



# The Hampshire Dormouse Group County Survey

## Woodland Survey



# Woodland Survey

- There has never been a satisfactory woodland survey specifically for dormice probably due to the difficulty of easily measuring habitat structure and connectivity.
- There have been one or two attempts at trying to determine a habitat suitability index for dormice but they have had varying degrees of success.
- Due to the lack of an appropriate woodland survey methodology we are asking you to complete three surveys; one from the new Dormouse Mitigation Handbook, one from the Forestry Commission and one from the 1984 Dormouse Survey. They all ask similar questions, just in slightly different ways. Hopefully from the results to the woodland surveys, we can find a better way of identifying dormouse habitat.

So please do all three, they are all slightly different and all important.

# Woodland Survey



## Woodland survey

Survey Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

Site/Woodland name		Surveyor		
Grid reference (6 fig.)		Nearest postcode		
Date survey completed				
Whole wood	Please describe in your own words a general description of the woodland/area			
	Size of whole woodland (ha)			
Woodland compartment	Please describe in your own words a general description of the woodland/area (please state if as above)			
	Size of compartment			
Survey area (main features)	Please describe in your own words a general description of the survey area			
	Size of survey area (ha)			
	Please mark Y/N against all		Y	N
	Woodland edge (within 20m)			
	Woodland ride (within 20m)			
	Woodland glade (within 20m)			
	Other feature within 20m (please specify)			
Please complete the Species list and % cover for the area where you are surveying				

Please put the Survey Ref. on all documents. This will be:

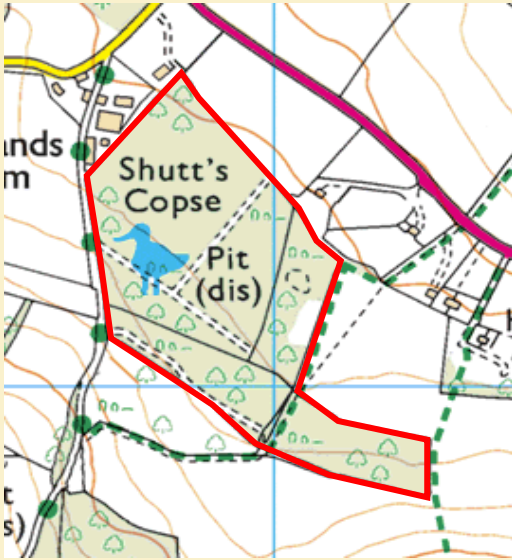
Your initials\_ 4 fig site grid ref\_ mthyear

- Site or woodland name
- Surveyor: Your name
- 6 fig grid reference of centre of survey area.
- Nearest postcode: this can be obtained from [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk)

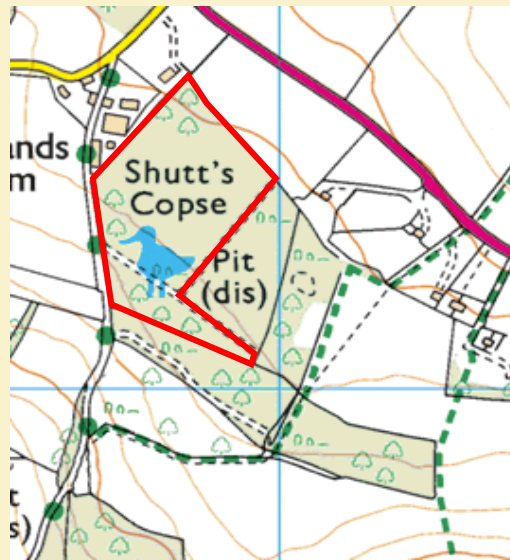
The first questions relate to the whole wood, the woodland compartment and the survey area. Please see [Defining woodland areas](#) for an explanation.

Often the whole wood and the compartment will be the same.

