Thank you for volunteering as a Livestock Lookerer. We have put together this handbook to summarise the main points covered in the Lookerer training session, as well as some further information for reference and general interest. However if you have any questions about the role please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Sussex Wildlife Trust is incredibly proud of its high animal welfare standards, and by volunteering as a Lookerer, you will be helping us to deliver the ‘five freedoms’ for animals, which are so essential to our work:

**Freedom from hunger and thirst:**
By providing enough fresh water and the right type and amount of food to keep them fit.

**Freedom from discomfort:**
By making sure that animals have the right type of environment including shelter and somewhere comfortable to rest.

**Freedom from pain, injury and disease:**
By preventing them from getting ill or injured and by making sure animals are diagnosed and treated rapidly if they do.

**Freedom to express normal behaviour:**
By making sure animals have enough space, proper facilities and the company of other animals of their own kind.

**Freedom from fear and distress:**
By making sure their conditions and treatment avoid mental suffering.
Main Objective of the Role
To help ensure the health and well-being of the Trust's livestock:
Checking that all livestock on the reserve are accounted for, looking for any signs of ill
health, and reporting back to the Grazing Officer.

The main points to look for are:
• Are all the livestock present and in the right place?
• Have any strays come in?
• Are there any signs of ill-health, such as:
  o Unusual behaviour
  o Weight loss
  o Runny eyes/nose
  o Lameness?
• Check the water supply
• Are there any noticeable hazards?
• Are there any obvious emergency repairs needed to gates/fences? (you do not need to
  walk the whole fence line, but if you happen to notice anything apparent, which requires
  immediate attention please report it.)

Once the checks have been made, if there are no issues, send a brief text to the Grazing
Officer to confirm all livestock are well, including your name and the reserve name.

If there are any issues, please call the Grazing Officer and give him the relevant details.

Liaising with members of the public
We would encourage any volunteers who wish to do so, to liaise with members of the
public; speaking to them about the work of the Sussex Wildlife Trust and about the
conservation grazing that it is carrying out. We would also like to build good relationships
with dog-walkers and promote responsible dog-walking practices.

Cattle Lookering
Checking of cattle is our primary focus for volunteer Lookerers. The cattle need to be
checked by somebody every day, which is why our rota system is so important. Ideally we
would prefer cattle to be checked in the morning, if possible, so that if there are any
concerns, they can be dealt with by our Grazing Officer promptly that day, during daylight
hours.

Sheep Lookering
The Grazing Officer will be responsible for checking the sheep each day; however we very
much welcome additional presence by volunteers who are happy to visit our sheep-grazed
sites to check that everything is okay.

Signs of good health in sheep include general alertness, free movement, active feeding
and rumination, and absence of lameness, visible wounds, abscesses or injuries. Signs
which indicate ill health in sheep can include listlessness, abnormal posture and
behaviour, lameness, scouring, absence of cudding, persistent coughing or panting,
scratching and frequent rubbing, rapid loss of body condition, excessive wool loss, and in
some circumstances, being apart from the flock.
Dog attacks on sheep
The Trust has unfortunately suffered a number of dog attacks on sheep, and whilst we encourage dog walkers to enjoy visiting our nature reserves, we need to do what we can to minimise the risks to our livestock. Therefore a secondary, optional objective, is to speak to owners of dogs that are off the lead where stock are present or chasing stock – but only if you are comfortable doing this!

If you see a dog worrying sheep, please call the Grazing Officer immediately to report the problem. If you are comfortable doing so, you can speak to the owner of the dog and ask them to keep their dog under control and on a lead whilst on the reserve; however it is imperative that you do not put yourself into a position of confrontation.

If you witness a dog attack do not try to tackle the dog, but ask the owner to control the dog. If the dog persists, call the police by dialling 999, and then follow this up with a call to the Grazing Officer.

Rota system and days/times we would like you to be available
Once you have become a registered volunteer and have been allocated a reserve(s), we will send you a schedule of grazing dates and you will be able to update this with the days you would like to volunteer.

