

Coed Glyn Gwennws

(Plan period – 2021 to 2026)



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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GLOSSARY

1. SITE DETAILS

Coed Glyn Gwennws

Location:	Pen y Cae, Ystradgynlais Grid reference: SN842137 OS 1:50,000 Sheet No. 160
Area:	3.01 hectares (7.44 acres)
External Designations:	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, National Park
Internal Designations:	Woods on Your Doorstep

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

Coed Glyn Gwennws lies in the upper reaches of the Afon Tawe catchment within the Brecon Beacons National Park. The site is surrounded by poorly drained land except where agricultural improvement has taken place to the south east. Building development occurs to the east.

The original wood pasture arises from a long history of grazing within a historic landscape with much evidence of old field systems in the form of old walls and boundary banks. Old oak standards and pollards are frequent along the boundary banks and a small stand of mature semi-natural ancient wood pasture dominated by sessile oak occurs on the northern and western slopes. The woodland was grazed until the end of the 20th century by cattle and sheep, maintaining an open structure with well-lit standards supporting an assemblage of lower plants, lichens in particular. In general, the field layer is fairly species-poor in this community type as a result of poor soil fertility and grazing. Typical species are wavy hair grass, creeping soft grass, common bent, bracken and wood sorrel. There is a small stand of alder towards the northern extremity of the site where it extends onto damper soils.

A rocky tor with extensive bracken, scrub and patchy acidic grassland dominates the site with slopes extending to the site boundaries. The upper part of the tor was planted with mixed broadleaves in 2000 as a local community millennium wood as part of the Woodland Trust's Woods on your Doorstep scheme (WOYD).

The key features of the site are wood pasture and informal public access.

3. LONG TERM POLICY

Coed Glyn Gwennws will be an oak-dominated wood pasture - maintained by periodic pulses of grazing by cattle - and characterised by an open structure with well-lit mature trees to provide optimal conditions for the growth of lichens. Planted areas will be incorporated into this dynamic wood pasture system upon establishment, with further canopy recruitment and scrub habitat occurring through natural regeneration.

The wood will remain a valued resource for local people, who will access the site's internal path network from the public bridleway for quiet recreation.

4. KEY FEATURES

4.1 f1 Wood Pasture

Description

The wood pasture arises from a long history of grazing within a historic landscape with much evidence of old field systems in the form of old walls and boundary banks. Sessile oak dominates the canopy as a mix of ancient pollards, coppice stools and maidens. Many of the trees have large spreading crowns forming a fairly open canopy with gaps. Grazing has limited the development of a shrub and field layer; the canopy trees are therefore often well-lit supporting an interesting lichen flora. In a survey 1999, 32 species of lichen were recorded including *Micarea alabastrites* which is scarce and confined to these woods with high rainfall; and the liverwort *Tritomaria exsecta*, which is very scarce in mid Wales and the first record for S. Brecknock. 13 species of liverwort and 24 moss species were recorded.

The field layer is species poor - wavy hair grass, creeping soft grass, common bent, bracken and wood sorrel occur with a fairly luxuriant cover of mosses.

Old oak standards and pollards are frequent along the boundary banks and a veteran oak is prominent within the grounds of the former primary school next door. There is a small stand of alder towards the northern extremity of the site where it extends onto damper soils.

The rocky tor that dominates the centre of the site was stock-fenced and partially planted with native broadleaves including sessile oak, alder, hazel, ash, birch and rowan, in 2000, as part of the millennium Woods on Your Doorstep Scheme. Bracken, bramble, and patchy acid grassland is widespread with developing scrub. The lower slopes, particularly to the south are open with extensive rhos pasture in the damper areas. The intention was to bring this area of new planting within the grazed wood pasture key feature at establishment i.e. from around 2020 and remove the internal fencing to allow more extensive grazing.

