

Bat Conservation Trust

# Annual Review

1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017



Grey long-eared bat in flight

# Review by the Chair and Joint Chief Executives



**B**CT's partnership working has really borne fruit this year... from scientific research to conservation action and education.

We launched Bearing Witness for Wildlife, extending our successful approach to tackling wildlife crime beyond bats to other threatened species and starting a new project to improve the evidence for how we can best mitigate any adverse effects of development on bats. As part of this we held a Mitigation Case Studies Forum to share best practice in mitigation in partnership with ARUP. These new projects were made possible with funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

We secured two highly competitive Natural Environment Research Council grants to develop and improve BCT's National Bat Monitoring Programme and use the latest technology, in collaboration with researchers from University College London, the University of Oxford, the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the British Trust for Ornithology.

We gave a bat theme to the 'Wild about Gardens' campaign this autumn in partnership with The Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Horticultural Society. The campaign had a huge impact, with over 200 articles about bats and gardening for wildlife, reaching an estimated 11.4 million people.

Alongside these new initiatives, we have also continued to deliver programmes to improve awareness, knowledge and action for bat conservation, working with key sectors including the buildings industry, forestry and planners.

Following the EU referendum and the lack of certainty as to how the legislation protecting wildlife will fare under Brexit, BCT has worked with our supporters to identify allies and advocates for bat conservation amongst decision makers and politicians. We led a campaign where 90 of our supporters wrote letters to MPs, Members of Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly Members encouraging them to strengthen or maintain current protection for bats in the legislation and this has helped us identify people willing to speak up for bat conservation.

Looking ahead, we need to continue our advocacy, speaking up for strong policy and legislation protecting bats in these times of rapid political change. We need to continue to improve the evidence base and to provide solutions for bat conservation, through scientific research, monitoring and cross sector partnerships such as the new Bats in Churches project. And we need to increase engagement with and understanding of bats by the public and the media, through our National Bat Helpline and innovative new projects such as Back from the Brink. The National Bat Helpline has been busier than ever this year, providing crucial support to householders, church communities and those who have found a bat in need of help.

A heartfelt thank you to all our staff, volunteers, partners and supporters. Your passion and dedication enables us to make a real difference for the future of bats. It's been an encouraging record year for us in terms of our membership, supporters and volunteers – we now have over 6,000 members and have had record numbers of life and corporate members join us. We have reached over 100,000 likes on Facebook and an analysis of volunteer time put into our National Bat Monitoring Programme surveys alone highlighted this is worth nearly £300,000 each year.

Dr David Gibbons, Chair

Kit Stoner, Joint Chief Executive

Julia Hanmer, Joint Chief Executive



## Chris Packham President's message

What a year we have all had. There have been ups and downs. BCT has secured full funding for a number of ground breaking projects, Tam Dalyell MP and many other well-known public figures have sadly passed away, plus there has been Brexit and rapid political change. It has certainly been a significant year for wildlife and people.

BCT saw the culmination of an intensive period of working with seven other partners on a unique project to draw on the commitment and expertise of all the organisations to help combat the threats to our wildlife. Back from the Brink will save 20 species from extinction including the very rare grey long-eared bat. It will also help safeguard a further 118 species. The plans developed together have a total budget of £6.3m. While that's not enough to save all England's threatened species, it is enough to make a real difference. This project will also directly engage 50,000 people with their natural environment and reach a further 1,280,000 through wider engagement. The funding is now in place thanks to a number of funders including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Garfield Weston Trust and many others. We are eternally grateful to them for sharing our vision and weighing in to help our beleaguered wildlife.

