



Mim Saxl, Low Carbon West Oxford &  
Hugh Warwick, HedgeOx

c/o 22 Oatlands Road  
Oxford OX2 0ET

[info@lcwo.org.uk](mailto:info@lcwo.org.uk)  
[www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk](http://www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk)

[www.hedgeox.org](http://www.hedgeox.org)  
[www.hughwarwick.com](http://www.hughwarwick.com)

20 March 2019

Dear

We are contacting all Oxfordshire fencing companies today with a request to take action to help Oxfordshire's hedgehogs and the opportunity to be listed in our soon-to-be-launched 'HedgeOx Hog Hole Roll of Honour'.

**Our ask: help Oxfordshire create hedgehog-friendly gardens and let us know what you are doing by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019**

Hedgehogs need large areas to roam, forage and nest and therefore all the areas of green space should be connected, at ground level, with gaps that hedgehogs can pass through - and **this is where you come in!**

We are asking fencing companies to take some or *all* of the following hedgehog-friendly actions:

- Promote fencing with pre-cut hedgehog holes (13x13cm) to all new customers;
- Offer of a free or low-cost service to create a hole in a new fence during installation, with an additional offer to create holes in any other existing fences on the property;
- Access to a fence cutter for making the hedgehog hole, for customers to borrow and use themselves;

- Hosting of a leaflet at your main point of customer contact outlining the need for fence holes and explaining how people can do it, with links to other simple actions they can take to support hedgehogs in Oxfordshire;
- Promotion and stocking of green 'hedgehog highway' signs.

### **Our offer to you: promotion in our Roll of Honour – a great PR opportunity!**

In exchange for agreeing to undertake any of the actions outlined above, you will be added to the HedgeOx Hog Hole Roll of Honour, launching in May 2019. You will need to **inform us of your plans by the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2019 to be listed on the Roll.**

**Why should you care?** Your customers care. Hedgehogs have twice been voted the UK's most popular animal, most recently in the 2014 BBC Wildlife Magazine poll. The national campaign Hedgehog Street has over 60,000 registered volunteers, and local campaign group HedgeOx has been receiving attention from local media (examples listed at the end of this letter). Hugh Warwick's petition on Change.org, '*Help save Britain's hedgehogs with 'hedgehog highways'!*' ([www.change.org/p/help-save-britain-s-hedgehogs-with-hedgehog-highways](http://www.change.org/p/help-save-britain-s-hedgehogs-with-hedgehog-highways)), has, to date, received over 455,700 signatories.

Local organisation HedgeOx attended Countryfile Live in 2018, and received over 200 newsletter sign ups from people who want to take a more active role in hedgehog preservation.

Plus what is good for hedgehogs is also good for lots of other types of declining wildlife, such as frogs, toads and slow worms, so it this is an opportunity to help a whole host of wildlife.

**Is there a PR opportunity?** Yes. If you can demonstrate that you are making provisions for hedgehogs, this will open up opportunities for joint press releases (both in local and national media) with the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), the British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS) and HedgeOx. There is clearly a lot of interest in hedgehog preservation with potential customers, and by joining the HedgeOx Hog Hole Roll of Honour, you will be part of making our county a leading area for hedgehogs.

The Roll will also be publicised by the 60+ Community Action Groups which stretch across the whole of Oxfordshire, and who in 2017-2018 ran events in the county with over 100,000 attendees (<https://cagoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Annual-Comms-Postcard-2017-2018-PDF.pdf>).

### **Background:**

**What the problem?** Hedgehogs are currently in severe decline right across the UK, with a third of the population lost since the year 2000 in urban areas and even more in the countryside. Development, and specifically fencing, is thought to be a key driver of the decline. But new developments could actually be beneficial to our declining hedgehogs, if their design takes them into consideration. It's a huge opportunity.

**Aren't hedgehogs more at home in the countryside?** No. This is a common misconception. Hedgehogs are very tolerant of human activities and can thrive in suburbia. In fact, some of the healthiest populations of hedgehogs are in our towns and cities. Hedgehog numbers in the countryside, however, are estimated to fallen by 50% since the turn of the century.

**Will it be expensive, complicated or problematic?** No. At its most basic level, hedgehog mitigation is as low tech as a small 13cm<sup>2</sup> hole in a garden fence. The holes are too small for pets and can be positioned discretely if necessary.



**What are the green signs for?** They are made from recycled plastic, and they help to mark the hedgehog holes to stop people blocking them out of ignorance for what they are for. They cost £1.75 each when 50 or more are purchased (RRP £3) – a cost effective and novel way to help wildlife, at scale.

If you would like to discuss the detail of our proposal, or have any questions, please do get in touch – email: [info@lcwo.org.uk](mailto:info@lcwo.org.uk), tel.: 07932073091.

We hope to hear from you soon, as we really believe you can make a huge difference!

Yours sincerely,

Mim Saxl  
Lead Programme Manager  
Low Carbon West Oxford

Hugh Warwick  
Author, ecologist and Founder of HedgeOx

Low Carbon West Oxford is an award-winning charity which aims to reduce the carbon footprint of West Oxford and encourage residents to live more sustainably. It celebrated a decade of work in 2017, and this hedgehog project is one focus of its wildlife work in 2019. [www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk](http://www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk)

Launched in June 2018, HedgeOx is the campaign to help Oxfordshire's hedgehogs. We are connecting gardens, people and organisations around the county to enable hedgehogs to move more easily and thereby help halt the dramatic population decline we have seen in recent years. [www.hedgeox.org](http://www.hedgeox.org)

#### **Examples of HedgeOx and Hugh Warwick's work in the news:**

The Oxford Times [February 2019] [\*"Hedgehog holes in your garden can help the species thrive"\*](#)

Oxford Mail [June 2018] [\*"Hugh Warwick's HedgeOx campaign aims to save spiny species"\*](#)

The Daily Mail [August 2013] [\*"A bird in the hand: The awesome beauty of a very peckish robin"\*](#)

Countryfile Magazine [June 2013] [\*"Hail the Hedgehog"\*](#)

BBC Wildlife Magazine [March 2008] [\*"A prickly problem"\*](#)