

APPENDIX 1

**MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR TREMANS WOOD
PROPOSED LOCAL NATURE RESERVE
JANUARY 2010**

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1. AIMS

1.1 This document sets out proposals and a workplan for Tremains Wood which aim to:-

1. Protect and enhance its nature conservation interest.
2. Promote and improve public access to and within the Wood provided that this does not damage its nature conservation interests, physical fabric, or the security and privacy of local residents.
3. Increase public understanding, awareness and enjoyment of the Wood.
4. Reduce the levels of anti-social behaviour that takes place within the Wood.
5. Protect and improve the visual appearance of the Wood.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This plan sets out the Council's plans for Tremains Wood over the next three years.
- 2.2 This plan has been used for a public consultation exercise under the provision of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) in order to progress Tremains Wood to Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Status.

The plan contains :

- 1. A description of the Wood including its important features and other relevant background information.
- 2. A discussion of the various background issues, opportunities and threats affecting the Wood.
- 3. Management proposals for the Wood. These are listed under 'General', 'Nature Conservation', 'Access and Recreation' and 'Environmental Education'.
- 4. A three year work programme for the Wood.
- 5. Maps and Species Lists.

3. DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 General Description and Location

Tremains Wood is a 3.2 hectare lowland mixed broadleaved woodland situated in the middle of the Brackla housing development (see Maps 1 and 2). It is listed in the provisional 'Glamorgan Inventory of Ancient Woodland' (Nature Conservancy Council. December 1986). The Wood is closely bordered by housing on its northern and western boundaries with playing fields to the south and east. To the south there are proposals for the development of a school.

3.2 Ownership

Tremains Wood is owned by BCBC. Through the LNR designation the Council's Communities Directorate will take on responsibility for the management of the Wood in terms of it's access, enjoyment and wildlife interest.

3.3 Policy Context and Designations

As a lowland mixed deciduous woodland Tremains Wood is considered a priority for protection and management in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough (2002). The Wood is part of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation and there are several trees on the eastern boundary of the wood that are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (see Map 2). The Wood is also listed under Policy RC9 of the UDP. Under this Policy the woodland is specifically allocated as an area of public open space.

3.4 Historical Land Use

Old Ordnance Survey (OS maps) show that the current area of wood has been at least partly wooded over a long period. The area is shown as woodland on the Yates map of 1799. The 1875 OS map marks the woodland as 'Tre-Maen' Wood. This map also shows a track through the south west corner of the wood that links to another roughly north / south track running across the far western edge of the existing woodland. To the south, this track leads to an old quarry and lime kiln at lower Tremains. It seems possible that this track was used, at least in part, for the transport of timber from the wood to be used as fuel in the lime kiln. The lower part of the wood on this map is shown as being sparsely wooded. This is also the case on the 1899 OS map where the lower part is shown as rough pasture. Only the 1875 map shows the south west corner of the current woodland as wooded (and then only partially so). Other maps up to 1941 show it as completely unwooded.

3.5 Recent Management

Some limited woodland management has been carried out over the last 10 years. An area in the southern part of the wood has been coppiced (see Map 2). In the northern part, several small areas have been thinned. Some access work has also been carried out. These have consisted of the construction of timber bridges and various improvements in relation to the main north / south path through the Wood.

3.6 Wildlife and Habitats

Tremains Wood is an oak/ash mixed broadleaved woodland. The dominant canopy trees are oak, ash, field maple with shrubs such as hazel, hawthorn and spindle forming the understorey. There are a number of 'ancient woodland' indicator plants such as yellow archangel and wood anemone that have been recorded in the Wood. Their presence suggests that the Wood has been continuously wooded at least in part since 1600. Its underlying geology is limestone and the range of flora found in the wood reflects this. In addition to the woodland itself there are a number of other features that are important for wildlife. These include old boundary banks, veteran trees and streams (see Map 2). A list of the wildlife recorded in the wood is given in Appendix B.

3.7 Historical and Archaeological Features

In the southern part of the Wood adjacent to one of the bridges there are the remains of an old stone wall and what appears to be an old sluice gate. The location of this feature is shown on Map 2. It is likely that at least some of the old boundary banks present within the Wood would have been used to enclose parts of the Wood for grazing animals such as pigs. As far as is known, there are no other historical or archaeological features present within the Wood.

