

Wild Parishes

Hedgerow and Woodland Management

- Marcus Militello – BBOWT, Hedgerow Havens Officer
- John Morris – Woodland Consultancy

www.bbowt.org.uk/wildparishes

Wild Hedges – A Wild Parishes Presentation

**Marcus Militello – Hedgerow Havens Project
Officer, BBOWT.**

What we'll be covering

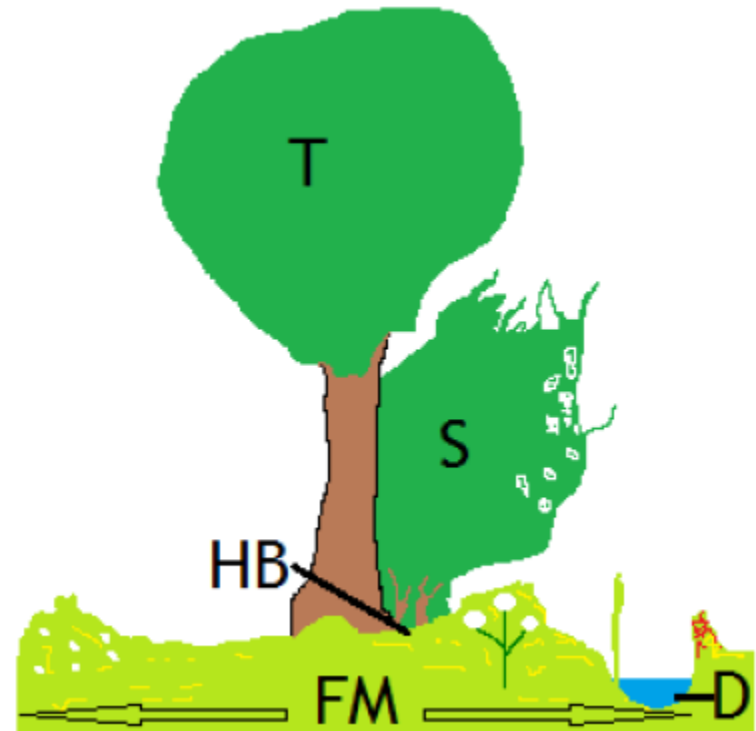
- **What makes a hedgerow and what makes it good for wildlife?**
 - Putting hedgerows in the context of parishes in the three counties.
- **How to manage your hedgerows**
- **Surveying and monitoring hedgerows**
- **Case studies and how to get the community involved**
- **Funding opportunities**

What makes a hedgerow 1

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



- **Hedge components, include: the tree (T), shrub layer (S), hedge base (HB), field margin (FM) and ditch (D).**
- Shrub layer: The woody part of the hedge consisting of bushes. Generally less than 4m high.
- Tree layer: Woody part of a hedge. Normally more than 4m high, but may also be represented by shorter pollards and coppice stools. Both isolated trees, where the canopies do not touch, and lines of trees are included here. Lines of trees may or may not have a shrub layer beneath them.

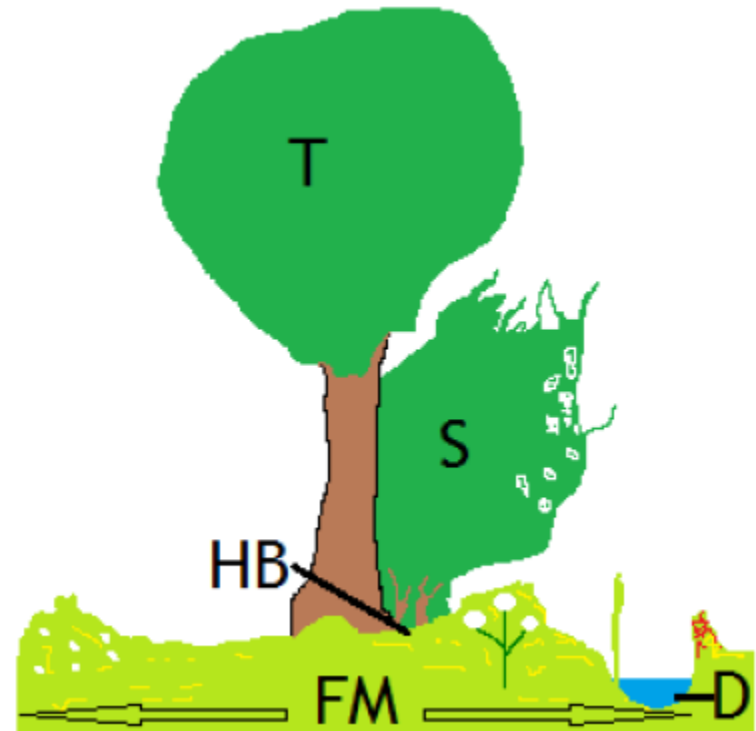


What makes a hedgerow 2

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



- Hedge base: The bare or vegetated ground beneath the shrub and tree layer. Includes the bank
- Field margin: The ground adjoining the base towards the field centre. Includes grass buffer strips, arable conservation headlands and field margins managed to benefit biodiversity.
- Ditch: Any watercourse closely associated with the hedge. May be shallow or deep, and carry water permanently, seasonally or just in response to heavy rainfall events. Ditches may be under the canopy of the shrubs or trees (internal) or outside this line (external, as in diagram).



Threats Hedgerows Face

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire



- As much as 50% of all hedgerows in the UK have been removed since WW2 (though this has now nearly stopped)
- Decrease in managed hedgerow nationally. Between 1998 and 2007 the length of managed hedgerow decreased by 13.2% (26000km). Most of these hedgerows have now become lines of trees or relict hedgerow.
- Development and infrastructure
- Intensive management – Increased pesticide use and fertiliser use. Yearly flailing!
- Increased field size – less common since changes in legislation in 1998 but still takes place.

Hedgerows within parishes



- One of several wildlife friendly habitats.
- One of the main ways parishioners interact with nature.
- Crucial for many of the well known garden species
- Threatened by over trimming.

What makes a hedgerow good for wildlife?



What wildlife relies on hedgerows?

- **130 priority species!**



How to manage your hedgerows



**Yearly flailing to the
same height**



How to manage your hedgerows – non intervention or less frequent cutting

Simply allowing the hedgerow to grow without cutting or cutting only occasionally

- 40% increase in flower and berries with two yearly cut
- 100% increase with three yearly cut
- 200% increase when left for five years.¹



¹ Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH)

How to manage your hedgerows – hedgelaying

**Important tool to rejuvenate overgrown
hedgerows.**

Benefits include:

- Prolonging life of trees
- Prevention of gaps
- Prevention of decreases in habitat quality
- Rejuvenation of trees, new growth. Important for many species
- Prevention of shading out of basal vegetation

How to manage your hedgerows – traditional hedgelaying



Pros

- Attractive
- Maintains a traditional country skill.
- Trees rejuvenate well

Cons

- Expensive: £12.41/m (2015 est.)
- Large number of fruit and berry bearing stems removed
- Area sheltering wildlife greatly decreased as hedgerows are reduced to thin lines.

How to manage your hedgerows – conservation style hedgelaying



- More fruit bearing stems retained
- More dead wood retained
- Can be carried out with hand tools or chainsaws
- Minimal resources needed
- Cheap: £6.64/m (2015 est.)

How to manage your hedgerows – mechanical/ wildlife hedgelaying

**Incision made at the base of each tree and 360⁰
digger used to lay.**

Benefits include:

- Cheapest: £4.13/m (2015 estimate)¹
- Fast: up to 300m laid in a day
- Retention of flowering stems and berry crop
- Retention of dead wood
- Minimal loss of shelter for wildlife using hedgerow
- Can lay larger hedgerows

