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**Bat Survey Report for
2 York Lane,
Langho**

Commissioned-by:
David Allen

Survey Date: 29/5/13

Report Date: 7/6/13

**DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

17 JUN 2013

FAO

Introduction.

I was asked to assess the importance of this property to bats as part of the planning process, prior to it being extended to the side.

I made a daytime visit on 29/5/13 to undertake a preliminary survey of the building, assess its likely importance to bats and advise whether or not a precautionary approach or further survey work is needed. Having being involved with bat survey work for 25 years and consultancy work for 18 years, it is always my objective to carry-out my work in a manner consistent with accepted Good Practice Guidelines (1) and consistent with the code of practice of the IEEM. I have a bat conservation, science, education and training licence from Natural England, number 20130059 including an Annex to cover barn owls (20123281).

This is a stone semi-detached cottage, converted from a barn adjoining a farm house:



It is in a rural, village location in an area of good quality bat feeding habitat.

*specialist in the requirements of bats for roosting and feeding
natural england licenced – bats (conservation, science and education) and barn owls
member of the institute of ecology and environmental management (ieem)
b.tech (hons) - environmental science: applied ecology & environmental management*

The pipistrelle bat (2 species but especially *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) is common and widespread in the area. Roosts of this species can occur in any building that provides suitable roosting crevices, with the risk of bat presence increased by close proximity to good bat feeding habitat and commuting routes.

Other species likely to occur within 2 kilometres are the brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) - the species most likely to leave evidence of roosting within barns and haylofts - Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) with other species such as the whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*), Brandt's (*Myotis brandtii*) and Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*) possible.

Bats and the Law.

All British bats and their roosts are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 (as amended) and the EC Habitats Directive of 1992 as implemented by the 2010 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. (Further information is available via <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>)

As a result of these two pieces of legislation, amongst other things it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture bats, disturb bats or damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts. Doing so can result in a custodial sentence. Fines of up to £5000 per bat can be issued in cases of non-compliance with the law. Bat roosts are protected whether or not bats are present at the time.

Under the European legislation, it is necessary for a development to maintain the favourable conservation status of bats in their natural range. This has generally been interpreted as meaning no net loss of roosts, and it is expected that roosting provision for bats will be made better than or equal to whatever is being lost to development. Wider environmental issues such as changes to feeding and commuting habitat, and lighting, also require consideration. However, the term "roost" in this context, tends to be interpreted to exclude places used opportunistically on a single occasion by just one bat.

Under English legislation (the Wildlife and Countryside Act, as above), a "bat roost" is described as "any structure or place which any wild [bat]... uses for shelter or protection".

Implications.

Where a development will potentially impact on the favourable conservation status of bats in their natural range, a European Protected Species Licence is required before the roost can be interfered with in any way. It takes approximately 7 weeks for these to be issued once the application has been submitted. The application includes a Method Statement, and this along with the licence itself forms a legally binding document.

European Protected Species licences are issued providing planning permission has been granted, where appropriate.

Three conditions have to be met in order to obtain a licence and planning authorities are now required to apply the same 3 tests before granting planning consent:

- That the development is necessary for the purpose of "preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequence of primary importance for the environment";
- That there is "no satisfactory alternative";
- That the action authorised "will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range".

Accordingly, planners must now satisfy themselves before issuing planning consent that they have enough information to conclude that either the project will not have a negative impact on the favourable conservation status of bats, or if it seems likely it will, then appropriate mitigation and compensation measures will be employed to ensure this does not occur.

The mitigation and compensation measures would include appropriate timing and methodology for the work including details of how the bats will be provided-for in the long term.

Natural England, the Government body responsible for administering the law relating to bats, have issued guidelines to planners on how to proceed with respect to bats (<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningtransportlocalgov/spatialplanning/standingadvice/advice.aspx>).

Outside the planning system, the onus is on developers/members of the public, to have sufficient investigations undertaken to satisfy themselves (and the authorities in the event of a subsequent investigation), that their actions are unlikely to be in contravention of bat legislation. Where this is in doubt it is necessary to seek appropriate advice and licencing before commencing any work on site.

N.b. It should always be remembered that bats often roost in places not anticipated by a lay person, such as modern buildings, trees with cavities and bridges. Some leave no signs in lofts, as they roost underneath external features such as roof slates, ridges, weatherboarding and cladding.

In the case of a building, tree or other feature not already known to be a bat roost, if bats are found during the course of work, contractors are legally obliged to stop work and seek advice. This should be from an appropriately experienced and licenced bat ecologist. Assuming good-quality bat survey work had been carried-out before the commencement of the project, and its recommendations followed, it would be unlikely that the discovery of bats during the course of the work would be considered to be "reckless" interference.

Additional Relevant Legislation and Policy.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) of 2006 requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty', which relates to section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW).

