

WOODLANDS OF THE AVON VALLEY



Proposals for Management



BRISTOL
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

PUBLIC MEETINGS
10th AND 17th OCTOBER

ANCIENT AND MODERN

Woodlands cover over half the total area of the Avon Valley. Together with the river, they give the valley its attractive rural character. There are few areas in south Bristol where so much woodland can be found just a stone's throw from the homes of so many people.

Of the five main areas of woodland in the Valley, Dundridge Farm Wood and parts of Blackswarth and Birch Woods are ancient woodlands. They have never been completely cleared in their history and may well date back to the last Ice Age. For this reason these woods are especially important.

The other areas of woodland are much more recent, having been either planted or allowed to develop naturally over the large tracts of wasteland left by industry.

RICH IN WILDLIFE

Most of the woodland trees are broadleaved and many of the mature ones are oaks. These include not only the more familiar English oak but a large number of sessile oaks which prefer the acid soils in the Valley. Sessile oak woodlands are rare in this part of the country and are regarded highly by conservation organisations.

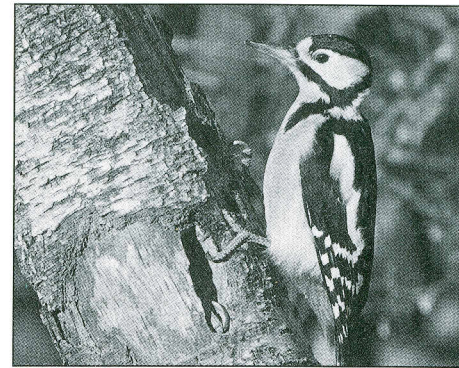
Like all oak woodlands, those in the Avon Valley are good for birds. Colourful jays and woodpeckers can be seen regularly, as well as a host of smaller woodland birds like tits and warblers.

The best woodlands are the ancient ones, like Dundridge Farm Wood, which have trees of all

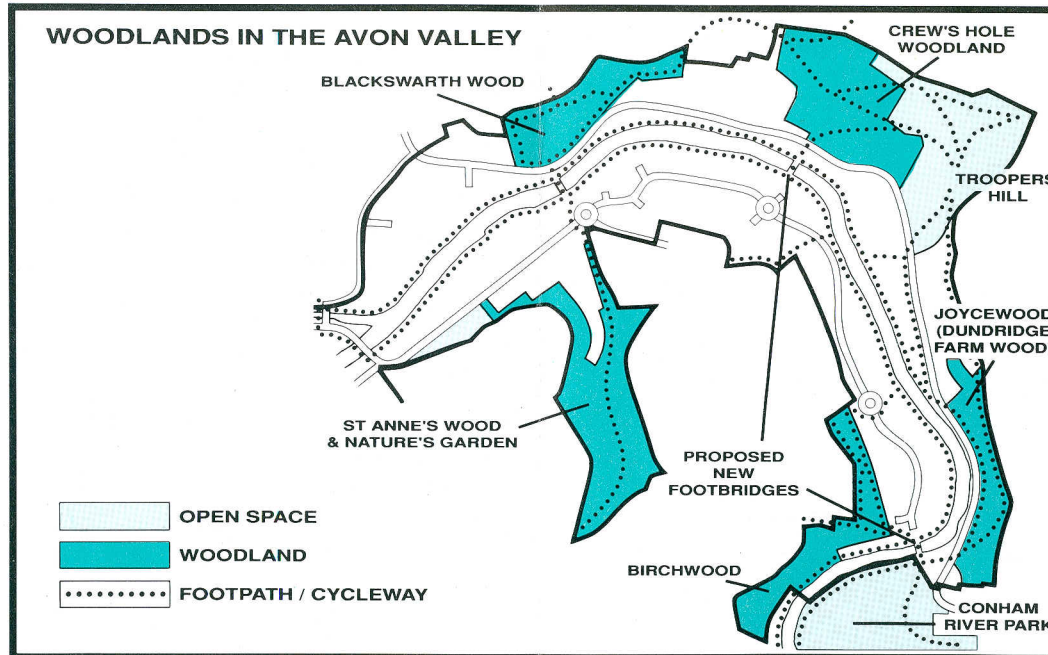
ages from very old to tiny saplings and provide many sources of food, cover and nesting sites. They are also good for mammals like badgers, mice and even deer, and in spring they have carpets of bluebells and other wild flowers.

PLACES FOR PEOPLE

The Avon Valley Woodlands are greatly appreciated by people as well as wildlife, but at the present time only two are in public



Greater Spotted Woodpecker



ownership and most of them are still difficult to enter and enjoy.

Bristol Development Corporation is not only anxious to protect the woodlands for all time but also to enable local people to enjoy them more easily. It intends to do this through careful management, in co-operation with the owners of the woodlands.

THE NEED FOR MANAGEMENT

There are several problems affecting the woodlands which could be put right by careful management. In the ancient woodlands there are not enough young oak trees to replace the old ones and invading sycamore threatens to change their special character. In the Birch

Wood plantation many of the trees are dying and in the woodlands which colonised open space, some of the grassy clearings need to be kept open or they will become less important for wildlife. There is also a need to provide a simple and accessible network of footpaths through the woodlands for the benefit of local people.

A PROGRAMME OF WORK

Bristol Development Corporation has commissioned a management plan for each of the woodlands in the Valley which recommends that a programme of work is carried out over the next ten years. This programme would involve:

- thinning out some of the trees to encourage the next generation of trees to germinate and develop
- removing sycamore in the ancient woodlands to stop it taking over completely
- creating and maintaining glades and rides for the benefit of wildlife
- planting new trees, shrubs and wild flowers
- creating and upgrading footpaths

A CHANCE TO GET INVOLVED

The work programme provides many opportunities for local people to get involved. Volunteer groups, school children and individuals could, for example, help with the planting of trees and wild flowers, pulling out sycamore saplings and clearing back scrub.

FIND OUT MORE

If you would like to know more about the plans for the Avon Valley woodland, and to air your views, the Corporation will be providing this opportunity at two public meetings, as described below. Please come along.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Thursday, 10th October

St Anne's Park School, Lichfield Road.

At 7.00pm

Thursday, 17th October

**The School Room, St George Baptist Church,
Summerhill Road,**

At 7.00pm



Young volunteers planting trees

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