¹ Staley 2015

How to manage your hedgerows – Coppicing

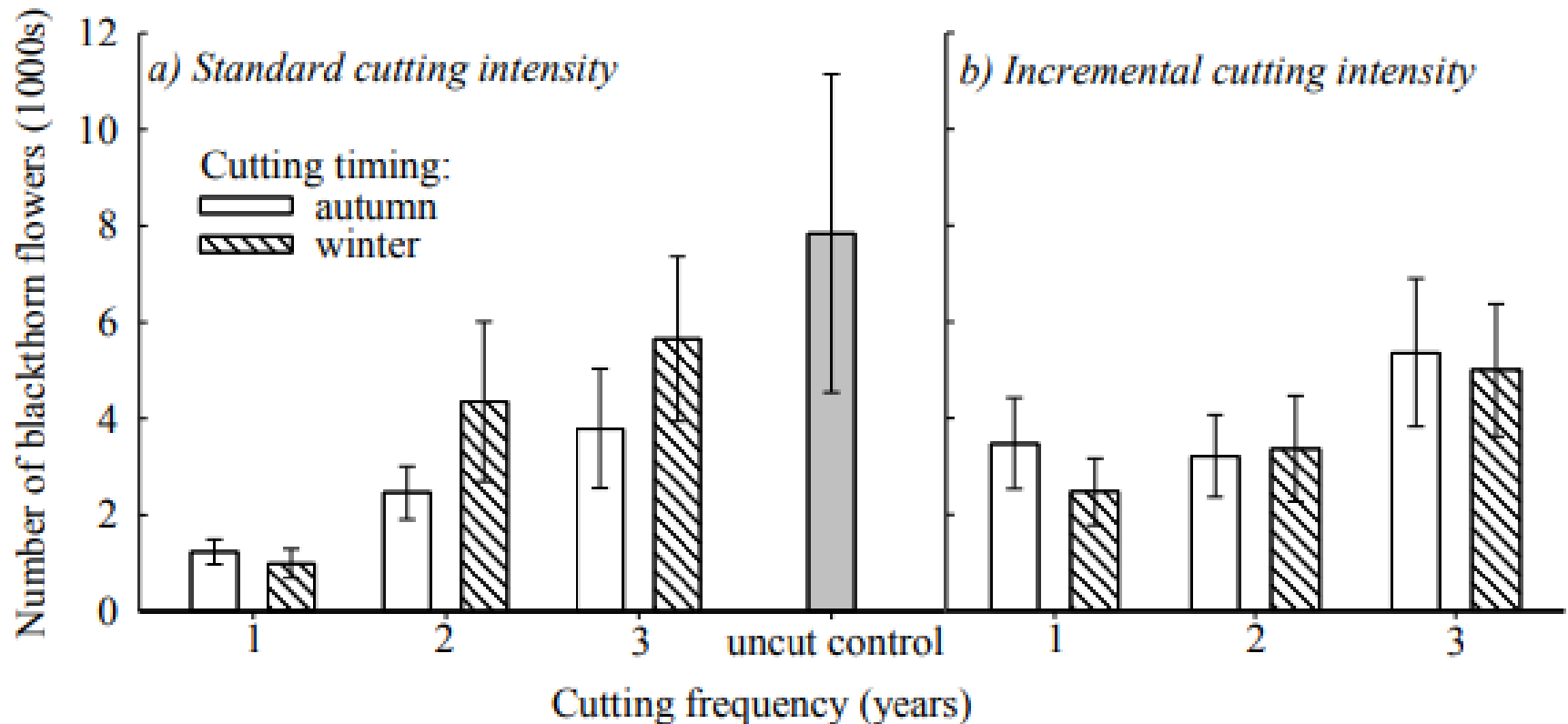


Involves cutting shrubs down to ground level

- Useful on very overgrown hedges
- Cheap: £3.93/m (2015 est.)
- Strongly rejuvenates hedgerow prolonging life
- Coppiced areas may need to be fenced off = extra cost
- Removes all fruit and flower bearing stems plus wood, creating a shortfall for wildlife.

