

Annual Review

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021



Brown long-eared bat with moth



Message from the President

What an extraordinary year. So many of us have had to rethink how we continue with vital conservation work amid COVID-19 restrictions, and as a result the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) has seen innovation, incredible support, challenges, moved much more of its work online and delivered many of its achievements remotely, for the first time.

Whilst the pandemic closed many doors it also prompted some new ones to open up, in how we confront challenges, work differently, share and connect with each other to keep conservation pushing forwards.

For example, it was a pleasure to address the Bat Conservation Trust's first online AGM in 2020, and like many others, I was beamed in from home. In my case, a bat-friendly nook in the New Forest from where I have been sharing nature during lockdown, via the online Self Isolating Bird Club, which has featured bats, BCT and bat volunteers.

Among other firsts, BCT saw a successful Big Bat Skills online event in May, and then the National Bat Conference. BCT launched BatFest, over a month of fascinating and easily accessible online events to suit all tastes and ages throughout September – another new way to bring more people closer to bats and their conservation.

We held three regional conferences online in October and November, as well as the Woodland Symposium and Discover the Wonder of Bats, held in January. It was reassuring to see how this new delivery method attracted more than 2,000 participants, with overwhelmingly positive feedback. Going online for the first time yielded other benefits too, making events cheaper and more accessible to new audiences.

In October we continued with the popular BatChat podcast series, with 10 more episodes presented by BCT trustee Steve Roe, which I very much enjoyed being part of. This great resource has exceeded 20,000 downloads.

The misinformation around COVID-19 and bats has been a continuous challenge, and forced BCT to divert considerable resources to managing communications and weathering a storm of untruths around bats and diseases. We fought back with the Don't Blame Bats campaign, launched with the Spanish Association for the Conservation and Research of Bats.

We also have a fantastic new website resource called ROOST, to promote the best practice in bat roost protection and mitigation during building works, sharing excellent case studies and celebrating them via the Roost Awards.

BCT continues to provide clear information through all its channels on bat conservation and has a growing social media presence, now reaching around 200,000 followers.

And of course we are bolstered in all our efforts by the unfaltering volunteers and supporters who have helped carry bat conservation through such challenging times.

This year has demonstrated how innovation can happen when we are catalysed to think differently. This might offer hope to all those who feel, like I do, that we can be more ambitious with how we confront a greener recovery for nature.

And 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the Bat Conservation Trust being set up. I am looking forward to BCT's forthcoming celebrations to reflect on all the achievements for bat conservation during that period, and cheering on the next 30 years as we strive for a wildlife richer future.

Chris Packham CBE, President, Bat Conservation Trust

Review by the Chair and Chief Executive

The past year has been challenging for BCT, as it has been for so many. As well as the need to address misinformation around bats and COVID-19, highlighted by Chris, we have also had to adapt our activities to work in a remote world.

BCT's National Bat Helpline has been as busy as ever, fielding nearly 15,000 enquiries in 2020/21. Throughout the pandemic, the Helpline has adapted its processes to enable it to continue providing support to the general public, including using technology to carry out 'virtual' roost visits and a network of volunteers offering remote advice to those who had found grounded, injured and orphaned bats.

Like many charities, in the past year we have had to take action to reduce our expenditure, to ensure that we are sustainable going forwards. For example, we have been trialling a Volunteer Bat Care Helpline to run in and out of office hours during summer.

Our advocacy and policy work have continued to be a high priority. We have worked closely with other environmental NGOs to campaign for an ambitious fit-for-purpose Environment Act to protect our wildlife for generations to come. Most recently this has involved galvanising supporters to sign a petition calling for a legally binding target to halt the decline of species. We have responded to proposed planning reforms, and called on our supporters to write to their MPs to voice their concerns.

We have continued to work in partnership with other NGOs on species recovery projects, to help some of the UK's rarest species. As part of Back from the Brink, the Grey Long-eared Bat Project has worked with nearly 200 farmers and landowners to improve foraging habitat and connectivity. We will build on this work, in partnership with East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through a new project called Return of the True Night Rider.

Species on the Edge, another collaborative project in Scotland, is in its development year, and an exciting funding application for Natur am Byth in Wales was recently submitted.

Technology and innovation have continued to be a theme in BCT's work. We partnered with the Government of Jersey to deliver the Jersey Bat Survey, a passive acoustic bat monitoring survey. 2020 also saw the report of our Forestry England pilot, which explored the use of acoustic monitoring to inform natural capital accounting and woodland condition monitoring. We are now working with Forest Research to integrate passive acoustic monitoring of bats into the National Forest Inventory field survey.

We have also secured funding for a new project called Nightwatch – a free, tech-enabled night-time biodiversity survey open to all, regardless of background, experience, or physical ability. Nightwatch will collect robust, locally focused biodiversity data, whilst engaging a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds and abilities, initially in urban areas.

The importance of reaching a wider range of supporters and volunteers was highlighted by our recent membership and National Bat Monitoring Programme volunteer surveys. We have much work to do to reach a wider audience and this year we will continue to take action to improve our own practices to make BCT a more inclusive employer and provide more volunteering opportunities for all. We have joined the Diverse Sustainability Initiative and will continue to support the Wildlife and Countryside Link Review into Ethnic Diversity in the Environment Sector.

