

Durham Bat Group

Registered Charity No. 1170672

Trustees' Annual Report 2021

enquiries@durhambats.co.uk

Durham Bat Group Trustees

Trustee Name	Committee Position	Dates serving as a trustee in 2021
Claire Dewson	Chair	01/01/2021 - 31/12/2021
Clare Rawcliffe	Treasurer Trainer	01/01/2021 - 31/12/2021
David Sowerbutts	Recorder	01/01/2021 - 20/10/2021
Tony Purcell	Asset Manager	01/01/2021 - 31/12/2021
Alistair Lockett	Communications Officer Membership Coordinator	01/01/2021 - 20/10/2021
Gwynevere Kipling	Bat Care Coordinator	01/01/2021 - 31/12/2021
Barry Anderson	Secretary	01/01/2021 - 31/12/2021
Jodie Morgan	Events Coordinator	01/01/2021 - 31/12/2021
Melissa Young	Recorder	20/10/2021 - 31/12/2021

Trustees

The Trustees have acted with due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit with respect to Durham Bat Group's charitable activity, and in particular to Public Benefit Guides PB1, PB2 and PB3. This report is prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:



Clare Rawcliffe

Governing Document

The constitution of Durham Bat Group was adopted on 20 October 2016 and is based on the Charity Commission's model 'Association' constitution for Charitable Incorporated Organisations.

The group is further governed by byelaws adopted on 20 February 2018 which define criteria for membership, the structure of the governing committee, and group policies on bat work training, partnerships with other organisations, providing advice to the public, group meetings, data and financial management, and insurance.

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the Durham Bat Group (DBG) are promotion of the conservation and welfare of bats, primarily within the geographic area between the rivers Tees and Tyne, but also including parts of Durham south of the Tees and excluding parts of Northumberland south of the Tyne. This includes the provision of practical advice and help to any individual or organisation with regard to bats, education of the public about bats by means of public talks, bat walks, talks to school groups etc., and encouragement of community participation in bat related activities. It also includes the study of bats to further understanding of their biology and ecology and working with other organisations sharing similar aims.

Durham Bat Group is the umbrella body for bat workers within its area of activity. It holds indoor meetings during the winter months and field activities at all times of the year but focusing on the main period of bat activity from May to October.

It is the local coordinator for Natural England's Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor (VBRV) Scheme, whereby licensed VBRV's respond to enquiries made through the National Bat Helpline run by the Bat Conservation Trust on behalf of Natural England. It therefore helps Natural England to deliver its statutory duty to provide advice to the public regarding interactions with bats, which are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2018 and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

DBG maintains a database of bat records within its area of activity, and provides records, on request, to further the understanding of bats and to ecological consultants carrying out Ecological Impact Assessments.

Durham Bat Group carries out searches of its database and produces reports for which a charge is made to commercial organisations. Typically, this charge will be about £25 for a standard 2-km radius search; charges for more wide-ranging searches are subject to negotiation.

The group has a network of bat carers who rehabilitate sick and injured bats found by the public for release back into the wild where possible. Bat carers must receive training from group members experienced in bat care before carrying out any bat rehabilitation independently. DBG works closely with Durham Cathedral to care for grounded bats found regularly in the Cloisters, primarily in late summer / early autumn.

DBG maintains and monitors bat box schemes in the county, undertakes surveys and runs bat walks for the public. It also works with other groups and organisations to provide educational talks and bat walks and benefits the public through bat conservation activities.

Occasional financial donations to bat-related scientific or charitable work by outside individuals or bodies are assessed on their merits and voted on by members during group meetings. Grants may be provided to groups or individuals whose activities are considered to provide added value for bat conservation to those of Durham Bat Group.

The membership of Durham Bat Group stands at 101.

2021 Achievements and Performance

General Indoor Meetings of Members

23/02/2021 – an online talk on ‘Hibernation, Swarming & more...’ was given by Dave Anderson from North Yorkshire bat group and attended by 26 people.

13/12/2021 – Six DBG Members gathered in the Blue Bell pub in Sunderland to facilitate the annual Christmas card mail out.

2021 Meetings of the Board of Trustees

The Trustees met on 06/01/2021, 28/01/2021, 23/02/2021, 01/04/2021, 13/05/21, 04/08/21, 14/09/21 and 16/11/2021 to facilitate the running of the Group.

