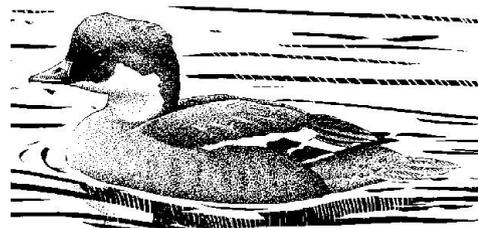


Bat Survey to
56 Greenhill Bank Road
New Mill
HD9 1ER

26th August 2025



Wildlife Photographer | Bat ecologist



1. Summary

- 1.1 A bat scoping and activity survey has been carried out to 56 Greenhill Bank Road, New Mill to determine if there are features that have any potential to be used by roosting bats and whether bats are present or likely to be present. The survey is required for the planning application process and was undertaken towards the end of the optimal time for bat occupancy but aimed to establish the *presence or absence* of bats in the building. The application seeks demolition of existing and erection of a new build.
- 1.2 The building is a 1960s style house with blue slate roof and rendered walls. The box eaves are sealed by the render and there are no decorative wooden features such as fascia boards. The dry verges are in good condition with no failed mortar, and the roof is sound and without missing or slipped tiles, but there are some sections of failed ridge mortar on the west side of the roof. The house offers a small number of potential roosting features but is located in an area that is potentially very good for bats with excellent foraging habitat close by. Given the very low roost potential, a single evening emergence survey was carried out to confirm the presence or absence of bats.
- 1.3 The bat activity survey was carried out on the same evening as the scoping survey by two very experienced surveyors using heterodyne and RTE detectors. Sunset was 20:12 and the first bat was noted 25 minutes after sunset and flew into the site from the north following the tree line to the rear of the dwelling where it foraged briefly before continuing north. A second bat, possibly the same individual, was noted 36 minutes after sunset following the same flight pattern then no further bats were noted until some 50 minutes after sunset. All bats foraged along the rear of the property where the steep vegetated bank creates a linear feature. The emergence pattern suggests bats are roosting close by in a dwelling on Greenhill Bank, but no bats were observed emerging from the survey site.
- 1.4 The building offers limited potential roosting features and is assessed as being of very low, almost negligible value to bats and it is not considered essential to species survival. Bats are not using the building at present, and it is unlikely that they have used this building, but they are present very close by. Inclusion of permanent roosting features in the proposed new dwelling will increase the site's appeal to bats.
- 1.4 Badgers were present on site and heard foraging in undergrowth at the rear of the house and one entered the site along the driveway from Greenhill Bank Road. Care must be taken to ensure badger setts are not damaged during ground clearance.
- 1.5 The demolition of this building is unlikely to harm bats and there will be no loss of roosting sites or fragmentation of habitat. No further survey effort is required.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 A bat scoping survey and emergence survey has been undertaken to 56 Greenhill Bank Road, New Mill, HD9 1ER (NGR SE160084) in accordance with the Planning Authority's request, to determine whether bats are using the property as a roost site. The site was also checked for the presence of nesting birds though none were noted but badgers were noted passing through the site,
- 2.2 The current proposal seeks to demolish the existing house and erect a new dwelling.
- 2.3 The survey took place at a time considered to be towards the end of the optimal period for bat occupancy aimed to establish the following:
- The presence or absence of bats using the buildings by undertaking a scoping survey.
 - Identify any potential roosting features (PRFs).
 - Determine if activity surveys are required.
 - Provide an impact assessment of the development on bats.
 - Define mitigation proposals where required.
 - Assess the requirement for a protected species licence.
 - Assess the building for use by nesting birds.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The site was surveyed in accordance with BCT best practice guidelines (4th Edition) **and** surveyor experience by John Gardner, a surveyor with 45yrs field experience in searching for bats and is registered to use the Class Survey Licence WML CL20 (Level 4). The licence number is 2015-15656-CLS-CLS.
- 3.2 The building was inspected during daylight using torches, binoculars, a Zeiss DTI 3/35 Gen 2 thermal scope and an endoscope where possible. All normal signs of bats were looked for including bats, dead baby bats, bat droppings, prey remains, scratching and staining of entry and exit holes.
- 3.3 The building was assessed for its degree of potential to support roosting bats including assessing the building design, construction, materials, and condition. This combined with an assessment of the location of the site and the surrounding habitat in terms of bat suitability allows an assessment to be made as to the potential of the building to support bats. Factors such as the proximity of good foraging areas (woodland, water bodies) and features that link the site to the wider surrounds such as linear features (hedgerows etc) were also considered.
- 3.4 This report sets out the findings of a scoping survey carried out to the above property on Tuesday 26th August 2025 and highlights the ecological constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed works and appraises the potential impacts. Appropriate actions to ensure the protection of bats are identified and mitigation measures detailed where appropriate.

