

# Bat Conservation Trust



## Pete Guest Award: 2017 Nominations

### Background

The Pete Guest Award is given in memory of Pete Guest who was an inspirational figure in the bat conservation movement for more than 20 years. Each year, the bat world is invited to nominate people who have made an outstanding practical contribution to bat conservation. The criteria for the award includes: dedication, innovation, enthusiasm and inspiration in making a difference, both to bats and to people, helping make BCT's vision become a reality.

Previous winners of the award are:

- 2016 James Shipman
- 2015 Arthur Rivett
- 2014 Colin Morris
- 2013 Maggie Brown
- 2012 Daniel Hargreaves
- 2011 Peter & Maggie Andrews
- 2010 Roger Ransome
- 2009 Sue Swift
- 2008 Tom McOwat
- 2007 Phil Burkinshaw
- 2006 John Hadow
- 2005 Phil Richardson
- 2004 Tony Hutson
- 2003 Jenny Clark\*
- 2002 Shirley Thompson\*



\* BCT set up an award for “Outstanding voluntary contribution to bat conservation” in 2002, winners received a framed picture. Following Pete’s death, the Trustees proposed a new award in Pete’s name as a way of honouring his contribution to bat conservation. They also proposed that a formal trophy be sculptured, first awarded in 2004. This then replaced the award set-up in 2002.

## This Year's Nominations

A total of 12 bat workers have been nominated (inc. three joint nominations) for the Pete Guest award in 2017:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Voting reference (see How to Vote)</b>
Ani Binet	PGA-Binet
Chris & Mike Pawling	PGA-Pawling
Donna & Graham Street	PGA-Street
Jane Harris	PGA-Harris
John Puckett & Hazel Ryan	PGA-PuckettRyan
Kayleigh Fawcett	PGA-Fawcett
Margaret & Peter Grimsey	PGA-Grimsey
Tina Wiffen	PGA-Wiffen

Supporting statements submitted with nominations are enclosed in Appendices 1-8.

### How to Vote

To register your vote by **email**:

- Please copy and paste the relevant voting reference (see table above) into the **subject** of a new email
- Write your name and bat group (if you are a member of one) only in the main body of text
- Email to: [worledge@bats.org.uk](mailto:worledge@bats.org.uk) by **5.30 pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August**

Please be aware that if the voting reference has not been entered correctly, your vote may not be registered. Therefore please double check before sending.

To register your vote by **post**:

- Print out and complete the postal voting form sent with this document or available from the BCT website at:  
<http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/nationalconferenceawards.html>
- Return the form to: Pete Guest Award, FAO Lisa Worledge, Bat Conservation Trust, Quadrant House, 250 Kennington Lane, London. SE11 5RD by **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August**

Votes received after 5.30pm on 21<sup>st</sup> August will not be valid, therefore please ensure you allow sufficient time for delivery.

Please note that you are only allowed one vote. Your name will be stored by BCT solely for the purpose of imposing this rule. Names will not be published or announced publically.

## **The Decision Process**

The nominee with the greatest number of votes will be announced on the BCT website, BCT social media and via email communication to bat groups by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August.

## **Appendices**

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## Appendix 1

### Supporting statement for Ani Binet

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**Liz Walsh**

***Jersey Bat Group & Research Volunteer with Annyctalus Ecology***

I would like to nominate Ani Binet of Jersey Bat Group and Annyctalus Ecology for the Pete Guest award.

I met Ani nearly 2 years ago when I joined the Jersey Bat Group. Since that moment she has encouraged and inspired me and many others to give our time to bat work increasing our knowledge hugely along the way. She somehow manages the demands of having a young family with dedicating all her spare time to bat conservation. She is always doing something - from looking after rescue bats, to planning trapping sessions, to linking Jersey in with experts from off the Island. She has been instrumental to the running of two Jersey Bat Conferences with delegates and speakers from across the Channel Islands and the UK present.