And finally, we would like to offer huge thanks to all of you – our staff, volunteers, partners, donors, supporters, members. Your continued support over the past year has been invaluable and has allowed us to continue working hard for bat conservation. We look forward to working with you over the coming year.

Professor Kirsty Park, Chair

Kit Stoner, Chief Executive



Our vision



The Bat Conservation Trust is the leading UK charity devoted solely to championing bats and the places they need to survive. Our vision is a world rich in wildlife where bats and people thrive together. Our mission is to conserve bats for present and future generations. Through education, inspiration, collaborative action and scientific research we inspire individuals and organisations to value and speak out for bats.

Discover: We ensure scientific evidence is in place to support bat conservation.

Act: We take conservation actions and influence policy.

Inspire: We train, engage and educate diverse audiences to secure a good future for bats.

Strengthen: We invest in a sustainable future for bat conservation.



Advances in monitoring

This year we have continued to make exciting advances in science technology and techniques for monitoring bats and other wildlife. There has been a big focus on field work directed at testing the best way to deploy passive acoustic sensors to achieve powerful new results.

In Britain's woodlands, we have continued with a groundbreaking monitoring project launched with Forestry England. The pilot project in 2019 in south west Britain was a huge success, amassing the largest, most comprehensive and attribute-rich dataset of woodland bat records ever compiled by BCT. Eight species and 1.7 million bat calls were captured and identified using artificial intelligence, across 60 locations over 36 nights.

The aim was to explore new uses of acoustic monitoring that could be invaluable in informing natural capital accounting and woodland condition monitoring.

Building on this success, we are now working with Forest Research to add the passive acoustic monitoring of bats into the National Forest Inventory field survey which we are piloting in summer 2021.

We have also been supporting Bat Conservation Ireland to develop a similar woodland survey for the Republic of Ireland.

In summer 2020 we partnered with the Government of Jersey to deliver the Jersey Bat Survey, a passive acoustic bat monitoring survey across the island. We are now working to analyse 10 years of acoustic data from Jersey, and develop a comprehensive monitoring programme there, including a variety of monitoring approaches. We are also supporting the RSPB to pilot bat monitoring across their reserves.





400+  volunteers trained

13  online workshops

1,340  sites surveyed

88%  online portal usage

Natterer's bat

© Hugh Clark

Building knowledge

The latest analysis from the vital work of our National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) has shown positive trends.

Five of the 11 British bat species monitored are increasing, following decades of historical declines. Among them are two of Britain's rarer bats: the greater horseshoe and lesser horseshoe; plus the common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and Natterer's bat.

Meanwhile, another six species appear to be stable: Daubenton's, whiskered/Brandt's, noctule, serotine and brown long-eared bat populations.

The NBMP is the longest running purpose-built, multi-species monitoring programme for mammals in the UK. It relies on a nationwide network of citizen scientists and has enabled us to produce statistically robust population trends for 11 bat species, over more than 20 years. It will inform the 2021 UK Biodiversity Indicators report.

Although COVID-19 restricted activities, our volunteers visited 82% of the 2019 sites, with almost double the 1997 volunteer numbers.

The NBMP is run by the Bat Conservation Trust in partnership with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, supported and steered by Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, NatureScot and Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Tackling bias in citizen science

Accidental bias can be an issue that needs understanding and addressing with citizen science in conservation, including when trying to detect bat population changes. Our Centre for Ecology and Hydrology PhD researcher, Lea Dambly, has been testing a 'virtual ecologist' idea that models the effect of biased site selection and differing rates of observer retention on our ability to accurately detect abundance trends when using roost count data.

This is helping us understand why, with certain species monitored by the NBMP, trends estimated from Roost Survey data differ substantially from trends estimated using Field and Hibernation Survey data.

Here's a conundrum: if surveyors don't observe any bats, they are more likely to give up surveys, even though zero roost counts are important. The findings suggest that trends derived from Roost Count surveys are negatively biased as a result of some species frequent 'roost-switching' and the increased tendency of observers to stop monitoring if bats temporarily abandon roosts.

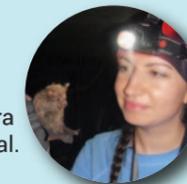
The magnitude of the bias depends on the degree of site fidelity. Species that switch site more often are more likely to be affected. These findings were published in a Citizen Science special edition of the 'Journal of Applied Ecology' in 2020, – 'Observer retention, site selection and population dynamics interact to bias abundance trends in bats.'

In 2021 we received funding from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee to further explore this bias. This work suggests that excluding zero counts reduces the degree of negative bias, although it does not remove it completely. Zero counts largely represent instances where the colony is absent from the roost and so are more accurately characterised as missing data, rather than colony extinction, which would represent a true zero. A greater understanding of change in the number of roosts present in the population is needed to show unbiased long-term trends.



