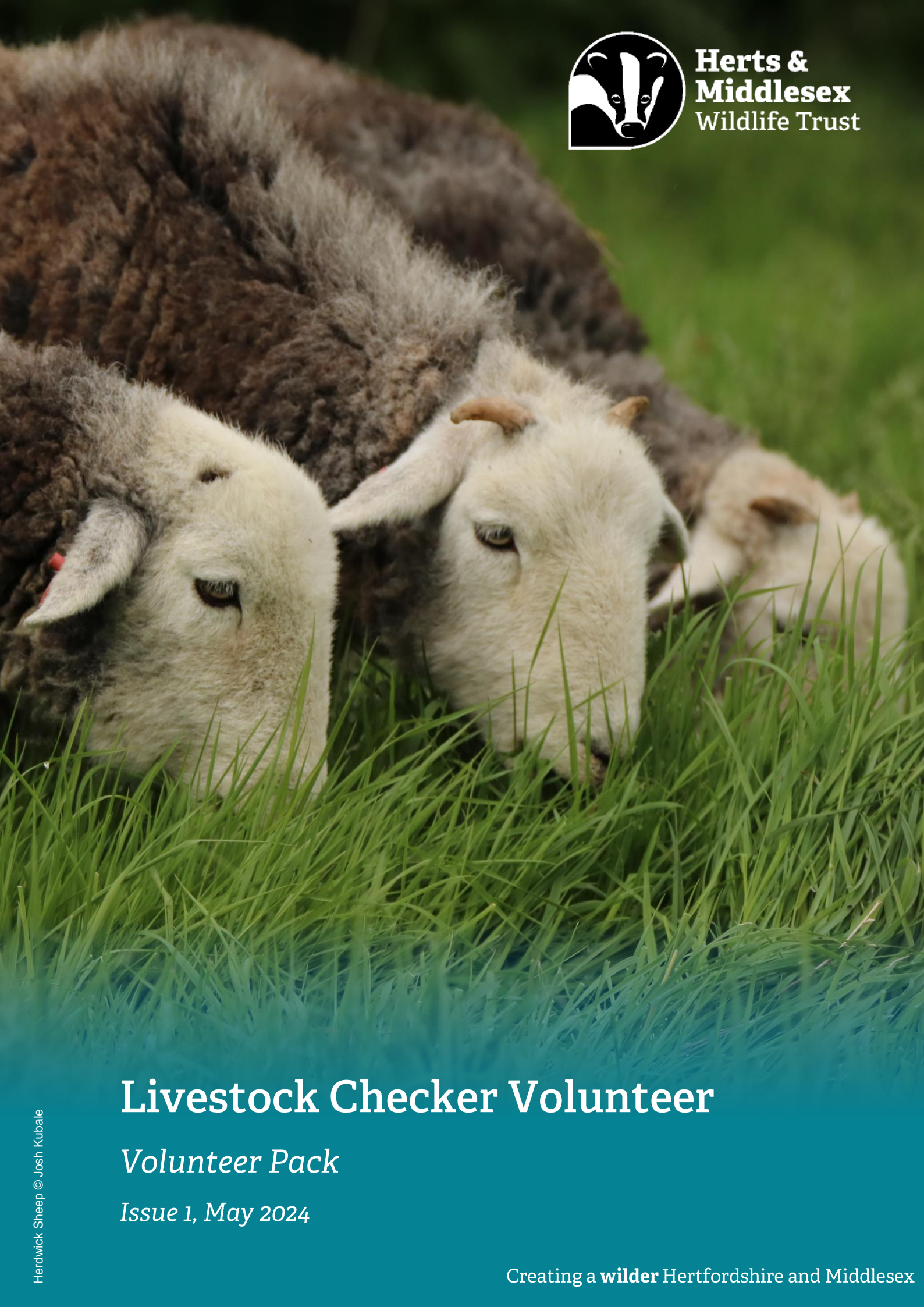




**Herts &
Middlesex**
Wildlife Trust



Livestock Checker Volunteer

Volunteer Pack

Issue 1, May 2024

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Role Profile



Livestock Checker Volunteer

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) is a local conservation charity working to protect wildlife and help people connect with nature. We believe that wildlife should be able to thrive alongside our everyday lives and that everyone is better off when they have access to nature. With a team of volunteers, we care for wild places to create space for nature and help communities create their own wild places. We help people experience the wildlife on their doorsteps and to take action to protect it.

