



Surveys and mitigation

Badger activity survey

You will usually be asked for a badger survey if you've had a preliminary ecological appraisal that has identified a sett on, or within 30m of, your site.

A badger activity survey is the next step. We use infra-red surveillance cameras to check whether a sett is currently being used. Our specialised equipment allows us to see how many badgers are using the sett, and what type of sett it is.

We also record other signs of badger activity, including paths, footprints, latrines, hairs, scratches on trees, and bedding. The results of these surveys help us to design a suitable mitigation strategy for you.

Our experienced ecologists can complete badger surveys all year round, although the optimal months are November to April inclusive.

Bait marking surveys

Bait marking surveys can be used to establish the territories of badger social groups. The bait is a mixture of peanuts, golden syrup and indigestible plastic pellets, which is positioned near the setts. The plastic pellets placed at each sett are a different colour. Badgers mark their territory with latrines and the different coloured pellets in their dung can be used to establish a badger clan's territory.

Badger method statement

If we've recorded badgers on your site, you will usually have to submit a method statement to the Local Planning Authority as part of your planning application.

The method statement demonstrates how you will prevent your development from affecting badgers. Our ecologists are experienced at developing mitigation strategies that not only ensure the safety of badgers on site, but take into consideration your construction timings and development proposals.

Badger exclusion and disturbance licence

If badgers are recorded using a sett, and the sett can't be retained or avoided, you will need a badger exclusion or disturbance licence from Natural England, Natural Resources Wales or Scottish Natural Heritage.

Licences to exclude badgers and destroy a sett are only issued between July and November inclusive.

We can give advice on whether or not you'll need to apply for a licence, and what information will be needed if so.

Badgers licences are separate to planning permission, and we can apply for a licence once you've secured planning permission (or any other relevant consents).



Sett exclusion

We can install one-way badger gates at a sett, enabling badgers to leave the sett but not enter it. The gates are required to be in place for 21 days, and must be checked by an experienced ecologist at least once every three days for signs of badgers entering or leaving.

Once badgers have been excluded, we can either:

- Destroy the sett (if appropriate) as soon as possible to reduce the chances of badgers re-occupying
- Ensure the sett is securely proofed against re-entry by badgers by using heavy-gauge chainlink or weldmesh

If a main breeding sett is to be destroyed, you will need to build an artificial sett in a suitable location nearby. The artificial sett must be in position for six months (or until it is occupied) prior to destroying the main sett.

We work with specialist contractors to design and build artificial setts, that meet the requirements of your licence.