



NATIONAL HEDGELAYING SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Preserving the past, protecting the future
WINTER 2021

CONTENTS

NHLS BUSINESS	2
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.	2
FABULOUS NEW MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT METHOD!	3
NEW NHLS CHAINSAW TRAINING AWARDS.	4
LETTERS & COMMENTS	5
NHLS MERCHANDISE	9
ARTICLES	10
2021 IRELAND HEDGELAYING CHAMPIONSHIP	10
2021 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT	12
HEDGELAYING RESULTS.	13
CHAMPIONSHIP RAFFLE & DRAW	16
MATCH & EVENT REPORTS	18
PATRON'S EVENT 2021	18
WORCESTERSHIRE TRAINING DAY	20
BHHA "SKILLS OF THE HILLS" 2021	21
LWHLA – ARNSIDE AND SILVERDALE	23
DIVERSIONS	25
NHLS AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS	26

FROM THE EDITOR



Thank you all for the articles for the newsletter, especially Richard for all his help in the layout and checking my spelling. This year has seen a dramatic increase in interest in hedgelaying and what we do. This come after a long period when nothing was happening due to the restrictions. The society is progressing very quickly, with greater demand for training and a very large number of people emailing and ringing in wanting someone to lay hedges. If you are thinking about doing the accreditation and putting your name on the contractors list, this would be a good time to do it. Lastly, I have repeated many times that the newsletter editor's job is available and so at the AGM we will be looking for someone new to take it on. *David Whitaker*

The front cover shows the 2021 National Hedgelaying Championship Supreme Champion - Pete Gibson.

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 NHLS CHAIR

It only seems a short time since August when we were able at last to hold our Annual General Meeting and I was appointed as your Chair, but what a busy time it as been.



In September we held our very first Charity event at Rotherfield Estate in Hampshire by kind permission of the Scott family. Hedgelayers from all round the country turned out to raise the fantastic amount of £14,500 for three charities: RABI and the two South West Air Ambulances. 120 cutters attended; what a brilliant effort for a first event. We hope to do it all over again on the 1st October 2022 at the same venue.

Then, in last October, again at Rotherfield, we were able to hold our National Championship which Covid had forced to be held over from the previous year. The hedge proved to be more of a challenge than some we have had but with a little extra time given and a nice dry day the standard that the cutters put before the judges was of the highest. Very well done to all those who competed. Glyn Davies cutting Welsh Style took the new "Reserve Supreme Champion" trophy whilst Peter Gibson, cutting Lancashire and Westmorland style, took the overall Supreme Champion title. Well done to everyone who took part whether you were winners or not. At this point I have to say a big thank you to our chief steward Clive Bethell for organising both of these events.

At the National Championship we announced two new projects: one a partnership with the Dry Stone Walling Association to form the "Rural Skills Hub", the second to launch the new accreditation scheme under the LANTRA banner. This is open to anyone whether they are members of the National hedgelaying Society or not. Application forms can be downloaded from the NHLS website or on request from our secretary.

In November we organised our patron's event with 30 cutters tackling a blackthorn hedge at Highgrove. The Prince of Wales duly arrived and spoke to every cutter in turn as he walked the length of the hedge. A very enjoyable day it was, and the Prince seemed to really enjoy himself in such a relaxed atmosphere.

The NHLS and it's officials continue to look at ways to move the Society forward in these changing times and hope to have more announcements for you in the very near future.

I'd like to add a personal "thank you" to all volunteers who give their time so freely to help with the running of this Society.

Meanwhile take care and stay SAFE.

Joe Craig

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**Saturday 26th March 2022 10:00am****Cutnall Green & District Memorial Hall****Addis Lane, Cutnall Green, Droitwich WR9 0NE****W3W: ///under.fail.deleting****AGENDA:**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM – 14th August 2021
3. Matters arising
4. Change in wording of the Constitution as to when we hold a AGM:
(An Annual general meeting must be held each year not more than six months after the end of the financial year.)
5. Correspondence
6. Chair's report
7. Treasurer's report
8. Election of auditors
9. Other officer reports (training, accreditation, and media)
10. Election of executive, trustees, and committee
11. Any other business
12. Date and time of next meeting

Nominations for Trustees:

Nominations are required for a total of six Trustees: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, and three others.

Anyone nominated as a Trustee must be a paid up member of the NHLS.

Persons nominated for any of these positions must have agreed to stand for election and must have a proposer and seconder.

Nominations for President & Secretary:

Two other posts requiring nominations are: President and Secretary.

Must be paid up members of the NHLS, and must have agreed to stand for election and must have a proposer and seconder.

Nominations for Committee.

We are once again asking for nominations for the remainder of the committee to save time at the AGM. Nominations are required for up to 30 members who are over the

age of 18 and willing to stand. Should there be more than 30 nominations then there will be a vote. Committee members do not require proposers and seconders and may put themselves forward for election or have agreed to stand if nominated by someone else.

All Nominations.

Nominations for all the above must be made in writing by post or email to reach the Secretary:

Mr.D.Whitaker, 2 Armitage Way, Galgate, Lancaster LA2 0BN

By Friday 25th February 2022 – 30 days before the AGM

Before the AGM we are planning to have a social event on the evening of Friday 25th March at the

Premier Inn, Bromsgrove, B60 1GJ.

All are welcome!

FABULOUS NEW MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT METHOD!

