Horses, Hedges and Edges
New Forest Land Advice Service
The New Forest Land Advice Service

Delivering independent land management advice across the New Forest and Avon Valley
Georgie Watson, Julie Stubbs, Rhys Morgan
Importance of hedgerows

- Cultural and historical
- Landscape
- Wildlife
- Soil, pest, pollutant and water management
- Fuel and food supply
- Carbon storage
Landscape importance
Hedgerow Facts

• Main surviving semi natural habitat in the lowlands
• Critical to the existence of many plants and animals
• Facilitate movement through landscape for wide range of organisms
• Majority are not in favourable condition
• Most are more than a thousand years old
Ten Top Tips

• Keep it thick and dense
• Cut at the right time
• Don’t cut too often or too tight
• Encourage native shrubs
• Encourage flowers and grasses at the base
• Look after trees or plant new ones
• Rejuvenate your hedge
• Link with other wildlife habitats and fill gaps
• Don’t pollute your hedge
• Explore your hedge!
Management

• All hedges need to be managed
• Neglect of hedges is common and is a huge problem in the countryside
• Equally over management is a major threat to our hedges
• Best approach is to allow hedge to develop in a controlled manor and extend its life span for as long as possible before rejuvenating via laying or coppicing
Planting

• To fill in the gaps of an existing/historic hedge
• To compliment an existing hedge network
• To screen an eyesore or act as a windbreak
• Sometimes inappropriate to plant a new hedgerow – ask us for advice
• Bare root stock – plant end of Oct to end March
• Avoid freezing weather or planting into waterlogged soils
• Plant on a still, moist day
Planting

- A species mixture is always best
- Different mixes across the country – ask us
- Use native stock
- Bare rooted ‘whips’ – cheap and easy to get
- Take care to protect roots before planting
- Plant into bare soil if possible
- Double staggered row
- Wider the better
- Protect with rabbit guards
- Fence from stock – distance is crucial
- Consider planting trees at the same time
Protect when hedge is young or recently managed
## New Forest species mixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Botanical name</th>
<th>% of Hedge Species (up to)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
<td><em>Crataegus monogyna</em></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackthorn</td>
<td><em>Prunus spinosa</em></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Maple (neutral soils)</td>
<td><em>Acer campestre</em></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazel</td>
<td><em>Corylus avellana</em></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly</td>
<td><em>Ilex aquifolium</em></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelder Rose (neutral soils)</td>
<td><em>Viburnum opulus</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogwood (damp soils)</td>
<td><em>Cornus sanguinea</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Rose</td>
<td><em>canina</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spindle (neutral soils)</td>
<td><em>Euonymus europaeus</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Rose</td>
<td><em>arvense</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Service Tree</td>
<td><em>Sorbus torminalis</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beech</td>
<td><em>Fagus sylvaticus</em></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornbeam (damp soils)</td>
<td><em>Carpinus betula</em></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## New hedge for the New Forest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Botanical name</th>
<th>% of Hedge Species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
<td>Crataegus monogyna</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackthorn</td>
<td>Prunus spinosa</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Maple</td>
<td>Acer campestre</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazel</td>
<td>Corylus avellana</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly</td>
<td>Ilex aquifolium</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelder Rose</td>
<td>Viburnum opulus</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogwood</td>
<td>Cornus sanguinea</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Rose</td>
<td>canina</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Species choices

- Hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel can withstand regular trimming.
- Most broadleaved trees and shrubs coppice well, with the exception of beech. Dogwood,
- Spindle and guelder-rose are difficult to lay.
- Holly and beech grow well in the shade cast by mature hedgerow trees.
- Species like ash, oak and willow can grow very large.
Rejuvenating a hedge

• Coppicing – cut at the base, protect and allow to re-grow

• Laying – lay the hedge over so it grows new shoots from lower down in the hedge again

• Gapping up – add to the number of plants to thicken it up and increase species diversity
Cutting

• In the past annual cutting was done to keep hedge stock proof, mark boundaries and supply fuel
• Nowadays the role of hedges has changed and for wildlife and landscape reasons a bigger hedge is often much more valuable
• Cutting the hedge is still required to keep it thick and bushy, control it and prevent shading out flowers at the base
• Cutting one side at a time is best, only every two or three years
• Don’t cut them all in any one year.
• Avoid cutting at same height year after year
Cutting

• January and February are the best times to cut
• Avoid March until end August – bird breeding season
Machines

• **Flail head** – cut and mulch, eyesore with mature woody growth

• **Knife blade cutter** – (reciprocating knife/circular spinning blades) – light growth, neat, don’t mulch

• **Circular saw blade/shaping saw** – good for mature growth, hands off approach to management, have to clear up brash
Edges
Edges

- 2m of rough grassy margin on either side of a hedge will hugely increase wildlife potential
- Cut the half metre next to the hedge every few years
- Cut and remove (or graze) the metre and a half along the edge every year in late July or August
- Fencing may be needed for protection from stock
Hedge Law

- Hedgerow regulations – prohibits removal of hedgerows or parts of hedgerows
- Cross compliance requirements – rules about removal, disturbance, cutting, bank and ditch maintenance, chemical use
- Wildlife and Countryside Act – birds
- Roadside hedges – landowner responsibility
- Tree Preservation Orders
Grants/schemes

• Environmental Stewardship
• Single Payment Scheme
• Verderers’ small grant scheme
• NFLAS small grant scheme – no longer running but maybe in the future if funds can be found
Hedgelink

- www.hedgelink.org.uk

- Fantastic website with all the information you could ever need about hedges

- New Forest Land Advice Service – we are here to help
Thank you!

• The New Forest Land Advice Service would like to thank you for coming to this evening course
• Please fill in your feedback forms and leave them on your chairs before you go
• Contact us if you would like further advice