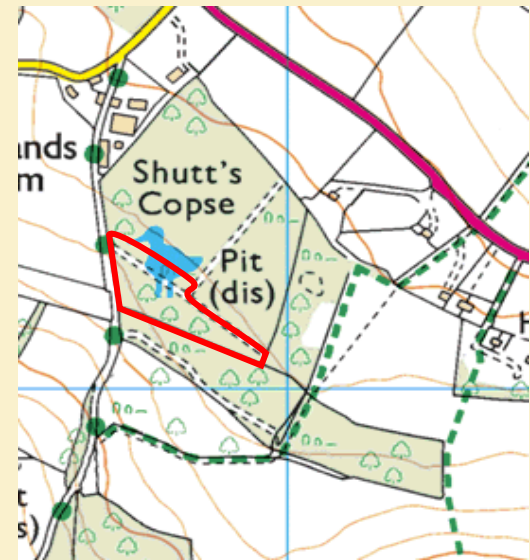
# Defining woodland areas



The whole wood appears to have two or three owners but it is well defined and has a total area of 12.5 ha.



The woodland compartment we have access to (it is owned by the local Wildlife Trust ) is outlined above. It has an area of 5 ha. Often the whole wood and the woodland compartment will be the same.



The survey area is outlined above. 30 footprint tunnels spaced 15m apart will occupy an area of 0.95 ha; the survey area outlined above is 0.90 ha.

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Grid reference (6 fig.)		Nearest postcode		
Date survey completed				
Whole wood	Please describe in your own words a general description of the woodland/area			
	Size of whole woodland (ha)			
Woodland compartment	Please describe in your own words a general description of the woodland/area (please state if as above)			
	Size of compartment			
Survey area (main features)	Please describe in your own words a general description of the survey area			
	Size of survey area (ha)			
	Please mark Y/N against all		Y	N
	Woodland edge (within 20m)			
	Woodland ride (within 20m)			
	Woodland glade (within 20m)			
	Other feature within 20m (please specify)			
Please complete the Species list and % cover for the area where you are surveying				

## Whole wood:

- Please give a brief description of the whole woodland and it's size (see *Calculating the size of your woodland*)
- Please give a brief description of the woodland compartment i.e. the area of the woodland that you have access to, and it's size (this can be obtained from google maps). Often this will be the same as the whole woodland, but please state if this is so.

- Please give a brief description of the survey area. This will generally be an area of about 1 ha (100m x 100m). Dormice are an edge species and so please indicate whether your survey area is close to the woodland edge or any woodland rides or glades. Please note any other feature close to your survey area than may be of interest.
- Please complete the Species list for your survey area (see *Species list for woodland*)

# Calculating the size of your woodland



- Use the location or post code (if known) to identify the location of your site in [www.googlemaps.co.uk](http://www.googlemaps.co.uk)
- Switch to 'satellite' view and visually identify your wood, compartment and/or survey area.
- Right click to bring up a further googlemaps menu which will show 'measure' at the bottom of the menu.
- Click on one corner of your area to measure to start and then click on the other corners to draw a polygon around the area.
- Click on your starting point to complete the polygon.
- The pop up box will show the length of the line you have drawn and the area it encloses.
- The area may be shown in m<sup>2</sup> i.e. 125,000m<sup>2</sup> but please convert to hectares. Divide by 10,000 to obtain the correct result i.e. 125,000m<sup>2</sup> = 12.5 ha.

# Species list (for woodland)



	Hedge				Wood	
	30m Sample		Whole hedge		Survey area +	
	Shrubs present (Y)	% cov'ge of top 5 species	No mature trees > 20 cm dbh	No. young trees < 20 cm dbh	Present (tick)	DAFOR
Alder, common ( <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> )						
Apple, crab ( <i>Malus sylvestris</i> )						
Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> )						
Aspen ( <i>Populus tremula</i> )						
Beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> )						
Birch, downy ( <i>Betula pubescens</i> )						
Birch, silver ( <i>Betula pendula</i> )						
Blackthorn ( <i>Prunus spinosa</i> )						
Bramble ( <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.)						
Broom ( <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> )						
Buckthorn ( <i>Rhamnus cathartica</i> )						
Butcher's Broom ( <i>Ruscus aculeatus</i> )						
Cherry, wild ( <i>Prunus avium</i> )						
Dogwood ( <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> )						
Elder ( <i>Sambucus nigra</i> )						
Elm, English ( <i>Ulmus procera</i> )						
Elm, wych ( <i>Ulmus glabra</i> )						
Elm - not sure which ( <i>Ulmus</i> sp.)						
Gorse ( <i>Ulex</i> sp.)						
Guelder rose ( <i>Viburnum opulus</i> )						
Hawthorn ( <i>Crataegus</i> sp.)						
Hazel ( <i>Corylus avellana</i> )						
Holly ( <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> )						

