

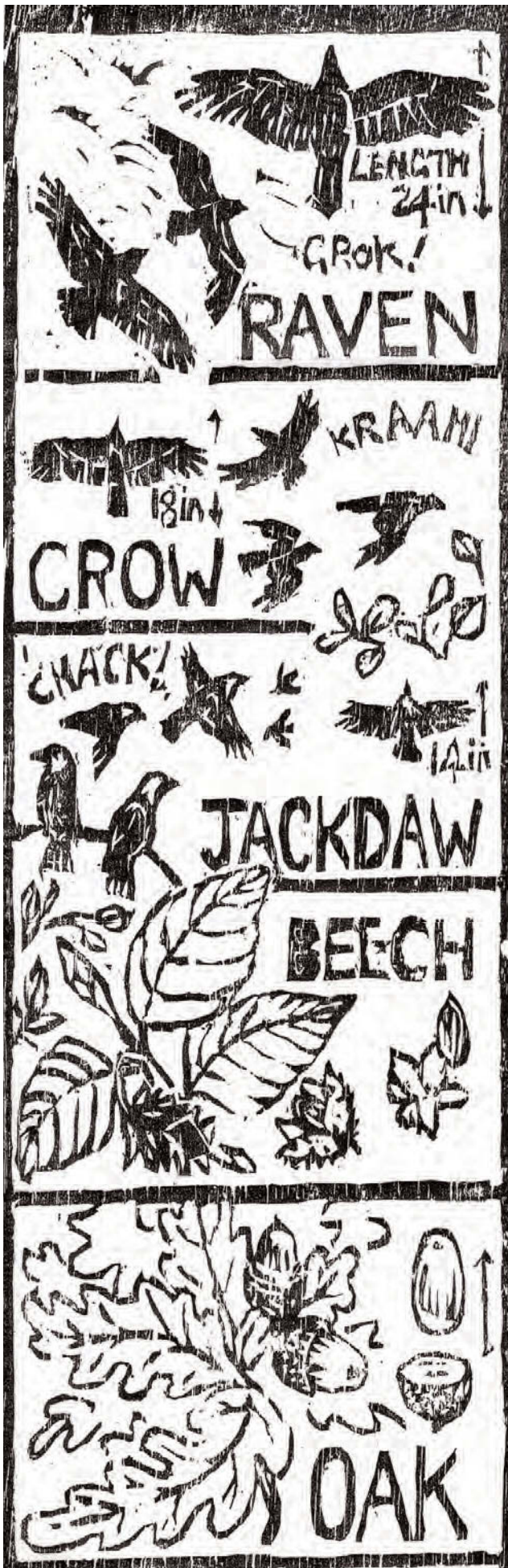
January 2007



Interpretation of Goblin Combe & Cleeve Wood

*Final Design
Concept*

Woodcut incorporated into interpretation panel: Lindy Clark



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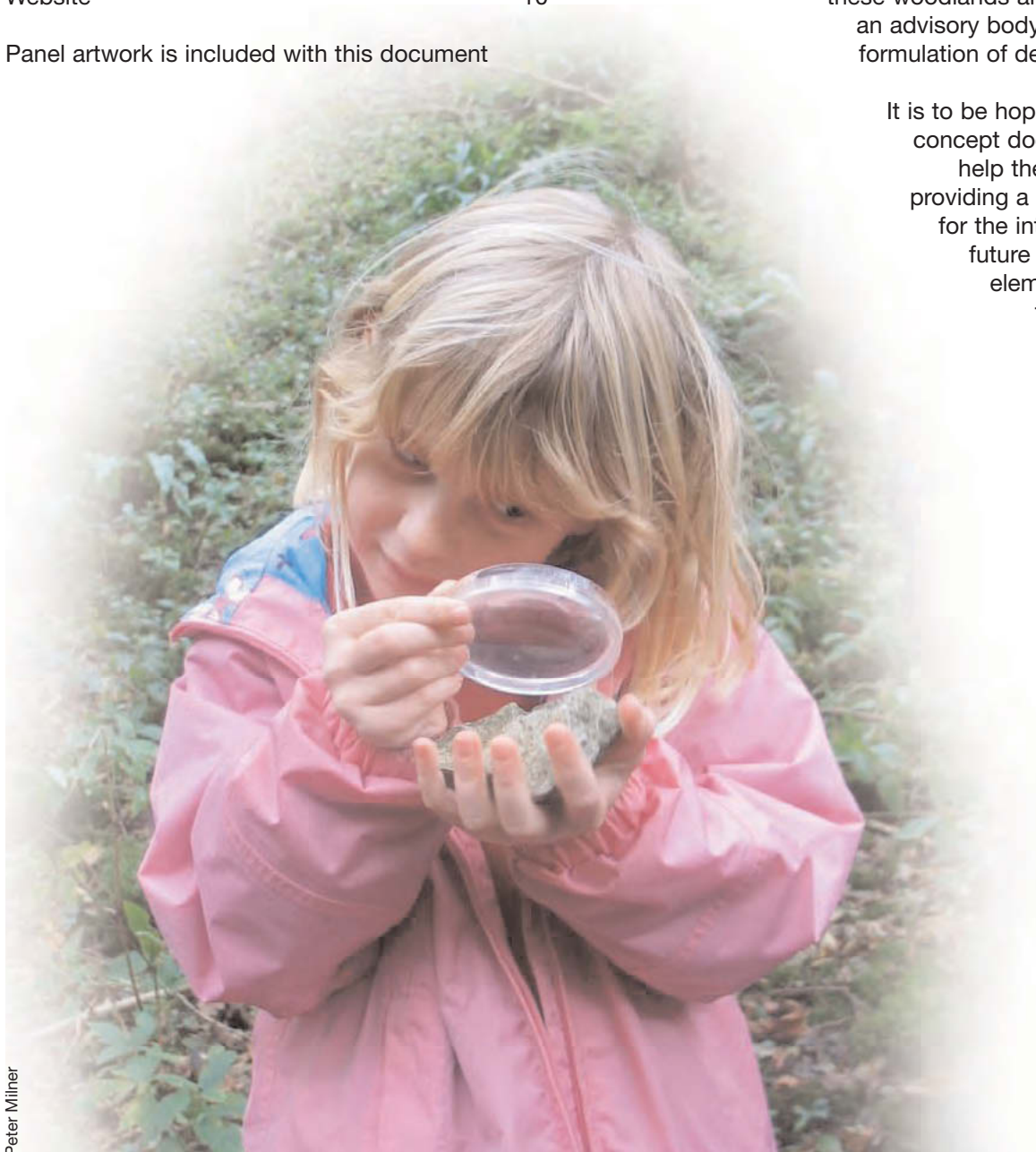
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Introduction

The following guidelines have been produced as part of the ALSF interpretation project completed in 2006. They exist to guide the design elements of future physical and intellectual access works at Goblin Combe and Cleeve Wood. Design parameters as they relate to signage and way-marking as well as interpretation boards and leaflets have also evolved throughout the project process.

C&M associates were pleased to work with local schools and community groups which helped to focus our work. The Woodland subgroup of Goblin Combe Environment Centre's trustees were similarly helpful. These local people know and care about these woodlands and acted as an advisory body during the formulation of design ideas.

It is to be hoped that this concept document will help the Centre by providing a clear vision for the integration of future interpretive elements within the Woods.



Peter Milner

Guiding Principles

Outlined here is the design guidance to support the future development of signage, publicity materials, leaflets, booklets and the website as generated by GCEC. This follows on from earlier drafts of the Outline Strategy (Feb 2006, updated and finalised Jan 2007) and the Draft Design Guide for the interpretation of Goblin Combe and Cleeve Wood that is finalised here.

The guidance has also been informed by the consultative and educational work that took place during Stage 1 of the project (reported fully in the Outline Strategy) and also by these other factors:

Good practice in similar projects:

C&M associates' attention was drawn to good examples of printed interpretive materials such as those produced for the Maelin Heritage Trail in Cumbria and the leaflet developed for the Bestwall Project which covered similar material featuring a hillfort, the natural world and aggregates. C&M associates' attention was drawn to other exemplary projects by the Countryside Agency and English Nature.

