

Bat Emergence Survey Report

Brick Agricultural Building at

Thistledown Cottage

Harbolets Lane

West Chiltington

West Sussex

RH20 2LG



2nd June 2026

Sylvatica Ecology Ltd

Company Registration Number: 07705793

<https://se-planning.com>

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Limitations and Liabilities

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It should be borne in mind that the behaviour of animals can be unpredictable and may not conform to standard patterns recorded in scientific literature. Therefore, this report cannot predict with absolute certainty that animal species will occur in apparently suitable locations or habitats, or that they will not occur in locations or habitats that appear unsuitable.

In order to minimise the likelihood of adverse effects on protected animal species over time, it is accepted good practice, in accordance with Natural England (NE) (formerly English Nature) guidance for ecological surveys to be repeated should works be deferred for over 12 months from the date of initial survey.

It is the duty of the landowner, developer and operations managers to act responsibly and to comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to, or during works.

The recommendations and information contained within this report are based on the information provided on the development works prior to the surveys being carried out. Should the development proposals change then the findings and recommendations contained within would potentially require revision.

The findings within this report do not constitute legal advice. Should this be required, then a suitably qualified professional practitioner should be contacted.

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1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 A preliminary bat roost assessment carried out in 2022 (Syntegra 2022) assessed the brick agricultural building at Thistledown Cottage as having Moderate bat roost potential, with small numbers of bat droppings recorded within the building. An updated roost assessment and two bat evening emergence surveys were therefore carried out in May 2026 in accordance with BCT Good Practice Guidelines (BCT 2023a). Both surveys were conducted in optimal weather conditions (clear and dry, 22–26°C, light westerly/south-westerly winds).
- 1.2 The brick agricultural building is of rendered brick construction with a pitched slate-tiled roof. The brickwork is single-skin with no cavity, pointing in good condition and no gaps or cracks. Ridge tiles are in good condition, with the exception of ventilated ridge tiles at the south-eastern end of the roof which incorporate air vents facing south-west and north-east, representing potential bat ingress points. Internally, the roof void is divided into two sections accessed via hatches; no bat droppings, staining or other evidence of bat use were recorded during the updated inspection.
- 1.3 **Survey 1 (6 May 2026):** Four bat species were recorded. Common pipistrelle foraging was recorded to the north of the building throughout the survey, with soprano pipistrelle passes also recorded. Single calls of brown long-eared bat (and Daubenton's bat were also recorded to the west. No bats were observed emerging from the building.
- 1.4 **Survey 2 (28 May 2026):** Activity was similar but at a reduced level. Common pipistrelle foraging was recorded to the north; three soprano pipistrelle were observed commuting west to east over the southern end of the building; a serotine commuting pass was recorded over the building; and a single brown long-eared bat call was recorded. No bats were observed emerging from the building.
- 1.5 No bats were observed emerging from the brick agricultural building on either survey date, and no internal evidence of current bat use was recorded during the updated inspection. Although the 2022 survey found evidence of bat use, the current surveys indicate that bats are no longer using this building as a roost. The roost category has therefore been downgraded to 'no longer in use'. A European Protected Species Mitigation Licence from Natural England is not required.
- 1.6 In recognition of the building's previous bat roost history, a precautionary method of works is recommended for demolition. Key requirements include:
 - *Pre-commencement inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately before works begin to confirm the absence of roosting bats, including checks of all roof voids, cavities and structural joinery;*
 - *Soft strip to proceed incrementally by hand tool from exterior to interior and top to bottom, with roof coverings lifted individually or in small sections;*

- *No mechanical plant to be used for structural removal until all relevant elements have been confirmed clear by the supervising ecologist in writing;*
- *Supervising ecologist to be present during initial roof covering removal and any works in areas of identified roost potential;*
- *If bats are discovered during works, all work in the vicinity must cease immediately and Natural England's wildlife licensing helpline (0300 060 3900) contacted.*