Tam Dalyell, MP (1932-2017) was a bat friendly voice in parliament. He became concerned about the effect of remedial timber treatments on bats. Well-briefed by Bob Stebbings, he rose in the House to ask whether it was not time that the major treatment companies stopped killing bats in their roosts. That single intervention set a ball rolling that eventually led to the banning of chlorinated hydrocarbon insecticides and fungicides from use in such treatments. In subsequent years Tam championed many bat-related issues and latterly became concerned about bat issues such as white-nose syndrome or emergent viral diseases such as Ebola, and would write or telephone BCT for a briefing. We need more parliamentarians like him which is why it's great to see BCT taking part in three projects encouraging a growing number of politicians across the UK to become Species Champions. We can all do our bit for bat conservation through education, engagement and empowerment. Solutions to some of the challenges faced by bats can be found, but we must continue to act together in order to implement them. It is only through our individual actions and collective determination that we can make sure that these sub-magical organisms that flutter on the brink can be conserved for future generations to enjoy.

It is encouraging to see people from all walks of life and professions working together, through Back from the Brink and other partnerships BCT is part of, to ensure the future of our wildlife. One of the great things about a partnership that works in a constructive way, is the amount that you can get done in a short time. I am sure that next year I will be writing about the successes of the early years of the great collaborations that have come together this year.

Chris Packham, President, Bat Conservation Trust

# Discover

## National Bat Monitoring Programme

Longest running purpose-built, multi-species monitoring programme for mammals in the UK. Relies on a nationwide network of citizen scientists.



In **2016** a total of **2,134** sites were surveyed by **958** volunteers.

**34** bat detector workshops provided training for around **450** volunteer surveyors.

The data will contribute to the 2017 UK Biodiversity Indicators report.

## NBMP data contributed to

the **2016 State of Nature** report, an assessment of how nature is doing across the UK.



The **European Bat Population Trend Indicator** produced by BatLife Europe and Statistics Netherlands.

Study of the distribution of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, the fungus associated with white-nose syndrome.

## Four PhD studies.



Two peer-reviewed publications co-authored by BCT staff also used NBMP data.

**Looking ahead:** We are working with researchers from UCL, the University of Oxford and the British Trust for Ornithology to develop our survey programme and incorporate the latest advances in bat detector technology and call analysis into the NBMP.

## Vincent Weir Award



**Dr Rachael Cooper-Bohannon** of the University of Stirling and Bats Without Borders won the award in 2016 for her research identifying priority areas for bat conservation in southern Africa.

One of the key messages from her research is that if only areas of high species richness are prioritised as important for conservation, then other areas which may have lower species diversity but with rare, at risk or endemic species could be neglected.



## Kate Barlow Award



The Kate Barlow Award was set up in honour of the late **Dr Kate Barlow**. Kate made an outstanding contribution to bat conservation and worked for BCT from 2008 to 2015.

We received **27** applications from **13** countries and the standard of application was very high. The first award winner was announced in April 2017.

# Act

## Biodiversity

'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition', published by BCT early in 2016, has **sold 931 copies** to the end of January 2017 and has been downloaded from the BCT website thousands of times.

BCT sat on the steering groups for the Defra-funded bats and wind farms project and the guidance group arising from this. Several drafts of the guidance have now been reviewed and, with Scottish Natural Heritage leading, we hope this will be published during 2017.

The Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning is a **partnership of 19 organisations led by BCT** representing the conservation, development and planning sectors working together to improve the consideration of biodiversity in the planning process.



New project (Bearing witness for wildlife) was funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation in November 2016 and encompasses two work areas – conservation wildlife crime and bat roost mitigation.

## Investigations

During the period covered by this review our investigations officer considered **188 allegations of bat crime** with 146 referrals having been made to the Police. Ten cases led to offenders being cautioned, subjected to community resolution measures or warned. Twenty eight cases are still being investigated.



## Policy and consultations

Following the referendum decision in June 2016 for the UK to leave the EU, BCT set up an **internal Brexit Group**, recognising the potential risk of reduced protection for bats in the legislation following Brexit and other risks and opportunities that may arise in the changes to come.

BCT continues to engage in policy affecting bats through the Wildlife and Countryside Link, Wales Environment Link and Scottish Environment Link, attending meetings and signing up to submissions,

including on the **25 Year Plan** for the Environment, the Neighbourhood Planning Bill and the Housing White Paper.