4. Survey constraints

4.1 There were no constraints to the survey.

5. Site Description

The site consists of a detached 1960s house located in a rural area along Greenhill Bank Road. The rear of the site forms a steep terraced garden with a mix of scrub trees, fruit trees and shrubby undergrowth and backs on to arable land and is average foraging habitat. The steep wooded valley and New Mill Dike run along the east side of the site providing excellent foraging habitat and the site is connected to the whole of the surrounding landscape.



Figure 1. Site location plan

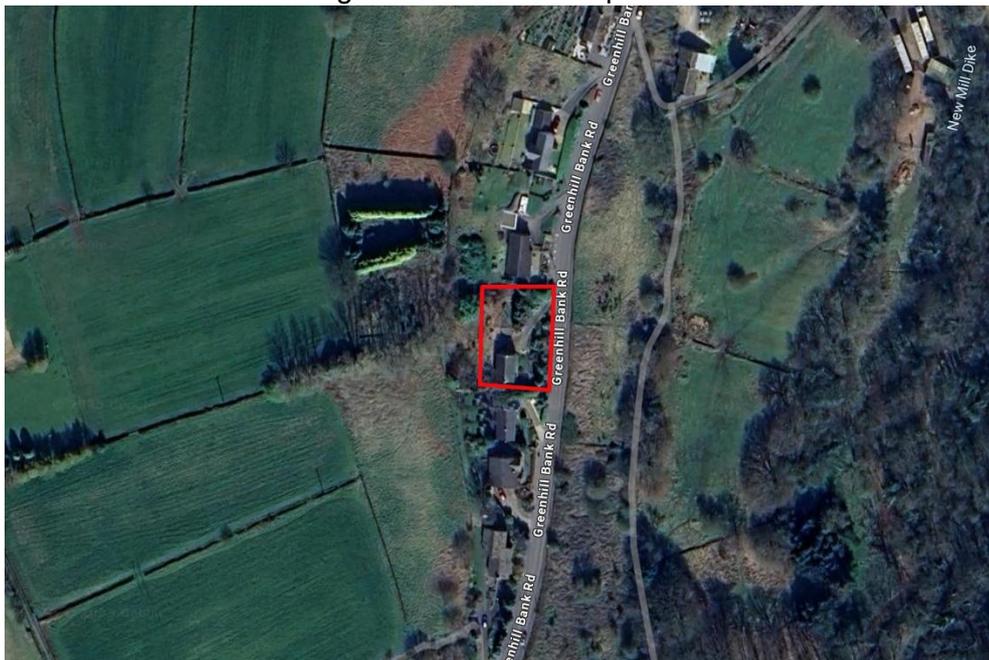


Figure 2 Aerial view of the site, surrounds and buildings surveyed

6. Desk Study

The building has low to negligible roost potential and the activity survey determined bats are not using this building. There will be no records relating directly to this site and the proposed works will remain within the site footprint and will not impact beyond the boundaries. Therefore, no data searches have been carried out, and none are required at this time.

7. Activity surveys

7.1 A single activity survey was carried out on the same evening as the scoping survey by two very experienced surveyors using a combination of heterodyne and RTE detectors and also thermal imaging aids. The survey was carried out from 40 mins prior to sunset until 90 mins after sunset. Sunset was recorded at 20:12 and the weather was ideal with clear skies, no wind and a temperature of 17°C. The results are detailed in section 8.2.

8. Survey results

8.1 The daylight survey

The house is a detached dwelling with a blue slate roof and rendered walls. The roof is sound and without any missing or slipped tiles though there are two small sections of missing ridge pointing on the west side of the ridge. The verges are very sound and are sealed by the render and there does not appear to be any potential access at the roof edges where the slates meet the verge. The walls are completely rendered forming a tight seal at the boxed eaves on the front and rear of the house and there are no external decorative wooden features.



Photo 1: Showing general exterior view of the house



Photo 2: General view of sealed eaves, dry verge and section of failed ridge mortar

The render is in excellent condition and forms such a tight seal at the eaves and dry verges that it effectively eliminates any potential for bats to roost. The only potential roosting features are the sections of missing ridge pointing on the west side of the roof. An internal inspection of the attic revealed that the ridge section and the internal gable apex are heavily covered in cobwebs. There was no light ingress and no scattered droppings or discarded prey remains, Bats have not used the internal roof sections. The limited number and diversity of potential roosting features classify the dwelling as very low value to bats and only a single activity survey is called for.

