CYNGOR TREF
PONTYPRIDD
TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda

Trustees of Coedpenmaen Common Pontypridd
Thursday 23rd October 2025 @ 6pm
Hybrid Meeting

Council Presiding Member: Cllr C Thomas **Town Mayor:** Cllr C Morgan

1. Appointment of Chair
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Declarations of Interest.
4. Approval of Minutes of Trustees Meeting held on 24th October 2024.
5. Secretary's Report.

A J Graham

16th October 2025
Tony Graham
Secretary
Trustees of Coedpenmaen Common Pontypridd

CYNGOR TREF
PONTYPRIDD
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes

Meeting of Trustees of Coedpenmaen Common
6.00 pm Thursday 24th October 2024
Hybrid Meeting

Present:

Councillor C. Thomas
Councillor S. Pritchard
Councillor C. Morgan
Councillor L. Bengough
Councillor E. Griffiths
Councillor C. Roberts
Councillor S. Carter
Councillor A. Karadog
Councillor L. Tomkinson
Councillor H. Fychan
Councillor S. Powderhill

In attendance:

Tony Graham – Chief Executive/Town Clerk/Secretary
Carol Hindley – Assistant Town Clerk
Keryl Martin – Business support officer

1. Appointment of Chair

Councillor C. Thomas was nominated by Councillor Pritchard and seconded by Councillor Morgan, there were no other nominations and therefore Councillor Thomas was appointed as Chair.

2. Apologies for absence.

Councillors D. Paul, L. Davies, J. Brencher, D. Wood, S. Presse, C. Lisles, M. Powell and H. Gronow.

3. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

4. Approval of Minutes of Trustees Meeting held on 26th October 2023

To note for information and accuracy purposes the minutes of the Trustees of Coedpenmaen Common Pontypridd Meeting held on 26th October 2023. Councillors were all in agreement to approve these minutes.

5. Secretary's Report

5.1 Background – Context/Background

The Members of Pontypridd Town Council are the Trustees of Coedpenmaen Common Charity. The objective of the Charity is "the provision and maintenance of a Recreation Ground for the use of the inhabitants of the ancient parish of Eglwysilan and the neighbourhood thereof with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants".

There are therefore 23 Trustees of the Coedpenmaen Common Trust being the 23 Councillors of Pontypridd Town Council. Trustees are expected to meet at least annually. This meeting is held in compliance with that requirement.

5.2 Charity Commission Annual Return 2022-23

The Charity Commission Annual Return for 2022/23 has been submitted (Jan 23) with updates confirming that there has been no income (apart from interest) received in relation to this charitable land for the period 1st April 2022 to the 31st March 2023.

On 30th September 2024, there was a balance of £176.29 deposited in two accounts with the CCLA Deposit & Investment Fund in relation to previous income received for this land.

AGREED:

To note the report and Councillors agreed for the amounts to be deposited into the new CCLA investment account.

5.3 Land Use Management Plan

The Chief Executive advised members that this area of land will be one of those areas that fall under the remit of the Town Council's Land Use Manager who will produce a Land Use Management Plan in the coming months which will be discussed and shared with the local ward members and members of the Environment, Land Use & Planning Committee.

The Chief Executive also informed members that Councillor Davies wanted to note with Trustees the work that has been carried out on the Common this year. The following work has been carried out in the last 12 months:

- Footpaths cut back twice.
- Seats – ongoing repairs and painting. Some will be replaced in the coming year.
- Display boards and Mab Stones – painted and cleaned.
- Steps – cut and cleaned twice.
- War memorial – cut, cleaned, weeded and railings painted.
- Poppies placed on memorial.
- Knotweed treated in May.
- Grass cut twice.
- Water course altered to alleviate flooded area.
- Area damaged near memorial subject to ongoing seeding.

AGREED:

To note that the Land Use Manager will prepare a report in conjunction with ward members and for the attention of the Environment, Land Use and Planning Committee's oversight and that any work approved by that committee may be carried out as soon as practicable.

Meeting closed at 6.11 pm

Signed: _____

Tony Graham – Secretary

CYNGOR TREF
PONTYPRIDD
TOWN COUNCIL

Secretary's Report

Trustees of Coedpenmaen Common

1. **Context/Background**

The Members of Pontypridd Town Council are the Trustees of Coedpenmaen Common Charity. The objective of the charity is "the provision and maintenance of a Recreation Ground for the use of the inhabitants of the ancient parish of Eglwysilan and the neighbourhood thereof with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants".

There are therefore 23 Trustees of the Coedpenmaen Common Trust being the 23 Councillors of Pontypridd Town Council.

Trustees are expected to meet at least annually. This meeting is held in compliance with that requirement.

2. **Charity Commission Annual Return 2023-24**

The Charity Commission Annual Return for 2023/24 has been submitted (Jan 24) with updates confirming that there has been no income (apart from interest) received in relation to this land for the period 1st April 2023 to the 31st March 2024.

Members will be aware that the maintenance and upkeep of the Common is undertaken by the Town Council who are the Trustees of the land.

DECISION REQUIRED:

To note the report.

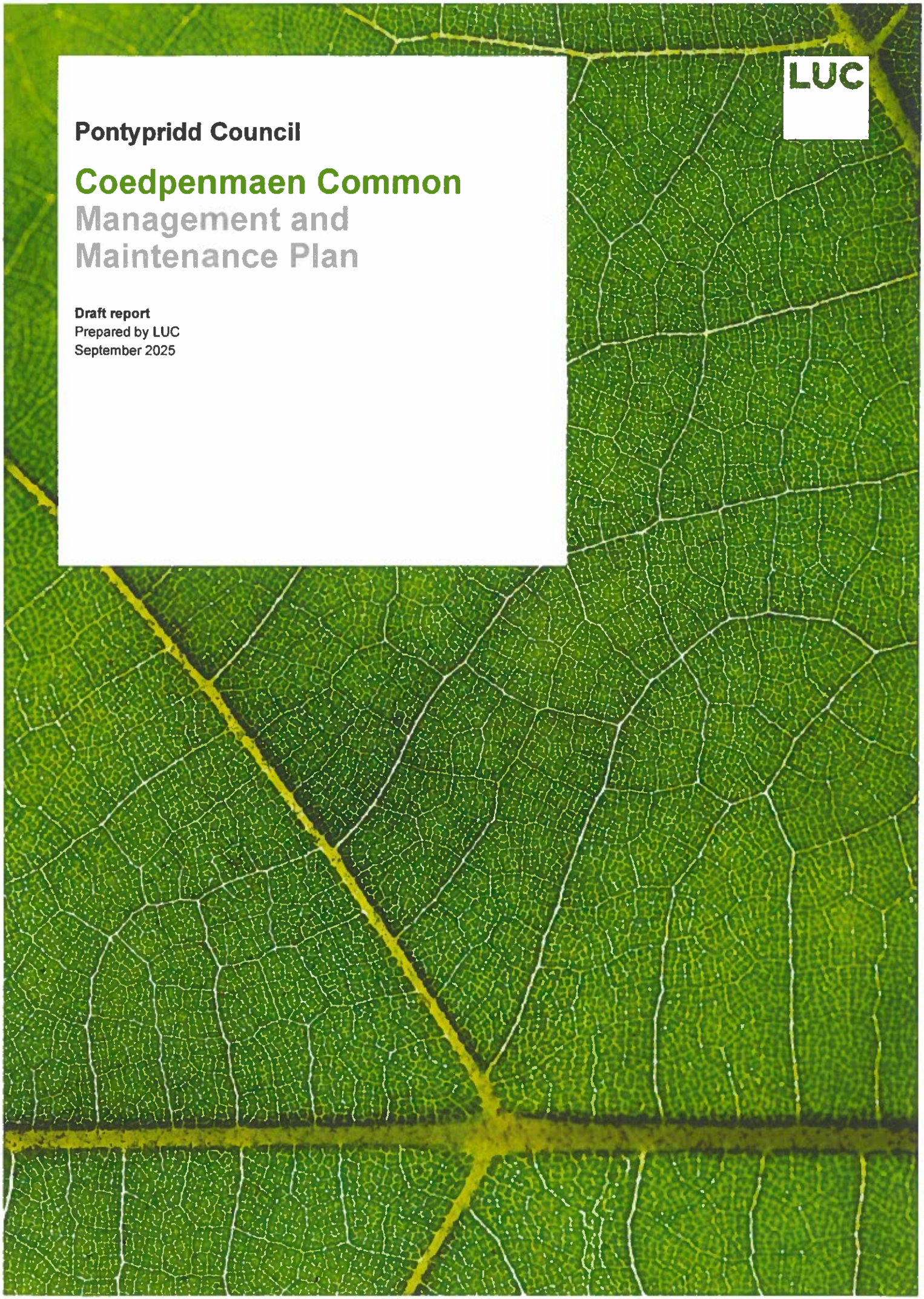
3. **Land Maintenance Report (LUC)**

Members will be aware that the Town Council's Environment, Land Use and Planning Committee commissioned a report to provide detailed information regarding the Common and the work needed to maintain the Common for the benefit of residents. This report is attached for Trustees' attention.

As responsibility has been delegated to the Town Council for the upkeep of the Common this report will be considered by the relevant Committee and with Trustees approval any appropriate works will be carried out as budgetary constraints allow.

DECISION REQUIRED:

To note the report and delegate responsibility for carrying out any appropriate works in accordance with the report as budgetary constraints allow.



Pontypridd Council

Coedpenmaen Common Management and Maintenance Plan

Draft report
Prepared by LUC
September 2025

Pontypridd Council

Coedpenmaen Common
Management and Maintenance Plan

Project Number
13439

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1.	Draft Report	M.Patterson	D Zacks	D Zacks	03.09.2025

Bristol
Cardiff
Edinburgh
Glasgow
London
Manchester
Sheffield

landuse.co.uk

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Chapter 1
Introduction

Background and Purpose of MMP

1.1 Pontypridd Town Council has appointed LUC to create a new Management and Maintenance Plan (MMP) for Coedpenmaen Common (herein referred to as 'the Common').

1.2 The MMP sets out a clear framework for the effective, long-term management of the Common. It aims to retain, enhance and protect valued habitats, amenity areas, key viewpoints, and heritage features, while supporting biodiversity gains and improving site accessibility.

1.3 The MMP is informed by a baseline review of the landscape, ecological features, heritage, and amenity value, and assisted by the following documents and assessments:

- Phase 1 Habitat Assessment (See **Appendix A**)
- Coedpenmaen Common: Biodiversity Report (See **Appendix B**)
- Specifications for Open Spaces (See **Appendix C**)

1.4 The management approach set out in this document will need to be reviewed and informed by ongoing monitoring.

Structure of MMP

- **Chapter 2: Understanding the Site** - Details the landscape, ecology, heritage and current management of the Common.
- **Chapter 3: Vision, Aims, and Objectives** - Outlines the vision for the Common and the related aims and objectives.
- **Chapter 4: Future Management** - Details the designated habitat management areas and features, their associated objectives, management guidelines, and aspirational future areas of work.
- **Chapter 6: Work Schedule** - Outlines a timetable for managing the Commons' habitats and features.
- **Chapter 7: MMP Implementation, Monitoring and Review** - Provides an overview of the recommended MMP implementation, monitoring, and review procedures.

Policy and Legislation

1.5 The MMP has been prepared in accordance with relevant legislation and policy, including domestic

environmental legislation, UK nature conservation policy and local biodiversity guidance.

1.6 National legislation, planning policy and guidance relevant to the MMP are listed below:

Statutory legislation that applies in Wales

- Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations)
- Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, s.40
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016, s.6 & s.7
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning (Wales) Act 2015
- Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013
- Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

National Welsh planning & environment policy

- Planning Policy Wales (PPW) - Edition 12, 2024 - Chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places
- Natural Resources Wales: South-Central Wales Area Statement

Regional/local

- Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) Local Development Plan 2011-2026
- RCT Action for Nature Plan 2021-26
- RCT Council Decarbonisation Strategy 2023-25

Local initiatives & community programmes

- RCT Local Nature Partnership (LNP)
- Pontypridd Green Week / Great Big Green Week hub

Other UK-wide legislation

- Environment Act 2021 (UK)
- Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as applied in Wales)

Chapter 2
Understanding the Site

2.1 This chapter provides an overview of the Common. It details its heritage, natural landscape and habitats, key considerations regarding the natural landscape, and an overview of the existing management at the Common.

Site description

2.2 The Common is situated on the eastern slope above Pontypridd. It supports a mosaic of semi-natural habitats, shaped by historical land use, topography and natural processes.

2.3 The site features several viewpoints, a variety of heritage features, a war memorial, and several habitats, including: a small watercourse, broadleaved woodland, acid and amenity grassland, pockets of heathland, ffridd (bracken), bramble scrub, and various crags.

2.4 See **Figure 2.1** for a baseline phase 1 habitat map of the Common, as informed by the updated baseline habitat assessment (See **Appendix A**).

Heritage

2.5 The Common has traditionally served as a communal gathering space, hosting cultural events, civic processions, and political rallies. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, it was the venue for neo-druidic ceremonies, peace celebrations, and speeches by influential figures such as Keir Hardie. It is also home to several designated heritage assets. As a result, the Common holds significant historic and cultural importance, ultimately marking its position in the broader cultural landscape that mirrors the town's long-standing social, political, and spiritual traditions. Designated heritage features on the Common include:

- **Welch Regiment War Memorial** - A Grade II listed structure commemorating the 5th Battalion of the Welch Regiment, many of whom were recruited from the local area. The memorial was unveiled in 1923 by Viscount Allenby and serves as a prominent visual and cultural landmark.
- **Ring Cairn and Two Standing Stones** - A Scheduled Monument comprising the remains of a Bronze Age burial chamber dating to approximately 1,500 BCE. The

site includes a stone-lined central chamber (cist), a partial ring of smaller stones, and a displaced capstone. These features contribute to the archaeological value of the Common and its significance as a ceremonial landscape.

