

Overview

This standard covers all the activities that may be required to create, restore or manage habitats. The work required will differ according to the nature of the habitat and the desired outcome of the work, and it must take into account the use of the site.

You are expected to carry out these activities following the information provided in site management and other plans e.g. Biodiversity Action Plans. It is essential that you understand the characteristics of the habitat you are working in and the effects that your work will have on it. Species identification skills are also important (covered in a separate standard) as are practical habitat management skills.

When working with equipment and machinery or chemicals you must be appropriately trained, and hold current certification, where required, in line with the relevant legislation.

You must carry out your work in line with the relevant permissions and licences and at the correct time of year. Permissions and licences may relate to work on designated sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest, nature reserves, conservation areas, etc.), to specific types of work (tree felling etc.) or to the presence of protected species within that site.

You must carry out your work in a way that takes account of its impact on the environment.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice, industry standards and guidance.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. obtain the relevant information to carry out the work activities in accordance with organisational procedures
2. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in accordance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice
3. assess the risks associated with the site and the work to be carried out, before starting work and throughout the activity, checking and confirming the findings of any existing risk assessments
4. select the safest working methods, making use of mechanical methods where this is safer, in accordance with the assessed risks and organisational procedures, and plan work accordingly
5. use the relevant machinery for the work and take the necessary steps to limit the environmental impact of machinery on the site
6. confirm that you have any required permissions, consents or licences required to access the site and carry out the work
7. confirm that relevant training and certification is in place to undertake the work to be carried out and recognise your own competence limitations
8. use appropriate methods to maintain effective communication with other workers and anyone else involved in, or affected by the work, in accordance with industry guidance and organisational procedures
9. obtain the materials required for the work in accordance with organisational procedures
10. confirm that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work to be carried out is worn at all times
11. select, prepare, use, maintain and store the tools and equipment required safely, in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and manufacturer's instructions
12. confirm that all equipment has been checked, tested where required, and is fit for purpose in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and manufacturer's instructions
13. maintain the safety and security of tools, equipment and materials on site
14. carry out a site assessment and prepare the site for the required habitat work
15. maintain hygiene and biosecurity throughout your work in accordance with legal and organisational requirements

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16. use the correct techniques to create, restore or manage habitats in accordance with instructions and specifications
17. carry out your work in accordance with the relevant environmental legislation, nation-specific and local regulations, codes of practice and policies of your organisation
18. check that the completed work meets instructions and specifications, including habitat management plans
19. remove all waste and surplus materials and deal with them in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and organisational procedures
20. minimise damage or disturbance to the site and surrounding area while carrying out this work, and confirm that the site is left in a safe and tidy condition which is consistent with the surrounding area
21. implement best practice approaches to sustainability that are appropriate for the work being carried out
22. deal effectively with issues that arise within the scope and limitations of your responsibility and report issues that cannot be resolved, in accordance with organisational procedures
23. complete and store all relevant documentation in accordance with legal requirements and organisational procedures

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify and access information relevant to the required work
2. the implications of any site restrictions and designations in place and any permissions, consents and licences required to carry out the work
3. how to identify hazards and assess the risks associated with the site and the work to be carried out and the importance of site-specific risk assessment and control measures that are appropriate for your area of work
4. the relevant health and safety procedures and Safe Systems of Work (SSoW)
5. the current legislation and codes of practice, industry standards and guidance, organisational policies, procedures and protocols, business and professional ethics that are relevant to your area of work and to which you must adhere
6. your and the organisation's responsibility for protecting the environment and working sustainably
7. how other legislation or constraints may affect your work
8. the legal, industry and organisational requirements for training and certification to undertake the work activities required and the importance of acknowledging your limitations and not undertaking work that is beyond your level of competence
9. why it is important to maintain effective communication with colleagues and anyone else involved in, or affected by, the work and the methods of communication that should be used
10. how to obtain the materials required for the work and how to ensure materials are available where and when required
11. the tools, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) required for the work and how to safely, prepare, use, carry out operator maintenance, and store these, in accordance with the relevant legal requirements, manufacturer's instructions, and organisational procedures
12. the legal requirements for checking and testing equipment and why it is important to maintain all equipment to a high standard
13. technology used within your area of work and how to use it
14. the importance of carrying out an environmental assessment of the site before starting work and how the findings may affect the habitat work
15. the importance of hygiene and biosecurity measures and how to apply these
16. the type and characteristics of the habitat being maintained and improved
17. how to identify the key species of flora and fauna found in the habitat where

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work is taking place, including any invasive or protected species, how to identify these and how this affects habitat creation, restoration or management work

