

REGIONAL UPDATE

East Anglian Planning and Biodiversity Seminar

14th November 2019

Gen Broad

SUMMARY



Biodiversity Validation Requirements Checklist



Ecological Networks



Important Invertebrate Areas



Recreational disturbance Avoidance Mitigation Strategies

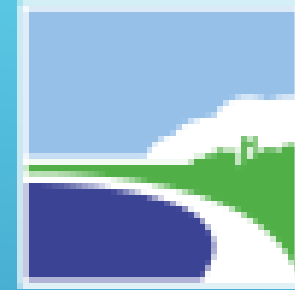
BIODIVERSITY VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

ESSEX

- ▶ Major applications - County wide checklist
- ▶ Minor & Householder applications
- ▶ Uttlesford and Braintree District Councils



BIODIVERSITY VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST



NORTH
NORFOLK
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

NORFOLK

- ▶ Each Council has an individual checklist
- ▶ Examples North Norfolk and South Norfolk Councils

SUFFOLK

- ▶ County-wide checklist hosted on SBIS website, linked to Council websites
- ▶ Updated Sep 2019



Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service

Suffolk Biodiversity Validation Checklist [[Click here to download pdf](#)]

Updated September 2019

Suffolk Biodiversity Validation requirements

A Biodiversity or Geodiversity Assessment: where the site includes or is close to:

- sites designated or proposed for their biodiversity or geodiversity importance, i.e. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites, County Wildlife Sites (CWS), and UK and Suffolk Priority (BAP) Habitats and Regionally Important Geological/geomorphologic Sites (RIGS) designations; See Tables 2 & 3.
- areas including or close to recorded locations of Protected species, and UK and Suffolk Priority species; See Table 1; and;
- other areas identified in pre-application discussions as potentially containing Protected and Priority species.

Where Assessment is required according to the development type and Species affected, as identified in Tables 2 and 3, the appropriate seasons for undertaking ecological surveys are identified in Figure 2 attached to Table 1.

Where there are likely to be biodiversity impacts associated with a proposed development, Suffolk planning authorities will determine the planning application in accordance with Clauses 7, 8 and 9 of BS42020 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development* (2013). In doing so, this provides applicants with a transparent process that is in accordance with a nationally recognised professional standard.

In addition to these biodiversity validation requirements, other information may be requested by the LPA as part of the determination of an application. These can include information to inform Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) provided by the applicant to enable the LPA to prepare HRA screening report.

TABLE 1
Local Requirement for Protected Species, UK Species of Principal Importance (Priority Species):
Criteria and Indicative Thresholds (Trigger List) for when a Survey and Assessment is Required with an Application to meet BS42020:2013

Column 1												
Proposals for Development That Will Trigger a Survey for the relevant Protected Species	Bats	Barn Owls	Breeding Birds	Gr. Crested Newts	Otters	Dormouse	Water vole	Badger	Reptiles	Amphibians	Sensitive Plants & Fungi Slag Bevels	Acute/Invertebrates Other Priority species
Proposed development which includes the modification, conversion, demolition or removal of buildings and structures (especially roof ends) involving the following:	•	•	•									
• all agricultural buildings (e.g. farmhouses and barns) particularly of traditional brick or stone construction and/or with exposed wooden beams greater than 200m thick;	•	•	•									
• all buildings with weather boarding and/or hanging tiles that are within 200m of woodland and/or water;	•	•	•									
• pre-1900 detached buildings and structures within 200m of woodland and/or water;	•	•	•									
• pre-1914 buildings within 400m of woodland and/or water;	•	•	•									
• pre-1914 buildings with gable ends, peg tile or slate roofs, regardless of location;	•	•	•									
• all tunnels, mines, kilns, ice-houses, adits, military fortifications, air raid shelters, cellars and similar underground ducts and structures;	•	•	•									
• all bridge structures (especially over water and wet ground).	•	•	•		•		•					
Proposals involving lighting of churches and listed buildings or flood lighting of green space within 50m of woodland, water, field hedgerows or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water.	•	•	•			•						
Proposals affecting woodland, or field hedgerows and/or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water bodies.	•	•	•			•		•			•	•
Proposed tree work (felling or lopping) and/or development affecting:												
• old and veteran trees that are older than 100 years;	•	•	•									•
• trees with obvious holes, cracks or cavities;	•	•	•									
• trees with a diameter greater than 1m at chest height.	•	•	•									

