

Bat Conservation Trust

Annual Review

1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016



*Noctule - BatLife Europe
Bat Species of the Year 2016*

Review by the Chair and Joint Chief Executives



This year, with your help, we have continued to speak up for bats and their needs.

We have ensured the continuing need for the Habitats Directive and its better implementation is made crystal clear within the EU Habitats and Birds Directives Review (REFIT) in two ways. Firstly, we have contributed to a strong joined-up response from 100 UK NGOs via UK Joint Wildlife Links. Secondly we helped catalyse a strong message of support for the Directives from the public, resulting in the biggest ever response to an EU consultation. We have also worked closely with other wildlife non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Wales to ensure the Environment (Wales) Bill is strong and effective.

Increasingly we are working in partnership to have a stronger voice and greater overall impact for bats and all wildlife. BCT has led the first year of our Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning. This is a collaboration of 19 organisations from the conservation and planning sectors which aims to simplify and improve consideration of biodiversity in planning decisions.

We have continued to lead on guidance, best practice and advice for bat conservation. After a widespread consultation we published the third edition of the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines in February. Our National Bat Helpline responded to over 15,000 calls in 2015 and feedback about the service from callers remains overwhelmingly positive.

Discovering more about bats and their conservation needs continues to be a key priority for BCT. This year we published the trends of three bat species in Scotland for the first time. We identified 19 priority research areas where better evidence is needed to inform and direct bat conservation.

During the year we have developed our new strategy which outlines how we will work to conserve bats over the next five years, through education, collaborative action and scientific research. The progress in this report is shown against our new Strategy for 2015-2020, which we launched at the National Bat Conference in September. Over the coming year we will be continuing to consult with key stakeholders on our new strategy.

Looking forward, we have big aspirations. We are part of a ground breaking Back from the Brink collaboration, planning the biggest ever project to directly tackle the well-evidenced decline in species. With this partnership of seven like-minded NGOs and Natural England, we aim to launch action across England to improve the status of 130 species under threat, including grey long-eared bats and greater horseshoe bats.

It is crucial that future mitigation advice is based on lessons learned from current mitigation measures. Early in 2017 we will hold an event to share mitigation case studies, nurture best practice and strengthen partnership working. Next year we will be setting up a new award, in memory of our dear friend and colleague Dr Kate Barlow. This scheme will provide grants to encourage scientists carrying out Masters and PhD studies on bat conservation.

Huge thanks to all our staff, bat groups, volunteers, partners and supporters. Your passion and dedication has allowed us to make a real difference to the future of bats. A big thank you as well to Professor Kate Jones, who stepped down as Chair at the AGM in September after nine years on the Board of Trustees. Kate led us through some tricky times, but always did so with great good humour.

Dr David Gibbons, Chair

Kit Stoner, Joint Chief Executive

Julia Hanmer, Joint Chief Executive



Chris Packham President's message

I recently found myself writing a piece for World of Animals – Bats. I have been convinced by your persuasive Director of Communications to reproduce some of it here:

I like bats as much now as I did when I was six and used to paw over the pages of my Ladybird book dreaming nightly of glimpsing a pipistrelle flitting outside my window. And now these remarkable mammals do swoop and pirouette around my garden and I stand entranced, trying to imagine what it is like to be them, what it is really like to fly that fast, to 'see' with sound, to find tiny insects in the air and snatch enough of them for a meal. But I also worry, because in the fifty years of being fascinated by bats they have become much rarer and, although we have made progress, we haven't learned enough about their lifestyles to guarantee their conservation. But of course of all the species to study bats are amongst the hardest, they are nocturnal, fragile, sensitive and some are so endangered they have become precious. And of course historically they have often had negative press, the ingredients of witches brews, vampires... and all the 'old wives tales'.

I then went on to urge everyone to get into bats and especially to join Bat Conservation Trust. Now, many of you reading this are already members and some for many years but I know there are still a lot of people who have not discovered what we have – the wonder and importance of bats. I hope I can urge them to share and be part of securing the future for bats.

It's great to have started 2016 celebrating the 20th anniversary of the National Bat Monitoring Programme. As the longest running purpose-built, multi-species monitoring programme for mammals in the UK, we have a lot to be proud of. It is because of the NBMP and the data collected by thousands of dedicated volunteers that bats are included in the government's UK Biodiversity Indicators which measure the overall health of our environment.

A first for BCT this year has been supporting its work by using a crowdfunding appeal. The funds raised were to publish and distribute a new edition of the Bat Care Guidelines. This is a vital resource for those caring for bats. It is freely available for all volunteer rehabilitators listed with the Bat Care Network and also UK veterinary practices. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this fundraising effort.

