



Taylor Wimpey Yorkshire.

Well House Lane, Penistone

WINTERING BIRD REPORT

August 2018

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1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 FPCR was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey Yorkshire to conduct wintering bird surveys at a site at Well House Lane, Penistone, Barnsley (Ordnance Survey central grid reference: SE 24504 04401).
- 1.2 Proposals for the site included residential housing with associated green infrastructure. However the project is now in abeyance.
- 1.3 Wintering bird surveys were conducted between November 2017 and March 2018.
- 1.4 A total of 24 bird species were recorded within the site during the wintering bird surveys, of which eight were considered 'notable' species.
- 1.5 Golden plover were not recorded on site, nor were they recorded within 2km of the site.
- 1.6 The wintering bird assemblage making use of the site was typical of the habitats present, comprising for the most part common and widespread species, and was therefore considered to be of Local importance.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd. on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Yorkshire. The report provides the results of wintering bird surveys undertaken across a proposed development site at Wells House Lane, Penistone, Barnsley (Ordnance Survey central grid reference: SE 24504 04401) (referred to herein as 'the site').

Site Location and Context

- 2.2 The site is approximately 16.8ha in size and consists of four intensively sheep-grazed improved grassland fields. These are internally and externally bordered by stone walls. A hedgerow also borders the Well House Lane boundary. In the south-west corner a mature broadleaved woodland (Scout Dam Plantation) is adjacent to the boundary, and there is mature scattered hawthorn on the slope in the south-west field.
- 2.3 The site is 5.4km from the Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) Special Protection Area (SPA) moorland to the south-west of the site. This is a European statutory designation relating to three bird species which breed on those moors including Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*. The LPA requested that wintering bird surveys be carried out on the site to establish if Golden Plover do utilise the site in winter, for foraging and/or roosting.

Proposals

- 2.4 Proposals for the site involved residential housing however the project is now in abeyance.

Survey Objectives

- 2.5 The aims of this assessment are to identify areas of ornithological interest, make recommendations to minimise the potential impact of development, and where feasible to consider opportunities for additional habitat creation. The objectives of the survey were to:
- Identify the presence and distribution of wintering birds, especially in reference to Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*;
 - Evaluate the conservation importance of wintering bird populations present;
 - Evaluate the importance of wintering bird populations and the anticipated residual impacts of the development, and
 - To identify areas of ornithological interest and make recommendations to minimise the potential impact of the scheme.

Legislation & Status

Legislation

- 2.6 The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) is the principal legislation affording protection to UK wild birds. Under this legislation all birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions to recklessly or intentionally:
- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
 - Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while in use or being built;
 - Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

- 2.7 Species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) are specially protected at all times. This extends their protection whereby they are protected against intentional disturbance whilst building or occupying a nest, and against disturbance of dependent young.
- 2.8 Certain species have also been identified as Species of Principal Importance for nature conservation under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC S.41) Act (2006). The Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan (2002, 2009, 2016) also lists bird species regularly breeding or overwintering in Barnsley which are prioritised locally when they are
- identified nationally on statutory lists or by being red-listed,
 - scarce or rare nationally, regionally or locally, or
 - of local concern or interest.

There are some species for which there are signs that, although they do not currently breed or overwinter in Barnsley, they potentially could do so, and these will be prioritised as well.

Status

- 2.9 In addition to statutory protection, some bird species are classified according to their conservation status, such as their inclusion on the Red and Amber lists of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) in the UK¹:
- Red list (high conservation concern) species are those that are globally threatened according to IUCN criteria; those whose population has declined rapidly (50% or more) in recent years; and those that have declined historically and not shown a substantial recent recovery.
 - Amber list (medium conservation concern) species are those with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe; those whose population or range has declined moderately (between 25% and 49%) in recent years; those whose population has declined historically but made a substantial recent recovery; rare breeders; and those with internationally important or localised populations.
 - Green list (low conservation concern) species fulfil none of the above criteria.

