

Supporting guidance for Open-range Deer Management

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This item supports land managers to reduce the number of deer on their land to benefit upland and moorland habitats.

For this item, priority will be given to sites in unfavourable condition that will benefit from deer reduction. Your deer range must include land designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest or Natura site, which is in, or is at risk of falling into 'Unfavourable' condition.

What needs to be done

Support your proposals with a Deer Management Plan. The plan should follow the [Best Practice Guidance](#) on Deer Management Plans and cover all the land over which you manage deer.

You can find information on annual cull deer returns and a link to the online recording system on the [Scottish Natural Heritage website](#). Further details on how to fill in a return are available on the [Best Practice Guides website](#).

The plan should include:

- deer population targets for enhancing the condition of key habitats
- a population model showing the cull and population response
- management required to deal with issues, e.g. reducing deer numbers and / or targeted culls to address trampling, over grazing, deer-vehicle collisions
- details of any deer fences to be erected, what impacts this might have on neighbouring land, and how these impacts will be addressed
- information on opportunities and constraints, e.g. better ground fenced off, how the deer population is influenced by management on neighbouring land, deer welfare issues
- in cases where deer reductions may impact on neighbouring interests, these should be described in the plan together with appropriate measures to address the impacts
- annual reviews of the population model based on counts, culls and monitoring data as appropriate
- monitoring, including regular population counts and a commitment to Best Practice monitoring. The monitoring will feed back into the Deer Management Plan and inform deer management

Your Deer Management Plan should be in line with the [Code of Practice on Deer Management](#).

Payment rates vary according to the size of your reduction cull. You can only claim when the cull target has been achieved.

Further information

- [Deer population management](#)