

Endangered Bat hanging out in New Buckenham!



The Barbastelle is one of Britain's rarest bats and it's here in New Buckenham. It's listed as endangered or vulnerable in most European countries. It even has a "Species Action Plan" created by the Government to protect it. As part of our Neighbourhood Plan, we have joined the BTO's ground-breaking Norfolk Bat Survey, to establish what's whizzing round where! The project is enormous and a world first. <http://www.batsurvey.org/> Scientists now believe that bats are a valuable indicator of environmental

health. They need trees, water, insects and open fields. Currently they are threatened by development, chemical sprays and farming practices. We've monitored Barbastelles around the South side of the village from the Castle, along the old town ditch up to Turnpike Lodge on the Common. We've also recorded them whizzing around St Martin's Church. Of course, we only know how many flypasts there have been...not how many actual bats there were. Barbastelles tend to fly massive distances (15km a night, potentially) so who knows how many we've *actually* recorded...or is it just a small gang going round and round? Since you're not likely to get to see one close up we can tell you it has ears joined at the base and a pug nose, a wing span of 27 cms and a body length of 4.5cms.

There are 18 bat species in the UK. We have recorded at least 9 of them across 20 locations over 2 square kms stretching all across the village including the Castle, the Common, which is, of course an SSSI, and our bit of the Tas Valley Way. We have Noctules, Daubentons, Brown long-eared bats, Natterer's bats, Serotines, Pipistrelles, Soprano Pipistrelles, Whiskered or Brandt's bats. The NWT said "Excellent news. What good results!" The BTO said we were doing pretty well in the bat league, "In terms of species, at least, there's not much more that could be recorded". If you need more batty info contact info@NP4NB.online

