

Wildfire Action Plan 2026

Anagach Woods

Date Approved:

Next Review:

ANAGACH WOODS WILDFIRE FIRE ACTION PLAN 2026

1. In case of fire, dial 999 or 112 and ask for Fire & Rescue Service

2. INTRODUCTION

This plan is for Anagach Woods, owned by the Anagach Woods Trust (“AWT”) and is accompanied by the fire plan map. This plan and the map is subject to yearly revision.

3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3.1. Uncontrolled and unauthorised fires are considered to be a major hazard to nature and infrastructure and are to be dealt with and discouraged at all times.

3.2. If a fire breaks out the Fire and Rescue Service will be contacted as quickly as possible and they will take control of the situation. AWT trustees should be informed per the contact numbers below and on the fire plan map.

3.3. The whole area is considered highly vulnerable to fire, because it contains large areas of woodland, grassland and heathland on peaty soils. Much of the forest is designated for nature conservation. The accumulation of deadwood is an environmental asset for fungi, invertebrates and other associated wildlife.

3.4. Large areas are open to the public. A footpath network and long distance paths run through heavily wooded areas with tall heather. Several domestic properties and gardens border the woodland. Visitor presence allied to weather and vegetation conditions contributes to HIGH FIRE RISK, when extra vigilance is required. It also means that members of the public are also often on hand to report a fire.

3.5. There is a risk of wild fire at all times when conditions are dry. However, two periods in the year can be singled out as being especially dangerous:

- **MARCH, APRIL AND MAY** - often dry and windy - little growth in plants and much dry and dead vegetation.
- **JULY AND AUGUST** – more people in the woods, potentially warm and dry conditions.

4. PREVENTION

1.1. PUBLIC RELATIONS / COMMUNICATION

1.1.1. Use notice boards, website and social media to get messages out, especially during periods of high fire danger. Highlight the importance of the wood for wildlife and that dead trees and branches are important as deadwood not as firewood. The following behaviour will be encouraged:

- Help care for the forest and its wildlife and alert the Fire and Rescue Service promptly if an uncontrolled fire is seen in the woods.
- No fire of any sort may be lit, except with prior approval by the Trust and the use of all safeguards. The Cairngorms National Park Fire Management Byelaws 2025 apply (1st April to 30th September each year).
- Great care must be taken with cigarettes and matches.
- Picnic stoves and barbecues must only be used when and where it is clearly safe to do so.

1.1.2. At times of High Fire Risk, warning signs are posted at the following locations:

- Forest Road end
- Golf course entrance
- Poorhouse Wood car park
- Old Speybridge road entrance
- Cromdale entrance

1.1.3. Additional signs are put out to cover additional access points in times of extreme fire risk.

1.2. FIREWATCH AND PATROLS

1.2.1. At times of high fire danger, encourage AWT members to take evening walks to monitor use of the woodland before dusk, and report on any fire lighting.

1.2.2. Fire sites (e.g. unauthorised campfires) will be checked again after initial extinguishing, then once cool, all signs of the fire removed or dispersed (charred wood, rocks used for a fire ring, etc, to discourage others from lighting a fire at that point.

5. PREPARATION

5.1. COMMUNICATIONS

5.1.1. Early in the year (January to February) contact should be made with the Fire and Rescue Service to ensure they have up to date maps, contact numbers and gate keys or padlock combination codes.

- 5.1.2. Update the map each year to ensure features are accurate.
- 5.1.3. Check with key contacts to ensure phone numbers are still correct.

5.2. EQUIPMENT

- 5.2.1. No specific fire fighting equipment is held by AWT, but their tools include spades and shovels and a powered wheelbarrow which are all held at the Curling Club off Forest Road.
- 5.2.2. Some AWT volunteers own and are insured to use chainsaws.
- 5.2.3. The town has a water bowser for watering plants and it may be possible to borrow this to get water out to some of the harder to reach parts of the forest.

5.3. ACCESS

- 5.3.1. The Fire Plan map shows access tracks that are maintained in serviceable condition for fire tenders and 4x4 vehicles. Work each year should include surveys to identify requirements, filling of significant pot-holes and pruning back of overhanging branches or encroaching vegetation.

6. RESPONSE

1.1. RECEIVING AND INVESTIGATING AN ALERT

- 1.1.1. Most alerts of a fire will go straight to the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 1.1.2. It is then helpful for AWT Trustees to be contactable by the Fire and Rescue Service, and they should have several contact numbers available from the fire plan map.

