

## Useful websites:

RSPB – Advice on planting a hedge  
[http://www.rspb.org.uk/gardens/advice/gardenhedges/planting\\_a\\_hedge.asp](http://www.rspb.org.uk/gardens/advice/gardenhedges/planting_a_hedge.asp)

Forest of Dean District Council Landscape Character Assessment  
[http://www.fdean.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=808&parent\\_directory\\_id=200&positioning\\_article\\_id=&language=&sortkey](http://www.fdean.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=808&parent_directory_id=200&positioning_article_id=&language=&sortkey)

DEFRA – Environmental Stewardship Scheme  
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/funding/schemes/es.htm>

Suffolk Wildlife Trust – Hedgerow Management  
<http://www.suffolkwildlife.co.uk/ca/wh/hedges.htm>

## Useful Contacts:

Gloucestershire Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)  
[gloucester@fwag.org.uk](mailto:gloucester@fwag.org.uk) Tel: 01452 627487

If you have any questions please contact  
the Countryside Team on 01594 81000.

Completed plans and specifications for approval should be sent to  
Planning Services, Forest of Dean District Council, High Street,  
Coleford, Gloucestershire, GL16 8HG.

Please ensure that the application and location details are included.



*Notes on...*

# Hedge Planting Specifications for Planning Applications



Forest of Dean District Council,  
Council Offices, High Street, Coleford, GL16 8HG  
Tel: 01594 810 000 Fax: 01594 812 590  
Visit the council website at [www.fdean.gov.uk](http://www.fdean.gov.uk)  
July 2006

This leaflet forms one of a series of advice notes, which have been produced to help people take into consideration the important issues of landscape and biodiversity, when preparing a planning application. The purpose of this leaflet is to illustrate best practice techniques in hedgerow planting and management, and to explain what information needs to be provided within the planning application.

## Considerations for Hedgerow Planting

The initial stage of planning a hedgerow involves looking at the existing landscape and planting features of a site. When planning a hedgerow the following should be considered:

- It should represent the character of the local landscape, and where possible link with existing vegetation; have a look around the local area to see what species are present (see link to Forest of Dean Landscape Character Assessment, at end of document);
- It should reflect the function and character of the site (i.e. is it a rural or urban setting);
- It should produce a safe, practical, usable landscape;
- It should be appropriate for the growing conditions; and
- It should take into account the resources available for the long-term management and maintenance of the site.

## Tick Box

### Have you included all the required details in your Hedgerow Planting Scheme?

- Diagram showing location of proposed hedgerow
- Depth and width of cultivation
- Time of year work will take place
- Details of any hedgerow standards to be planted including species and distance apart
- What species are to be planted and how many of each
- Details of how the hedgerow is to be planted, with measurements of distances between plants and rows etc (could include diagram)
- Type of protection planned, and measurements (e.g. height of fencing, and area to be covered by mulch, use of rabbit guards etc)
- A management statement.

branches. These leave a neater cut, which has a better chance of healing without infection, than hedges cut by a mechanical flail, which damage branches, and result in a shattered, ugly hedge.

### Long-term management by laying or coppicing

Although trimming will keep hedgerows in good condition for a number of years, occasional restoration work is necessary to prevent gaps developing or hedges turning into a line of trees. Hedgerow restoration can be performed in the winter by one of the following methods:

- Coppicing (cutting the stems at ground level) is the best method of restoration if the hedge is too overgrown to be laid because the stems are too thick.
- Laying (cutting stems part way through and interweaving them along the hedgeline) has a less drastic effect on wildlife and maintains the character of the landscape, but needs skilled labour.



All hedgerow planting should be carried out in accordance with BS4428:1989, Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces). Hedgerow shrubs should either be notch planted or trench planted. Hedge trenches should be dug to a minimum depth of 400mm and width of 600mm, with the plants put into the ground at the same depth at which they had been previously grown in the nursery. All plants need to be well heeled in after planting and watered in during dry weather. Most hedging plants are supplied as bare root specimens, and it is important to make sure that the roots do not dry out, therefore it is advisable to keep them under a moist cloth or in a bucket of water during planting. Hedges should only be planted between November and March, while plants are still dormant. Avoid planting in very cold or wet weather. **Details of the cultivation method proposed and a planting schedule should be included** in the hedgerow scheme.

If hedgerow trees are to be included these should be spaced at least 30m apart to prevent them overshadowing the hedge. To establish trees, they can be planted in the line of the new hedge along with the hedge plants, but use tree shelters to allow their identification during maintenance. Suitable tree species include oak, ash, willow, field maple, and wild cherry.