Professional standards:

The Association for Heritage Interpretation publish many good practice guidance documents as do the RNIB on maximising 'readability'. C&M have researched a wide range of style/design guides, including those of the National Community Forest Partnership and English Nature.

Audience and accessibility:

It seems likely that the permanently sited interpretation at Goblin Combe and Cleeve Wood will be chanced upon by regular visitors drawn mainly from the local area and people from a wider area, particularly dog walkers and wildlife enthusiasts.

The Countryside Agency suggests in its guidelines "Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: management Plans, A guide" that it is best to assume that the general adult audience displays "intelligence but ignorance". The aim was to strike the right balance without being patronising.

To address as wide an audience as possible it may, in the longer term, be worth producing simplified leaflets in different languages.

Signage incorporating Braille/tactile elements should be considered as a matter of course in future, although the site throws up many challenges in planning for both those with sight impairment and wheelchair users, which are being accommodated as far as the site topography and safety allows.

The leaflet series and the website offer broader opportunities to engage with a wider public. Large print versions will be produced as downloadable PDF files enabling GCEC staff to print stocks as required. These may also have use for younger readers.



Identity

The development of any identity relies heavily on the appearance of its outputs. Here, we document how such outputs can be as accessible to as many of the potential audience as possible but also how published materials can best develop a coherent yet distinctive design style building on what already exists. This recommendations therefore necessarily visits fonts, logo, colours, types of materials, mapwork, use of images and web content and usability.

Publicity Materials



Logo

Goblin Combe Environment Centre already has an attractive and well-known logo. The logo conveys a sense of friendliness and approachability that owes much to the use of its distinctive typeface – 'Grizzly'.

In commercial terms this would be called 'brand recognition' and 'brand qualities'. We recommend that the logo should remain in use and be included in all of the Centre's published materials. This is already embedded in the working practices of Centre staff, and is a cost-efficient promotional tool that should remain in use.

Recommended type and font

Two new fonts have been brought into use by the ALSF interpretive project:

- Poppl Laudatio (semi-sans title font)
- Helvetica Neue (sans serif for clarity in body text and captions, similar to Ariel)

These fonts are in use, in this way, throughout this document. Versions of the these fonts suitable for PC can be purchased, but if it is envisaged that most interpretive work will be done by outside contractors, then there is no need for this expense.

Text should range left with a ragged right edge to ensure greater consistency of spacing between words and because it is generally less formal and more visually pleasing.

Colour

This identity-consistent scheme is recommended for use throughout interpretive outputs.

- GCEC green - 3298 Pantone uncoated
- Ochre - 121 Pantone uncoated
- Orange - 152 Pantone uncoated (this is

the corporate AWT colour appropriate for use since the project has brought the two agencies into close co-operation on interpretive matters).

(NB These colours are designed for use on uncoated papers)



The duotone pairing currently used by N Somerset Council when preparing training booklets is recommended where budgetary constraints restrict use of full colour.

Mapwork

The project commissioned a new, accurate multi-layered map for use by GCEC, from the cartographic services of North Somerset Council. Its base material merges NSC's GIS and archaeological material with English Heritage's site survey and Avon Wildlife Trust's Reserve maps. The map is editable and any of the layers can be used in conjunction with any of the other layers. These total more than 30. This is likely to be a long-lived resource of continued value to the GCEC.

Readability

General recommendations are:

- Good colour and brightness contrast between text and background avoiding red and green for people who are colour blind.
- Avoiding reflective surfaces for text.
- Avoiding fancy typefaces, extra-bold type and UPPERCASE WHICH ARE ALL HARDER TO READ.
- Using a text hierarchy, boxes, bullet points, rules and other relevant visual devices to maintain interest and clarity.
- Using symbols and images instead of words where possible.

Use of images

These may be photographic or illustrative. It should always be clear why an image has been included. Poor quality images should be avoided at all costs. Digital images should be captured or requested from suppliers at a resolution of 300 DPI and of appropriate dimension. This is because a far higher resolution is required for inclusion in printed than web material. All images should be credited. We favour running credits vertically in caption text to one side. These may curve where images are irregularly shaped.

It is hoped and expected that the work of the project artist Linda Clark will be used as a resource by GCEC. The conditions for the future use of Linda Clark's work should be re-visited as required, as set out in the agreement between artist and Centre.