Role overview:

You will be joining the Trust's team of Volunteer Livestock Checkers to support the work of looking after our 42 nature reserves across Herts and Middlesex.

Our Volunteer Livestock Checkers carry out weekly welfare checks of grazing animals on our nature reserves. Conservation grazing is an absolutely essential part of the work HMWT does across its nature reserves, and is the primary objective for many of our nature reserves. We use grazing animals such as cattle and sheep to manage rare grassland habitats. The work livestock do cannot easily be undertaken by machinery or other methods.

It is no overestimation that grazing animals on our nature reserves would be impossible without the help of volunteers. In this role you will be supporting our conservation grazing by helping us keep a check on our grazing animals. Our sites simply would not be the same without our livestock and our volunteer checkers.

Role location:

Designated nature reserve(s).

Role responsible to:

Senior Project Officer

Role responsibilities:

- To carry out a weekly basic welfare check of grazing animals on HMWT's nature reserve(s)
- To ensure grazing animals are secure and safe within the correct grazing area
- To communicate any issues with the responsible officer or other HMWT staff as appropriate

Skills and experience you will need:

- Experience of visiting HMWT's nature reserve(s)
- Organisation, attention to detail and good observation skills
- Availability and reliability on a weekly basis
- Enthusiastic about wildlife and the work of the Trust
- Ability to work in rough pasture and sometimes wet/muddy conditions

Reasons to volunteer with the Trust

- Provide vital support for the Trust by helping us achieve our conservation grazing objectives
- Opportunity to develop your skills and confidence
- Gain valuable experience of practical conservation work
- Receive support from a group of committed staff and volunteers working together to deliver our conservation objectives
- Join a fun and friendly team to make a difference

Volunteer training and support

- Induction training covering an introduction to the livestock and the grazing area; basic animal welfare checking; and H&S policies and procedures
- Contact with an experienced staff member and other volunteers to guide your activities
- Reasonable travel expenses can be claimed with prior arrangement

Anticipated time commitment:

- Weekly commitment on a specified day(s) within a flexible timeframe which is site-dependent, but typically around three months
- Welfare checks take approximately 30 minutes
- Additional travel to and from nature reserve(s)

For more information about this role please contact:

Steven Werrell (Senior Project Officer)
E: steven.werrell@hmwt.org
T: 07799116012



Livestock Check Sheet

This checklist is designed to aid anyone checking livestock on behalf of HMWT. It is not necessary to fill this form out for every check of livestock.

Please check the group of livestock for the following issues:

Correct number of animals present		No animal separate from the main flock/herd	
Plenty of drinking water available		No visible injuries , abscesses or swellings	
All animals at a healthy weight		All animals can stand normally and are alert	
All animals can walk normally (no limping)		No fly activity (mostly sheep)	
No mucus from eyes/mouth/nose		No coughing/hacking animals	
No scouring (running faeces)		Eyes are unclouded, open and clear	
No excessive scratching/itchiness		No wool/hair loss or damp patches of wool/hair	
No damage to fence lines and gates are locked		No redness (sunburn) of skin (mostly pigs)	

Reporting issues

Please report issues by calling:

- **8:30-4:30 Mon-Fri**: Call relevant staff member:

Steven Werrell	mob: 07799 116012
Dan Townsend	mob: 07876 508036
Office (on-call)	tel: 01727 858901