Ani has been heavily involved in bringing new approaches to life such as her tree climbing and aerial work qualification to aid research into tree roosts in Jersey. At the other end of the scale, literally, she had been part of the team climbing down into sea caves below the cliffs to install detectors where sightings have been reported.

Most of all from my perspective her smile, energy and desire to share her knowledge has made me someone who wants to contribute to bat conversation and also an advocate to get others involved too. Those that she has encouraged are now recruiting other volunteers in turn. She has helped a number of us less experienced volunteers to develop a range of skills from PRF spotting, endoscope use and sound analysis to bat ID, trapping and handling through hands on teaching sessions and supervision at surveys.

The level of conservation, education activity and public awareness in Jersey is now greater than ever and shows in the results of 2 new species recorded in the last eighteen months. The first records of tree roosts in Jersey were identified in 2016 as a result of training activities including radio tracking with the help of Bat Cru, another training event that Ani was instrumental in arranging and coordinating. But her keenness to help others isn't limited to Jersey, this year she found the first known Natterers bat in Alderney while visiting to provide training on hibernation surveys to the Alderney Wildlife Trust.

The Jersey Bat Group and Annyctalus Ecology are now busy with many projects with teams of tree climbers deploying static detectors, camera traps and recording tree roost features, others on the ground participating in activity and advanced surveys, bat box checks and hours and hours of sound analysis, engaging with the public and providing bat talks to schools etc.

The common denominator in all of these is Ani Binet, which is why she would be a worthy recipient alongside those past names who have given so much to the values and aims of BCT.

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## Appendix 2

### Supporting statements for Chris & Mike Pawling

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#### **Nik Knight**

##### ***Chairman of Hampshire Bat Group***

Chris and Mike Pawling have been the mainstay of the Hampshire Bat Group for the past twenty-six years. For most of that time they ran our bat hospital, pioneering bat rehabilitation. Their devotion to the care of their patients extended to collecting bats from all over our large county, feeding pups at all hours of the day and night and keeping detailed records.

Their educational bats have accompanied them to a vast number of talks and demonstrations, inspiring and informing people of all ages about these wonderful mammals. Their enthusiasm and wide experience enables them to communicate their conservation message to audiences ranging from infant classes to adult wildlife groups. Almost every week throughout each summer, Chris and Mike took our displays to public events and led numerous bat walks, where their friendly charm engaged visitors with these amazing animals.

Until their recent retirement from the bat care and educational work, most of the rooms in their home seemed to be involved in their passion for bats, including making children's craft materials and storing and maintaining our equipment. Needless to say, it has needed a lot of new volunteers to take over the work of these two wonderful people.

Mike was our Chairman from 2001 to 2008, when his wisdom and practicality guided us through a time of great change. Both Chris and Mike have recently retired from our committee, where they have both served continuously for over 21 years. Chris continues to edit our journal 'Bat Droppings' and contributes lively articles. Many of our current members were inspired and trained by them, leading by example and friendly encouragement. In addition to all their dedicated work in Hampshire, Chris and Mike have shared their expertise as roost visitors and as volunteers for the BCT's Out of Hours helpline.

I know of no-one else who has done so much for bat conservation on so many fronts and in such a kind and generous way.

#### **Steve Page**

##### ***Hampshire Bat Group***

Chris and Mike's dedication and commitment to sustaining and promoting bat welfare is legendary in Hampshire. The network of friends and contacts they've created extends to schools, scout and youth groups, property owners, caretakers and water bailiffs! Wildlife NGO's regularly consulted them to run events or to tap their wealth of knowledge extending over thirty years. During this time they have developed interactive demonstrations of bats and their benefits to man. The disabled but otherwise fit bats in their care, nurtured back to health in their licensed bat hospital have criss-crossed Hampshire to this end. Also carried with them was a large model house wired with lights to illustrate where bat are roosting cheek by jowl with an unsuspecting public who are grateful when told of the number of midges they consume! Over the years Chris must have made thousands of black felt cut-outs for young children to decorate and take home. These are just three examples of their efforts to help people of ages to engage with bats and see them in a positive way whether in schools and evening groups or at county shows.

