

A Brief History



West Tanpit Wood is probably named so because Markham Brook was once used for leather tanning. The 1837 Tithe Map shows a tan yard located opposite Mulberry Farm. A tannery is believed to have existed here since Medieval times when it may have belonged to St Augustine's Monastery which also created the fish ponds at nearby Abbots Pool. The area was historically managed as oak woodland with hazel coppice. Oak was used to line tan pits where the animal skins were submerged in tanning liquor created by tannins leached from the bark into water supplied by the brook. This treatment, which could last for up to a year, would make the hides soft and durable so they could be turned into leather goods. The small building next to the footbridge is an old pump house which provided power to transport water from the brook, via a set of lead pipes, to local buildings and troughs on the Failand Estate. The pump was in operation as recently as the 1950s.



How to find West Tanpit Wood

West Tanpit Wood is in North Somerset, 4 miles west of Bristol. Turn down the clearly named 'Sandy Lane' from the sharp bend in the A369 at Abbots Leigh and follow this narrow road for one mile to reach a small car parking area at the woodland entrance.

Managing the Woods

West Tanpit Wood is owned and managed by the **Forestry Commission & The National Trust**. For general enquiries or to report any concerns about the woodland please contact **0117 973 1645** or **01594 833 057**.



The **Forest of Avon** would like to thank the North Somerset Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund and the Backwell Environment Trust for their support in creating this leaflet.



WEST TANPIT WOOD

WOODLANDS FOR ALL

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Printed on recycled paper, Design & Print S. Glos 3278

West Tanpit Wood



West Tanpit Wood is a small, quiet woodland in the Forest of Avon located on the banks of picturesque Markham Brook. The circular route shown provides a short walk around the wood – about 1km long. The main track leading from the small car parking area to the south bridge is wide but mostly unsurfaced. The path on the west side of the stream between the two bridges is narrower and uneven in places but easy to follow. A new woodchip path has been created through the trees between the main track and the north bridge.

The Natural Environment

West Tanpit Wood is divided into two halves ecologically. East of the brook the trees are mostly tall Larch conifers grown for timber. Historic oak with coppiced Hazel is predominant on the west side of the valley. A carpet of woodland flowers creates lots of colour to this part of the wood in Spring when bluebells, wild garlic, celandines and greater stitchwort can all be seen. The wood is home to many birds including the buzzard which is regularly heard and seen flying above the tree tops.