If there is no answer to your call then please leave a message giving your name, the nature of the issue and your contact number and then try the other listed numbers. If there is no answer again then please call the office number following the options to get through to the reserves officer on-call (Pressing 2 for 'Wildlife, Land and Conservation'; then pressing 8 for 'Emergency Nature Reserves on-call number')

- **Emergency**: 01727 858901 and pressing 8 for 'Emergency Nature Reserves on-call number' to get through to the on-call reserves staff member. Please note this phone is active on all days (Monday -Sunday) at the following times:
 - Summer (Daylight saving time): **9am – 9pm**
 - Winter (Standard time): **9am – 6pm**
 - *Christmas break*: **9am – 4pm**

If there is no answer to your call then please leave a message giving your name, the nature of the issue and your contact number and wait for a call back.

Please do not call via WhatsApp voice call as this has limited service and no voicemail option.

Most of our nature reserves with livestock have WhatsApp groups to aid communication. Please contact us if you are not a part of your reserves WhatsApp livestock checking group.

The function of the WhatsApp groups are as follows:

- To organise cover for days when you are unavailable
- To report minor, non-urgent issues and give relevant updates (A message to say you have checked the livestock on your day is much appreciated, but not compulsory)
- To ask questions to staff members relevant to all checkers
- For staff members to communicate relevant issues or movement plans
 - 'Minor, non-urgent' means it does not require a member of staff to go on site immediately
 - Urgent issues must be reported by phone call (please follow call procedure on the Check Sheet)
 - **Always call if in doubt**

Volunteer stock checkers are in no way accountable for illness or death of livestock with HMWT. Volunteers are also not contractually obliged to carry out checks on any given day, however it is useful to give Trust staff as much notice as possible when changes are made to any given checking rota. Checking times are flexible as the Trust appreciates volunteer's other commitments, however they should take place in the morning if possible.

What it means to be a Livestock Checker

"I enjoy being outdoors and live really close to where the sheep are so they are easy to get to. The Shetland Sheep are characters and I don't know if I imagine it; seem to get to know you. 'Here she come again this crazy woman who sings'

For me it is a time to look around at the wildlife as well. I often take binoculars with me and just spend time taking in the sights and smells. Being almost 70 it's also a good way for me to get some extra exercise. If you need time away from the computer and stress of working I would recommend it."

CAROLINE, AMWELL NATURE RESERVE

"I visit Long Deans regularly, so checking the Cattle is simple and easy to incorporate into my routine. My family really loves the site , so the opportunity to do just a small thing to help look after it is a pleasure , not a chore. If you think similar thoughts I'd recommend volunteering, it's a very simple and rewarding thing to do"

"I've always been a lover of the wildlife trusts and this is a kind of volunteering which is manageable and a good excuse for a walk. There is a group of us that do this so if we have to miss a day we can usually cover for each other so it's low pressure.

Checking consist of counting them without falling asleep, (that joke never gets old) checking for any physical issues and seeing their general condition. The sheep are wonderfully relaxing to be around and some are quite characterful. If you like animals at all then sheep are just great company."

PETER, ALDBURY NOWERS NATURE RESERVE



"I do a set day for each animal once a week and allocate some time. When I arrive I count them to make sure they are all present and no escapees! Then make sure they are all well and have no obvious problems. I go on to check they have sufficient water and make sure the fencing is sound. We use a WhatsApp group where every checker reports that all is ok or if there are any problems. Photos too are useful.

It's great to be involved knowing that I am adding value for the Trust and it's important for conservation seeing how our furry mowers are improving habitat.

It's also great for my wellbeing spending time with the animals in their environment."

