The Former Cross Keys Pub, Ancoats

Bats: Building Survey

Simply Ecology

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This report has been prepared by Simply Ecology Consultants with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, within the terms of the Contract with the Client. The actions of the surveyor on site and during the production of the report were undertaken in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. (www.ieem.org.uk).

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

1.1.1 Simply Ecology Consultants were commissioned in December 2009 by Sigma Property Ltd to undertake a bat survey of the former Cross Keys pub, Jersey Street, Ancoats, Manchester, M4 6JG. (O/S Grid Reference SJ851987). See Map 1 showing the Location Plan.

1.2 Aims and Proposed Works

1.2.1 The aims of this survey were to gather up-to-date information on the presence of bats at the site and to assess the surrounding habitat quality for bats. This report should be used as part of a planning submission to demolish the existing building and construct new commercial premises. The survey encompassed the entire building, both inside and out.

1.3 Site Description

1.3.1 The building inspected was a brick-built former Cross Keys public house at the corner of Jersey and Radium Streets, Ancoats (Plate 1). The building is thought to date from the late 19th Century and is located amongst dense surrounding residential and commercial premises. The location is in the heart of Manchester, with limited habitat areas nearby (See Map 1 showing the Location Plan).

Plate 1: General view of the Cross Keys.



2.0 STATUTORY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

2.0.1 Bats and all places they use for shelter are afforded full protection by the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) (Section 9, Schedule 5). In addition to the above protection, bats are also protected under European legislation which is implemented in England via The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) (Regulation 39).

2.0.2 If both national and international legislation are taken together, the legislative protection afforded to the species makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally/deliberately kill, disturb, injure or capture a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any breeding site or resting place of a bat.
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat.

2.0.3 If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, derogation from the legal protection can be issued in the form of a European Protected Species licence issued by Natural England. Licences for development purposes are issued under the Habitat Regulations 1994 (as amended) and only allow what is permitted within the terms and conditions of the licence.

2.0.4 In addition to licensing, for activities requiring planning permission, the presence of bats is a material consideration which must be fully considered when granting planning permission. Local Authorities have been issued with Planning Policy Statement 9 (ODPM Circular 06/2005) which provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to wildlife issue and development.

2.0.5 Where a development is proposed which may affect a protected species, PPS9 advises that alternative sites should be considered before granting planning permission which may affect a protected species. The planning authority may require mitigation or compensatory proposals in order for an activity to be granted planning permission.

3.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 A records search was undertaken via the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and the South Lancashire Bat Group (SLBG). The NBN is a National database containing over 18 million records of the location of individual species and utilises the datasets from many contributing organisations. The SLBG provides detailed local information on species sightings, and the combined search for bat records on the two different databases search engines provides a comprehensive record of bats in the local area.

3.2 Building Survey

3.2.1 The building survey was undertaken in accordance with the standard methods described in the 'Bat Worker's Manual' (JNCC 1999) and 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines' (BCT 2007). The survey was carried out by Jason Reynolds MSc MIEEM, an experienced bat surveyor with over ten years of bat survey and an MSc in *Pipistrelle* foraging behaviour. In accordance with best practice, the survey comprised the following elements:

- An inspection of the exterior of the property to look for obvious signs of bat activity (such as droppings on windowsills) and assessing the potential for entry/exit into the roof.
- Using ladders where necessary, an internal inspection of the underside of the roof and within any loft spaces in the property to determine whether bats were present, to look for signs of bat activity (such as discarded prey items and

droppings) and to assess potential suitability for bats. Lighting was provided by a million candle power Cluson Clulite CB2. Any cracks or inaccessible areas were inspected using a ProVision PV-636 endoscope.

- An assessment of the surrounding habitat quality for bats was carried out by walking the area on foot and later from reference to aerial images (Google Earth). These searches were used to identify important land use and habitat features known to be favoured by bats.

3.3 Timing and Constraints

3.3.1 The survey was carried out on 18th December 2009. This is during the winter period when bats are in hibernation. It is not possible to conduct emergence surveys at this time due to the decline in bat activity at roost sites. However, the timing of the building inspection visit posed no constraints as building inspections to search for signs of bats can be undertaken at any time of year. An assessment of the building's potential to support bats can therefore be made according to evidence found, building condition, location and the experience of the surveyor.