- **Y Garreg Siglo Bardic Complex** - A Scheduled Monument surrounding the naturally occurring Rocking Stone (a glacial erratic), modified and celebrated as a druidic gathering place in the 19th century. The stone circle and associated features were constructed by local figures involved in the Welsh cultural revival, including Iolo Morganwg and Myfyr Morganwg, both of whom held bardic ceremonies at the site.

2.6 These heritage features provide a unique opportunity to celebrate the historical and cultural layers of the Common. They also reinforce the importance of protecting the Common not only for its natural assets but also for its role in shaping the identity of Pontypridd.

2.7 Future works and interventions affecting heritage features will be undertaken in consultation with Cadw and the local planning authority, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, including the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Natural landscape

2.8 The natural landscape of the Common underpins its ecological, recreational and scenic value. It supports a diverse range of flora and fauna, reflecting the variety of habitats found on-site. However, over recent decades, there has been a significant shift from open-grazed grass and heathland to woodland and mown grasslands, which has had a substantial impact on the Commons' flora. Species associated with grassland and heath have declined, while woodland species have spread.

2.9 The diversity of the Common supports its designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), described as:

> **82. Coed-Pen-Maen Common** (NGR ST 079903)
>
> Otherwise known as Pontypridd Common, perched on the eastern valleyside above Pontypridd town, this popular site supports a diverse mixture of woodland, grassland, heath, ffridd and crags. Areas of the open Common 'plateau' are maintained by mowing, while much of the less accessible parts of the site have become woodland. The site supports a range of flora and fauna and is a historic site for Cornish moneywort.

Habitat overview

2.10 The biodiversity assessment for Coed-Pen-Maen Common establishes an ecological baseline for the Site (See **Appendix B**), identifying several habitats and their locations. However, given the age of this initial assessment, it was considered necessary to undertake an updated Phase 1 habitat assessment in July of 2025 (See **Appendix A**) as part of the MMP. An amalgamation of both assessments has been used to provide the best detail and accuracy regarding the current state of the Commons habitats. The habitats identified on site include:

- **Broadleaved Woodland (Semi-natural)**
  - **Northwest** - The northwest of the site was dominated by broadleaved semi-improved woodland dominated by sycamore (90%) with abundant pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur)*, ash (*Fraxinus excelsior)*, and silver birch (*Betula pendula)*. Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia)* was found occasionally with rare occurrences of beech (*Fagus sylvatica)* and hazel (*Corylus avellana)*. The scrub layer within the woodland was dominated by Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica)* and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), with occasional butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii)* and rare gorse (*Ulex europaeus)*. The field layer was dominated by Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera)*, broad buckler fern (*Dryopteris dilatate)*, enchanters' nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana),* with occasional male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas)*, lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina)* and wood avens (*Geum urbanum)*. Lastly, the ground layer was dominated by leaf litter and western ivy (*Hedera helix)*. The woodland contained three Schedule 9 invasive species, as listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended): Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Buddleja. Regular removal of these species is recommended as the top priority for the management of this woodland.
  - **Boundary** - Predominantly found along the Common edge as defined by the Common Road and Hospital Road. The habitat supports a mixture of pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur),* non-native naturalised ornamental species such as horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum)*, sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus),* as well as varying densities of bramble scrub.
  - **Central and Southeast** - The central and southeastern side of the site was comprised of silver birch-dominated broadleaved woodland, with abundant rowan, and occasional pedunculate oak and turkey oak. A few non-native tree species were

present rarely, including eucalyptus and cypress. Scott's Brome was also present rarely.

- **Acid Grassland** - Within the centre of the site was a large area of acid grassland with varied sward height (ranging from 5-85cm). It was dominated by Purple Moor Grass *(Molinia caerulea)* with abundant Yorkshire fog *(Holcus lanatus)* and creeping soft grass (*Holcus mollis)*, as well as other acidic grass species including sheep's fescue (*Festuca ovina)*, common bent (*Agrostic capillaris)*, sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum)* and occasional wavy hair grass (*Deschmpsia flexuosa)*. Several pockets of common heather (*Calluna vulgaris)* were present, alongside ragwort (*Packera* sp.) and rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium),* with rare broad buckler fern. Moss (*Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus)* was the dominant bryophyte on the ground. No *Sphagnum* moss species were identified on site. The central area within the acidic grassland was largely flat and had a uniform sward height of 5cm, due to regular access from the public. Yet, the floral species were consistent with those on the margins, with the addition of white clover (*Trifolium repens)* and broad-leaved plantain (*Plantago major).*
- **Amenity Grassland** - Small pockets of amenity grassland were identified on site. These were located near footpaths and are subject to a regular mowing regime. They are frequently accessed by the public. Dominant species present included: Perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne)*, Yorkshire fog, creeping soft grass, with frequent white clover, creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens)*, broadleaved plantain, and rare daisy (*Bellis perennis)*, red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra),* growing rarely.
- **Heathland** - Small scattered stands are located amongst parts of acid grassland (between the war memorial and the central acid grassland plateau), on the steep west face, and open grass areas between fridd and bramble scrub. The latter stands are at risk of succession from scrub.
- **Ffridd/Bracken** - One large area of bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum)* was identified on the northeastern side of the site, located between broadleaved woodland to the north and acidic grassland to the south. Occasional mature rowan, pedunculate oak and silver birch trees were present within the bracken. The margins were dominated by purple moor grass, common bent, sweet vernal grass, Yorkshire fog, and creeping soft grass. Bracken was also found mixed in mosaics with acid, heath and marshy grassland, as well as transitional slopes, on the western and southern faces.
- **Bramble Scrub** - Two large areas of bramble scrub were identified on site. These areas were almost exclusively comprised of bramble species, with occasional mature rowan and silver birch trees. The margins were dominated by rosebay willowherbs and Yorkshire fog grass.
- **Watercourse** - One dry stream was present in the south of the site. The stream was approximately 24cm wide. The margins of the stream were dominated by Himalayan balsam, soft rush (*Juncus effusus)*, remote sedge (*Carex remota)*, Brookline (*Veronica beccabunga)*, male fern, and broad buckler fern.
- **Flushes and Rhos Pasture** - Several small flushes cross the Site. Rhos Pasture constitutes most of the wet, marshy grassland within the Common and is mainly found in damp, poorly drained areas of the Common or amongst flushes.
- **Crags and Scree** - Exposed rock faces occur along the steep west slope, many of which support a community of heath and woodrush.
- **Bare Ground** - A few walking paths were located around the site, including both sealed surface concrete paths and dirt paths.

Key Considerations

- Across the Common, there are three invasive species: Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Buddleja. The regular removal of these species is a key priority.
- The dominance of bramble and bracken is affecting the diversity of habitats and habitat niches, historic character features, and accessibility at the Common, with further growth likely to worsen the situation.
- There are numerous ash trees throughout the broadleaved woodland; ash dieback requires proactive monitoring and adaptive management to address any potential safety risks. Similarly, general tree management should include regular inspections in areas with high footfall to ensure the safety of users.
- Heath offers a biodiverse and valuable habitat, and acts as a fundamental feature of the Common. However, without management, heath becomes dominated by increasingly old 'leggy' heather bushes and can become invaded by gorse scrub and other successionary species. Measures should be taken to ensure that areas of heathland are preserved and enhanced, where possible.
- There is potential to enhance the southern area of the seasonal watercourse via additional buffer planting and habitat creation.

- During periods of high rainfall, pathways to the southeast of the Common experience flooding due to rising water levels in the adjacent wet woodland.

2.11 The Commons' dynamic character, shaped by both natural succession and historic land use, presents opportunities to promote ecological resilience through sensitive, adaptive management. Future works should aim to maintain habitat diversity, strengthen ecological networks, and support the Commons' character as a naturalistic, multi-use green space.

Current Management

2.12 Pontypridd Town Council currently employ two full-time operatives to manage the Site, alongside several other areas of open space within Pontypridd.

2.13 Excluding the areas of grassland, management is primarily undertaken reactively, whereby landscape operatives respond to landscape management requirements as they arise. This includes managing brambles, trees, bracken, and the various other habitats at the Common.

2.14 The current management aim for the Common is to maintain accessibility along key routes, preserve heritage assets, prevent the decline of hard features, and manage overgrowth to stop vegetation encroachment both within the Common and on adjacent roads.

Pontypridd grass cutting specifications for open spaces

2.15 Pontypridd Council have a grass cutting specification for all the open spaces within their catchment (See **Appendix C**). Below is a summary of the specification for the Common:

- All grass areas have a maximum growth between cuts of 80mm and a minimum cut of 25mm.
- All grass areas to be raked out, and the clippings disposed of (a local allotment will accept the clippings for mulch).
- Any path surfaces adjacent to the grass areas will be swept after grass cutting.
- Grasses growing tight to fixtures, e.g. Druid Stones, wayside seats, and litter bins, are to be cut using a strimmer.

2.16 Grass cutting areas, total number of cuts, and time between cuts for said areas are detailed in **Table 2.1** below.

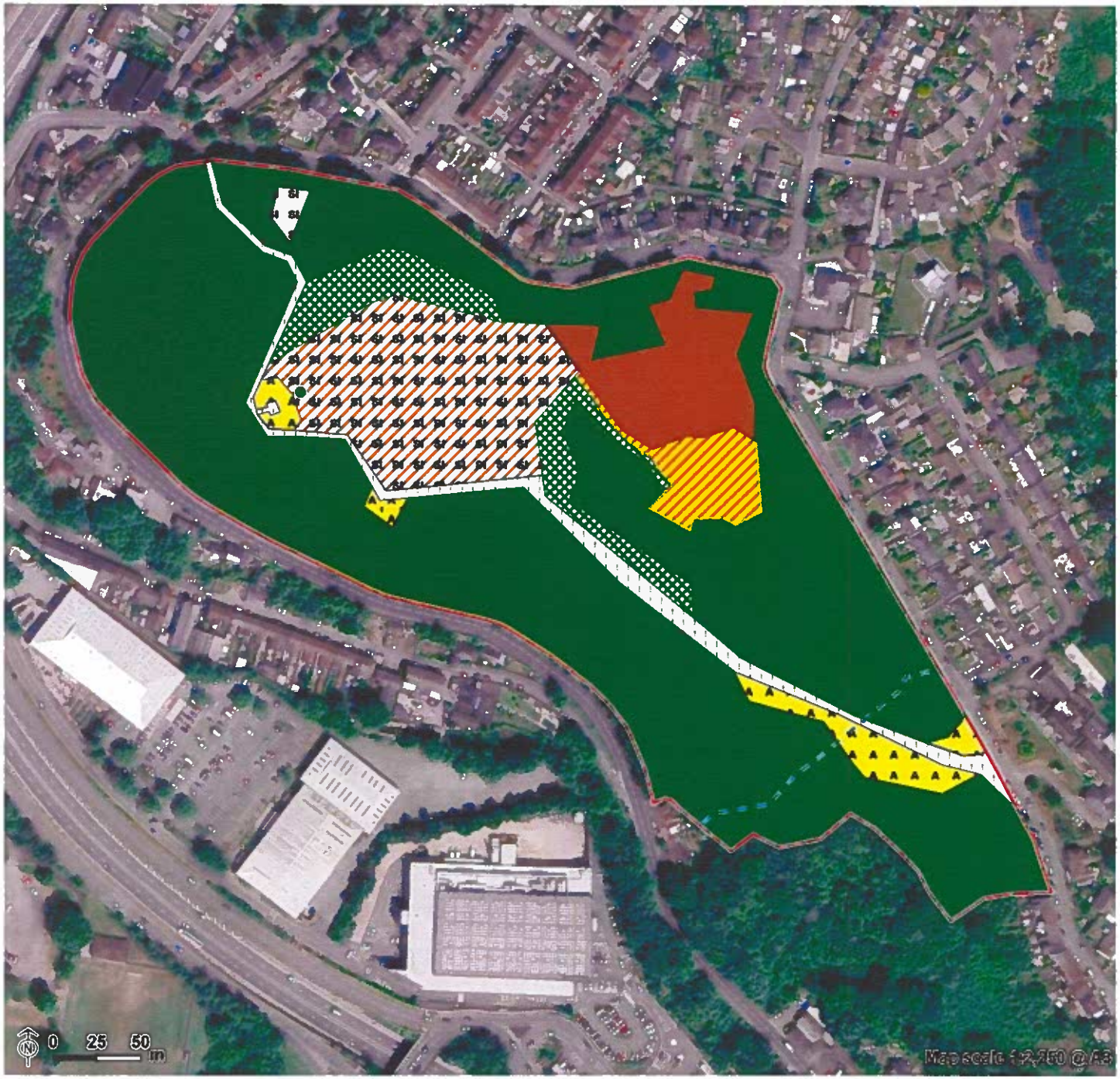
Table 2.1 Coedpenmaen Common grass cutting schedule

Area	Width of cuts (Mtr)	Number of cuts (Approximately)	Time between cuts (Days)	Time between cuts (Days)	Additional information
Common Playing Field (Central acid grassland)	N/A	2	10 (Weeks)	8 (Weeks)	N/A
Common perimeter/ banks (Grass verges)	3	2	N/A	N/A	Cut between April and September.
Grass verges – internal Common paths	1	14	12	8	Using a rotary mower. Finishing with the strimmer, where necessary.
Druid stones and the surrounding area	N/A	14	12	8	N/A
War Memorial	N/A	14	12	8	Laurel bushes are pruned when necessary. (Notes – these are no longer on site). Cut a week before Armistice Sunday.
North east corner (Junction of Hospital Road/ Common Road)	N/A	14	12	8	N/A
Way-side seats from Ael-y-Bryn Road and the surrounding area	N/A	14	12	8	Grass around and leading to the seats.

