

Bat Conservation Trust



Pete Guest Award: 2018 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:

- 2017 Donna & Graham Street
- 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 Haddow
- 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 11 bat workers have been nominated (inc. a joint nomination) for the Pete Guest award in 2018:

| Name | Voting reference (see How to Vote) |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Gail Armstrong | PGA-Armstrong |
| Dani Linton | PGA-Linton |
| Jean Matthews | PGA-Matthews |
| Amanda Millar | PGA-Millar |
| Steve and Fiona Parker | PGA-Parker |
| Huma Pearce | PGA-Pearce |
| Hazel Puckett | PGA-Puckett |
| Nick Tomlinson | PGA-Tomlinson |
| Michael Walker | PGA-Walker |
| Anne Youngman | PGA-Youngman |

Supporting statements submitted with nominations are enclosed in Appendices 1-10.

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 by **5.30 pm on Wednesday 22nd 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 **Wednesday 22nd August**

Votes received after 5.30pm on 22nd 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 at the Bat Workers Forum on Friday 7th September and the award presented at the National Bat Conference on Sunday 9th September. Details will also be posted on the BCT website, BCT social media and via email communication to bat groups week commencing 10th September.

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Appendix 1

Supporting statement for Gail Armstrong

Ley Hodgson

North Lancashire Bat Group

I would like to nominate Gail Armstrong for the Pete Guest award this year.

I feel she is more than worthy of a nomination due to her professional and voluntary roles within bat care, conservation and education.

Gail has been involved in bat conservation for 24 years. She has not only been involved in conservation but has also helped shape its future for people like me to come and join the cause. She sees every opportunity no matter how small, daunting or down right upsetting as an invitation to educate people about bats and their conservation, similarly she shares all good news stories. She passes along information to any and everybody regardless of profession, culture or background. She champions knowledge as the way forward and will never accept that she is a specialist because 'there is always more to learn'.

Gail's activities are numerous and range from, but are not limited to:

- Fronting BCT helpline for North Lancashire
- School talks and activities
- Adult talks and staffing information stands at public events
- National monitoring surveys and roost counts
- Home roost visitor
- Reading and commenting on development proposals if bat conservation has not been considered or is inappropriate
- Monitoring for councils on council schemes
- Bat care and education with the public
- Running training courses for bat handling within North Lancashire
- Running workshops at regional and national BCT events

Gail is the figurehead of the North Lancashire Bat Group. A group with a large geographic catchment with many miles of rural and urban habitat to cover. She ensures its members are informed of all information coming from BCT and other sources through emails and keeps everyone on social media in the loop through our Facebook page. She arranges events for us to attend and is never too busy for someone to drop in and learn about bats or just have a cuddle with her little lovelies. Her encouragement of others in person, over the phone or on social media is amazing. She is always available to call or will come and visit if I have an issue or new learning experience with the bats in my care.

She is a well-known and much loved figure in the bat community, far beyond our regional group. Being a regular contributor to BCT national conferences and events. She has welcomed people from all over the country to come to her base in Silverdale and gain whatever knowledge and or experience they may need. For example, this year Gail

welcomed Martyn Cooke from the southeast to our roost counts so that he could record the calls of our fabulous Brandt's bats so we, the wider bat community may better understand and identify them in the future.

Gail's dedication and enthusiasm knows no bounds. Her friendly and fun demeanour is engaging to people of all ages. She spent a day with my niece who was over from Northern Ireland on work experience, teaching her all about bats, their physical make up, how to feed them and care for them, how flight cages work etc., but not only that, she passed on her enthusiasm. They discussed ways in which my niece could become involved in bat care at home if she wanted to. As a result my niece, having just finished her GCSEs is about to start a voluntary summer placement with a local animal care centre.

These things seem simple, and to some, unimportant, but this is what excels Gail above others. This maybe an example of one conversation and one day spent with someone, it is also an example of how Gail interacts with everyone about bats. No information is useless, nor wasted. It is passed on for people to do with what they can and are able to. I only wish I had been that 16-year-old and not in my 30's when I had caught Gail's infectious enthusiasm for bats.

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Appendix 2

Supporting statement for Dani Linton

Ani Binet

Jersey Bat Group

I have known Dani for a few years now and have visited her at the Wytham Bat Project on a number of occasions, as well as at Finemere, for swarming at Box and having her visit Jersey twice. Every time I meet her I am inspired by Dani and her dedication to the study of bat ecology. The knowledge she has achieved through the Wytham bat project with regards to colony size and movements, cohorts within the colony groups, life span and breeding success of individual bats etc. etc. etc. in itself is incredible, but she is also willing to share the results of her projects by sending copies of research papers to volunteers and professionals alike on request where she has been unable to publish them on open access sources.

Not only is Dani dedicated to carrying out her research but she is also amazingly welcoming to volunteers, even adding extra survey dates to her already very busy schedule to ensure that Jersey volunteers can get the most out of a trip to Wytham! She is always happy to share her knowledge as well as training volunteers in the identification, handling, processing and ringing skills needed to help volunteers gain licences in order to be able to improve the study of bats in their own areas.

As well as carrying out the research and assisting volunteers in gaining or increasing their own knowledge Dani also engages with public events to increase public awareness of the importance of bats and decrease the fear people often feel for these much maligned creatures due to the frequent negative portrayals in the media.

To me Dani is the living embodiment the criteria for the Pete Guest award of dedication, innovation, enthusiasm and inspiration and she would be a truly worthy winner!

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Appendix 3

Supporting statements for Jean Matthews

Sarah Cartmel

Gwynedd Bat Group

I would like to nominate Jean Matthews of Gwynedd Bat Group for the Pete Guest Award. Many of you may have come across Jean while she worked as the bat specialist for NCC/CCW/NRW and for JNCC and know her for her tireless efforts for bats in Wales, the UK and worldwide.

However, bats have always been far more than a job for Jean, she spends much of her own time helping with Gwynedd Bat Group, helping with injured and rehabilitating bats, and has even organised her holidays around bats so that she can help people in the areas she visits with their own bat work.

I have known Jean for over twenty years and throughout that time she has been an inspiration for the rest of Gwynedd bat group and people in north Wales. One of the first times I met her was at a talk she was giving to the local town, and this inspired me and others to get involved in the local bat group.

She has been the co-ordinator for most events the group has done including our popular bat camps, has been a trainer for many years and is always welcoming to new bat group members.

She has been the instigator for projects the bat group has done including a 'batty holidays' project whereby the local accommodation providers with bat roosts were given information packs about bats and advice on how to broach the subject with their visitors!

She organised the first bat camp the group have done in the wilds of north Wales, and made it a very memorable weekend despite the weather!

She has always been very keen to make sure the bat group members receive any training they need and goes above and beyond in helping anyone in the group.

She continues to be the 'queen pin' in Gwynedd Bat Group, and her time even now she has retired from NRW, is still very much taken up with all things batty - from the European perspective to the local.

Wales has been very lucky to have such a devoted person working for their bats and many bat colonies have been saved by the work Jean has done.

Jean deserves so much praise and this award would be a very fitting tribute and a way for all of us to say thank you to her and long may it all continue!

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Alison Johnston
Gwynedd Bat Group

I would like to nominate Jean Mathews for the BCT Peter Guest Award as I truly feel that she deserves this award in recognition of her work in bat conservation both locally and further afield.

I have known Jean for nearly 20 years in which time she has inspired me to become firstly a member of Gwynedd Bat Group and from there to further my interest and eventually go on to work in bat conservation. In fact, I wouldn't be where I am now doing a job that I love without her input, enthusiasm and guidance.

Jean has worked for bat conservation in many ways, originally with NCC, then CCW and eventually NRW and with a leading role in the Gwynedd Bat Group. Jean is one of the members who you can guarantee will turn up at every bat group meeting with a smile if she's in the country and not away on a batty holiday. She is always happy to share her wealth of knowledge regarding bat conservation and bat care to anyone who needs it. As a member of the bat group she has lead numerous walks and given more talks to members of the public and to the bat group than I can count, as well as offering support and training for both new and older members of the group. She is a trainer for the bat group and will happily provide training that is being requested by members. She organised the first bat group 'Bat Camp' and has been involved with each subsequent camp for what has become a keenly anticipated event in the group calendar.