Making material web ready

If printed material is to be downloadable from the GCEC website it is best to ensure that it is in A4 format to suit most printers. Copies of documents in PDF format should be sought from print companies – usually available at little extra cost.

Leaflets

The project produced the two leaflets that set the style for a series of future titles. The format is A3 folded to DL printed in full colour on recycled paper. The first two focus on:

- Quarrying and mining, rocks and minerals.
- The archaeology of the SAM and the context of other bronze age/iron age sites in the vicinity.

The themes for future leaflets may be:

- Wildlife of the Combe and the SSSI.
- Woodland types and management.
- Limestone grassland and other flora and fauna.
- Walks and what to look out for.

Each leaflet uses a specially commissioned woodcut by Lindy Clark, the project artist, central to a duotone style cover. The GCEC logo font style 'Grizzly' (or 'Austere') has been reintroduced on the leaflet and it can be seen that it marries well with Poppl-Laudatio and Helvetica Neue. The back cover features a map for the walker's convenience. The information in the leaflets overlaps and extends the information in the panels and provides further links for information, suggests other places to visit and routes to local involvement. The leaflets are printed in four colour process on both sides of 100% recycled 150gsm Evolution satin paper.

Each leaflet should primarily cover only the theme-relevant material and omit the concerns to be covered in the other leaflets.

Recommended type and font

Not less than 11 point size for body text in accordance with RNIB guidelines, except for image captions which can be smaller. As detailed on the previous page, fonts are:

- Poppl Laudatio (semi-sans title font)
- Helvetica Neue (sans serif for clarity in body text and captions, similar to Ariel)

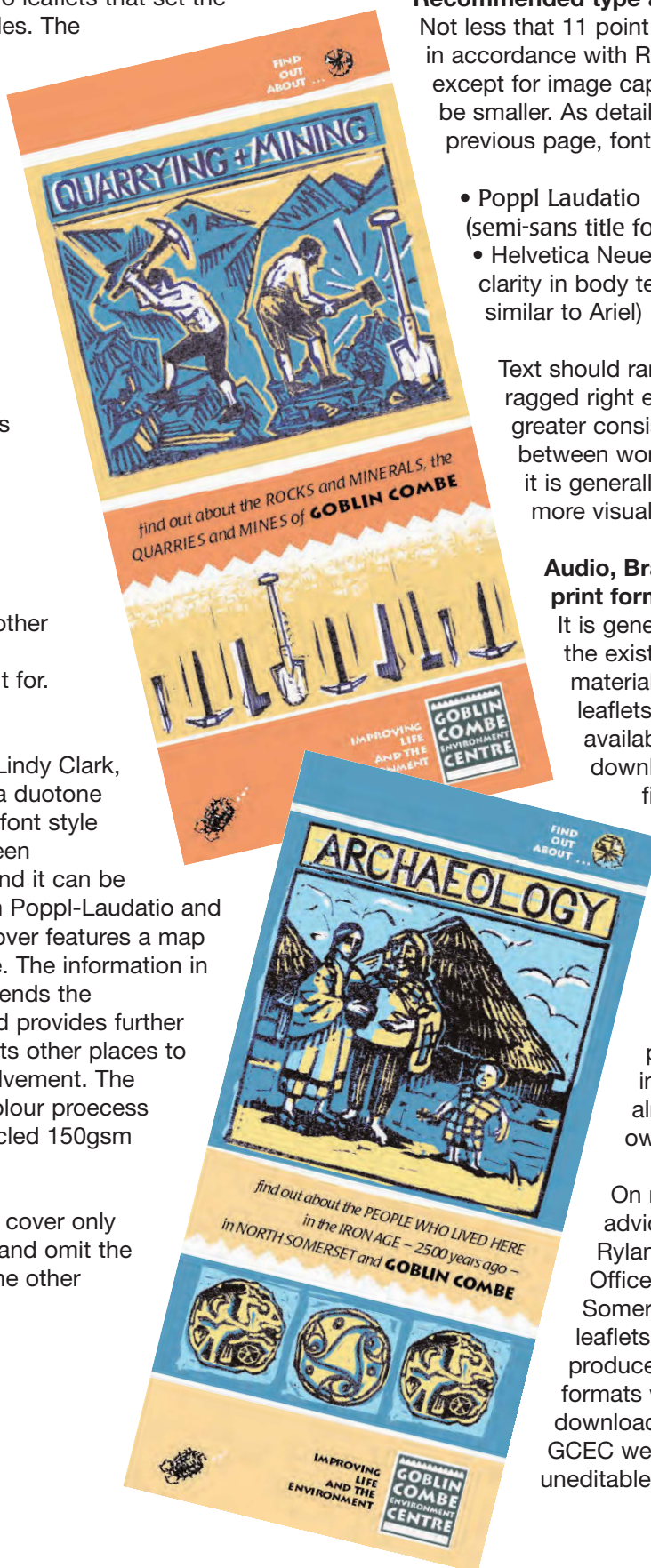
Text should range left with a ragged right edge to ensure greater consistency of spacing between words and because it is generally less formal and more visually pleasing.

Audio, Braille and large print formats

It is generally agreed that the existing interpretive material, especially the leaflets, could be made available in audio as downloadable MP3 files.

This is currently the most accessible and cost effective way of delivering audio material, MP3 players being inexpensive and already widely owned.

On receiving helpful advice from Anthony Rylands, Disability Officer for North Somerset Council, the leaflets have also been produced in large print formats which can be downloaded from the GCEC website as uneditable PDF files.



Interpretive Panels

The panels

The panels are mainly A1 landscape rather than portrait as this better suited the shape of the site and how it is represented in mapwork. Landscape rather than portrait also allows for better accessibility by being within the reach and view of children. In one position, where we have used portrait boards, special platforms have been constructed for children to stand on.

Text spread over a large width in one column is difficult to read – newspapers use approx 38 characters to a column width for this reason. The panels will therefore use five columns with selective 'magazine' style to box some material and separate it from others to enable viewers to 'dip in and out' as they please.

The minimum recommendations for text on interpretive panels is 24pt - (minimum 18pt with larger main introductory text - one million people in the UK are partially sighted) and to make reading more comfortable for everyone.

With its sheer cliff faces, mineshafts and uneven ground, most of the site would be physically dangerous for severely visually impaired people to visit even if accompanied by a sighted person. For this reason, Braille was not incorporated into the panels.

The Association for Heritage Interpretation favours "...electrostatic digital image output as full colour paper prints, laminated in thin plastic sheet, face and reverse bonded to rigid clear Texan polycarbonate and Foamex backing sheets. The resultant 'sandwich' will be 18mm thick and able to absorb most of the punishment thrown at it."

The panels manufactured for the Goblin Combe project conform to these recommendations.

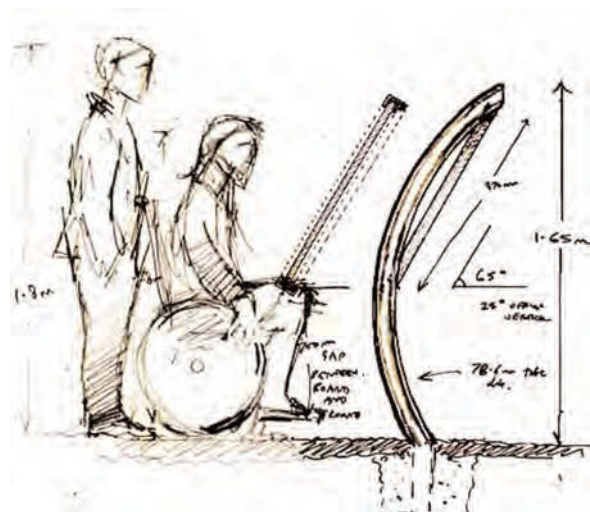
Positioning

In our view it is particularly important that the panel matches the actual orientation of the location maps presented. It is a common fault on many interpretative panels that the viewer is forced to puzzle about their relationship with the map before moving on to the content, and the 'real business', of the panel.

We further recommend positioning panels in shaded areas when possible and not orientating them to face south – to minimise the bleaching effects of direct sunlight.

There are several entry points into the woods, so due consideration needs to be given to the user's experience with regard to sequencing, while ensuring that each panel 'stands alone', should any be added in future.