## Built Environment

BCT continues to work to improve awareness, knowledge and action for bat conservation within the built environment sector.



In 2016 we secured a permanent stand in the National Self Build and Renovation Centre to promote awareness of bat conservation, training courses and the **bat box scheme**.

**Looking ahead:** We will continue to promote best practice within relevant industry sectors through our work with the Construction Industry Research and Information Association and the Institute for Lighting Professionals.

## Bats and woodland

Woodland is a very important habitat for bats and therefore continues to be a priority for BCT.

We have completed the first year of the HLF 'Discovering the connection between natural heritage and cultural influence in Swanton Novers woodland' project in this woodland national nature reserve in Norfolk.



During 2017, we will be working on a new project with Forest Research called 'Putting UK Woodland Bats on the Map'.

## Bats and Churches

BCT and partners successfully secured funding from The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in February 2017 for the Bats in Churches partnership project. This funding will enable the development stage to proceed until March 2018, with potential further funding for 5 years.

The project aims to bringing together wildlife and heritage conservation and church organisations to **save bats and protect churches**.



# Inspire

## Helpline



You can reach the National Bat Helpline on 0345 1300 228 **between 9.00am and 5.30pm on weekdays all year round**, with an 'Out of Hours' service provided during the summer by trained volunteers.

The National Bat Helpline fielded a total of **14,781 enquiries** (calls, emails and letters) in 2016.

In 2016, **BCT organised 1,403 Natural England roost visits** (12.3% of all enquiries) in England. We also answered a further 3,535 Natural England enquiries (29.2%) which did not require a visit, such as planning enquiries or reassurance about an enquirer's roost.

BCT provided immediate welfare advice about grounded and injured bats and put callers in contact with **over 400** local volunteer bat care experts and regional helplines who comprise the National Bat Care Network, which is co-ordinated by the Helpline.



## Training



BCT delivered 36 training courses in 2016/17 for a combined audience of **392 people**.

Many of our courses are now approved by the Royal Society of Biology for purposes of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Twenty-two courses were openly advertised, four courses were run for volunteers and **10 in-house training courses** were provided for various professional audiences including ecologists, arborists and roofing contractors.

The second edition of the Bat Care Guidelines was published and shared with every bat carer on the BCT Bat Care Network as well as a variety of other relevant audiences, including vet practices across the UK.



## National Bat Conference

The 2016 National Bat Conference took place at the University of York on 2-4 September and was attended by 300 delegates from across the UK and further afield.

For several reasons relating to declining attendance and programming challenges, plus our wide programme of other events, it was decided to rest the National Bat Conference in 2017, but it **will return in 2018**.

For 2017, the AGM will take place at the Scottish Bat Conference in November and the Bat Worker's Forum will be added to the Welsh Bat Conference in June.

## Championing bats

At the end of the financial year the Bat Conservation Trust had a **total of 6,203 members**. That includes the support of 33 corporate members – ten more than last year.

**105,000 likes** on Facebook representing an increase of 9,000 from the previous year – **Over 35,000 followers** on Twitter. An increase of over 4,000 this year – Over **3,800 followers** on LinkedIn.

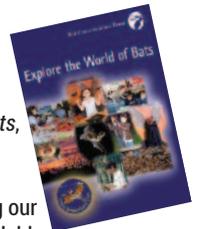


We posted 38 news stories directly onto the BCT website and 12 blogs from a range of bat enthusiasts.

## Education

Last year 82 educators received our education pack *Explore the World of Bats*, 80 of whom are active BCT members.

We have been updating and developing our education pack in order to make it available to secondary schools in Wales. This new pack will be made available later in 2017.



## BCT in Scotland

There are **12 bat groups in Scotland**; two groups were awarded Partnership Group Support funding towards projects to increase awareness of bats and the collection of bat data.

The Spring into Action day and Scottish Bat Workers Conference attracted around **150 attendees** giving them opportunities to update their knowledge and skills with other bat workers and to network.