Appendix B ECOLOGICAL SURVEY SEASONS

Key: Optimal Survey Time ■ Extending into ■

The survey calendar below broadly indicates appropriate survey periods – for further details, reference should be made to published guidance and mitigation guidance documents listed below.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Badgers	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bats (Hibernation Roosts)	■	■	■								■	■
Bats (Summer Roosts)				■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Bats (Foraging/Commuting)				■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Birds (Breeding)			■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
BIRDS (Over Wintering)	■	■									■	■
Dormice					■	■	■	■	■			
Great-Crested Newts TERRESTRIAL			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
AQUATIC		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Invertebrates				■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Amphibians		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Otters	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Reptiles				■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Water Voles			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
White-Clawed Crayfish						■	■	■	■	■		
Habitats/Vegetation	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

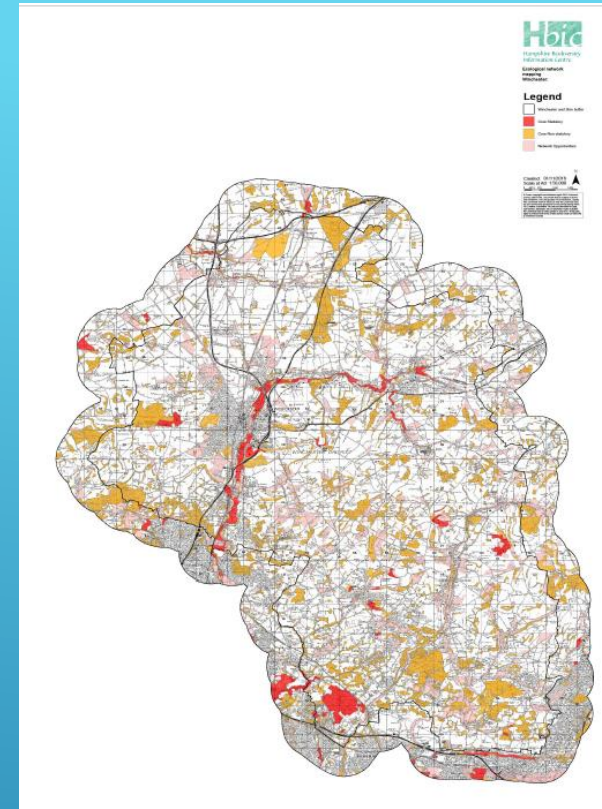
Points to note regarding surveys are as follows:

- It is important that surveys for protected (and priority) species are carried out at an appropriate time of year, as indicated by published guidance and/or nationally recognised survey guidelines/methods where available. This is so that there is the greatest chance of detecting protected (and priority) species if present. At other times of year, it can be very difficult to detect protected (and priority) species as their levels of activity decrease as temperatures decline and the weather worsens, they take refuge in areas that are difficult to access and bad weather destroys evidence of their presence. Therefore, surveys undertaken at an inappropriate time of year will not provide a true reflection of the likely impacts of a proposed development on protected (and priority) species.
- For certain species and habitats surveys can be carried out at any time of year, but for other species, particular times of year are required to give the most reliable results, as indicated above.
- Surveys conducted outside of optimal times will be unreliable. As a consequence, there may be insufficient information for determination of an application. For certain species (e.g. Great Crested Newt) surveys over the winter period are unlikely to yield any useful information. Similarly, negative results gained outside the optimal period should not be interpreted as absence of a species and further survey work may be required during the optimal survey season. This is especially important where existing surveys and records show the species has been found previously on site or in the surrounding area.

ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS

Suffolk

- ▶ Ecological Network Project – early stages
- ▶ Aim – to provide a dynamic toolkit comprising a register of local opportunities for connecting and enhancing sites.



ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS

Norfolk

MEOW project – Making Earth Observation Work - Norfolk Living Map

Modelled by Environment Systems to create habitat networks - www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/ecological-networks/

Example: Norfolk's stock map and network opportunity maps for grassland and heath

Map 1 - Grassland and Heath Network Stock Map

Ecosystem service: Biodiversity - Habitat Connectivity

- Core
- Stepping stone
- Least permeable habitat
- Most permeable habitat

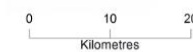
What the ecosystem service is:
Existing semi-natural grassland and heath network within which species can move and spread to maintain genetic diversity. The network comprises the larger areas of existing semi-natural grassland and heath (core habitats), smaller areas of these habitats (stepping stones), and the surrounding land which species from the core habitats can travel through (permeable habitat).

Why it is important:
Areas of native habitat that are joined together in a landscape are more resilient to changing climate or management. Within the network restoration of grassland and heath will be far more effective as propagules, pollinators and important species will be available. Inside the network habitats generally provide a higher level of other ecosystem services, such as the ability to clean or regulate water flow as the habitats function as a complete system (sometimes called steady state system). Grassland and heath are particularly important for their support of pollinator species.

How it was created:
The map was created using information and data on habitat gathered from existing surveys and supplemented with analysis of remote sensing data.

The map has been created at a strategic level and is only indicative at the field level due to the data sets used. Therefore, a field visit should be undertaken to verify the exact ground conditions before any specific management decision are taken.

Cartography by Environment Systems Ltd. Version: February 2017.
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Map 4 - Grassland and Heath Network Opportunity Map

Ecosystem service: Biodiversity - Habitat Connectivity

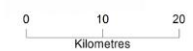
- Current restoration sites provided during stakeholder review
- Conifer in area containing peat - Opportunity for habitat restoration
- Existing core / stepping stone
- Opportunity around existing core
- Opportunity around existing stepping stone
- Opportunity within existing network

What the ecosystem service is:
This map illustrates the opportunities to enhance the grassland and heathland network. Sites are highlighted that could be added to the network and their spatial relation to the existing habitat within which species can move and spread to maintain genetic diversity. Preferred opportunity areas have the most likelihood of establishing fully functioning semi-natural habitats whilst potential areas may take more effort to establish semi-natural communities.

Why it is important:
Areas of native habitat that are joined together in a landscape are more resilient to changing climate or management and generally provide a higher level of other ecosystem services, such as the ability to clean or regulate water flow as the habitats function as a complete system (sometimes called steady state system). This map highlights where restoration of habitat will be far more effective if soil and habitat conditions are right and if the area is part of the network.

How it was created:
The map was created using information and data on habitat gathered from existing surveys and supplemented with analysis of remote sensing data. The map has been created at a strategic level and is only indicative at the field level due to the data sets used, therefore, a field visit should be undertaken to verify the exact ground conditions before any specific management decision are taken.

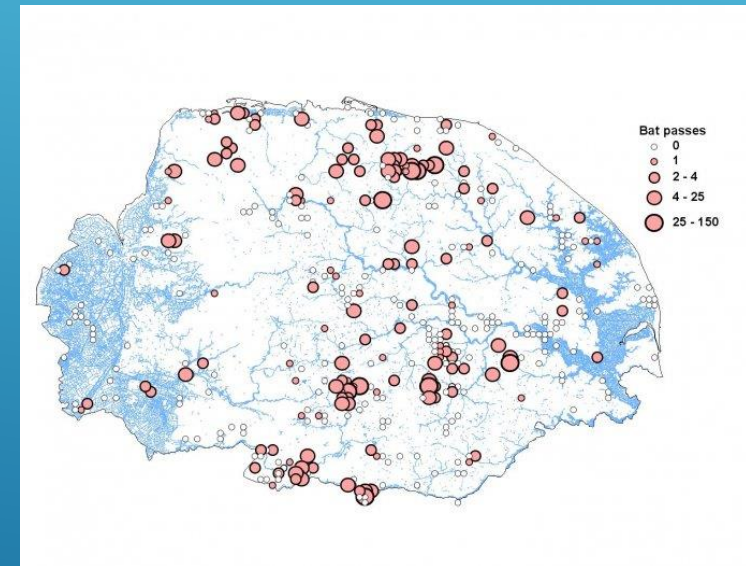
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ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS

Norfolk

- Natural England's Great Crested newt maps to support GCN district licencing project.
- Bat distribution maps modelled by Stuart Newson, BTO using Norfolk Bat Survey data.
- Local bat conservation plan for Norfolk and 'sensitivity maps' for various species.



ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS

▶ Essex

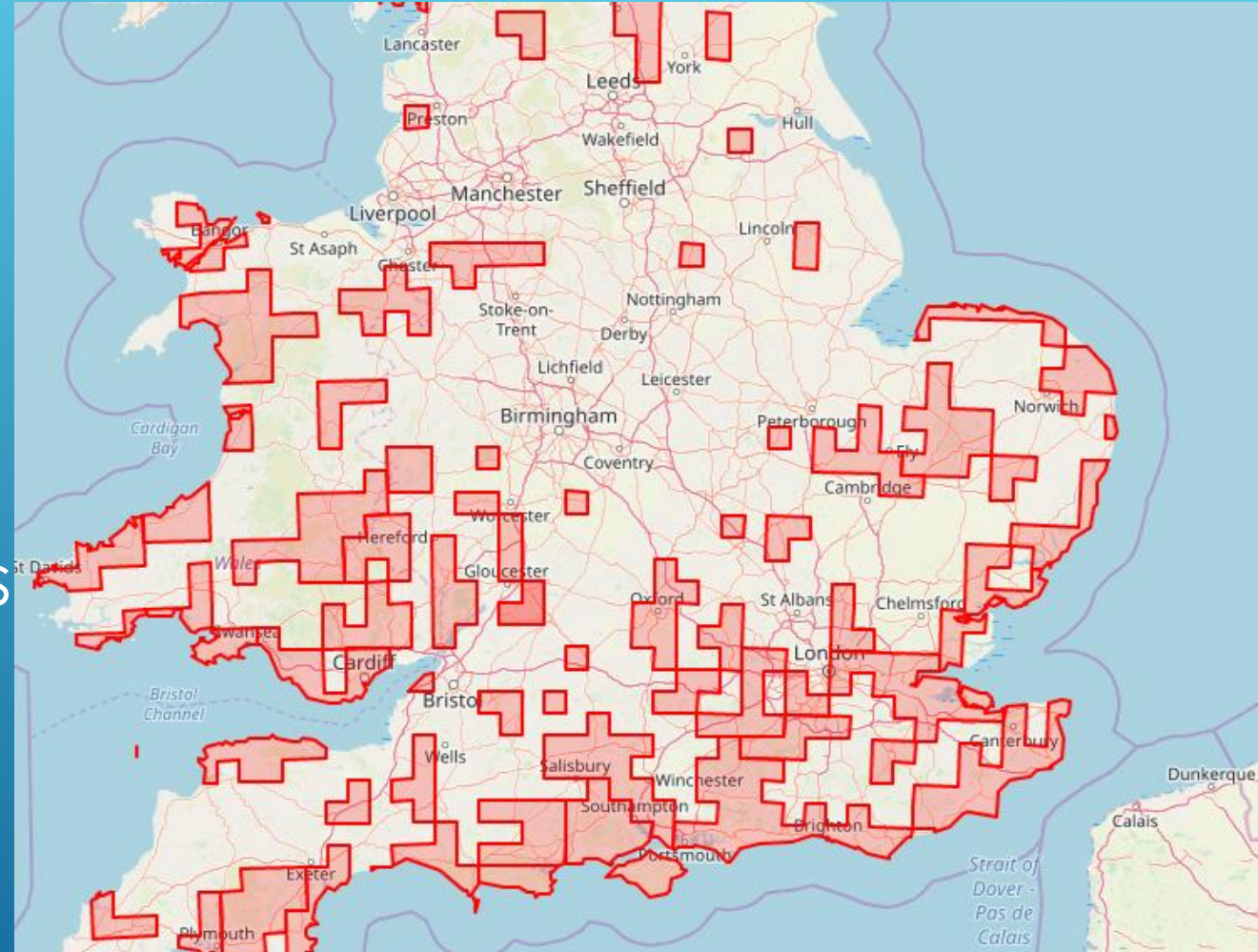
- ▶ Colchester Borough Council Biodiversity Strategy
- ▶ Two sources of records – Essex Field Club and Essex Wildlife Trust Records Centre
- ▶ EWT Biological Records Centre sit on the Essex Special Roadside Verges Project
- ▶ Castle Point Borough Council strategic biodiversity assessment. Guidance on net gain, offsetting and other compensation measures.




