

WOODLAND
TRUST

Ancient Woodland Restoration Interpretation Toolkit

Welcome to the Ancient Woodland Restoration Interpretation Toolkit

Ancient woodland is a precious part of our nation's history.

Today only a tiny fragment survives, and much is damaged. However, with careful management and the support of our partners and the public, we now have a unique opportunity to bring thousands of our lost ancient woods back to life for future generations to enjoy.

Alongside the physical restoration process, we can also help people to understand why this work is important, and provide opportunities for them to become involved in bringing these precious pieces of history back to life.

We must present consistent, clear messages.

We must combat myths and misunderstandings.

We must excite and involve our audiences.

We need carefully planned interpretation



This toolkit is here to help you!

It provides guidance on planning, developing and delivering a range of interpretive media and events suitable for your site and your visitors.

Who is the toolkit for?

This toolkit has been produced for community woodland owners, but could be used by anyone who owns or manages ancient woodland that is undergoing restoration.

If your woodland doesn't currently have public access, you may wish to consider creating permissive access to open it up to visitors. Your local Highway Authority will be able to advise on the procedure.

**To find out more about Ancient
Woodland Restoration please go to:**
woodlandtrust.org.uk/restoration

Using the Toolkit

If you're using the toolkit online, click on the nut icons to navigate quickly to the sections you're interested in.



The Toolkit – in a nutshell...

Section 1

An explanation of what interpretation is and why it's important

Section 2

A step by step approach to planning successful interpretation, including:

- Why do you want to provide interpretation?
- What are you going to interpret?
- What stories will you tell?
- Who is your interpretation for?
- Where will people find the interpretation?
- When will your interpretation have most impact?
- Who is going to develop and deliver the interpretation?
- How are you going to present your interpretation?

Section 3

Case studies and examples to inspire you

Section 4

Tips on delivering your interpretation

Section 5

How to check if it's working – evaluation techniques

Section 6

Sources of funding

Section 7

Finding suppliers and other useful information

What is interpretation?

Section 1

Interpretation is a communication process that helps us to share the special qualities of a place with others.

We can present things as 'information' or as 'interpretation'.

The difference is not what we say, but how we say it.

- **Information presents facts**
- **Interpretation reveals the 'story' or 'spirit' of a place**

Information



A simple notice can become an interpretive tool by encouraging people to notice and think about what is happening and why.

Interpretation



We are felling trees in this area to let the light in and reawaken an ancient beauty.

Look for signs of the ancient woodland coming back to life.

Please keep to paths and observe safety notices.

Discover more about ancient woodland restoration woodlandtrust.org.uk/restoration

Good interpretation...

... Attracts attention and provokes thought

Visitors should be keen to know more, not bored and ready to go home.

... Helps us relate to places, objects or events

Tell the human stories – feed our curiosity about the lives of others.

... Generates a sense of revelation

“So what?” becomes “Oh, I get it!”.

... Invites activity and involvement

Turn passive observers into active participants.

... Is easy to understand

Leave people enlightened, not mystified.



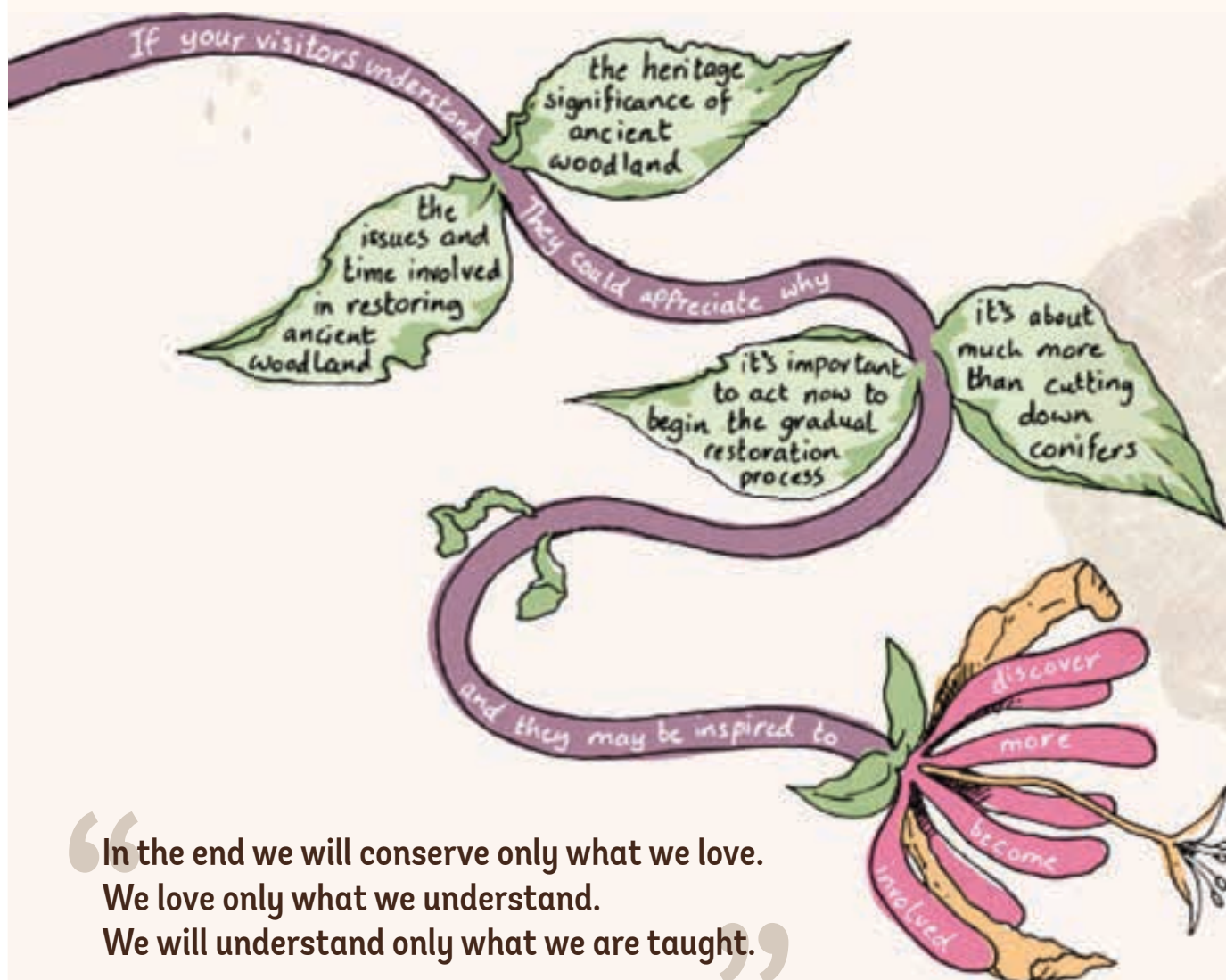
Why is interpretation important for your site?

