

Tidenham and Wyeside Forest Plan 2017 - 2027

West England Forest District



The mark of
responsible forestry

Forestry Commission
woodlands have
been certified in
accordance with the
rules of the Forest
Stewardship Council.



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Location and description

Nestling between the River Wye and River Severn the woodlands in this plan lie 3½ miles north of Chepstow on the Tidenham Chase Plateau in the lower reaches of the Wye Valley to the west and mid-reaches of Severn Estuary to the east with three quarters of the plan area included within the Wye Valley AONB.

The plan area is located solely within the county of Gloucestershire and lies outside the Statutory Forest, 4 ½ miles south west of Lydney and lies north of the A48 from Chepstow and straddles the B4228 that serves the Forest of Dean from the south.

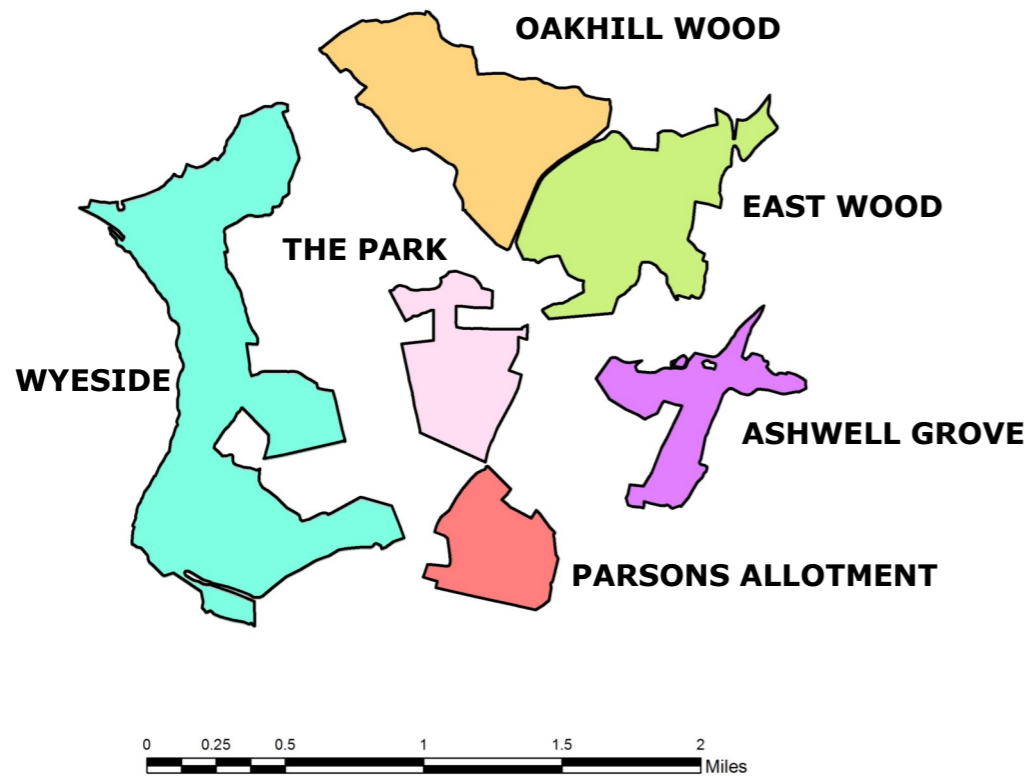
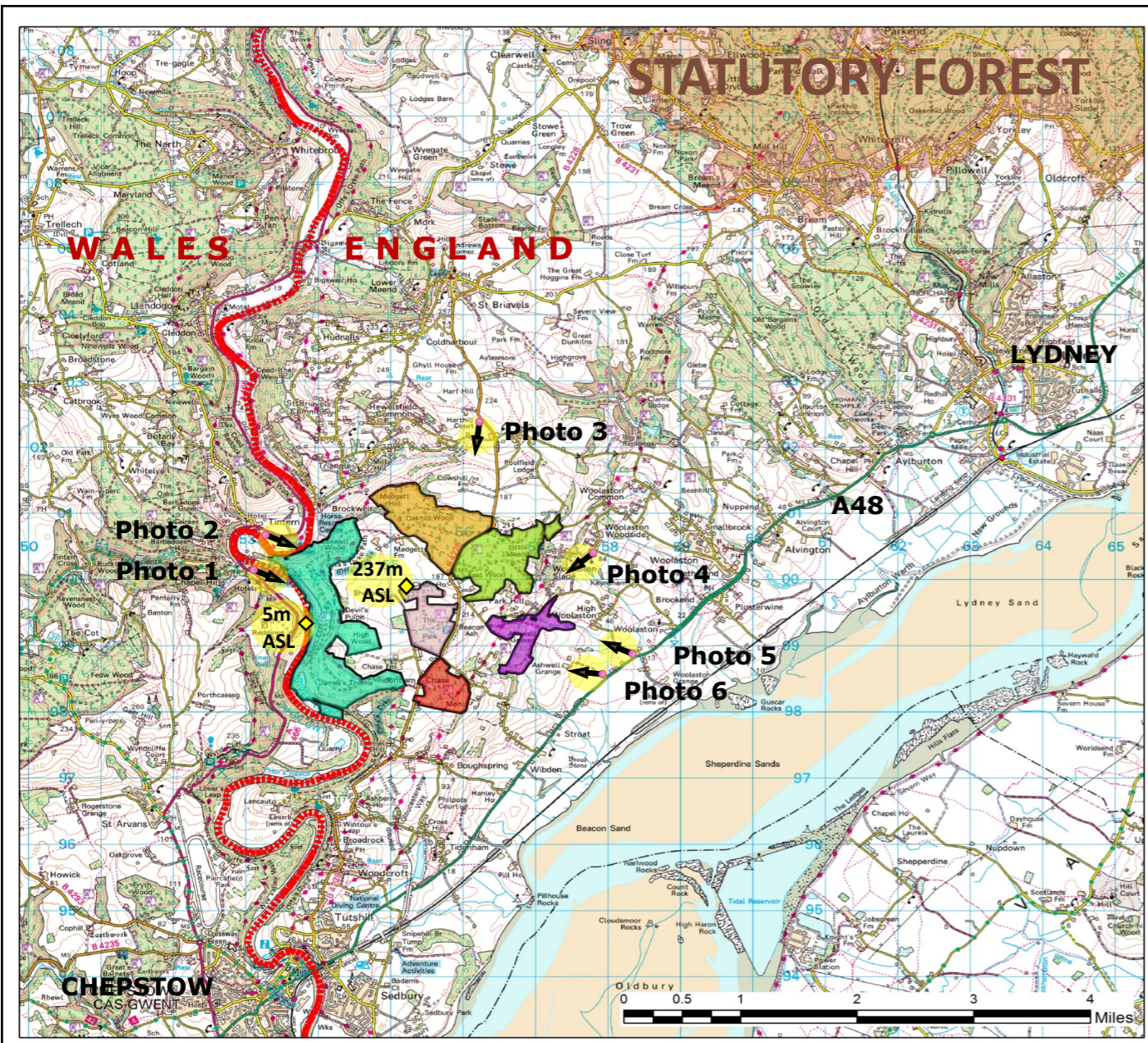
The plan area consists of 525Ha of mixed woodland that rises from 5m ASL along the Wye up to 237m ASL at the highest point of the plateau just north of The Park, enjoying on average 600mm of rainfall per year. The plan comprises of Limestone and Sandstone geology that give rise to rich soils that are generally calcareous with some brown earths, enabling growth rates for conifer to be achieved in the range of Yield Class 12-24 and for broadleaves YC of between 4-8.

