pine in 1995. The previous owner then planted some broadleaved trees which grew alongside native regeneration. The Woodland Trust acquired the site in 1999 and planted further native stock in the autumn of 2000. The public involvement in the design and planting of the site was enabled through our Woods on Your Doorstep project, and Informal Public Access continues to be a Key Feature of the site. Its development into secondary woodland is the other Key Feature.</p> <p>Sessile oak, alder, rowan, ash, thorn and hazel that were planted by local people and the Woodland Trust in 2000. This planting mix was based upon the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) W17 for upland oak and birch woodland, which is common in the surrounding landscape. The mosaic of wetland, semi open moorland and dense scrub provides excellent niches for a rich variety of birds, insects, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and plants.</p> <p>There are several other tree species growing on the site as well as the planted native species. These include occasional spindly, mature birch trees which grew within the conifer plantation and have been left to help reseed the site, some lodgepole pines left after the plantation was felled, and natural regeneration which is predominantly birch and willow species with occasional conifers seeded from the old crop of trees. Some unusual saplings including copper beech, laburnum and red oak which were planted by the previous owner following the clear felling of the site.</p>
Significance
<p>Coed y Bobl provides a good example of a young establishing woodland that is beginning to diversify and regenerate. It provides a publicly accessible space that is both valuable to wildlife and the local community.</p>
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Wet ground limits management practices and timing.</p>
Factors Causing Change
<p>Climate change leading to increased storm damage.</p> <p>Increasing nutrient levels caused by atmospheric pollution leading to a decline in sensitive ground flora.</p> <p>Impacts from tree disease</p> <p>Damage to young trees caused by deer and grey squirrels</p> <p>Changes in land management or adjoining a woodland and pasture</p> <p>The impacts from increased visitor pressure and antisocial behaviour</p>

Long term Objective (50 years+)
The site will be allowed to grow into a high canopy woodland with a varied structure, allowing for natural regeneration and a diverse ground flora. Some areas will be kept clear of trees, such as the areas around the pond, the entrances and the paths. Occasional thinning work will be required in order to maintain this diverse structure, with some trees grow on into senescence. Levels of deadwood will be allowed to accumulate an increase over time and deer will be maintained at a sustainable levels, not having a detrimental impact on the ecological condition. Monitoring of woodland condition and browsing damage will guide management and decision-making, ensuring an evidence based approach.
Short term management Objectives for the plan period (5 years)
Annually maintain areas of open ground, such as ride edges and glade, in order to provide habitat diversity. Thinning works are required throughout the woodland compartments to maintain a diverse structure and allow for natural regeneration.

4.2 f2 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description
<p>The land is level and so water tends to stand in low parts and the remains of some ditches. A pond was opened up and is now kept clear. The site is always wet and in the winter is only walkable in wellington boots. A public footpath runs along the southern edge of the site and several permissive footpath give alternative circular routes for visitors around the wood. The wood is accessed through kissing gates from the B4343, and two picnic benches are present just inside the main entrance from Devil's Bridge.</p> <p>Devils Bridge itself has a high population of summer visitors on holiday, some discover the site, however its main use is by the local residents who can walk to the site. Views to the surrounding hills can be seen from Coed y Bobl and red kite are often seen circling overhead.</p>
Significance
The Woodland Trust believes that everyone should recognise that trees and woods are an essential part of a healthy environment and that there should be a wood with open access close to everyone's home.
Opportunities & Constraints
<p>Lack of parking facility.</p> <p>Management access limited to drier months.</p>
Factors Causing Change
<p>Misuse of the site, such as access by mountain bikers.</p> <p>Higher than expected visitor numbers affecting path conditions and wildlife disturbance.</p> <p>Potential clash between user groups, such as by uncontrolled dogs.</p> <p>Possible increase in desire lines/ ground impact during winter months when the ground conditions are poor.</p>

Tree disease affecting use of the permissive paths (ash die-back).
increase in Anti-social behaviour.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The path network shall be managed to allow visitors to explore this small but diverse site. Access infrastructure, such as gates and signs, will be maintained in good working order and both safety and tree safety checks will be routinely carried out in line with the Woodland Trust's policies.