You can choose which days you are able to volunteer; this could be anything from every day to once/twice per month. The level of involvement is up to you; however we do ask that you are able to honour the days which are allocated to you, as all our cattle need to be checked every day.

If you are not going to be able to check the livestock on an allocated day, please give the Grazing Officer at least a day’s notice so that alternative arrangements can be made. If you are unwell on a day that you are due to be checking livestock, please let the Grazing Officer know as soon as possible.

Travel expenses
Travel expenses up to 40 mile round trip can be reimbursed with prior approval of the Grazing Officer at a rate of 45p per mile, however the Trust encourages volunteering at local reserves, wherever possible. Mobile phone costs which are incurred whilst volunteering can also be reimbursed. Obviously if you choose not to claim we are very grateful, but equally we are anxious that no-one is put off volunteering for financial reasons.

If you would like a volunteer expenses form, please contact the Reserves Administrator: gemmaharding@sussexwt.org.uk or 01273 497 510.
**Handling Livestock:** Lookers should only approach stock close enough to ensure all are present and general welfare. Only those deemed capable of handling stock should do so. If there are any problems with stock, the grazing officer is to be notified.

**Lone Working:** Lone working is where an individual undertakes activities on behalf of the Trust alone. In an ideal situation no member of staff or volunteer would work alone. However if lone working is unavoidable, it is important for your own safety that you adhere to the Trust’s lone working policy. In brief;

- Before lone working let a friend or relative know where you are going (including grid references) and when you expect to be back.
- If several sites are visited during this period, the lone working contact should be informed whenever you move on to the next site, so that your location is known at all times.
- When lone working is finished let your lone working contact know that you are safe and have finished your task for the day. If you don't return and they can't get hold of you to check you're okay then they need to contact the Trust and we will carry out procedures for a missing volunteer: Woods Mill Headquarters 01273 492 630 (9am-5pm Monday – Friday), or Gary Baldock: 07884 496 807. If your lone working contact cannot get hold of us then they would then contact emergency services.

**Adverse Weather Conditions:** In cases of extreme weather conditions, such as severe flooding, or deep snow, do not put yourself in danger. If you are unable to check the livestock due to adverse weather please let the Grazing Officer know as soon as possible.

**Lyme Disease:** Lyme disease is a tick borne spirochaetal infection transmitted to man by the bite of an adult female tick. The commonest presenting sign is a mild skin rash a few days after a bite. Secondary complications, which are considered rare, can occur several weeks after the bite and may be arthritic, neurological or cardiac.

**Prevention:**
Wear appropriate clothing to cover the legs, e.g., high boots, wellingtons or gaiters. Arm covering should include a cuff to help to exclude ticks. Ticks should be removed immediately, wash hands first with soap or a disposable cleansing wipe. Workers should inspect their skin for ticks when bathing or showering after work and should remove any promptly using a medical wipe to raise the body of the tick so that it is in line with the mouth parts. The tick should be carefully extracted, and the skin cleansed with a medical wipe. If the site of the tick bite remains unhealed, or if the skin rash develops or if symptoms of ill health are present, then consult a doctor immediately.

**Handling Dead Animals:** In the unlikely event that you discover dead sheep/cattle, do not try to handle it. Instead please call the Grazing Officer and inform him of its location.

**Pregnant Women:** There is a health risk for pregnant women around pregnant sheep or newborn lambs, therefore pregnant women must not associate or work with ewes that are lambing. For more information please visit the NHS website: [http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/934.aspx?CategoryID=54&SubCategoryID=131](http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/934.aspx?CategoryID=54&SubCategoryID=131)
### Risk Assessment Form - ACTIVITIES

**Activity Assessed:** Grazing  
**Activity Location:**  
**Assessed By:** Alex Collins  
**Date:**  
**Next assessment due:** April 2014