Wildlife crime continues to be an important focus for BCT. In March 2016, for the first time, to our knowledge, a wildlife crime case has been upheld on appeal in the Crown Court and has not only been successful but also had a Proceeds of Crime penalty applied. This sends a strong message to those who destroy wildlife that they will be held to account and will not profit from their criminal behaviour. Well done to the Investigations Project – great work.

And hoorah for the noctule which has been selected by BatLife Europe as Bat Species of the Year for 2016. What a great choice, it's our biggest bat, but no longer than the width of your palm; This is one of the few bats whose calls can be heard by the human ear – but, except for the lucky few, this is something only children can hear. I hope you will join us in celebrating the noctule and all bat species throughout the coming year.

Chris Packham, President, Bat Conservation Trust

Discover

National Bat Monitoring Programme



Population trends produced for 11 of the UK's 17 resident bat species.

Our world leading citizen science programme has been monitoring bats for 20 years.



Sunset/Sunrise surveys continue to help people discover more about the nocturnal wildlife in their garden.

In 2015 a total of **2,137 sites** were surveyed by **1,002 volunteers**, which is more than double the 1997 figure when our national monitoring programme was launched.



Looking ahead: It is a priority to expand our monitoring programme to encompass more UK bat species and to improve our understanding of the causes of population and distribution change.

Research

Evidence based conservation lies at the heart of all BCT's work.



We have identified **19 priority research areas** where further evidence is needed to help inform and direct bat conservation.

We work with a range of partners which include groups of dedicated citizen scientists, other environmental and conservation NGOs, government departments, the private sector and academic institutions.



Data from our bat monitoring programme was used in seven research collaborations with academic institutions and contributed to three peer-reviewed journal papers published in 2015-2016.

Vincent Weir Award

2015 winner – **Dr Paul Lintott** receives his award from BCT Trustee, Abigail Entwistle.



Paul's research has improved our understanding of how bats respond to urbanisation.



Act

Guidance

Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition was published in January 2016



BCT is leading the Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning, a partnership of **19 organisations** from the conservation, planning and development sectors, which aims to simplify and improve the consideration of biodiversity in planning decisions www.biodiversityinplanning.org

Investigations



In 2015 there were four convictions for bat crime in Lincolnshire, London, Burton upon Trent and Worcester. All resulted in convictions with the lowest fine imposed being £500 and the highest £4,500.

The number of cases being dealt with outside the court system showed a considerable increase in 2015. Often this leads to gains for bat conservation that may not have occurred if the case had proceeded to court. More information can be found on our website and in our bat crime reports.

Policy and consultations

BCT has been busy inputting to policy and legislation impacting bats. We have responded to consultations, submitted evidence to Parliamentary Select Committees and written to Ministers. Looking ahead, we will continue to work with partners to ensure our voice is heard in all policy decisions affecting bats.



Built Environment

Targeted outreach which included delivery of talks to industry (e.g. lighting professionals, planners and construction managers and designers) and even consultants of the future, through Masters lectures.

We're working to secure the future of bats in our built environment through the Habitat partnership scheme. A proportion of the profits from bat box sales from these partnership companies will be reinvested into the Habitat scheme, with the long-term aim of improving bat roosting habitat using feedback from monitoring.



Habitat Double Chambered Rocket Box

Bats and woodland

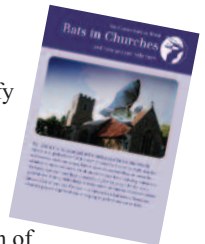
We continue to train woodland managers, this year we have also provided training to RSPB staff, volunteers working with the Woodland Trust/Natural England Bovey Valley Barbastelle Project and bat groups.



In December BCT and Natural England launched the Swanton Novers Woodland project. This is a HLF funded project to involve volunteers in answering key questions about bats and woodland management.

Bats and Churches

To tackle issues with bats and churches, we have established a cross sector partnership to identify and implement innovative solutions. Over the year to come we will continue to work closely to develop joined up solutions with Natural England, the Church of England Church Buildings Council, Historic England and the Churches Conservation Trust.



Inspire

Helpline



The National Bat Helpline fielded a total of **15,497 enquiries** (calls, emails and letters) in 2015.

In 2015, BCT organised **1,450 visits** on behalf of Natural England to householders and places of worship with bat roosts.



The National Bat Helpline provides immediate welfare advice about grounded and injured bats and puts callers into contact with around 400 local volunteer bat care experts and regional helplines who make up the National Bat Care Network.

Training

A total of 18 professional courses were delivered in 2015/16.



