

## Two publicly-owned woods rescued from neglect in Beaminster, Dorset, England, UK

Michael Dower

- **Scale of activity:** local
- **Actor/s:** private
- **State of the activity:** started in 2012, ongoing
- **Keywords.** woodland management, voluntary work, production of firewood, added value, services for the public



### Summary

This describes a private, voluntary initiative aiming at making use of local resources (firewood) and providing further multiple benefits to society and wildlife through management of woodlands.

### Description of activities

**Setting.** Beaminster is a small city in the Civil Parish of West Dorset in the South West of England. The objects of management are 2 woodlands owned by the local school, planted in 1995 (located in a designed conservation area) respectively 2005.

**Personal motivation.** In order not to buy firewood I wanted to cut my own firewood. Opposite my house was a small woodland owned by The Beaminster School Wood is located opposite to my house and so making use of it seemed likely.

**Aims of the management.** shelter and screening as primary purposes. firewood and long-term timber as strong secondary purposes.

**Woodland management activities.** Coppicing, thinning

**Management plan.** had to be set up for the woodland located in the conservation area

### Outlook

**Challenges.** How to keep **continuity** in a setting that is based only on voluntary work and how to find a balance between benefits and draw backs of **public access** (vandalism, protection of firewood).

And getting a clear picture about the balance of benefits and to **adapt the management to produce those benefits**

**Next steps.** We aim to gradually enrich the woodland habitat, by introduction of further tree species.

We will create a team of volunteers for long-term maintenance of the wood, and hope to offer woodmanship training in the School curriculum

We will try to reduce vandalism.

### Source and contact

**Information gathered at:** the 1st workshop on Sustainable Forest Management (17-20 March 2016)

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