

Cholsey Parish Council

Hedge Management Plan 2023

Hedgerows are an important feature in the village. They may have marked important historical boundaries and their loss is to be discouraged. Hedgerows provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife.

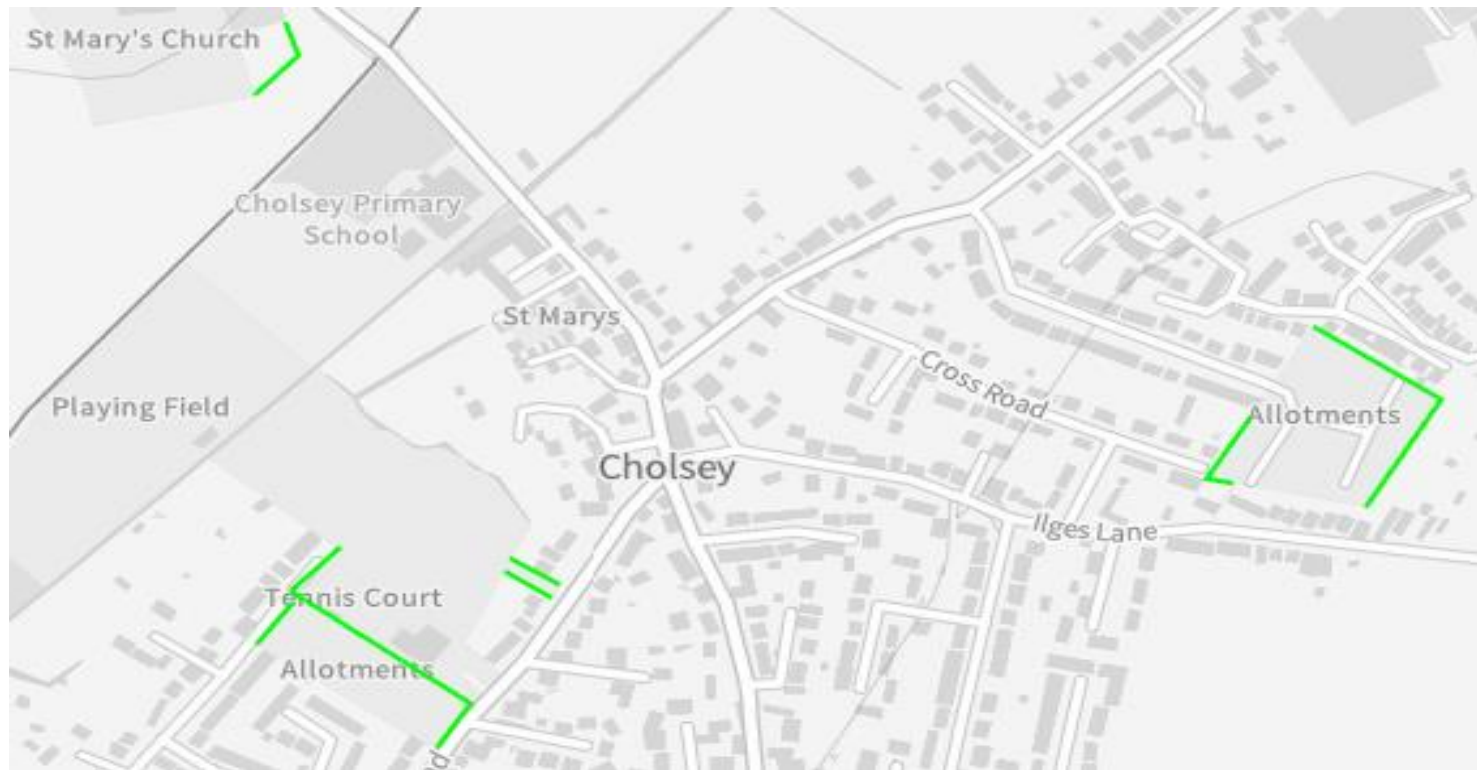
The Council will aim to ;

- To ensure that the hedgerows are appropriately managed and maintained for the benefit of all ;
- To maintain and enhance the existing nature conservation value of retained hedgerows.
- To provide a working document for those involved with the management of the parishes hedgerows;
- To ensure a continuity of best practice management over time;
- To maintain a high standard of working practice.

The Council will not undertake hedge cutting or maintenance –

- During the nesting season, unless work is for health and safety reasons.
- The main nesting and breeding season is recognised as being between 1 March to 31 August.

Map showing sites of hedges Cholsey Parish Council are responsible for.



St Mary's beech hedge = 77.7m (approx..) (both sides and top)

Ilges Lane Allotment Site = 317.2m(approx.) (allotment site side and top)

Station Road Allotment Site = 264.2m(approx.) (both sides and top to tennis club) Station Road footpath = 47m(approx.)(both sides and top)

West End footpath = 39.3m(approx.) (one side and top?)

