

## Paranormal Events in Margam Castle & Bats

Margam Park has 14 species of bat using the Park and associated buildings (including the Castle) throughout the year. The species are recorded through a combination of in-hand identification, roost visits, trapping surveys and sonogram analysis. The species that have been recorded in the park currently are:

- Greater Horseshoe bat - *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser Horseshoe bat – *Rhinolophus hipposideros*
- Daubenton’s bat – *Myotis daubentonii*
- Brandt’s bat – *Myotis brandtii*
- Whiskered bat – *Myotis mytacinus*
- Natterer’s bat – *Myotis nattereri*
- Noctule bat – *Nyctalus noctula*
- Leisler’s bat – *Nyctalus leisleri*
- Serotine bat – *Eptesicus serotinus*
- Common pipistrelle – *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
- Soprano pipistrelle – *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Nathusius pipistrelle – *Pipistrellus nathusii*
- Brown long-eared bat – *Plecotus auritus*
- Barbastelle bat – *Barbastella barbastellus*

(The species highlighted in blue are known to be more light-sensitive than the other bat species although all bat species are negatively affected by any lighting occurring near roost entrances and also lighting of commuting routes)

Bats are legally protected in the UK through The Countryside and Wildlife Act (as amended) 1981.

It is against the law to:

- deliberately capture, injure, or kill bats
- damage or destroy a breeding or resting place
- obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places
- possess, transport, sell or exchange live or dead bats, or parts of them
- intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it’s in a structure, or place of shelter, or protection

The Paranormal Events that take place in Margam Castle occur during the night, meaning they have the potential to cause disturbance to bats whilst they are in the Castle.

To avoid negative impacts on bats during these paranormal events it is recommended that the below steps are followed by all attendees and leaders who are present during the events. The below steps are being put in place to protect both the bats and the humans.

1. Access to the 'bat' room is now prohibited. This room has a high level of bat activity, both from roosting bats, and bats using it to commute/forage from their roosting area to their exits on a different side of the Castle.  
 There have been cameras installed in this room and it has caught footage of attendees from paranormal events shining lights around the room, looking over the half doors with lights into what is clearly marked as a bat roost. These are disturbance events that could be considered an offence.  
 As this room is highly used by foraging and commuting bats, bats also come into close contact with humans sat around the table – this is potentially harmful for bats. To prevent this, human access to the room must be removed.  
 The lighting used by the events in this room will also have a negative impact on the species such as Lesser Horseshoe bats who would not be able to commute through that room as they normally do whilst people are present.
2. No light is to be shone up at the rafters/roof area or into dark areas and lighting during is to be kept to a minimum with torch lights pointed at the floor.
3. The windows that allow light to fall into the inner courtyard are to be covered/blacked out to ensure that that courtyard remains in darkness, as it is an important entrance/exit for a very light sensitive species of bat.
4. If upon entering any of the rooms/areas of the Castle, bats are observed roosting or flying around that area, people are to leave that area so the bats are undisturbed. No lights are to be used to track the bats flying etc.
5. All lights are to be turned off upon leaving the Castle, no lights are to be left on (e.g. toilets).