

SOUTH OF ENGLAND HEDGE LAYING SOCIETY

Reg Charity No 1046124

Promoting the craft of hedge laying,
training, competitions and countryside management

August 2017



HEDGEHOGS: When did you last see one?

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear members

Welcome to the August edition of the South of England Hedge Laying Society News Letter. Thank you to Ian Runcie for bringing this together for us & for Frank Wright for printing it up.

As the summer has progressed the committee has been busy discussing the new venues for the 2017 / 2018 cutting season.

Frank has been scouting out the hedges for us & Tim Hughes has been visiting coppicing venues, we have 2 new woodlands to work in this winter. Thank you to both for your hard work & dedication. I look forward to seeing you all on the training days & events throughout the season. Good luck in the competitions if you are taking part. The season kicks off at the "deep end" for experienced cutters with the Laughton Ploughing Match Hedge Laying competition on the 9th of September at Goat Farm Ringmer, for more information contact Des Whittington on 01825 890357, spectators welcome.

Best wishes Phil Hart, Chairman.

Editor's Notes

After some experimentation, the committee have decided to go with the A5 formula for this newsletter.

Supreme Champion Paul Mathews is offering training in different styles to hedge layers with experience. We have a thank you for the, often overlooked, competition judges. Also why an untidy competition hedge should be awarded more points than a tidy one!

PS. Just as this newsletter was going to press I received information from The Surrey Wildlife Trust who also appear to be concerned about hedgehogs (p5).
Ian Runcie

Hedgehogs: Is a Tidy Hedge a Sterile Hedge?

Hedgehog numbers are in rapid decline as shown in a survey in 2015.

http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/pdf/SoBH_2015.pdf

The main cause for this seems to be changes in arable farming but increasing hard spaces in gardens may also be contributing.

A 2011 campaign by the British Hedgehog Preservation Society sought to encourage wild areas in gardens, preferably in some continuity with neighbours and to reduce slug pellets and other potentially harmful chemicals. Despite this, a survey by Gardener's World in February suggests that the declining numbers may be accelerating.

In a survey of hedge management for DEFRA, Hedgelink state that "a dense basal layer of vegetation, should probably be encouraged for the benefit of the species"(hedgehogs). They also emphasise the advantages of a grass verge on either side of the hedge.

http://www.hedgelink.org.uk/cms/cms_content/files/65_hedgerow_management_and_wild_life.pdf

The Centre for Ecology & Hydrology has published research on regeneration following various types of hedge management, including a conservation style suggested by Nigel Adams. There was an impassioned article in the National Newsletter by Hedgelink's Rob

Wolton arguing the conservation case for leaving dead wood within the hedge, rather than burning it.

https://www.ceh.ac.uk/sites/default/files/HedgerowRejuvenationResearchProject_SummaryLeaflet_June15.pdf and https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XZeudI_xh441PtgBB9AsR7iknrXTGUOzy9gY4fVIYgRI/edit?usp=sharing

Hedge laying is useful for small mammal preservation but the process of laying must temporarily disturb habitat and clearance of the base layer prolongs this damage, possibly for some time.

Could we do better? When we are out in the field could we leave dead wood in the hedge to encourage the insects etc within the food chain and could we leave some leaf litter at the base?

In competitions points are given for tidy hedges and a dense basal layer of vegetation is definitely out during a SOE competition.

Given that the main purpose of Hedge laying these days is conservation, should we be training new hedge layers with more emphasis on good conservation practices rather than for competitions?

Perhaps our judges could even be persuaded to award points for conservation effect rather than for tidiness.

Ian Runcie

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From John Wilson, Past President

Dear Editor

When I received the Spring 2017 edition of the SOEHS newsletter I noted that the competition judges were all long established members of the Society: in fact all were members in the mid eighties, before many current members were born!

Why are they still getting involved?

After many years of hedgelaying they, like many others, continue to support the activities of the Soehs, keeping the society so vibrant and the envy of hedgelayers all over the country.

Keeping involved after being very active is just as enjoyable as when one has just joined the Society.

The 2017 judges no longer get praise for winning competitions and rarely receive adequate thanks for their efforts. So may I record a generous “thank You” to those judges and many other backroom members who keep the SOEHS events so busy and enjoyable.

