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Surveying for bats in trees and woodland – Guide

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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 October 2015. It was prepared by Technical Committee BDY/1, *Biodiversity management*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

Use of this document

As a guide, this British Standard takes the form of guidance and recommendations. It should not be quoted as if it were a specification or a code of practice and claims of compliance cannot be made to it.

Presentational conventions

The guidance in this standard is presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Any recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is "should".

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

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This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

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0 Introduction

0.1 General

Other publications that include the subject of surveying for bats in trees and woodland have been produced and these are primarily aimed at ecological consultants involved in the planning process for development, or for arboriculturists undertaking tree work. This British Standard brings together, into one place and for the first time, all the information about surveying for bats in trees and woodland. In doing so it updates the information with evolving knowledge about how bats use trees and woodland, and what emerging techniques there are for surveying. It also addresses some identified information gaps.

This British Standard gives guidance on surveying to those directly involved in the management of trees and woodland (urban and rural), enabling these professionals to attain the necessary understanding of the survey and checks that they can do themselves, while identifying the occasions when the services of a bat specialist might be needed. As such it is of assistance for those carrying out sustainable forest management under the *UK Forestry Standard* [1] (see Annex A for information on the UK Forestry Standard), and also gives guidance to bat specialists where more advanced surveys are required. The aim of this British Standard is to aid clarity by bringing together recommendations on all aspects of surveying, for all audiences, and matrices are included to ensure that the relevant information is accessed with ease (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

This British Standard acknowledges and maintains the variety of approaches required to fit the differing needs that range from individual garden trees through to loss of woodland as a result of development and ongoing forestry management.

The following are examples of some of the reasons that bat surveys might be required:

- development;
- health and safety considerations;
- forestry operations;
- tree risk management and proposed tree work;
- conservation management; and
- site designation.

In planning any survey it is important to reflect on the reasons for carrying it out to ensure the survey is fit for purpose.

0.2 The matrices

This British Standard is aimed at those who carry out surveys for bats, whether in individual trees, small copses, woodland or forests. This could relate to trees in gardens or on development sites, within a farmed landscape or in parkland. For woodland, this could relate to management for forestry purposes or conservation.

Bat surveys might be required to identify potential roosts in trees or to identify the value of a group of trees or woodland for bat foraging or commuting potential. Figure 1 covers roosts and Figure 2 covers foraging and commuting. Within the sections indicated there are links to other points of common interest or reference.