2021 Annual General Meeting

The 2021 AGM was held online via zoom on the 20th October 2021. The minutes of the 2020 AGM were agreed, as were the 2020 financial report and trustees annual report.

David Sowerbutts and Alistair Lockett stood down as trustees as required by the constitution. Tony Purcell stood down and was re-elected. Melissa Young was appointed as a new trustee.

There followed a presentation by Alan Roe of Derbyshire Bat Group on the Moor Bats Project.

National Bat Helpline Support

There were a total of 163 enquiries from the Durham Bat Group area to the National Bat Helpline run by the Bat Conservation Trust in 2021. Of these:

- 18 were Natural England roost-related enquiries which required a roost visit and were referred to licenced Volunteer Bat Roost Visitors (VBRVs).
- 27 were roost-related enquiries which did not require a visit, and
- Approx. 118 were bat care related calls (a small number of these are categorised as ‘other’ enquiries)

Training

International guidance advised against any non-necessary handling of bats due to the Covid-19 pandemic to reduce risks to both bats and people. A series of national and regional lockdowns restricted training in 2021.

Opportunities to handle and ID bats were offered to all members with appropriate vaccinations and PPE at the Washington WWT bat box check by C Rawcliffe.

Opportunities to participate in bat surveys using detectors were offered to all members at the Ushaw College and North Gare, Hartlepool surveys.

Records

About 400 new records were received during 2021. Nowadays many reports of bats come via Facebook, but the majority of these provide insufficient detail, without further investigation, to be of record status and are not included in the count.

Towards the end of March, David Sowerbutts notified the Trustees of his intention to retire from the post of Recorder, and that he would not accept new data searches after the end of June. Melissa Young was appointed as his successor to manage the data, but not to carry out data searches. A new arrangement was negotiated with ERIC North East by which "All commercial, public, or academic data enquiries...received by DBG will be forwarded to ERIC for response". This arrangement was agreed before the end of the year, but not implemented until July 2022.

The number of data searches carried out was 86, the majority during the first half of the year.

Projects

Durham Cathedral

Jodie Morgan managed the Cathedral's bat patrol rota which is aimed at collecting and providing first aid to grounded bats during the summer period. As Covid-19 cases were still high, volunteers were advised on appropriate PPE to handle bats and a telephone rota was provided to the Cathedral porters for emergencies. Bat patrols were carried out as normal

by volunteers. Cathedral staff were also trained, during organised sessions, in basic bat care by lead volunteer and Trustee Jodie Morgan, in a safe environment.

A total of 5 volunteers contributed to a daily bat patrols on a rota and a 'on call' basis, awaiting a bat rescue call from Durham Cathedral to recover and rehabilitate grounded bats during the annual Common Pipistrelle swarming period in the Cathedral cloister.

Volunteers during 2021 were, Jodie Morgan, Melissa Young, Antonio Barbaro, Mike Wilson and Bridget Black .

This resulted in the recovery of 81 grounded bats in total either by trained members of the Cathedral staff or bat patrol volunteers, of which 59.94% were successfully rehabilitated and released. This is a higher release rate than previous years. There was a 32.44% mortality rate of the total number of bats found. 17% of which were found dead on arrival and 15% died in the care of volunteers.

It is likely that more bats were rescued than in 2020 due to less restrictions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. This demonstrates the effort put into the bat patrols, finding more bats in total with both parties (DBG and Cathedral staff) working together. It is clear from the data that a higher number of bats are becoming grounded annually. However, more bats were successfully rehabilitated and released in 2021 and Jodie has concluded it is down to more people trained to provide first aid. As a future action, it is desirable to recruit more fully trained bat carers to ensure a higher percent of bats rescued.

Hamsterley Forest

International guidance advised against any non-necessary handling of bats due to the Covid-19 pandemic to reduce risks to both bats and people, therefore no bat box checks were undertaken in 2021.

WWT Washington Bat Box Checks

On 26th September 2021, the WWT bat boxes were checked by Clare Rawcliffe, assisted by 6 other Members plus staff and volunteers from the

Wetlands centre. 26 bats were present altogether. All bats identified to species level were soprano pipistrelles.

Bat Flight Cage

The bat flight cage was relocated from the allotment of former Trustee Julia Brown to a site in Marske, due to Darlington County Council categorising bats as livestock, and therefore being unable to be kept on the allotment. The dismantling and re-erection of the flight cage was undertaken by a professional contractor under supervision by members of both Durham and Cleveland Bat Groups. The relocation took place in August 2021. The cost of the flight cage relocation work was £1824.

