

BADGER *MELES MELES* SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

Although the badger is not a priority species in the UKBAP it is listed as a species of conservation concern. It is a victim of persecution in Caerphilly county borough and is therefore considered an important species for conservation locally.

Relevant Legislation/Species Status	
priority species (P) or species of conservation concern (S)	S
EC Habitats and Species Directive	-
Conservation Regulations 1994	-
Berne Convention 1982	Appendix III
Bonn Convention 1979	-
CITES 1975	-
WCA 1981	Sch. 6
Other Legislation	Protection of Badgers Act 1992



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2. CURRENT STATUS

2.1 UK and Wales

The badger has a widespread distribution, in woodlands and farmland areas throughout Britain and Wales. However, due to various pressures it has become rare and even extinct in some areas. A national study conducted in the mid-1990s (Bristol University) suggested that badger numbers are generally stable in the UK, but some areas of South Wales were shown to be declining²⁵.

2.2 Caerphilly County Borough

The badger is known throughout most of the county borough, in deciduous and coniferous woodlands. However, there are few records for the northern part of the Rhymney Valley, where there are less wooded areas. They can be quite numerous on lower slopes and pasture, and are found in both rural and urban areas. As it is nocturnal, regular observations are rare.

2.3 Links with Habitats

- **Deciduous Woodlands**
- *Planted Coniferous Woodland*
- *Species-rich Grasslands*
- *Wildlife Corridors* (hedgerows)
- *Common Land*
- *Post-Industrial Land* (re-vegetated colliery tips)

3. CURRENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE SPECIES

- Loss of habitat through urbanisation and road construction, in particular feeding habitat such as grassland. Increased road casualties and incidents of sett disturbance is also linked to existing and new housing, road and industrial developments (the number of badgers being killed on the roads is not accurately recorded).

- Deliberate mortality from persecution by farmers, land managers and members of the public because of worries about livestock, through the 'sport' of badger baiting, involving the digging of setts and setting of dogs onto the captured badger.
- Lack of knowledge of the species and its habitat and conservation requirements, particularly livestock farmers.

4. CURRENT ACTION

- 4.1 Membership of local badger groups (Gwent, Glamorgan). These groups carry out monitoring and surveillance of setts in an attempt to deter and reduce digging and lamping incidents. Badger Groups and local constabulary liaise with landowners and farmers.
- 4.2 Gwent Police (Wildlife Liaison Officers) enforce national legislation such as the WCA 1981 and the Badger Act 1992, particularly in circumstances of sett disturbance and persecution.
- 4.3 EN has produced a useful leaflet entitled *Badger Guidelines for Developers*¹³.

5. OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

5.1 UK Objectives and Targets

Not applicable to this species.

5.2 Caerphilly Objectives and Targets

- 5.2.1 Maintain the current populations of badgers on known sites in the county borough. (Target: ongoing)
- 5.2.2 Carry out survey work to identify further sites (in particular, the northern Rhymney Valley) and as a part of the planning process for any new developments. (Target: 2003 and ongoing).

6. ACTION AND KEY PARTNERS

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by:								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6.1 Policy and Legislation											
6.1.1 Seek to ensure that badgers are taken into account in all new roads, bridges, industrial, commercial and residential developments.	CCBC	GBdG GLBdG	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.2 Site Safeguard and Management											
6.2.1 Protect and prevent further loss of feeding habitats. Pursue planning refusals or satisfactory mitigation where proposed development threatens to erode these vital areas.	CCBC	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by:								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6.3 Species Management and Protection											
6.3.1 Ensure badger surveys are undertaken before any developments are given planning permission and as part of a routine monitoring scheme.	CCBC	GBdG, GLBdG	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3.2 Encourage people to report persecutions, digging, baiting, sett disturbance, etc. to the police and the local badger groups, providing an emergency contact number in any publicity materials and other items.	GBdG GLBdG	Gwent Police	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3.3 Continue to implement wildlife legislation.	Gwent Police	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.4 Advisory											
6.4.1 Produce and disseminate information about badgers to farmers and other landowners and land managers, including sympathetic habitat management advice and information on the behaviour of the species on farmland and in relation to the safety of livestock.	CBP	GLBdG Coed Cymru	✓	✓							
6.5 Future Research and Monitoring											
6.5.1 Continue to monitor all existing sites for population density, behaviour and any possible threats such as badger-digging/baiting evidence.	GBdG GLBdG	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.5.2 Seek to expand sett monitoring and surveying to further deter digging and lamping activities through local group and possible community groups.	GBdG GLBdG	-	✓								
6.6 Communications and Publicity											
6.6.1 Encourage membership of badger groups and/or local wildlife trusts to promote the badger in the area.	CBP	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.6.2 Provide schools and colleges in the county borough with information in order to educate children, parents and teachers about the conservation status of badgers in the local area. Promote the need for reporting of sightings, road accidents and sett disturbance incidents to local Badger Groups.	CBP	Schools, Youth Forum		✓							