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Soils

I never quite know what's coming my way – each day presents a variety of activities and a constant learning process. I'm part of a small and supportive soils 'teamlet' working alongside specialists in climate change and agronomy. It's about applying your specialist knowledge to rural and urban planning scenarios.

I usually help Area Team colleagues respond to statutory consultations, which help us protect our soils and best farmland. We advise on restoring mineral and landfill sites to agriculture and wildlife-friendly uses. The work is mainly office-based, and you need to assimilate a lot of information quickly to identify the main issues, but also present advice in a way that non-soil experts can easily understand.

We also work closely with Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) in the wider soils policy arena, supporting the implementation of the 25 Year Environment Plan's soil aspirations. It's very satisfying to be involved in the formation of government policy and advise ministers alongside Defra colleagues.

I enjoy making links with other areas of Natural England, and hopefully I'm showing colleagues how an understanding of soils can help in a more complete understanding of the natural environment.