damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981), to intentionally l March and l September. It is an offence, under Section l Do not cut during the bird nesting season between

February ensures that nuts and berries are available longer for possible and avoid damaging frosts. Cutting in January or February, but you should aim to cut as late in the winter as Hedges can be trimmed, laid and coppiced from September to During which season should I cut my hedge?

grow into hedgerow trees. newly planted trees (at approximately 50 metre intervals) to every two or three years. This permits existing saplings or Another option is to cut the sides each year, but the tops once

carry out an annual light trim for road safety purposes. reduces maintenance costs. However, it may be necessary to dual benefits. It creates a bushier hedge for wildlife and Not necessarily. Cutting on a two or three year rotation has Do I need to cut my hedge every year?

valuable for wildlife than a low thin one. more important than shape - a tall, thick, bushy hedge is more drawbacks for wildlife and farming. Generally, overall volume is There are several possible hedge shapes, each with merits and Which shape should I choose for my hedge?

little more growth each year will provide a thicker hedge. woody shoots may otherwise result. Grading cuts to allow a machinery suits the size of the stems being cut. Splintered achieved by using sharp blades and ensuring that the Most hedges are trimmed by machine. Good results can be

HEDCE WYINLENVICE - LISHWING LECHNIONES

local traditions in hedge management if possible. suits most hedgerows. However, it is important to continue A combination of trimming, laying and coppicing techniques

Guidelines for conservation management

periodic laying and requires **'**әВрәү рәфрү 'A' no nodt iess stockbroof birds and insects. It is, however, gnizsan-bnuorg tius ot nigamm This option allows for a grassy provide good shelter. , sərtəm 2.1 Jo thgiəh muminin

shaped hedges, cut to a

hedgerow trees to develop. and if not topped, enable song posts for a variety of birds, stockbroofing and shelter, create shaped hedges provide good

Parallel-sided or 'box'



wonderful landscape features. habitat. Such hedges are and provide excellent wildlife years, maintain a dense base, a longer cycle of 10 to 20 Free growing' hedges, cut on



hedge which remains unsprayed and unfertilised. establish a permanent grass field margin alongside the do not spray in windy or very calm conditions. Ideally, to pesticides and fertilisers. To protect the hedge from these Many insects and hedgerow plants are extremely vulnerable A few words about pesticides and fertiliser

discourage geese from grazing fields.

■ a barrier to prevent the spread of disease, and to air down hills;

■ the prevention of frost hollows by blocking the flow of cold

 \blacksquare the conservation of both soil and soil-water

■ shelter for livestock and crops

endangered Barn Owl.

birds, in particular the

for insects, small mammals and

valuable habitat and food source

Grass margins also provide a

as Couch and Sterile Brome.

roublesome arable weeds such

fields will resist colonisation by

netre wide, along the edges of

plants and grasses, at least one

Permanent strips of perennial

■ wildlife 'corridors' linking different habitats

■ nesting and shelter places for birds and other animals

■ song posts and viewpoints for birds

weasels prey on rabbits, and shrews eat slugs including leather jackets and caterpillars, stoats and that biologically control pests. Birds will eat insects

mammals (such as the hedgehog)

of birds (including game birds such as partridge) and ■ a valuable food source (fruit, nuts and insects) for a variety

■ an attractive habitat for the birds and predatory mammals

field and garden pests such as aphids garden plants; and predatory insects feed on, and control, pollination of fruit, legumes, rape, horticultural crops and moths and bumble bees. These insects are valuable in the

■ a home for a variety of insects including beetles, butterflies, provide the following benefits:

More specifically, good management of your hedge will

and, together with field margins, provide important wildlife They remain fundamental to the landscape, are often historic, relevant, many Weald farms and gardens still retain hedges. While some of the original functions of hedges are no longer

Why should I manage my hedge?

Farming, landscape and wildlife benefits



Hedgerows Initiative



Hedge structures

appropriate management. you to decide the most Knowing the hedge type will help the hedge's structure and shape. on your farm or in your garden, look at To determine the type of hedge you have What type of hedge do I own?

Hedge types

rchards and other fruit crops. nave been planted as wind often of Poplars and Alders, that Shelter belts - tall hedges,

particular feature of the Low does not exist. These are a pattern of shaws between fields hedgerows where the traditional trees, normally Oak or Ash, Hedgerow trees - mature

he High Weald landscape. remain a distinctive feature of Managed as woodland, they fields or along roadsides. 9-12 metres wide, between oroadleaved woodland, often Shaws/Rews - strips of Other boundary features

ablastvact from the Weald's support little wildlife and suburban features which However, exotics tend to be Can thrive on Wedld soils. φορηίαι ας α μεαβιμβ <mark>φ</mark>ίαυς – a hardy and fast growing conifer (χζηφιές22οςγραγις Ιεγίαπάιι), particular Leyland Cypress,



made up of predominantly shrub and/or tree species. A boundary feature less than five metres wide and

Hedgerows Initiative

What is a Weald hedge?

