

Introduction

This policy describes simple housekeeping measures that aim to minimise the opportunity to bring pathogen contaminated soil and plant material into a Heartwood session at woodland sites. This is accomplished by ensuring boots, outer clothing, tools, equipment and vehicles are clean on arrival at site.

Detail

Boots and outer clothing should be visually clean and free of soil and plant material before entering the site. Practically, for boots, this means brushing the uppers and sole with a stiff brush and water and winking out any debris with a pick, then a final rinse with fresh water if needed. That's how these old boots were transformed following a wood fuel session.



Tools and equipment should be visually clean and free of soil and plant material before entering the site.

Ensure that vehicles are cleaned regularly to remove any accumulated mud, especially from wheels and wheel arches. Accumulated mud is that which is thick enough to fall of the vehicle and contaminate the ground and so could be removed with a brush or a stick. Showroom condition is not what is required. Keep vehicular access to a minimum: do not enter areas unnecessarily and, where practicable, keep to established hard tracks.

A small biosecurity kit should be present on site for use before leaving if information comes to light that an unexpected pest is present.

Background

The need for biosecurity measures has arisen due to the exponential increase in overseas tree pests and diseases arriving in the UK.

This policy is based on best practice for low risk site visits published by the Forestry Commission, the Forestry Commission being the body responsible for leading the effort on tree biosecurity in the UK. The Woodland Trust has similar requirements. Low risk is defined as a visit to a site that either has no known tree pests present, or if tree pests are known to be present, the visit presents low risk of transportation to another site.

Quoting from the guidance "Biosecurity measures are a series of precautionary steps designed to reduce the risk of transmission of harmful organisms.... good biosecurity practice refers to ways of working that minimise the risk of contamination and the spread of pests.... the term "pest" should be taken to include all invertebrate, bacterial or fungal organisms that are harmful to trees

Practically, Heartwood relies on the landowner's knowledge and assessment of tree pests that may be present on site and so the level of risk. It is anticipated that Heartwood events would not be permitted at high risk sites, so the higher levels of biosecurity precautions appropriate for high risk sites are not in scope. However, reporting of suspected sightings of tree pests and diseases is encouraged via the Forestry Commission Tree Alert system <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/treealert>

References

Forestry Commission Biosecurity Guidance August 2012

[https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf/\\$file/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf](https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf/$file/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf)

Forestry Commission Biosecurity online learning modules 1 to 4

<https://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/beeH-9z9dbr>

Version history.

Revision	Date	Authors	Description
1.0	18/01/08	GB	Document created.
1.1	18/02/12	GB	Version control sheet added. Photograph of boots added with minor wording change to include rinse with clean water if needed. Clarification added to vehicles "and so could be removed with a brush or a stick. Showroom condition is not what is required."
1.2	18/02/15	GB	Photograph of boots changed to depict an older pair and shown before and after cleaning.