Pontypridd Landscape Management Plans
Pontypridd Town Council

LUC

Figure 2.1: Coedpenmaen Common Baseline UKHab Habitats



Site boundary
Individual tree

Phase 1 linear habitat

J2.6 Dry ditch

Phase 1 habitat area

A1.1.1 Broadleaved woodland (semi-natural)
A2.1 Scrub (dense/continuous)
B1.2 Acid grassland (semi-improved)
B6 Poor semi-improved grassland / B4 Improved grassland
C1.1 Bracken (continuous)
D5 Dry heath/acid grassland / B1.2 Acid grassland (semi-improved)
J1.2 Amenity grassland
J1.2 Amenity grassland / B4 Improved grassland
J4 Bare ground

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Chapter 3
Vision, Aims, and Objectives

3.1 This chapter details the vision, aims, and objectives, setting the future direction of management at the Common.

3.2 The strategic vision set out in this chapter, as well as the corresponding management area objectives, maintenance guidelines (detailed within Chapter 4) have been created with consideration for the guidance outlined in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Action for Nature Plan and the actions in the Coed-Pen-Maen Common Biodiversity Assessment.

Site Vision

To conserve, restore, and celebrate Coedpenmaen Common as a resilient, biodiverse, and accessible landscape that supports both people and wildlife. Through sensitive, adaptive management and meaningful community involvement, the Common will remain a safe, well-maintained, and welcoming space where cultural features are protected, key views and access routes preserved, and habitats managed to enhance biodiversity and adapt to the pressures of climate change. The Common's unique character - shaped by its prominent setting, varied habitats, and rich heritage - will be both safeguarded and showcased for the benefit of current and future generations.

Aims

3.3 The overarching aims for the Common are as follows:

- **Aim 1: Build and maintain a skilled team for coordinated site management** to ensure consistent, effective delivery of the Common's objectives.
- **Aim 2: Maintain a safe, welcoming, and well-managed site** that supports public enjoyment and protects its special qualities.
- **Aim 3: Maintain and enhance access and connectivity**, preserving key routes and improving informal pathways where appropriate.
- **Aim 4: Protect and enhance biodiversity**, managing habitats to strengthen ecological networks, increase available habitat niches, and support climate resilience.

- **Aim 5: Conserve and promote the Commons' heritage and landscape character**, safeguarding key features while creating and utilising interpretation to maximise opportunities for appreciation.
- **Aim 6: Embed adaptive management through robust monitoring**, enabling evidence-based decision-making and long-term sustainability.
- **Aim 7: Promote environmental best practice** in all activities and interventions across the site.
- **Aim 8: Foster community involvement and site stewardship** through inclusive engagement, volunteering, and education.

3.4 **Table 3.1** sets out management aims with supporting objectives.

Table 3.1 Management aims and objectives

No	Management Aim and Objectives	Objective Type
Aim 1	**Build and maintain a skilled team for coordinated site management**	
1.1	Identify and appoint a qualified landscape management team to undertake management and maintenance operations detailed within this plan. External appointment may be necessary for initial works, with maintenance works undertaken by in-house staff.	To be completed (TBC)
1.2	Ensure all relevant staff and contractors are briefed on the Management and Maintenance Plan (MMP) and updated as it evolves.	Ongoing
1.3	Appoint a lead for implementation, monitoring and review (Council staff project manager or contracted specialist).	TBC
1.4	Provide ongoing training and skills development to maintain high standards of site management.	Ongoing
Aim 2	**Maintain a safe, welcoming, and well-managed site**	
2.1	Develop and adopt a tree safety policy and programme of regular tree safety surveys, prioritising areas with high public access.	Ongoing
2.2	Maintain clear and clean signage; ensure sightlines at viewpoints, access points, and thresholds are unobstructed.	Ongoing
2.3	Maintain an up-to-date asset register (bins, benches, signage, planters) and incorporate it into condition audits.	Ongoing
2.5	Monitor and address litter, fly tipping, and dog fouling through education, signage, bins, and provision of bags.	Ongoing
2.6	Preserve and enhance recreational spaces for passive recreation and informal play, preventing scrub/bramble encroachment.	Ongoing
Aim 3	**Maintain and enhance access and connectivity**	
3.1	Maintain tarmac paths to ensure clear, unobstructed access and accessible connections.	Ongoing
3.2	Maintain and improve key informal access routes, enhancing desire lines where appropriate to promote access through inclusive design, using landscape character-sensitive path surfacing and layout without over-formalisation.	Ongoing
3.3	Address drainage and erosion issues along routes, particularly flood-prone sections, through sustainable interventions.	Ongoing
Aim 4	**Protect and enhance biodiversity**	
	Grassland and heathland	
4.1	Implement adaptive mowing/cutting regimes in grassland and rush pasture, adjusting frequency and height to balance amenity, aesthetics, and floristic diversity.	Ongoing
4.2	Retain and enhance heathland patches through scrub removal, soil disturbance, and tailored management (e.g. seasonal cutting).	Ongoing
	Scrub and Woodland	
4.3	Undertake targeted clearance of bramble, bracken, and unwanted saplings in overgrown areas.	Ongoing

No	Management Aim and Objectives	Objective Type
4.4	Support natural broadleaved woodland succession, selectively removing non-native saplings to encourage the success of native species.	Ongoing
4.5	Introduce glade and scallop areas to create diverse woodland habitats.	Ongoing
4.6	Maintain habitat connectivity along streams, woodland edges, and bracken slopes.	Ongoing
	Tree maintenance	
4.7	Monitor tree and woodland health: structural issues, disease (e.g. ash dieback), pests, and harmful fungi. Removing as necessary, and retaining standing and fallen deadwood where possible.	Ongoing
4.8	Selectively thin/prune canopies to preserve key views and historic sightlines.	Ongoing
4.9	Conduct regular tree monitoring in high footfall areas to ensure safety.	Ongoing
	Stream	
4.10	Undertake targeted bi-annual vegetation clearance in overgrown areas to support stream flow.	Ongoing
Aim 5	**Conserve and promote the Commons' heritage and landscape character**	
5.1	Maintain and sensitively manage heritage assets (e.g. exposed rocks, notable trees, built features) to prevent obscuring or neglect.	Ongoing
5.2	Retain and strengthen landscape identity through vegetation management, preservation of open views, and use of traditional materials/non-resource-intensive techniques.	Ongoing
5.3	Develop interpretation and information points to connect visitors with the site's cultural and natural heritage.	Ongoing
Aim 6	**Embed adaptive management through robust monitoring**	
6.1	Establish and carry out ongoing surveys to monitor habitat condition, recreational use, and infrastructure. Utilising an adaptive management approach that identifies emerging issues early, addresses them promptly, and adjusts measures to ensure long-term success.	Ongoing
6.2	Review and update the MMP every five years, adapting management regimes based on monitoring outcomes.	Ongoing
6.3	Develop and follow a green waste policy, prioritising reuse on-site.	Ongoing
Aim 7	**Promote environmental best practice**	
7.1	Avoid chemical inputs unless essential; if required, use the least harmful approach.	Ongoing
7.2	Incorporate sustainable drainage, habitat-friendly materials, and climate-resilient planting in all works.	Ongoing
7.3	Develop a proactive invasive species control programme for Himalayan balsam, Buddleja, and Japanese Knotweed, with early-season removal and community awareness.	TBC
7.4	Establish rapid-response monitoring for new or resurgent invasive species.	Ongoing
Aim 8	**Foster community involvement and site stewardship**	

No	Management Aim and Objectives	Objective Type
8.1	Promote sensitive recreational use through community channels.	TBC
8.2	Establish and support a volunteer programme; partner with schools and local groups for stewardship, monitoring, and maintenance.	TBC
8.3	Link management interventions with community engagement, education, and interpretation opportunities.	TBC
8.4	Encourage public participation in biodiversity monitoring and conservation activities.	TBC

Chapter 4
Future management

4.1 Drawing on the vision, aims and objectives, this chapter outlines the future management of the Common. It details the management objectives, guidelines for achieving the objectives, and potential future work options for the Commons habitats and features. See **Figure 4.5** for a map of the management areas and site features.

4.2 All works must be undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), particularly with respect to nesting birds, protected species, and invasive species.

Key Considerations for future management

4.3 The following key considerations will need to inform management:

- Bramble, bracken, and tree management operations should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season.
- Bramble, bracken, sapling, and invasive species growth will require regular monitoring and maintenance to prevent unwanted regrowth and spread to other habitat areas.
- There may be opportunities to use public engagement as a means of undertaking site maintenance (through volunteering/education schemes, etc.).
- Health and safety will need to be considered in terms of ongoing requirements for tree surveys.

Potential future works

4.4 This management plan has been developed with consideration for the resources available to achieve its objectives. As a result, the plan presents realistic management recommendations, based on the Council's current resources. Nonetheless, there are additional beneficial opportunities for improvement that could be pursued if funding becomes available in the future. These are briefly noted in the management areas below.

4.5 Provided any future grants are obtained, it is strongly recommended that an appropriate feasibility study be undertaken to explore these options.

Habitat Management Areas

4.6 Broadly, the Common has been subdivided into five primary habitat management areas, with corresponding sub-areas. The five areas include:

- Boundary broadleaved woodland
- Central acid grassland
- Central scrub
- Amenity grassland
- Stream

4.7 For each of the sub-areas, a set of management objectives has been created, and where relevant, recommendations for future work have been provided.

Boundary broadleaved woodland

General approach

4.8 Tree works and inspections should be prioritised in areas of high and medium public use, particularly along formal and key informal paths.

4.9 Retain standing and fallen deadwood wherever it does not pose a safety risk, to enhance structural diversity and biodiversity value.

4.10 Undertake targeted removal of invasive species (Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed, and Buddleja), ideally during winter when ground disturbance and impacts on wildlife are minimised.

4.11 Maintain and, where possible, enhance open spaces within the north boundary and southeast woodland to support habitat diversity and improve amenity.

Area-wide management guidance

4.12 Apply the following guidance to each of the woodland areas, excluding Area 1:

- Tree health and safety monitoring - Inspect annually for signs of disease (including ash dieback), pests, structural defects, and harmful fungi. Act promptly following guidance from the Forestry Commission, the Arboricultural Association, and BS 3998:2010 for all arboricultural works.
- Natural succession - Allow natural succession to take place, but look to remove non-native species saplings (especially sycamore) to encourage native diversity.
- Control the spread of invasive species – The management of the invasive species is covered in the later section of this chapter. Follow guidance accordingly.
- Deadwood - Retain standing and fallen deadwood where safe to do so, to support invertebrate and fungal biodiversity.

Area 1: West woodland

Management objectives

4.13 Allow natural succession within this largely inaccessible woodland area, limiting interventions to essential actions only, such as maintaining key viewpoints from the Common or addressing safety concerns.

Long-term management guidelines

- Minimal intervention excluding safety measures and view retention - Allowing natural succession to take place, with management and maintenance limited to viewpoint retention and essential tree safety measures, such as branches overhanging nearby roads. Both of which are outlined in later sections within this chapter.

Area 2: Northwest woodland

Management objectives

4.14 Retain an area of accessible mature semi-natural woodland. Implementing only light-touch management across the woodland and allowing for natural succession to occur. Interventions should be limited to:

- Regular monitoring of high footfall areas to address public safety.
- Monitoring and managing tree health.
- Removing non-native saplings.
- Controlling the spread of invasive species.

Long-term management guidelines

- Apply Boundary broadleaved woodland area-wide management guidance.

Future works

4.15 Consider selective canopy thinning to enhance light penetration to the woodland floor and improve ground flora diversity.

4.16 Taking proactive steps to increase native tree species diversity by planting native saplings.

Area 3: North boundary woodland

Management objectives

4.17 Maintain an open canopy and parkland character, with emphasis on retaining glades and ensuring good visibility and accessibility throughout.

4.18 Monitor and prune trees (as necessary) overhanging the informal pathway running west to east, to keep it light, open, and welcoming for users.

4.19 Control scrub and sapling encroachment to prevent unwanted vegetation from creeping into open areas. Bramble should be retained only in limited clusters and primarily within less accessible parts of the woodland to preserve parkland character, sightlines, and ease of access.

Initial works

- Glade, scallop, and ride creation - Existing open areas within the woodland are to be managed and maintained as rides and glades - grassed open areas with scrub transitioning into woodland. Scallops are to be created in the bracken and bramble areas adjacent to pathways and existing grasslands to reduce the dominance of bracken and bramble. An example area for scalloping can be seen to the left of Figure 4.1.
- Refer to the habitat management methods for bramble and bracken and apply them as necessary.

Figure 4.1 North boundary woodland scalloping area example

Long-term management guidelines

- Upkeep glade, scallop and ride areas - Cut grass/ vegetation in glades to 50–75 mm and remove arisings, approximately 4 times per year. Adjusting as necessary to retain grassland centre. Refer to guidance for the frequency of bramble and bracken removal.
- Apply Boundary broadleaved woodland area-wide management guidance.

Future works

4.20 Undertake improvement works to the key informal pathway to enhance accessibility (Refer to the informal pathways section of this chapter).

Area 4: Southeast woodland

Management objectives

4.21 Maintain and enhance the woodland through the creation and management of glades, scallops, and rides, reducing the dominance of bracken and bramble and providing a mosaic of varied habitats to support biodiversity. Existing open areas should be retained as amenity grassland with soft scrub edges transitioning into woodland, with additional natural scallops created along boundaries to increase structural diversity and visual interest.

Initial works

- Glade, scallop, and ride creation - Existing open areas within the woodlands are to be managed and maintained as glades - central grassed areas with scrub transitioning into woodland. Scallops are to be created in the bracken and bramble areas adjacent to pathways and existing grasslands to reduce the dominance of bracken and bramble. See Figure 4.4 for suggested starting areas, and as shown in Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 below.
- Refer to the habitat management methods for bramble and bracken and apply them as necessary.

Figure 4.2 Southeast woodland Glade 1

Figure 4.3 Southeast woodland Glade 2

Long-term management guidelines

- Upkeep glade, scallop and ride areas - Cut grass/ vegetation in glades to 50–75 mm and remove arisings, approximately 4 times per year. Adjusting as necessary to retain grassland centre. Refer to guidance for the frequency of bramble and bracken removal.
- Apply Boundary broadleaved woodland area-wide management guidance.

Future works

4.22 Explore the potential to formalise glades north of the woodland as a picnic area, incorporating dedicated social seating to enhance community use while preserving the area's natural character.

Central acid grassland

General approach

4.23 Protect and conserve areas of acid grassland, while maintaining amenity value in zones with high public use.

4.24 Prevent scrub and woodland encroachment into grassland areas to safeguard open habitat character.

4.25 Retain and enhance heathland patches through targeted management to promote structural diversity and long-term habitat quality and resilience.

Area 5: Central plateau

Management objectives

4.26 Maintain a short sward of acid grassland, prioritising amenity value for Common users while safeguarding the habitat's ecological character.

Long-term management guidelines

- Central plateau cutting regime. Cut grassland twice annually. Cut to 50-75 mm and remove arisings to maintain low soil fertility. The period of time between cuts during the growing season should be between 8 and 10 weeks.

Area 6: Rough acid grassland

Management objectives

4.27 Manage rough grassland to ensure a balance of amenity use, aesthetic quality, and floristic diversity, while preventing scrub encroachment.

4.28 Retaining stands of trees and scrub, ensuring, through regular monitoring and maintenance, that they do not expand beyond their current extent.

4.29 Ensure the retention and long-term health of heathland stands.

Long-term management guidelines

- Rough acid grassland cutting regime - Cut grassland once annually. Cut to 50-75 mm (or approximately this height, given the rush pasture clumps) and remove arisings to maintain low soil fertility. Cut to be undertaken between August and September.
- Scrub and sapling control - Manage bracken, bramble and saplings to prevent encroachment and further spread within the area, avoiding March-August to avoid bird nesting disturbance. Continue to maintain the initial bramble buffer strip created during the initial works. Refer to guidance for the frequency of bramble and bracken removal.
- Apply Heathland/heather management as detailed later within this chapter.

Area 7: Northwest scrub

Management objectives

4.30 Maintain as a distinctive transitional zone between the woodland to the north and the open acid grassland, retaining occasional scrub and woody species for structural diversity.

4.31 Prevent woodland creep and scrub encroachment, with aggressive control of bramble abounding the northern informal pathway to preserve light, accessibility and amenity value.

Initial works

- Remove small stand of young saplings located along the northwest edge to prevent woodland creep. Stand shown in Figure 4.4.
- Buffer strips - Create buffer strips of at least 2-3m in bramble scrub adjacent to the informal pathway adjoining the north, avoiding March-August due to bird nesting disturbance.

Figure 4.4 Woodland creep – sapling stand

Long-term management guidelines

- Scrub and sapling control - Manage bracken, bramble and saplings to prevent encroachment and further spread within the area, avoiding March-August to avoid bird nesting disturbance. Continue to maintain the initial bramble buffer strip created during the initial works.

Central scrub

General approach

4.1 Maintain a mosaic of scrub at varying ages/heights while preventing dominance over open habitats, heritage, and amenity features.

4.2 Maintain the central area of rough grassland and associated heathland species by preventing sapling colonisation and monitoring for bramble and bracken encroachment.

4.3 Landform, pathways, and trees should guide bracken and bramble removal. Retaining connected 'clumps' around these elements but reducing the total area.

4.4 Retain and enhance heathland patches through targeted management to promote structural diversity and long-term habitat quality and resilience.

Area 8: Bracken and bramble scrub

Management objectives

4.5 Maintain as a predominantly scrub habitat, ensuring the continued availability of informal pathways. The area is to consist of a mosaic of bracken, bramble, and rough grassland, interspersed with occasional trees and shrubs. Preventing the dominance of bramble, bracken, and woodland.

4.6 Establish a series of buffer strips and apply edge scalloping along informal pathways to reduce the total area of dense scrub and prevent encroachment. Separate from the scallops and buffer strips, create a series of areas under long-rotation cutting schedules to diversify the age and structure of stands. Use landform and existing vegetation to guide interventions.

Initial works

- Undertake initial clearance works, using buffer strips and edge scalloping to create areas of permanent removal in bracken and bramble stands.
- Create 1-2 large areas for long-rotation bramble/ bracken cutting.
- Removal is to be guided by landform with existing trees/shrubs to roughly define removal lines. Retain approximately 60-70% of the total bracken and bramble scrub, prioritising 'easy win' areas.

Long-term management guidelines

- Rough acid grassland cutting regime - Cut grassland once annually. Cut to 50-75 mm (or approximately this height, given the rush pasture clumps) and remove arisings to maintain low soil fertility. Cut to be undertaken between August and September.
- Buffer strips and edge scalloping - Maintain 1-3m cut strips along key paths and open spaces to prevent encroachment and reduce total area. Cut annually.
- Long-rotation cutting – Maintain large areas of long-rotation cutting. Cut approximately every 2-3 years.
- For further guidance on bramble and bracken management, refer to guidance detailed later in this chapter.
- Monitor for sapling growth - Allowing for natural succession that preserves the intended open woodland/ scrub mosaic, but removing saplings if overcrowding is becoming apparent.
- Apply Heathland/heather management as detailed later within this chapter.

Future works

4.7 If additional funding and maintenance capacity become available, undertake a more extensive programme of bracken and scrub reduction. These interventions should not remove bracken and scrub entirely but should break up large, continuous areas. Ongoing maintenance, such as bracken bruising and bramble cutting, will be essential to prevent a reversal to current conditions.

Area 9: Southern woodland

Management objectives

4.8 Maintain an open-canopy woodland interspersed with well-managed scrub, ensuring the continued use and enjoyment of key amenity features such as benches and informal footpaths. Prevent over-shading and obstruction of views by thinning saplings before they become established and reducing bramble cover, with immediate priority given to clearing vegetation around benches to restore light and sightlines.

Initial works

- Undertake initial clearance work, using buffer strips, scalloping, and targeted scrub removal - Focus on removal around existing open areas and amenity assets such as benches and informal pathways. Removal of scrub will not need to be as extensive as Area 8, given the character of the woodland.
- Measured sapling removal/ small tree felling - Removal of saplings within the southern woodland section to preserve an open canopy and amenity space around benches.

Long-term management guidelines

- Glade cut - Mow/ strim in existing open areas of grassland/vegetation. Approximately 4 times per year. Adjusting as necessary.
- Buffer strips and edge scalloping - Maintain 1-3m cut strips along informal paths and open spaces to prevent encroachment and reduce total area. Cut annually.
- Monitor for sapling growth and unwanted bramble stands - Allow for natural succession that preserves the intended open woodland/scrub mosaic, but remove saplings and bramble stands if overcrowding becomes apparent.
- For further guidance on bramble and bracken management, refer to guidance detailed later in this chapter.

Future works

4.9 Where not achievable through routine management, undertake targeted thinning or felling of woodland stands to increase light levels, enhance amenity value, and improve access to benches and pathways.

Area 10: Woody scrub pocket

Management Objectives

4.10 Maintain bramble and tree cover to preserve a sense of discovery at the adjacent viewpoint, while preventing encroachment that could make the space feel uninviting or inaccessible.

Long-term management guidelines

- Buffer strips and edge scalloping - Maintain 1-3m cut strips along key paths and open spaces to prevent encroachment. Cut annually.
- For further guidance on bramble management, refer to guidance detailed later in this chapter.

Amenity grassland

Management objectives

4.11 Manage amenity grassland to maintain a healthy, dense sward that supports informal recreation, including walking, picnicking, and sitting.

4.12 Maintain a short, even sward for informal recreation and the preservation of heritage features in the landscape.

Long-term management guidelines

- Cutting regime - Cut to 50-75 mm, removing arisings to prevent nutrient build-up, cutting 14 times per year. The period of time between cuts during the growing season should be between 8 and 12 days.
- Edges and fixtures - Strim around benches, signage, and heritage features during each cut cycle.
- All grass to be raked out, and the clippings disposed of (a local allotment will accept the clippings for mulch).

Future works

4.13 Explore further opportunities to establish natural regeneration of wildflowers (overseeding if necessary) to enhance biodiversity and visual interest.

Area 11: Wildflower meadow

Management Objectives

4.14 Establish and maintain an area of wildflower grassland to improve biodiversity and visual amenity when entering the Common.

Long-term management guidelines

- Cut to 70 -100 mm from late August/ early September after wildflowers have set seed, leaving arisings in situ for 5-7 days to help the spread of the wildflowers (hay cut). Cutting once annually.
- Avoid cutting during the early and midsummer months to allow wildflowers to bloom and set seed. The precise timing of the cut depends on local factors, including past management and current weather conditions.
- If possible, also lightly mow the sward down to 70 -100 mm as required throughout the winter months until March and collect the clippings.
- Leaves to be removed once per week in the leaf fall season. Remove detritus frequently to avoid a build-up of litter, or at least before cutting.

Future works/ Establishment guidelines

4.15 If natural regeneration is unsuccessful after several years, follow the establishment guidelines detailed below, using an appropriate wildflower seed mix or locally sourced green hay.

- Mid-march to mid-April, cut grass to 10-20mm and heavily scarify designated areas using a rake, chain harrow, or mechanical scarifier to expose 50–70% bare ground.
- Sow at approximately 2 g/m2, broadcasting seed on the surface by hand (crosshatching) or seed drill if available. If undertaken by hand, lightly roll or tread in the seeds, using a roller or walking over the area,
- First cut between mid-September and early October. Collect the arisings. Cutting height 70 -100 mm. If successful following first season, bring into long-term management.
- If sufficient wildflower species do not establish after a season of management, then a repeat sowing may be required the following spring.

Stream

Management objectives

4.16 Maintain a healthy stream ecosystem that supports ecological function, seasonal flow capacity, and amenity value - undertaking strategic clearance of vegetation overgrowth as necessary.

Long-term management guidelines

- Vegetation control - Selective clearance of overgrown vegetation on an annual or bi-annual basis (ideally in early spring and/or late summer) to support water flow. Removing woody regrowth or encroaching scrub that could shade out ground flora or obstruct flow. Avoid excessive removal and ensure the retention of some native riparian vegetation to support biodiversity.
- Debris management - Remove fallen branches, built-up leaf litter, or litter that could obstruct flow or cause waterlogging upstream.
- Wildlife sensitivity - Avoid clearance during bird nesting season (March-August) unless urgent. Check for presence of fauna before major works.

Future works

4.17 Potential for additional planting at the southern section of the stream, with associated interpretation work. The Forestry Commission guidelines recommend protective strips of "thriving vegetation" (at least 5m wide for small streams, 2-3 times stream bed width for larger streams) and ensuring "at least 50% of the stream surface should be open to sunlight" (Patterson, Edge Management in Woodlands 1989, p.58).

Additional considerations

4.18 Within and surrounding the management areas are additional hard and soft landscape features that require consideration, but do not fall into the broad management areas. These are grouped into soft landscape features and hard landscape features and contain the following:

- Soft landscape features
  - Heathland patches
  - Site boundary: verges and banks
  - Tree health and safety
  - Ash dieback
  - Invasive species
  - Re-use of green waste

- Hard landscape features
  - Viewpoints
  - Heritage features
  - Site furniture: signage, benches, interpretation, bins
  - Formal tarmac pathways
  - Informal pathways
  - Birds and bat boxes

Soft landscape features

Heathland patches

Management objectives

4.19 Retain existing heathland areas and enhance remnant or degraded patches through targeted scrub removal and tailored management (e.g. seasonal cutting – provided heather is not too old and leggy) to support characteristic heathland species and structure.

Initial restoration and enhancement phase

- Heathland enhancement is best initiated outside the bird nesting season (September–February) and during periods of suitable ground conditions to avoid soil compaction. Initial works should focus on restoring structural diversity and removing invasive encroachment. Works typically involve four key elements:
  - Scrub and bracken removal: Remove invading scrub species to prevent shading and nutrient enrichment. Cut and treat stumps of persistent woody species; repeat annually where regrowth occurs.
  - Heather rejuvenation:

    For younger/mid-aged heather (5-15 years), cut small patches, removing approximately 2/3rds to encourage fresh growth. Treat no more than 10-20% of each stand per year to maintain habitat continuity.

    For older heather (>15 years) with minimal green growth at the base, cutting alone may result in poor regeneration. Instead, combine management with small-scale turf stripping or light scarification to expose mineral soil and stimulate seed bank germination. Where the seed bank is depleted, overseed with locally sourced heather seed or use plug planting to reintroduce cover.
  - Soil disturbance for regeneration: In degraded areas, strip small patches of turf or lightly scarify to expose mineral soil, promoting germination of heather seed from the soil seed bank.
  - Targeted re-seeding/plug planting: Where natural regeneration is insufficient, introduce locally sourced heather seed or plugs to boost cover and genetic diversity.
- Arisings should be removed from site or placed in designated habitat piles away from heathland to avoid nutrient enrichment.

Long-term management guidelines

- Where suitable, maintain a rotational cutting programme, cutting approximately 20% of the total heather stands by 2/3rds of their size per year to ensure a varied age structure of heather and associated species.
- Undertake annual monitoring for species such as bramble and bracken. Remove promptly before they dominate.
- Avoid management during March–August.

Site boundary: verges and banks

Management objectives

4.20 Maintain verges and banks as a well-kept transitional habitat between woodland and grassland, ensuring vegetation does not impede road users. Where possible, create a smooth progression from grassland to herb, shrub, and canopy layers, removing unwanted succession, such as sapling or bramble spread, where necessary.

