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Section 1 - Policy

1.1 Introduction

Craig-y-nos Country Park is wholly owned and managed by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority. As such it recognises the purposes of the National Park Authority in guiding its management. However, it also recognises the purposes of country parks as laid down in different parliamentary legislation.

1.2 National Parks

The purposes of the National Park were originally set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949 and subsequently amended by the Environment Act, 1995. The latter Act states that the purposes of National Parks are:

conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas and

promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public.

An additional duty is placed on National Parks:

in pursuing the above purposes (they) shall have regard to the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park.

Further, a duty is placed on any "relevant authority",

in exercising or performing any functions (that) affect land in a National Park (to) have regard to the purposes (specified above), and, if it appears that there is a conflict between these purposes, (they) shall attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area comprised in the National Park.

Relevant authorities include government departments, public bodies and statutory undertakers.

1.3 Country Parks

The legislation enabling authorities to create country parks is the Countryside Act (1968) and states that the purposes of a country park are:

to provide or improve opportunities for the enjoyment of the countryside by the public.

1.4 The National Park Management Plan

The National Park Authority is required by the 1995 Environment Act to review and publish a National Park Management Plan. It sets out a vision and a plan for the management of the Park as a whole. It also sets out the National Park Authority's aims for all aspects of its work over a five-year period. Finally, it shows how the National Park Authority is taking part in Local Agenda 21 and working toward sustainable development.

Of the many aims within the Plan, most contain direct or indirect relevance to the work of the Country Park.

1.5 Other legislation and obligations

Features management

SSSI

Part of the Country Park is within the boundary of the Craig y Rhiwarth SSSI. Consent in respect of Potentially Damaging Operations within this area must be obtained from CCW.

Biodiversity species

The Country Park has a number of species identified in the government's Biodiversity Action Plan as well as those identified in the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC(c) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora), the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). For a full species *list see File ref.: cpl conservation features\flora and fauna.*

Register of Historic Parks and Gardens

The CADW/ICOMOS Register of Historic Parks and Gardens forms a recent and important development in the knowledge and associated management operations within the Country Park. The site is a Grade II* Garden in the list.

Services/facilities management

Public Rights of Way

A number of PROWs cross and fringe the site (*see file: cpl map 4*).

Access for all

The site has been identified as one that is suitable for development.

Welsh Language Act

The National Park Authority has prepared a Welsh Language Scheme which influences communication throughout the site. The Country Park is in a part of the National Park with a high proportion of Welsh speakers.

Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act

The only activity offered under this legislation is remote mountain walking.

Whole site management

Local Agenda 21

The National Park has sustainability at the core of its policies and much of the work contributes to the aims of Local Agenda 21 (LA21).

Health and safety legislation

See Section 7 – legal and other obligations.

Deeds

Deeds of the Country Park commit resources to management of property outlined in File ref.: cp\infrastructure\deeds.

Best Value

All local authorities, including special purpose authorities such as the National Park Authority have a duty to adopt a system of Best Value. This is defined in the Local Government Bill (1998).

Section 2 - Description

2.1 General information

2.1.1 Location

Craig-y-nos Country Park is located in the upper Swansea Valley, adjacent to the A4067, 20 miles to the north of Swansea and 20 miles south of Brecon (see *file: cplmap 1*). It lies in the southwestern end of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

For management purposes the Country Park has been divided into 17 compartments - "blocks" - based on broad habitat types (see *file: cplmap 2*).

2.1.2 Area

The Country Park is approximately 40 acres/ 16 hectares in size.

2.1.3 Ownership and boundaries

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority opened the site in 1976. Several factors combined to create the drive towards ownership of the site:

Countryside Act 1968

This gave local authorities, including National Park Planning Boards, the power to create country parks.

Black Mountain "wilderness" area / Old Trecastle Road

The National Park Committee had recently declared their commitment to conservation of the relative wilderness qualities of the Black Mountain area. They perceived the increasing use of the adjacent Old Trecastle Road by private car users as a potential threat to this special quality.

Powys Health Authority

Owners of the land, they indicated their willingness to sell.

Chairman of the National Park Committee

Lord Watkins of Glyntawe was keen to see some benefit to the local population.

There are 4 landowners with shared boundaries (see file: cp\map 3):

1. Karen Williams, Pentre Cribarth Farm,
2. Ashford Price, National Showcaves Centre for Wales (Dan-yr-Ogof),
3. Dai Jones, Rhongur Uchaf Farm,
4. M.Gover and partner, Craig-y-Nos Castle.

The boundary is well defined by fences, gates and the river Tawe in places. A wall, currently in a poor state of repair defines part of the boundary between the Country Park and the Castle between the A4067 and the tool shed. A mixed hedge in poor-reasonable condition defines the boundary along the A4067 from the Visitor Centre northwards.

The Deeds indicate that the National Park Authority has shared responsibility for maintaining boundaries.

2.1.4 Public rights of way

There are 4 PROWs which cross the Country Park, three footpaths and a bridleway. The routes of these PROWs through the Country Park are shown in file: cp\map 4.

2.1.5 Services and pipelines

A number of services and pipelines run through the Country Park though most are concentrated in the car park area. File: cp\map 5 shows the routes of known services and pipelines. Some date from the Victorian era and the exact location is not always known. Map 5 should not be considered as exhaustive and care should be exercised with any excavation works, particularly in the car park area.

2.1.6 Management infrastructure

Permanent National Park staff who are actively involved in the management of the site on a daily basis are:

- Country Park Manager - Richard Levy,
- Assistant Country Park Manager - Suzanna Meekins ,
- Groundsman - Nick Jones,
- part-time Administrative/information Assistant - Norma Thomas,
- part-time cleaner - Marlyn Dowdeswell,
- part-time cleaner - Barbara Hughes.

Seasonal staffing may be budget-led but in recent years (1996 onwards) has been:

- full-time Seasonal Warden,
- part-time Seasonal Groundsman,
- part-time Seasonal Information Assistant.

The above staff are responsible for the day-to-day management of the site, and for the implementation of the management plan.

Support comes from other National Park staff including the Ecologist, the Woodlands Officer, the Solicitor, the Estate Team etc.. The Assistant National Park Officer (Visitor Services) - Bernard Watkins - has senior managerial responsibility for Craig-y-nos Country Park.

2.1.7 Physical infrastructure

There is a network of paths of varying surface and condition through the Country Park. There are three bridges crossing the river Tawe, referred to as the upper bridge, the middle bridge and the lower or white bridge.

There are a number of buildings on site, most dating from the Victorian period:

Visitor Centre, office and staff accommodation, classroom and boiler room	Originally Victorian Gardener's cottage, extended in the past (date unknown) and extended recently (classroom, boiler room - 1992, toilet block - 2000)
Old craft shop and disabled toilet/baby changing room	Victorian
Tool shed	Victorian, formerly kennels
Welly shed	Victorian
Game room	Victorian
Old toilet block	Victorian, formerly laundry
Environment Agency flood warning station	1995
Pavilion	Victorian

File: cp\map 5 shows the location of these buildings.

The car park area used to be the Victorian kitchen garden and the wall remains on two sides (north and east).

Old maps indicate previous structures no longer remaining - gazebo and rose garden for example.

Both the Fishpond and the Far Lake are artificial water bodies, constructed in Victorian times. Other built elements include a lade system behind the Fishpond and a storm drain that runs from the A4067 to the river Tawe next to the car park.

2.1.8 Map and photographic coverage

Site records contain a collection of more than 3500 colour transparencies, dating from 1976 to the present.

Maps may be generated by the Geographic Information System of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, based on Ordnance Survey and National Park data.

Victorian archive information includes maps and photographs, some of which have been copied as transparencies.

All of the above information is located in the Country Park office.

Aerial photographs dating from 1975, 1985 and 1993 are held in the National Park office in Brecon.

2.1. 9 Landscape

The landscape of the Upper Tawe Valley is characterised by:

- a glaciated U-shaped river valley,
- scattered upland farms,
- small to medium sized pasture fields on the lower slopes and the valley bottom, grazed by sheep and ponies with some fields managed for hay and silage,
- small to medium semi-natural woodlands on the valley sides,
- uplands of common grazing on acid grassland and heath, with limestone outcrops and scree,
- field boundaries of hedgerows, hedge and wall, post and wire fencing.

Three properties of note in the valley are the National Showcaves Centre for Wales (Dan-yr-Ogof), Craig-y-Nos Castle and Craig-y-nos Country Park.

2.2 Background to features

2.2.1 Geology and soils

The part of the valley in which the Country Park lies is flat-bottomed and quite narrow, flanked on either side by steep slopes of Carboniferous limestone. The combination of past glaciation and the continuing action of the river Tawe gives the site a soil based on the Old Red

Sandstone found two miles upstream to the north, despite the limestone bedrock. We do not have a more detailed analysis of the soil profile.

2.2.2 Hydrology

We have no detailed study of the hydrology of the area.

The river Tawe bisects the Country Park, and the river Llynfell joins the Tawe just north of the middle bridge.

Nant y Gwared flows from farmland to the west directly into the river; groundwater from the farm of the same name flows into the silt trap feeding the Fishpond. There is a system of water channels behind the Fishpond, including a lade branching from a feeder from the Llynfell to Blaenau Mill. This lade is often blocked as the main flow is required for the sewage treatment at Blaenau Mill. The Fishpond outflows to the Llynfell at 3 points.

A feeder channel runs from the river Tawe by the upper bridge to the Far Lake. The Lake is also fed by a spring rising close to the boundary at the north east of the site. The Far Lake overflows to the Tawe at its southernmost point.

A number of water channels run through the beechwood (#14) and outflow into the Tawe. The origin and function of these channels is not clear.

A lade runs through the Castle land and, for a short distance, through the Country Park to outflow into the Tawe downstream from the white bridge and opposite the corner of the boundary between Castle and Country Park.

2.2.3 Habitats

Compartment boundaries are based on broad habitat types. File ref.: cp\ infrastructure\maps gives a brief description of the habitats on a block basis, with approximate areas.

Archive maps held in the Country Park indicate that the hay meadow area has been permanent grassland since at least 1840, initially as pasture and since 1985 as hay meadow. In 1997 the National Park Ecologist described the sward as NVC MG5 (*Cynosurus cristatus* - *Centaurea nigra*) - MG6 (*Lolium perenne* - *Cynosurus cristatus*).

Archive maps and photographs indicate that much of the wooded character of the Country Park stems from Victorian planting and that the bulk of site was managed as pasture prior to the Victorian period. It is likely that many of the riverside trees are of self-seeded native origin.

There are 3 open water features :

- the Fishpond, #3 (Victorian) ; area approximately 0.4ha,

- the Far Lake, #15 (Victorian) ; area approximately 0.5ha,
- hay meadow pond, #5 (1985?); area approximately 0.02ha.

Other than the hay meadow, no NVC categories have been assigned to habitats within the Country Park.

2.2.4 Flora

We surveyed the herb species of the Country Park 1994 and 1996. The full results of the surveys are filed under File ref.: cp\ conservation features. A list of the known tree species is on file in File ref.: cp\ conservation features\woodland.

4 permanent quadrats were located in #6 in 1997 to monitor changes in the hay meadow sward species composition. A summary of this project is found in File ref.: cp\ conservation features\grassland.

We surveyed ferns in 1995. Results are found in the files as per flora surveys.

We have no surveys of bryophytes or lichens.

We have no nationally rare or important plant species. A county notifiable species - *Arabis hirsuta* - has been recorded as present in #1 1994 - 1999.

The location of sensitive plant species is given in File: cp\map 6, with explanations as to their sensitivities.

2.2.5 Fauna

With the exception of moths and small mammals, we have no detailed surveys of fauna. We keep incidental sightings of fauna (including birds and invertebrates) on file.

Small mammal trapping has been offered as an educational event since 1994. All trap records can be found in File ref.: cp\ conservation features\flora and fauna\mammals.

Moth trapping has been carried out on an *ad hoc* basis throughout the Country Park and also as a formal survey for a 5-week period in 1998. File ref.: cp\ conservation features\flora and fauna\moths summarises the species recorded in the Country Park.

File: cp\map 7 shows the locations of bird boxes sited around the Country Park. Bird boxes are managed through the Adopt-a-box project, details of which can be found in the Administration Manual. Annual summaries of use can be found on file.

File: cp\map 7 also shows the locations of bat boxes in the Country Park. These boxes are managed through the Rent-a-roost scheme, details of which can be found in the Administration Manual. Annual summaries of use can be found on file.

There are 2 badger setts within the Country Park though it is not known if they are used by the same group of animals. File: cp\map 8 marks their location. The use of sett A was last established in 1994, and the use of sett B was last established in 1997 when there was extensive new digging.

2.2.6 Archaeology/ past use

Archive maps and photographs show that much of what is now the Country Park was used as pasture land until the late 1870's when the land came under the ownership of the Victorian opera diva, Adelina Patti. Much of the grounds were then planted as pleasure grounds for Craig-y-Nos Castle, resulting in the current mix of native and exotic species.

Following the death of Patti in 1919 the property was sold to the Welsh National Memorial Foundation, with the Castle being used as a TB sanatorium and then a geriatric hospital.

In 1976 the property was split with the grounds being purchased by Powys County Council and handed over to the Brecon Beacons National Park Committee to be managed as a Country Park. In the years immediately following this purchase management focused on developing a basic infrastructure for visiting public.

2.2.7 Present conservation status

The northernmost part of the Country Park on the eastern side of the river Tawe lies within the Craig-y-Rhiwarth SSSI. The citation sheet and list of PDO's are given in File ref.: cp\obligations\SSSI.

In general the Country Park is afforded protection through its National Park ownership and management, and is subject to National Park policies.

Craig-y-nos Country Park has been designated by CADW as Grade II* on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

2.2.8 Past management for nature conservation

The site has been in the ownership of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority since 1976 and thus conservation has been integral to the management of the site. Table 1 below summarises key events.

Table 1	
Project	Date
Major tree felling	1976
Fishpond island created	1983
Fishpond margins altered	1983
Hay meadow seeded	1985
Hay meadow pond created	1986
Flood prevention	1987
Clearance after major storm damage (20 individuals)	1990
Waste woodchip and concrete birdboxes	1994
Alder/willow coppice Far Lake	1995
Flood prevention	1995
Roadside hedge laid	1995
Wildlife Garden	1996
Concrete bat boxes	1997
Otter holt	1997
Welsh oak bird boxes	1997
Major tree felling (22 individuals plus specified areas cleared)	1998
Fishpond margins altered	2000

2.2.9 Past management for historic features

Table 2 below summarises key events.

Table 2	
Project	Date
Kitchen garden made into car park	1976
Boathouse renovated	1978
Pavilion restoration	1978
Craft shop conversion	1986
Clay packed in Far Lake dam	1987
Tractor shed removed	1988
Kennel shed renovated	1989
Lower bridge resurfaced/new railings	1989
Slit packed behind sand bag wall on Far Lake	1994
Pavilion re-roofed	2000

2.2.10 Past status/ interest

The site was once part of the Craig-y-Nos estate, owned by the opera diva Adelina Patti from 1878 until her death in 1919. There is public interest in Patti and her connections with Craig-y-Nos.

2.3 Background to services/facilities

2.3.1 Present status

The National Park Authority owns the site. They manage it as a tourist attraction. Ownership and management of land designated as a Country Park are unique among all National Park Authorities in England and Wales. Four PROWs cross the site and others lead into the open countryside from the boundary.

The Visitor Centre functions as a National Park Information Centre and is seasonally staffed. We offer group activities and the site is part of the National Park Education Service.

2.3.2 Present use

The site is managed as a Country Park, i.e. it is opened on a daily basis to visiting public and groups for informal recreation, formal and informal education. Visitor numbers for recent years are found in File ref.: cp\ recreation services\statistics and numbers of school groups at File ref.: cp\ education services\statistics.

The grounds are managed with conservation of natural and historic features as a prime consideration.

2.3.3 Past management for services/facilities

Key events are found below in Table 3.

Table 3

Project	Date
Middle bridge installed	1976
Tennis court on site	1976 - 1990
Holiday flat in Visitor Centre	1981 - 1985
Countryside exhibition	1985
Watch group	1985 - 1988
Last Game Fair	1986
Joint marketing with Dan-yr-Ogof Showcaves	1986
Significant increase in school visits	1986 onwards
Significant increase in community talks	1986 onwards
Quarry trail developed (off-site)	1988

Patti exhibition installed	1989
Donated trees/benches scheme	1989 - 1993
Classroom, walkway and patio extension to Visitor Centre	1991
Prince of Wales award for services to environmental education	1992
Countryside exhibition installed	1993
Upper bridge installed	1995
Boardwalk	1995
Visitor Welcome Point	1997
21st birthday party	1997
Visitor Centre rewiring	1998
Castle boundary fence erected	1998
Visitor Centre re-roofing	1999
Sewage treatment plant installed	2000
Toilet block built	2000

Section 3 - Evaluation of features

3.1 Provisional list of features

- Woodland
- Parkland
- Grassland
- Wetland
- Historic landscape
- Otter population
- Bat populations
- (other BAP/legal species)

3.2 Evaluation - Woodland

Approximately 14% (5.3 hectares) of the Country Park can be considered woodland. The woodland areas exist as distinct pockets within the Country Park, some of which have particular dominant canopy. Over 70 species have been recorded in the Country Park. There are many exotic species present, having been planted during Victorian times and to a lesser extent under National Park management. The woodland pockets support a diverse range of associated flora and fauna species.

Part of the Craig y Rhiwarth SSSI falls within the Country Park boundary. This SSSI was designated because of its limestone plant communities, none of which are present within the Country Park boundary. Thus the woodland pocket which is also SSSI can be considered along with the other woodland pockets.

The planted nature of the woodland is visible to varying extents, especially in the pinewood where the grid formation can still be clearly seen. The planted pockets have a poor age structure with few (middle-aged) trees. The woodland strips bordering the river are of a semi-natural character seen elsewhere in the Tawe Valley.

The Craig-y-Nos estate, i.e. Victorian buildings and associated grounds, is a distinct landscape feature within the upper Swansea Valley and the Brecon Beacons National Park. The woodland within Craig-y-nos Country Park is a major part of this landscape feature.

The woodland areas are used for a range of environmental education study days and interpretive events, and for informal recreation. The balance of these uses varies substantially across the year.

In conclusion the woodland within Craig-y-nos Country Park is to be considered an important feature due to its landscape value locally (within the Swansea Valley), regionally and nationally. It has further value for education, recreation and interpretation.

3.3 Evaluation - Parkland

There are 4 areas of parkland in the Country Park – the main meadow, the small meadow, the car park lawns, the Pavilion lawn.

Pocket	Area (ha)	Number of trees present
Main meadow	0.55	43
Small meadow	0.26	14
Car park lawns	0.40	57
Pavilion lawns	0.14	28

Note that the number of trees indicated refers to both established individuals and saplings planted to replace them in time.

The Rose Garden forms part of the Pavilion lawn and it is the opinion of the National Park Archaeologist that the planting on the Rose Garden threatens what is left of its structure and so should be removed. This issue will be discussed more thoroughly in the factors section of this feature.

There is a variety of tree species within the parkland, both native and exotic. Most of the trees are aged 50 – 100 years old, i.e. dating from the Victorian era, with a few having been planted by the National Park Authority within the past 25 years. A number of the older trees are in decline and 12 individuals have either been felled or have undergone remedial surgery in the last 2 years as a result. Nonetheless the parkland areas remain a distinct landscape feature.

Areas of grass have been left uncut through the summer months to increase the wildlife interest of the parkland.

The parkland areas are particularly popular with the visiting public, with the main meadow being one of the most frequented parts of the Country Park. The parkland offers opportunities for education and interpretive events.

In conclusion the parkland is to be considered an important feature because of its historical value as part of the Craig-y-nos estate and its current value as a recreational and educational resource.

3.4 Evaluation - Grassland

There are two distinct types of grassland in Craig-y-nos Country Park requiring substantially different management regimes: hay meadow and rough grassland.

The hay meadow area covers 1.5 hectares, typical in size to pasture/hay fields in the locality. There is a range of vascular plants within the sward – the author suggests that the diversity of species is greater than other pasture/hay fields in the locality. The species composition is generally typical of the locality, with a few exceptions due to the seeding project of 1985 (details in File ref.: cp\conservation features\grassland). With the exception of the wartime planting of potatoes, the hay meadow area has not been subject to improvements. The extent of species rich semi-improved grassland in the National Park is not known, but it is a habitat that is no longer common nationally.

The hay meadow fields are consistent with the local landscape of scattered upland farms – pasture/hay fields and woodland pockets on the valley sides and bottom, common grazing on the upland hill tops.

In conclusion the hay meadow sward is to be considered an important feature since it represents a habitat typical of the landscape but becoming increasingly uncommon across the UK.

There are small pockets of rough grassland dotted about the Country Park, most notably in #7, alongside the hay meadow boundary and in the southern tree nursery area. Note that rough grassland refers to areas of grassland not regularly managed and does not include the uncut shapes on the parkland, which are cut at the end of each season.

The rough grassland areas contain a limited diversity of plant species. Nonetheless, the habitat offers food and shelter opportunities to a variety of fauna species, notably invertebrates, small mammals and grass snakes.

Rough grassland is uncommon around managed farmland with high grazing pressure and in historic gardens.

In conclusion the rough grassland is to be considered an important feature since it has a value to associated fauna species and is uncommon in the locality.

