

Applying for a licence to burn heather under The Heather and Grass etc. Burning (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2025



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When do I need a Defra licence?

- Where I want to burn heather or other vegetation
- On land where the peat is of a depth of more than 30 cms
- Within a Less Favoured Area



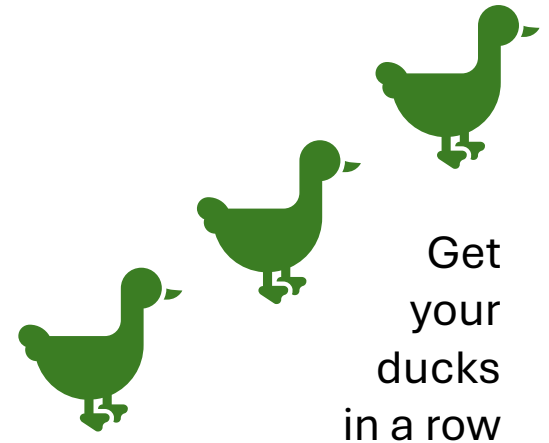
When do I also need NE consent?

- Where land is in SSSI – NE consent to burn will be needed BEFORE Defra will issue a licence
- BUT if you have consent to burn in an existing Site Management Statement that should suffice – go straight to Defra
- NE consent forms are available online – link in the Forms & Guidance section at the end of the MA Handbook



Applying to Defra

- Applications need to be supported by evidence
- Understand what is required before you start
- Get your evidence organised for this year and it should be an easier job next time
- Default position is a 1 year licence – if you want a longer one, explain why



Help us to help you!

- How long will it take?
- What will it cost?
- What parts are difficult?
- We want to show Defra – please send us the evidence
- Proforma timesheet to record time AND note any problems with the process



We need **YOU**
to send us the
evidence



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Where to start

- You can only make ONE application per landholding
- Where do you want to burn?
 - Site plan
 - Check peat depth
 - Record 8-figure OS reference
 - Record the type of vegetation – may need photos
- Why do you want to burn?
 - 4 reasons set out in the Regs
 - Can use different reasons for different burn areas
 - Each reason needs its own supporting evidence



Why do you want to burn?

“(a) for the conservation, enhancement or management of the natural or historic environment for the benefit of present and future generations”

- Include a Restoration Plan using Defra’s template
- May need ecologist support to prepare Plan
- Could this option be used when tackling heather beetle infestation?



Why do you want to burn?

“(c) to reduce the impact of wildfire”

- Include a Wildfire Management Plan using the Defra template, covering:
 - Your site, aims and objectives
 - Analysing the current risk and proposed ideas
 - Wildfire response plan
 - Additional maps and evidence
 - Consultation with FRS, neighbours and others with an interest



Why do you want to burn?

“(b) for the safety of any person”

- Evidence of specific risk to people & why burning would reduce the risk
- NB excluding wildfire as a risk

“(e) for research or educational purposes”



The Application Form

- Online – you need to complete a question to move to next one
- MA has produced a slide pack of the questions to give an overview
- Currently the system won't send you a copy of your response automatically. Request a copy by emailing heatherandgrassburning@defra.gov.uk



For each burn site

- Provide OS grid reference
- State the reason for the burn (conservation/wildfire etc)
- Explain why burning is necessary for this area
- Give length and width of the burn area in metres
- Provide details of the main plant species & the % of land they cover
- Give average height of vegetation on this plot in metres
- Select option describing the amount of time it has been growing for (pioneer, building, mature, degenerate) (optional)



The new Code

- New Heather and Grass Management Code 2025 now published – review it and make sure anyone involved in vegetation management has read it



QUESTIONS?



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