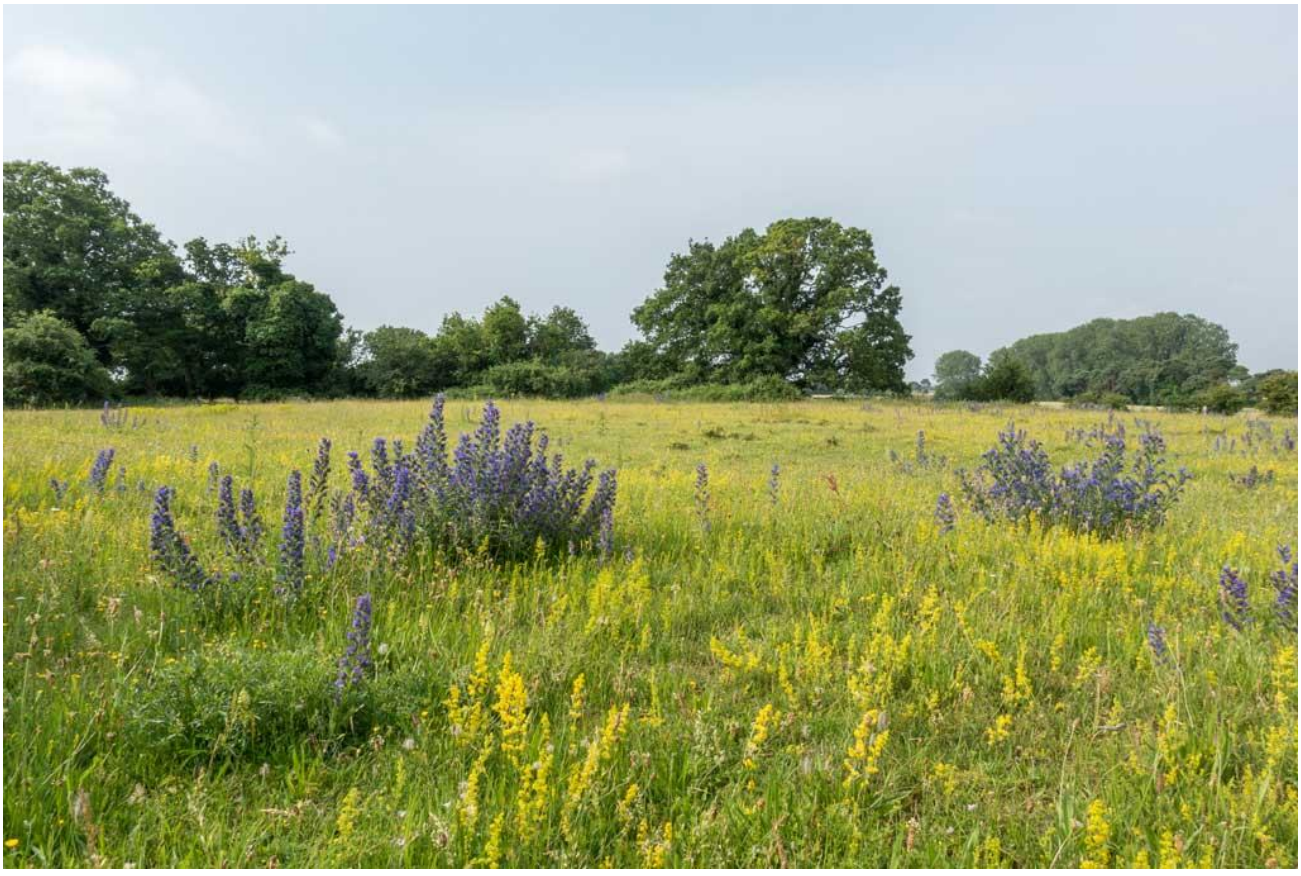
Worlington Parish

Bat Activity Survey

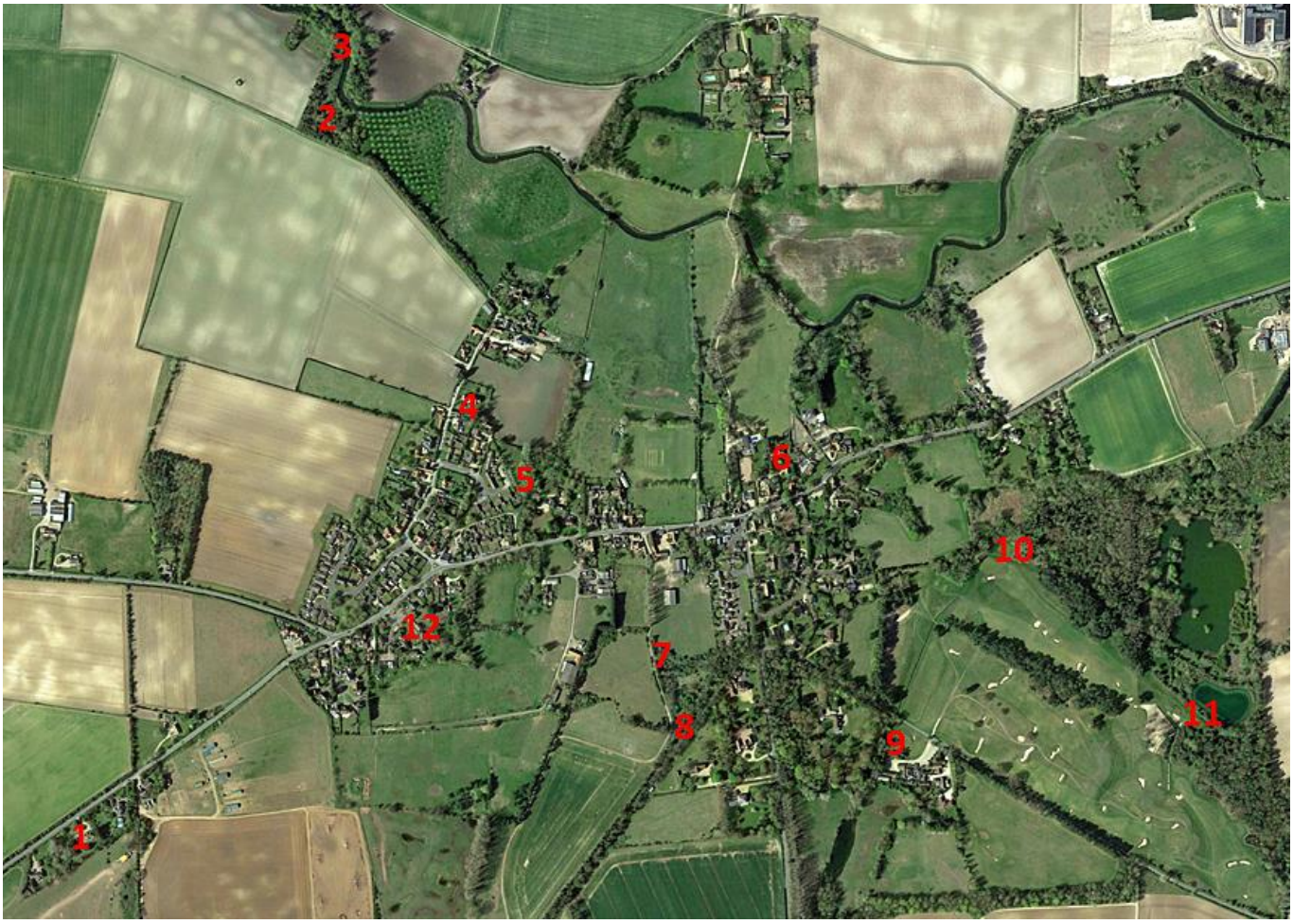
9th July 2021



1. Survey Methodology

The survey was carried out at various fixed points around the parish [see map]. The points were chosen because they were judged to offer good sheltered feeding areas for bats so as to maximize the amount of feeding activity detected.
Batbox Duet bat detectors were used in conjunction with digital recorders to record bat echolocation. Recording times were synchronized and ran for 90 minutes from sunset. Analysis was done on computer using Batscan and Batsound analysis programmes.

Survey Points, 9th July 2021



2. Summary of Results

Recording points 9th July 2021.

Point 1. TL68497309
Four species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, Noctule *Nyctalus nocula* and a Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*].

Point 2. TL68877431
Four species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* and a Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat or Daubentons bat *Myotis daubentonii*].

Point 3. TL68897444
Six species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Barbastelle, Noctule, Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri* and Daubenton's bat.

Point 4. TL69117385
Four species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule and a Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat].

Point 5. TL69227373
Six species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Barbastelle, Noctule, Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus* and a Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat].

Point 6. TL69647378
Four species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Barbastelle and a Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat].

Point 7. TL69437339
Five species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Barbastelle, Noctule and Serotine.

Point 8. 69547332
Six or more species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Barbastelle, Noctule, Serotine and Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat and possibly Daubenton's bat as well].