**N.B.** See Risk Assessment 25: Livestock handling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Hazard</th>
<th>Likelihood of Occurrence</th>
<th>Hazard Severity</th>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Precautions</th>
<th>New Likelihood of Occurrence</th>
<th>New Hazard Severity</th>
<th>New Risk Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Livestock cause injury to public</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interpretation through site signage with up to date information regarding the livestock located at all entrances/ access points. Most livestock avoid contact although during lambing/ calving mothers become protective. To minimise contact with the public the livestock are located at an appropriate penning area away from public interference prior to giving birth. Individual livestock that demonstrate aggressive actions towards the public are removed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock cause injury to staff/ volunteers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Members of staff are trained and experienced in handling livestock. Appropriate guidance is given to volunteers and other staff members prior to handling livestock. Wear appropriate PPE to handle livestock.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposal of Dead Animals/ Carcasses</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health &amp; Safety Working Instruction outlines procedure for dealing with dead animals. This includes appropriate PPE, moving the carcass and suitable disposal. All SWT owned livestock have a health plan and welfare is overseen by a full-time conservation grazier.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog attack of livestock and injury to staff from aggressive dogs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Interpretation through site signage with up to date information regarding the livestock located at all entrances/ access points. Staff member is at the site daily, educating people and monitoring the livestock. To minimise contact with the public during lambing/ calving, the livestock are located at an appropriate penning area away from public interference. Staff member/ volunteer does not tackle dog but asks owner to control the dog. If it persists the police should be contacted.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury while carrying out husbandry of livestock</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Members of staff are trained and experienced in handling livestock. Appropriate guidance is given to volunteers and other staff members prior to handling livestock. Wear appropriate PPE/ Equipment to handle livestock.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administering treatments (husbandry)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Members of staff are trained and experienced in handling livestock. A vet administers appropriate treatments in accordance to the health plan and emergency treatments.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Risk Assessment Form - ACTIVITIES

**Activity Assessed:** Livestock handling  
**Assessed By:** Alex Collins  
**Next Assessment due:** Apr-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Hazard</th>
<th>Likelihood of Occurrence</th>
<th>Hazard Severity</th>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Precautions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk of injury from crushing, kicking, biting, butting or goring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Only competent staff and contractors to handle stock. To demonstrate competence, staff/contractors must be trained to use handling and safety equipment (e.g. crush, pen, races, trailer, etc); must understand the need to be vigilant and demonstrate an awareness of risks posed; be able to work calmly with a minimum of shouting/impatience/force; and, have mental and physical abilities appropriate to the task. Close supervision of individuals with limited experience and allocation of duties appropriate to skill level. Policy to cull stock known to pose a high risk. Equipment and handling facilities maintained in good order. Minimum of two people always present when handling stock. Vehicle and first aid kit close to where task is underway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoonoses (diseases passed to humans from animals)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Maintain stock in good health and treat infection promptly; ensure good personal hygiene (e.g. wash before eating, drinking); wear suitable protective clothing such as overalls when handling animals if sick and gloves/waterproof apron if possibly handling infected material such as products of birth or muck; wash and cover cuts and grazes immediately; be vigilant about personal health; pregnant women must not associate or work with ewes that are lambing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary medicines and sheep dips</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Store medicines securely and out of reach of children; ensure syringes and needles are kept securely; where possible use less hazardous alternatives (e.g. water-based vaccine rather than organo-phosphorus); use safer application systems (e.g. pour on rather than dip); only staff trained in their use to use; dispose of medicines and dip appropriately; wash off any splashes/wash before eating/drinking; follow emergency measures recommended by manufacturer; follow manufacturers recommendation for PPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual handling, including lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying and supporting a load by hand or bodily force</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Plan and organise work to avoid unnecessary lifting; assess the risks and plan accordingly (e.g. ease of gripping, distance to carry); use mechanical assistance (e.g. sack trolley) where possible; pace work to allow rests/pauses; ensure floors are level, well-lit and unobstructed; wear protective gloves and boots and protective clothing; use good lifting techniques (manual handling course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury while lookering through lone working or contact with animals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lookers to follow SWT lone working procedures and to ensure someone knows when they are on site. Lookers only to approach stock close enough to ensure all are present and general welfare. Only those deemed capable of handling stock should do so. If there are any problems with stock the grazing officer is to be notified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General note:** Only those deemed as competent to handle livestock by the Grazing Officer to handle stock
Further Reading
We do not expect volunteer lookers to diagnose illness in livestock; this is the responsibility of the Grazing Officer. However, in case you are interested in further reading, we have provided some basic details on the most common illnesses affecting livestock:

