

# Burton Community Council ~ 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025 ~ Item 11: Options for Barnlake Wood ...

Report from Cllrs Laurence Price and Scott Sinclair

Following discussions at BCC there has been - a consultation process using flyer [attached]; some initial clearing of footpath and seating area by a group of volunteers; advice from Aethne Cooke [PCC Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership Project]; and a meeting with local Scout group.

## Key matters for this meeting:

1. Consultation leads us to conclude that **there is positive support**, with some provisos, for improving the maintenance of Barnlake Wood. [Note 1]  
There is potential to set up support group .....
  - ◊ *Do we go ahead? - 9 people have expressed interest in joining 'Group'*
  - ◊ *7 people [3 not in 9] came to do initial clearing work, pre-nesting restrictions*
2. The footpath is a registered '**right of way**'. It should be maintained whatever the plan.
3. Advice [Note 2] about appropriate **woodland management** confirmed that:
  - ◊ the main woodland [A] should be "left to do its own thing" - without access;
  - ◊ the path, and the area either side, should have regular maintenance;
  - ◊ the seating area should be cleared and maintained. This needs a Risk Assessment if to be used by the public or groups such as the Scouts.
4. Barnlake Wood **is a Community Asset** - the question is: would it be better if it was managed by the Community Council? And if so what are the implications?
  - ◊ *Should we start the process of Asset Transfer?*
  - ◊ *If so: - what terms - and what support should we aim for?*
5. There is a need to **review boundaries** - a) for long-term clarity maintaining access, b) to make sure the building site fencing is in an appropriate place [Note 3].  
Propose we ask PCC to do this.
6. There is a need for a **new bench**. [Currently a 'risk'.] Propose explore options for how this could be funded. [Note- it should be further back from the water's edge.] Also **need for a bin** - we should ask PCC to consider this.
7. There is potential for contribution to **BCC Biodiversity Plan**. Propose this reviewed including small but interesting Salt Mash and Estuarine Rock habitat by the shore.
8. The **Scouts** offered help with clearing. Also a useful discussion about potential for Scout activities. This may be a matter for discussion at a later date. [Note 4]
9. The 'right of way' route has a **significant history**. Make something of that? [Note 5]

## Barnlake Wood

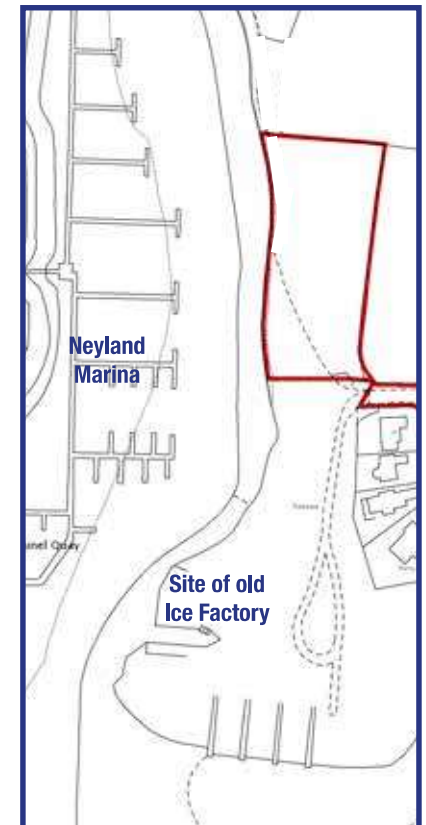
Map from land registry

Pembrokeshire County Council took over the freehold from Barnlake Engineering in 1985.

A Prince's Trust project used stone and foundation stone from demolished Ice Factory to create an ark shaped seating area. See ●

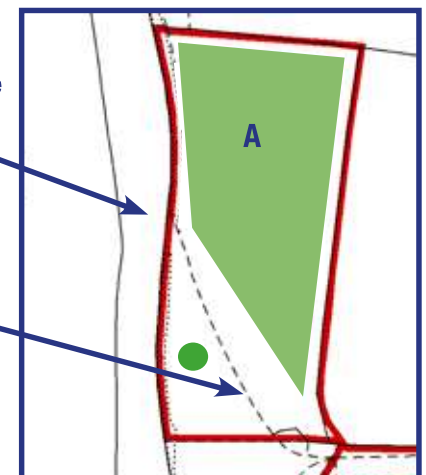
## Useful to see as three zones:

- A. in green - wild woodland
- B. footpath zone - road to bench
- C. area south of footpath including seating arc and picnic bench



Bench at water edge

Footpath  
Right of Way



## Note 1: Consultation Feedback

Responses via online form, email and conversations.  
**Overall there is positive support, with some provisos.**

One email rejected the idea .....