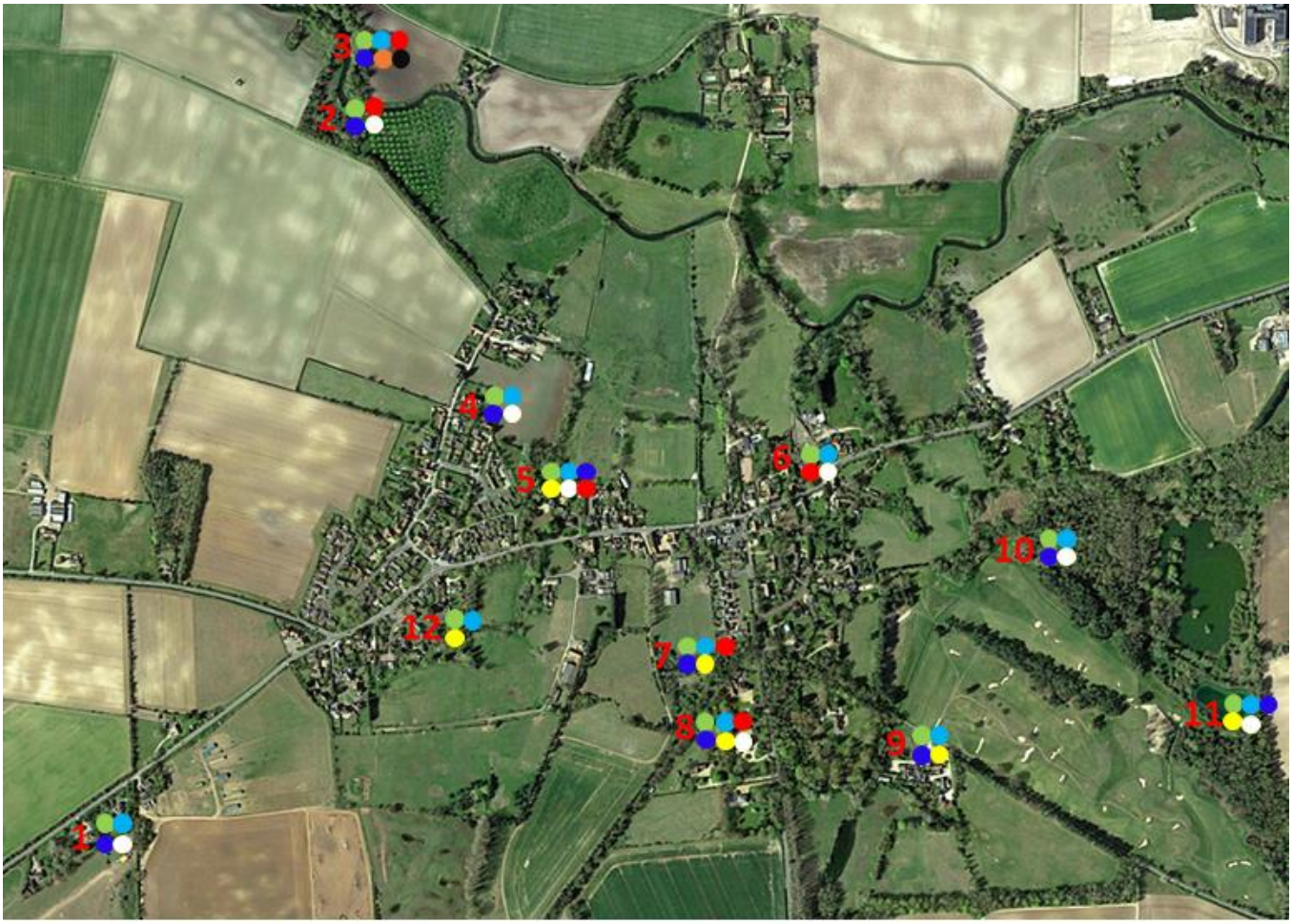
Point 9. TL69847331
Four species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule and Serotine.

Point 10. TL70057361
Four species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule and a Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat].

Point 11. TL70377335
Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule, Serotine and a Myotis species [probably Natterer's bat or Daubenton's bat].

Point 12. TL69057347
Three species were recorded. Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and a Serotine.

Species distribution 9th July 2021.



- Common Pipistrelle
- Soprano Pipistrelle
- Barbastelle
- Noctule
- Serotine
- Leislers
- Daubentons
- Myotis sp.

3. Conclusions

Both Common and Soprano Pipistrelle bats are widespread throughout the village. These bats will be roosting in a number of different buildings or trees depending on the time of year and weather conditions. In both species there will have been main maternity roost sites during June and July with other sites being used at other times.

Barbastelle bats were recorded at six different points. The Barbastelle bat is a nationally rare bat with a stronghold in East Anglia, even here it is still rare with colony sizes being small and very mobile. Barbastelle bats roost mainly in trees but will also use buildings. As this species is very mobile with the colony moving from roost to roost around the parish old trees are very important. Roost sites will be in holes and splits in both the trunk and branches and behind loose lifting bark on dead or lightning struck trees. Ivy is also is also very important for this species as it is known to roost in crevices between thick stems and the tree trunk.

