Bat Group

End of Year Report 2026



Introduction

Our bat group was formed in August 2025 and we began recording and mapping bat activity in September 2025. This year we have been monitoring bat activity since April and have a full set of monthly records in our archive until October. Over time we are planning to use our records to examine changes in bat activity and bat species, which may be due to a variety of environmental factors. Bats play an important role in ecosystems and are highly relevant as indicators of environmental change.

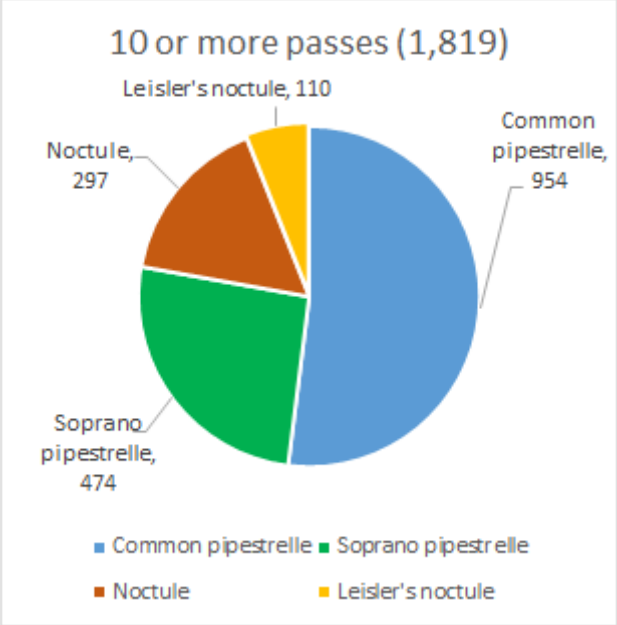
We continue to monitor three transects in the village:

Transect 1 – from Chapel Street to the suspension bridge – monitored by Chris and Wendy

Transect 2 – the Church orchard and Church field – monitored by Sylvia and Malcolm

Transect 3 – the full length of Low Mill Lane and Old Lane – monitored by Jackie and Ian

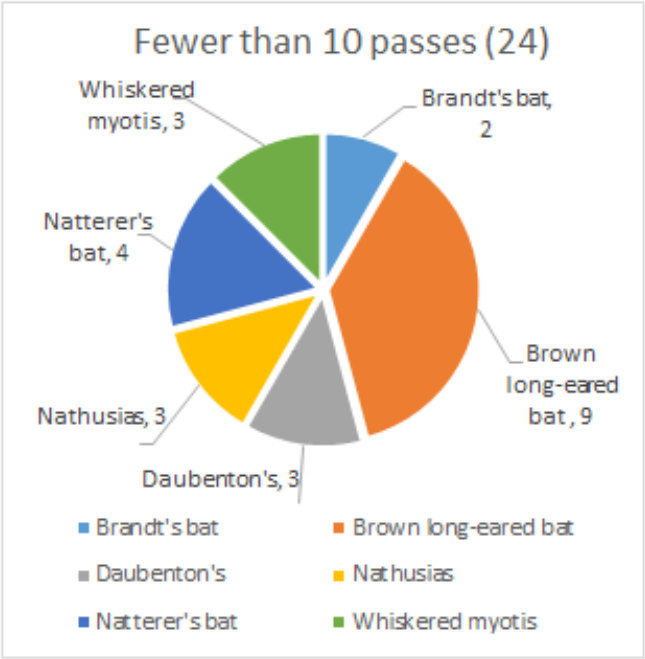
The most common species of bats recorded in the village are **Pipistrelles** and **Noctules**



Pipistrelles emerge around sunset and these are the bats you are most likely to spot. They have an erratic flight – twisting and turning around buildings, streetlights, trees and hedges. There are three species of pipistrelle that look very similar: the common pipistrelle, the soprano pipistrelle and the rarer Nathusius' pipistrelle.

The **noctule** is one of our biggest bats and they emerge early in the evening, just as it starts to get dark. They can sometimes be seen flying in a straight line, high overhead above the trees. The noctule looks about the same size as a starling and has distinctive narrow wings.