The aim of the biodiversity duty is to raise the profile of biodiversity in England and Wales, so that the conservation of biodiversity becomes properly embedded in all relevant policies and decisions made by public authorities.

Accordingly, certain more vulnerable habitats and species are the subject of National and/or Local Biodiversity Action Plans. Some bat species are covered by such plans. (<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx> provides more information)

Birds.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 gives protection to the nests of all wild birds whilst being built or in use. The bird nesting season is generally considered to be 1st March to 31st July.

A consortium of organisations, via their report on "The population status of birds in the UK: Birds of Conservation Concern 3 (2009)" have given the house sparrow "red" status on a scale of "red" to "green", where red is of the highest conservation concern.

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Survey and Findings.

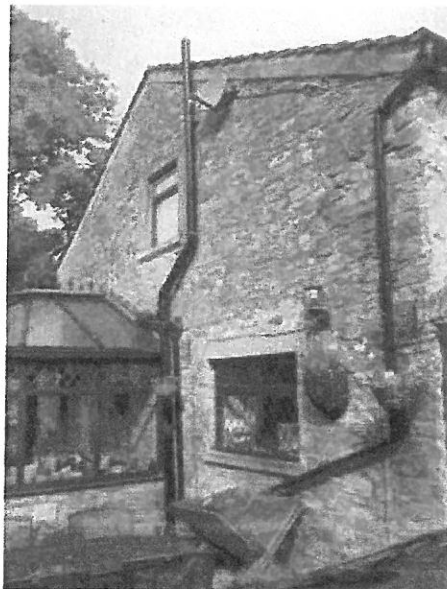
As far as possible, I surveyed the building inside and out with the aid of ladders, million candle-power torch and binoculars.

The loft is quite low and has been fully utilised for storage:

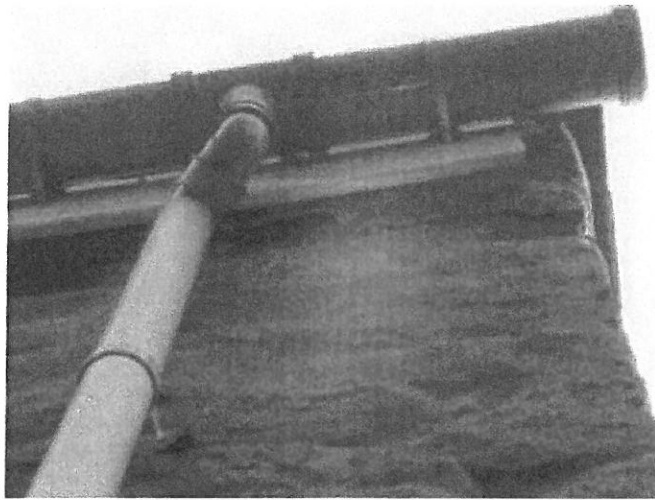


There was no evidence to suggest bats had been present.

Externally, the walls are well-pointed, and the gable end where the extension is proposed has a well-pointed verge and close-fitting roof tiles:



Along the front and rear elevations there are gaps behind the fascia at the tops of the walls:



In the past mesh has been used to block these, but it has become displaced and the client tells me house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) nest in some years. They were not nesting at the time of the survey.

Bats could also use these sorts of gaps to gain access to roost within the walls. There was no evidence in the form of droppings on external surfaces to suggest that bats were present at the time.

Conclusions.

N.b. In arriving at these conclusions I am using my judgement as a licenced bat worker of over 20 years standing, with a wide range of experience of bat behaviour and activity as both a volunteer and a consultant.

I do not think a survey at another time of year would have found evidence of roosting in the loft.

Roosting potential associated with the gable end is negligible, if it exists at all.

Bats could enter the front and rear walls via gaps at the eaves. So long as these gaps will be unaffected by the work there will be no loss of bat roosting habitat. The only risk therefore relates to potential disturbance at the time of the work.

Bats can move between the roosts known to them quite frequently and the absence of signs on this occasion does not confirm absence of roosting.

As bats could hibernate in the walls unseen, the work is best done outside winter.

Otherwise, there should be a precautionary bat activity survey undertaken just before work commences to the main structure of the existing house, to check as far as possible that bats are not present at the time.

Recommendations.

These recommendations should be read in conjunction with the conclusions above.

Aim to avoid starting work between the months of November to March inclusive.

Prior to work starting on the existing structure, have a bat activity survey undertaken within the 24 to 48 hours immediately beforehand to confirm as far as possible the absence of roosting.

Ensure existing gaps at the front and rear eaves remain unblocked. **If this is not possible** additional survey work will be needed over the warmer months to assess better whether a roost will be destroyed, and a detailed Method Statement will need to be written out-lining how compensatory bat roosting provision will be made (as bats could currently hibernate in winter undetected.) Similarly as house sparrows are recognised as being a species of conservation concern (2) sparrow terracing should be provided too. See Appendix 1.