Their hands on involvement extends beyond interacting with the public: mention somewhere in Hampshire and they can tell you of a roost or a loft they've visited or a pup rescued. The fact that Mike and Chris have so many bat sightings logged against them is in no small part due to the trust property owners and caretakers have in them and that they are happy to have them return year after year. In July 2014 Chris and Mike logged the survey report for Winchester Cathedral, 30 years after their first in 1984!

Their quiet but reassuring manner and 'can do' attitude is enchanting and has made it easy for members of the public to join HBG, myself included. Their desire to sustain the county group has been Churchillian in taking on roles vacated as others moved on or retired. This extended period of stewardship provided time and space for the group to broaden and reorganise and introduce new young talent. Chris and Mike are still committee members but with the advancement of time they have been able to facilitate continuity and they are now able to pass on the baton to younger members. Their former roles are now shared by a team.

Recognition of Chris and Mike's selfless work over many decades before and after retirement, to promote the understanding of Bats in Hampshire as well as their welfare particularly with young people is well deserved and if the casting vote was with those Hampshire bats it - would be assured.

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## Appendix 3

### Supporting statements for Donna & Graham Street

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#### **Mike & Anne Gurr**

##### ***Isles of Scilly Bat Group***

**Dedication.** Donna is certainly dedicated, judging by the amount of time she spends looking after her bats at home, going out in all conditions to retrieve injured bats and training her volunteer helpers.

**Innovation.** We are sure that there are other bat hospital facilities in the UK but the system that Donna has evolved on the IOW has broken new ground in the way she both receives bats from people who bring them to her as well as always being on call to go out to collect them from elsewhere. She also corresponds extensively with people all over the world who contact her for advice.

**Enthusiasm.** She has this in abundance and during our visit, she hardly stopped talking about her work from the time we arrived to the time we left! She also has a great facility for inspiring enthusiasm in others including the many young volunteers who assist her daily and we left feeling even more addicted to bat conservation than when we arrived.

**Inspiration.** All the above qualities that we have described work together to inspire others. We think she is truly worthy of this award.

#### **Ian Davidson-Watts**

##### ***Davidson-Watts Ecology***

I first met Graham Street around 20 years ago when I was running a bat detector workshop in the New Forest for English Nature. He had arrived to the workshop on a bike from the Isle of Wight and proceeded to run about the Forest on foot with a bat detector for the weekend before cycling home with just a few hours' sleep. I realised at that time that Graham was absolutely passionate (aka batty!) about bats, he wanted to learn everything he could, but he was as equally as determined to do his bit for bat conservation and to share his enthusiasm for these amazing creatures.

Shortly after, Graham and Donna Street established the Isle of Wight (IOW) Bat Hospital, where there was an ever increasing need to deal with grounded bats on the Island. Living in a modest house, on the edge of Sandown, Graham and Donna proceeded to convert significant parts of the house to a 'bat ward' with multiple units to accommodate bats, whiteboards, tracking procedures and processes for the efficient and high quality management of bats in their care. This system has improved beyond recognition from those early days, and offers a service for bats both on and off the Island (where other bat carers are unable to keep bats). More recently the hospital has been inspected and approved as a quarantine facility for unusual migrant bats arriving from outside the UK, which was prompted by the recent visit to the IOW from a Freetailed Bat. Graham's innovative approach to housing bats, as well as their existing strict procedures around the welfare of bats, convinced the authorities they were more than up to the job.

To say that Donna and Graham are leaders in the field of captive bat husbandry and rehabilitation is an understatement, and they spend countless hours advising others on the skills they have learnt, training a wide range of volunteers, young and old, in all things bats. Additionally they have visits

from researchers and ecologists to encounter some of the rarer species found (literally) on the IOW. In 20 years of operation the Isle of Wight bat hospital as received in excess of 1900 bats of over 18 different species, Graham and Donna simply have not had a day off since it started and I know no one else with this kind of dedication. They go out at all hours 24/7 to pick up grounded bats, rare or common, young or old.