1.7 Any external lighting associated with the development must conform to BCT Guidance Note GN 08/23 (BCT 2023b) to protect the foraging and commuting bat community recorded on site. Requirements include: warm white spectrum (<2700 K), no UV component, LED full cut-off luminaires with no upward tilt, minimised column heights, and security lighting on motion sensors with short timers (<1 minute). Light spill into adjacent hedgerow and woodland habitat must be avoided.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aims and Objectives of this Study

- 2.1 This report presents the findings of two bat evening emergence surveys carried out on the brick agricultural building at located at Thistledown Cottage, Harbolets Road, West Chilton, RH20 2LG, NGR: TQ 10013 21022. A preliminary bat roost assessment (Syntegra 2022) was previously conducted which assessed this building as having a moderate value for roosting bats, with small numbers of bat droppings present within this building. Therefore, an updated roost assessment was carried out and two emergence surveys conducted.

- 2.2 **Figure 1: Site Location in Wider Landscape (Red Line Area Surveyed)**



Legal Status of Bats

- 2.3 The potential presence of bat roosts within a proposed development site has to be considered as all eighteen of the UK's bat species are protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended). The WCA states that '*a person is guilty of an offence if intentionally or recklessly they disturb [a bat] while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or he obstructs access to any structure or place which [a bat] uses for shelter or protection*'.
- 2.4 Bats are also protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Bats are listed as European protected species under which it is an offence if;

- *a person deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species;*
- *deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species;*
- *damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.*

2.5 Disturbances of animals include in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to;

- *survive, breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young;*
- *in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or*
- *to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.*

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The survey work used the guidance detailed within Bat Surveys Guidelines for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines (BCT 2023a) and the Interim Guidance Note on Surveys and Night Vision Equipment (BCT 2022) as the basis to the survey methodology.

Lead Surveyor

3.2 The survey work and reporting has been led by Richard Law BSc MRes CEnv MCIEEM FLS. Richard has been undertaking ecological survey work within the last 20 years on many different locations throughout the United Kingdom, for a variety of protected species, including bats (2025-85394-CL18-BAT), reptiles, amphibians including great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (2025-85909-SCI-CL08) and terrestrial mammals including dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius* (2026-88947-CL10a-DOR) and birds including barn owl *Tyto alba* licence (2026-88948-CL29-OWL). Richard is also qualified in track and sign and trailing *via* an international system of assessment (www.trackercertification.com).

Equipment Used Bat Roost Potential Survey

3.3 A high-power torch (1 million candle power) was utilised to illuminate any external areas of interest, with a less intrusive head torch used for assessing internal spaces. Crevices were checked using a PCE300 Endoscope and Nikon Monarch binoculars were used to assist in ground level inspection of any higher-level features.

Equipment Used Emergence Surveys

3.4 The night vision observation equipment gave a view of the features of the building surveyed that was not possible with the naked eye, enabling effective observation to continue in the dark. The cameras were installed on tripods, which enabled the surveyor to work normally without having to hold the

camera steady. The Sionyx Aurora IR camera provide a wide angled view which is also recorded and fixed throughout the survey and the Pixfra camera provided a more narrow focused field of view. .

3.5 **Figure 2: Surveyor and Camera Positions**



Survey Type

- 3.6 Emergence survey is undertaken to observe bats emerging from roost. In addition to observation, night vision and thermal imaging equipment was used to ensure that features can be effectively viewed in the dark and that any footage can be reviewed following the survey.

Sight Lines

- 3.7 The eastern aspect of the barn building was directly adjacent to the main road, which restricted access to that site for surveyors. However, this aspect was also heavily covered by the adjacent tree and hedge vegetation, which also limited any flight-lines to this face of the building. Therefore, this restriction to sight lines is not considered to have affected the overall conclusions to the survey findings. Additionally, a remote thermal camera was installed to the south east of the building to capture any bat flight/activity heading to this part of the building.

4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 This section provides an account of the results from the surveys carried out and from the records search. These findings will inform any further recommendations outlined within this report.

