

WILDLIFE & PROTECTED AREAS

TREE PROTECTION

Trees and hedgerows provide a vitally important habitat for wildlife and many trees and hedgerows are protected by law.

It is illegal to cut down trees protected by law under a Tree Preservation Order or to grub up certain countryside hedges. During certain times of the year trees and hedgerows may contain nesting birds. Nesting birds are protected by law against disturbance under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Damaged trees may become unstable and potential hazards.



DON'T

- ✗ **DON'T** undertake tree felling or hedgerow clearance during the bird nesting season.
- ✗ **DON'T** undertake any works to, or near to, trees without authorisation from your manager.
- ✗ **DON'T** track vehicles or plant over tree protection areas.
- ✗ **DON'T** store materials, especially fuels and oils, under or near trees.



DO

- ✓ Check with your manager before felling any trees or removing any hedgerows.
- ✓ Clear only vegetation as instructed by your manager.
- ✓ Check for nesting birds and if any are found contact your manager immediately.
- ✓ Ask your manager what protection is required to trees and hedgerows.
- ✓ Check with your manager before excavating near to trees and hedgerows.
- ✓ Take photographs if there is any doubt.
- ✓ Remember the safe excavation zones:
 - **All Prohibited Zone** (1 m from trunk)
 - **Precautionary Zone** (4 x tree circumference)
 - **Permitted Zone** (outside the precautionary zone).



• • • • • TREE TRUNK

• • • • • PROHIBITED ZONE - 1 M

• • • • • PRECAUTIONARY ZONE

• • • • • PERMITTED ZONE

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology is the study of human history through the excavation of sites and the analysis of physical remains. Archaeology is an important part of our heritage and valuable and irreplaceable remains can easily be damaged on construction sites.

It is not only buildings and their foundations but also artefacts such as jewellery, pottery, coins, bones and skeletons that need expert examination before removal and preservation.

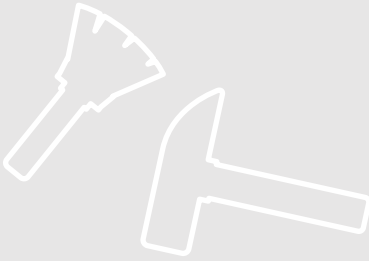
It is illegal to damage some monuments and archaeological structures.



DO

- ✓ Stop work if you find any archaeological features and immediately contact your manager for instructions.
- ✓ Obey the advice provided by any appointed archaeologist.

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DON'T

- ✗ **DON'T** assume that any artefacts or features discovered are unimportant.
- ✗ **DON'T** remove any 'finds' such as coins, pottery, or bones from the site, it is illegal.
- ✗ **DON'T** undertake work adjacent areas of archaeological importance without considering if any damage may be caused.
- ✗ **DON'T** cause vibration near to remains as this may cause cracking.
- ✗ **DON'T** dewater as this may cause a preserved feature to settle and crack.
- ✗ **DON'T** drive vehicles through protected sites.



LEGALLY PROTECTED AREAS

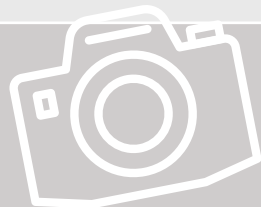
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are nationally important habitat areas that are legally protected. Many SSSIs are also internationally important and are protected under European legislation. An SSSI can be harmed in many ways, such as trampling, cutting vegetation, excavation or tipping waste. They may even be damaged by works some distance away, through for example noise, dust or water pollution.

It is illegal to undertake potentially damaging operations or disturb wildlife on or near a SSSI without consent from Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage or Natural Resources Wales. Prosecution could lead to a fine of up to £20,000 per offence and in some cases unlimited fines.



DO

- ✓ If working on or near an SSSI, check to find out why the area is important and what activities may cause damage to it.
- ✓ Only undertake works that have been given consent by the regulator.
- ✓ Restore the works area to the condition it was in before works started.
- ✓ Replant using only approved species that are native to the site.
- ✓ Keep noise, dust and silt to a minimum if working within 250m of an SSSI.
- ✓ Take photographs of work areas before, during and after works are completed.