As from last autumn, Andrew Crow and I have been working with the Society's accountants on an online accounting package that will simplify the accounts and, ultimately, the processing of your membership every year.

The part of the process that will affect you, as a member, is the convenience and ease of being able to set up a direct debit online. Once set up it will enable us to send you an invoice as a reminder and the subscription will then be taken automatically. I shall send out invoices at least 2 weeks before renewal date to enable you to alter anything.

An advantage of GoCardless, as the direct debit program is called, is that it is a once only process for the member, once in place that's it, done. The NHLS has no access to your personal banking details. It can also be used for ad hoc payments such as merchandise, meaning that you will be able to pay directly rather than having to send a cheque or transferring the money. The only thing to remember is to **cancel any standing orders** that are in place. We cannot do this for you as we have no way of knowing who is paying by standing order or by bank transfer.

We sincerely hope that most of you will sign up this this system when renewing your subscription. All the details will be on the email/letter that I send out before your subs are due. As always if you need to chat about this, please give me a call.

*Margaret Budding
Membership Secretary*

NEW NHLS CHAINSAW TRAINING AWARDS

The National Hedgelaying Society recognises that chainsaws are in many cases an essential hedgelaying tool. It also recognises that it is a tool which is dangerous in untrained hands. We therefore encourage all chainsaw users to undergo training in the safe use of chainsaws. Indeed, you will not be permitted to compete in The National Hedgelaying Championship without a current recognised training certificate.

We also recognise that gaining these qualifications is not cheap for young people commencing life in land-based work therefore, in recognition of the importance we place on the issue of safety and our desire to encourage more young people and those looking to make a career change, to practise the craft of hedgelaying, the National Hedgelaying Society is offering an award of £100 to persons of 40 years of age and younger (minimum 16 years of age) who present evidence of having successfully completed a chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting course, either 003920 City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting or Lantra Level 2 Award in Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting.

To be eligible for this award, the applicant must be a member of the NHLS and, if not a "Junior" member, must be paying their annual subscription by direct debit or have arranged to do so by completing a direct debit mandate for their forthcoming subscription.

The chainsaw course can be taken with any approved Lantra or City & Guilds training provider.

The funding allocated to this award scheme is finite and the allocation will be on a 'first come first served basis'. For further details visit the NHLS website.

The National Hedgelaying Society is a charity registered in England and Wales and is unable to make awards to persons living outside these countries.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP THIS YEAR IS TO BE HELD ON
SATURDAY 29TH OCTOBER
THE SITE IS NEARLY DECIDED!**

**SATURDAY 1ST OCTOBER
CHARITY EVENT TO TRY AND BEAT LAST YEAR'S RECORD TOTAL.
ROTHERFIELD ESTATE.**

(WE ARE EXPERIENCING AN EXTRAORDINARY INTEREST IN HEDGELAYING EVENTS AND TRAINING COURSES. IF YOU HAVE AN EVENT PLANNED OR INTEND TO PLAN AN EVENT IN FUTURE PLEASE LET US KNOW SO WE CAN PUT IT ON THE EVENTS AND DIARY PAGE ON THE WEBSITE.)

To Whom It May Concern;

As a long standing member of the NHLS and an active competitor in the Midland Open Class; after long deliberation and serious discussion with fellow members and cutters; I feel I have a duty to voice our concerns over the future of our Midland Open Class.

Myself, and fellow highly principled and passionate Midland style cutters, are very concerned that the fore-mentioned class may become compromised, due to the unfortunate excessive and seemingly flagrant use of deadwood within our class competitions.

We realise that deadwood is a contentious issue, but this subject needs to be appropriately addressed and serious debate needs to take place within the society to secure the future of the Midlands style going forward.

If the continued and seemingly accepted practice of the overuse of deadwood is allowed to continue without consequence and guidance for our competitors and judges alike, the difficult task of securing further landowners to offer hedgerows for future competitions will become increasingly difficult to obtain.

Decisions over how clear the rules and regulations are, including deductible points and disqualification need to be made.

The Midland style (also called the Bullock hedge) should be a living, stock-proof barrier. How is this possible, with long swathes of dead hedgerow in the following weeks after a competition has taken place?

The art of laying a living hedge is being lost.

We cut Midland style for a living and speak to many landowners in the course of a season and all too often we hear that the landowner would never contemplate a competition on their land, solely due to the issue of deadwood. This is because long after the competitors have triumphantly left holding their winning cup aloft, the farmer is left seeing how much of his hedge is not growing the following spring.

I hope, going forward we can bring some much needed reform to our rule book to help competitors and judges keep Midland style alive.

Looking forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours Sincerely,

D G WALKER	Professional Hedgelayer
I LEADBETTER	Professional Hedgelayer
P MARTIN	Professional Hedgelayer
J EXTON	Professional Hedgelayer

NHLS Chair's response

Hi David,

This has been a concern of mine for quite a few years, not just in the Midland class but across all styles. During the briefing at Pewsey I announced that excessive use of deadwood would be penalised but until we get JUDGES to implement this we are where we are.

I will put your concerns before the committee at our next meeting and hopefully come up with some sort of a solution to this problem – for the benefit of hedgelaying and the good name of the NHLS

Regards. Joe

HEDGELAYING AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

May I fully endorse the comments made by George Darwall in the Summer 2021 Newsletter; it is right that standards need to be maintained by some form of “accreditation” but that is not to say it is only for those who see hedgelaying as a source of income, there is far more to the craft than crashing down as much hedge as possible in a season, and I have met many, (shall we call them “Volunteers” rather than “Amateurs”), who know more about hedgelaying and the environment than some of those who claim to be professionals.