JENNA, PATMORE HEATH AND THORLEY WASH NATURE RESERVES



Risk Assessment

TITLE:	Checking Livestock	DATE:	04 Sep. 2023
RA NUMBER:	RA54	RISK ASSESSOR:	Steven Werrell
LOCATION:	Nature Reserves	APPROVED BY:	Justin Tyas
		VERSION:	3

DESCRIPTION OF TASK
Visual checking livestock (i.e. cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, water buffalo) on nature reserves by Trust staff and volunteers. This risk assessment should be read in conjunction with Safe Working Procedure (SWP) 77 Livestock Checking

HAZARD & POTENTIAL FOR HARM	CONSEQUENCE RATING LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	EXISTING & <i>REQUIRED</i> CONTROLS	LIKEHOOD OF HARM LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	CONSEQUENCE X LIKELIHOOD
<p>Hazard: Uneven/slippy ground</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Accident: Checker trips/slips</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Worst-Case Injury: Fracture to e.g. wrist, ankle, collar bone</p>	MEDIUM (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear sturdy outdoor footwear with ankle support and good grips If entering a wetland compartment, ensure that appropriate footwear such as wellington boots are worn, and move cautiously, looking out for ditches and other hazards Take a stick to test any areas of boggy / waterlogged ground / depth of ditch 	LOW (1)	MEDIUM(3)

HAZARD & POTENTIAL FOR HARM	CONSEQUENCE RATING LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	EXISTING & <i>REQUIRED</i> CONTROLS	LIKEHOOD OF HARM LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	CONSEQUENCE X LIKELIHOOD
<p>Hazard: Sun exposure (UV) / hot weather</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Accident: Acute sunburn from over exposure to sun / heat exhaustion</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Worst-Case Injury: Skin cancer or other long-term skin damage / Sun Stroke</p>	HIGH (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In extremely sunny conditions, plan your work to avoid being out in direct sunlight in the hottest parts of the day. • Keep the top of your body fully covered. If it is not practical to have long sleeves, at least keep your upper arms covered. • Wear a hat with a brim or a flap that covers the back of the neck. • Stay in the shade whenever possible during your breaks and especially at lunch. • Use a high factor sunscreen of <u>at least</u> SPF15 on any exposed skin. • Check your skin regularly for any unusual moles or spots. See a doctor if you find anything (such as a mole) that is changing in shape, size or colour, or has begun to itch or bleed. • Take plenty of water • See Safe Working Procedure (SWP) 31 Working in the Sun and Hot Weather Working Outdoors 	LOW (1)	MEDIUM (3)

<p>Hazard: Animal infections transmittable to humans</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Accidents: Ingesting infection through eating with contaminated hands or absorbing infection through uncovered cuts / contact with ticks</p>	M(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure any cuts are covered, and washed thoroughly as soon as practicable. • After touching livestock, you must wash your hands and arms. This is particularly important prior to eating, drinking or smoking 	LOW (1)	LOW (2)
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HAZARD & POTENTIAL FOR HARM	CONSEQUENCE RATING LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	EXISTING & <i>REQUIRED</i> CONTROLS	LIKEHOOD OF HARM LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	CONSEQUENCE X LIKELIHOOD
<p>Reasonably Foreseeable Worst Case Injury: Contracting orf, E.coli, salmonella, cryptosporidiosis. Hospitalisation / Lyme Disease</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not hand feed livestock • Avoid physical contact with livestock unless completely necessary • Task not suitable for pregnant or nursing mothers or those with compromised immune system • Follow controls and practice from SWP 49 – Lyme disease 		

