

# Environmental Standard Operating Procedure 14

## Bat Mitigation for Tree Removal Works

Mature trees with scars, deadwood and ivy are potential roost sites for bats. All British bats protected under European and national legislation. Working practices aim to comply with the legislation which protects all bats against disturbance, killing and injury and also protects bat roost sites even when unoccupied.

### Aim

To avoid killing and injury to bats and damage and destruction of roosts during tree removal or trimming.

### Environmental Risk

Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Killing and injury of bats during active summer & winter hibernation periods	High	Retain trees with roost potential. Standard procedure if bats found in felled tree.
Destruction or damage to summer and winter roost sites	High	Retain trees with roost potential. Replace roosts if roost found in felled tree.



### Delivery Method

- **Rangers / Operations Technicians / Environment Officers** – Assess the trees for age and potential bat features. The following features are likely to attract bats: old trees, old woodpecker/rot holes, splits, loose bark, snags, dead/dying wood, epicormic growth and dense ivy cover – fill in Tree Work Assessment Form
- If in doubt of the potential of a tree to be a roost site, seek advice from an Environment Officer (EO)
- If trees are identified as having potential, an EO should be called to arrange further survey
- Mark trees as identified in the Standard Procedures below
- Carry out felling as set out in Appendix 2 of the BA 'River Corridor and Scrub Management Guidance'
- Where trees with potential are felled, follow mitigation advised by licensed bat worker

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### Standard Procedure

- Appendix 2 of the BA 'River Corridor and Scrub Management Guidance' outlines the protocol for determining the importance of individual trees for bats and should be referred to for more detail
- Trees marked with a white 'X' may be felled at any time but avoiding breeding birds (April-August).
- Trees marked with a red 'R' may require further detailed inspection for bats. If no signs of bat usage, felling may occur in October/November following good practice guidelines in Appendix 2.
- Trees marked with two red 'R's should be retained, or trimmed under supervision of a licensed bat worker, but if it is necessary to remove the tree a European Protected Species (EPS) licence will be required
- Training should be provided to those carrying out tree work

### What to do if bats are found

- If bats or signs of bats are found at any stage during felling and disposal of the tree, the work should stop and a licensed bat worker/EO should be contacted immediately.

### Consultation Required

- Natural England to be informed of maternity or hibernation roosts.

### Further Information

- <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/species/europeanprotectedspecies.aspx>
- Bat Conservation Trust [www.bats.org.uk](http://www.bats.org.uk)
- Broads Authority 'River Corridor and Scrub Management Guidance'

### Bat Mitigation for Tree Works – Timeline

Stage	Task / <i>Responsible Persons</i>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	Identify individual trees / tree blocks for felling next winter <i>Rangers &amp; Maintenance Team</i>												
2	Assess trees for bat potential. Fill out survey form for records. If no bat potential - Mark tree with white 'X' <i>Suitably Trained Rangers, Operations Technicians &amp; Environment Officers</i>												
3	Report trees assessed as having bat potential to Environment Officer. <i>Rangers &amp; Maintenance Team</i>												
4	Arrange further survey of trees with bat potential by licensed bat worker. <i>Environment Officer</i>												
5	Trees with bat potential but no signs of usage (following further survey by licensed bat worker) - Mark with red 'R' <i>Rangers, Operations Technicians, Environment Officers</i>												
6	Trees with bat potential and confirmed usage by bats (following further survey by licensed bat worker) - Mark with double red 'RR' <i>Rangers, Operations Technicians, Environment Officers</i>												
7	Arrange for : Appropriate mitigation programme (Trees marked 'R') or EPS License for works if required (Trees marked 'RR'). <i>Environment Officer taking advice from Licensed Bat Worker.</i>												
<b>FELLING</b>													
Responsible Persons : <i>Rangers, Operations Technicians, Contractors</i>													
8	Trees marked with white 'X' - subject to absence of breeding birds or other protected species.												
9	Trees marked with single red 'R' - subject to mitigation advised by licensed bat worker.												
10	Trees marked with double red 'RR' - subject to EPS License requirements												