

Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team on **08081 434 434**

# Bat tree surveys & works

Various | 2021

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway for Britain. In response to the covid-19 virus we have worked hard to ensure that our working practices are fully aligned with the Site Operating Procedures produced by the Construction Leadership Council. These procedures have been endorsed by Public Health England. We will be keeping our local website <https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area> up to date with information on our works, and the measures we have in place to maintain the safety of the community and our workforce.

## What are we doing?

In our previous newsletter we informed you that we have built a number of new habitat sites along the HS2 route which will support a wide range of species. This edition of our newsletter provides further detail of bat mitigation works. Our habitat and planting sites have been established for several protected species such as great crested newts and reptiles. These sites include the following key features:

- Wildlife ponds with aquatic planting
- Hibernaculas – hibernation sites for amphibians and reptiles, these are also hugely beneficial for a range of other species.
- Bat boxes and new planting of bat flight lines
- Reptile basking banks
- Seeding of grassland

about the bat roosting activities in your area. To understand this, we need to complete bat surveys. The following information explains how we do this and what you may see happening locally.

## Bat tree surveys

We are continuing our established programme of bat surveys and we will be undertaking works to remove the required trees along the line of route in the coming months based upon the survey data. Ahead of any tree felling works we will undertake a series of surveys in accordance with the ecological seasonal calendar. These surveys, with survey identifiers are:



### Bat tree surveys

These surveys are completed by one or more of these:

#### Ground Surveys

#### Tree climb surveys

#### Emergence surveys

**The outcomes from these will provide information to classify the tree in the Potential Roost Feature survey**

#### Mitigation measures

Trees that have been identified as having a high to medium bat roost classification and have sufficient ecology survey data will be identified within a licence application to Natural England for a Bat Licence.

As part of this mitigation work, we need to find out more information

## Bat tree surveys

### Ground Survey:

Trees are checked initially by an ecologist from ground level for a variety of features, such as holes, crevices, broken branches, loose bark and dark stains around the entrance to a hole. Based on the features observed each tree will be assigned a category ranging from high to low.

### Tree climb surveys:

For trees identified to contain Potential Roost Features (PRF) which cannot be reached from the ground ecologist's complete checks by climbing trees. We will use equipment such as endoscopes (small flexible cameras) which are put into crevices and holes to check for bats or evidence of bats.

### Emergence surveys:

Undertaken at dawn and dusk for trees with evidence of bats or potential for bats identified during earlier surveys. This may include trees that are unsafe to climb.

### Potential Roost Features (PRF)

These surveys provide the information to classify a tree according to its potential to support roosting bats. Trees that are identified as having low / negligible PRF can then generally be felled (subject to other ecological and arboricultural checks).

Trees that are identified as having moderate or high PRF require further assessment to determine whether a licence from Natural England is required or whether the trees can be felled without a licence, should the surveys determine that bats are not roosting in the PRFs.

Completion of an isolated survey on a tree does not necessarily lead to same-day or next-day felling. In some scenarios, trees cannot be considered in isolation. A larger number of trees (grouped) may need to have surveys completed before the overall impact on bats can be assessed, and decision made to fell a cluster of trees (such as a woodland).

### Mitigation measures

Where surveys and assessments have identified that there is likely to be an impact on roosting bats then we will apply for a bat licence to Natural England. Once the licence has been granted the trees in the licence area will have a pre fell-tree inspection usually via a tree climb. When the further inspection is complete, and the tree is found to be free of any bats the PRF, such as a tree limb containing a hole, will be removed before the rest of the tree is felled. Any bats found during the inspections will be safely relocated to a pre-installed bat box.

Mitigation for the effects on bats is identified in the approved licence area. This can include installation of bat boxes on nearby retained trees to provide roost habitat and creation of habitat for bat foraging and commuting.

# Keeping you informed

We are committed to keeping you informed about work on HS2. This includes ensuring you know what to expect and when to expect it, as well as how we can help.

## Residents' Charter and Commissioner

The Residents' Charter is our promise to communicate as clearly as we possibly can with people who live along or near the HS2 route.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-residents-charter](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-residents-charter)

We also have an independent Residents' Commissioner whose job is to make sure we keep to the promises we make in the Charter and to keep it under constant review. Find reports at:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner)

You can contact the Commissioner at: [residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk](mailto:residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk)

## Construction Commissioner

The Construction Commissioner's role is to mediate and monitor the way in which HS2 Ltd manages and responds to construction complaints. You can contact the Construction Commissioner by emailing: [complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk](mailto:complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk)

## Property and compensation

You can find out all about HS2 and properties along the line of route by visiting:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property)

Find out if you're eligible for compensation at:

[www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2](http://www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2)

## Holding us to account

If you are unhappy for any reason you can make a complaint by contacting our HS2 Helpdesk team. For more details on our complaints process, please visit our website:

[www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain](http://www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain)

## Contact Us

Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team all day, every day of the year on:

 Freephone **08081 434 434**

 Minicom **08081 456 472**

 Email **[HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk)**

Write to:

**FREEPOST**

**HS2 Community Engagement**

Website **[www.hs2.org.uk](http://www.hs2.org.uk)**

To keep up to date with what is happening in your local area, visit: **[www.HS2inyourarea.co.uk](http://www.HS2inyourarea.co.uk)**

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