<p>Hazard: Large animals (including bites). / erratic and unpredictable behaviour</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Accidents: being knocked over/injured by an animal</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Worst-Case Injury: Death from cattle charging and being knocked out. crushing, kicking, butting or goring.</p>	<p>H(3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only enter the compartment that the animals are in when absolutely necessary and when the terrain is safe underfoot. • Never enter a compartment if animals are agitated or moving around quickly • No dogs are allowed with checkers whilst checking livestock • When calling livestock over with feed, stop shaking the box before they get close in order to avoid them becoming overly agitated. • Do not hand feed livestock – either drop feed onto the ground or into a bucket or trough • When checking cattle, only approach when absolutely necessary. • When approaching and moving around animals, keep your distance and walk steadily without any jerking movements so as not to startle them. • Only encourage animals to stand if they appear otherwise well and are not 	<p>LOW (1)</p>	<p>MEDIUM (3)</p>
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HAZARD & POTENTIAL FOR HARM	CONSEQUENCE RATING LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	EXISTING & <i>REQUIRED</i> CONTROLS	LIKEHOOD OF HARM LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	CONSEQUENCE X LIKELIHOOD
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		<p>breathing or drooling excessively. Always position yourself to the rear of the Cattle to encourage them to stand and attempt waving your hands and calling at them in an increasingly louder voice. Try not to startle the animals. If calling does not work then leave the animal and report by following the steps on the Livestock Check Sheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the behaviour of the animals changes at any point, and they become agitated, leave the compartment immediately and safely. • Do not attempt to catch or chase an animal, even if they have escaped or have a health problem. If you cannot get close enough to an animal safely to properly assess its health then inform an appropriate member of staff as per the Livestock Check Sheet. • Only get as close as is needed for you to be able to clearly see each cow. If some animals cannot be seen (such as due to long grass) then report this as per the Livestock Check Sheet <p>When checking herds with young calves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not attempt to approach calves and do not include them in the total herd count (for example if there are 10 cows and 10 calves you only need to attempt to count 10 cows) 		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not position yourself between a calf and a cow Do not approach a cow which is by itself away from the others in the herd 		
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HAZARD & POTENTIAL FOR HARM	CONSEQUENCE RATING LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	EXISTING & <i>REQUIRED</i> CONTROLS	LIKEHOOD OF HARM LOW(1), MEDIUM(2) or HIGH(3)	CONSEQUENCE X LIKELIHOOD
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If it is not possible to do a full herd check due to the above considerations then inform the appropriate person as per the Livestock Check Sheet. 		
<p>Hazard: Cold, wet weather.</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Accident: Checkers getting cold.</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Worst-Case Injury: Hypothermia</p>	M2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dress according to the cold weather and to wear waterproofs if necessary 	L1	L2
<p>Hazard: Lone working</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Accident: falling and not being able to get help / medical incident</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Worst-Case Injury: Illness / injury requiring treatment at hospital</p>	H(3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lone working policy and subordinate procedures to be followed at all times. Buddy should be in place when lone working. Take means of communication (mobile phone) No lone working during extreme weather 	L(1)	M(3)

<p>Hazard: Electric fencing</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Accident: Member of staff/volunteer or member of public accidentally touches electric fencing when switched on.</p> <p>Reasonably Foreseeable Worst-Case Injury: Minor electric shock. NB Minor electric shocks are thought to affect pacemakers and there may be a higher risk to a person who has a pacemaker or implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD) fitted.</p>	<p>H(3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never touch an electric fence or electrical equipment unless confident that the power source is disconnected • Maintain a safe distance (2m where possible) away from electric fence line when inside or outside the electrified compartment • Use safe access points only to enter or exit an electrified compartment • Ensure appropriate signage is placed on fencing to identify it as electrified Individuals with pacemakers or ICD's shall not be allowed to check livestock where electric fencing is in place • When disconnecting and reconnecting it's preferable to do so with another person present or inform buddy 	<p>L(1)</p>	<p>M(3)</p>
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EXPLANATION OF RATING SYSTEM			
CONSEQUENCE	LOW(1) – Minor injury requiring no more than First Aid	HIGH(3) – Death or major injury with life changing consequences	MEDIUM(2) – All other injuries
LIKELIHOOD	LOW(1) – Would be extremely surprised if this occurred	HIGH(3) – Could reasonably expect this to occur in the foreseeable future	MEDIUM(2) - Other
RISK	LOW(1), LOW(2)	HIGH(6), HIGH(9)	MEDIUM(3), MEDIUM(4)