3.5 Evaluation - Wetland

The water features in the Country Park are summarised as follows:

- two rivers - Tawe and Llynfell,
- stream -Nant-y-Gwared, flowing into the Tawe via the lade crossing the car park area,
- two springs - one rising to the west and flowing to the silt trap, one rising below Craig y Rhiwarth and flowing to the Far Lake,
- three ponds - Fishpond, Far Lake, hay meadow pond,
- a network of water channels throughout the park.

The ponds and channels are man-made.

Craig-y-nos Country Park sits in the valley taking its name from the river that runs through it – the Tawe. The river Tawe is a dominant landscape feature of the valley and flows north south through the Country Park, almost bisecting it. The levels of both rivers fluctuate greatly depending on the amount of rainfall. It is not uncommon for the river Tawe to rise (and fall) approximately 1m over a 24-hour period and to burst its banks on average 8-12 times a year. The river Llynfell flows a short distance through Craig-y-nos Country Park, and is a tributary of the river Tawe.

The riverbeds are of boulders and gravel (predominantly limestone in the Llynfell and predominantly sandstone in the Tawe). The rivers are used by spawning brown trout and bullheads, and salmon have been recorded. The Tawe and Tributaries Angling Club has argued that the stretch of the Tawe within the Country Park boundaries is one of the most

natural stretches along the course of the river. The upper stretches of the Tawe, including the stretch running through the Country Park, has been designated a *Class 1 River Ecosystem* in Swansea and Llanelli area LEAP (1999)

The rivers are a popular attraction for visiting public. Physical geography and invertebrate studies are two of the most popular study options for visiting schools, centred on the Tawe.

In conclusion the natural water features (rivers, stream and springs) within the Country Park are to be considered an important feature because of their landscape value (in particular the Tawe), their associated wildlife and their value as a recreational and educational resource.

The man-made water features, i.e. the ponds and water channels, date from the Victorian period with the exception of the hay meadow pond (created 1986). The Fishpond has a surface area of 220 square metres and the Far Lake a surface area of 0.49 hectares. Silting has reduced the depths of both. The Fishpond has two small islands, one constructed in Victorian times and the other in around 1982/83, and the Far Lake has one large island, probably constructed at the same time as the Lake.

As with the natural water features, the man-made water features host a diversity of vertebrate and invertebrate life. A recent study by a Swansea University student centred on their algal populations (File ref.: cp\ conservation features\man-made water features).

The Fishpond and the Far Lake are popular visitor attractions, as are their duck populations.

In conclusion the man-made water features are to be considered an important feature due to their association with the Victorian historic landscape and their continuing attraction to visiting public.

3.6 Evaluation - Historic landscape

The Craig-y-nos estate, i.e. Craig-y-nos Castle and the grounds, part of which form Craig-y-nos Country Park, has been designated by CADW Grade II* on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Parks and Gardens are designated because of their architectural features, ornamental structures and historic associations. Grading is for exceptional qualities (grade

one), special qualities (grade two star) and sites of special interest (grade two). The remaining Victorian elements include built components i.e. buildings, bridges, water bodies and channels, walls, rose garden, and planted components i.e. parkland, pinewood, rhododendron tunnel.

There is continued interest in the Victorian features and the owner of the Craig-y-Nos estate at the time – Adelina Patti. Both Patti and the Victorian features of the Country Park are part of our educational study days and public events.

The Craig-y-nos estate is a prominent landscape feature within the upper Swansea valley.

In conclusion the historic (Victorian) landscape is to be considered an important feature because of its designation and interest value to the public.

3.7 Evaluation - Otter population

The European otter is a protected species (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Chapter 69, Schedule 5) and has been named in the government's Biodiversity Action Plan. Otters are known to be present in the Country Park - spraints have been found in the Country Park on a regular basis from 1995. They are not known to be resident.

In conclusion otters are to be considered an important feature reflected in their statutory protection.

3.8 Evaluation - Bat populations

All UK bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), schedule 5 and (certain) species have been targeted by the UK government's Biodiversity Action Plan.

Five species have been recorded in the Country Park during summer months. There are no known nursery roosts. Both the main office building and the Pavilion have wintering bats but there is no detailed information on species or numbers.

In conclusion bats are to be considered an important feature reflected in their statutory protection.

3.9 Evaluation - Other BAP/legal species

Over 50 species in the BAP have been recorded for the site. They cover a range of species including birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish.

These species are an important feature reflected in their statutory protection.

3.10 Confirmed list of important features

- Woodland
- Parkland
- Hay meadow
- Rough grassland
- Natural water features
- Man-made water features
- Historic (Victorian) landscape
- Otters
- Bats
- Other species, as required by legislation and the UK BAP

Section 4 – Features objectives

4.1 Feature 1 – woodland

4.1.1 Summary description

The woodland is in distinct pockets, each with its own canopy species composition.

4.1.2 Favourable status

The woodland pockets will be at favourable status when:

- They are viable in the long term, i.e. the components of a woodland ecosystem are at a status that will allow the pockets to remain as woodland in the long term, and the extents of the pockets are stable or increasing,
- The canopy species composition per pocket is of a desirable mix, as specified in this plan.

4.1.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.1.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural, including physical	Human related
National Park Management Plan policies	Bats	Utilities
Health and safety legislation	Rhododendron	Visitor pressure
PROW's	River action	Donated trees
Boundaries and other lease obligations	Soil type/composition	Adopt-a-box/ Rent-a-roost
Register of HP& G Grade II* listing	Conflict of interests	Past management
Craig y Rhiwarth SSSI	Vehicle access	Grazing
Best value	Steep slopes	Availability of resources

Policy and legislation factors

Dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

Natural, including physical, factors

Bats

Bats use the woodland as summer roost sites (exact locations unknown). Before any woodland management is carried out an assessment on the impact on bat populations should be made.

Lower limit: impact assessment on bat populations prior to any tree surgery work

Monitoring project: consult National Park staff / licensed bat handler

Rhododendron

There is Rhododendron in the woodland areas. This species is normally regarded as undesirable within a woodland setting. However, rhododendron for this site must be considered within the context of the Victorian planting scheme. Where the species has a value as a screen between areas or is clearly a part of the Victorian planting scheme it should be retained but the extent controlled. Where the value - historic or otherwise - is unclear an assessment must be made on an individual (clump/bush) basis.

Upper limit: where plants form the block boundary, rhododendron height 2m
 (excepting tunnel);
 woodland rhododendron height 1m, and in no greater density than
 1999 levels

Monitoring project: annual visual check/ photomonitoring

River action

Several mature trees on the bank have exposed root systems and are vulnerable to collapse when the bank erodes further.

Monitoring project: annual diary check of riverbank trees lost

The Tawe bursts its banks on average 8-12 times a year and, depending on the severity of the flow, woodland areas are inundated. The National Park Woodland Officer suggests that this regular flooding has hastened the decline of beech within the park.

Soil type/composition

We do not know if any attempt was made to match past planting with the soil type present in the park. Soil type will affect the success of certain species to regenerate and this may influence the potential species composition of pockets.

Conflict of interests

The public presence in the Country Park may result in pressure to keep a "tidy" woodland, while nature conservation interests would prefer lying and standing deadwood, for example. A balance must be sought.

Also dealt with under recreation, education, and interpretation.

Vehicle access

Vehicle access across the river is either over the middle bridge or through the river. The middle bridge is currently awaiting assessment to determine a safe weight limit. The river can only be crossed by all-terrain vehicles when flow rates allow. The Tawe and Tributaries Angling Association have objected to vehicles crossing the river.

To get to woodland south of the Pavilion, vehicles must cross Craig-y-Nos Castle land. While Country Park staff hold gate keys, permission may still be needed depending on circumstances.

The restrictions described above can affect the management in certain woodland areas.

Monitoring project: check of access problems reported

Steep slopes

Blocks 7 and 16 have steep slopes. Any woodland management in these areas must take account of this.

Human related factors

Utilities

Overhead electricity lines cross the site in block 7. Most other services are concentrated in the car park area and include mains water pipes, buried electricity and telephone cables and buried LPG pipes. The sewage treatment plant (installed winter 2000) has an outfall pipe located on the west bank of the Llynfell (File: cplmap 5). Tree root systems and canopies cannot be allowed to interfere with the services described.

Visitor pressure

In general visitors tend to keep to the paths provided or those that have been eroded/created by volume of traffic, e.g. along the main meadow by the river. This concentrates pressure in certain areas, as does the provision of benches and seats. Compaction and trampling may limit regeneration opportunities. There is little vandalism, e.g. broken saplings and branches.

Upper limit: 3 incidences of vandalism of trees/saplings p.a.

Monitoring project: annual summary of problems reported by staff

Donated trees

During the period 1989 - 1993 the Country Park operated a scheme where members of the public could pay for a tree to be adopted by them. Country Park staff bought nursery standards and an accompanying plaque (*See File ref.: cplobligations\gifts, donations and loans*). While no formal agreement exists, there is a presumption to maintain donated trees. Conflicts can arise when the species is deemed inappropriate for the pocket or when we need to think about removal/relocation of an individual tree.

Monitoring project: check impact of tree work on donated trees

Adopt-a-box/ Rent-a-roost

These schemes enable members of the public to adopt bird and bat boxes, and to receive yearly updates on the use of them. These boxes are located on trees around the park (see *File: cplmap 7 for locations*). The impact of any woodland management on the boxes must be assessed, and if necessary the boxes relocated.

Monitoring project: check impact of tree work on A-a-b and R-a-r projects

Past management

There are no original planting records on site. Present day species give the clearest evidence of past management and vision – much of the woodland results from the designed landscape rather than from natural development. As the present species mature, a new vision is required or the assumed vision continued. .

Grazing

A winter let is offered in #6 – the hay meadow. There are no fences preventing sheep getting into #5 – the woodland strip bordering the river.

Monitoring project: sheep damage to trees during winter let

Availability of resources

Staffing -

- A member of staff with sufficient skill and expertise must undertake the twice-annual checks of the trees. The National Park Tree Safety Policy requires this. The National Park Woodland Officer carries out the inspections.

- Much of the ongoing management needs staff with relevant qualifications and experience. At present the Country Park Manager, Assistant Manager and Groundsman hold chainsaw certificates.

Budget -

- Since many of the trees are large mature specimens, and some are in challenging locations, specialist tree contractors may be needed. The costs of this can be difficult to budget for.

Note that the Environment Agency have cleared trees fallen across the river as part of their duties and therefore at no charge to the Country Park.

4.1.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

Much of the current management recognises that the majority of the trees are of a similar age and many are mature. The National Park Authority must provide a safe environment to staff and visitors alike and this has fed into decisions relating to individual or groups of trees. The felling of mature trees creates opportunities for regeneration. Relying on natural regeneration alone is likely to change the canopy species composition of the woodland, especially where exotics are likely to be out-competed by species such as ash and sycamore. In addition, shrub rhododendron could spread. Decisions relating to desired canopy mix, either by regeneration or replanting, must take into consideration the site's status as a Grade II* Historic Park and Garden, and the contribution of the woodland towards that status.

4.1.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Extent of woodland pockets**

As per the definition of favourable status, the extent of the habitat must be stable or increasing. The extent is taken as the current extent indicated on a map rather than as measured area.

- **Canopy species composition per pocket**

The woodland pockets have distinct characters related to the mix of the canopy species. This in turn contributes to the overall character of the Country Park. The desired species mix focuses on the dominant canopy species and must take account of the Grade II* listing of the site.

- **Canopy cover**
- **Gap creation rate**
- **Regeneration**

For woodland to be viable in the long term there must be sufficient opportunities for tree regeneration. This depends on the canopy cover density, the gap creation rate and the availability of viable saplings.

- **Dead wood content**

The importance of dead wood to woodland processes is increasingly being recognised. The dead wood present should vary in diameter, volume and be a mix of standing and lying. Within this plan, content is given as total volume density.

4.1.5 Objective

Objective 1: to maintain the woodland pockets at favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- The extent of the woodland pockets is as shown on File: cp\map 10
- The canopy species composition is

Woodland pocket	Craig y Rhiwarth SSSI	Lower beechwood (#14)	Pinewood	Upper beechwood (#13)	Others
Upper limit	40% ash and 60% oak				
Lower limit		70% beech	70% Scot's pine	30% conifer	66%

- The canopy cover has a lower limit of 60%
- The gap creation rate is to be determined
- Regeneration – number of viable saplings in 50% of any 2m² *to be determined*; number of viable coppice stools per woodland pocket *to be determined*

Woodland pocket	Craig y Rhiwarth SSSI	Lower beechwood (#14)	Pinewood	Upper beechwood (#13)	Others
Lower limit					

- The dead wood content has a lower limit of 1999 levels plus 25% of all felled wood.

Performance indicators from factors:

- Bats

Lower limit: impact assessment on bat populations prior to any tree surgery work

- Rhododendron

Upper limit: where plants form the block boundary, rhododendron height is 2m (excepting tunnel); woodland rhododendron height is 1m, and in no greater density than 1999 levels

- Visitor pressure

Upper limit: 3 incidences of vandalism of trees/saplings p.a.

4.1.6 Current status

Unfavourable, recovering

This is due to excess canopy cover, unknown gap creation, unknown regeneration levels and insufficient dead wood content. Rhododendron height is above upper limits.

4.1.7 Rationale

We have recognised the poor age structure and dead wood content. Greater attention is now being given to the management of mature trees. This is due to health and safety legislation and long term viability of the pockets as woodland. This presents opportunities to increase the gap regeneration rate, decrease canopy cover and increase dead wood content.

We will address the ability of certain species to regenerate and the impact on species composition. Planting may be necessary to ensure that the desired canopy species mix can be achieved.

We will carry out a comprehensive review of planting with specific reference to the historic features. Any proposed planting scheme must be developed following consultation with relevant organisations and the public.

4.1.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.1.8.1 Manage woodland areas

Control rhododendron	Devise planting scheme
Increase dead wood	Increase gap creation rate
Decrease canopy density	

4.1.8.2 Monitor woodland areas

Rhododendron height and extent	Annual losses
Bat work	Riverbank trees lost
Access problems	Vandalism
Grazing damage	Extent of woodland
Canopy mix	Canopy cover
Gap creation rate	Regeneration
Dead wood content	

4.1.8.3 Manage public donation projects

Adopt-a-box and rent-a-roost projects	Donated trees and benches
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4.1.8.4 Monitor public donation projects

Adopt-a-box and rent-a-roost impacts	Donated tree impacts
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4.2 Feature 2 – parkland

4.2.1 Summary description

There are 4 areas considered as parkland - main meadow, small meadow, car park lawns and Pavilion lawn. These areas consist of mown grass lawn interspersed with native and exotic specimen trees.

4.2.2 Favourable status

The parkland areas will be in favourable status when:

- They are viable in the long term, i.e. the components of the parkland (grassland and trees) are in a status that will allow the areas to remain as parkland in the long term, and the extents of the areas are stable or increasing,
- The species composition of the trees is of a desirable mix, as specified in this plan
- There are defined areas of uncut grass.

4.2.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.2.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural, including physical	Human related
National Park Management Plan policies	Grass	Utilities
Health and safety legislation	Bats	Visitor pressure
Register of Historic Park and Garden Grade II* listing	Rhododendron	Donated trees
Best value	Conflict of interests	Rent-a-roost
	Vehicle access	Availability of resources

Policy and legislation factors

Dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

Natural, including physical, factors

Grass growth

Short grass is a main component of parkland. If the areas are to be maintained as parkland the grass must be mown regularly throughout the growing season.

Upper limit: maintain sward height 15cm

Monitoring project: weekly visual checks of sward height

Since the parkland areas are regularly mown there are no opportunities for tree regeneration. Thus a planting scheme must be in place for there to be a continued population of trees in the parkland areas.

Dealt with under woodland and historic landscape objective

Species

There are bats using the site. We must make an assessment of the impact of any work on the trees.

Monitoring project: check for contact with licensed bat handler

There is Rhododendron around the edges of the main and small meadows. It functions as a barrier, defining the boundaries of the meadows and screening them from the rest of the park. It should not be allowed to spread forward into the meadows.

Upper limit: encroachment onto meadow areas to be at 1999 levels

Monitoring project: annual visual check

Conflict of interests

Refer to discussion of this factor in woodland objective.

Vehicle access

The restricted access to the eastern side of the Tawe and the Pavilion lawn (as described in the woodland objective) means only certain vehicles/machinery can be used there.

Human related factors

Utilities

Most utilities are concentrated in the car park area, including mains water pipes, buried electricity and telephone cables, buried LPG pipes and the sewage treatment plant (installed winter 2000). Any work on these services will disrupt the parkland.

Visitor pressure

The parkland areas are enjoyed by the visiting public, with the main meadow being one of the most popular parts of the Country Park. Potential problems resulting from this pressure include soil compaction and root damage (particularly around the bases of trees), vegetation

and soil erosion, increased amounts of litter and damage to limbs/branches during games/play.

Monitoring project: annual summary of problems reported by staff

We believe that uncut grass shapes are an environmentally valuable component of the parkland areas. The demand for "sitting down" areas must be balanced against the extent of uncut grass. The public, particularly small active children enjoy the shapes formed by the uncut grass, and the mown areas between them.

Upper limit: 33% of each meadow area to be uncut grass

Monitoring project: annual visual check

Donated trees

Refer to discussion of this factor in woodland objective.

Monitoring project: check impact of tree work on donated trees

Rent-a-roost

Refer to discussion of this factor in woodland objective.

Monitoring project: check impact of tree work on Rent-a-roost project

Availability of resources

Tree management as per woodland objective.

4.2.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

As per the woodland objective, the age and condition of the trees demand attention, particularly in the light of health and safety legislation. To keep a Parkland habitat we must mow grass and retain individual trees. As per the woodland objective, a planting strategy must be in accordance with the site's Historic Park and Garden status.

4.2.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Extent of parkland areas**

As per the definition of favourable status, the extent of the habitat must be stable or increasing. The extent is taken from a map rather than as a measured area.

- **Tree species composition**

Some of the parkland trees date from the Victorian period and all contribute to the overall character of the site. Thus the selection of species must take into consideration the Historic Park and Garden status of the site.

- **Number of individual trees**

Parkland means that there are trees present. The number of trees present will vary per area, and should be distributed evenly and not clumped.

- **Age structure**

A suitable age structure is important- young trees will grow alongside mature specimens with a view to replacing them in the long term. This process should be continuous.

- **Extent of uncut grass shapes**

We consider uncut grass shapes to be an environmentally valuable component of the parkland areas.

4.2.5 Objective

Objective 2: to maintain the parkland in favourable status where

Performance indicators from attributes:

- The extent of each parkland area is as shown on File: cp\map 10
- The tree species composition is selected from Table 4 with a lower limit of 10% being native species

Table 4 - parkland tree species

Sessile oak <i>Quercus petraea</i> (N)	Pedunculate oak <i>Quercus robur</i> (N)	Red Horse Chestnut <i>Aesculus x carnea</i>
Plane <i>Platanus x hispanica</i>	Walnut <i>Juglans regia</i>	Beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> (N)
Copper Beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> var. <i>purpurea</i>	Cut-leaved Beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> var. <i>fastigata</i>	Birch <i>Betula pendula</i> (N)
Variegated Sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> ' <i>Variegatum</i> '	Mulberry <i>Morus nigra</i>	False Acacia <i>Robina pseudoacacia</i>
Norway Maple <i>Acer platanoides</i>	Sawara Cypress <i>Chamaecyparis pisifera</i> ' <i>Plumosa</i> '	Douglas Fir <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>
Sawara Cypress <i>Chamaecyparis pisifera</i>	Lawson Cypress <i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	Yew <i>Taxus baccata</i> ' <i>Adpressa</i> '

<i>'Squarosa'</i>		<i>'Variegata'</i>
Weeping Ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior 'Pendula'</i> (N)	Himalayan Tree <i>Cotoneaster frigidus</i>	Japanese White Pine <i>Pinus parviflora</i>
Poplar <i>Populus sp.</i>	Lime <i>Tilia x europaea</i> (N)	

- The number of individual trees per area, to be distributed evenly, is

	Car park lawns	Main meadow	Small meadow	Pavilion lawn
Upper limit	30	60	20	15
Lower limit	15	40	10	5

- The trees are to be a mix of ages with a lower limit of 15% of the individual trees to be less than 50 years old
- The extent of uncut grass shapes per parkland area (May – October only) is as shown on File: cp\map 10.

Performance indicators from factors:

- Grass growth

Upper limit: maintain sward height 15cm

- Rhododendron

Upper limit: encroachment onto meadow areas to be at 1999 levels

- Visitor pressure

Upper limit: 33% of each meadow area to be uncut grass

4.2.6 Current status

Unfavourable

We do not have an age structure for the parkland trees that meets the objective.

4.2.7 Rationale

Recent tree work, particularly related to health and safety issues, has refocused discussion on a planting strategy for the parkland areas. This will deliver an acceptable age structure and species composition mix. As with the woodland objective, any planting scheme must take

account of the Historic Park and Garden status of the site and be developed in consultation with relevant organisations and the public.

The grassland management we have chosen means regular mowing for the majority of the sward and an end of season cut only for the uncut shapes.