The plan is a complex comprised of 6 woodlands draped over an elongated plateau (see Landform Analysis and watershed analysis) with a surrounding matrix of fields, hedgerows and agricultural land. Wyese is the largest covering 198Ha and is situated on the steep eastern slopes of the River Wye providing scenic backdrops to the village of Tintern and its historic Cistercian Abbey. The area to the east of Wyese known as Tidenham Chase contains the remaining 5 woodlands these are: Oakhill Wood, East Wood, The Park, Ashwell Grove and Parsons Allotment.

Wyese is probably best known for its home to a 3 mile stretch of the historically renowned long distance Offa's Dyke path that runs along Wyese's eastern boundary, enjoying far reaching views across the valley into Wales especially from a natural outcrop of Limestone, known as Devils Pulpit. Lying just north of Shorn Cliff, Devils Pulpit overlooks Tintern and Tintern Abbey and is a well frequented stopping point for visitors walking the historical Offa's Dyke path, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument or SAM.

Wyese also includes 1 SSSI site: Shorncliff and Caswell Wood, known for their Woodland type (*Tilio-Acerion*) Further information is available in the SSSI management section. Whilst The Park contains 26Ha of priority habitat managed in partnership with GWT and grazing tenant for Lowland Heath, Parsons Allotment / East Wood can be found exhibiting examples of Limestone Pavement in varying condition and is thought to be the most southern examples within Britain with some occurring in open habitat and others under mixed woodland canopy.

The Severn Estuary SSSI is indirectly connected through the River Wye. Wyese drains west to the Wye and the eastern side of the plan area drains towards the Severn. (see water shed analysis in appendices)