Awards

Kate Barlow Award



The Kate Barlow Award was awarded to Laura Torrent of the Universidade do Porto, Portugal. Laura's project will provide one of the most thorough evaluations to date of the bat diversity of Equatorial Guinea, a hugely understudied region located in one of the most important biodiversity hotspots in Africa.

This work will provide critical information for local authorities and support their efforts to protect its bat species. This project will use genetic techniques to assess an entirely unstudied collection of more than 1,000 bat specimens that were collected across Equatorial Guinea in the 1990s.

This study will also consider wing-punch tissue samples collected in more recent years. Laura's project forms part of her PhD.

Vincent Weir Scientific Award



Rana Khayat (Manchester Metropolitan University) won BCT's 2020 Vincent Weir Scientific Award for her PhD project characterising the causes and effects of wing tears in common pipistrelles and other UK bat species for the first time.

Rana collected her data from bat carers who sent pictures of bat wings and swabs from injured bat wings.

This award recognises the achievements of new bat researchers and their contributions to bat conservation.

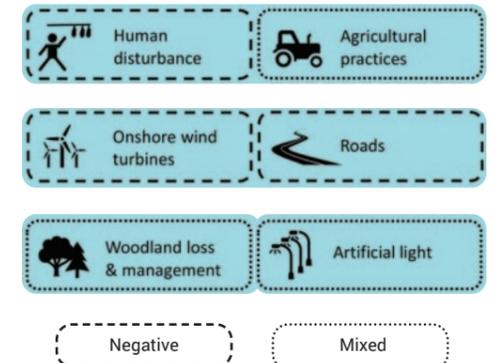
What's driving change?

BCT is co-supervising a PhD on the drivers of bat population change, with Ella Browning, hosted by University College London. This study draws on data from the NBMP.

In collaboration with BCT, Ella published the paper 'Drivers of bat population change: a review reveals evidence gaps' (Mammal Review, 2021). It reviewed the evidence linking proposed drivers to impacts on bat populations in Europe, building on the results of a previous assessment.

Whilst there are still big knowledge gaps, major threats were flagged. Six of the UK's 17 breeding bat species could not be assessed due to a lack of evidence. New monitoring tools will help identify some of these drivers.

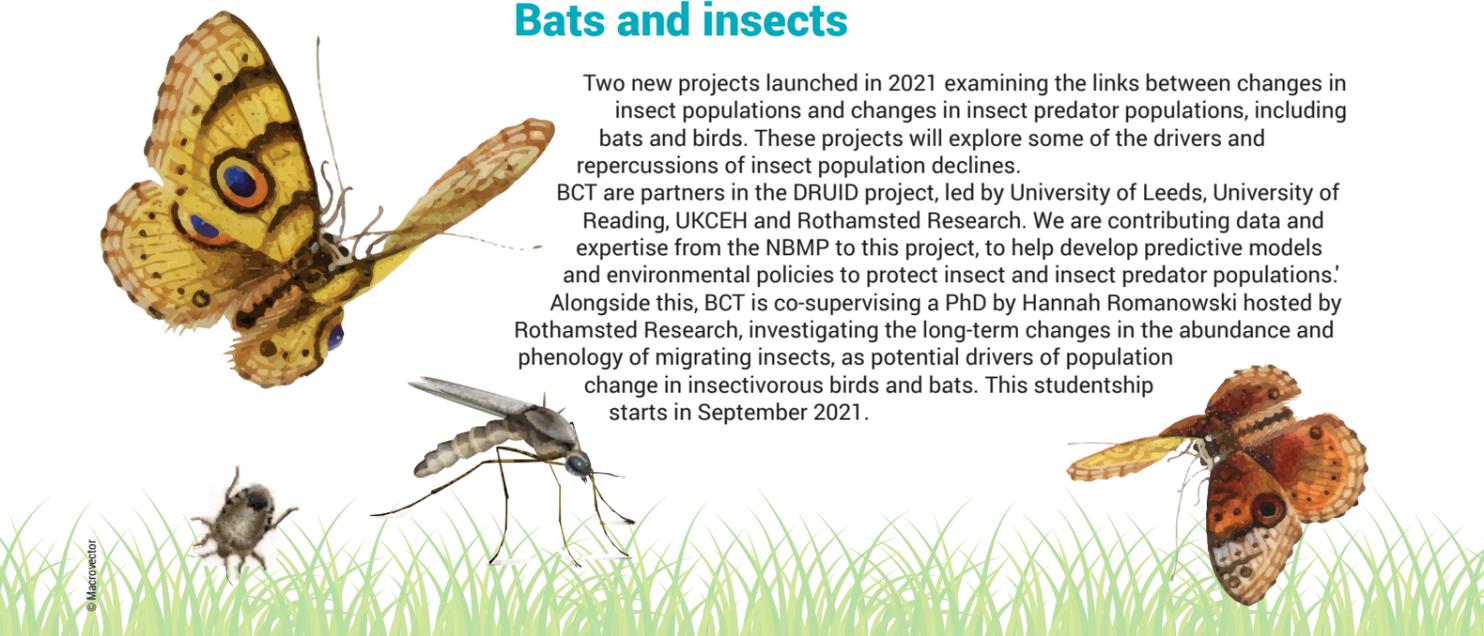
Reasonable evidence for impact



Bats and insects

Two new projects launched in 2021 examining the links between changes in insect populations and changes in insect predator populations, including bats and birds. These projects will explore some of the drivers and repercussions of insect population declines.

