

CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

GROUP BAT SPECIES ACTION PLAN

Introduction

This plan covers a range of bat species identified as priority BAP species in Wales that occur or are likely to occur in Carmarthenshire: common and soprano pipistrelle, barbastelle, noctule, brown long-eared, greater and lesser horseshoe bats. As bats often roost together and have similar requirements it can be taken that all other species known or likely in Carmarthenshire will be included in the plan: whiskered, Brandt's Natterer's, Daubenton's and Serotine.



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The different bat species have different ecological requirements and different feeding strategies but what they do share in common is that they all require a wide range of built, semi-natural and natural habitats for their various feeding and roosting requirements. Hibernation roost sites provide stable temperatures to allow a period of winter torpor, e.g. underground sites such as cave/mines. Nursery roost sites are where females gather in the spring/early summer to give birth and rear their single offspring (e.g. roof spaces, crevices/hollows in mature standing trees). Individuals or small groups of males have separate roosts during spring–autumn in roof spaces or trees. Finally it appears that other sites are used for ‘social-gathering’ at certain times of the year (e.g. the autumn mating season) for some, or all species.

Bats feed over a wide range of habitats (farmland, woodland, suburbia, parklands, marshes, watercourses and lakes), on a diet of small flying insects such as midges, caddis flies, mayflies, cockchafers, lacewings and small moths. Generally a mosaic of habitats is preferred and for some species (horseshoes) a linking network of hedgerows and tree lines appears to be important.

For the priority BAP species in Wales we have the following information. The common and soprano pipistrelle are widespread and the brown long-eared bat is probably widespread in low numbers across lowland areas – they are all regularly recorded in the county. Lesser horseshoe bats are widely distributed throughout lowland Wales and for greater horseshoe bats the main population centre is Pembrokeshire with other important populations in parts of south and east Wales – they are both occasionally recorded in the county. The barbastelle bat is found mainly in the southern half of Wales with breeding roosts identified in Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion – it may well occur in suitable habitats Carmarthenshire as well.

Habitat creation and restoration is a key action to help bat species. The creation and/or protection of riparian habitats close to important soprano pipistrelle roosts and improvements in water quality will increase insect abundance in their preferred foraging habitat. The retention, planting and expansion of woodland, parkland and amenity trees and hedgerows within the vicinity of significant brown long-eared roosts will help that species

For lesser horseshoe bats, the creation of a network of habitats to provide connectivity between all types of important roosts (including maternity, hibernation, mating, night and important transition roosts) and surrounding habitat and foraging areas is a priority. In addition the importance of the built environment for lesser horseshoes should not be overlooked. Construction practices could be influenced to encourage the creation of lesser horseshoe roosts as part of building renovation work or in new developments. For noctules suitable management of woodland, parkland, amenity trees to maintain and increase the number of suitable roosting places should be encouraged.

The local planning authority requires that surveys are undertaken to inform the planning/decision making/ of any plan/project that has the potential to affect bats as part of their statutory/policy responsibilities. Developers, woodland managers, tree surgeons and contractors should all be aware of the importance of bats and the negative and positive contribution they can make to these species.

Key threats (taken from [JNCC website](#))

- Loss or disturbance of roost sites, especially within buildings,
- Decrease in insect prey abundance and feeding habitats
- Agricultural pressure – pesticides and loss of pastoral systems
- Pollution and infilling of water bodies
- Unsympathetic forestry practices

Vision statement and objectives

Within Carmarthenshire we aim to help maintain the range and population of our bat species, ensure adequate protection through the development process, management of foraging areas and retention and creation of flight lines. Continued raising awareness is an important part of achieving the conservation aims for this important group of species. Any action will seek to meet one or more of the following objectives:

- BAT1** To maintain and increase the population of all bat species in Carmarthenshire
- BAT2** To gather data on the distribution and status of bat species in Carmarthenshire, including promoting and taking part in BCT’s National Bat Monitoring Programme
- BAT3** To raise awareness of the importance of bats in Carmarthenshire and provide advice on habitat/roost management and protected status