The siting of future panels should minimise disturbance to the archaeology of the site.



Two extra panels

Following production of detailed briefs to artists and illustrators, interpretation boards and leaflets were designed, produced and installed.

It has been pleasing that the Avon Wildlife Trust have chosen to collaborate with the scheme by commissioning two panels as part of the interpretation for placing on the Goblin Combe Nature Reserve that they manage.

PLEASE SEE APPENDIX FOR PANEL ARTWORK

Description of individual panels

Please use the map (page 8) to relate the panel description below to its location:

Panel 1 (below) - Introductory board at GCEC which introduces the Centre, the quarry, the combe and woods and the general themes and features i.e. enclosure, Toot, gorge.

Panel 2 - Part of the existing notice board, the routes around the site i.e. map with colour coded routes and description of walks. Half-size (A2).



Panel 3 (below) - Bronze Age / Iron Age enclosure in the context of other sites in immediate area, locally found artefacts, similar sites to visit locally.



Panel 4 - Woodland Management, uses of trees found in landscape past and present.

Panel 5 - Lime production, exploitation and usage, lime for mortar, lime for fertilizer. How limestone was formed, limestone cycle. How a limekiln worked; lead and ochre mining, aggregates.

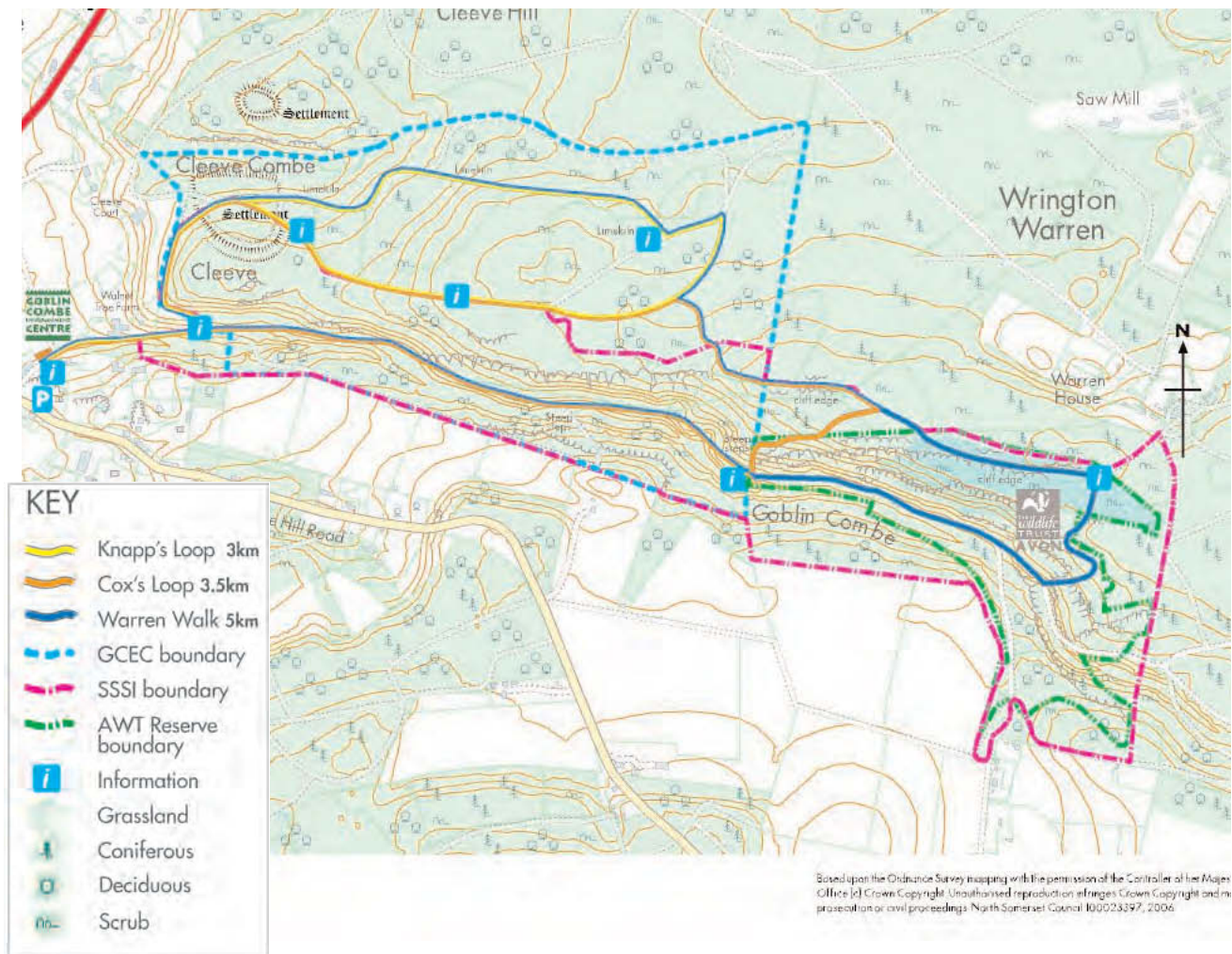
Panel 6 (above & below) - The limestone grassland, diversity of plants and animals (butterflies) grazing and habitat management (AWT)