*"My partner and I are not in favour of developing this area. We feel it would be a complete waste of councils limited money. I do not know anyone in this area who would make use of it. I would sooner see the money spent on speed bumps on the lane under the bridge to avoid a car accident."*

A point of view from Burton, clearly the wood will be more of an asset to those local to it. We propose that the issue of the road under the bridge should be reviewed.

Most supported the idea .....

*"There is certainly potential to improve the facility for the local residents and the wider community."*

*"I would like to see the area cleared."*

*"It sure needs to be cleaned up"*

*"It's an utter disgrace"*

*"Improve access"*

There is concern about sustaining the improvement.

*"..... there is an opportunity to improve the facility"*

*".... what plans would be in place to ensure that it remains cared for into the future?"*

*"Footpath number PP7/2 shown on PCC map 92 has not been maintained for several years."*

*"A defined footpath should be maintained by PCC"*

*"It would be good if the Community Council could take this area over and keep it manageable."*

*"BCC to fund and maintain the area for all ages and abilities"*

Interesting to note a perception of BCC priorities:

*"Be good to develop this area as enough has been done and spent in Houghton."*

Other suggestions included:

*"The residents privacy should also be respected, so there should be no extra car parking."*

*"The rough woodland should be attended to by someone trained in woodland management, with new mixed native replanting and clearance of invasive species."*

One Barnlake resident supported the idea but pointed out several concerns to be considered:

- *Incidents from past: shooting an air rifle; someone taking inappropriate photographs of individuals on the other side of the water.*
- *Condoms and syringes found on the site*
- *Couples have used it as a meeting point for inappropriate behaviour, of all ages*
- *Dog fouling from individuals who do not live locally and fail to take their mess away*
- *Cars parking to eat their McDonalds and then abandoning the rubbish.*
- *We would also like to see a 'camera' similar to those placed 'under' the bridge to deter unsocial behaviour.*

There was some enthusiasm for initial clearing work ....





## Note 2: Woodland Management

Site visit by Aethne Cooke

PCC Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership Project

- ❑ Leave the main woodland area as it is and without public access.
- ❑ Manage and maintain path to shore and the seating area.
- ❑ To keep right of way open it would be worth doing some more clearing, and as part of that reviewing Risks - including where we have left cuttings.
- ❑ Make a clearer path to the 'Ice Factory' seating area. If encouraging the public to leave the public right of way need to consider safety of path.
- ❑ Keep PCC Countryside Access [Sean Tilling] informed of work done / plans.
- ❑ Make cuttings into smaller pieces and form 'habitat piles'.
- ❑ Leave some areas with brambles - but remove from main paths.
- ❑ Manage the Buddleias - they have, in places, grown very large. Maybe remove some.
- ❑ Maybe scope for just a couple of trees - native Oak - in the area near the path.
- ❑ Grants - Not sure what there will be in the future. But note that will not be for maintenance work. Review possible sources once we have a plan.
- ❑ Interesting feature of Salt Mash and Estuarine Rock habitat by the shore. [Potential to point out]

There was also discussion about the advantage of a major clear, using a contractor to establish things.

Aethne to provide oak post **"Not neat for nature"**

In future there may be opportunity for complete survey of site trees. In any case we should do a check for any issues with Ash trees.

## Note 3: Review boundaries

Propose that PCC review boundary and negotiate with whoever developing site. Also that fence needs repair

Note that building site has not been developed in last 7 years. Should this be an issue of concern to BCC?

On resident pointed out .....

*"The 'temporary' fencing at the entrance to Phase 2, Barnlake Point seems to be in the wrong place. I think the vehicle entrance to Phase 2 should be narrower and the footpath entrance to the woodland should be wider."*



## Note 4: Scouts' consultation

A group of 6 Scout leaders visited the site. There is a possibility that some Scouts could be involved in the clearing work. Main discussion was about potential of site for Scout Activities. Clearly Risk Assessment would be their responsibility but may result in the need for additional measures. This does not influence today's debate - and in any case is vague at this stage.