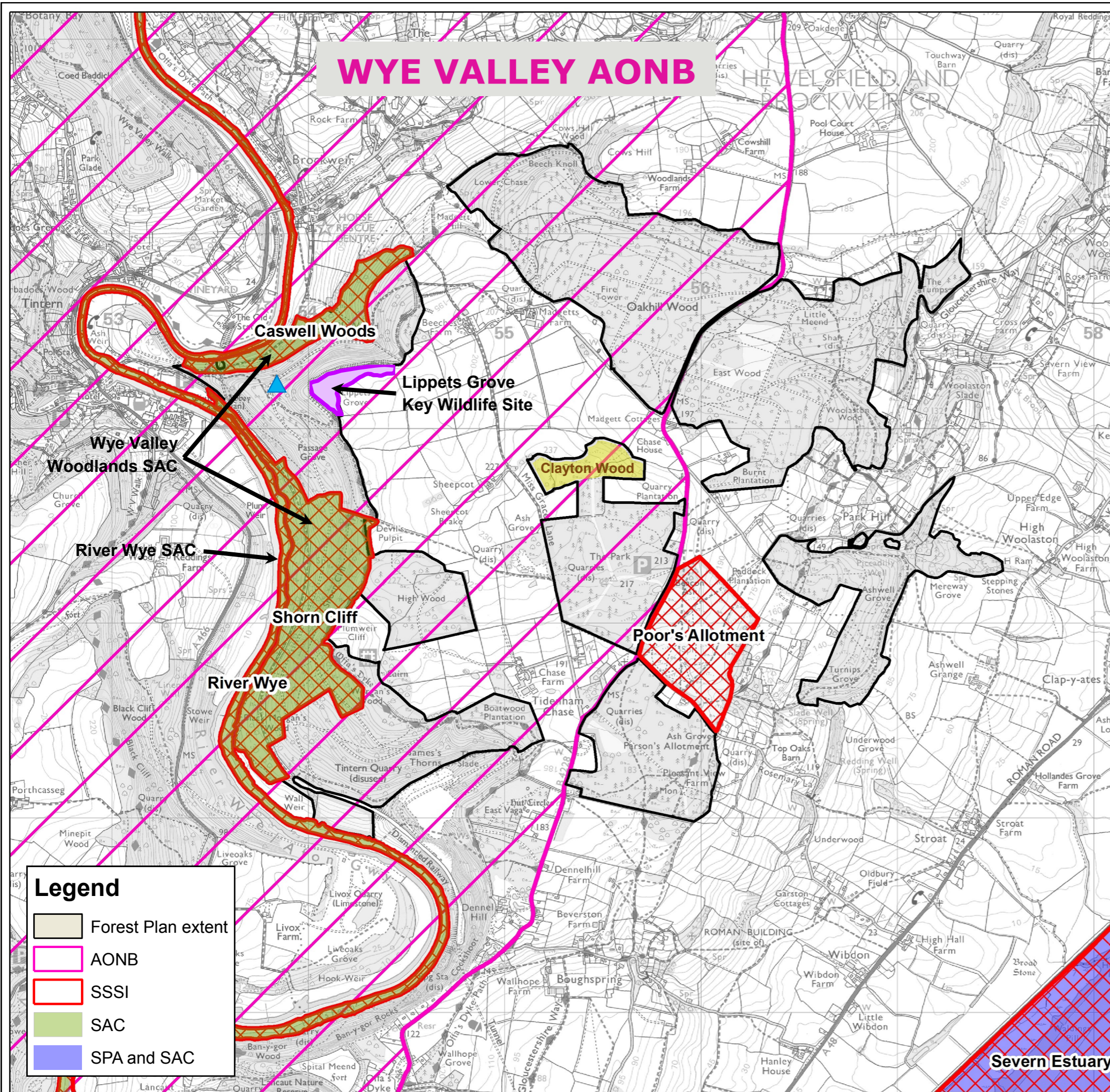


Forest name	Area	% of plan area
Wyese	198 Ha	38
Oakhill Wood	100 Ha	19
East Wood	93 Ha	18
The Park	49 Ha	9
Ashwell Grove	43 Ha	8
Parsons Allotment	39 Ha	7
522 Ha	100 %	

(Area given to the nearest Ha)



WYE VALLEY AONB



Tenure & Management Agreements

All 525Ha of woodland within the plan area enjoy a freehold status.

Shorn Cliff and Caswell Wood SSSI cover 69Ha within Wyese. They are Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) being part of the Wye Valley Woodlands SAC notified for their woodland type (*Tilio-Acerion / Asperulo fagetum*) and lesser horseshoe bats. They lie adjacent to the River Wye SSSI and together with the remainder of Wyese, The Park and Oakhill Wood account for around 75% of the plan area that lies within the bounds of the Wye Valley AONB.

