



## Wiltshire Bat Group Meeting 11 April 2024

Potterne Wick Scout Centre - 1900 – 2100

These notes have been put together for the benefit of those members not able to attend, and to provide a record of the discussions. They will be posted on the Wiltshire Mammal Portal web site. Any inaccuracies and omissions can be rectified at the next meeting.

### Sticky Notices

- *If members want to get involved in our fieldwork and projects, then please email the [project leaders directly](#) and ask to go on their volunteer lists. Please be patient, some events get booked up quite quickly, and in line with national guidance [project leaders are necessarily restricting numbers and reducing exposure to bats](#). Email [wiltsbqmembership@gmail.com](mailto:wiltsbqmembership@gmail.com) and ask for current list.*
- *The Wiltshire Bat Group will continue to abide by all the guidance produced by the BCT, IUCN and Government scientists for reducing the risk of exposure of Sars Cov-2 (Covid-19) from the human population to bats. The BCT website has all the relevant information – [www.bats.org.uk](http://www.bats.org.uk)*
- *Bookmark the Wiltshire Mammal Portal in your web favourites – <https://wiltshiremammals.wordpress.com/wiltshire-bat-group>. You can read occasional news, our latest and archived annual Newsletters and previous meeting notes from the publication tab. We are also on the following social media platforms – Facebook [@wiltshirebatgroup](#), Twitter [@wiltsbq](#), Instagram – Wiltshire Bat Group and Wiltshire Bat Care*
- *We have 16 hand-held detectors that can be borrowed for events. You'll need to collect and drop off. Please email [eventswbq@gmail.com](mailto:eventswbq@gmail.com) for details.*
- *If you want a reminder about how to request funding for projects in Wiltshire from the WBG please email [wwponting@gmail.com](mailto:wwponting@gmail.com)*
- *If you want assurance about how we protect your personal information please email [wwponting@gmail.com](mailto:wwponting@gmail.com) and we'll send you our latest Data Protection information.*
- *Send your bat records to the county recorder at [wiltbatrecords@gmail.com](mailto:wiltbatrecords@gmail.com)*
- *There is a comprehensive account of all Wiltshire's bat species in [mammals-in-wiltshire 2nd-edition](#) Updated in 2022/3. Free to download.*
- *Note: If you are reading these notes on the Wiltshire Mammal Portal, are a WBG member but don't receive updates by email from our Secretary, then please email [wiltsbqmembership@gmail.com](mailto:wiltsbqmembership@gmail.com). You may be one of those members that we have no contact details for. And please remember to tell us if you change your email address at any time. Thanks!*

### **Will Ponting opened the meeting and welcomed everyone**

- 22 members and guests attended the meeting
- Apologies were received from members who could not attend the meeting
- Will gave a brief description of how the WBG is doing at the moment. Plenty of activity out in the field producing survey results. He drew attention to the latest Newsletter for group activities and thanked Ben Mitchell for helping to put the Newsletter together.

### **WBG Committee**

Voting took place to re-appoint Committee members.

Will Ponting – Treasurer and Membership Officer

Laura Loncar - Secretary

Gareth Harris – County Recorder for Bats

Will noted that the current committee was still rather minimal and that in particular an Events Officer would be a great addition to increase the amount of training and talks the Group would be able to provide.

It is hoped that one of the members will be taking on the role of the BCT NBMP Champion shortly.

### **Update from the Treasurer/Membership Officer – Will Ponting**

Will gave his report on the year's financial activity.

Year to date 29 February 2024

Income: - £3051.07

Expenditure: - £1273.05

Surplus: - £1777.98

Closing balance 29/02/24 - £8771.15

Reserve - £5578

Funding Available: - £3193

Any questions can be addressed via email to the Treasurer.

In summary the WBG funds remain at a good level.

Small grants are available to members for bat survey work, DNA testing and other bat related activities. Any requests to be sent to The Treasurer. Will provided a quick summary of grants and donations made so far in 2023.

