

Any structure on a path will impede use, therefore a gap in the fence or hedge is always preferred; a gap is also virtually maintenance and cost free. If a structure is required, for example, to prevent livestock getting into or out of an area, the best option is a gate. A kissing gate is less accessible than a standard gate and therefore should only be considered if conditions make a standard gate unsuitable. Kissing gates should only be used on paths which are open solely to walkers and where stock control is needed. If the path is used by cyclists or horse-riders a kissing gate should not be used. Kissing gates are not permitted on Bridleways, Restricted Byways or BOATS.

Responsibilities

Landowners are legally responsible for the maintenance of, and are liable for, any gates on public rights of way over their land. Landowners are legally obliged to obtain permission from the County Council before installing any additional (not replacement) gates or stiles.

The County Council is willing to contribute towards the cost of a kissing gate where it replaces an existing stile, provided that a gap or more accessible gate is not suitable. Further details available on <https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/parish-pages/parish-partnership-fund>

Gate Design

- Kissing gates are available in different widths. The County Council's default is to use the largest gate which the site will allow, which gives easy passage for pushchairs, dogs and people with mobility difficulties. The default is to use gates which have provision for Radar padlocks, as these allow wheelchair users to open the gate past the posts. These also facilitate access for mowers and maintenance equipment.
- At absolute minimum, the internal manoeuvring space should be one that allows a one metre diameter cylinder to pass through the gate.
- If livestock are present, the gate should swing closed on its own; see diagrams showing siting and the 'livestock' section overleaf.
- Latches, if fitted, should be visible, accessible and simple to operate from both sides of the gate. A simple lifting latch is preferred.
- There should be good hard ground either side of the gate and within the enclosure.
- Barbed wire and electric fencing must not be attached to the gateposts; if present, it should be attached to an adjacent but separate post, ideally 1 metre away.

Kissing Gates

Countryside Service Design Standards (2024)

Wood or Metal?

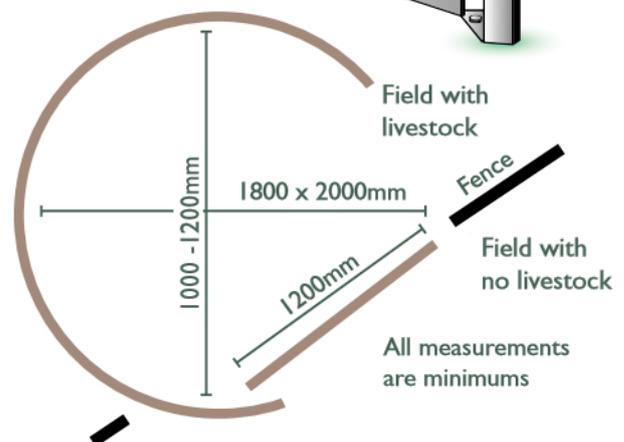
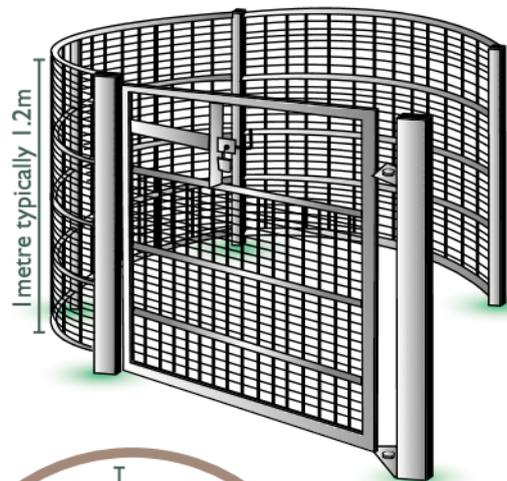
Both wooden and metal gates are used in Hampshire; the decision on which to use is guided by the specific location, level and type of use, budget and aesthetics.

Metal gates last longer (25 years or more), but are more expensive. They are usually simpler to install as they are pre-formed and part assembled, ensuring the correct distances and angles. They can also be more easily made stock-proof as many gates incorporate mesh, to keep smaller animals from escaping. Hanging and enclosure posts should be dug in to approx. 600mm depth.

Metal gates are available in both left and right handing, to ensure best fit in any location.

Metal kissing gate components:

- 1 x hanging post 60mm diameter x 1.9m long
- 1 x gate approx 1.2m wide x 1-1.2m high
- 1 x circular compound approx 1.2m high
- Maximum length needed in fence line is 2.6m

