

**Durham Bat group**

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
Registered Charity No 1170672

## **Durham Bat Group**

Registered Charity No. 1170672

### **Trustees' Annual Report 2023**

### Durham Bat Group Trustees

Trustee Name	Committee Position	Dates serving as a trustee in 2023
Claire Dewson	Chair	01/01/2023 – 31/12/2023
Clare Rawcliffe	Treasurer / Trainer	01/01/2023 – 31/12/2023
Tony Purcell	Asset Manager	01/01/2023 – 31/12/2023
Jodie Morgan	Events Coordinator	01/01/2023 – 31/12/2023
Melissa Young	Recorder	20/10/2023 – 31/12/2023
Ian Bond	Secretary	18/10/2023 – 31/12/2023
Debbie Goldsmith		18/10/2023 – 31/12/2023
Julie Dyson		18/10/2023 – 31/12/2023
Lauren Gibson		18/10/2023 – 31/12/2023
Craig Basford		18/10/2023 – 31/12/2023

### Non-Trustee Committee Members

Name	Committee Position	Dates serving as a committee member in 2023
David Sowerbutts	Advisor	01/01/2023 – 31/12/2023
Alistair Lockett	Communications Officer Membership Coordinator	01/01/2023 – 31/12/2023

### 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:



Ian Bond (secretary)

## **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.

DBG maintains a database of bat records within its area of activity. The group provides records, via an agreement with ERIC NE (the local records centre), to further the understanding of bats and to ecological consultants carrying out records searches.

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 stood at 154 (as of 29/01/2024)

## **2023 Meetings**

### 2023 Meetings of the Board of Trustees

The Trustees met on 11/01/23, 03/04/23, 21/09/23 and 06/11/2022 to facilitate the running of the Group.

### 2023 Annual General Meeting

The 2023 AGM was held at the WWT Washington Wetlands Centre on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and attended by 13 members. The minutes of the 2022 AGM were agreed, as were the 2022 financial report and Trustees annual report.

As required by the constitution, Clare Rawcliffe and Claire Dewson stood down as Trustees, with both being re-elected. Debbie Goldsmith, Julie Dyson, Lauren Gibson and Craig Basford were appointed as new trustees.

The AGM was followed by a short discussion among members of various issues relating to the bat group, with issues raised to be followed up by the Trustees as appropriate. There was then a presentation by Tina Wiffen on finding hibernating Pipistrelles.

### General Indoor Meetings of Members

- 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 –Bat I. D. (9 members attended) Delivered by Ian Bond.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2023 – Licensing (13 members attended) Led by Clare Rawcliffe – presentation on bat class and project licenses followed by a group discussion.
- 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – National Nathusius Pipistrelle Project & Small Myotis Project (13 members attended) – Led by Clare Rawcliffe with input from Craig Bulga. Presentation on projects so far, known distribution of species and then group discussion on field work going forwards.

## **Surveys**

### Hibernation surveys

- A total of seven hibernation sites were surveyed between January and March 2023. These were carried out over four days. Two of those sites were new and had not been checked by the bat group previously (according to known records)
- A total of ten bats were observed during the surveys, the largest count was five bats in one adit.
- With some members completing more than one survey, the total number of members who participated was fourteen.
- Of those members, eight of them had not completed any hibernation surveys previously.

### Roost surveys

30 April 2023 - A bat box check was undertaken at Hamsterley Forest on led by Tricia Snaith

25 July 2023 - A roost visit in Stanhope was led by Rachel Hepburn on. As it was a visit within the roost, numbers were limited to three members other than Rachel.

25 June 2023 – A National Bat Monitoring Programme roost count was undertaken at St Mary's Church, Long Newton and attended by 4 members. and

16 August 2023 – A follow-up survey was undertaken at St Mary's to get a better understanding of how the bats were using the interior of the church. Approximately 10 members attended.

#### Activity surveys

3 May 2023 – A bat survey was undertaken at Washington Old Hall, led by Alistair Lockett. Access was granted within the hall allowing surveys both internally and externally. Eight members attended.

22 June 2023 - A bat survey around Escomb was led by Rachel Hepburn. Seven members attended.

#### Public walks and talks

15 April 2023 - Ian Bond led a bat walk for RSPB Saltholme.

29 April 2023 – Ian Bond led a bat walk for the Friends of Drinkfield Marsh, Darlington.

21 September 2023 - Ian Bond led a bat walk for RSPB Saltholme.

28 September 2023 - Ian Bond led a bat walk for Darlington Borough Council in South Park, Darlington. Approximately 50 people attended.