3.8 Access and Recreation

There are a large number of informal paths within the Wood. The main north /south footpath is marked on Map 2. None of these footpaths are statutory rights of way. Unfortunately the Wood is used for a number of anti-social recreational activities such as shooting and fire lighting.

3.9 Legal Interests and Constraints

The Wood is subject to easements, wayleaves and licences granted to the various public utility companies. Public utilities also have rights of access to the Wood to maintain their apparatus. The Wood is also subject to rights of drainage and rights of entry to maintain it for those members of the public as currently enjoy such rights. All footpaths in the Wood are subject to rights of way. Further information or clarification on these reservations/restrictions is available from BCBCs Legal and Regulatory Services.

4. BACKGROUND ISSUES AND FACTORS AFFECTING MANAGEMENT OF THE WOODLAND

This section of the plan considers a number of issues (or factors) that effect what can be done in the woodland. The consideration and discussion of these informs the drawing up of the proposals which are listed in the next section of this plan.

4.1 Staff and Financial Resources

There are limited staff resources within BCBC to manage the Wood on a day to day basis. It will therefore be essential to involve local groups in helping to maintain and manage the Wood. Brackla Community Council are keen to be involved in the management of the Wood and it is proposed that the Wood is from now on managed by BCBC and the Community Council in partnership. There are other local organisations such as Coed Cymru, Groundwork Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot and the Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales who are already or could potentially become involved in it's management. Coed Cymru gives ongoing support through various grant schemes such as the 'Better Woodlands for Wales' scheme.

4.2 Location

Because of its location there is considerable potential to involve local individuals and groups in both practical management and in activities aimed at promoting enjoyment and environmental education. There are three schools all located within a kilometre of the Wood. This will increase to four once the new Archbishop McGrath RC school is built.

4.3 Community Involvement

The Wood is surrounded by the Brackla Housing Estate, a residential development to the east of Bridgend town centre. In addition to housing, there are also two schools adjacent to the Wood (see Map 2). The Wood provides natural and accessible greenspace which is increasingly being recognised as a vital resource in helping to promote health and wellbeing. There is a limited supply of accessible and natural greenspace in this part of Brackla which obviously makes the Wood a really valuable local resource.

4.4 Anti-Social Behaviour

Unfortunately the Wood is subject to activities such as shooting, littering, vandalism, fire lighting and unauthorised tree cutting. It is accepted that these problems cannot be eliminated completely although it is an aim for future management to reduce them as far as possible. There is a need and an opportunity to work with local people, the local Police and Youth Service to see how these issues can be addressed. It may be possible to divert people away from carrying out anti-social activities by providing or supporting activities such as mountain biking on adjacent land or bush craft within the Wood.

4.5 Site Accessibility

4.5.1 General Comments

Given the large numbers of people who live near the Wood and the general management aim of promoting access, there is a need to consider how access to it could be improved and/or better managed. There is of course a need to balance any increased or improved access with a need to protect the biodiversity interests of the Wood and the privacy and security of local residents. Too much additional access could also lead to excessive trampling and possible erosion.

4.5.2. Existing Access

The existing main access routes through the Wood are shown on Map 2. The main north/south route is the possible subject of a Footpath Creation Order. However, this Creation Order is now temporarily on hold due to the development of land to the south of the Wood. It would be advantageous if this Creation Order goes ahead as this route would then become a maintainable Public Right of Way. The small spur path off this main route (map 2) is well used and also provides a good direct link into the wood from Tremains Primary School. The two bridges on this path and the one on the main path have been vandalised and it is proposed that all three are replaced using galvanised steel or concrete. There are a large number of informal trodden paths within the Wood which are difficult to show on a map. These are mainly situated in the southern (and flatter) section of the Wood. There may be some scope and merit in rationalising the paths within the Wood. By promoting and maintaining certain paths it may be possible to close off others thereby reducing levels of trampling, disturbance to wildlife and damage to the features mentioned in Section 3.6 (above). Work needs to be done to determine where people currently walk (or want to walk). This will help identify priority paths for maintenance or improvement.

4.5.3 Access to and through the South West part of the Wood

There is potential to improve access to and through the south west portion of the Wood. This would provide improved and more direct access to the Wood for residents living in Ashbrook, Min -y- Coed and adjacent streets. There is some existing access but this could be improved. However, because this access is relatively close to the rear of properties on Min -y- Coed local residents may object.