John Wilson

PS

Neil Sand and I at Bentley as 'Bill Hook'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Andv7a0NPEc>

or search youtube for hedge laying with bill hook



Gary Moore has some space in the Hurstpierpoint Ploughing match Hedge Laying Competition on a medium hedge that would be a good introduction to competing at Ploughing hedge match level. if anyone is interested please phone Gary on 07767 894961

Editor's note

Talking about videos: I like this one from 1942, starring Deighton. Deighton is an ultra-cool hedge-layer who manages: a mean billhook, a 7lb axe and trains up a land girl, all without removing his pipe. He has a method of trimming hedges that I have not seen before. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoprVhpOKIk> or search youtube for 'hedging(1942)'



HEDGEROW HEROES

Following a donation of £20,000 from Chessington World of Adventures, plus a further £7000 raised by staff, Surrey Wildlife Trust has launched 'Hedgerow Heroes'. Their aim is to preserve hedgerows as wildlife havens with reference to dormice, bats, birds, bees and yes hedgehogs!



They will train volunteers in hedge surveying and in traditional management techniques, including hedge laying. They will also plant some new hedges and hope to set up a database of Surrey hedges. The project manager is one of our new members, Jim Jones. www.surreywildlifetrust.org/hedgerowheroes



Paul's Midland Style

Do you fancy some extra Hedgelaying training?

This two-day training course provided by Hedges & Hurdles owner, Paul Matthews a Hedgelaying and Hurdle making professional. Hedges & Hurdles has been in operation since 2000 contracting out services to local authorities, organisations such as the National Trust and private residents and landowners including local farmers who wish to ensure a stock-proof barrier around their land. Paul is a registered and active member of the South of England Hedgelaying Society and the National Hedge Laying Society of England & Wales. An active participant in Regional and National Hedgelaying competitions Paul was awarded the title of National Champion in 2012, 2014 and 2015 and was very proud to be awarded Supreme Champion status in 2015.

Who should attend?

Both individual bookings and private groups can book. This course is great as a team building activity!

We will be on the edge of a field, therefore, please note that Hedgelaying is not suitable for anybody unable to move around easily on rough ground.

When are the courses?

Courses take place during selected weekends from October 7th, 2017 through to the end of February 2018. Each course is two days, commencing at 9.00 a.m. To 4.00 p.m. with an hour break for lunch.

What will I learn? Day one: Coppicing

Following an introduction, you will learn how to coppice the stakes and binders from the neighbouring woodlands and prepare them ready for use.

Day two: Hedgelaying

You will have the option to work in pairs or alone, laying between 8 to 10 yds of hedge. All hedges will be laid in the South of England style, a double brush hedge.

Course suitability

We welcome both novices and intermediaries, training up to 10 individuals per course. Private groups are welcome. *For those who are already experienced Hedgelayers there will be an opportunity to learn a different style or two; pick up tips and learn new methods.*

What shall I bring with me?

We supply the required tools and protection: including axes, billhooks, pruning saws and eye protection. Suitable gloves such as welding gauntlets are also required. If you do have your own tools and protection please bring them, suitably sharpened.

You will be cutting with hand tools. If a chainsaw is required the instructor will undertake this.

You will remain in the open air and should dress warmly. Bring waterproofs and strong footwear, preferably boots with toe caps.

You can either bring your own pack lunch or order lunch through the organiser and pay on the day. There are shops nearby. You will need plenty to drink, bottled water will be provided.

How much does it cost and how do I book?

Private group bookings for between 6 to 10 individuals @ £175.00 per person. If you have a larger group please contact the organiser to discuss.

Training days for individuals and smaller groups @ £190.00 per person.

Various weekend dates are available to choose from. All bookings to be made online via the following Eventbrite page link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hedgelaying-training-courses-tickets-34858886869?ref=estw>

Any questions regarding your booking please contact the organiser Lorraine:
lellery@outlook.com Tel: 01737762171

For questions about the training course please contact Paul directly:
<https://www.facebook.com/hedgesandhurdles/> Tel: 07958331203

Training in Hedge Laying

The following training days are planned for the 17/18 season.
Dates and locations may be subject to change.

	Event	Date
	Coppicing	23 rd Sept 2017
Day 1	Hedge Laying	14 th Oct 2017
Day 2	Hedge Laying	11 th Nov 2017
	Coppicing	18 th Nov 2017
	Tool sharpening	25 th Nov 2017
Day 3	Hedge Laying	9 th Dec 2017
Day 4	Hedge Laying improvers day	6 th Jan 2018
	Coppicing	20 th Jan 2018
	President v Chairman	27 th Jan 2018
	Annual Competition	18 th Feb 2018
	Fun day	17 th Mar 2018

Fees

Hedge Laying: the course (days 1 to 4) £150.