Survey Meta Data

- 4.2 ***Table 1: Timings and Weather Conditions***

Date	Sunset/ Sunrise	Survey Start and End	Temp	Rain	Wind Speed (Beaufort Scale) and direction
6 th May 2026	20:31	20:05 to 22:05	22°	Clear and Dry	Westerly (1)
28 th May 2026	21:02	20:40 to 22:40	26°C	Clear and Dry	Southwest (2)

- 4.3 Two bat emergence surveys were carried out. The temperate and weather conditions for both of these surveys can be considered as within the optimal range of conditions for bats surveys to be conducted.

Bat Roost Potential Survey

- 4.4 The building was of brick construction with white rendering finish on the southwestern face. The brickwork was single layered and didn't exhibit any cavity within the wall, with the cement pointing in good condition. The bricks were also in good condition, with no gaps or cracks present within the brickwork. The roof was pitched and tiled with slate tiles. These tiles were relatively flat, with limited gaps present. At the gable ends, there were also not any gaps present at the apex joining the brickwork to the eaves of the roof. The ridge tiles were also in good condition, with not any disenable gaps at the joins of the ridge tiles. At the southeastern end of the roof, some of the ridge tiles had a horizontal air vent present, with openings to the southwest and northeast. These ridge tiles provided potential ingress points for any bats.
- 4.5 Internally, the building had a ground floor utility and storage area, with a home gym present at the southern section. The roof void was divided into two distinct sections, with access hatches present for each. No evidence of bats was observed on the ground floor areas following the update check. The roof voids were accessed, and the flooring did not any discernible boarding, but there was insulation material present. The ridges of the roof of all sections were covered in old and dusty cobwebbing, and the underside of the roof tiles was visible with no roof lining present. No evidence of bats was observed within the building.

Bat Survey Results

4.6 **Table 2: 6th May 2026 Emergence Survey 1**

Time	Species	Passes	Activity and Location
20:34	S.pip	1	Louds calls, likely from a nearby local emergence.
20:52	C.pip	1	Brief pass to the north.
21:00	C.pip	1	Foraging to the north.
21:07	S.pip	3	Foraging and commuting pass from the west to the east.
21:23 to 21:46	C.pip	9	Foraging to the north.
21:47	S.pip	1	Brief call to the west. Heard not seen.
21:57	BLE	1	Brief call to the west. Heard not seen
22:06	Myo Daub	1	Brief call to the west. Heard not seen

S.pip = Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)

C.pip = Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

BLE = Brown Long Eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

Myo Daub = Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)

4.7 Four bat species were recorded and observed, during the survey. The first bat recorded was soprano pipistrelle with a brief pass from the south. This was relatively early on in the survey and was potentially an emergence from a local location. Common pipistrelle passes were also observed and recorded, notably to the north with soprano pipistrelle activity also recorded. A single brown long eared and a single Daubenton's bat was also recorded, respectively. No bat emergences from the building were observed.

4.8 **Table 3: 28th May 2026 Emergence Survey 2**

Time	Species	Passes	Activity and Location
21:23	C.pip	1	Foraging to the north.
21:35	C.pip	2	Observed commuting and foraging to the north.
21:44	Ser	1	Commuting pass from the south, over the building heading off to the west.
21:47	S.pip	1	Three bats seen commuting from the west, over the southern end of the building and then heading off to the east.
22:10	BLE	1	Brief call. Heard not seen

C.pip = Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

S.pip = Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)

Ser = Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)

BLE = Brown Long Eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

- 4.9 The bat activity was similar to the previous survey, but with a slightly diminished level. Common pipistrelle were observed and recorded to the north, with a commuting pass of serotine also observed and recorded. Three soprano pipistrelle were observed and recorded flying from the west, over the southern aspect of the building, then heading off to the east. A single brief call of brown long eared bat was also recorded, with this bat not directly observed. No bats were observed emerging from the building.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 No bats were observed emerging from the brick agricultural building at and no evidence of bats was observed within this building. previous ecological survey work in 2022 had found evidence of bats within this building, but it is now likely that bats are no longer using his building and the category of a roost can now be downgraded to no longer in use.