“Through interpretation, understanding;
Through understanding, appreciation;
Through appreciation, protection.”

Freeman Tilden,

‘Interpreting Our Heritage’, 1957

Good interpretation can change people’s understanding, attitudes and behaviour.
It can influence how people react to ancient woodland restoration.



“In the end we will conserve only what we love.
We love only what we understand.
We will understand only what we are taught.”

Baba Dioum,
environmentalist

Getting Started

Creating your Interpretation Plan

Planning interpretation requires careful, logical thought.

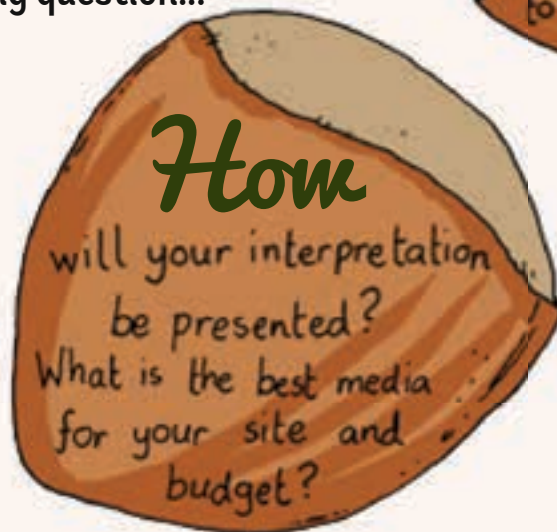
Every woodland is different, so choosing the right solutions for your site and your visitors is important.

Your Interpretation Plan can also help with funding applications.

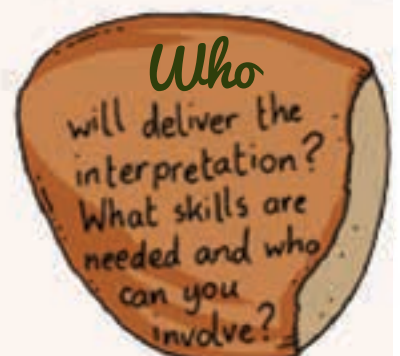
Start by thinking about...



Answering each of these will help you to crack the big question...



But don't forget...



The following pages will help you through these stages.



Why... provide interpretation?

What do you hope to achieve?

Your aims and objectives will set a benchmark against which you can evaluate. If you aren't achieving what you set out to do, re-think your approach.

Your AIMS might include:

- Generating public support for the restoration process
- Attracting more and new visitors to your woodland
- Establishing your woodland as a centre for learning
- Improving access
- Protecting sensitive wildlife
- Establishing a volunteer team

Split your **OBJECTIVES** down into **Learning, Behavioural, Emotional** and **Economic** objectives.

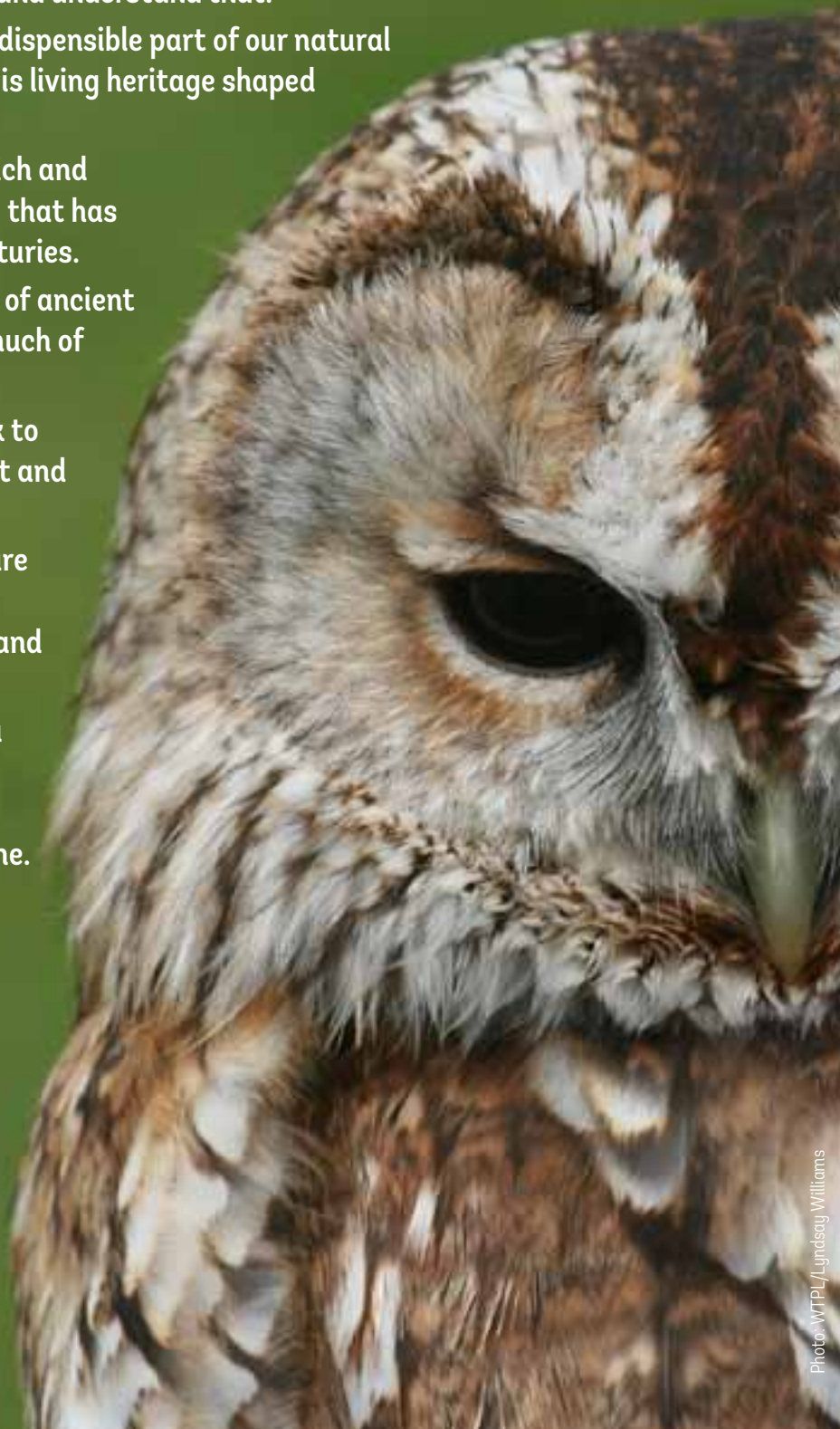
Learning Objectives

Interpretation can help everyone to learn in an enjoyable and rewarding way.

