



696. Sustainability & Climate Action - Biodiversity & Ecology - Biodiversity & Green Space Maintenance Plan Review

Category:	Sustainability & Climate Action
Subcategory:	Biodiversity & Ecology
Status:	Best Practice
Type:	Competent Person
Priority:	Recommended
Commonality:	Common

Note: This document provides guidance to support compliance but is not a substitute for professional advice.

Why This Task Matters

Your thoughtful review of biodiversity maintenance plans ensures green spaces remain safe, ecologically valuable, and educationally beneficial for pupils while supporting wider environmental goals. By balancing ecological needs with safety requirements, you create sustainable outdoor learning environments that enhance wellbeing, support curriculum objectives, and build confidence in the organisation's environmental stewardship while recognising the vital role facilities staff play in maintaining nature-rich spaces that foster both ecological and educational excellence.

Task Summary

Best Practice: This task requires reviewing the maintenance plan for biodiversity areas such as green roofs, wildflower meadows, or nature gardens on an annual basis. The review should assess current maintenance effectiveness, evaluate ecological outcomes, ensure safety compliance, and identify opportunities for improvement. Staff should examine maintenance schedules, assess biodiversity enhancement success, review safety procedures, and consider integration with educational activities. The process should include updating maintenance schedules based on seasonal requirements, incorporating biodiversity audit findings, and ensuring plans remain practical and resource-effective.

Revised plans should maintain ecological value while ensuring safe access for pupils and staff. This regular review supports the Climate Action Plan and helps balance biodiversity objectives with educational and safety requirements.

Relevant Legislation & Guidance

- **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981:** Ensures maintenance activities protect wildlife and habitats.
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:** Requires safe maintenance of green spaces.
- **DfE guidance on school grounds management:** Supports biodiversity-friendly maintenance approaches.
- **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:** Promotes biodiversity in land management.
- **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:** Includes provisions for habitat management.

Typical Frequency

This task should be completed yearly, ideally aligned with the growing season and maintenance planning cycles. The frequency could vary if significant changes occur in site biodiversity, new habitats are created, or if maintenance issues arise. In education settings, annual reviews ensure maintenance plans remain appropriate for seasonal activities and curriculum needs.

Applicability

This task is recommended and common, applying to schools and colleges with biodiversity areas or green spaces requiring maintenance. It is particularly relevant for establishments with wildlife gardens, green roofs, or nature conservation areas. The task applies regardless of site size, though establishments with extensive green spaces may require more detailed planning. Schools and colleges should consider this essential for maintaining ecological value while ensuring safety and educational access.

Responsible Persons

- **Task Type:** This is a Competent Person task that should be carried out by staff with knowledge of grounds maintenance and biodiversity principles.
- **Contractor Requirements:** Not applicable as this is a Competent Person task.
- **In-House Requirements:** Staff should have training in biodiversity maintenance and grounds management. Familiarity with the site's green spaces and maintenance

requirements is essential.

- **Permit to Work:** No permit to work is required for this task.
- **Delivery Model:** This task is normally completed in-house by trained staff, often involving grounds maintenance teams.

Key Considerations

Important factors include balancing ecological requirements with safety needs, coordinating with curriculum activities, and ensuring maintenance resources are adequate. The review should align with seasonal maintenance cycles and biodiversity audit findings. Consider the educational value of maintenance activities and pupil involvement opportunities. Risk assessment should focus on safety implications of maintenance activities and access to biodiversity areas.

Task Instructions

Prerequisites & Safety

- Access to current maintenance plan and biodiversity audit results
- Understanding of biodiversity maintenance principles
- Knowledge of safety requirements for green spaces
- Familiarity with seasonal maintenance cycles

Tools & Materials

- Current maintenance plan documentation
- Biodiversity audit reports and site maps
- Safety assessment checklists
- Seasonal maintenance calendars
- Stakeholder consultation records

Method (Step-by-Step)

1. **Plan Review:** Examine current maintenance schedules and effectiveness.
2. **Biodiversity Assessment:** Evaluate ecological outcomes of maintenance activities.
3. **Safety Review:** Assess safety compliance and risk management.

4. **Stakeholder Consultation:** Consult with grounds staff, teachers, and safety officers.
5. **Plan Update:** Revise maintenance schedules and procedures as needed.
6. **Documentation:** Update site maps and maintenance records.

Measurements & Acceptance Criteria

Maintenance plans should demonstrate effective biodiversity support while ensuring safety compliance. Updated plans should include clear schedules, safety procedures, and monitoring arrangements.

If Results Fail

Follow instructions on the Compliance Pod task completion form to record remedial/follow up actions and generate Reactive Task Tickets as required. If maintenance plans are inadequate, immediate actions should include consulting biodiversity specialists and developing interim safety measures.

Reinstatement & Housekeeping

No reinstatement required. Ensure all documentation is filed appropriately.

Completion Checks

Confirm that comprehensive review has been completed, plan updated, and evidence uploaded to Compliance Pod.

Record-Keeping & Evidence

- **Upload Process:** Upload any required statutory or supporting evidence to the corresponding task form in Compliance Pod.
- **Statutory Evidence:** No statutory evidence is required for this task.
- **Supporting/Good Practice Evidence:** Updated maintenance plan, annotated site maps, and review minutes.

Common Pitfalls & Best Practice Tips

Common mistakes include over-maintenance that reduces biodiversity value, failing to balance ecological and safety needs, or not involving relevant stakeholders. Best practices include timing maintenance for ecological benefit, incorporating biodiversity audit recommendations, and involving pupils in appropriate maintenance activities. In educational settings, align maintenance with curriculum seasons and safety training. Warning signs include declining biodiversity indicators, safety

incidents in green spaces, or maintenance plans that don't reflect seasonal requirements.

Quick Reference Checklist

- ☐ Review current maintenance plan effectiveness
- ☐ Assess biodiversity outcomes of maintenance
- ☐ Evaluate safety compliance and procedures
- ☐ Consult stakeholders for input
- ☐ Update maintenance schedules and procedures
- ☐ Revise site maps and documentation
- ☐ Upload evidence to Compliance Pod

Grouped Tasks

Grouping is feasible; align with related tasks of the same frequency and contractor visit.

Related Tasks

- Sustainability & Climate Action - Biodiversity & Ecology - School Grounds Biodiversity Audit
- Sustainability & Climate Action - Biodiversity & Ecology - Biodiversity & Habitat Enhancement Project Monitoring
- Sustainability & Climate Action - Climate Risk & Adaptation - Flood Risk & Drainage Resilience Review

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