

NATIONAL HEDGELAYING SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Preserving the past, protecting the future

SUMMER 2021

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FROM THE EDITOR

2017 was the year that I was persuaded to take on the job of NHLS Secretary. Now in my fifth year, I am getting to know more people but having a fantastic group of trustees and committee members has made the job a lot easier when compared to the days when the Secretary did everything. But I would still like someone else to take on the job of Newsletter Editor!!!

David Whitaker

Readers are reminded that views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and are not necessarily the policies of the NHLS

FROM THE NEW NHLS CHAIR

As a new hedgelaying season begins, and we are sharpening our tools to get a good start, and while days are a little longer and travelling across fields a little drier, it looks like I begin my tenure as your chair with an apology.

Because of lock down and lack of events due to COVID, we have held this Newsletter back until after the AGM on 14th August.



Although we missed the 2020 National Championship, the Society and its officials have been working hard on planning our way forward. Our new accreditation scheme is now recognised and certificated by LANTRA and will be launched this autumn. Our training officer Phil Hart is in the process of putting the final touches to it.

In addition, we have signed a partnership agreement with the Dry Stone Walling Association to form a "Rural Skills Hub". We applied for a grant from the government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund and I am happy to tell you our application was successful. We received a 100% grant of £99,700 to run the new scheme. This funding will allow us to employ someone in the post of "Rural Skills Coordinator". The job has been advertised and hopefully someone will be in post by early September. This is a fast moving project which will end in March 2023. The project involves training and providing apprenticeships for young people in the arts of dry stone walling and hedgelaying. Further information will be published as we progress. I hope that the partnership can continue into the future to the benefit of both organisations.

Meanwhile we continue to plan the Charity event on 25th September. This seems to be attracting cutters from far and wide and Clive tells me there are some coming over from Ireland.

We have now purchased John Savings' Bonsai show display as John has decided it is time for him to retire. Many thanks to John for all that you have done for this Society.

The Secretary continues to act as Newsletter editor in a temporary role. This is something that we would like to resolve so if someone would like to take it on, do please get in touch.

Thanks to all those that have contributed to creating the NHLS Accreditation Scheme. A special thank you to Linda Clarkson who guided us along the way. Also, many thanks to Linda for putting together the successful Green Recovery Scheme grant application mentioned above.

In closing, I hope that you all will continue to support the National Hedgelaying Society through these changing times and are looking forward to getting together once again. In the meantime – keep safe!

Joe Craig

FROM OUR RETIRING CHAIR



David Winning the "Supreme Champion" Title at the 2010 Championship held at Rutland Water

I will start my final report by acknowledging those members that have sadly passed away since the last AGM. I won't list them here in case I miss someone, but our sympathies are with all their friends and relatives.

The fact that the whole country went into lockdown due to the Covid pandemic just before the 2020 NHLS AGM, led to a very strange year indeed. Without being able to hold the AGM the Trustees of the Society – who are legally responsible to the Charity Commission – oversaw the day-to-day running of the Society. Since the previous AGM, in 2019, the Society has made some remarkable advances given the circumstances. We secured funding from the Prince's Countryside Fund to bring together the new accreditation scheme in conjunction with LANTRA. The scheme will be officially launched at this year's National Championship in October. I would like to record my thanks to the steering group who have toiled endlessly on many a night at video meetings to bring this project together.

As Joe has mentioned in his report, the National Hedgelaying Society and the Dry Stone Walling Association in partnership have recently been awarded a significant amount from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund to establish the Rural Skills Hub. This scheme is being overseen by a management board of representatives from both organisations and, although the DSWA is the lead partner as the applicant, both of us are equal partners in the project.

As we move forward in time, the environment, its needs and care are going to be heavily promoted. Through Hedgelinek, the NHLS has had input into the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) that will replace the current Environment Stewardship Schemes. We have also had discussions with the NFU regarding the future role of hedgerows in carbon capture. The opportunities for the Society to become involved are endless and we should consider becoming more vocal and politically engaged when it comes to the future of hedgerows and the benefits that they give to the environment.

There being no shows, competitions or National Championship in the last twelve months has left a very empty feeling for many people. It is a pleasant prospect to start to get back together again and renew old friendships. Let's hope we continue to see the light at the end of the tunnel approaching.

Finally on a personal note, it is five years since I was elected as NHLS Chair and I have now chosen to stand down. I would like to thank everybody who has served the Society in any position in that time – it has been a pleasure working with you all. I would especially like to thank all the members that have made me welcome at the many events I have attended while in office.

You can all be assured of my continual support of the Society in the future.

David Smith

REPORT FROM THE 2021 AGM

CUTNALL GREEN & DISTRICT MEMORIAL HALL

ADDIS LANE, CUTNALL GREEN, DROITWICH.

WORCS. WR9 ONE

SATURDAY 3RD JULY 2021

Election of Officers: (Posts nominated 30 days before the AGM)

President:**John Vickery**

Chair:**Joe Craig**

Vice Chair:**Phil Hart** (There were two nominations for Vice Chair: Clive Bethell & Phil Hart. In a secret ballot Phil was elected)

Secretary:**David Whitaker**

Treasurer:**Andrew Crow**

Trustee:**Clare Maymon**

Trustee:**Clive Bethall**

Trustee:**Nigel Adams**

Committee:**Peter Gibson, Andrew Kirkwood, John Vickery, Derek McNamara, Dave Padley, Graham Teece, Robin Dale, Hefin Davis, Russell Woodham, Mandy Woodham, John Savings, Roger Parris, Richard Lewis, Tina Bath, Steve Budding, Margaret Budding. David Boyson, David Smith**

Life Member:**Robin Dale was elected a Life Member**



Most (but not all) of the Committee

Next AGM, 26th March 2022 at the same venue

TREASURER'S REPORT

NHLS TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

I am pleased to present the Examined Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2020. This examination was carried out by Chartered Accountants, Rogers.

Rogers confirm the accounts to be accurate and raise no issues of concern.

