

## 6.8 Parkland and veteran trees

### **Main Objectives & Key Actions:**

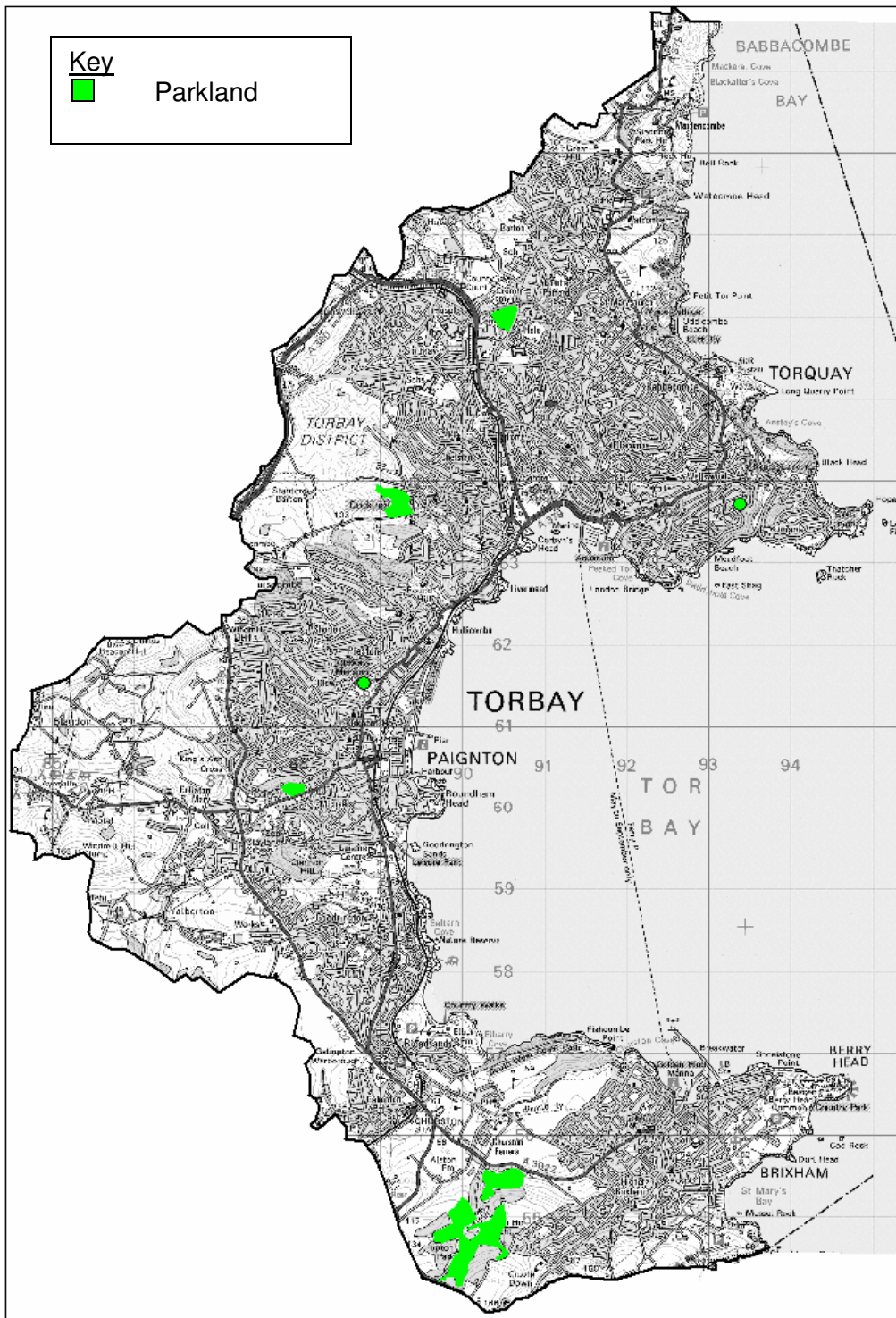
- 1) Conserve and enhance the current extent, distribution and quality of parkland and veteran trees in Torbay.**
  - If appropriate increase designation of suitable sites by 2008.
  - Establish Environmental Stewardship agreements in areas of Parkland/Veteran Trees by 2012.
- 2) Extend and improve knowledge of the parkland and veteran tree resource and research into best management options.**
  - Complete inventory of Torbay's veteran trees by 2012.
  - Establish the current resource of parkland in Torbay by 2009.
- 3) Ensure that the management of surviving sites acknowledges and incorporates the biological value of parkland as well as historical, cultural and agricultural aspects by 2012.**
- 4) Restore, where appropriate, the quality of parkland by ensuring long term recruitment and by linking and buffering within existing sites.**
  - Seek to restore 50% by 2012.
- 5) Continue to encourage appreciation and interpretation of Torbay's parkland and veteran trees.**
  - Encourage local community to be involved in the Veteran Tree Hunt – ongoing.