It is my belief that we need to give far more consideration to what is being laid and why. How many Hedgelayers do environmental surveys (as well as risk assessments), before beginning their work? Yet laying a hedge can be very disruptive to the flora and fauna, even destructive. The ecology of a hedge could be irreversible damage by destroying some unrecognised habitat essential to a rare plant or insect.

Climate change is another aspect of hedgelaying which seems to have received little attention. Should we be looking at the “Carbon Footprint” of hedgelaying activities, minimising the amount of material cut from the hedge and ensuring that it is disposed of thoughtfully, and what about the use of electric chain saws?

Perhaps the NHLS should be publishing recommendations and guidelines for “best practice”. I believe that Hedgelaying must change drastically over the next few years; it is no longer about retaining livestock in a field; the future is much more about careful management of hedgerows and the landscape. Preserving the past, in the form of ensuring that the old skills, techniques and styles continue to be used, but also protecting the future, by making sure that everything we do is environmentally friendly.

So, come on Hedgelayers, let us have a debate about hedgelaying and how it can best serve our environmental needs. If we do not get it right now there will not be a future for hedgelaying.

ALLAN PORTAS

THANKS

To the National Hedgelaying Society,

It was a total surprise at the AGM to be made a Life Member. Thank you all involved for putting me forward.

Where does the time go? I well remember my first day hedgelaying at Manor Farm on a light hedge between FARM PIECE and PECKET PIECE, I did so enjoy being taught by KEN HOPE, I went on to lay all the hedges on both farms, some really rough ones.

Never to be forgotten, the boundary hedge in COW GROUND (why it's called that I never know, not a good field, ridge & furrow in 5 different directions) a rough hedge, 6 foot ditch, no chainsaw, 5lb axe, bill hook and transistor radio. It was a Sunday, radio on and The Beatles had just released their new record “Penny Lane & Strawberry Fields”. Wow what a mega day!

By laying these rough hedges I learnt so much. The first competition I saw was the Forest of Arden ploughing & hedgelaying competition – I realized “I could do that”. I entered the 53rd Sheepy Ploughing & Hedgelaying Association on 13th October 1966 at Moor Burgess Farm, Glascote, Tamworth...

...off I set in my blue Ford Poplar van having milked the cows beforehand. It rained all day.

The Open won by Bert Clark, 2nd Roy Hawkins, 3rd Mr J Grewcock

Under-25 won by Ron Clark, 2nd myself, 3rd R Grewcock

What fun. I won £6, a lot of money, when my wage at home was £2, 10 shillings a week.

I went home happy, then milked the cows again.

What was sad was the site we laid the hedge on, the following week it was turned into a building site for houses.

I only competed in one Farmers Weekly competition at Offchurch in 1967, as I was expected to milk morning and night; I didn't have a relief until 1973.

I did a lot of contract hedgelaying between milkings, until the farm doubled in size. Only competing in competitions from 1966 – 1975 but then again 1986-87-88 and then in our local hedgelaying and walling competitions, great fun.

I had the honour and pleasure to become chairman of the NHLS in 2005, a role I enjoyed. I do so enjoy judging now, started in 1998 and I have enjoyed co-judging with many great hedgelayers.

I have so enjoyed the camaraderie of all associated with hedgelaying and the countryside.

Thank-you all for the honour.

ROBIN DALE

THE CONTINUING PERILS OF BLACKTHORN

I am a hedgelayer and on Friday 19th March 2021 I fell awkwardly while laying a hedge and a blackthorn penetrated my left calf muscle.



By the time I reached home my calf muscle was very swollen and red and it was very painful. As I am very aware of the danger of blackthorn poisoning I went to Witney hospital where I was given an anti-tetanus injection and

antibiotics. The staff were unable to extract the blackthorn as it was so deep and told me that the Ultrasound Department at the John Radcliffe Hospital would contact me within 24 hours. If they did not do so I should call them. As I did not receive a call I contacted them and was given an appointment on Tuesday 23rd March at 9.15 a.m.

Two people performed the ultrasound examination and told me there was no thorn to be seen.

As my calf muscle was still very painful I went home and applied a veterinary poultice and renewed it twice a day. On Saturday 27th March a 15mm blackthorn came out of my calf (see photos enclosed).

I am writing to you as I feel hedgelayers everywhere should know that an ultrasound scan is not completely reliable. It failed to show the blackthorn that was still lodged in my calf at the time.

HEFIN DAVIES



NHLS MERCHANDISE



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.

Merchandise News

The Society would like to thank you for your purchases over the last year. If there is anything you can think of you might like us to try please do say. For example mugs or maybe thermal mugs? If we get enough interest we can look into prices.

Please note All Polos, Rugby, Fleece & Gilets prices will increase by £1.50 and Beanies by £1 from 1st January 2022.

Order forms from: 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*



2021 IRELAND HEDGELAYING CHAMPIONSHIP *Nigel Adams*

In early October Phil Hart and I were invited to go over to Ireland to attend their annual hedgelaying championships. Myself to judge and Phil to do a demonstration of the South of England style. Due to shortage of time on both our parts we decided to fly over to Dublin from Gatwick leaving our cars at Cilla Tunk's house close by. It was great to see Cilla and have a quick cup of tea and a chat before taking a taxi to the airport.