Being a non-company charity with a gross annual income of less than £250,000, the accounts are prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis, rather than the more complex Accruals Basis. Furthermore, because the gross annual income of the Society is less than £500,000, the accounts are required to be independently examined rather than audited. An audit is more in-depth and requires the underlying documents to be checked and verified. This is a more time-consuming exercise and hence would be more costly to the Society. However, I would have no concerns regarding these accounts being subject to audit.

Overall, the Society had a healthy balance of £165,691 to carry forward to 2021, which represents an increase of 6% over the previous year. However, whilst the Society finances need to be maintained in good shape, accumulating money is not the function nor aim of this Charity. Inevitably, Covid-19 has impacted the activities of the Society. It resulted in reduced expenditure.

Cancelled competitions and training events resulted in reduced payments under the Youth Award Scheme. A further significant saving was made against the usual overall nett deficit from the annual Championship. In-come was also affected. The Wheler Foundation reviewed its support priorities because of the effect of Covid-19 on its other beneficiaries and there was a reduction in our membership and hence subscription receipts. I have commented on these aspects in greater detail below.

MEMBERSHIP

Referring to the Examined Accounts, it will be noted that the Membership Subscriptions are down by almost £800 on the previous year. This may be primarily because the Championship was not able to take place. We usually expect to enrol a few new members at the Championship, some members renew their membership at the event and I surmise that some members maintain their membership with the primary reason that they wish to attend or participate at the event. Although Individual Membership numbers decreased, Contractor Membership has risen marginally. There was also a small drop in the number of Affiliated Members, possibly because the Affiliated groups were unable to run their usual events and had no requirement for the insurance cover that affiliation provides.

Although, due to the hard work and persistence of our Membership Secretary, the situation relating to incorrect and duplicate subscription payments is improving, it has not been eliminated and I would ask all our members to check that their standing orders are 'in order' and also that when a

subscription reminder is received that a check is made to see that the standing order, if that is in place, is for the correct amount, that only one standing order is set up and to confirm by email or text, to our Membership Secretary that this is the case.

The subscription rates currently remain as follows:

Individual £20

Affiliated £50

Contractor £75

Members have asked about the possibility of them making their subscription payments by direct debit. Having investigated this, because of the additional online security implications, it is not considered to be feasible at this time although it remains under constant review.

CHAMPIONSHIP

Due to Covid-19 our major event ultimately could not take place. However, some minor expenses were incurred, amounting to less than £300 in preparation for the event to proceed should that have been possible, plus the payment of £100 for 'Best Regrowth' prizes. The income of £100 was a late payment from the 2019 Championship.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

The receipts this year were £4000 from the Prince's Countryside Fund and £1500 from the Wheler Foundation.

The expenditure under this item includes £1225 under the Youth Awards Scheme, £600 to LANTRA for the establishment of the National Hedgelaying Society as an approved provider of training and qualifications in the craft of Hedgelaying, and the balance of £4034 being payments to P J Hart and L Clarkson on a consultancy basis, without whose work the establishment of the LANTRA Awards Scheme would not have been possible.

SUNDRY

This item normally relates to the Patron's Event which, again due to the Covid pandemic, could not take place.

NEWSLETTER

Owing to the pandemic and the consequent lack of relevant news on which to report, there were again two rather than the usual three publications between January and December 2020. Further savings were also made in relation to printing and distribution costs which are affected by the number of pages and consequent weight of the publication, and the number of recipients.

SECRETARIAL EXPENSES

The further developments of the website, thanks to Richard Hooker our Webmaster, continue to enable more efficient management of membership administration. The greater use of emails and the text messaging facility, plus the greater use of payments by electronic transfer, all contributed to greater savings. Additionally, those meetings which have taken place have been 'virtual' meetings resulting in additional cost savings.

CONCLUSION

Although the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted hugely on the training activities of this charity, the Officers of the Society have been very active in planning for the future. Huge credit should go to those involved in the establishment of the LANTRA awards scheme and obtaining grant funding from the Prince's Countryside Fund.

In addition to the above, we also have the recent announcement of the launch of the Rural Skills Hub which involves a partnership between the Dry Stone Walling Association and the National Hedgelaying Society, for which the two organisations together have been awarded funding of £99,700 from the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Although the DSWA are the lead partner and will handle the financial administration, the NHLS are a full half member to the scheme. This together with the LANTRA Awards scheme are both challenging and exciting developments for the future of the Society.

Note: This report and a copy of the 2020 accounts are available for download from the NHLS web site.

TRAINING AWARDS FOR YOUNG HEDGELAYERS

Are you:

- Undertaking a full day or more training in hedgelaying skills with a recognised trainer?
- 26 or under i.e., not reached your 27th birthday at the time of the training?

If so, please read the following information carefully and if you wish to apply for an award, please complete the Award Application Form which can be found on the NHLS website.

The NHLS is keen to encourage young people to undertake professional training in hedgelaying skills to establish high standards and safe working practices.

Qualifying training must be **practical** and could include an introduction to the craft of hedgelaying, specific training in a style, more advanced training in a particular style as well as health and safety and tool maintenance training.

To recognise the commitment of young people to take part in valuable training the NHLS is offering an award of £25 for each **separate** course undertaken, **up to a maximum of 3 awards per claimant**. To qualify the course must be of at least a full day and the provider must agree you have completed the training satisfactorily.

Furthermore, if you successfully complete the basic chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting course and are awarded CS30 you may claim a separate award of £50.

For help with finding suitable training please refer to the NHLS website.

The Trustees of the National Hedgelaying Society reserve the right to refuse an application if in their opinion it does not fulfil the criteria

Any queries regarding this scheme should be referred to treasurer@hedgelaying.org.uk

COULD WE DO MORE

Readers must despair at Britain's hedges, often in terminal decline after over-trimming or neglect. Our craft could restore them, but one can cross an entire county without seeing a laid hedge. Are we little more than historical re-enactors, demonstrating past techniques but irrelevant today?