Jean will happily take injured/grounded bats in for care and has a number of permanent PR bats and is always at the end of the phone if advice is needed. She is always happy to look after any I have if I go away.

She undertakes BCT surveys, including the lesser horseshoe roost monitoring and National Bat Monitoring Programme and has done for many years. She is currently getting a swarming project of the ground to look at sites within the Gwydyr forest.

In her role with NCC, CCW and NRW she has been responsible for helping to shape bat legislation in Wales and Europe. She continues this work although she has recently taken retirement from NRW, by continuing with her involvement in drafting a publication for EUROBATS.

She has said that she hopes retirement will give her more time to get involved with batty projects and I'm sure she will be very busy with one project or another.

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Appendix 4

Supporting statement for Amanda Millar

Sheila Wright
Sussex Bat Group

I'd like to nominate Amanda Millar of the Sussex Bat Group, for this award.

Amanda works tirelessly to rescue and rehabilitate bats – she currently has about sixty bats in care, including orphaned babies to rear. All the bats are housed in comfortable net cages in their own, specially adapted room in her house in rural West Sussex.

As well as running the bat hospital, Amanda does regular bat talks to local schools and organisations, as well as running very popular training courses, all arranged at her home, where she teaches groups of vets, bat workers, ecologists and interested members of the public to identify bat species, to care for injured bats and to rehabilitate them, if possible. She is also almost always available to answer queries about bats from members of the public – calls which can take up a lot of her already limited time.

During the summer months Amanda and her husband, Michael, erect a large 'batzebo' – an outside flight cage, to help rehabilitate bats. This is extremely hard work, involving many hours of weighing and tending bats to ensure that they are coping well, before release. The bats have to be checked daily and a supply of insects and fresh water provided to allow them to learn to fend for themselves.

On top of this, she is the Chair of the Sussex Bat Group, taking on many responsibilities with that role and is also a volunteer roost visitor. It is not surprising that she has hardly managed a day off in years! Amanda is also a keen bee-keeper and intersperses honey bee training courses with her bat activity. She is invaluable to the Sussex Bat Group and no doubt to the Bee Keepers Society, as well.

I think that she is a very deserving person for this award.

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Appendix 5

Supporting statements for Steve and Fiona Parker

Baptiste Chadeyron ***South Lancashire Bat Group***

Steve and Fiona have been involved in bat conservation for around 20 years and this has become more a lifestyle than a regular hobby. Writing a statement to support their nomination for this award is actually quite tricky, but only because they have been involved in so many things that it is difficult to write a summary that highlights the many reasons why they deserve this award.

Fee and Steve started with bat care and gradually got more and more involved within the South Lancashire Bat group (to start with...) and their dedication helped shape up what has become one of the most active bat group in the UK... So much so that it is often referred as Steve Parker's bat group.

The group's bat line is actually in their house and although we have a team of volunteers remotely checking messages regularly, Steve and Fee are always aware of the numerous calls received and will make sure all are dealt with.

Fiona is one of the two SLBG's Bat Welfare officers and assist bat carers, new and experienced, all year round, sharing her experience and knowledge on bat rehabilitation.

Steve and Fiona have been organising and leading many public events like bat walks and talks or local wildlife shows, raising awareness on bats, inspiring members of the public to look after their local bats.

A big part of SLBG's success comes from the training workshops run every year, organised by our two trainers, Steve being one of them. A huge amount of time and effort goes into carefully planning and delivering these high quality workshops, helping new members to gain knowledge and confidence to make a contribution to bat conservation.

And of course a lot of bat surveys have been taking place over the years thanks to their drive and dedication – to name just one, SLBG was one of the pilot groups when the Nathusius project started in 2014 and Steve & Fee have been leading the countless nights we have spent looking for this species.

But Lancashire is not big enough! Steve and Fee started to travel for bats, from Wales to Sussex via Trinidad, Zambia and more recently Panama to name only just some of the numerous places visited for bat research, training, etc...

Enthusiasm and inspiration for bat conservation? When you dedicate so much of your spare time and ALL your holidays to bats, I think it is safe enough to say that Fee and Steve are enthusiastic about bats and inspired and trained quite a few bat workers over the years.

