Full Council meeting 2 September 2025
Agenda item 8 – A new Becky Addy Wood Woodland Management Plan
Written by – Green Spaces Officer

Background

Bradford on Avon Town Council purchased Becky Addy Wood in May 2020 during the first COVID lockdown. This followed fundraising and a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Town Council with the Friends of Becky Addy Wood (FROBAW).

Over the next eighteen months, ecological surveys were commissioned, a bat project commenced, funding was obtained from the Cotswold AONB, and surveys of trees in Becky Addy Wood were undertaken, as well as the preparation of a woodland management plan, with the involvement of and consultation with FROBAW. On 16 November 2021, the first Management Plan for Becky Addy Wood was adopted by the Town Council, addressing the notable effect of Ash Dieback in the woodland, safety, biodiversity and access by the public to the woodland.

Sadly, a dispute ensued, continuing until the Chair and Treasurer of FROBAW brought a High Court injunction against the Town Council in February 2023 stopping work at the woodland.

In February 2023 the Town Council offered a resolution, whereby an independent ecologist and an independent arborist would write a new management plan, to which both parties would commit to agreeing, and the injunction would end. This was formalised in a High Court Order in May 2023. Sadly, the claimants did not agree to appoint the experts, so the injunction stood and the case continued to trial.

The case and the injunction continued to a full trial at the High Court in May 2024. The judgement was issued in September 2024 where the claim against the Town Council was dismissed. At a further High Court hearing in January 2025 the injunction was lifted.

Liaison Committee

The Town Council set up the Liaison Committee, with FROBAW and the first meeting was held on 14 February 2025. At this meeting, the Town Council set out its plan to appoint an independent ecologist and an independent arborist to create a new Woodland Management Plan (WMP). This was agreed at the first Liaison Committee Meeting.

The Town Council appointed a consultant ecologist, Johns Associates, and a consultant arborist, Duramen Consulting Ltd, to jointly produce a new woodland management plan for Becky Addy Woods.

At the second meeting of the BAW Liaison Committee on 25 July 2025, the draft plan was discussed, with FROBAW's representatives stating that "a really good job had been made with the Draft (WMP)" … that "it was excellent". It was unanimously agreed that:

> "This Becky Addy Wood Liaison Committee (of the Town Council and FROBAW) recommends that this Becky Addy Wood Woodland Management Plan is adopted at either the next Environmental and Green Spaces Committee meeting of the Town Council or the next Full Council meeting.

A new Woodland Management Plan for Becky Addy Wood

Please refer to:

- a cover letter by the independent ecologist and independent arborist
- the draft plan

Recommendation:

That Bradford on Avon Town Council adopts this draft as the new Woodland Management Plan for Becky Addy Wood.