

# Queenswood Country Park & Arboretum

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## Queenswood Woodland Management



Queenswood is a working wood as well as a country park. The woodlands on the hillside, which are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), are managed under the Forestry Commission Woodland Grant Scheme. The woodland management team works in partnership with the Queenswood Coronation Fund throughout the year to maintain this important habitat.

### Mowing

The path sides are mown in summer and the grassy glades throughout the arboretum are mown in the autumn. Removing the vegetation stops these areas from 'scrubbing up' and becoming woodland again. Mowing also encourages a diverse range of ground flora to grow including various species of orchid.

Other regular works that take place each year include track resurfacing, tree planting and aftercare. Woodland works at Queenswood include coppicing and thinning.

### Coppicing

Around 10 acres of woodland below the viewpoint is cut in small areas on a 10 or 20 year rotation. The trees re-grow vigorously from the substantial root system which may be hundreds of years old. This can considerably extend the life of certain species such as hazel.

Coppice with standards is a variation on this method, where a few of the best specimens of tree are left to mature. We believe this is how most of our woodlands would have been managed centuries ago. Locally, the cut materials would have been used for hop poles, fences, building and of course firewood. The bark was stripped and used to produce tannin for the tanning of leather.

The sunny, scrubby and flower-rich areas that this creates, provide a very different habitat to the shady high forest and are important for a number of species including warblers, dormice, butterflies and moths.



### Thinning

Thinning is the process by which we selectively remove trees from the high forest to give the remaining trees room to grow. The extra light reaching the forest floor encourages the growth of seedlings and allows the all important shrub layer to develop. At Queenswood this is mostly hazel and holly.

### Deadwood

Deadwood is very important in the eco-system of woodlands. It is said that up to half of all the biodiversity in healthy woodland relies on deadwood. Unfortunately middle-aged woodlands do not tend to have much of this resource. For this reason we often leave felled trees to rot on the woodland floor.

Away from paths we also use ring-barking to create this valuable standing deadwood. Ring barking is the practice of killing a standing tree by removing the bark from around the base. This particular habitat is much appreciated by invertebrates and birds, such as the three woodpecker species which occur in the park.

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