

Supporting Information

for an annual bat survey license application for Dr. Isobel Abbott, Abbott Ecology

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The layout below follows the ***NPWS Template for Supporting Information***. Some of the template is not applicable to annual bat survey license applications.

2. Introduction

Part E: NPWS Template for Supporting Information lists the following for inclusion in this section;

- a. Objective of the proposed works (for example, as part of construction of a national road, repair of roofing, undertaking surveys etc.)
- b. Name, qualifications and relevant experience of scientific staff, including trainees, (e.g. ecologist) involved in the preparation of the application and those responsible for carrying out the proposed activity.
- c. If this application is for the carrying out of surveys that may cause disturbance, qualifications of all involved must be provided and trainees must be clearly identified.

Objective: Application for annual bat survey license to cover development projects or bat research/monitoring that arise in the course of ecological consultancy work/volunteering during 2026.

Name, Qualifications, and Relevant Experience:

Isobel Abbott: I have been consistently doing bat research and bat survey work since 2007 when I did my final year undergraduate project in UCC on the effects of sewage effluent on bats and their insect prey (Abbott *et al.*, 2009). In 2012, I then completed a PhD at UCC on the assessment of the effectiveness of bat mitigation measures employed on Irish national road schemes (Abbott 2012; Abbott *et al.* 2012b; Abbott *et al.* 2012a; Abbott *et al.* 2015).

Since starting Abbott Ecology in 2012, I work as a freelance ecological consultant, specialising in bat surveys, impact assessments, mitigation planning and monitoring. I have conducted hundreds of bat surveys for a wide range of projects, including national bat monitoring programmes, road construction, wind farms, solar farms, agriculture, bridge repairs, and residential, community, and industrial developments. I often sub-contract as a bat specialist with larger ecological consultancies.

I have gained a range of experience in capturing and handling bats over the years, including helping Cork County Bat Group with bat box checking, and collecting grounded bats so they could be rehabilitated. I've also gained experience in identifying, sexing, taking biometric measurements and DNA samples, and attaching transmitters to bats through radio-tracking projects as follows; (i) Vincent Wildlife Trust radio-tracking of Lesser Horseshoe Bats from a roost in Sneem, Co. Kerry in Aug 2007, with practical guidance from Conor Kelleher and Henry Schofield, (ii) radio-tracking of Lesser Horseshoe Bats from a roost near Ennis, Co. Clare in May 2009 and (iii) from Aug-Sep 2010, again with guidance from Conor Kelleher, (iv) radio-tracking of Lesser Horseshoe Bat and other bat species as part of EclA of the Galway City Transport Project (GCTP) with Scott Cawley Ltd. and Greena Ecological Consultancy Ltd during Jul-Sep 2014 (v) and again for the GCTP in May 2015. Further experience of bat capture and handling includes capture of bats using harp traps and mist nests at a number of underground autumn swarming sites in Northern Ireland during Aug-Nov 2013 under guidance from Dr. Daniel Buckley (Buckley *et al.*, 2014). More recent on-the-job bat handling experience have been provided to the NPWS in a separate application for a renewal of my annual bat capture and handling license.

Bat-related Publications:

- Abbott, I.M., Sleeman, D.P. & Harrison, S. (2009) Bat activity affected by sewage effluent in Irish rivers. *Biological Conservation*, 142, 2904–2914.
- Abbott, I.M. (2012) *Assessment of the Effectiveness of Bat Mitigation Measures Employed on Irish National Road Schemes*. PhD Thesis. University College Cork.
- Abbott, I.M., Butler, F. & Harrison, S. (2012a) When flyways meet highways – The relative permeability of different motorway crossing sites to functionally diverse bat species. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 106, 293–302.
- Abbott, I.M., Harrison, S. & Butler, F. (2012b) Clutter-adaptation of bat species predicts their use of under-motorway passageways of contrasting sizes - a natural experiment (ed N Bennett). *Journal of Zoology*, 287, 124–132.
- Buckley, D., Abbott, I.M., Montgomery, W.I., Reid, N. (2014) Confirmation of swarming sites for bats in Northern Ireland. Report prepared by the Natural Heritage Research Partnership (NHRP) between Quercus, Queen's University Belfast and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) for the Research and Development Series No. 13.
- Abbott, I., Aughney, T., Langton, S., Roche, N. (2015) BATLAS 2020 Pilot Project Report. Bat Conservation Ireland.
- Abbott, I.M., Berthinussen, A., Stone, E., Boonman, M., Melber, M. & Altringham, J. (2015) Bats and Roads. *Handbook of Road Ecology*, pp. 290–299. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester, UK.
- Abbott, I. (2025) Higher quality hedgerows support higher bat activity in an intensive agricultural landscape. BRIDE Farming with Nature EIP-AGRI Project Final Report.
- Abbott, I. (2025). Bat Friendly Farming booklet. BRIDE Farming with Nature EIP-AGRI Project Final Report.