# Species

Species chosen for the hedge should be representative of hedgerows in the surrounding area. Use of local native plant species is best wherever possible, as this will provide food and habitat for wildlife, and are generally safer for livestock. When planting native species, ensure they have come from British grown stock. **The hedgerow scheme will need to include details of how many of each species are to be planted.**

## Typical Rural Hedgerow Species Mix

Main Matrix (Transplants/Quicks)  
70% of planting stock

Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>

Interplant (Whips/Transplants)  
30% of planting stock

Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>
Wild Privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>



# Management

A long-term management plan should be considered, in order to ensure plantings remain healthy and in-keeping with the original design. Under the planning controls, applicants are responsible for the health and condition of the plants for at least 5 years after they are planted, and this means that any which die during this period must be replaced. Please **provide a management statement**, detailing planned management for at least 5 years after planting, and also a vision for future management after those five years.

## Hedge trimming

It is an offence to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built (Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981). It is therefore best to trim hedges in January or February to avoid the destruction of bird's nests (present from March to August) and also to allow any berry crop to be used by wintering birds (September to December). Trim on a two- or three-year rotation, rather than annually. This ensures that thick nesting cover is available and increases the berry crop and populations of over-wintering insects.

When trimmed, deciduous species tend to respond by producing numerous shoots at the point of cut, which means that hedge trimming can promote faster growth at the tops and sides of hedges and cause the plant to expend less energy at the base where gaps start to appear. Therefore, "A" shaped or "topped A shaped" hedge trimming is best for hedge viability and for wildlife. To trim the hedge it is best to use reciprocating bar cutters which slice through

# Protection (continued)

The planted hedgerow should be protected from rodent damage with spiral tree guards or the use of rabbit netting which can be removed once the plants are well established (approx 3-5 years). Some form of weed control is essential if newly planted trees are to be able to establish, and should be undertaken for at least the first three years after planting. To prevent weed competition an area 1 metre across should be cleared of vegetation in line with the new hedge. **You will need to specify the type of weed control to be used.** If properly applied and maintained, mulches can be effective at suppressing weeds. Alternatively, mulch mats or chemical weed control may be used. The mulch should be applied to a minimum depth of 100mm. In the planning application specify type of mulching, mulch mat or chemical weed control. In the case of chemical weed control specify the month(s) weed control will be undertaken.



*This picture illustrates the need for weed control, to prevent competition from grasses and other weeds.*



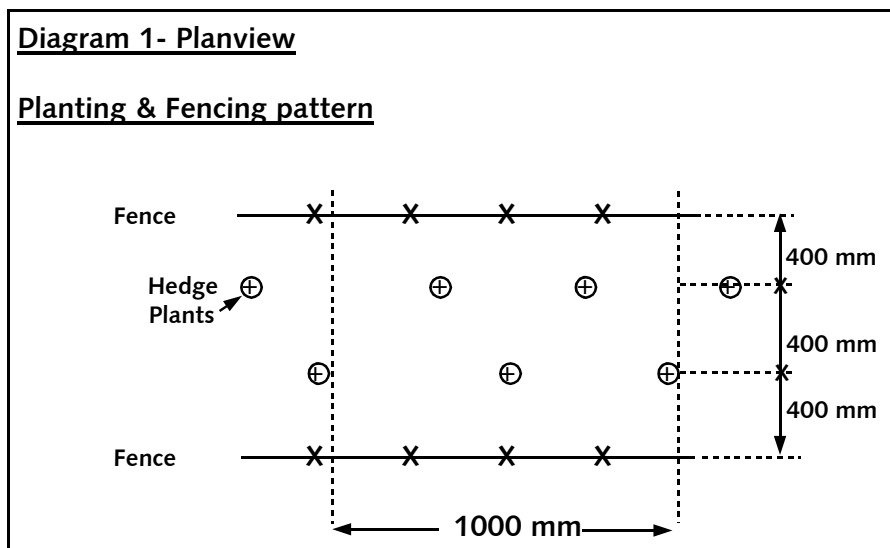
## Town and Village Garden Hedgerow Mix

For planting designs in town and village gardens, the following options should be considered in addition to those shown on the opposite page:

- For the purpose of screening, beech, holly, and yew could be used
- For protection, thorny species such as blackthorn, hawthorn, dog rose, geulder rose or holly could be used
- For Wildlife, use fruit and nut producing species such as hazel, hawthorn, yew, or wild privet.

# Planting Specification

Hedging should be planted in two, staggered rows at a density of not less than 5 per meter (see diagram 1), with approximately 450mm between plants in the same row, and 300-400mm between rows. The interplant whips/transplants should be planted within this pattern in groups of 2/3. The **density of planting and distances between plants should be specified in the hedgerow scheme details.**



# Protection

When planting a new hedge, protection from grazing animals, both livestock and wild animals such as deer and rabbits must be considered. **Specify how planting is to be protected.** The level of protection will depend on the level of perceived grazing. If protecting from livestock, then permanent fencing will probably be required of sufficient height to restrict grazing over the top. Where a double fence is applicable, the fences must be a minimum width of 2 metres apart. The fences should be of treated wooden posts with galvanised stock netting and wire to a height of 1.4m (see diagram 2).

