

News

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Our View: Finding out more about hedgelaying

By [Emily and William](#)



William and Emily

HI READERS, it's Emily and William here. I'm interviewing William tonight because he has been hedgelaying and want to find out more.

So, William, how come you are hedgelaying? "I volunteer with EuCAN, a not-for-profit Community Interest Company. On Wednesday we laid a very old and difficult hedge on Eggardon Hill Farm. On Friday I helped EuCAN instructors on an easier hedge for a public gave-a-go day organised by Dorset AONB. I helped thin the hedges ready for laying, and laid part of the hedge."

Is it easy to hedge-lay? "Sometimes it's ok, other times not so. It depends on the trees. Trees with berries, like blackthorn and hawthorn, make good hedges for wildlife. Some, like dogwood, we might remove. It's a lot easier knowing we have cake each day, and I'm in charge of timings!"

How do you hedgelay? "We do the Dorset Style. You cut into one side of the base of the tree, use a billhook to chop wood out until it can be bent, and then lay it over flat. You weave the laid trees inside each other to make the hedge tight. You continue all the way along the line. I also help by removing and burning the brash. Some old deadwood goes back into the bottom of the hedge to help small bugs and beasties, which small mammals and birds like to eat."

What tools do you use? "Loppers or saws to cut the wood, and our hands for weaving. Chainsaws are used on really large bits."

What about special clothing? "It's overalls, working boots, special gloves and goggles – in case thorns flick back in your face."

I, Emily, never would have thought William knew how to do this and it's good to have learnt something about William I never knew. Get you, William!

The writers of the Our View column are supported in their editing by The Friendship Club– a project for adults with learning disabilities, run by People First Dorset

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