We were met at Dublin by Mark, a long standing member of the society and someone we had met before in events in France and The Netherlands, who drove us about 90 minutes to the site in County Offal so we could get a look at the site.

Soon we found ourselves marking out the plots either side of a potentially rather wet farm track (it was on top of a peat bog!), novices one side and professionals the other. The hedge was really tough, big old Hawthorn planted in a single line and stems often far apart. One side was easier than the other so we made that the novice section and the older stuff for the more experienced. As darkness fell a delicious meal was served up in the marquee by the farmer's wife for those who had spent the day setting up the event.

After dinner a few beers were served up, a special brew made for the event called 'Hedgeslayerer'! We also chatted about the day to follow. Ireland does not as such have a recognised style so judging was not so straightforward. I learnt that some would be adding binders others not. So just how should the judging could be carried out... I decided that I would mark on cutting, build and general appearance only, excluding binders, yet have a special stand-alone prize for best binders and all agreed that was the way forward.

The weather held out for the event day and early on craft stands and vintage agricultural displays started to arrive. Competitors were not quite so punctual and it was about 10.30 before they finally started to cut.



On the Sunday we travelled into Dublin for an informal meeting with the Irish Hedgelay-

ing Association to discuss accreditation, competitions, training and ways in which our own National Society can help in any way in the future.

It was a great trip and we are very grateful to our generous hosts. We look forward to being asked again one day.

Standards varied enormously but on the whole they did very well on a difficult hedge. Visitors were plentiful including the Environment Minister from Dublin who was very interested in hedgerows. At the end of the day and after quite a bit of deliberation I chose my top three in each class and soon the prize giving was under way.



ing Association to discuss accreditation, competitions, training and ways in which our own National Society can help in any way in the future.

It was a great trip and we are very grateful to our generous hosts. We look forward to being asked again one day.

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: 07796 502100.

2021 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT

THE 42ND CHAMPIONSHIP

SATURDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2021

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

BY KIND PERMISSION OF ROTHERFIELD FARMS LLP



Happy New Year to you all and I hope you had a good Christmas.

Congratulations to everyone who came to the Championship to compete in October at Plain Farm Rotherfield, and the spectators that made it a great day; even the sun came to see us which made it a very enjoyable occasion. Our host was very happy with the laid hedges. I have a few 'thankyous' to Joe, Russell, Mandy, Laura, Gina, Annette, Lin, Maggie, and anyone else that helped on the day in the Marquee and to set up. Also to Sue for the food in the marquee; a great job once again, getting everyone fed and watered.

The biggest 'thankyous' have to go to Arthur, Emilie, Ollie, James, Jamie, James and Tony from Rotherfield Estate, without them the event would not have happened so thank you all.

Thanks to all our Sponsors McConnell Hedge Trimmers, Stihl, Aspin Fuels, Readyhedge, Bridgwater Agricultural Society, Mr C Matthew, Mr J French, R.D Dale & Son, South of England Hedging Society, Melplash Agricultural Society, and the Lancashire & Westmorland Hedgelaying Society.

I keep being asked what the total amount was that we raised at the charity day. Altogether, with the JustGiving page it was £15,000 shared between the 3 chosen Charities.

The last 'thankyou' is for The Patron's Event and goes to our Patron and also to the Gay Family for their hospitality and for the wonderful food they provided. We had a great day at Highgrove. Those of you who were invited to cut at this event I hope you enjoyed the day although a little cold and wet, but a good time was had by all.

Clive Bethell

Chief Steward, Championship Coordinator & Sponsorship Officer

Simon Watson Hurdles

Traditional Hampshire Hurdles

Spars, Stakes & Binder Supplier

Tel: 07810 715184 Email: watsonhurdles@gmail.com

Supplier for the NHLS National Championship & Patron's Event 2021



HEDGELAYING RESULTS

2021 SUPREME CHAMPION

PETE GIBSON – LANCS & WESTMORLAND OPEN CLASS



RESERVE SUPREME CHAMPION

GWYN DAVIES – WELSH OPEN CLASS



CLASS RESULTS

Midland Open

- 1st Jonathan Stafford
- 2nd Clive Matthew
- 3rd Malcolm Johnson
- 4th Steve Budding

Midland Intermediate

- 1st Chris Smith
- 2nd Terry Underwood
- 3rd Mark Palmer

Welsh Open

- 1st Gwyn Davies
- 2nd Chris Davies
- 3rd Richard Lewis

South of England Open

- 1st David Dunk
- 2nd Bill Daniel
- 3rd Nigel Adams
- 4th Stephen Mockford

South of England Intermediate

- 1st Mike Mason
- 2nd Graham West
- 3rd Charles Bowerman

South of England Veteran

- 1st David Droscher
- 2nd Clive Gilligan

Cheshire Open

- 1st Graham Teece
- 2nd Paul Loughnane
- 3rd Stephen Yandell
- 4th Andy Brown

Lancs & Westmorland Open

- 1st Pete Gibson
- 2nd Andrew Kirkwood
- 3rd Craig Proctor

Yorkshire Open

- 1st Gary Moore
- 2nd David Boyson

North Somerset Open

- 1st Colin Clutterbuck
- 2nd Alex Bown
- 3rd Paul Gulliford
- 4th Tina Bath

North Somerset Intermediate

- 1st Rob Wood
- 2nd Matthew Knight
- 3rd Chris Claxton
- 4th Duncan Fraser

Devon Open

- 1st Colin Risdon
- 2nd Martin Turner
- 3rd Andrew Burrough
- 4th Steve McCulloch

