



Roof Nesting Bird and Bat Survey Report

for

Bwthyn Brynamlwg, Neath

On Behalf of:

Avalon Architecture

July 2025



Eryrgwyn Ecology



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We confirm that in preparing this report we have exercised reasonable skill and care, taking into account the project objectives, the agreed scope of the work and prevailing site conditions. Advice in this report is based on the judgement of Eryr Gwyn Ecology and the interpretation of data gathered during the course of their survey on the property named in this document. The findings and advice given during the course of this report is provided by Eryr Gwyn Ecology, acting only on behalf of Eryr Gwyn Ecology. The ecologists may hold other paid employment but none of the advice or work undertaken in respect of producing this report refers to any roles or responsibilities held in any other employment. All work undertaken in this report is the sole responsibility of Eryr Gwyn Ecology.

This document is valid for a period of two years from the front cover date.

Report by Aaron Davies MCIEEM MSc BSc (Hons)

Quality Control

Issue / Revision	First Issue	Date
Author	Aaron Davies	11/07/2025
Reviewer	Steve Hancock	17/07/2025



Eryrgwyn Ecology

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Eryr Gwyn Ecology (hereafter referred to as 'EGE') was commissioned to undertake a roof nesting bird survey and preliminary bat roost assessment (PRA) of Bwthyn Brynamlwg, Pant Howell Ddu, Neath, SA11 2TU (the 'Property'). The purpose of the surveys was to inform the loft conversion of the Property (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development').

The PRA was undertaken in July 2025. The PRA was informed by an ecological desk study and an internal and external inspection of the Property.

The Property was identified as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats. Given the survey results, no targeted mitigation measures are expected to be required for the Proposed Development.

The Property was considered to have no suitability to support nesting birds. Given the survey results, no targeted mitigation measures are expected to be required for the Proposed Development.

Net Benefit for Biodiversity (NBB) enhancements are also recommended, such as the installation of integrated bird and bat boxes or access points on the Property to provide additional refuge sites for these species' groups. These recommendations help demonstrate a stepwise approach in line with the Welsh Government's approach to ecosystem resilience following the DECCA framework.

Repeat surveys are recommended if there are significant changes to the Property or if a period of more than two years elapses between the date of these surveys and commencement of the Proposed Development.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Eryr Gwyn Ecology (hereafter referred to as 'EGE') was commissioned to undertake a roof nesting bird survey and preliminary bat roost assessment (PRA) of Bwthyn Brynamlwg, Pant Howell Ddu, Neath, SA11 2TU (National Grid Reference: SS 75063 95182); hereafter referred to as the 'Property'.

The purpose of the surveys was to inform the loft conversion of the Property (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'). The purpose of this report is to provide sufficient information to update the baseline ecological information about the Property to support the planning application of the Proposed Development

SCOPE OF REPORT

The client commissioned EGE in July 2025 to:

- Complete a PRA of the Property, to identify the suitability, or otherwise, for bat roosts or nesting birds, to be present.
- Evaluate the Property for nesting birds and roosting bats and make recommendations as to how proposals should account for nesting birds and roosting bats with respect to legislation, planning and biodiversity policy.
- If necessary, to identify the need for avoidance, mitigation, compensation, or enhancement measures and / or further ecological surveys.

The results of these surveys, and subsequent recommendations, are included in this report.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

This report has been compiled with reference to the following relevant nature conservation legislation, planning policy and the UK Biodiversity Framework from which the protection of sites, habitats and species is derived in Wales.

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Habitats Regulations)
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA)
- Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000
- The Town and Countryside (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) 2024
- Technical Advice Note 5; Nature Conservation and Planning 2009
- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040.

METHODOLOGY

DESK STUDY

A desk study was undertaken in July 2025 to review existing ecological baseline information available in the public domain. Records were obtained of statutory sites designated for bats within 10km of the Property.

PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

A comprehensive external and internal inspection of the Property was undertaken to enable an assessment of its potential to support both bat roosts and nesting birds, and to search for evidence indicating the current or historic use of the Property by roosting bats and nesting birds.

