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| South of England Hedge Laying Society  Reg. Charity No 1046124 | SOEHL LOGO ltrhd |
| Promoting the craft of hedge laying, training, competitions and countryside management | |

**HEDGELAYING**

# METHOD STATEMENT

for

<<LOCATION>>

**Contents**

[METHOD STATEMENT 1](#_Toc437358265)

[1. General Method Statement 3](#_Toc437358266)

[2. Health and Safety 3](#_Toc437358267)

[3. Associated Documents 4](#_Toc437358268)

[4. Management Structure 4](#_Toc437358269)

[5. Training 4](#_Toc437358270)

[6. Communications 4](#_Toc437358271)

[7. Site Access 4](#_Toc437358272)

[8. Work Procedures 5](#_Toc437358273)

[9. Tools and Personal Protective Equipment 5](#_Toc437358274)

[10. Transport 5](#_Toc437358275)

[11. Environmental Policy 5](#_Toc437358276)

[12. Waste 5](#_Toc437358277)

[13. Welfare 5](#_Toc437358278)

[METHOD STATEMENT (SPECIFIC) 6](#_Toc437358279)

# 1. General Method Statement

South of England Hedge Laying Society (SEHLS) undertake hedge laying work for local authorities and private clients. The work entails the cutting of small and medium trees to form a stock proof hedge, and occasionally, the disposal of waste material of arising from hedge laying activity.

The works are carried out in a wide variety of locations including, but not limited to farmland, parkland, domestic gardens, public roadways, public pathways etc.

The work is carried out by skilled, trained and competent individuals or individuals undergoing supervised training. We work individually or in groups of two or three as dictated by a task/job, risk assessment and the level of skills the individuals have.

All works procedures incorporate safe systems of working and form part of the internal quality control.

SEHLS expect all clients to comply with the statutory requirements of Health and Safety Legislation and inform us of all known hazards and risks that may affect their health and safety whilst at the client’s location.

The hedge laying works are potentially hazardous by nature. The training in work procedures, safe systems of working and management systems ensure that the works are completed in a safe manner.

# 2. Health and Safety

All SEHLS volunteers have received basic health and safety training applicable to their responsibilities. Formal chainsaw training certificate details are validated with the issuing body and are recorded on the SEHLS membership list. Trainees are given a safety briefing before they commence work. The health and safety policy indicates the way that SEHLS manages health and safety. All volunteers are empowered to take whatever action they deem appropriate to ensure the health and safety of themselves, their work colleagues and others that may be affected by their actions or the actions of others.

All members are advised to use appropriate PPE for the task in hand, this includes hand, eye and foot protection. Any member using a chainsaw must be formally qualified, operate in a safe manner and use appropriate PPE. A basic first aid kit along with qualified first aiders is available at all events, as part of the site risk assessment we check for specific risks along with details for the nearest A&E and mobile phone coverage.

Due to the nature of the hedge laying a safe working perimeter around chainsaw users is not always possible, in such cases the operator will take reasonable precautions.

# 3. Associated Documents

This method statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

* SEHLS Health And Safety Advice For Society Activities
* SEHLS Training Welcome Pack
* SEHLS Risk Assessments

# 4. Management Structure

SEHLS operations are under the control of the committee. All volunteers are under the direct control of the Training Officer, Competition Secretary, Steward, or other Committee member on site. All volunteers are trained and skilled in their respective work. Work at the site is allowed only when a committee member is present. Some works require at least three team members present. Specific detail is given in the works instructions.

# 5. Training

All SEHLS volunteers receive training appropriate to the task that they will undertake. Any member using a chainsaw must be fully qualified and hold a certificate with either LANTRA or NPTC. First aiders are trained in First Aid at work.

All volunteers are supervised to ensure the correct methods of working are used during site operations

# 6. Communications

Mobile telephones are used as emergency communications, when working in areas with no mobile coverage the Risk Assessment will be reviewed to provide alternative means of communication.

# 7. Site Access

SEHLS expect all clients to provide whatever information and supervision is necessary to ensure the safety of their volunteers during all site works. Work is generally carried out at weekends between 8.30 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. weather and available daylight permitting. Alternative work patterns will be arranged directly with clients, site owners, occupiers or others, should it be required. Due to the nature of the work and the locations visited, health and safety arrangements for safe access and egress will be assessed at the work site in conjunction with the clients and owners or occupiers.