4.2.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.2.8.1 Manage parkland areas

Mow grass	Control rhododendron encroachment
Annual cut of uncut shapes	

4.2.8.2 Monitor parkland areas

Check mown grass height	Check rhododendron encroachment
Check problems reported from visitor pressure	Check extent of uncut shapes
Check of parkland extent	Check of species composition
Check of number and distribution of trees	Check age mix

4.3 Feature 3 – hay meadow

4.3.1 Summary description

The hay meadow is made up of two fields, separated by a few mature trees. We have managed the area as a hay meadow following a seeding project in 1985.

4.3.2 Favourable status

The hay meadow is to be considered in favourable status when:

- It is viable in the long term, i.e. the components of the grassland habitat are in a condition that will allow the area to remain as grassland in the long term, and the size of the area is stable or increasing,
- The species composition indicative of condition is as per specified in this plan.

4.3.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.3.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural, including physical	Human related
National Park Management Plan policies	Flora species	Mowing and grazing
Health and safety legislation	River flooding	Income generation
PROWs	Conflict of interests	Utilities
Best value	Vehicle access	Visitor pressure
		Adopt-a-box
		Weeds Act (1959)

Policy and legislation factors

Dealt with under Obligations objective

Natural, including physical, factors

Species

Yellow rattle is frequent throughout the sward. Its semi-parasitic nature will be beneficial in reducing the fertility of the area and we encourage it. The seed bank longevity of the species is unusually short - around 12 months. Thus the cutting date for the hay will be determined by the amount of rattle setting seed.

Lower limit: 60% of rattle to have set seed before hay cut

Monitoring project: check % rattle setting seed

Docks (other than common sorrel), creeping thistle, bracken, nettles and rosebay willowherb have potential to spread through the sward. They will be managed in order to control their populations.

Upper limit: no increase from 1999 levels

Monitoring project: annual check of the extent of the above species

The farmer who cuts the hay uses it as feed. Thus it is essential that common ragwort, toxic to stock, is removed from the sward.

Upper limit: zero flowering stems present

Monitoring project: check weekly for presence of flowering stems

River flooding

The Tawe bursts its banks on average 8-12 times a year, spilling onto the northeast corner of the meadow. The flood of 1998 resulted in extensive deposits of river sand on the northern end of the meadow. The impact on the vegetation communities is unknown.

Conflict of interests

The presence of sheep, which we need as the management regime, can inhibit public use. Visitors may think that the area is out of bounds or may be unhappy walking through an area littered with sheep dung. Dogs accompanying walkers may cause disturbance to sheep.

Also dealt with under recreation and interpretation.

Vehicle access

The vehicle access as described in the woodland objective needs vehicles to cross land belonging to Craig-y-Nos Castle. Any maintenance of the adjacent Castle-owned sewage works may need access for (large) vehicles. *Consideration as set out in woodland objective.*

Human related factors

Management required

The hay meadow sward is a semi-natural habitat. It needs ongoing management if it is to persist rather than succeed to scrub then woodland. Thus the area is managed via a regime of mowing and grazing.

Monitoring project: check compliance with projects below

Utilities

A Victorian sewage works lies on privately owned land adjacent to the meadow, with the outflow being piped underground across the site to the Tawe. There are two drain covers in the meadow area (File: cp\map 11). A leakage from this system would affect the grassland community and any failure would result in major works on site and damage to the grassland.

Monitoring project: check vegetation changes along the line of pipe and around
drain covers

Visitor pressure

Visitor pressure is much less in this area compared to other areas in the Country Park. This "quiet area" is an attraction in itself. In addition, dog walkers seeking an area in which to exercise their dogs actively use the area. There is a mown path around the edge of the meadow to allow access. Anglers moving along the riverbank climb the Country Park boundary and internal fencing in this area, causing damage.

Monitoring project: check of perimeter path

Monitoring project: annual summary of reported problems

Adopt-a-box

Refer to discussion of this factor in woodland objective.

Monitoring project: check impact of tree work on Adopt-a-box project

4.3.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

In order for a grassland habitat to be maintained there must be an appropriate management regime. For the hay meadow this is achieved by a mechanical hay cut and winter grazing by sheep. There can be potential problems between this management and the recreational use of the area, principally sheep disturbance and hassle for visitors (dung etc.). In addition the management of the area must seek to optimise opportunities for desirable species such as yellow rattle, while controlling undesirable species such as thistles, ragwort etc..

4.3.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Extent of the hay meadow**

As per the definition of favourable status, the extent of the habitat must be stable or increasing. The extent is taken as the current extent indicated on a map rather than as measured area.

- **Species composition indicative of appropriate management**
- **Species composition indicative of inappropriate management**

Certain species can be used to indicate whether or not the management is appropriate in achieving the desired condition.

4.3.5 Objective

Objective 3: to maintain the hay meadow in favourable status where

Performance indicators from attributes:

- The extent of the hay meadow is as shown on File: cp\map 11
- Species composition indicative of appropriate management has a lower limit of 5 broad-leaved species in 60% of any 1m², from the range of species listed in Table 5 below
- Species composition indicative of inappropriate management has an upper limit of 4 broad-leaved species in 40% of any 1m², from the range of species listed in Table 5 below

Table 5 - species indicative of hay meadow sward condition

Indicators of appropriate management	Indicators of inappropriate management
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
<i>Galium verum</i>	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	<i>Heracleum sphondilium</i>
<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i>	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	
<i>Taraxacum officinale agg.</i>	
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	

Performance indicators from factors:

- Yellow rattle
- Lower limit: 60% of rattle to have set seed before hay cut

- Invasive species
Upper limit: no increase from 1999 levels
- Ragwort
Upper limit: zero flowering stems present

4.3.6 Current status

Favourable

4.3.7 Rationale

In order for a grassland habitat to be maintained we must set an appropriate management regime. For the hay meadow a mechanical hay cut and winter grazing by sheep achieve this. There can be potential problems between this management and the recreational use of the area, principally sheep disturbance and hassle for visitors (dung etc.). In addition the management of the area must seek to optimise opportunities for desirable species such as yellow rattle, while controlling undesirable species such as thistles, ragwort etc..

4.3.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.3.8.1 Manage Hay meadow area

Mowing and grazing regime	Control invasive species
Mow perimeter path	

4.3.8.2 Monitor Hay meadow area

Check mowing and grazing regime	Check % rattle setting seed
Check extent of invasive species	Check vegetation changes along line of sewage pipe and around drain covers
Check perimeter path	Check reported problems re: boundary access
Check extent of hay meadow	Check species composition (appropriate/inappropriate)

4.4 Feature 4 - rough grassland

4.4.1 Summary description

There are pockets of rough grassland dotted through the site, the most significant being the area alongside the western boundary of the hay meadow and in the southern tree nursery.

4.4.2 Favourable status

The rough grassland will be in favourable status when:

- The habitat is viable in the long term, i.e. the components of the grassland habitat are in a condition that will allow it to remain as grassland in the long the long term, and the extent of the habitat is stable or increasing,
- The vegetation structure is as specified in this plan.

4.4.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.4.3.1 Relevant factors

National Park Management plan policies	Weeds Act (1959)
Management required	Public perception
Best value	

National Park Management Plan policies

There are opportunities for the promotion of National Park policies such as the environmental benefit of retaining patches of rough grassland in gardens, farmland etc..

Weeds Act (1959)

This Act relates to species including docks, common ragwort and creeping thistle, where the landowner may be ordered to control the spread of these species. The Act is rarely enforced, but has not been repealed.

Management required

The rough grassland is a semi-natural habitat that needs ongoing management if it is to persist rather than succeed to scrub then woodland. Thus the area is cut on an infrequent basis in order to control encroachment by bramble, rosebay willowherb, bracken, creeping thistle and tree species.

Upper limit : no increase from 1999 levels

Monitoring project: annual check of the extent of the above species

Public perception

Areas of rank grassland can be perceived by the public as being "weedy", unkempt and unattractive, and indicative of a lack of management. Since the site is open to the public there may be pressure to "tidy things up", i.e. increase the level of maintenance of the rough grassland.

Monitoring project: annual summary of public complaints

4.4.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

For the rough grassland to persist active management is needed. Public perception of rough grassland could create pressure to manage the areas differently.

4.4.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Extent of the rough grassland**

As per the definition of favourable status, the extent of the habitat must be stable or increasing. The target extent is taken as the current extent indicated on a map rather than as measured area.

- **Seed head presence**

- **Tussock presence**

The value in rough grassland lies in the structure more than the species composition, particularly where the structure is varied. Measures of a varied structure could include the presence seed heads (of any species) and presence of tussocks (of graminoids).

- **Encroachment by tree species**

In order to be maintained as rough grassland there must be no encroachment by tree species.

4.4.5 Objective

Objective 4 : to maintain the rough grassland in favourable status where

Performance indicators from attributes:

- The extent of the rough grassland is as shown on File: cp\map 12
- Seed heads (of any species) are present with a lower limit of 25% in any 1m²

- Tussocks (of graminoids) are present with a lower limit of 25% in any 1m²
- Presence of trees is confined to saplings of 2m or smaller

Performance indicators from factors:

- Management required to control invasive species

Upper limit : no increase from 1999 levels

4.4.6 Current status

Unfavourable, recovering

Presence of bramble, rosebay willowherb, bracken and tree saplings exceed limits set.

4.4.7 Rationale

We have reduced the Bramble in the southern tree nursery but it needs further control. We also control bracken encroachment and rosebay willowherb. We have targeted tree saplings for removal.

Any visitor comments about the perceived “untidiness” of rough grassland will be noted.

4.4.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.4.8.1 Manage rough grassland

Control invasive species	Remove tree saplings
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4.4.8.2 Monitor rough grassland

Check extent of invasive species	Check public complaints
Check extent of habitat	Check seed head presence
Check tussock presence	Check tree sapling presence

4.5 Feature 5 – Natural water features

4.5.1 Summary description

The natural water features are the rivers Tawe and Llynfell, the Nant y Gwared stream and the springs flowing into the Fishpond silt trap and into the Far Lake. Note that the immediate banks (not less than 1m to either side, unless outside the site boundary) are also included.

4.5.2 Favourable status

In the Swansea and Llanelli LEAP (1999), the Environmental Agency sets out environmental quality standards and targets for air, land, water and wildlife and heritage. Standards and targets for water cover three areas :

- Water quality,
- Water quantity,
- Physical attributes.

Standards for wildlife and heritage focuses on diversity of natural attributes such as bankside features, wetland, emergent vegetation, meanders, pools and riffles. They also include the survival and reinstatement of threatened fish populations, and the control of alien species such as Japanese Knotweed.

The natural water features in the Country Park will be in favourable status when :

- water quality meets the EA targets for the stretch of rivers within the site boundary as set out in the 1999 LEAP for the area, i.e. River Ecosystem class 1 and standards specified in EC Freshwater Fisheries Directive (78/659/EEC),
- they are viable in the long term, i.e. the condition of natural attributes such as meanders, pools and riffles extent is favourable and the extent of these attributes is stable or increasing.

4.5.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.5.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural, including physical	Human related
National Park Management Plan policies	Flora and fauna species	Agricultural pollution
Flood protection	Stocked fish	Sewage works
Health and safety legislation	Root disease of alder	Visitor pressure
Foreign nets	Fish breeding habitat	Vehicle access

Best value	Bank erosion	Bridge maintenance
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Policy and legislation factors

Dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

Natural, including physical, factors

Species

Japanese Knotweed

This alien species spreads rapidly and chokes out native vegetation. It is present in a few areas (File: cp\map 13) and has been actively controlled by pulling and stacking on-site since 1994. This approach does appear to be successful in controlling the extent of the species. N.B. this species is not to be confused with *Fallopia sacchalinensis* that also occurs on-site and at present does not need control.

Upper limit: extent as at 1999

Monitoring project: annual check of extent

Hemlock water dropwort

Dealt with under Recreation

Otter

Otters are protected by law and are known to use the water features of the Country Park. In order to contribute towards maintaining an otter population in the area their habitat needs should be met.

Dealt with under Otter objective.

Bullheads

This species has been identified as a priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, and as above the habitat needs of the species must be considered.

Dealt with under BAP/legal species objective.

Stocked fish

The Tawe and Tributaries Angling Association stock the river with brown trout reared at their Abercrave site approximately four times a year. The provenance of these fish is unknown. The EA Brown Trout Strategy recognises the stretch of Tawe within the Country Park

boundary as being "mixed", i.e. "stocking would be permitted in principle using native fish from any source" (Swansea and Llanelli area LEAP, 1999).

Root disease of alder

This disease has potential to decimate alder populations. The area LEAP (1999) notes that *Phytophthora* is not as yet confirmed in the area.

Monitoring project: annual check for effects of *Phytophthora* on alder on site

Fish breeding habitat

It is the opinion of the Tawe and Tributaries Angling Association that the stretches of river within the site boundary are of particular importance to breeding fish. The Association has in the past argued that vehicles should not be permitted to enter the river due to the damage and disturbance to potential spawning habitat.

Bank erosion

It is recognised that rivers are dynamic systems and that bank erosion due to river flow is a natural phenomenon. Several large trees on the Tawe banks have been lost in the past couple of years and several more have severely exposed root systems and inevitably will collapse into the river channel. In 1998 flooding of the site was made worse by the loss of a large oak in a critical position. Gaps resulting from such losses create regeneration opportunities for new trees.

Human related

Agricultural pollution

There is potential for watercourses within and surrounding the site to be contaminated by agro-chemicals such as fertiliser etc.. Water filtering over and through surrounding land is likely to be affected by animal waste.

Monitoring project: regular checks for indications of pollution and eutrophication

Sewage works

A treatment plant located at the bottom of the car park serves the Country Park. Discharges from this plant flow into the Tawe as indicated on File: cp\map 5. All discharges must conform to standards set by the EA. The discharges are monitored by the EA. A privately owned sewage treatment plant is located adjacent to the hay meadow. Two drain covers within the

meadow area suggest the line of the discharge pipe, but the exact location of the outfall is unknown. Discharge quality is also unknown.

Monitoring project: check for indications of pollution from Country Park and Castle outfalls

Visitor pressure

The river Tawe in particular is used as a valuable educational resource. River dipping has been a popular study option and Country Park staff have tended to use the same stretch of river. The effects of this are uncertain but staff are of the opinion that it is negligible when compared to the river in spate.

The rivers Tawe and Llynfell are popular attractions with the visiting public. Popular pastimes include building boulder dams and dropping rocks into the water from bridges. The impact of the dam building is regarded as negligible, and most constructions are removed naturally the next time the river flow is high. Dropping rocks into the channel is likely to have an adverse effect on fauna, and is therefore discouraged.

Monitoring project: check impact of visitor pressure - method to be decided

The Tawe and Tributaries Angling Association prefer to restrict canoeists from launching in the Country Park and using the Tawe. However, Country Park staff have no control over canoeists launching further upstream. Anglers contend that canoeists damage the riverbed and spawning redds. There has been no study on the potential impacts of canoeists on the Tawe in the Country Park.

Monitoring project: legal advice regarding access needed

Vehicle access

The Tawe splits the site - access to the eastern side for pedestrians and smaller vehicles (weight limit unknown) is by the middle bridge. Larger vehicles must cross the river just upstream from the confluence with the Llynfell, though this depends on the flow at the time. See *fish breeding habitat* above for further comment.

Bridge maintenance

Bridges are subject to routine checks. Any repairs or maintenance may impact on the watercourses. See *fish breeding habitat* above for further comment.

4.5.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

Past flood defence work by the EA has had a major impact on the natural water features. It is possible that other works could take place in the future, but the National Park Authority has limited powers of intervention. There are a number of species associated with water features (both natural and man-made) which need attention. Those species with legislation relating to them are dealt with under their own objective. Japanese Knotweed and hemlock water dropwort need management in order to control their spread. The Tawe and Tributaries Angling Association are vocal in their opposition to any action which they consider detrimental to the fishing interest. The natural water features are by their very nature dynamic systems, subject to the continuing actions of erosion and deposition. There are two sewage outfalls into the Tawe within the site boundary, and both must conform to EA standards. The water features, in particular the Tawe, are popular for recreational and educational activities.

4.5.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Water quality**

Water quality is a major influence on the flora and fauna that can be supported by aquatic systems. The desired water quality is that which is set out as a target for the area by the EA (Swansea and Llanelli LEAP, 1999).

- **Extent of natural physical attributes such as meanders, pools and riffles**

As per the definition of favourable status, the extent of the attributes must be stable or increasing. The lower limit is taken as the current extent indicated on File: cp\map 14 (showing distribution of individual attributes).

Note that the distribution of these attributes may naturally alter across years, and that the extent is more important than the actual location.

4.5.5 Objective

Objective 5: to maintain the natural water features in a favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- The lower limit of water quality is as per EA RE1 and EC Freshwater Fisheries Directive standards
- The extent of the natural physical attributes is as shown on File: cp\map 14.

Performance indicators from factors:

- Japanese Knotweed

Upper limit: extent as at 1999

4.5.6 Current status

Unknown, presumed favourable

The water quality is unknown, but the 1999 LEAP for the area indicates that the river stretch within the site boundary is of RE1 quality.

4.5.7 Rationale

The 1999 LEAP indicates that water quality reaches RE1 standards. We will manage our sewage treatment system in accordance with EA standards.

The extent of natural attributes is one of the indicators of favourable status. The National Park Authority has limited powers of intervention where EA works are concerned but we will liaise over future river works.

We will consider the habitat needs of species that carry legal obligations.

These are dealt with under the relevant species objective.

We will control the extent of Japanese Knotweed and hemlock water dropwort.

We will monitor the impact of recreational and educational use of the natural water features.

4.5.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.5.8.1 Manage natural water features

Manage Japanese Knotweed	Manage hemlock water dropwort
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4.5.8.2 Monitor natural water features

Check river levels following high or prolonged rainfall	Annual check of extent of Japanese Knotweed
Annual check of extent of hemlock water dropwort	Annual check for effects of <i>Phytophthora</i> on alder on site
Regular checks for indications of pollution and eutrophication	Check for indications of pollution from Country Park and Castle outfalls
Check impact of visitor pressure	Check water quality
Check extent of natural physical attributes	

4.6 Feature 6 - Man-made water features

4.6.1 Summary description

The man-made water features are the Fishpond, the Far Lake, the hay meadow pond, water channels and leats and other built elements associated with them such as the brickwork to the west of the Fishpond and the groynes on the Tawe, reputedly used as fishing platforms. The bulk of these features date from the Victorian era.

4.6.2 Favourable status

As with the natural water features, water quality must be one element of favourable status. The long-term viability and condition of each feature is another aspect of favourable status.

The man-made water features will be in favourable status when :

- water quality meets the EA targets for the area as set out in the 1999 LEAP, i.e. River Ecosystem class 1 and standards specified in EC Freshwater Fisheries Directive (78/659/EEC),
- The individual features are viable in the long term, and their extent is stable or increasing.

4.6.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.6.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural, including physical	Human related
Health and safety legislation	Stonework trees	Agricultural pollution
Historic Park and Garden status	Silting	Overfeeding of ducks
Protected species	River action	Mill water take
Best value		Availability of resources

Policy and legislation factors

Dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

Natural, including physical, factors

Stonework trees

Most of the man-made water features have built edges - stone, brick or concrete. The root systems of trees growing on and through these edges will contribute to their deterioration.

Lower limit: remove all trees with stems more than leg size

Monitoring project: annual check

Silting

The Fishpond, Far Lake and certain water channels (e.g. river intake upstream from upper bridge) are subject to silting. While water channels may be hand dug, the larger water features present a bit more of a challenge. In 1994 a small long armed digger dug out the Fishpond silt trap, but problems in keeping the digger stable were experienced. The depth of the silt in the Fishpond and Far Lake has not been formally assessed, nor the effect of the current and possible future depths of silt on the ecosystems.

Monitoring project: assess impact of silt depth on water ecosystems - method to be determined

The water level in the hay meadow pond is dependent on the weather - during the winter and in wet periods there is open water; in most years the pond is dry at some point during the summer months. This drying up is seen as desirable since it limits the fish fauna and thus benefits other species.

River action

Man-made water features directly on a riverbank, i.e. the fishing platforms and the feed channel to the Far Lake, may be affected by bank erosion.

Monitoring project: annual check of condition of bank adjacent to features

In 1998 there was extensive flooding throughout the park. As a result of this the hay meadow pond was almost completely filled with river sand and gravel, and very little water area remains.

Lower limit: re-excavate the hay meadow pond

Human related factors

Agricultural pollution

Dealt with under natural water features.

Visitor pressure

The water features, and their duck populations in particular, are popular attractions with visiting public. Many visitors scatter bread on the Fishpond and Far Lake as feed for the

ducks. Uneaten bread can sink to the bottom of ponds and form a thick layer that adversely affects the aquatic ecosystem.

Lower limit: raise awareness via interpretive services and information

Monitoring project: check for indications of adverse effects due to bread

Mill water take

A water channel from the Llynfell feeds both the Fishpond in the Country Park and the septic tank belonging to Blaenau Mill. The Deeds indicate that Patti paid an annual fee of the equivalent of 50p to take water from this channel. This fee is no longer paid. At times of low flow there is a presumption in favour of the Mill supply and the present owners have temporarily stopped water coming into the Country Park.

Availability of resources

As with other built features, the man-made water features need ongoing management if they are to survive in the long term. Pressure on resources, both money and staff time, is likely to impact on the amount of management which can be achieved.

