



# CHECK-LIST FOR INSPECTING NEW OR REPAIRED CORNISH HEDGES

© Robin Menneer FRICS Msc 2009. Reviewed 2023.

## WHY USE THE CHECKLIST?

The way hedges in Cornwall have traditionally been built, repaired or restored is set out in the Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges published by the Cornish Hedges Library. The Code is not statutory and may be contracted out of in writing, but if there is nothing written it should be assumed that the work complies with the Code. Hedges built according to the Code can be guaranteed to stand for 100 years or more without needing repair. The Code and the Checklist work together to uphold the traditional standard of craftsmanship in Cornish hedging.

There is no substitute for inspecting work in progress, and efforts should be made to visit the site, randomly and unannounced, at different stages of the work. Work that cannot satisfactorily be inspected after the hedge is built includes the shapes and bedding of the grounders, the shapes of other stones and the type and compaction of fill. For checking standard Cornish hedges, a profile of the intended batter is useful to test the hedge at intervals for correctly maintained agreed batter. Where work has not been satisfactory, only that section of the hedge need be rebuilt, provided that at the finish all of the hedge complies with the Code.

## WHEN TO USE THE CHECKLIST

Before employing a hedger, ask his permission to look at a hedge he has recently built and to use the checklist to satisfy yourself that he will be able to build to the standard you wish.

Where the hedger and the client have agreed that the hedge will be built in accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges, with possibly slight differences according to the individual hedger's preference, the Checklist may be used to ensure that this agreement has been followed, and that any individual differences have not affected the hedge's integrity.

Employers, firms or institutions overseeing Cornish hedging contracts may appoint an inspector to use the Checklist to ensure that work is in accordance with the standard of the Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges.

New hedgers learning to build to the Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges can use the Checklist for self-monitoring as they progress.

## HOW TO USE THE CHECKLIST

It will be helpful to take a copy of the Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges to the site with this check-list.

Please enter tick in box if the item has been done or included. Put cross in box if the item has not been complied with or is omitted.

Omissions or non-compliances marked with a star \* may be so serious as to make the hedge fall down after only a few months. Broadly, if any boxes have an X, then the hedge should be inspected by a proper traditional Cornish hedger who will be able to advise on what should be done. Sometimes a poorly-built hedge can be repaired, sometimes it has to be rebuilt. The more boxes with X, the less satisfactory is the work on the hedge.

## THE CHECKLIST

1. The type of stone used is similar to nearby locally traditional hedges  The pattern of the coursework is likewise  or has been otherwise agreed in writing
  
2. The line of hedge is where agreed  How accurate this needs to be depends on the circumstances. Boundary hedges, especially around gardens and other small plots, should be within 2 inches (50mm) of the agreed line. If the boundary hedge is jointly owned, then the centre-line of the hedge should be along the boundary, but if the hedge is wholly owned by one neighbour, then the whole of the hedge must reside within his boundary.
  
- 3\*. The dimensions of the hedge follow the Code, allowing deviation of no more than 5% (one-twentieth) on the width and 5% on the height  or as agreed in writing otherwise
  
- 4\*. The batter has been checked at one-quarter vertically up the hedge and does not vary by more than 5% of the batter specified in the Code  The batter has also been checked at three-quarters vertically up the hedge where it does not vary by more than 5% of the specified batter  Between these points the batter is a smooth inward curve  and above three-quarters height does not deviate more than 1 in 12 from vertical
  
- 5\*. Suitable fill has been used  Ramming has been properly carried out  This has been tested by hitting or kicking stones to feel for absolute tightness

[Cont.]

6\*. All grounders are correctly angled and bedded  No stones are wrongly used as  
facers  Stone culverts are inserted where specified  and roofed and floored  
with stone all the way through

7. Turf or fill is not used to block spaces between fillers and grounders   
No space between the stones is larger than a tennis ball

8. Rows of stones have been laid in courses in accordance with the Code  or if in  
random coursing this has already been agreed in writing

\*All stones are in contact stone-to-stone, with no fill or turf in between

\*Stones are staggered with all horizontal overlaps more than one-quarter of the width of the  
stone excepting pitched or herringbone slate which has been laid with each row interlocking  
stone-to-notch with that below

\*No vertical joint extends for more than two rows and not more than one of these weak joints  
in any one metre run of hedge side

9. No stone edge protrudes more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (10mm) beyond the line of hedge   
Stones are not trigged in from the face of the hedge (see Code)

10\*. Move along the hedge trying stones at random. No stone below the top row can be  
extracted (and replaced) easily by hand without disturbing the stones alongside  A stone  
smaller than a tennis ball if easily extracted counts as a gap between stones (see 7).

11. The stones in the top two courses are either pitched or laid herringbone fashion  
(see Code)  The stones in the top two courses interlock tightly stone-to-notch vertically,  
or diagonally for herringbone

12. The hedge top is domed to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of hedgetop width, built up with thick turf and soil properly  
consolidated

### **Additional points for repaired or restored hedges**

13. There are no poorly laid or moved grounders which require relaying to get the correct  
batter

14\*. Where the gap was more than two metres in length, the batter of the repair work follows the batter recommended in the Code  Stonework merges and interlocks with the original work at the edges of the gap

15. The pattern of the hedge has been followed in the repair  and the courses flow uninterrupted, stone in contact with stone from one side of the gap to the other

16. Where available, existing thorn growth has been layered across the gaps

-----

*You are welcome to download this paper for your private use and study. If you use any of this material in any other way, the copyright holder and the Cornish Hedges Library must be acknowledged as the source - thank you.*

**Titles of papers available on [www.cornishhedges.co.uk](http://www.cornishhedges.co.uk)**

<p>Advice for Working on Roadside Hedges          Building Hedges in Cornwall          Building and Repairing Cornish Stone Stiles          Butterflies, Moths and Other Insects in Cornish Hedges          Check-list for Inspecting New or Restored Hedges in Cornwall          Check-list of Types of Cornish Hedge Flora          Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges          Comments on the © Defra <i>Hedgerow Survey Handbook</i> (1st Edition)          Comments on the © Defra <i>Hedgerow Survey Handbook</i> (2nd Edition)          Cornish Hedges in Gardens          Cornish Hedges on Development and Housing Sites          Gates and Gateways in Cornish hedges          Geology and Hedges in Cornwall          Glossary of some Cornish Words used in the Countryside          Hedges in the Cornish Landscape          How to Look After a Cornish Hedge          How Old is That Cornish Hedge?          Literature Sources</p>	<p>Mediæval Hedges in Cornwall (450AD - 1550)          Modern Hedges in Cornwall (1840 - present day)          Mosses, Lichens, Fungi and Ferns in Cornish Hedges          Pipe-laying and Other Cross-country Works Involving Hedges          Post-Mediæval Hedges in Cornwall (1550 - 1840)          Prehistoric Hedges in Cornwall (5,000BC - 450AD)          Repairing Cornish Hedges and Stone Hedges          Repairing Turf Hedges          Risk Assessment Guidance for working on Cornish Hedges          Roadside Hedges and Verges in Cornwall          The Curse of Rabbits in Cornish Hedges          The Life and Death of a Flailed Cornish Hedge          Trees on Hedges in Cornwall          Unusual Old Features in Cornish Hedges          Who Owns that Cornish Hedge?  <a href="#">Wildlife and the Cornish Hedge</a></p>
--	---