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**This email has been sent to bat group contacts only.  
Please forward this information to others in your group.**

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Dear bat group member,

Hello and welcome to the January edition of the Bat Group Bulletin! In this issue you can find updates for England, volunteer requests in Wales and the latest on upcoming events.

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**1. Change to Schedule of English Regional Conferences.** Thank you to everyone who gave input on the proposed changes to the English regional conferences via consultations. Based on this feedback and discussions on viability, we are moving from a two-year cycle to a three-year cycle. We strongly believe in the opportunities for training and networking that regional conferences offer and are pleased to have reached a solution to ensure the long-term sustainability of these conferences. This change also creates capacity for BCT to offer an additional conference once every three years, focusing in on a given topic, for example the radiotracking conference on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April (see events for registering interest link).

The new English regional conference schedule is as follows for the coming three years:

23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2024	March 2025	April 2025	March 2026	April 2026
Midlands	South East	East	North	South West

**2. Bat Care Network Facebook Account.** Some of you may have noticed the Facebook account “Bat Care Co-ordinator”. This account will be used by the BCT Bat Care Network Co-ordinator to post relevant essential updates in Facebook groups, and on its own page. The co-ordinator will not respond to messages or friend requests sent to this account, but this account can be followed on Facebook. Please continue to keep an eye on the Bat Care Bulletin for all updates, and continue to contact [batcare@bats.org.uk](mailto:batcare@bats.org.uk) with any queries.

**3. BCT's Local Nature Recovery Strategies Guidance in England.** Following on from our LNRS update sent to bat group contacts on 11<sup>th</sup> Jan, we now have a [first full working draft of our guidance](#). This has undergone scrutiny, including with Natural England, but we are aware that it needs some refinement. This will continue over the coming weeks. However, with the Responsible Authorities having a deadline of the end of March to produce their longlists, we are very aware of the need to get this out without delay and the core text will not change. Bespoke ‘Species Summary Sheets’

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(mentioned on p7) will be populated in the next week after being reviewed. These sheets will be the first tranche and an additional one for Alcatraz, identified as a local priority, will be produced soon.

Thank you to all bat groups who responded to our request regarding stakeholder engagement. This list is linked from the guidance document (p7) and will be updated as more responses come through.

[Read here to learn more about Local Nature Recovery Strategies.](#)

**4. Biodiversity Net Gain in England.** BNG is a government strategy to improve biodiversity during development. BNG requires developers to provide at least 110% of the biodiversity value found on the site prior to their development, and will be made mandatory for major developments on 12<sup>th</sup> February and for minor sites from 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Read more here: <https://bit.ly/3SzFqle>.

**5. Company Fined for Demolition of Bat Roost.** A Newport developer has been fined £2,605 after pleading guilty to the destruction of a common pipistrelle roost, which took place without an ecologist present. BCT's Wildlife Crime Project supported on this case. You can read more details here: <https://bit.ly/47X4e1t>.

**6. Big Green Hike.** BCT will be taking part in the Big Green Hike again! This year, the Hike is taking place **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April**. This is a great way to get outdoors and to raise money for bat conservation by walking, skipping or running in your own style and at your own pace. You also decide the route and distance plus you can do it in urban or rural settings so you are in full control. It would be great for you to join us! If you are based in Scotland or have a particular love of Scotland we are keen for you to support our work there which is currently underfunded, although you can of course choose to raise money for any aspect of BCT's work, just make sure you let us know and make it clear on your fundraising page. For more information and to register for FREE, [click here](#).

**7. Request for Articles for Spotlight on Bat Groups.** We'd love to hear stories from your bat group to feature in the Spotlight on Bat Groups section of BCT's membership magazine, Bat News. It can be about any bat group activities such as a recent project, community initiative or bat care. Please send any ideas for stories, or articles between 300-400 words, to [batgroups@bats.org.uk](mailto:batgroups@bats.org.uk).

