

## Hedgerow Survey

A measure of statutory protection is afforded to hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, where any ecological or archaeological features are defined as being 'important'. The removal of important hedgerows requires consent from the local planning authority, except in certain prescribed circumstances.

The importance of hedgerows can be assessed according to the criteria identified in Part II Schedule I of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. A hedgerow is identified as being 'Ecologically Important' if it has existed for 30 years or more and satisfies certain criteria which requires a hedgerow survey to be completed.



Each hedgerow is inspected and given a grade 1 – 4 with the suffixes '+' and '-', representing the upper and lower limits of each grade respectively. These grades represent a continuum on a scale from 1+ (the highest score and denoting hedges of the greatest nature conservation priority) to 4- (representing the lowest score and hedges of the least nature conservation priority). Hedgerows graded 1 or 2 are considered to be a priority for nature conservation.

This information will be detailed within a professional report in which the following information is clearly provided:

- Site location, grid reference and aerial photograph
- Details of survey methodology employed
- Clearly annotated map showing the location of the hedgerow surveyed
- Description of the species present and make-up of the hedgerow
- Identification of any key features of significance in assessing the category of the hedgerow.
- Recommendations for removal or retention and management of the hedgerow.