1.2. ANAGACH WOODS ACCESS POINTS

- 1.2.1. There are access points at:

Station Wood	(NJ 026 269)
Kylintra Wood (cemetery)	(NJ 026 268)
Free Church Wood (Kylintra House)	(NJ 029 267)
Free Church Wood (Woodside Av)	(NJ 031 272)
Forest Road end	(NJ 034 275)
Old Speybridge Road	(NJ 035 268)
Old Spey Bridge	(NJ 043 266)
Golf Course	(NJ 039 279)
Poorhouse Wood	(NJ 045 284)
Nether Port	(NJ 061 284)

1.3. PERSONNEL

- 1.3.1. As supplied and requested by the Fire and Rescue Service
- 1.3.2. Volunteer assistance can be used for supplying refreshments to fire-fighters and with monitoring and damping down. Other deployment is at the discretion of the fire officer in charge.
- 1.3.3. In a drawn-out fire-fighting situation lasting several hours, or even days, keeping fire crews refreshed is vital and Trustees or AWT members can help by collecting supplies of drinking water and snacks.

1.4. WATER SUPPLIES

- 1.4.1. There is a fire hydrant at Forest Road end.
- 1.4.2. Fire tenders may be able to fill up from the River Spey. Other water bodies within Anagach Woods are not sufficient for fighting a significant fire.

1.5. HELICOPTER ASSISTANCE

- 1.5.1. Anagach Woods is not insured for the use of helicopters in fighting a fire. The rationale for this is that the commercial value of the woodland is limited, and there are no grants that would need to be paid back if the woodland is burnt. Recovery will be by natural regeneration over time, so replanting costs are not anticipated.

1.6. PUBLIC SAFETY

- 1.6.1. Safety of fire fighters and visitors is the primary consideration. Police are notified as part of fire procedure and will take over public evacuation if required. As far as practicable, visitors will be advised not to enter the fire area, either by staff at main access points or by signs.
- 1.6.2. After a fire there may be additional risk of falling trees if they have been partially burned, and action will be required to follow up and fell these trees if they are at risk of falling onto paths. Paths may need to be closed if the risks cannot be removed promptly.

1.7. NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATION

- 1.7.1. The fire plan map identifies neighbours and some key contact phone numbers.

1.8. Public / Social Media / Press communications

- 1.8.1. Each year, two people will be appointed to act as spokespersons for the Anagach Woods Trust. In the event that communications are needed to the wider community and to respond

to the press, appointed representatives will be on hand to give consistent messaging about the fire and its impacts.

1.2. AFTER PUTTING OUT A FIRE

- 1.2.1. AWT members and volunteers may be able to help with damping down operations.
- 1.2.2. Even after a small campfire, it may be necessary to re-visit the site several times to ensure the fire does not re-ignite.
- 1.2.3. It is always a valuable practice to debrief soon after the fire using written logs and personal recollection or impressions of events to assess response and performance with a view to future amendments or improvements to procedure.

Appendix 1

[Contact details redacted]

Appendix 2

In Case of Fire – volunteer safety notes

Staff/Volunteer safety & safety of the general public comes first at all times in any fire situation.

Do not tackle any fire alone; first raise the alarm so that others know the situation and are in a position to organise help.

Remain calm; walk, do not run. Take time to remember procedures and equipment rather than finding out too late that they have been overlooked. Take a moment to properly assess a situation rather than rushing in headlong – the fire might have been started by an energized electricity cable!

Do not drive too fast to fire site; remember that visitors can appear at any time on local tracks, any accident ends your usefulness at the fire there and then. Driving fast on tracks does machinery no good; broken equipment won't put out a fire.

Remember PPE (Personal protective equipment). Wear adequate and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Do not attempt to use machinery or vehicles you are unsure or not trained to operate, even if told to do so.

Work as a team; do not wander off without telling someone; check and maintain communication by phone.

Fuel container safety: do not carry containers of fuel on vehicles over a site requiring damping down. Store at a distance upwind from a fire site.

High voltage power cables: take extra care when working near overhead cables as smoke can cause electricity to arc from the power lines.

Vehicle fires: vehicles contain a wide range of highly flammable materials and vehicle fires produce highly noxious smoke; they are best left to the fire and rescue service.