3.3.2 The survey was undertaken during dry weather and there were no constraints to accessing the entire property. Visibility of the exterior of building was excellent, with access on all sides and with no trees or vegetation to limit the inspection.

4.0 SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 The search of records held by the NBN revealed that Pipistrelle has been recorded from the surrounding 2km. The SLBG records showed one Pipistrelle bat roost at SJ846982 and a further 20 records of Pipistrelles from within the surrounding 1.2km (See Map 2 and Appendix 1). Within the wider Manchester area, the following 8 bat species have been recorded: both the 45 and 55 kHz Pipistrelle, brown long-eared, noctule, whiskered, brandt's, Daubenton's and Natterer's.

4.1.2 As a result of the bat records within the local area, particularly Pipistrelle, all of the typical roosting locations and behaviour of the above listed species were taken into account and used to inform the building inspection.

4.2 External Inspection

4.2.1 The building was a 2 storey brick construction. The main roof was a hip roof with one gable end dressed with slates. On the rearward projection of the building was another separate hip roof. The pub was small and only measured 11m x 13m. At the time of the survey the building was unheated, disused and derelict.

4.2.2 Although disused, the main fabric of the building was in fair condition and was structurally sound to enter and inspect. Only the pub was inspected as there were no other buildings or grounds within the site.

Plate 2: General view of the pub roof. Much of the roof was in good condition but in the rear valley there were missing slates permitting entry for bats.



Plate 3: General view of the second, smaller hipped roof (lhs).



Plate 4: Example of boarded up window, with very small gaps which was considered unlikely to provide access for bats. No signs of bats were found on or around the windowsill.



Plate 5: Underside of guttering and the soffit had no gaps suitable for bat entry.



Plate 6: View to the rear of the property.



Plate 7: Single skin corrugated sheet roof at rear of the property



4.2.3 As can be seen from Plates 1-7, most parts of the exterior of the building provided limited few opportunities for bats to gain entry into the building for roosting.

4.2.4 All of the typical areas of a roof which bats tend to use for entry/exit were searched. Most of the main roof was in good weather-tight condition (Plates 1 & 2). However, several slates were missing from the rear-facing valley. On the second hipped roof there were no missing slates present. Bats could readily enter into the main building but not the smaller hipped roof.

4.2.5 The inspection also covered all of the external windows and doors. There was a combination of old windows and doors. All windows and doors were either intact, or those with broken and missing panes were boarded up. This reduced their accessibility

for bats (Plates 1, 2, 3 & 4). Despite a search, no bat droppings were present around the doors or on the windowsills.

4.2.6 The other possible bat entry/exit points on the building around the roof/wall/guttering junction were also searched. However, no visible gaps all along the roof edge were present (Plate 5). Finally, the flat roof on the single storey section at the rear of the property was also inspected (Plates 6 & 7). This comprised over-lapping corrugated sheets, and no obvious location where bats could enter the building was found.

4.2.7 **The pub had reasonable potential for bats to enter it, although a thorough inspection of the outside of the building found no sign of bats.**

4.3 Internal Inspection

Plate 8: Underside of the roof, showing the intact underfelt.



Plate 9: The underfelt was ripped to inspect for sings of bats. None were found.



Plate 10. All flat surfaces within the loft were searched for signs of bats. None were present.