4.6.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

Health and safety issues relating to water features have been identified, and action has been taken. This process needs to continue. With the exception of the hay meadow pond, the man-made water features are Victorian and therefore their management must take account of the site's Historic Park and Garden status. Trees continue to threaten the fabric of some features, and must be controlled. The needs of species associated with the water features must be considered where there is legislation relating to them. The water features will continue to silt up - this may need to be addressed. All of the above needs management and pressure of resources may limit what can be achieved.

4.6.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Water quality**

Water quality is a major influence on the flora and fauna that can be supported by aquatic systems. The desired water quality is that which is set out as a target for the area by the EA (Swansea and Llanelli LEAP, 1999).

- **Extent**

- **Water depth**

The individual features must be viable in the long term. They must be present, i.e. the extent must be as shown on a map, and they must be in a suitable condition.

For features that contain water, i.e. ponds and channels, depth may be a useful indicator of condition. If there were problems with the fabric of the features such as retaining walls, depth is likely to decrease due to leaking. If there are problems with excessive silting or river deposition the water depth will decrease. Note that other factors such as weather conditions could also affect depth.

4.6.5 Objective

Objective 6 : to maintain the man-made water features in a favourable condition where :

Performance indicators from attributes:

- The lower limit of water quality is as per EA RE1 and EC Freshwater Fisheries Directive standards
- The extent of the man-made water features is as shown on File: cp\map 15
- The lower limit of water presence for the following elements is

Feature	Fishpond	Far Lake	channels
	20% loss of present level	20% loss of present level	None set

- The water in the hay meadow pond is present for at least 5 months in 12

Performance indicators from factors:

- Stonework trees

Lower limit: remove all trees with stems more than leg size

- River action

Lower limit: re-excavate the hay meadow pond

4.6.6 Current status

Unfavourable

We have lots of trees growing out of stonework.

The water quality is unknown.

The Hay Meadow pond levels are poor.

4.6.7 Rationale

The 1999 LEAP indicates that the water quality of the area reaches RE1 standards. Standing water quality may differ from river water quality and we will take steps to assess this.

Risk Assessments will identify action that needs to be taken, such as grading edges of ponds, fencing off the Far Lake outflow etc..

We will control stonework trees that threaten the fabric of individual features.

We will consider the needs of protected species. *See species objectives.*

We will assess the impact of silting of ponds and channels in order to determine the lower limit for depth and the potential effects of silting on associated flora and fauna.

River action has filled in the hay meadow pond. We want to keep the feature and will excavate it.

4.6.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.6.8.1 Manage man-made water features

Remove stonework trees	Re-excavate the hay meadow pond
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4.6.8.2 Monitor man-made water features

Annual check of stonework trees	Assess impact of silt depth on water ecosystems
Annual check of condition of bank adjacent to features	Check water presence in hay meadow\pond
Check for indications of pollution and eutrophication	Check for indications of adverse effects due to bread
Check water quality	Check extent of man-made water features
Check water depths	

4.7 Feature 7 – historic landscape

4.7.1 Summary description

The primary reasons for grading the site are:

“Spectacular and romantic setting in a secluded upland valley; remnant high Victorian garden; arboricultural interest in garden and park; home of the internationally famous opera singer Madame Adelina Patti; Patti gardens laid out and glasshouses designed by well known park designer, William Barron c. 1878 on.”

Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales, CADW, 2000

The historic landscape includes all land owned by the National Park Authority known as Craig-y-nos Country Park. The objective below is written for this land only but the wider historic landscape extends to include Craig-y-Nos Castle and takes into account what CADW call the “essential setting” of the property (see *File: cplmap 16*).

4.7.2 Favourable status

The National Park Management Plan (January 2000) indicates that

“the (National) Park’s historic ...environment and features are irreplaceable. They represent a diminishing resource...and by their attraction for visitors they contribute to the Park’s economy.”

Aims within the above plan include:

- listing all buildings of listable quality
- protecting buildings that contribute to the Park’s built heritage
- promoting built heritage education and awareness.

The Cadw/ICOMOS Register describes the site as one which,

“by reason of (its) historic layout, features and architectural ornaments considered together makes it of great quality.”

The historic landscape will be in favourable status when:

- its designated area is stable
- it retains the qualities that led to grade 2* status

- there is retained public interest in the site

4.7.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural, including physical	Human related
National Park management Plan policies	Degradation of features	Utilities
Health and safety legislation	Species composition	Visitor pressure
Boundaries and other lease obligations	River action	Availability of resources
Register of Historic Park and Gardens Grade II* listing	Tree regeneration opportunities	
Best value	Trees on stonework	

Policy and legislation factors

Dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

Natural, including physical

Degradation of features

Trees are dealt with under the other feature objectives.

The built environment will age over time and will need ongoing maintenance. A comprehensive maintenance scheme addressing the built environment of the country park is needed.

Lower limit: 5-year gap between maintenance of any significant building

Monitoring project: check corporate financial plan

Species composition

There is a mixture of native and exotic woodland species on site. A planting strategy is needed which examines original and recent planting schemes. Some large trees have been recently felled, mainly on grounds of health and safety issues relating to visitors. The vision for the future needs to address issues relating to the past vision and modern alternatives.

Wide consultation will be necessary. *See other feature objectives.*

River action

Also dealt with under woodland objective.

Tree regeneration opportunities

Also dealt with under woodland objective.

Human-related

Utilities

Dealt with under legal and other obligations.

Visitor pressure

Dealt with under other feature objectives.

Availability of resources

The listing of the site and its status as a designed historic landscape qualify it to bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for remedial works. A Restoration Plan will be drawn up to submit the bid according to HLF guidelines. At present, resources do not allow the possibility of funding for contractors to assist in the writing of a Restoration Plan.

Lower limit: completion of a Restoration Plan within the life of the management plan

Lower limit: Heritage Lottery funding

Lower limit: National Park Authority capital investment every three years; revenue investment no lower than 1998 levels

Monitoring project: check budget

4.7.4 Impact assessment of factors

The site has received external recognition of its character and quality as seen in the grading from Cadw. Internally, the focus has been on the condition of the built and vegetative elements. Large numbers of trees have been felled or coppiced. Many buildings are in need of repair. Other elements of the historic landscape are in poor condition. A comprehensive Restoration Plan will draw together these issues and take the site beyond the original Victorian vision.

4.7.5 Selection of performance indicators

- extent of the designated area

The historic landscape defined by CADW includes an area of land and property greater than the existing Country Park. The target extent must remain as the area under National Park ownership.

- **Retention of grading and status**

- **Retention of public interest**

While there is no presumption that sites on the Cadw Register are open to the public, there is a good deal of public interest in the site – both from schools and general visitors. This has links to the education services objective (*see below*) and the National Park Management Plan aims of promoting public interest and awareness of the historic landscape.

4.7.6 Objective

Objective 7: to maintain the historic landscape in favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- the extent of the historic landscape is as shown on File: cp\map 16
- the site sustains the grading on the Cadw/ICOMOS Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Interest

Lower limit: grade 2

- there is sustained public interest in the historic features
(*see also information, interpretation, education and marketing*)

Lower limit: 5% of publication sales to be relating to site history

Lower limit: 5% of educational visits requesting Victorian studies

Lower limit: 200 (free) site history leaflets taken from the Visitor Centre

Lower limit: four events linked to the historic landscape

Lower limit: four requests for community talks on the history of the site

Performance indicators from factors:

- Degradation of features

Lower limit: 5-year gap between maintenance of any significant building

- Availability of resources

Lower limit: completion of a Restoration Plan within the life of the management plan

Lower limit: Heritage Lottery funding

Lower limit: National Park Authority capital investment every three years; revenue investment no lower than 1998 levels

4.4.7 Current status

Unknown

4.7.8 Rationale

There are a number of historic elements on site. These are grouped as follows:

1. Original buildings
2. Designed landscape features (banks, leats etc.)
3. Original infrastructure (paths, walls etc.)

Each group consists of a range of elements that require differing levels of management. Based on the Florence Charter (1981) we propose a range of management options – maintenance, conservation, restoration or reconstruction – which can be applied to the different elements.

Site element	Management option	Monitoring project	
Original buildings (See File: cplmap 5)			
Visitor centre Welly shed Craft shop Kennel shed Game Room Old toilet block Pavilion	Conservation Conservation Conservation Conservation Restoration Conservation Restoration	Annual review of condition	
Designed landscape features			
Woodland	Conservation		See woodland feature
Parkland	Conservation		See parkland feature
Hay meadow	Conservation		See hay meadow feature
Man-made water features	Restoration		See man-made water features

Raised banks Planted	Conservation	Annual review of condition
Other	Maintenance	Annual review of condition
Rose Garden	Conservation	Annual review of condition
White gate	Restoration	Annual review of condition
Significant view <i>See File: cplmap 16</i> (taken from the CADW Register).	Conservation	Annual review of condition
Memorial stone	Maintenance	Monthly check on condition
Exotic trees (not dealt with in Parkland objective)	Maintenance	Twice-annual check on condition
Other flora (not covered in conservation features above) <i>Fallopia sachalinensis</i>	Conservation	Annual check on extent
Rhododendron	Conservation	Annual check on extent
Original infrastructure		
Kitchen Garden	Maintenance	Annual review of condition
Path network	Conservation of the existing network	Annual review of condition
Bridges		
Upper original bridge	Maintenance	Annual review of condition
Middle original bridge	Maintenance	Annual review of condition
Lower original bridge	Restoration	Check for inclusion in corporate financial plan

4.7.9 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.7.9.1 Manage historic landscape elements

Manage buildings	Manage designed landscape features
Manage original infrastructure	

4.7.9.2 Monitor historic landscape elements

Annual review of condition of historic elements	Monitor budget implications
Check corporate financial plan	Check budget for maintenance levels

4.8 Feature 8 - otter population

4.8.1 Summary description

Otters are known to use the Country Park. We know this because we have found spraints.

4.8.2 Favourable status

Otters are not known to be resident in the Country Park. Thus it is more appropriate to focus the objective on contributing towards maintaining an otter population on the Tawe and tributaries system, rather than attempting to define favourable status for a non-resident population. The desired state is then:

- The presence of otters is confirmed by spraint at least once a year.

4.8.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.8.3.1 Relevant factors

Species legislation	Habitat requirements
Best value	Visitor access

Species legislation

Dealt with under legal and other obligations

Best value

Dealt with under legal and other obligations

Habitat requirements

The presence of scattered clumps of scrub and trees along the river is essential for providing cover for otters.

Lower limit: 50% of riverbank within the site boundary to have scattered scrub and tree vegetation

Monitoring project: annual visual checks of vegetation extent

Visitor access

The river is a popular attraction with the public. Some lengths of riverbank should remain clear of vegetation to allow public access to the river edge.

Lower limit: 20% of riverbank within the site boundary to remain clear of scrub and tree vegetation

Monitoring project: annual visual checks of vegetation extent

4.8.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

Maintaining lengths of riverbank suitably vegetated will contribute towards maintaining a habitat suitable for otters. This must be balanced with the demand for access to the river for members of the public.

4.8.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Presence of otter spraint**

Otter presence is easiest confirmed by the presence of spraints.

4.8.5 Objective

Objective 8: to contribute towards maintaining an otter population on the Tawe and tributaries river system where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- Otter presence is confirmed by spraint presence at least once a year

Performance indicators from factors:

- Habitat requirements

Lower limit: 50% of bank length of the Tawe riverbanks within the Country have scrub and trees present.

- Visitor access

Lower limit: 20% of the riverbank within the site boundary to remain clear of scrub and tree vegetation

4.8.6 Current status

Favourable

The bankside vegetation satisfies limits and the presence of otter spraint has been regularly recorded.

4.8.7 Rationale

We will continue to manage the bankside vegetation, coppicing and felling where appropriate, to maintain suitable cover for otters.

4.8.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.8.8.1 Manage habitat for otters

Coppicing/felling of bankside vegetation	
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4.8.8.2 Monitor habitat for otters

Annual visual check of vegetation extent	Monitor otter use
Annual otter spraint hunt	

4.9 Feature 9 - bat populations

4.9.1 Summary description

Bats have been recorded as present in the Country Park during summer months. There are no known nursery roosts. Both the main office building and the Pavilion are known to have wintering bats but there is no detailed information on species or numbers.

4.9.2 Favourable status

Since bat species are migratory and since bat populations are not directly managed in themselves it is considered more appropriate to focus the objective on the habitat required for bat populations rather than the bat populations themselves. Thus the desired state is:

- The presence of summer roost and winter hibernation locations
- Habitat (and other) management throughout the site sensitive to the needs of bats
- Presence of winter and summer populations confirmed at least once a year for each.

4.9.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.9.3.1 Relevant factors

Species legislation	Habitats
Best value	Building works
Trees	Rent-a-roost

Species legislation

All species of UK bats have legal protection - they are listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act under schedule 5 and as priority species in the UK government BAP (??). The management of the site must comply with legislation relevant to bats.

Dealt with under legal and other obligations

Best value

Dealt with under legal and other obligations

Trees

Some of the mature trees are in decline, and in recent years a number have been lost, either through felling following a risk assessment or by natural means. This has potential to decrease the roosting availability. An assessment of known or potential roost use must be made prior to any tree surgery, and an amendment made to work if necessary. Another

potential effect of loss of trees is a change in food availability and feeding corridors. Little information on this area exists for the site.

Lower limit: bat check prior to tree work

Monitoring project: check bat assessments have been made

Habitats

In order to support bat populations, habitat management should seek to fulfil their habitat requirements in terms of roosting and feeding needs. There is insufficient information on this area for the site. General principles though, should be to protect known and potential roost sites, and to encourage invertebrate populations.

Building works

Any works, which have potential to affect roost sites, must be preceded by an assessment of bat use. Where the use by bats is confirmed further advice should be sought from the National Park Ecologist and/or CCW. There should be a presumption in favour of the use of bat friendly products and the creation of bat access points when undertaking building works.

Monitoring project: ensure bat friendly products are used

Rent-a-roost

This public donation project will increase the knowledge of the use of the site by roosting bats. It also provides additional potential roost sites, and helps to educate and inform the public. Inspection of bat boxes can only be done by an appropriately qualified individual.

4.9.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

Little information on bat populations in the Country Park exists, and this should be addressed at some stage by a bat use survey of the site and surrounding area. Any works - trees, buildings etc. - which has potential to affect roost sites (existing or potential) must be preceded by an assessment of bat use. Where bat use is confirmed further advice should be sought. There should be a general presumption in favour of bat-sensitive management throughout the site.

4.9.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Presence of summer and winter populations**

The presence of bats should be confirmed (via animals or droppings) in summer roost/winter hibernacula at least once a year for each.

4.9.5 Objective

Objective 9: to contribute towards maintaining bat populations in the area where

Performance indicators from attributes:

- Bat presence is confirmed for both summer and winter populations

Lower limit: overall occupancy reduced to 75% of 1999 population

Performance indicators from factors:

- Tree works

Lower limit: bat check prior to tree work

4.9.6 Current status

Unknown

There is little information on bat populations in the Country Park.

4.9.7 Rationale

We will ensure an assessment of bat use is carried out on trees and buildings on site. Where bat use is confirmed, we will seek specialist advice.

4.9.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.9.8.1 Manage site in a bat-friendly manner

Increase knowledge of bat populations	
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4.9.8.2 Monitor bat populations

Annual check of bat use of summer roost sites	Annual check of bat use of winter hibernacula
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4.10 Feature 10 - other BAP/legally protected species

4.10.1 Summary description

Over 50 species in the UK government BAP have been recorded for the site, and other species recorded as present are covered by legislation such as the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981, chapter 69). Such legal obligations cover a range of species including birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish. The full list can be found in File ref.: cp\ conservation features\flora and fauna.

4.10.2 Favourable status

There is little information on the populations of most of these species on site. Thus it is considered more appropriate to focus this objective on maintaining the habitat requirements in order to support such populations. The desired state is then:

- Habitat (and other) management throughout the site is sensitive to the needs of all species covered by legislation, including the UK government BAP,
- Presence of each species is confirmed at least twice in any five year period

4.10.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

4.10.3.1 Relevant factors

Species legislation	Vegetation growth
Best value	Conflict of interests
Habitat	Visitor pressure

Species legislation

The management of the site must comply with legislation relating to individual species.

Best value

Dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

Habitat

Each species will have its own habitat requirements. The management of the site should seek to maintain the habitat requirements in order to support the populations of the species.

Vegetation growth

The habitats of the site are dynamic in nature. As succession progresses so the habitats favour one species more and another less. Thus the range of species supported by the site is dynamic also.

Conflict of interests

Habitat management on site must balance the needs of a range of issues – recreational use, conservation of historical features etc.. It is likely that at some point the habitat requirements of a species may require a management regime in conflict with that required by another aspect of the site, and a compromise/balance must be sought.

Visitor pressure

Public use is integral to the management of the site. There are likely to be occasions where the presence of the public is detrimental to the interests of certain species. As above, in such situations a compromise/balance must be sought.

4.10.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

The complex nature of the site will require the manager to balance all of the needs of the site and seek to manage as sensitively as possible.

4.10.4 Selection of performance indicators

- **Species presence/use confirmed twice in any five year period**

The site need only be managed for a particular species where that species is present or is currently using the site.

4.10.5 Objective

Objective 10: to contribute towards maintaining populations of BAP/legal species where

Performance indicators from attributes:

- The presence of each species is confirmed
Lower limit: once in any five-year period

4.10.6 Current status

Favourable

As per 1999 all species listed had been confirmed as present within the past five years.

4.10.7 Rationale

The designed historic landscape and past management may have played some part in providing habitat for the range of BAP species. We will manage the site with as much continuity as possible to optimise its use by such species.

4.10.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

4.10.8.1 Monitor site for legal species' populations

Annual check for presence of species	
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Section 5 - Evaluation of Services/facilities

5.1 Provisional list of important services/facilities

Below is a list of existing services/facilities that are provided by the Country Park. Local definitions are attached.

Recreation

Informal public access and recreation activities in and from the site.

Education

Formal education activities and group visits though not exclusively schools/colleges.

Interpretive services

Informal activities e.g. events, guided walks, interpretive leaflets etc..

Information

Visitor Centre services, directional signs, information leaflets etc..

Marketing

Product placement, pricing issues and promotion via advertising, public relations etc..

Justification for their inclusion in the provisional list follows below.

5.2 Services/facilities - Existing provision

5.2.1 Recreation

The site is open to the public on a daily basis. There is a car park and a path network that allows access around the site and the site is well used (78,000 visitors in 1999).

Present provision for recreation combined with statutory purposes and demand leads to its inclusion as a significant provisional service/facility.

5.2.2 Education

Staff, equipment and other resources have been committed to the management and delivery of an environmental education service for over 20 years. Over 150 groups used the site in 1999, with over 50 dealt with by staff.

Present provision for education combined with statutory purposes and demand leads to its inclusion as a significant provisional service/facility.

5.2.3 Interpretive services

Since opening, the Country Park has provided leaflets, events and outdoor panels to interpret the natural and historic elements. Countryside related events have been a popular theme throughout the summer months since opening in 1976. Recently budget cuts both for marketing and for the events themselves have led to a low key and low cost approach.

Present provision for interpretive services combined with statutory purposes and demand leads to its inclusion as a significant provisional service/facility.

5.2.4 Information services

The information provision has been on site since opening. Dedicated staffed services from within the Visitor Centre are concentrated in the peak summer period only. Ad hoc information services, leaflets, posters and notices are provided year-round.

Present provision for information services combined with statutory purposes and demand leads to its inclusion as a significant provisional service/facility.

5.2.5 Marketing

When the National Park Authority bought the site in the mid-1970s, key benefits included the use of the site itself to satisfy recreation aims as well as the drawing of visitors from the Black Mountain "remote" area. Today, other benefits include the peace and tranquillity that the site continues to offer, as well as the opportunity to be a window to wider policies of the Authority.

Pricing has remained low key although greater interest in income generation is increasing. This is due to the wish by the National Park Authority to recover reasonable costs from its Centres as well as the poor settlement rates received from central government funds.

Promotion of the products and services has been similarly low key, largely dependent on available resources and judicious use of media contacts. The Country Park has always had links with wider promotions, for example, the National Park guided walks programme and the Festival of the Countryside.

Present marketing functions and a commitment to increasing visitors leads to its inclusion as a significant service/facility.

5.3 Evaluation - Recreation

Full evaluation

There are a number of policies supporting the provision of recreation at this site. Such policies include National Park purposes, the Countryside Act 1968 relating to Country Parks, CCW guidelines for country parks and current (2001) policies on health promotion.

Surveys tell us that the public find the Country Park features interesting and enjoyable (see *File ref.: cpl\recreation services\visitor surveys*). We manage some of the features taking public access into account (e.g. mowing of parkland, strimming of brambles). There are elements of fragility amongst the features present, and here, public access is managed accordingly.

The site is next to a main highway that gives easy access. The public bus service is limited. Access to the site on foot is limited, as the nearest major settlement is six miles away. Within the site there is a network of paths. Their use by visitors is influenced by surface, condition and visitor mobility. The Country Park lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park boundary and features on many guides and leaflets that promote the area. It is 2 miles from the nearest village. There are other tourist attractions within a 2-mile radius.

We keep records of visitor numbers (see *File ref.: cpl\recreation services\statistics*), showing the fluctuating popularity of the site. Availability of parking both on and off site is limited. Personal experience indicates that the Park's capacity is not exceeded when the car park is full. There is a range of user groups using the park both formally and informally. Neighbours' attitudes to and perceptions of the Country Park differ; some are negative, some positive and some are both.