I'll be the first to admit that in my early ecological career as a species officer with English Nature, I was a bit of a purist. I wondered how the huge amount of time invested in such an operation would help bat conservation. Maybe saving a baby pipistrelle wouldn't make much of a difference to the bat populations directly...however through Graham and Donna's dedication and infectious enthusiasm for bats, evidenced by their appearance at all hours to collect a half dead bat of one sort or another, they have convinced the public that these species have to be important if people are prepared to dedicate their lives to it. For every bat they have taken in, for very call they answered, they also made another friend for bat conservation.

In addition Graham and Donna's work has been incredibly useful from a scientific perspective. I was fortunate to have led the IOW Woodland Bat Project which discovered 10 colonies of Bechstein's and 6 colonies of barbastelle bats. However prior to this the only major dataset on the distribution of these species was from the grounded bats Graham and Donna had (in the main) rescued. These data directly informed trapping priorities for the surveys making the best use of limited resources. In addition the UK's information on migrant bats such as the parti-coloured and Kuhl's pipistrelle bats has increased significantly since start of their work.

However, Graham and Donna's bat conservation message is not confined to the work of the bat hospital. As part of their bat awareness programme, they undertake over 50 bat walks and talks and are present at around 20 shows every year. They are also fully engaged in monitoring roosts for the National Bat Monitoring Programme and assisting visiting researchers (like myself) with a range of activities, from biometrics of bats to research on breathable membranes.

In conclusion, every time I have had the pleasure to work on the IOW, and mentioned the word 'bat' to landowners, architects, local developers and house holders, without fail they spoke of the good work of the IOW bat hospital. This is testament to the hard yards put in by Graham and Donna over the last two decades, not only in rescuing bats, but through their common touch and natural enthusiasm, spreading the bat conservation message in one of the UK's most important bat Counties.

Graham and Donna are simply the Isle of Wight's very own dynamic duo, they have been (and still are) an inspiration to a long in the tooth ecologist like me, and an inspiration to many, many others and I am honoured to nominate them for the Pete Guest Award.

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## Appendix 4

### Supporting statement for Jane Harris

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**Abi Gray**

***Norwich Bat Group***

My nominee for the Pete Guest Award is Jane Harris. I've looked through the previous winners of this award and there are some really well-known names in the list. I don't think many reading this will have heard of Jane, but I firmly believe that it is time she is recognised for all she has done and is doing for bats and bat conservation.

Jane is a truly inspirational and dedicated individual: she is the epitome of the all-round bat enthusiast, splitting her time between public engagement and advice, bat research and bat care. As the only registered BCT Bat Carer in Norfolk, Jane almost single-handedly deals with all bat care work for the county (5,370km<sup>2</sup>!) and is now even venturing into Suffolk to assist where she can, often travelling hundreds of miles per week to collect and release bats. She supports local vets and Wildlife Charities, offering her expert advice on injury assessment and care practices, and is always willing to speak to anyone who contacts her, night or day.

Entirely self-funded, Jane has built (with the help of her long-suffering husband!) a specially designed flight cage and converted part of her house into a bat hospital. At the time of writing, Jane has 18 pups in care, requiring feeding every 2-3 hours, not to mention all the pups with mums and other adults she is nursing back to health.

I have just returned from a dawn bat survey with Jane. Earlier, she had been helping on a dusk evening event organised as part of the Bats in Churches project, showing captive bats to members of the public. Going home, she then fed all the pups and managed maybe a few hours' sleep, before heading off to complete the dawn survey as part of her work as an Ecological Consultant. Finishing at 04:30, Jane had to then return home to feed the pups again, before embarking on a 60 mile round trip to collect a bat brought in to a vets, then dashing off to another site to collect yet another pup. This is a typical summer's night for Jane.

Some of the pups come to Jane through her role as a Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor for the BCT and Natural England, engaging with local home owners and churches about their resident bats. Jane is one of only four or five VBRV's in the county, which when you consider Norfolk has over 900 churches, can be a time-consuming role in itself!

