



Newborough News

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Forest plan ready soon

Forestry Commission Wales is to press on with the long-awaited management plan for Newborough Forest.

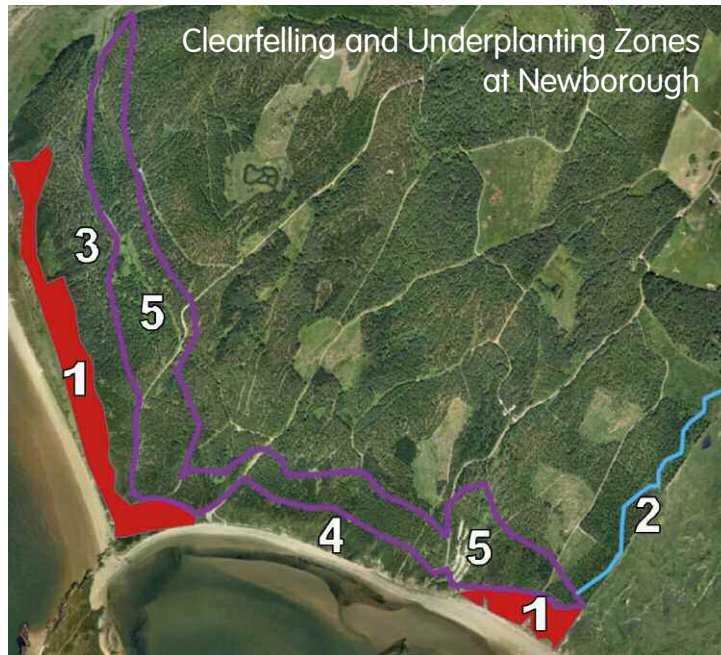
The Commission, which manages the forest on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government, told a well-attended meeting of the Newborough Liaison Partnership recently that it would conclude a plan for the whole forest even though agreement had yet to be reached on a science review into the level of tree-felling required.

Originally, FC Wales hoped to make progress on the management plan by omitting the contentious areas of the forest covered by the science review.

But it now felt that a plan which did not address the main areas of concern for stakeholders would be of little value and leave everybody frustrated and speculating about what might happen next.

The whole-forest plan will show the likely impact of the science review - but any changes along the disputed coastal margins or by the Warren will not be implemented until the review is concluded.

FC Wales Head of Estate Management Peter Garson, who chaired the meeting at the Pritchard Jones Institute on July 22, said,



An aerial map showing the extent of tree felling under the proposed forest management plan which was shown to the Newborough Forest Partnership at the recent meeting

"I hope you think that this is constructive.

"It could be argued that no decisions should be made until every element of scientific uncertainty has been resolved, but that could be years.

"So, as practical and pragmatic land managers, we wish to put

forward a plan for the whole forest but within this plan recognise that there are areas of uncertainty where we want to proceed with caution."

Newborough Forest is a Special Area of Conservation - Europe's highest environmental designation - and FC Wales has a legal obligation to draft a forest design plan that

Key

- *Zone 1 Clearfell - Encourage Natural coastal Processes
 - *Zone 2 Hydrological Experiment & Realignment
 - *Zone 3 Monitor & Review requirements for creating dune zones
 - Zone 4 Natural Processes, Limited Intervention
 - Zone 5 Forest Protection - Underplant
- *Subject to the final science review

meets the requirements of tough habitats regulations.

There is also an urgent need to thin areas of the forest to counter the effects of Red Band Needle Blight.

As well as identifying the extent of felling needed to protect the sand dunes, the plan will also address measures to look after red squirrels and other important species.

Peter told the meeting, "We want to share this with you so that we can get some feedback before we pull together the full plan which will go forward for formal approval."

He said the plan would be sent to members of the Liaison Partnership and it was hoped further drop-in sessions for the community could be arranged.

Meeting to move science review forward

CCW and the Newborough Forest Partnership are to meet again following a report presented to the Assembly Government on the Science Review.

There remain fundamental sticking points between the groups following four meetings to review the science behind the designation and future management needs for the whole area.

The meeting will attempt to clarify these remaining areas of disagreement and recommend a way forward.

The report will include those areas of agreement associated

with the hydrological issues.

CCW Regional Director Tim Jones said, "The Countryside Council for Wales believes that trees in a limited area of the forest should be removed to restore natural dune zones behind the shoreline and to address the impact of the forest on the water table that is affecting the dune habitats.

"The Newborough Forest Partnership will meet us again to finalise a report before we seek a way forward over those areas where we have still not reached agreement."

He added, "CCW believes the

majority of the forest can be maintained and improved whilst clearing trees on some of the shore side to ensure that the dunes can shift and develop in line with natural processes, providing a rich and diverse habitat for a wealth of wildlife.

"Rumours that have been circulating locally that 40% of the trees need to be cleared are unfounded. CCW is concerned that this misinformation is still creating unnecessary concern."

Other points of agreement included the need to diversify the tree species in Newborough Forest,

particularly given the threat to Corsican pines from red band needle blight, and to maintain grey squirrel control as part of the actions necessary for conserving Anglesey's red squirrel population.