2 October 2023 - Rachel Hepburn gave a talk to a Darlington Beaver group followed by a bat walk. Approximately 20 children attended.

29 November 2023 - Rachel Hepburn gave a talk to a Durham Beaver group. Approximately 15 children and their leaders listened to a talk on bats and went home with bat masks to make.

#### **Training**

17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 – A hand netting training session was held at Staindrop Pumping station, delivered by Clare Rawcliffe and attended by 8 members.

18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 – A National Bat Monitoring Project (NBMP) Level 2 "Using Your Ears" Bat Detector Workshop was held at Houghall College, Durham. This was open to the public as well as DBG members. It was delivered by Clare Rawcliffe on behalf of the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT).

6 August 2023 – A training session on bat care was run by Noel Jackson and Melissa Young at Washington Wildfowl & Wetlands Centre.

#### **Media**

Durham Bat Group received coverage on BBC News 'Look North' on 13<sup>th</sup> September covering our activities at Durham Cathedral. A link to this article was included on the BBC website.

## 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 per the guidance regarding Covid-19, 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.

Volunteers contributed to a daily bat patrol on rota and an 'on call' basis, awaiting a bat rescue call from Durham Cathedral to recover and rehabilitate grounded bats found in the cloisters.

Two training sessions for Durham Cathedral Staff were carried out by volunteer and trustee Melissa Young. In total 12 new bat first aiders were trained in how to spot grounded bats, administer appropriate emergency aid, release suitable bats and how to escalate cases where bats couldn't be released. More sessions have been requested for 2024.

Bat patrols were carried out at the cathedral by a rota of volunteers from the bat group. 71 visits were completed over the course of 90 days. During this time 88 bats were found, of these 63 were found alive (23 already deceased). Of the live bats, 55 went on to be successfully released.

Volunteer	No. Cathedral Patrols
Jodie Morgan	2
Melissa Young	21
Antonio Barbaro	9
Mike Wilson	2
Bridget Black	17
Kate Ferguson	12
Debra Goldsmith	8
Total Patrols	71

### Washington Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

No WWT Washington Bat Box Checks were undertaken in 2023.

Some acoustic surveys were undertaken for the National Nathusius Pipistrelle Project, but the licence to trap was not renewed during 2023 so no harp trapping surveys were undertaken.

## **Financial Summary**

The largest expenditure in 2023 was associated with establishing the new Durham Bat Group website and in settling accounts associated with the previous web hosting fees and online meeting facilities set up through the covid pandemic.

The equipment expenditure in 2023 was for two sets of Nightfox Whisker night vision binoculars. In addition the group received a donation of two Peersonic bat detectors from the BCT Bats in Churches Project.

The Trustees took the decision not to do the usual Christmas card mail out to roost owners, so this reduced printing expenditure. A mail out in advance of the maternity period in 2024 will be undertaken instead.



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name	No (if any)
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## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a


For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
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### 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 £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Fees for bat data searches	3,009	-	-	3,009	-
Donations for bat care	-	-	-	-	-
Donations for services - walks & talks	75	-	-	75	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)	3,084	-	-	3,084	-
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	3,084	-	-	3,084	-
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Room Hire & Refreshments	213	-	-	213	-
Printing, postage & stationary	204	-	-	204	-
Insurance	100	-	-	100	-
IT Related Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment	2,613	-	-	2,613	-
Bat Care Expenses	300	-	-	300	-
General Expenses	30	-	-	30	-
Donation to Bat Conservation Trust Appeal	500	-	-	500	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	3,960	-	-	3,960	-
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	3,960	-	-	3,960	-
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	- 876	-	-	- 876	-
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	19,658	-	-	19,658	-
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	18,782	-	-	18,782	-



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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		18,782	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	18,782	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets				
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				
	2 x triple bank harp traps		-	-
	Bat box checks equipment		-	-
	2 x acoustic lures		-	-
	4 x tablets to run acoustic lures (failing)		-	-
	1 x Batlogger M Bat detector		-	-
	4 x Anabat Express bat detector + 2 x Personics Bat detectors		-	-
	12 x Magenta 5 bat detectors		-	-
	12 x FSC guides to British Bats + 12 FSC Guides to British Bats		-	-
	2 x Nightfox Whisker Night Vision Binoculars		-	-
B5 Liabilities				
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Clare Rawcliffe	4/17/2024