

Class 2 survey licences – Natural England Licence WML-CL18.

What is a class 2 licence?

This Natural England licence enables the licence holder to '*survey bats of all species for scientific and/or educational purposes*'. It must be noted that this is a disturbance licence i.e. it allows you to disturb bats using a range of techniques, and it differs from a class 1 licence in that it allows you to use a greater range of techniques.

Under most circumstances in order to study bats you do not need a class licence at all, for instance if you are simply using a heterodyne detector to listen to bats, to find roosts and to assess species composition.

With a class 1 licence you can check the use of bat boxes but without a class 2 survey licence you can't handle any bats that you may find in them (and you can't use an endoscope to have a look).

There are a number of key principles (licence conditions) that you must accept prior to getting a licence.

- Disturbance of bats must not be taken lightly. All the techniques covered by a class 2 licence will cause bats some distress to a greater or lesser extent.
- There must be a reason for using the techniques, idle curiosity is not a good reason.
- All bats taken must be liberated at the capture site immediately after examination
- No hibernating bats must be handled
- You need to put a report in of all activity under the licence every year (in order to have your licence renewed).
- The licence holder must keep up to date with the latest relevant legislation and bat research (see section on reading).

So how do you get a class 2 licence?

Durham bat group's primary objective is to train people in order to achieve roost visitors licences (RVL). The new licence system has separated the RVL from the survey licences and so the bat group has decided that it is in the best interest of the group and its members to assist trainees in the acquisition of the class 2 licence with training running concurrently with the RVL training. To get the class 2 licence two referees are required, this may be the group trainer and the mentor of the candidate but may also be someone else within the group who knows the work of the applicant and who feels that they have fulfilled the criteria of the survey licence. We envisage that training for this will be rigorous and the end product will be that the referees can both confidently state that the applicant is a fit and proper holder of this licence which will after all allow the holder to disturb a European Protected Species.

What do I need to do to be a fit and proper person?

You will need to demonstrate to the bat group that you have both the knowledge and practical experience of working with and surveying for bats in a range of situations. This will require an understanding of current guidelines and advice (through reading) as well as experiencing survey work. This practical experience can be gained through bat group activities but also through experience outside of the bat group such as assisting in private research, assisting in consultancy work or local authority work. In the case of experience external to the bat group, evidence must be provided of the activity (bat diary) and it is possible that the external supervisor of such activity may be contacted by the group for verification.

So where do I get all this information?

Reading

There are a number of pieces of essential reading in order to be fully aware of all the issues involved. The Bat Workers manual which is essential reading for a RVL also covers much of the material needed for Class 2 licenses. I have reproduced the checklist at the end of this document and a fuller version that can be used by trainees to help them collect evidence can be found on the website.for.

All of the documents listed below are free to download.

In order of importance –

- 1) The Level 2 Class licence - http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/images/wml-cl18-batsurvey_tcm6-35039.pdf
- 2) The Bat Workers Manual – <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-2861>
- 3) The Bat Mitigation Guidelines – <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/69046?category=31008>
- 4) Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines – <http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/guidanceforprofessionals.html>
- 5) Natural England Skillport – <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/enjoying/linkingpeople/communities/volunteering/volunteersdirectory/battraining.aspx>

We are not suggesting that you need to rote learn all the documents but each resource will have something useful to say about techniques, surveys, safety and crucially the law. Number 1 is the most important document as it is the licence itself. It explains the legal responsibility of holding the licence.

Practical Experience

The bat group will give you the opportunity to carry out a range of surveys and use a range of techniques. In terms of opportunities the programme does change from year to year so in the table below I have simply listed some of the well-established projects which are continuing.

	Licensed activity	Bat group activities which may provide experience	Other activities providing experience
	Disturbance by -		
1	Surveying using artificial light (torches)	Durham Cathedral	Roost visits
		Haswell Tunnel	NBMP (waterway survey for Daubenton's)
2	Surveying using endoscopes	Hamsterley Forest	Roost visits
		Durham Cathedral	Indoor training during winter sessions.
3	Hand	MIT	Liaison with bat carers
		Indoor meetings with captive/rescue bat present	
4	Using Static hand held nets	MIT	Liaison with bat carers
5	Observing hibernating bats (handling not licensed)	Trina's hibernation visits	Roost visits
		Durham cathedral (poss.)	NBMP
	Optional		
6	Photography (causing no additional disturbance to that caused by initial survey)	Hamsterley Forest	Roost visits
		MIT	
		Durham Cathedral	
		Indoor meetings with captive/rescue bat present	

We would anticipate that there will be many other opportunities both within and without the bat group which, if properly documented will provide evidence to support the references.

Good luck.

Training checklist (From The Bat Workers Manual)

Legal protection: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 & Conservation

(Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 or equivalent.

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Basic protection	
Limits to protection	
Dwelling houses	
Lawful operations	
Circumstances requiring consultation	
Limitations of advice by volunteers	
Licensing	
Licensable activities	
SNCO licences	
Other licences	
Bat biology and ecology	
Basic biology	
Taxonomy	
Relationships with other mammals	

Characteristics of families	
Physical adaptations for flight	
Physiological specialisations	
Senses	
Basic ecology	
Importance in ecosystems	
Life histories	
Lifespan	
Breeding	
Food and feeding	
Seasonality	
Social behaviour	
Colony formation and composition	
Mating systems and behaviour	
Maternal behaviour	
Juvenile behaviour	
Habitat selection	
Roosting	
Range of roost sites	

Seasonal changes in site selection	
Feeding	
Range of feeding habits	
Diurnal rhythms in feeding behaviour	
Bat conservation	
Threats to bats	
Historical evidence	
Current threats	
Habitat change/loss	
Loss of hibernacula	
Loss of summer roost sites	
Effects of modern farming	
Pesticides	
Loss of insects	
Remedial timber treatment	
Agricultural pesticides	
Persecution and intolerance	
Sensitivity of bats to disturbance -	

In winter	
In summer	
Public relations	
Site visits	
Safety	
Visits to householders who have discovered bats	
Arranging the visit	
Analysing the situation	
Persuasion and education	
Sensitivity to fears and phobias	
Practical help and limits to advice	
Follow-up action	
Further visits	
Recording and reporting	
Consultation/liaison with the SNCO	
Visits to buildings requiring works which may affect bats	
Arranging the visit	
Analysing the situation	

Inspecting the site	
Collecting relevant information	
Follow-up action	
Completion of report	
Suggestions for advice	
Liaison with the SNCO	
Presenting bats to the public	
Giving talks	
Dealing with the media	
Health and safety in bat work	
Health and first aid	
Travel and night or lone working	
Safety in and around building	
Safety underground	
Safety at tree roosts	
Safety at public events	
Handling and examining bats	
Handling	

Identification	
Examining	
Catching bats	
Inside roosts	
At roost entrances	
In the open	
Survey work	
Hibernacula	
Safety	
Frequency of survey	
Liaison	
Summer roosts	
Frequency of survey	