For example

You may want people to know and understand that:

- Ancient woodland is an indispensable part of our natural and cultural heritage – it is living heritage shaped by generations.
- Ancient woodland has a rich and irreplaceable biodiversity that has developed over many centuries.
- Only a tiny fragment (2%) of ancient woodland remains, and much of that has been damaged.
- Ancient woodland is a link to the past that is easily lost and impossible to replace.
- We are working with nature to restore these precious places – letting the light and life back in.
- Woodland restoration is a slow process, not a quick fix – the woodland will gradually change over time.



Behavioural Objectives

Interpretation has the capacity to influence people's actions, both during and after visits.

For example

You may want encourage people to:

- Visit ancient woodlands and benefit from the recreational, health and learning opportunities.
- Care for the ancient woodlands they visit.
- Take more notice of their surroundings and look for signs of ancient woodland features and restoration in action.
- Use all of their senses to experience woodlands in transition.
- Tell others about what they have experienced and why it's important.
- Return to see the transformation progressing.
- Become involved through volunteering.
- Support the work of your organisation.

Emotional Objectives

To be effective, interpretation should make people think, react, care and become involved.

For example

You may want people to feel that:

- Ancient woodland is part of their personal heritage.
- They can be part of this 'big event' by participating in activities or giving their time as a volunteer.
- Their involvement will influence what happens in the future by making our countryside more resilient.
- Their support makes a real difference to the landscape, wildlife and to future generations.



Economic Objectives

By enhancing the experience of a visit, interpretation should encourage people to explore further, stay longer, use local facilities, return and recommend a visit to others.

For example

You could make a difference by:

Increasing dwell time and encouraging people to explore the wider area.

Encouraging people to support local communities and services during their visits.

Encouraging people to support your organisation financially.

Igniting the imaginations of local businesses who could support you in your work.

Generating income through events, enabling these activities to be sustainable and self-financing.





What... will be interpreted?

What features, qualities and stories make your site special?

Drawing out what makes your site special is the first step in defining what stories you should tell.

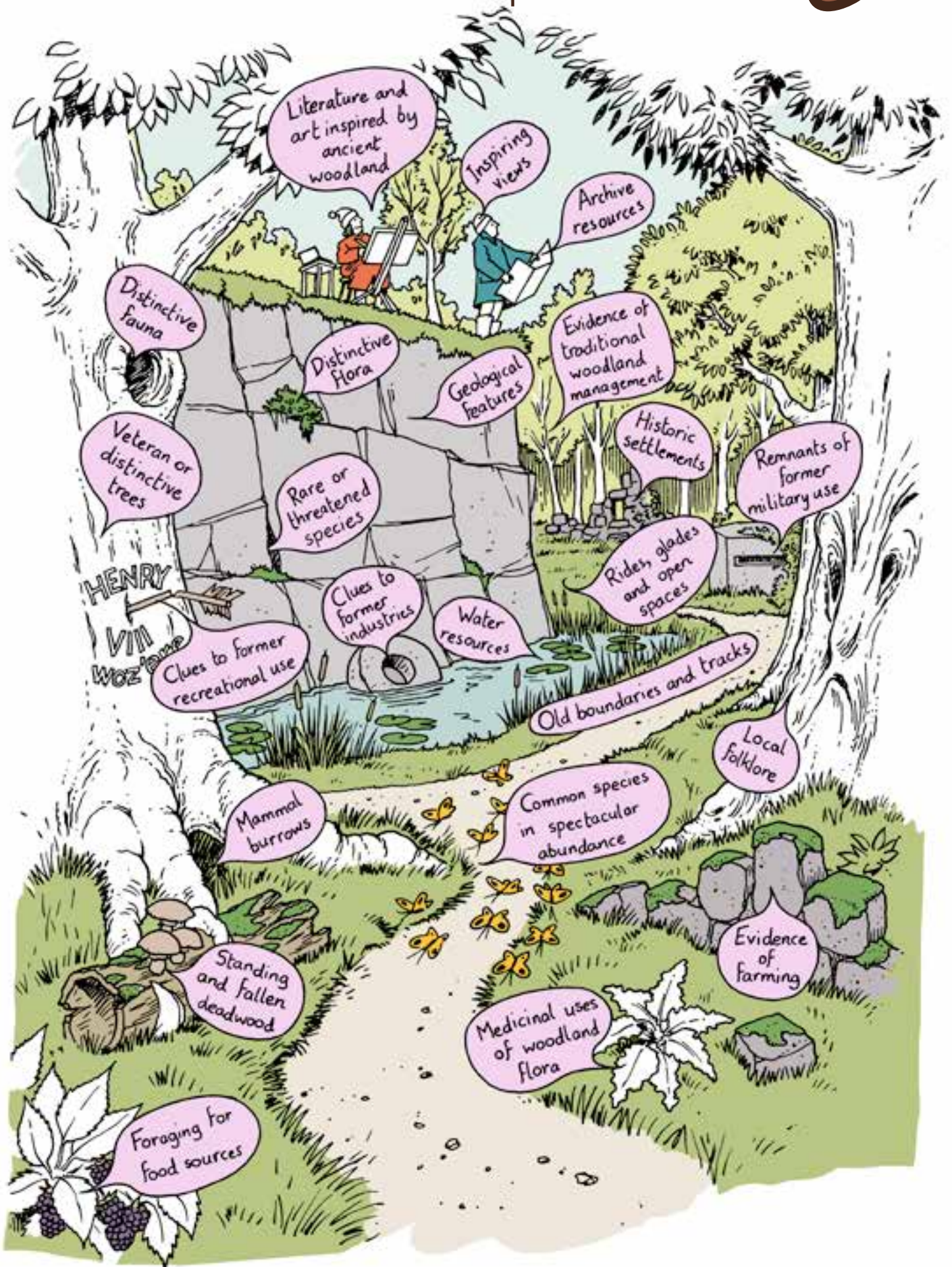
Describe your woodland's 'assets' under the following headings:

- **PHYSICAL assets**
The site's natural features
- **CULTURAL assets**
The human associations with the site

The Value of Local Flavour

Consider involving local people in this process. All have a story to tell about their special place which can add extra meaning for visitors.