Other Events / Activities

2nd July 2021 – Alistair Lockett organised a bat survey of Ushaw College, Durham in preparation for some events. This was attended by 4 members

4th September 2021 – A joint event between Ushaw Historic Chapel and Gardens and Durham Bat Group. A walk and talk, led by DBG member Ian Bond.

12th September 2021 – Ian Bond organised a survey of the strandline from North Gare to the Hartlepool Headland, attended by several DBG Members. This was jointly run with the Cleveland Bat Group who undertook a survey on the southern bank of the Tees, by way of comparison, on the same night.

29th September 2021 – Clare Rawcliffe gave a bat talk and walk for the WWT Washington Wetlands Centre as part of their events programme.

16 October 2021 – A joint event between Ushaw Historic Chapel and Gardens and Durham Bat Group. A walk and talk, led by DBG member Alistair Lockett and attended by approximately 20-25 people. A great family event which received very good feedback.

Financial Review

	2021	2020	2019
Receipts			
			£
Data searches	£ 1,525.00	£ 3,320.00	2310.00
Donation - bat care	£ -	0	0.00
Donation - talk	£ 200.00	0	0.00
Income sub Total for year	£ 1,725.00	£ 3,320.00	2310.00
Payments			
			£
Room hire & Refreshments	£ -	£ 301.68	231.50
Postage	£ 1,054.00	0	390.40
Insurance	£ 100.00	£ 100.00	1059.69
Bat Care	£ 281.00	£ 250.02	130.36
Website subscription	£ 117.00	0	0.00
Repair of detectors	£ -	0	0.00
Recorder buttons		0	0.00
DNA analysis		0	0.00
Bat flight cage (materials and labour)	£ 1,824.00	£ 1,836.79	
Donation (Nathusius' Project)		0	0.00
General expenses	£ 39.00		
Expenditure total for year	£ 3,415.00	£ 2,488.49	1811.95
Income minus expenditure	-£ 1,690.00	£ 831.51	498.05
Balance brought forward from previous year	£ 23,873.00	£ 23,042.21	22544.16
End of year balance	£ 22,184.00	£ 23,873.72	23042.21
DBG has no restricted funds or endowed funds			



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name Durham Bat Group	No (if any) 1170672
---	-------------------------------

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 1/1/2021	To	Period end date 12/31/2021
------------------------	-------------------------------	----	-------------------------------

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £
A1 Receipts				
Fees for bat data searches	1,525	-	-	1,525
Donations for bat care	-	-	-	-
Donations for services - talks & walks	200	-	-	200
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	1,725	-	-	1,725
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).				
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	1,725	-	-	1,725
A3 Payments				
Room hire & refreshments	-	-	-	-
Printing, postage and stationary	1,054	-	-	1,054
Insurance	100	-	-	100
IT related expenditure	117	-	-	117
Equipment	1,824	-	-	1,824
Bat Care expenses	281	-	-	281
General expenses	39	-	-	39
Donation to Bat Conservation Trust appeal	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	3,415	-	-	3,415
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)				
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total payments	3,415	-	-	3,415
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 1,690	-	-	- 1,690
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	23,874	-	-	23,874
Cash funds this year end	22,184	-	-	22,184

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		22,184	-
		-	-
		-	-
	Total cash funds	22,184	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-
			-
			-
			-
			-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	2 x triple bank harp traps		-
	4 x tablets to run acoustic lures		-
	2 x acousric lures		-
	4 x tablets to run acoustic lures		-
	1 x Batlogger Bat detector		-
	4 x Anabat Express bat detector		-
	1 x batbox duet detector (failing)		-
	3 x batbox II detectors (failing)		-
	Bat box checks equipment		-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-
			-
			-
			-
			-

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

Print Name

CC16a



Last year
to the nearest £

3,320
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
3,320

-
-

3,320

302
-
100
-
1,837
250
-
-
-
-
2,489

-

2,489

831
-
-
831



**Endowment
funds**
to nearest £

-
-
-
-

OK

**Endowment
funds**
to nearest £

-
-
-
-
-
-

**Current value
(optional)**

-
-
-
-
-

**Current value
(optional)**

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

**When due
(optional)**

Date of
approval
