

**Small mammal surveying in and around Comberton churchyard overnight
from 18 to 19 October 2025 - Peter Pilbeam, Francine Hughes, five members of CMG,
and several members of the public.**

Twenty (20) Longworth traps were set to catch with bedding (hay) and bait (muesli, excess diced apple and excess casters) at various locations (a small range of habitats) in a vague loop round (mainly) the perimeter of two churchyard areas from around 6pm on 18 October 2025 and checked from 8am on 19 October 2025. Each animal caught was weighed, sexed and released immediately where it was caught. All the traps were then removed.

Those present then checked over the areas for signs of larger mammals

Trapping results:

Trap No.	Location	19 October 2025 – c8am
68	Corner of allotment wall	o
69	Under shrubs by apple tree	o
58	In grassy area in front of shed	WM – f – 13.5gm
67	In long grass adj gate	o
52	Under LH tree in new part of graveyard	o
60	Behind log pile on LH of ditto	WM – m – 18gm
61	Under trees at rear of ditto	o
62	By wall under trees ditto	o
53	Beside wall behind trees ditto	o
64	LH of gate back to graveyard	o
66	By wall next to gate	o
65	Under trees on LH of main graveyard	o
59	By seat next to rear wall of ditto	o
54	By wall on RH of ditto	o
63	In nettly corner of ditto	o
56	By wall on RH of ditto	o
55	In long grass in centre of ditto	o
70	Under yew tree in centre of ditto	o
51	In flower bed adj church	WM – f – 19.5gm
57	Ditto	o

Key

WM -- Wood Mouse
m -- male
f -- female
o -- open (not tripped)

Other mammal signs

Other mammals observed were rabbits, grey squirrels, muntjac, and unidentified bats. Badger dung was found between the graves at one point – a large badger sett was visible just over the churchyard wall.

Conclusions

Overall therefore after 20 trap sessions there were three (3) wood mice caught (a catch rate of 15%). In 2023 a smaller number of traps caught one wood mouse and one bank vole. In 2022 seven wood mice were caught using 11 traps. Therefore no clear conclusions can be drawn. The recommendation is that more of the area needs to be left to 'go wild' – that should encourage the small mammals.

The weather had been cool and showery for some time and was cool and dry when the traps were opened. Overnight it was dry, cloudy and cool.

Peter Pilbeam
20 October 2025