There is current financial pressure to optimise income generation, though the Country Park remains a subsidised service. The site has been targeted by the Beacons Bus venture, promoting the use of public transport. There are a number of similar providers (Country Parks and others) in South Wales, and other tourist attractions within a 6 mile radius of the site.

Visitor surveys indicate travelling distances of our users (*see File ref.: cpl\recreation services\visitor surveys*).

Current facilities include a main car park, visitor centre and toilet block. There are a number of paths of varying quality as well as picnic benches and seats. Site infrastructure for recreation is indicated in Section 8.

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide opportunities for recreation in Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *the existing provision is consistent with relevant guidelines with respect to country parks and the statutory purposes of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority,*
- *the site features and infrastructure are suitable to continue and develop recreational opportunities,*
- *records of past and current usage indicate that there is a demand for recreation at this site.*

Shortcut evaluation

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan (January 2000) states that one of the statutory purposes of the Authority is to,

“promote opportunities for the enjoyment of the Park’s special qualities”.

“In general it is not the National Park Authority’s role to provide recreation facilities...however it owns Craig-y-nos Country Park which (is a) popular informal recreation facility. “

Aims for recreation across the whole National Park area are:

- *to ensure that recreation activity is environmentally sustainable;*
- *to promote opportunities for the enjoyment of the (National) Park’s special qualities by the public;*
- *to resolve problems and conflicts caused by recreational opportunities.*

The Good Practice Guidelines for Country Parks (CCW, 1995) confirms the 1969 Countryside Commission definition of a country park as,

“an area of land...designed to offer the public...opportunity for recreational activities in the countryside”.

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide opportunities for recreation in Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- one of the statutory purposes of the Authority is part realised by the continued management of the Country Park,*
- the National Park Authority continues to use its Centres as windows to wider National Park policies, including appropriate environmentally sound practice and demonstration sites for innovative projects e.g. access for all,*
- the existing provision is consistent with relevant guidelines with respect to country parks.*

5.4 Evaluation – Education services

Full evaluation

National policies (including the Welsh dimension) support learning of historical, geographical and science topics. Outdoor and adventurous activities have relevance. The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan highlights education issues currently affecting the Authority, including Biodiversity and Education for sustainability.

There are many natural and anthropogenic features worthy of study at National Curriculum and complementary levels. This is based on the demands made by new and repeat groups. Fragile features are taken into account when considering study options. There is significant impact by educational activities on the Country Park and surrounding land e.g. ambience, tree regeneration. Sensitivities relating to features will be a management consideration. There is existing interest in features management especially with further and higher level students.

The site is next to a main highway and there is a network of Public Rights of Way in and around the Country Park. Within the site there are paths of varying surface and condition.

Most study areas outside the Country Park are accessible by minibus although coach travel is limited on some minor roads. The site is within the area of the Brecon Beacons National Park. It lies in a glaciated valley bottom. There is easy access to moorland and limestone scenery and a wealth of upland land use types.

Refer to File ref.: cp\ education services for a history of past use by geographical area, topic of study, visit by Key Stage and total numbers of visiting groups. The menu of options for primary, secondary and higher levels is found at File ref.: cp\ education services\promotion. Current staffing levels cannot meet existing demand. This discrepancy exists throughout the year. There is potential to increase provision especially as educational marketing has been cut in recent years. An increase could only be achieved if staffing levels and/or workloads altered. Conflicts can and do arise between education and other services/facilities in the Country Park e.g. quiet enjoyment. Best available knowledge indicates that current usage does not adversely impact on carrying capacity. We consider surrounding landowners when planning the level and type of visits offered. We offer student placements to schools in the local community and beyond.

Charging levels are discussed centrally. The charges are flat rate regardless of staff input. The service is subsidised. There is differential charging by age, by topic and by authority (see *File ref.: cp\ education services*). There is a current debate within the Authority between balancing the needs of National Curriculum studies and issues directly arising out of the National Park Management Plan. There is a wealth of alternative provision within a 50-mile radius with a variety of charging policies. Neighbours and nearby attractions provide opportunities for a formal and informal integrated service.

There is a purpose-built lecture room and stocks of educational equipment. There is a car and coach park and associated facilities e.g. toilet block, lunch-stop areas etc.

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide educational opportunities in and around Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *The existing provision is consistent with relevant guidelines with respect to country parks and the statutory purposes of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority,*

- *The site features and surrounding countryside are suitable,*
- *Records of past and current usage indicate that there is a demand for educational activities at this site.*

Shortcut evaluation

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan (January 2000) states that,

“the role of the National Park Authority Education Service is to demonstrate (principles of sustainability) by teaching about the role and work of the National Park Authority, the Park area and wider issues of management.”

The draft aim is to,

“instil understanding of sustainable development and environmental issues, in particular the special qualities of the National Park, and the National Park Authority's work, and encourage attitudes and behaviour which will ensure a sustainable future.”

The Good Practice Guidelines for Country Parks (CCW, 1995) states,

“country parks offer an excellent opportunity to provide and nurture environmental awareness for people of all ages...in particular (they can) play a significant role in providing opportunities for schools and other educational groups to study the countryside. (They could provide) an opportunity to communicate messages about the work of the country park and its supporting agencies.”

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide educational opportunities in Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *one of the statutory purposes of the Authority is part realised by the continued service within the Country Park,*
- *the National Park Authority continues to use its Centres as windows to wider National Park policies, including appropriate environmentally sound practice and demonstration sites for innovative projects e.g. management planning for schools,*
- *the existing provision is consistent with relevant guidelines with respect to country parks.*

5.5 Evaluation – Interpretive services

Full evaluation

Health and safety policy is taken into account in interpretive planning. Parent organisation policies encourage interpretive provision and the second statutory purpose of the Authority is fulfilled in this way.

There are many features, both on and off-site that can be interpreted. There is existing public interest in these features. Sensitivities relating to features will be a management consideration. Visitors show interest in features management by their attendance at events, talks etc..

The site is next to a main highway and there is a network of Public Rights of Way in and around the Country Park. Within the site there are paths of varying surface and condition. The site is within the area of the Brecon Beacons National Park. It lies in a glaciated valley bottom. There is easy access to moorland and limestone scenery and a wealth of upland land use types.

Refer to File ref.: cp\ interpretive services\events for a history of event programmes and attendance. Attendance in recent years at events has been lower than the optimum number per event. There are varying levels of interest depending on topic and timing of activities offered. In recent years there has been a concentration of events on weekends, school and public holidays. There is a potential conflict between event participants and members of the public especially with relation to quiet enjoyment of the site. Personal experience suggests that carrying capacity is not exceeded either on or off site. We recognise and plan with local and wider communities in the management of facilities and activities. The most potential for conflict lies with off-site events rather than on-site ones. On-site marketing has proved more effective than off-site. However, an increase in off-site marketing could result in an increased uptake.

Opportunities exist for income generation although charging is nominal. It remains a highly subsidised service. The emphasis in recent years has been low-key, low-cost. We optimise opportunities to promote elements of green living and sustainable practices. There is a wealth of alternative provision within a 50-mile radius with a variety of charging policies.

The Visitor Centre is the focus for many activities and facilities. It contains display boards, activity rooms and interactive games with different levels of technology. Leaflets provide self-guided walks, quizzes and trails. There are a small number of outdoor panels throughout the site.

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide interpretive opportunities in and around Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *The existing provision satisfies the second statutory purpose of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority,*
- *The site features and surrounding countryside are suitable,*
- *Records of past and current usage indicate that there is a demand for interpretive activities at this site.*

Shortcut evaluation

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan (January 2000) states that,

“the National Park Authority's provision of interpretation contributes to the fulfilment of both of its statutory purposes. It contributes to people's understanding and enjoyment of the Park by interpreting its landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, and by explaining the purposes, policies and work.”

The draft aim is to,

“promote among Park residents and visitors an understanding of the special qualities of the National Park and of the role of the National Park Authority in conserving them.”

The Good Practice Guidelines for Country Parks (CCW, 1995) states that country parks should act as “gateways” to the surrounding countryside,

“providing interpretation about opportunities such as the public rights of way network and other places to visit”.

It indicates that “interpretative centres should be low-key...and complement the natural surroundings of the country park providing information and interpretation.”

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide interpretive provision in Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *both of the statutory purposes of the Authority are part realised by the continued service within the Country Park,*
- *the existing provision is consistent with relevant guidelines with respect to country parks.*

5.6 Evaluation – Information services

Full Evaluation

Parent organisation policies support an information service of which the Country Park forms a part. The second statutory purpose and a contribution to sustainable management of the National Park are cited in the National Park Management Plan. The CCW Guide to Good Practice in Country Parks also supports the provision of an information service.

Information about the site and surrounding features form the bulk of the work of the service. There is existing public interest in these features. Sensitivities relating to features will be a management consideration.

The Country Park lies on an important north-south route within the National Park and acts as a gateway to the south-western part of the area. The Visitor Centre forms the focal point for the information service and there are numerous information boards on site, mostly clustered in the car park area. There are other information centres within a 30-mile radius including a National Park Village Information Point in Abercrave.

Evidence from staff shows high levels of interest in the site and its immediate environs and attractions. Further informal evidence suggests that a small proportion of total Country Park visitors come into the Visitor Centre itself. There are rarely times when the carrying capacity of the building approaches maximum. There is recognition of local and wider communities in the management and planning of facilities. Conflicts can arise with visitors walking through neighbouring farmland. The service aims to resolve these conflicts through personal recommendation for routes at sensitive times of the year.

A range of publications is offered, both free and for sale. We have the lowest volume of sales and income of all the National Park Information Centres.

The Visitor Centre forms the focus for the facilities with boards, leaflets and posters available all year. Seasonal staffing significantly boosts the level of service available at weekends during Easter - September and school holidays periods (Easter to end of summer). There are timber map boards and signs in the car park along with other notice boards for staff to change on a regular basis. There are two information boards in the main Country Park as well as a number of timber markers identifying habitat types and path quality.

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide information services in Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *The existing provision satisfies the second statutory purpose of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority,*
- *The site features and surrounding countryside are suitable,*
- *Records of past and current usage indicate that there is a demand for information services at this site.*

Shortcut evaluation

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan (January 2000) states that,

“the National Park Authority’s provision of information contributes to the fulfilment of both of its statutory purposes. It contributes to people’s understanding and enjoyment of the Park by interpreting its landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, and by explaining the purposes, policies and work.”

The draft aim is to,

“promote among Park residents and visitors an understanding of the special qualities of the National Park and of the role of the National Park Authority in conserving them.”

The Good Practice Guidelines for Country Parks (CCW, 1995) states that country parks should

“provide clear visitor information, especially relating to the location of facilities, conservation, interpretation and the work of the country park and the role of CCW”

It indicates that “interpretative centres should be low-key...and complement the natural surroundings of the country park providing information and interpretation.”

Conclusion

We shall continue to provide information services in Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *both of the statutory purposes of the Authority are part realised by the continued service within the Country Park,*
- *the existing provision is consistent with relevant guidelines with respect to country parks.*

5.7 Evaluation - Marketing

No specific policies exist to support marketing other than the commitment to effective communication.

Features of interest on site and their management, as well as services and facilities are all marketable. A range of target markets can be identified from current patterns of use and visitor survey results.

Surveys show that over 95% of users visit the Country Park by private car. There is a main bus route running past the site and it is mentioned in the Beacons Bus programme. The site is the only Country Park in a National Park, the only Country Park in Powys and compared to many other local country parks is relatively uncommercialised.

Visitor surveys indicate, at a general level, the type of visitor and their home areas. We gather opinions about the site and its services and summary data appears on file. The range of services offered and the features (both on and off-site) are subject to varying levels of marketing and promotion. In recent years the budget for such activities has dwindled to zero. Free opportunities are exploited where possible. The local communities are addressed via newspapers, community magazines and more proactive methods such as evening talks. There is also networking among professional colleagues to share good practice and current developments.

Sustainability is addressed by direct marketing of site features, services and facilities and by the promotion of sustainable management practices by staff. Complementary marketing opportunities are exploited where possible and potential exists for a cluster of attractions to further integrate.

Free publicity can be generated by selective press releases, identifying current projects/photo opportunities. Off site promotional leaflets and posters are in print and are randomly distributed. Selected events are marketed via the National Park Guided Walks programme. The Country Park features on the National Park website and has the potential to be developed further.

Conclusion

We shall continue to market and promote Craig-y-nos Country Park because:

- *The site features and facilities and surrounding countryside are suitable,*
- *Records of past and current usage indicate the levels of demand that exist.*

5.8 Confirmed list of services/facilities

- Recreation
- Education
- Interpretive services
- Information services
- Marketing

Section 6 - Services/facilities objectives

6.1 Service/facility 1 - Recreation

6.1.1 Summary description

The site is offered to the public for daily use throughout the year. Different habitat types coupled with relatively flat ground in a spectacular valley setting combine to make the country park a popular attraction. Its setting within the National Park area contributes to its attraction for holidaymakers.

6.1.2 Favourable status for recreation

The National Park Authority statutory purposes, as defined in the Environment Act 1995, are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Thus there will be continued commitment to the provision of recreation at this site. The Best Value process will challenge this commitment.

Parent organisation policies

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan (January 2000) aims for recreation management are to:

- Ensure that recreation activity is environmentally sustainable
- Promote opportunities for the enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities by the public
- Resolve problems and conflicts caused by recreation activities

Within the Plan, each of these statements is broken down into a series of composite work areas. They are not easily measurable and all that can be suggested is that action taken at the Country Park is moving the service towards or away from achieving the broader statement.

Cost/efficiency

The National Park Authority sets the Country Park budget. Within this framework are staffing costs, revenue expenditure including premises, transport, supplies and services and targets for income generation across a range of cost codes. Charging policies are reviewed frequently and often in tandem with other service providers within the Authority. Options for defining favourable status available for the Craig-y-nos Country Park could be:

- Net cost per visitor
- Income per visitor
- Gross income as a percentage of expenditure

Service delivery outcomes

The biggest test of whether the site is attractive to users will be overall visitor numbers. There are a range of factors which will affect this. These are addressed further in the plan. The Country Park infrastructure relevant to recreation consists of the following main elements:

- Path network
- Countryside furniture
- Toilet facilities
- Mown areas
- Car park

Unless these elements satisfy visitor demands and expectations, the recreational service cannot be seen to be of full benefit to the user.

Quality

There are many ways in which visitors can express their feelings about the site and the quality of the service, the experience and the facilities within it. The National Park Authority offers a complaints facility should visitors wish to register concerns. External consultants offer views of quality within some of the recreation, information and interpretive services. We carry out annual surveys covering a range of qualitative issues.

Fair access

A key aspect of countryside recreation is fair access for all visitors. This includes accessibility issues such as:

- Physical access to the site
- Charges on site
- Access for all around the site
- Social access

Conclusion

Recreation at Craig-y-nos Country Park will be in favourable status when:

- *the site is open*

- *net cost does not significantly rise above current levels*
- *the car park satisfies peak demand*
- *visitors are satisfied with the site*
- *access for all issues are appropriately addressed*

6.1.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

6.1.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural including physical	Human related
Income generation	Grass growth	Utilities
Health and safety legislation	Decline of trees	Visitor pressure
National Park Management Plan policies	Habitats	Litter
Neighbours	Species	Overcrowding
LA21	River flooding	Repeat visits
Boundaries	Weather	Guided walks
Study of Good Practice	Block 16	Bank holidays
Disability Discrimination Act	Size of car park	Availability of resources
Best value	Slope of car park	
	Extent of hard path network	
	Site location	

Policy and legislation factors

Dealt with under Obligations objective.

Natural, including physical, factors

Grass growth

Recreational use of the site is concentrated in parkland areas. Visitors favour short grass.

Dealt with under Parkland objective.

Decline of trees

The National Park Woodland Officer (NPWO) has recognised that parts of the woodland are in decline. Public access in these areas requires the Woodland Officer and Country Park staff to carry out regular health and safety checks. The Country Park (or zones) may be closed during felling or following checks.

Lower limit: two site inspections pa by NPWO; severe weather checks by Country Park staff as required

Monitoring project: diary checks

Habitats

Dealt with under Marketing

Species

There are two species that inhibit public enjoyment, namely brambles and nettles.

Lower limit: 80% of paths (see *File: cplmap 9*) where vegetation does not impinge on access

Monitoring project: monthly check on grounds work programme

Hemlock water dropwort is a poisonous plant present throughout the park and next to paths. It is easily confused with non-toxic cow parsley.

Lower limit: 80% of paths (see *File: cplmap 9*) with a 1m border free from Hemlock water dropwort

Monitoring project: monthly check on grounds work programme

The duck population is a known attraction to the visiting public.

Lower limit: feed ducks weekly so as to encourage a resident population on the Fishpond and the Far Lake

Monitoring project: monthly check on grounds work programme

Visitors also come to the park to see the flowering rhododendron and autumn foliage. Mature rhododendron has formed a tunnel between blocks 11 and 12 and is enjoyed by the public.

Dealt with under Features objective.

River flooding

The Tawe, and to a lesser extent the Llynfell, can reach bankfull state on numerous occasions throughout the year. At these times the river becomes a potential danger to the public and more of an attraction for canoeists. Water levels regularly break the banks flooding part of the site, restricting access.

Monitoring project: monitor rainfall levels; patrol riverbank

Weather

The site is generally busier the warmer and drier the conditions. Very high temperatures in summer can see a fall in numbers as visitors choose coastal sites to visit instead. Prolonged

dry periods in summer can increase fire risk. Strong winds can cause the site to be closed as a precaution against falling trees and branches. Snow attracts visitors although icy conditions can restrict access to the car park – due to the slope cars can come in but they cannot get out. The ponds freeze over in severe winter conditions and tempt some visitors to walk across them. River flooding - as above.

Lower limit: appropriate car park management during busy days

Monitoring project: diary checks to see when overflow car park was used/could have been used if conditions were right

Lower limit: fire risk signs placed in strategic locations when necessary; increase patrols and checks on BBQ locations

Monitoring project: diary check to note dates that signs are placed in park and date removed

Lower limit: close site during violent storms

Monitoring project: diary checks and cross-reference to tree file for Warden's report following storms

Lower limit: close car park when icy

Monitoring project: diary check

Lower limit: place danger signs near ponds when frozen

Monitoring project: diary check

Block 16

Victorian maps show a path on the east bank of the Far Lake. This is now fully overgrown. There are no plans to reinstate the access as it is considered to be an undisturbed wildlife haven. Also, the steep slope above it contains numerous mature trees.

Dealt with under features management.

Lower limit: maintain restricted access

Size of car park

As the parking bays are not marked, the total number of cars that can be accommodated can vary considerably. *See below for relationship to guided walks.* The lawns at the bottom of the

car park can be used in dry conditions as an overflow car park. Once the car park is full there is limited nearby off-site parking.

Lower limit: patrol car park on weekend days (May - August)

Monitoring project: see weather project above

Slope of car park

See above for weather.

Dealt with under Information and Interpretation.

Extent of hard path network

Most visitors use the path network to move around the site irrespective of the weather conditions. The network is of particular importance to the less able, elderly or infirm visitors.

Lower limit: 10% loss of hard path network as per 1999 map

Monitoring project: monthly grounds check

Site location

Dealt with under Marketing and Information.

Human related factors

Utilities

The sewage treatment plant (installed in winter 2000) has an outfall pipe located on the west bank of the Llynfell, upstream of the middle bridge. *See File: cp\map 5.*

Upper limit: 5% comments about outfall nuisance/odour in annual visitor survey

Monitoring project: complaint records/annual survey

Visitor pressure

Dealt with under individual features objectives.

Litter

There are no outside bins in the Country Park. We pick litter daily in summer and several times a week at all other times. No litter is burned on site – it is taken away by the local authority refuse lorry. Controlled waste has to be removed by licensed contractor (nappy unit, feminine hygiene units). There are no dog waste bins.

Upper limit: 5% complaints about site litter in annual survey

Monitoring project: check annual survey results

Overcrowding

See also individual features and services/facilities objectives.

Personal experience indicates that there has been little conflict between recreational users of the site, even on the busiest of days. There may be conflict between the casual user and large parties of schoolchildren on site but this is likely to be of short duration. *Dealt with under education.*

Repeat visits

Dealt with under Interpretive services.

Repeat visits form an important part of the visitor profile. Recent surveys (1991-1999) did not record frequency of visit, as it did not directly impact on recreational management. However, the nature and extent of repeat visits is to be used as a Local Performance Indicator within the Best Value process to measure the level of satisfaction with the site. Season tickets are on offer to visitors but take-up is currently poor.

Dealt with under Marketing.

Lower limit: collect data on repeat visits

Monitoring project: include in annual visitor survey

Guided walks

Participants on popular guided walks (especially in high season) impact on available car parking spaces.

Lower limit: liaise with guided walk leaders

Monitoring project: check programme at start of season

Bank holidays

Dealt with under weather above. Bank holidays are generally the busiest days of the year. Extra patrolling of the site including the car park and the toilet facilities is required therefore we need to commit extra staff on these days.

Lower limit: appropriate staffing/ patrolling

Monitoring project: diary check

Availability of resources

Over two-thirds of the revenue expenditure of the site is spent on staff resources. Continued pressure on the budget could lead to changes in the nature and extent of staffing on site. External funding opportunities are constantly sought to reduce overall costs to the National Park Authority. Pressure to generate income is constant. Targets are set and further examination of the site's potential is expected. *Dealt with under features management.*

Lower limit: 2000/01 staffing levels

6.1.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

There are year-round commitments to maintain the site in a suitable condition for visitors. The main summer season (May-September) brings added pressure on facilities, especially at Bank Holidays. We also need to control vegetation that impacts on visitors' enjoyment. This includes regular grass mowing as well checks on maturing trees. The weather will always play a major role in the success of the site as a destination.