Guidelines

- Mow to 50-75mm at a width of 3m. Undertaking approximately 2-3 cuts annually between April and September, adjusting frequency as necessary.
- Maintain clear sightlines for road safety.
- All grass to be raked out, and the clippings disposed of (a local allotment will accept the clippings for mulch).

Tree health and safety

Management objectives

4.21 Monitor and manage trees and saplings, carrying out maintenance to ensure public safety, reduce the risk of tree failure, and prevent unwanted succession so that the intended character of each management area is preserved.

Guidelines

- Carry out all tree work to a professional standard and in line with BS 3998:2010 Tree Work.

- Maintain up-to-date surveys of trees and woodland groups.
- Check regularly for signs of pests, disease, and fungi (particularly ash dieback given the prominence of ash through the Common), and act promptly following guidance from the Forestry Commission and the Arboricultural Association.
- Use a diverse species mix if re-stocking.
- Monitor structural stability and health of all trees, but particularly where accessible to the public. Inspect trees regularly, and especially after storm occurrences. Carry out any identified surgery/ felling work promptly to maintain safety.
- Remove unwanted saplings promptly.
- Where appropriate, use arisings to provide deadwood habitat. Anything from smaller diameter brushwood to larger branches can be trimmed or cut into lengths and stacked neatly to rot down, providing valuable habitats for wildlife. Branches with a diameter greater than 10cm (approx.) can be partially sunk into the ground to provide vertical loggeries as habitats for invertebrates.

Ash dieback

4.22 Ash trees are found throughout the Common and its woodlands. Ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus) poses significant risks to ash (Fraxinus excelsior) populations, impacting tree health, woodland structure, biodiversity, and public safety.

Management objectives

4.23 Monitor and manage ash dieback in line with best practice guidance to minimise risks to public safety, while supporting long-term ecological health of woodlands through the preservation of deadwood habitat and native species succession support (where suitable).

Invasive species

Management objectives

4.24 Undertake proactive invasive species management. Develop and implement a long-term control programme targeting Himalayan Balsam, Buddleja, and Japanese Knotweed. Prioritise early-season removal and community awareness to limit further spread.

4.25 Ongoing monitoring and rapid response. Establish a regular monitoring protocol to detect and respond to new or resurgent invasive growth.

Guidelines

- Record, monitor, and remove invasive species and injurious weeds by mechanical means, or chemical means if necessary.
- Target removal of invasive species early in the season before seed set.
- Prioritise removal of Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed as both are listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. The removal of Buddleja and Japanese Knotweed is more labour-intensive and may need professional assistance.
- See **Habitat management methods** for details on Himalayan Balsam control.

Future works

4.26 Removing species such as Knotweed is time and labour-intensive, can require heavy-duty removal equipment, and may not be suitable for volunteer groups and the existing council resource. If funding is available, undertake a program of professional removal.

Re-use of green waste

Management objectives

4.27 Create and maintain natural biodiversity features by utilising 'waste' from management operations to create habitat for fungi, insects, amphibians, and small mammals. Designate two to three areas that are suitable for maintaining these features.

Guidelines

- Green waste generated through management activities (including grass cuttings, bramble arisings, and other vegetation) should be reused or disposed of sustainably, where possible. Where appropriate, arisings can be composted on-site in designated areas to create nutrient-poor compost that can later be used for soil improvement in non-sensitive zones or mulching young trees. Alternatively, material can be formed into habitat piles to provide valuable refuge for invertebrates and small mammals, enhancing local biodiversity. If on-site reuse is not feasible, green waste should be removed promptly and taken to a certified composting or green waste recycling facility to prevent nutrient build-up and maintain the low-fertility conditions of the grasslands.

On-site composting guidance

- Establish discrete heaps in low-visibility, non-sensitive areas.

- Avoid composting directly on grassland to prevent nutrient leaching.
- Turn heaps periodically to encourage breakdown, aiming for a balance of dry (bramble, woody) and green (grass, herbaceous) material.
- Use finished, low-nutrient compost only in appropriate areas (e.g., young tree planting), not spread across grasslands.

Habitat pile creation

- Construct brash piles or log stacks in partially shaded areas.
- Stack material loosely to provide air gaps and refuge spaces.
- Use a mix of coarse woody material (bramble, woody arisings) and finer herbaceous cuttings to create structural diversity.
- Locate piles away from regularly disturbed or high-traffic areas to maximise wildlife value.

Hard landscape features

Viewpoints

Management objectives

4.28 Preserve open views from key viewpoints in the Common, selectively thinning tree canopies and clearing vegetation, as necessary.

Initial works

- It may be necessary to remove vegetation and/or prune, thin, or fell trees if they are impeding key views from the Common. Removal should focus on trees that do not provide significant character benefits, are long-lived natives/provide support high levels of biodiversity.
- Following the initial phase of removal, it is advised that photographs be taken at each of the viewpoints to capture the intended view. This can then be used as a point of reference to guide management.

Long-term management guidelines

- Using reference photos, viewpoints should be regularly assessed for any vegetation regrowth that may impede views, and impeding vegetation should be removed promptly.

Future works

4.29 Interpretation signage already exists at several of the viewpoints. However, they are outdated about the current state of the Common and the surrounding area. While maintenance works will be able to restore some semblance of the imagery provided by the interpretation, future funding should explore opportunities to update the signage accordingly. Using updated signage to instil the vision of how viewpoints from the Common are intended to look can also help inform future management operations once initial clearance works have been undertaken.

Heritage features

4.30 The following section covers the management objectives of the Commons' heritage features. Much of which falls within amenity grassland, and as such the practical management of these features has been addressed within the amenity grassland section.

4.31 The War Memorial has been treated as an extension of this section, given its standalone management requirements.

Management objectives

4.32 Maintain and sensitively manage heritage assets and character features, including exposed rocks, distinct trees, and built features, ensuring that their cultural and historical significance is not obscured by overgrown vegetation or neglect. Key heritage features include:

- Y Garreg Siglo Bardic Complex
- Ring Cairn and Two Standing Stones Rocking stone

Long-term management guidance

- To be managed in line with amenity grassland.

War memorial

Management objectives

4.33 Ensure the memorial, paving and fencing are kept clean and presentable, and the grassland has a healthy and dense sward.

Guidelines

- Maintain grass height between 50-75mm, approximately 14 cuts per year.
- Cutting frequency during the growing season is to be between 8 and 12 days. Outside the growing season, frequency will be based on the rate of growth and cuts needed to maintain the grass to the specified height range.

- Ensure a cut is undertaken a week before Armistice Sunday.

Future works

4.34 There is potential to improve the visual amenity and biodiversity value of the memorial by introducing character-sensitive wildflower planting, such as a poppy-inclusive wildflower mix.

Site furniture: signage, benches, interpretation, bins

Management objectives

4.35 Maintain signage, benches, interpretation panels, and bins so they are presentable, functional, and free from graffiti, replacing any items damaged by vandalism. Ensure all features are consistent in style and in keeping with the character of the Common.

Guidelines

- Ensure all items of site furniture are kept clean (with interpretation and wayfinding information clearly visible) and free of graffiti.
- Any damages are to be repaired promptly, and replacements made as required to match existing furniture and features.

Formal pathways

Management objectives

4.36 Maintain safe, accessible, and well-kept pathways, ensuring they are disability-friendly and resilient to flooding through appropriate low-intervention drainage solutions where required.

Guidelines

4.37 Mow grass verges to 50-75mm at a width of 1m, approximately 14 times a year using a rotary mower and finishing with the strimmer, where necessary.

4.38 Cutting frequency during the growing season is to be between 8 and 12 days. Outside the growth season, frequency will be based on the rate of growth and cuts needed to maintain the grass to the specified height range.

4.39 Any path surfaces adjacent to the grass areas to be swept after grass cutting.

4.40 All grass to be raked out, and the clippings disposed of.

4.41 Drainage ditches to be re-dug as necessary to prevent flooding of pathways.

Future works

4.42 There are several areas of the pathway which would benefit from surface repairs or being completely resurfaced.

4.43 There is potential to explore long-term solutions to surface water flooding, which are likely to increase in frequency and severity during the winter months as a result of climate change. Options could include sub-surface drainage underneath the footpath or the creation of concrete gullies running across the path.

Informal pathways

Management objectives

4.44 Maintain informal pathways and adjacent vegetation to ensure they remain accessible, safe, and in keeping with the natural character of the Common.

Guidelines

4.45 Maintain grass pathways, cutting to a height between 50-75mm at a width of 2m. Approximately 12 cuts a year.

4.46 During the growing season, cut every 3-4 weeks, adjusting the cutting frequency based on the rate of growth and the number of cuts needed to prevent overgrowth.

4.47 During the dormant season, no cutting should be needed unless the weather is mild. If growth continues, one cut may be necessary.

4.48 All grass to be raked out, and the clippings disposed of.

Future works

4.49 Potential to enhance existing key informal pathways, as shown in **Figure 4.5**. Both pathways border on formal pathways, and given their use within the context of the Common, there is an opportunity to improve these pathways via natural surfacing, such as wood chip or gravel, that respects their natural character whilst also improving year-round accessibility.

Bird and bat boxes

Management objectives

4.50 Maintain and monitor bird and bat boxes to ensure they remain secure, in good condition, and provide suitable habitat.

Guidelines

4.51 Ensure boxes remain secure and free from damage. Replace any broken or missing boxes promptly.

4.52 Maintain clear flight paths to box entrances by trimming back overhanging vegetation where necessary.

4.53 Position new boxes in suitable locations to maximise value.

Future works

4.54 Look for opportunities to install additional bird and bat boxes in suitable locations.

Habitat management methods

Bramble management

Initial removal phase

4.55 Removal is best carried out between late autumn and early spring when ground conditions allow and before the growing season. Removal involves four key elements:

- Manual or mechanical removal: Cut stems back to ground level using brushcutters, loppers, or flails. Continued cutbacks help to weaken root systems.
- Root management: Dig out or grub up root crowns where feasible to prevent regrowth.
- Follow-up control:
  - Buffer and scallop cutting. If aiming to prevent any regrowth. Revisit annually to cut back, targeting young shoots.
  - Large stand clearance. If creating stands of varying ages, rotate cutting on a 2-3 year basis.
- Where possible, prioritise mechanical methods to protect non-target species and soil health. Use herbicide only if necessary.

4.56 Cut material should be removed from site or heaped in designated piles for wildlife habitat (if appropriate).

Long-term management guidelines

4.57 Brambles to be managed carefully to prevent encroachment and loss of species-rich grassland.

4.58 Establish a cutting programme and cut brambles on rotation to manage regrowth. Adjusting frequency based on management intention, i.e. increased frequency for permanent removal (scallops and buffer strips), and less frequent if creating a mosaic of varying sward heights (long rotation cutting).

4.59 Avoid cutting between March and August to prevent disturbing birds during nesting season. Prioritise mechanical removal methods, only using herbicides as a last resort.

Bracken management

Initial removal phase

4.60 Removal and control of bracken is best initiated between late spring and mid-summer, targeting periods when fronds are fully expanded but before spore release (typically June to late July). This timing depletes the rhizome's energy reserves and reduces long-term vigour. Removal involves four key elements:

- Mechanical suppression: Cut, bruise, or crush fronds using brushcutters, hand tools, or specialist bracken rollers. Two treatments per season (June and late July/August) for several consecutive years are recommended for effective control.
- Rhizome management: In areas where ground disturbance is acceptable, dig out rhizome sections to reduce regrowth.
- Follow-up control: Monitor treated areas annually and repeat cutting/rolling to prevent re-establishment.
- Herbicide application: Only where mechanical methods are impractical or ineffective, following all regulatory guidance. Spot treat to avoid impacts on non-target vegetation.

4.61 Cut material should be removed or heaped in designated piles for wildlife, avoiding excessive nutrient enrichment in species-rich grassland.

Long-term management guidelines

4.62 Bracken to be managed to prevent encroachment into acid grassland, heathland, or heritage features, and retain structural diversity where beneficial for wildlife.

4.63 Establish a cyclical management programme, applying 1–2 cuts per year for at least 3–5 consecutive years in problem areas to deplete rhizome reserves and achieve sustained reduction.

4.64 Where bracken is retained for habitat value, maintain buffer strips or scalloped edges to prevent spread into priority habitats.

4.65 Avoid cutting between March and late July in areas known to support birds or other wildlife.

4.66 Reducing In open habitat restoration projects, combine bracken control with follow-up reseeding or natural regeneration of desirable species to prevent recolonisation.

4.67 See Bracken Management [1] for further guidance.

Himalayan Balsam control

Initial removal phase

4.68 Control is best undertaken between late May and early July, before flowering and seed set. Removal involves three key elements:

- Manual removal. Hand-pull plants at the base, ensuring roots are removed to prevent regrowth. This is effective in small or sensitive areas and suitable for volunteer groups.
- Mechanical removal: In dense stands, cut or strim stems close to ground level before flowering.
- Follow-up control: Repeat removal within the same season if regrowth occurs and revisit annually until the seed bank is depleted (typically 2–3 years).

4.69 Cut or pulled material should be removed from the site or composted away from watercourses, ensuring plants cannot re-root or set seed.

Long-term management guidelines

4.70 Maintain annual monitoring in previously infested areas to identify and remove seedlings promptly.

4.71 Target control along watercourses first, working upstream to downstream to prevent reseeding from untreated areas.

4.72 Promote natural regeneration or replant with native riparian species after clearance to reduce recolonisation potential.

