

Badger Sett Closure Information

Where a badger sett is present within a proposed development area it may be necessary to exclude badgers from the sett. A badger license is required from Natural England to carry out such work. This license should detail a method statement with mitigation and compensation measures. If a well-used sett is to be closed then it is likely an artificial sett will be required in compensation. Details of both sett closure and artificial sett building are provided within this information sheet.

Badger Sett Closure

Sett closure involves the installation of one-way badger gates across all holes of the sett and wire mesh across the surrounding area to prevent digging. EMEC Ecology's approach is to leave these gates open for the first seven days following installation to encourage badgers to leave on their own accord. More often than not badgers leave the sett within these first days as the disturbance encourages them to move elsewhere. Following this initial period the gates are closed and only after a period of 21 days (site monitored every three days) where all badger gates have remained secure, can it be safely assumed that badger are no longer present. If at any point the gates or wire mesh is breached, these are repaired and a further 21 day period observed before works begin. **This closure can only be carried out between July and November inclusive.**



Badger Gate & Wire Mesh

Artificial Sett Construction

When the sett to be closed is considered to be well-used, an artificial sett is often required in compensation for the loss. The building of an artificial sett is required before the natural sett is closed.

The standard design of an artificial main sett is for six chambers. This involves digging six pits in discrete locations and installing three 1x1m and three 2x2m chambers. These are created using wooden stakes, each with a marine plywood roof / sides. The sides are bare in some places in order to allow badgers to excavate and create additional chambers. Linking the chambers to one another and to the surface requires 300mm plastic pipes which have the bottoms cut out so that the badgers are walking on soil.

The sett is then meshed over to prevent the sett being 'dug-out', as well as to add additional structure. The area is then covered with soil and planted with saplings / whips of tree and shrub species.

Once an artificial sett has been built, soil from the entrances of the existing setts is translocated to the entrances of the artificial sett. In addition, latrines are moved and placed around the artificial setts. Cameras are set up around the setts and only when badgers have been recorded and are shown to be aware of the artificial setts can closure of the existing sett occur.



Artificial Sett in Construction

Timings

Natural England licences allowing a sett closure are usually only granted for the period between the 1st July to 30th November. It is therefore recommended artificial setts are constructed prior to this period. Sett closure is carried out during this timeframe to avoid the badger breeding season when cubs are young and vulnerable.

Calendar for Sett Closure & Artificial Sett Building

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
						Sett Closure					
Artificial Sett Building Throughout Year											

Further information is available on our website at www.emec-ecology.co.uk.



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