**8. Please Nominate BCT in the Movement for Good Awards.** The Movement for Good Awards are a platform for giving, set up by all the businesses that make up the Benefact Group (including Ecclesiastical Insurance – BCT's insurance provider). The latest round of nominations are now open and we could receive a donation of £1,000. We have been successful in the past thanks to your support. The more nominations the higher the chance of being drawn, so please nominate BCT using this link: <https://bit.ly/3SXvtQQ>. You can also nominate your own bat group if they are a registered charity in the hopes of winning an award.

There will also be a special draw for animal charities between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of February with a donation of £5,000. Nominations are not open yet but you can be notified when they by providing you contact details through this link <https://movementforgood.com/notify/>.

**9. Volunteers Needed for Welsh Rainforest Bat Surveys.** [Gobaith Coetir/Woodland Hope](#) are looking to find volunteer bat surveyors to set up and collect passive acoustic monitoring (PAM) devices in temperate rainforest sites, located between Dolgellau and Beddgelert. Training will be provided so don't be put off if you have no surveying experience. BCT will also cover some volunteer expenses such as mileage. If volunteering with this project sounds like something you may want to do, please get in contact with Elliot at [ebastos@bats.org.uk](mailto:ebastos@bats.org.uk) for more information.

[Gobaith Coetir/Woodland Hope](#) ni'n chwilio'n bennaf am wirfoddolwyr i gynnal arolygon ystlumod, a fydd yn gosod ac yn casglu dyfeisiau monitro acwstig goddefol (PAM) ar safleoedd coedwig law dymherus rhwng Dolgellau a Beddgelert. Byddwn ni'n darparu hyfforddiant, felly peidiwch â

digalonni os nad oes gennych chi brofiad o arolygon ystlumod. Bydd yr Ymddiriedolaeth hefyd yn talu am rai o dreuliau gwirfoddolwyr fel milltired. Os yw gwirfoddoli gyda'r prosiect yma'n swno'n ddeniadol, cysylltwch ag Elliot ar [ebastos@bats.org.uk](mailto:ebastos@bats.org.uk), am fwy o wybodaeth.

**10. Reminder – British Islands Bats Articles Wanted.** The editors of British Islands Bats, Tina Wiffen and Lisa Worledge, are now seeking articles for Volume Five (please see Volume Four and previous volumes at <https://bit.ly/47VMYDw>, hosted on the BCT website but please note the publication is independent of BCT). Contributions can come from across the British Islands (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands, and Isle of Man). They can be full length papers to short notes covering anything relevant to bats and bat work. Articles may be on any bat related projects, and the editors particularly welcome submissions about bat group projects and from students undertaking bat research. Please see the webpage for how to submit an article, or email any questions to [britishislandsbats@gmail.com](mailto:britishislandsbats@gmail.com). The deadline for contributions to Volume Five is the **end of March 2024**.

**11. Key Dates for Your Diary.** Watch this space for dates and reminders of conferences, BCT training and other events you may be interested in. Please do utilise the extra publicity for your events by getting them added to the [BCT events page](#) or included in the bulletin for other bat group members to see. For more information about training please see our [training pages](#) or email the training team on [training@bats.org.uk](mailto:training@bats.org.uk). You can also get updates straight to your inbox by signing up to BCT's events mailing list here: <https://bit.ly/3a2g0M0>.