# 8. Work Procedures

All works are undertaken in accordance with the procedures contained within “Health And Safety Advice For Society Activities” These procedures are monitored and reviewed to incorporate up to date knowledge and experience as necessary. Clients’ own health and safety standards and procedures can take precedence when they are of an equal or higher standard.

# 9. Tools and Personal Protective Equipment

All tools and personal equipment in use by field operatives are owned and maintained by the individual. All volunteers have standing instructions to replace faulty equipment immediately.

# 10. Transport

SEHLS does not provide vehicles, all volunteers use their own vehicles. SEHLS does provide a caravan for use on some events, which is regularly maintained. Any vehicles or trailers used are to be regularly maintained and meet the requirements of road traffic legislation. The weight limits and towing capacities of any vehicle combination remain the responsibility of the driver.

# 11. Environmental Policy

SEHLS will endeavour to minimise disruption to the natural environment in which they work. All works undertaken, by their very nature, will cause some change to the local environment. SEHLS operate in a way that minimises the effects of their work on the local environmental infrastructure. Work on hedges is only carried out in the winter months (generally September to March) to avoid disturb nesting birds, dormice, etc. If any disturbance should occur we will informing land owner or relevant organisation as soon as practicable. Any fires are lit in the middle of open space, and managed to minimise environmental disruption.

# 12. Waste

SEHLS will agree up front with the landowner what is done with waste material. In general it is either burnt by the society or stacked in piles for the landowner to dispose of.

# 13. Welfare

SEHLS inform volunteers in advance if they need to bring lunch or drinks. Volunteers should bring their own facilities for hand cleansing etc. They are informed where the nearest welfare facilities are located.

# METHOD STATEMENT (SPECIFIC)

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| **Site address** | <<LOCTION>> |
| **Description of works** | Laying of hedges in the South of England Style |
| **Site Personnel** | List to be provided on email the week before  Including certificate details of chainsaw operators |
| **Date/s and time of works** | <<DATES AND TIMES>> |
| **Duration:** | Typically five hours, but up to eight if required |
| **Emergencies:** | Appropriate committee members are trained in first aid and emergency procedures. The volunteers on site will have at least one mobile telephone. |
| **First Aid:** | A first aid kit will be available at the site.  At least two volunteers on site will have completed a First Aid course. |
| **Welfare:** | <<NOTE LOCAITONS>> |
| **Tools:** | Chainsaws, handsaws, billhooks, Axes, Slashers, Rakes, Mauls. |
| **Staff:** | These works will be carried out by volunteers experienced in this type of work, or by supervised trainees. Any volunteer using a chainsaw have received appropriate chainsaw training and certification by NPTC or LANTRA. There will be a minimum of 8 people on site at all times. |
| **Method:** | * Removing any old fencing and wire * Cut and pulling out bramble, clematis and other scrambling plants * Cut out elder plants and preventing re-growth of stumps * Partially cut through stems near ground level, laying the pleachers (cut stems) over at an angle from horizontal to form a stock-proof barrier * Remove the uncut heel from each pleacher * Keep pleachers in position by staking and binding * Keep all existing hedgerow trees * Remove all cut branches and other rubbish from the immediate site after completion of the work * Any Chainsaw work will only be undertaken by suitability qualified personnel |
| **Site risk assessment:** | A member of the committee will complete a site risk assessment, updated on the day if appropriate to take account of the weather and any change of circumstances during the operations.  The committee will be responsible for ensuring the health and safety of everyone within the working area or who may be affected by the works.  When working on or near access roads ‘men at work’ signs will be deployed, and volunteers will be briefed of additional the risk. |
| **Risk prevention** | Trainees to be supervised, and only to use hand tools.  All chainsaw operators to be suitably qualified and operate according to best practice at all times |
| **PPE:** | Volunteers will have the appropriate PPE  Hand tool users, typically  Thorn-proof gloves preferably with wrist protection  Eye protection  Safety boots / Wellingtons give protection against sharp tools, thorns etc.  Chainsaw users will additionally use   * Chainsaw protective trousers. * Helmets complete with eye protection and hearing protection. * Chainsaw protective boots with steel toe caps. * Gloves (optional) * Reflective Vests   Other PPE may be necessary dependent upon risk assessment |

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| --- | --- |
| Method statement completed by: | <<WHO>> |
| Checked by: | <<WHO>> |
| Date: | <<WHEN>> |