BCT are partners in the DRUID project, led by University of Leeds, University of Reading, UKCEH and Rothamsted Research. We are contributing data and expertise from the NBMP to this project, to help develop predictive models and environmental policies to protect insect and insect predator populations.' Alongside this, BCT is co-supervising a PhD by Hannah Romanowski hosted by Rothamsted Research, investigating the long-term changes in the abundance and phenology of migrating insects, as potential drivers of population change in insectivorous birds and bats. This studentship starts in September 2021.





Back from the Brink

We are supporting ambitious work to help grey long-eared bats as part of Back from the Brink. The project has been extended until August 2021. This partnership works with farmers and landowners to improve foraging habitat and currently involves 198 farmers and landowners.

Our work to secure the future of this rare bat species has expanded further through the Green Recovery Challenge Fund in partnership with the East Devon Area of Outstanding Nature Beauty. This will enable even more habitat improvement and connectivity on land around key roosts in east Devon and west Dorset.

Plans are in place for more grassland restoration works, engagement events with the East Devon Farmers Group, partnership working with Dorset AONB and Dorset Wildlife Trust and educational events at agricultural colleges. The extended project has so far engaged 20 landowners. Work will continue until January 2022.

In partnership

As ever we have been busy with partnership work. We supported two further Back from the Brink (BftB) projects – Roots of Rockingham and the Ancients of the Future. Monitoring by volunteers continued once lockdown restrictions were lifted, with surveys to better understand site use by bats.

BCT delivered landowner workshops and volunteer training, including eight online workshops, covering sound analysis and survey refresher sessions.

Working with the Dorset Bat Group, we collated our findings from three radio tracking studies and produced a report looking at the habitat requirements of the Bechstein's bat in Dorset, plus landowners' guidance for the BftB Adding Diversity to Dorset Heaths project.

The rescheduled Woodland Symposium was delivered online over two days in November, with 207 delegates. It provided an opportunity for bat workers, landowners, ecologists and professionals from woodland and forestry to gather and listen to talks from 15 speakers on research, knowledge updates and case studies on woodland and bats.

We hosted sessions on climate change and conservation with a presentation from Dr. Orly Razgour on Forest Bats and Climate Change; working in collaboration with BftB; and drivers of change covering infrastructure projects, tree planting and woodland creation and tree diseases.

We also created workshops on surveying trees for bats, for the Environment Agency, and arborists.



© Robson Zucolotto, Pixabay

Wildlife crime

We delivered crime prevention training, posters and talks online and with Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Dorset and Wiltshire police forces and bat groups. Working with the National Wildlife Crime Unit, we created an analytical tool on bat crime hotspots, using nine years of BCT records.

The year saw 125 police investigations into bat crime. Action by Devon and Cornwall Police resulted in a fine of £2,500 for a bat death. Metropolitan Police action resulted in the highest known penalty against a housing developer for the loss of a roost at £600,000. This brought about a £20,000 voluntary donation to BCT. Devon and Cornwall Police issued a caution in March 2021 after a video was shared on social media of a person stroking a bat roosting in a cave, as part of a current urban exploring trend.

We are working with the United Nations International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime on assessing UK wildlife and forestry crime, continuing in 2021, and UK wildlife crime enforcement teams with the Bat Priority Delivery Group, the Crown Prosecution Service Community Panel, and LINK.



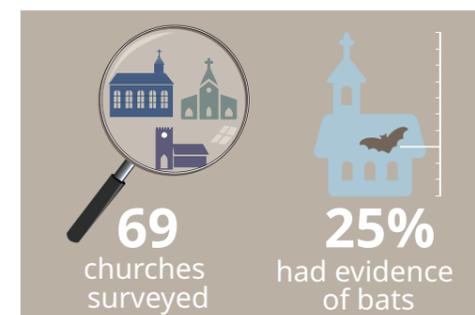
In churches...



The Bats in Churches project has been working closely with 108 churches. Citizen science surveys continued in 69 churches where possible amid pandemic restrictions.

The project delivered free training and events, including five live lunchtime webinars and 14 online training sessions on bat surveying, working with churches, engagement activities to help church, heritage and bat group audiences.

We hosted talks with local bat groups and workshops at national and regional bat conferences.



In planning and development...

- In 2020 our training courses were adapted for online learning, attracting 150 participants. We ran workshops on bat roost mitigation, launched a new Roost website resource, and masterclasses on tree management, mitigation, historic buildings and ecology guidance.

- Knowledge gathered from case studies and engagement with ecologists fed into the new Roost Partnership. Some profits were reinvested into Roost, to improve habitat.

- The steering group on non-bitumen coated roofing membranes published an independent methods paper for the industry.

- Our funding for the Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning Project ended but we maintained the website and Wildlife Assessment Checklist, which had 10,000 visitors.