Figure 1 Matrix: roosts

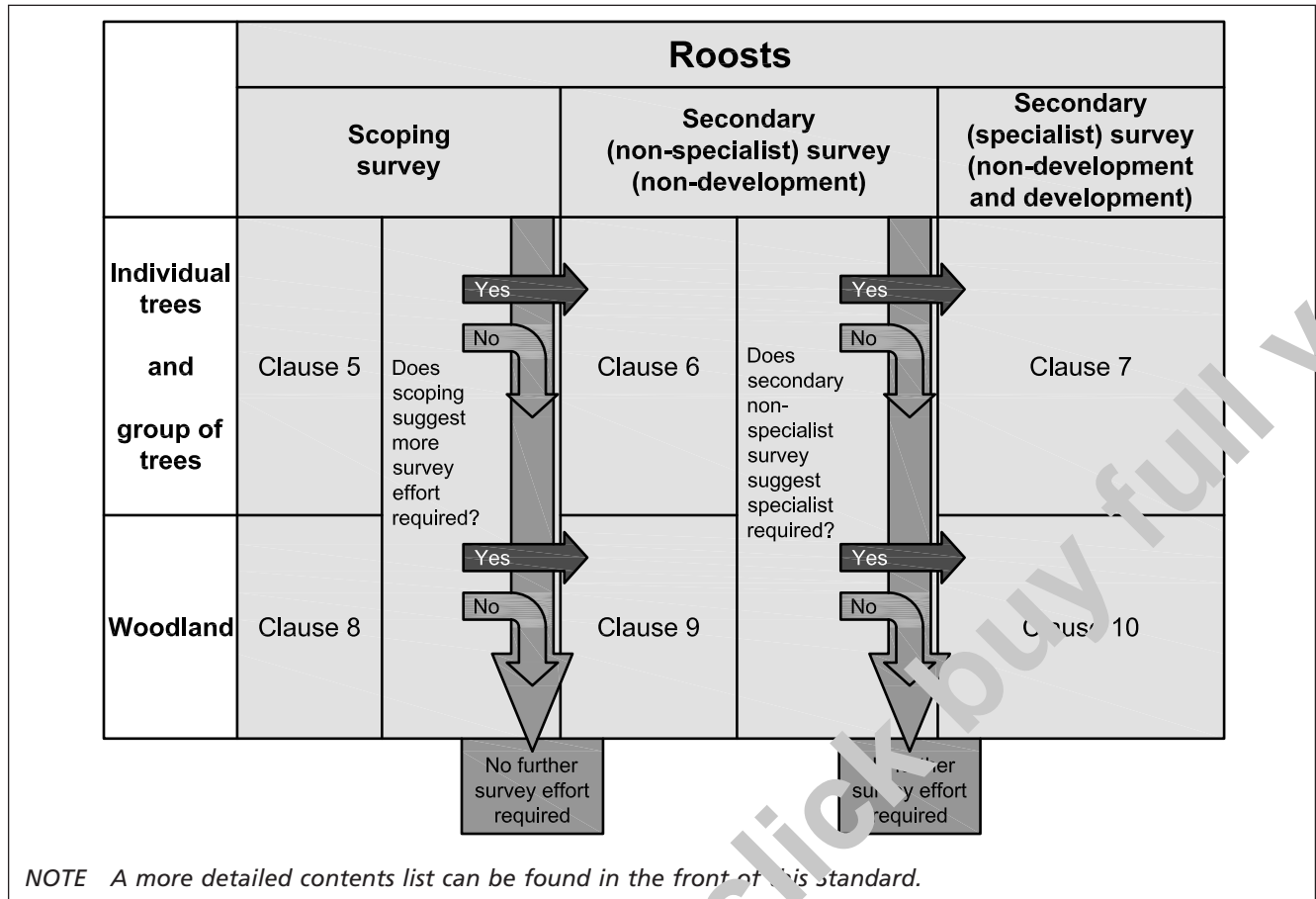
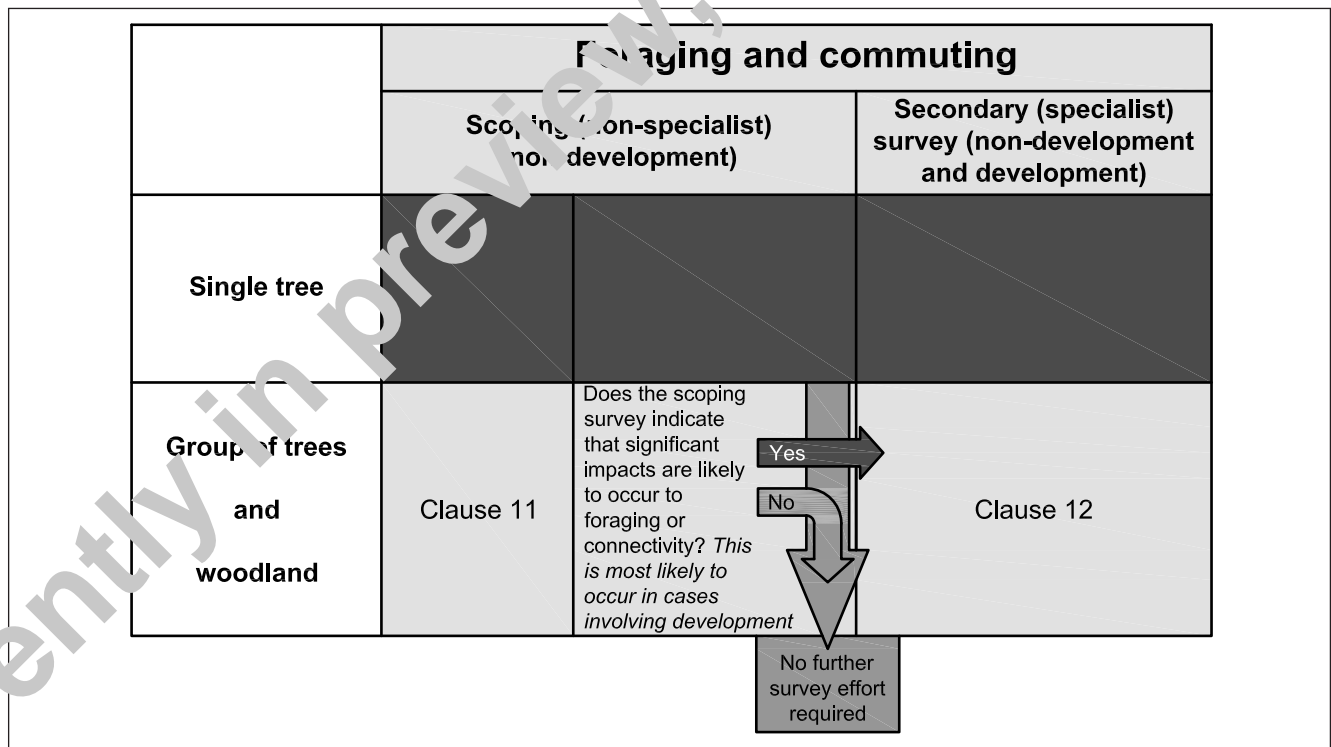


Figure 2 Matrix: foraging and commuting



Section 1: General

1 Scope

This British Standard gives guidance on surveying for bats in individual trees, groups of trees and in woodland. This includes scoping, roost and activity surveys, and record keeping.

This British Standard applies to the following:

- forestry and woodland managers and operatives, including woodland owners, managers, agents, foresters, contractors, conservation bodies and woodland advisers;
- arboriculturists, in particular tree work contractors, but also arboricultural consultants and local authority tree officers;
- planning officers, local government ecologists and other government departments whose functions might bring them into contact with bats in trees or woodland (whether directly or indirectly);
- developers and associated professions, e.g. construction companies, demolition companies and landscape architects;
- ecological consultants, particularly those who have the potential to work on the specialist aspect of surveying for bats in trees;
- utility companies, infrastructure constructors and maintainers, engineers; and
- flood risk managers.

This British Standard does not include guidance relating to bat surveys in buildings, underground sites or any habitat other than woodland or trees. It also does not give any guidance about the outcomes of the surveys undertaken, such as how woodland is managed or mitigation measures.

2 Normative references

The following document, in whole or in part, is normatively referenced in this document and is indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

BS 42020, *Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 activity survey

assessment undertaken by a bat specialist to establish the extent to which an area is used by bats where additional information is required to supplement the findings of the secondary habitat assessment

NOTE An activity survey might be required when proposed work has the potential for high impact to bats, particularly if mitigation or compensation is required.

3.2 ancient woodland

woodland that has existed continuously since 1600 or before in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (or 1750 in Scotland)