## BCT in Wales

We work alongside **250 volunteers** in 17 volunteer local bat groups across Wales.

The **Wales Bat Workers Day** took place at the Media Resource Centre at Llandrindod Wells on 7 May with an excellent breadth of presentations from bat groups and academics on monitoring and surveillance.

We concluded our initial work on the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which received Royal Assent in spring 2016. The Act introduced enhanced biodiversity duty and enacts the principle of sustainable management of natural resources.

## Bat Group Support

**UK, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man**  
Bat groups are at the forefront of bat conservation in the UK and remain at the core of BCT. We have a formal relationship with **89 Bat Groups**, of which **67 are Partner Groups** and **22 Network Groups**.

BCT provides support to bat groups including talks, training, and outreach materials (e.g. leaflets) as well as some financial support through the Partner Group Support Fund (for projects, with **awards of £1,481 this year**, and support to attend National Conference with £438 in bursaries for the 2016 event).

**Looking ahead:** we continue to develop collaborative projects that engage with the bat groups across the British Islands as well as continuing to showcase the wonderful work being done locally.

## Pete Guest Award

A **total of 13 bat workers** were nominated by BCT members, bat groups, NBMP volunteers and bat carers, for the award in 2016. This was the most nominees we have ever received.

This year's winner was **James Shipman** from Berkshire. James was nominated for his commitment and his contagious enthusiasm for bat conservation in the UK and Gibraltar, along with his encouragement of new volunteers from all walks of life.



## BCT in Europe and Internationally

During the year, BCT has been considering its international work as part of the 2015-20 strategy. A **workshop was held in July 2016** to help BCT identify where its experience and expertise would add most value to international bat conservation.



## BatLife Europe

As a **founding partner of BatLife Europe** (which now has 33 NGO partners), BCT has supported this initiative since its creation.

BatLife Europe projects this year have included further development of a pan-European indicator to which BCT has contributed data, and the **Bat of the Year (noctule bat)**, which BCT has promoted to UK bat groups and via social media.



# Summarised financial statements and auditors' report

## Statement of Financial Activities *(incorporating an income and expenditure account)* For the year ended 31 March 2017

	Endowment	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2017 Total £	2016 Total £
<b>Income</b>					
<i>Income from generated funds</i>					
Donations and legacies	-	43,521	330,123	<b>373,644</b>	248,685
Investment income	-	-	51,420	<b>51,420</b>	50,631
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Conferences income	-	-	103,448	<b>103,448</b>	102,872
Training courses and meetings	-	-	65,986	<b>65,986</b>	42,397
Projects and research	-	479,553	457,909	<b>937,462</b>	808,926
Other activities	-	-	52,089	<b>52,089</b>	58,925
<b>Total income</b>	-	523,074	1,060,975	<b>1,584,049</b>	1,312,436
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<i>Expenditure on raising funds</i>					
Membership support	-	-	57,181	<b>57,181</b>	59,910
Costs of raising funds	12,389	-	95,975	<b>108,364</b>	101,369
	12,389	-	153,156	<b>165,545</b>	161,279
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>					
Conferences costs	-	-	80,569	<b>80,569</b>	84,927
Biodiversity training courses	-	4,000	68,985	<b>64,985</b>	43,838
Project and research costs	-	389,186	632,564	<b>1,021,750</b>	1,063,237
<b>Total expenditure</b>	12,389	393,186	931,274	<b>1,336,849</b>	1,353,281
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments</b>	(12,389)	129,888	129,701	<b>247,200</b>	(40,845)
Net gain/(losses) on investments	238,996	-	52,686	291,682	(55,531)
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	226,607	129,888	182,387	<b>538,882</b>	(96,376)
Transfers between funds	(87,186)	87,186	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	139,421	217,074	182,387	<b>538,882</b>	(96,376)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	1,962,129	195,801	600,546	<b>2,759,476</b>	2,855,852
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	2,101,550	413,875	782,933	<b>3,298,358</b>	2,759,476

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 15 to the financial statements.