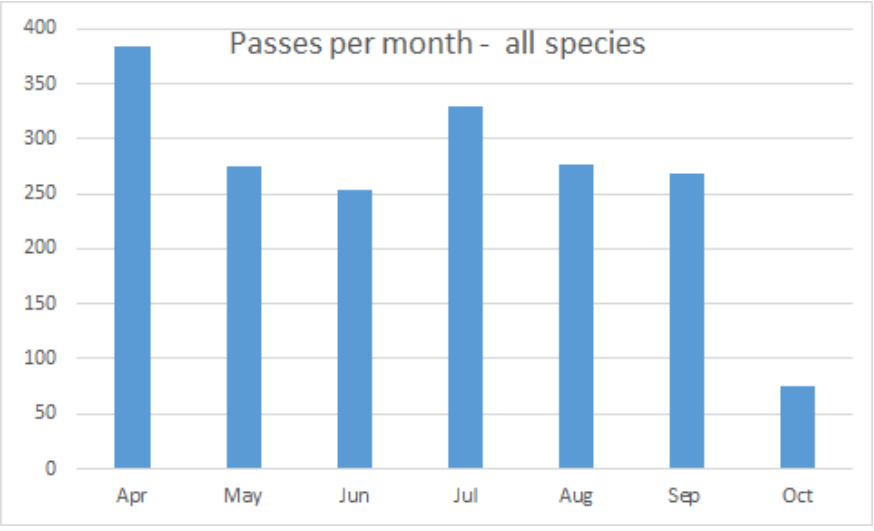
Other bat species detected were



Daubenton's – these bats can be seen flying very low over water, in a straight line, collecting insects from the surface of the water with their hairy feet.

Using a bat detector to identify bats

Bats use high frequency calls, normally beyond the range of human hearing, to build a sound picture of their surroundings. This system, called **echolocation**, enables them to fly though the night and hunt down even the tiniest of insects. Bats can consume thousands of insects in one evening. A **bat detector** makes the bats' echolocation sounds audible to humans. Different species echolocate at different frequencies. The bat detector will only record the number of bat **passes** ie the number of times a bat passes the detector, NOT the number of bats. These are the passes recorded for all species by month.



A table of all bat species detected by month is at **Appendix 1**

The National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP)

The NBMP is a long-running citizen science project, co-ordinated by the Bat Conservation Trust (since 1996), that enlists over 3500 volunteers to track bat populations. This information helps to estimate changes in bat populations across the UK.

This year we volunteered to take part in a Waterway Survey on behalf of the NBMP which took place on two occasions in August. The aim of the survey is to monitor Daubenton's bat populations along rivers and canals in the UK. Our survey area covered a one kilometre section of the Wharfe starting near Old Lane. We had 10 observation points but survey visibility was significantly reduced in places by the dense August foliage. We recently had a very positive meeting with Phil Jones, the General Manager of Ilkley Golf Club, and he has agreed we can carry out the NBMP survey on golf course land next year, which will significantly improve our view of the River Wharfe.

In accordance with the NBMP guidelines, surveys were conducted using heterodyne detectors rather than Touch Meters. To ensure data accuracy, bat passes picked up on the detectors have to be confirmed with a sighting of the bat skimming the water surface.

Catherine on Silsden Moor

Catherine monitors the curlew population on Silsden Moor on behalf of the AEG and she invited us to monitor the bat activity around her house and the adjoining woodland. We visited but there was a heavy mist when we arrived and this turned to fine rain during our visit ..... so conditions were less than ideal. We recorded Common Pipistrelles which were foraging around the house and under the woodland canopy. We also recorded a single Brown Long-Eared Bat. Our plan is to return next year to undertake further monitoring and to investigate a derelict barn close to the property which looks perfect for roosting bats.

Annual Community Bat Walk

Our annual walk took place on Tuesday, 29 September 2026. After morning rain cleared into a very warm afternoon the evening was unseasonably warm and balmy. We saw rather fewer bats than usual, and none at all around Bridge 55. This could have been for a variety of reasons. By this time of year bats are transitioning out of summer foraging into the mating and fat building phase before hibernation. They become more selective about when they fly. There were fewer midges, moths and flying insects around, probably due to the earlier rain and the heavy cloud cover, so the bats were probably conserving their energy and stayed in their roosts. We had an enjoyable walk and fielded lots of questions along the way.