Leanne Townsend
South Lancashire Bat Group

Such is Steve and Fee's dedication to all things bats their house is often more like a bat drop in centre. Both of them, especially Fee, have happily had people coming and going with bats to help with bat care. Either both always have time on the phone to help people too, even for people that might not be in South Lancs anymore.

I am not sure that either of them ever switch off from "Mode: Bat" except, maybe when Steve runs. But even then, he's run for bats. He did the London Marathon, in uncomfortable temperatures and with an injury, and still did it in great time. Oh, and he raised about £9000 for the Kate Barlow Award in the process. No biggie for Steve when you live and love bats!

Both of them are a fountain of knowledge and readily share that with trainees, new and 'old' members of South Lancs Bat Group alike, as well as on a worldwide scale - visitors from various places have been to South Lancs and no doubt benefited from Steve and Fee being as keen as they are.

They're always eager to help, share and also continue learning themselves and they are, frankly, inspirational to other people in the bat world. It is a massive benefit to bats to have Steve and Fee in their camp.

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Appendix 6

Supporting statement for Huma Pearce

Alison Fure

London Bat Group Trainer

Pete was a member of the London Bat Group (LBG) and gave authoritative advice to organisations such as English Nature and the GLC on development projects prevalent at the time – such as the docklands – when there was new European legislation to negotiate.

It was Pete who found the first *Nathusius' pipistrelle* bat along Barge Walk, River Thames, Richmond when he came with me to verify a Daubenton's bat maternity roost, at the barge tunnel, Seething Wells, Kingston upon Thames. He used his Tranquillity TE bat detection – now in my possession- and was quick to find this new species, in 2001.

I would like to nominate Huma Pearce of London Bat Group for the Pete Guest award. As well as being the Treasurer for the LBG, Huma has worked tirelessly over the last three summers on the National *Nathusius' pipistrelle* project (NNPP) revealing new information about this species. She has undertaken surveys in ~ 20 London Boroughs – engaging large numbers of volunteers – and liaised with organisations such as London Wildlife Trust; raising the profile of bats and making them more accessible to communities.

Volunteers have developed a range of skills from to bat ID and handling through teaching sessions. She has assisted us in Kingston where we found a new species for our borough. The whiskered bat, captured at Jubilee Woods, was female. Its capture in early June indicates that a maternity colony may occur within or near to the site. There is limited data on whiskered bats in London, so this is considered a significant record within the context of the Greater London area.

Four bats of Latvian origin and two of Lithuanian origin have now been recaptured. Two of the four Latvian ringed bats were caught within Greater London highlighting its importance with respect to the migration route of this species:

- A Latvian ringed male *Nathusius' pipistrelle* was captured from Stocker's Lake 2017.
- A Latvian ringed female *Nathusius' pipistrelle* was captured by Huma at the Thames Water Kempton Park Nature Reserve 2017

The level of conservation, education activity and public awareness in London is now much increased thanks to Huma and her volunteer army.

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Appendix 7

Supporting statement for Hazel Puckett

Val Sutton & Shirley Thompson
Kent Bat Group

We would like to nominate Hazel Puckett (nee Ryan) to receive the Pete Guest Award 2018.

She has been a trustee of the Kent Bat Group since 1999 and has worked tirelessly, with great success, to rehabilitate bats from pups a few days old to adults with serious injuries. About 200 grounded bats annually, from all over Kent, come into her care. After healing, many need to build up stamina and relearn flying and hunting skills. A most important part of their recovery is exercise in the Kent Bat Group's flight cage at the Wildwood Trust (a wildlife park for native species) where Hazel is a Senior Conservation Officer. Hazel was the inspiration behind the innovative flight cage, experimenting with different materials and layouts to achieve the optimum result, and where, in 2017, 65% of the bats she flew there passed her 'proficiency test' and were released back into the wild. Members of the public are invited to watch these test flights, which allows them to see bats close to and learn about them from Hazel. Her vision and dedication has recently led to Wildwood receiving a Gold Award from the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquaria (BIAZA) in the Behaviour and Welfare category. Hazel also runs training courses for bat carers, many of whom are now on BCT's carers' list.