Ancient woodland is a rich resource for interpretation





What... stories will you tell?

Defining your physical and cultural assets will provide you with the building blocks to develop **INTERPRETIVE THEMES** and **STORYLINES**.

1: Start with an Overarching Theme

The main message that you want visitors to know and understand.

For example:

“Ancient woodland is a precious part of our nation’s heritage, but only a tiny fragment survives and much is damaged. With careful management, we can bring thousands of our lost ancient woods back to life for future generations to enjoy.”

2: Break your overarching theme down into specific messages, or sub-themes

Aim for five or six.

For example:

Ancient woodlands could be our last tangible living link with the 'Wild Wood' that cloaked our landscape after the last Ice Age.

Ancient woodlands are home to 232 of our most endangered species and act as reservoirs from which wildlife can spread to new woodlands.

Ancient woodlands have provided us with food, shelter, fuel and other resources for generations – the evidence of this human activity is largely preserved, unaltered by cultivation or disturbance.

Ancient woodlands contribute to people's sense of place, well-being and imagination – “being in an ancient woodland is like being in a fairytale”.

Bringing ancient woodlands back to life is all about the balance of light and time, and the right trees in the right place.

Ancient woodlands provide valuable, high quality renewable resources in the form of hardwood timber and other woodland products.



Photo: WTPL/Fran Hitchinson



Photo: WTPL/Georgina Smith

3: Break your sub-themes down into individual storylines

This is the detail of what you want to say, and is likely to include things that are specific to your woodland.

For example, the sub-theme...

'Bringing ancient woodlands back to life is all about the balance of light and time, and the right trees in the right place.'

...could be split down into these storylines:

Many of our conifer plantations, planted to supply post-war timber demand, were once pristine ancient woodlands.

As the conifers grew, their year-round, dense shade stopped other native plants from growing.

Now that the conifers are ready to harvest, we have an opportunity to reverse this effect.

By gradually harvesting the conifer crop, light is once again reaching the woodland floor.



Photo: WTPL/Simon Brown



Photo: WTPL/Pete Holmes

As if by magic, seeds lying dormant in the soil are triggered into life and the ancient woodland character is beginning to re-emerge.

As native wildlife gradually returns, a functioning ecosystem is re-established.

The re-awakening takes time and patience.

Need some inspiration?

The Woodland Trust website is a great place to start





Who...

is your interpretation for?



Who are your audiences?

They may already visit your woodland, or they may be unaware of it. They may be experts on woodland wildlife, or they may never give it a second thought.

Step 1

Find out about your existing visitors

- Who are they?
- Why do they visit?
- When do they visit?
- Where do they come from?
- What do they know already?
- What would they like to know?
- Could they become involved?

Gather this information by talking to people you meet on site, by carrying out a short visitor survey, or through more focused interviews or focus groups.

See Section 5 for more about Audience Consultation



Dog walker

Den builder

Jogger

Forager

Bird-Watcher



Step 2

Identify who's missing

Are there people who may like to visit, but don't currently come?

For example:

- local schools
- local youth organisations or affinity groups e.g. Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides etc
- health and fitness groups
- families
- local clubs and societies e.g. WIs, U3A

Contact them – find out what may tempt them to visit. It may simply be lack of awareness or that they need help and encouragement, for example a themed guided walk or organised event.



Step 3

Consider visitor needs and interests

Your visitors will have a wide range of knowledge, interests, abilities and motivations. This will affect how they engage with your interpretation.

Things to think about:

Virtual 'visitors' may never come to your site, but could access interpretive messages via your website.



Photo: WTPL/Tony Chadwick

Activity visitors – walkers, cyclists, horse-riders – may see your woodland as their destination, or just pass through. They may follow trails with nuggets of interpretation along the way.

Schools and children's affinity groups may download ready-made activity ideas from your website. They may also like on-site support from volunteers. Consult them first – it could save time and wasted effort.

Specialist interest visitors may be interested in guided visits, detailed content on your website and referral to places where they can discover more.

Families will look for something to engage the children – challenges, activity trails and creative activities will appeal.

Local residents could have unique stories to share. They could become walk and event leaders or helpers.

Tourists and day visitors may only have one opportunity to visit – make it easy for them to find the 'best bits'.

First time visitors may need help with finding their way around – a good orientation point is essential.

Repeat visitors will overlook interpretation if it never changes. They may also know the site better than you, so involve them in your planning.

Young people are more likely to take part in things they've planned themselves – invite them to share their ideas.

People with disabilities will have diverse needs and interests. Involve your local access advisory group in the planning process – contact your local authority or go to [Useful Resources](#).

Welsh Language – if your woodland is in Wales you will need to provide bilingual interpretation.



Photo: WTPL/Stephen C Smallman

Step 4

Think about the nature of their visits

When do people visit – could events reduce the impact on sensitive seasons?

Where do they go – could new trails help to avoid sensitive sites?

How often do they visit – is there always something new to see and do?

How can people plan their visit – where can they find out about disabled access, facilities and events?

How can they find their way around – is there an orientation point or way-marked trail?





