



## Why trees are felled in Selsdon Wood (Part 1)

Sometimes there is concern about felling trees in Selsdon Wood. The Council's primary objective in managing this National Trust Nature Reserve is maintaining its healthy biodiversity and amenity.

The following summarises the reasons behind felling:

- 1. To Provide Succession & Diversification:**
- 2. To Preserve Ancient Woodland Management:**
- 3. To Remove Overcrowded Trees:**
- 4. To Remove Introduced & Harmful Trees:**
- 5. For Safety Reasons:**

Selsdon Wood is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and is classified as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW). Within it there are a number of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland requires management to encourage diversification and to prevent it all becoming high forest. Active management had been stopped until the late 1990s and many areas show the results of this neglect. Now the woodland is looked after by Croydon Council's Tree & Woodland Section following set management plans which ensure the wood's sustainability. The management of Selsdon Wood is currently covered by the Selsdon Management Plan November 2015. Its policy on removing sycamore is being reviewed in the light of ash die back. The plan is approved by the Forestry Commission and carried out under their grants and with a felling licence.

The timber from Selsdon Wood is a valuable resource and the Council sells it for chipwood, firewood, sawlogs etc. to help finance the woodland operation. Contractors cut the timber; some of which is left onsite to season. For hazel coppicing - the contractor sells the product instead of being paid. The Friends have coppiced a plot and they improve habitat and diversification by thinning areas of woodland, mainly of introduced trees. They sometimes sell charcoal and logs to help fund their activities. Inevitably the initial sight of felling and its removal is unsightly but nature soon covers the scars and the wood becomes a more diverse and attractive habitat.

Should you require any further information please contact the Croydon Trees & Woodland Section.

Tel: 020-8726 6000 Ext. 62387.



## Why trees are felled in Selsdon Wood (Part 2)

### 1. Providing Succession & Diversification:

#### a. Felling either side of Beech Grove, West Gorse & Leafy Grove:

The felling of trees in some areas is to encourage natural regrowth and to allow replanting. This is necessary in order to sustain a healthy wood with some understorey and to provide succession. This prevents it becoming high forest and helps diversification. It opens up rides that benefit birds, butterflies and bats.

#### b. Clearance in and around the Jubilee Plantation:

This was to reduce the dominance of sycamore and ash and allow the growth of 260 whips planted by the Friends and 60 whips by Selsdon Brownies to aid diversification and provide a more bird friendly habitat. Silver birch, elder, field maple, wild service, hazel, spindle, wild cherry, guelder rose, wild rose, blackthorn and dogwood have been planted and are becoming well grown.

### 2. Preserving Ancient Woodland Management:

#### Coppicing either side of The Wend:

This is a commercial 4 hectare hazel coppicing regime with standards. Plots are coppiced on a nine year rotation to produce pea sticks, bean poles, hedging, tree stakes and binders. Coppicing is a traditional woodland craft and involves cutting a bush or tree back down to its base which results in the re-growth of straight shoots. This management practice creates a more open habitat benefiting butterflies and nesting birds which enjoy the mosaic of light and shade. Willow warbler has returned. The Friends developed their own coppiced plot on the edge of Leafy Grove which includes replanting to fill gaps. They periodically produce charcoal and logs for sale. There are many other areas of would-be coppice in the wood that are unmanaged due to shortage of funding or volunteers to carry out the work.

### 3. Removing overcrowded trees:

#### a. Felling larches between Middle and East Gorse:

The larches were nearly full grown and should have been thinned many years ago. Thinning now would have left spindly unsafe trees so action had to be taken. The Management Plan was to fell these larches and see if gorse would re-emerge. This has happened. Gorse was probably grown as fuel for local lime-kilns or winter feed for stock.

#### b. Thinning Scots Pine in Stevens Larch:

The Scots Pine had become overcrowded.

### 4. Removing Introduced & Harmful Trees:

#### Cutting down Laurel, Holly & Sycamore:

Laurel is a Mediterranean species, probably introduced into Court Wood to give cover for game birds. It spreads steadily by suckering, layering, seeding and poisons the ground beneath it. Holly may not poison the ground but its spread, like laurel, inhibits the growth of other plants. The Friends have a plan to control Laurel & Holly. Reducing Sycamore is being reviewed in the light of Ash die back.

### 5. Safety:

Some felling is for safety reasons.