

Case study



Tilhill

BSWGROUP member of binderholz

Cranmore Woodland

This is a 16 ha woodland that had previously suffered from the trees being too tightly spaced because the thinning was very overdue and was generally under-managed. Additionally, the access had over-grown and had not been utilised for many years.



The results of this under-management was limited growth of the timber as the trees competed with each other for light and nutrients. The woodland had, in effect, started self-thinning with some trees being shadowed by others. Consequently, trees were dying and falling to the woodland floor.



Tilhill were engaged to manage the woodland in order to bring it back to realising its full potential both in terms of timber value and environmental credentials.



By removing a proportion of the crop, the remaining trees can grow on faster and healthier than before. This creates a higher value end product as the proportion of log (the highest value product) is increased.

The thinning also allows more light to access the woodland, increasing biodiversity at ground level.



The woodland had overhead powerlines running through the centre that would have presented a danger to life if struck by machinery or a falling tree. Additionally, the woodland was regularly used by groups of children for various outdoor activities. The owner was unaware of the current timber market and the value within their woodland. In recent years the woodland had only been used for recreation.

Tilhill organised an attractive timber offer for the client utilising our unique market position and in-depth knowledge of the current markets and forestry works.

With the offer accepted Tilhill applied and received all the necessary licenses required to fell the trees. Then, after fulfilling all necessary planning permissions, we re-instated the old and dilapidated access route enabling a sustainable and efficient route to market for the timber haulage vehicles.



Cranmore Woodland – continued



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This meant timber could be removed from the woodland consistently and whatever the weather without slowing down the forest operations or impacting on the environment. This was especially important given the small area allocated to stacking timber.



To minimise disturbance the power line was only shut off for a short period of time while the forest machinery worked the area in close proximity. Any trees with potential to fall on the line were felled with the aid of a winch tractor.

Using a quality local contractor, who knew the ground well, we safely removed the timber crop utilising as much of the product as possible from the woodland totalling 1,321 tonnes.



The largest and main part of the tree was sent as log to a local sawmill for manufacturing into wood products for the construction and landscaping industry. At the sawmill the whole tree is utilised: The bark is removed and used as horticultural mulch, saw dust is used as animal

bedding or compressed into pellets and any unused off cuts will be chipped and sent for biomass. The lower quality parts of the tree are sent as 'bars' to pallet manufacturers. Finally, the roughest part of the tree was sent to the wood chip market to be directly used for animal bedding.



There was also a proportion of hardwood in the woodland that, due to having a higher calorific value and growing very differently to softwood, was used as fuel wood. This was sent to a local biomass company to be chipped and burned for energy and also a local firewood producer to be used for logs and sold to the domestic market. The only remaining part of the tree was the fine and branchy matter known as brash. This is left in the woodland to form rough tracks to support the machinery on soft ground where necessary. It soon degrades back into the soil fertilising the remaining trees.



With the project complete and a very happy client, Tilhill removed all products and machinery from the site. The access will be allowed to green up and will only need minimal re-instatement by the time of the next thinning.