Many of our courses are now approved by the Royal Society of Biology for purposes of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The BCT arborist courses (*Arboriculture and bats* & *How to use an endoscope*) have been updated to bring them in line with the new British Standard 8596 – *Surveying for bats in trees and woodland*.

The *Surveying Trees* course was also re-written to bring it in line with the 3rd edition *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*.

National Bat Conference

Held at the University of Warwick on 11-13 September. This event was attended by **316 delegates**.

Plenary talks were given by Professor Kate Jones (Chair of BCT from 2006-2015) and Professor Gareth Jones.

Championing bats

BCT has continued to speak up for bats and their needs.

Over **96,000 likes** on Facebook up 20,000 from the previous year.

Over **31,000 followers** on twitter. Up over 6,000 this year.

47 news stories directly onto the BCT website and six blogs from a range of bat enthusiasts.

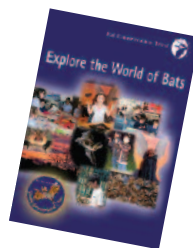
We worked with BatLife Europe to promote the first 'Bat Species of the Year'.

Bat Species of the Year

2015
Nathusius' pipistrelle

2016
Noctule

Education



Since 2010, BCT has distributed nearly 300 *Explore the World of Bats* packs to teachers, youth leaders and other people working in the education sector.

We currently have 83 active youth leaders / teachers who receive *The Young Batworker* magazine three times a year.



BCT in Scotland

The Scottish Bat Conference 2015 was very well attended with **127 delegates** with nine workshops to choose from.

Surveying for bats has been a main focus of the Scottish project this year, and a number of new roosts have been identified, including one new hibernation site.

BCT in Wales

The rich Welsh landscape provides a diverse range of habitats for 15 British bat species.

250 volunteers in 17 bat groups across Wales.

The Wales Bat Conference took place at the National Trust's Stackpole Centre, Pembrokeshire over the weekend of 7-8 June.

Bat group support

UK, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man

Bat groups continue to be at the forefront of bat conservation in the UK and at the core of BCT. BCT has a formal relationship with **89 Bat Groups**, of which **67 are Partner Groups** and **22 Network Groups**.

BCT provides support to bat groups including talks, training and outreach material (e.g. leaflets) as well as some financial support through the Partner Group support fund (for projects and support to attend the National Conference).

Updates and information is disseminated to Bat Groups through the production of the monthly bat group bulletin, the BCT website, as well as through direct regular contact, annual meetings with groups, regional conferences and the Bat Workers' Forum held as part of the National Bat Conference.



Pete Guest Award

Arthur Rivett won the 2015 award. Arthur has clocked more than 30 years of dedication to bat conservation – a massive achievement which continues to inspire newcomers to get involved. He helped set up Suffolk Bat Group back in 1984 and served as its first Chairman for the next 12 years. He has embraced the technology of bat detectors and computer sound analysis, and after group surveys writes up all the reports so that landowners get the best advice for managing their trees and woodlands for bats. He also masterminds the hibernation checks across the county and his experience in dealing with lots of batty situations over the years is like a library for others to borrow from.



BCT Internationally

In an increasingly globalised world it is crucial to stay abreast of developments in other countries and share good practice. In the past year, BCT has worked with



international partners, sharing our skills and experience in monitoring, educational work, helpline development and capacity building.

BCT in Europe

BCT is a founding partner of BatLife Europe which now has 34 NGO partners.



One important part of our collaboration this year has been to provide feedback to the European Commission's Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

Summarised financial statements and auditors' report

Statement of Financial Activities *(incorporating an income and expenditure account)* For the year ended 31 March 2016

	Endowment	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2016 Total £	2015 Total £
Income					
<i>Income from generated funds</i>					
Donations and legacies	-	-	248,685	248,685	1,749,112
Investment income	86	-	50,545	50,631	36,278
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Conferences income	-	-	102,872	102,872	106,163
Training courses and meetings	-	-	42,397	42,397	57,667
Projects and research	-	338,569	470,357	808,926	894,767
Other activities	-	-	58,925	58,925	29,971
Total income	86	338,569	973,781	1,312,436	2,873,958
Expenditure					
<i>Expenditure on raising funds</i>					
Membership support	-	-	59,910	59,910	73,069
Costs of generating voluntary income	-	-	101,369	101,369	118,994
	-	-	161,279	161,279	192,063
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>					
Conferences costs	-	-	84,927	84,927	76,839
Biodiversity training courses	-	-	43,838	43,838	47,162
Project and research costs	-	405,905	657,332	1,063,237	985,497
Total expenditure	-	405,905	947,376	1,353,281	1,301,561
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments	86	(67,336)	26,405	(40,845)	1,572,397
Unrealised (losses) / gains on investments	2,715	-	(31,922)	(29,207)	165,471
Realised (losses) / gains on investments	-	-	(26,324)	(26,324)	13,414
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	2,801	(67,336)	(31,841)	(96,376)	1,751,282
Transfers between funds	1,000,000	114,251	(1,114,251)	-	-
Net movement in funds	1,002,801	46,915	(1,146,092)	(96,376)	1,751,282
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	959,328	149,886	1,746,638	2,855,852	1,104,570
Total funds carried forward	1,962,129	196,801	600,546	2,759,476	2,855,852