How to manage your hedgerows – incremental flailing

Increasing height and width by 10cm with each cut



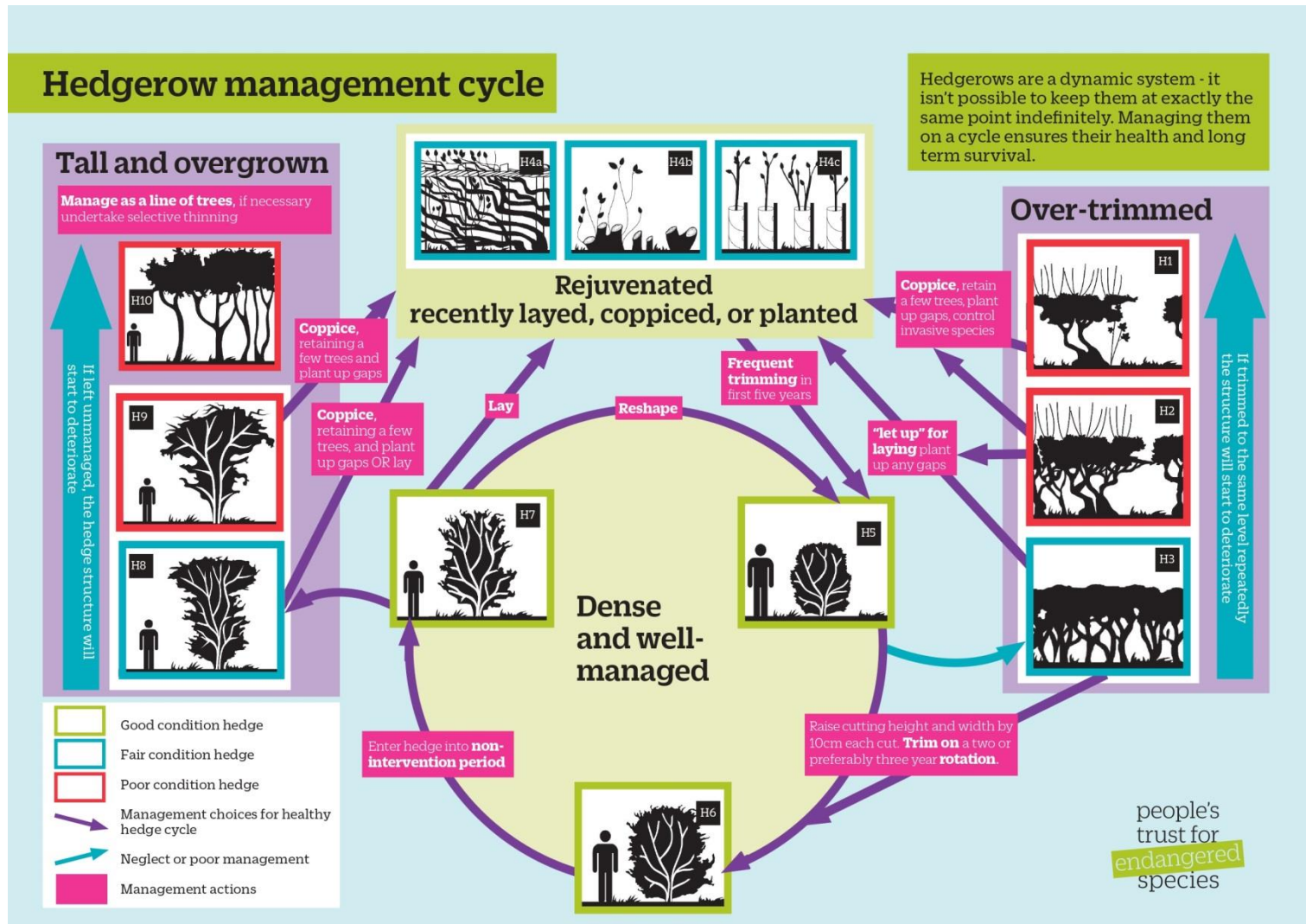
Surveying and monitoring hedgerows



Highly Important

- Informs management decisions.
- Assesses quality of habitat
- Easily repeatable
- Creates a framework for ensuring all hedgerows are in favourable or recovering condition.

The PTES hedgerow management cycle



PTES Hedgerow management cycle 2

Divides hedgerows into four categories, each with three sub categories.

- **H1-H3 – overtrimmed**, usually by yearly flail, creating a ‘hard knuckle’
- Developing gaps
- Base canopy rising above ground level
- Often lacking branches or foliage in the lower parts

Over-trimmed



PTES Hedgerow management cycle 3

Structurally managed



H4a-H4c – structurally managed

- Recently managed in some way
- H4a, recently laid (within the past five years). Can include traditional, conservation or mechanical styles
- H4b recently coppiced in the last five years
- Recently planted, again in the past five years

PTES Hedgerow management cycle 4

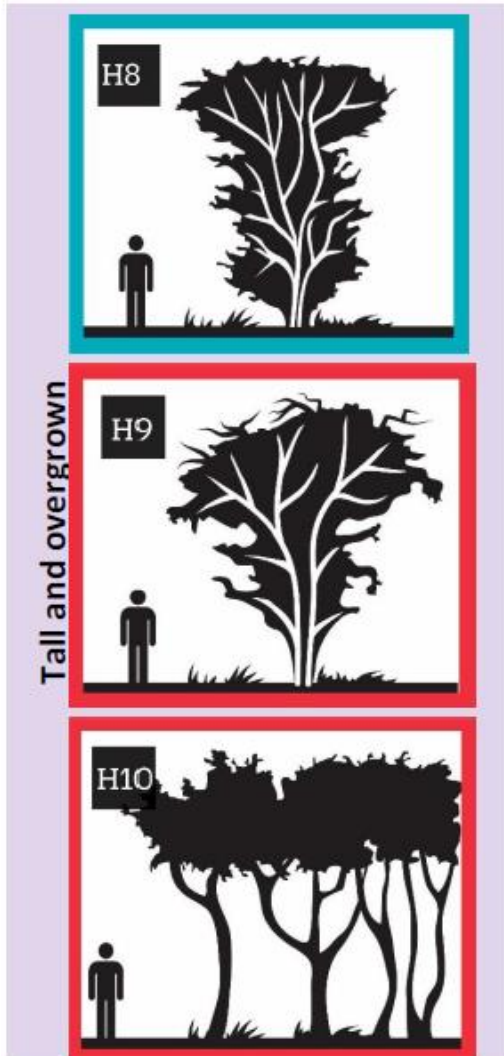
H5-H7 – dense and managed

- Healthy and dense
- Canopy stretches all the way or close to the ground providing good shelter
- Approximately 2-4m in height
- Ranges from hedgerows trimmed in the last year to those not trimmed for over five years

Dense and managed



PTES Hedgerow management cycle 5



H8-H10 – Tall and overgrown

- Tall (4m+)
- Top begin to spread becoming more 'tree shaped'
- Canopy base height rises as lower parts shaded out. This decreases value as shelter
- May be beginning to turn into a line of trees (H9-H10).
- Collapse creating gaps possible.

Other variables measured through hedgerow surveys

- Height
- Width
- Base vegetation
- Associated features – field margins, verges, banks, fences, ditches etc.
- Plant species richness and diversity
- Presence of non-native invasive species
- Canopy base height