DON'T

- ✗ **DON'T** clear vegetation unless you have permission.
- ✗ **DON'T** remove any SSSI signs.
- ✗ **DON'T** use pesticides or tip any waste in or near an SSSI.
- ✗ **DON'T** spread seeds or other plant matter within an SSSI.
- ✗ **DON'T** pump silty water across an SSSI.
- ✗ **DON'T** remove any plant or animal from the site.
- ✗ **DON'T** alter drainage arrangements in any way, even improving drainage could harm wildlife.
- ✗ **DON'T** use vehicles that are likely to damage the area, such as heavy plant.



BATS

There are 16 species of bat in the UK, many are endangered. Bats are a legally protected species.

It is a criminal offence for anyone to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or handle a bat
- Possess a bat (whether live or dead)
 - Disturb a roosting bat
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not.

Breaking the law can lead to fines of up to £5,000 per bat and/or up to 6 months in prison. Since they tend to return to the same roosts each year, these sites are also protected whether the bats are present or not.

Places where you might find bats include holes and cracks in trees, roofs and walls of houses and buildings, under bridges, underground in caves and old railway tunnels. Every building and mature tree is a potential bat roost. Look out for bat droppings – dark brown or black, about 4 to 8mm in length. They look like mouse droppings but crumble easily, as they are made up of insect fragments. In well-established roosts, droppings may be several centimetres deep.



DO

- ✓ If you think you have found a bat or a bat roost on site, **IMMEDIATELY STOP** all works in the area and inform your line manager.

DON'T

- ✗ **DON'T** try to touch or handle a bat. They are very delicate and you are very likely to cause them serious harm – it is also breaking the law.



BADGERS

Badgers are a legally protected species. Both the animals and their setts are protected by law.

It is a criminal offence to:

- Kill, injure or take a badger
- Disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett
- Interfere with a badger sett by damaging or destroying it
- Obstruct the access to, or any entrance of a badger sett.

It is illegal to carry out any construction work close to a badger sett without taking steps to positively avoid damage and without an appropriate Licence.

It is no excuse in law to be unaware of the presence of Badgers. Most badgers have the characteristic black and white striped face although very occasionally they can be creamy white (albino) or red/ginger in colour. Fully grown adults can be up to 1 metre in length and weigh up to 14 kg. The sett entrance is usually D shaped and at around 300mm wide by 200mm high is larger than either a fox or rabbit hole. There may be signs of freshly excavated material at the entrance or piles of leaves, dry grass, straw or bracken, which the badgers take inside to use as bedding.



DON'T

- X DON'T** use heavy machines within 30 metres
- X DON'T** use light machines within 20 metres
- X DON'T** hand dig or clear scrub within 10 metres of a badger sett before checking with your line manager whether a licence is necessary.

DO

- ✓ **IMMEDIATELY STOP WORK** and inform your line manager if you discover a badger sett or see a badger on your site.



GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

The Great Crested Newt is the largest and the rarest of the 3 species of newts found in the UK. Their numbers have been declining rapidly over the past thirty years due to loss of habitat.

They live in ponds and very slow moving watercourses but are also found in woodland, scrub, hedgerows, rough grass land and derelict sites surrounding ponds and watercourses.

It is an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, capture, trade or even to disturb a Great Crested Newt.
- Damage, destroy or obstruct habitats where Great Crested Newts live or breed.

Prosecution could lead to a fine of up to £5000 per newt affected and in some cases up to 6 months imprisonment.

They grow to around 170mm (almost 7 inches) in length with a rough, granular skin.

Back and flanks are brownish black with darker spots.

Vivid orange or yellow belly has an irregular pattern of black spots or blotches. Males have jagged crest on the back with a smoother edged crest above and below the tail and white, silver or grey stripe running from the tail tip, fading as it reaches the abdomen. Females do NOT have a crest and have a yellow-orange stripe running along the lower edge of the tail.

DO

- ✓ **STOP WORK** in the immediate area and contact your manager for instruction if you think you have identified Great Crested Newts on your site.
- ✓ Watch out when moving logs, stones or rubble or clearing the site near to ponds. These are favourite habitats for Great Crested Newts.



UP TO
6
MONTHS

DON'T

X DON'T try to touch or otherwise disturb any Great Crested Newt.