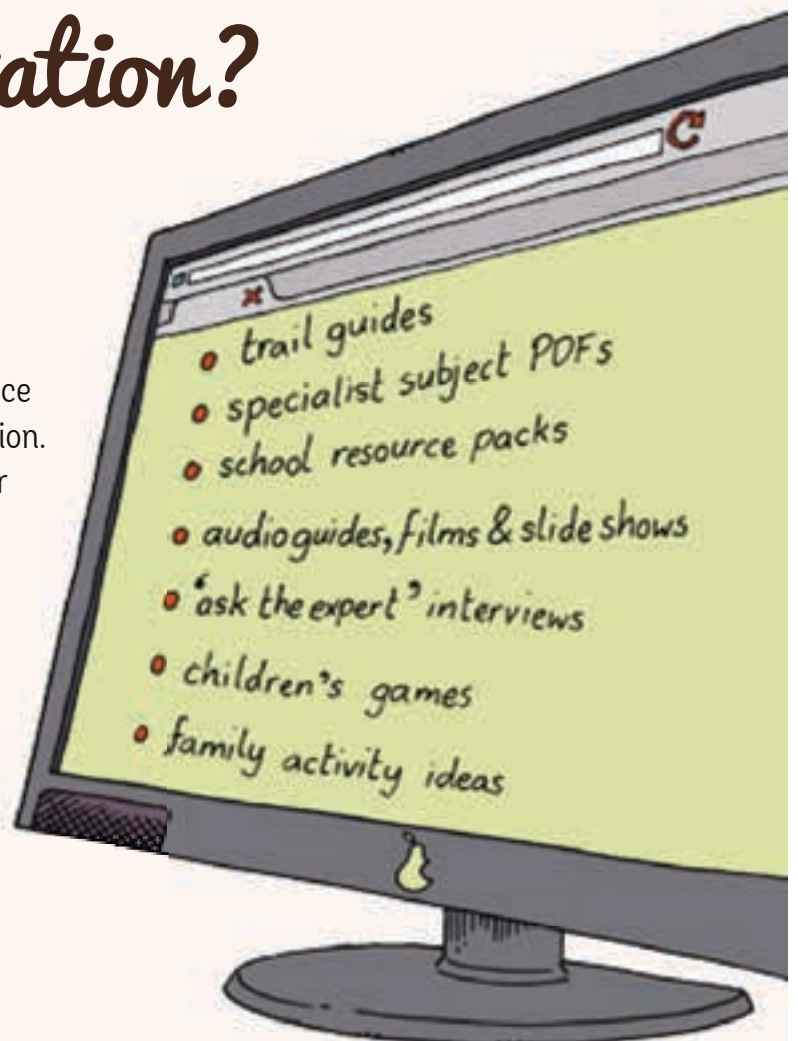
Where...

will people find the interpretation?

Reaching your audiences?

Off-site interpretation

Websites reach an international audience and can host downloadable interpretation. If smartphones work on site, make your website 'mobile friendly'.



Outreach interpretation

To reach people who don't know about your woodland you may need to take the interpretation to them.

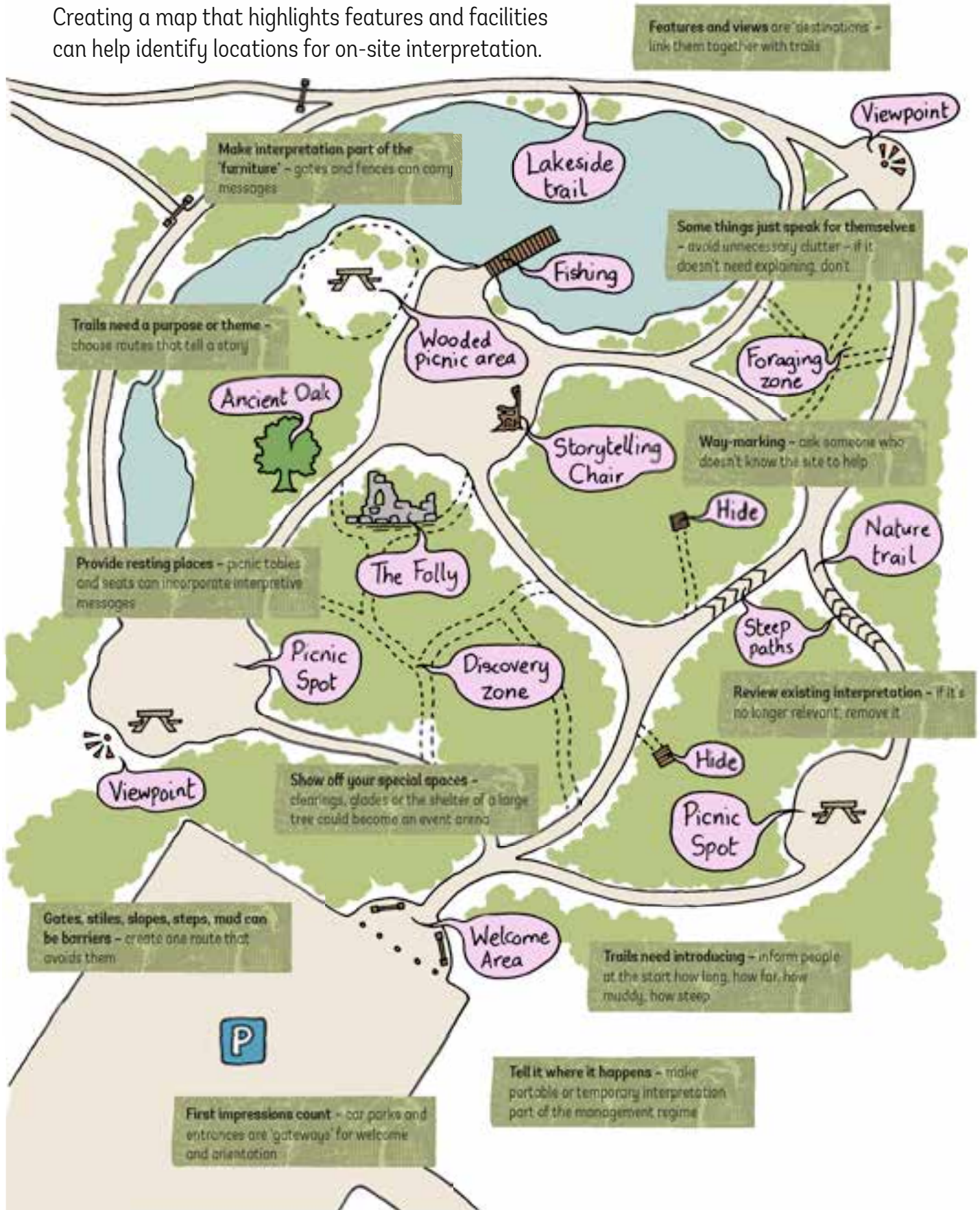
For example:

- **portable displays** in libraries or shopping centres
- **delivering talks** and activity sessions to groups and schools
- **woodland craft demos** at fetes and shows



On-site interpretation

Creating a map that highlights features and facilities can help identify locations for on-site interpretation.





