



Report: Bat Roost Assessment – Trees, Mitford Close

For the Client:

Roopjani Kumar, Ayro Properties Limited

Issued on:

25 June 2025

Author:

Kelly Jones MSc MCIEEM

Introduction

The client, Roopjani Kumar of Ayro Properties Limited, contracted Kelly Jones of PAD Ecology to conduct further assessment of trees for roosting bats. These were identified during the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) undertaken by aLyne Ecology Ltd in March 2025.

The site is located on Mitford Close in Shinfield, Reading, which lies to the eastern side of Whitley Wood Road. The proposed development includes the construction of six two-storey dwellings with associated gardens and amenities, further details are located within the PEA Report.

As part of the PEA, a ground level assessment of trees was undertaken to assess their potential to support roosting bats. Eight trees were identified for further assessment required (FAR), due to the ivy growth which may have obscured suitable features within the trees.

Method

A field survey was conducted on 15 June 2025 by Kelly Jones MSc MCIEEM, a qualified ecologist with over 13 years' experience and who holds a Class 3 and 4 Natural England (NE) survey licence for bats (2020-45088-CLS-CLS and 2020-45091-CLS-CLS) and a CS38 certificate for climbing and aerial rescue (in trees).

Methods follow those described in the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, Fourth Edition (Collins, J. (ed.) 2023) and Bat Roosts in Trees: A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals (Bat Tree Habitat Key, 2018).

During the survey, close focussing binoculars and a high-powered torch were used to inspect trees, with a ladder, climbing kit and Ridgid Seesnake endoscope available where required to provide aerial access. Each tree was assessed from all angles to search for potential roost features (PRFs), such as rot holes, knot holes, woodpecker holes, frost cracks and tear outs, which extend into a cavity within the tree.

Results

All eight trees (T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T16, T28 and T29, refer to the PEA Report for locations) were inspected fully during the survey. Each of the trees supported young ivy growth, not of sufficient size to form plates which would provide a PRF in itself and sparse enough to allow a thorough visual inspection between stems.

No PRFs were identified.

Conclusion

Although aerial access was available during the field survey, it was not required to confirm the absence of PRFs within the eight trees categorised as FAR during the PEA. Furthermore, young and leafy ivy growth typically creates clutter around a tree stem and branches, which bats tend to avoid when selecting a roost location.

In the unlikely event that a bat roost feature has been obscured by the ivy growth, it would be pertinent to cut ivy from the trees prior to felling, under the direct supervision of a suitably licensed ecologist. Where ivy cannot be cut back, the tree may be 'soft felled' to allow visual assessment prior to cutting each stem or branch section.