Bats that are not able to be released, often pups that have grown up but never learned to fly, become PR bats and accompany Hazel to various events, most notably Kent Agricultural Society's Living Land day, a sort of county show for primary schools. Over the many years she has been showing and talking about these bats, she has inspired thousands of children to delight in them and deserves recognition for her outstanding practical contribution to bat conservation by receiving the Pete Guest Award 2018.

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Appendix 8

Supporting statements for Nick Tomlinson

Becky Wilson

Dorset Bat Group Member

I would like to nominate Nick Tomlinson for this year's Pete Guest award. I think Nick is really deserving of this award as he meets all the criteria. He has dedicated years to bat conservation, he has worked and been a trustee for the Bat Conservation Trust, contributed to a number of BCT projects and lead projects that directly improved bat conservation during his time as a county ecologist. He is dedicated to the Dorset bat group and gives a huge amount of his time organising and leading bat surveys for bat group members and since retiring has somehow managed to give even more time to the group! Nick is always looking for ways to contribute to BCT's vision, whilst working for the National Bat Monitoring Programme Nick has been in touch on many occasions to ask how his work with the bat group could help BCT and he even organised a Dorset bat conference to connect bat enthusiasts in the county.

Nick is one of the most innovative and enthusiastic people I have ever known. He is always striving to learn more about bats, coming up with experiments to test his ideas and asking, what he likes to call, the 'hive mind' for their opinions and experiences. Discussing bats with Nick is so enjoyable, he is a wealth of knowledge but is open and approachable making you feel like there are no bad questions. What is particularly special about Nick is his enthusiasm for bats and helping other who are interested in bats. He is not one of these people drawn into bat politics and will strive to help and support anyone interested in getting involved with bats. He has been incredibly supportive to me and many others who have been trying to break into the world of bats and work towards their licences. I think that people like Nick are inspirational, in not only the time and effort they give to bats but also in helping others get involved.

Philip Briggs

London Bat Group & Dorset Bat Group

Nick has boundless and infectious enthusiasm for bats. He is one of the most inspiring and engaging bat workers I know and I think anyone who joins him on a survey can't help but be encouraged to take their interest in bats further. He has vast and varied knowledge and experience yet remains very modest and always assumes that other people will know things he doesn't and is interested in others' thoughts on different topics.

He does amazing work getting projects up and running that increase knowledge of bats in Dorset including collecting valuable data on rare woodland species and bats at autumn swarming sites. He's very good at identifying potentially important bat sites and working with landowners to gain permission to survey them (sometimes after many years of perseverance). He also recently organised the Dorset Bat Conference with the aim of bringing together everyone who is doing bat work in Dorset and promote sharing of information. This really sums up his approach which is to get everyone working together,

sharing knowledge and skills, and not letting things get bogged down by politics. He also promotes working together between different bat groups, for example winter hibernation visits are run together by Dorset Bat Group and Somerset Bat Group across the two counties, giving great survey opportunities for members of both groups. Directly for BCT he gives up his free time to take part in the National Bat Monitoring Programme and lead workshops as an NBMP trainer, training volunteers to take part in NBMP surveys. He also takes part in the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project. For several years he acted as a BCT trustee.

One of the most valuable things Nick does is to create opportunities for people to get involved in exciting projects and surveys in order to build up their experience. The Dorset Bat Group surveys programme always has lots going on each year and Nick always strives to ensure that everyone who wants to attend one or more surveys gets the opportunity to do so.

Nick does a huge amount of bat research and conservation work himself and by inspiring, training and creating opportunities for people to gain experience his contribution to bat conservation extends far beyond his own activities.

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Appendix 9

Supporting statements for Michael Walker

Various People

Nottinghamshire Bat Group

Nottinghamshire Bat Group would like to nominate Michael Walker for the Pete Guest award due to his tireless work to promote bat conservation in Nottinghamshire. Over the last decade, Michael has led the bat group, inspired and trained countless VBRV and others in all things bat, led educational events for the wider public and taken the group on a journey to create a distribution atlas for the county. Below are the thoughts from a number of group members on why Michael deserves this award.

