

Devon Hedge Group, UK

Robert WOLTON, Devon Hedge Group, UK

- **Scale of activity:** local, regional, national, European
 - **Actor/s:** Partnership of public bodies, NGOs & individuals
 - **State of the activity:** started in 1995, ongoing
- Keywords:** Hedges, Devon, conservation, importance, history, culture, wildlife, landscape, farming



Summary

The Devon Hedge Group exists to protect and promote Devon's world class hedges. We bring together organizations and individuals with an interest in hedges. This is our 21st year.

Description of activities

Ecosystem services. We promote the value of hedges and the many ecosystem services they deliver. These include: biodiversity, water quality improvement, flood prevention, soil conservation, pollination, crop pest control and carbon storage.

Tree health. We have led the development of a Devon [action plan](#) for ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) dieback disease (Chalara).

Training and events. Member organisations offer training courses on hedge laying, bank maintenance and other hedge matters.

Farming economy. We promote the use of hedges as a practical, cost effective and sustainable source of [wood fuel](#).

Links. We have close ties with [Hedgelinek](#), the equivalent UK group, and with various groups in northern continental Europe.

Media. Over the years we have succeeded in generating a great deal of media attention, and have done much to

raise the profile of hedges in the county. We have produced a number of quality publications, most recently in 2014 the book [Devon Hedges](#). We are now campaigning to promoting the importance of non-woodland trees, especially those in hedgerows, for biodiversity and landscape.

Outlook

Challenges: Many hedges are in poor health, largely due to poor management. Our key challenge is make hedges once more a valued part of the farm economy and business. Tree diseases and pests are a growing threat.

Next steps. To refine our vision for a resilient and healthy network of hedges and trees at a landscape level.

Source and contact

Information gathered at: the 1st workshop on Sustainable Forest Management (17-20 March 2016)

Devon Hedge Group

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