Protecting bats

We carried out a detailed bat survey of the numbers and types of bats living around, and using the areas near, the South Bristol Link.

Colliter’s Brook, Hanging Hill Wood, and the railway corridor are important foraging sites and commuting routes for lesser horseshoe bats from Barrow Hospital and Clarkencombe Lodge.

We are providing bat underpasses at the Colliter’s Brook, and Longmoor Brook crossings so bats can continue to use their existing routes. We have planned the road bridges to allow bats to pass underneath along existing bat flightlines. Our landscape planting in these areas has been designed to funnel bats commuting along the watercourses through the underpass. Bats have been shown to readily use underpasses where conditions are suitable.

We will monitor the level of bat use of these structures for three years after construction and we will share the findings with the local authority and Natural England to make sure bats are protected. We are:

- Planting 2.9 acres of new, native, broadleaved woodland
- Planting 4.9 acres of native tree and shrub belt
- Planting about 3 km of hedgerow for new bat habitats. This is a net gain of about 2.1 km. Hedgerows will be planted with native woody species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, and hazel.
- Creating more than 12 acres of species-rich grassland on highway verges and surrounding areas
- Ensuring no street lighting for the majority of the rural section of the scheme
- Installing 10 bat boxes
- Creating 6 new ponds, required for drainage, but benefiting wildlife