18. the purpose, scope and objectives of the habitat creation, restoration or management work on the habitat and landscape quality and the importance of habitat management plans

19. the effect that environmental conditions will have on the growth of vegetation, habitat quality and landscape value and the best time to carry out the work to maximise the benefits to the habitat and minimise environmental damage

20. the effect that land uses such as farming, gamekeeping, recreation and tourism have on habitat creation, restoration or management work

21. the environmental value of the site, the potential impact that your activities could have and ways in which these can be minimised

22. the potential causes of damage to the habitat and the ways in which it can be protected

23. habitat creation, restoration and management techniques, including traditional methods, how to apply these techniques and ways of encouraging natural regeneration

24. where chemicals can be used and legislation that applies to their use

25. how your work fits into local plans such as Biodiversity Action Plans

26. the correct methods of dealing with waste and surplus materials in accordance with legal requirements and organisational procedures

27. the importance of checking that the completed work meets requirements, in accordance with instructions and specifications provided

28. the issues that can occur when carrying out habitat work, the actions to take and the organisational procedures for reporting issues that cannot be resolved

29. the scope and limitations of your competence, responsibilities and accountability

30. the legal and organisational requirements for the completion and storage of documentation

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Glossary

Environmental value could be:

- ecological
- biodiversity
- aesthetic
- historical
- recreational
- economic
- cultural
- carbon

Habitats may be in terrestrial, freshwater, coastal or marine including:

- coastal
- estuary
- farmland
- freshwater
- grassland
- heathland and moorland
- hedgerows
- marine
- peatlands
- rocky
- urban
- wetlands
- woodlands

Habitat creation, restoration or management work could include:

- the opening up of woodland canopy or coppicing to promote woodland flora and tree regeneration
- carbon/nitrogen capture schemes
- peatland restoration
- tree planting
- management to encourage the development of food plants for specific insects
- improving the numbers and diversity of native species through re-introductions
- re-wilding
- control of invasive, non-native plant and animal species

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- river restoration
- bankside management/improvement/protection
- pond creation/management
- natural flood management
- flood plain/wetland restoration
- erosion control
- drainage
- work to manage the effects of visitors
- scrub control in reed beds, grasslands, heathlands or moorlands
- site amelioration and habitat creation in urban or post-industrial sites
- management of marine habitats improving marsh, wetland, seagrass or riparian communities through re-vegetation and natural re-contouring of landscapes
- improving shellfish beds through seeding juvenile shellfish, creating adult spawner sanctuaries, introducing appropriate substrates etc.
- working with coastal and marine authorities to develop ecologically compatible dredging, shoreline protection and recreational activities
- establishment of artificial reefs
- use of grazing animals to manipulate vegetation
- grassland management
- management of wild animals
- adaptive management techniques

Instructions and specifications could include:

- drawings/plans
- site maps/aerial image assessment
- schedules
- method statements
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- manufacturers' instructions
- legal requirements
- good practice guidelines
- customer requirements
- standard of outcome required
- verbal or written instructions

Objectives could include:

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- to create or maintain suitable conditions for particular species
- to mitigate the effects of climate change on habitats
- to enhance or provide new habitats to enable connectivity
- to create or maintain a desired mix of habitats for biodiversity, access and recreation
- to conserve desirable physical or archaeological features
- to reduce the pressures of human activity on habitats
- to promote site safety
- to restore terrestrial carbon stores (peatland restoration)

Organisational procedures refer to procedures set by the organisation you are employed by or the organisation that you are doing the work on behalf of (the client or customer)

Protection from:

- unwanted competing growth
- prevailing environmental conditions
- humans
- animals
- erosion and carbon loss

Safe System of Work (SSoW) – is a method of work that puts in place control measures arising from a risk assessment, in order to manage identified hazards, which are broken down into four elements: safe person; safe equipment; safe place; and safe practice.

Site and environmental conditions could include:

- climate
- time of year
- weather conditions
- soil type and condition
- water levels
- water condition
- drainage
- slopes and levels
- previous use of the site
- existing structures and systems (e.g. fences, hedges, walls, paths, buildings,

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bridges, drains)

- access
- peat depth
- hydrology

Site restrictions or designations could include:

- National Park
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA),
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- National Nature Reserve
- Marine Conservation Zone
- World Heritage Site (WHS)
- Archaeological site
- Nitrogen Vulnerable Zone (NVZ)
- Drinking Water Safeguard Zones
- Scheduled Monument (SM)
- Listed Building (LB)
- Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs)
- Registered Battlefield (RB)
- Sites identified on the Historic Environment Record (HER)
- Public rights of way and access land

Military training area

Links to other NOS

LANEnC33 Apply species identification skills

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