Devon Intermediate

- 1st Rob Sturme
- 2nd Malcolm Dowling
- 3rd Mark Pugh

Dorset Open

- 1st Jon Sibthorp
- 2nd Tim Frampton
- 3rd Terry Coombe
- 4th Russell Woodham

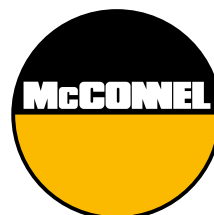
OTHER AWARDS

- Best Midland Veteran *Clive Matthew*
- Overall Best Veteran *David Droscher (SoE Vet.)*
- Best Staking & Binding – Midland Style *Malcolm Johnson*
- Best Lady Competitor *Tina Bath (N. Somerset)*
- Best Work on a Poor Length *Gary Moore (Yorkshire)*
- Oldest Competitor..... *Chris Smith*
- Youngest Competitor *Alex Clayson*
- Best Intermediate Cutter *Mike Mason (SoE Int.)*

- Best Midland Regrowth..... *John Exton*
- Best Regrowth – Welsh..... *Neville Powell*
- Best Regrowth – Derby..... *Graham Teece*
- Best Summer Hedge – Lancs. & Westmorland..... *Andrew Kirkwood*
- Best Regrowth – South of England..... *Stephen Mockford*
- Best Regrowth – South of England Veteran *Frank Wright*
- Best Regrowth – Devon..... *Richard Hooker*
- Best Regrowth – North Somerset..... *Paul Gulliford*
- Best Regrowth – Dorset..... *Russell Woodham*
- Best Regrowth – Cheshire..... *Stephen Yandell*
- Best Regrowth Overall..... *Russell Woodham*

CHAMPIONSHIP SPONSORS

The NHLS is grateful to the following organisations for generously sponsoring or otherwise supporting this year's NHLS National Championship



Also:
 Mr Clive Matthew
 Mr RD Dale & Son
 Mr John French
 Mrs Claire Maymon

CHAMPIONSHIP RAFFLE & DRAW

NATIONAL HEDGELAYING SOCIETY CHAMPIONSHIP DRAW
 Protocol: J Crow, Fallowfield House, Bulby, Bourne, Lincs, PE10 0RU

2021 National Hedgelaying Championship & Countryside Event
 Saturday 23rd October 2021

Prizes include: £100 Cash
 Food Hampers, Wines and Spirits
 Plus Many Other Prizes

TICKETS £1 EACH
 To be drawn on Saturday 23rd October 2021
 at Rotherfield Park Estate, Plain Farm,
 Alton, Hampshire GU34 3SE
 www.hedgelaying.org.uk
 Patron: His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales
 Registered Under the Small Society Lotteries Act, 2002,
 8000 (Ref 140). Registration Charity Number: 298952
 Hot Metal Press, Elsecar Heritage Centre, Tel: 01226 740499 Fax: 350201
 www.hotmetalpress.co.uk

The First Prize was won by ticket number **09695**.

Congratulations to **Trevor Dorey**.

Thank you to everyone who supported the raffle this year. A total of £1814.60 was raised to help fund the Championship Event. Thanks to all who bought, sold and folded tickets and donated prizes/cash. Your support, in this way, for the Championship Event, is much appreciated. A special note of thanks to all who helped on the day to make this an excellent result.

Jenny Crow - Raffle Officer

	Ticket	Winner
1 st	09695	Trevor Dorey
2 nd	02646	J Hemming
3 rd	02717	Natalie Russell
4 th	02088	David Smith
5 th	07101	J Lord
6 th	04583	Chapman
7 th	00025	Charlotte Hawkins
8 th	05508	Shirley Strugnall
9 th	03767	Ned Dunbar
10 th	07617	Jon Bethall
11 th	02712	Colin Risdon
12 th	08807	Robert Cole
13 th	07763	Steve Budding
14 th	05605	Lottie Johnson
15 th	03525	Mrs L Cookson
16 th	07700	Janice Burrough
17 th	08084	Christopher Smith
18 th	01151	John Korbey
19 th	02246	David Walker
20 th	04015	Terry Coombe
21 st	02357	Graham West
22 nd	06672	Christopher Hall
23 rd	07962	Paul Laughnane

	Ticket	Winner
24 th	02220	John Harper
25 th	07748	G Alford
26 th	02668	Penny - Burger van
27 th	07558	A A Karen c/o Adams
28 th	07708	Charlie Burrough
29 th	05275	Louis - Netherlands
30 th	09594	Woodhouse
31 st	04904	David Boyson
32 nd	02624	Becky and John Exton
33 rd	09895	Michael Wells
34 th	05781	Mrs I Hopkins
35 th	08827	Mr Bill Piper
36 th	08556	Jane Wheelhouse
37 th	00055	B Westmacott
38 th	02463	Hans
39 th	03456	Christine Parris
40 th	04290	Andy Harris
41 st	02314	Carol Whitaker
42 nd	07978	Harley Dale
43 rd	08799	Anne Pitman
44 th	00037	Dave Lee
45 th	04165	Pete Gibson

From Claire Maymon...

For those fortunate enough to have been to Alton in September for the charity event, finding the venue was easy. Some of us went on a roundabout way but it was well worth the effort! The location of the site was excellent. The Angel Hotel 5 miles up the road was first rate, both for accommodation, food and space.