In addition to her absolute devotion to the care and rehabilitation of bats, Jane is fundamental in improving our understanding of their ecology in her voluntary role as a Project Officer for the Norfolk Barbastelle Study Group. As part of this, she has devised an innovative scheme to explore the crossbreeding of Barbastelle colonies in Norfolk and their potential resistance to climate change using DNA from the droppings of captured bats. Her methodology prevents the need for ringing and wing punches which can be expensive and invasive. To date and with the help of volunteers, Jane has collected and analysed droppings from over 40 individual bats from 8 different roosts across North Norfolk. Through her long-standing study of this species which has included many nights of radio tracking, we now know so much more about the Barbastelle's behaviour, noting that those in our region don't always behave the way the textbooks suggest (Normal for Norfolk!).

Because Jane still had 1 or 2 hours per week in the summer which weren't utterly devoted to bats (I have no idea how), she has recently enabled the county to join in with the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project for the first time. Jane has single-handedly organised the paperwork, grant applications and equipment for this study, and assisted in the training of volunteers.

Just in case you thought Jane might take a break over the quieter winter months, she is assisting in a collaborative study between the BCT and University of Santa Cruz in the US, looking at white-nose syndrome in UK hibernation sites to feed into vital research on this issue.

Jane is so much more than vital to the bats of Norfolk and the UK, and I honestly cannot see how anyone could give any more of themselves to the conservation of these animals than she does.

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## Appendix 5

### Supporting statement for John Puckett & Hazel Ryan

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**Liz Vinson**

***Kent Bat Group***

John was the very first “batman” I ever met. My neighbour’s cat had caught a bat – I had rescued it and then called my local vet for advice. John then arrived with a box, a paintbrush and some mealworms, and talked to me for at least an hour about bats! He then, over the next week, rehabilitated the bat (a male juvenile Soprano Pip) – in the meantime I had had instructions to purchase a bat detector and start looking for nearby roosts! He had a record of one, which was quite nearby and, the following week, we contacted the house owners and arranged to release the bat and count the roost! He was the person who inspired me to learn about bat conservation and join the Kent Bat Group which led onto me being trained as a VBRV. Although sometimes he bamboozles me with his Latin terminology, he is the most enthusiastic, selfless individual I know and the sheer volume of work he has carried out for the KBG over the years deserves recognition.

I met Hazel through the Bat Group, usually at events, where she always had a PR bat to hand. She then suggested I train as a bat carer – although once vaccinated, I had been doing on off respite care for other carers over the years. She encouraged me to train although I was not very confident and has been my constant mentor over the past two years. She is always happy to give advice on the bats which come through my care and has never once let me down – she is, like John, totally selfless, and dedicates most of her time when she is not working, to looking after all the bats in her care. Indeed, she works at Wildwood where there is a bat flight cage, and she often runs bat conservation courses in her own time there. She gives talks to the public sometimes daily during the holiday months, and shows them bats who are about to be released who are practising their flying skills in the flight cage.

The work that Hazel does is second to none in the promotion of bat awareness – I have been present at a few of the talks (usually because I need to test fly a patient) and the energy and enthusiasm she passes onto the visitors is amazing – most of the people would never have seen a bat before – some don’t even know they exist in the UK!

I do hope that this wonderful award could go to them both, especially with the health issues which John is suffering at the moment.

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## Appendix 6

### Supporting statement for Kayleigh Fawcett

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#### **Melody Stokes**

#### ***Warwickshire, Shropshire, South Bucks & Berks Bat Groups***

Dr Kayleigh Fawcett demonstrates a passion and enthusiasm for bats and is determined to see new methods and technologies secure their well-being.

In her PhD research, she set out to explore improvements in bat call analysis, investigating species in Britain, Denmark, Belize and Canada. On noticing an expensive thermal imaging camera, unused by her colleagues, Kayleigh became curious to know how, when and where to use it. From a standing start, she embraced the challenge becoming a Level 1 Thermographer, now with five years of thermal imaging experience.