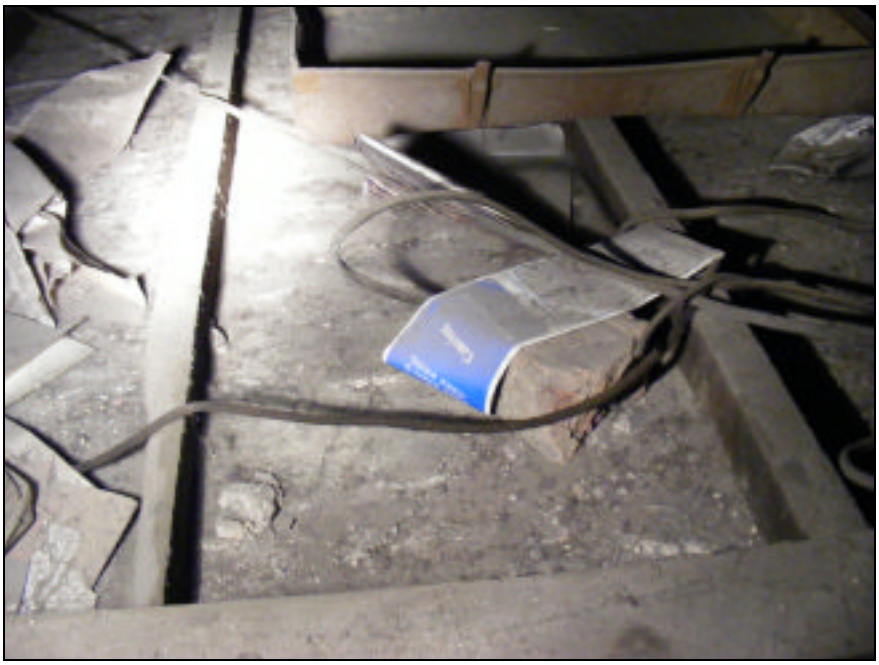


Plate 11: Underside of the roof, showing the partial missing slates and first floor ceiling.



4.3.1 The interior of the building was also thoroughly searched for any signs of bat activity. There were 6 rooms of the first floor and the roof space was accessed via a single hatch on the first floor landing. The building has been re-roofed at some date in the past, and the slates were laid onto underfelt (Plate 8). Across most of the roof the underfelt in the roof was intact, except for the area of missing slates. In order to carry out a thorough inspection, the underfelt was manually ripped around the roof to search using the endoscope for any deposits indicating presence of bats, as these would typically accumulate at the bottom of the roof (Plate 9). However, no signs of bats were found.

4.3.2 In the loft, all flat surfaces including the boarding and on top of the water tank were searched for signs such as droppings or discarded wings from prey items, but none were found (Plate 10). Similarly, no disturbance to cobwebs was noted which could have indicated bat presence. These observations are valuable because droppings associated with bat activity would have been expected if bats had been flying into the loft via the hole created by the missing roof slates.

4.3.3 Finally, the area around the hole in the roof was inspected. Below this a portion of the ceiling in one room had collapsed and so a search for signs of bats was carried out on the first floor amongst the debris (Plate 11). This was however hampered by the damp conditions which would have resulted in any droppings disintegrating.

4.3.4 In the rearward section of the building, no access to the loft void in the smaller hipped-roof section of the building was possible as there was no hatch. This inability to search the loft could have been a significant constraint upon the ability to detect any possible signs of bats which may have been present. However, although no access to the loft was possible, this was negated by the fact that the external inspection of the roof gave no reason to believe that bat entry would have been possible.

4.3.5 The inside of the single storey flat-roof addition was also inspected. The single skinned corrugated roof lacked any important structure such as a roof void. This meant that the physical properties of this roof would not provide opportunity for roosting.

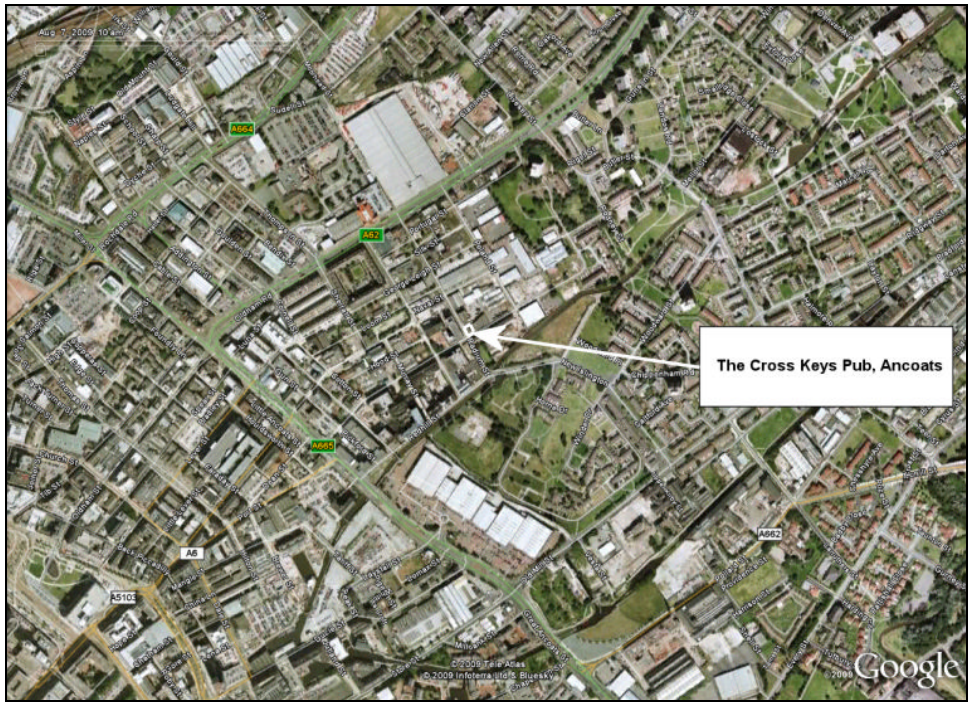
4.3.6 **After completing a thorough check throughout the interior of the pub, no signs of bat activity were found.**

