

Forest Strategies

17. Introducing the strategy areas

18. Strategy areas

- Severn Vale and Ridge
 - Northavon Vale
 - Pucklechurch Ridges
- Dundry and River Valleys
 - Lulsgate Plateau
- Gordano and Parkland
 - City



CHAPTER 17 - Introducing the Strategy Areas

This part of the Plan provides a local interpretation of the Forest vision. The aims and proposals detailed in the previous part apply generally to the whole Forest area. Seven strategy areas are described here and have been identified in order to take account of local factors and opportunities and to give a local focus and emphasis to the vision in different parts of the Forest. A summary of the Forest strategies is shown on Figure 17.1 and more detailed information is given within each strategy area.

- 17.1** The basic building blocks of each strategy area are the landscape subzones derived from the landscape assessment (see Chapter 3), but they also take into account centres of local population and recreation links. Two of the strategy areas relate to complete landscape zones, whilst the others are made up of a number of subzones which, although varied in character, are close together and form a locally identifiable geographical unit. Each strategy area is looked at first as a whole, giving a brief description of the area and its priorities, and then in more detail through each strategy area subzone, giving more specific descriptions and proposals. Strategy areas will form the basis of more detailed local proposals and community involvement at a later date.
- 17.2** The strategies for each subzone are primarily based on woodland planting targets and have been derived from the landscape assessment. They are primarily a reflection of the perceived quality of the existing landscape (see Chapter 3) and the degree to which the landscape would be enhanced by new woodland planting. In general terms, conservation is proposed for high quality landscapes, improvement for medium quality landscapes and significant change for those of poor quality. The targets for woodland cover reflect the degree of change proposed. The strategies within the Forest Plan are broad-based. More detailed landscape strategies are being developed by local authorities and these will, over time, identify smaller areas of differing local landscape character. **In existing built up areas it will be impractical to achieve the woodland targets but informal recreation, sports, access, arts, general tree planting and other elements of the vision can be achieved.** Some part of the vision can be achieved everywhere within the Forest boundary; the city area has a specific strategy of its own.
- 17.3** The figures for existing woodland cover are based on woodlands as shown on the current Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 maps and therefore do not include very recent planting or small copses and hedgerow

trees. The figures for proposed woodland cover do include hedgerow trees and copses, representing their value in the landscape and as wildlife sites. The percentage of woodland cover proposed for each subzone takes into account the potential there for community woodlands and recreational needs, not just landscape enhancement. Information given under the heading of woodland is included to give an indication of the scale of woodland planting that is appropriate, and where it could best be located to benefit the character of the area. In some locations, an indication is also given of other possible objectives, such as the creation of community woodlands.

- 17.4** Figures for proposed woodland cover are given as averages for an area but should not be interpreted as an even spread of woodland. Cover will vary according to landform, environmental constraints and local distinctiveness and character.
- 17.5** **The future management of individual land-holdings is a matter for owners to determine. The strategy areas describe a general picture of the scale and pattern of woodland cover which might develop in the long term, given landowners' willingness to establish new woods.**
- 17.6** Information on wildlife is primarily concerned with opportunities to improve the nature conservation value of the broader landscape, particularly by connecting fragmented sites through improvements to hedgerows, riversides, permanent set-aside and other wildlife corridors, and by encouraging traditional management of rare habitats to enhance their nature conservation interest. Heritage features listed are those which have an impact on the landscape character of the area and those where there are opportunities for further interpretation. In all cases the aims of protection and enhancement of existing sites of value apply.
- 17.7** Proposals for new gateway sites will be evaluated through further study and a strategy developed. This strategy will be referred to by councils when producing their local plans to ensure any planning impacts are taken into account. These will be key points for people to find out about and gain access to the Forest, related to transport interchanges where public transport, cycle routes and key recreational routes cross, and will provide a range of other facilities. Each proposed site will need to be assessed in more detail as to the precise nature of facilities required.

CHAPTER 17 - Introducing the Strategy Areas

- 17.8** The route of the Community Forest Path and other potential new recreation routes are indicated; these are for further detailed investigation. These routes focus on footpaths; further research is needed to identify a comprehensive network of off-road cycle routes and bridleways, based on existing rights of way.
- 17.9** The local strategies reflect the current situation but they will need to be reviewed throughout the life of the Forest to accommodate changes in land use, agriculture and forestry policies as well as demand patterns. Woodland cover targets will be reviewed as planting occurs and in response to landscape assessments to ensure that landscape character is not lost. The strategies are not a substitute for detailed site assessment and design, which will enable the interpretation of local distinctiveness and character to be refined and shaped to the views of local people.