

# Hedge Survey

## Why are we asking you to do a hedge survey?

We want to build up data on hedges in Devon. Hedges are vitally important for our wildlife. It's been shown that a length less than 100m can support over 2000 species<sup>1</sup>. We have some information, but only the location of hedges, not their height, width, the species of tree or shrub or gaps in them. These attributes all influence the quality of habitat a hedge provides and the type of management appropriate. That's where you can help us.

## Help with species identification

Species identification can be difficult in winter, but you can find information about individual species at [Devon Wildlife Trust wildlife explorer](#).

You may also find our Conservation Communities webinar series useful, these cover various topics including: [Winter Twig ID](#), [Woodland Plant Identification](#), [Managing Devon Hedges for Wildlife](#).

## Survey Method

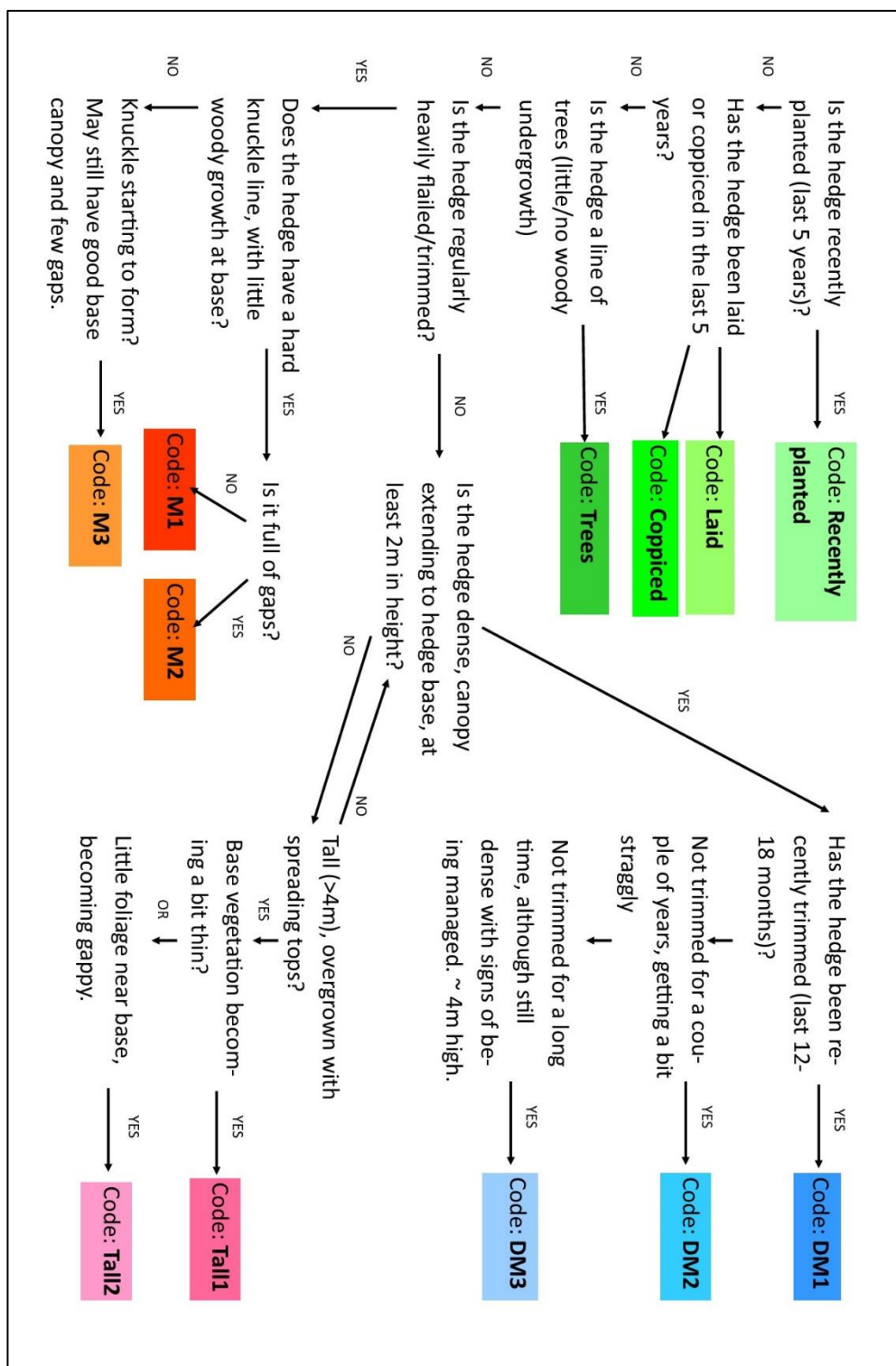
1. Choose your hedge. Ideally, we would like both sides of a hedge surveyed, but this often can't be done with public access, so you can do one side. Survey the full length of the hedge, from a junction with another hedge, to the next junction.
2. You will need to take some basic measurements and record them in the [Survey form](#) below.
  - a. **THICKNESS:** Width of hedge - Take a long stick with you for measuring thickness. You can poke it in the hedge to see how thick it is. This is easiest if you can have someone on either side of the hedge. If you can't, then give your best estimate.
  - b. **HEIGHT:** Average height of hedge - This can be difficult, but please just put down your best estimate. The height is for the hedge only (from the ground or top of the hedge bank). If you have trees in the hedge, with a separate canopy, then don't include these in the average hedge height. They can be recorded separately.  
Average base canopy - The base canopy measurement is from the ground (or top of the bank) to the lowest point of the hedge vegetation. This could be 0 in a healthy hedge, or much more in an undermanaged hedge.
  - c. **LENGTH:** Approximate length - You could pace the length of the hedge, to give an approximate measurement. By giving us the grid references for the start and end points, we can identify the hedge for a more accurate measurement. You can get a grid reference using an app on your phone, an OS map, or using a website such as [www.gridreferencefinder.com](http://www.gridreferencefinder.com).
3. **TIP:** Read through the survey form before you go. The questions are hopefully all easy to answer. If you need help, please contact us.
4. **Health and safety.** We have provided a guide at the end of this document. Please read it through before going out.
5. Send your forms back to either Jack ([jrivers@devonwildlifetrust.org](mailto:jrivers@devonwildlifetrust.org)) THANK YOU!