### **6.8.1 Background & Current Status**

The South West Biodiversity Action Plan broadly defines parkland as 'Sites with old trees, sometimes mixed with younger trees of various ages but often associated with open habitats including grassland'. A veteran tree is usually old, having survived longer than other trees of the same species.

Parkland and veteran trees are not only valuable resources of biodiversity, but are also of great historical significance, and this double interest affords these environments a special place in Devon's natural and cultural heritage (Devon BAP). Nationally it is estimated that between 10 – 20,000 ha of working lowland pastures and parks remain and Devon is estimated to currently hold 1753 ha of this habitat (The Biodiversity of the South West).

The two main areas of parkland in Torbay are Cockington Country Park, Torquay and Lupton Park, Brixham. Cockington Country Park totals c 186 ha of parkland, woodland and farmland and has CWS and LWS status. Lupton Park is a LWS and has 108 ha of parkland and woodland and is currently managed privately as permanent pasture. There are also small areas of parkland (c 1.3 ha) at Primley Park, Paignton, Brunel Woods, Rainbow Estate, Torquay Cemetery (Barton Road), Oldway Gardens and Castle Tor. Figure 7 shows the current areas identified as having parkland in Torbay.



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**Figure 7:** Map showing areas of Parkland in Torbay, identified using aerial photography.

Cockington Country Park is managed by Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and was established in 1991 to regenerate an area of neglected and under-used urban fringe countryside. The exact figure for number of hectares as parkland is currently not known, as current figures combine woodland and farmland habitats. Lupton Park is known for its rare lichens including *Cryptolechia carneolutea* and *Lobaria pulmonaria*.

**Candidate Species to be highlighted:**

*Lobaria pulmonaria* – lichen.

*Wadeana dendrographa* – lichen.

*Melaspilea lentiginosa* – lichen.

*Physcia tribacioides* – lichen.

*Parmelina quercina* – lichen (parkland species)

Greater horseshoe bat

Lesser horseshoe bat

Noctule bat

**6.8.2 The current problems/threats to this habitat:**

- Removal of old trees and dead wood and cessation of old management practices e.g. pollarding.
- Recreational pressures – too tidy and too safe.
- Uniform age structure and fragmentation of sites.
- High stocking rates – compaction, trampling, bark stripping and nutrient enrichment around trees.
- High grazing levels – species poor grassland
- Grassland management – intensive in areas that have the potential for habitat enhancement.
- Inappropriate use of herbicides and fertiliser.
- Machinery – trees damaged by collisions and bad tree surgery.
- Lack of knowledge
- Loss of hedgerows

