

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU  
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION**

**MONMOUTHSHIRE**

**WYE VALLEY LESSER HORSESHOE BAT**

**Date of Notification:** 1994

**National Grid Reference:** SO 455 041, SO 525 043,  
SO 522 107, ST 493 952

**O.S. Maps:** 1:50,000 Sheet Number: 162  
1:25,000 Sheet Number: SO 51, SO 50, SO 40, ST 49

**Site Area:** 0.65 ha

**Description:**

This is a composite bat site located in and around the valleys of the lower River Wye and its tributaries, Gwent.

The site comprises 4 summer nursery roosts of the lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* at Penallt Old Church, The Priory, Llandogo, Itton Court Stud and Tregeiriog Farm. Individually, these roosts are important in a national context as nursery sites, and collectively they form part of the most important population centre for the species in the UK.

The lesser horseshoe bat is an internationally endangered species listed on Annex II (a) of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats and Species Directive). The species has declined substantially in Western Europe and the British population restricted to Wales and south west England now has European significance.

Penallt Old Church, dating from the late 13<sup>th</sup> Century, is located approximately 3 miles south of Monmouth. The site comprises the church and the church yard. The church is the site of the largest known nursery roost for the species in the UK, with more than 450 bats (1993 count).

The Priory, a large country house, is situated on the steep east facing slopes of the River Wye Gorge at Llandogo. The roost here is in the roof space of the main building, which has been used as a nursery site regularly with over 150 bats since its discovery in 1985, with a maximum of 245 (1994 count).

Itton Court Stud, situated approximately 3 miles north west of Chepstow, comprises part of the courtyard stable block and nearby boiler house and the access points to these roost sites. The stable block is an important nursery site for the species and has been used by up to 150 bats during the summer months since 1988. The boiler house acts as an important transitory roost for many of the bats, utilised during the spring and autumn.

Tregeiriog farm lies close to Llangovan, approximately 7 miles south west of Monmouth. The nursery roost, here found in the cellar, has recorded over 100 bats in the summer months since its discovery in 1988.

Other bat species, brown long eared *Plecotus auritus* and natterer's *Myotis nattereri* are found at Itton Court Stud and Tregeiriog Farm respectively.

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