Panel 7 - Geology, the formation of the Combe, the Toot, ancient corals and ancient seas, the limestone screes / wildlife of the gorge. Folk tale; literary links.

Panel 8 - The Reserve, the limestone screes / wildlife of the gorge – rare ferns, moonwort; why SSSI designation, management (AWT)



Locations of Interpretive Panels



The stands

The ALSF project commissioned Touchwood Wood Products Cooperative to produce the stands from locally sourced Douglas fir to be harmonious with the woodland setting as well as being inobtrusive, elegant, strong, durable and as resistant as possible to vandalism.

The interpretation boards are designed and constructed to have a minimum life of 10 years.



Tactile experience

The desire to touch, to explore shapes or textures, is almost as strong as the desire to see, especially in children. Introducing tactile elements to the new interpretation panels extends the experience for the sighted, as well as being of extra value to the visually impaired.

Such elements help to ensure that the panels have appeal across all age ranges and add to their potential to be incorporated into educational sessions held in the woods.

C&M associates have used tactile elements to convey useful wildlife information through the use of work by the project artist, Lindy Clark, who worked with the local wildlife group and schools.

These have been designed so that visitors can also take to take rubbings from them, using crayons and paper. These materials could be available from GCEC at a moderate charge.

Signage and Waymarking

The majority of the area is wooded with limited vistas to landmark. There are also some hazardous areas, so a clear scheme of waymarking is essential to the wellbeing of visitors. During the course of the ALSF project, much consideration had been given to this matter and it has been agreed that waymarking and signposting can be overdone and inappropriate to the nature and qualities of a semi-wild environment. This was to be avoided. A light touch has resulted from this approach, in that panels in seven different locations serve a waymarking function and a very good map now exists which appears on the leaflets, and that will be widely used by GCEC. A3 size laminated copies may be produced from these for visitors' use.

Circular routes

The rights of way and permissive paths around the site are (or can be) marked on the map. Three colour coded loop walks are further recommended on the panels to offer different experiences while bringing visitors safely back to their entry point.

Types of marker

It was outside the remit of the ALSF project to do more than make recommendations here, but it is loosely agreed that any further marking may simply be a spot of colour on a tree or coloured arrows on dedicated posts of wood or stone at the relevant location or perhaps a mixture of both. For example, arrows showing where a looped walk splits away from one of the core circular walks carved and coloured on a dedicated post would be appropriate and sensible.

This abstract approach could be supplemented with some signposts which point the way to certain landmarks such as the main limekiln or (perhaps) the Toot. But limits should be set on their usage and they should be integrated into the colour-coded waymarking system (see photo) or they could be perceived as an alternative comprehensive route finding device – insufficient clear landmarks exist in the locality for this to even be a possibility.

Old road names

Some old names have been reintroduced to differentiate the three loop walks from each other.

Knapp's Loop 3km

Bronze Age/Iron Age earthworks • Cleeve Toot commanding a wide view • dips and bumps, old mine shafts, spoil heaps and pits • three limekilns • old field boundaries in woodland • return via wooded rides and glades • take extra care close to cliff edges.

