



Herefordshire's countryside is particularly rich in ancient hedgerows which are a key component of our landscape. Ancient hedgerows, which tend to be those which support the greatest diversity of plants and animals, may be defined as those which were in existence before the Enclosure Acts, passed mainly between 1720 and 1840. Species-rich hedgerows are those which contain five or more native woody species, on average, in a 30 metre length. Recently planted species-rich hedges are included in this plan.

Hedgerows are a primary habitat for at least 47 species of conservation concern in the UK. They are especially important for butterflies and moths, farmland birds, bats and dormice. Over 600 plant species, 1,500 insects, 65 birds and 20 mammals have been recorded in hedgerows.

Hedgerows also act as wildlife corridors for many species, including reptiles and amphibians, allowing dispersal and movement between other habitats. The current UK total is estimated to be about 450,000km, of which 190,000km is ancient and/or species-rich.

### Threats

- Inappropriate management
- Gaps in hedges and use of incorrect species in gapping up and new planting.
- Diseases, pests and pathogens
- Stock damage
- Removal of hedges for agricultural and development purposes.
- Loss of hedgerow standard trees
- Changes in funding schemes and reduction in financial support for good practice.
- Loss of skills in traditional management techniques

### Current Action

- Hedgerow management options are available through agri-environment schemes
- 'Important hedgerows' are protected against removal under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, enforced by Herefordshire Council
- Developers are being encouraged to incorporate hedgerows into all aspects of their site landscape plans
- Hedgerows and trees on agricultural land are subject to cross compliance under Good Agricultural Environmental Conditions (Section 7a and 7c respectively)
- Article 10 of the EC Habitats Directive supports management of hedges as habitat corridors
- Guidance on the establishment of trees is available from the Forestry Commission or Woodland Trust

	Objective	Action
A	Locate and map existing habitat extent	4,5
B	Maintain extent and distribution	2
C	Incorporate appropriate habitat mitigation in planning consents	2
D	Raise awareness of the importance of hedgerows as homes for wildlife and connections between the current habitat mosaic	1,2
E	Target resources to restore 23km and create 30km, primarily in Living Landscapes	1,4,5
F	Increase training in best practice management and traditional management techniques	6
G	Increase numbers of hedgerow trees where appropriate	3

	Actions	Target
1	Enhance quality through supporting the development and adoption of management and farm plans	Annual
2	Ensure new developments include plans to enhance existing and create new hedgerows of locally appropriate species	Annual
3	Increase number of trees in hedgerows through planting or promoting saplings. Consider encouraging the creation of edible hedgerows managed by local communities	Annual
4	Review available data on hedgerows, collate and make it accessible, identify gaps in data and develop projects to increase and refresh available data	Annual
5	Work to help target available funding and seek sources of new funding to encourage good management practice and enable monitoring of existing habitat	Annual
6	Produce advice, set up demonstration events and workshops with relevant land managers	Annual

Lead Partner	DEFRA
Key Partners	HC, Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE)