

## Toolbox talk – Environment

# Badgers

## What?

- badgers are a protected species
- both the animals and their setts are protected by law
- 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.



## Identification

- most badgers have the characteristic black and white striped face although very occasionally they can be creamy white (albino) red/ginger in colour
- fully grown adults can be up to 1 m in length and weigh up to 14kg
- the sett entrance is usually D-shaped and at around 300 mm wide by 200 mm high is wider 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
- badgers have a distinctive footprint – five claws and a broad main pad
- an indicator of badgers can be found on trees or posts that badgers use for scratching.

## Do

- **IMMEDIATELY** stop work and inform a line manager if a badger sett is found or a badger is seen on site or close to the site boundary
- seek guidance from a competent person before any work within 30 m of a badger sett.

## Questions

- Where might signs of a sett be found?
- How is a badger sett identified?
- If suspected badgers are present, what do you do?

## Why?

- avoid prosecution: it is a criminal offence for anyone without a licence to:
  - kill, injure or handle 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
  - breaking the law can lead to **fines of up to £5000 per badger and/or up to six months in prison.**

## Don't

- use heavy machines within 30 m of a badger sett before checking with a line manager whether a licence is necessary
- use light machines within 20 m of a badger sett before checking with a line manager whether a licence is necessary
- work within 10 m of a badger sett before checking with a line manager whether a licence is necessary
- carry out any works that are likely to disturb, damage or destroy a badger sett unless a line manager has categorically instructed to proceed further to a competent ecologists recommendation to do so.

