



**The Welsh Government, Local Authority and the contractors delivering this scheme are committed to the preservation of wildlife.**

### Protected species

The installation of exterior wall insulation carries a risk to protected wildlife. The most vulnerable are bats and birds. Bats are fully protected against intentional harm and destruction of their resting places by European law, the highest level of wildlife protection. Wild birds are protected from harm while nesting by national law.

Bats are protected because 1) bats are losing habitat all the time; 2) bat populations are slow to recover because bats breed very slowly; 3) population numbers have crashed across the whole of Europe; 4) contrary to common opinion, bats are extremely important for the environment. They are not pests or vermin but they eat pests, including mosquitoes, midges, beetles etc.

### Bat and bird surveys and considerations

Bat and bird surveys are being carried out on properties eligible for exterior solid wall insulation under this scheme. The surveys involve an inspection of the exterior by the ecologist and may involve an inspection of a roof void (with the permission of the owner). Nighttime (dusk and dawn) bat surveys may also be carried out that involve a general survey of the area with bat detectors and recording equipment. You may see the ecologists walking around the general area with their detectors and noting the bat activity in the area during the day, at dusk or dawn!

If bat roost potential is identified or birds are nesting on properties, then minor alterations to the EWI may be needed as well as / or wildlife boxes in order to ensure the wildlife can continue to use these spaces and for those involved to meet legal requirements and duties.

### Commitment to habitat improvements as part of the energy improvement scheme

In order to improve habitat for bats and birds on the scheme, wildlife boxes are being installed on some properties. Suitable properties are identified during the surveys. The ecologist will advise the project manager on the best locations for bats boxes. The boxes will not be installed on a property without prior agreement from the owner.

### Information about bat and bird boxes

- 1) The model of wildlife boxes being installed are self-contained, discrete and weatherproof. The bat boxes are embedded in the exterior wall insulation and rendered over to match the rest of the wall; only a small entrance slot remains visible. Some bird boxes are embedded and some fixed to the surface. Different bird boxes are provided for different species (eg a sparrow terrace or a house martin cup nest).
- 2) The boxes do not require maintenance or cleaning out. Bat droppings fall out of the slot at the bottom and are washed away by the rain. The boxes are not installed above windows or doors.
- 3) The bat boxes should not cause problems with bats. You may not even notice if bats have moved in. If, by a very remote chance, a problem develops then the ecologist will arrange for the problem to be resolved at no cost to the house owner. Bat droppings are not offensive in the same way as dog, cat or rodent (rat/mouse); bat droppings are dry and powdery and dissolve quickly in rain. They are also very good fertiliser for the garden!
- 4) If bats move into a bat box on a house this does not mean that bats will then try to move into other parts of a house.
- 5) There are several species of bats in Wales but the species most likely to use the boxes are common and soprano pipistrelle, and possibly brown long-eared bats.
- 6) The common bird species found associated with buildings include house sparrows, blue tits, house martins and robins.

### More information on bats and birds

More information on bats is available from the Bat Conservation Trust website: [www.bct.org.uk](http://www.bct.org.uk)

More information on birds is available from the RSPB: [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

Please support your local wildlife. We live in a rural area that is rich in biodiversity and we should be proud of that fact. Thank you!

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If you would like to speak with the ecologist, ask the office manager to put you in touch.



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