



## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY**

There are some risks involved in surveying boundaries coming from a few main hazards. Here is some advice to help keep yourself safe.

### Hedge plants:

Hedge plants can bear sharp thorns or prickles which can cause injury to eyes, hands, etc. Puncture wounds from hawthorn and other thorns in joints, eg fingers, often swell and become infected very quickly. Some plants can cause allergic reactions -- we all know about nettles! A few plants can cause phytophotodermatitis, especially umbellifers -- giant hogweed is a well known example. The reaction can be severe with blistering made worse by sunlight. Use your common sense to reduce the risk of an injury or reaction happening to you:

- cover arms and legs to reduce the risk of scratches;
- take care bending to a hedge and avoid twigs, prickles and thorns;
- if you get a thorn puncture wound and it becomes painful or swollen you should consult your doctor;
- try not to handle suspect umbellifers, especially if you know you may be allergic;
- if you get skin blistering, cover up and consult the doctor.

### Road traffic:

Although the parish has relatively few roads and most of the boundaries will be surveyed 'off road', you should remember that drivers will not expect to encounter pedestrians on the roads and may be travelling too fast to stop when they do spot you. Therefore you should:

- stay on the verge not in the road;
- keep your eyes and ears open for traffic coming and get out of the way;
- wear something light and bright;
- avoid surveying in poor light;
- if possible always work with someone else who can keep a look out.

### Sunshine/heat:

The survey extends into the summer months -- take sensible precautions against sunburn and dehydration -- there is a singular lack of shade in most of the parish!

## Water:

Quite a number of the boundaries will be water-filled although the area has very low rainfall. Some of the banks are very steep, and some watercourses very deep, so be wary. Waterborne diseases also exist, so keep open cuts covered and wash your hands before eating if you've been in contact with the contents of the watercourses. This particular potential hazard links with the next.

## Surveying alone:

It's safer and more fun to survey at least in pairs – only one need be a surveyor of course. If both are surveyors then we would hope they could get on quicker and accomplish twice as much! A fully-charged mobile telephone could be considered a 'must' for individuals surveying alone – some parts of the parish are quite remote.

Cottenham Environment Audit Group is jointly initiated by  
Cottenham Village Design Group : Cottenham Footpath Group : Cottenham Wildlife Group



Local Heritage *initiative*



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