Ecology and Biodiversity: Protecting and Preserving

Samantha Davenport
Senior Environmental Specialist for Urban Habitats
What we will cover

• Legal and policy framework for biodiversity conservation

• How to apply this at a local level

• Further sources of information
What is biodiversity

Short hand for biological diversity – the variety of life on Earth.

It includes plants, animals, even invisible micro-organisms and bacteria which, together, interact in complex ways with the inanimate environment to create living ecosystems.
Provisions for protecting and enhancing our most important biodiversity in England

**Legislation**
- International conventions
- European Directives
- Domestic legislation
- Legislative duties for biodiversity

**Policy Protection**
- National Planning Policy Framework (and associated Planning Guidance)
- Local Authority Local Plans

**Government Strategies**
- Natural Environment White Paper
- National Biodiversity Strategy
- National Pollinator Strategy
Biodiversity habitats with duties in legislation and policy regarding their protection and enhancement

- European wildlife sites (both terrestrial and marine)
- Ramsar sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Nature Reserves
- Irreplaceable habitats
- Local Wildlife Sites & Regionally Important Geological Sites
- Priority habitats
- Habitat corridors
- Wider biodiversity habitats
Biodiversity species with duties in legislation and policy regarding their protection and enhancement

- European protected species
- Nationally protected species
- Priority species
- Wider biodiversity species
Biodiversity underpins our life support system

It is estimated that the cost to the world of not preserving biodiversity and the ecosystems it supports could be between £1.2 and £2.8 trillion a year*.

*The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)
Delivering for biodiversity
1 – Understand the local landscape
Delivering for biodiversity
2. Understand your place - evidence & monitoring
Making contracts work for wildlife: how to encourage biodiversity in urban parks

Paradise Preserved
An introduction to the assessment, evaluation, conservation and management of historic cemeteries

Natural England Technical Information Note TIN043

Bats in Churches: a management guide

This leaflet is to help those who look after church buildings that are used by bats to understand their legal obligations. It will be of help to architects, surveyors, local authority conservation officers, ecologists and Natural England and English Heritage staff and volunteers.

This publication elaborates the previous English Heritage and English Nature document Bats in Churches and brings readers up to date with the current legal protection for both bats and buildings. Anecdotal accounts suggest that bats coexist happily inside the Second World War air-raid shelters, possibly at a level of use of other habitats. This means that church buildings are becoming increasingly important as roost sites. This can, therefore, cause tension where local communities and ecologists are both seeking to use church buildings for a wider range of community/social events as well as worship.

Bats and church buildings have a long association and many of the 15,500 known churches in England are used by bats in some way. Although bats originally roosted in caves and crevices, they now take advantage of the built environment as an essential part of their daily lives. The bats are hidden away from humans and are particularly well suited to church buildings, which are often isolated and are often small and isolated buildings located in an urban environment. The bats are often found in the ceiling spaces of church buildings, while the walls, floors, and ceilings are often used for roosting. The bats are often found in the ceiling spaces of church buildings, while the walls, floors, and ceilings are often used for roosting.

Bats are important because they are a keystone species that helps to control the population of insects and other pests. They are also important because they are a source of food for many other animals, including birds, small mammals, and reptiles.

The importance of bats to bats

Churches play an important role in helping to protect our native bats. A survey by the Bat Conservation Trust estimated that there are 6,400 churches and chapels in England that may be occupied by bats. Eight species are known to use churches for roosting, including some of our least common species, such as Natterer’s bat, the common pipistrelle and greater horseshoe bat. In a changing landscape, churches can represent one of the few remaining precious resources for bats. The use of bats can vary from church to church, and can range from occasional visits to regular roosting sites.

About bats

There are 17 species of bat in England. Bats are protected because many species, nationally and internationally, are rare or even extinct.

Bees’ Needs: food and a home

Pollinator Strategy 6 Simple Actions Case Studies Information Sheets PAW
In summary

“Biodiversity is the totality of all inherited variation in the life forms of Earth, of which we are one species. We study and save it to our great benefit. We ignore and degrade it to our great peril.”

— E.O. Wilson

Any questions?