6.1.4 Selection of recreation performance indicators

- **Number of days the site is open**

An open site is the key to providing recreational opportunities - a statutory purpose of the site. The lower limit is set to take account of normal management operations and natural conditions that may affect opening.

- **Net cost per visitor**

Cost effectiveness is another indicator of the success of a service. The service subsidy is recognised. 1999 cost per visitor levels have been chosen since they were the most recent full year data available. Expenditure levels have been similar to previous years and visitor numbers are average when compared to the last 10 years. Expenditure is understood to be revenue costs and excludes all capital projects.

- **Visitor numbers**

Factors heavily influence the limits set for visitor numbers. These factors include finances available for marketing the site, size of the car park, weather and neighbouring attraction development. The lower limit is the lowest acceptable figure (suggested by the manager) before favourable status would be affected. No upper limit has been set.

- **Car park availability**

There are few days in a normal year when demand for the car park exceeds supply of spaces. When conditions allow, an overflow area can be made available to take some of the extra demand. There is a strong interrelationship between demand on the car park and the two factors of Bank Holidays and the weather.

- **Visitor satisfaction levels**

The success of the site is based largely on the visitor experience. Visitor satisfaction is currently assessed by questionnaire. Past surveys indicate that a majority of visitors would like to see changes in the facilities currently offered. The introduction of Best Value may require official justification as to why suggested changes are not implemented.

- **Local Access Group requirements**

The local Access Group has been vital in guiding the development of the site to be more accessible for all. They have proposed standards, requirements and desirable conditions for path networks, countryside furniture, toilet facilities etc.. These suggestions must be balanced with other needs of the site.

6.1.5 Objective

Objective 10 - To offer public use of the country park in a favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- the site is open to the public,

Lower limit: 350 days

Monitoring project: annual diary check

- net cost per visitor is

Upper limit: 1999/00 levels+10%

Monitoring project: annual check

- visitor numbers p.a. are

Upper limit: none set

Lower limit: 55,000

Monitoring project: annual check

- the car park satisfies demand

Lower limit: no fewer than 70% of weekend days (May - August)

Monitoring project: record number of occasions when overflow car park is or could have
been opened

- overall satisfaction levels are maintained

Lower limit: 95% of visitors express overall satisfaction with the site in the annual
visitor survey

Monitoring project: annual visitor survey

- recreation services/facilities meet the needs of the local Access Group

Upper limit: standards deemed inappropriate for the site by the Country Park
Manager

Lower limit: minimum standard agreed by the Group and the Country Park
Manager

Monitoring project: Continued involvement on National Park Authority Disabled Access
Steering Group.

Performance indicators from factors:

- Decline of trees

Lower limit: two site inspections pa by NPWO; severe weather checks by Country
Park staff as required

- Brambles and nettles

Lower limit: 80% of paths (see *File: cplmap 9*) where vegetation does not impinge
on access

- Hemlock water dropwort

Lower limit: 80% of paths (see *File: cplmap 9*) with a 1m border
free from Hemlock water dropwort

- Duck population

Lower limit: feed ducks weekly so as to encourage a resident population on the Fishpond and the Far Lake

- Weather

Lower limit: appropriate car park management during busy days

Lower limit: fire risk signs placed in strategic locations when necessary; increase patrols and checks on BBQ locations

Lower limit: close site during violent storms

Lower limit: close car park when icy

Lower limit: place danger signs near ponds when frozen

- Block 16

Lower limit: maintain restricted access

- Size of car park

Lower limit: patrol car park on weekend days (May - August)

- Extent of hard path network

Lower limit: 10% loss of hard path network as per 1999 map

- Utilities

Upper limit: 5% comments about outfall nuisance/odour in annual visitor survey

- Litter

Upper limit: 5% complaints about site litter in annual survey

- Repeat visits

Lower limit: collect data on repeat visits

- Guided walks

Lower limit: liaise with guided walk leaders

- Bank holidays

Lower limit: appropriate staffing/ patrolling

- Availability of resources

Lower limit: 2000/01 staffing levels

6.1.6 Current status of recreation

Unfavourable, recovering.

This is because we do not meet the minimum standard proposed by the local Access Group.

6.1.7 Rationale

We have carried out much work to make the site more accessible for people of all abilities.

See Disabled Access file for records of work to date. The main area of improvement identified by the local Access Group is in path provision (gradient, surface, camber etc.) The main factor that limits further improvements is availability of resources.

We will manage the impact of factors such as the control of invasive species, regular mowing and checks on tree condition. We will continue active visitor management including patrols of the site and assisting with car parking.

Policy and legislation management is dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

6.1.8 Outline prescriptions and projects

6.1.8.1 Manage recreation services

Mow grass	Leave uncut shapes
Path widths maintained	Hemlock water dropwort cleared from paths
Feed ducks regularly	Retain rhododendron borders

6.1.8.2 Visitor management

Liaison with National Park Disabled Access Steering Group	Manage guided walks /car parking
Meet all canoeists before launch	Bank holidays / weekend patrols
Record complaints	

6.1.8.3 Monitor visitor management

Check grounds work programme for species	Check duck feeding patterns
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control	
Check overflow car park use/demand	Check hard surface network
Check survey results re: litter/dog waste	Carry out face to face surveys

6.2 Service/facility 2 – Education

6.2.1 Summary description

The level of study offered is pre-school through to higher education, though the bulk of visits are from students at Key Stage 2 (age 7 – 11) of the National Curriculum (>95% in 1999). The education service covers visits to and by schools and colleges. Study options cover a range of topics, and we deliver activities both within and outside the Country Park. Educational services include staff led and self guided activities and student placements.

6.2.2 Favourable status

Parent organisation strategy

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan states that the aims of its Education Service are:

- *to instil understanding of sustainable development and environmental issues, in particular the special qualities of the National Park and the National Park Authority's work*
- *to encourage attitudes and behaviour which will ensure a sustainable future*

These statements are broken down into a series of composite work areas. The Country Park education service contributes to these aims by offering and delivering group visits, student placements and other learning opportunities.

Cost/efficiency

Educational charges are reviewed annually across the National Park Education Service as a whole. It is a subsidised service. There is managerial discretion in deciding the extent of support of the service at site level. Nonetheless the service is expected to generate income. In order to meet the needs of parent organisation policies, income generation ought to be greater from groups beyond Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum.

The service is offered as part of a range of visitor services. Education staff have other duties such as land and property management. A balance must be sought between meeting the demand for visits and meeting the demands of the whole site.

Service delivery outcomes/Quality

The service offered needs to reflect teacher requirements in respect of National and other curricula as well as National Park Authority messages. The service must be in demand. The

service is delivered in a variety of ways including staff-led activities, self-guided options, distance learning and student placements. Outcomes of the service must satisfy teachers, pupils and the National Park Authority. For schools, there may be a discrepancy between the outcomes for the pupils and that of the teaching staff. *See File ref.: cpl\ education services\surveys for results of previous evaluation of the service by teachers.*

Fair access

Fair access addresses a number of issues. Access to staff is based on a first come-first served basis, irrespective of level/topic of study and date of the preferred visit. Centre Managers have discretion to reduce charges for schools who would be financially disadvantaged by current pricing policy. The Welsh Language Board (1998) has adopted the National Park Authority Welsh Language Scheme. This commits the Authority to extending the services offered in the Welsh language but does not state existing provision nor set any targets.

The National Park Authority statutory purposes as defined in the Environment Act 1995 are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Thus there will be continued commitment to the provision of education.

Conclusion

The education service at Craig-y-nos Country Park will be in favourable status when:

- *study day composition is biased towards National Park purposes*
- *appropriate income is generated*
- *an appropriate number of study days are offered*
- *schools request the services*
- *teachers are satisfied with the service*
- *students have a positive learning experience*
- *Welsh language opportunities exist*

6.2.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

6.2.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural including physical	Human-related
Income generation	Decline of trees	Visitor pressure
National Park Management Plan policies	River flooding	Litter
LA21	Weather	Overcrowding
Mammal trapping	Size of car park	Repeat visitors
Welsh Language Act		Neighbours
National Curriculum		Availability of resources
Health and safety legislation		
Disability Discrimination Act		
AALA		
Best value		

Policy and legislation

Dealt with under Obligations objective.

Natural processes

Decline of trees

Dealt with under recreation.

River flooding

Dealt with under recreation. As at 1999/2000 river dipping and river studies are the most popular activity on site. Alternative water sources can be found at times of high flow.

Weather

Dealt with under recreation. Health and safety notes circulated to group leaders indicate the need for visit preparation based on a range of weather conditions.

Size of car park

Most educational groups arrive by coach. The size and layout of the car park means that only a limited number of coaches can park, especially on busier days. Pre-booking of educational groups alleviates this issue to some extent as spaces can be reserved. Poor accessibility results in groups being dropped off in the car park with the coach then parking off-site.

Human-related

Visitor pressure (pupil numbers)

The river Tawe in particular is used as a valuable educational resource. River dipping has been a popular study option and Country Park staff have tended to use the same stretch of river. The effects of this are uncertain but staff are of the opinion that it is negligible when compared to the river in spate.

Dealt with under natural water features management.

Litter

Dealt with under recreation. Schools are positively encouraged to take all their litter home with them. Black bags are provided to those who ask. Educational activities take place throughout the Country Park including areas where dogs are exercised. Leaders are encouraged to make children wash their hands before eating.

Overcrowding

Dealt with under features management and recreation. There can be competition between visiting schools for equipment and for particular sections of the site. This can be for curriculum studies or for recreational use. Staff take bookings and advise teachers accordingly.

Monitoring project: record frequency of equipment / area sharing

Repeat visitors

Many schools have been visiting the site for years although these numbers are not recorded. Classes may visit more than once in a year or a teacher will bring one class each year to follow the same theme. Country Park staff discuss previous visits with school staff to ensure consistency and to avoid repetition.

Dealt with under Marketing.

Neighbours

Neighbours interact with the Country Park education service in different ways. Some schools will visit neighbours' property (National Showcaves Centre for Wales, Craig-y-Nos Castle). Leaving the Country Park and using the PROW network impacts on local landowners. During the lambing season, we pay particular attention to the conduct of staff-led groups passing through farms. Local access agreements give groups the option to visit private land otherwise out of bounds.

Monitoring project: record visits on private land and any incidents

Availability of resources

The Seasonal Warden post is a crucial role within the Country Park between Easter and October, satisfying a large number of requests for educational visits in the Summer Term and the early part of the Autumn Term. Threats to the level of funding for this post would have knock-on effects to the remaining education staff and the number of schools offered staff-led places.

Pressure on the budget has led to a reduced amount of upgrading of printed educational resources, renewal of broken equipment and replacement of worn out equipment. A positive impact has been the continued support of the Environment Agency in the joint interpretive work in the Flow Measuring Station.

Lower limit: 10% broken / damaged equipment not replaced

Monitoring project: annual inventory

Lower limit: 20% printed material to be renewed on an annual basis

Monitoring project: annual check

6.2.3.2 Impact assessment

Staff must get regular feedback from teachers especially with relation to charging for visits and changes in curricula that will enhance future visits. The impact of the volume of visits both on and off site will benefit from feedback. This must come from teachers and pupils as well as staff, visitors and neighbours.

Legislation factors are dealt with in the appropriate section.

6.2.4 Selection of education performance indicators

- **number of study days offered**

The offer of dates for school and college visits has to be balanced with other management activities needed to satisfy the management of the site as a whole. This is reflected in the table of study days offered per member of staff per term.

- **number of school visits**
- **date availability**

Demand is indicative of the quality of the service as well as marketing and relevance to the National and other curricula. Demand in the summer term generally outstrips supply of available staff. Schools who cannot be accommodated on their first choice of date are offered alternative dates or self-guided education sessions either at the Country Park or at other venues within the National Park.

- **income generation**

The National Park Education Team has met on numerous occasions to discuss methods of assessing the outcome of the service. One aspect that has emerged is that younger students i.e. those at Key Stage 1 and below are less likely to be following a curriculum that specifically relates to the National Park area than those at higher key stages. By measuring income per key stage, the range of service delivery can be targeted to those students deemed more capable of receiving the key messages.

- **positive learning experience for pupils**
- **study day composition**

The National Park Authority aims for Education (*see favourable status above*) are realised through pupils' positive learning experiences and ensuring study day topics include direct relevance to the special qualities of the National Park area.

- **satisfying teacher expectations**

Teachers book visits in order to satisfy National Curriculum (and other curricula) requirements.

- **Welsh language opportunities**

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Welsh Language Scheme commits the Authority to extending its services offered in Welsh.

6.2.5 Objective

Objective 11 - To offer the education service in a favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- the number of study days offered is as per Table 6 below:

Table 6

Post	Spring term (Jan-Easter)	Summer term (Easter-July)	Autumn term (Sept-Christmas)
Country Park Manager	Upper limit: 20 Lower limit: 10	Upper limit: 30 Lower limit: 15	Upper limit: 20 Lower limit: 10
Assistant Country Park Manager	Upper limit: 25 Lower limit: 12	Upper limit: 35 Lower limit: 20	Upper limit: 25 Lower limit: 12
Seasonal Warden	Upper limit: NA Lower limit: NA	Upper limit: 35 Lower limit: 15	Upper limit: 30 Lower limit: 15
Self-guided visits	Upper limit: 40 Lower limit: 10	Upper limit: 60 Lower limit: 30	Upper limit: 60 Lower limit: 20

Monitoring project: monthly check

- the number of school visits is

Lower limit: 50% of each lower limit in the Table 6

Monitoring project: monthly check

- the number of schools failing to achieve first choice of dates is as per Table 7 below:

Table 7

	Spring term	Summer term	Autumn term
Upper limit	33%	60%	33%

Monitoring project: monthly check

- income generated from students aged 11 and over is

Lower limit: 20%

Monitoring project: monthly check

- pupil evaluations (via questionnaire) indicate a positive learning experience

Lower limit: 65% of those questioned enjoyed their visit

Monitoring project: trial evaluation needed

- study days that staff deliver are:

Lower limit: 15% of all options are taken from the list below

Monitoring project: monthly check

Topics:

Hill walk; contrasting landscape; upland land use; conflicts and issues in National Parks

- teacher expectations are satisfied

Lower limit: 80% satisfaction

Monitoring project: trial evaluation forms

- requests for study days delivered through the medium of Welsh are met:

	up to KS1	KS2	above KS2
Lower limit:	25%	10%	None set

Monitoring project: annual check

Performance indicators from factors:

- Availability of resources

Lower limit: 10% broken / damaged equipment not replaced

Lower limit: 20% printed material to be renewed on an annual basis

6.2.6 Current status

Unfavourable

- no records available with relation to dates offered,
- take-up lower than limit,
- no records available for date availability,
- no records for pupils' learning nor teachers satisfaction,
- no data available with relation to Welsh requests

6.2.7 Rationale

We will keep more detailed records of group visits.

Take-up of educational visits has been low partly due to school management issues (e.g. pressures on time for visits, alternative providers). Also, we have not marketed the educational service offered by Country Park staff for the last five years. This is due to the lack of resources (staffing, finance) and due to concentration of staff time on other aspects of site management. We will address schools marketing.

We will specifically target higher level groups (11 years and older) in order to better achieve the aims of the National Park Management Plan. By the nature of the curriculum these pupils focus more specifically on National Park purposes. This could be achieved through increased visits but also through website development.

We will continue to monitor the number of school parties on site needs in order to minimise conflict with other uses and with features. We also need to keep checks on the demands on a limited pool of educational equipment. Similarly, we will monitor the frequency of off site visits where parties regularly cross farmed land. This is to avoid a conflict of interest with the local farming community.

Legislative issues will be addressed under the relevant objective.

6.2.8 Outline prescriptions and management projects

6.2.8.1 Provide educational services

Develop study day options for on-site and distance learning	Deliver study days
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6.2.8.2 Monitor provision of services

Evaluate pupils' learning experiences	Evaluate teacher expectation
Check broken or damaged equipment not replaced	Check reprints of resource material
Check staff time committed to education	Record take-up of visits
Record number of schools failing to achieve first preferred date	Check age range of students
Check composition of study days (topics)	Record pressures on equipment
Record private land incidents	

6.3 Service/facility 3 – Interpretive services

6.3.1 Summary description

Interpretive services form a major part of the work of staff. The single biggest focus is the Visitor Centre that contains displays and activity areas. Trails and publications supplement these (free and retail), interpreting the Country Park, the locality and the wider National Park area. Beyond the Visitor Centre, trails and panels offer passive service while active elements include events, walks and talks.

6.3.2 Favourable status

Parent organisation strategy

The Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan states that the aims of its interpretive work are to:

“promote among Park residents and visitors an understanding of the special qualities of the National Park and of the role of the National Park Authority in conserving them.”

This statement is broken down into a series of composite work areas. They are not easily measurable and all that can be suggested is that action taken is moving the service towards or away from achieving the statement. *See service delivery outcomes below.*

Cost/efficiency

The service is subsidised throughout. We offer a wide range of activities, publications and exhibits. Publications produced by the Information Section of the National Park satisfy a range of needs. Not all of the publications produced recover costs of production.

Activities such as guided walks and events have related budgets for production and delivery. Some guided walks are led from the site as part of the wider National Park programme. The Warden service manages these. Public service is deemed to outweigh the costs of provision in terms of staff time. Transport costs are generally recovered in full.

Overall costs to the public are minimal and do not reflect expenditure on equipment or staff time.

Service delivery outcomes

Interpretive planning recognises three distinct outcomes (Veverka, 1994). These are focussed on learning, emotion and behaviour. All interpretive services should be planned and assessed in this way.

An overall measure of benefit must be found to justify the commitment by staff.

Quality

Quality of service can be defined as provision that meets the needs of the user. Some work must be done to identify those needs. We can measure service delivery through inspection, observation, consultation and direct questioning.

Fair access

We aim to have a proportion of the interpretive services accessible for all physical abilities. Recent work on tactile maps has been a result of consultation with the local Access Group. The Visitor Centre has few exhibits that are accessible to all although sound, light and tactile exhibits are used. Text sizes vary but most letter height is small (below 30-point). Colour contrast has not been a feature of exhibit planning to date. There are no large print, Braille or audio interpretive publications or exhibits.

Some of the staff-led activities take the bus network into account, aiming to give the less mobile a chance to use the services.

Conclusion

The interpretive services offered by the Country Park will be in favourable status when

- *they satisfy National Park management plan aims*
- *they satisfy interpretive objectives (Veverka, 1994)*
- *benefits are deemed to outweigh costs*

6.3.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

6.3.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural including physical	Human-related
Income generation	Decline of trees	Visitor pressure
National Park Management Plan policies	Habitats	Bank holidays
PROW	Species	Neighbours
Register of Historic Parks	River flooding	Repeat visitors

and Gardens		
AALA	Weather	Availability of resources
Mammal licence		
Welsh Language Act		
Health and safety issues		
Children Act		
Disability Discrimination Act		
Best value		

Policy and legislation

Dealt with under Obligations objective.

Natural including physical

Decline of trees

Dealt with under Recreation and Woodland. Interpretive provision can aid understanding as to why the site appears in the condition that it does i.e. coppicing, felling etc..

Habitats

The different habitat types and their historical context offer many opportunities. *See National Park Management Plan policies.*

Species

We can optimise the opportunity to raise awareness about ecological processes in general and threatened species in particular. *See National Park Management Plan policies.*

River flooding

Dealt with under Recreation.

Weather

Dealt with under Recreation.

Human-related

Visitor pressure

Dealt with under Recreation. Interpretive services can both inform visitors about the pressures they may cause on a site and exacerbate them at the same time. Outdoor panels or trails attracting large numbers of visitors can cause trampling or erosion to ground surfaces. *Dealt with under Features.*

Bank Holidays

Dealt with under Recreation and visitor pressure above. Bank holidays are generally the most popular days of the year. We can provide an additional level of service on these days as the volume of visitors receiving corporate messages can be maximised.

Lower limit: interpretive activities to take place on Bank Holidays Easter – August inclusive.

Monitoring project: diary check

Neighbours

Dealt with under Education services.

Repeat visitors

Visitors may return each month or more frequently. The modular nature of the Visitor Centre display lends itself to frequent updating. Trails leading visitors around the Country Park can often focus on significant landmarks and returning visitors have commented in the past that similar routes are used around the site.

Lower limit: review panels in the Visitor Centre quarterly; review trail routes

Monitoring project: diary check

Availability of resources

Current budgets are prioritised towards safeguarding features and compliance with health and safety requirements. This means that interpretive provision has been starved of development funds for three years. Events are low-key, low-cost. The Visitor Centre display has not been upgraded in three years. Publications are either produced in-house and photocopied or put on hold until funds improve. The AALA licence has not been renewed since 1998. The costs and benefits of Welsh language publications is the subject of current debate within the Authority. One area of positive impact has been the support of the Environment Agency towards use of their Flow Measuring Station.

6.3.3.2 Impact assessment

Interpretive planning must recognise the visitor profile, in particular the frequency of visits and the age and ability of the visitors and their cultural background. To complement this

approach, feedback on participation and a focus on outcomes will provide an effective means of review for future planning.

