

Pete Verney

Introduction to Bellever Forest.

We're on the eastern side of Bellever Forest looking down towards the East Dart River with another Forestry Commission block of Soussons in the distance. Bellever is the second largest of the six blocks of woodland owned by the Forestry Commission on Dartmoor, it totals 568 hectares of which 440 are under conifer which is mainly Sitka Spruce – purchased in 1930 most of the planting was done between 1930 and the end of the Second World War, managed essentially for timber production, consequently it provided a lot of employment in the area, again resulted in the hamlet of Bellever being built in the 1950s to house employees, over the years it's been realised that the forest provided a lot of other opportunities and benefits other than timber production, recreation has increased, the importance of biodiversity has increased consequently the management of the forest has changed and its list of priorities have changed with timber production being further down the line now.