[1] UK Best Practice Guidance – Bracken Management. Available at https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2024-06/introduction-bracken.pdf

Pontypridd Landscape Management Plans
Pontypridd Town Council

LUC

Figure 4.5: Coedpenmaen Common Habitat Management Plan

- Site boundary
- Heritage feature
- Viewpoint
- South east woodland glade
- War memorial

Boundary broadleaved woodland
- Area 1: West woodland
- Area 2: Northwest woodland
- Area 3: North boundary woodland
- Area 4: Southeast woodland

Central acid grassland
- Area 5: Central plateau
- Area 6: Rough acid grassland
- Area 7: North west scrub

Central scrub
- Area 8: Bracken and bramble scrub
- Area 9: Southern woodland
- Area 10: Woody scrub pocket

Amenity grassland
- Area 11: Wildflower meadow
- Amenity grassland

Stream
- Watercourse

Site furniture
- Bin
- Benches

Pathways
- Formal
- Informal
- Informal (proposed)

0 20 40 Metres

Map scale 1:2,100 @ A3

Chapter 5
Work Schedule

5.1 The tables below set out the annual work programme and schedule for all management and maintenance operations. The schedule should be read in conjunction with site plans in **Figure 4.5** and the management guidelines set out in **Chapter 5**.

Table 5.1 Coedpenmaen Common Annual Work Programme

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
Trees and Broadleaved Woodlands				
General – Whole Common				
Visual inspection	Monitor for safety hazards, disease, pests, and undesired sapling growth.	Weekly, June - October, and after storms / high winds.	As required	Prioritise high-use areas, notably formal and informal footpaths. Include ash dieback monitoring.
Maintenance of trees along footpaths/high-risk zones.	Removal of structurally compromised branches/ overhanging vegetation.	As required.	1	Follow BS 3998:2010. Remove deadwood where risk. Update tree surveys.
Sapling removal	Removing unwanted saplings.	As required		If unsure of where saplings are undesirable, management objectives will provide guidance on the character of management areas.
Area 3: North Boundary Woodland and Area 4: Southeast Woodland				
Initial works				
Bramble cut – scallops and buffer strips	Create scallops, buffer strips, and define open areas for future retention.	November - February.	1	Width of cut to vary from 1-3m. May be necessary to undertake repeated cuttings to weaken root systems for removal.
Maintenance				

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
Glade cut	Maintain open structure.	Year-round, with increased frequency during the growing season.	4	Cut grasses to 50–75 mm. Reinforcing existing open areas.
Bramble cut – scallops and buffer strips.	Maintain scallops and buffer strips from initial cutback.	Nov–Feb	1-2	
Central Acid Grassland				
Area 5: Central Plateau				
Grass cut	Maintain short sward	Apr, Aug	2	Cut to 50–75 mm; remove arisings. Avoid early summer cutting.
Area 6: Rough Acid Grassland				
Grass cut	Maintain long-grass sward	Sept	1	Cut to 50–75 mm; remove arisings. Avoid early summer cutting.
Scrub control	Prevent encroachment from scrub stands.	Nov–Feb	1	Control margins of bramble stands.
Area 7: Northwest Scrub				
Initial works				
Bramble buffer strip cut	Create buffer strip in the northern area bordering adjacent pathway.	November - February.	1	Buffer strip 2-3m in width. May be necessary to undertake repeated cuttings to weaken root systems for removal.
Sapling removal	Prevent unwanted woodland establishment.	November - February.	1	Removal/thinning of small stand of saplings to the northwest of parcel, adjacent tarmac footpath. Use loppers or a wood saw.

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
Maintenance				
Bramble cut	Create and maintain buffer strips.	Nov–Feb	1-2	Maintain 1-2 m buffer around the perimeter. Maintain initial buffer cut to the north. Remove arisings.
Central Scrub				
Area 8: Bracken and Bramble Scrub				
Initial works				
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallop and buffer strips	Create scallops and buffer strips to reduce total area.	November - February.	1	Scallops and buffer strips range from 1-3m in width. May be necessary to undertake repeated cuttings to weaken root systems for removal.
Bramble and bracken cut/bash - initial rotation	Initial cut to create varying ages of stands and break up dominance.	November - February.	1	Create 1-2 large areas for rotational bramble cutting. Guided by landform and trees/hard features. Avoid full clearance.
Maintenance				
Grass cut	Maintain long-grass sward at central rough grassland.	Sept	1	Cut to 75-100mm; remove arisings. Avoid early summer cutting.
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallop and buffer strips	Maintain scallops and buffer strips.	Nov–Feb	1-2	Maintain 1–2m buffers to limit spread. Focused on informal pathways and the area border.
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – rotational maintenance	Break up dominance across large areas.	Nov–Feb	Every 2-3 years	Maintain rotational areas.

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
Area 9: Southern Woodland				
Initial works				
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallops, buffer strips, and clearance of overgrown areas	Create scallops, buffer strips, and remove overgrown areas.	November - February.	1	Scallops and buffer strips to range from 1-3m in width. Removal of bramble overgrowth surrounding benches. May be necessary to undertake repeated cuttings to weaken root systems for removal.
Maintenance				
Glade cut	Retain open areas.	Year-round, with increased frequency during the growing season.	4	Cut to 50–75 mm; remove arisings. Reinforcing existing open areas.
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallop and buffer strips	Maintain scallops and buffer strips.	Nov–Feb	1-2	Maintain 1–2m buffers to limit spread. Focused on informal pathways and the area border.
Vegetation clearance	Improve amenity and retain open canopy.	Nov–Feb	As necessary	Thin vegetation overgrowth by targeting saplings/ large overgrown stands of bramble. Focus on seating.
Area 10: Woody Scrub Pocket				
Scrub control	Prevent encroachment from scrub stands.	Nov–Feb	1	Control margins of bramble stands.
Amenity Grassland				

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
Grass cut	Maintain recreation space.	Year-round, with increased frequency during the growing season.	14	Cut to 50–75 mm; remove arisings. 8–12 days apart in growing season. Includes grass at heritage features, viewpoints, and site furniture. Mow and strim.
Area 11: Wildflower grassland				
Cut	Hay cut.	Sept	1	Cut to 75mm; remove arisings.
Leaf clearance	Retain low nutrient density.	Oct - Nov	6	Once a week.
Stream				
Vegetation clearance	Maintain flow and retain riparian habitat	Feb-Mar	1	Retain some riparian vegetation. Use pulling and lopping (if hardwood) to thin riparian species.
Debris removal	Prevent blockages	Year-round	As necessary	After heavy rain/storms.
Site Boundaries/Verges				
Verge cutting	Maintain safety & transition habitat	Apr–Sep	2–3	Cut to 50–75 mm; width 3 m. Remove arisings.
Invasive Species				
Himalayan balsam removal	Eradication.	May–Jul	1–2	Hand-pull before seed set.
Knotweed treatment	Eradication.		As required	Contractor-led herbicide application.
Buddleja	Eradication.		As required	Contractor-led herbicide application.
Heathland Patches				

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
Turf stripping	Heather rejuvenation	Sep–Feb	As required	Turf stripping or light scarification to stimulate seed bank germination. Where the seed bank is depleted, overseed with locally sourced heather seed or use plug planting to reintroduce cover.
Heather cutting	Maintain varied age structure	Sep–Feb	1 (rotational)	Only undertake on younger stands (5-15 years). Treat 10–20% annually.
Hard landscape features				
Site furniture				
Visual inspection	Check for wear and tear, and vandalism.		As required	Whenever visiting the site, check.
Clean	Clean with pressure washer at a frequency necessary to avoid a build-up of dirt on the hard surfaces.		As required	
Repairs	Ensure repairs are made promptly.	As required.	As required	
Viewpoints				
Initial works				
Vegetation clearance	Initial clearance efforts to open up views.	Nov-Feb	As required	Tree thinning/pruning, felling, scrub, and saplings clearance to re-establish key views. Ensure that mature/key character trees are maintained. If tree felling is necessary, focus on young trees

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
				that are yet to mature as key character points in the landscape.
Reference photos	Take reference photos to inform visual inspections and whether vegetation clearance is necessary.	Following vegetation clearance	As required	
Maintenance				
Visual inspection	Ensure vegetation regrowth is monitored and kept in line with reference photos.		As required	Whenever visiting the site, check. Use reference photos.
View vegetation clearance	Maintain open views	Nov–Feb	As required	Use reference photos.
War Memorial				
Grass cut	Maintain appearance	Year-round, with increased frequency during the growing season.	14	Cut to 50-75mm; remove arisings. 8–12 day cycle in growing season. Include pre-Armistice cut.
Fencing re-paint	Maintain appearance		As required	
Formal Paths				
Verge cut	Maintain appearance	Year-round, with increased frequency during the growing season.	14	Cut to 50–75 mm; remove arisings. Width 1 m. 8–12 day cycle in growing season.
Remove arisings	Retain low nutrient density.	Arisings removed after all cutting operations.	2-3	
Drainage ditch	Reduce flooding	Nov–Feb	As required	Re-dig shallow trenches as needed.
Informal Paths – Grass				

Task	Purpose	Timing	Frequency per annum	Notes
Grass path cut	Maintain access	Year-round, with increased frequency during the growing season.	12-13	Every 3–4 weeks; cut to 50–75 mm. Width 2m. Remove arisings. 1 winter cut, if necessary.
Remove arisings	Retain low nutrient density.	Arisings removed after all cutting operations.	12-13	
Bird & Bat Boxes				
Inspection			As required	Whenever visiting the site, check.
Replacement			As required	

Table 5.2 Coedpenmaen Common Annual Work Programme

Management activity	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Trees and Broadleaved Woodlands													
General – Whole Common													
Visual inspection	As required												
Maintenance of trees along footpaths/high-risk zones.	1												
Sapling removal	As required												
Area 3: North Boundary Woodland and Area 4: Southeast Woodland													
Initial works													
Bramble cut – scallops and buffer strips	1												
Maintenance													
Glade cut	4												
Bramble cut – scallops and buffer strips	1-2												
Central Acid Grassland													
Area 5: Central Plateau													

Management activity	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Grassland cut	2												
Area 6: Rough Acid Grassland													
Grassland cut	1												
Scrub control	1												
Area 7: Northwest Bramble Scrub													
Initial works													
Bramble buffer strip cut	1												
Sapling removal	1												
Maintenance													
Bramble cut	1-2												
Central Scrub													
Area 8: Bracken and Bramble Scrub													
Initial works													
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallop and buffer strips	1												

Management activity	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bramble and bracken cut/bash - initial rotation	1												
Maintenance													
Grass cut	1												
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallop and buffer strips	1-2												
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – rotational maintenance	Every 2-3 years												
Area 9: Southern Woodland													
Initial works													
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallops, buffer strips, and clearance of overgrown areas	1												
Maintenance													
Glade cut	4												
Bramble and bracken cut/bash – scallop and buffer strips	1-2												
Vegetation clearance	As required												

Management activity	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Area 10: Woody Scrub Pocket													
Encroachment control: bramble buffer strip cut	1												
Amenity Grassland													
Grass cut	14												
Area 11: Wildflower grassland													
Cut	1												
Leaf clearance	6												
Stream													
Vegetation clearance	1												
Debris removal	As required												
Site Boundaries/Verges													
Verge cutting	2-3												
Invasive Species													
Himalayan balsam removal	1-2												
Knotweed treatment	As required												

Management activity	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Buddleja	As required												
Heathland Patches													
Turf stripping	As required												
Heather cutting	1												
Hard landscape features													
Site furniture													
Visual inspection	As required												
Clean	As required												
Repairs	As required												
Viewpoints													
Visual inspection	As required												
View vegetation clearance	As required												
War Memorial													
Grass cut	14												
Fencing re-paint	As required												

Management activity	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Formal Paths													
Verge cut	14												
Drainage ditch	As required												
Informal Paths – Grass													
Grass path cut	13												
Bird & Bat Boxes													
Inspection													

Chapter 6
MMP Implementation, Monitoring, and Review

6.1 This MMP provides a working document which sets out principles to be tailored and refined by appointed management staff.

6.2 The document provides a framework for managing the site over a 30-year period; however, it will need to be reviewed and updated every 5 years to ensure management responds to the site's specific requirements.

6.3 A lead officer (internal or external) will oversee MMP implementation via periodic reviews. The management team will conduct annual reviews to assess progress against the work schedule and aims. Findings from surveys, tree inspections, and community feedback will inform adaptive management, ensuring practices remain effective and aligned with biodiversity and amenity goals.

6.4 Monitoring and review of the MMP should ideally comprise the following:

- Monitor success of maintenance regimes and outline work schedules throughout the year.
- Adjust & record changes to maintenance schedules and guidelines annually in response to site monitoring.
- Undertake a comprehensive review & update of the Management and Maintenance Plan every ten years, or sooner if significant changes occur, including a review of the vision, aims and objectives.

Appendix A

Updated baseline habitat assessment: Phase 1 habitat survey

13439 Pontypridd TC

Survey date: 25/07/2025

Constraints & limitations: None: survey was conducted within ideal survey season (May-August)

Surveying method: Phase 1 habitat survey

Habitat descriptions:

Broadleaved woodland (semi-natural)

The northwest of the site was dominated by broadleaved semi improved woodland dominated by sycamore (90%) with abundant pedunculate oak *Querus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, silver birch *Betula pendula*. Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* was found occasionally with rare occurrences of beech *Fagus sylvatica* and hazel *Corylus avellana*. The scrub layer within the woodland was dominated by Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* sp. agg., with occasional butterfly bush *Buddleja* and rare gorse *Ulex europaeus*. The field layer was dominated by Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, broad buckler fern *Dryopteris dilatata*, enchanters' nightshade *Circaea lutetiana,* with occasional male fern *Dryopteris filix-mas*, lady fern *Athyrium filix-femina* and wood avens *Geum urbanum*. Lastly, the ground layer was dominated by leaf litter and western ivy *Hedera helix*. The woodland contained three Schedule 9 invasive species, as listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended): Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Buddleja. Regular removal of these species is recommended as the top priority for the management of this woodland.

