

West Sussex Yews - West Harting Down

West Harting Down is situated in the county of Sussex on the border of Hampshire, just to the north of Horndean and forms the north western edge of the West Sussex Landscape; Western Downs.

This area of mature woodland lies on Upper Chalk of the South Downs and is chiefly composed of mature yew, developing yew scrub and small areas of chalk grassland.

Extract from the South Downs Forest Design Statement:

English Nature recognises that the yew stands within West Harting Down are currently isolated and even-aged. The local English Nature team has recommended that these islands of yew be allowed to develop into a mature yew woodland habitat, where natural processes are allowed to take place. This could be brought about by felling the beech plantation found growing between and adjacent to the existing blocks of yew to create an open chalk habitat. With planned deer control, the yew would then have the opportunity to colonise these open areas. Once there is clear evidence of the expansion of the existing yew woodland, then the potential for felling a percentage of yew trees from within the SSSI may arise. This would provide high quality timber to support both large and small users of such high quality products. In the long term, it may be beneficial to include the area to the north of the SSSI in this management prescription.

A copy of the full statement can be read on the Hampshire local government website.

The yew grove is on the hanger in the dry valley at SU762180 and clearly existed before the conifer and beech was planted and intentionally not felled when the rest of the Down was planted in 1958.

The girth of the largest yews suggest that many of the oldest trees here are well over 500 years old, taking them back beyond the time when this land would have been used as sheep walks to the time when yew was a natural component of Ancient Semi-Arid Woodland (ASNW).

Twenty two yews are featured below. Recording was carried out starting at the north end of the Down and walking SW. A complete count of yew numbers was not attempted because in one small area alone over 70 individual yews were noted when completing a 360° visual sweep.

