

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Bird Surveys

*Leicestershire County Council Planning Ecology Service
November 2014, minor amendments September 2022*

When are surveys needed?

Surveys are required for wind-farm developments, including those on predominantly arable or intensively managed farmland.

Wintering and Breeding Bird Surveys are required for large-scale built and other development (such as solar farms) that would impact adversely on high quality bird habitats, such species-rich, semi-improved or rough grasslands; wetlands; woodland and scrub; open habitat mosaics on previously developed land; and neglected/set-aside farmland.

When are surveys not needed?

Surveys are not required for built developments impacting on land with habitats of lower value and significance to birds, such as intensive arable land, improved grasslands or heavily-used urban open spaces.

Although arable land can be very good for birdlife, it is the commonest land-use habitat in Leicestershire, and the loss of a proportionally small area of this habitat is not significant; in the overwhelming majority of cases birds will be displaced to adjacent similar habitat.

Survey methodology and guidance

Breeding bird surveys (BBS) should follow the methodology set out by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/bbs/research-conservation/methodology>

Wintering bird surveys should be based on standard Wetland Bird survey (WeBs) methodology (Pollit et al. 2003) and on generic monitoring methodology in Gilbert et al (1998).

Surveys for wind farm developments should be guided by the methodology in SNH (2014) and NE TIN069, and should include Vantage Point surveys and Collision Risk analysis.

References

BTO/JNCC/RSPB (2014) breeding bird survey: Instructions

Gilbert G., Gibbons D.W. and Evans J. (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods: A Manual of Techniques for Key UK Species*. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Pollit MS, Hall C, Holloway SJ, Hearn RD, Marshall PE, Robinson JA, Musgrove A, Robinson J. and Cranswick PA. (2003) *The Wetland Bird Survey 2000-2001: Wildfowl & Wader Counts*. Slimbridge.

Natural England Technical Information Note TIN069 (2010) *Assessing the effects of onshore wind farms on birds.*

Scottish Natural Heritage (2014) *Recommended bird survey methods to inform impact assessment of onshore wind farms.*

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