

What are Forest Design Plans?

Forest Design Plans are produced by the Forestry Commission, to set out the management proposals for the next thirty years for the woodlands we look after. They aim to fulfil a number of objectives:

- Provide descriptions of the woods as they are now,
- Show the process the Forestry Commission goes through when deciding what is best for the woods in the long term,
- Show how the woods should develop over the next thirty years,
- Specifically show tree felling and re-establishment in more detail for the first 10 years and in outline for the succeeding 20 years.

Our aim is to produce a plan that meets the needs of those using the wood, meets the needs of the wildlife of the area and the needs of the Forestry Commission, as managers of a multipurpose sustainable resource. Often there are compromises to be made, but we hope that these are explained within the plan.

A plan does not set out to detail all the management operations in each area of a wood or exactly when the work will take place - the plan is a strategic document with broad-brush proposals within it. More detailed site plans are prepared for each management operation as they come up and the broad proposals may well be modified. After all, we cannot plan for natural changes in a wood, such as wind damage or the discovery of an important species that must be protected or a product that is in demand at the time of felling. So any felling proposed within a plan is likely to be subject to minor changes during the life of the plan. However, major changes that require a plan to be re-written would be put back to consultation before being approved to go ahead.