- There is one Species list form for both the hedge and woodland survey.
- For woodlands, the survey area is the area of about 1 ha (100m x 100m) around where the tunnels are placed.
- Walk round the area first and tick the species as you identify them.
- Once you have done that assign a DAFOR scale coding to the abundance of each species (please see below).
- If you are not familiar with tree and shrub species, please just count the number of different woody varieties present

**D for Dominant:** In practice you will rarely, if ever use this. To score **D**, a species would have to be the most common plant by far, in well over three quarters of the area. It is possible that in a square that is entirely conifer plantation, a tree might score **D**; If you are not sure if something should score **D** or **A**, give it **A**.

**A for Abundant:** Only use **A** if the plant was really very common in many parts of the area. For most species this would mean that there were lots of individual plants present. Generally, few species will score as highly as **A** and if you are not sure if something should score **A** or **F**, give it **F**.

**F for Frequent:** Use **F** if you found the plant in several places in the area and there was usually more than just a few individuals in each of these places. You could also use **F** if the plant was only present in one part of the area but was very common in that part, with many individuals and covered a substantial area (e.g. between one eighth and one quarter of the area of the hectare). If you are not sure if something should score **F** or **O**, give it **O**.

**O for Occasional:** Use **O** for species that occur in several places in the area, but whose populations are usually not very big. You would also use **O** for species that are very common in one bit of habitat within the hectare that occupied just a small area (e.g less than one eighth of the area of the hectare). You will use **O** for many species in the area. If you are not sure if something should score **O** or **R**, give it **R**.

**R for Rare** Use **R** for any species that occur as a small number of individuals in the square. This small number of individuals may be located in one place in the square, or scattered over several different locations within the square. In many squares **R** is likely to be the score that most species get. If you are not sure if something should score **O** or **R**, give it **R**.

# Woodland Survey – Survey 1



This simple survey may be included in the new Dormouse Mitigation Handbook and it would be useful to see if this survey is adequate to indicate a likely dormouse presence.

Please mark Y/N against all, but no more than one Y in each section		Y	N	
Survey 1	Approx number of woody/shrubby species in 1 ha of woodland	More than 6		
		Between 3 and 6		
		Less than 3		
	Woody vegetation that is 4m or higher i.e. mature trees	Little or no canopy <10%		
		Canopy cover 25 - 30%		
		Canopy cover 50 -100%		
		Canopy cover 70 - 100%		
	Woody vegetation that is less than 4m i.e young trees, hazel, bramble etc.	Dense understory covering >75% of area with high level of connectivity between shrubs (visibility <5m)		
		Understory cover 30 – 75% and connectivity not complete (visibility 5-20m)		
		Understory sparse or absent; (visibility>20m)		
	Comment			

Survey area (approx. 1ha)

For all the forms please mark either **Y** or **N** so that we can see that all questions have been considered.

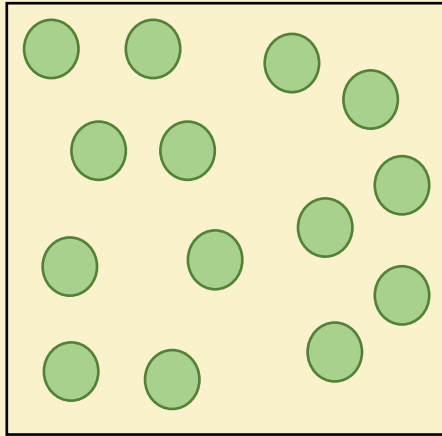
- Input the number range of woody/shrubs. One **Y** only.
- Estimate the amount of canopy cover there is (see *Estimating canopy cover*). One **Y** only.