Gaining solid evidence of bat presence and population size is crucial to protecting bats. Kayleigh researched and implemented new methods using thermal imaging cameras. She has been generous with her expertise, sharing her experience at conferences and with colleagues, recently exporting the methods to bat-workers in New Zealand.

These techniques are set to revolutionise the way bats are detected in the commercial and voluntary sector as technology becomes more accessible. Kayleigh works hard both within her demanding job and as a volunteer, to improve the way we visualise the presence of bats and understand their behaviour. She has found thermal imaging an excellent means of engaging people with the world of bats, supporting BCT's vision.

She demonstrates considerable dedication through long years of research into innovative use of thermal imaging. She has enthusiastically shared her know-how and experiences and, through her sheer energy and enthusiasm, she is an inspiration to those who work with her and all who have heard her presentations.

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## Appendix 7

### Supporting statement for Margaret & Peter Grimsey

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**Julie Hopton**

***North Bucks Bat Group***

I first met Margaret & Peter at Tiggywinkles back in 2007 when we were there picking up baby bats that had been abandoned by their Mums. It was a very wet summer and they were dropping through into people's living quarters and scaring house owners. During that summer we had an extraordinary large number of orphaned and injured bats and as carers and bat group members we did what we could for them. Margaret & Peter have over the years since worked tirelessly to both care for bats and raise awareness/educate the public about bats through talks & events some of which I have had the pleasure of working with them on. This has been no mean feat as it has entailed a lot of preparation, sourcing events equipment including display boards and some heavy marquees which they have erected at shows, plus producing magnificent display information which they have endeavoured to find new and innovative ways of hooking the public in.

They never say no to a call for help when bats have been found in distress and have travelled thousands of miles over the years collecting bats, bringing them back home and caring for them until they can be returned to where they came from. They have always made a point of making the people who find the bats feel special for taking the time to ring up and get help, and particularly if there are children involved, making sure that when they take the bats back they get the little ones involved in releasing the bat to encourage them to want to get involved even more when they get older - they are our future bat carers after all.

Margaret & Peter have done lots of work for BCT over the years on the bat helpline and have totally dedicated their retirement to looking after and caring for bats, so much so that they have created a bat cave in a beautiful garden summerhouse complete with video cameras and sensors to check if any leave, created a flight cage to ensure they fit to release - in fact, they have given up so much of their lives to care for their 'babies' that they haven't been away for a holiday for many years now even though, I am sure, they would love to, but as always they put their animals first.

They certainly have gone above and beyond in the name of Bat Conservation and I really can't think of anyone more worthy of receiving this award.

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## Appendix 8

### Supporting statement for Tina Wiffen

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**Mandy Tomas**

***Northumberland Bat Group***

Tina has more than 20 years' experience of bat care, training other carers and dealing with the public. She freely shares her knowledge, but is willing to change methods as new knowledge becomes known. Tina inspires trainees by describing what to do with a sick bat and why, shows the carer and then gets the learner to do the procedure, always giving encouragement and never criticism. Along with bat care, her dealings with the public either while collecting downed bats or as a Voluntary Bat Roost Visitor, she will advise along with extending their knowledge and interest of bats. She has even encouraged maternity roost owners to help take care of 'their' orphaned bats.

Tina will give an impromptu talk to interested members of the public (and offices of the law who stop her late at night whilst she is getting bat data), highlighting the importance of bats, as well as doing voluntary bat walks. Tina is always trying to get more data on bats by electronic methods, as well as quick calls to anywhere where she thinks bats might be roosting. Genuine interest in every aspect of bat biology, she is helping to disentangle their life style by encouraging scientists, ecologists and anyone with information about bats, to submit papers to Northern Bats which she helped to set up. Tina helps out at many other bat group projects even funding her own travel, such as helping with trapping and ringing for the Nathusius' Project and Gibraltar Free-tailed bats. Her enthusiasm for bats has even taken her plodging through snow to go down adits in Cumbria, getting wet and dirty. In short her enthusiasm and love for bats is infectious, whilst always thinking of the individual and collective welfare of bats.

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