

SABI NATIONAL SCYTHE USERS' SURVEY
All questions are optional. Please underline any relevant answers. The information gathered will help to develop our training courses and knowledge base.

In what ways have you learned to use a scythe?

- Scything courses (Taught by: _____)
Individual tuition
Attending festivals and other events
Reading books and articles
Self-taught
- Videos / Youtube
Other (Please describe)

What would you like to know more about?

- Mowing techniques & styles
Safe scything
Grassland management
Snath making
- Sharpening and peening
Teaching others to mow
Haymaking
Other (please describe)

How and where do you use your scythe?

- For personal use, eg gardening
As a tool in your job
- As a volunteer
As a contractor
- Allotment
Country Park
Churchyards
Gardens
- Small holding
Urban Park
Highway verges / public rights of way
Orchards
- Farm / Estate
Nature reserve
Other (please list)

Which types of vegetation do you mow by scythe?

- Mown turf / lawns
Pasture (grazed by animals)
Rough pasture / verges / banks
Bracken
Woodland ground flora
- Grass paths
Meadows (cut for hay)
Weeds / Nettles
Woody scrub
Wetland / Reedbeds
- Cereals

What motivates your choice of a scythe?

- Low capital cost (compared to a strimmer)
Quiet operation / No need for cumbersome safety clothing
Causes less disturbance to natural habitats
Personal fitness / exercise
Avoiding using fossil fuels
- Other (please describe)

How long have you been scything? What is your age group?

Do you have grassland to mow, and would you like help with it?
Are you seeking mowing opportunities - as a job, a volunteer, or just for fun?

What would you like to see SABI do for the scything community in the future?



Mowing tussocks at Hassocks in Sussex - July 2013

Regional Events and Festivals

National Scything Festivals with competitive events in which you can pit your skills against all levels of scythesmanship take place every summer in the West Country, East Anglia and Ireland, and numerous informal scything days occur around the country at all seasons. Mowing heritage cereals in the Home Counties, traditional dairy farm haymaking in Dorset, mowing country churchyards in the Welsh Borders, bracken-thrashing in the autumnal New Forest or cutting reeds in Norfolk in February are just some examples of our activities.

SABI supports a nationwide network of highly skilled and experienced scything teachers who are available to provide tuition to groups or individuals.

A regional structure with local organisers who coordinate requests for help with outside mowing tasks encourages a social scything scene where all who turn up with a scythe (SABI members or not) are welcome, and skills can be exercised and developed. A list of the regional co-ordinators can be found on the website. Contact details for your nearest local organiser will be sent to you when you join.

please post the form to:

Chris Riley, SABI Membership Secretary,
c/o Monkton Wyld Court, Charmouth, Bridport, DT6 6DQ
chris@pratensis.net



THE SCYTHE ASSOCIATION OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND



Stay sharp!

www.scytheassociation.org

THE SCYTHE ASSOCIATION OF BRITAIN & IRELAND

was formed in 2011, only 2000 years after the arrival of the scythe in the British Isles . . .

These islands are blessed with one of the best grass-growing climates in the world, so grass-land management has always been a necessary activity, whether for feeding livestock through the winter by haymaking, or for keeping on top of lawns, cricket pitches and wayside weeds.

In the past workers were trained in the proper handling of the English scythe, but after WW2 scythes were replaced by noisy and temperamental petrol-powered machinery. In the last decade the Austrian scythe has arrived in the UK. A traditional yet modern and versatile tool, it is light and easy to use, yet giving scope for ever-improving levels of skill and pleasure.

Scythes are once again being used in public parks and gardens, wildlife reserves, stately homes and allotments, on riverbanks and haymeadows throughout the islands. From the Home Counties to the Outer Hebrides, the scything revival is flourishing, not least because of its benefits to health - fresh air and exercise, the quiet enjoyment of nature, and the sense of satisfaction that comes from real work done well. The environmental benefits are too many and obvious to list here, but crucial nonetheless.

As a testament to the scythe's many enjoyable aspects, a lively social network has sprung up with events, festivals and courses around the country and keen participants from all walks and ages of life. It is this natural Association which SABL exists to support and foster, and we hope you too will join us.

The Aims of The Scythe Association:

- To promote the use of scythes in Britain
- To improve mowing skills through training and the broadcast of information
- To promote the advantages of the scythe to government, local authorities and national organizations
- To enhance communication amongst mowers and between mowers and landowners and other sectors
- To promote the study of the history of the scythe and allied technologies
- To maintain standards of manufacture and supply of scythes and ancillary equipment



Membership benefits include:

- Personal invitation to regional events
- Local and national networking and training opportunities
- Downloadable leaflets and information
- Googlegroup news and blog access; email links to media articles on scything
- A membership card and handsome badge

Membership is open to all, and runs annually from the AGM in June (West Country Scythe Festival date)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Your Name:

Address:

Town

County / Postcode

Email address

How would you prefer to keep in touch with the

Association? (tick as many as you wish to)

- website news postings
- 'Windrow' newsletter (sent as pdf by email)
- facebook
- by email (google group)
- by post

Do you belong to any organisations or companies relevant to your use of scythes?

- I enclose a cheque* for £10 for annual subscription to next June or
- I am renewing my subscription to next June.
- I enclose 10 Euros in cash (Irish members)

Signature:

Date:

Please return this form with your cheque to The Membership Secretary at the address to overleaf.

*Payment by cheque. (made out to Scythe Association of Britain & Ireland) postal order or cash only at present.

-----Please cut along this line, post the form and retain the rest of this leaflet for information.-----