



## THE ECOLOGY EXPERTS

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## Badger Surveys

Badgers are protected under both UK and EU law, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take a badger, or to destroy or obstruct a badger sett. It is also an offence to bait or dig for badgers, deliberately send or intentionally allow a dog into a sett and also sell or possess and live or dead badger or any part of a badger.

## Why do I need a Badger survey?

An assessment to determine if badgers and their setts (living spaces) are present on site or in close proximity is conducted during the walkover survey as part of a [Preliminary Ecological Appraisal \(PEA\)](#). This forms part of a protected species risk assessment and surveys the site and surrounding area for field signs of badger, such as prints, latrines, foraging activity and sett entrances. If badgers are present locally but a sett is not located on or in close proximity to the site (c.30 m), then efforts are usually possible to avoid affecting the badgers and therefore activity surveys may not be required. Badger activity surveys would generally be necessary if a sett is located on or in close proximity to the site, and the proposed works are considered to present potential impacts.

For more information on when you may need badger surveys, please [click here](#) to read Natural England's guidance. If you wish to discuss further, please get in contact with the team.

## What does a Badger Activity survey involve?

Surveying for badgers usually requires several site visits and can be conducted all year round, although are optimal in spring, early autumn or winter. The surveys employ several techniques, including the use of camera trail cameras to gather still image/ video footage. This is often used when surveying a sett to determine current activity, resident species (may be badger, fox, rabbit or other) and number of badgers living there. Site visits repeat the walkover search techniques to ensure that field signs aren't missed and accurate data is collected. Depending on the number of badger setts in the area and the impact of the development, it may also be appropriate to conduct survey techniques that map out the territories of the badger clans so that impacts can be fully assessed.

Call us to speak to an ecologist to discuss survey techniques and requirements further.

## Badger set present on or adjacent to your site – the next steps

Avoidance measures are always the first consideration to prevent impacts to badgers and their setts. This may require review and modification of the development design, with the implementation of appropriate mitigation and compensation. Where impacts to a sett cannot be avoided, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence is required from Natural England, which includes a Method Statement that demonstrates how the proposed works will be conducted to prevent direct harm to badgers (mitigation). This can include the licensed exclusion of badgers from their setts prior to destruction. In these cases, you may be required to build a compensatory artificial sett to provide the badgers with a suitable alternative home. Our team are experienced in badger licenced work and badger ecology and are here to help you with your project. Please feel free to [get in contact](#) to discuss further, we are happy to provide free advice and guidance.

## Useful Links

- [Badgers: surveys and mitigation for development projects. Natural England](#)
- [Badgers: protection and licences. Natural England](#)