¹ Eaton M.A., Aebischer N., Brown A., Hearn R., Lock L., Musgrove A., Noble D., Stroud D. and Gregory R.D. 2016. *Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the population status of birds in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man*. British Birds 108, pp708-746.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Field Survey

- 3.1 To provide a reasonable level of accuracy for determining the population status of wintering birds within the survey area, it was considered that four survey visits were required. Surveys were undertaken during November and December 2017, and in January and March 2018.
- 3.2 The survey methodology employed was broadly based on that of territory mapping as developed by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)². Standard BTO species codes and symbols for bird activities were used to identify birds and denote activity, sex and age where appropriate.
- 3.3 The survey area was walked over by an ecologist experienced in bird survey, between dawn and 1100h. Routes were mapped out prior to the surveys being undertaken, and where possible surveys paid particular attention to linear features, such as hedgerows and tree lines, and natural features such as areas of scrub. Bird surveys were not undertaken in unfavourable conditions such as heavy rain or strong wind, which may negatively affect the results. Table 1 identifies the dates and weather conditions of the surveys.

Table 1: Wintering Bird Survey Dates & Conditions

Date	Cloud (%)	Rain	Temperature (C°)	Wind (Beaufort Scale)	Visibility
13.11.17	85	None	2	3	Good
13.12.17	100	Showers	4	3	Good
26.01.18	100	None	4	3	Good
28.03.18	50	None	3	2	Good

- 3.4 The surrounding area (~2km radius) was also searched for Golden Plover by scanning suitable arable fields for their presence from the roadside.

Species & Assemblage Assessment

- 3.5 The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance on ecological impact assessment assesses nature conservation importance within a geographical context³. To attain each level of importance, an ornithological resource or one of the features (species population or assemblage of species) should meet the criteria set out in Table 2. In some cases, professional judgment may be required to increase or decrease the allocation of importance, based upon local knowledge.
- 3.6 The most recent county annual bird report (Yorkshire Bird Report 2014) was consulted to inform the assessment. The abundance of species referred to by these reports is classified by the following criteria:
- Vagrant – Up to ten records;
 - Rare – 0-10 individuals each year in the last ten years;
 - Scarce – 11-100 individuals each year in the last ten years;

³ Bibby, C.J., N.D. Burgess & D.A. Hill, 2000: Bird Census Techniques: 2nd Edition. London: Academic Press
³ http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Publications/EcIA_Guidelines_Terrestrial_Freshwater_and_Coastal_Jan_2016.pdf

- Uncommon – 101-1000 individuals each year in the last ten years;
- Fairly common – More than 1000 records per year;
- Common – More than 10,000 records per year;
- Abundant – More than 50,000 records per year.

Table 2: Evaluation Criteria

Nature Conservation Value	Examples of Selection Criteria
International	A species which is part of the cited interest of an SPA and which regularly occurs in internationally or nationally important numbers. A species present in internationally important numbers (>1% of international population).
National	A species which is part of the cited interest of a SSSI and which regularly occurs in nationally or regionally important numbers. A nationally important assemblage of breeding or over-wintering species. A species present in nationally important numbers (>1% UK population). Rare breeding species (<300 breeding pairs in the UK).
Regional	Species listed as being of principal importance under NERC S.41 which are not covered above, and which regularly occurs in regionally important numbers. Species present in regionally important numbers (>1% of regional population). Sustainable populations of species that are rare or scarce within a region. Species on the BoCC Red List & which regularly occur in regionally important numbers.
County	Species listed as being of principal importance under NERC S.41 which are not covered above and which regularly occurs in county important numbers Species present in county important numbers (>1% of county population). Sustainable populations of species that are rare or scarce within a county, or are listed as being of principle importance under S41 of the NERC Act. A site designated for its county important assemblage of birds (e.g. a SINC Site). Species on the BoCC Red List & which regularly occur in county important numbers.
Local	Other species of conservation interest (e.g. all other species on the BoCC Red and Amber List or species listed as being of principal importance under NERC S.41 which are not covered above) regularly occurring in locally sustainable populations. Sustainable populations of species which are rare or scarce within the locality.
Site	Species that are common and widespread

4.0 RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Field Survey

- 4.1 A total of 24 bird species were recorded within the survey area (Appendix A). Of these, eight appear on one or more of the following:
- Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 (as amended);
 - BoCC Red or Amber lists;
 - Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006;
 - Barnsley LBAP
- 4.2 Golden Plover were not recorded on any survey, nor were they sighted in the surrounding area.
- 4.3 The distribution of the eight notable species is illustrated on Figure 1, and Table 3 provides a summary of the species recorded.