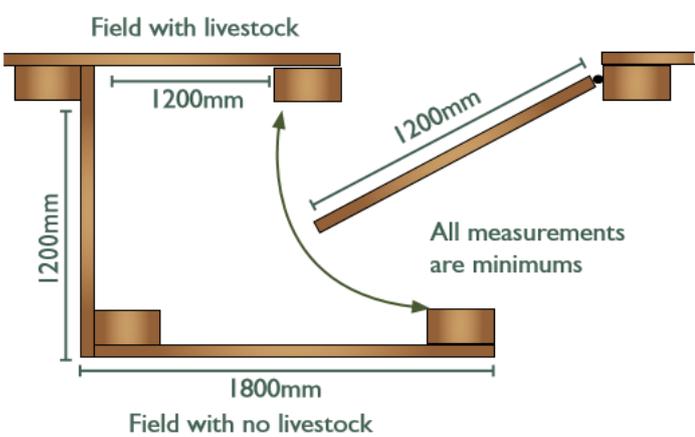
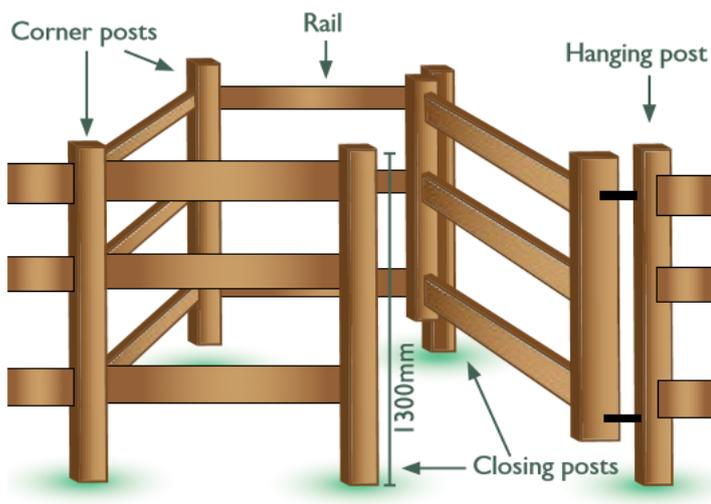


This guidance is suitable for most situations in Hampshire; for further advice email prow@hants.gov.uk or call 0300 555 1391

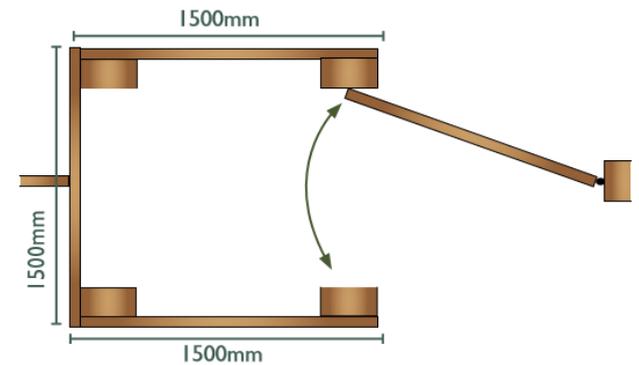
Wooden gates are usually softwood and slightly cheaper but will not last as long (typically 10 years) and will need occasional maintenance as the posts move over time and use, affecting the swing and closure of the gates. They are more difficult to install correctly than metal gates. The hanging post should be sunk into the ground by 1100mm and the other posts by 700mm approx.

Wooden kissing gate components:

- 1 x Hanging post 160mm x 160mm x 2.4m
- 2 x Closing posts 100mm x 100mm x 2m
- 2 x Corner posts 100mm x 100mm x 2m approx.
- 1 x Gate 1.2m width x approx. 1-1.2m high
- 1 x Hinge set
- 1 x Latch (if needed) plus either
 - 15m length x 100mm x 50mm for 3 rails or
 - 20m length x 100mm x 50mm for 4 rails (4 makes the structure more stockproof)
- Maximum length needed in fence line 3m



Alternative fence-line arrangement:



Ground

The ground around the gate and within the enclosure will become well trampled and so may be prone to getting muddy. If this is likely, use a material such as scalplings to protect the ground to around a metre either side.

Livestock

- If livestock are present, the gate should be fitted with self-closing hinges; mesh or closely-spaced rails should be used across the bottom half of the enclosure and the gate.
- Cattle and horses kept in adjoining fields have the strength to damage the gate enclosure so its best to install it so that it sits flush with the fence line (see metal gate aerial diagram and first wooden gate aerial diagram).
- If livestock are present on both sides a judgement should be made as to the best siting.
- In areas of deer fencing please contact us for advice.

Installation Tips

- A wooden gate will require five post holes and care should be taken to get the posts plum and the correct distance apart to allow the gate to swing correctly.
- A metal gate typically has an integral H-frame which fixes the angles, distances and hinges. The hoops are pre-formed, so it is easier to install, but will require a trench dug across the path as well as 4 holes, to sink the frame and hoops into.
- Make holes in the ground as narrow as possible and backfill with concrete. Additional Post-crete (a quick-set cement mix) may be required where ground conditions prevent the post hole being dug to the full depth or there is a danger of it being removed.
- On wooden gates the top hinge pin should point downwards and the lower one should point upwards—this prevents someone just lifting the gate off. An extra nut and plenty of grease on the lower hinge will make future maintenance easier.
- Be particularly careful not to disturb underground services and take all normal precautions for working outdoors, with manual or power tools and lifting and handling.
- Further guidance is available from County Council officers.

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