Summary of action achieved by LBAP Partners (for more information contact the biodiversity officer – Biodiversity@carmarthenshire.gov.uk) or visit the national Biodiversity Action Reporting System - <http://ukbars.defra.gov.uk>:

2010–13

- Tywi Afon Yr Oesoedd Project – bats boxes erected in the Tywi valley BAT1
- Monitoring of established bat roosts – BCT BAT2
- Urban Bat Survey undertaken with vols in the county – BCT/CCC BAT2
- Contribution to National Bat Monitoring programme in county – BCT BAT2
- ‘Bat’ events for public held in the county – BCT/WTSWW/NT BAT2
- Bat Group formed in the county and site visits organised BAT3
- Surveys required for planning applications that may affect bats – CCC BAT4
- Training held for planners/agents/architects – CCC BAT3
- Blog spot established for Bat Group – <http://carmarthenshirebatgroup.blogspot.co.uk> BAT3
- Bat boxes installed as part of Landscape and Biodiversity RDP-funded scheme BAT1

2014

- Transect developed and walked to monitor pipistrelles and noctules at Garn North and Pwll Edrichiad, Carmel NNR – WTSWW BAT2

2015

- Bat walk on Pembrey Burrows during Wales Biodiversity Week - CCC BAT3
- Bat survey of Ferryside with local community – BCT/CCC BAT2/3
- Training for CCC officers on bats and buildings and bridges – BCT/CCC BAT3

- Update of current known distribution of Barbastelle bats - establish Carms records BAT2
- Rare Woodland Bats Project – survey of Stradey woods - Nathusius pipistrelle recorded BAT2

Future proposed action

- On-site training for bridge engineers on bats - CCC BAT3
- Continue with Rare Woodland Bats Project – BCT BAT2
- Survey open water in Llanelli area for Nathusius pipistrelle – BCT BAT2

Useful links:

- [Bat Conservation Trust](#)
- [Carmarthenshire Bat Group](#)
- [Bat Detective](#)
- Natural Resources Wales - [bat licences](#)

Legislation

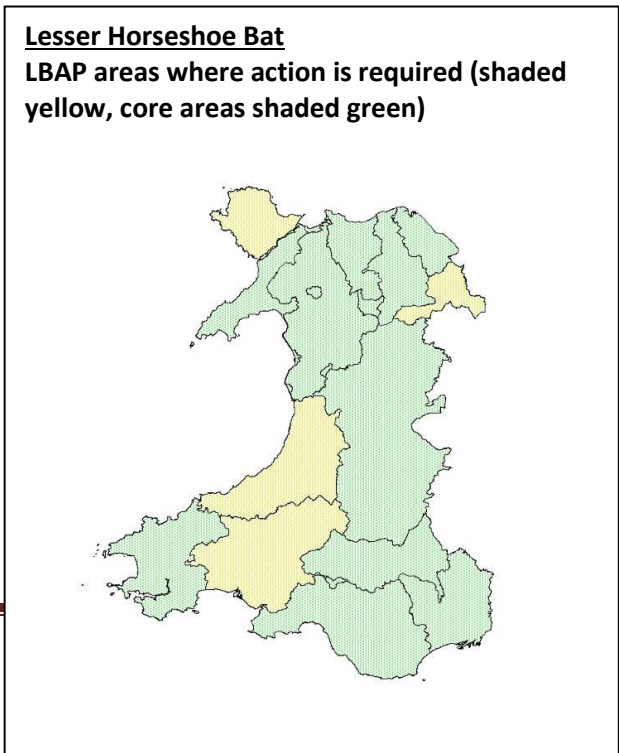
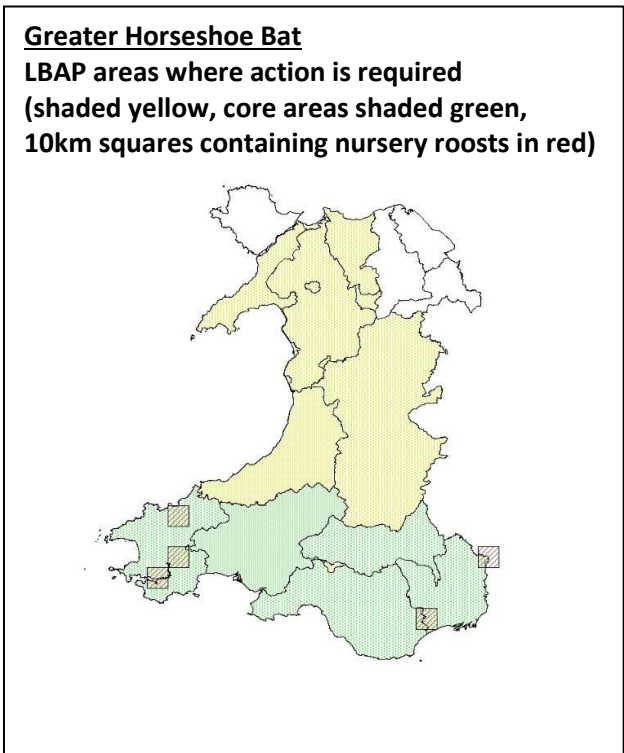
In Britain all bat species and their roosts are legally protected, by both domestic and international legislation. This means you will be committing a criminal offence if you:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