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

All paths and access routes should be maintained to a high standard, being regularly cut with any obstacles removed from the path/track edges - any informal non-permissive paths should be managed to discourage and prevent increased access and potential damage to establishing ground flora and regenerating trees and shrubs.
Visitor infrastructure and tree safety will be maintained in line with Woodland Trusts policies, appropriate for the type of site and levels of access.
Sections of footpath shall be upgraded to improve the visitor access over wet and boggy sections.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2020	SL - Tree Safety Emergency Work	Work associated with unplanned emergency tree safety works – such as clearance of fallen trees/branches and associated repairs	March
2020	WMM - Secondary Silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within secondary woods to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	October
2020	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	November
2021	AW - Management Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of management access infrastructure and tracks Such as repairs to vehicle entrance points, maintaining vehicle bridges and repairing / reinstating surfaced management access routes.	July
2021	AW - Visitor Access Maintenance	Works associated with the maintenance of existing visitor access infrastructure and paths. Work could include items such as repairing pot-holes and path surfaces, mowing grass paths, path widening, maintaining footbridges and steps, cleaning signage etc,	July
2021	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	November
2022	SL - Legal Obligation Work	Works that have to be undertaken by Woodland Trust as part of with legal agreements made with third parties such as erection of boundary fencing, surfacing of joint access tracks , maintenance of drainage ditches. Also works associated with safeguarding the Woodland Trust legal position – such as erection of boundary markers on open boundaries, removal of illegal third party structures/vehicles/ campsites	March
2022	SL - Tree Safety Works - Zone A	Work associated with planned tree safety works alongside areas such as car parks, roadsides and boundaries	November
2022	WMM - Secondary Silviculture	Works associated with silvicultural operations within secondary woods to meet our primary aims of conserving woodlands and encouraging public enjoyment– such as the removal of non-natives, thinning and promotion of native trees and shrubs, creating and managing view points and providing welcoming sites for visitors	December

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2023	SL - Safety / Legal Obligation Work (SODS)	Works associated with specific Health and Safety legislation or associated legal requirements such as – safety fencing of quarries, safety requirements stipulated in planning consent for car parks or entrance points etc	February
2023	SL - Safety / Legal Obligation Work (SODS)	Works associated with specific Health and Safety legislation or associated legal requirements such as – safety fencing of quarries, safety requirements stipulated in planning consent for car parks or entrance points etc	July

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	3	Birch (downy/silver)	2000	Wood establishment	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	
<p>Relatively flat sub-compartment of planted broadleaves and natural regeneration. Natural regeneration species include downy birch, rowan, crab apple, lodgepole pine and hawthorn. Ground flora is dominated by grasses and common rush, other species present include willow herb, heather, gorse, bramble, moss, bracken and bilberry. Several semi-mature (1985) lodgepole pine have been retained along the southern boundary. Downy birch regeneration is particularly prolific in this sub-compartment. A permissive footpath forms the northwestern boundary. Lizards have been seen basking in this area. This compartment was once part of a conifer plantation and so there is occasional spruce regeneration, but of no consequence.</p>						
1b	2.5	Birch (downy/silver)	2000	Wood establishment	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	
<p>Very gently sloping, west facing sub-compartment of planted broadleaves and natural regeneration. Natural regeneration species include downy birch, rowan, beech, crab apple and sitka spruce. Ground flora species include grasses, willow herb, bramble, moss and foxglove. Part of the clear-felled conifer plantation but the small amount of spruce regeneration is not significant. In 2012 a re-widening of the B4343 involved some land take from the area. A small number of trees were transplanted, the footpath was diverted with a new footbridge constructed and a new fence put up. The old volunteer group created a new path and small pond along the blackberry way.</p>						
1c	1.4	other willows	1970	Wood establishment	Mostly wet ground/exposed site	
<p>Small area of wet ground at the southwestern end of the site that has been retained as willow scrub, this area was never part of the conifer plantation as it has always been very wet. Downy birch is regenerating well, along with rowan and crab apple. Ground flora species include grasses, common rush, willow herb, bramble and moss. Two small ponds are situated in this sub-compartment, with a mulched path leading to it.</p>						

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.

Windblow/Windthrow

Trees or groups of trees blown over (usually uprooted) by strong winds and gales.

Registered Office:

The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL.

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