



7th November 2020 Midlands Bat Conference Online

Priorities in the Midlands

This session was chaired by Steve Roe, BCT Trustee.

Steve introduced this session as an opportunity to:

- Share views on the current priorities for bat conservation in the Midlands; and
- Feedback ideas and thoughts on what BCT should be focusing its resources on; and
- Raise any issues or concerns.

Steve highlighted this was not intended as a Q&A session. However, BCT staff were available to respond, where appropriate.

Additionally, this year delegates were able to submit priorities ahead of the session via the BCT Events app during the day.

Discussion points were:

- Bat group in Northamptonshire
- Sharing of records between bat groups

Bat group in Northamptonshire

Priority raised: *We don't have an active bat group in Northamptonshire, people tend to gravitate to the Bedfordshire Bat Group. Are there plans for a new group?*

Response from BCT's Head of Conservation Services, Lisa Worledge at the conference:

There is technically still a Northamptonshire Bat Group, chaired by Phil Richardson, but in reality, it is not open to new members, doesn't undertake engagement, NBMP surveys, etc. but is the repository for bat records in the county. Steve Allen is in the process of setting up a new bat group. He has been in touch with Colin Morris, BCT's Bat Groups Officer, about this prior to Colin's retirement. Please watch this space!

Response from Steve Allen at the conference: I am trying to set-up a new group, very early at the moment and I don't want to tread on anyone's toes. Initially we'll see who we've got interested, what we want to achieve and try to get things moving forward. Hopefully we'll be as successful as some of neighbouring groups over time.

Update since the conference: The new Nene Valley Bat Group, covering Northamptonshire, is now active. They have their own website at: <http://www.nenevalleybats.org.uk/> and they can also be found on Facebook.

Sharing of records between bat groups

Priority raised: *General sharing of records with BrumBats, especially around borders. Need to find a way for bat groups to share border records with each other as we know bats don't stop at borders! Not even just about having boundary records, what we need is to know where the nearest roosts are without necessarily going out to local records centres (LRC), or understand if most of records held within bat groups etc. Aspire to data sharing with all records in general. Also issue of time lag with records that submitted to LRC could be 12 to 24 months old before being available.*

Response from various bat groups and bat group records officers at the conference:

Representatives from four other bat groups commented:

- Shropshire Bat Group – John Morgan suggested contacting bat group records officers directly to ask what data they have.
- Warwickshire Bat Group – send records straight to Warwickshire Biological Records Centre (WBRC). The Group does not hold its own database of records so would need to go to WBRC for records from the county, but WBRC does share border records with EcoRecords.
- Leicestershire & Rutland Bat Group – Natalie Cossa is the LRBG recorder. She works with Leicestershire and Rutland Environment Records Centre (LRERC) so if need any data from LRBG then do get in touch with Natalie or LRERC.
- Staffordshire Bat Group - Kelly Hopkins is the SBG recorder and happy to share records, so please get in touch. Most of records are also shared with Staffordshire Ecological Record.

Update since the conference: Contact details for bat groups can be found on the BCT website at: <https://www.bats.org.uk/support-bats/bat-groups> (grouped by region for England). If specific records contacts aren't available then please get in touch with BCT's Bat Groups Officer, Abby Packham (batgroups@bats.org.uk), who will be happy to help facilitate contact.