

## **Inis Environmental Consultants**

### **Knockanean House Lesser Horseshoe Bat Roost Visit**

#### Visit Information

Inis Environmental Consultants are planning a staff visit on February 10<sup>th</sup> to the artificial Lesser Horseshoe Bat Roost at Knockanean House which was implemented for mitigation as part of the Ennis bypass. Howard Williams, our managing director, contributed to the planning and design process of the roost.

#### Purpose of Visit

The purpose of the visit is to educate our staff on the behaviour and ecology of Lesser Horseshoe Bat. This includes the mitigation measures required for avoiding impacts of large-scale construction projects on the species and the techniques used in the design and implementation of these mitigation measures.

#### Alternatives to Proposed Visit

There are several alternatives to this planned visit:

1. Do nothing scenario - We could not carry out the visit to this roost or any other roost. This would result in us not learning about the mitigation measures implemented to protect this species and miss out on the opportunity to use this work to improve our understanding of the methods used for bat conservation in Ireland.
2. Visit during another time of year (breeding season) - This is an active breeding Lesser Horseshoe bat roost. If we visit during the breeding season the chance of causing disturbance to the bats would be much higher. As the bats will be in torpor during our planned visit, they will be far less sensitive to disturbance and potential negative effects.
3. Visit a different Lesser Horseshoe Bat roost – This is an artificial Lesser Horseshoe Bat roost that was built specifically for mitigation for the species, so the main benefits of learning about bat conservation and mitigation would be lost by visiting another roost.

This visit will support our bat survey work over the coming years and by improving our understanding of the species it will aid us in any future bat mitigation methods we recommend. This opportunity would be lost if any of these alternatives were to be carried out.

#### Disturbance Reduction Measures

Efforts will be made to ensure there are no disturbance impacts on the roosting bats during our visit. We will be visiting during hibernation season when any bats in the roost will not be active, and it will be a controlled visit accompanied by a NPWS ranger. Restricted numbers will be visiting the roost with only a couple of people going into the roost at a time and suitable torches / lighting will be used. It will be a short visit to minimise time spent in the roost and the visit will be immediately ceased if any disturbance is noted. We have visited this roost in the past and there has been no disturbance caused to the Lesser Horseshoe Bat roosting there.

The visit has been organised with help from David Lyons, NPWS and we will be accompanied during the visit by Jamie Durrant who is the local ranger.

**Attendees:**

Calum McSorley, Bat Ecologist

Howard Williams, Managing Director

Emer Hannon, Team Lead Manager

Lisa Kavanagh, Assistant Ecologist

Heather Hurray, Assistant Ecologist

Nicole Leadbetter, Assistant Ecologist

Katie Sullivan, Assistant Ecologist

Natasha Allen, Assistant Ecologist