

# *Stoughton Down*

## *West Sussex*

*A survey of the yews*

Peter Norton    November 2013



# Introduction

The Forestry Commission's Stoughton Downs woodland, near Chichester, West Sussex lies within the South Downs National Park and covers an area of 191 hectares. This downland is comprised of thin calcareous soils overlying chalk, embedded with flint. In many areas the soil and chalk have washed away leaving some exposed flint.

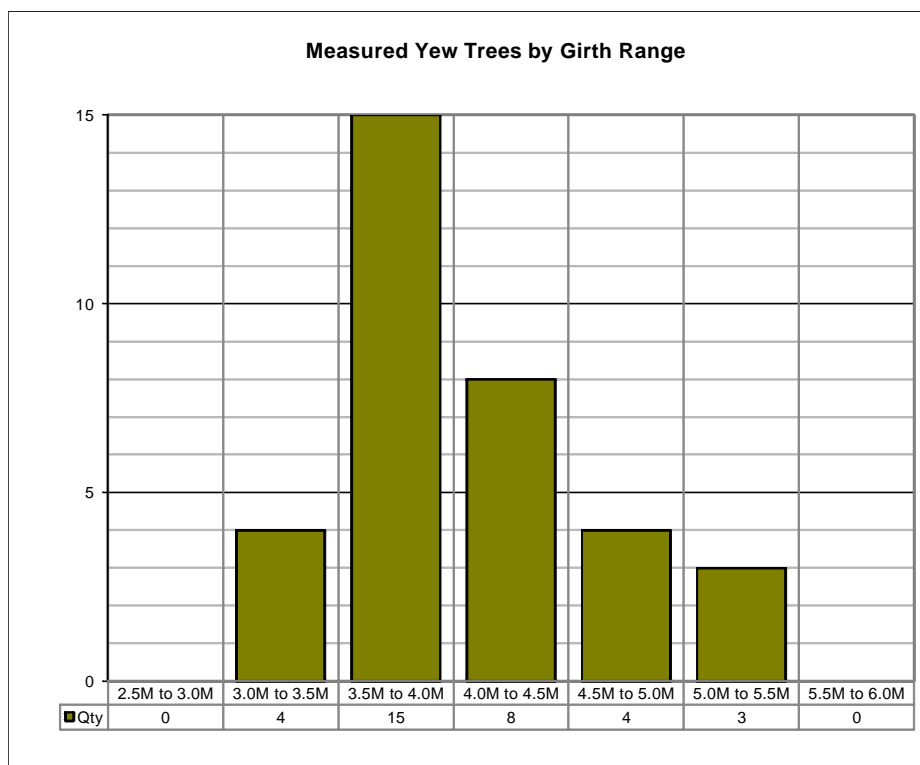
It was predominantly a beech plantation dating from the early 1950's along with some significant stands of yew woodland. Stoughton also contains areas of Corsican pine and Douglas fir.

There are six Scheduled Monuments in Stoughton Forest and the areas of yew have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Stoughton abuts Kingley Vale National Nature Reserve (NNR), also an SSSI.

The yews grow mainly on the northwest facing slopes of Lambdown Hill, with the larger girthed trees towards the lower reaches and the younger yew spreading up the steep hillsides.

The girth of the largest yews suggests that many of the oldest trees predate the time when this land would have been used as sheep walks, but the younger yew woodland would have colonised the slopes following the decline of extensive downland sheep-farming from around 1880.

Thirty four yews were measured and photographed of which twenty four are featured below. Recording was carried out starting at the southwest forestry car park and walking northeast through the yew and then back along the footpath that links Chilgrove with Stoughton. A complete count of yew numbers (100's) was not attempted, however this survey is thought to represent a complete census of all yews around 3.5m girth and greater. A complete list of the thirty four yews can be found in Appendix 1.



All measurements are taken from the root crown - top of the slope unless otherwise stated.

SU8149212479 Female 15' 2"  
This could be two trees that have merged



SU8151012459 Female 13' 5"



SU8158012570 Male 12' 8"



SU8158912572 Female 13'



SU8160812616 Male 12' 4" Root crown



SU8160212615 Male 13' 5" Root crown





SU8214313151

Female 17' 7" Three main leaders from a 5' break of crown



SU8217213143

Female 12' 2"



SU8218113141

Male 11' 7"



SU8221413182

Male 16' 3"





SU8223012619 Male 14' 2"



SU8224613190 Female 15' 1"



SU8226613196 Female 12' 10" on the left



Female 12' on the right





SU8228513208

Female 16' 6"



SU8229513213

Male 14' 1"



SU8233013151

Female 12' 7"



SU8235213202

Male 13' 2"



SU8236513238

Male 13' 5" at 1'



SU8237613195

Female 13'





SU8240013162 Female 15' at the ground



SU8248812747 Male 14' 1"



SU8255312640 Male 16' 5"  
A large male yew that has suffered with the loss of a major stem



Between SU826135 and SU828138, a distance of around 320 metres, there are about 100 young yews lining the footpath.

## Appendix 1

No	Grid Loc (SU)	Sex	Girth			Height measured	Comments
			Ft	Ins	Mtrs		
35	8149212479	Female	15	2	4.6228	Root crown	Possible that this is two trees
36	8151012459	Female	13	5	4.0894	Root crown	
14	8158212576	Female	11	8	3.556	Root crown	
15	8158012570	Male	12	8	3.861	Root crown	
16	8158912572	Female	13		3.962	Root crown	
1	8160812616	Male	12	4	3.759	Root crown	
2	8160212615	Male	13	5	4.089	Root crown	
4	8166912617	Female	11	6	3.505	Root crown	
5	8167112625				0.000		6 stems emerging from a common base
17	8174212641	Male	11		3.353	1'	
18	8205412729	Male	10	10	3.302	Root crown	
6	8214313151	Female	17	7	5.359	Root crown	3 main leaders from a 5ft break of crown
19	8216012771	Female	11	6	3.505	2'	In very poor condition - outer shell is rotting
7	8217213143	Female	12	2	3.708	Root crown	
8	8218113141	Male	11	7	3.531	Root crown	
32	8221413182	Male	16	3	4.953	6"	
20	8223012619	Male	14	2	4.318	Root crown	
29	8224613190	Female	15	1	4.597	Root crown	
30	8226613196	Female	12	10	3.912	Root crown	Two yew close together
31	8226613196	Female	12		3.658	Root crown	
28	8228513208	Female	16	6	5.029	Ground	
27	8229513213	Male	14	1	4.293	Root crown	
21	8233512677	Male	11	9	3.581	Root crown	
10	8233813149	Female	13	11	4.242	Root crown	Twin trunk
9	8233013151	Female	12	7	3.835	Root crown	3ft break of crown
13	8235213202	Male	13	2	4.013	Root crown	
26	8236513238	Male	13	5	4.089	1'	
22	8237712738	Female	12	1	3.683	Root crown	
12	8237613195	Female	13		3.962	Root crown	
11	8240013162	Female	15		4.572	Ground	Low break of crown
33	8241213330	Male	10	10	3.302	Root crown	
34	8247513430	Female	12	2	3.7084	Root crown	
23	8248812747	Male	14	1	4.293	1'	
25	8255312640	Male	16	5	5.004	Root crown	Loss of a major branch/limb
	826135- 828138						Between these two grid references there are about 100 young yew lining the path
24	8284712709	Female	10	9	3.277	Root crown	