8.1 The emergence survey

An evening emergence survey was carried out on the same evening as the daytime survey by two very experienced surveyors positioned for maximum coverage of the building using multiple bat detectors and thermal imaging aids. The first bat was recorded just 25 mins after sunset indicating a local emergence, but it was detected flying into the site from the north and along the vegetation line to the rear of the site. This was followed by a second bat pass, potentially the same individual, some 5 minutes later. The bats foraged around the west boundary to the rear of the site before heading off to the south. There was an absence of bats until around 50 minutes after sunset when again bats hunted along the west boundary and over the gardens in front of the north elevation of the house. Bats appear this length of time after sunset suggest emergence further afield and are being observed as they commute to other feeding areas. All bats recorded were common pipistrelles and no bats were observed emerging from the dwelling which was as expected given the limited roosting potential.

9. Discussion and analysis

The scoping survey established that the building offers very limited potential roosting features due to the render and the good condition of the roof and lack of facia. No bats emerged from the building which was as expected given the limited potential, but bats are roosting close by, confirmed by the first bat on the wing just 20 minutes or so after sunset. The number of bats was unremarkable with only single bats being seen at any one time and all activity was noted along the west boundary and later in the survey some foraging took place along the north side of the dwelling over the garden, but these bats then headed further south. There are other residential dwellings close by that offer greater roosting potential, specifically those features favoured by common pipistrelle, and it is very likely that the bats are roosting in one of these dwellings.

Only small numbers of bats were noted, and this could be due to the optimal season coming to a close, it is unlikely that bats would use this building as a roost given the very limited potential. Adding permanent roosting features into the fabric of the proposed new dwelling is likely to increase the site's potential to support bats.

10. Impact assessment

The building has a very limited number and diversity of potential bat roost features, consequently, there is no requirement for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence. Any loss of existing

potential roosting features can be offset by inclusion of permanent roosting features in the new dwelling with a greater chance of uptake. The building is not considered essential to species survival.

11. Mitigation measures

The dwelling has limited potential roosting features, and it is unlikely bats are present or likely to be present in this dwelling. Therefore, there is no requirement for a method statement or derogation tests, simple precautions will suffice.

Timings

There are no timing restrictions to the demolition from the presence of bats but ground clearance should be carried out outside the bird nesting season (February to August).

Enhancements

In order to compensate for any slight loss of potential roosting features, permanent roosting features should be included in the fabric of the new dwelling. An integral bat roosting feature should be included on both the south and west elevations and be in place prior to occupancy of the building. There are a wide range of bat roosting features available such as those from Schwegler e.g, Schwegler bat wall system 3FE. Style and location can be marked on the final plans.

12. Conclusion

A bat scoping and activity survey has been carried out at 56 Greenhill Bank Road, New Mill and determined that the dwelling has very few potential bat roosting features and that the demolition is unlikely to result in harm to bats or damage to roost sites. There may be a small loss of foraging habitat, but bats will still be able to commute through the site. Integral roosting features within the fabric of the new dwelling is likely to increase the site's bat potential and at least two should be incorporated into the finished design. Bats are present in the area and likely to be roosting close by, but the scope of the works will not extend beyond the site boundary and is therefore highly unlikely to affect any bat roosts in the area. There are no statutory constraints to this project from the presence of bats. Badgers are present close by and were seen in the garden and therefore care should be taken not to impact any setts that might border the site.

Appendix 1: Surveyor experience

Surveyor experience – John Gardner

The primary surveyor has been surveying for bats for over 40 years and holds a Class Level 4 licence. Since surveying for bats in Wakefield, he has found roosts of over 7 species of bats including the first record of Nathusius' pipistrelle for West Yorkshire. Prior to his starting bat surveying in Wakefield, only a single occurrence of Leisler's bat was known from South Yorkshire, but extensive surveying in the 80s in Wakefield established that this species is widespread and common. The survey effort in Wakefield with this species resulted in a total rewrite of the UK distribution maps for Leisler's bat. A bat box scheme run at Bretton Country Park resulted in a nursery roost of over 80 Leisler's bats in 2 boxes and was visited by Durham Bat Group and others for experience. Long term roost monitoring of common pipistrelles was carried out and the results have been used in international papers by Dr John Altringham. He continues to survey for bats when not commissioned to survey for planning applications.

Surveyor experience – Heather Gardner

Heather also began bat surveying in the 80s and held a level 4 licence for over 20 years before family commitments prevented her from more regular surveying. She has experience at searching for and handling six species of bat and has completed hundreds of hours of field surveys. Along with John Gardner, she has visited bat roosts outside the county to observe horseshoe bats in Wales and has taken part in bat searches in Lancashire. She has provided surveyor services with the primary surveyor for the past 14 years as and when required where multiple surveyors are required.