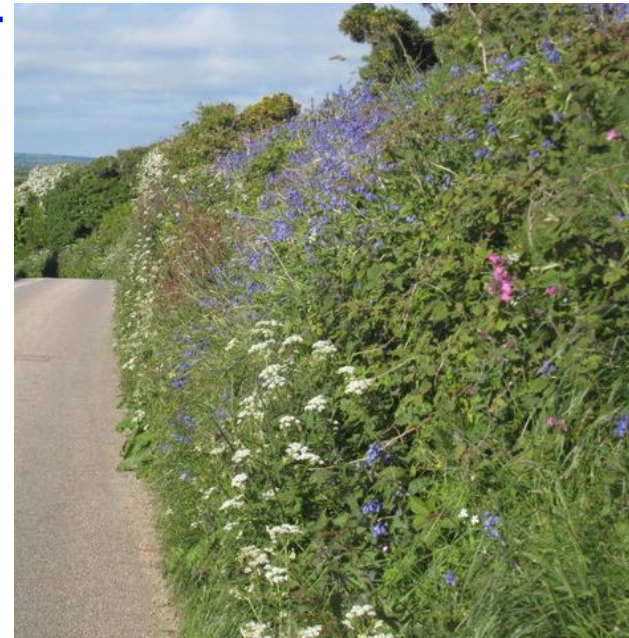
To build the best picture all hedgerows should be surveyed on a five year cycle.

Learning how to survey Hedgerows

For guidance visit this link

<https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/hedge-management-cycle>

- Online form or paper copies available
- Survey is fairly easy but will require basic tree ID skills
- I may through BBOWT be running a course next year, to express interest contact marcusmilitello@bbowt.org.uk
- Alternatively PTES may run free sessions for groups, contact through their website.



Getting the Community involved

Hedgerow works provide an opportunity to get parishioners out enjoying nature and can provide the backbone to parish conservation work. Opportunities provided can include:

- Autumn and winter hedgelaying
- Autumn and winter planting
- Spring and summer surveys and monitoring
- Providing refreshments for volunteers
- Writing content for online and other media
- Creating content for social media pages
- Fundraising



Case Study 1 – Conservation Hedgelaying in Whitchurch

- Ongoing project in the village of Whitchurch
- Started 2019
- Looking to lay over 100m of hedgerow over the next few years.



- Partnership between Whitchurch Wildlife Group, the parish council and BBOWT
- Village volunteers in attendance along with volunteers from surrounding villages.

Case Study 2 – Trad. Hedgelaying & hedge planting in Weedon chapel

- Planting of 20m new hedgerow
- Laying of a further 20m of hedgerow in traditional south of England style
- 19 local village volunteers involved



- Partnership between Weedon Parish Council and BBOWT.
- Carried out in conjunction with another project to create wildflower road verges and the planting of fruit trees.



Funding opportunities – The woodland Trust, MOREhedges



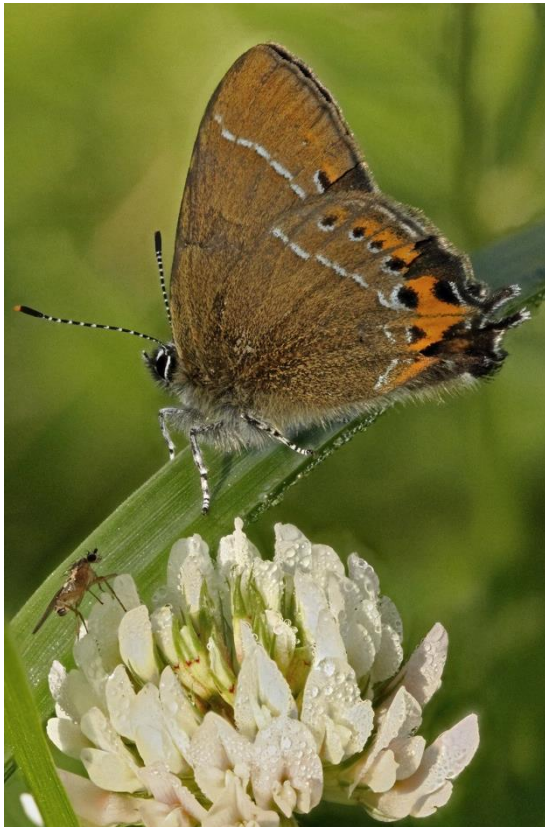
Subsidised hedgerow planting following on from the MORE woods project.

- Up to 75% of cost of materials covered.
- Will fund hedgerows of 100-250m or longer if connected to woodland
- Materials provided by woodland trust. Work to be carried out by the applicant.
- Species rich mixture of plants provided (5-6 plus standard trees)

Funding opportunities – The woodland Trust, Community tree packs

Subsidised tree packs.

- Various tree mixes provided including hedge, orchard, working wood and wildwood
- All local community groups eligible to apply
- Land must be accessible to the public
- Length of hedgerow may be from 6m up to 100m
- Tree packs provided by woodland trust



Funding opportunities – Landfill Community funding via entrust

Project funding from landfill.

- Extends to all wildlife friendly projects
- Funds projects such as hedgeplanting up to 90%, further 10% comes from the applicant
- Various waste disposal companies signed up
- Best to visit the entrust website to see what is available in your area.



Funding opportunities – Countryside stewardship

Government funding targeted at larger land owners.



- Only applicable for councils owning more than 5Ha of land which is farmed.
- Pays £8 per 100m side per year for general management
- £9.40/m for hedgelaying
- £11.60/m for hedgelaying
- £4/m for coppicing
- Apply through .gov website

Funding opportunities – Your local wildlife trust

Various, often localised project funding.