Table 3: Protected, Species of Principal Importance, BoCC Red and Amber Listed and LBAP Bird Species Recorded during Wintering Bird Surveys 2017-18, and their Recent Status within Yorkshire

Species	Legal/ Conservation status	Peak count / No. of surveys (of 4) recorded	Recent Status
Greylag goose <i>Anser anser</i>	Amber list	2/1	Feral. Fairly common to common resident, uncommon breeder
Black-headed gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Amber list	10/2	Present all year round, abundant in winter, uncommon breeder
Herring gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red list NERC S.41	1/1	Common winter visitor, scarce in summer
Stock dove <i>Columba oenas</i>	Amber list	2/2	Fairly common to common resident breeder
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber list	1/1	Fairly common resident breeder
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red list NERC S.41	80/3	Abundant resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor
Mistle thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Red list	1/2	Common resident breeder
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber list NERC S.41	1/1	Common resident breeder

Description

- 4.4 The majority of bird species recorded were typical of the range of habitats that dominate the site, being heavily influenced by the current agricultural regime. Internal compartments of grazed pasture offered limited opportunities to the majority of species recorded, but did supply foraging habitat for flocks of starling *Sturnus vulgaris*, and occasional mistle thrushes *Turdus viscivorus*. Large scale open habitats also provided foraging habitat for the common and widespread raptor species buzzard *Buteo buteo*, sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* and kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, although due to the intensively managed nature of these habitats, only small numbers of birds of prey were likely supported by the site.
- 4.5 Hedgerows on the north-east boundary and adjacent woodland in the south-west corner provided foraging opportunities for a number of common and widespread generalist species including great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*, blackbird *Turdus merula*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, the common tit species and bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*.
- 4.6 A number of species were recorded flying over the site only and included greylag goose *Anser anser*, herring gull *Larus argentatus* and black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*.

Evaluation

Bird Assemblage

Wintering Assemblage Value

- 4.7 Pasture fields provided poor foraging opportunities for the range of generalist species recorded on site including small flocks of starling and a few thrushes. Given the abundance

of arable land within the surrounding landscape, the site was considered to be of no more than Local level importance for this over-wintering farmland bird assemblage.

- 4.8 Hedgerows and woodland blocks supported an assemblage of common and widespread generalist species in addition to a small number of woodland birds including bullfinch. As with their associated arable habitats, these features are common in the landscape and were therefore considered to be of no more than Local nature conservation value for the generalist species recorded.

Individual Species

- 4.9 Table 4 summarises those bird species recorded within the site that are of at least Local importance.