- Mark **Y** against the descriptor that best describes the survey area and **N** for those that don't apply. If none are suitable please make **N** against each.
- Please note any additional comments in the box.

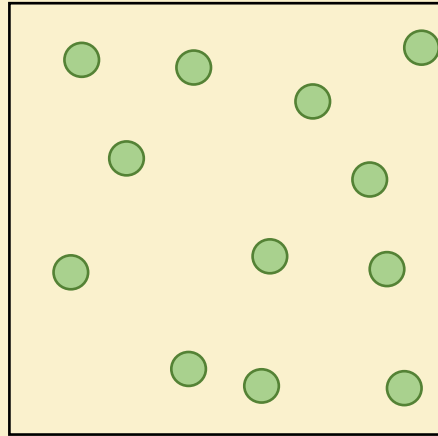


# Estimating canopy cover

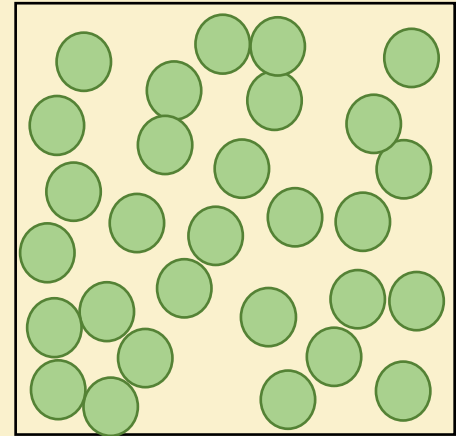
Visually estimate the percentage canopy cover (approx. anything over 4m) in the survey area. Imagine you are looking down onto the area from above and estimate how much of the area is covered by the canopy. Examples of trees in 1ha below:



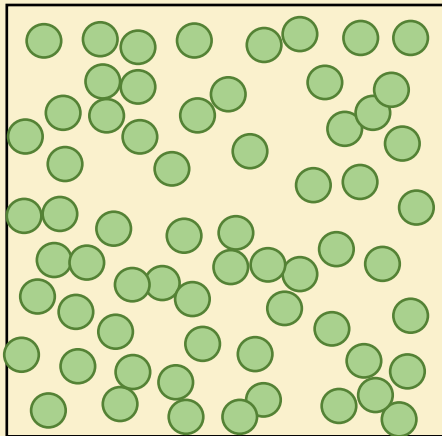
14 oak tree 15m spread,  
approx. 25% cover



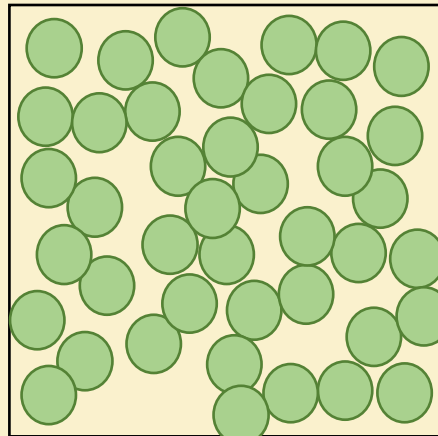
12 birch trees 10m spread,  
approx. 10% cover



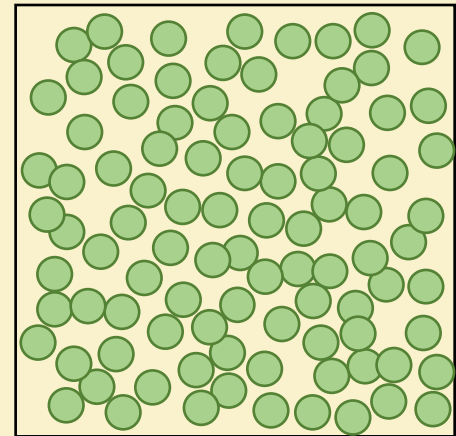
29 oak trees 15m spread,  
approx. 50% cover