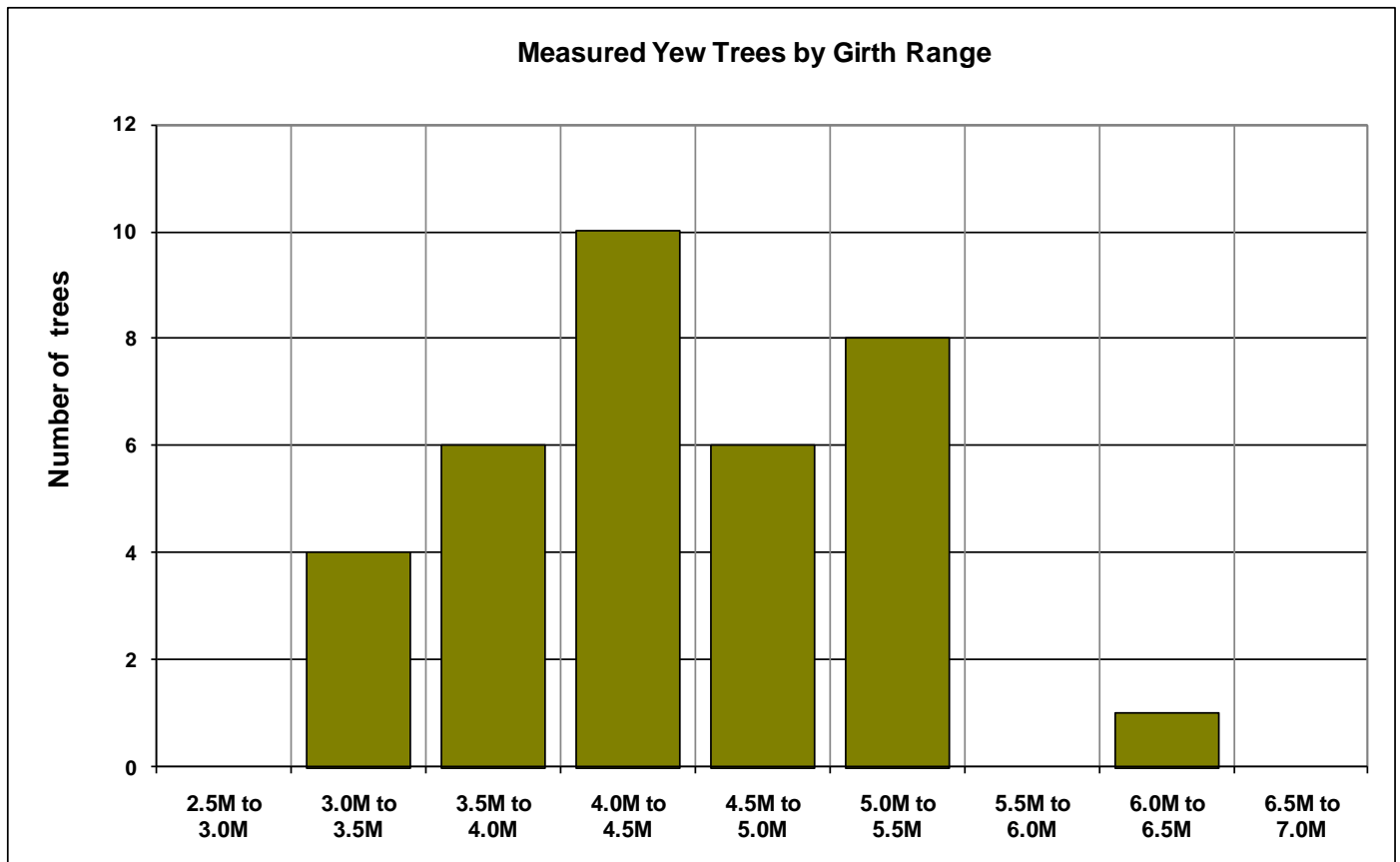





Table of recordings

The 35 observations contained in the table below are of the larger yews featured in this survey. Photographs of 22 of these, identifying their Grid Locations, make up the rest of this report.

Grid Loc (SU)	Sex	Girth			Height measured	Comments
		Ft	Ins	Mtrs		
76551835	Male	10	1	3.0734	Root crown	Slight growth
76481814	Male	11	5	3.4798	Root crown	
76531819		11	6	3.5052	2'	
76391810	Female	14	8	4.4704	Root crown	
76361816	Male	14	0	4.2672	Root crown	
76301808	Female	13	9	4.1910	Root crown	
76291806	Male	17	0	5.1816	Root crown	
76321806	Male	16	7	5.0546	Root crown	Near
76241808	Female	14	1	4.2926	Root crown	
76241806	Male	14	5	4.3942	Root crown	Yew to the rear of the above female
76221811	Male	16	8	5.0800	Root crown	
76231812	Female	15	2	4.6228	Root crown	Angled
76151802	Female	15	6	4.7244	Root Crown	Narrowest point on the 'Pinched' yew
76181795	Female	14		4.2672	Root crown	
75971769	Female	14	7	4.4450	Root crown	
76001759	Male	11	4	3.4544	Root crown	
75981759	Female	12	3	3.7338	Root crown	One large limb has extended 41', with three succesful rootings. Also noted several seedlings
76031765				0.0000		With a 360° view 70+ yew in one small grove
75991767	Female	12	9	3.8862	Root crown	Counted at least nine seedlings
75991769	Female	12	3	3.7338	Root crown	
76011770	Male	15	3	4.6482	1'	From the top of the slope,
76111769	Female	14	7	4.4450	Root crown	
76091777	Female	20	3	6.1722	Root crown	Height was recorded by Clinometer and 70' noted
76171778		14	1	4.2926	Root crown	
76181784	Female	16	11	5.1562	Root crown	
76231796	Female	17	10	5.4356	Root crown	At least eight limbs have been shed
76231797	Female	12	11	3.9370	Root crown	
76221797	Female	15	1	4.5974	1'	
76251802	Male	17	6	5.3340	Root crown	
76251801	Male	17	8	5.3848	Root crown	A succesful layering complete with a young tree and a further limb protruding which measured 4' 8"
76271802	Male	15	9	4.8006	1'	A succesful layering, but original limb has died back leaving the new tree having a girth of 5' 4"
76301806	Male	13		3.9624	Root crown	
76221802	Male	16	11	5.1562	Root crown	
76201802	Female	14	7	4.4450	Narrowest point	Another 'Pinched' yew
76191800	Male	14	10	4.5212	Root crown	Many succesful layerings with healthy young trees