When...

will your interpretation have most impact?

Making the most of your assets?

Nothing sits still for long in an ancient woodland. Visits can be totally new experiences at different times of year or at different times of day. Use this to your advantage.

Things to consider:

Seasonal spectacles – flowering, fruiting, migrating, breeding, seeding....

Seasonal sensitivities – avoid disturbance and trampling.

Seasonal change – a single trail can become several themed walks.

Dawn choruses and night walks – being out and about at extreme hours adds to the excitement.

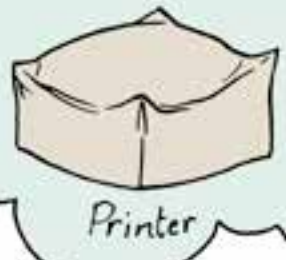
Holiday activities – a great way to engage local children.

Let people in on the action – if people see and understand the restoration process, they're more likely to notice the gradual change.



Who...

is going to develop and deliver the interpretation?



Who can you involve and what skills do you need?

If you don't have the skills and expertise yourself, or in-house, you could consider:

 **Buying-in professional help**

 **Working with local experts**


- Developing partnerships with other organisations who have relevant skills:
 - local history group
 - Wildlife Trust
 - ornithological group
 - bat group
 - drama group
 - youth club
 - U3A
 - local businesses
 - teachers
- Working with local colleges or universities – students seeking project work often have completely fresh ideas.
- Attending a **training course** 



Photo: Helen Pugh



Photo: Katherine Owen

Don't forget to appoint a Project Manager!



Photo: Allan Randall



Photo: WTPL/Ben Lee



How...

are you going to present your interpretation?

Matching media to messages and audiences

Interpretive media falls into four main categories:

Personal, or face to face

Guided walks, talks, demonstrations, live performances, activities and workshops.

Research suggests that this is the most memorable form of interpretation as it encourages interaction. It requires knowledgeable, skilled and enthusiastic people, so may be considered as a one-off event or part of an events programme.



Photo: WTPL / Steven Highfield / Inset photo: Dave Watson

Printed or graphic material

Leaflets, panels, plaques and displays.

Panels can be outdoor or indoor and are a cost-effective way of getting your messages to lots of people. Leaflets can be downloaded from your website, saving you the cost of printing. However, to be successful, they must be carefully written, designed and looked after. A dull, over complicated or dirty panel is generally ignored. A panel in the wrong place can be an eyesore.



Photo: Carol Parr



Photo: Carol Parr

On-site installations

Seating, picnic benches, stiles, boardwalks, way-marking and sculptures.

All can present interpretive messages through their shapes, carved words or imagery. They can be expensive, but offer a creative medium for presenting stories. Local craft workers are a good source of help and inspiration.

Digital or electronic

Websites, audio trails, apps and downloads.

Smartphone apps or on-site info-points can make digital content accessible on site. If you can't regularly offer face to face guided walks, an audio trail or 'meet the expert' film could be the next best thing.



Photo: Montage, Maltings Partnership

Making the right choices

Some things to consider...

Personal, or face to face interpretation

Guided walks, talks, demonstrations, live performances, activities and workshops.

Good for:

Communicating with a variety of people – can be tailored to the interests and knowledge of your audience.

Making a lasting impression – hopefully the right one!

Explaining complex things – people can ask questions if they don't understand.

Inclusivity and social interaction – anyone and everyone can take part.

Generating income – people are willing to pay for interactive experiences.

Developing partnerships – invite other organisations to help as activity leaders.

Having fun!

Not so good for:

Reaching a mass audience – numbers able to participate are likely to be limited.

Providing readily available interpretation – may be a one-off experience.

You, if you have limited time – don't underestimate the time needed to organise, run, and promote events. Seek help from volunteers and partners.

Bad weather – think carefully about venues and providing shelter.

Other things to consider:

Always evaluate – seek feedback from leaders and helpers as well as participants.

Make sure the right people are leading the activities – they must engage with people on the right level.



Photo: WTPL/Helen Pugh



Photo: WTPL/Helen Parr



Photo: WTPL/Helen Pugh

Printed or graphic material

Leaflets, panels, plaques and displays.

Good for:

Reaching a mass audience – a well designed, on-site panel is available 24/7 and should be accessible to every visitor.

Targeting specific audiences – leaflets and displays can have carefully selected distribution and venues.

Making your messages available both on- and off-site.

Helping visitors with orientation and exploration.

Income generation – through the sale of printed literature.

Not so good for:

Keeping interpretation up to date.

Repeat visitors – they're not likely to give your panel or leaflet a second glance.

Encouraging interaction and engagement.

Limited budgets – can require high initial outlay for design and production.

Other things to consider:

A poorly sited and designed panel can be intrusive.

Outdoor panels need cleaning and maintaining.

Panels and plaques may require planning permission.

Leaflets require effective distribution – this can be time consuming.



Design: The Maltings Partnership

Illustrated maps can highlight special features and help them to become destinations along trails. Panel by The Maltings Partnership.



Photo: Carol Parr

Etched metal trail markers can double-up as crayon rubbing plaques for children's trails- design them so rainwater runs off!

Panels can be any shape and size as demonstrated at Maen Llia. Panel by Fitzpatrick Woolmer.



Design: Fitzpatrick Woolmer



Photo: Katherine Owen

A layered panel allows you to feel the view at Glen Affric.

On-site installations

Seating, picnic benches, stiles, boardwalks, way-marking and sculpture.

Good for:

- Drawing attention to specific features.
- Triggering curiosity and imagination.
- Involving people with hands-on activity e.g. through an artist in residence.
- Providing interpretation along trails.
- Reaching a mass audience – always available and should be accessible to everyone.
- Using local, natural materials.
- Creative expression.
- Incorporating messages into existing on-site furniture – without adding extra clutter.

Not so good for:

- Sites where vandalism is an issue.
- Limited budgets – working with artists can be expensive, but small scale projects with local craft workers can be cost effective if visitors can become involved in the experience.
- Sensitive locations – erosion can occur around installations.
- Presenting complex messages – people will interpret sculpture in different ways.