- Following our Bearing Witness for Wildlife Bat Roost Mitigation Project we have published reports on the BCT website, in Conservation Evidence, CIEEM's 'In Practice' and 'Bat News' on how to improve efficacy for bat lofts, bat boxes and roost access points.



Championing bats

Bats and disease

This year we had a strong focus on tackling misinformation and providing guidance on diseases. We diverted significant resources into strong communications on COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2, working with experts nationally and internationally to counter public and media misunderstandings on the pandemic and bats.

We partnered with the Spanish Association for the Conservation and Research of Bats for the Don't Blame Bats campaign, alongside regular engagement with the media.

This work continues for the public, volunteers and bat workers, including guidance on rabies, white-nose syndrome and COVID-19 – via our website, 'Bat News', bulletins, external publications, presentations, meetings and conferences.

We worked with the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Defra on disease surveillance. Only our APHA rabies passive surveillance programme work was directly funded. We received one-off funds from generous BCT supporters.



Helpline

We had to reduce our costs significantly this year but the Helpline has been as busy as ever, fielding nearly 15,000 enquiries. Throughout the pandemic, we adapted to 'virtual' roost visits and volunteers offering remote advice on grounded, injured and orphaned bats. We trialed a Volunteer Bat Care Helpline to run in and out of office hours during summer.



July 2020: 63 distressed baby pipistrelles were rescued during a heatwave.

© Steve Parfiter



Pete Guest Award

Michelle Young of Gloucestershire Bat Group and Evesham Bat Care won the Pete Guest Award 2020, for outstanding practical contribution to bat conservation and tireless duty to bat care. Ten bat workers were nominated and we received 510 votes.

Bat groups and training

UK, Channel Islands & Isle of Man

BCT has relationships with 88 bat groups, with new ones forming this year in England and Scotland. We supported them with talks, training, outreach, insurance, advice and guidance. This included a monthly bulletin, website updates, regular contact, meetings, conferences and the annual Bat Workers' Forum, using virtual meetings.

88 bat groups



Wales

BCT worked alongside 250 volunteers in 15 Welsh bat groups, environmental NGOs and Wales Environment Link. Much of our work focused on the rapidly changing policy and legislation. We responded to a white paper consultation on agriculture, held the Wales Bat Workers Day and other events online.

25 training courses

Scotland

The Scottish Bat Project, with support from NatureScot, worked with 133 National Bat Monitoring Programme volunteers and 11 bat groups, to increase knowledge and tackle conservation threats.

Our work included public engagement, advocacy and work with the Scottish Environment LINK and its members on policy and law.

At least 300 people joined the Big Bats Skills event, 78 delegates attended our 2021 conference, 100 new volunteers signed up for the NBMP and we delivered 14 workshops. Participation in the Sunset Sunrise Survey rose from 12 to 29 (up 142%) in Scotland.

We are working with Scottish bat groups through the Putting Scotland's Bats on the Map project and to create new connections between volunteers, landowners, managers and other environmental organisations. We are developing volunteers' bat survey skills on a pilot project.

78 online conferences



1,000 BatFest participants



Internationally...

Despite COVID-19 disruption, some Eurobats working groups met online in March 2021. BCT staff attended sessions on monitoring and indicators, light pollution, communication, bat conservation and public health, evaluation criteria for assessment reports concerning bats, and bats and climate change.

BCT worked with Eurobats on potential risks of SARS-CoV-2 transmission from humans to bats, and on guidance with the Global Union of Bat Diversity Networks (GBatNet) and the IUCN Bat Specialist group. We continued to support the BatLife Europe partnership.

BatLife Europe support



© Juan - Pooles

Growing support

Our membership and number of supporters continues to grow steadily. We have kept people informed via Bat News & Young Bat Worker magazines, news stories, blogs, BatChat podcasts, corporate bulletins, e- bulletins, Bat Care Bulletins, our website, social media and online events.

Following our membership and volunteer engagement survey, we are improving the membership experience, volunteer engagement and communications.

We will continue supporting all those who care about bats – our members, volunteers and broader interests.

We are developing a new NBMP strategy to help us connect with more diverse audiences.

We want to better support bat groups through training and resources and showcase the wonderful work achieved by front-line teams.

- 6,500 members
- 3,000 volunteers
- 200,000 online followers

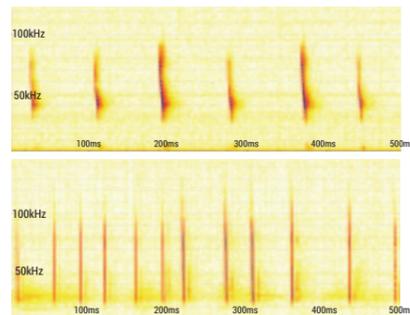


EchoHub

We will shortly be launching EchoHub, an open-source sound library focusing exclusively on bat sounds.

It will feature recordings contributed by professionals, researchers, educators and anyone with an interest in bat bioacoustics.

This resource will be free and allow sharing and downloading of bat sounds, making it easier to access recordings for diverse purposes such as scientific research, conservation, education and the arts.



30th anniversary

In 2021 BCT celebrates its 30th anniversary during BatFest, a month long series of events starting on 25th International Bat Night, August 28, 2021. Full details of events will be updated on the BCT website.