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Appendix 1

2026 Number of bat species passes recorded

April

Transect T1	116	Transect T2	126	Transect T3	141	All transects	383
Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat	
Common pipestrelle	70	Common pipestrelle	103	Common pipestrelle	100	Common pipestrelle	273
Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine	
Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's	
Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe	
Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle	
Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule	1	Leisler's noctule	1
Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat	
Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias	
Natterer's bat	1	Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat	1
Noctule		Noctule		Noctule	2	Noctule	2
Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat	
Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle	
Soprano pipestrelle	45	Soprano pipestrelle	23	Soprano pipestrelle	38	Soprano pipestrelle	106
Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle	
Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	

May

Transect T1	86	Transect T2	22	Transect T3	167	All transects	275
Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat	
Common pipestrelle	32	Common pipestrelle	3	Common pipestrelle	63	Common pipestrelle	98
Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine	
Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's	
Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe	
Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle	
Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule	17	Leisler's noctule	17
Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat	
Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias	
Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat	
Noctule	10	Noctule	19	Noctule	72	Noctule	101
Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat	
Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle	
Soprano pipestrelle	44	Soprano pipestrelle		Soprano pipestrelle	15	Soprano pipestrelle	59
Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle	
Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	

June

Transect T1	78	Transect T2	65	Transect T3	110	All transects	253
Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat	
Common pipestrelle	30	Common pipestrelle	47	Common pipestrelle	40	Common pipestrelle	117
Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine	
Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's	
Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe	
Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle	
Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule	3	Leisler's noctule	3
Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat	
Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias	1	Nathusias	1
Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat	
Noctule	12	Noctule	1	Noctule	46	Noctule	59
Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat	
Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle	
Soprano pipestrelle	35	Soprano pipestrelle	17	Soprano pipestrelle	20	Soprano pipestrelle	72
Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle	
Whiskered myotis	1	Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	1

July

Transect T1	116	Transect T2	69	Transect T3	144	All transects	329
Brandt's bat	1	Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat	1
Brown long-eared bat	1	Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat	1
Common pipestrelle	61	Common pipestrelle	25	Common pipestrelle	106	Common pipestrelle	192
Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine	
Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's	
Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe	
Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle	
Leisler's noctule	2	Leisler's noctule	2	Leisler's noctule	4	Leisler's noctule	8
Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat	
Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias	1	Nathusias	1
Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat	
Noctule	13	Noctule	26	Noctule	8	Noctule	47
Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat	
Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle	
Soprano pipestrelle	38	Soprano pipestrelle	16	Soprano pipestrelle	24	Soprano pipestrelle	78
Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle	
Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	1	Whiskered myotis	1

August

Transect T1	80	Transect T2	76	Transect T3	120	All transects	276
Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat	
Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat	1	Brown long-eared bat	1
Common pipestrelle	56	Common pipestrelle	26	Common pipestrelle	23	Common pipestrelle	105
Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine	
Daubenton's	1	Daubenton's		Daubenton's	1	Daubenton's	2
Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe	
Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle	
Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule	1	Leisler's noctule	43	Leisler's noctule	44
Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat	
Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias	
Natterer's bat	3	Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat	3
Noctule	2	Noctule	38	Noctule	39	Noctule	79
Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat	
Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle	
Soprano pipestrelle	18	Soprano pipestrelle	11	Soprano pipestrelle	13	Soprano pipestrelle	42
Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle	
Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	

September

Transect T1	106	Transect T2	66	Transect T3	96	All transects	268
Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat	1	Brandt's bat	1
Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat	7	Brown long-eared bat	7
Common pipestrelle	38	Common pipestrelle	53	Common pipestrelle	37	Common pipestrelle	128
Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine	
Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's	1	Daubenton's	1
Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe	
Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle	
Leisler's noctule	31	Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule	3	Leisler's noctule	34
Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat	
Nathusias	1	Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias	1
Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat	
Noctule	1	Noctule	1	Noctule	6	Noctule	8
Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat	
Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle	
Soprano pipestrelle	35	Soprano pipestrelle	11	Soprano pipestrelle	41	Soprano pipestrelle	87
Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle	
Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	1	Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	1

October

Transect T1	2	Transect T2	11	Transect T3	62	All transects	75
Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat		Brandt's bat	
Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat		Brown long-eared bat	
Common pipestrelle		Common pipestrelle	8	Common pipestrelle	33	Common pipestrelle	41
Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine		Common serotine	
Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's		Daubenton's	
Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe		Greater horseshoe	
Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle		Khul's pipistrelle	
Leisler's noctule		Leisler's noctule	2	Leisler's noctule	1	Leisler's noctule	3
Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat		Long fingered bat	
Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias		Nathusias	
Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat		Natterer's bat	
Noctule	1	Noctule		Noctule		Noctule	1
Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat		Northern bat	
Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle		Savi's pipistrelle	
Soprano pipestrelle	1	Soprano pipestrelle	1	Soprano pipestrelle	28	Soprano pipestrelle	30
Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle		Western barbastelle	
Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis		Whiskered myotis	

End