Other things to consider:

- Installations may require planning permission – contact your local authority for guidance.
- Sculpture doesn't have to be long-lasting – it could be designed to 'fade' with the seasons.
- Training volunteers in basic woodcraft skills can make this more cost effective.

Design: Fitzpatrick Woolmer



Benches can become interpretive features, incorporating maps and highlighting things to look out for.

Seating can be designed to reflect the character of a place.



Photo: Carol Parr



Photo: Carol Parr

Sculpture trails encourage you to look at every detail of the forest in case you miss something. Sally Matthews' wild boar and deer at Grizedale Forest will eventually rot away into the forest floor.

Digital or electronic

Websites, audio trails, apps and downloads.

Good for:

A range of audiences – messages can be multi-layered.

Avoiding intrusion in the landscape – visitors can bring the interpretation with them on their phones, tablets or downloads.

Audiences with visual impairment – they can incorporate audio material.

Presenting films and animations.

Providing 'virtual' face to face interpretation.

People who can't actually visit your woodland – they can

make a virtual visit via your website.

Keeping interpretation up to date.

Helping people with pre-visit planning.

Not so good for:

Limited budgets – some media can have very high start up costs e.g. apps.

Managers and volunteers who are not confident with using ICT – it will require maintenance and updating.

Encouraging social interaction on site – people using audio trails or apps can isolate themselves from their surroundings.

Anyone who is averse to using PCs, smartphones or tablets – some people visit the countryside to get away from this sort of thing!

Other things to consider:

Technology changes rapidly – your interpretation may quickly become obsolete.



Photo: Dan Boys



Photo: Dan Boys





It's all in the mix!

Choosing the right ingredients

It's likely that you'll need a variety of media to deliver your package of interpretation.

Think about it as a visitor journey and set out your 'shopping list' under these headings:



Interpretive media and activities

Find all these resources and more in our advice and support area at woodlandtrust.org.uk/restoration.



Exploring the woodland



Permissive Footpath

The path less travelled



Nordic Walking for Health

Walking for wellbeing



Geocaching

Hide and seek with GPS

Woodland Activities to Enjoy

Woodland Crafts
Making things in the woodland DIY store



Woodland Survival
Meet challenges with new skills



Foraging

Discover the woodland larder



Natural Play
Playing with nature



Using your senses

Audio Trails

A moveable feast of words



Soundscapes

Making music in forests



Stone sculpture

Carving a sense of place



Painting with Plants

Painting with Plants

Learning the colours of woodland plants



Top ten tips

1: Keep it short and sweet

Avoid unnecessary clutter – present concise, clear messages.

Few people read reams of text. Present your messages in layers with an intriguing headline, back-up strapline and short paragraph or two. People should get the gist of the message from the headline and strapline.

Aim to:

- adopt a lively, friendly writing style
 - address your audience by inviting them to look, listen, smell...
 - use short sentences with everyday language
 - keep your word count to a maximum of 150 - 200 words on panels
 - keep to one theme or story per panel
 - let pictures speak – annotated photographs, illustrations or diagrams
- reduce word count dramatically and are often the first thing that people look at.

Consider commissioning an illustrator to produce bespoke imagery that really gets your message across.

Ag fás fuinseoige le haghaidh camáin **Clash of the ash** **biodiversity**

Fuinseoig le haghaidh camáin
 Déantar camáin as na crainn fuinseoige seo. Cuireadh iad ag an am céanna ionas go bhfásfaidh na tamhain ina dtamhain dhíreacha, arda. Ní bhaintear ábaid ach as bun an tamhain chun na camáin a dhéanamh. Déantar aghaidh chuartha an camáin as bonn an tamhain, áit a n-éiríonn sé níos leithne ag na tréimhacha.

Hurley ash
 These ash trees are a crop, destined to become hurley sticks. They were planted close together so the trunks grow straight and tall. Only the bottom part of the trunk is used to make hurleys. The curved end or bas is made from the base of the trunk, where it widens to become roots.

Bliú - bliú - éiríocht - éiríocht
 Bhíodáiláirín an ábairtí de ruid fás, úr phoimé danna le bhaint. Bhaintí na n-áiríonn na gairíonn aad agas bhaintí na ndéanú at he áiríonn le éiríocht at fás. Bhíodáiláirín é gairíonn anáiríonn bliú.

Bliú - bliú - éiríocht - éiríocht
 Biodiversity: the variety of all living things from human beings to bacteria, the variety of all the places they live and the variety of individuals within a species. Biodiversity: our life support system.

Déan do chuid ar son na bithéagsúlachta
 Tá ár gairíonn fuinseoige i ruidín le ngairíonn críochán eac. Déanann agus fás ár gairíonn dhíreacha.

Do your bit for biodiversity
 Ash dieback disease is threatening our ash trees. Grow and buy native-grown trees.

Faigh tuilleadh eolais
 Déan do chuid ar son na bithéagsúlachta nó bhíodáiláirín at fás dhíreach www.actionforbiodiversity.eu

Find out more
 Scan the QR code for more about biodiversity or visit www.actionforbiodiversity.eu

European Union
 European Regional Development Fund
 Investing in your future

Photo: Sarah Douglas, Red Kite Environmental

2: Provide clear briefs

When contracting designers or specialist suppliers, set out a clear and detailed brief. For example, graphic designers will need to know:

- the themes or messages you want to convey
- the audiences you want to reach
- if there is a house-style or colour palette they must adopt
- how logos must be presented
- how imagery will be supplied and credited
- if they are expected to create maps, diagrams or other illustrations
- dimensions, materials and print runs
- where your interpretation will be located
- if you expect them to project manage production and installation.

3: Make it accessible to all

Think about the needs of people with a range of disabilities when planning your interpretation. You'll need to consider both physical and intellectual access to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

If your interpretation is on-site, you may need to start with an access audit to identify any physical barriers to people accessing the interpretation. Many local authorities have access advisory groups, who may be able to help.

You'll also need to think about the presentation and content of your interpretation, for example legibility of text, use of colours and contrasts, incorporating audio and tactile as well as visual material, height of panels etc.

A source of guidance is the Heritage Lottery Fund document 'Making your project accessible for disabled people'. It includes links to a wide range of organisations and further guidance information.

hlf.org.uk 

The Fieldfare Trust publishes a 'Countryside for All Good Practice Guide'. It's free and available to download from their website.

fieldfare.org.uk



Members of an access advisory group test an audio trail.