ACTION PLAN		
ADDITIONAL CONTROLS REQUIRED	TARGET DATE	ACTION BY WHOM

Safe Working Procedure

NOTE: DO NOT undertake this task/use this equipment unless you have been trained in its safe use and operation

Date: 06.07.2022	Name: <i>Livestock Checking</i>	
Description of Work:	<i>Visual checking of livestock without touching the animals. Completed by both Volunteer Livestock Checkers and Trust Staff</i>	
SWP Ref: 77	Minimum number of staff/volunteers: 1	
Significant hazards (<i>things that could cause harm</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with livestock involves a potential injury from crushing, kicking, butting or goring.• The risk is greater if the animals have not been handled frequently / are not used to people• Certain hands-on jobs may increase the risk, e.g. veterinary work.• Attempting to carry out stock tasks on unrestrained livestock or with makeshift equipment is particularly hazardous• Never underestimate the risk from livestock, even with good precautions in place• Working alone without immediate support if injured / medical emergency		
Equipment / tools needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobile phone / means of communication• Livestock Check Sheet (with list of phone numbers)		
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Required (<i>Check the box for required PPE</i>):		

 Gloves	 Face Masks	 Eye Protection	 Face Shield	 Appropriate Footwear	 Hearing Protection	Other – state requirement:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Safe Work Procedure Checklist:

1. PRE-Operation/Task:

- Assess if it is safe to travel to the site. If conditions such as snow and frost prevent this from being safe then call an appropriate member of staff as can be found on the Livestock Check Sheet.
- Where needed undertake appropriate Lone Working preparations as per the Lone Working Policy. I.e. set up a buddy with information as to where you are going and expected return time.
- Check that you are up to date on how many animals you are checking for and in which compartment.

2. Operation/Task

- Upon entering site assess if the ground conditions are suitable for walking over considering wet areas, frost and slopes. Make your way over to where the animals are on site. Before entering the compartment, consider if checks can properly be done from outside of the compartment given their position (particularly for wet sites and working with cattle).
- Do not enter the compartment if animals seem at all agitated or are moving around quickly or the terrain is unsafe underfoot. Do not allow your dog to enter any compartment with livestock in, with the exception of Long Deans where your dog must be on a short lead and kept at least 5m away from any livestock.
- Flocks of sheep can be called over by shaking a container of sheep nuts to make a rattling noise and by calling the animals. Once the sheep begin approaching calling and shaking should stop so as to prevent them becoming overly excited.
- Avoid touching animals and their drinking water.

- If you must enter the compartment to undertake a check, ensure that all animals are aware of your presence by calmly calling or whistling before approaching the group. When approaching and moving around animals, keep your distance and walk steadily without any jerking movements so as not to startle them. Visually check for each item on the Livestock Check Sheet.
- Some cattle can be reluctant to stand when lying down. Only encourage animals to stand if they appear otherwise well and are not breathing or drooling excessively. To encourage cattle to stand first position yourself to the rear of the animal and attempt waving your hands and calling at them in an increasingly loud voice. Try not to startle the animals. If calling does not work then leave the animal and report by following the steps on the Livestock Check Sheet.
- If the behaviour of the animals changes at any point, and they become agitated, leave the compartment immediately and safely.
- Always undertake livestock tasks on areas with good ground conditions. Avoid working in very wet or icy conditions as this increases the risk of accidents.
- Do not attempt to catch or chase an animal, even if they have escaped or has a health problem. If you cannot get close enough to an animal safely to properly assess its health then inform an appropriate member of staff as per the Livestock Check Sheet

When checking herds with young calves/[bulls]:

