

News story: Natural England reduces red tape on badger class licences

Natural England's new [class licence](#) will mean badgers continue to have the same high level of protection when it is necessary to move an active sett.

This new licence will reduce paper work delays on building sites. Currently applications take up to 30 working days to process; the new licence is expected to take just five working days.

Natural England is asking ecological consultants, who apply for such licences on behalf of developers, local authorities, churches and other public bodies, to sign-up now so pre-registration checks can be completed before July. Licences are only issued between July and November to avoid moving badgers caring for cubs.

This new approach is a change to the administration of the licence – the powers for moving badgers remain the same.

Where the licence is for the purpose of development, work to exclude badgers will only begin once an artificial sett has been constructed nearby and 'discovered'.

Only specialists, with the required high level of knowledge and experience in excluding badgers, will be able to register to act under this licence. The class licence is not for individual homeowners.

Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This level of protection is unaffected by the class licence.