hawthorn. These hedges are most common in the Low Weald. and 19th centuries. Many are straight and were created using Planted hedges are mainly due to the enclosures in the 18th

roadsides. These are a feature of both the High and Low such as along the edges of ditches, streams, fence lines and neglect, developing in areas that are difficult to graze or crop Some natural hedges have appeared as a result of

These ancient hedges are most common in the form hedges which are often rich in wildlife. Many of these have subsequently been managed to left strips of woodland known locally as shaws or rews. the first 'farmers' cleared small fields from the forest, they of ancient woodland that once covered much of the Weald. As In the South East of England many hedges are the remnants ■ Natural and unplanted

Within the Weald there are two kinds of hedges, either:

animals and crops; and were once a source of timber and fuel. boundaries; help to manage livestock; provide shelter for farm functions. They indicate land ownership and administrative hundreds of years. Hedges in the Weald have several Hedges represent decisions made by our ancestors over many Why do we have hedges?

.andscape and wildlife value. practical advice on management to retain their functional, the unique features of local hedgerows and to offer some and distinctive rural character. This leaflet aims to highlight Hedges are an essential part of the Weald landscape's special

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spart bnb sdurds maintenance fencing and exotic Replacement with low

which hinders regrowth Careless mechanised cuting

Removal as part of road modernisation and property

Removal as part of farm

Decline in traditional

Neglect

Current threats

indicate an ancient boundary

Relic hedges on banks often

A practical guide

to the care of an

outstanding

feature and

its unique

wildlife



Hedges in the Weald

Hedges surround the irregular shaped fields of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, linking the area's many woodlands.



Hedges are a distinctive feature of the High Weald – a valued Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the rural heart of South East England. The High Weald is a historic countryside of rolling hills draped by small, irregularly shaped fields, abundant woods and hedges, scattered farmsteads and sunken lanes.



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Hedge-laying is an ancient craft with many different styles Stems, known as pleachers, are selected to be layed. These are partially cut with an axe, billhook or saw, just above ground level, and lowered to an angle of 30 to 45 degrees. The tops of the pleachers are woven between equally-spaced stakes. A top binding of hazel (called hetherings) holds the hedge firm. The finished height of the hedge needs to be 1.25m. From the Garland Collection, of West Sussex County Records Office

HEDGE REJUVENATION - LAYING, COPPICING

Hedge-laying and coppicing are traditional methods of rejuvenating hedges that have become overgrown or gappy, due to neglect, old age or poor management. Most hedges will require laying or coppicing at intervals of between 10 and 25 years to keep them stockproof.

What does 'coppicing' mean?

Coppicing involves cutting individual trees and shrubs back to the base and allowing them to re-grow. It is particularly useful where the base of a hedge has become a row of large leggy stems. Some stems should be left to grow on as tall standard trees in the hedgeline. In any one year, coppice only sections of a hedge to reduce the impact on wildlife and landscape.

What does hedge-laying involve?

Hedge-laying is a method of stockproofing a gappy hedge. Ideally the hedge should be between three to five metres high. This provides enough stem and bush to make the finished hedge strong and stockproof and to provide more shelter for birds.

How do I fill the gap in my hedge?

By planting locally occurring, native species. Mulching the new plants is beneficial to retain moisture and suppress weeds. Protection from grazing stock and rabbits may also be necessary.

Where might I plant a new hedge?

In a variety of locations. You could plant along the line of an old hedge that has been removed, or along fence lines where larger fields have been divided. Hedgerows might also be planted between existing woods, copses, shaws or hedges, linking with other habitats like wildflower grasslands and ponds, to create wildlife 'corridors'. Hedges are ideal for new boundaries around gardens, paddocks and orchards. Again, use species traditionally found in the Weald that are suited to

There are a number of organisations who can advise and assist with hedge maintenance and rejuvenation. Contact the High Weald AONB Unit for details or visit www.highweald.org

Hedgerows Initiative



What must I do before removing a hedge? If you want to remove a hedgerow you must send a **hedgerow removal notice** to the local planning authority. The notice must set out your reasons for wanting

The strong presumption is that important hedgerows will be protected by a **hedgerow retention notice** unless circumstances justify its removal. The local planning authority cannot refuse hedge removal if the hedgerow is not important under the regulations.

The way in which the regulations apply to individual hedgerows is quite complex. Before formally seeking permission to remove a hedgerow, you are advised to discuss any plans to do so at an early stage with your local planning authority.

Weald Hedgerows Initiative

Hedges and the law

Are there any regulations which apply to hedges? Yes. The Hedgerow Regulations were introduced in 1997 to protect important hedgerows in the countryside The regulations state that it is a criminal offence, unless an exception applies, to deliberately remove a hedgerow without permission.

To which hedgerows do the regulations apply? The regulations apply to most countryside hedgerows in England and Wales. They apply to all hedgerows of 20 metres or more in length and to all hedgerows less than 20 metres in length which meet another hedgerow at each end. All hedgerows on, or adjoining land used for agriculture or forestry, the breeding and keeping of horses, ponies or donkeys, common land, village greens, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserves are included Garden hedges are not affected and there are other exceptions.



For sources of further information on the regulations contact your planning authority.

Including

poster

the local soils.