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 16 to the full financial statements.

Balance sheet – as at 31 March 2016

	2016 £	2016 £	2015 £		2016 £	2016 £	2015 £
Fixed assets				Creditors: amounts due within one year			
Tangible fixed assets		2,459	17,293		(102,101)		(106,731)
Investments		2,397,762	2,418,648	Net current assets		359,255	419,911
		2,400,221	2,435,941	Net assets		2,759,476	2,855,852
Current assets				Reserves			
Debtors	171,061		187,350	Endowment funds	1,962,129		959,328
Short term deposit	114,117		116,639	Restricted funds	196,801		149,886
Cash at bank and in hand	176,178		222,653	Unrestricted funds			
	461,356		526,642	General funds	486,306		171,822
				Designated funds	114,240		1,574,816
				Total funds	2,759,476		2,855,852

The summary financial statement contains information from the statement of financial activities and the balance sheet for the year ended 31st March 2016, but is not the full statutory report and accounts. The full financial statements were approved by the trustees on 29th June 2016 and subsequently submitted to the Charity Commission for England and Wales, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and to Companies House.

The auditor has issued an unmodified report on the full financial statements and on the consistency of the trustees' annual report with those financial statements. Their report on

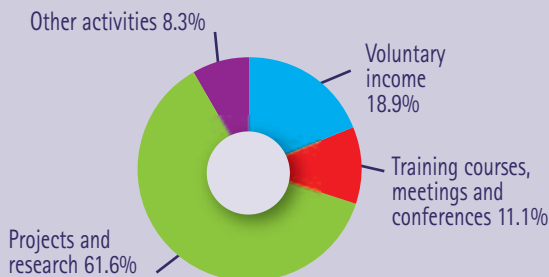
the full annual financial statements contained no statement under sections 498 (2) (a), 498 (2) (b) or 498 (3) of the Companies Act 2006.

Copies of the full annual accounts including the Trustees' Annual Report may be obtained from the charity's head office and www.bats.org.uk.

Signed on behalf of the trustees
David Gibbons, Chair, 29th June 2016.



Incoming resources £1,312,436



BCT had a strong year financially following the difficult decisions that had to be made to manage down expenditure in 2014. Whilst not achieving a balanced budget (in year income and expenditure) in the 2015/16 financial year, the overall deficit of £96,376 is positive considering the challenging current funding environment, which is likely to make achieving a break-even budget difficult in the medium term. The overall financial stability of the charity, however, has been greatly assisted by a very generous legacy from Vincent Weir in late 2014. This has allowed the charity to establish an investment portfolio of £2,397,762, the gains and income from which can help to ensure BCT is financially sustainable in the long term.

Fundraising costs – Our fundraising cost to income ratio was unusually low last year (7%) due to the large legacy received in 2014. However, in 15/16, we have achieved a reduction in the fundraising cost to income ratio from the year prior to the legacy (15% down to 12%). This is thanks to the generosity of donors, funders and members, as well as working hard to streamline our fundraising processes.

WHO'S WHO:

President – Chris Packham.

Vice Presidents – Professor Paul Racey, John Burton and Dr. Robert Stebbings.

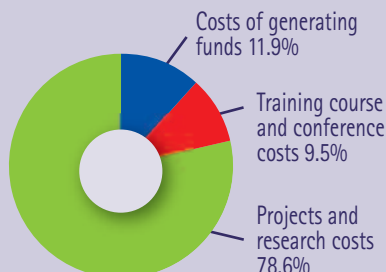
Patron – David Gower OBE

Trustees:

Professor Kate Jones, *Chair*: (until Sept 2015)

Dr. David Gibbons, *Vice Chair*: (Chair from Sept 2015)

Resources expended £1,353,281



Reserves Policy Statement – We adopt a risk-based approach for our reserves policy in order to define the amount we need to enable us to sustain our operations and protect us from unforeseen events. We have also been investing some of our reserves in strategic projects to secure BCT's long term financial viability.

