



Durham Bat group

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity No 1170672

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Trustees' Annual Report 2024

Durham Bat Group Trustees

Trustee Name	Committee Position	Dates serving as a trustee in 2024
Claire Dewson	Chair	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Clare Rawcliffe	Treasurer / Trainer	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Tony Purcell	Asset Manager	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Jodie Morgan	Events Coordinator	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Debbie Goldsmith	Recorder	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Ian Bond	Secretary	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Melissa Young	Website and email manager	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Julie Dyson		01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Lauren Gibson	Bat Care Co-ordinator	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Craig Basford		01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024

Non-Trustee Committee Members

Name	Committee Position	Dates serving as a committee member in 2023
David Sowerbutts	Advisor	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024
Alistair Lockett	Advisor	01/01/2024 – 31/12/2024

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 stands at 205 as of 20 December 2024.

2024 Meetings

2024 Meetings of the Board of Trustees

The Trustees met on 28/02/24, 03/07/24 and 22/10/24 to facilitate the running of the Group.

2024 EGM

An EGM was held on 17/04/24 to present the Trustees report for 2023 and the financial report for 2023. Fourteen members were present. Both the Trustees report and the financial report were agreed by those present.

The EGM 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.

Surveys

Hibernation surveys

Alistair Lockett ran a series of hibernation surveys of sites in Weardale and Teesdale.

- A total of six hibernation sites were surveyed
- A total of ten bats were observed during the surveys, the largest count was five bats in one adit.
- The total number of members who participated was 22.

Roost surveys

An emergence survey of Hollingside in Durham City was undertaken on 17 April, attended by 13 people.

St Mary's Church, Long Newton was surveyed on 8 June as part of the National Bat Monitoring Programme. Five people took part in the survey.

Activity surveys

A bat survey of land owned by Durham University was undertaken on 12 May in conjunction with the University. It was led by Melissa Young and attended by approximately 30 students and 10 members of Durham Bat Group

A National Bat Monitoring Programme Field Survey was carried out in Darlington on 23 July. It was attended by two members of Durham Bat Group and two members of the public.

A National Bat Monitoring Programme Waterways survey was carried out in Darlington on 20 August, attended by 7 members of Durham Bat Group.

Bat talks and walks for the public and groups

Rachel Hepburn gave a talk on bats for Brandon Cubs on 27th February. There were approximately 30 children plus leaders.

Melissa Young, Jodie Morgan and Ian Bond gave a talk to the Friends of Durham Cathedral on 5 February. Approximately 50 people attended the talk. This was followed up with a separate talk to camera which was sent to the Friends of Durham Cathedral world-wide.

Clare Rawcliffe and Lauren Gibson gave a talk to students on the Animal Management course at Houghall College on 9 July.

Ian Bond did a talk and bat walk for RSPB Saltholme on 20 July. Six people attended plus members of RSPB staff.

Ian Bond led a bat walk for Darlington Borough Council in South Park, Darlington on 10 September. Approximately 60 people attended.

Training

Barry Anderson delivered training on bats in trees and the use of endoscopes in 24th February 2024. This was attended by 19 members.

Training on bat care was hosted by Northumberland Bat Group and delivered jointly between Northumberland and Durham bat groups on 13 April.

Training on bat box inspections was undertaken on 1 September at Hamsterley Forest, led by Clare Rawcliffe and attended by 5 members.

Projects

Durham Cathedral

Jodie Morgan managed the Cathedral's bat patrol rota which is aimed at collecting and providing first aid to grounded bats. The rota operates between July and October. 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. 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. Staff from the Cathedral were also trained in basic bat care. In 2024, a total of 73 bats were attended to, of which 10 were already dead. Of the 63 bats found alive, 43 could be rehabilitated and were released.

Washington Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

A single bat box check was undertaken in 2024, on 9th November. Five members were present. The checks also included some training on the use of torches in bat box checks. A total of five pipistrelle bats were found in the boxes.

National Bat Helpline Support

Durham Bat Group Members assisted with calls received by National Bat Helpline run by the Bat Conservation Trust in 2024. The call types received included:

- Natural England roost-related enquiries which required a roost visit and were referred to licenced Volunteer Bat Roost Visitors (VBRVs).
- Roost-related enquiries which did not require a visit, and
- Bat care related calls to advise and assist with grounded and injured bats.

A total of 13 VBRV visits were undertaken across the DBG area in 2024. On some of these the licensed bat worker was accompanied by trainee or prospective VBRVs.

Donations

Durham Bat Group donated £1025 to the Bat Conservation Trust in 2024 to help fund the National Bat Helpline.

Bat Care

In addition to the work undertaken at Durham Cathedral, fourteen members were actively involved with caring for injured or sick bats. A total of 147 bats from seven different species were attended to in the course of the year.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name

No (if any)

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date

To

Period end date

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 £
A1 Receipts					
Fees for bat data searches	7,303	-	-	7,303	3,009
Donations from the public	70	-	-	70	75
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	7,373	-	-	7,373	3,084
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	7,373	-	-	7,373	3,084
A3 Payments					
Room Hire & Refreshments	-	-	-	-	213
Printing, postage & stationary	748	-	-	748	204
Insurance	100	-	-	100	100
IT Related Expenditure	456	-	-	456	-
Equipment	293	-	-	293	2,613
Bat Care Expenses	157	-	-	157	300
General Expenses	-	-	-	-	30
Donation to Bat Conservation Trust Appeal	1,025	-	-	1,025	500
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	2,779	-	-	2,779	3,960
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	2,779	-	-	2,779	3,960
Net of receipts/(payments)	4,594	-	-	4,594	876
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	18,783	-	-	18,783	19,658
Cash funds this year end	23,377	-	-	23,377	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		23,377	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	23,377	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	2 x triple bank harp traps		-	-
	Bat box checks equipment (hard hats, poles etc)		-	-
	2 x acousric lures + 4 x tablets to run acoustic lures (failing)		-	-
	5 x heat mats		-	-
	1 x Batlogger M Bat detector		-	-
	4 x Anabat Express bat detector + 2 x Peersonic Bat detectors + data cables		-	-
	12 x Magenta 5 bat detectors + 12 xFSC guides to British Bats		-	-
	External Hard Drive tostore bat data		-	-
	2 x Nightfox Whisker Night Vision Binoculars + Tripods. SD cards		-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval