



LOWER HOOPERN VALLEY Biodiversity Enhancement Proposals



ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING HABITATS

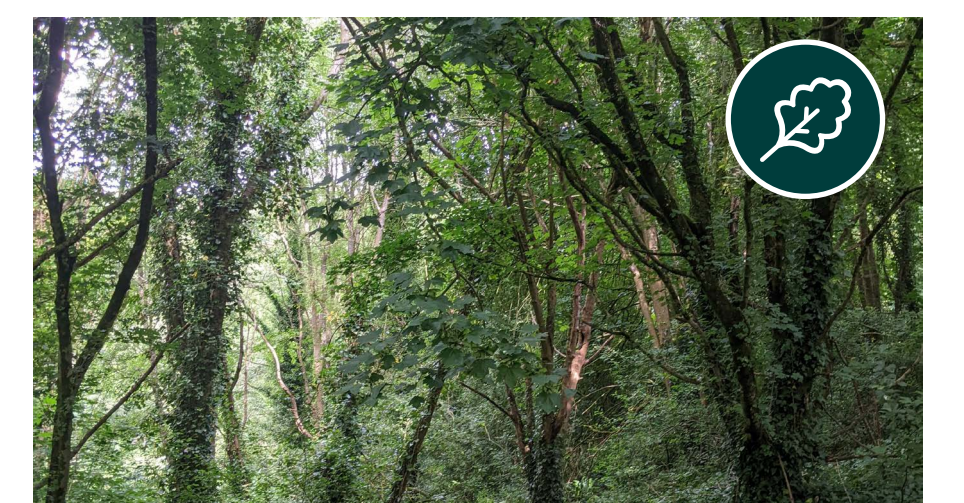
GRASSLANDS

- Manage as hay meadows to increase species diversity
- Cut back encroaching scrub to restore more extensive grassland cover
- Control invasive weeds to improve grassland quality
- Permit access along mown paths
- Stockproof fencing, access gates and water supply to be provided if grazing following hay cut is preferred management regime (August–November)



WOODLANDS

- Maintain current areas of broadleaved and ornamental plantation woodlands
- Improve structural and species diversity within tree, shrub and ground layers
- Control invasive non-native species (e.g. laurel) and bramble scrub
- Maintain dense scrub around woodland margins to provide woodland edge habitat and discourage access



WOODLAND/SCRUB MOSAIC

- Encourage a mosaic of woodland, scrub and grassland habitat to develop on eastern valley side
- Extend and maintain the 'ecotone' (transition) between these habitats to enhance biodiversity



WETLANDS

- Clear debris and litter throughout Taddiforde Brook corridor to improve habitat and water quality
- Reduce shading of watercourse by localised tree/scrub clearance (e.g. non-native cherry laurel) to enhance range and diversity of wetland habitats
- Extend open water and marsh habitat in areas of former ponds
- Consider opportunities to slow the flow of water around existing dam structures to provide downstream flood attenuation benefits



HEDGEROWS AND SPECIMEN/VETERAN TREES

- Manage individual specimen and veteran trees to ensure their survival within woodland and grassland areas and along historic hedge-lines
- Fill gaps and replace diseased trees within remnant outgrown hedgerows to enhance their condition, biodiversity and effectiveness as field boundaries



HABITAT CREATION

POND RESTORATION

- Restore former area of open water in area above derelict dam structure, upstream of footbridge
- Clear riverside scrub to allow dredging and removal of accumulated silt in former pond area
- Impede flow of water by either repair of existing dam structure or construction of 'woody debris dam' within side channel (subject to feasibility assessment)
- Promote development of a diverse range of aquatic and marginal wetland habitats around the pond
- Provide decked access to one side of the pond for nature study and quiet enjoyment (see infrastructure proposals)



NEW HEDGEROW & TREE PLANTING

NEW HEDGEROW & TREE PLANTING

- Plant two new hedgerows of mixed, native species to restore historic field pattern and enhance habitat connectivity
- Close gaps and replace diseased trees (e.g. elm) within remnant outgrown hedgerows, to enhance their biodiversity and effectiveness as field boundaries
- Introduce two small groups of copse tree planting and a few individual specimen trees to recreate former parkland landscape features on northern valley slopes
- Introduce small patches of new native tree planting within areas of dense scrub on southern valley side, to promote development of diverse habitat mosaic






LOWER HOOPERN VALLEY

New Infrastructure Proposals



SIGNS & INFORMATION BOARDS

-  Interpretation boards at key locations (visitor shelter and pond platform), to include information about wildlife, site access and other features of interest
-  Other signage and waymarking of an appropriate 'countryside' character at site entrances and within access network, to guide and inform users of footpath routes and responsible behaviour to protect wildlife



ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

ENTRANCES & GATES

-  New entrance to be created off Prince of Wales Road to provide principal point of pedestrian access to the valley and 'arrival space' on plateau
-  Inclusive access gates to be provided at existing and new site entrances and within field boundaries where required




FOOTPATHS

-  Public Right of Way
-  Permissive mown footpath network to be maintained
-  Former riverside path to be reinstated
-  New inclusive access route (<1:21 gradient) to be created within 'arrival space' on level plateau, surface to be of an appropriate rural character
-  New gentle gradient (<1:21) winding mown path to be created to enhance inclusive access to wider footpath network
-  Path subject to seasonal diversion to provide disturbance-free area for ground-nesting birds
-  New steps to be created on steeply sloping ground, of an appropriate rural character



SEATS & BINS

-  A limited number of bench style seats to be provided at elevated viewpoints and pond area, to provide opportunities to rest, to enjoy views and observe nature
-  Bins for litter and dog poo located at site entrances, to encourage responsible use of the site



EDUCATION FACILITIES

POND PLATFORM*

- Small decked platform constructed over water on northern side of newly restored pond (see habitat creation proposals), to allow for nature study (e.g. pond dipping, water sampling) and quiet enjoyment
- Incorporating safety measures, information board and limited seating



*Proposals subject to feasibility studies, community response and planning