Station Road entrance = 47.7m(approx.)(one side and top)

GENERAL HEDGE MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

1. Government advice is about producing environmental benefits, such as creating wildlife habitats and attractive landscapes.
2. Most tree and shrub flowers are produced on year-old twigs, and therefore fruit and berries in the Autumn.
3. Trimming should occur during December, January and February when the majority of fruit has been taken by local wildlife and carried out according to best practice guidance. Trimming should not be undertaken during severe frosts, or during the bird nesting season (this is generally accepted as being from March to September inclusive).
4. Following hedge cutting operations, all significant waste (cuttings), such as large branches should be removed from the site, or alternatively, and occasionally, they can be piled in small designated areas to encourage the creation of hibernacula habitat.
5. Following the Hedge Management Cycle (see appendix 1) for a healthy hedge, it may be necessary to rejuvenate a hedge by coppicing. After that, the rate of growth and structure of the hedge can be regulated by trimming, perhaps with occasional re-shaping. The aim should be to keep the hedge in the green part (steps 3 to 8), periodically laying or coppicing it, with trimming at appropriate intervals in between.

Existing Hedgerows

Ref	Length	Hedge Species	HMC Cycle Point	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Notes
1	77.7m	Beech	5	Cut annually	Cut annually	Cut annually	St Mary's beech hedge. Cut annually between December, January and February.
2	46.5m	Mixed, mainly elder and beech	5	Cut annually	Cut annually	Cut annually	Station Road entrance. Right side need to reduce height, left side mainly trees, prune as necessary.
3	39.3m	Mixed	6	Cut annually	Cut annually	Cut annually	West End entrance to recreation ground, cut annually both sides and top.
4	41.9m	Mixed	8	Cut annually	Cut annually	Cut annually	West End allotment hedge. Cut both sides and top, reduce height. Lot of ivy.

5	168.1m 100.7m	Mainly hawthorn, some elder	8	Cut annually	Cut annually	Cut annually	Station Road allotment hedge reduce height and both sides to Tennis Club. Reduce height
6	47m	Mixed, lot of ivy.	7	Cut annually	Cut annually	Cut annually	Station Road footpath need to reduce width over path, cut side over allotments and top. Contains self-seeded sycamore which was cut down 2022, now re-growing.
7	63.9m	Mixed	8	Cut	Cut	Cut	Ilges Lane site hedge on boundary of Cross Road cut top and site side, will need to be coppiced soon, contains ornamental shrubs.
8	109.3m	Mixed	7	Cut annually	Cut annually	Cut annually	Ilges Lane allotment site hedge on boundary of No85 Ilges Lane Cut top and allotment side, contains Horse Chestnut (2) and Ash trees
9	119.4m	Mixed	8	Coppice first section	Coppice second section	Coppice third section	Ilges Lane allotment site hedge on boundary of East End Coppice to ground level dividing into 3 sections and coppice over 3 years. Be aware of slow worms living around this hedge.

Mixed means the hedge contains Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Elder and Beech. Some self-seeded sycamore, horse chestnut and ornamental.

Appendix 1

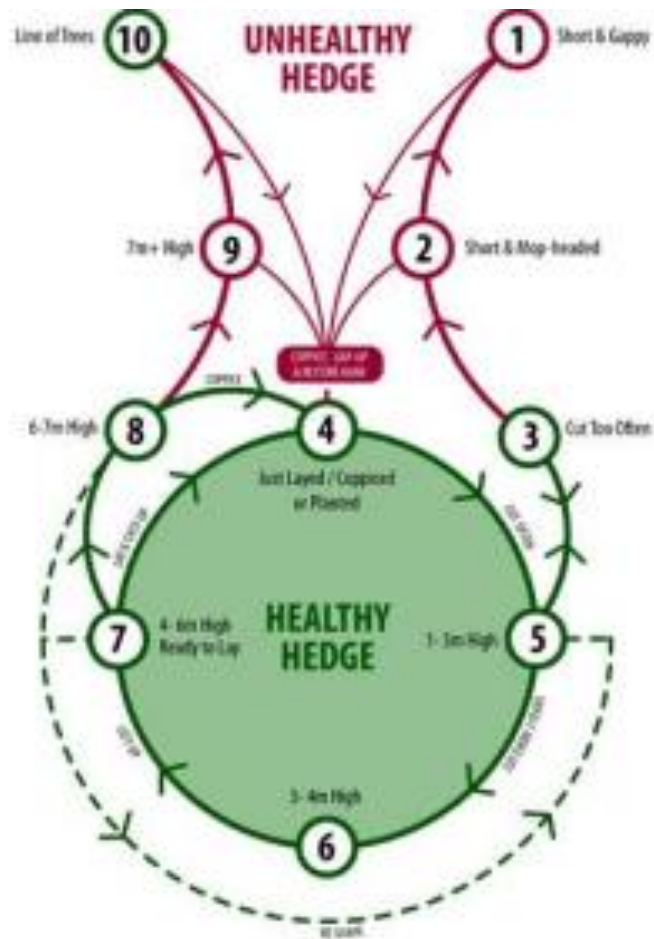


Figure 1. The Hedge Management Cycle (HMC). Art work by Will Field. Management Cycle concept developed by Nigel Adams.