Ensure contractors understand that if a bat or droppings that may have come from a bat are found work **must** stop immediately. They have a legal obligation to do this. As far as practicable the feature that was sheltering the bat/s should be replaced. Further advice **must** then be sought before work continues, either from myself another bat consultant, even if the bat has flown off.

References.

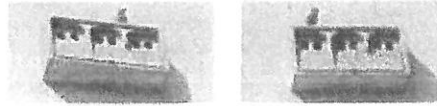
1. Hundt L. (2012). Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines - Second Edition. Bat Conservation Trust.
2. RSPB et al. "The population status of birds in the UK: Birds of Conservation Concern (2009)".

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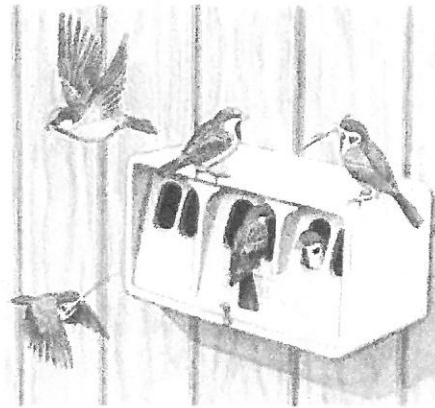
Appendix 1 – house sparrow nesting provision

Birds

Installation examples ▶



Sparrow Terrace 1SP



House Sparrow
(*Passer domesticus*):
These birds thrive in areas
cultivated by man, from
villages to large cities.

Tree Sparrow
(*Passer montanus*):
Also widely distributed
throughout towns and
villages as well as the
surrounding fields, farms,
woodlands and hedges, and
woodlands bordering rivers
and streams.

General details:
While nesting and raising
their young both types of
sparrow feed exclusively on
insects, especially arthropods
(insects with segmented
legs). Therefore, their
traditional role in keeping
down pests and maintaining
the balance of nature is a
very important one, though
not always recognised.
Recently the numbers of both
species have declined
substantially and in some
areas they are now rarely
seen. Long term studies have
confirmed this drastic
reduction in their numbers
across Europe. The causes
include the clearance and
monotonous nature of rural
zones, the sterility of many

chemicals in agriculture and
gardens. The survival of
these species is particularly
threatened by widespread
building renovation and
clearance which denies them
many nesting possibilities.

Occupants:
House and Tree Sparrows,
and in some instances other
birds which use nest boxes
such as Tits, Redstart and
Spotted Flycatcher.

Material:
SCHWEGLER wood concrete.

Siting:
On all types of houses in
built-up areas, and on
industrial and agricultural
buildings such as barns,
sheds and factories.

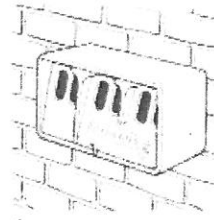
Installation height:
2 metres or more above
ground level.

Cleaning:
Cleaning is advised but is
not essential. By turning the
safety catch by 180° the
front panel can be removed.

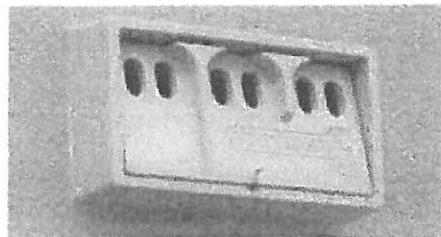
**Dimensions of brood
chambers:**
Each: height 16 x width
10.5 x depth approx. 15 cm.

External dimensions:
height 24.5 x width 43 x

Installation ▼



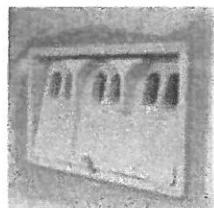
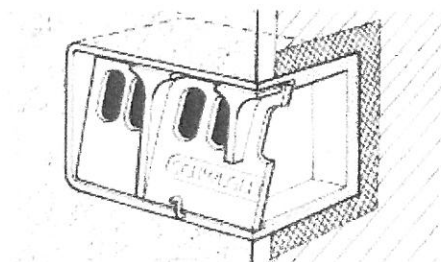
Installation Method 1
Simple surface installation using the plugs and screws
supplied



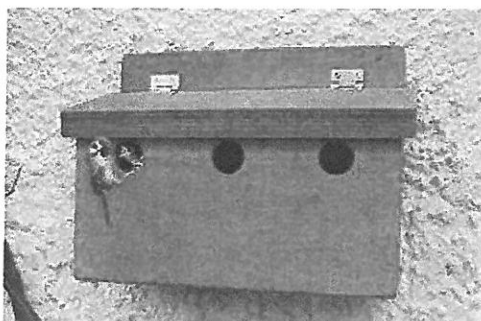
▲ Built into insulation of walls

Installation Method 2
Complete installation as a
nesting block within brick or
concrete walls