4.4 Habitat Assessment

4.4.1 The building is located on the urban centre of Manchester, in an area of large commercial properties and housing. Notwithstanding this urban context, there are few vegetated habitats near to the site. The nearest of these are areas of grass and trees which lie 100m to the southeast. Also, the disused Rochdale Canal is 100m to the southeast, and this could provide bat foraging habitat. Overall this landscape will have a low value for many species of bat, but some individual features such as those mentioned certainly could be used by bats (Plate 12).

4.4.2 Overall, given the habitat features present it is likely that few bat species could utilise this urban area. Potential presence of *Pipistrelle* and Daubenton's bats would seem most likely.

Plate 12: Surrounding landscape near to The Cross Keys.



4.5 Site Status and Risk Assessment

4.5.1 It is concluded that the building has the potential for use by bats. However, after a thorough search, the lack of any signs of bat activity indicates that the property does not appear to be used by bats. A comprehensive search was carried out. One area could not be searched, which was the smaller hipped roof loft space. This could potentially be used by bats, but only if external access could be gained. However, no evidence of any such entry/exit points for bats into the loft was found during the inspection due to the good condition of the roof. Therefore it is concluded that, in line with Natural England and Bat Conservation Trust guidelines, the risk assessment for the pub is low.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0.1 The visual inspection survey of the Cross Keys did not find any evidence of past or current use by bats. The overall likelihood of bats being present was graded as low based upon the findings of the building condition and visual inspection. Although possibilities existed for bats to enter into the building, the thorough search of all potential roosting areas revealed no signs of activity and it is considered that there is no reasonable likelihood that bats are present.

5.0.2 It is understood that the planned building works will involve complete demolition of the existing structure. **It is advised that no disturbance of bats or loss of roost potential is envisaged. No Natural England licence or mitigation measures are necessary in this instance as no impact upon bats is predicted.**

5.0.3 Although no bats were found, the following precautionary actions are recommended at this site:

- All contractors on the site should look out for bats during the works.
- In the event that any bats are found during the works, the client (and any sub-contractor) is reminded of their protected legal status. All works must cease immediately until advice on how to proceed has been sought from either Natural England or the Appointed Ecologist.
- If a bat is found and it is absolutely necessary to remove it to avoid immediate harm, gloves should be worn. The bat should be carefully caught in a cardboard box and kept in the dark in a quiet place until it can be released at dusk near to where it was found, or moved to an undisturbed part of the building, with outside access, and placed in a location safe from predators. THIS MUST ONLY BE DONE FOR WELFARE CIRCUMSTANCES. The legal protection afforded to bats does not make this an admissible way to destroy a bat roost. The Appointed Ecologist will advise on steps necessary to ensure legal compliance and working under license if a bat roost is found.