New guidance

We work with several partners on reviewing professional guidance for bat workers.

- ✔ A draft version of a new 'Bat Mitigation Guidelines' will be published and shared at the Consultant's Forum at the National Bat Conference in 2021.
- ✔ New 'Thermal Imaging Survey Guidelines' is coming in summer 2021.
- ✔ With NatureScot we are updating 'Bats and Onshore Wind Turbines', for 2021.
- ✔ Updated guidelines on the 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)' are proposed for spring 2022.

In brief

- The UK Bat Steering Group in 2021 will focus on tree and woodland surveys and mitigation for development.
- We will seek new funding for priority work on disease risk management and communications.
- Scottish bat workers and enthusiasts will meet up at the Spring Into Action event in March 2022, with training in bat survey skills and knowledge.
- Season 3 of the popular BatChat podcast will launch in Winter 2021.
- Development on the new pilot licensing process called Earned Recognition will continue with Natural England and CIEEM, to streamline bat roost mitigation work, raise professional standards and improve outcomes for bats.

African links

The National Bat Helpline continues to expand its reach and we are now working with African Bat Conservation based in Malawi, on building bat conservation. This work is developing a Bat Helpline Service in Malawi. Thanks to funding from The Rufford Foundation.



Nightwatch

We have been developing Nightwatch – a new, free, simple, tech-enabled biodiversity survey scheme with exciting potential.

It is open to everyone, regardless of background, experience or physical ability. Not only will it collect robust, locally focused biodiversity data, it will also open up engagement to a wider range of people from diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Initially, the Nightwatch scheme will be used in urban areas. Thanks to the advances in technology, volunteer Nightwatchers will simply need to put out credit-card sized AudioMoth acoustic sensors in their gardens or local green spaces overnight, then share their wildlife sightings and recordings via a custom app.

A new AI tool will allow computerised identification of bat calls from the recordings. Nightwatch data will be shared with participants, local conservationists, researchers and policy makers.

Our new NightWatch pilot project is also coming to Scotland, enabling underserved communities to join bat surveys and reach more diverse, new audiences. The project will make use of new technologies in an accessible way to promote and inspire the enjoyment of bats and the natural environment.

There is also scope for this new survey method to be used with other wildlife as well as bats, working in partnership with other animal charities and environmental organisations. This will make it possible to collect more robust monitoring information for a range of nocturnal species.

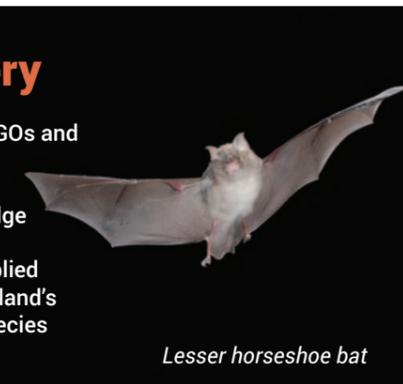



We are delighted to have appointed our first ever BCT Ambassador for bats – the folk singer Kate Rusby.

Species recovery

Our collaborative work with NGOs and other partners will include the exciting new Natur Am Byth (Wales) and Species on the Edge (Scotland) projects.

These follow a similar applied conservation approach to England's Back from the Brink 5-year species restoration initiative.



Lesser horseshoe bat

Strategy and advocacy

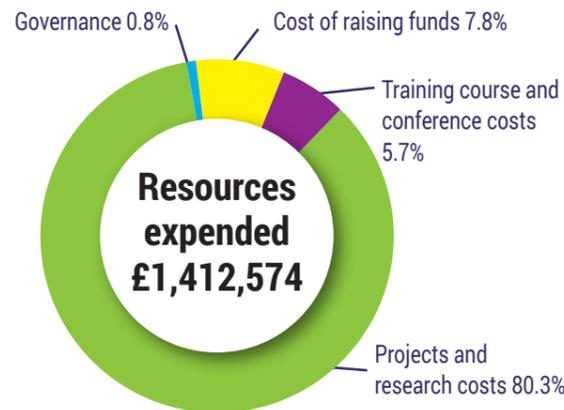
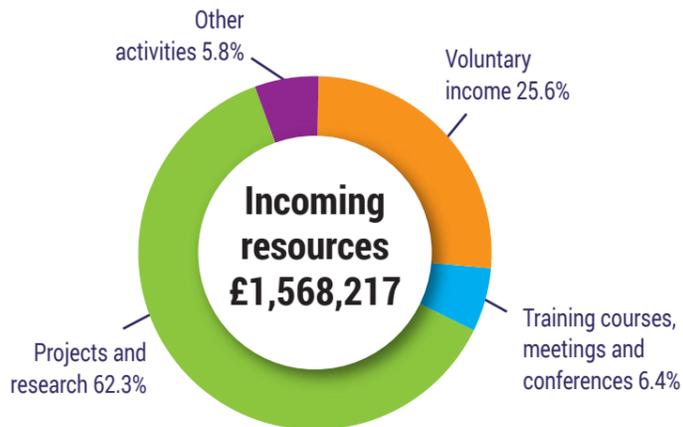
We will be producing a new and exciting strategy over the coming year.