Laying earns you a living only if priced accordingly. Farms with miles of hedge can seldom afford that without subsidies. There'll never be enough rich landowners or taxpayers' money to support many professional layers. Hence the situation.

Simplistic? I believe we could double Britain's hedgelaying – to an acceptable standard – without another penny of Government money. Still a drop in the ocean but perhaps reversing the decline like a small change of Covid R index. We should surely try. How?

Farms don't own all the hedges. Older country properties are bounded by them; new village developments absorb former farmland. There's a substantial UK hedge resource of innumerable short lengths with different owners who can often afford a fair price for laying. Sparsely scattered professionals hardly touch this market: small remote jobs incur disproportionate overheads. What's needed is local advice and layers. Farms can afford small jobs too when somebody wants them.

Laying was always a part time activity in the past - for farm hands in the slack days of winter. Long summer hours earned their living: harvest bought their boots. Today numerous activities barely support a living but thrive as "beer money hobbies", perhaps supplementing a pension. For every millionaire Beatele there are countless enthusiasts with a day job, playing in "amateur" groups.

UK Beekeeping offers a paradigm: a few hundred professional apiarists and tens of thousands of small timers. Do potential enthusiasts realise that hedgelaying pays better than beekeeping? We won't recruit them by running competitions, however well these market professionals. Hedges need an infrastructure like the British Beekeepers' Association: strength in numbers with local advice, support and mentors for novices.

The BBKA subscription includes basic insurance. Members of the British Deer Society earning a turnover of less than £5k p.a from stalking are insured to prowl woods in twilight with a rifle for an extra £22 p.a. I pay over ten times that for casual hedgelaying using hand tools... and am outnumbered by beekeepers and stalkers!

I once feared hobbyists might damage the business of professionals. 30 years' experience confirms they don't. Part-timers don't want large grant-supported jobs. Provided the two sectors communicate, each finds work for the other. I've pointed out in this newsletter [Spring 2018, 2021] that certain hedges can nearly fund their own repeated laying, creating work for all.

What about standards? Hobbyists won't starve if they take their time. Laying every hedge to competition excellence is crass extravagance. Competently pleached, one between two gardens will regenerate satisfactorily if staked with old beanpoles and ethered with brambles. Do champions want such work?

There's a small-time beekeeper (with local market) in nearly every village. Why not a hedgelayer too, replacing the retired farm hands of former years?

GEORGE DARWALL

STEVE BUDDING IS NOT SATISFIED WITH HIS HEDGES BEING SEEN AT GROUND LEVEL



In 2014 I bought Steve a weather vane for his 60th birthday (yes, he's really that old) and we have waited until now to put it up. Not procrastination, just waiting for the right house to come along. It was made by Dorset weather vanes (weathervanes-direct.co.uk). Spot the deliberate mistake!!

MARGARET BUDDING



A photo of the hedge I have re done for Tuesday, three years on...

Steve Budding did it for Geoff's funeral and I have stripped it down this year to put new hedge in. Last year I just put a few bits into the hedge Steve had done! Don't know where 3 years have gone but then again last year was a "non year"!!

It's not as good as Steve's but I like to keep it going.

CHRIS KEY

A REQUEST FROM AMERICA



Simple Gifts "Tis a gift to be simple, 'tis a gift to be free," runs the ballad behind Aaron Copeland's Appalachian Spring.

Having come up in the central Appalachian hill country of West Virginia (USA), I learned early the simple gifts of nature and hard work. And, while no longer quite in the spring of life, I know what it means to be free. I am an American with life-long interest in the traditional craft of hedgelaying.

I remember in teenage years reading the history and ecology of British hedgerows and being captivated. I am acquainted now with Britain more at first hand and have reached a more sober stage of life; however, I also more am in position to fulfil a youthful dream. As a healthy, physically fit man used to manual labour and long hours, and comfortable working outdoors, I am reaching out to a master hedgelayer who might take me on as a vol-

unteer apprentice, introducing me to the craft. I say "volunteer", for I seek no compensation other than learning.

At present, I am employed in an unrelated field, but my employer allows leave which would enable me to start. My hope is to arrive at mutually agreeable arrangements for late Summer or early Autumn 2022.

If you are open to passing on knowledge to a novice but a keen, experienced learner and gaining whatever work-assistance I might offer in return, please contact David Whitaker, the Secretary of the NHLS. He will put us in contact.

A further lyric from the ballad says: "And when we find ourselves in the place just right, 'Twill be in the valley of love and delight." It would be a delight if, in hands-on learning the craft of hedgelaying, I might find a place "just right".



Has anyone seen a bigger burr on a Oak tree?

HAVE YOU GOT THESE IN YOUR HEDGEROWS & FIELDS?

“Moles are believed to remain solitary as adults and avoid contact with other moles. However, there are at least two exceptions. One occurs in the spring, when the males start to move around and leave their range in search of females. They may move about for several weeks, even after all the females in an area have mated. The other exception is that occasionally some tunnels are used by several moles; these tunnels are, in a sense, like highways. This communal use suggests that the social system of moles is more complex than we think.”



EUROPEAN MOLE – TALPA EUROPAEA

Moles are very robust animals and can survive in rather adverse conditions. Most often, however, they tend to dig up prized lawns, golf courses, and carefully-tended gardens. The reason lawn and garden moles seem to dig more frequently in the most fertile areas is that such conditions usually indicate a plentiful supply of its main food source – worms. Good soil means lots of worms, and moles are sure to follow. The primary variables that determine good soil (and therefore mole activity) are moisture, warmth, vegetation, and soil acidity. Moles create tunnels for two purposes, travelling and feeding. Travelling tunnels are pathways between feeding areas and the den. Feeding areas are usually marked by clusters of hills and shallow tunnels. Their purpose is allow the mole to hunt for its main diet, worms. The mounds or “mole hills” are excess dirt that has been mined away by the mole to create these tunnels. Moles will often seek new territory during the spring and early summer when the baby moles (“pups”) are searching for their own territory.