4.5.4 Access from the East and North

There is limited access directly into the Wood along its eastern boundary especially for those residents living in the Woodlands. Currently these residents have to access the Wood using a tarmac path to the north of Fenwick Drive and then into the Wood via the path adjacent to Rosewood House (see map 2). This is an indirect route which involves the negotiation of a steep gradient. There is the possibility of promoting access through a corridor of land to the north east of the Wood. This would provide a quicker access into the Wood for residents in the Woodlands and a more direct access for residents living to the north east of the Wood. However, providing and promoting access through this land corridor would be very likely to meet with local objections given its proximity to the rear of residential properties.

In view of the legal and security issues involved in the provision of any new or improved access to and within the Wood it will be important, as part of this management plan, to obtain the views of other BCBC departments. In addition, it will also be useful to discuss possible other options for improving access to and /or within the Wood.

4.5.5 Access for the Less Abled

In view of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the core values of BCBC there is the need to consider the promotion of access for the less abled to and within the Wood. There is a need to carry out an access audit and consult with local disability groups and individuals to assess how current and any future additional access could be made as accessible as possible. There is some scope for improving access for the less abled, particularly in the southern flatter part of the Wood. However, it is not considered appropriate to formally construct or surface existing paths as this would detract from the naturalness of the Wood.

4.6 Biological Information

There is some biological information about the Wood (see species list in Appendix B). Further survey work is required to determine if the Wood contains plants or animals (or species) that have been identified as priority for protection in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for BCBC (2002).

4.7 Threats to the Woodland

There are a number of places within the Wood where unauthorised fencing has been erected and / or encroachment has taken place. These obviously pose a threat to the integrity of the Wood and appropriate action needs to be taken to removal unauthorised structures and deal with encroachment. Other threats to the Wood include sewage leaks from pipes that cross the Wood, and invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed that could be or already has been introduced to the Wood from fly tipped material.

For various reasons, there are concerns about the longer term viability of the wood and the wildlife it supports. At present, the wood is effectively landlocked with residential development closely bordering its western, northern and eastern boundaries. New housing development and the construction of a new school to the south of the Wood could lead to an increased separation of the Wood from other similar areas of adjacent woodland. This could, and almost certainly would, have a detrimental effect on the viability of wildlife in the Wood. In any new development to the south of the Wood land will need to be set aside as 'buffer zones' to help prevent any loss of biodiversity interest. It will also be important to identify and protect wildlife 'corridors' that form a link between the Wood and other areas of adjacent woodland.

In a wider and longer term context, climate change is likely to have an effect on the viability and biodiversity of the Wood. There is concern that ancient woodlands such as Tremains Wood will be lost unless they can adapt to new climatic conditions. Climate change may, in general, lead to substantial forest dieback, more wind throw and forest fires and an increase in pests. It's full effects are not fully understood at present although changes such as plants flowering earlier and migrant birds arriving earlier and leaving later are likely. Climate change may also lead to a change in the types of tree present in the Wood. For example, historically oak and ash have come into leaf at the same time. However, over the past fifty years oak has commonly come into leaf three weeks earlier. Oak will as a result of this phenomenon come to potentially dominate Oak-Ash Woodlands as the tree responds positively to climate change. It is also predicted that foreign tree species will compete with native trees as they are better able to adapt to the warmer climate. The ongoing management of the Wood will need to take account of research into climate change.

5. PROPOSALS

This section of the plan sets out a number of proposals for the management of the Wood. These will help take forward the aims and form the basis of a detailed workplan that follows in the final section of this plan. These proposals have been drawn up taking into account the management aims, the description and current knowledge about the Wood and the discussion of issues affecting the management of the Wood.

5.1 General Proposals

1. Liaise with Brackla Community Council, Coed Cymru, the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales and Groundwork Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot to discuss if and how they can be involved in the management of the Wood.
2. Designate the Wood as a Local Nature Reserve.

5.2 Nature Conservation Proposals

1. Determine if the Wood is in a 'favourable' conservation condition.
2. If necessary, enhance the nature conservation interest of the Wood by drawing up a programme of woodland management work.
3. Devise a simple monitoring method that can be used to ensure that the Wood remains in a favourable conservation condition.
4. Identify adjacent wildlife corridors and take action to protect and improve them.