Significant legislative changes such as the Environment Bill and the reform of planning regulations means that we will need to continue to work to retain and strengthen the laws protecting bats and their habitats. Our advocacy work is becoming increasingly important.

We will continue to work with and engage with politicians across the political spectrum and all the national parliaments to further bat conservation.

We work with a number of other organisations to pool resources and expertise. Our members and wider supporters will continue to play a vital role in ensuring our voices are heard.

In 2021 we will convene the UK Bat Steering Group to discuss tree and woodland surveys.



Treasurer's report

The last year has been very unusual for all, including those in the charity sector, and this is reflected in BCT's accounts. It was a difficult 12 months, but BCT managed to continue our vital work with some changes and achieved a positive year with respect to our financial position.

Through careful cost-cutting measures and by continuing to invest in fundraising, we have achieved a very small but important surplus in unrestricted funds. This realises a return on all our efforts, but shows we must continue with this careful control of expenditure and diversification of income streams in the immediate future. A welcome positive shift in the value of our investments from the low of a year previous is reflected in the timing of our annual accounts.

Every year is challenging and the times ahead are going to be no different; our current financial position gives some comfort but it doesn't reduce our need for strict management of these funds to secure the future of the organisation.

For the year ended 31 March 2021: income was £1,568,217 (2020: £1,267,202) and expenditure was £1,412,574 (2020: £1,602,907), leading to net surplus for the year of £155,643 (2020: net deficit of £335,705). Taking into account gains on investments of £483,565 (2020: losses of £118,383), the net movement in funds for the year was an increase of £639,208 (2020: a decrease of £454,088).

Investments

Investments total £2,603,514 (2020: £2,181,194) at 31 March 2021. The aim of these funds is to provide a steady additional annual income stream to support our work, helping to reduce the risks associated with our reliance on project funding.

Reserves policy

At the end of the 2020/21 financial year our total reserves stand at £3,318,985 (2020: £2,679,777). Of this, £2,425,735 (2020: £1,996,710) are endowment funds and £239,956 (2020: £94,104) are restricted funds for projects. This leaves unrestricted funds of £653,294 (2020: £588,963) of which £166,963 (2020: £135,660) have been designated to key programmes of work in the next financial year. This leaves us with £486,331 (2020: £453,303) as unrestricted, unallocated funds.

On behalf of BCT, I would like to thank all our members, donors and partners for their fantastic support and our volunteers and staff for their endless hard work on behalf of bat conservation.

Stephen Markham, Treasurer

Summarised financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Endowment £	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Income					
<i>Income from generated funds</i>					
Donations and legacies	-	66,752	334,228	400,980	279,307
Investment income	-	-	43,685	43,685	59,228
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>					
Conferences	-	-	62,744	62,744	100,602
Training courses and meetings	-	-	37,347	37,347	64,691
Projects and research	-	479,513	497,282	976,795	708,816
Other activities	-	-	46,666	46,666	54,558
Total income	-	546,265	1,021,952	1,568,217	1,267,202
Expenditure					
<i>Expenditure on raising funds</i>					
Membership support	-	-	67,118	67,118	52,940
Costs of raising funds	13,640	-	106,619	120,259	139,438
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>					
Conferences	-	-	17,493	17,493	91,607
Biodiversity training courses	-	-	63,479	63,479	75,165
Project and research costs	-	400,413	743,812	1,144,225	1,243,757
Total expenditure	13,640	400,413	998,521	1,412,574	1,602,907
Net expenditure before net gains/(losses) on investments	(13,640)	145,852	23,431	155,643	(335,705)
Net gains/(losses) on investments	442,665	-	40,900	483,565	(118,383)
Net income expenditure for the year	429,025	145,852	64,331	639,208	(454,088)
Net movement in funds	429,025	145,852	64,331	639,208	(454,088)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	1,996,710	94,104	588,963	2,679,777	3,133,865
Total funds carried forward	2,425,735	239,956	653,294	3,318,985	2,679,777

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 financial statements.

WHO'S WHO:

President
Chris Packham CBE

Vice Presidents
Professor Paul Racey
John Burton
Dr. Robert Stebbings

Patron
David Gower OBE

Ambassador
Kate Rusby

Trustees

Dr. Abigail Entwistle
Professor Kirsty Park
Jean Matthews
Steve Markham
Bob Cornes
Annika Binet
Stuart Brittenden
Rupert Lancaster
Roger Mortlock
Lord John Randall

Steven Roe
Dr. Ruth Waters

Chief Executive
Kit Stoner

Director of Conservation
Dr. Carol Williams

Director of Communications & Fundraising
Dr. Joe Nunez-Mino



We spend 12p on fundraising per £1 raised

Ethical funding



We are very aware of the need to raise our funds in an ethical way. We do not allow our personal, political or moral beliefs to influence decisions on donations, gifts or sponsorship, but we review them in the context of any potential harm to bat conservation or to BCT. The best interests of bats will always lie at the core of the decision making process. Our investments are all held in ethical funds.

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.