The most defining physical characteristic of the mole is its forepaws. They are usually about the size of a pound coin and appear disproportionately large compared to the rest of the body. This equipment makes them exceptionally efficient at digging their trade-mark tunnels.

When tunnelling, the mole will scrape away dirt with its front paws. In a swimming-like motion, it brushes the dirt within reach of the hind legs. The mole will then “kick” away the dirt to keep its working area clean. After the mole has excavated a sufficient amount of dirt, it will turn around in the tunnel (some studies report observing moles doing a somersault) and push the dirt up to the surface, creating a mole hill.

The coat of a mole is so incredibly dense that it keeps out water and dirt. Because their fur points straight up, moles can move forward or backward within their tunnels without rubbing their fur the wrong way and trapping soil in their coats. In addition, mole hair does not taper down at the end like that of a human. It is widest in the middle of the strand and thinnest on either end. This protective feature also contributes to keeping the coat free of dirt and water.

In less politically correct times, mole skin was highly prized for its softness and durability. The coats were used for anything from vests to ballerina slippers.

Moles are generally solitary animals. One exception to this rule is during mating season which usually runs from February to April. The usually reclusive males will go in search of a receptive female by emitting high-pitched squeals and tunnelling through foreign areas. Gestation usually lasts between 4 – 6 weeks. Depending on the species, mole litters usually range from 2 – 6 baby moles (or pups). All species of moles breed only once per year. Pups do not stay under the mother’s care for very long. After only a few months of being nourished by their mother’s rich milk, the pups will be forced to strike out on their own. Not having the strength of an adult, the pups will often travel in loose soil or even above ground in the treacherous search of their own territory.

During late spring and early summer, it is a very common for cats, owls, and other predators to catch baby moles.. Another common sight is for young moles to appear drowned in swimming pools.

Moles are sexually mature about 10 months after birth and will usually live for 3 – 5 years, depending on their health and surroundings.



2021 NATIONAL HEDGELAYING CHAMPIONSHIP

THE 42ND CHAMPIONSHIP

SATURDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2021

**ROTHERFIELD PARK ESTATE, PLAIN FARM,
ALTON, HAMPSHIRE GU34 3SE**

BY KIND PERMISSION OF ROTHERFIELD FARMS LLP



In my new roles as Chief Steward, Championship Coordinator & Sponsorship Officer, I've been very busy planning both the Charity Day and the Championship Events. As of writing this, it's all go, fingers crossed.

The past eighteen months have been trying times for all of us.

All the hedges have been looked at a number of times and are looking good for both events.

It's been a pleasure working with the Rotherfield Farms LLP, who have made us very welcome.

The Estate has lots of big hedges that haven't had much done to them for years so are ready to be laid, to bring more wildlife back to the area.

At the Championship, please feel free to ask about the work you see. There will be "Helpful Hedgehogs" (stewards with armbands) wandering around the site, to answer your questions.

Some of the competitors may be able to chat to you, as they take a moment to stand back from the hedge to assess their work and that of their neighbours, but please remember they are in a competition and that time is precious. On the Charity Event Day the cutters will be trying to lay as much hedge as they can to raise as much money as possible for the Air Ambulance Charities (Hampshire & Isle of Wight / Dorset & Somerset) and The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution.

Please do not get too close to the hedgers for your safety.

Our younger visitors & families are particularly welcome as it is their countryside and their future we are preserving. It is important, even if they don't live or work in the countryside, that they understand what is required for the countryside to work as it should.

I would like to take a moment to say THANK YOU to all our helpers, volunteers, for all their hard work in getting this Charity Day up and running.

See you on the 25th of September (Charity Day) & The Championship on the 23rd of October.



Clive Bethell

Chief Steward, Championship Coordinator & Sponsorship Officer



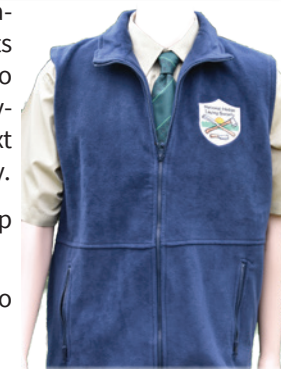
The NHLS has a range of high quality, great value merchandise available. The price list below shows a selection of what is available. Shirts and jackets can be ordered in a variety of colours and size from S to 3XL. (Forms will be available at the Championship for Xmas delivery). In addition, items can be customised with embroidered text front and/or back. For example, your style of hedgelaying or county.

There will be limited stock available at the National Championship (but sadly no trying-on due to Covid restrictions).

For more information about all the available items and options or to get an order form please email Russell Woodham using:

merchandise@hedgelaying.org.uk

- Rugby Shirt (Navy/Bottle Green) £24.50
 - Polo Shirt (Navy/Bottle Green/Maroon) £16.50
 - Hoodie (Pullover) £18.00
 - Hoodie (Zip Up) £23.00
 - Fleece (Navy/Bottle Green/Maroon) £19.50
 - Gilet (Navy/Bottle Green/Black) £18.50
 - Beanie Hat (Navy/Bottle Green/Maroon)..... £6.75
 - Baseball Cap (Navy/Bottle Green/Maroon) £6.75
 - Dress Shirt (Khaki/Sliver Grey)..... £17.50
 - NHLS Tie £5.00
- Plus Umbrellas, Key Rings, Car Stickers etc*





42ND NATIONAL HEDGE LAYING CHAMPIONSHIP

SATURDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2021

ROTHERFIELD PARK ESTATE, ALTON, HANTS. GU34 3RT
BY KIND PERMISSION OF ROTHERFIELD FARMS LLP

HEDGE LAYING ENTRY FORM

Please note that the "Veteran" age limit has increased this year
from 60 to 65 and "Junior" from 21 to 26.

Overdue NHLS Subscriptions **MUST** be paid before your entry will be accepted.