Serotine bats were recorded at six of the points. The Serotine bat is one of our largest bats and is not very common. This species is only known to roost in buildings, usually large houses and barns, there is a known roost in the church. Serotines feed around woodland edges, along tall hedges and very low down over grassland which supports large insects including beetles and moths. The pastures behind Manor Farm and the stables on the south side of the village will be very important for foraging and they will fly along tree belts and hedgerows to get to these areas.

Daubenton's bats feed low over water, often using their feet to pick insects off the surface. They were recorded in good numbers along the river at the Hythe and will certainly be found along the whole length of the river in the parish. Daubenton's bats are known to roost in hollow riverside trees and nearby barns.

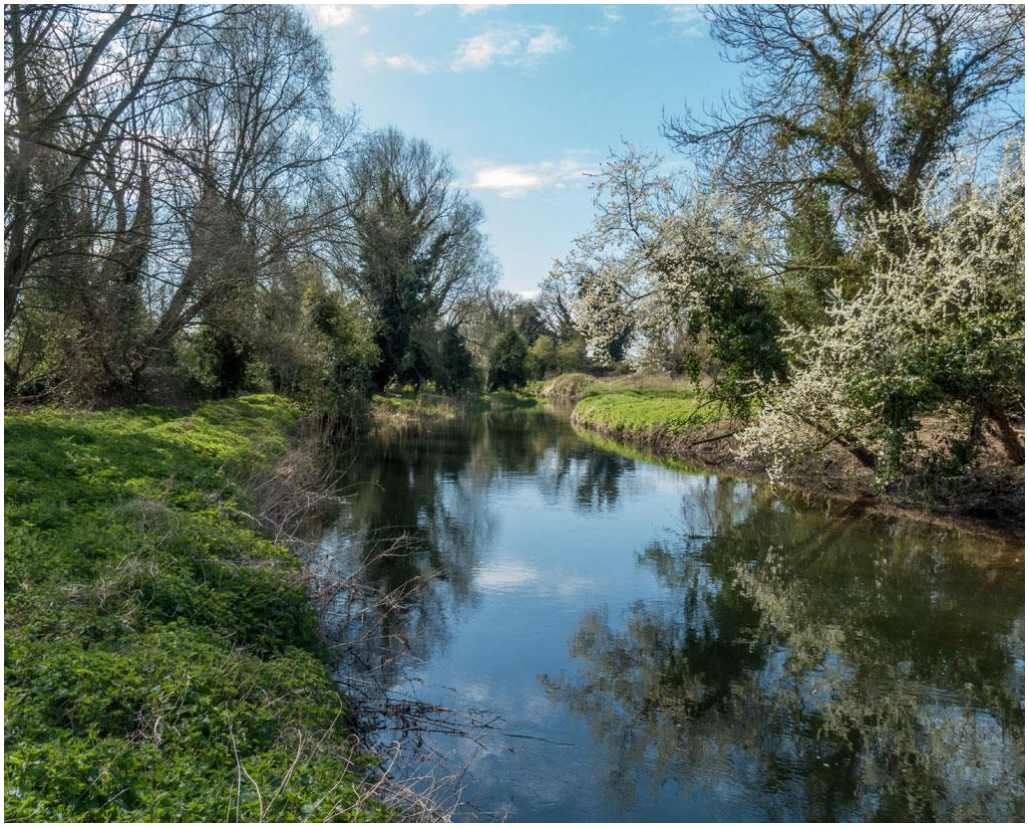
Noctule bats were recorded at ten of the survey points but as they fly high and travel long distances to feed several of the records could have been the same bat. The Noctule bat is still decreasing in numbers due to loss of roosting sites and good feeding areas. This is another of our largest bats almost always found roosting in tree holes, they have a particular liking for the old Breckland pine trees, often roosting in old woodpecker holes. They will fly up to twenty miles at night from roost sites to good feeding areas and can be seen flying over as the Swifts go to roost.

The Leisler's bat recorded at The Hythe is a smaller and rarer relative of the Noctule and will roost in buildings as well as trees. It was probably recorded at The Hythe because it was feeding along the river valley.

