



COED CADW
WOODLAND
TRUST

Coed Cefn

Management Plan 2017-2022

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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 Consequently this printed version may quickly become out of date, particularly in relation to the planned work programme and on-going monitoring observations.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 Cefn
Location:	Crickhowell
Grid reference:	SO226186, OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 161
Area:	11.11 hectares (27.45 acres)
Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, Ancient Woodland Site, National Park, Scheduled Ancient Monument

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary Description

Coed Cefn is an ancient woodland with a rich historical past: there is an iron age hillfort in the centre, and a few non-native conifers remain, hinting at the woodland's past extensive planting. Visit for a circular woodland walk, with beautiful views out to the surrounding countryside, and for fantastic displays of bluebells in April and May.

2.2 Extended Description

Coed Cefn is a small, well-visited restored ancient woodland, with a mostly broadleaved canopy; few non-native conifers remain. It is known locally as 'Bluebell wood' for its impressive display of bluebells in April and May. Situated on a hilltop 1 mile east of Crickhowell and located in the Brecon Beacons National Park, it is a prominent landscape feature. The surrounding area is predominantly pasture, with Table Mountain visible to the north, and Crickhowell visible to the west. Coed Cefn is an isolated area of ancient woodland, valued by local people as one of the few areas of accessible woodland near the town. The woodland was bought from the Forestry Commission in 1991 with contributions from local people.

The woodland canopy is dominated by mature oak and beech, with occasional sycamore, fir and Norway spruce, planted in 1958. There is little sub-canopy throughout but a good shrub layer of holly, hazel and elder; and frequent regeneration of sycamore, ash, beech and hazel. Ground flora is predominantly abundant bluebells, though bramble is abundant in some areas. Since purchasing the woodland, non-native conifers have been gradually removed, and now few remain. A key feature of the woodland is a low hillfort earthwork, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which is partially cleared of scrub for visitors benefit. A drystone wall encompasses most of the woodland, however only the northern section is maintained. Public access is good, with a car park at the eastern end of the wood and a mainly flat circular path from here, which is mostly dry throughout the year, as soils are on free-draining sandstone.

3.0 PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

3.1 Getting there

By bus:

The nearest bus stop is at Crickhowell Square. The X43 service from Cardiff to Abergavenny via Merthyr and Brecon stops here.

By train:

The nearest railway station is Abergavenny. From the bus station take the X43 to Crickhowell.

By car:

Entering Crickhowell on the A40 from Abergavenny, turn right onto Greenhill Way after the health centre. At the mini-roundabout turn right and continue along Bellfountain Road. As the road turns to the left, the entrance to the car park is on your left.

For up to date information on public transport please check Traveline: www.traveline-cymru.info or telephone 0871 989 1353

3.2 Access / Walks

Coed Cefn lies to the east of Crickhowell. The entrance is from the car park in the east, which has space for 4 vehicles. The paths are mostly flat, broad earth tracks, with some gentle gradients. There is a circular footpath around the site from east to west, and a central path through the middle of the woodland and the hillfort.

4.0 LONG TERM POLICY

The long term aim is to maintain a predominantly mixed broadleaved woodland, which will be managed through minimum intervention, as restoration of the planted ancient woodland is now complete. Occasional spruce and fir will remain in the canopy as they are not significantly impacting on regeneration of broadleaves, nor richness of the ground flora. Remaining conifers will be allowed to decline naturally, with no new conifers recruited, as there is no evidence of successful seed germination at this site. The area of native planting (2003) will also be managed in the long term to create a mature broadleaved canopy. Public access, including ride management, will be maintained. Archaeological interest will be maintained by periodically controlling scrub on the ramparts to the north of the footpath, ensuring some areas of the ramparts are visible and providing the visitor with a sense of the scale of the monument. Additionally, the dry stone wall along the northern boundary will be maintained.

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 Archaeological Feature

Description

Iron age hill fort with an almost complete rectilinear enclosure of earthworks, open at the northernmost corner. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). The site occupies an area close to the summit of the hill, and a footpath runs through the middle of the hill fort.

Significance

Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) as designated by CADW. One of many earthworks in the area; it shows the use of the woodland in the past.