At the end of the 2015/16 financial year our total reserves stand at £2,759,476. Of this, £1,962,129 are endowment funds and £196,801 are restricted funds for projects. This leaves unrestricted funds of £600,546 of which £114,240 have been designated to key programmes of work in the next and subsequent financial years (see notes to the accounts for details). This leaves us with £486,306 as unrestricted, unallocated funds. The trustees' policy is to work towards holding six months operating costs, approximately £675,000, in unrestricted reserves and we will continue to review our reserves policy and our progress towards achieving it each year.



Tom Andrews, Treasurer

Sarah Escott, *Hon Secretary*. (Vice Chair from Sept 2015)

Tom Andrews, *Treasurer*.

Bob Cornes (Partner Bat Group Nominated Trustee – PBGNT). Dr. Abigail Entwistle (from Sept 2015).

Rupert Lancaster. Steve Markham (Hon secretary from Sept 2015). Dr. Kirsty Park. Tom McOwat (PBGNT).

Roger Mortlock (from Sept 2015). Steve Parker (PBGNT). Professor Robert Upex.

Thank you

We would like to thank all our members and friends who have made donations during the past year. We do not have the space to name everyone; however, we would like to thank everyone for their greatly valued support without which none of our work would be possible.

Charitable Trusts, Statutory Bodies and Other Organisations

Natural England
Joint Nature Conservation Council
Scottish Natural Heritage
Defra
Natural Resources Wales
SITA Trust
Animal and Plant Health Agency
The Chapman Trust
The Rufford Foundation
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Green & Lillian F M Ainsworth Family Benevolent Fund
Miss Edith Mary Sage Charitable Trust
John Coates Charitable Trust
HLF East Anglia
The Rufford Foundation
Clark Bradbury Charitable Trust
Langdale Trust
The Jack Patston Trust
William Haddon Charitable Trust
Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust
The Leslie Mary Carter Charitable Trust
A&N Daniell Charitable Trust
Pilkington General Fund
Marsh Christian Trust
Walker 597 Trust
Holbeche Corfield Charitable Settlement
The Mitchell Trust
Dolly Knowles Charitable Trust

Legacies

Josephine Mary Payne
Barbara Else Redlich
Trudy Seagon

Sponsorships (of £100 or more)

Applied Ecology Ltd
Arbortearing Ltd
Arcus
Corvus
David Dodds Associates
Echoes Ecology Ltd
The Ecology Consultancy
Ecosulis
Just Mammals Ltd.
Kestrel Wildlife
Mott MacDonald
Tree Surveys
Arup
Brief2Event
Elekon
Envisage Wildcare Ltd
NHBS
Pettersen Electronik
Portland Data Ltd
Wildcare
Wildlife Acoustics
Wild Surveys Ltd
Wildwood Ecology
Wilmott Dixon

Corporate Members (as of 1st April 2016)

Advanced Tree Services Ltd
ASW Ecology, Regent's Place
Bovingdon Brickworks Ltd
Cleankill Environmental Services Ltd
Continental Landscapes Ltd
Denbies Wine Estate
Echoes Ecology Ltd
Ecological Survey & Assessment Ltd
English Heritage

From The Notebook Ltd
Ground Control Ltd
Historic England
Just Mammals Consultancy LLP
Kates Clothing Ltd
Marquis & Lord Limited
MKA Ecology
National Insulation Association
Peersonic Ltd
Sykes Cottages Ltd
Tamworth Property Services
The Nestbox Company Ltd
Treework Ltd
United Environmental Services Ltd
Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd
Wealden Heartwood Enterprises Limited
Wilby Tree Surgeons
Wildlife Acoustics
Wildwood Ecology Ltd

Donations from Bat Groups (of £100 or more as of 1st April 2016)

Cardiff Bat Group
Derbyshire Bat Group
Devon Bat Group
Gwent Bat Group
Hampshire Bat Group
Inverness Bat Group
Isles of Scilly Bat Group
Jersey Bat Group
Kent Bat Group
Oxfordshire Bat Group
South Lancashire Bat Group
South Yorkshire Bat Group
Surrey Bat Group
Sussex Bat Group
Tayside Bat Group
Warwickshire Bat Group
West Yorkshire Bat Group

Photographers: BCT would like to thank all the photographers who so kindly donated their photographs during the year.

Cover image: Hugh Clark

Auditor: Sayer Vincent LLP



Bat Helpline: 0345 1300 228 www.bats.org.uk

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Scotland: SC040116. Company limited by Guarantee, Registered in England No: 2712823. VAT reg. no. 877158773.

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