

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Ecology Guidance Note: 2014

Survey Season Calendar

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

■ Optimal
 ■ Sub-optimal
 ■ Inappropriate



Why Survey?

Phase 1 Habitat Surveys provide an assessment of habitats and vegetation types within a defined area. The distribution of habitat types and plant communities across a particular site are mapped. The aim of the survey is to provide a record of the semi-natural vegetation communities and wildlife habitats. An extended survey takes account of any animal species which are utilising the site, in particular, species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This includes direct sightings of individuals, or evidence of presence.

SERVICES:

- Phase 1 Habitat Surveys
- Extended Phase 1 Surveys (including protected species potential)
- National Vegetation Classification (NVC) surveys
- Initial 'walkover' biodiversity assessments
- Full botanical species lists
- Digital habitat maps



Methodology

The study area is visited by surveyors and every habitat catalogued in accordance with the habitat codes defined by the Phase 1 classifications (Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey. JNCC). Maps are annotated in the field to record key features, habitats and species present. Phase 1 target notes are used to highlight the presence of protected habitats and species, recording their positions within the site. The presence of any invasive alien species which may require specific management are also indicated.

Existing environmental features that may provide suitable habitat for specific species (scrub, mature trees, hedgerows, aquatic habitats, etc.) are highlighted as targets for further investigation. Areas that provide potential for environmental enhancement can also be identified. Although not specific to Phase 1 Surveys, a full botanical species list should be compiled. This is important in the identification of habitats to community level, such as semi-improved grasslands, and is also useful data should a BREEAM or CSH assessment be required at a later date.

These surveys provide baseline data on habitat types, which allows an assessment of the ecological value and their potential to support protected species.

Mitigation

Mitigation measures recommended will be species and habitat specific.