New forest eye (cattle): the main symptoms are runny eyes, red and inflamed conjunctiva and corneal ulcers in the later stages of infection. Affected animals often experience weight loss.

Foul of the foot (cattle): A sudden onset of severe lameness where the animal only ‘toes’ the foot to the ground, may be a symptom of foul of the foot.

Blue Tongue (cattle and sheep): Bluetongue is a disease of animals affecting all ruminants, including sheep, cattle, deer, goats and camels.

Clinical signs in sheep:
- Eye and nasal discharges
- Drooling as a result of ulcerations in the mouth
- High body temperature
- Swelling of the mouth, head and neck
- Lameness
- Haemorrhages into or under the skin
- Inflammation at the junction of the skin and the horn of the foot – the coronary band
- Respiratory problems – difficulty with breathing and nasal discharge
- A bluetongue is rarely a clinical sign of infection
- Deaths of sheep in a flock may reach as high as 70 per cent. Animals that survive the disease can lose condition with a reduction in meat and wool production.

Clinical signs in cattle:
It is possible that cattle will show no signs of illness, however clinical signs have included:
- Nasal discharge
- Swelling of the head and neck
- Conjunctivitis (runny eyes)
- Swelling in, and ulceration, of the mouth
- Swollen teats
- Tiredness
- Saliva drooling out of the mouth

Lameness (Sheep)
Most outbreaks of lameness in sheep are caused by either scald or footrot.
Scald is the most common cause of lameness in sheep occurring whenever conditions underfoot are wet. In mild cases the interdigital skin is red and swollen and covered by a thin layer of white material.
Footrot is an extremely painful disease and affected animals lose weight rapidly. Animals with virulent footrot are very lame, remain recumbent for long periods and may carry the affected leg. When both forelimbs are affected, animals walk on their knees. The first sign of footrot is swelling and moistening of the interdigital skin. A break occurs at the skin horn junction from where infection spreads under the horn tissue so that the wall of the hoof becomes separated and the sole under-run. There is a characteristic foul-smelling
discharge. In chronic cases, the hoof walls and toes become overgrown and misshapen, trapping dirt and inflammatory exudate between the inflamed, granulating soft tissues of the sole and overgrown horn. Affected feet may be flystruck.

**Fly strike (sheep):** In the UK, blowfly strike is usually caused by the greenbottle fly. The females are attracted by the odour of decomposing matter such as wounds, soiled fleece or dead animals. The first signs in affected sheep are a patch of discoloured wool and agitation. A closer examination would show clouds of green-bottle blowflies around patches of matted wool.

**Lice (sheep):** Infested sheep rub and scratch and the fleece appears rough and pulled, with numerous loose strands of wool. Sheep can bite and nibble at the fleece.

**Pasteurella (sheep):** There are different types of pasteurella bacteria, which cause septicaemia in young lambs during the spring and summer, pneumonia in older sheep and mastitis in ewes. The common clinical signs of pneumonia are coughing, thick nasal discharge, thick discharge around the eyes, wheezing, and rapid breathing. Other early signs include fever (104-108 F), depression, decreased or no appetite, weight loss, and isolation from the flock.

**Scab (sheep):** Sheep scab is a skin disease of sheep caused by a mite called *Psoroptes ovis*. It causes severe itching in affected sheep if left untreated. Scaly lesions develop on the woolly parts of the body and sheep often bite themselves and rub against objects to relieve the irritation causing loss of wool. Untreated sheep may lose weight.

DEFRA’s website also has some useful information, which may be of interest, including: