



# BRACKLEY HOGWATCH

**A community conservation project dedicated to growing a strong hedgehog population in Brackley and the surrounding five-mile radius**  
**Registered Charity No. 1188770**

## EASY GUIDE: Building a Basic Hedgehog House

So, you've been lucky enough to discover a hedgehog in your garden and want to offer it a safe place to sleep, possibly hibernate, or even better still, nest and have hoglets. What you need is a hedgehog house! This can be either a bought one or why not try making your own? If you'd like to make one, follow these simple steps:

- Using untreated wood, cut to the desired size to make a box shape with an entrance measuring 10x10cm (to allow a large hog to pass through) and a separate lift-off lid. The hedgehog house needs two sections consisting of an entrance chamber that leads to a larger sleeping chamber (*fig. 1*).
- Houses should have a tunnel at the entrance as this helps to prevent predators from swiping their paws inside (*fig. 2*).
- To aid ventilation, either leave a small gap at the back of the house or drill a hole and attach a short piece of hosepipe making sure it's above ground level.
- Make a detachable lid ensuring it overhangs the sides of the house and cover with roofing felt. This will help to keep the hedgehog house watertight (*fig 3*).
- If you want to paint the house, please only use water-based paint and only apply to the exterior of the house.
- Put some dust extracted barley straw (recommended as it does not go mouldy) into the house (*fig. 4*). You can also leave a flowerpot, on its side, near the house stuffed with straw so that the hedgehog can help itself to more bedding. From experience, Hedgehogs will use anything they find as bedding material (even plastic bags), so it is important that there isn't any litter in your garden.
- Once completed, place the hedgehog house underneath bushes or shrubs in a quiet shaded area avoiding the midday sun. The front entrance should be out of the wind (*fig 5*).
- Clean out the hedgehog house at least once a year; preferably early April after they've emerged from hibernation and before they start producing hoglets, or October as most litters have been weaned by then and it will be ready for hibernation. Wearing gloves, remove the old bedding and douse the insides of the house with boiling water to help kill any parasites. Let it dry before refilling with bedding. **Do not** clean if a hedgehog is in residence.
- Please do not be tempted to remove the lid of the hedgehog house to see if you have a resident. A simple way to find out is to place something in the entrance that won't blow away but can easily be moved by a hedgehog, like some straw or a scrunched-up piece of newspaper. If you have a resident hog, you'll find it will have been moved by the next morning. Alternatively, if you have one, a night-trail camera or ring doorbell could be set up to monitor any comings and goings and will provide you with hours of fun!



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

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