5.3 Access and Recreation Proposals

1. Draw up a plan to reduce anti-social behaviour in the Wood.
2. Draw up a plan to deal with the problems of litter and fly-tipping in and around the Wood.
3. Consider options for managing existing access within the Wood.
4. Consider options for improving access to the Wood.
5. Carry out an access audit and consult with local disability groups and individuals to identify how access for the disabled could be improved.
6. Liaise with BCBC's Highways and Transportation Department over the proposed Footpath Creation Order on the main north/south footpath through the Wood that links Fenwick Drive with the cycle path.

5.4 Environmental Education Proposals

1. Liaise with the local schools to determine if and how they are interested in using the Wood for environmental education purposes.
2. Organise events to promote understanding and enjoyment of the Wood.
3. Produce an information panel or small leaflet that could be sited/distributed locally to raise awareness of the Wood and its points of interest.

5.5 Priorities

Because of limited staff and financial resources it will not be possible to take forward all of the above proposals in the short term. It is proposed at this stage that the main priorities should be to start to tackle the problems of litter, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour that are damaging the fabric of the Wood and much reducing people's enjoyment of it.

The limited resources available to BCBC to manage the Wood also mean that it will be important to work in partnership with Brackla Community Council and other organisations to take this plan forward. It is proposed that the other proposals in this plan relating to access, biodiversity and environmental education cannot be fully taken forward at this stage.

6. WORKPLAN

This section of the plan sets out a series of specific projects to be carried out over the next three years. These reflect the priorities set out at the end of the previous section.

6.1 Plan for 2009/2010

1.	Discuss and finalise this management plan in consultation with all interested parties.
2.	Carry out ongoing work to declare the Wood as a Local Nature Reserve.
3.	Assess the current litter and fly- tipping problems in and around the Wood.
4.	Carry out on- going surveys and work to determine if the Wood is in a 'favourable conservation condition'.

6.2 Plan for 2010/2011

1.	Take forward solutions to litter and fly - tipping problems.
2.	Liaise with Brackla Community Council, the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales and Groundwork Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot to discuss if/how they can be involved in the management of the Wood.
3.	In consultation with local organisations, draw up a plan to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour affecting the Wood.
4.	If necessary, draw up a plan of woodland management works to ensure that the Wood remains in a favourable conservation condition.
5.	Devise a simple monitoring method that can be used to ensure that the Wood remains in a favourable conservation condition.
6.	Formally declare the Wood as a Local Nature Reserve (following public consultation on this plan).

6.3 Plan for 2011/2012

1.	Liaise with local schools to determine if they are interested in using the Wood for environmental education purposes.
2.	Take forward actions to reduce the levels of anti-social behaviour in the Wood.
3.	Review this management plan and draw up a new three year work programme.
4.	Develop a Strategy with BCBC's Property department to deal with encroachments affecting the Wood.

7. REFERENCES

- BCBC (2006-2016). Unitary Development Plan for Bridgend County Borough.
- BCBC (2002). A Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough.
- www.woodland-trust.org.uk
- www.naturescalendar.org.uk

APPENDIX A – MAPS

Map 1. General Location Map

Map 2 Access and Features within the Woodland

APPENDIX B – SPECIES LISTS.

<u>Trees and Shrubs.</u>	<u>Other Plants</u>
<p>Ash Blackthorn Dogwood Elm Field Maple Hawthorn Hazel Holly Oak Spindle</p>	<p>Black Bryony Bramble Bush Vetch Cock’s Foot Common Rush Creeping Buttercup Cuckoo Pint Dandelion Dock sp. Dog’s Mercury Enchanter’s nightshade False Wood Brome Field Rose Field Woundwort Great Willowherb Hartstongue Fern Herb Robert Hogweed Horsetail Ivy Lesser Celandine Meadowsweet Opposite Leaved Saxifrage Primrose Red Campion Currant sp. Rough Meadow Grass St John’s Wort sp. Vetch sp. Wavy Bittercress Willowherb sp. Wood Anemone Wood Avens Woodrush Wood Sage Wood Speedwell Yellow Archangel Yellow Archangel (Garden Escape) Yellow Pimpernel Yorkshire Fog</p>
<p><u>Fungi</u></p>	
<p>King Alfred’s Cake</p>	