

Badger



Scientific Name:
Meles meles

Current factors causing loss or decline

Badgers, their setts and feeding areas are under threat from many sources.

These include:

- Road and housing development
- Recreational activities close to setts
- Fragmentation/ loss of habitat
- Forestry and agricultural operations
- Sett interference
- Badger digging & baiting
- Snaring
- Poisoning (including the misuse of pesticides)
- Lamping

Current action

The main legislation protecting Badgers, and their setts, is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This act consolidates all previous legislation including the Badgers Act 1973 (as amended) and the Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991.

Badgers are also listed on Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Other relevant legislation includes the Protection of Animals Act 1911 and the Abandonment of Animals Act 1960.

The recent Nature Conservation (Scotland) Bill includes a number of measures which strengthen the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

Current status

Badgers are the largest members of the Mustelid family (Weasels, Stoats, Otters, Polecats, Mink, Ferrets and Pine Martens) occurring in Britain. They are found throughout Europe extending into Russia, Siberia, China and Japan.

Badgers weigh between 10 and 20 kg and are about one metre in length and stand around 40 cms at the shoulder. Weight varies depending on time of year, and between sexes, with males being on average a kilo heavier than females. The appearance of the coat is predominantly grey, individual guard hairs are black with white tips. The head stripe is the most striking physical feature; a broad white band runs from crown to snout, on either side of this black bands run from the ears, over the eyes to the snout.

With powerful, muscular front legs, broad; spade like front feet and long, sharp claws the Badger is ideally suited to digging. They have good hearing, eyesight that allows them to see in low light levels, and an excellent sense of smell. This is the sense they use more than any other; it allows them to search for food, sense danger, identify other clan members or intruders, and to find their way around their territory.

Badgers are classified as carnivores, but are omnivorous in their habits. More than half of a Badger's diet comprises earthworms, specifically *Lumbricus* species, the remainder being made up of a wide variety of foods such as; berries, roots, carrion, small mammals and insects.

Habitats in Britain where badgers are found include; woodlands, mountains, towns, sea cliffs and road sides. Highest population densities are reached in areas of deciduous woodland, grass pasture and arable land.

Badgers are found throughout Britain, the highest population density being in the south west of England. The species is quite common in Scotland, particularly in the lower-lying, more fertile parts of the country. There are no accurate figures for the total population in Scotland, but it has been estimated to be around 25,000.

The exact number of active setts within the Glasgow boundary is unknown. Records are available for up to 5 setts, not all of which are currently active.



Objectives and targets

Object 1: Increase knowledge of the status, distribution and ecology of the Badger population within the Glasgow City boundary.

Object 2: Locate and encourage protection of Badger setts.

Object 3: Maintain and encourage an increase in the current population of Badgers within Glasgow.

Object 4: Protect, maintain and enhance habitat features required by Badgers.

Object 5: Ensure that knowledge of best practice for the conservation of Badgers is used locally.

Proposed Action with Lead Authorities

Action	Lead	Delivery	Objective
Policy and Legislation			
Seek the inclusion of effective measures to protect Badgers and their habitats during planning applications and developments.	GCC-LS	GCC-DRS, SNH	2
Recommend the carrying out of impact studies for development proposals which may adversely affect Badgers and their feeding areas and setts.	GCC-LS	GCC-DRS, SNH	2
Site Safeguard and Management			
Ensure that all known Badger setts and feeding areas are protected where any development occurs near existing social groups.	GCC-LS	GCC-DRS, GCC-LS, SNH	2, 4
At peripheral sites liaise with neighbouring landowners and councils to encourage species movement and viable local populations.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	1, 3, 4
Encourage the provision of Badger fencing, tunnels etc. and the provision of foraging areas in developments near where social groups are known to occur.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	3, 4, 5
Encourage positive habitat management and promote habitat corridors to encourage movement.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	3, 4, 5
Advisory			
Advise on preventative measures where Badgers are having an impact on agricultural, horticultural and amenity land.	GCC-LS	FWAG, GCC-LS	5
Liaise with landowners at known setts to ensure protection.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	2,4
Future Research and Monitoring			
Review historical data to assess past distribution or population sizes.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, GCC-CLS	1
Establish and monitor the Badger population within Glasgow.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	1
Monitor road and rail casualties within Glasgow and identify preventative measures to lower mortality rates.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, GCC-CLS	1, 3
Communication and Publicity			
Develop a means of sharing Badger information with those involved in their conservation, while making sure records remain confidential.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, GCC-CLS	1
Ensure good practice for the conservation of Badgers is passed to the appropriate organisations.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, SNH	5
Raise awareness of Badgers and their needs through publications and websites.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	5
Establish a Badger working group to co-ordinate the conservation efforts of individuals and organisations.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	1,5
Links with other Plans			
Review progress of plan by 2010.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

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Glasgow City Council: Development and Regeneration Services(**GCC-DRS**), Glasgow City Council: Land Services(Conservation Group) (**GCC-LS(CG)**,

Glasgow City Council: Culture and Leisure Services (**GCC-CLS**), Glasgow City Council: Education Services (**GCC-ES**), Glasgow City Council: Land Services Countryside Ranger Service (**GCC-LS(CRS)**,

Scottish Ornithologists' Club (**SOCC**), Greenspace for Communities(**GFC**), British Waterways (**BW**), Forestry Commission (**FC**), Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (**FWAG**), The WISE Group (**TWISE**),

Glasgow Natural History Society (**GNHS**), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (**RSPB**), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (**SEPA**), Scottish Natural Heritage (**SNH**), Scottish Wildlife Trust (**SWT**),

Clyde Amphibian and Reptile Group (**CARG**), Butterfly Conservation (**BC**).