Name -----

*In order to take part you must be a member of the NHLS. All
details of membership are available on the NHLS web site:
www.hedgelaying.org.uk*

NHLS Membership No -----

Address -----

Telephone: -----

Mobile: -----

Next of Kin: -----

Contact No. -----

COMPETITION CLASS - Tick One Box

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midland Open | <input type="checkbox"/> Lancs & Westmorland Open | <input type="checkbox"/> North Somerset Open |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midland Intermediate | <input type="checkbox"/> South of England Open | <input type="checkbox"/> North Somerset Intermediate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welsh Open | <input type="checkbox"/> South of England Intermediate | <input type="checkbox"/> Devon Open |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Derby Open | <input type="checkbox"/> South of England Veteran | <input type="checkbox"/> Devon Intermediate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yorkshire Open | <input type="checkbox"/> Dorset Open | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheshire Open |

OTHER INFORMATION - Tick any that apply

Age: Veteran (over 65) Junior (under 26)

*If you think that you may be the oldest or youngest competitor
taking part, please give your age on the day of the competition*

Years ----- Months -----

*If you intend to use a chainsaw at the competition,
you must hold a current chainsaw safety certificate
and wear Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) at
all times while using the saw.*

Chainsaw Certificate No -----

Signed ----- Date -----

By signing this form, you confirm that you have read the competition rules and agree to be bound by them.

Return completed forms to:

NHLS Entries, Worhams Farm, Shute, Axminster EX13 7QF

Closing Date for Entries: 8th October 2021



Registered Charity No: 288850
National Hedgelaying Society

www.hedgelaying.org.uk
 Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales



September 2021

Dear Member

National Hedgelaying Society Championship Draw

Tickets £1 each, £5 per book



Dare we hope that the National Championship will actually happen this year and the familiar Championship Draw can also take place? A definite YES!

I have enclosed 3 Championship Draw books with this Newsletter, £15 worth of tickets. Can I please encourage you to buy/sell the enclosed tickets and return counterfoils before the National Hedgelaying Competition so that we can get a head start on the folding. I am also very grateful to those of you who prefer to send a donation towards the Competition Expenses rather than return the tickets. Do feel free to stick address labels on the counterfoils or if you are coming to the Competition just a name and telephone number would be sufficient.

Cheques (please don't send cash) should be made payable to The National Hedgelaying Society and should be returned along with the counterfoils to:

Mrs J A Crow, Fallowfield House, Bulby, Bourne, Lincs. PE10 0RU

If you would like to pay electronically (I still need the counterfoils!) the details are:
 Account name: The National Hedgelaying Society, Sort Code: 40-20-35, Account Number: 11375075. Please use Surname and 'Raffle' as a reference to identify your payment and pop a note in with the counterfoils to say when the payment was made.

If you would like more books or have any queries please contact me on 01778 591158 or 07800832763 or email jenny.crow@btinternet.com Please ensure anything is posted to me by Friday 15th October or, if you prefer, bring lots of money and counterfoils back on the day of the competition. I will cope!

If you are able to donate a prize it would be very much appreciated and if anyone is able to help sell tickets on the day of the competition I would be most grateful. You wouldn't have to commit to all day! Just let me know when you could help.

I look forward to meeting you all in Hampshire this year.

Best wishes
 Jenny Crow
 Raffle Organiser

Class	Scoring (100 points in total)
Midland Open & Intermediate	Cut & Pleach35
	Stake & Bind25
	Back of Hedge.....20
	General Appearance.....20
Welsh Open	Front & Pleach25
	Back of Hedge.....25
	True to Style.....25
	Stake & Top25
Derby Open	Cut & Pleach35
	Stake & Bind20
	Back of Hedge.....20
	General Appearance25
South of England Open, Intermediate & Veteran	Cut & Pleach35
	Stakes & Binders.....35
	General Appearance.....30
Lancs & Westmorland Open	Choice of Wood & Distribution30
	Axe Work25
	Stakes.....25
	Finish (inc. Bank, Ditch, etc.)20
Yorkshire Open	Cut & Pleach40
	Stake & Rail40
	General Appearance.....20
Cheshire Open	Cutting & Pleaching35
	Build & Appearance.....25
	Staking & Fencing.....20
	Back of Fence.....20
Devon Open & Intermediate	Cutting & Laying, Quality of Cutting of Stool, Lack of Splitting.....30
	Selection & Best use of Crooks30
	General Appearance, Quality of Finished Hedge, Effectiveness as Stock Barrier, Tidiness of Site.....40
North Somerset Open & Intermediate	Heels & Pleachers35
	Stake & Firmness35
	General Appearance.....30
Dorset Open	Cutting & Laying, Quality of Cutting of Stool, Lack of Splitting.....30
	Selection & Best use of Bonds30
	General Appearance, Quality of Finished Hedge, Effectiveness as Stock Barrier, Tidiness of Site.....40

PRIZE MONEY

The prize money is the same in all classes: 1st: £100, 2nd: £70, 3rd: £50, 4th: £20

