North York Moors National Park

Fencing Drystone Walls

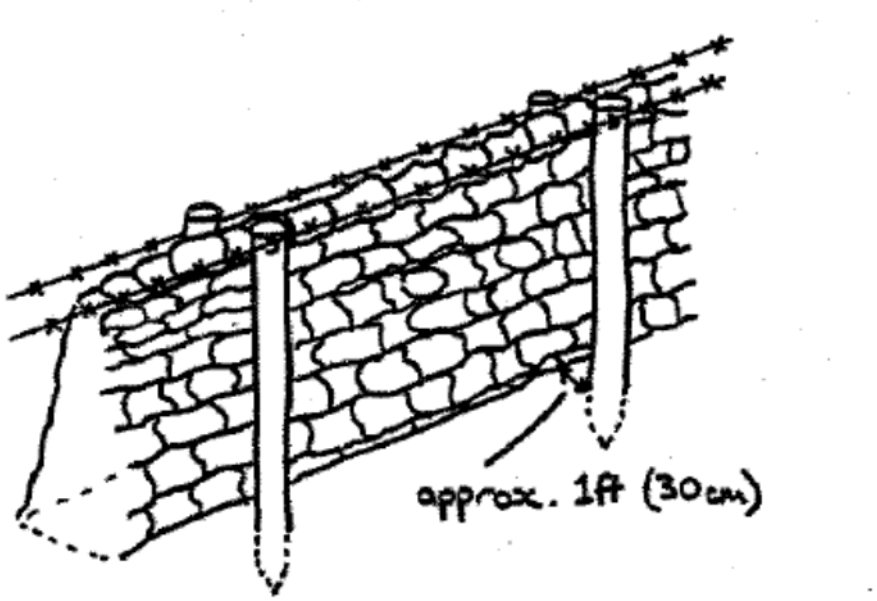
Once a wall has been repaired and rebuilt topwiring or topnetting may be required in order to heighten the wall and make it stockproof. There are several designs which can be used depending on the type of stock, whether the wall needs to be stockproof from both sides and the ease at which posts can be knocked in to the ground.

Wallside wire

This involves a single or double strand of barbed wire set parallel to the wall top (see Figure 1). Barbed wire should be properly strained to the outside of the posts and stakes. The number of strands of wire will depend on the condition of the wall. The top line of wire should be set at the height of the wall and any additional lines set below.

Straining posts are to be dug in to a depth of at least 90 cm (3') and properly firmed and strutted. Strainers can be 150 m apart but should be used at all sharp changes of direction and gradient. Intermediate stakes should be driven into the ground to a minimum depth of 55 cm (21") at approximately 4 m (14') intervals. Posts and stakes should be 15-30 cm away from the line of the wall.

Figure 1

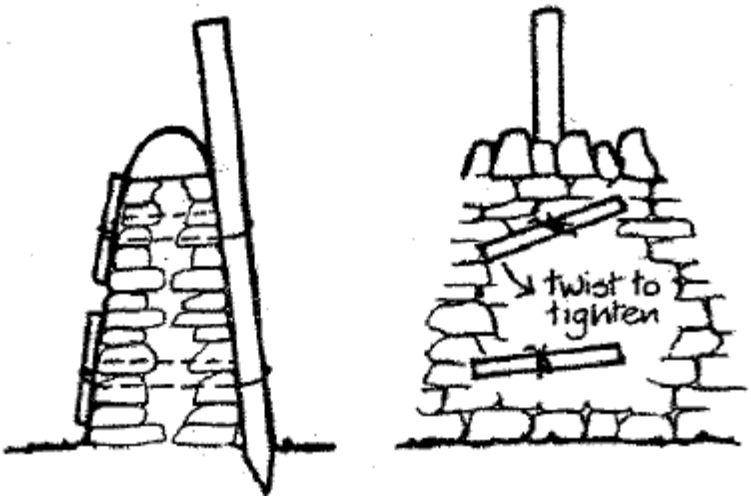


Topwire

This will increase the height of the wall. Where posts can be knocked into the ground straining posts may be used as with a wallside wire. Intermediate posts should be driven into the ground at a slight angle and at approximately 4 m (14') intervals. Posts can be alternated from one side of the wall to the other in a zigzag formation to maximise protection from both sides of the wall.

Where the ground is too hard to knock the posts into the ground the posts should be attached to the wall. This can be achieved by placing the stake against the wall and threading two wires through the wall around the post and back again, and then tightening with a batten (see Figure 2).

Figure 2



In most situations 2 strands of wire will be adequate; the first strand should be 10 cm (4") above the wall top with the second wire 15 cm (6") above the first. The wire should be properly strained and stapled to the outside of the posts and stakes.

Top netting

With traditionally low walls it may be necessary to erect a half net or hedge bottom net instead of wire. This will be a greater deterrent for jumping sheep and will stop animals pushing through the wire if they do get onto the wall top.

General

On all fences staples must not be driven fully home on intermediate posts in order to allow future repair and retensioning work. They are to be positioned diagonally to the grain of the wood.

Fencing should not be strained or attached to gate posts, trees, shrubs or any other structures.

Take care when knocking posts into the ground or attaching them to the wall that you do not weaken or damage the wall in any way.

Materials

TIMBER POSTS must be round peeled softwood (not spruce) and pressure tanalised to BS 4072, or timber of equivalent quality and durability. Minimum specifications: strainer posts – 120 mm (4-5") top diameter; intermediate stakes – 75 mm (3") top diameter. The length of posts and stakes will depend on the fence design but approximately 2 m (7 ft).

WIRE must comply to BS 4102 and galvanising to BS 443. Either (4 mm) 8 swg plain mild steel galvanised wire or double strand (2.5mm) 12.5 swg mild steel galvanised 4 point barbed wire,

TOPNET should be a half net or hedge bottom net galvanised net (5-60-15).

STAPLES should be 40 mm x 4 mm (1.5" x 8 swg) galvanised wire staples.

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