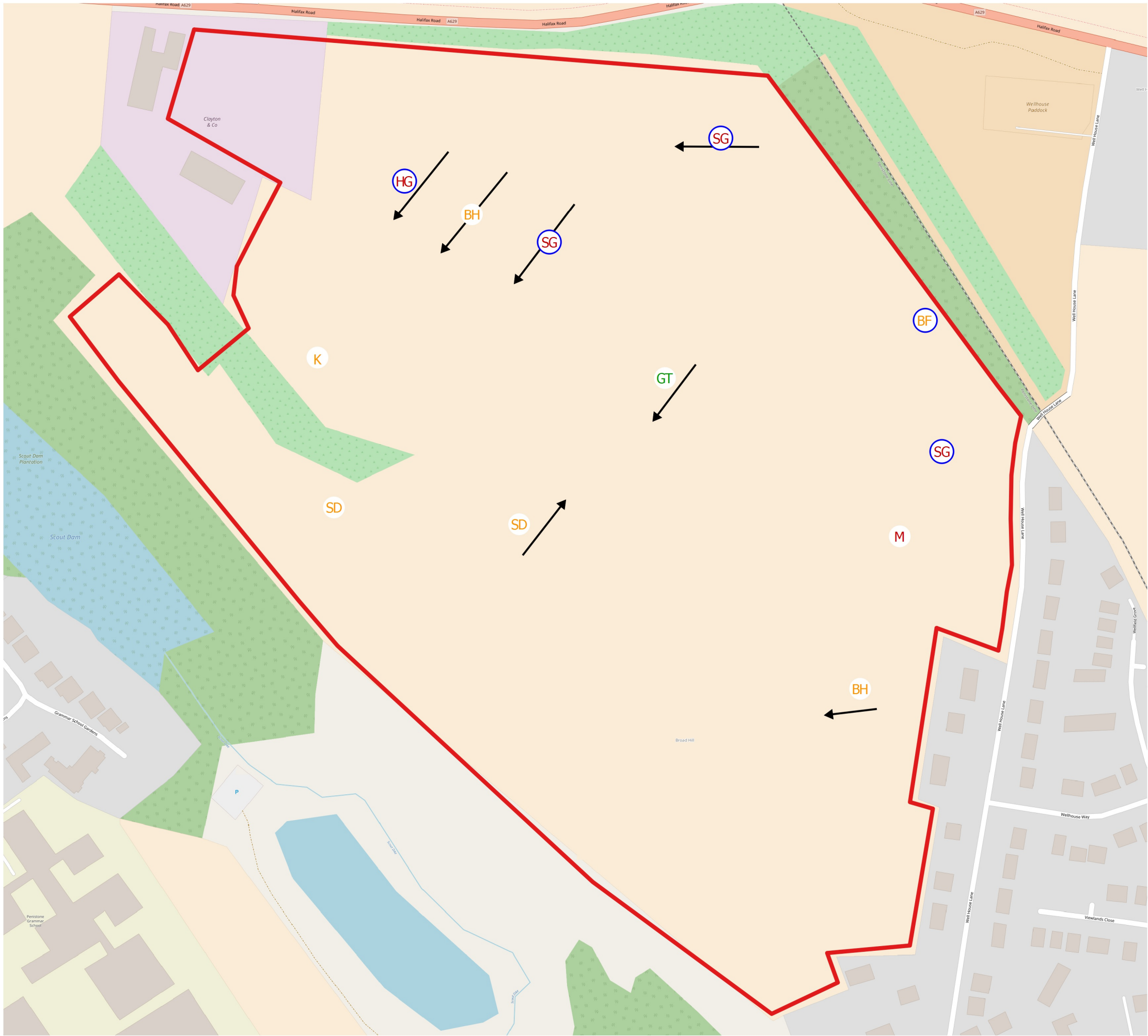
Table 4: Birds of Local Importance

Species		NERC S.41 Species	LBAP	Nature Conservation Value
BoCC Red List				
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	+		Local
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	+	+	Local
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		+	Local
BoCC Amber List				
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>			Local
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>			Local
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>			Local
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		+	Local
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	+	+	Local

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Appendix A – Penistone Winter Bird Survey Results

Species: Common Name	Species: Latin name	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3	Survey 4	Conservation Status & Protection
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>			2		Amber list
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			1	1	Green list
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	1	1	1		Green list
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	1	10			Amber list
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		1			Red list NERC S.41
Feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>				10	Green list
Stock dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	1		2		Amber list
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	9		2	1	Green list
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>			2		Green list
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>			1		Green list
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>			1		Amber list; LBAP
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	2	2	3		Green list
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	2	23		1	Green list
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>		12	5		Green list
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	2	1	5	4	Green list
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		1	3		Green list
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>		2	2		Green list
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>			1		Green list
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		80	3	60	Red list NERC S.41 LBAP
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	6	6	1		Green list
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	1	1			Red list; LBAP
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		1	1		Green list
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	1		2		Green list
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>			1		Amber list NERC S.41 LBAP
Total No. Species	24	10	13	19	6	



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Key

Species

- BH Black-headed Gull
- BF Bullfinch
- GT Great Tit
- HG Herring Gull
- K Kestrel
- M Mistle Thrush
- SG Starling
- SD Stock Dove

→ Fly over only

BoCC Red Listed Species

- HG Herring Gull
- M Mistle Thrush
- SG Starling

BoCC Amber Listed Species

- BH Black-headed Gull
- BF Bullfinch
- K Kestrel
- SD Stock Dove

BoCC Green Listed Species

- GT Great Tit

○ NERC Species of Principal Importance

○ Schedule 1 Species



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OF NOTABLE SPECIES

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