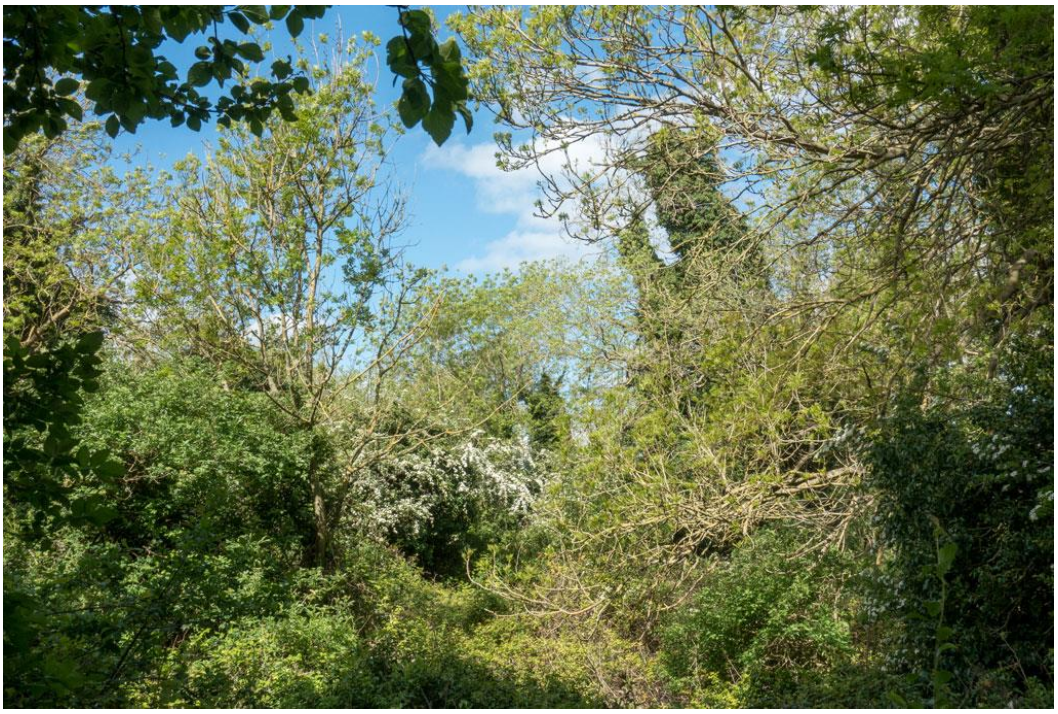
The Myotis bats recorded at eight of the points could be any one of the four species we have in Suffolk, these are Daubenton's bat, Natterer's bat, Whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus* and Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii.* The last two are very rare in Suffolk and the most likely species will be the Natterers's bat which is a species that mainly feeds around trees and roosts in both tree holes and buildings.

There is one other species that we do not pick up on the bat detectors but is widespread in Suffolk and will be present in the village, that is the Brown Long-eared bat *Plecotus auratus.* This bat has very quiet echo-location and such sensitive hearing that it can pick insects, particularly moths, off foliage while flying in amongst the tree branches. Brown Long-eared bats roost in both tree holes and the roof spaces of buildings, including modern houses, churches and barns.

The River Lark at the Hythe provides good foraging habitat.