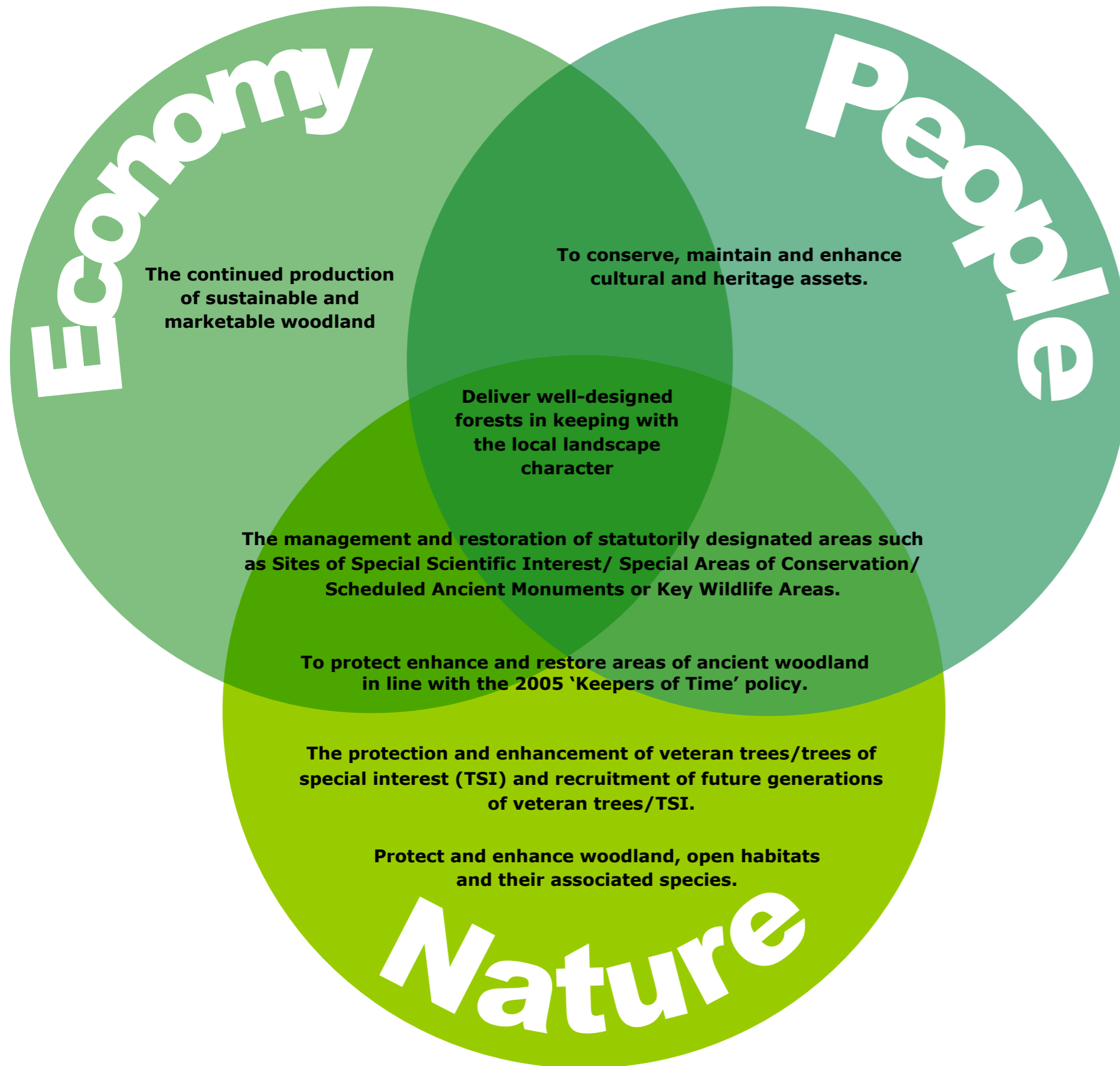
The Park contains lowland heath priority habitat, whilst Lippets Grove is a Key Wildlife Site. Both are included in the concordat with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust who are managing The Park for heathland restoration, including grazing rights let to a 3rd party, whilst Lippets Grove is managed for ground flora associated with ASNW and Dormouse interest.

Poor's Allotment SSSI lies adjacent to and to the north of Parsons Allotment and notified for contrasting habitats (Lowland heath, acid & calcareous grassland) that overlie the concurrence of Drybrook Sandstone and Drybrook Limestone.

The River Wye SAC is notified for being a large linear ecosystem that acts as an important wildlife corridor, migration route and key breeding area for many national & internationally important species of flora, mammals, invertebrates, fish and birds including amongst others: Otter, Fresh water pearl mussel, 3 species of lamprey, Atlantic stream crayfish, crowfoot, milfoil species and 5 nationally scarce species of moth.

Clayton Wood is part of The Park and with Oakhill currently has a sporting lease in place.

▲ A company called "Arqiva" operate a mobile phone mast in Wyese under lease from FC, with space on the mast leased to 3rd parties operating through Arqiva.



Management Objectives

WEST ENGLAND FOREST DISTRICT

PROTECTING AND EXPANDING ENGLANDS FORESTS AND WOODLANDS AND INCREASING THEIR VALUE TO SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

The objectives of this Plan will, in part, deliver the *West England Forest District Strategic Plan (2013a)* and the national *Strategic Plan for the Public Forest Estate in England (2013b)*.

Sustainable management of the woodland will be to the standards required to maintain FSC and PEFC accreditation and therefore must deliver economic, environmental and social objectives.

