



Tool Box Talk

Focus on Performance

Badgers

Sust. 16

What?

Badgers are large foraging mammals which can be found in agricultural areas, woodland and embankments, as well as under buildings. Badgers live in underground chambers called setts, seen above ground as a hole or group of holes. Sett entrances are at least 25cm wide and form a flattened oval shape. Badgers are largely nocturnal and spend much of December and January underground in their setts.

Why?

Badgers and their setts are protected by legislation. Injuring or killing a badger, or damaging a sett can lead to fines of £5,000 per offence. Working near to a badger sett requires a licence.

How?

- Check the site and adjacent areas (especially woodland and embankments) for signs of badger setts. These may have been identified in ecological surveys.
- If you are unsure whether a hole is a badger sett, seek expert ecological advice.
- If the badger sett falls outside of the work area, establish a minimum 30 metre exclusion zone to avoid disturbance.
- Create ramps out of excavations to enable any badgers to escape if they fall in and close off ends of pipes. Note, do not try to handle badgers if they become trapped in excavations.
- Stop work immediately and report any badger sightings or discoveries of setts after works have started.

If the works are likely to disturb badgers, or require destruction of the sett, a licence is needed from the relevant body:

- England: Natural England
- Scotland: Scottish Natural Heritage
- Wales: Countryside Council for Wales

Specifically a licence is needed for:

- Exclusion of badgers from setts.
- Destruction of setts.
- Disturbance, including:
 - Using hand tools within 10m of a sett
 - Using light machinery (e.g. mini-diggers) within 20m of a sett.
 - Using heavy machinery (e.g. 360° excavators) within 30m of a sett.



Questions

1. What size hole would a badger sett entrance have?
2. What is the fine per offence for injuring or disturbing a badger?
3. What would you do if you discovered a badger on site?

If you have any queries regarding the content of this tool box talk please contact your Sustainability Advisor or Line Manager.