Significance

Wood pasture with large mature trees supporting rich lichen communities are of high nature conservation importance (Biodiversity Habitat Action Plan). Maintenance of high light levels around the trunks and canopies of mature trees to allow spread and long term conservation of lichens. This woodland pasture is a scarcity within the local area and Glyn Gwennws includes many mature trees within the hedgerows and canopy with the potential to develop veteran characteristics and support associated ancient tree fauna. Other similar wood pasture habitats locally are confined to small areas of shelter belt or field margins such as hedgerows and are limited in number.

The 2000 planting area extended this habitat and provided a cohort of younger trees, adding structural diversity. Little or no new woodland pasture is being established locally. The planted compartment is now supporting epiphytic lichen and moss communities, thus extending the area of suitable habitat.

Opportunities & Constraints

Grazing such a small site may present logistical issues around TB testing and animal husbandry etc, although there is now an opportunity to grow and utilise the Trust's herd of Welsh White steers. Suitable access to water sources for potential livestock might prove to be an issue and limit the duration of potential grazing periods. The preservation of existing lichen communities may require striking a delicate balance of timing and livestock choice, as they could be impacted by cattle rubbing against licheniferous trunks and browsing lower branches / saplings.

There may be an option to offer grazing to neighbours (mainly sheep and equine), however these animals may not be as effective at managing bracken as cattle and grazing may inhibit development of a woodland field layer.

Livestock will need to be managed in the context of public access, including dogwalkers.

The bedrock lies close to the surface which can make work on boundary fences challenging.

Factors Causing Change

An absence of grazing over the last 20 or so years has allowed bramble and bracken to become locally dominant in the field layer, with little natural regeneration able to take root within the dense bracken banks. Presence of dry bracken in the context of long dry summers may increase the risk of wildfire resulting from campfires. The future availability and management of grazing animals is likely to be key to the maintenance of open conditions for lichens: too much and there may be no recruitment of future canopy trees but without it, the woodland is likely to infill over time and become a dense closed canopy woodland with a bramble or holly-dominated understorey, punctuated by areas of dominant bracken. Ash dieback has had a serious impact since 2016, with most of the mature and regenerating ash showing severe impacts: ash is now unlikely to form a significant part of the woodland mix in the foreseeable future. Otherwise natural processes such as windblow and senescence of mature trees will be the main drivers.

Potential development of former country primary school may potentially impact upon woodland if adjacent veteran wood pasture trees are removed.

Rabbit and squirrel damage may impact on planted and regenerating trees.

Long term Objective (50 years+)

Coed Glyn Gwennws will be an oak-dominated wood pasture - maintained, by preference, by periodic pulses of grazing - and characterised by an open but diverse structure, with well-lit mature trees to provide optimal conditions for the growth of lichens. Planted areas will be incorporated into this dynamic wood pasture system upon establishment, with further canopy recruitment and scrub habitat occurring through natural regeneration, although a dynamic mosaic of open glades will be retained, through grazing and natural processes such as windthrow. Bramble and bracken will be a component but will not dominate significant areas of the field layer.

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

By 2026, internal fencing between the planted woodland and establish wood pasture will have been removed and external boundaries and access points secured. Short pulse or mob grazing - ideally with cattle e.g. the local Welsh White herd - will be attempted in later spring/ early summer over a couple of years, breaking up the coarse vegetation

in the field layer and maintaining the open component of the habitat. The purpose of the work will be communicated to site users. Temporary water troughs or bowsers may be required to facilitate this.

If grazing cannot be arranged for practical reasons, then consider annual bracken rolling on the slopes above the bridleway to create some element of sward diversity/ opportunities for scrub development.

4.2 f3 Informal Public Access

Description

The site lies on the edge of the village of Pen-y-cae within close proximity to a residential area. A gated public bridleway passes through cpt 2a. A permissive path loops provides access on foot to most of the site. A bench is located toward the north of the property. There was an interpretation panel placed close to the entrance explaining the planting element, however, this is no longer in situ and the wooden welcome signage is reaching the end of its life.

