

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Cows can kill

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A farmer was prosecuted after two members of the public were attacked and one fatally injured by cows in a field.

The courts judged that the farmer failed to ensure that 'persons not in his employment' weren't exposed to health and safety risks.

Did you know that between April 2000 and March 2015 there have been 18 fatalities to members of the public involving cattle? Most incidents occur when the cows are with calves.



Cattle from the prosecuted farmer's herd

What does this mean to us?

We sometimes enter private land for site scoping visits or surveys, exposing our people to the risks associated with livestock. We must consider these risks and their control measures when planning our field activities.

Additional information:

[HSP 020 - Managing Risk](#)

[HSP 030 - Site and Field Activities](#)

Ramblers Association [Guidance when walking near livestock](#)

Before you go to site - the MWH responsible managers, i.e. those putting people to work (including external contractors), must ensure the following steps are undertaken:

1. **Site specific risk assessment developed ([HSF 020.01](#))** – think about the presence of livestock, record your findings and your site specific control measures as appropriate. Refer to the model risk assessment for site and field activities ([HSMRA 030](#)) and:

- Consult with the landowners - will livestock be in the areas you need to get to?
- Coordinate your visit with the landowner – can livestock be moved out of the way?
- Consider if the visit be timed to avoid sensitive seasons e.g. mating, lambing and calving seasons?
- Remember - at no time should we take dogs to site.

2. Prior to starting your site visit, complete the **Point of Work risk assessment ([HSF 020.02](#))** to confirm the planned control measures (such as farmer moving livestock) have been, or can be implemented. If the control measures to safeguard your health and safety are not in place, the visit must be suspended and re-planned.

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