Precautionary Method of Works

- 5.2 Due to the previous, now downgraded, usage of this building by bats – a precautionary method of works is recommended regarding the demolition of this structure.
- 5.3 Prior to commencing any soft strip or demolition works, the principal contractor must ensure that:
- *All site operatives have been briefed on this method statement, the relevant bat species legislation and what to do if bats or evidence of bats are found;*
 - *A copy of this method of work is held on site at all times;*
 - *The contact details of the supervising ecologist are prominently displayed in the site welfare facilities and are known to the site foreman;*
 - *A named operative is designated as the ecology liaison contact for the duration of the works.*
- 5.4 Immediately before soft strip or structural demolition works commence in each work area, the supervising ecologist must carry out a pre-commencement inspection of the structure to confirm the absence of roosting bats. The inspection should include:
- *A visual check of all accessible roof voids, wall cavities, ceiling voids and structural joinery for bat droppings, staining, feeding remains, dead bats or live bats;*
 - *Use of a torch to illuminate dark recesses and voids not otherwise visible;*
 - *Where access is available and safe, a close inspection of tile battens, fascias, soffits, ridge features and any loose boarding for evidence of bat use.*
- 5.5 The results of the pre-commencement inspection must be recorded and retained by the ecologist. If no evidence of bat use is found, works may proceed under the conditions set out in this method statement. If evidence of bat use is found, works must stop.
- 5.6 Soft strip and demolition must proceed in a controlled, incremental manner to allow any bats sheltering opportunistically within the structure to leave of their own accord. The following working procedures apply:
- *Work must progress from the exterior of the building inward, and from the top of the structure downward, so that roof coverings are removed before wall or floor elements;*

- *Roof tiles, slates or sheets must be lifted individually or in small sections, working progressively across the roof rather than stripping large areas simultaneously;*
 - *Ceiling boards, internal linings, soffit boards and fascias must be carefully prised away from the structural frame rather than being struck, smashed or rapidly ripped down;*
 - *Structural timbers, particularly ridge beams, purlins, rafters and wall plates, must be inspected visually for roosting bats before cutting or removal;*
 - *At the start of each working day, a visual check of exposed structural elements must be made before commencing work;*
 - *Any enclosed void that is revealed during works must be opened carefully and checked before further work proceeds in that area.*
- 5.7 The use of mechanical plant (including excavators, demolition arms and grab attachments) for the removal of roof structures, wall structures, internal linings or built-in joinery is not permitted under this method statement. Such works must proceed by hand tool only, unless the supervising ecologist has confirmed in writing that all relevant elements have been checked and are clear of bats.
- 5.8 Mechanical plant may be used for the removal of rubble and debris once structural elements have been manually stripped and confirmed clear.
- 5.9 The supervising ecologist must be present on site during the following activities:
- *The initial removal of roof coverings;*
 - *The removal of any ceiling voids, roof space linings or built-in joinery identified as having roost potential;*
 - *Any works identified in the pre-commencement inspection as requiring ecological oversight.*
- 5.10 The level of ecological supervision required for other phases of works will be agreed between the supervising ecologist and the principal contractor in advance, taking into account the findings of the pre-commencement inspection and the roost potential of the elements being stripped.
- 5.11 If a bat is found at any point during works, all work in the immediate vicinity must cease immediately. The following procedure must be followed:
- *The site foreman and supervising ecologist must be notified without delay;*
 - *The bat must not be handled, disturbed further, or moved by any person who does not hold a Natural England bat mitigation licence;*
 - *If the bat is injured, Natural England must be notified and the bat must be passed to a licensed bat carer as soon as practicable. Natural England's wildlife licensing helpline: 0300 060 3900;*
 - *The supervising ecologist will prepare a written record of the incident for retention by the contractor and, where required, for submission to Natural England.*

- 5.12 If a roost/ bat is discovered all works must cease and a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence from Natural England obtained before works can resume.

Bats and Lighting

- 5.13 To account for the foraging activity of bat species within the local area, any lighting installed at the property will conform to the specifications which are outlined within BCT Guidance Note (2023b). This will reduce any light pollution would have on nocturnal activity of fauna, namely bat species, some of which are extremely sensitive to light pollution. Light spill into adjacent habitats will be reduced and avoided by the following:

- *All luminaries will lack UV elements; metal halide and fluorescent sources will be avoided,*
- *A warm white light spectrum on external lighting will be adopted (<2700kelvin) to reduce the blue light component,*
- *LED luminaries will be used where a sharp cut off is required to avoid light spill into adjacent habitat,*
- *External luminaries will feature wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats,*
- *Column heights of external lighting will be limited,*
- *Luminaries will be mounted on the horizontal plane, with no upwards tilt,*
- *Security lighting will be set on motion sensors and on short timers (<1min).*

6.0 REFERENCES

BCT (2022) Interim Guidance: Use of night vision aids for bat emergence surveys and further comment on dawn surveys

BCT (2023a) Bat Survey Guidelines for Professional Ecologist 4th Edition – Good Practice Guidelines

BCT (2023b) Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK – Bats and the Built Environment Series.

English Nature (2004) Bat Mitigation Guidelines IN13.6

HMSO (1981) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) HMSO, London.

HMSO (2017). The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c). (As amended) Regulations 2017

Mitchell-Jones, T & McLeish, A.P (2004) Bat Workers Manual, Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Russ, J (2021) Bat Calls of Britain and Europe – A Guide to Species Identification. Pelagic Publishing

Syntegra (2022) Preliminary Roost Assessment of brick agricultural building at, Thistledown Barn, Harbolets Road, West Chilton, RH20 2LG.

7.0 CAMERA VIEWS AND PHOTOS OF BUILDING

Plate 1: IR 1 - Start View (Surveyor 1)



Plate 2: IR 1- End View



Plate 3: IR 2- Start View (Surveyor 2)



Plate 4: IR 2 - End View



Plate 5: Thermal 1 – View

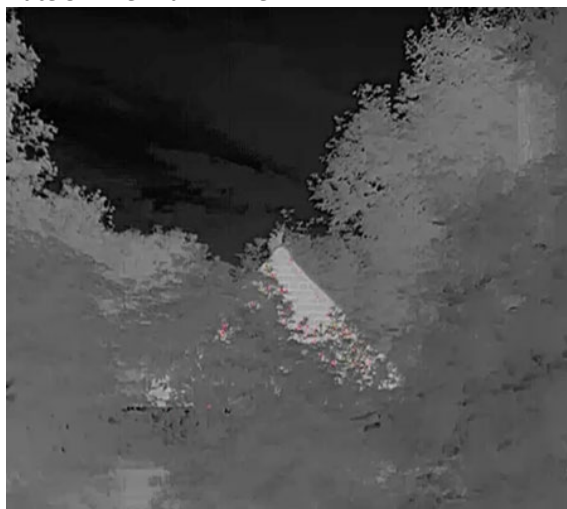


Plate 6: Ceiling of Ground Floor

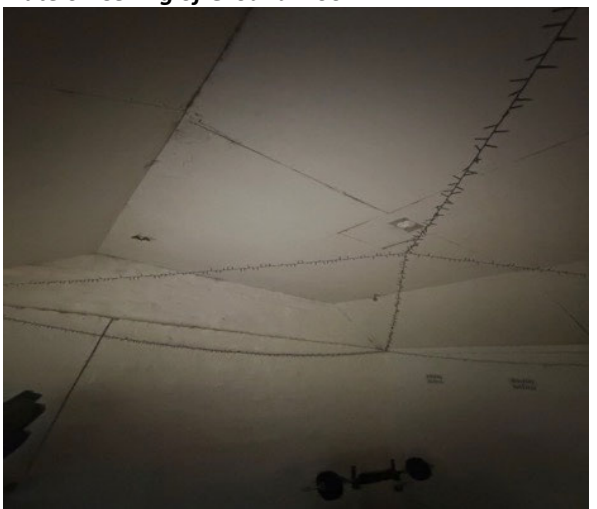


Plate 7: Middle Roof Void Section



Plate 8: Northern Roof Void Section



Plate 9: Northern End



Plate 10: Western Face with Ridge Tile Gaps



Plate 11: Southern End



Plate 12: Southern Roof VOID



8.0 SUMMARY MAP OF BAT ACTIVITY