Most visitors are likely to be locals looking for quiet walking and dog walking opportunities or seeking access to the open hills beyond, although there may be some tourist footfall, given the location in the Brecon Beacons National Park and proximity to attractions such as Henryd Falls.

Significance

Provides an accessible and tranquil natural area for enjoyment by local people.

Opportunities & Constraints

Constraints: Grazing livestock within the woodland at certain times, potential for conflict with dog walkers, gates left open etc.

Opportunities: Good local support for the wood developed under the Woods on your doorstep (WOYD) project in 2000. Potential to work more closely with local wildlife 'living landscape' project and nearby wildlife trust reserves in the local area.

The wood may be suitable as an area to offer dedications such as Dedicate a Tree/ Dedicate an Acre, given its character and accessibility close to areas of population.

Factors Causing Change

Recent closure of the adjacent primary school will likely result in increased pressure from potential housing development established on former primary school property. This may result in footpaths becoming increasingly well used in the future and deteriorate the footpath surface (currently un-surfaced).

Long term Objective (50 years+)

The wood will remain a valued resource for local people, who will access the site's internal path network from the public bridleway for quiet recreation.

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

Maintain paths through a mowing regime to encourage a pleasant visitor experience by removing barriers to accessibility where possible and suitable to do so. Replace or repair entrance infrastructure/ signage and bench seat

before 2026 to improve the visitor welcome and reinforce visibility of Trust ownership.

Ensure introduction of grazing is managed so that visitors are well-informed to minimise conflicts.

Explore options with Dedications Team.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Year	Type Of Work	Description	Due Date
2021	SL - Tree Safety Emergency Work	Work associated with unplanned emergency tree safety works – such as clearance of fallen trees/branches and associated repairs	July
2022	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,	May
2022	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,	August
2023	WMI - Wood Pasture Restoration	Works associated with the initial restoration of wood pasture and parkland sites – such as grazing infrastructure, fencing, initial tree felling/clearance works	September
2023	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,	September
2024	WMM - Wood Pasture Grazing Work	Works associated with the maintenance of grazing regimes to manage wood pasture and parkland sites such as grazier costs, fence repairs, water supply costs	June
2025	WMM - Wood Pasture Grazing Work	Works associated with the maintenance of grazing regimes to manage wood pasture and parkland sites such as grazier costs, fence repairs, water supply costs	June

APPENDIX 1 : COMPARTMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Cpt No.	Area (ha)	Main Species	Year	Management Regime	Major Management Constraints	Designations
1a	0.78	Oak (sessile)		Wood pasture	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland, National Park
<p>The wood pasture arises from a long history of grazing within a historic landscape with much evidence of old field systems in the form of old walls and boundary banks. Sessile oak dominates the canopy as a mix of ancient pollards, coppice stools and maidens. Many of the trees have large spreading crowns forming a fairly open canopy with gaps. Grazing has limited the development of a shrub and field layer; the canopy trees are therefore often well-lit supporting an interesting lichen flora. In a survey 1999, 32 species of lichen were recorded including <i>Micarea alabastrites</i> which is scarce and confined to these woods with high rainfall; and the liverwort <i>Tritomaria exsecta</i>, which is very scarce in mid Wales and the first record for S. Brecknock. 13 species of liverwort and 24 moss species were recorded.</p> <p>The field layer is species poor - wavy hair grass, creeping soft grass, common bent, bracken and wood sorrel occur with a fairly luxuriant cover of mosses.</p> <p>Old oak standards and pollards are frequent along the boundary banks. There is a small stand of alder towards the northern extremity of the site where it extends onto damper soils.</p>						
2a	2.23	Sessile oak	2000	Wood pasture	Management factors (eg grazing etc)	National Park
<p>The rocky tor with extensive boulder fields and rock outcrops, dominates the site. Bracken, bramble, and patchy acid grassland is widespread with developing scrub. The upper slopes were planted with native broadleaves including Sessile oak, alder, hazel, ash, birch and rowan, in 2000. The lower slopes, particularly to the south are open with extensive rhos pasture in the damper areas.</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:

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