## Note 5: Significant History

**The 'right of way' route has a significant history. Is there is potential to make something of that?**

Workers living in the Burton area could use this footpath and a small ferry to cross to Neyland. This route was also used to reach Pembroke Dock via the ferry to Hobbs Point. When the weather was stormy this avoided the use of small boats directly across the estuary from Burton Ferry.

The Great Western Railway cut this footpath. This became to focus for a "very remarkable Right of Way case."

The matter went before the Courts on four occasions. .

- Queen's Bench, London 19th June 1888;
- Haverfordwest Assizes 8th/9th July 1889;
- Court of Appeal, London Nov/December 1889;
- House of Lords 27th February 1894.

Each time Great Western Railway Company had judgement against them. The case brought by the National Footpath Preservation Society eventually forced GWR to build to build a footbridge over the railway - re-establishing the right of way.



The footbridge - with Ice Factory in back ground.



# CONSULTATION FLYER

## Burton Community Council is seeking views to help us review the future options for Barnlake Wood ...



The footpath is overgrown <sup>[1]</sup> and in places impassible. We have asked Pembrokeshire County Council [who took over the Freehold from Barnlake Engineering in 1985] to clear the right of way. The fence <sup>[2]</sup> also needs maintaining. It is often tranquil at the waters edge <sup>[3]</sup> but the bench <sup>[4]</sup> is very rotten..

We suggest that the area is a potential Community Asset - *how do you see it?*



Consultation ends ...  
St David's Day Sat 1<sup>st</sup> March

### Options ....

We seek views to help BCC consider the options. Some starter questions:

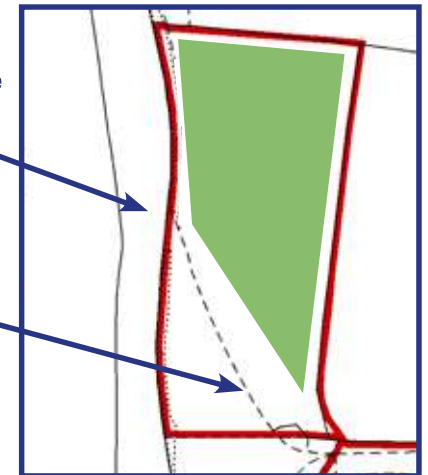
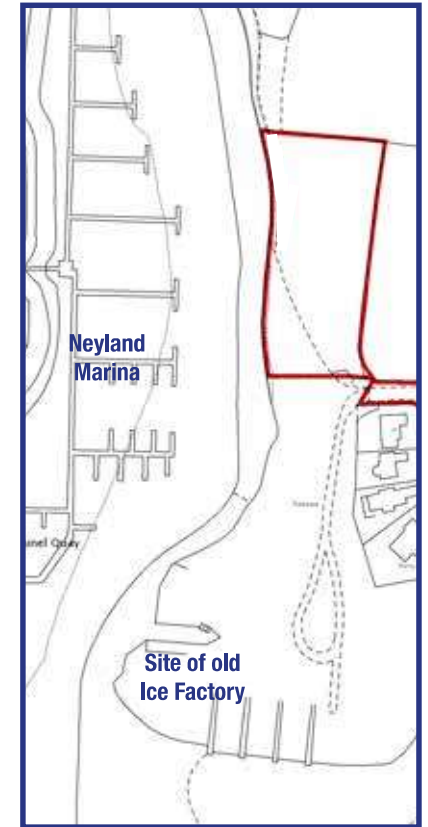
- Do we leave as it is?
- See if we can get Pembrokeshire CC to regularly maintain the right of way?
- Do we seek funding to replace bench?
- Do we develop plan including funding for BCC to take responsibility - as a 'Community Asset'?
- Do we develop plan for seating arc [with ice factory stone] and picnic bench area?
- What plan, if any, plan is needed for woodland [Zone A] management?
- Do we set up a local support group?



Form to share your views and advice:  
<https://forms.gle/5yS4tS5qTifFpQDU7>

Or visit - 'Burton Community' Facebook for direct link

Or email  
[burtoncommunitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:burtoncommunitycouncil@gmail.com)



Useful to see as three zones:

- A. in green - wild woodland
- B. footpath zone - road to bench
- C. area south of footpath including seating arc and picnic bench

Laurence Price & Scott Sinclair  
January 2025 BCC