

Table 1: Woodlands and their key functions

Woodland (and ownership)	Type	Key functions this woodland will deliver	By-products	Who's involved in realising the woods potential
Cwmelyn (FCW)	A	Tourism and Recreation linked to the Ebbw Fach Trail 	Education, Conservation, potential enterprise (tree nursery), Health	Cwmelyn ponds group, FCW LAM, FCW Conservation manager, FCW Education Officer?
Rose Heyworth (BGCBC)	A	Recreation and Tourism / Skills 	Health & Education	Tai Calon RSL, Local Authority, Communities First,
Beaufort Woods (BGCBC)	A	Recreation / tourism 	Conservation, Health	Beaufort Hills and woodlands group, BGCBC
Parc Nant y Waun (BGCBC)	A	Recreation / Tourism 	Conservation, health, training, <u>Gateway</u>	Friends of Parc Nant y Waun, Friday Project (C1st), (FLP)
Penrhiggarreg (FCW)	B	Training and skills development and enterprise	Conservation improvement, public access improvement	FCW LAM, Training provider (Tafy) FCW Conservation officer
Six Bells (FCW)	B	Woodfuel, Training or enterprise	Public access, landscape improvements	FCW officers
Arail Bank (FCW)	B	Woodfuel, enterprise	Landscape improvement, Possible training and skills development	FCW
Cwmillery Tip (Coal Authority)	D	Recreation and tourism and landscape improvement	Conservation, Training, Links with FLP	Coal Authority, FCW, Cwmillery Communities First, Local authority (FLP)
Jim Owen Pavilion (BGCBC)	D	Recreation / Tourism / High Visual Impact / Enterprise / Outdoor Activity / (Adjacent to) EFT site 	Recreation and health development, potential enterprise, <u>Gateway</u>	BGCBC, C1st, CLEAN

Recommendations:

These are a set of key recommendations deemed necessary to begin unlocking the potential of the Ebbw Fach's woodlands. (Also see [Appendix 1: Project Index](#))

Adoption of strategy:

- The Woodland sub-group (made up of all key partners) endorses the suggested Key Functions for the valley's woodlands and pledge their involvement where indicated and commend it to the Ebbw Fach Trail Group as a strategic document for adoption.

Governance:

- A dedicated Ebbw Fach woodlands steering group is established to oversee the strategy and its implementation comprising members of the Ebbw Fach Trail group and other appropriate strategic national and local partners. Creation of an action plan for development and management
- All partners sign up to using the suggested functions of each woodland in this report to create detailed time-bound, resourced Action Plans with identification of project leads responsible for driving the process forward.
- Private landowners need to be engaged further in order to enlist their support and involvement in maximising the social and economic potential of the woodlands areas for benefit and to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency of spend.
- Rationalisation of walking and cycling routes (exclusive of but in connection to the Trail) and scoping the potential for an Ebbw Fach Woodland Trail utilising existing routes. This could also incorporate a MTB trail, taking into account the recommendations of the CALON mountain biking feasibility study (this can be downloaded [here](#)), which will also take into account potential links to Blaenavon from St. Illtyd's, Cwmtillery and Nantyglo. (See [Appendix 7.1](#) for the priorities which have been identified by these community groups).
- The encouragement of further community-managed woodlands, utilising existing community groups, enterprises and the development of projects listed in the projects below.
- To establish a long term strategic management plan of the Ebbw Fach region so that all groups involved in woodland management can work to the same goals and aims whilst retaining the individual identity of each woodland. This should also include an agreement of support with the land owning body and should be relevant to community groups, social enterprise and business.