**Table 11: Parkland & Veteran Tree Action Plan.** Actions shaded in grey indicate further funding is required.

**High priority actions** are proposed for completion within the next 3 years (to end of 2009).

**Medium priority actions** are proposed for completion within the next 6 years (to end of 2012).

**Low priority actions** are proposed for completion within the next 10 years (to end 2016).

| <b>Actions for Parkland &amp; Veteran Trees Priority Action Plan</b>  | <b>Priority (High, Medium and Low)</b> | <b>Objective</b> | <b>Partners</b>                   | <b>Ongoing Action</b> |
|---|--|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Policy &amp; Legislation</b>   |  |                  |                                   |                       |
| <b>P1</b> - Ensure TC follow PPS9 recommendations for 'veteran' trees.  | <b>H</b>                               | <b>1</b>         | <b>TC, NE</b>                     | ✓                     |
| <b>P2</b> - Ensure that development schemes do not affect the integrity or conservation of this resource and are considered in planning applications. | <b>H</b>                               | <b>1</b>         | <b>TC, NE</b>                     | ✓                     |
| <b>P3</b> - Encourage development of strategies to promote positive management of parkland.   | <b>M</b>                               | <b>1,3</b>       | <b>TC, NE, TCCT</b>               | ✓                     |
| <b>Site Management</b>  |  |                  |                                   |                       |
| <b>P4</b> - Ensure management plans include sympathetic management actions for parkland ecology and veteran trees.                                    | <b>H</b>                               | <b>1,2, 3</b>    | <b>NE, TCCT, TC, WWCT, PZ</b>     | ✓                     |
| <b>P5</b> - Encourage ES of land surrounding parkland as a buffer zone.   | <b>M</b>                               | <b>1,2</b>       | <b>TCCT, NE, TC</b>               | ✓                     |
| <b>P6</b> - Reduce generation gaps by planting native species.  | <b>M</b>                               | <b>1,4</b>       | <b>TCCT, TC</b>                   |                       |
| <b>P7</b> - Identify the next generation of veteran trees in the Bay and seek protection.   | <b>M</b>                               | <b>2,5</b>       | <b>TCCT, TC</b>                   |                       |
| <b>P8</b> - Restore degraded areas of parkland.   | <b>M</b>                               | <b>1,4</b>       | <b>TCCT, TC, Landowners, WWCT</b> |                       |
| <b>P9</b> - Look to parkland sites to CWS status if appropriate.  | <b>H</b>                               | <b>1</b>         | <b>TC, DBRC</b>                   |                       |
| <b>P10</b> - Encourage farmers and land managers to look into ES schemes to help protect veteran trees and parkland.                                  | <b>M</b>                               | <b>1,5</b>       | <b>TCCT, DEFRA</b>                |                       |

| <b>Communication &amp; Publicity</b>   |          |              |   |   |
|--|----------|--------------|---|---|
| <b>P11</b> - Promote the trees at Cockington – produce a tree trail and leaflet.   | <b>L</b> | <b>5</b>     | <b>TCCT</b>   |   |
| <b>P12</b> - Promote Torbay’s veteran trees through walks, talks newspaper etc   | <b>M</b> | <b>5</b>     | <b>TCCT, WWCT</b>   | ✓ |
| <b>Advisory</b>  |          |              |   |   |
| <b>P13</b> - Advise developers, landmanagers, farmers and tree workers on best management practice for veteran trees and parkland. Refer to documents produced by Woodland Trust and English Nature. | <b>H</b> | <b>1,2,5</b> | <b>TC</b>   | ✓ |
| <b>Research &amp; Monitoring</b>   |          |              |   |   |
| <b>P14</b> - Work with volunteers and local community to undertake surveys of veteran trees.   | <b>M</b> | <b>5</b>     | <b>TCCT, WWCT, PZ</b>                                     |   |
| <b>P15</b> - Produce a veteran tree database, map and submit to the Woodland Trust ‘Ancient Tree Hunt’.  | <b>M</b> | <b>5</b>     | <b>TCCT</b>   |   |
| <b>P16</b> - Work with relevant groups to establish and carry out parkland species surveys e.g. invertebrates and lichens.   | <b>M</b> | <b>5</b>     | <b>Peninsular Invertebrate Forum, BLS, TCCT, WWCT, PZ</b> |   |

Abbreviations: Torbay Coast & Countryside (TCCT), Torbay Council (TC), Natural England (NE), Devon Biodiversity Records Centre (DBRC), British Lichen Society (BLS), Paignton Zoo, Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust.