



The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a living, working landscape. Many of the distinctive features in the landscape are the result of man's interaction with the land over the centuries. For example, there are more than 4,000 miles of drystone walls, constructed from the thin strata of oolitic limestone that lies just beneath the ground's surface. Hedgerows too are a notable part of the landscape, providing habitats for key species.

Sadly many of these features are in a state of severe neglect and disrepair and, without action to maintain them, may soon be lost for good. We run a programme of activities to help people develop the skills needed to maintain these unique, rural features. The drystone walling and hedgelaying courses included in this leaflet are part of that programme.

We also run courses on thatching and green wood working. Thatched roofs in the Cotswolds are more common than one might think, particularly in certain parts of the AONB such as in Oxfordshire and Warwickshire.

Our green woodworking and hurdle making courses inspire people to use traditional techniques to make products from coppice woodlands. Many of these woodlands have not been managed properly for years – partly because of a decline in the market for coppice goods. As a result, they have lost the biodiversity they would once have supported. Participants are encouraged to look more closely at the woodlands in their localities to identify the products that can be derived from them.

Team-building days

Our hands-on courses provide excellent opportunities for team-building. Staff can join existing courses or we offer bespoke events across the AONB. All equipment is provided, although participants should wear suitable clothing and organise their own lunches and other refreshments. For more information please call 01451 862000.



Supporting Rural Skills in the Cotswolds AONB 2009

Courses and competitions for:

- Drystone Walling
- Hedgelaying
- Pole Lathing/Coppice
- Hurdle Making
- Thatching



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Drystone walling courses

Courses led by qualified trainers take place all over the Cotswolds AONB and are designed for beginners who would like to get a taste of walling and improvers who wish to hone their skills.

The beginners' course covers the following: dismantling walls, stone sorting, laying foundations, the batter, laying courses, throughstones and laying of copestones, the importance of drystone walling in the Cotswolds, equipment, sources of stone and health & safety from a drystone walling perspective.

Drystone walling courses dates

DATES	LOCATION
MAY	
9th & 10th	Tetbury
23rd & 24th	Tetbury
JUNE	
13th & 14th	Lansdown, nr Bath
27th & 28th	Broadway
JULY	
11th & 12th	Lansdown, nr Bath
25th & 26th	Long Compton - Warwickshire
AUGUST	
8th & 9th	Broadway
22nd & 23rd	Huntsmans (Naunton)
SEPTEMBER	
5th & 6th	Huntsmans (Naunton)
19th & 20th	Long Compton - Warwickshire

Drystone walling competition

We hold an annual drystone walling competition in partnership with the Cotswolds branch of the Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain. Winners in each class receive a trophy and prize money and those who come second and third also receive prize money. This year's event will be held on Sunday 4 October. The competition is free to enter and has the following classes:

- Professional
- Amateur
- Novice
- Beginners' Pairs



Hedgelaying courses

Courses are held between November and February each year and last for two days (from 9am to 4pm). Courses are in the Midland style and are for beginners. Trainees will be taught basic skills including clearing, trimming, cutting and laying the pleacher, staking and binding.

Places are limited to 12 for each course. You will need strong footwear, warm old clothes and a packed lunch. Hand tools provided.

Hedgelaying courses dates

DATES	LOCATION
NOVEMBER	
28th & 29th	Andoversford
DECEMBER	
5th & 6th	Tetbury
JANUARY	
23rd & 24th	Rissington
FEBRUARY	
6th & 7th	Rissington

Hedgelaying competition

We hold an annual hedgelaying competition. The competition, which is supported by the National Hedgelaying Society, is free to enter. This year's event will be held on Saturday 21 November at a location in the North Cotswolds. It has the following classes:

- Open
- Junior, Beginners & Novice (all same class)
- Veterans
- Beginners' pairs

Winners in each class receive a trophy and prize money and those who come second and third also receive prize money.



Green wood working courses

Our woodland rural crafts weekend course introduces trainees to green woodworking. You can make some of the following in just one weekend in the woods: hay-rake, gate hurdle, garden dibber, spurtle, rolling pin, rounders bat, milking stool, boot rack, rattle, peg rail. The woodland courses will be set up with cleaving brakes, chopping blocks, shave horses and pole-lathes. Trainees will learn safe and efficient use of the billhook, bow saw, froe, side axe, drawknife, twybil. Trainees enrolled on hurdle making will make items such as gate-hurdles and rakes. They will focus on cleaving and drawknife work in the preparation of stock while those who choose to learn about turning will be taught spindle turning on a pole-lathe.

Pole lathing/coppice courses

DATES	LOCATION
OCTOBER	
10th & 11th	Sherborne
24th & 25th	Sherborne

Hurdle making courses

DATES	LOCATION
OCTOBER	
10th & 11th	Sherborne
24th & 25th	Sherborne

Thatching courses

The thatching course includes a brief history, the materials used, sourcing materials, thatching tools, types and styles of thatching, durability of thatching, fire and thatching, health & safety, and qualifications and further training. Ben Thomas, the course leader, is a Member of the National Society of Master Thatchers. He will demonstrate the principles of thatching to show how it is done. Trainees can then have a go themselves. The courses are an introduction to thatching but will not enable participants to thatch once the course has finished – you will need to become a thatching apprentice for that!

Thatching courses

DATES	LOCATION
JULY	
18th & 19th	Northleach
AUGUST	
15th & 16th	Northleach

All course dates, correct at time of going to press.

Course Application Form

To apply for any course please call 01451 862000 first to confirm availability and then fill in the form below and send it to us with a cheque enclosed.

COURSE DETAILS

Course name _____

Location _____

Date of course _____

Full name(s) of participants _____

1 _____ 4 _____

2 _____ 5 _____

3 _____ 6 _____

CONTACT DETAILS

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Contact telephone number(s) _____

Mobile number _____

Email address _____

Please tick here if you do not want to be contacted about our future rural skills courses.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

FULL PAYMENT ENCLOSED OF £ _____

All courses cost £80 each. Cheques made payable to the "Cotswolds Conservation Board".

I understand that the course fee is non-refundable (please tick).

DETACH FORM ALONG PERFORATION