Phil Carter

Notts Bat Group

When Michael joined the Nottinghamshire Bat Group in 2000, it was a tiny group of enthusiasts – 18 years later, and with Michael as chair for the last 10, it has grown to be a very active group with over 100 members. This growth is largely down to Michael's commitment and influence on a whole generation of bat lovers. He has led the group meetings throughout this period, organising a wide range of guest speakers, taken on lots of roles and run many events. Central to this, is his enthusiasm and support for anybody who has an interest in bats. He loves to nurture and actively encourage people and help them to grow their knowledge and experience. He has trained many members and supported them in their university studies or to attain licences, with a good proportion using this as a springboard for a career in ecological consultancy. For these people, they would not be in the positions they are today, without Michael's support. Michael is always very humble and approachable and has a huge ability to communicate with people. He uses these skills to educate and enthuse a wider audience through the many talks that he gives across the county, reaching many members of the community who previously have no understanding of bats and always leave his talks much the wiser and encouraged to go out and watch bats in their local areas. As county recorder, Michael has also contributed to the conservation of bats in Nottinghamshire through his preparation of bat biodiversity action plans.

Ruth Testa

Notts Bat Group/Devon Bat Group

I first met Michael in 2008, when he took over the chairship of Notts Bat Group. I remember the first meeting I attended was his first as chair with only five or six other members in attendance, and I also remember the last meeting I attended with well over 25 others, and a group membership of over 100. The growth of the group in this time is down to Michael's determination to spread the batty love across the county, encouraging others to do the same. He is an incredibly patient teacher with a wealth of knowledge that he takes pleasure in sharing – Notts Bat Group rose to new heights under his leadership.

Michael, with the support of other committee members, embarked on the Echolocation Location project, gaining HLF funding to map the distribution of bats in Nottinghamshire. This was no mean feat and without his perseverance and dedication the project would not have been the success that it is. His enthusiasm when undertaking driven transects across the remoter parts of the county is astounding. His desire to have accurate knowledge of bat distribution to help inform countywide conservation is phenomenal and some of the sites surveyed as part of the current project have been nominated as Local Wildlife Sites purely for their bat interest.

Michael has inspired my love of bats, and without him my bat journey would probably not have taken the path that it has. Working alongside Michael has been an absolute pleasure and I can't think of anyone more deserving of this recognition.

Amelia Reddish
Notts Bat Group

During my time volunteering with NBG, myself and many others have been inspired by Michael's kind and supportive nature and enthusiasm for bat conservation. Michael's roles within NBG are numerous from running the Heritage Lottery funded Echolocation Location project to guiding bat walks and talks. Michael juggled being chair of NBG with many other important roles such as being Nottinghamshire's mammal recorder. Michael has been an integral part of Nottinghamshire bat group for 18 years and is one of the longest standing members. Throughout Michael's time as chair, the group has grown and developed massively. Despite his busy schedule, Michael has always been available to advise and assist NBG members (both new and old).

Sheila Wright
Former Chair Notts Bat Group

Michael has always shown total dedication to his work for bat conservation, often going out on bat calls at very short notice so as not to let the bats, his co-workers, or members of the public down. He is extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of bats and their conservation needs, as demonstrated by the many talks and walks he has led and the huge amount of survey work he has undertaken over the course of many years. During his Chairmanship of the Notts Bat Group, the organisation went from strength to strength – culminating in the superb work Michael did in initiating, organising and participating in the HLF-funded county survey. I cannot think of a more worthy person to receive the Pete Guest award.

Tony Morris
Notts Bat Group

I would, without any hesitation, nominate Michael Walker for the 'Peter Guest' award, who through almost two decades has run a crusade in the conservation of bats. My nomination relates to his tireless work and support in the provision of talks and presentation to enlighten a wide audience to the world of these fantastic and intriguing mammals.

Janice Bradley

Notts Bat Group/Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Michael has led the Bat Group from strength to strength, with his vision, commitment and enthusiasm he has made a real difference to bat conservation in Nottinghamshire. Under Michael's leadership, membership of the Group and recording effort have increased enormously, and securing funds for the Echolocation Location Project, and then delivering it, was a monumental achievement. The Bat Atlas will be a tremendous resource for informing and driving more bat conservation in the County.

Lynn Victor

Notts Bat Group

Michael is one of the brightest, most conscientious and modest people I have ever met. Stepping up to the role of Chair of Notts Bat Group, he brought new impetus to the group which has since expanded and developed enormously. His efforts have had a huge impact on both bat conservation in the county and the people he has worked with.