Approximate position of the yew measured

Key:
Female 
Male 
Sex not recorded 

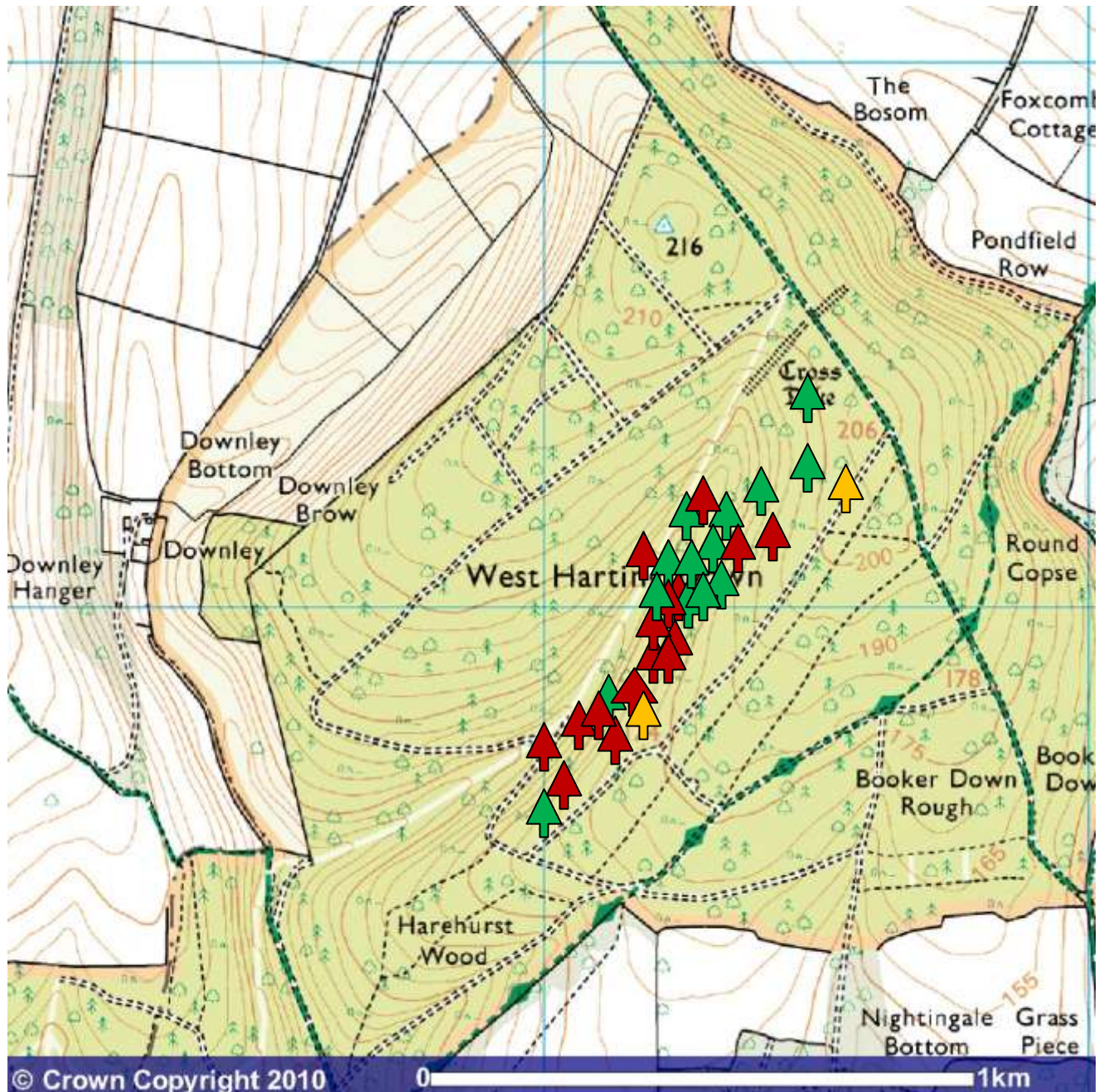


Image produced from Ordnance Survey's Get-a-map service.
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Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland.

Click on the embedded link – Street Map will open in a separate window and indicate the exact position. You may have to increase the zoom control on the R/H side of the map to level 3 or 4.

[SU76391810](#)



[SU76361816](#)



[SU76301808](#)



[SU76291806](#)



[SU76241808](#)



[SU76241806](#)



[SU76221811](#)



[SU76231812](#)



[SU76151802](#)



[SU75971769](#)



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