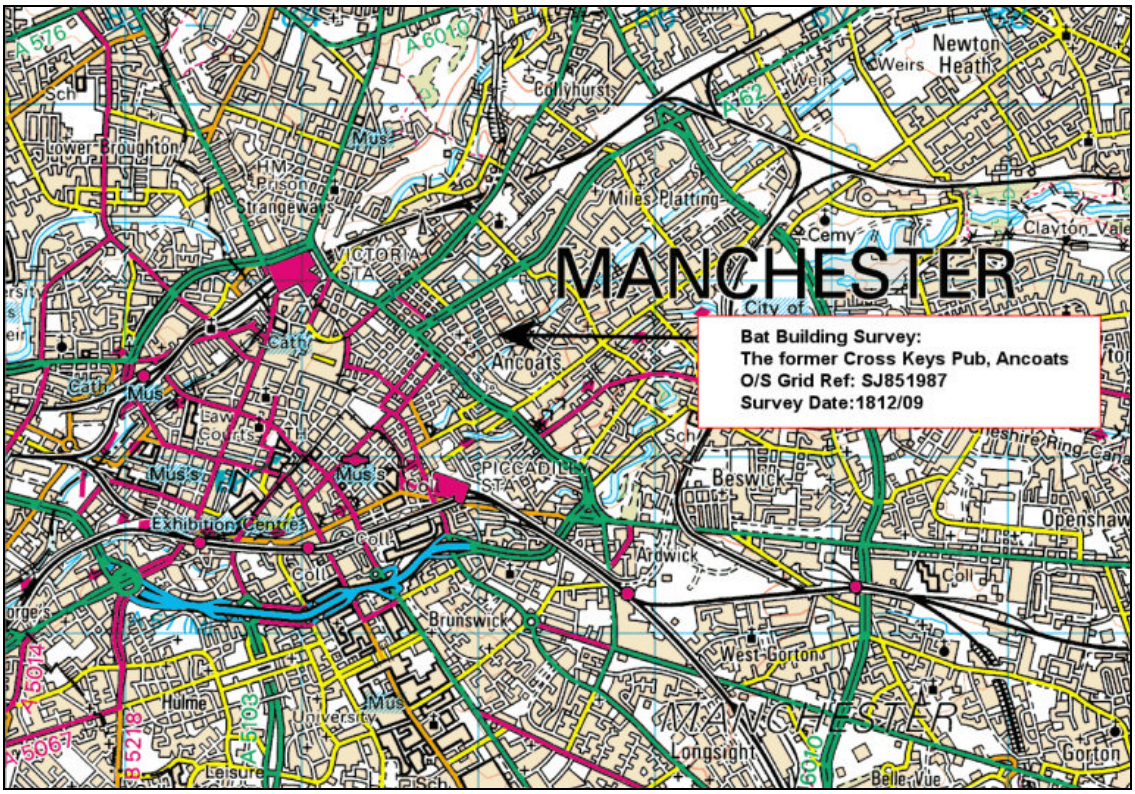
6.0 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2007). Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

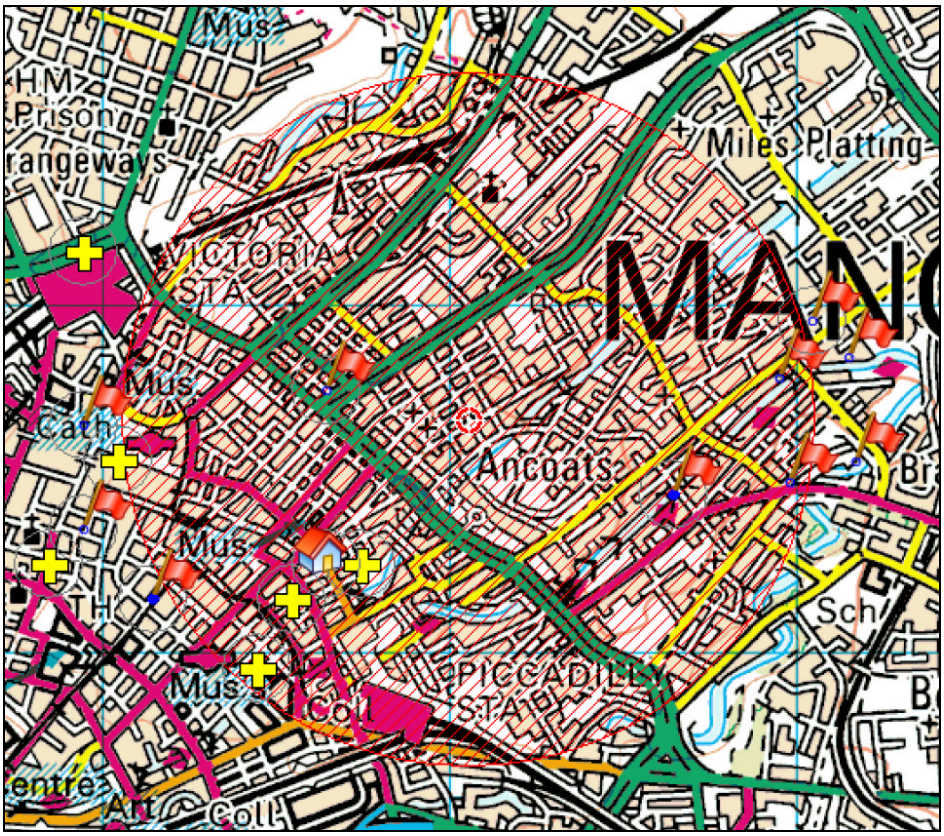
JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE (2001) *Bat Workers' Manual* (1999 version). JNCC, Peterborough.