Go to the BCT [Bats and the Law](#) website for more information.

Bats have been flying for millions of years and no other mammal has attained the power of flight.

To the Chinese, bats are regarded as symbols of happiness and good fortune (health, wealth, serenity, virtue, and long life). At one time Chinese mothers would sew small jade buttons in the shape of a bat on the caps of their babies, a custom believed to impart long life. Ancient and modern-day art objects, tapestries, imperial robes, home furnishings and the like often include bats as part of the motif.



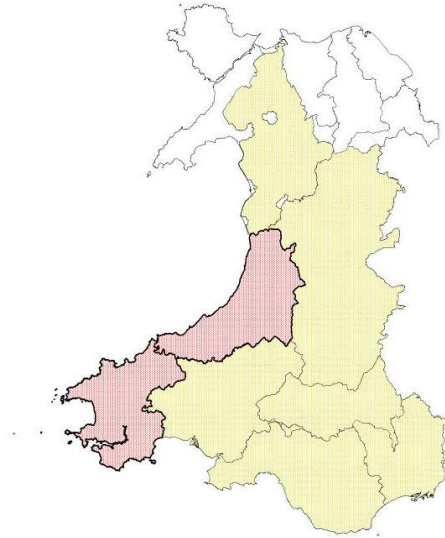
Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Brown long-eared bat , and Noctule bat

LBAP areas where action is required (shaded yellow)



Barbastelle bat

**Priority LBAP areas where action is required
Red = site protection and management and further survey, Yellow = survey required**



Bechstein's bat

LBAP areas where action is required (shaded yellow)





Partneriaeth **Bioamrywiaeth** Sir Gaerfyrddin
Carmarthenshire **Biodiversity** Partnership

www.carmarthenshirebiodiversity.co.uk

The [Carmarthenshire Biodiversity Partnership](#) (CBP) is made up of the following organisations: [Carmarthenshire County Council](#) (CCC), [Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales](#) (WTSWW), [Natural Resources Wales](#) (NRW), [RSPB](#), [Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust](#) (WWT), [Carmarthenshire Bird Club](#) (CBC), [National Botanic Gardens Wales](#) (NBGW), [Butterfly Conservation](#) (BC), [Carmarthenshire Rivers Trust](#) (CRT), [National Trust](#) (NT), [Botanical Society of the British Isles](#) (BSBI), [Llanelli Naturalists](#) (LN), [Bat Conservation Trust](#) (BCT), [West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre](#) (WWBIC), [Amphibian and Reptile Conservation](#) (ARC), [Woodland Trust](#) (WT)