



Local authority guidance Protected species surveys – when to ask for them

The presence of protected species is a material consideration in planning decisions. It is important that planning decisions are informed about the possible effects of development on protected species.

What species are protected?

These are the protected species most common in Sussex and Surrey. For a full list of all protected species go to English Nature's website.

Species	Protection?	Want more information? *
Bats	Killing or injuring the animal. Disturbing or destroying their resting places (even if species are not present).	Focus on bats leaflet Bats in buildings leaflet Bat mitigation guidelines
Dormice	Killing or injuring the animal. Disturbing or destroying their resting places (even if species are not present).	Dormouse Conservation Handbook
Great crested newts	Killing or injuring the animal. Disturbing or destroying their resting places (even if species are not present).	Great crested newt mitigation guidelines
Water voles	Damage or destroy their resting place	Water voles: guidance for planners and developers
Reptiles	Killing or injuring	Reptiles for developers
Badgers	Killing or injuring Damaging or destroying access to a sett.	Badgers and development
Birds	Killing and injuring. Damaging or destroying a nest.	Birds and the law leaflet (by RSPB) Available from: www.rspb.org.uk/policy/wildbirdslaw/rspb_publications.asp

***For English Nature publications see**
www.english-nature.org.uk/pubs/publication/pub_search.asp

When are licences necessary?

The developer's ecologist should advise if a licence is necessary. Whilst licences may not be required for all protected species, all applications that affect protected species should be subject to special scrutiny.

Generally licences allow actions which would otherwise be illegal. Compensation, e.g. replacement setts or roosts for a lost one, or mitigation, e.g. timing the actions so that they minimise the impact on the species, are required in order to obtain a licence.

Species	Licensing body	More information
Bats	Defra	www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/EPS.htm
Dormice	Defra	www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/EPS.htm
Great crested newts	Defra	www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/EPS.htm
Water voles	Not licensable	
Reptiles	Not licensable	
Birds	Not licensable	
Badgers	English Nature	www.english-nature.org.uk/science/licensing/

When is a survey needed?

In order that planning decisions can be fully informed by up to date information, surveys should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist. Planning officers/developers should consider the need for ecological surveys and possible constraints to development at least one year prior to the submission of the application.

These simple surveys can determine whether species are present or absent. If species are present, more detailed surveys will need to take place.

Trigger	Species	When can the survey be done?
Existing records	All	Some species and habitat records are available from the county biodiversity records office. Remember that if there are no records it does not necessarily mean that protected species and habitats are not present
Demolition of buildings	Bats	Any time of year. Ideally between April and August.
Barn/farm building conversions	Bats Barn owls	Any time of year. Ideally between April and August.
Ponds on the site and/or within 500m	Great crested newt	Late Feb – early June
General development on Allotments, derelict land, brown field sites - any site with rough grassland.	Badger	Any time of year
	Reptiles	March-October
	Invertebrates	May – Sept
Loft conversions and work to roofs of buildings	Bats	Any time of year but ideally between May and August.
Lopping or felling of trees	Bats	April to September. Potential bat roosts can be assessed in winter.
	Nesting birds	Mid-February to mid-August
Hedges, scrub	Dormice	Mid-February to mid-August
	Nesting Birds	Mid-February to mid-August
	Great crested newt	Late Feb – early June
	Reptiles	March-October
Rivers, canals, streams and ditches	Water vole	March – October
	Crayfish	April-October
Works on bridges, tunnels, caves, mines, culverts	Bats	Nov-March

For Sussex and Surrey guidance on specific species see www.english-nature.org.uk/team/sussexandsurrey

Useful contacts

Sussex Biodiversity Records Office www.sxbrc.org.uk

Surrey Biodiversity Records Office www.surreywildlifetrust.co.uk/

English Nature Licensing www.english-nature.org.uk/science/licensing/

Defra Wildlife Division www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/contacts.htm#EPS

Local badger groups www.badger.org.uk/

Local bat groups www.bats.org.uk/

Local herpetofauna groups <http://www.froglife.org/>