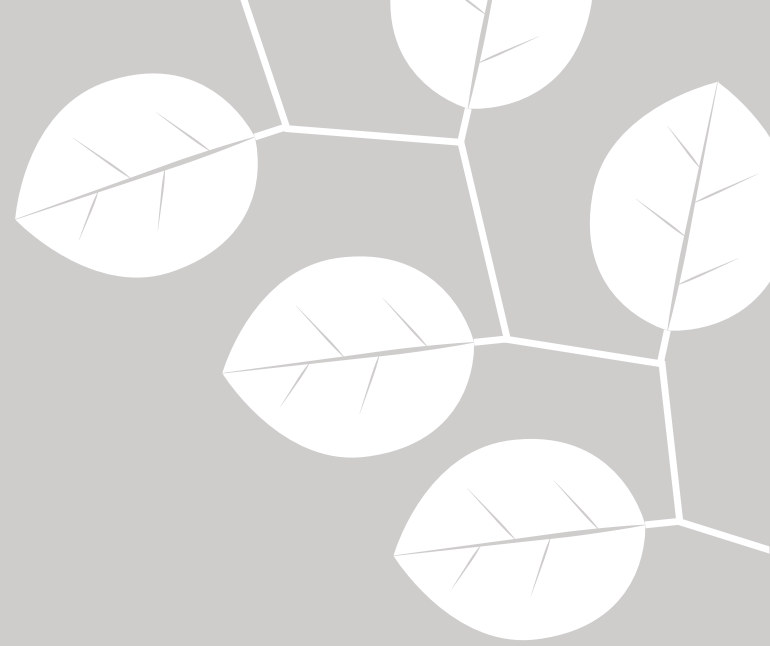
JAPANESE KNOTWEED

It is illegal “to plant or otherwise encourage” the growth or spread of invasive plants, such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam or Giant Hogweed. They spread quickly, dominate habitats, grow densely and shade out native plants. Biodiversity is affected as the consequent loss in plant diversity leads to a reduction in the population of insects and birds.

Japanese knotweed forms dense clumps over 3m high. The rhizome roots can extend several metres away from the original plant and be up to 2m deep. The plant is strong enough to penetrate foundations, walls, roads and drainage pipework. It spreads through progression of its root system and through fragments of its stem or root (a piece as small as 0.8 grams can regenerate). The stem is hollow with distinct nodes like bamboo and breaks easily.

In Spring it is fleshy and red tinged and in Summer it is green with purple speckles. Leaves in Spring are pinky red and uncurl as the stem grows. In Summer they become large oval or heart shaped mid-green.

Flowers are cream coloured and appear in drooping clusters towards the end of August. The plant dies before November often leaving behind the upright brown, hollow, woody stalks.



UP TO 3 M

7 METRES

DO

✓ **IMMEDIATELY STOP ALL WORK** within 7 metres of the suspect plant and contact your line manager for instructions if you think you have identified Japanese Knotweed on your site.



DON'T

- ✗ **DON'T** excavate or move any soil from within 7 metres of a Japanese Knotweed plant without instruction.
- ✗ **DON'T** track plant or vehicles over the area.
- ✗ **DON'T** stockpile potentially contaminated material within 10 metres of a watercourse or drain.

OTHER INVASIVE PLANTS



HIMALAYAN BALSAM

Himalayan Balsam produces more than 500 seeds before it dies. The slightest touch to seed pods causes them to burst open catapulting and dispersing the seeds up to 7m away. It grows up to 2.5m tall and the stem is pinky red, hollow, sappy and brittle.

Leaves occur in two's or three's from the same point on the stem, are spear shaped with serrated edges, shiny and dark green with a reddish mid-rib.

Flowers, which are similar to a Foxglove, are purplish pink, carried on long stalks and appear from June to October.

STOP

DO

- ✓ **STOP WORK** in the immediate area and contact your manager for instruction if you think you have identified either Himalayan Balsam or Giant Hogweed on your site.
- ✓ Wear protective clothing before touching Giant Hogweed and seek medical advice if you have been in contact with the sap.



GIANT HOGWEED

Giant Hogweed is now wide spread throughout the UK. It grows to over 5m tall. The seeds can remain viable on or in the ground for up to 15 years.

The plant contains large amounts of poisonous sap, which, on contact with the skin and in the presence of sunlight, causes severe irritation, swelling and painful watery blisters. This reaction can occur up to 24 hours after exposure to sunlight. Contact with eyes can cause temporary blindness.

Giant Hogweed can cause significant harm to grazing animals.

DON'T

- ✗ **DON'T** disturb the seedpods.
- ✗ **DON'T** move soil that may contain seeds or other plant materials without specific instructions.
- ✗ **DON'T** handle Giant Hogweed until further advice is taken.