3. Background

Part E: NPWS Template for Supporting Information lists the following for inclusion in this section;

“Background to proposed activity including location, ownership, type of and need for the proposed activity, planning history, policy context, zoning in relevant Development plan (or equivalent), etc.”

Nationwide bat survey license application. Locations and projects unknown in advance.

4. Full Details

Part E: NPWS Template for Supporting Information lists the following for inclusion in this section;

“Full details of proposed activity to be covered by the derogation (including a site plan). The site may be inspected by an NPWS representative, so the details given should clearly reflect the extent of the project. This information will be used to compare site conditions with the Method Statement.”

N/A - nationwide bat survey license application. Locations and projects unknown in advance.

5. Ecological Survey and Site Assessment

Part E: NPWS Template for Supporting Information lists the following for inclusion in this section;

“Ecological Survey and site assessment (Not required for applications to carry out surveys)

- a. *Pre-existing information on species at location and environs.*
- b. *Status of the species in the local/regional area (relevant to the consideration of the impact on the population at the relevant geographic scale (Test 3))*
- c. *Objective(s) of survey*
- d. *Description of Surveys Area*
- e. *Survey methodology (including evidence as to how the methodology represents best practice and is appropriate to the Objective). Methodology should include survey maps, details of timing, climate, equipment used and identify any uncertainties or difficulties encountered.*
- f. *Survey results including raw data, any processed or aggregated data, and negative results as appropriate. Photographs and maps must be provided where site-specific features are referred.*
- g. *Population size class assessment.”*

N/A

6. Evidence to Support the Derogation Tests

Part E: NPWS Template for Supporting Information lists the following for inclusion in this section;

“Evidence to support the Derogation Tests

- d. *Test 1 - Reason for Derogation:*
 - i. *There should be a clear explanation as to why a specific reason(s) has been selected in the application form.*
 - ii. *Applicants are advised to read the guidance published by the NPWS ‘Guidance on Applications for Regulation 54 Derogations for Annex IV species: Guidance for Applicants’ with specific reference to Section 3.1.*
- e. *Test 2 - Absence of Alternative Solutions*
 - i. *Applicants must list the alternatives to the proposed activity that have been considered, including the do-nothing alternatives in a clear and objective manner. A basic requirement is that these alternatives should be compared in terms of their impact on the species subject to strict protection. It should be clear to NPWS officials as to why the chosen approach has been selected.*
 - ii. *Applicants are advised to read the guidance published by ‘Guidance on Applications for Regulation 54 Derogations for Annex IV species: Guidance for Applicants’ with specific reference to Section 3.2.*
- f. *Test 3 - Impact of a derogation on Conservation Status*
 - i. *Applicants should include details of the population at the appropriate geographic scale and an evaluation of how the proposed activity will affect the conservation status both before and after mitigation measures have been applied.*
 - ii. *Full and detailed descriptions of proposed mitigation measures that are relevant to the potential impact on the target species. Evidence that such mitigation has been successful elsewhere should be provided, where available.*

Applicants are advised to read the guidance published ‘Guidance on Applications for Regulation 54 Derogations for Annex IV species: Guidance for Applicants’ with specific reference to Section 3.3.”

This section was covered in the license application form.

7. Monitoring the Impacts of the Derogations

Part E: NPWS Template for Supporting Information lists the following for inclusion in this section;

- a. *“Applicants must include details of how they propose to verify whether the derogations have been implemented correctly and whether they achieved their objective, using scientifically based evidence, and, if necessary, how the applicant will take corrective measures where required.”*
- b. *Applicants should provide details of proposed reports to be submitted to the NPWS including the results of monitoring.*
- c. *Applicants are advised to read the guidance published by the European Commission “Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive” with specific reference to Section 3.4.”*

License returns for the annual bat survey license will be submitted to the NPWS as required. Separate license returns for projects where I am involved with bat derogation licenses will be submitted, including the results of monitoring.