With access to two long hedges either side of the same field was a rare facility for The Championship together with a good sized, sturdy marquee, caterers and trade stands, the scene was set.

The day began with the early morning exit of the competitors from the hotel and the weather was good.

We were sorry that both Jenny and Andrew Crow were absent on this occasion but the ladies in the tent did a wonderful job of setting out the raffle and selling tickets to the value of almost £2,000.

Sue Westmacott and her team of caterers provided an excellent post competition meal and this was particularly welcome after an extra hour had been given by our Chair. His concern being that the hedges should be finished to the highest standard possible.

The hedge was varied and had the unusual feature of permanent rat traps, gaps and even a bit of old bedframe. As ever, the challenge was for the skilled hedge layer to make "the best job" of their stint. The chainsaws whirred and the sweat dripped. Some felt it too warm for cutting but those of us spectating did not have that problem.

The hours flew by and the hedges began to take shape. The transformation from start to finish was as stunning as ever. The view changed dramatically as the hedges came down and the craft of hedge laying was put on show.

The judges were left with the hard task of deciding who would win their classes. The points between competitors so often are only 2, or 3 apart but there has to be a winner.

With the light fading and the stiffness of all setting in, thanks were given to all who help to make the Championships the wonderful occasion it is. Thanks also were given to the host, Mr Arthur Scott.

The presentation of donations to the three charities were also made. This came from the fantastic record hedgelaying event held a month earlier at Rotherfield Estate. With the generous donation of Rotherfield Farm and Arthur, Clive Bethel was able to award £15,000 divided equally between to The Devon and Dorset Air Ambulance and the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Fund.

Special mention should be made of Clive, who undertook the organisation and running of the Charity Event in September with great success. Clive then turned to and organised a huge part of the 2021 Championships and we thank him and his family for all the time they give to the National Hedgelaying Society.

The team is now planning for the 2022 Championships. Watch this space!

PATRON'S EVENT 2021

4TH DECEMBER 2021

A truly magical day was shared by those who attended this year's Patron's event.

NHLS Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales, arrived at the top of the sheep filled field and was greeted by our Chair, Joe Craig, Henry James Gay the tenant farmer and Geraint Richards the Duchy Head Forrester. Together they strolled in a very leisurely fashion downhill towards the byre where he met some of the committee members.

Prince Charles, as ever, was on a mission to get down the hedge length and start his walk back up. He gave every cutter an opportunity to speak to him and to enjoy discussing the benefits of a well laid hedge and the importance they carry for wildlife. In cold but glorious sunshine many members of the national press and attendees were able to take pictures to mark the occasion.

30 cutters, had completed 8 yard lengths in either South of England, Midland or Welsh styles. Several of these cutters were out of their usual style and all did a fantastic job reaching top standards. There was a good mix of experienced and very capable cutters together with younger keen and able new cutters.

Gradually the group moved back towards the byre that had been turned into a charming outdoor café. Delicious open roasted lamb, soup cakes and buns had been provided close to a most welcome fire pit. The Prince casually moved among the people and was very comfortable in the company of fellow country folk who understand the vital importance of hedges and their maintenance.



Hefin Davies meets an interested spectator

Claire Maymon



Joe Craig thanked our host for his unending support and generosity to the National Hedgelaying Society.

Having awarded prizes to the top three cutters, The Prince of Wales delivered a very passionate and heartfelt speech regarding hedgelaying. He thanked all attending for their dedication to the craft and was proud to serve as Patron of the National Hedgelaying Society.

Chris Smith presented the prince with a hazel "stick" that he politely but firmly told him that it was not for him but for Prince William. "You already have one!", he assured.

John Savings handed over the 25-odd trees that have travelled the country attending fairs and show grounds with him as part of the NHLS display. They have been donated to the prince and given a home on the Highgrove estate.

With the hard work of Henry Gay, the tenant farmer and his family the day was the great privilege that it always is. We can only hope that the request from Joe Craig "to long be our Patron..." is met.

Thanks must be given to those members of the committee and others who gave their time to travel to Highgrove, to set it up and to ensure that it ran as smoothly as ever.

RESULTS

Midland

- 1st Graham Teece
- 2nd Hefin Davies
- 3rd Heather Swiftl

South of England

- 1st Gary Moore
- 2nd Steven Mockford
- 3rd John Handley

Welsh

- 1st Chris Davies
- 2nd Rita Jones
- 3rd Malcolm Edwards

Welsh Pairs

- 1st Phil Powell & Harry Jones
- 2nd Emily Pritchard & Lewis Lloyd
- 3rd Mervyn Powell & Jack Williams



Midland Winner Graham Teece



WORCESTERSHIRE TRAINING DAY

20TH NOVEMBER 2021

The first Worcestershire training day took place on a calm, dry and comfortable Saturday in November.

Whilst working at the Malvern and Moreton shows in the Autumn the names of people wanting to have a go and learn more about hedgelaying grew and grew.

I decided that we had to set up the Cotswold Training Group. With the great fortune of having John Savings,



Hefin Davis and Tony Wilsdon living locally, I was confident that we could provide an excellent opportunity.

Finding a suitable hedge was a challenge, but eventually a beauty was found locally.

After a short talk and encouragement to join the NHLS we set off with 11 novice cutters. John paired them up and gave them an idea of how things

should go. They were off! No chainsaws except for the experienced guides and using their hand tools, safety gloves and safety glasses they set to work.

