

Useful contacts

Arboricultural Advisory and Information Service (AAIS)

(A registered charity that carries out research and disseminates information to the arboricultural and forestry industries on behalf of the Government)

Alice Holt Lodge, Wrecclesham, Farnham, Surrey GU10 4LH

Tel: 01420 22022 Tree Helpline 09065 161147 (calls charged at £1.50 per minute).

Arboricultural Association

(A registered charity concerned with raising the standards of tree care in the UK)

Ullenwood Court, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucester GL53 9QS

Tel: 01242 522152 – Fax: 01242 577766

E-mail: admin@trees.org.uk

Website: www.trees.org.uk

Bat Conservation Trust

Unit 2, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG

Tel: 020 7627 2629 Bat helpline: 0845 1300 228 (local rate but does not include calls from a mobile)

Fax: 020 7627 2628

E-mail: enquiries@bats.org.uk

Website: www.bats.org.uk

Borough of Basingstoke and Deane (Contact Centre)

Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4AH

Tel: (01256) 844844

Fax: (01256) 845200

www.basingstoke.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Development (Biodiversity advice)

Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4AH

Telephone: (01256) 844844

Fax: (01256) 845200

E-mail: neighbourhood.dev@basingstoke.gov.uk

Website: www.basingstoke.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Development (Protected tree advice)

Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4AH

Telephone: (01256) 844844

Fax: (01256) 845200

E-mail: neighbourhood.dev@basingstoke.gov.uk

Website: www.basingstoke.gov.uk



*Basingstoke
and Deane*

Guide to Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Birds, bats and trees



This leaflet provides advice on your responsibilities under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 if you are planning to carry out tree work. These Acts and Regulations protect **all** wild birds, their nests (whether in use or being built) and eggs and other wild animals including bats and their roosts in or adjacent to trees. In simple terms, you should make sure that there are no wild birds nesting in or bats roosting in or adjacent to the tree(s) that you are proposing to work on. It is a criminal offence to recklessly or intentionally destroy any bird, its nest or its eggs or any bat or its roost (even if the roost is not occupied at the time). If your trees are protected (either subject to a tree preservation order or by virtue of growing in a conservation area), obtaining consent from the council will not override your responsibilities under the above wildlife acts.

With particular reference to bats, it is the tree owner's responsibility, along with the tree work contractor who will undertake the work, to observe the law and make sure that no offence is committed. If you consider that there is potential for the trees to be used by bats, we recommend that a bat survey of the trees is undertaken by a consultant. If bats or bat roosts are found to be present, a licence from Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs may be required for the work to be undertaken legally. This licence simply permits works which affect bats or their roosts which are otherwise unlawful. Natural England can provide details of suitable consultants to undertake bat surveys on 023 8028 6410

If bats or evidence of bats are found at anytime, all works must stop immediately and Natural England contacted for further advice on 023 8028 6410.

The Bat Conservation Trust produce a helpful leaflet entitled '*Bats and Trees – a guide to the management of trees*', copies of which can be obtained via email from enquiries@bats.org.uk or by telephoning 08451 300 228. The Arboricultural Association also publish a useful resource '*Guidance Note 1 - Trees and Bats*' (£12.50) that gives good advice, particularly on how to mitigate the impact of any tree work on potential roosts for example, by using soft felling techniques. Copies can be obtained through the Associations web site at www.trees.org.uk or by telephoning 01242 522152. Some basic advice on avoiding disturbance to bats is given below.

Timing of tree works:

- To reduce the chance of disturbing a bat roost, it is important to avoid the summer breeding season and winter hibernation months.
- Works to trees with potential for bats is best done from late August to early October when young bats are mobile and on the wing, female bats are unlikely to be pregnant and the hibernation season has not yet begun.
- March to April is also a suitable time, though consideration should also be given for nesting birds as these are also protected by law.
- Crown pruning and minor tree works can also be completed over the winter months. The removal of potential roost sites during this time should be avoided, as some bat species hibernate in trees.

Best practice methods:

- Keep tree work to a minimum retaining all potential roosts where possible.
- A precautionary inspection of the tree(s) by the tree work contractor looking for signs of bats should be carried out before starting work. This should include an inspection of all holes and niches using a torch and preferably an endoscope. If bats or signs of bats are found, no work should start and English Nature should be contacted for further advice.
- Where possible, avoid cross cutting in proximity to cavities or hollows.
- Limbs with internal fissures should be pruned carefully to maintain integrity of features as potential roost sites.
- Any sections felled containing cavities should be lowered carefully and left on the ground (preferably for 24 hours) with the openings clear, allowing anything inside an opportunity to escape.
- Split limbs that are under tension may need to be wedged open to prevent their closure when pressure is released, potentially trapping bats

If ivy covers areas of a tree's trunk or branches, there is roosting potential behind it. Dealing with ivy-covered trees depends on the amount of growth. If there is a thick mass of ivy growth, it may be practical to consider felling the tree on the basis that the thickness of the foliage will soften the fall and reduce the shock. This tree can then be inspected on the ground and if possible left for 24 hours, before section cutting. If the tree is only partially covered, pruning or sectioning may be more appropriate. If the works are not urgent, cutting the ivy at its base and completing the work when the ivy is dead will reduce the bat roosting potential. Where stems of ivy create a dense mass against the trunk, there will always be roosting potential.