MAPS

Map 1: Site Location Plan.



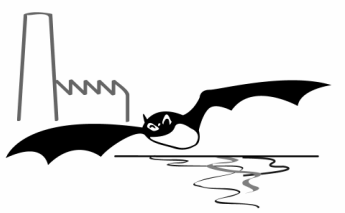
Map 2: Location of South Lancashire Bat Group records.



Appendix 1: South Lancashire Bat Group Desk Study Records Search.

South Lancashire Bat Group

Records Report



SOUTH LANCASHIRE BAT GROUP

Registered Charity Number 1109519

Simply Ecology Ecological Consultants
25 Bowerham Road
Lancaster
LA1 4AA

SLBG Ref SE.01.2009
Purchase Order Ref SLBG001

21st December 2009

Re: Bat Record Search at Ancoats

Neither the general area around the site, or the site itself on your request has been surveyed for bats, however casual sightings have been found in the area around your site as detailed below.

Please Note:

- The records are to be used only for the specific survey requested, and are valid only up until the date listed above.
- Records remain the property of South Lancashire Bat Group.
- **Your report should indicate that these records have been obtained from South Lancashire Bat Group.**
- **Lack of records does not indicate that bats do not use the area but simply that they have not been reported to the Bat Group.**

Browse records for 1.2 Km around Grid Reference [SJ850987]

Vernacular	GridRef	Qty	Date	Method	Stage	Status
Pipistrelle Species	SJ8398	1	26-Nov-1994	Field Record	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Common Pipistrelle	SJ845981	1m	08-Jun-2006	Casualty	Adult	Not Recorded
Pipistrelle Species	SJ8598	1	Jun-2004	Field Record	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Pipistrelle Species	SJ847982	1	07-Aug-2002	Casualty	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Pipistrelle Species	SJ841981	1	18-Mar-2003	Casualty	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Pipistrelle Species	SJ841981	1	25-Aug-2000	Field Record	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Pipistrelle Species	SJ840985	1	06-Oct-2004	Casualty	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Pipistrelle Species	SJ839986	1	01-Aug-2002	Field Record	Not Recorded	Not Recorded

Pipistrelle Species	SJ839983	1	08-Jan-1997	Field Record	Not Recorded	Dead
Pipistrelle Species	SJ838982	1	18-Sep-2001	Casualty	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Soprano Pipistrelle	SJ846987	1	19-Sep-2006	Field Record	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Common Pipistrelle	SJ86179854	1	23-May-2007	Aural Bat Detector	Adult	In Flight
Common Pipistrelle	SJ86159884	1	23-May-2007	Aural Bat Detector	Adult	In Flight
Common Pipistrelle	SJ85989848	1	23-May-2007	Aural Bat Detector	Adult	In Flight
Common Pipistrelle	SJ85959878	1	23-May-2007	Aural Bat Detector	Adult	In Flight
Pipistrelle Species	SJ846982	30	20-May-2008	Roost	Adult	Maternity roost
Common Pipistrelle	SJ844979	1	29-Apr-2005	Casualty	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Common Pipistrelle	SJ839991	1	31-Jul-2002	Casualty	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Pipistrelle Species	SJ860989	3	09-Sep-2003	Field Record	Not Recorded	Not Recorded
Common Pipistrelle	SJ856984	4	02-May-2008	Aural Bat Detector	Adult	Feeding
Common Pipistrelle	SJ856984	6	02-May-2008	Aural Bat Detector	Adult	Commuting

If you have any queries about this report please contact John Harrison on 0161 764 8850 (leave a message) or e-mail records.slbg@talktalk.net