The central and southeastern side of the site was comprised of silver birch dominated broadleaved woodland, with abundant rowan, and occasional pedunculate oak and turkey oak. A few non-native tree species were present rarely, including eucalyptus and cyprus. Scott's Brome was also present rarely.

Acid Grassland

Within the centre of the site was a large area of acid grassland with varied sward height (ranging from 5-85cm). It was dominated by Purple Moor Grass *Molinia caerulea* with abundant Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and creeping soft grass *Holcus mollis*, as well as other acidic grass species including sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina*, common bent *Agrostic capillaris,* sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and occasional wavy hair grass *Deschmpsia flexuosa*. Several pockets of common heather *Calluna vulgaris* were present, alongside ragwort *Packera* sp. and rosebay willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium with* rare broad buckler fern. *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus* moss was dominant bryophyte on the ground. No *Sphagnum* moss species were identified on site. The central area within the acidic grassland was largely flat and had a uniform sward height of 5cm, due to regular access from the public, yet the floral species were consistent with that on the margins, with the addition of white clover *Trifolium repens* and broadleaved plantain *Plantago major*.

Bramble Scrub

Two large areas of bramble scrub were identified on site. These areas were almost exclusively comprised of bramble species, with occasional mature rowan and silver birch trees. The margins were dominated by rosebay willowherbs and Yorkshire fog grass.

Bracken (continuous)

One large area of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* was identified on the northeastern side of the site, located between broadleaved woodland to the north and acidic grassland to the south. Occasional mature rowan, pedunculate oak and silver birch trees were present within the bracken. The margins were dominated by purple moor grass, common bent, sweet vernal grass, Yorkshire fog, and creeping soft grass.

Amenity Grassland

Small pockets of amenity grassland were identified on site. These were located near footpaths and are subject to a regular mowing regime. They are frequently accessed by the public. Dominant species present included: Perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire fog, creeping soft grass, with frequent white clover, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, broadleaved plantain, and rare daisy *Bellis perennis*, red clover *Trifolium pratense* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* growing rarely.

Bare Ground

A few walking paths were located around the site, including both sealed surface concrete paths and dirt paths.

Watercourse

One dry stream was present within the south of the site. The stream was approximately 24cm wide. The margins of the stream were dominated by Himalayan balsam, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, remote sedge *Carex remota,* Brookline *Veronica beccabunga*, male fern, and broad buckler fern.

Appendix B

Coedpenmaen Common: Biodiversity Report

Coed-Pen-Maen Common

Biodiversity Assessment

Coed-Pen-Maen Common

Biodiversity Assessment

Introduction

This assessment provides a baseline biodiversity assessment of Coed-Pen-Maen Common. Using this baseline a series of suggested management and enhancement opportunities have been made. The principal objective is to elicit a wider discussion of land use management objectives within the Common and to encourage a sustainable biodiversity management, which can be successfully integrated into the wider functions of the Common.

Baseline Ecological status

Action for Nature: The local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taff provides a strategic context for biodiversity conservation within the County Borough. Survey work has identified a range of Key Priority Local Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats within the Common. These are;

Dry native woodland/ wood pasture
Wet alder carr
Planted Trees
Gorse scrub
Parkland
Dry acid grassland
Heathland
Ffridd/Bracken slopes
Purple moor-grass and rush pasture
Streams
Crags and scree

Habitat Assessments

Native Woodland

The principal area of native woodland occurs around the periphery of the Common, with a large expanse at the southern end of the Common (associated with the Pentre-bach quarry), and along the Site's steep western face. The woodland is mixed with oak, ash, alder, birch, hazel, holly, rowan, willow and hawthorn. Obvious differences in woodland structure occur across the Site, reflecting to a large degree the topography of the Site, and the age and maturity of the woodland present. While it is assumed that much of the woodland has established fairly recently, a good mixture of mature trees and developing woodland/understorey exists. In places the woodlands support a diverse and varied ground flora. In areas bramble and bracken dominate, but

the Common supports a diverse ground flora characterised by bluebell, pignut, wood sorrel, lesser celendine, wood sedge, male fern and creeping soft grass. Where heathland has become invaded by woodland heather and bilberry forms the ground flora. The woodlands are important breeding and feeding bird habitat including species such as willow warbler, chiffchaff, wren, robin, blackcap, blackbird, Mistle and song thrush. The woods represent good fungi habitat and will support a range of invertebrates, including a range of moth and butterflies, including species such as speckled wood, brimstone and purple hairstreak. The woodland edges will be good bat foraging areas.

When the Common was grazed, much of the existing woodland cover would have been characterised as wood pasture, with mature trees and bushes within a grazed pasture. This wood pasture management has long since ceased and the development of the woodland areas continues.

Planted Trees
The Common edge as defined by Common Road and Hospital Road and supports a mixture of original native oak and planted trees of various types, including horse chestnut, sycamore, etc. These municipal tree plantings are typical Edwardian parkland features. They create a park style edge to the Common.

Mature tree standing trees often has holes and recesses for nesting birds and roosting bats and can support a range of fungi.

Gorse Scrub
The Common supports small stands of gorse scrub. Gorse typically colonises unmanaged grasslands and heathlands and can be invasive. However it also represents excellent nesting bird habitat for species such as linnet and long-tailed tit, and the green hairstreak butterfly is also often associated with areas of gorse.

Acid Grassland /Neutral Grasslannd
On the Common's main plateau there is an expanse of unimproved and semi-improved acid grassland. Most of the grasslands is characteristic lowland acid grassland (classified under the National Vegetation Classification as U4). It supports a typical acid grassland sward with sheep's fescue, wavy-hair grass, common bent, sweet vernal grass, sheep's sorrel, heath bedstraw, and tormentil. In areas (along paths etc) a more neutral grassland sward occurs with common bent, sweet vernal grass, rye grass, crested dog's-tail and herbs such as bird's-foot trefoil, common knapweed, etc. Common grassland mosses (in particular *Rhytidiadelphus sqarrosus, Hylocomium splendens* and *Pleurozium schreberi*) are well established and the mown grassland swards have a good potential for grassland fungi (including waxcaps).

Traditionally the Common's grasslands were maintained by livestock grazing; today mowing retains the open areas of grassland.

Heathland
Only fairly small stands of pure dry heath (heather and bilberry) still occur on the Common. These include some larger areas on the plateau to the immediate north and west of the war memorial and smaller areas on the steep shear western faces of the common.

Dry heath also forms an important component of much of the acid grassland of the Site where it occurs within areas of mown acid grassland on the plateau. It is also present in areas of open birch woodland.

Ffridd
Bracken occurs in complex mosaics with acid, heath and marshy grassland within the Park. Bluebell is in particular associated with bracken areas in the Common.

Areas of bracken, especially if associated with species-rich ground flora (including dog violets) can represent good invertebrate habitat. Bracken in light birch woodland (especially its litter) can also represent nesting bird cover for species such as the tree pipit. Litter build up in association with violets can also be an important habitat for fritillary butterflies which may occur on the Common.

Vandals may occasionally burn areas of the Common's bracken. Traditionally low levels of cattle or pony grazing would represent the best means of breaking-up bracken litter and reducing the extent of burning. Grazing also assist in maintaining floristic diversity and preventing bracken from becoming over dominant.

Flushes, Issues and Rhos Pasture
The Common has at least one main stream running across its southern end and a series of other smaller issues and flushes. Most of the wet, marshy grassland within the park can be described as Rhos pasture. This consists of tiny fragments of unmanaged marshy grassland. Much of the lowland marshy grassland is rush dominated with purple moor-grass, soft and sharp flowered rush and associated species such as greater bird's-foot trefoil, meadowsweet, angelica, marsh thistle, cuckoo flower, lesser celendine, ragged robin, common sedge and meadow and creeping butttercup. In areas stands of *Polytrichum* moss become locally dominant, with *Sphagnum* and flushed areas support pennywort, marsh violets and hemlock water dropwort (more details see Appendix 1).

The most effective management for these areas (in conjunction with grassland and heath) would be grazing with cattle and pony. This would help to promote species diversity, encouraging wet heath and bog components and species such as small pearl-bordered fritillary.
The ranker marsh grassland offers nesting bird habitat. Meadow pipit was particular common in such areas and reed buntings hold territories in ranker wet areas.

Crags and scree
The steep west facing slopes of the Common support exposed rock faces and ledges. These ledges often support their own communities of heath and woodrush. In certain circumstances they can represent safe nesting sites for birds of prey (e.g. kestrel and peregrine) and raven.

Flora
The Common supports a wide range of flora reflecting the size of the Site and the diversity of habitats present. Over decades the shift from open grazed habitat to woodland and mown grasslands will have had a significant impact on Common's flora. Species associate with grassland and heath will have declined, while woodland species will have undoubtedly spread. Action for Nature: The Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taff contains a number of Action Plans for groups of lower plants and key flower species. Of these, the following may occur on the Common;

Lichens (range of habitats, including standing stones, trees and heath),
Mosses and Liverworts (grass, woodlands, heath and walls),
Ferns (walls and woodland),
Cornish Moneywort (damp heath/stream sides)
Ivy-leaved Bellflower (heath and acid grassland)
Black Knapweed (neutral grassland),
Bluebell (woodland),
Heath Spotted Orchid (acid grassland)

Cornish Moneywort is a particularly significant species. Recorded from only nine sites in Wales, the species has its main Welsh population in the Taff Ely area. In the 1885 it was recorded on Pontypridd Common by the well-known botanist John Storrie (Flora of Glamorgan, Wade et al, 1994). In recent years it has been re-found on Llantrisant Common and Y Graig, Llantrisant. A Denizen of stream sides and damp heathland this diminutive species may well still occur somewhere on Pontypridd Common.

Fauna
The Common supports a diverse woodland fauna, including a range of invertebrates, birds and small mammals. The open heathland, rough grassland and woodland edges represent idea reptile habitat and it would expected that the Common would support slowworm, common lizard, and possibly adder and grass snake. There are no well-established ponds on the Site, but it is likely that frogs, toads and palmate newts, will occur using rough grassland and woodland as foraging and hibernating habitat. Since livestock grazing ceased grassland and open heathland fauna will have declined. There will however still be a range of common grassland and heathland invertebrates and the potential for some key 'Common' birds, such as tree pipit, whinchat and stonechat. Action for Nature: The Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taff contains a number of Action Plans for fauna species. Of these, the following may occur on the Common;

Small pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly (wet, marshy areas with marsh violet)
Grayling butterfly (heath and acid grassland)
Double-line moth (woodland and grassland)
Brown-banded Carder Bee (species-rich grassland)
Amphibians (pools, woodland, grassland, etc)
Reptiles (heath, grass, woodland edges)
Buzzard (woodland)
Peregrine (crags)
Barn Owl (hunting over grassland/heath)
Nightjar (bracken and heathland)
Skylark (grassland)
Swift (foraging habitat)
House martin (foraging habitat)
Spotted Flycatcher (woodland edges)
Whinchat (rough grassland)
Styonechat (gorse, heath and rough grassland)
Song thrush (woodland, grassland edge)
Bullfinch (woodland)
Linnet (gorse thickets)
Hedgehog
Bats (woodland, woodland edge)
Badger (?)

Assessment of Common's Biodiversity
The Common supports an excellent diversity of habitats attracting a wide range of fauna. This biodiversity value is reflected in the Common designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). This is a planning designation, which identifies Sites of County Borough Wildlife Value (see Rhondda Cynon Taf (Taff Ely) Local Plan –1991-2006, Sites of Importance for Narture Conservation (policy en11) Appendix 3). The SINC description is;

82. *Coed-Pen-Maen Common (NGR ST 079903)*
Otherwise known as Pontypridd Common, perched on the eastern valleyside above Pontypridd town, this popular site supports a diverse mixture of woodland, grassland, heath, ffridd and crags. Areas of the open Common 'plateau' are maintained by mowing while much of the less accessible parts of the site have become woodland. The site supports a range of flora and fauna and is an historic site for Cornish moneywort.

The number of relevant Action for Nature, Habitat and Species Action Plans further illustrates the significance of the Common.

While the Common is of undoubted biodiversity value the Site is significantly different from the 19th Century Common on which John Storrie botanised. There has been a significant shift from open grazed grass and heathland to woodland. The remnant open habitats are maintained by mowing (and occasional fires). The maintenance of the remaining open habitats and the fine-tuning of management would help to retain, and enhance, classic 'Common' habitats and species. Whilst traditionally this would be achieved

through cattle or pony grazing (as employed on Llantrisant Common SSSI) the urban nature of Pontypridd Common and public perception and concern would make the re-introduction of grazing challenging (although grazing on urban spaces does occur successfully elsewhere in Britain and should not be lightly disregarded). The management and continued maintenance of open habitat may therefore need to depend upon mechanical means and again the challenge is to develop a management programme, which can balance the amenity value of 'open' areas whilst maximising their biodiversity potential.

A majority of the Common is now well-established woodland and should be maintained as such. The woodlands areas should largely be allowed to continue there natural development, however some selective management would help to assist both amenity use and biodiversity and consideration should be given to Woodland Grant Scheme.

Management Recommendations

Action 1 – Grassland/Marshy Grassland/Bracken Management
Objective
To restore a diversity of grassland habitats, within a structured management programme
Proposal
Varying the mowing regime of the Plateau areas and creating areas of quasi-hay meadow areas would potential increase grassland diversity. This could be achieved by variations of some of the existing management programmes, but taller grass/hay will need to be managed by machines capable of dealing with such material. Also cut hay must be removed from the Site. The Alpine Hay Bailer (see attached details) is a possible management tool, the employment of specific management contractors could also be considered.