A visual inspection of the exterior of the Property using binoculars (Swarovski binoculars NL Pure 8x42), high-powered torch (LED Lenser P7R Core), endoscope (Teslong TD500), and pole camera set up (Ghost XL Drift camera, SmallRig Mini LED video light and 6m telescopic pole), was completed to search for features which may provide access or roosting opportunities for bats. Where suitable features were noted, their location and a brief description of their character was recorded. The external inspection comprised a check for potential roost features (PRF) / access points and evidence of bat activity around the Property with particular attention paid to the condition and fit of fascia boards, soffit boards and roofing tiles. Additionally, each feature was visually inspected for evidence indicating use by roosting bats such as droppings, urine staining, and scratch marks / characteristic staining (from fur oils).

Photographs and notes were taken of the Property and any PRF of interest. Photos of relevant features of interest are included in Appendix A of this report.

The internal inspection of the Property comprised a check for PRF / access points and evidence of bat activity within the roof void of the Property with particular attention to areas around possible access points, gable ends and beneath potential roost features such as ridge beams.

The Property was categorised in line with the descriptions in Table 1 below (adapted from Collins, 2023¹). Based on the features present and the location of the Property, the potential for different types of bat roost was also considered. For the purpose of the PRA, potential roost types were grouped as follows:

- Maternity (breeding roost).
- Summer / transitional (to include transitional, satellite, feeding, night and day roosts); and
- Hibernation.

¹ Collins J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Table 1. Bat Habitat Suitability

Potential Suitability	Description – Roosting habitat in structures
None	No habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats at any time of year.
Negligible	No obvious habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by multiple bats. Unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status such as maternity and hibernation.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are suitable for use by large numbers of bats on a regular basis. Structures have high potential to support high conservation roosts.

DATES OF SURVEY AND PERSONNEL

The PRA was completed on 11th July 2025 by Aaron Davies. Aaron has been an ecologist since 2012 and is a full member of CIEEM. Aaron has held Natural Resources Wales (NRW) survey licences since 2015 and has also held multiple development licences for bats. This includes licences for *Pipistrellus* bat species, *Rhinolophus* species, *Myotis* species, *Plecotus* species and *Nyctalus* species. Aaron is also chairman of the Glamorgan Bat Group, a National Bat Monitoring Program Champion for the Bat Conservation Trust, and is also the VC41 county recorder for bats. Aaron is also named on NRW research project licences, in particular projects related to ringing and monitoring Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii* bats and Greater Horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* bats.

This report has been subject to technical review by Steve Hancock CEnv MCIEEM. Steve has worked as a consultant ecologist since 2009 and holds a degree in a related discipline. Steve is a Chartered Environmentalist, a full member of CIEEM and holds a Natural Resources Wales science, education and conservation licence with respect to bats (licence number S091721/1).

NOTES AND LIMITATIONS

Ecological survey data is typically valid for up to two years² unless otherwise specified, for example if conditions are likely to change more quickly due to ecological processes or anticipated changes in management.

² CIEEM (2019), Advice Note on The Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. CIEEM, Winchester

It is standard practice during a PRA, to undertake a desk study search of bats and roof nesting birds from the local record centre (South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc)). This includes bat records within a 2km radius of the Property and records of all roof nesting birds within 150m of the Property. However, as the Property was found to have negligible suitability to support roosting bats and roof nesting birds, no desk study data records were requested.

This report records the presence or absence of PRFs / potential access points for bats and evidence of bat activity present on the date of the PRA. Every effort was made during the site visit to complete comprehensive surveys and produce a detailed and accurate description of the Property and survey findings. However, natural and semi-natural habitats change, and it should be borne in mind that the behaviour of bats (or other mobile species) can be unpredictable and may not conform to standard patterns recorded in scientific literature. Therefore, this report cannot predict with absolute certainty that bats will not occur in locations or habitats that appear unsuitable.

Bats generally have seasonal use of buildings, and being highly mobile species, may start using a site after it has been surveyed, or roost somewhere else during the period it was surveyed. For this reason, bats may potentially be present but remain undetected.

RESULTS

DESK STUDY - DESIGNATED SITES

No statutory sites designated for bat species within 10km of the Property were identified. Designated sites are therefore not further mentioned in this report.

OVERVIEW

The Property is located on Panthowell Ddu Road, north west of Ynysmaerdy and close to Briton Ferry and Neath. The wider area is predominately rural, with fields of pasture and woodland areas.