The day was superb with everyone that attended wanting to come back for more. The farmer was equally delighted and is pestering for the next 2/3/4 events so that his hedge is finished.

Due to the expert tutoring, it was judged, by Robin Dale, who kindly came along too, that the result was well within an intermediate level.

Thank you to John, Hefin, Tony and Robin for giving me the encouragement to sort out a chance for people to learn more about our lovely craft.

Claire Maymon

BHHA “SKILLS OF THE HILLS” 2021

Great God – What people hedgelayers are!

The Blackdown Hills Hedge Association held their Covid-delayed “Skills of the Hills” hedgelaying competition on 2nd October 2021 in the village of Hemyock – right in the heart of the Blackdown Hills. Our host, Mrs Jenny Parsons, was as welcoming as she was patient, the competition having been postponed a couple of times for various reasons.

Despite a plethora of local knowledge, we were unaware that October seems to be the start of the monsoon season on this part of the Devon/Somerset borders. The weather forecast for the day was truly dreadful, a consistent “black cloud and two raindrops” from start time until dusk. Add into the equation the fact that the legendary “Mobile Catering Division” of the Smeatharpe WI had ceased trading during the pandemic and we looked at each other on the morning and said “no one will turn up”.

Well, they did, and in their droves. Out of a field of 36 competitors, only 2 chose not to take part. And when they did arrive the atmosphere was like a party - it was reminiscent of old black and white footage of pit ponies being let out into the fresh air after a six week shift underground. That’s Covid restrictions for you.

Talking of which, one of the least reported effects of the lockdown has been the one it has on hedges. When inspected two years prior to the competition, the hedges had been almost perfect. They’d obviously spent the intervening time putting on a little weight (like some of the rest of us). Parts of the Open class hedge had really gone to town and lower numbered draws were a definite advantage. Having imparted this fact to Russell Woodham, he proceeded to draw length 11 – the second from the end. As he pointed out part way through the competition, commercially he would have insisted on being paid by the ton rather than the metre for the day’s work. Look on the bright side though Russell, at the end of the day your brash pile joined the likes of the Great Wall of China as being one of the few man-made objects visible from space.



The Open class hedge. Tim Frampton in the foreground.

The competition comprised four classes: Open, Intermediate, Novice, and Pairs. The latter two being down on numbers compared with the usual turnout. The main reason being that we encourage people taking part in our winter training courses to enter the competition at the end of the season. With the competition being much earlier than usual there were few newly trained novice hedgelayers to fill the classes.

Aside from the Open class, the other hedges were almost perfect for the less experienced competitors. They had been laid a dozen years previously, and had usable, straight growth placed fairly evenly along each length. All classes had a classic Devon bank to work on, with the majority of the pleachers between waist and shoulder height.

...but it rained and it rained and it rained. Paused for a minute and then rained again.

Despite the conditions most cutters had finished before the closing hooter, and arrived at the food marquee in soggy dribs and drabs. Most of the tent sides had been removed for Covid ventilation reasons, but at least the roof stayed on, and gave some respite to those wishing to wring out chainsaw trousers and undergarments.

The BHHA has always prided itself on the catering at its event and the absence of the WI could potentially have caused a problem - but not a bit of it. Dawn Vickery, Lynda Cregan, and Lindsay Graham stepped in and produced a vast cold buffet, hot drinks and cakes. Even the plague of locusts that is your usual hedgelaying competition field, couldn't finish it despite earnest endeavour. All those involved should be congratulated on what they achieved. The inclusion of Steve McCulloch's mum's runner bean chutney, means that the BHHA may well now be able to hang on to its Michelin star for another year.

Along with the catering staff, the judges and stewards should all be thanked for turning out in excellent conditions for field testing the new waterproof paper scoresheets! I'm not sure we would have had any comprehensible results without it. So thanks to Roger Vickery, Roger Parris, Don Gaskins, Alan Barlett, Ian Connabeer, Henry Selway, & Charlie Burrough for their stoicism.

RESULTS

Open Class

- 1st Andrew Burrough
- 2nd Terry Coombe
- 3rd Steve McCulloch
- 4th Colin Risdon

Intermediate

- 1st Bob Parsons
- 2nd Rob Wood
- 3rd Steve Eldridge
- 4th Chris Stanton

Novice

- 1st Mike Baker
- 2nd Adrian Mills
- 3rd Jamie Ranson

Pairs

- 1st Darren & Paul Ackroyd
- 2nd Tim Cox & Johnny Gilbert
- 3rd Phil Hims & Brian Fishlock



*The Novice and Pairs hedge at the start of the competition.
(No later pictures are available due to waterlogged equipment)*

Despite everything, the BHHA "Skills of the Hills" competition will return to its usual time of year in 2022: **Saturday 5th March**. (Apologies to those winners of the 2021 event who will only get to hang on to their trophies for five months before having to hand them back).

Details and an entry form are available from the diary section of the NHLS web site.

Andy Cutter

LWHLA – ARNSIDE AND SILVERDALE

9TH JANUARY 2022

Lancashire and Westmorland hedgelaying association held their first competition of 2022 at Arnside courtesy of the Woodland Trust and the Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



The hedge had not been laid before and was mainly excellent but in other parts slightly stunted in growth. As ever, by the end of the day the cutters had done a first class job despite the variability of the available material. There were also a large number of spectators as a public footpath ran alongside the hedge from the village. Everyone enjoyed a love-

ly hotpot lunch and they were able to have a socially distanced natter at the same time.