## Identifying hedge structure:

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<sup>1</sup> Rob Wolton - 2060 species recorded in two years of observations on 90m hedge. Species large enough to be visible with the naked eye.

Choose one of these categories to identify your type of hedge structure. Choose the category that is dominant along your hedgerow. Enter the code into the Hedge structure section of the Survey form.



A “knuckle” forms when a hedge is repeatedly flailed to the same height. The woody plants become straggly near the base and forms a thick growth at the trim-line.

**Survey form**

Name:

Contact:

Hedge location (give it a name or number):			
Date:			
Starting point (min 8 figure grid reference):			
End point (min 8 figure grid reference):			
Approximate length (metres):			
Hedge structure (see descriptions):			
Surveyed one side of the hedge or both? Please state which side (e.g. North/South facing):		One side: / both	
Adjacent land use (arable/pasture etc) of both sides, if possible. Please indicate which.		Side: Side:	
Width of hedge (metres):		<1    1-2    2-3    3-5 >5	
Average height of hedge to nearest 25cm.			
Hedge bank present?		Y / N	
Any other hedge structures e.g. stone facing/ditches?			
<p>Hedgerow trees. Isolated trees (canopy separate from the hedge).</p> <p>Height categories: &lt;4m, 4-6m, 6-8m 8-10m, 10-12m, &gt;12m</p> <p>Trunk diameter: at chest height estimate to nearest 10cm</p>	Species	Height	Trunk Diameter
Total hedge gaps (metres), this is a collective measure of all the gaps:			
Average base canopy (metres):			
Woody species and climbers:		Please record overleaf	
Do nettles, cleavers and/or docks combined make up more than 20% of the immediate ground flora at the base of the hedge?			
Optional: Notes and Other species. Please use this space to describe and list other species, including ground flora up to 2m from the hedge.			

Woody species list:

Species name	Present (tick)	% (list top 5 species)
Alder, common ( <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> )		
Apple, crab ( <i>Malus sylvestris</i> )		
Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> )		
Aspen ( <i>Populus tremula</i> )		
Beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> )		
Birch, downy ( <i>Betula pubescens</i> )		
Birch, silver ( <i>Betula pendula</i> )		
Blackthorn ( <i>Prunus spinosa</i> )		
Broom ( <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> )		
Buckthorn ( <i>Rhamnus cathartica</i> )		
Butcher's Broom ( <i>Ruscus aculeatus</i> )		
Cherry, wild ( <i>Prunus avium</i> )		
Devon whitebeam ( <i>Sorbus Devoniensis</i> )		
Dogwood ( <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> )		
Elder ( <i>Sambucus nigra</i> )		
Elm species ( <i>Ulmus sp.</i> )		
Elm, English ( <i>Ulmus procera</i> )		
Elm, wych ( <i>Ulmus glabra</i> )		
Gorse ( <i>Ulex sp.</i> )		
Guelder rose ( <i>Viburnum opulus</i> )		
Hawthorn ( <i>Crataegus sp.</i> )		
Hazel ( <i>Corylus avellana</i> )		
Holly ( <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> )		
Hornbeam ( <i>Carpinus betulus</i> )		
Horse Chestnut ( <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> )		
Lime, large-leaved ( <i>Tilia platyphyllos</i> )		
Lime, small-leaved ( <i>Tilia cordata</i> )		
Maple, field ( <i>Acer campestre</i> )		
Oak, pedunculate ( <i>Quercus robur</i> )		
Oak, sessile ( <i>Quercus petraea</i> )		
Pear, common ( <i>Pyrus communis</i> )		
Pine, Scots ( <i>Pinus sylvestris</i> )		
Plum, wild ( <i>Prunus domestica</i> )		
Poplar, black ( <i>Populus nigra betulifolia</i> )		
Privet, wild ( <i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> )		
Rose species ( <i>Rosa sp.</i> )		
Rose, dog- ( <i>Rosa canina</i> )		
Rose, field- ( <i>Rosa arvensis</i> )		
Rowan ( <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> )		
Spindle ( <i>Euonymus europaeus</i> )		
Sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> )		
Wayfaring-tree ( <i>Viburnum lantana</i> )		
Wild service ( <i>Sorbus torminalis</i> )		
Willow species ( <i>Salix sp.</i> )		
Willow, goat ( <i>Salix caprea</i> )		
Other species ( <i>please detail</i> )		
Climbers (presence only)		
Ivy ( <i>Hedera helix</i> )		
Honeysuckle ( <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i> )		
Traveller's joy ( <i>Clematis vitalba</i> )		

## Health and Safety

1. Firstly, please follow Government guidelines on Covid-19. Stay at home if you have Covid-19 symptoms.
2. It's best to conduct this survey as a pair. If this can't be done, make sure someone knows where you are going and when you are expected to return.
3. Wear suitable clothing and footwear for the weather.
4. Take water.
5. Carry a charge mobile phone.
6. Take caution when measuring the hedgerow or looking closely, to avoid getting scratches or twigs in the eyes/face.
7. Take care when walking. Be aware of uneven surfaces to avoid trips and falls. Don't rush.
8. Don't attempt the survey in inclement weather.
9. Stick to publicly accessible areas, including footpaths and commons. Do not enter any privately owned land without permission.
10. If there are any water courses, please keep a safe distance.
11. We recommend that you survey hedges adjacent to fields, rather than roads. If you do need to walk along a road, either as part of the survey or to get to your chosen hedgerow, then:
  - a. Stay alert for traffic.
  - b. Wear high viz/bright colours.
  - c. Don't survey alone.
12. Ensure you have everything you need before you head out to do the survey.
13. Wash your hands thoroughly after the survey.