- Often a good first point of call when looking for funding. Even if wildlife trust funding is not available in your area, a trust should be able to tell you where to find it!
- Current BBOWT projects supplying hedgerow funding include the Hedgerow Havens (north of Aylesbury) and Rough Around the Edges (south of Aylesbury and part of the Chilterns)



Useful links & further reading

<http://www.hedgeline.org.uk/> - the best online resource for all things hedgerow

<https://ptes.org/hedgerow/> - another good online resource and access to the PTES hedgerow survey

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/morehedges-faqs/> funding opportunity for larger hedge planting projects

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/> free tree packs for communities

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-get-paid-for-environmental-land-management>
funding for councils with larger land holdings that are farmed

Useful links & further reading cont.

Book: a natural History of the hedgerow by John Wright – An excellent informative book for anyone interested in the subject.

<https://www.entrust.org.uk/landfill-community-fund/> Landfill Community funding. Various business waste providers such as Biffa, Veolia and Viridor will provide funding for projects such as hedge planting. It is usually necessary to match 10% of costs.

<https://www.bbowt.org.uk/wildlife/wildlife-conservation/hedgerow-havens> homepage for BBOWT's Hedgerow Havens Project

Useful Contacts – Buckinghamshire

- <https://roberttuckwell.co.uk/> - Contractors able to carry out mechanical hedgelaying.
- dean@ddlandscapes.co.uk 01296715393/ 07715047502
Dean Dyer - traditional hedgelayer.
- <http://www.nigeladamscountysidemangement.co.uk/nigel-adams-hedgelaying.php> - Nigel Adams, traditional hedgelayer and highly knowledgeable on hedgerow management. One of the creators of Hedgelink
- marcusmilitello@bbowt.org.uk – I can provide land advice and in some instances funding for small projects.

Useful Contacts – Berkshire & Oxfordshire

- <https://www.theoldfarmyard.co.uk/> - Clive Leeke, traditional hedgelayer and trainer.
- <http://www.nigeladamscountysidemangement.co.uk/nigel-adams-hedgelaying.php> - Nigel Adams, traditional hedgelayer and highly knowledgeable on hedgerow management. One of the creators of Hedgelink
- 07776 133383/ g.crockford@btinternet.com Gary Crockford farm contractors (Berks) – have carried out flailing work for BBOWT before and may be able to carry out incremental cutting of hedgerows.
- There are currently no contractors that we work with in Berks and Oxon carrying out mechanical hedgelaying. However it is highly likely that an agricultural contractor would be able to do this provided a brief was provided to them. BBOWT may be able to assist with this.
- marcusmilitello@bbowt.org.uk – I can provide some land advice and can organise a site visit with members of the wider countryside team if appropriate.

Thanks for listening



Tree & woodland management in the Chilterns

John Morris

Woodland advice and management



- Worked here since 1983
- Woods are important part of the landscape character of Chilterns
- Valuable for wildlife, recreation, cultural heritage, as a timber and wood fuel resource.
- Most woods have survived because they were useful and so not converted to agriculture.

Chilterns AONB a wooded landscape,
21% woodland cover, mainly on hilltops
on poor clay with flints & plateau soils



Many ancient Chiltern beech woods are not plantations!



Old hazel coppice – unmanaged wood



What is an ancient wood?