RESULTS

Open Class

- 1st Craig Proctor
- 2nd William Bell
- 3rd David Whitaker

Novice

- 1st James Yates-Bell
- 2nd Neil Croskery
- 3rd Sally Capewell

Junior

- 1st Clark Ellwood
- 2nd George Harrison
- 3rd Angus Ellwood

Starter

- 1st Andy Rodger
- 2nd Mark Reynolds



Best Hedge on the FieldJames Yates Bell (Novice)



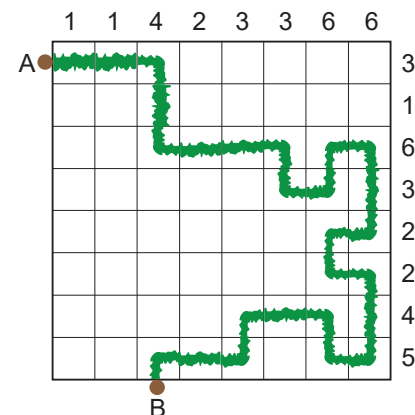
TREE WORDSEARCH

(The first person to email the editor with the word that is missing will be in line for a prize.)

A	R	T	N	B	Q	M	E	I	W	O	Y	W	B	E	X
H	E	C	M	O	U	O	L	Z	U	I	A	D	R	N	C
A	U	U	B	A	Q	C	P	E	M	J	L	K	A	A	E
Z	N	N	C	E	E	O	K	X	O	B	E	L	I	L	M
E	W	N	X	A	P	B	U	T	T	S	K	L	O	P	I
L	B	A	P	L	L	L	N	R	H	C	S	S	P	W	L
E	Y	S	A	L	L	Y	D	R	O	O	Y	L	V	A	T
L	C	R	W	Q	Y	U	P	L	O	L	R	P	L	U	M
P	E	C	U	R	P	S	M	T	X	H	L	N	N	P	A
P	P	M	O	N	K	E	Y	P	U	Z	Z	L	E	T	E
A	O	W	O	E	H	I	A	R	A	S	A	S	H	Z	B
K	P	C	E	E	L	D	E	R	M	W	Y	F	O	C	E
Y	F	W	A	Y	F	A	R	I	N	G	Z	A	L	A	T
T	I	P	R	L	N	L	B	S	P	I	N	D	L	E	I
E	R	O	W	A	N	S	D	T	P	M	L	U	Y	Q	H
X	P	N	A	N	R	O	H	T	K	C	A	L	B	B	W

- APPLE
- ASH
- BLACKTHORN
- BOX
- BUCKTHORN
- DOGWOOD
- ELDER
- ELM
- EUCALYPTUS
- FIR
- HAZEL
- HEMLOCK
- HOLLY
- HORNBEAM
- LIME
- MAPLE
- MONKEY PUZZLE
- OAK
- PEAR
- PLANE
- PLUM
- POPULAR
- ROWAN
- SPINDLE
- SPRUCE
- WALNUT
- WAYFARING
- WHITEBEAM
- WILLOW
- YEW

“HEDGETRACKS” SOLUTION





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

THE CONSERVATION HEDGELAYERS

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

COTSWOLD TRAINING

Contact: Claire Maymon, Coach House Farm, Cheltenham Road,
Broadway WR12 7BY
Email: claire_maymon@yahoo.com



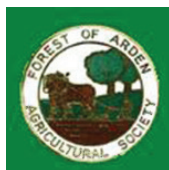
DURHAM HEDGEROW PARTNERSHIP

Contact: Sue Mullinger, Durham County Council,
Landscape & Arboriculture R E D, Durham DH1 5UQ
Email: sue.mullinger@durham.gov.uk Tel: 0300 026 7142



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 Kelmars 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



SURREY HEDGELAYING GROUP

Contact: Roy Champion, 10 Clayton Road, Farnborough GU14 9DG
Email: birchtree10@outlook.com
Tel: 07767 324765

WRINGTON & BURRINGTON HEDGING SOCIETY

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

YORKSHIRE HEDGELAYING ASSOCIATION

Contact: Ken Walmsley, The Old Stables, Risplith, Ripon HG4 3EP
Email: cbc122.cc@gmail.com
Tel: 01765 620378



WESTMORLAND COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Lane Farm, Crooklands, Milnthorpe LA7 7NH
Email: manager@westmorland.org.uk
Tel: 01539 567804

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 and have delivered three times a year?



Annual Membership Fees

- Junior (under 21)..... Free
- Ordinary member..... £20
- Contractor Member £75
- Affiliated Organisation..... £50

More details are available on the NHLS web site



READYHEDGE Tradition.



01386 750585

lindsay@readyhedge.com

matthew@readyhedge.com

www.readyhedge.com

Delivered across the UK ready-spaced and ready to plant, Readyhedge instant hedging is available in a huge range of varieties, including traditional mixed native hedging.

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 OFFICER, CHIEF STEWARD & 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

Frogshole, Banks Road,
North Chailey BN8 4JG

Tel: 07717 054172

Email: training@hedgelaying.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

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 7QP

Tel: 07973 796826

Email: webo@hedgelaying.org.uk



THE PRINCE'S
COUNTRYSIDE
FUND

www.hedgelaying.org.uk