Action 2 – Woodland Management
Objective
Develop a long-term programme of woodland management to enhance biodiversity, amenity and landscape
Proposal
While the woodland areas are ecological valuable, there is a potential that some structured woodland management could improve both the ecological and amenity value of some areas. Therefore review the appropriateness of a woodland grant scheme and explore the potential for future grant assisted management. Initially review the site with Coed Cymru and develop a prioritised list of woodland management zones.

Action 3 - Heathland Management
Objective
Maintain and enhance heath land areas within a wider management strategy.
Proposal
Heathland needs to be managed. Traditionally light grazing would maintain the heath and also periodic controlled burns would have been used to promote new growth. Without management heathland become dominated by

increasingly old 'leggy' heather bushes and become invaded by birch woodland and gorse scrub. Heathland is a fundamental feature of the common and should be retained and enhanced. Mechanical management is possible and again depends upon the use of appropriate machinery and methods.

Action 4 – Ponds
Objectives
To create small pond(s), which amphibians and pond life will colonise and which will improve biodiversity of the Common and visitor interest.
Proposal
The Common does not have any permanent ponds and its potential use by amphibians and other pond life, is therefore limited. A series of small, well-positioned ponds would help to increase the biodiversity value of the Common and the interest of visitors. It would be important that ponds were not dug in areas of existing biodiversity value (e.g. marshy grassland/heath) and they would need to be designed to avoid steeply shelving edges or excessive deep water. A huge amount of guidance exists for biodiversity safe pond construction. Ponds would need occasional management (clearing-out).

Action 5 – Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam Control
Objectives
Eradicate Japanese knotweed and Himalayan Balsam
Proposal
Map all stands of the above and instigate a control programme. Recent evidence indicates that single application of gyphosate herbicide in late summer can have a high kill rate on Japanese knotweed

Himalayan Balsam can be controlled either by spraying or mechanically cutting (strimming) in early summer.

Considerable guidance and expertise has been developed for invasive plant control. Environment Agency, and WDA have produce guidance. The County Borough Council is piloting new methods of Japanese Knotweed control and it is recommended that the Council's Landscape Architect, Ray Edwards is consulted for details.

Action 6 - bird and bat boxes
Objectives
Increase numbers of birds and bats using the common and improve visitor interest
Proposal
Through the provision of a range of bird (including tit boxes, open fronted robin type, owl, and kestrel boxes) and bat boxes on trees increase the diversity and numbers of birds and bats. Mirror the bird and bat box scheme within Ynysangharad Park. Monitor boxes using local bird watchers.

Action 7 – Biodiversity Interpretation

Objectives

Raise awareness of the biodiversity value of the Common and the works to maintain and enhance this value. Encourage users to record wildlife.

Proposal

Develop interpretative biodiversity material.

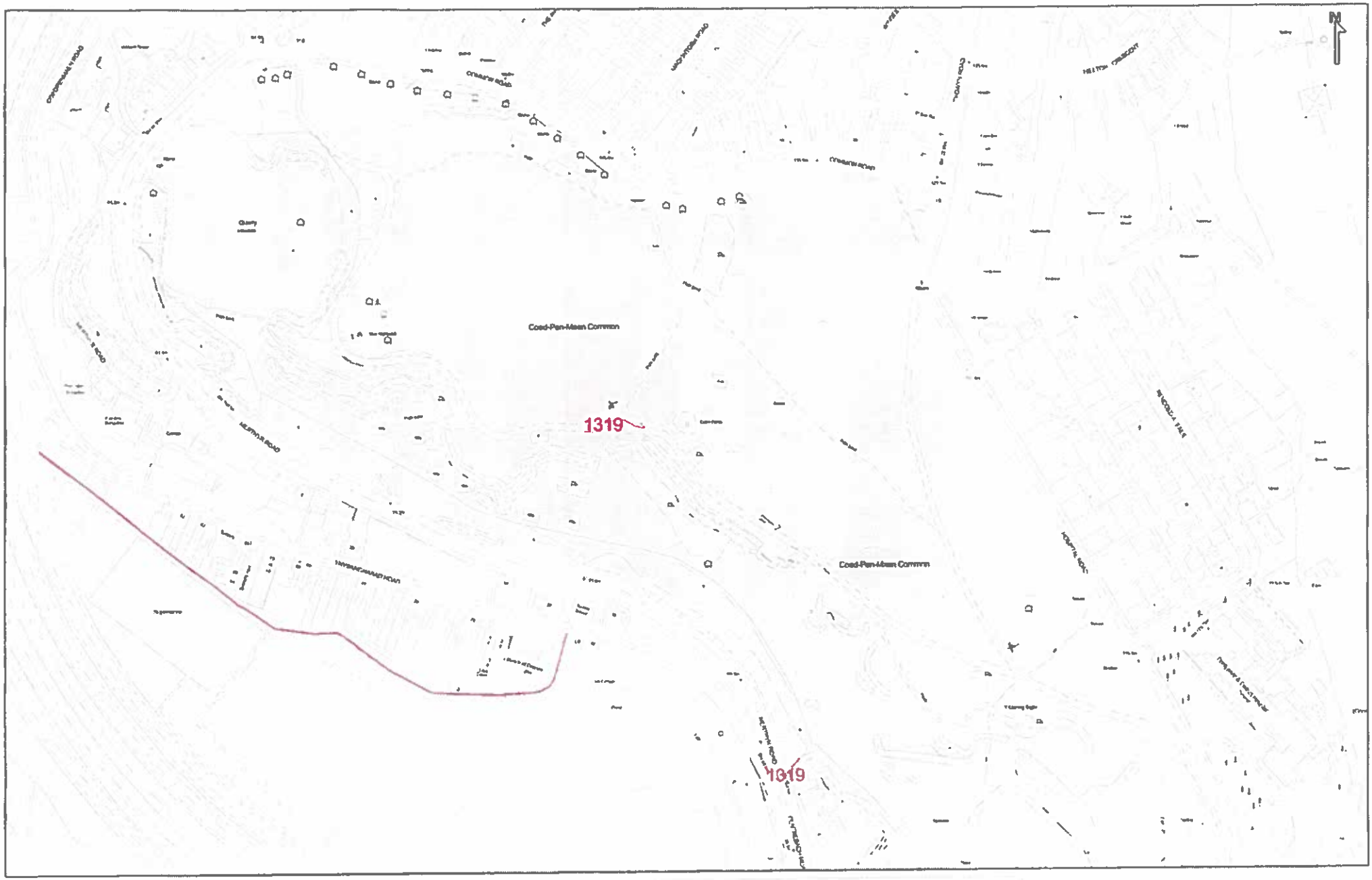
Action 8 – Dog Fouling Reduction

Objectives

Raise awareness of the health implications of dog fouling for people using the park, and irradicate dog fouling within the area completely.

Proposal

More anti dog fouling notices on site and possible fines or dog wardens.



Pomtypridd Common

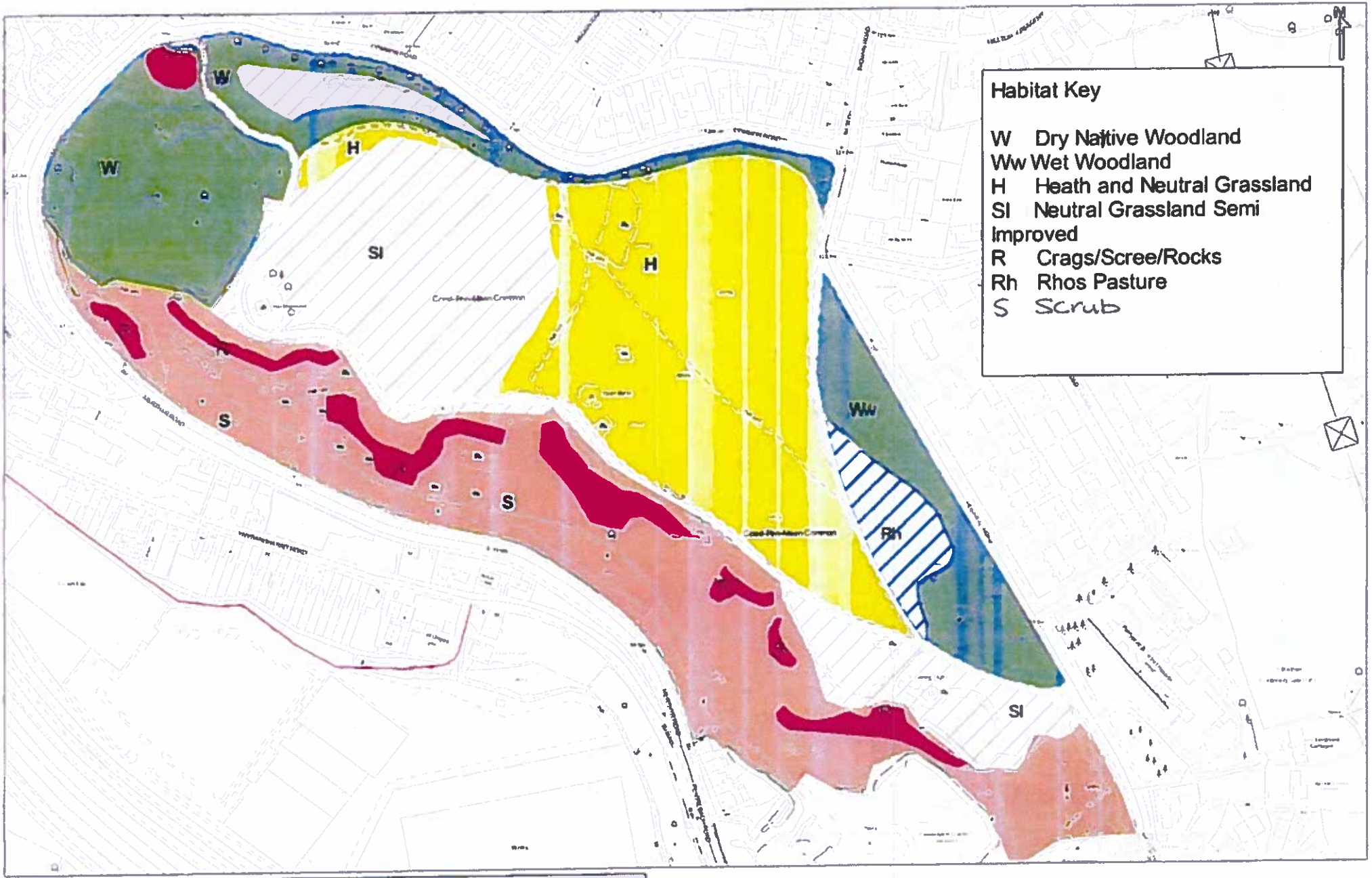
Key

ProwRCT

Open Country

MAP REF: ST0790SE

SCALE: 1:2500



Coedpenmaen Common Habitat Map

MAP REF: ST0890SW

SCALE: 1:2500

Appendix C

Grass cutting specifications for Open Spaces

CYNGOR TREF
PONTYPRIDD
TOWN COUNCIL

Specifications for Open Spaces

The following Open Spaces will require grass cutting to the specifications of the Pontypridd Town Council.

1. The Coedpenmaen Common

   All areas mentioned in the following list to be cut approximately 10-12 times per year or maximum growth between cuts 80mm and minimum cut to be 25mm. The only exception will be the large playing field on the Common. This area has bed rock just below the surface, resulting in poor grass growth, particularly during dry periods. Therefore the grass will only need to be cut approx twice during the growing period.

   All the grass areas in question should be raked out, the clippings disposed of (a local allotment will accept the clippings for mulch) any path services adjacent to the grass areas to be swept after grass cutting.

   a) The grass verges on the internal Common paths are cut to a width of 1 Mtr; using a rotary mower and finished off with a strimmer where necessary.
   b) The feature areas around the Druid Stones and the area directly opposite the Cottage Hospital are to be cut as specified. Make sure grasses growing tight to fixtures e.g. Druid Stones, wayside seats and litter bins are cut using a strimmer.

The following Open Spaces will require grass cutting to the following specifications of the Pontypridd Town Council.

1. The Common, including all path verges, the War Memorial grounds and feature areas around the Druid Stones. Total area 1¼ acre.

   a) The grass verges on the internal Common Roads are cut to a width of 1 Mtr.
   b) The grass verges/Banks on the Common perimeter is cut to a width of 3 Mtrs and is cut twice a year between April-September.
   c) The feature areas around the Druid Stones are cut approx 14 times a year or maximum height of grass between cuts is 80mm and minimum cut 25mm.
   d) The Common War Memorial grass is cut approx 14 times a year or maximum growth between cuts is 80mm, minimum cut of 25mm. Also prune memorial laurel bushes when necessary. Also the memorial grounds are cut a week before Armistice Sunday.
   e) Cut grass around and leading to way side seats from Ael-Y-Bryn Road are cut 14 times a year or maximum growth between cuts is 80mm, minimum cut 25mm.
   f) The north east corner of the Common, Junction of Hospital Road/Common Road is cut 14 times or maximum growth between cuts is 80mm minimum 25mm.

The following Open Spaces will require grass cutting to the specifications of the Pontyrpridd Town Council.

1. The Common, including the War Memorial grounds, path verges feature areas and playing field.
2. Darren Park.
3. Taff Meadow Grounds.
4. Rhydyfelin War Memorial Grounds.
5. Cilfynydd War Memorial Grounds.

All the areas are classes as General Amenity areas. The whole areas shall be cut leaving no area un cut between rows and producing an even height across the whole area. The total number of cuts, and height of cut shall be:

	General Amenity Areas	Maximum cuts / year	Height of cut
1.	General Amenity Areas	14	20mm
2.	Common Playing Field	2	20mm

The period of time between cuts during the growing season shall unless otherwise instructed, or delayed by ground conditions be no greater or less than:

	Type of Area	Working days between cuts Max	Min
1.	General Amenity Area	12	8
2.	Common Playing Field	10 (weeks)	8 (weeks)