Warren Walk 5km

Follows parts of other walks • includes Goblin Combe Nature Reserve managed by the Avon Wildlife Trust - open sunny limestone grassland, good for butterflies • views over the Severn Estuary • take extra care close to cliff edges.

Cox's Loop 3.5km

Expect a climb, sharp descent, cliff edges • Bronze Age/Iron Age earthworks • cliff edge then steps into Combe • return is along the V-shaped Combe – note limestone scree • ancient woodland • take extra care close to cliff edges.

Materials

In keeping with existing interpretation, we suggest that the majority of materials used in the woods should be either native timber or local stone. Lettering and arrows could either be hand cut or sandblasted through stencils into these materials. These marks could be highlighted with paint as necessary.

Shared land

A fair proportion of the visitable landscape is administered by the Avon Wildlife Trust. It is to be hoped that any future scheme would be adopted by both GCEC and AWT to continue to build on the good working relationship that exists between the two bodies which have worked in close cooperation on the ALSF project.



Website

GCEC already has a well established website where information is disseminated about courses and workshops. These are often themselves a route for participants to understand or appreciate an aspect of the locality more fully. For example, a course that explores the local geology will help to explain the presence and formation of the deep combe or the limestone screes, an event to hear the dawn chorus will not only inform the participant about the various species of birds present in the area but deepen appreciation and enjoyment of this special landscape. But the primary access to these experiences has come via the website indicating its importance in the strategy of dissemination as well as intellectual access.

The ALSF interpretation scheme has been mindful of the potential of the web to supplement and augment information which is contained within the interpretation boards and leaflets. The project's remit did not include any changes to the website, but as detailed in previous pages, much of the material generated will be available to download.

Adding value through content

The Centre aims to extend the information available to different audiences beyond that which is contained in the boards and leaflets. An example cited by the Centre Manager was that of secondary school pupils who might be exploring the area via project work focused on limestone extraction. Historically this would have been processed in the limekilns that are still visible on the site. The amount of information presented at the site on the interpretation board is limited and tailored for a general audience. Supplementary information that makes use of panel content as a starting point could be uploaded to the website. Here information such as the chemical processes or the economic significance of lime production could be explored in detail - or links made to websites that do so.

The format of both boards and leaflets has been to break down the core information into engaging and accessible subject areas, each of which has sub-headings reinforced with visual material, to which captions provide a secondary commentary.

This style of presentation naturally allows for comfortable overlaps with web presentation. It is also worth noting that mobile phone technology will soon make mobile access to the resources of the web commonplace. In anticipation of this 'additionality' the GCEC web address appears on all outputs.

Type and font

This is where there is an exception to the rule of printed materials. The sans serif fonts Ariel and Verdana are the most widely used screen fonts accessible by virtually everyone. These have emerged through good web practice (as monitored by Bobby, one of the organisations that set the industry standard). GCEC preferred fonts can still be incorporate as .gif and .jpg files containing text for titles and sub-titles for example.

Existing content

At present the website architecture is unbalanced. One or two sections contain only one page whereas 'Training' is bulging with content and several clickthroughs are required to access important content. This can also create navigational difficulties. Minor structural changes would better promote the extensive training programme and perhaps allow for a new section dedicated to downloadable material to be used for both learning and on-site exploration.

New content

A minimum position is to use some of the attractive images produced by the children using arts and crafts techniques as part of this project.

Learning materials and selected extracts of relevant documents e.g. how a lime kiln works could be added to the website, probably in PDF format that does not permit editing (and therefore deleting appropriate credits to the Centre and/or originators of the material) but will allow users to download and print out. Maps of routes may be suitable for inclusion in this manner.

Overall look and feel

Usability studies are largely agreed on certain basic guiding principles relating to colour, font, image size, navigation etc. The website mainly reflects these already.

Technical

Any website development should be accessible to the visually impaired (using RNIB guidelines), children, the elderly and those with low levels of literacy by applying best-practice techniques to building web pages. Improvements could be made, but it is commendable that the website has been tested for compliance with most browsers. Simple instructions for altering browser settings should perhaps be added as, in practice, few people will follow up the invitation to contact the webmaster if experiencing browser difficulties.



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