6.3.4 Selection of interpretive services performance indicators

- **understanding of the special qualities of the National Park area**
- **understanding of the role of the National Park Authority**

The National Park Management Plan aims can be satisfied through a range of site-based initiatives and services.

- **changes in emotion, behaviour and learning**

Veverka (1994) suggests that interpretive objectives provide the direction and content of all interpretive services. He breaks objectives into three main components – learning, emotion and behaviour. Learning is simply what you want the visitors to remember after completing any activity or service offered. Emotional objectives are “driving force” objectives – they help visitors to remember because of the strong feelings that they provoke. Finally, behavioural objectives – the most powerful of all – help focus on what you want the visitor to do as a result of participation in the interpretive service or activity. Veverka calls these the “pay-off” objectives or the “results” of the services provided.

- **benefits outweigh costs**

Costs can never be fully evaluated in the provision of interpretive services. Expenditure on real items such as equipment, fuel etc. can be recovered but staff time is not taken into account nor the costs of providing the interpretation rather than some other activity. Similarly, the benefits are not always measurable. One happy child can be ample reward. However, an approach has been developed by TRAT – an internal working party of the National Park Authority (Tourism, Recreation and Transport). Here, inputs and outputs to activities are declared and even though subjectivity is used in deciding the cost-benefit, it is a first step in measuring the relative success or otherwise of the service provided.

6.3.5 Objective

Objective 12 - To offer interpretive services in favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- Users have an understanding of the special qualities of the National Park area (increased learning)

Media	Activity/area	Lower limit
Visitor Centre exhibits	National Park panels	20% of those people viewing the panels can name one or more special qualities of the National Park area
Events	Those with National Park display material present	20% of those visiting the display material can name one or more special qualities of the National Park area
Self-guided trails	Those that focus on the National Park	10% of those completing the trail can name one or more special qualities of the National Park area
Free leaflets	Ditto	10% of those people who have read the leaflet can name one or more special qualities of the National Park area
Sale publications	Ditto	10% of those people who have read the publication can name one or more special qualities of the National Park area
Guided walks	Ditto	33% of those people on the walk can name one or more special qualities of the National Park area

Monitoring project: questionnaire survey, direct audience feedback

- Users have a greater understanding of the role of the National Park Authority (increased learning)

Media	Activity/area	Lower limit
Visitor Centre exhibits	National Park panels	10% of those people viewing the panels can name one or more National Park purposes; 20% of those people viewing the panels can name one or more functions of the National Park Authority and/or areas of staff work
Events	Those with National Park display material present	20% of those visiting the display material can name one or more functions of the National Park Authority and/or areas of staff work
Self-guided trails	Those that focus on the National Park	10% of those completing the trail can name one or more functions of the National Park Authority and/or areas of staff work
Free leaflets	Ditto	10% of those people who have read the leaflet can name one or more National Park purposes and/or functions of the National Park Authority and/or areas of staff work
Sale publications	Ditto	10% of those people who have read the publication can name one or more National Park purposes and/or functions of the National Park Authority and/or areas of staff work
Guided walks	Ditto	33% of those people on the walk can name one or more National Park purposes and/or functions of the National Park Authority and/or areas of staff work

Monitoring project: questionnaire survey, direct audience feedback

- Users' response to the interpretation is a change in emotion

Media	Activity/area	Lower limit
Visitor Centre exhibits	All display and activity areas	10% of those people questioned when leaving the Visitor Centre can describe a change in feeling as a result of the interpretation
Events	All	75% of people participating in an event can describe a change in feeling as a result of the interpretation
Self-guided trails	All	66% of those people completing the trail can describe a change in feeling as a result of the interpretation
Free leaflets	All	10% of those people questioned who have read the leaflet can describe a change in feeling as a result of the interpretation
Sale publications	All	10% of those people questioned who have read the publication can describe a change in feeling as a result of the interpretation
Guided walks	All	75% of people participating in a guided walk can describe a change in feeling as a result of the interpretation

Monitoring project: questionnaire survey, direct audience feedback

- Users' response to the interpretation is a change in behaviour

Media	Activity/area	Lower limit
Visitor Centre exhibits	All display and activity areas	5% of those people questioned when leaving the Visitor Centre indicate that they will change one or more aspects of their behaviour as a result of the interpretation
Events	All	10% of people participating in an event indicate that they will change one or more aspects of their behaviour as a result of the interpretation
Self-guided trails	All	5% of those people completing the trail indicate that they will change one or more aspects of their behaviour as a result of the interpretation
Free leaflets	All	5% of those people questioned who have read the leaflet indicate that they will change one or more aspects of their behaviour as a result of the interpretation
Sale publications	All	5% of those people questioned who have read the publication indicate that they will change one or more aspects of their behaviour as a result of the interpretation
Guided walks	All	10% of people participating in a guided walk indicate that they will change one or more aspects of their behaviour as a result of the interpretation

Monitoring project: questionnaire survey, direct audience feedback

- the outcomes of interpretive events are deemed "worth the effort"

Lower limit: 75%

Monitoring project: TRAT Event Guidance monitoring sheets to be completed for each event

Performance indicators from factors:

- Bank holidays

Lower limit: interpretive activities to take place on Bank Holidays Easter – August inclusive.

- Repeat visitors

Lower limit: review panels in the Visitor Centre quarterly; review trail routes

6.3.6 Current condition

Unknown

This is due to a lack of information regarding the effects of the services offered.

6.3.7 Rationale

In the past we have surveyed users in terms of broad expressions of satisfaction. We will now focus questioning and feedback on the different elements of interpretive objectives (learning, emotion and behaviour).

When we plan events, we already consider a range of issues such as costs, target markets including the less able and overall effectiveness. We will continue to use TRAT guidance sheets. These will enable us to reach as objective conclusions as possible as to the success of the event in supporting National Park interpretation aims.

We will continue to focus event timing on Bank holidays and other main holiday periods. We will address the needs of repeat visitors with a rolling programme of updates to displays and events that respond to continuous feedback.

The partnership approach developed with the EA will continue.

6.3.8 Outline prescriptions and management projects

6.3.8.1 Provide interpretive services

Visitor Centre displays	Events
Trails	Leaflets
Other publications	Guided walks

6.3.8.2 Monitor provision

Monitor effectiveness of all services	Diary check for Bank holiday activities
Review facilities for repeat visitors	

6.4 Service/facility 4 – Information services

6.4.1 Summary description

Information is available year round via displays, posters and leaflets in the Visitor Centre and from publications, either free or for sale. There are a limited number of notice boards, directional and other signs around the Country Park, though most are concentrated in the car park area. Staff deal with face-to-face, telephone and e-mail enquiries all year and the information desk in the Visitor Centre is staffed between Easter and September.

6.4.2 Favourable status

Parent organisation strategy

The National Park Management Plan (January 2000) states that the aims of its information work are to:

“promote among Park residents and visitors an understanding of the special qualities of the National Park and of the role of the National Park Authority in conserving them.”

This statement is broken down into a series of composite work areas. They are not easily measurable and all that can be suggested is that action taken is moving the service towards or away from achieving the statement. *See service delivery outcomes below.*

Cost/efficiency

The information service is subsidised. Public service in the pursuit of statutory purposes is deemed to outweigh the costs of provision. Publications produced by the Information Section of the National Park aim to satisfy a range of needs. Not all of the publications produced recover costs of production. Other publications are bought in at wholesale rates for retail. Notice boards and signs have related budgets for production. Some are produced in-house while others are wholly contracted out. Short-term signs are efficiently produced in-house for immediate use.

Service delivery outcomes

Services are measured through the National Park Visitor Centres' regular assessments. This involves external evaluation of staff, buildings and contents. These are currently under review by a cross-Park working group. While these assessments tend to be focused in the Visitor Centre, there is scope to comment on the outcomes of other information provision beyond

buildings e.g. notice boards, signs etc.. An overall measure of benefit must be found to justify the commitment by staff.

Quality

Quality of service can be defined as provision that meets the needs of the user. Some work must be done to identify those needs. We can measure service delivery through inspection, observation, consultation and direct questioning.

Fair access

The information services aim to have a proportion of them accessible for all physical abilities. Staff training has included deaf awareness and disability awareness. The Visitor Centre has few information boards that are accessible to all although we do have sound, light and tactile exhibits. Text sizes vary but most letter height is small (below 30-point). Colour contrast has not been a feature of internal display exhibits to date, but there has been a substantial amount of work achieved on the provision of tactile maps and signs including colour contrast (see File ref.: cp\ obligations\Disabled Access and File ref.: cp\ infrastructure\signs). There are no large print, Braille or audio publications or display boards.

The National Park Authority statutory purposes as defined in the Environment Act 1995 are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Thus there will be continued commitment to the provision of information services.

Conclusion

The information services offered by the Country Park will be in favourable status when

- *they satisfy National Park management plan aims*
- *they satisfy external assessment and examination*
- *benefits are deemed to outweigh costs*

6.4.3 Identification of factors and operational limits

6.4.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural including physical	Human-related
Income generation	Decline of trees	Visitor pressure
National Park Management Plan policies	Species	Litter
National Park Visitor Centre Study of Good Practice	River flooding	National Park Guided Walks programme
LA 21	Weather	Bank holidays
Health and safety legislation	Front entrance	Neighbours
Disability discrimination Act	Extent of hard path network	Availability of resources
Boundaries and other lease obligations		
Welsh Language Act		
Best value		

Policy and legislation

Dealt with under Obligations objective.

Natural including physical

Decline of trees

There are a number of mature trees recently felled and lying around the Country Park. Visitors have commented in the past about the “tidiness” of the site. Both staff services and notices need to explain current practice. *Dealt with under Interpretation.*

Species

Issues relating to protected species must be addressed. This includes species found on site and in the wider National Park area (e.g. trampling of uncommon flora, badger baiting or egg thefts). Staff and other services must tread a fine line between informing the interested individual about such wildlife and protecting the interests of species/habitats.

Lower limit: accurate information available to staff

Monitoring project: on-site and local flora and fauna sensitivities to form part of induction and pre-season briefings

River flooding

In times of extreme high flow, access is denied to visitors including temporary closure of rights of way. We put appropriate signs in place for the duration of the flood events.

Lower limit: signs in place

Monitoring project: diary check that signs were erected and removed

Weather

During long dry spells we place fire risk signs in areas of high visitor flow.

Lower limit: fire risk signs in place; extra weekend patrols to ensure safe BBQ practices

Monitoring project: diary check that signs were erected and removed

Front entrance

The main A4067 passes the front entrance of the Country Park. The entrance is wide enough to let two cars to pass side by side but because of the nearby road and the layout of the car park, cars and other vehicles move into the car park area quickly. Thus the signs at the front entrance (site name, closing time, chargeable parking) are often overlooked.

Lower limit: review of car park layout and associated landscaping

Monitoring project: check work programme for Country Park staff and Landscape Architect

Extent of hard path network

A hard path network encourages the less able to visit and use the Country Park. *See also Recreation*. It is important that site information (maps, leaflets etc.) makes reference to the network. This will help in pre-visit planning as well as access around the site during a visit.

Human-related

Visitor pressure

Experience of management staff has shown that visitor movement around the site does lead to crowding of certain areas. There have been no complaints or adverse comments about overcrowding and loss of enjoyment on busy days. Regarding the rest of the National Park, there is little feedback as to the effect of our information service on capacity at other sites. For example, many visitors request information about the Waterfalls area. While leaflets exist showing this and other similar attractions, we cannot confirm that pressure at these areas is as a result of information services provided by the Authority.

Litter

There are no litterbins on site. Staff are proactive in managing this by placing signs in prominent places. These signs explain that bins are not provided because of the nuisance caused by animals and the costs of removal by the local authority.

National Park Guided Walk Programme

Dealt with under Recreation.

Bank holidays

Public pressure on Bank Holidays leads to extra staffing both in the Visitor Centre and out in the wider grounds.

Neighbours

We provide information about neighbours who also operate tourist attractions. We promote sensible use of the countryside through the Country Code either by notices and signs or by direct assistance to the visitors.

Availability of resources

Staffing

At the time of writing the Visitor Centre Information desk is only staffed at weekends between April and the end of September and during the main school holiday periods in the same part of the year. Pressure from senior management exists to increase this to daily coverage in this period even though financial return is proven to be low at these times.

Monitoring project: analyse daily income and correlate to visitor numbers and factors such as weather, day of the week, term-time etc.

Budget

Publications

Lack of budget means that reprints of publications have been delayed or cancelled.

Monitoring project: record delayed and/or cancelled information projects

Signs

Sign budgets have been frozen since 1998. Deteriorating signs remain in place. Temporary boards are used where appropriate.

Monitoring project: record delayed and/or cancelled sign projects/upgrades

Notice boards

See Signs above.

Monitoring project: record delayed and/or cancelled notice board upgrades

6.4.3.2 Impact assessment of factors

The dominant factor in determining operating practices and procedures is the inter-Park (National Park) Study of Good Practice in Visitor Centres. It defines current policy towards information provision, quality and content of service. It reinforces the common sense and sensitive approaches that staff and other services must display both towards issues such as species protection and honeypot tourist areas that don't need any extra traffic. The issue of resources limits the professionalism that the service demands.

6.4.4 Selection of information performance indicators

- **communicate effectively to residents and visitors about the National Park's status, role and work**
- **encourage the public to understand and value the National Park's natural beauty, special qualities and way of life**
- **provide information and advice**

The National Park Management Plan aims can be satisfied through a range of site-based initiatives and services.

- **the service satisfies external and other appropriate assessment**

This brings the Country Park services into line with other National Park Visitor Centres. From 2000 onwards, the different levels of Visitor Centre that exist across the different National Parks (Visitor Centre, Information Centre, Partnership Centre) will be judged and scored in groups according to the nature and extent of the site.

- **benefits of provision outweigh costs**

Costs can never be fully evaluated in the provision of information services. Expenditure on real items such as signs, notice boards can be identified but staff time is not taken into account nor the costs of providing the information rather than some other activity. Similarly, the benefits are not always measurable. One happy visitor can be ample reward. The approach identified by TRAT needs to be developed for Information services (See *Interpretation*).

6.4.5 Objective

Objective 13 - To offer information services in favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- There is effective communication to residents and visitors about the National Park's status, role and work

Lower limit: *See Interpretive services objective.*

Monitoring project: questionnaire survey, National Park Study of Good Practice survey

- There is encouragement to the public to understand and value the National Park's natural beauty, special qualities and way of life

Lower limit: *See Interpretive services objective.*

- The Country Park provides information and advice

Lower limit: 550 hours of staffed service a year between Easter and October 1st

Monitoring project: diary check

- The service satisfies external and other appropriate assessment

Lower limit: 1999 levels (89%)

Monitoring project: comparison of results after each survey

- Benefits of providing information service outweigh costs

Lower limit: all Information services deemed "worth the effort"

Monitoring project: TRAT Event Guidance to form basis for new methodology

Performance indicators from factors:

- Sensitive species

Lower limit: accurate information available to staff

- River flooding
Lower limit: signs in place

- Hot weather
Lower limit: fire risk signs in place; extra weekend patrols to ensure safe BBQ practices

- Front entrance to site
Lower limit: review of car park layout and associated landscaping

6.4.6 Current condition

Unknown, presumed unfavourable

This is due to a lack of information regarding the effects of the services offered.

6.4.7 Rationale

In the past we have surveyed users in terms of broad expressions of satisfaction. We will now focus questioning and feedback on the different elements of interpretive objectives (learning and behaviour).

We will keep a service that covers core hours. Once we know how effective the service is, we will be able to make decisions about expanding the contact time of staff.

The National Park Study of Good Practice survey will encourage year on year improvements.

6.4.7 Outline prescriptions

6.4.7.1 Provide information services

Flora and fauna sensitivities to form part of induction and pre-season briefings	Programme car park landscaping
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6.4.7.2 Monitor provision of services

Correlate income to visitor numbers and weather etc.	Record cancelled or delayed projects
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6.5 Service/facility 5 – Marketing

6.5.1 Summary description

The “marketing mix” recognises four elements – product, price, promotion and place.

The “product” of the Country Park is a contribution towards satisfying the statutory purposes of the Environment Act. Pricing levels are frequently reviewed. Income can be recovered to offset running costs – profit is not possible. Promotion is currently low key due to financial cutbacks. Press releases do get sent out and photo opportunities are exploited to raise the Country Park profile in the public eye. The place is marketed as a quiet venue for recreation and an ideal centre for understanding and enjoying the special qualities of both the Country Park and the wider National Park area.

6.5.2 Favourable status

Parent organisation policies

No specific policies exist to support marketing. *See Information services and Interpretive services.*

Cost/efficiency

As in the preceding services/facilities, public service and the methods used to pursue the purposes of the Authority are deemed important despite the costs. Pricing of different activities such as service provision (e.g. school visits, guided walks) and trading are regularly reviewed.

Service delivery outcomes/Quality

The outcome of providing the range of services/facilities found on site is measured in a variety of ways including direct questioning, observation and number of repeat visits.

Satisfaction levels feed in to specific projects such as the Study of Good Practice in National Park Visitor Centres or whole site work such as the Best Value Performance Plan. Promotion can be measured through specific questioning. We can measure general awareness following media stories or more specific feedback following targeted promotion.

Fair access

See the legal and other obligations objective for reference to less able visitors’ needs.

Targeting different user groups is a core element of marketing. Issues such as Beacons Bus

and links with the Black Environment Network Wales are examples of recent work. This range of focus must be maintained.

6.5.3 Identification of factors

6.5.3.1 Relevant factors

Policy and legislation	Natural including physical	Human-related
Income generation	Decline of trees	Visitor pressure
National Park Management Plan policies	Habitats	Litter
Adopt-a-box and Rent-a-roost	Weather	National Park Guided Walks programme
Disability Discrimination Act	Site location	National Curriculum
Historic Park and Garden status		Neighbours
LA21		Availability of resources
AALA		
Best value		

Policy and legislation

Dealt with under the legal and other obligations objective.

Natural including physical

Decline of trees

The need to deal with natural windblown trees and felled individuals is a constant theme of woodland management. The wooded character of the Country Park is changing rapidly and appropriate information about the ongoing work needs to be available. *See Habitats below.*

Habitats

The variety of habitat types is a popular reason for visiting the site (*see visitor surveys on file*). There are opportunities to continue promotion of the site as a varied landscape as well as explaining the wildlife benefits of such variety (*See Interpretive services*).

Lower limit: twice-annual newsletter

Monitoring project: keep file copies

Weather

Clear information must be given at times of extreme weather such as storm damage to the woodland or river flooding.

Site location

See Habitats (above) and Historic Garden status (in Obligations).

Human related

Visitor pressure

See factor discussion on visitor pressure in Information services objective.

Litter

With no bins on site, visitors need a clear explanation of the policy towards litter (wildlife disturb the bins causing greater mess; wildlife may be at risk of injury; staff time to empty bins is limited; the local authority make a charge per bag for removal and funds are limited). See *Information services*.

National Park Guided Walks programme

The Country Park is well used as a venue for guided walks. The surrounding landscape is a rich interpretive resource and the centre itself provides a secure car park, toilet facilities and is on the Beacons Bus route from Swansea to Brecon. Current CCW policy towards country parks includes using them as gateways to the wider countryside.

Upper limit: 12 walks p.a.

Lower limit: 3 walks p.a.

Monitoring project: liaise with programme writers

National Curriculum

The ability to satisfy elements of the National and other relevant curricula has been addressed in the *Education services* objective.

Neighbours

There is limited joint marketing with the National Showcaves Centre for Wales (Dan-yr-Ogof). We have also had past joint marketing with Craig-y-Nos Castle relating to school visits and there is potential for joint marketing within the upper Swansea Valley.

Availability of resources

Advertising

The current advertising budget is zero. A range of local, regional and specialist publications were well supported in the past. All these links need to be restored if the profile of the Country Park is to be raised. Senior staff have identified the need to encourage both local and wider populations to visit the site.

Lower limit: annual advertising budget

Monitoring project: check budget

Leaflets/literature

A number of leaflets and interpretive material needs updating and reprinting for wider circulation.

AALA

Licence and inspection fees have been cut from the budget. We cannot offer educational trips to all parts of the National Park area until these funds are restored. Until this time, other activity providers are offering complementary services to schools that would normally use the National Park service. *See Education objective.*

6.5.3.2 Impact of factors

Pricing of goods and services will be in accordance with corporate policies. All methods of promoting the work of the Authority will be encouraged including site-based projects, broadcast media and promotional material. Guided walks will be encouraged as examples of promoting CCW policy. The lack of resources directed towards marketing has an unknown impact.

6.5.4 Selection of performance indicators

The site has a wealth of features that can be enjoyed and interpreted as well as a history of providing quality services. The performance of (or demand for) the site (the “product”) is addressed in the *Recreation objective*.

Performance aspects of pricing are covered in *Recreation* (season tickets), *Education* (charging rates), *Interpretive services* and *Information services* (trading).

- **Effective promotion to the public**
- **Effective promotion to teachers**
- **Effective promotion to special interest groups**

There must be effective promotion of the site features and services. This justifies use of scarce finance and limited staff time.