### Balance sheet – as at 31 March 2017

	2017 £	2017 £	2016 £	2016 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Tangible fixed assets				2,459
Investments		<b>2,724,326</b>		2,397,762
		<b>2,724,326</b>		2,400,221
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors	307,159		171,061	
Short term deposit	136,099		114,117	
Cash at bank and in hand	211,758		176,178	
	655,016		461,356	
<b>Creditors: amounts due within one year</b>	(80,984)		(102,101)	
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>574,032</b>		359,255
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>3,298,358</b>		2,759,476
<b>Reserves</b>				
Endowment funds		<b>2,101,550</b>		1,962,129
Restricted funds		<b>413,875</b>		196,801
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
General funds		<b>614,082</b>		486,306
Designated funds		<b>168,851</b>		114,240
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>3,298,358</b>		2,759,476

Included in the reserves above are unrealised gains of £285,875 (2016: £102,397).

The summary financial statement contains information from the statement of financial activities and the balance sheet for the year ended 31st March 2017, but is not the full statutory report and accounts. The full financial statements were approved by the trustees on 3rd July 2017 and subsequently submitted to the Charity Commission for England and Wales, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and to Companies House.

The auditor has issued an unmodified report on the full financial statements and on the consistency of the trustees' annual report with those financial statements. Their report on the

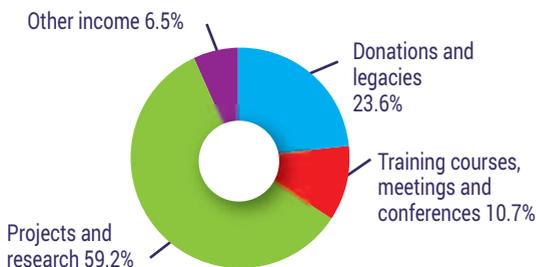
full annual financial statements contained no statement under sections 498(2) (a), 498 (2) (b) or 498 (3) of the Companies Act 2006.

Copies of the full annual accounts including the Trustees' Annual Report may be obtained from the charity's head office and [www.bats.org.uk](http://www.bats.org.uk).



Signed on behalf of the trustees  
David Gibbons, Chair, 3rd July 2017.

## Incoming resources £1,584,049



### Treasurer's report

BCT had a strong year financially in FY16/17, with funding for three new large collaborative projects being secured (Bats in Churches, Bearing Witness for Wildlife, Back from the Brink). This, as well as increased income from donations and legacies, alongside continued careful control of expenditure, has resulted in a positive year end picture. Trustees recognised in 2016 that BCT is working in a difficult financial climate, with strong competition for decreasing pots of funding and therefore took a decision to allocate 6% of investment gains to strategic projects for the next three years. Given the continued difficult financial climate, Trustees have endorsed the approach continuing into FY 17/18.

**Investment policy** – Investments total £2,724,326 (2016: £2,397,762) at 31 March 2017. 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. This year our investments performed strongly in the first half of the year, stabilising in the second half of the year in line with general market conditions. For budgeting purposes BCT assume a 6% total return per year to take into account market fluctuations.

## Resources expended £1,336,849



**Reserves policy** – We adopt a risk-based approach for our reserves policy in order to define the amount we need to enable us to sustain our operations and protect us from unforeseen events. We have also been investing some of our reserves in strategic projects to secure BCT's long term financial viability.

At the end of the 2016/17 financial year our total reserves stand at £3,298,358 (2016: £2,759,476). Of this, £2,101,550 (2016: £1,962,129) are endowment funds and £413,875 (2016: £196,801) are restricted funds for projects. This leaves unrestricted funds of £782,933 (2016: £600,546) of which £168,851 (2016: £114,240) have been designated to key programmes of work in the next financial year (see notes to the accounts for details). This leaves us with £614,082 (2016: £486,306) as unrestricted, unallocated funds. The Trustees' policy is to work towards holding six months operating costs, approximately £670,000, in unrestricted reserves and we will continue to review our reserves policy and our progress towards achieving it each year.