- Do not attempt to approach calves and do not include them in the total herd count (for example if there are 10 cows and 10 calves you only need to attempt to count 10 cows)
- Do not position yourself between a calf and a cow
- Only get as close as is needed for you to be able to clearly see each cow. If some animals cannot be seen (such as due to long grass) then report this as per the Livestock Check Sheet
- Do not approach a cow which is by itself away from the others in the herd
- Male cattle (bulls) are to be treated in the exact same manner as the rest of the herd; however, if the bull becomes isolated from the herd then inform the appropriate person as per the Livestock Check Sheet
- If it is not possible to do a full herd check due to the above considerations then inform the appropriate person as per the Livestock Check Sheet

3. POST-Operation/Task:

- Report any issues discovered during the checks by phoning the appropriate person as per the Livestock Check Sheet. If there is no answer then leave a message detailing your name, the nature of the issue and your contact number and try another number on the sheet. If you are calling the on-call phone then wait for a call back to your message.
- If you do come into contact with livestock or their bodily fluids, you must wash your hands (or the affected area) as soon as reasonably possible. This is particularly important prior to eating, drinking, smoking or otherwise touching your face or any open wounds.
- Check yourself for ticks

Training and capabilities:

To have been inducted by experienced member of HMWT staff. Copies of this SWP and the Livestock Checking Risk Assessment provided.

Relevant Risk Assessments and Documentation (Available on HMWT volunteer policies webpage or on request)

Risk Assessment: **GRA 54 Livestock Checking**

SWP 49 – Lyme disease

Lone Working Policy

SWP 48 – Sheep – Rounding Up

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/topics/livestock.htm>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/topics/zoonoses.htm>

[https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/topics/livestock.htm# Keeping bulls](https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/topics/livestock.htm# Keeping_bulls)

Safe Working Procedure review history

Version No:	Date:	Reviewed by:	Changes made:
Version 1.0	09.01.2020	Unknown	First iteration

Version 2.0	21.06.2022	J Tyas	Translated to new SWP template Significant hazards added to the SWP
Version 2.1	06.07.2022	Steven Werrell	Added bullet about checking male cattle (bulls) Added link to HSE Guidance on keeping bulls

Lone Working Procedure:

Each volunteer shall have a designated buddy, usually their emergency contact listed on their volunteer registration form. If the buddy is not available then the livestock checking WhatsApp groups can be used, upon prior arrangement with a member of HMWT staff. You and your designated buddy must understand the agreed escalation process in an emergency or where contact cannot be established in a reasonable time, as shown in the flow chart below.

You must follow the lone working procedure when working alone i.e. Inform your designated buddy where you are going, when you are going and when you expect to be back; if remote then you can 'check in' and 'check out' with your designated buddy.

It is important that volunteers keep their personal contact information at the Trust up to date, including an emergency contact (close family or friend). All personal data will be held in line with the Trust's data protection protocols.