1 taster day £60

Tool Sharpening: £10

Coppicing days: FREE to Members

If you are unable to attend a training event please let us know. No shows and late cancellations are a headache for the organisers. If you are unable to attend an event the following fees apply:

Over 1 week – no fee

Between 2 days and 1 week - £10

Less than 2 days – £20

No show / the night before / on the day - £30

Training continued

Experienced current members

A section of hedge will be allocated for experienced current members wishing to lay hedge, if you wish to please let Phill Piddell know which event(s).

Maps

For each event a reminder email is sent about 1 week before, and Maps are emailed a few days later

To Join

To take part in any of these events you need to join the society so you are covered by the Society's insurance. Membership is £15 per annum. Please bring your membership cards to all events.

To get booking information for these events, send a completed membership application form (below) to Phill Piddell.



Membership cards to be phased out

The committee have agreed that from next year the society will no longer issue annual membership cards. Previously we used the cards to ensure people turning up at events were paid up members, but with our new booking system this is no longer an issue.

When you re-join you will get a confirmation email. If you do not have an email address, but we have your mobile number you will get a text message. If we don't have either then you will not get anything.

Please email or text Phill Piddell phill.piddell@bt.com / 07933 128880 including your name and the event, if you wish to attend an event, or if you are subsequently unable to attend. This is very important as our events are quite a logistical challenge, and accurate attendee numbers really help.

South of England Hedge-Laying Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (or renewal)

April 2017 to March 2018



PRESIDENT:

Peter Tunks
The Coach House, Waltersville Way
Horley, RH6 9EP
Tel: 01293 784826 / 07836 75757

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Phill Piddell, 1 Hope House Farm
Cottage Crouch Lane, Sandhurst
Cranbrook, Kent
TN18 5PD tel: 01580 850768

Annual membership of the Society	£15 per person
Lapel Badge	£5 per badge
Total	
Please treat my membership as a Gift Aid donation (YES / NO)	

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.

PLEASE USE CLEAR BLOCK CAPITALS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Email _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Emergency Contact (Name and Number) _____

Age (if under 18): _____ Occupation: _____

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Society is informed of any changes in your communication details.

Please return the completed form to Phill Piddell. You will receive a Membership Card in the post.

Alternatively please email the above details to phill.piddell@bt.com and transfer the money directly to our bank account: SORT CODE **20-49-76** Account **90867381** (South of England Hedge Laying Soc)

Renew on online - www.sehls.co

FOR YOUR DIARY

9 th Sept	Laughton & District Competition, Gote Farm, Ringmer
16 th Sept	West Grinstead competition, Itchingfield, W Sussex
15, 16, 17 th Sept	Weald Woodfair, Bentley
23 rd Sept.	Coppicing. Furzefield Wood New Way Lane, Hurstpierpoint
7 th Oct	Hurstpierpoint Competition
30 th Sept, 1 st Oct	Autumn Show and Game Fair, Ardingly Show Ground
14 th Oct	Hedge Laying 1, Scotney Castle, Kent
28 th Oct	National Competition, Stourhead. (Vets - fill in a form and indicate Veteran).
11 th Nov	Hedge Laying 2, Magham Down, Sussex
18 th Nov	Coppicing. Furze Field nr. Turners Hill
25 th Nov	Tool Sharpening, Plumpton College, Sussex
9 th Dec.	Hedge Laying 3, Magham Down, Sussex
6 th Jan 2018	Hedge Laying Improvers Day 4, Magham Down, Sussex
20 th Jan	Coppicing TBA
27 th Jan	President's verses Chairman
18 th Feb SUNDAY	ANNUAL COMPETITION
17 th March	Fun Day Hope Farm, Peening Quarter, Wittersham, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 7NP

NOTICES

Fletching charity day 18 March 2017

On the 14 June Bob Hunt, Des Whittington and Mike Parrott were invited to the opening of Patchwork Farm at Chailey Heritage by the Duchess of Gloucester. The following Thursday four of us presented



the society cheque for £2000 to be used in the running of the farm. Members of the South of England Hedge Laying Society were warmly thanked by Joan Martin, secretary of the Fundraisers for their continued support of the Chailey Heritage Foundation.

