

Ram Meadow, Bury St Edmunds.**Activity Survey of bats****Introduction**

Home Covert is a floodplain and public open space beside the River Lark in Bury St Edmunds, stretching from Ram Meadow car park to Compeigne Way. It is centered at approximately OS grid reference TL858648. Ram Meadow is owned by St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

Methodology

On 18th July 2015, members of Woodland Ways, led by Nick Sibbett, a licenced bat surveyor and bat roost visitor trainer, walked around the site from 15 minutes before sunset until 1 hour 45 minutes after sunset. Sunset was at 2108 BST. The weather was dry and warm with light wind throughout.

The Woodland Ways members carrying out the surveys were

Nick Sibbett

Russell Moles

Gillian Miller

Jane Sibbett

The surveyors used an Echometer Touch bat detector, a Duet bat detector, and other detectors to help find and identify bats during the survey.

Results

Three species of bat were recorded during the survey.

The first bat recorded was a very brief noctule *Nyctalus noctula* call at 2115 in the north of the site, probably representing a bat recently emerged from a roost and commuting to a feeding ground. A soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* was seen foraging in the south of the site at 2134. At 2146 a common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* flew past the surveyors in the central eastern side of the site and another was heard foraging at 2152 a short distance further north.

All three species were seen and recorded foraging simultaneously in the north of the site, from 2200 - 2209 when the surveyors moved on leaving the bats still present.

Results are shown on the accompanying figure.

Interpretation of results

The whole site comprised large nettle beds with scattered trees, scattered scrub, and small areas of broadleaved woodland. Wet ditches were present. The whole site appears to be good bat foraging habitat. The River Lark was found on the eastern boundary of the site. The southern part of the site suffered from very loud music from a nearby pub and the eastern side had significant road noise



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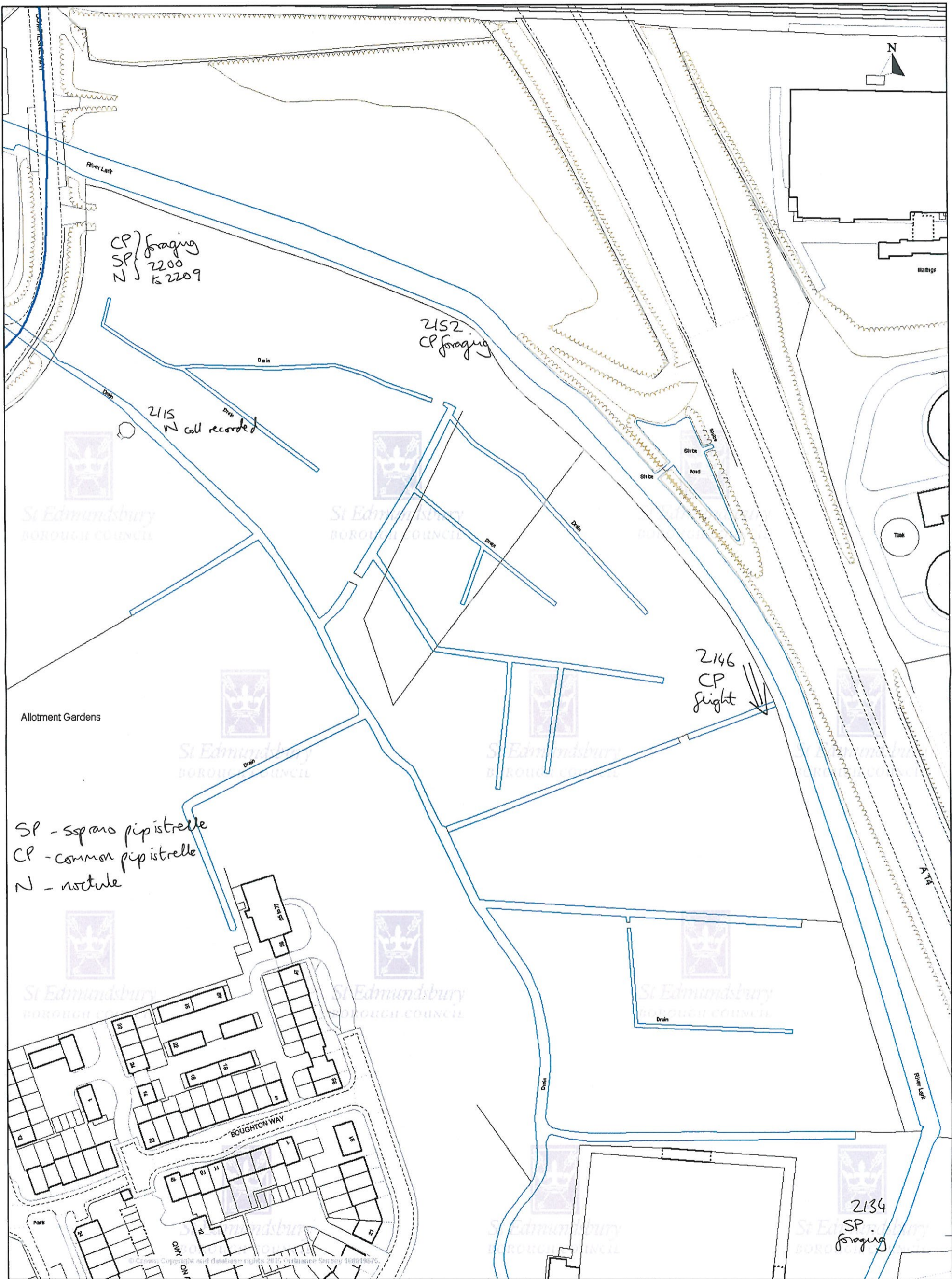
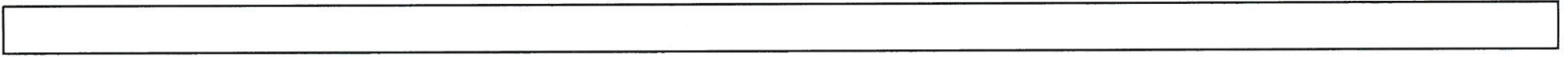
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from the A14 dual carriageway. The south-west side was adjacent to houses in Barwell Road. The northern part of the site adjoined allotments to the west and uncultivated land across the river to the east.

The distribution of bats was consistent with using the River Lark corridor as a flight route, with almost all bats found close to the river. foraging was recorded by all species in the north of the site, away from urban and transport noise, and away from built development. Further bat foraging might have been expected in other areas of the site where it was not found, and possibly on other nights other parts of the site are used for foraging too.

There was a low density of bat activity in the south of the site, perhaps reflecting the urban surroundings and the likely inhibition of bat flight caused by the nearby A14.

Nick Sibbett
Chair, Woodland Ways
25th August 2015



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Scale 1/1350
 Date 13/4/2015
 Centre = 585775 E 264926 N

Bat Activity Survey
 18th July 2015

Woodland Ways