COMPETITION RULES

1. Open to any paid-up member who has proven ability as a hedgelayer.
2. Competitors having reached their 65th birthday on the day of the competition will be eligible for the Veteran prize. **Note the increase from 60 to 65.**
3. Anyone winning an Intermediate class twice must compete in an Open class.
4. The Chief Steward reserves the right to refuse entry to anyone whose standard of work is considered inadequate for the National Competition.
5. All classes will cut up to 10 metres.
6. The time limit for all competitors will be 5 hours, from 09:00am to 2:00pm. Competitors exceeding this time will be penalised. In the event of extreme weather conditions, the chief steward reserves the right to extend the time.
7. Competitors must report to the Chief Steward by 8:30am when they will be directed to their class. The length number has been allocated on receipt of entry and is not transferable.
8. Competitors are to lay their allocated length starting from their number and working towards the next highest number.
9. Competitors opening up their length **MUST** leave sufficient material for the next entrant to lay in on completion of their length.
10. Competitors may receive assistance from a steward or another Competitor. Other help will not be allowed and may lead to points being deducted
11. Competitors must use stakes and binders provided by the Society. Failure to do so will lead to a points deduction.
12. Competitors using excessive deadwood inappropriate for their style will be penalised. Judges will be briefed accordingly.
13. Any competitor refusing to cut the length allocated will be ineligible to compete the following year.
14. Judging will be on a points basis. The Chief Steward's decision is final and no discussion or correspondence will be entered into by the Society.
15. If there are 3 entries or less the class will be cancelled or amalgamated at the discretion of the Chief Steward. No 3rd prize will be paid if there are only 4 entries. No 4th prize will be paid if there are only 5 entries.
16. Chainsaws are permitted, but all competitors must use appropriate safety equipment as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive. The Safety Officer has the right to penalise any competitor deemed to be working in a dangerous or unsafe manner.
17. All waste material must be left where designated.
18. Competitors will be allocated their length on receipt of their entry form. No draw for lengths will take place on the morning of the competition.
19. Competitors under the age of 65 who have won any Open class at a National Championship may only enter an Open class regardless of cutting style chosen. This rule ceases to apply once a competitor reaches the age of 65.

SUPREME CHAMPION & RESERVE

The Supreme Champion will receive a prize of £200

The Reserve Supreme Champion (2nd overall) will receive a prize of £100

TROPHIES, TROPHIES, TROPHIES



To all winners of trophies from the National Championships 2019 I hope you have enjoyed displaying them in pride of place.

It's now time to dust them off and check they are ready to return.

Please ensure you have had them engraved with:

2019 YOUR NAME

2020 No Comp (COVID)

And please make sure they are polished and in the condition you would like to receive them.

Returns on the day of this year's competition please.

If you are not planning on attending this year, please return your trophy to an NHLS committee member and inform me of who is bringing it to the competition at awards@hedgelaying.org.uk or text me the details 07870 389285

Wishing you a safe journey to the competition and look forward to seeing you again.

Mandy Woodham - Awards Officer

ENTERING THE HEDGELAYING COMPETITION

You can fill in the entry form in the centre fold of this Newsletter but don't forget that you can enter online via the NHLS Website. Simply log in (register if you haven't already - it's easy to do from the site) and go to the "Online Entry Form" link on the "Championship" menu.

WHY NOT JOIN THE NATIONAL HEDGELAYING SOCIETY?

If you have come across this newsletter or been given it and if you find it interesting, then why not join the National Hedgelaying Society?

We were founded in 1978 to ensure that the hedgerow management skills accumulated over many hundreds of years were not lost forever.

Benefits of membership include:

- This Newsletter published three times per year
- Free entry to the NHLS National Championship
- Access to a wealth of information and advice on hedgerows
- Links with local groups and national conservation organisations
- Opportunities for training and education events across the UK



Annual Membership Fees
 | Junior (under 21) Free
 Ordinary member £20
 Contractor Member £75

Leather Hedging Mitts – Arm Guards – Billhook & Axe Holsters



- Hedging mitts, various sizes, left and right hand. Made with chrome or alum tanned leather, seamed or un-seamed. From £40.
- Single edge billhook holsters and axe guards. From £15.
- Forearm guards: small, medium and large, in light or heavy duty. From £18.



Email: jasperprachek@hotmail.co.uk
 or Call: 07769 502100.

TRAVELS WITH THE TRAILER

David Whitaker



Trailer and Stand at 2021 Bath & West Show

For the last number of years, as many of you will know, John Savings has put together a fantastic display of the Bonsai hedges laid in different regional styles. All housed on a trailer for ease of transport. Well, John retired now and decided to unhitch the trailer and pass it on to its new keepers.

John drove it to the Great Yorkshire Show where we collected on the last day and brought it back to its new home. So, from 21st July 2021, myself and Mrs Whitaker have taken custody of the trailer and with it the immense responsibility of looking after the Bonsai hedges. That is no mean task with constant watering and trimming but with lots of helpful advice from John. Luckily our new Chair Joe Craig and wife Georgina live not too far away to help look after the infant.

Now John had a pickup truck with space for all the paraphernalia that go with the display, and capable of towing the unbraked trailer (and stopping it too). The trailer's weight limit was 750kg but altogether the trailer and its supporting cast of display boards, tables, watering can etc. weighed a tonne and quarter.



The Wildlife Picture Quiz

Our first outing was to the Game Fair at Ragley Hall so we loaded the trailer up to its 750kg limit and filled our car. With that packed, there was still a pile to go so Joe and Georgina filled their car as well.

To avoid this in future, we have replaced the trailer with a braked version which is rated to carry the full load. It's also 5" inches wider so there has been some minor engineering needed for the swap but that has been done without too many problems.

No matter which show the trailer is taken to, it is always the star of the NHLS stand attracting many admirers.

Can I thank John for all his work over the years with the travelling display and only hope that I can look after it up to his standard. For many years John has travelled to the shows with a menagerie of 25 trees as a species identification quiz. Sadly that is not possible for us, but we have come up with a wildlife picture quiz which seems to go down well with the younger generation and parents alike.

WARWICKSHIRE HUNT COMPETITION

2021 HEDGELAYING RESULTS

Kindly Judged by Mr Brian Brazington and Mr Brian Webb.

One Chain of Hedge Laying – Sponsored by Knight Frank

- 1st David Fletcher Hedge Layer on Chris Wrightson's Land – Meon Hill, Brailes
- 2nd Richard Markham on Mr & Mrs Males Land – Napton
- 3rd Robin Dale on his own land – Bourton on the Hill

Best Novice Hedge Layer – Sponsored by Mrs Jennifer Meir

- 1st Luke Dyer on Sue Etherington-Smith's Land – Dower House, Sibford Ferris
- 2nd Mike Hartnell on his own land – Little Compton

Most Difficult Hedge – Sponsored by Mr Tim Withers

- 1st Richard Markham on Mrs and Mrs Males Land – Napton
- 2nd Michael Gibbs on his own land – Tysoe

Most Jumpable Hedge – Sponsored by G&T Racing

- 1st Ken Roland on Kathy Warrens Land – Bourton on Dunsmore
- 2nd Jimmy Shurman on Mr & Mrs Godson's Land – Upper Brailes

THE GAME FAIR 2021

Claire Maymon

The Game Fair was back!