- Recommended new planting sites would be the areas around Cwmtillery and any connecting areas. (Please also cross-reference with Coed Cymru plans who are undertaking maintenance works on trees particularly in the urban areas).
- Support the social enterprise (TAFY) working within the identified ‘skills’ woodlands (Penrhiwgarreg & Six Bells)
- The continued support of the community managed woodlands and promotion of these sites in the first instance, including support in the development of Rose Heyworth community. Signage, access, promotion and facilities should firstly be concentrated on these woods and be used as gateways in themselves to further afield.
- Engage immediately with Communities First (in whatever new structure emerges) to encourage their programme delivery through the valley’s environmental assets (including the woodlands).
- Community groups are offered training in order to be able to carry out management and to be able to share knowledge and information in other green spaces across the region. (This is particularly significant since the demise of the BG LAMS programme).
- That an action be taken forward to identify a key network of recreation routes (i.e.; mountain biking and/or bridleways) in the valley to link pieces of green space (such as woodlands) and to promoted the scope, interest and potential economic development of outdoor activities across the valley.

Promotion and Marketing:

- The woodlands are promoted within the marketing strategy for the valley and the wider VRP.

Key projects that will help to further these aims are listed in the table below, more information and further projects are listed in [Appendix 1](#)). Please note that these are not in any priority order and should not be viewed separately, but rather as a cohesive and complementary set of regional developments to enhance the region and access to green spaces as a whole.

Project / Development /strategic region	Area:	Description	Aims (in line with new C1st indicators)	Key partners:	Links to other projects / initiatives
Abertillery Town regeneration	<i>Abertillery</i>	Green space promotion and access within town regeneration plans, including Abertillery Park and links to Cwmtillery in particular	Health	BGCBC	EFT, Jim Owen
Community Food initiatives	<i>Ebbw Fach & Ebbw Fawr region</i>	Development of a sustainable local food supply	Health	BTCV, C1st,	Native Tree Nursery, Woodland Creation, Jim Owen and Cwmtillery
Jim Owen Pavilion Site and Cwmtillery Tip	<i>Cwmtillery</i>	The Jim Owen Pavilion site development as a community /visitor hub for outdoor activities and important links to Blaenavon WHS. (See Project Index – Appendix 1 & Appendix 8)	Health benefits and potential for skills /training and employment	Cwmtillery C1st, BGCBC,	FLP, EFT, Abertillery
Llanhilleth region	<i>Llanhilleth (region)</i>	Development of Llanhilleth area (including promotion of St.Illtyd's Church) as the Southern 'Gateway' to the Ebbw Fach Trail. Including links to the South and reaching to Blaenavon	Health	C1st, BGCBC, EFT	Walking Groups (lower Ebbw Fach), EFT
Native Tree Nursery development	<i>Ebbw Fach region</i>	Development of a local, native tree supply in the region as social enterprise	Skills, training and employment	BTCV, Tai Calon, BGCBC,	Woodland Creation / Community Food initiatives / Schools and health initiatives
Parc Nant y Waun	<i>Nantygrolo /Brynmawr</i>	Development of Parc Nant y Waun as a northern 'Gateway' on to the Ebbw Fach trail. Including links to the North (BBNP) and west (FLP/Blaenavon)	Health, skills and education	C1st, BGCBC,EFT	EFT, FLP,
Quality hardwood timber market	<i>Ebbw Fach Region</i>	Creation of a (long-term) quality hardwood timber supply identified as a market niche by local joinery business	Skills, training and employment	Vintage Joinery, Coed Cymru, BGCBC	Native Tree Nursery, Woodland creation,
Walking Group developments and trail priorities	<i>Lower Ebbw Fach</i>	Rationalisation and prioritisation of newly developed trails identified by the local community walking groups in the Lower Ebbw Fach. These routes can be viewed in the appendices .	Health	BGCBC, C1st, EFT	EFT, FLP, Jim Owen, St.Illtyd's (region), Abertillery (region), woodland creation
Community Green Flag	<i>Upper Ebbw Fach</i>	Nomination and development of Community Green Flag status on all sites in the Ebbw Fach trail	Health, Skills	EFT, Groundwork	EFT, BGCBC