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.



Tom Andrews, Treasurer

### WHO'S WHO:

President – Chris Packham.

Vice Presidents – Professor Paul Racey, John Burton and Dr. Robert Stebbings.

Patron – David Gower OBE

### Trustees:

Dr. David Gibbons, *Chair*

Sarah Escott, *Vice Chair*

Tom Andrews, *Treasurer*

Steve Markham, *Hon Secretary*

Bob Cornes (Partner Bat Group Nominated Trustee)

Dr. Abigail Entwistle, Rupert Lancaster

Tom McOwat (Partner Bat Group Nominated Trustee) (resigned Oct 2016)

Roger Mortlock, Professor Kirsty Park

Steve Parker (Partner Bat Group Nominated Trustee)

Professor Robert Upex

# 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 individually; however, we would like to thank everyone for their greatly valued support without which none of our work would be possible.

## Charitable Trusts, Statutory Bodies and Other Organisations

A & N Daniell Charitable Trust  
Animal and Plant Health Agency  
Betty Phillips Charitable Trust  
Cecil Pilkington Trust  
David Webster Charitable Trust  
Defra  
Dolly Knowles Charitable Trust  
Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation  
Forest Research  
Garfield Weston Trust  
Golden Bottle Trust  
Heritage Lottery Fund  
Hobson Charity  
Ian Askew Charitable Trust  
Joint Nature Conservation Committee  
Margaret Joan Tottle Trust No 2  
Miss E M Tyler Charitable Trust  
Mitchell Trust  
Natural England  
Natural Resources Wales  
Oakdale Trust  
The Pagan Federation District of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles  
Pilkington General Fund  
Pillar Charitable Trust  
Robert Kiln Charitable Trust  
Scottish Natural Heritage

The J & JR Wilson Trust  
The Rufford Foundation  
The Scottish Forestry Trust  
Woodland Trust  
Waterloo Foundation  
William Dean Trust

## Legacies

Hilary Barbara Negus  
Alan Bartholomew Morshead

## Sponsorships

(of £100 or more)  
ARUP  
Atkins  
Auritus Wildlife Consultancy  
Ecosurv/Habibat  
Elekon AG  
Forticrete  
Greenwood Ecohabitats  
NatureCounters (BioMotors Ltd)  
Pettersson Elektronik AB  
Titley scientific  
Wildlife Acoustics, Inc.  
Wildsurveys Ltd.

## Corporate Members

(as of 1st April 2017)  
Absolute Ecology  
Arbtech Consulting Ltd  
Asw Ecology  
Barn Hill Ecology  
Cleankill Environmental Services Ltd  
Continental Landscapes Ltd  
Cottage Holidays  
Denbies Wine Estate Limited  
Dorset County Council

Echoes Ecology Ltd  
Ecological Survey & Assessment Ltd  
English Heritage  
Ground Control Ltd  
Highland Titles  
Hipper.com  
Historic England  
Holidaycottages.Co.Uk  
Ingencia  
Just Mammals Consultancy LLP  
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Mka Ecology  
Peersonic Ltd  
Serenata Flowers  
Sykes Cottages Ltd  
Tamworth Property Services  
The Nestbox Company Ltd  
Trework Ltd  
United Environmental Services Ltd  
Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd  
Wealden Heartwood  
Wilby Tree Surgeons  
Wildcare  
Wildlife Acoustics

## Donations from Bat Groups

(of £100 or more as of 1st April 2017)  
Essex Bat Group  
Central Scotland Bat Group  
Cornwall Bat Group  
Dumfries & Galloway Bat Group  
Fife and Kinross Bat Group  
Gwent Bat Group  
North Bucks Bat Group  
Teifi Bat Group

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

Cover image: Hugh Clark

Auditor: Sayer Vincent LLP

Designed by: Matthew Ward



**Bat Helpline: 0345 1300 228** [www.bats.org.uk](http://www.bats.org.uk) email: [enquiries@bats.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bats.org.uk)

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