

## Farm Hedgerow Management Plans



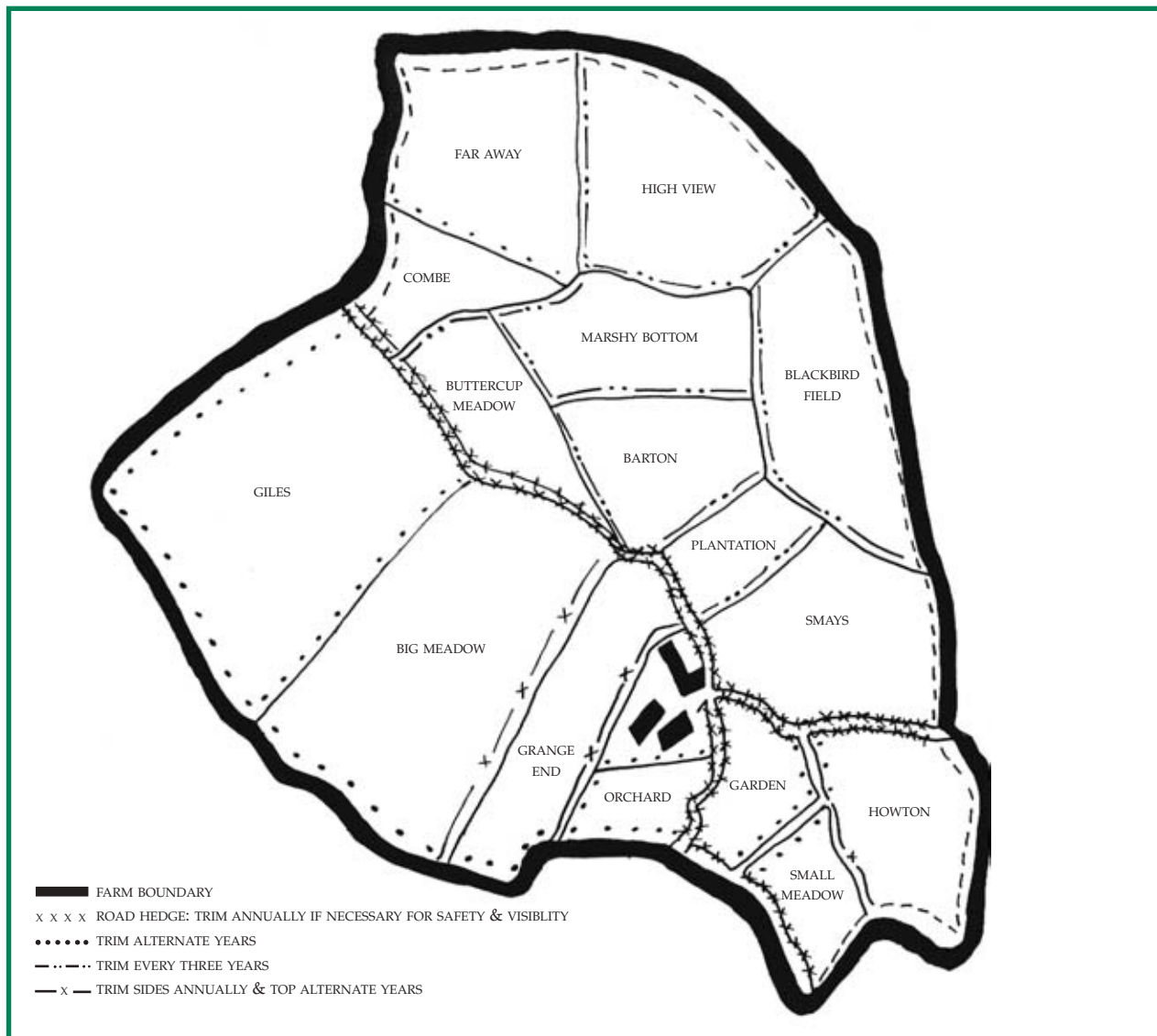
Farm Hedgerow Management Plans can provide a very useful management tool for the farmer, staff and outside hedge cutting contractors. Whilst most farmers will have selected the trimming regime for their hedges, the value of a hedgerow management plan is:

- 🌿 *When changing management. For example a plan will be invaluable during the introduction of a rotational hedge trimming regime.*
- 🌿 *When changing hedge cutting contractors.*
- 🌿 *As an aide-memoire for a Countryside Stewardship agreement.*

The purpose of this section is to show how a simple farm hedge management plan might be drawn up to assess any significant variations in hedge type, growth and species content.

### *Drawing up a farm hedgerow management plan*

Get a map of the farm and mark on it all the hedges with a thin green line. Remember that quite often farm maps can be out of date and need correcting. IACS maps are ideal but they may need to be reduced to fit on to a manageable sized sheet.



*Farm Hedge Management Plan: Commences October 1997 (An example for demonstration purposes only).*

PICTURES AVAILABLE IN  
PRINTED VERSION ONLY

Walk around the farm noting:

- 🌿 *All those hedges which consist of mainly slow growing species such as thorn. They could be cut less frequently than every year.*
- 🌿 *Lengths of hedge containing faster growing species such as ash, willow or sycamore which need to be trimmed annually.*
- 🌿 *Lengths of hedge alongside arable fields which need side-trimming every year but could have their tops cut on a 3 year cycle.*
- 🌿 *Existing hedgerow trees or lengths of hedgerow which could benefit from more hedge trees.*
- 🌿 *Gaps or sections of hedge or bank which need to be repaired.*
- 🌿 *Any hedges which need steeping or coppicing now or in the future. These should not be cut.*
- 🌿 *All species-rich grass margins and banks.*
- 🌿 *Any hedges which need to be fenced.*

All these management options can be transferred on to the map using various codes with a clear key alongside. The map can then be photocopied. Keep one map for future changes. The other could be laminated to make it suitable to use outside during hedge cutting.

To make location on the farm easier, especially for new staff or contractors, it is always a good idea to mark familiar field names and gateways on the map.

If hedgerow trees are selected or planted into existing gaps during restoration, their position can be marked on the laminated map with a bright coloured small sticky label. Hedgerow trees should be clearly identified in the hedge by tree tags or strips of brightly coloured plastic to prevent damage during hedge trimming.

After the map has been produced, draw up a programme of works for any necessary future hedge restoration and management eg. steeping, banking and fencing, noting anticipated costs.

If possible take the person cutting the hedges round the land indicating:

- 🌿 *Those hedges to be cut*
- 🌿 *The amount to be cut from both height and width*
- 🌿 *Those hedges to be left uncut*
- 🌿 *The position of hedge trees.*

The farm hedgerow management plan might form the basis of an application for grant aided hedgerow works (see page 37).