The meeting and monitoring of these objectives is outlined on the following page.

District Strategy

Forest Plan Objective

Meeting Objective

Monitoring

Economy

Maintain the land within our stewardship under FSC/PEFC certification.

Improve the economic resilience of our woods and forests.

Encourage and support business activity on the Estate

People

Maintain existing established consultation panels in the Forest of Dean and engage with other consultative bodies such as National Park Authorities and AONBs.

Provide high quality woodland based recreational opportunities for people and business focusing on the 3 principle Forest Centres.

Nature

Improve the resilience of the natural environment of the Estate under our stewardship.

Realise the potential of the Public Forest Estate for nature and wildlife.

Maintain and improve the cultural and heritage value of the Estate.

The continued production of sustainable and marketable woodland products.

Plan delivery achieved through thinning and clearfelling will continue to produce a mixture of wood products, both conifer and broadleaf that will be in keeping with and help progress and or enhance other management objectives.

Comparison of production forecast with actual production at the Forest Plan (FP) five and ten-year review:
 Year 5 - 2017-21 = 329m3 felling and 1730m3 thinning
 Year 10 - 2022-26 = 810m3 felling and 1484m3 thinning
 OSP and contract supervision.
 Pre- thinning survey and post thinning control.

The management and restoration of statutorily designated areas such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest/ Special Area of Conservation/Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Key Wildlife Areas.

Implemented through the Operational Site Planning (OSP) should identify opportunities to enhance these sites, where appropriate seek advice from NE & follow guidance given. OSP should also refer to any site specific management plans.

Monitoring of SSSI condition is principally carried out by NE. Whilst SAMs are monitored by Historic England through the Heritage at Risk Register.

To protect enhance and restore areas of ancient woodland in line with the 2005 'Keepers of Time' policy.

Restoration of PAW sites will be a gradual process targeting removal of conifer crops and non-native regeneration through clearfelling & thinning to aid establishment of native species through regeneration and planting.

Analysis and comparison of naturalness scores derived from the Sub-Compartment Database (SCDB) through the FP review process.

Deliver well-designed forests in keeping with the local landscape character that also protect and safeguard adjoining SSSI sites.

Through a mixture of thinning & clearfelling the approach will be dependant upon steepness & awkwardness of terrain and prominence within the landscape. Operational site planning will help integrate the FP intentions minimising risk of adverse impact on the landscape and adjacent SSSI.

Fixed point photography will be used during the FP review process to help in the analysis of how the implementation of the plan is effecting external landscape and character. OSP will help identify opportunity for enhancement to character and identify safeguards for SSSI.

The protection and enhancement of veteran trees (VT)/trees of special interest (TSI) and recruitment of future generations of veteran trees/TSI.

These woodlands contain numerous scattered TSI & VT of varying description, including old lime coppice stools. OSP should record TSI and VT; updating GIS layer files for future reference. At the same time the process should promote the retention of both standing and fallen deadwood.

The FP review process at years 5 and 10 should check data held on GIS. Site visits and operational site plans will help in verifying appropriate TSI and VT management.

To conserve, maintain and enhance cultural and heritage assets.

The identifying and recording of any unscheduled features is an on-going process aimed at improving the quality of existing data sets that subsequently feed into the OSP of harvesting and restocking sites that should identify features of interest and outline appropriate measures to avoid and minimise damage.

Monitoring will be achieved through the OSP and contract supervision and the Forest Plan review process.

Protect and enhance woodland, open habitats and their associated species.

Through a mixture of clearfelling, thinning and coppicing the provision for open habitats and associated species will be enhanced. Opportunities should be highlighted in the OSP process where conservation benefits can be delivered. Appropriate reinstatement works will be carried out once operations have been concluded.

Monitored through review process, looking at local records for updated sightings.
 National Dormouse monitoring scheme.
 Analysis and comparison of SCDB open space through the Forest Plan review process.
 OSP of harvesting and restocking operations.