PRA - EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL INSPECTION

The Property is a single-storey bungalow. The roof is a slate tiled duo-pitched structure with concrete ridge tiles. The fascias and eaves are uPVC. The Property lies on a north-south axis with a flat roof extension on the east elevation.

No PRF types were recorded on the Property. All gaps were minor and tight, and unsuitable for roosting bats or nesting birds. No signs of bats or current or historic evidence of active nesting birds were recorded.

Very small crevices did provide access into the loft for Common Wasps *Vespula vulgaris* which were observed during the survey.

Photographs illustrating the external and internal inspection of the Property are included in Appendix A of this report.

PRA Summary

The external and internal inspection of the Property found no evidence of bats or signs of historic use and the Property was considered to have negligible suitability to support roosting bats.

The Property was considered to have no suitability to support nesting birds.

ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BATS

The Property was identified as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats. Relevant legislation and planning policy is included below for information only and does not place constraints upon the Proposed Development. Given the survey results, no targeted mitigation measures are expected to be required for the Proposed Development.

All species of bats recorded within the UK are protected from killing, injury and disturbance³ and their roosts protected from damage or destruction under the Habitats Regulations. Protection is also afforded under the WCA with respect to disturbance of individuals occupying places of rest or shelter and obstruction of access to these. Activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under this legislation may be licensed by NRW for certain purposes.

Barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*, Greater Horseshoe and Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros* bat, Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* bat, Brown Long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* bat are also listed as Priority Species in accordance with Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Section 7 obliges public bodies (including local planning authorities) to have regard for the conservation of biodiversity (including Priority Species) when discharging their duties (including determining planning applications).

It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or capture a bat, to possess a bat (whether live or dead) or any part of a bat, or sell or offer for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to intentionally damage or destroy any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not and to intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or obstruct access to a bat roost.

A bat roost may be any structure a bat uses for breeding, resting, shelter or protection. It is important to note that since bats tend to re-use the same roost sites, a bat roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time. Licences can be granted by the relevant licensing authority (NRW in Wales) to allow illegal activities, including development, to take place if carried out in accordance with the provisions of the licence.

³ Disturbance is defined within the Habitats Regulations as that which is likely to impair a species ability to survive, breed or reproduce, hibernate or migrate or to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species.

BIRDS

The Property was considered to have no suitability to support nesting birds. Relevant legislation and planning policy is included below for information only and does not place constraints upon the Proposed Development. Given the survey results, no targeted mitigation measures are expected to be required for the Proposed Development.

Under the WCA all wild birds are protected from killing and injury, and their nests and eggs protected from taking, damage and destruction whilst in use. Additional protection is extended to species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act, meaning it is also an offence to disturb these species at or near the nest, or whilst they have dependent young.

Various bird species are also listed as Priority Species in accordance with Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

Planning Policy Wales⁴ states that the planning system must ensure development results in a Net Benefit for Biodiversity (NBB) and ecosystem resilience to enhance well-being.

It defines a NBB as development leaving *“biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems in a significantly better state than before, through securing immediate and long term, measurable and demonstrable benefit, primarily on or immediately adjacent to the Site.”*

To support local authorities in achieving their Section 6 duty to *“promote the resilience of ecosystems”* when determining planning applications, the DECCA Framework should be adhered to, in order to ensure a NBB. This includes following the stepwise approach.

To encourage compliance with planning policy additional measures have been identified and are recommended for inclusion within the Proposed Development. This is the installation of integrated bird and bat boxes or access points⁵ on the Property to provide additional refuge sites for these species' groups.

REPEAT SURVEYS

In order to provide robust and up-to-date data for assessment of likely impacts on protected species, it is generally considered good practice to repeat surveys should a period of up to two years lapse⁶ between a survey being completed and the works commencing.

⁴ Welsh Government (2024) Planning Policy Wales. Edition 12. February 2024.

⁵ Examples include 1FE Schwegler Bat Access Panel, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'C', Manthorpe Bat Ridge Roost, 1MF Bat and Swift Nest Box.