Opportunities & Constraints

Threats to are:

1. Neglect of site leading to shrub and tree invasion and consequent loss of integrity through windblow and root disruption.
2. Visitors straying away from path and over earthworks, establishing new paths which may lead to erosion of earthworks.

Opportunities to benefit are:

1. Maintenance of path network through EMC, so that users are encouraged to adhere to paths and are not inclined to stray in the vicinity of the SAM.
2. Maintenance of hillfort through periodic cutting back of northern ramparts.
3. Interpretation of hillfort in conjunction with CADW to inform the public of the importance of the monument, and to discourage straying from paths.

Factors Causing Change

Erosion of hillfort from visitors. Regeneration of trees and windblow of mature trees.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The integrity of the SAM is to be maintained where possible in the long term.

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

Continue to maintain scrub on the northern ramparts (existing areas of scrub clearance, 2017). The integrity of the SAM is to be maintained by felling trees subject to windblow on the hillfort if not secure. To deter erosion by visitors through regular maintenance of the footpath network.

5.2 Ancient Woodland Site

Description

Restored Ancient Woodland Site: NVC W10 - Lowland Mixed Broadleaved Woodland with bluebell. More than 80% of the canopy comprises native broadleaves and all ancient woodland features are secure, with non-native conifers not seeding in.

Significance

With so little ancient woodland in the UK, it is a core objective of the Woodland Trust to prevent any further loss and restore planted ancient woodland. The majority of non-native conifers have now been removed, with a small area of restocking of native broadleaves in 2003, and the rest of the restoration process has occurred through successive thinning operations with broadleaf regeneration occurring naturally. Coed Cefn is part of the Brecon Beacons National Park and is part of a wider, designated landscape. In this area there is a fairly high concentration of ancient woodland, though most are small, isolated patches.

Opportunities & Constraints

Threats are:

Seeding-in of non-native conifers. Chalara infection of ash trees (though minor component of canopy composition). Beech domination and consequent loss of native flora/habitat.

Opportunities are:

Example of restored AW site.

Factors Causing Change

Chalara with consequent ash loss changing canopy composition. Sycamore and beech domination changing community from one that's predominantly native.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Maintain the character of the wood to a diverse mixture of native tree species and ground flora. Retain remaining non-native conifers but do not permit new recruits should they occur.

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

Maintain the character of the wood throughout the plan period by minimum intervention, retaining remaining non-native conifers but not permitting new recruits should they occur.

5.3 Connecting People with woods & trees

Description

The wood is less than a mile east of Crickhowell; the only entrance is off Bellfountain Road, where there is a small car park accommodating approximately 4 cars. Access into the wood from the car park is via a squeeze post, so could be considered prohibiting access to some users. There is a broad earth circular permissive footpath around the wood. Some small scale events have been trialled, including junior ranger clubs and photography workshops. Visitor numbers are already high, and with the car park often overflowing at peak times we would not actively seek to increase visitor numbers.

Significance

This restored ancient woodland is valued by local people as one of the only areas of accessible woodland near Crickhowell with a circular footpath, as a place to walk. The carpets of bluebells in April and May attract many visitors. There is also a small hillfort in the centre of the site that may not be immediately obvious to visitors.

Opportunities & Constraints

Opportunities:

Installation ladder board sign at the entrance.

Provision of a waste bin only if the community council maintain.

Potential for improving the car park surface and extending to provide an extra 2 spaces, though the size of woodland indicates the site is already at a carrying capacity.

Creation and installation of interpretation board informing people of importance of hillfort and ancient woodland.

On-going maintenance of path network and entrance through the Estates Maintenance Contract (EMC)

New events E.G. Brand Moments could take place on site.

Dedication opportunities, including a bench overlooking Crickhowell.

Maintenance of viewpoints over Crickhowell and looking towards Table Mountain.

Engaging local schools in Crickhowell for activities such as Forest Schools.

Linking of the wood to Crickhowell by exploring options with new footpath links.