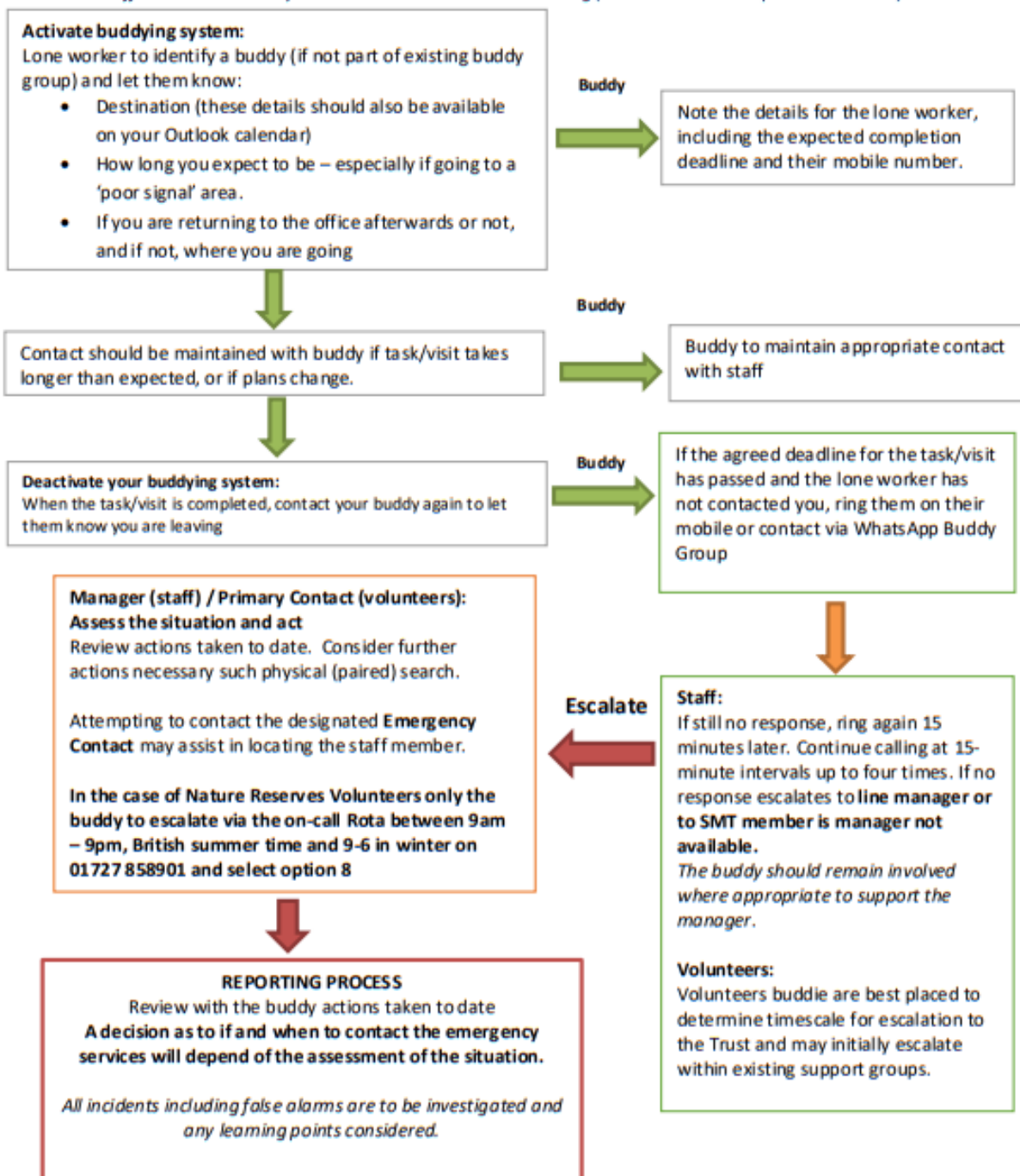
The lone working system will be explained during your on-site induction with a member of staff. If you seek alternative arrangements or further clarification please do not hesitate to contact HMWT as soon as possible.

Lone Working Escalation Procedure

Version 1 [June 2023]

Escalation process for missing Staff and Volunteer lone worker

- Staff should ensure their calendars are up to date daily with their whereabouts including where they are going and who they are meeting, and to include absences (annual leave, TOIL, training, non-working days etc.). Staff calendars should be available to all colleagues
- Staff are also responsible for ensuring that their information on the Emergency Contact List is up to date with their line managers/HR. Primary Contacts should ensure volunteer Emergency Contact details are maintained on ThankQ
- A list of all staff mobile numbers and vehicle registrations will be maintained by Business Support
- Staff should ensure they are contactable whilst lone working (i.e. via their mobile phone or WebEx)



Useful links:

HMWT Health and Safety Handbook:

<https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/HMWT%20Volunteer%20Handbook%20-%20February%202024.pdf>

HMWT Volunteer Handbook:

<https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Health%20and%20Safety%20Handbook%20-%20Rev%202024%20%28Ver%207%29.pdf>

HMWT Volunteer Policies:

<https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/volunteerpolicies>

(Hold Ctrl + Left click to access links; alternatively copy and paste into your internet browser)