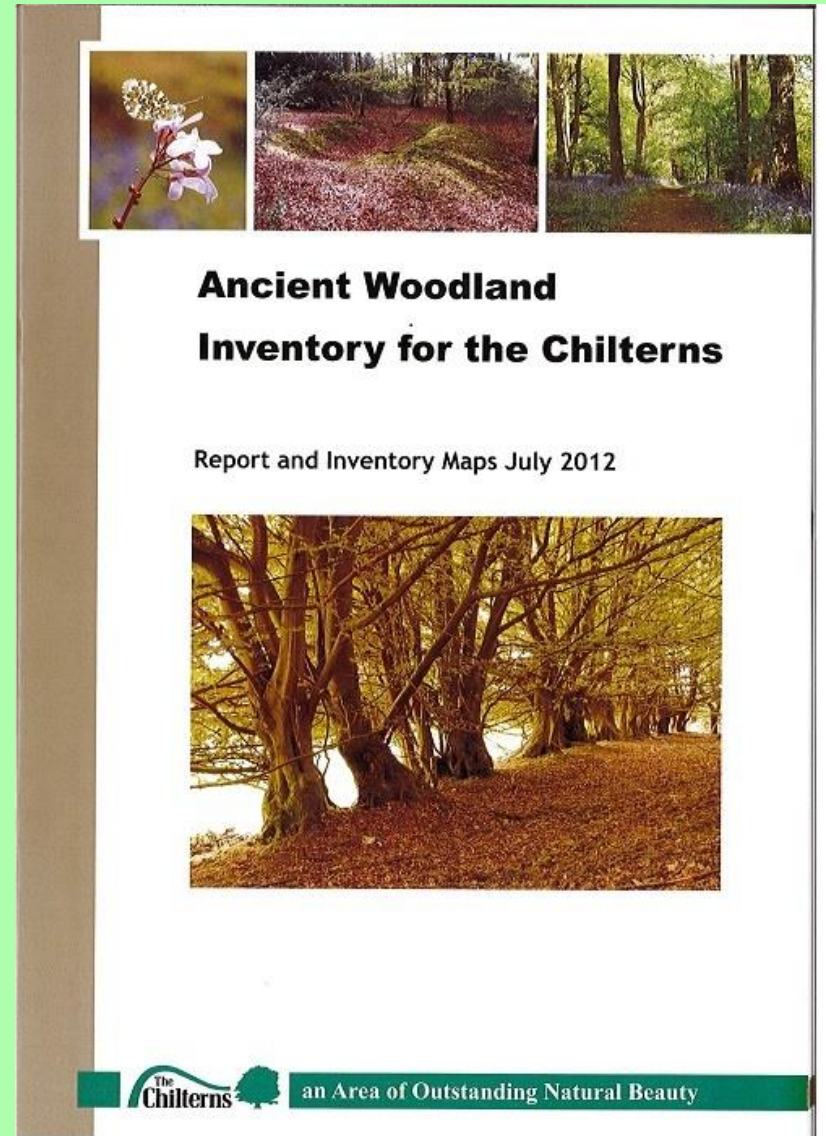
- Existed for over 400 years, from 1600.
- Idea thought of by botanists!
- Likely to contain flora adapted to woodland conditions eg. shade tolerant / spring flowering – indicator species

Keepers of Time policy (2005)

- Importance of Ancient Woods for their archaeology and cultural interest, as well as for nature conservation – priority habitats
- Restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS)
- Biodiversity / Habitat Action Plans
- Protection of ancient trees
- New England Tree Strategy being drafted 2020 – woodland creation a priority

Revised AWI - Published July 2012

- Mapped using GIS & survey of ancient woods for Natural England & Forestry Commission inventory
- Added small woods under 2ha
- www.chilternsaonb.org/ancient-woodland.html



Woodland Regulations

Consent for felling may be needed

- Felling licence – Forestry Commission
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) – local authority (District or Unitary)
- Trees in Conservation Areas – local authority (District or Unitary)
- SSSI – Natural England
- Scheduled monuments – local authority (County or Unitary)
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/880171/UKFS_for_Planners.pdf

Prepared management plan for Lane End PC for Moorend Common SSSI



I organise grants & felling licences,
practical work in woods – timber sales



Felling conifers – PAWS restoration



Extraction of timber, stacking & loading in field. Heavy forestry equipment can cause ground damage.



Felling mature conifers & replanting in Monkton Wood



Conifers felled, replanted broadleaves, in tree guards, after 2 years



Naturally regenerated beech wood Captain's Wood, Chesham



Do you know what trees and woods you have and are responsible for?

- Maps of wooded areas
- Tree surveys – frequency depends on age of trees and level of risk to public etc – vary time of year of checks
- winter to assess damage,
- summer to assess health
- Tag individual trees outside woods in high risk areas, link to reports & maps
- Are you insured?

Young trees planted by busy A road in Thame, owned by Town Council



Parkland trees in Thame, need monitoring and a replacement programme



Why fell trees?

- Safety – risk assessment
- Decay or Disease – but consider if work is necessary or can tree be kept?
- Damage – tree surgery?
- To regenerate areas – replanting?
- To create or maintain more open habitats
- To sell timber or firewood
- To thin out some trees to give space for others to grow



A splitting Norway maple trunk, close to road in recreation ground & storm damaged rowan in a wood
Safety felling!



Improving the woodland habitat



Harvesting firewood in Bottom Wood



**Silver washed fritillary and
Purple Emperor butterflies**

Smaller equipment used to extracting logs in Walkwood, for Beaconsfield Town Council



Invasive laurel in Walkwood, owned by Beaconsfield Town Council clearance by Chiltern Rangers



Other issues

- Deer browsing
- Grey squirrel damage
- Insect pests eg – oak processionary moth
- Litter, flytipping
- Vandalism
- Anti-social or criminal behaviour
- Access & information
- Fencing & boundaries

Roe deer & young fallow deer, numbers are increasing, browsing can cause problems to young trees & flora. Muntjac also common.