Starting on 22nd July in warm, summer weather and continuing for 4 days, David and Carol Whitaker towed the trailer of bonsai hedges down from Garstang to Ragley Hall, Warwickshire. John Savings and Hefin Davies helped to set up the stand. With the tree display and the superb new gazebo, we looked pretty smart!

The weather was hot and moody and thankfully the thunder and rain forecast never came.

As always, people were fascinated and delighted to see the hedges, still often amazed to find that "...yes, they are real, alive and growing, all the time". Carol now is very focused on the nail scissor clipping that really does take place several times a day as the shoots on the hedges continue to unfurl.

Many people took part in the guess the tree competition and we signed up some new members to the Society.

With devotion to duty from Joe and Georgina Craig and help from several midland hedge-layers, thanks as ever needs to be given to those that just give their time and enthusiasm to manning the stand. Tony Wilsdon, Robin Dale, John Vickery, Roger Parris, Hefin Davies, John Savings and Glynis together with Carol and David should all be mentioned.

As those who have attended shows know, the final breakdown, clear up and journey home is the most tiring – almost feels like the day after a hedgelaying competition!

The hedges and trailer are now owned by the NHLS and David and Carol have undertaken the care and trailing around of them. With an emergency hotline to John Savings, their future looks rosy and exciting.

The display had already been to the Yorkshire Show, is destined for the Moreton Show, heading for the World of Wood Show in Cambridge, The Malvern Show and so their miles rack up.

Thanks to all who help with this unique advertisement for the National Hedgelaying Society.



ANDREW BROWN-JACKSON

I am writing to notify those in the East Midlands particularly, of the passing of my father Andrew Brown-Jackson. He died in August 2020 after a short battle with pancreatic cancer.

My dad came to hedgelaying later in life having had to leave his previous role in education. He was told to get outside to help his recovery from mental health issues and this gave him an opportunity to do something that he had always wanted to do – hedgelaying and dry stone walling.

Dad decided that if he was going to learn to lay hedges properly he would start by using nothing but hand tools, and by entering hedgelaying competitions. He thoroughly enjoyed the experience and spent time with Geoff Key, who gave him the benefit of his vast experience. There followed a 20 year career in hedgelaying and drystone walling which took him all over Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Leicestershire completing both private jobs and also training others to lay hedges. I think in that time he trained approximately 600-800 people through various courses all over the East Midlands.



Dad worked right up until the first lock-down when he first showed signs of being ill, and at 78 had not shown any indication of stopping. He had plenty more he wanted to do but unfortunately that was not meant to be.

Given the current situation we were unable to have a large funeral and intend to hold some form of celebration when we are allowed. If any body wants to get in touch please feel free to contact me at matto-kun@gmail.com.

Matt Brown-Jackson

POETRY CORNER

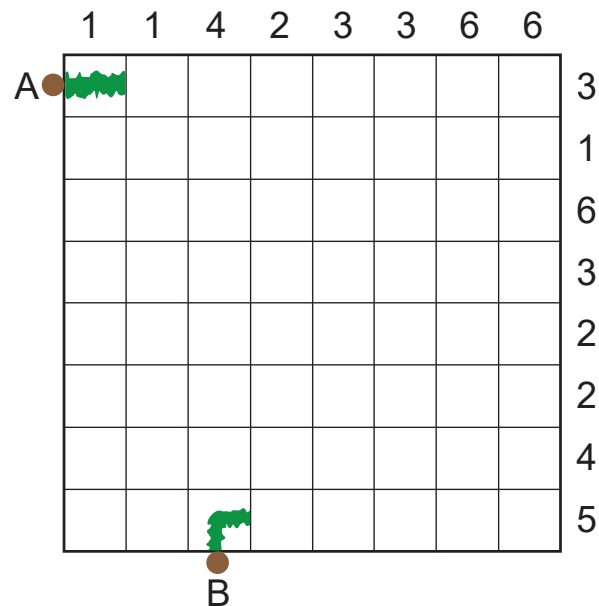
Chris Key – The Hedgelayer’s Friend

Working alone in peaceful countryside
 A hedge needing your expertise,
 Tools ready, stakes at hand
 A nice day with a gentle breeze,
 What could be better, as you start to clean out
 You notice a little friend around
 A robin has joined you, he has come
 To see what is down in the ground,
 He likes to be near you all day long
 Looking for something to eat
 He sits in the branches, singing his song
 Then down again, looks for another treat,
 Someone said it’s an old hedgelayer
 Come back to watch over you,
 Maybe, as there is often a robin by your side
 When there’s a hedge to do!
 So if you find you have a companion, talk to him
 He could be your old friend
 The robin will watch over you, everyday
 And be well fed by the end!

John Clare – The Thrush’s Nest

Within a thick and spreading hawthorn bush
 That overhung a molehill large and round,
 I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush
 Sing hymns to sunrise, and I drank the sound
 With joy; and often, an intruding guest,
 I watched her secret toil from day to day -
 How true she warped the moss to form a nest,
 And modelled it within with wood and clay;
 And by and by, like heath-bells gilt with dew,
 There lay her shining eggs, as bright as flowers,
 Ink-spotted over shells of greeny blue;
 And there I witnessed, in the sunny hours,
 A brood of nature’s minstrels chirp and fly,
 Glad as the sunshine and the laughing sky.

“HEDGETRACKS”



Similar to the “Train Tracks” puzzles you see in newspapers and magazines, this is a version that uses hedges (just to make it even less plausible).

Lay bits of hedge connecting gatepost A to gatepost B. The numbers indicate how many lengths of hedge go in each row and column. Unlike in real life, lengths can only be straight or right-angle bends but, reassuringly, the hedge cannot cross itself.