Partner Bat Groups

Avon Bat Group
Bedfordshire Bat Group
Berkshire & South Bucks Bat Group
Birmingham & Black Country Bat Group
Borders Bat Group
Cambridgeshire Bat Group
Cardiff Bat Group
Central Scotland Bat Group
Cheshire Bat Group
Cleveland Bat Group
Clwyd Bat Group
Clyde Bat Group
Cornwall Bat Group
Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group
Devon Bat Group
Dorset Bat Group
Dumfries & Galloway Bat Group
Durham Bat Group
East Lancashire Bat Group
East Yorkshire Bat Group
Essex Bat Group
Fife & Kinross Bat Group
Glamorgan Bat Group
Gloucestershire Bat Group
Guernsey Bat Group
Gwynedd Bat Group
Hampshire Bat Group
Herefordshire Mammal Group
Herts & Middlesex Bat Group
Inverness Bat Group
Isle of Wight Bat Group
Isles of Scilly Bat Group
Jersey Bat Group
Kent Bat Group
Leicestershire & Rutland Bat Group
Lincolnshire Bat Group

Loch Lomond Bat Group
London Bat Group
Lothians Bat Group
Manx Bat Group
Merseyside & West Lancashire Bat Group
Mid Anglian Bat Group
Montgomeryshire Bat Group
Norfolk Barbastelle Study Group
North Bucks Bat Group
North Ceredigion Bat Group
North East Scotland Bat Group
North Highland Bat Network
North Lancashire Bat Group
North Wales Mammal Group
Northern Ireland Bat Group
Northumberland Bat Group
Norwich Bat Group
Nottinghamshire Bat Group
Oxfordshire Bat Group
Pembrokeshire Bat Group
Shropshire Bat Group
Somerset Bat Group
South Cumbria Bat Group
South Lancashire Bat Group
South Yorkshire Bat Group
Staffordshire Bat Group
Surrey Bat Group
Sussex Bat Group
Tayside Bat Group
Vale of Glamorgan & Bridgend Bat Group
Valleys Bat Group
Warwickshire Bat Group
West Yorkshire Bat Group
Worcestershire Bat Group

Charitable Trusts, Statutory Bodies and Other Organisations

Animal and Plant Health Agency
Animal Friends
Cecil Pilkington Charitable Trust
Chapman Charitable Trust
Ecclesiastical Insurance
Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust
Forestry Commission
National Lottery Heritage Fund
Joint Nature Conservation Committee
National Trust

Natural England
Natural Resources Wales
Pillar Charitable Trust
Pilkington General Charitable Fund
Seven Pillars of Wisdom Charitable Trust
Scottish Natural Heritage
The Cambridge Chrysalis Trust
The Ian Askew Charitable Trust
The Marjorie Coote Animal Charity Trust
The Marsh Christian Trust
The Matilda Ellis Charitable Trust
The Pilkington Family Trust
The Royal Parks
The Rufford Foundation
The Walker 597 Trust
The William Dean Countryside and Educational Trust

Sponsorships (of £100 or more)

BatAbility Courses & Tuition
Highland Titles
Mountfield Ecology
The Cambridge Chrysalis Trust
Wildlife Acoustics, Inc.

Corporate Members (as of 1st April 2021)

Arbtech Consulting Ltd
Asw Ecology
Barn Hill Ecology
Batability Courses & Tuition
Batbox Ltd
Big Domain
Bramley and Teal
C J Wildbird Foods Ltd
Canine Cottages
Cleankill Environmental Services Ltd
Continental Landscapes Ltd
Denbies Wine Estate Limited
Echoes Ecology Ltd
Ecological Survey & Assessment Ltd
English Heritage Trust
Green & Blue
Ground Control Ltd
Highland Titles

Hipper.com
Historic England
Holidaycottages.co.uk
Ingencia
Just Mammals Consultancy LLP
Kates Clothing Ltd
Marquis & Lord Ltd
Mka Ecology
Original Cottages
Peersonic Ltd
Serenata Flowers
Stay In Cornwall
Stay in Devon
Tamworth Property Services
The Nestbox Company Ltd
Tittle Scientific
Treework Ltd
United Environmental Services Ltd
Whitcher Wildlife Ltd
Wilby Tree Surgeons
Wildcare
Wildlife Acoustics
Wold Ecology Ltd

Donations from Bat Groups (of £100 or more as of 1st April 2021)

Bedfordshire Bat Group
Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire Bat Group
Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group
Devon Bat Group
Essex Bat Group
Hampshire Bat Group
Hertfordshire & Middlesex Bat Group
Isles of Scilly Bat Group
North Buckinghamshire Bat Group
Oxfordshire Bat Group
South Lancashire Bat Group
South Yorkshire Bat Group
Surrey Bat Group
Tayside Bat Group
Warwickshire Bat Group

Legacies

Mr Arthur Roy Mayes
Mr J W Webber



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

Cover image: © Daniel Hargreaves
Chris Packham: © Anna Deacon

Auditor: HW Fisher

Designed by: Matthew Ward

Bat Helpline: 0345 1300 228 www.bats.org.uk email: enquiries@bats.org.uk

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