Michael is passionate about the natural world and extremely knowledgeable about many aspects of wildlife and conservation. His desire to make a difference was demonstrated by his career change into nature conservation (6 years ago), which he worked hard to achieve. At this time he was already a very active member of Notts Bat Group, putting significant time and energy into developing his own knowledge and skills and also supporting others to do so. Over the years this has resulted in him mentoring and training many bat group members and other individuals, and enthusing countless members of the public about bats through bat talks and walks.

Michael has become a most highly respected expert in bat conservation. In addition to his many roles including Chair and trainer with the Notts Bat Group, he spearheaded the Lottery bid for a large-scale project to map Nottinghamshire's bats, which he subsequently coordinated. Michael always sets very high standards for himself and despite pressures at work he has ensured that this has been a hugely successful project.

Without Michael the Notts Bat Group could well have folded years ago, and would certainly not have been as active. We would have engaged far fewer people and we would know far less about Nottinghamshire's bats. He is thoroughly deserving of this award.

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Appendix 10

Supporting statement for Anne Youngman

Eilidh McNab

On behalf of Central Scotland Bat Group

Every Scottish bat worker knows Anne Youngman, either personally or by reputation! For over a decade, Anne was the friendly and welcoming face of BCT in the country. As the only staff member in Scotland, she was the go-to person for bat workers, the many members of the public who contact BCT, and a huge number of different organisations with an interest in this most exciting of taxa (but of course we are all biased!). And bats could not have a better advocate. Anne is wildly enthusiastic in everything she does; whether taking school children on bat walks, engaging with homeowners, or being a source of knowledge and encouragement to all the bat groups across Scotland. She is the perfect individuals to 'sell' people on bats - enthusiastically extolling their virtues as pest controllers, vital parts of our biodiversity, and all-round fascinating creatures.

Her tireless work encouraging the monitoring of bat species across Scotland included training for NBMP surveys, running the Big Bat Map (which allowed people of all abilities to add their sightings, and was a useful tool in introducing others to bat conservation), and presenting training events for experienced surveyors to teach others, encouraging even farther participation in surveys. She also single-handedly organised the ever-popular Scottish Bat Conference annually, the social event of the year for Scottish bat enthusiasts! Anne worked tirelessly to make the event a success, seeking out exciting new speakers every year, as well as encouraging old hands to impart their knowledge and experience.

But her influence extends far outside bat workers of course. Her political advocacy work through the Scottish Environment forum saw Anne recruit six MSP Bat Species Champions, encouraging them to lend political support for the protection of bats. Working with many other conservation organisations, such as the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the National Trust for Scotland, Anne was instrumental in encouraging an interest in bats for lots of young (and not so young!) trainees, myself included!

It is Anne's happiness at engaging others outside of the conservation sphere that marks her out – instead of staying in the safe sphere of like-minded individuals she worked hard to raise awareness of bats with a much wider audience; from the public at Gardening Scotland shows (where BCT has a lovely stand every year), bat walks for local Rotary Clubs, to engagement with community groups such as the Seagull Trust. The cause of bat conservation across Scotland has been immeasurably furthered by Anne's work.

We at the Central Scotland Bat Group were lucky to have her so close by, and she was heavily involved with everything the group does, from Waterways surveys and roost counts, through hibernation visits, and public engagement. Although she may have migrated north, we still consider her a part of the group, and she is welcome back any time!

So, it is with great pleasure that the Central Scotland Bat Group would like to nominate Anne for the Pete Guest award.

P.S. Of course one of the many reasons why Anne was appointed to the job of Scottish Bat Officer fifteen years ago was her wealth of experience and her enthusiasm for bats and bat conservation beginning many years before then. She was for several years an area officer, based in Dingwall in the Highlands, for Scottish Natural Heritage, and brought her enthusiasm for bats to that work. She was at the same time a keen member of Inverness Bat Group (and, by the way, designed the logo that the group still uses today). Now that she has moved back to the north of Scotland she has renewed her membership of the Inverness BG, and will undoubtedly provide the same enthusiasm and inspiration for them as she did for the CSBG, and all Scottish bat groups, while she was the Scottish Officer for BCT.

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