

<b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council</b>	
<b><u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.64</u></b>	<b>SINC name: Penallta Meadows, west of Hengoed</b>
<b>Grid reference: ST146953</b>	<b>Area (hectares): 4</b>
<b>Survey date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2007</b>	<b>Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)</b>
<b>(UDP policy reference: C11.53)</b>	
<b>Summary description</b>	
West-facing valley-side supporting Bracken with patches of semi-improved neutral grassland and scattered Hawthorn and Gorse scrub. The grassland is ungrazed and becoming encroached upon by Bracken, but it supports a good number of grassland indicator species including Yellow rattle, Common spotted-orchid and Great burnet. Anthills are present. Locally, the Bracken includes a ground flora of Bluebell, with some Violets.	
<b>Qualifying features</b>	
Semi-improved neutral grassland containing at least 8 indicator species.	
<b>Secondary features</b>	
Bracken covered slope with abundant Bluebells.	
Scrub.	
<b>Potential value/ unconfirmed features</b>	
The site could potentially support a large population of reptiles, potentially including Common lizard, Slow worm and Adder.	
The combination of Bracken with Violets in its ground flora means that there is potential for Violet-feeding fritillary butterflies. However, fires probably limit this and the extent of the Violets requires further survey.	
<b>Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)</b>	
The site is ungrazed and does not appear to have been actively managed for several years. Bracken has covered the majority of the slope and only a few small patches remain as grassland. Bracken control and/or the re-introduction of grazing would be appropriate management to enhance the site for biodiversity. Garden and domestic refuse has been tipped near the top of the slope and there is evidence of fires in several of the Bracken-covered areas.	
<b>Access/ community use</b>	
The SINC lies within open access land and is crossed by several public footpaths. However, the very dense Bracken makes it difficult to use some of the paths.	
<b>Additional information</b>	
Most of the adjoining slopes are Bracken-covered slopes, but there are a few small patches of grassland further north that may also have value for nature conservation. The tree-lined stream at the foot of the slope is also likely to be of value for wildlife, possibly functioning as a movement corridor for Bats and Otters. These areas should be considered at future SINC review.	

**Species list (Dominant species, SINC Criteria, RDB or other notable indicator species)**

(LBAP species shown in **bold**, species confirmed by 2007 survey in *italics*)

Grassland and Bracken species (all grading into one another): *Lotus corniculatus*, *Galium saxatile*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Lathyrus pratensis*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Trifolium pratense*, **Hyacinthoides non-scripta**, *Conopodium majus*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*, *Vicia cracca*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Hieracium* sp., *Hypericum perforatum*, **Dactylorhiza fuchsii**, *Pilosella officinalis*, *Hypericum pulchrum*, *Viola riviniana*, **Rhinanthus minor**, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Ulex gallii*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Festuca rubra*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Dactylis glomerata*, *Luzula campestris*, *Carex* sp., *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Scleropodium purum*.

Fauna observations: **Slow Worm**, **Bullfinch**, **Song Thrush**, *Blackbird*, *Goldfinch*, *Whitethroat*, *Willow Warbler*, *Chaffinch*, *Large White Butterfly*, *Meadow Brown Butterfly*, *Small Skipper Butterfly*.

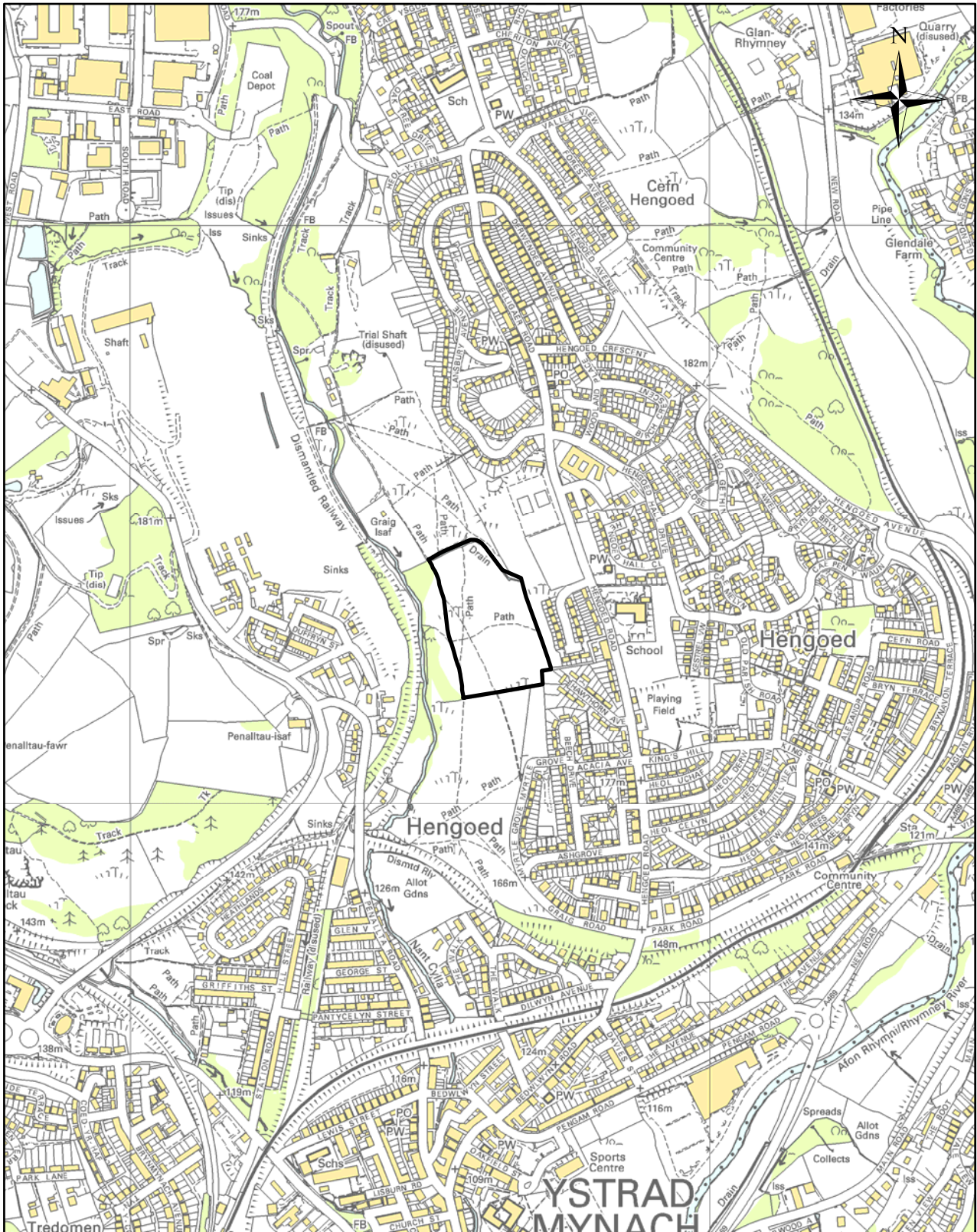
Additional records from desk study: *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Succisa pratensis*, *Lotus pedunculatus*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Euphrasia nemorosa*, *Potentilla anglica*, *Lathyrus linifolius*, *Festuca ovina*.

**Bat** records from nearby urban areas.

**Eel**, **Bullhead** and **Stone Loach** records from nearby watercourses.

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Penallta Meadows, West of Hengoed 4 Ha

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