

# Bats



Bat:  
(Photograph by Whitfield Benson)

## Links to Habitat Action Plans and Guidance Notes.

Priority habitats associated with Bats:

**Woodland, Wood Pasture, Parkland and Veteran Trees, Ancient and Species-rich Hedgerows, Wetlands, Open Water, Coastal Wetlands, Coastal Cliff Mosaics, Rivers and Streams, Species in Buildings**

Action Plans have been prepared for those in bold.

## Introduction

There are 16 species of bat in Britain, 8 of which can be found locally. Each species has its own particular requirements, but as a group they may be found in all habitats and some use buildings, so bats have a special connection with humans.

During the past century most species are thought to have declined. Anecdotal evidence suggests that 'bats are not as common as they used to be' and some research projects have confirmed losses. However, the secretive nature of bats and the difficulties this presented for their study prior to the development of sophisticated technology makes it difficult to quantify the losses.

### Our objectives for Bats are:

To sustain a healthy bat populations within the Borough.  
To improve the habitats available to bats.

Bats feed on insects and in summer can often be seen hunting along rivers and woodland edges where insects are numerous. In winter, when insects are difficult to find they hibernate. Although summer roosts are usually in warm locations, hibernacula are often in cold places with stable temperatures, such as caves.

## Status and Distribution

All bats and their roosts are afforded special protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the European Habitats Regulations. This protection applies to roosts even when the bats are seasonally absent. To carry out any work on a dwelling house which might affect bats or their roosts requires consultation with English Nature (EN). In other buildings, structures and trees a licence from Defra may be required. The Horseshoe bats (not found locally) and Pipistrelle bats have priority species status in the UK BAP.

In Yorkshire and The Humber region 9 species are known to breed. These are listed overleaf together with their estimated UK populations.

Only Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Daubenton's, Noctule and Brown Long-eared bats have been recorded in Scarborough Borough outside of the National Park. However, this is possibly the result of under-recording.

## Threats

The main threats are loss of roost sites and hibernacula, both accidental and deliberate; reduction of food sources through the widespread use of insecticides or habitat removal and fragmentation of the landscape leading to disruption of commuting routes.

## Current Action

North Yorkshire Bat Group (NYBG) holds records of all known bat roosts within the county and provides advice to householders, landowners and others in conjunction with English Nature. The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT), with the support of Government agencies and volunteers, runs the National Bat Monitoring Programme to monitor changes in populations of various species.

NYBG organises public events to foster a public understanding of bats and their conservation.

Developers wishing to carry out works which would impact on bat roosts are required to obtain a licence for such works and to provide suitable mitigation measures to enable bat populations to be maintained. The Local Planning Authority is required to consider bats as part of the planning process.

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) surveys all bridges prior to maintenance work.

English Nature gives advice on planning applications which affect bats. EN advise developers / agencies on the surveys and mitigation that are needed to maintain the population of this European protected species at favourable conservation status.

**Estimated UK Bat Population**

**Whiskered and Brandt's  
70,000 combined**

**Daubenton's  
150,000**

**Natterer's  
100,000**

**Common Pipistrelle  
and Soprano Pipistrelle  
2,000,000 combined**

**Noctule  
50,000**

**Leisler's  
10,000**

**Brown Long-eared  
200,000**

**What you can do  
to help:**

**Report sightings  
including date and time  
to NYBG. Contact  
details are in the  
Appendix 7.**

**Include bat friendly  
features when carrying  
out loft or building  
extensions.**