4: Don't forget the logo

Funding bodies and partner organisations will want recognition for their input. Check if they have any rules about displaying logos e.g. size and colour restrictions.

If you have lots of funders, you may need to negotiate with them about how their support is acknowledged. This means you will avoid losing your interpretation amidst a sea of clashing logos – a list may be more appropriate.


5: Copyright conundrums


If you're using imagery, maps, quotes, illustrations or other archive materials, be aware that there may be copyright restrictions, reproduction fees to pay or ownership to acknowledge. If you've sourced material from an archive, they will be able to advise you.

Whilst material may be out of copyright, there may still be a fee to pay for reproducing it. This is usually minimal for non-profit, educational purposes, but could be substantial if you intend to sell your product e.g. a brochure. Always check first!

You may be required to acknowledge the source, or ownership, of the material using specified wording. Check with the archive or supplier.

If you're commissioning illustrations, photography, music or other performances, ensure you have a written agreement about copyright with the supplier, especially if you intend to re-use the work in the future.

A copyright fact sheet is available at copyrightservice.co.uk 

For advice about map copyright go to ordnancesurvey.co.uk 



6: Manage risk

Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for on-site installation work, events or activities. If you're working with contractors, they must provide a copy before they begin work on site.


Your organisation may have a risk assessment procedure. If not, guidance on risk assessment and event planning can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website.

[hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk) 


7: Check consents, listings and insurance


On-site installations may require planning consent. Consult your local authority as soon as possible as it can take at least six weeks for applications to be processed.

If historic buildings or landscape features will be affected, you'll need to check if they are listed or scheduled. Relevant databases are held by the following organisations:

English Heritage 
[english-heritage.org.uk](https://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

Historic Wales Portal 
[historicwales.gov.uk](https://www.historicwales.gov.uk)

Historic Scotland 
[historic-scotland.gov.uk](https://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk)

Northern Ireland Environment Agency 
doeni.gov.uk/niea/built-home/protection.htm

You should also seek written consent from landowners as they may require public liability insurance for allowing public access or events to take place on their land. Some event insurance companies provide cover for one-off events.

Inform the police if you plan a large event as traffic may be affected.




Photo: WTPL/ian Gilkison

8: Use the right language

If your woodland is in Wales you may need to provide your interpretation in both English and Welsh.

Consider:

- allocating a budget for professional translation and proof reading – good translators will be creative, ensuring that text is meaningful in both languages. The Association of Welsh Translators has a directory of registered translators and interpreters welshtranslators.org.uk 
- allowing space within design for both texts to have parity in their presentation – you may need to reduce your word count to fit everything in
- working with designers who have experience of bilingual design
- arranging simultaneous translation at meetings, events or on guided walks



9: Test and tweak

Test a draft, or prototype, of your interpretive media on representatives of your target audiences at an early stage.

Friends and colleagues may not be the best people to ask as they may not provide honest feedback.

10: Enhance not detract

Think carefully about the appearance and location of on-site interpretation. Poorly placed installations can detract from the woodland setting, obliterate views or look totally alien.

Consider:

- materials that have relevance to the site or story you're telling
- colours that work within the woodland environment – you don't want your interpretation to disappear in dappled shade or to stand out like a fast food shop in a high street
- long term maintenance – choose a site where bird droppings and algae won't obliterate your interpretation
- wear and tear around the installation – choose a site that can withstand trampling



Check if it's working

Evaluation Techniques

Evaluation helps you to measure what you've achieved, identify areas for improvement and provide evidence of need to potential funders.

Choice of technique will depend on how you intend to use the data generated.

Visitor counts

Generate raw, quantitative data about numbers and types of people participating. Useful for recording attendance trends, but won't reveal the impact of your interpretation.

Observation

Watching and recording how visitors react to interpretation. Event leaders should also record their observations at the end of an activity.

Visitor surveys

Provide qualitative data about people's opinions. Can be self-complete or conducted by an interviewer. The latter gives more reliable results with less scope for unanswered questions. Self-complete surveys can be conducted via your website.

Focused interviews

More in-depth questioning about specific subjects. Participants are invited to give more considered opinions. Can be undertaken face to face or by phone.

Focus groups

Informal, interactive discussion led by a trained moderator. Good for exploring opinions, perceptions and attitudes or testing prototype interpretation. Group participants will have a common demographic or interest e.g. teenagers, parents of young children.

Satisfaction surveys

Good for gathering feedback at the end of an event, but keep it brief. Use self-complete survey forms with tick boxes or smiley faces to record people's satisfaction and ask straightforward questions, such as:

- What did you enjoy?
- What did you learn?
- What can we do to improve the experience?

Show of hands

Useful to generate quick feedback from children.

Tweeting

Ask questions and record responses via Twitter.

Fund Finder

It's likely that you'll need financial help with delivering your interpretation, either to pay for skills you don't have in-house or for materials.

There are thousands of grant-giving organisations and trusts, some operating nationally, and others very locally. The links below will help your search.

Can partners help?

Start by contacting potential partner organisations to see if they can help. They may have an image library, graphic design service, experienced volunteers or access to materials they are willing to share. They may publish events programmes and be willing to co-promote your events.

Local business sponsorship

For small funding packages, or help in kind, try local businesses. Stress the environmental, educational, health and community benefits of your project. Some large firms have employee volunteer schemes and are looking for interesting projects to support. Some supermarket chains also support community projects.

Grants, trusts and foundations

The Heritage Funding Directory provides a helpful source of potential grants, trust and foundation funding for heritage projects, and can be searched via:

theheritagealliance.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/search.php

Help is at hand!

Section 7

Finding suppliers and other useful information

The following organisations are a good starting point when searching for suppliers, publications, case studies, advice, training and inspiration:

The Association for Heritage Interpretation

www.ahi.org.uk 

Museums Association

museumsassociation.org 

Group for Education in Museums

gem.org.uk 

Heritage Lottery Fund

hlf.org.uk 

Interpret Scotland

www.interpretscotland.org.uk 

Ancient Woodland Restoration Interpretation Toolkit

Developed for The Woodland Trust by:

Content: Allan Randall and Carol Parr, Interpretation Consultants

Design and illustration: Maltings Partnership



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