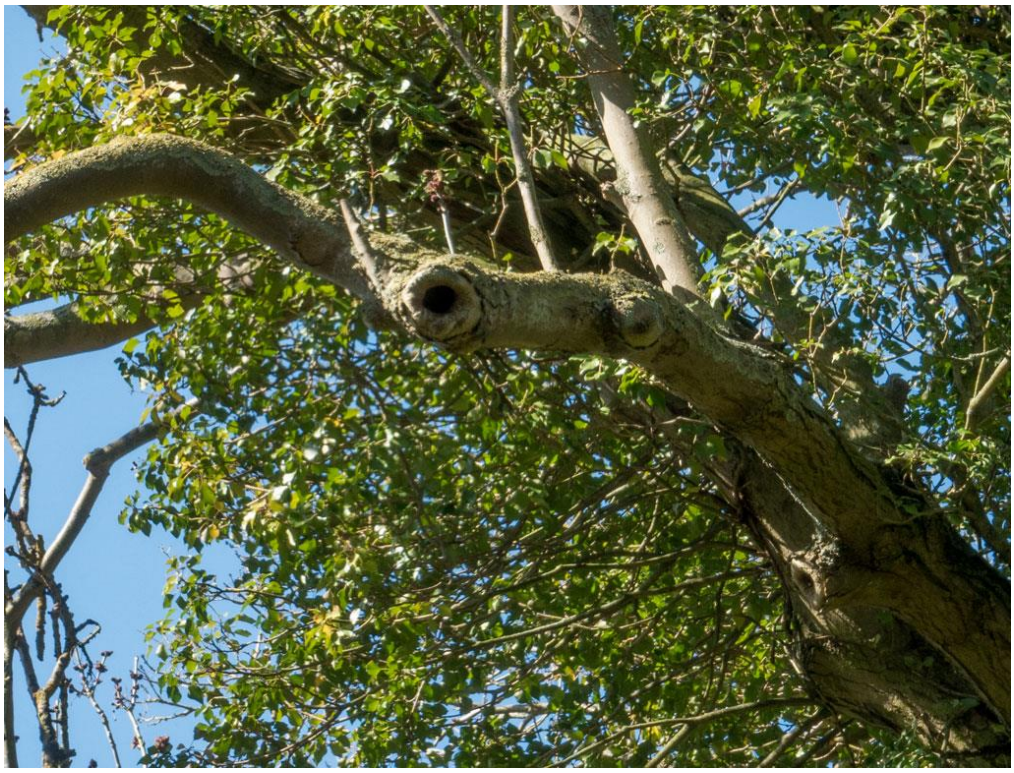


Woodland habitat at The Hythe, good for Barbastelle, Natterer's and Brown Long-eared bats.

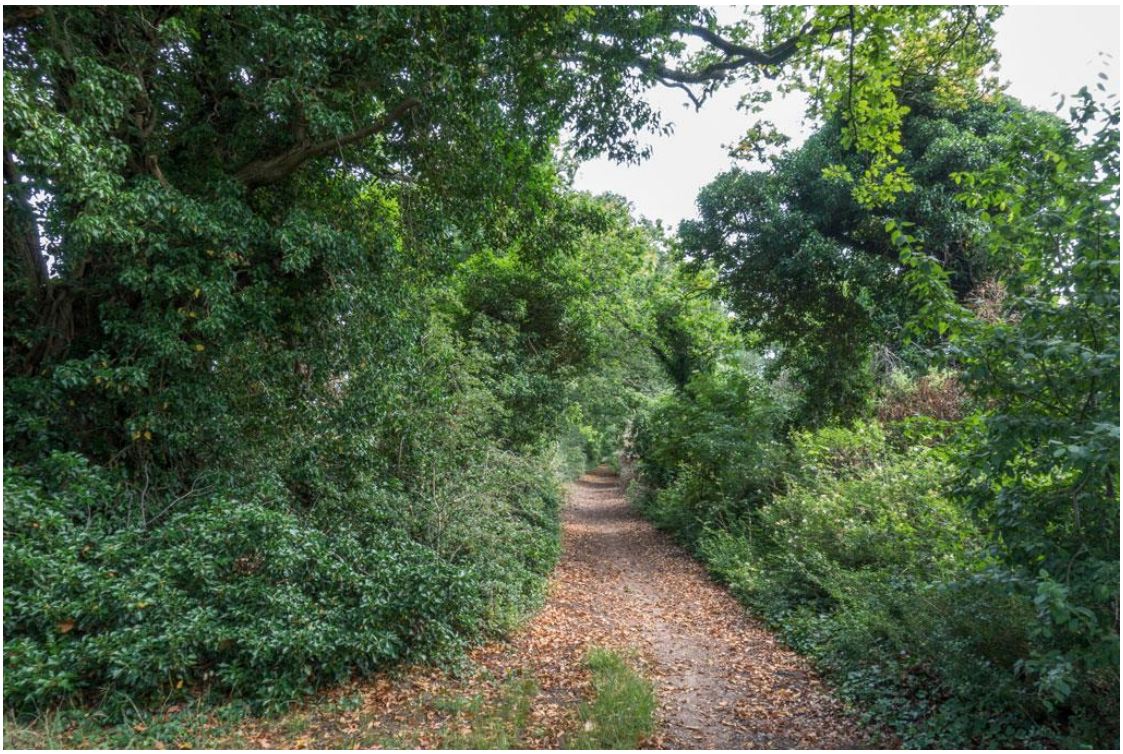


Example of typical roosting sites for Barbastelle bats.

