

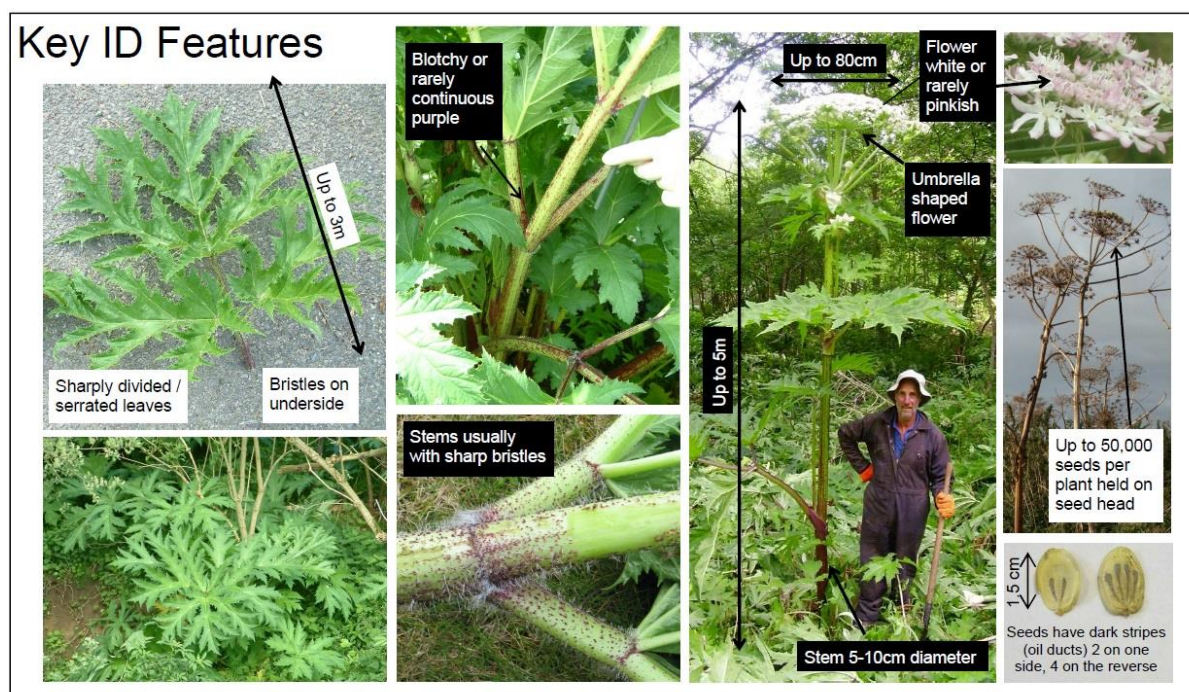
## Giant Hogweed burns

<b>Issue date</b>	10/07/2020
<b>Issued by</b>	Paul Turner, Head of Policy and Safety
<b>Applicable to</b>	All colleagues and contractors

Please be aware of the presence of Giant Hogweed whilst working in both urban and rural settings. Giant Hogweed is a non-native invasive species which is more prevalent at this time of year. It is a water loving plant and can commonly be found colonising river banks and boggy, wet shaded places.

It can reach over five metres in height and coming into contact with it can cause **severe burns and long-lasting scars**. It poses a serious risk to people who are unaware of its potential for harm.

When fully grown, Giant Hogweed is a tall plant with thick bristly stems that are often purple speckled. The flowers are white and held in flat topped clusters, like those on carrots or Common Hogweed, with all the flowers upwards. The flower head can be up to 80cm across. Please see the identification photos below.



If you encounter Giant Hogweed at a worksite, do not let any uncovered parts of your body come into contact with it. Always cover arms, legs and ideally wear a face mask if working near it. Report the plant as being present and include in your risk assessments. Wash any skin that does come into contact with the plant immediately and seek shelter from the sun. If it gets into your eyes seek immediate medical attention.



To minimise the risk of transporting seeds or plant fragments between different work site locations, ensure all work equipment including PPE, machinery, tools and vehicles are washed as a part of routine maintenance after working in areas where these plants are found. It must be ensured that cleaning operations do not affect ground or watercourses.

If you encounter these plants contact [Rachel Travers](#) or the [Groundworks Team](#) for further advice. More identification information, including how to differentiate from the native and harmless Common Hogweed, can be found [here](#).