PRIZE CROSSWORD SOLUTION

	B	I	L	L	H	O	O	K		I	L	E	X	
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	L		A	G	R	O	N	O	M	Y		R		
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BLACKDOWN HILLS HEDGE ASSOCIATION

Contact: John Scantlebury, Shoebrooks, Ashculme, Hemyock EX15 3SU
Email: secretary@bhha.info



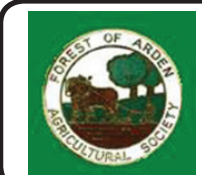
CHESHIRE PLOUGHING & HEDGE CUTTING SOCIETY

Contact: Susan Ball, The Croft, Church Lane, Smallwood, Sandbach CW11 2UT
Email: sueball_lynhouse@hotmail.co.uk
Tel: 01260 270180



FAIRFORD, FARINGDON, FILKINS & BURFORD PLOUGHING SOCIETY

Contact: Megan Saunders, Keepers Cottage, Wilcote, Chipping Norton, OX7 3SZ
Email: megan@ploughingmatch.co.uk



FOREST OF ARDEN AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Mrs Sue Westmacott, Stockton House, High Street, Henly-in-Arden, B95 5AT
Email: sue@westmacotts.co.uk Tel: 01564 793746

HALLATON & DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Gill Burbidge, Lynham, 31 Kelmarsh Road, Clipston, Market Harborough LE16 9RX
Email: gillburbidge2014@gmail.com
Tel: 01858 525911 or 07950 738732



HEART OF ENGLAND HEDGE LAYING GROUP

Contact: Bill Piper, 31 Dorset Drive, Moira, Swadlincote DE12 6HU
Email: bill@billpiper.co.uk



HEDGE & WOODLAND CONSERVATIONISTS

Contact: Christopher Kersley, 14 Robins Dale, Knaphill, Woking GU21 2LQ
Email: chris.kersley1167@gmail.com



LANCS & WESTMORLAND HEDGELAYING ASSOCIATION

Contact: Mrs Ann Kendal, Dale House, Grayrigg, Kendal LA8 9BU
Email: annkendal43@gmail.com
Tel: 01539 824276



MELPLASH AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Lucy Hart, 23 South Street, Bridport DT6 3NT
Email: office@melplashshow.co.uk
Tel: 01308 423337



MID-SOMERSET AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Christine Barham, 3 Europa Court, Crown Trading Estate, Shepton Mallet BA4 5QQ
Email: secretary@midsomersetshow.org.uk

NORTH EAST HEDGELAYING SOCIETY

Contact: David Boyson, Rothley Mill Cottage, Hartburn, Morpeth NE61 4ED
Email: dbcountryside@btinternet.com
Tel: 01670 774267 or 07771 721573

THE CONSERVATION HEDGELAYERS

Contact: P Vaughan, 19 Tavistock Gardens, Ilford IG3 9BE
Email: linda@thewannas.co.uk
Tel: 020 8590 0879 or 07939 912097

WRINGTON & BURRINGTON HEDGING SOCIETY

Contact: Clive Bethell, 19 Vicarage Lane, Shapwick, Bridgwater TA7 9LR
Email: mowbarton@btinternet.com
Tel: 07976 895643



WESTMORLAND COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Lane Farm, Crooklands, Milnthorpe LA7 7NH
Email: manager@westmorland.org.uk
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Readyhedge is proud to support the National Hedgelaying Society and the National Hedgelaying Championships.

WHO TO CONTACT IN 2021/22

PRESIDENT

JOHN VICKERY

Ashlands, Stockland, Honiton EX14 9DY
Tel: 01404 861368

CHAIRMAN & TRUSTEE

JOE CRAIG

11 Stoney Lane, Galgate,
Lancaster, LA2 0JY
Tel: 01524 752665
Email: chair@hedgelaying.org.uk

TREASURER & TRUSTEE

ANDREW CROW

Fallowfield House, Bulby,
Bourne PE10 0RU
Tel: 07941 715734 or 01778 591158
Email: treasurer@hedgelaying.org.uk

CHAMPIONSHIP COORDINATOR, SPONSORSHIP & TRUSTEE

CLIVE BETHELL

Mowbarton, 19 Vicarage Lane,
Shapwick, Bridgwater TA7 9LR
Eml: championship@hedgelaying.org.uk

SECRETARY &

ACTING NEWSLETTER EDITOR

DAVID WHITAKER

2 Armitage Way, Galgate,
Lancaster LA2 0BN
Tel: 07734 134919
Email: secretary@hedgelaying.org.uk

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, TRAINING OFFICER & TRUSTEE

PHIL HART

1 Wales Farm Lane, Ditchling Road,
Plumpton, Lewes BN7 3AS
Tel: 07717 054172
Email: training@hedgelaying.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP

MARGARET BUDDING

42 Main Street, Cossington,
Leicester LE7 4UU
Tel: 07894 262783
Email: membership@hedgelaying.org.uk

TROPHIES

MANDY WOODHAM

Keepers Cottage, Hampton,
Dorchester DT2 9DY
Email: awards@hedgelaying.org.uk

MEDIA OFFICER & TRUSTEE

CLAIRE MAYMON

Coach House Farm, Cheltenham Road,
Broadway WR12 7BY
Tel: 01386 858030 or 07810 768098
Email: media@hedgelaying.org.uk

MERCHANDISE

RUSSELL WOODHAM

Keepers Cottage, Hampton,
Dorchester DT2 9DY
Email: merchandise@hedgelaying.org.uk

SAFETY OFFICER

DAVE PADLEY

Moss Side Farm, Wigglesworth,
Skipton BD23 4SP
Tel: 07729 333676
Email: safety@hedgelaying.org.uk

WEBSITE

Richard Hooker
Worhams Farm, Shute,
Axminster EX13 7QF
Tel: 07973 796826
Email: webo@hedgelaying.org.uk



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