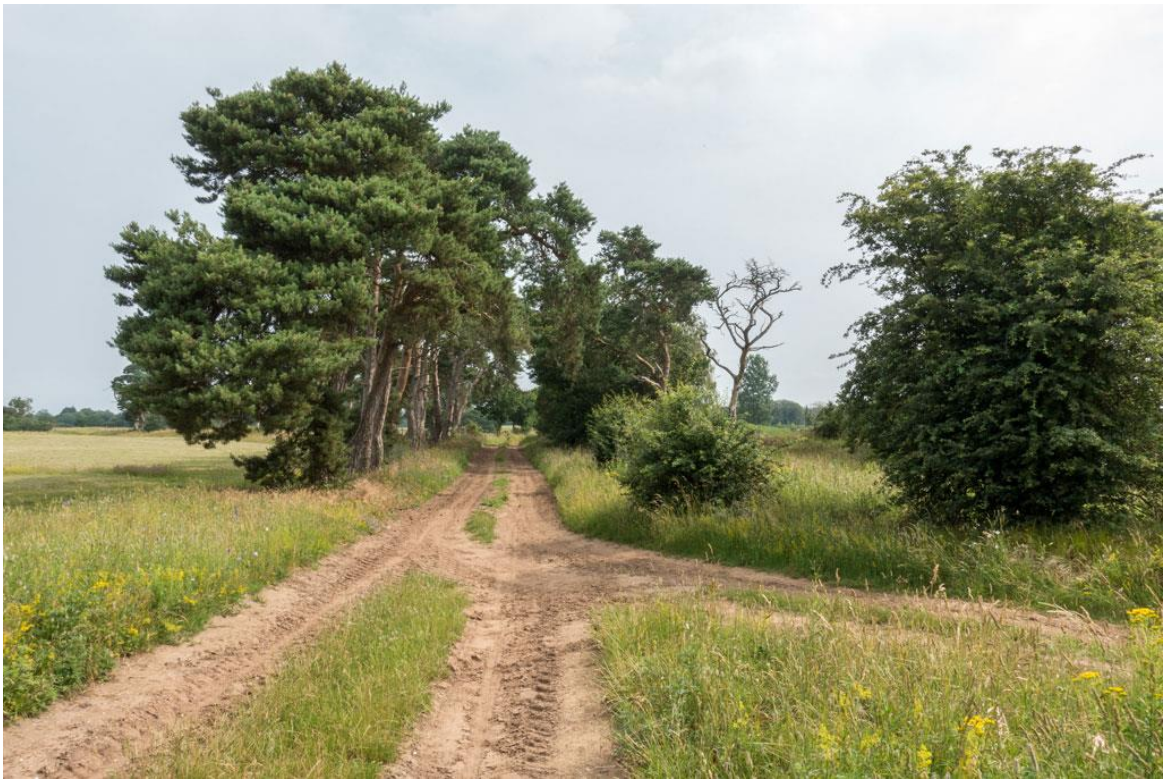
Tree hole at the Hythe suitable for bats.



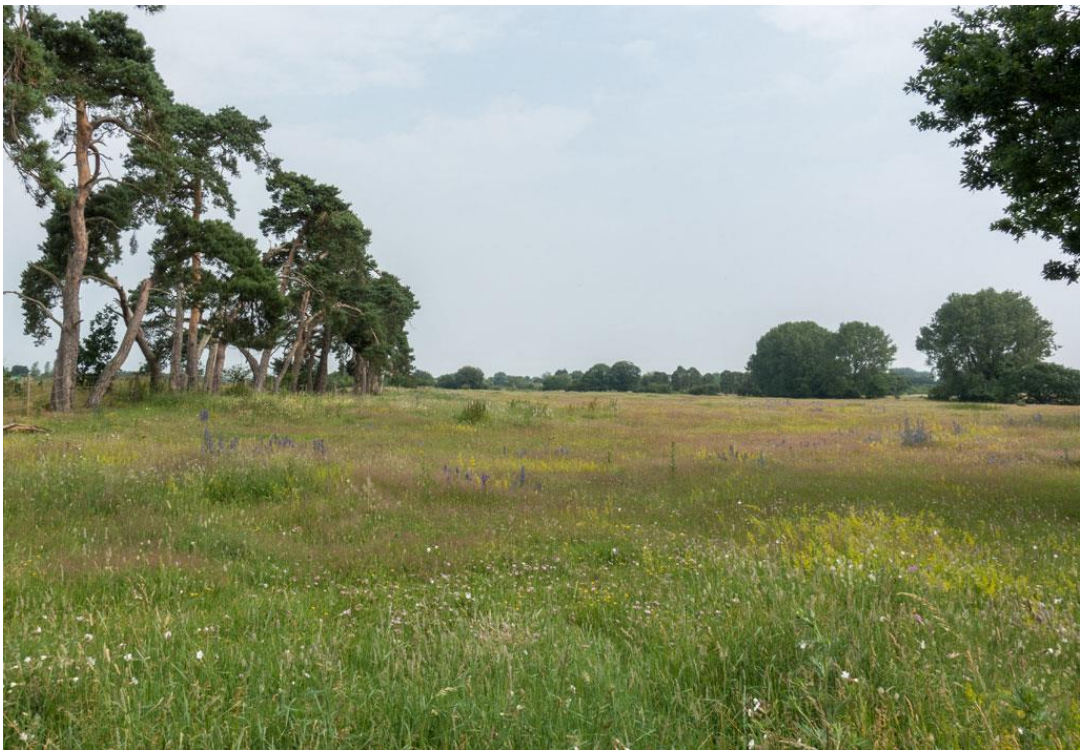
Badlingham Lane, good for foraging, commuting and roosting.