Patchwork Farm is a multi-sensory learning environment designed and created for those with complex disabilities. As well as a learning resource for pupils at Chailey Heritage the farm will be used by schools in the area.

Although we raise money for the charity on a bi-annual basis, donations from members are always welcome and a collecting box will be at all our hedge laying days. Thank you all who donated.



Mike Parrott

NOTICES

Letter from Chailey Heritage

Dear Mike

Thank you for supporting our appeal to build Patchwork Farm. It was lovely to see you again at the opening, and I understand from Joan and Jenny that your cheque presentation the following week went well.

With thanks to funding from The South of England Hedge Laying Society and many other generous supporters, we have been able to create a fantastic facility which is fully wheelchair accessible and designed specifically to meet the needs of young people with complex disabilities and health needs.

Following the Official Opening on Wednesday 14th June, groups of young people from across the Foundation have started visiting Patchwork Farm for hands on sessions with the animals.

Thank you again for your wonderful support.

*Best wishes Sally-Anne Murray, Development Director
Chailey Heritage Foundation*



The Duchess of Gloucester, pictured second from the left is seen with teachers, volunteers and children at the opening of Patchwork Farm.

Bird Watch April 2017



Rose Coloured Starling

This is certainly, to me, the best time and most exciting time of the year. There is so much anticipation in the bird world with the departure of those that came here for the winter and the arrival of those species we welcome for the summer. To see the first Swallow of the year is

always special and if we hear the Cuckoo on the odd occasion it will be reminiscent of a once frequent sound that was locally so familiar. Another memory from the past is the nest of a Song Thrush with its smooth mud lining that retains the warmth of the incubating bird

when it leaves to feed and containing the bright blue eggs with their round black dots. Again sadly not as familiar as in the past but there will be some.

Bird song will be at its peak by the end of the month but can be confusing with so many different species in competition especially early in the morning. Experienced birders are so sharp at recognising not only the song but the contact notes of individual species that birds are quickly identified often before they are seen.

At the end of February I went on another "twitch". My youngest son announced that we were going to Crawley, where there was a species of bird I had never seen. Back in the autumn a Rose-coloured Starling had been found at the corner of a housing estate, where it had remained throughout. When it was first identified it was juvenile and bore no resemblance to its flashy name. Then it was a light brown colour

with a yellow bill and could have been easily overlooked in the group of common Starlings. As the winter passed its mature plumage emerged and over the weeks the pink of the main body showed through. It developed a shaggy crest on its head and as it had now started to sing, was recognised as a male. The view we had was in very moderate light but amongst the other Starlings it was easily distinguished, the main body resembling the colour of a Jay and the tail is longer. The bird has been well featured and photographed on the Sussex Ornithological website but by the time you read this it is likely to have returned to its normal breeding range in Eastern Europe.

Bird watching is one of the few hobbies that wherever you go, woods, countryside, seashore or even in cities where so long as you keep alert, there is the possibility of sighting something of interest and specific to the habitat.

Reg Lanaway

Committee Members and Officers

President	Peter Tunks 01293 784826
Vice President	Bob Hunt 01273 400898
Chairman & Training Officer:	Phil Hart 0771 705 4172
Vice Chairman	Frank Wright 01273 493309
Secretary and Show Officer	Chris Burchall-Collins 01273 495026
Treasurer	Mike Parrot 01273410292
Assistant Secretary:	Vacant
Membership Secretary: and Competition Secretary	Phill Piddell 01580 850768
Newsletter Editor	Ian Runcie 01273 567278
Awards Officer:	Mathew Beard
Coppicing Officer and committee member	Tim Hughes 01444892742
Transport Manager:	Bob Hunt 01273 400898
Hedge Manager:	Frank Wright 01273493309
National Reps	Phil Hart 0771 705 4172 & John French 01424 772371

Committee Dates, 27th Sept. 22nd Nov

**Items for next Newsletter to Ian by mid
November please**

**Editor: Ian Runcie, Windrush, Cuilfail,
Lewes, BN7 2BE hedger@mail.com**

Acknowledgements: Rose coloured Starling: Flickr Vasos vasiou.

Hedgehog Flickr, foxysj.

Harvest Mouse, Flickr [Nigel Hodson](#)