



## Hedge-cutting - introduction

1st March to 31st August each year is the core period for nesting birds, when the countryside is awakening in a riot of colours, the days are longer and the weather milder (most of the time).

All wild birds, their nests, eggs and chicks are legally protected against damage or destruction and many bird species nest within hedges, so where possible, people are recommended to avoid cutting hedgerows during the main nesting season, or if it's really required, to be mindful about how much is cut.

**It is not illegal to cut hedges and other vegetation during this season; but it is an offence to recklessly or intentionally damage or destroy wild bird, their nests, eggs or chicks. This means that thorough checks for nesting birds must always be made before cutting begins.**

As well as the potential for direct damage and destruction from cutting, removing the vegetation from around nests can expose eggs or chicks to predators and make it more likely that the adults will abandon their nests.

Major cutting work, including general maintenance, is encouraged in the autumn and winter months instead.

Some cutting may still be necessary in the summer, such as for the maintenance of visibility and accessibility along our roads, for health and safety reasons, However, thorough checks should still be made.

Cutting without checks would be considered reckless.