⁶ CIEEM (2019), Advice Note on The Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. CIEEM, Winchester

APPENDIX A – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1. Front of the Property (west side)

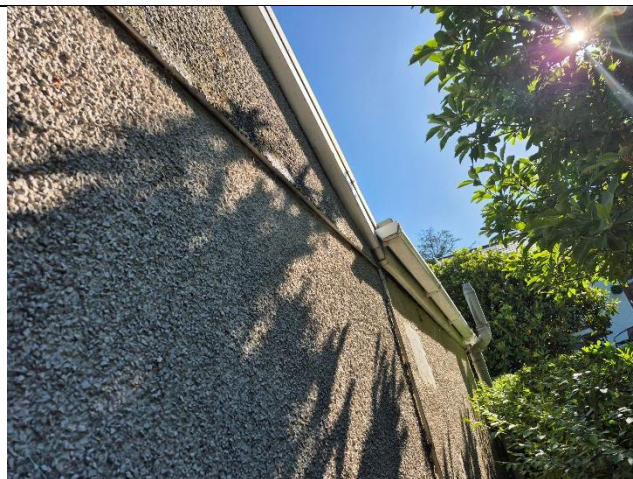


Photo 2. South of the Property



Photo 3. Roof of the Property



Photo 4. Roof of the Property



Photo 5. Endoscoping features on the property

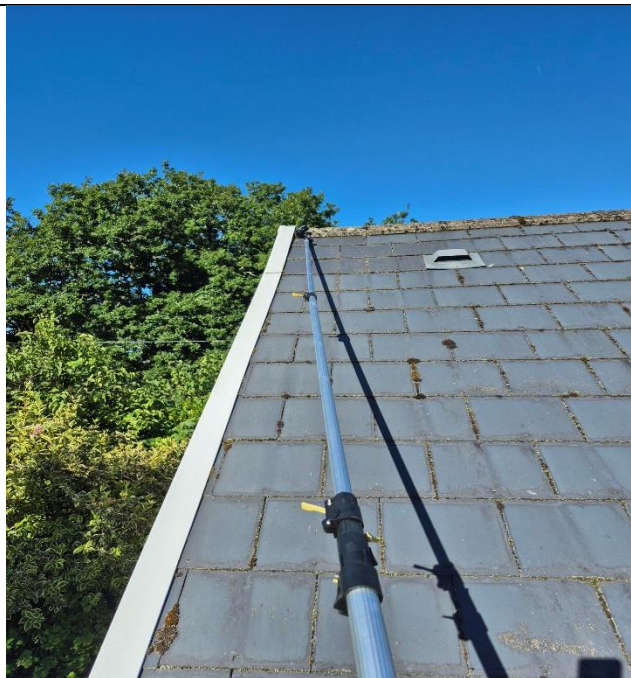


Photo 6. Inspection of the Property

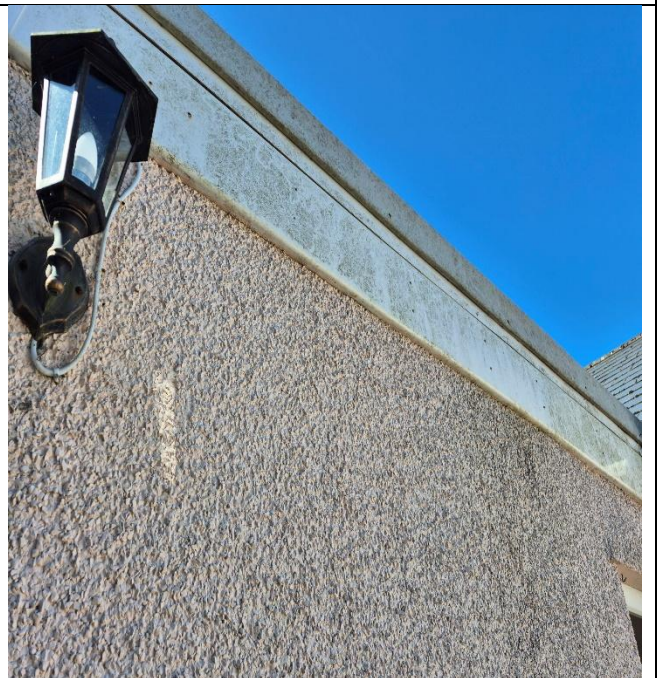


Photo 7. Tight PVC facias



Photo 8. Internal



Photo 9. Internal



Photo 10. Wasp nest



Photo 11. Wasp nest



Photo 12. Wasp entering



Photo 13. Property