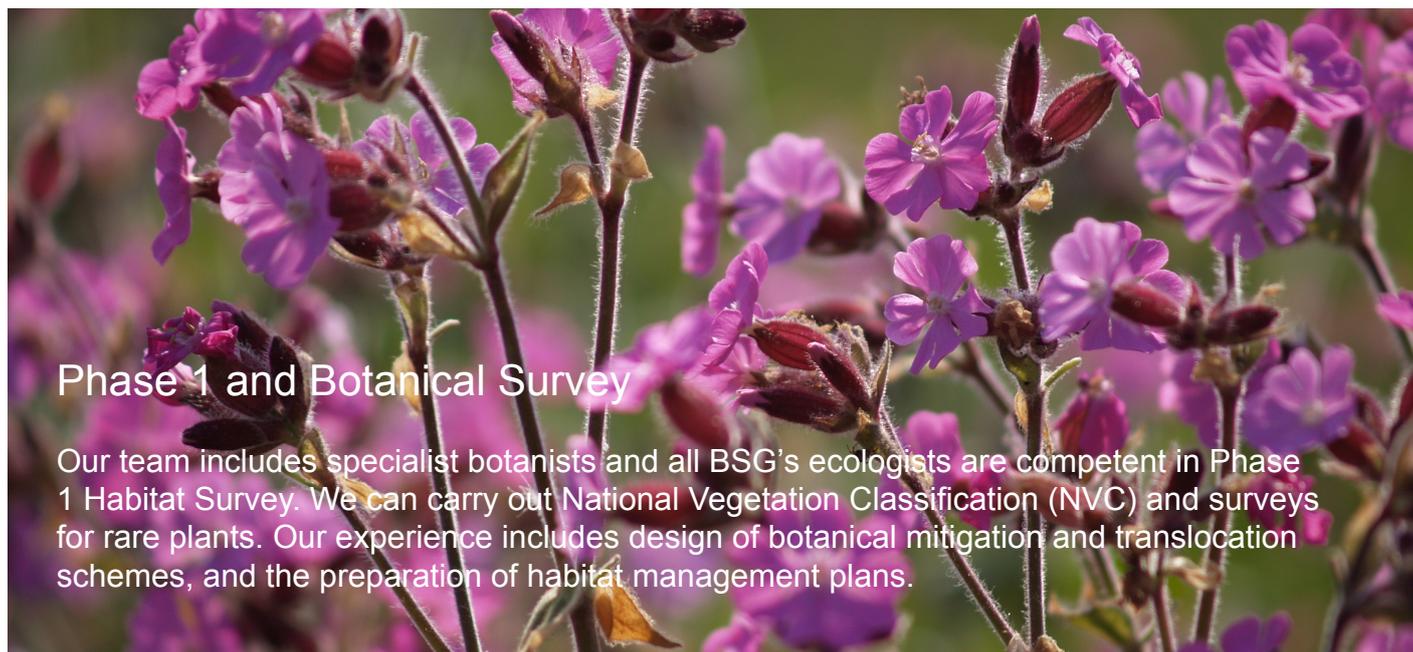


CAPABILITY STATEMENT



Phase 1 and Botanical Survey

Our team includes specialist botanists and all BSG's ecologists are competent in Phase 1 Habitat Survey. We can carry out National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and surveys for rare plants. Our experience includes design of botanical mitigation and translocation schemes, and the preparation of habitat management plans.

Overview

BSG's ecologists are all competent in Phase 1 Habitat Survey, and our team includes specialist botanists. We can also carry out survey work in accordance with the (Irish) Heritage Council's Classification Scheme, National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and surveys for rare plants. Our experience includes design of botanical mitigation and translocation schemes, and the preparation of habitat management plans.

This capability allows BSG to provide clients with high quality survey results coupled with appropriate evaluation, interpretation and assessment. The applications of such work have included development of mitigation and compensation measures to address the impacts of development; condition monitoring of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); monitoring species to determine conservation status and to quantify the impacts of development on them; and the preparation of ecological management plans for rare plant species, habitats and nature reserves.

Habitat and Botanical Survey

Our team combines wide-ranging survey experience with technical knowledge and expertise, and can carry out habitat and more detailed botanical surveys throughout the UK and Ireland. We use GPS units and handheld GIS tablets to accurately map habitats on sites where necessary (for example in moorland). This greatly reduces post-survey data processing time for large sites.

Our habitat and botanical survey services include:

- Phase 1 Habitat Surveys of sites, districts, boroughs and counties;
- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys – these expand the scope of the Phase 1 Habitat Survey to include simultaneous searches for evidence of, and to assess potential for, legally protected species and those of conservation importance;
- Application of the Heritage Council habitat survey and mapping scheme (based on the classification system derived by Fossitt)
- NVC Survey of semi-natural botanical communities;
- Bespoke Phase 2 botanical surveys for sites and habitats that do not readily conform to the NVC system, such as post-industrial (brownfield) sites;

- Monitoring communities and plant species to determine their response to management;
- *Asplenium trichomanes ssp. quadrivalens*, fine leaved sandwort
Minuartia hybrida, lizard orchid *Himantoglossum hircinum* and perfoliate penny-cress *Thlaspi perfoliatum*.

Data Analysis and Presentation

BSG Ecology uses a range of mapping software tools tailored according to client need and budget. This includes GIS to map habitats, communities and populations of species. Such maps enable comparative analysis of the distribution and extent of habitats, communities and species. Maps are also used to correlate abundance and distribution of habitats, communities and species with environmental factors such as altitude, gradient, aspect and soil type.

We use statistical software programmes such as MATCH, MAVIS or TABLEFIT to classify NVC communities.

Ecology Consultancy Services

BSG Ecology undertakes surveys for a variety of private and public sector clients, as well as for charitable organisations. We regularly attend conferences and workshops in order to keep up to date with research and contemporary issues and discussion points.

Our ecology consultancy services include:

- Desk-based habitat and botanical consultation;
- Preliminary appraisals of habitats, communities and plant species located within proposed development sites;
- Habitat and botanical impact assessments to inform planning applications and habitat management plans;
- Advice on the implications of legal protection afforded to habitats and plant species;
- Development and implementation of botanical monitoring programmes including 'community condition assessments';
- Species population census studies;
- Method statements to ensure legislative compliance and minimise impacts;
- Appropriate Assessment / Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) advice (with regard to botanical Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar Sites).