



# PIPE-LAYING AND OTHER CROSS-COUNTRY WORKS INVOLVING CORNISH HEDGES

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*Definitions / general / procedure - Cornish hedges, stone hedges, turf hedges, thorn & other hedgerows / completion.*

**These guidelines are based on traditional Cornish hedging practice for the physical steps necessary in the dismantling and rebuilding of Cornish hedges during the installation of pipelines and other cross-country services where the hedge crossing does not exceed 3m in width. They provide for the maintenance of beneficial biodiversity and geological features within the design of development. Operators should evaluate the environmental characteristics of the existing Cornish hedges using the Hedge (& Wall) Importance Test.**

**This specification does not refer to the various regulations and permits, way-leaves, consents or other paperwork which may be involved before, during or after the hedging works are carried out.**

## DEFINITIONS

Stone-clad hedges with an earth core are Cornish hedges. A stone-clad hedge with a rubble stone core, or other stone or boulder build, is termed a stone hedge. A bank with no stone is called a turf hedge (sometimes named a "Devon bank"). A hedgerow without a bank is referred to as a hedgerow or thorn hedge. Some hedges contain some courses of stone in the lower half, then turfed to the top. For repair and reinstatement, the stone component of the hedge will be treated as for a Cornish hedge and the turf component for a turf hedge. The tradition-based Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges is published by the Cornish Hedges Library and is available at [www.cornishhedges.co.uk](http://www.cornishhedges.co.uk) as the standard for rebuilding work.

## GENERAL

A Cornish hedge is owned either half-and-half by the adjoining landowners or wholly by one or other. Where the hedge is owned wholly by one, he also owns the land under the hedge for at least its full width, and has a right of entry on to his neighbour's land to maintain the hedge. He has the say as to how both faces of an opening in the hedge are to be restored by the operator. Special regard will be had to roadside boundaries, consulting the local highways authority before

any works are undertaken. Where the way-leave passes through pasture land, turf will be dug within the way-leave, sufficient to rebuild the hedge openings in the manner specified.

## PROCEDURE

All tree growths within the hedge way-leave are severed at about 0.5m above ground level, removed from the immediate vicinity of the hedge and disposed of. A working space 1m wide is kept clear of stone and other material along the hedge line.

**Cornish Hedges.** Working carefully from each side, all stones, including grounders (foundation stones) below ground level, are removed, sorted to be free of earth and plant material, and stored in the vicinity of the hedge. Each course of stone is laid out separately in sequence as it is taken down, ready for rebuilding as before.

Working carefully from each side, all earth and plant material is removed and stored, separate from the stones, in the vicinity of the hedge. The earth is stored separately from the plant material.

After laying the pipeline the trench is filled with the excavated subsoil material and firmly consolidated. The subsoil is levelled at the line of seating for the original grounders, and the removed grounders relaid as before so as to provide a stable foundation for the rebuilt hedge.

Using the stones obtained from demolishing the hedge, supplemented by more of the same type if necessary, the hedge is rebuilt in accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges, coursing the stones in the original style and using the original materials in the same courses, with their weathered/mossy faces outwards. Special care must be taken where it rejoins the existing hedge, so that upon inspection the stones will be firmly fitted with no interruption of the original style. The rest of the earth and the plant material from the opening will be used to top off the repaired hedge. The finished height of the new section should be 10% higher than the adjoining original hedge to allow for settlement.

**Stone Hedges.** Any layer of vegetable matter and soil or small stone fill on top of the hedge is first removed and stored separately. Then working carefully from each side, all stones forming the outer layer of cladding stones, including grounders (foundation stones) below ground level, are removed, sorted to be free of earth and plant material, and stored in the vicinity of the hedge. Each course of stone is stored separately, laid out in sequence. At the same time the loose stones filling the hedge are removed and stored separately.

Before rebuilding the hedge the subsoil infilling of excavation is properly consolidated and brought to the original contour and seating line of the grounders so as to provide a stable foundation for the rebuilt hedge.

Using the stones obtained from the hedge, supplemented by more of the same if necessary, the hedge is rebuilt in accordance with its original style and method. Special care should be taken where it rejoins the existing hedge, so that the stones lock firmly and there will be no interruption of the original style. Boulder or other types of stone hedge are rebuilt in their original style.

**Turf Hedges.** The hedgebank is removed, storing the turf separately from the infilling soil. Any woody top-growth is separated for burning. Any odd hedging stones found in the hedge are stored separately and made available for hedge ends.

Any infilling of depressions or excavation must be properly consolidated and brought to original

contours so as to provide a stable foundation for the rebuilt hedge.

Turfs (tobs or tubbans) cut by plough, digger blade or by Cornish shovel shall be 150mm (6 ") thick and diamond shaped. The method of cutting the turfs and rebuilding a turf hedge is as described in Building a Turf Hedge (Cornish Hedges Library). The hedgerow plants are replaced by a planting of shrubs of the same single or mixed species as those originally present.

**Thorn and other hedgerows.** Any infilling of depressions or excavation must be properly consolidated and brought to original contours so as to provide a stable foundation for the replacement hedge. The ground is restored with a minimum depth of 40cm and a minimum width of 1m of topsoil along the line of hedgerow. The hedgerow plants are replaced by a planting of shrubs of the same single or mixed species as those originally present. Plants should be sourced in Cornwall, well-grown and not less than 0.5m in height. They should be planted 30cm apart in the row, in two staggered rows, 50 cm between the rows (8 plants per metre run of hedge) and protected with rabbit guards. Planting in hot dry conditions is preferably avoided, but if necessary mulching and/or follow-up watering may be desirable.

## COMPLETION

The site is cleared and restored to its original profile, with surplus vegetative and woody material being disposed of, preferably by forming a habitat pile nearby. Note that no seeding or planting shall be done, other than specified above.

The rebuilt or replanted section of hedge should be fenced on both sides with pig netting and three strands of plain or barbed wire according to the wishes of the owner of the hedge, the fence being erected 1m from the hedge, with the posts 2m apart, rejoining the hedge 2m distant from the restored section.

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More information for working on Cornish hedges is available at  
[www.cornishhedges.co.uk](http://www.cornishhedges.co.uk) / Cornish Hedges Library

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