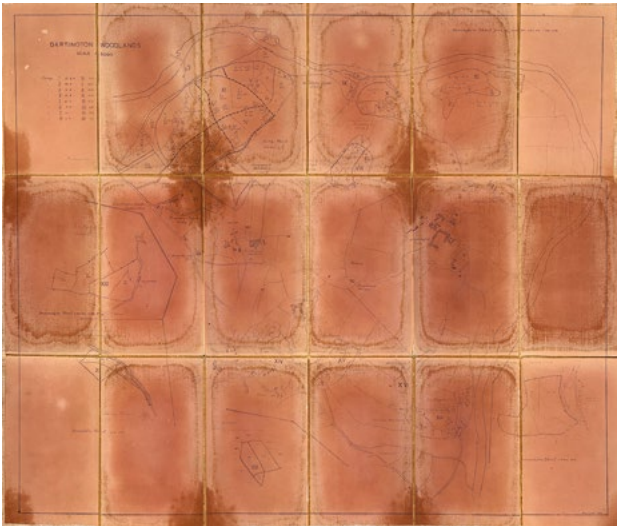


# Dartington, The Forest Story So Far



The forest estate at Dartington has a rich history. Exploration of the ground under North Woods points to early settlement on the site and the recently renovated boundary wall in Deer Park revealed that the woodlands were used from the middle ages onwards.

The Elmhursts had a huge impact on forestry on the estate. With help from the Professor of Forestry, Wilfred Hiley, they set about buying up areas outside the estate for new planting and created the forestry school. Present day students of forestry still read Hiley's *A Forestry Venture*, a seminal text.

In recent decades the estate has been running the forest operation within the estate boundary, fostering a nascent hub of timber businesses in Woodlands Yard. The Sequoia and Douglas fir, the trademarks of Hiley, can still be found in North Woods and year-on-year they become all the more impressive specimens.



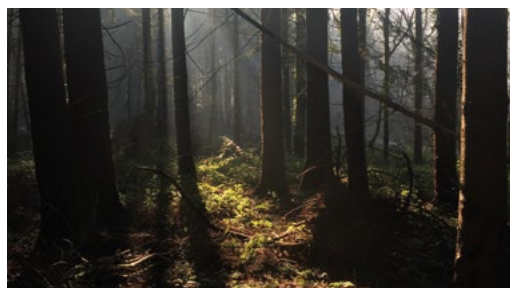
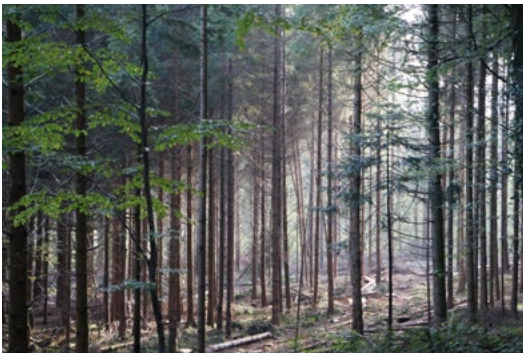
# The Bigger Picture

The estate at Dartington extends to some 1200 acres, 300 of which are woodland. At 25% woodland cover this far exceeds the national average for the UK (13%). The woodlands are currently a mix of broadleaf and conifer blocks with the recent addition of extensive agroforestry to the estate.

New pressures are radically changing how we approach our forestry: changing climate, pests and disease. We also have a better understanding of how important ecology is to tree growing and the impact of soil health to our silviculture. New scientific discoveries and digital understanding of tree growth will hopefully allow us to manage our forests better for future generations.

Population growth and the need for low carbon material will mean forests will become increasingly important for maintaining clean water supplies and protecting soils.

At Dartington, just a small cog in the global landscape, we have an opportunity to once again become innovators in growing trees. It is an exciting challenge producing resilient and diverse forests, and we may not see the full benefit for many years to come.



# Agroforestry, A New Type Of Woodland

The agroforestry work on the estate is some of the most exciting work that we are doing.

Trees are starting to break out of their traditional settings and the results are starting to be seen across the estate and will change the way the landscape looks.

There are a number of projects happening across the estate where field planting of wide spaced trees will bear fruit or timber and provide shelter, microclimates and soil nutrients for the agricultural crops and livestock beneath them.

At the Agroforestry Research Trust (near Schumacher College) a forest garden has been created that forms a complex forest structure supporting over 100 species of edible plant.

This new practice harks back to ancient ways of using woodland, but integrates new understanding of soils and agricultural systems, to provide long-term health and sustainability to the land.



# A Century On – A New Forestry Venture

In woodland blocks around the estate we are experimenting with new ways of growing traditional species, as well as new forest species such as eucalyptus, just as Hiley experimented with Redwoods.

We are asking questions about how best to create a forest that has multiple objectives, providing a rich, biodiverse resource that people not only enjoy visiting but can also use. A key objective is to make the area a fit and healthy resource for future generations, not just above ground, but also below.

We are now producing a new 'forestry manifesto' as part of our Land Use Review, that assesses our woods and makes recommendations for building on the Elmhirsts' rich legacy. Our aim is that our woods become known, once again, for their diversity, experimental silvicultural practices and educational benefit.