6.5.5 Objective

Objective 14: to market the Country Park in favourable status where:

Performance indicators from attributes:

- There is effective promotion to the public

Media	Activity/area	Lower limit
Visitor Centre exhibits	All	20% of all visitors enter the Visitor Centre; 10% of all who enter stay for at least 5 minutes
Free leaflets	(i) General site leaflet (ii) Adopt-a-box (iii) Rent-a-roost (iv) Castle grounds to Country Park	(i) monthly mailing to local TICs (Apr-Sept) daily counts of leaflets in the Visitor Centre (May-Sept) (ii) ditto (iii) ditto (iv) ditto
Sale publications	All	20% decrease in sales (from 2000 levels)
Press releases	All	Printed stories and/or pictures in 33% of all publications mailed
Community magazines	All	Quarterly printed stories and/or pictures
Country Park newsletter	All	Daily counts of newsletters taken from the Visitor Centre

Monitoring project: monitoring of local and other press; observation surveys; leaflet counts

- There is effective promotion to teachers

Media	Activity/area	Lower limit
Free leaflets	Primary schools Secondary schools Other education centres	Leaflet available on demand Twice-annual mailing Leaflet available on demand
Country Park newsletter		Information regarding study options in each newsletter
INSET (in-service training) days	Primary teachers Secondary teachers	Liaison with LEA staff Ditto
Corporate promotion		Compliance with corporate strategy

Monitoring project: check for mailing; check newsletter content

- There is effective promotion to special interest groups

Group	Activity/area	Lower limit
Access for All	Advertising in specialist publications Access audits	Adverts placed every two years Site audit every two years
Ethnic communities		Liaison with Black Environment Network
Social inclusion groups		Liaison with appropriate professional staff
Walking for health initiative		Ditto
Other identified groups		Ditto

Monitoring project: record liaison meetings and outcomes

Performance indicators from factors:

- Habitats

Lower limit: twice-annual newsletter

- National Park Guided Walks programme

Upper limit: 12 walks p.a.

Lower limit: 3 walks p.a.

- Advertising

Lower limit: annual advertising budget

6.5.6 Current status

Unknown

6.5.7 Rationale

We will ensure more feedback is available about the effectiveness of our advertising to ensure best use of scarce resources. Previous on-site advertising has been effective and we will ensure a good supply of information is available for visitors, including resurrecting the publication of a site-based newsletter.

Despite almost zero press advertising, we still attract thousands of visitors each year and there is potential to attract more. The size of the car park limits numbers on any given day but we will promote off-season visits.

Educational marketing has been zero for some years, but in line with the Education services objective, we will promote opportunities for older students, especially GNVQ level and above.

We will price goods and services in accordance with corporate policies.

6.5.8 Outline prescriptions

6.5.8.1 Market the site

Carry out marketing activities	
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6.5.8.2 Monitor all activities

File copies of newsletters	Liaise with Guided Walks programme writers
Check annual budget for advertising money	Check mailings
Record all liaison meetings and outcomes	

7 All legal and other obligations and policies

7.1 Summary description

Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act 1995 (Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority – AALA)	Biodiversity Action Plan species	Boundaries and other lease obligations (including neighbours)
CADW/ICOMOS Register of Historic Parks and Gardens	Children Act 1989	Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) (Amendment) Regulations 1997
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1994 (COSHH)	Countryside Act 1968	Craig y Rhiwarth / Brecknock Wildlife Trust Local Nature Reserve
Disability Discrimination Act 1995	Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996	Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
Environment Act 1995	Flood prevention	Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1989
Health and Safety at Work Act etc, 1974	Local Agenda 21	Local Government Bill (1998) – Best value
National Park Management Plan policies	National Park Authority Trading Strategy	National Park Visitor Centres Minimum Standards (Study of Good Practice)
Occupiers' Liability Acts	Protection of Badgers Act 1992	Public donation projects
Public rights of way (PROW)	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Tawe and Tributaries Angling Association fishing lease
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992	Weeds Act 1959	Welsh Language Act 1993
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981		

7.2 Discussion

The management of the site must comply with the requirements of all of the legal and other obligations and policies listed above. Thus there is no favourable status as such and it is considered appropriate to move straight to the objective.

7.3 Objective

Objective 15: to comply with the requirements of all legal and other obligations and policies relevant to the management of the Country Park.

7.4 Outline prescriptions and projects

7.4.1 Woodland obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Health and Safety legislation	PROW's
Boundaries and other lease obligations	Register of Historic Parks and Gardens Grade II* listing	Craig y Rhiwarth SSSI
Bat checks prior to tree work	Manage public donations	Best Value

	projects	
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7.4.2 Parkland obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Health and safety legislation	Register of Historic Park and Garden Grade II* listing
Bat checks prior to tree work	Manage public donations projects	Best Value

7.4.3. Hay meadow obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	Health and safety legislation
PROWs	Weeds Act (1959)	Public donation projects
Best Value		

7.4.4 Natural water features obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Flood protection	Health and safety legislation
Foreign nets	Species protection	

7.4.5 Man-made water features obligations

Health and safety legislation	Historic Park and Garden status	National Park Management Plan policies
Species protection	Best Value	

7.4.6 Historic landscape obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Health and Safety legislation	Boundaries and other lease obligations
Register of Historic Park and Garden Grade II* listing	Best Value	

7.4.7 Obligations to Otters, Bats and other protected species

Species legislation	Manage public donations projects
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7.4.8 Recreation services obligations

Income generation	Occupiers Liability Acts	Public Rights Of Way
Electrical regulations	Fire safety	COSHH
National Park Management Plan policies	Neighbours	LA21
Boundaries	Study of Good Practice	Donated trees
Disability Discrimination Act	Best Value	

7.4.9 Education services obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	LA21
Mammal trapping	Welsh Language Act	National Curriculum
Occupiers' Liability Acts	COSHH	Health and Safety at Work Act
Electrical regulations	Fire Safety Act	Disability Discrimination Act
AALA	Best Value	

7.4.10 Interpretation services obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	PROW
Register of Historic Parks and Gardens	AALA	Mammal licence
Welsh Language Act	Occupiers' Liability Acts	Health and Safety at Work Act
Electrical regulations.	Fire Safety Act	COSHH
Children Act	Disability Discrimination Act	Best Value

7.4.11 Information services obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	National Park Visitor Centre Study of Good Practice
LA21	Occupiers' Liability Acts	Health and Safety at Work Act
Electrical regulations.	Fire Safety Act	COSHH
Disability Discrimination Act	Boundaries and other lease obligations	Welsh Language Act
Best Value		

7.4.12 Marketing obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	Adopt-a-box and Rent-a-roost
Disability Discrimination Act	Historic Park and Garden status	LA21
AALA	Best Value	

7.5 Rationale

We have many site-specific obligations to meet to fulfil this objective as well as several broader obligations such as Health and safety issues, National Park management Plan policies and Best Value. The projects will address the obligations and identify timing, resource allocation and monitoring and review. Reviews have relevance both on site and within the wider spheres of the organisation and other countryside networks.

8 Infrastructure and support services

8.1 Summary description

Recreation infrastructure includes the path network, park furniture such as benches and seats, toilet facilities, mown lawns and the car park.

Infrastructure supporting other services includes buildings, signs and notice boards.

Estate infrastructure includes gates and stiles, boundary features, bridges, leats and other non-public buildings.

Support services cover all aspects of staffing, vehicles, plant and machinery.

8.2 Discussion

Infrastructure allows visitors opportunities for understanding and enjoyment. It further supports the services/facilities objectives by providing the means of access to information, interpretation and education services. The designed landscape infrastructure is important because of policies and public interest (*see Historic landscape objective*).

We maintain vehicles, plant and machinery to deliver the management of the objectives. They comply with safe working practices under the Management of Health and Safety Regulations (1992). *See legal and other obligations objective*.

We provide a range of staff-led services (*see the relevant objectives*). There is a strong commitment to management of the infrastructure itself, including managing staff. We provide training, induction and personal development. *See the description for current staffing levels*.

8.3 Operational objectives

8.3.1 Manage recreation infrastructure

Park furniture	Toilets
Car park	Mown lawns – <i>see Parkland objective</i>

8.3.2 Manage buildings and associated equipment

Architectural features – *see Historic landscape objective*.

Service/facility elements – *see below*.

Visitor centre	Welly shed
Craft shop	Kennel shed
Game Room	Old toilet block
Pavilion	Environment Agency Flood Warning Station

8.3.3 Manage other estate infrastructure

Utilities	Gates
Fences	Signs
Notice boards	Fences
Bridges	Paths

8.3.4 Manage vehicles, plant and machinery

Vehicle	Plant and machinery
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8.3.5 Manage staff

Recruitment and selection	Induction
Personal development / CPD	Internal personnel management

8.4 Rationale

Site infrastructure will be managed to meet the needs of the conservation features objectives and the services/facilities objectives. Unassociated infrastructure will be managed with a hierarchy of commitment as suggested below:

- Discard (remove/re-use/recycle redundant elements)
- Maintenance (elements are maintained in current condition)
- Renovation (repairs and refurbishment of existing elements)
- Replacement (replace like with like or upgrade)

Management of staff will require us to meet all legal and other obligations as set out in National Park Authority Codes of Conduct and other adopted Personnel procedures.

Section 9 – Action plan

Woodland

Manage woodland areas

Control rhododendron	Devise planting scheme
Increase dead wood	Increase gap creation rate
Decrease canopy density	

Monitor woodland areas

Rhododendron height and extent	Annual losses
Bat work	Riverbank trees lost
Access problems	Vandalism
Grazing damage	Extent of woodland
Canopy mix	Canopy cover
Gap creation rate	Regeneration
Dead wood content	

Manage public donation projects

Adopt-a-box and rent-a-roost projects	Donated trees and benches
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Monitor public donation projects

Adopt-a-box and rent-a-roost impacts	Donated tree impacts
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Woodland obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Health and Safety legislation	PROW's
Boundaries and other lease obligations	Register of Historic Parks and Gardens Grade II* listing	Craig y Rhiwarth SSSI
Bat checks prior to tree work	Manage public donations projects	Best Value

Parkland

Manage parkland areas

Mow grass	Control rhododendron encroachment
Annual cut of uncut shapes	

Monitor parkland areas

Check mown grass height	Check rhododendron encroachment
Check problems reported from visitor pressure	Check extent of uncut shapes
Check of parkland extent	Check of species composition
Check of number and distribution of trees	Check age mix

Parkland obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Health and safety legislation	Register of Historic Park and Garden Grade II* listing
Bat checks prior to tree work	Manage public donations projects	Best Value

Hay meadow

Manage Hay meadow area

Mowing and grazing regime	Control invasive species
Mow perimeter path	

Monitor Hay meadow area

Check mowing and grazing regime	Check % rattle setting seed
Check extent of invasive species	Check vegetation changes along line of sewage pipe and around drain covers
Check perimeter path	Check reported problems re: boundary access
Check extent of hay meadow	Check species composition (appropriate/inappropriate)

Hay meadow obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	Health and safety legislation
PROWs	Weeds Act (1959)	Public donation projects
Best Value		

Rough grassland

Manage rough grassland

Control invasive species	Remove tree saplings
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Monitor rough grassland

Check extent of invasive species	Check public complaints
Check extent of habitat	Check seed head presence
Check tussock presence	Check tree sapling presence

Natural water features

Manage natural water features

Manage Japanese Knotweed	Manage hemlock water dropwort
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Monitor natural water features

Check river levels following high or prolonged rainfall	Annual check of extent of Japanese Knotweed
Annual check of extent of hemlock water dropwort	Annual check for effects of <i>Phytophthora</i> on alder on site
Regular checks for indications of pollution and eutrophication	Check for indications of pollution from Country Park and Castle outfalls
Check impact of visitor pressure	Check water quality
Check extent of natural physical attributes	

Natural water features obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Flood protection	Health and safety legislation
Foreign nets	Species protection	

Man-made water features

Manage man-made water features

Remove stonework trees	Re-excavate the hay meadow pond
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Monitor man-made water features

Annual check of stonework trees	Assess impact of silt depth on water ecosystems
Annual check of condition of bank adjacent to features	Check water presence in hay meadow\pond
Check for indications of pollution and eutrophication	Check for indications of adverse effects due to bread
Check water quality	Check extent of man-made water features
Check water depths	

Man-made water features obligations

Health and safety legislation	Historic Park and Garden status	National Park Management Plan policies
Species protection	Best Value	

Historic landscape

Manage historic landscape elements

Manage buildings	Manage designed landscape features
Manage original infrastructure	

Monitor historic landscape elements

Annual review of condition of historic elements	Monitor budget implications
Check corporate financial plan	Check budget for maintenance levels

Historic landscape obligations

National Park Management Plan policies	Health and Safety legislation	Boundaries and other lease obligations
Register of Historic Park and Garden Grade II* listing	Best Value	

Otters

Manage habitat for otters

Coppicing/felling of bankside vegetation	
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Monitor habitat for otters

Annual visual check of vegetation extent	Monitor otter use
Annual otter spraint hunt	

Obligations to Otters, Bats and other protected species

Species legislation	Manage public donations projects
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Bats

Manage site in a bat-friendly manner

Increase knowledge of bat populations	
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Monitor bat populations

Annual check of bat use of summer roost sites	Annual check of bat use of winter hibernacula
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Other protected species

Monitor site for legal species' populations

Annual check for presence of species	
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Recreation services

Manage recreation services

Mow grass	Leave uncut shapes
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Path widths maintained	Hemlock water dropwort cleared from paths
Feed ducks regularly	Retain rhododendron borders

Visitor management

Liaison with National Park Disabled Access Steering Group	Manage guided walks /car parking
Meet all canoeists before launch	Bank holidays / weekend patrols
Record complaints	

Monitor visitor management

Check grounds work programme for species control	Check duck feeding patterns
Check overflow car park use/demand	Check hard surface network
Check survey results re: litter/dog waste	Carry out face to face surveys

Recreation services obligations

Income generation	Occupiers Liability Acts	Public Rights Of Way
Electrical regulations	Fire safety	COSHH
National Park Management Plan policies	Neighbours	LA21
Boundaries	Study of Good Practice	Donated trees
Disability Discrimination Act	Best Value	

Education services

Provide educational services

Develop study day options for on-site and distance learning	Deliver study days
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Monitor provision of services

Evaluate pupils' learning experiences	Evaluate teacher expectation
Check broken or damaged equipment not replaced	Check reprints of resource material
Check staff time committed to education	Record take-up of visits
Record number of schools failing to achieve first preferred date	Check age range of students
Check composition of study days (topics)	Record pressures on equipment
Record private land incidents	

Education services obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	LA21
Mammal trapping	Welsh Language Act	National Curriculum
Occupiers' Liability Acts	COSHH	Health and Safety at Work Act
Electrical regulations	Fire Safety Act	Disability Discrimination Act
AALA	Best Value	

Interpretive services

Provide interpretive services

Visitor Centre displays	Events
Trails	Leaflets
Other publications	Guided walks

Monitor provision

Monitor effectiveness of all services	Diary check for Bank holiday activities
Review facilities for repeat visitors	

Interpretation services obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	PROW
Register of Historic Parks and Gardens	AALA	Mammal licence
Welsh Language Act	Occupiers' Liability Acts	Health and Safety at Work Act
Electrical regulations.	Fire Safety Act	COSHH
Children Act	Disability Discrimination Act	Best Value

Information services

Provide information services

Flora and fauna sensitivities to form part of induction and pre-season briefings	Programme car park landscaping
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Monitor provision of services

Correlate income to visitor numbers and weather etc.	Record cancelled or delayed projects
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Information services obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	National Park Visitor Centre Study of Good Practice
LA21	Occupiers' Liability Acts	Health and Safety at Work Act
Electrical regulations.	Fire Safety Act	COSHH
Disability Discrimination Act	Boundaries and other lease obligations	Welsh Language Act
Best Value		

Marketing

Market the site

Carry out marketing activities	
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Monitor all activities

File copies of newsletters	Liaise with Guided Walks programme writers
Check annual budget for advertising money	Check mailings
Record all liaison meetings and outcomes	

Marketing obligations

Income generation	National Park Management Plan policies	Adopt-a-box and Rent-a-roost
Disability Discrimination Act	Historic Park and Garden status	LA21
AALA	Best Value	

Infrastructure

Manage recreation infrastructure

Park furniture	Toilets
Car park	Mown lawns – see <i>Parkland objective</i>

Manage buildings and associated equipment

Architectural features – see *Historic landscape objective*.

Service/facility elements – see *below*.

Visitor centre	Welly shed
Craft shop	Kennel shed
Game Room	Old toilet block
Pavilion	Environment Agency Flood Warning Station

Manage other estate infrastructure

Utilities	Gates
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Fences	Signs
Notice boards	Fences
Bridges	Paths

Manage vehicles, plant and machinery

Vehicle	Plant and machinery
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Manage staff

Recruitment and selection	Induction
Personal development / CPD	Internal personnel management

References

ICOMOS/IFLA International Committee for Historic Gardens (1981), *Florence Charter*

Veverka, J. (1994), *Interpretive Master Planning*, pub. Falcon Press Publishing Company.,
Inc., Montana

Craig-y-nos Country Park Management Plan

Sample projects

Please contact the Country Park for the full project list.

Control rhododendron

1. **Feature:** woodland

2. **Factor:** Rhododendron

3. General background

The Rhododendron on site is likely to be part of the Victorian designed landscape. It was planted as a border feature between different areas of the grounds, alongside paths and may have formed part of the planting scheme within the woodland blocks themselves. Today, it is a significant visual element in the Country Park with growth exceeding 4m high in many places. The project aim is to maintain the visual boundary of the plant where it forms a boundary yet contain its height and spread. Within the woodlands, until further research is done, we do not want to eradicate the plant completely – simply control its extent.

4. Methodology:

- a) *Equipment:* chainsaw, bowsaw, rope, PPE.
- b) *Location of project:* see accompanying map File: cp\map 10
- c) *Technique:* Where the rhododendron forms a boundary, all plant stems/branches over 2m will be removed **at 2m**. The outcome will be a hedge effect. Horizontal growth must also be cut. As a general rule, the width of the plant will be **no wider than 3m** from the main stem/trunk. The exception to this will be the rhododendron “tunnel” between the Beechwood and the Far Lake. This will be controlled annually with management approval. Two people may be needed where branches are high and/or the ground conditions are not level. Rope may be needed to pull the branches nearer to the saw. No unstable/unapproved platforms will be used. All arisings to be stacked with branches facing the same way, ready for future chipping. There is no unapproved burning on site. Where the rhododendron is within the woodland, all plants taller than 1m will be cut **at ground level** and stacked as above. There is no unapproved use of chemicals on site to treat the plants.
- d) *Period:* any time outside the flowering season (May-June).
- e) *Frequency of work:* Boundary plants to be cut in rotation after management approval. Woodland plants can be cut at any time outside the flowering period.
- f) *Repeat interval:* Annual.

5. Data management

- a) *Identification of data format:* Paper map with areas cut (and date); informal slide/digital camera records
- b) *Location of data:* file: Country Park/flora/woodland; country park slide filing cabinet; computer file: j:\images\cp (for digital camera output).

6. **Reporting/circulation of reports:** Annual report of project – internal only.

Devise planting scheme

1. Feature: Woodland

2. Factor: past management

3. General background/bibliography: We have few written records on site of the background to the Victorian planting scheme. The landscape designer was William Barron (1800-1891). The best evidence of the planting scheme we have is taken from Ordnance survey maps. These show the development of the land around the castle and then the surrounding grounds.

4. Methodology:

Insert text from HLF consultants re: desk search for records.

Scheme to be derived from this woodland objective and sent out to internal and external consultation.

Increase dead wood

1. Feature: Woodland

2. Performance indicator/s: Increase dead wood content of woodland.

3. General background/bibliography: To follow.

4. Methodology:

- a) *Technique:* Dead wood will arise out of staff or contractor felling or infrequently, windblown trees. It is assumed that standing dead wood will be left in situ, following NPWO approval. The aim will be to leave a mixture of sizes of timber on the ground. Due to the access to and within the woodland areas, the main trunk of fallen wood is the simplest part to leave in place. Smaller limbs and branches can be either removed from site and sold for firewood or stacked in piles to rot down. Brash can be either stacked for rotting down or for future chipping.
- b) *Unit of measurement:* Not less than 25% of all timber is to be left on site. A mixture of types should be left i.e. trunk, smaller limbs and some brash.
- c) *Special considerations:* Particular attention must be paid to the twice-annual monitoring by the NPWO. His recommendations must form the basis for any management decision. Also, species is a consideration in that it may have importance for wildlife i.e. suitable structure for a bat roost or particular value for re-sale i.e. Yew, Sycamore etc. for the craft markets.

5. Data management

- a) *Identification of data format:* Paper addition to woodland file following any felling (staff, contractor or windblow). Note an estimate of the amount of the original tree left in situ.
- b) *Location of data:* File ref.: cp\ conservation features\woodland.

6. Reporting/circulation of reports: Annual report – internal only

Rhododendron height and extent

1. Feature: Woodland

2. Factor: Rhododendron.

3. General background/bibliography: *See above project.*

4. Methodology:

- a) *Equipment:* Ranging pole and/or visual check.
- b) *Location of sample collection:* Refer to map used in management project.
- c) *Technique:* Annual visual checks of boundary planting and woodland plans. Boundary plants to be not greater than 2m from ground and 3m in any horizontal direction (except “tunnel”). Woodland plants to be no taller than 1m.
- d) *Sampling period:* Any time.

5. Data management

See above project.

6. Reporting/circulation of reports: *See above.*