But CCW maintains that a modest decrease in the area of the forest would not detrimentally affect the red squirrels at this site.

Tim said, "CCW has provided substantial funding to restore red squirrels on Anglesey over the past 12 years, and would not want jeopardise this investment."

Updates on the science review can be found on CCW's website.

Top of the docks!

There is nothing better than finding value in something that, on first sight, appears worthless. This is most people's experience when they encounter shore dock, one of Wales's rarest plants.

Were it not for a subtle hue to the leaves and the bulbous nature of the seed capsules, it's easy to mistake this rarity for any other curled dock, a family of plants usually given low ratings by both landowners and conservationists.

We need to look again at this plant to see its value. Deep within Newborough Forest lies the shoredock. This is the world's rarest dock and is found here at its most northerly location growing as a relic of past times.

And, being scattered from Galicia in northern Spain through Brittany, Cornwall and south Wales, it has a particular claim to a Celtic pedigree. It's home in the forest was once the shoreline of the Cefni estuary and it has somehow managed to survive many centuries of landscape-scale change.

To see the population increase at this site has taken the efforts of foresters and conservationists sharing their knowledge and efforts. Ponies are being used to keep down vegetation and puddle the site.

Wet, disturbed ground is the name of the game for this species and in the absence of coastal seas and tides there is still some hope that we can keep this species associated with the Newborough landscape.



Shoredock

Watch the Birdy (1)

Despite a national decline, there has been a significant increase in the number of breeding ringed plovers on Llanddwyn thanks to a fine, dry spring and the wardening efforts of staff and volunteers.

These charismatic birds nest on bare or partially vegetated shingle on the upper shore during late spring and summer. They are more often heard than seen, being so well camouflaged.

Newly hatched ringed plover chicks only remain in the nest until they have

dried off and are strong enough to stand and begin to move around. The time varies from just a few hours to a day, but most have left the nest within 24 hours to search for food.

When walking on shingly beaches during the breeding season, please be aware of the likely presence of breeding birds. Avoid disturbing and

trampling nests and respect dog restrictions to keep disturbance to a minimum.



Watch the Birdy (2)

Rob Williams, Forestry Commission Wales's man on the ground at Newborough, released a young raven into the forest after the bird was given to the RSPCA as an abandoned chick in the Caernarfon area.

Hopefully, the bird will make its home among the colony in

Newborough forest, which is thought to be one of the largest in Europe.

Rob was amazed at the raven's wingspan and he said, "You don't really realise how big they are when you see them flapping around the trees, but they are pretty impressive up close."

Rob and the raven

Flower power on the Warren

The much-needed rain in early July has carpeted the colourful dune slacks and grasslands with species of orchids and helleborines, grass of parnassus, dune pansies and bird's foot trefoil.

Sand dunes are among the UK's richest habitats with more flowering plants per square metre than any other!

Research from the Centre of Ecology and Hydrology found that the diversity of flowers on the Warren is increasing as a result of using grazing animals to help with conservation management. They keep the grass low so that flowers don't get smothered.

See for yourselves! A walk through flower-rich Newborough Warren on a warm summer evening with the song of skylarks above is a tonic to the soul and an escape from the stresses of daily life.



Bee orchid

Don't get lost this summer

We have been working with the Coastguard service to provide wrist bands for visitors with children. The idea is to write a contact phone number on the band, so that if your child gets lost and our Ranger staff find them first, we can contact you to stop the panic as soon as possible.

Ask our Ranger for details when you're next visiting the beach.

The Doctor's new job

Jon Stammers recently started working for FC Wales in Newborough.

Jon has just finished his phd in Linguistics at Bangor University and so is now officially Doctor Jon.

His job is to help look after the car park and forest trails on Anglesey, but he will spend most of his time in Newborough.

Later this summer you may also get stopped by someone with a clipboard asking questions about your visit. FC Wales is conducting a visitor survey as part of our Wales recreation site monitoring. The information will be used to help improve the quality of your visit.

Forest experts take home tips from Newborough

Newborough Forest played host to a group from Nepal and Laos recently as part of a fact-finding mission to north Wales organised by the Centre for International Development in Telford.

The eight-strong team are widely respected in their own countries for their work on community forestry and control of illegal logging.

Tim Gordon-Roberts of Forestry Commission Wales led a guided tour, with the subjects for discussion ranging from leech management to climate change.

The group's leader, Dr Yadav, said, "This has been a really useful day - we are embarking on a national forestry

strategy in Nepal and will take back with us what we have learnt in Wales today."

The visit ended with a walk along the

sands. As both Nepal and Laos are landlocked, for many of the visitors this was their first chance to put a toe in the sea!



FC Wales Local Area Manager Tim Gordon-Roberts is pictured with the visitors from Nepal and Laos

Contact us

For all the latest information on Newborough, visit the FC Wales website on www.forestry.gov.uk or call us on **0300 068 0300**, or contact CCW on enquires@ccw.gov.uk Tel **0845 1306 229**



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