Table 1. The ten point Hedge Management Cycle (HMC)

Point	Present condition of the hedge	Management action
1	Cut short with many gaps and sparse stems, the bases of the shrubs gnarled or rotting. Bank often badly eroded.	Coppice, restore bank and re-plant gaps. Grub out or poison undesirable species.
2	Cut short and thin, with hard knuckle at trim line and shrubs have mop-headed growth form. Not yet gappy or moribund but stems still too far apart to be allowed to grow up for laying.	Coppice and replant any gaps. Restore bank if necessary.
3	Cut short yet still dense: hard knuckle at trim line and mop-headed growth developing, and gaps developing at base. Stems sufficiently frequent that when allowed to grow up the hedge can be successfully laid.	Allow the hedge to grow up for between 8 and 20 years so that it can be laid, coppiced or re-shaped. Hedge may be trimmed as it grows up, but raise cutting height each time.
4	Recently-laid, coppiced or planted.	In first years trim often to create dense growth, initially low down, raising cutting height a few inches each year until Point 5 reached.
5	Dense with frequent healthy stems, at 1 - 3m high (above bank).	Trim every two, three or four years, raising trimming height a few inches every few cuts to prevent development of dense knuckle and mop-headed growth until Point 6 reached. Alternatively, if the hedge is trimmed every year, raise the cutting height each time.
6	Dense, with frequent healthy stems, over 3m high.	Allow to grow up ready for laying, or re-shape with circular saw to Point 5.
7	Frequent healthy stems more than 4m high of right thickness to lay (typically 8 - 15cm diameter).	Lay (or coppice), or re-shape with circular saw to point 5.
8	Tall hedge with spreading canopy, typically 6 - 7m high and some stems too large for laying (typically more than 15cm in diameter).	Coppice, or reshape with circular saw to point 5, planting up gaps and restoring bank as necessary.
9	Tall, often gappy, hedge, typically over 7m high with many ash, oak or beech stems, with sparse shrub layer and the bank at risk of collapse. Most stems too large for laying.	Coppice and plant up gaps, restoring bank as necessary.
10	Mature line of trees, usually oak, beech or ash.	Retain as line of trees for as long as possible. When the trees die or have to be felled, restore the bank and replant the hedge, in whole or in part as appropriate.

Appendix 2

Cost for Maintenance Person completing the hedge cutting.

(I am unsure if the coppicing of Ilges Lane/East End hedge can be achieved by the maintenance person)

1. Cost of Equipment.

Elongated hedge cutter - £659.00

Henchman Ladder (height?) - £649.00 - £549.00 (height dependant)

Hours – December, January and February – 100hrs = £1315

Safety equipment – Hard hat, safety glasses, leg protectors (need to purchase gloves and shoes)

Removal of Waste – skip - £350

Service of equipment - £100.00

Cost for Year 1 - £3073.00 approx. Cost from Year 2 - £1765.00 approx.

Cost for contractor to complete hedge cutting

These are quotes taken from last year and I have added 10% to give an idea of the costs involved.

Contractor A was used last year.

Contractor	Quote (2022) + 10%	Ilges Lane/East End boundary hedge Coppiced	Ilges Lane/East End boundary hedge trimmed
Contractor A	2022 £2690.00 incl VAT + 10% £300.00 approx	2022 £5200.00+ 10% £5700.00 approx	2022 £4340.00 incl VAT (reduce to 4')+ 10% £4750.00 approx
Contractor B	2022 £2712.00 incl VAT+ 10% £3000.00 approx		2022 £984.00 incl VAT+ 10% £1100.00 approx
Contractor C	2022 £3250.00 + VAT+ 10% £3500.00 approx	2022 £4350.00 + VAT+ 10 % £4800.00 approx	2022 £3000.00 + VAT+ 10% £3300.00 +VAT

Appendix 3

Rejuvenating Hedges.

All hedges ultimately will need rejuvenating. It is recommended that a hedge is 'rejuvenated' every 40-50 years.

Rejuvenation usually involves coppicing or laying.

Coppicing



Coppicing can be used to rejuvenate a failing hedge © Nigel Adams

Coppicing removes the hedge down to a stump, usually by chainsaw to about 5-10cm height. "It's cheap, and the only way of rejuvenating a dying hedge," "It allows you to replant the gaps and build up any bank, but make sure the regrowth isn't eaten by rabbits, hares and deer."

It also potentially provides logs or fuel for wood chip biomass boilers.

Hedge Laying

Hedge laying is more specialist and expensive. There are a number of different styles, but all involve cutting the stem to allow the branch to be placed at a slant or even along the ground.

The cut needs to be deep enough to allow the stem to lay, but with enough wood remaining to allow sap to draw up through the stem to keep the plant alive and encourage new growth.



Laying hedges is more costly but encourages growth and provides a stock-proof barrier © Nigel Adams