64 birch trees 10m spread  
approx. 50% cover



42 oak trees 15m spread,  
approx. 75% cover



95 birch trees 10m spread,  
approx. 75% cover

# Woodland Survey – Survey 2



## Woodland survey

Survey Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

This woodland survey currently features in the new Forestry Commission guidance. We are unsure how much it has been field tested and so it would be useful to do as part of the HDG survey

Please mark Y/N against all (you may have more than one Y on this survey)		Y	N
Survey 2	Wide range of broadleaved tree species and age classes present, in patches, scattered throughout, or around the edge		
	Shrub layer present, especially with hazel, honeysuckle or bramble (brash can be a component of this structure)		
	Species-rich scrub on woodland margins, ridesides or in patches		
	Species-rich restock sites or new woodland creation sites especially if hazel, honeysuckle or bramble present		
	Canopy connections across tracks or thick, wide hedgerow connections to other nearby suitable habitat		
	Conifer/broadleaved mixtures or conifer plantations colonised by native broadleaves		
	Fruiting age trees especially hazel or sweet chestnut – ideally as managed coppice		
	Plantation already subjected to several traditional rack thinning operations in conifers		
	Densely shaded with little or no understorey		
	Signs of deer/stock suppressing regenerating trees/shrubs, or lack of regeneration		
	Preponderance of waterlogged ground in winter		
	History of clearfelling of large management areas relative to the woodland area		
	Absence of large fruiting trees		
	Conifer plantations lacking any native broadleaved trees and shrubs i.e. 'cleaned'		
	Plantations from which all nurse conifers have been removed in one operation		
	Short rotation (< 7 yrs) coppice in cycle		
	Short sward e.g. regularly cut rides without any woody vegetation.		
Comments			

Survey area (approx. 1ha)

For all the forms please mark either **Y** or **N** so that it can be seen that all questions have been considered.

- Mark **Y** against the descriptors that best describes the survey area and **N** for those that don't apply. Please note that more than one descriptor may apply, so you could have more than one **Y**.
- Please notes any additional comments in the box.

# Woodland Survey – Survey 3



## Woodland survey

Survey Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

A version of this survey featured in Mammal Society Dormouse survey in 1984 and was devised by Elaine Hurst

Please mark Y/N against all, but no more than one Y in each section		Y	N
Woody vegetation that is approx. 4m or higher (mature trees)	Low Canopy cover < 30%		
	Med Canopy cover 30 - 70%		
	High canopy cover > 70%		
Woody vegetation that is between 1.5m and 4m (young trees, hazel etc)	Understory absent or sparse		
	Medium understory and connectivity not complete		
	Dense understory with high level of connectivity		
Vegetation that is less than 1.5m (bramble, bracken etc.)	Scrub absent or sparse eg bramble suppressed		
	Medium scrub level e.g. bramble patches		
	High level of scrub e.g. continuous bramble bank		
Coppiced woodland RECENT	Recently cut coppice (< 3 yrs)		
	Short rotation coppice (3 - 8 yrs)		
	Long rotation coppice (10-20 years)		
Coppiced woodland OLD	Overstood coppice (>30 years) reasonable connectivity		
	Derelict coppice (>30 years) gappy, poor connectivity		
Please mark Y/N against all (you may have more than one Y on this section)		Y	N
Deciduous woodland with understory/scrub			
Young plantation			
Scrub			
Hedgerow			
Long grass			
Bramble			
Garden			
Coniferous woodland			
Other (please list)			
Comments			

Survey area (approx. 1ha)

For all the forms please mark either **Y** or **N** so that it can be seen that all questions have been considered.

- Estimate the amount of canopy cover there is (see *Estimating canopy cover*). One **Y** only.
- Estimate the amount of woody vegetation cover. One **Y** only.
- Estimate the amount of scrubby vegetation cover. One **Y** only.
- Estimate the age of coppice present.
- Mark **Y** against the descriptors that best describes the survey area and **N** for those that don't apply. Please note that more than one descriptor may apply, so you could have more than one **Y**.
- Please note any additional comments in the box.