To avoid heat-conduction
please also use wall insula-
tion, or install at a suitable
depth in the wall



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example of wooden sparrow terracing

N.b. The suppliers of Schwegler bat boxes also supply bird boxes, along with C.J. Wildlife: http://www.birdfood.co.uk/products.php?area_id=2&nav_id=39

Bat and Bird Box Suppliers

Schwegler woodcrete:

NHBS: http://www.nhbs.com/bat_boxes_eqcat_421.html

Envisage Wildcare. 01793 724848

[http://www.wildcareshop.com/Products_Results.php?pageNum_WADAProducts=0&totalRows_WADAProducts=25&Search=1&ProductCategoryID\[\]=5](http://www.wildcareshop.com/Products_Results.php?pageNum_WADAProducts=0&totalRows_WADAProducts=25&Search=1&ProductCategoryID[]=5)

Jacobi Jayne: <http://www.livingwithbirds.com/nest-boxes-by-species/bats/>

Wooden:

KT nestboxes:

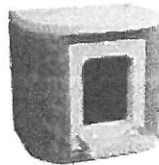
<http://ktnestboxes.co.uk/BatBoxes.aspx>

Birds

Installation examples



Built-In Multi-System (Main Cavity)



(Main cavity)

The Multi-System can be installed in all types of buildings, whether constructed of concrete, brick or timber. Examples include bridges, industrial buildings, houses, church towers and barns. To meet the needs of various bird species, different types of front panel are available for use with the Main Cavity. This Main Cavity is supplied without a front panel which should be ordered separately (please see below). At a later stage the front panel can be changed, if desired, to accommodate or encourage a different species of bird.

The Multi-System has been used very successfully in major urban conservation projects to assist species which have become very rare. For example, Kestrels are welcome in cities because they help to keep feral pigeons away, and are therefore encouraged to occupy historic buildings in an effort to keep them clean.

Siting:
Do not install below a height of 5 to 6 m. Take care to choose the side of the building that is not exposed to prevailing winds.

Installation depth:
This can be varied to meet individual requirements and the type of building construction. Ideally the Main Cavity is set 24 cm into the wall.

Density:
Since Jackdaws and Swifts breed in colonies, it is advisable to place a number of Multi-System Boxes in close proximity to one another. Kestrels, on the other hand, do not seek the company of their own species when nesting. However, they will happily nest among colonies of Jackdaws and Swifts. One or two Multi-System Boxes on a building or bridge will suffice for Kestrels, while a virtually unlimited number can be set up for the other two species.

Cleaning:
The front panels can be easily removed for access. However, cleaning is not essential, which is an important factor when installing on inaccessible places such as bridges, cooling towers, etc.

Material:
SCHWEGLER wood concrete

Dimensions:
width 44.5 cm x depth 41.5 cm x height 41.5 cm

The Main Cavity should be ordered with one of the front panels listed below.

Order no. 00 290/7
(for Main Cavity only)



Built into external wall



From section showing installation depth (Main cavity)

Front Panels for the Built-In Multi-System



• **Kestrel:**
Siting, installation and nest bedding: see Kestrels Box No. 28 on page 24. Includes perch.
Material:
SCHWEGLER wood concrete

with galvanised fittings and treated wooden perch.
Dimensions: width 24 cm x depth 5.5 cm x height 31.5 cm
Entrance hole: width 16 x height 21 cm

Order no. 00 290/2
(front panel only)

If Main Cavity is required, please also order item no. 00 290/7



• **Jackdaw:**
Siting and installation: see Jackdaw Box No. 28 on page 24.
Material and dimensions: see above

Diameter of entrance hole:
8 cm

Order no. 00 295/8
(front panel only)

If Main Cavity is required, please also order item no. 00 290/7



• **Common Swift:**
Siting and installation: see Swift Boxes on page 28. A dividing panel supplied is used to create two separate nesting chambers.

Nesting chamber: width 19 cm x depth 28 cm each
Material and dimensions: see above
Entrance hole: width 8 cm x height 3 cm

Order no. 00 297/6
(front panel only)

If Main Cavity is required, please also order item no. 00 290/7

Hole Size	Suitable for:
28mm	Tree Sparrow, Blue, Coal, Great & Crested Tit
32mm	Pied Flycatcher, Great Tit, Tree Sparrow and House Sparrow
45mm	Starling
70mm	Little Owl
130mm	Stockdove, Goosander, Jackdaw & Goldeneye
Open	Robin & Wren (if well hidden), Spotted Flycatcher, Pied & Grey Wagtail, Song Thrush & Blackbird