Constraints:

Limited capacity of car park and lack of open areas means limited opportunities for events and engagement

Small site with limited management required means limited volunteering and event opportunities

Occasional antisocial use of car park

Factors Causing Change

Increasing level of usage by visitors; slightly increasing volumes of litter.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Site to be welcoming and accessible, visitors to enjoy quiet recreation with viewpoints maintained, interpretation installed and a network of maintained paths enabling access. Visitors to feel engaged appropriate to this site, possibly small events and from information provided on site.

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

During this plan period, the following will be implemented:

A new entrance sign will be installed.

Options for extending the car park and providing a waste bin will be explored and implemented as appropriate.

Opportunities for providing a small scale events programme will be investigated.

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	1.58	Oak (sessile)	1958	Min-intervention	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park
<p>This compartment lies to the east of the site around the car park. The canopy consists mainly of oak (planted in 1958), with sycamore and occasional remnants of under-planted fir. There is little in the sub-canopy; in the shrub layer there is some holly, elder and hazel. Regeneration is mostly birch, ash and sycamore, the field layer is predominantly bramble, but bluebell cover is also dominant. Prior to 2006, this compartment was divided in three sub-compartments (1, 2a and 6b). Part (the previous 2a and 6b) was thinned in 2002 to remove conifers - mainly Norway spruce - and form an oak canopy. A car park (built summer 2002) is located within the compartment at the main entrance; there is an adjacent entrance and footpath along the northern boundary. A boundary wall runs along most of the northern boundary, which has been maintained in the last plan period. Bellfountain Road forms the eastern boundary.</p>							
2a	1.96	Oak (sessile)	2003	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park
<p>This compartment lies to the north of the site, west of compartment 1a. Part of this compartment was planted in February 2003 with a mix of native broadleaves (c. 70% oak, 15% ash and a mix of birch, rowan, field maple, hazel and other native shrubs) following felling of Norway spruce in 2002, though birch and oak are the predominant canopy species now. The hill fort forms part of the boundary of the compartment. The northern boundary wall is also present here, with views out to Table mountain.</p>							
3a	0.78	Oak (sessile)		Min-intervention	Archaeological features, No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park, Scheduled Ancient Monument
<p>This compartment encompasses the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). Over half of this area is high canopy, predominantly oak and ash with little sub-canopy and occasional regeneration of hazel, oak, ash and sycamore. The remaining area is the north and western parts of the ramparts, which were cleared in the last plan period of small regrowth and are now managed as open ground, with bluebells now abundant in this area.</p>							

4a	2.77	Mixed broadleaves	1958	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park
<p>This compartment runs along the north boundary to the west of the site. The canopy comprises semi-mature oak and ash; under-planted Grand fir was removed in autumn 2002. Parts of this sub-compartment are particularly rich in ground flora, with bluebell, celandine, wood anemone, blackcurrant, honeysuckle, wood sorrel, violets and yellow archangel. There are some large old beech along the north of the compartment. The N boundary wall is also present here.</p>							
5a	0.32	Sycamore	1900	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park
<p>This small compartment in the far west of the site has a mature sycamore canopy, with a sycamore and holly shrub layer and frequent sycamore and ash regeneration. The compartment is bordered by power lines, an area maintained as shrubby cleared vegetation, which provides a habitat that would be otherwise lacking. The ground flora is particularly rich, with pignut, dog's mercury, primrose and moschattel present. The boundary wall is also present here.</p>							
6a	1.83	Beech	1958	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site	Ancient Woodland Site, Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park
<p>This compartment runs through the centre of the site just south of the Scheduled Ancient Monument in compartment 3a. The canopy is predominantly beech with some oak and spruce. Towards the western end there is a large amount of ash regeneration plus oak, birch, willow and sycamore regeneration.</p>							
7a	1.87	Oak (sessile)	1958	Min-intervention	No/poor vehicular access within the site, Very steep slope/cliff/quarry/mine shafts/sink holes etc	Ancient Woodland Site, Connecting People with woods & trees	Ancient Woodland Site, National Park
<p>This compartment runs across the southern boundary of the site and comprises an oak, ash and birch canopy with occasional beech and Norway spruce. Hazel coppice, rowan and holly are found in the shrub layer.</p>							

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.