Grey squirrels damage beech & oak in summer, scars in beech stump



Climate Change

- Impact is most likely on older trees, particularly beech
- Drought & heat – a real threat this year! Some trees were suffering last year, very young or older trees most at risk.
- Storms – older and exposed trees at risk
- Linked to diseases and new pests – bacteria, fungi, insects
- Consider what trees will grow in future?
- <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/ecological-site-classification-decision-support-system-esc-dss/>

Tree diseases

- Horse Chestnut
- Pines
- Larch
- Oaks
- Elms
- Beech?
- Ash
- Alder



- <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/pest-and-disease-resources/>

Horse Chestnut leaf miner (moth)



Ash in the Chilterns

Ash has become the dominant young tree in many woods across the Chilterns

- Through natural regeneration
- Selection
- Planting
- Damage to alternative species by grey squirrel



Ash is one of the commonest trees in England



Ash dieback, is a wind dispersed fungal disease. It is getting worse and will kill many millions of trees, which become brittle and fall



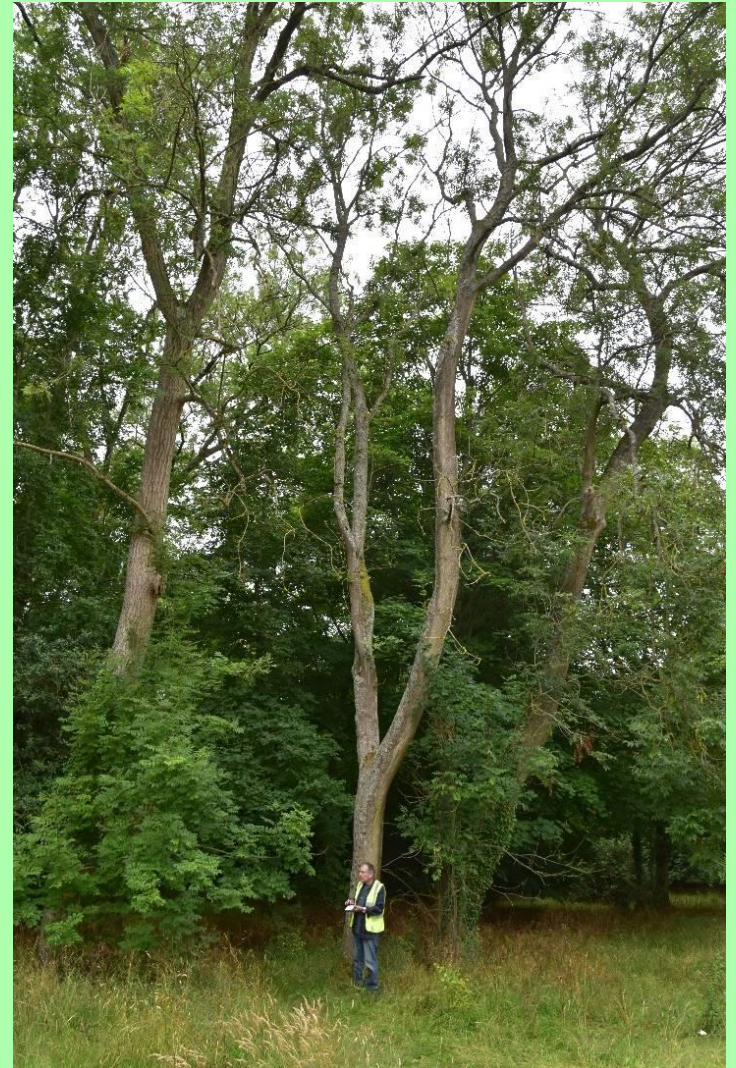
Classic signs of ash dieback



Storm damaged cherry & ash dieback on Chesham Bois Common

It took years for management plan to be approved here

- Mapping with RLR
- Commonland
- Conservation Area
- TPO
- Ancient wood



Tree inspection found dying Sycamore on Chesham Bois Common by main road



House damaged by falling beech tree



Road blocked by fallen ash – risk assessment & inspections!



Tree surgeons work to fell old ash

– cherry picker – can be expensive



Marking ash for felling licence -
can be sold for firewood – in quantity



Lessons of tree diseases

- Don't Panic!
- Do a risk assessment & get advice
- Plan ahead – you may need a **felling licence** from the Forestry Commission.
- Timber and firewood can be valuable
- So is dead wood habitat
- Nature / woodland recovers given time
- Something is likely to grow in its place
- Planting is not always the answer
- Deer management will be more important
- But woods will be different

Stacked oak timber & firewood for sale



Sign to explain reasons for safety work



Woodland Trust may help fund tree and hedge planting by communities

- Right tree, right place
- Think soils
- Any overhead wires
- Or underground services?
- Plant in winter
- Protect from animals
- Aftercare / weeding
- Mulch, consider watering in dry summer



Woodland creation – grants available what to plant in a changing climate?



New wood created for Stoke Poges PC
planted over 20 years ago, now needs
thinning to respace trees.



Retaining standing deadwood,
the tree guards protect from deer browsing



Fallen dead trees are valuable!

- Dead and decaying trees are vital components of a properly functioning forest ecosystem and play a role in sustaining biodiversity, soil fertility and energy flows



Woodland butterflies like light, open areas



Woods are popular places to visit



I run tree identification courses



John Morris Woodland Consultancy

For

Woodland management advice & assistance

Tree surveys & tree planting advice

Email - johnkmorris0@gmail.com

Twitter @ChilternWoods