**BCT Events and Training.** BCT runs a hybrid program of online and in-person events.

- **7<sup>th</sup> February – Mailing List Mingle.** Opportunity for open discussion with other bat group members on [zoom](#) to discuss bat group mailing lists systems and methods. <https://bit.ly/3j5aNct>.
- **21<sup>st</sup> February – Surveying Guidelines Surgery.** [Online](#) opportunity to ask the editor (Jan Collins, BCT's Head of Biodiversity) of Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition any questions you have. Booking required: <https://bit.ly/3SbN7nl>.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> March – Spring into Action.** Booking is open for the [in-person](#) training and workshops event at Stirling University. <https://bit.ly/3nbKSBI>.
- **15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> March – How to Organise & Lead a Bat Walk.** [Online](#) training to develop skills to be able to run a bat walk by yourself. From preparing your event to running the bat walk itself, covering some key aspects of bat biology so you can feel confident sharing your enthusiasm and knowledge. <https://bit.ly/3kjqNv>.
- **23<sup>rd</sup> March – Midlands Regional Conference.** Booking for this [hybrid](#) event will be opening soon, offering a mixture of talks and two 1hr workshops. <https://bit.ly/3n73rXA>.
- **13<sup>th</sup> April – Radiotracking Conference.** More details to follow. You can register your interest here: <https://forms.office.com/e/Gq8DWkfzyM>.
- **19<sup>th</sup> June-24<sup>th</sup> July – British Bats, their ecology and conservation.** Six-session [online](#) course designed for those new to bats wanting to develop a broader understanding of bat ecology, threats and conservation action. Nov-Dec dates also available to book. <https://bit.ly/42arupQ>.
- **13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> September – National Bat Conference.** Save the date of the 2024 [hybrid](#) conference.
- **Ongoing – Bats and lighting talks.** Hear the talks given by experts who spoke at the Bats and Artificial Guidance Note Update Launch: <https://bit.ly/3TAj9Lk>.
- **Ongoing – 4<sup>th</sup> edition survey guidelines: exploring the changes [webinar](#):** <https://bit.ly/4803R70>.

### Other Events and Training.

- **12<sup>th</sup> March – 3<sup>rd</sup> International Bat Research Online Symposium.** Free online event on replacement roosts for bats at buildings: <https://bit.ly/46TH9fY>.
- **23<sup>rd</sup>–24<sup>th</sup> April – Trees, People and the Built Environment 5 Conference.** Hybrid conference to provide a place for built and natural environment professionals to collaborate, with real-world case studies, research, and practical solutions: <https://bit.ly/49yDxlz>.
- **2<sup>nd</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> September – European Bat Research Symposium.** Scientific conference dedicated to the study and conservation of bats in Europe, in Tarragona, Spain: <https://bit.ly/3Rzj6wy>.
- **Ongoing – Bat Acoustics Analysis.** Online course from BatAbility containing 14 modules and more than 15 hours of content to develop your skills in bat call analysis and, if you want, undertake a graded examination at the end of the course. BatAbility are kindly donating at least 6% to BCT for each participant that signs up. <https://bit.ly/3fvgZHa>.
- **Ongoing – Free Charity and Trustee Webinars.** See [gettingonboard.org](https://gettingonboard.org).

**12. Bat Research Papers, Reports & Other Bat Media.** Please note we normally include articles, reports and blogs that are available to read online or download without charge.

- **Latest episode of BatChat is out.** Steve Roe talks to Dr Debbie Saunders from Wildlife Drones about new drone technology and its potential for bat research and conservation: <https://bit.ly/48PvD6P>.
- **Higher and bigger: How riparian bats react to climate change.** 24 year long study on Daubenton's, showing changes in female altitude limit and newborn body size, linked to climate change: <https://bit.ly/4bjsYUg>.
- **Modelling bat movement.** Two different modelling types are required to represent radio-tracking data of an initial dispersal period and a return to roost period. With those exterior returning first, leap frogging the others: <https://bit.ly/47PmDx2>.
- **Agricultural benefit of bats in apple orchards.** Bat predation on codling moth reduces apple damage by 50% (total weight of damaged apples per tree): <https://bit.ly/3HCWKG1>.
- **Wetland restoration increases in bat activity.** A before-after-control-impact study on boreal wetlands found increased bat activity but not presence after restoration: <https://bit.ly/3vVRomO>.
- **Are different definitions of 'population' failing bat conservation?** Article poses that different definitions are creating arbitrary boundaries and are missing species ecology diversity: <https://bit.ly/3Oistjp>.
- **Volunteering with BCT is a great experience.** Article by a volunteer comparing their experiences at three different charities, with volunteering on BCT's Helpline coming out on top! <https://bit.ly/3HBHn0J>.

A rolling 12 months of previous bulletins are available on the BCT website at <https://bit.ly/2GGoYRK>.

Best wishes,



Abby Packham  
Bat Groups Officer

If you wish to alter your contact preferences, including to opt-out of receiving future communications from us, please contact us by either calling 020 7820 7193 or emailing [batgroups@bats.org.uk](mailto:batgroups@bats.org.uk), **however if you are receiving this bulletin forwarded to you by your bat group, please contact the bat group directly.**

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