Note: Although not mentioned at the meeting, the WBG has 260 paid up members.

### **Wiltshire's Best Bat Walks Leaflets and Guided Walks – Laura Loncar**

Laura reported that the first Leaflets had been produced in this series and thanked Richard Cassidy for designing these. She announced that there would be Guided Walks taking place to follow the routes of the first two leaflets at:

Jubilee Lake Nature Reserve – Royal Wootton Bassett on 11 May. Led by Gareth Harris and Bob Philpott

River Ebble – Coombe Bissett on 17 May. Led by Gareth Harris and Louise Hartgill

The third leaflet at Waterhay will be coming soon with a walk to launch this in September 2024 and there will be a fourth leaflet with accompanying walk, around Richard Cassidy's wood at Great Cheverell.

### **Update from the County Recorder – Gareth Harris**

Gareth gave a brief run down of the highlights of bat work activity over the past few months. You can read the details of these projects on the Wiltshire Mammal Portal under the WBG publication tab. [Publications – Wiltshire Mammal Portal \(wordpress.com\)](#)

Gareth announced that work would be beginning to produce the next edition of Mammals in Wiltshire as increased records, many generated by members of the Bat and Mammal groups had generate significant increases in our knowledge of key species, as well as new species to add.

Gareth reported on survey results from ongoing work at Salisbury Cathedral where 14 species have been recorded.

He showed video from the new Bat House at Standlynch Farm which is attracting several species including Greater Horseshoe Bats.

He announced that the Savernake Forest Survey Projects was receiving new funding from Forestry England, which will mean an expansion of the project and a need for more volunteers to help.

Members are encouraged to submit all bat records, via iRecord or our excel template recording form.

### **AOB**

Phil Aitkin spoke briefly about his Pipistrelle Echolocation DIY Kit. He had brought examples along and invited members to come and take a look during the meeting interval.

### **Refreshment Break**

### **Talk: Lewis Hillier**

After the break there was an illustrated talk from WBG member, Lewis Hillier, who is now doing bat surveys out of County! He described some of the bats he has encountered in projects in South Africa, Uganda and Zambia.

After talk there were questions from the floor then Will thanked Lewis and closed the meeting.

<b>Wiltshire Bat Group Project leaders contact email</b>		
<i>wiltsbgmembership@gmail.com</i>		
<b>Your Committee</b>		
The Chair	vacant	wiltsbg@gmail.com
WBG Secretary	Laura Loncar	wiltsbg@gmail.com
Treasurer and Membership	Will Ponting	wiltsbgmembership@gmail.com
County Recorder for Bats	Gareth Harris	wiltsbatrecords@gmail.com
Wiltshire Bat Care Coordinator	vacant	wiltshirebatcare@gmail.com
BCT NBMP coordinator	vacant	NBMPWiltsbg@gmail.com
WBG Events coordinator	vacant	EventsWiltsbg@gmail.com

## **Wiltshire Bat Group Principles**

- *Bat Group members should be champions and ambassadors for bat conservation raising the profile and public awareness of bats.*
- *Bat Group Members should promote and encourage data recording, forwarding their bat records to the Wiltshire Bat Group County Recorder.*
- *Experienced bat workers should provide training opportunities for the next generation of volunteers, including effective engagement with the public, safe handling, bat ID and surveying techniques.*
- *The Bat Group will establish and maintain effective partnerships with other bat groups, statutory bodies and conservation organisations.*
- *Bat Group Members should be courteous to each other, show respect, act with integrity at all times, communicate openly and adhere to the conditions of licences.*
- *Bat Group members should respect and adhere to National Guidelines relating to personal safety and bat welfare at all times.*
- *Bat group members engaging with, referencing or representing the Wiltshire Bat Group to the media should ensure they are delivering accurate, balanced and consistently professional messages aligned with the values of the group, and national bat conservation initiatives.*