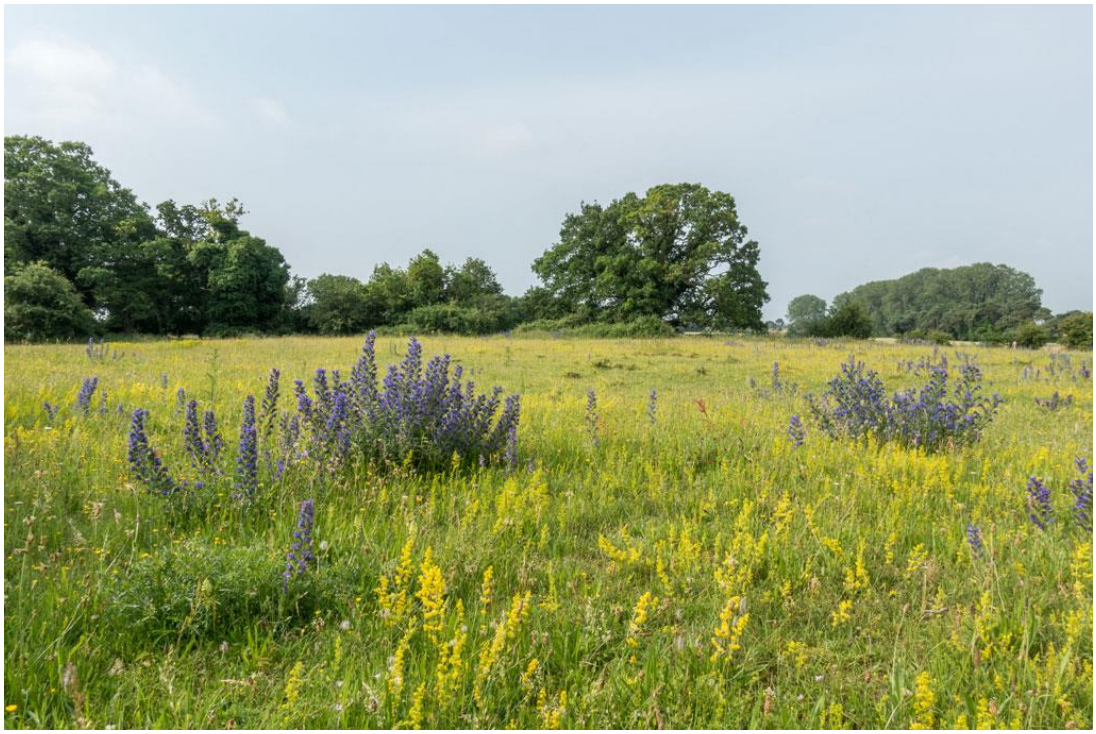
Old pine trees along Badlingham Lane offer good roosting potential.



Old pine trees for roosting and flower rich fields for foraging.



Flower rich pasture at Manor Farm, good for foraging.



4. Hibernation

It is likely that many of the older trees in the Parish will be used for hibernation for at least part of the winter, particularly by Barbastelle bats. Barbastelles are known to roost behind loose tree bark as well as in cavities and will only move to alternative sites during very cold weather [see examples below].

Examples of suitable hibernation sites for barbastelle bats.

5. Recommendations.

Leave dead standing trees as roosting sites.
Leave all trees with splits in the trunk and loose peeling bark as these are important roosting sites for Barbastelle bats.
Do not remove any wind damaged or dead branches from the old trees as the splits and holes in these also provide important roosting sites, often some distance from the main trunk.
Before carrying out work on any trees which may have cavities in them it is important that a thorough search is done to make sure no bats are present [contact the Bat Conservation Trust for advice].
Do not remove or kill mature Ivy on the large trees as it provides roosting sites for Barbastelle bats.
Retain and improve any hedgerows and tree belts that link roosting and foraging areas as these provide good commuting routes for bats.
Maintain any areas of open unimproved flower rich grassland which provides insects for foraging bats.
Maintain ponds etc. in an open condition as they provide good feeding sites for bats.

Acknowledgements.
Many thanks to volunteers from Worlington Parish and members of the Suffolk Bat Group for their help with the survey.

Arthur Rivett
Suffolk Bat Group
24th October 2021

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Suffolk Bat Group. www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/suffolkbatgroup

Bat Conservation Trust. www.bats.org.uk