Essex Wildlife Trust Biological Records Centre

IMPORTANT INVERTEBRATE AREAS - ESSEX

- ▶ Support local authorities
- ▶ Embed areas in data searches
- ▶ Ensure early identification to prevent later delays
- ▶ Info: Buglife / resources / important invertebrate areas
- ▶ Good Practice Planning for Invertebrates



RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

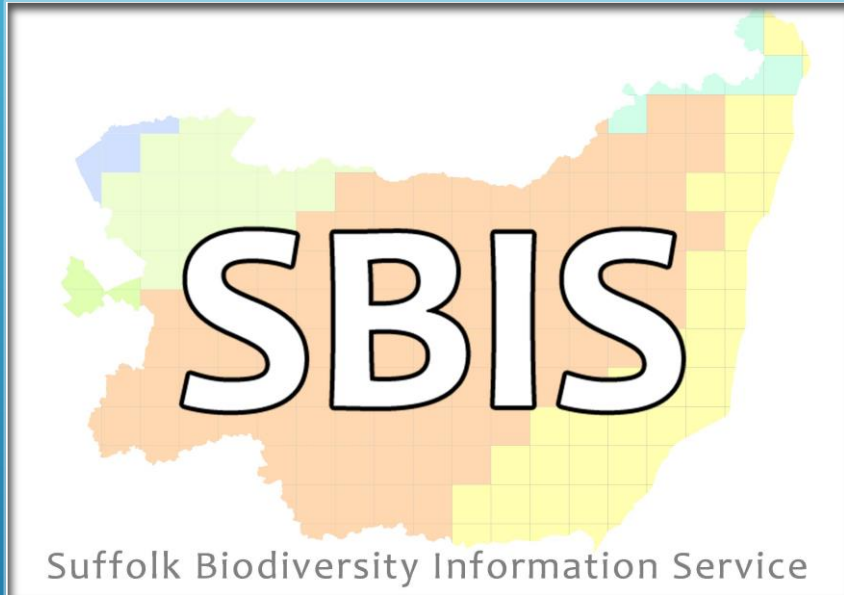
- ▶ Essex Coast RAMS published Jan 2019, SPD consultation due early 2020. 11 authorities involved.
 - ▶ Epping Forest RAMS in preparation (managed by City of London Corporation), involves London boroughs and Herts and local plans.
 - ▶ Suffolk Coast RAMS – set up phase now.
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SUFFOLK

- Suffolk Coast RAMS – Ipswich Borough, Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts, East Suffolk Councils working together.
- East Suffolk – published already, no SPD needed, collecting contributions against strategy.
- Ipswich – Supplementary Planning Document needed. Consultation.
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk – going to Cabinet for approval in November, collecting contributions for bespoke measures.



Habitats Regulations Assessment
Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and
Mitigation Strategy for Ipswich Borough,
Babergh District, Mid Suffolk District and
East Suffolk Councils – Technical Report



THANK YOU FOR
LISTENING!

