

Warwickshire Bat Group

Annual General Meeting held at Brandon Marsh, 27th January 2009 at 8:00pm

Present: Penny Angold, Jon Russ, Bernie Higgins, Jackie Underhill, Caroline Bailey, Anna Swift, Lois Browne, Vivienne Knight, Sean Neill, George Burton Snr, Francesca Allaby, Jo White (JoW), Janet Watson (JW), Louise Sutherland, Tim Marlow, George Burton

Apologies: John Waller, Julia Waller, Dot Jeffcote, Rob Hunter, Liz McKay

Chair:

Penny Angold chaired the meeting and explained that Andrew Heath had resigned the Chair as he was no longer able to meet his commitments due to personal reasons. GB explained that he was moving away.

GB: Gave vote of thanks for Andrew Heath based on similar statement in newsletter

JR: Stated that no nominations had been received for Chair

JU: Asked whether it was essential to have Chair to drive group forward

GB: Explained that trustees had been over-stretched as volunteers to compensate for Andrew's absence and a Chair would be preferable

JW: Was happy to help but concerned about not always being local

SN: Felt the chair didn't need to be located locally

JW: Offered to take post with immediate effect and saw it as an exciting new challenge

JoW: Proposed JW as Chair

SN: Seconded JW as Chair

PA: Explained about management committee, i.e. group of 6 trustees (inc. Chair) would be Expanded and that JW would need time to consider whether to continue as events' organiser. GB suggested that if JW was to continue in events it may be useful to meet Dot and Rob to Gain from their experience and also find out which events they previously attended

The following were agreed as new committee members with specific roles:

- Anna Swift: WCC contact
- Caroline Bailey: WWT contact

Tahira: Had volunteered to co-ordinate walks and talks last year but hadn't received any support so the Group was uncertain whether she wished to commence that role immediately for 2009. PA was to contact Tahira to confirm situation

JU: Volunteered to attend West Midlands regional meetings for Warwickshire and this was gratefully accepted

PA: Stated that library/equipment needs to be accessible and should be available at all meetings

Membership Report

PA (Membership Secretary) stated that membership had increased from 54(?) in 2007 to 92 in 2008 despite increase in fees

The Newsletter had helped and additional donations on membership fees had been received from some parties

Financial

JR (Finance Secretary) presented accounts which looked healthy. He stated there was "plenty to spend", and invited ideas

One or two minor queries were raised

GB suggested more fieldwork should be undertaken following Phil Richardson's talk to which there was general agreement

SN suggested more bat detectors to loan to new workers with JoW adding that a small deposit could be requested. LB stated that it was not necessary to have expensive detectors for this purpose

Activity

Car Survey

JR explained that the Car Survey was to continue in 2009 (May to September)

Volunteers were required for surveys and sonograms. AS/LB volunteered to help with sonogram analysis

WCC were to produce maps of individual species pre bat 'season' to inform necessary surveying especially in urban areas which was a condition of previous WCC funding received in 2008

JR added that the Barbastelle Survey, which identified 19 individuals during 2008, would be continued in 2009 and that an organiser/"writer-up" was sought. This could be suitable for MSc or PhD project, starting July 2009, TM volunteered to help if available

WWT Surveys

BH had left WWT during 2008 but remained as a trustee

CB (BH's replacement at WWT) was taking on the role of WWT contact and intended to highlight sites to be surveyed in 2009 and what to do with information from 2008

PA queried whether bat box checks were done in 2008 at Brandon March and it was confirmed that they hadn't been. WCC volunteered to check some

GB explained about Myton Pool project with F.R.O.M.P. voluntary residents group which would continue this year with a bat walk and talk

LS asked how walks and talks worked

PA explained what's included in order to inform those who hadn't lead such an event

JoW, Phil Pointon, LB and WCC generally were interested in taking part

SN volunteered to lead Compton Verney subject to further details being provided and some assistance

TM volunteered to assist and PA explained that a walks/talks co-ordinator might organise these

JoW said that the use of the word 'honorary' not 'donation' should be considered for "invoicing" for events and also explained about her 3rd party insurance experience from other sites.

GB stated that those leading walks did it in their own way and queried whether this should be standardised. SN was concerned that it was important that individuality of approach, especially in relation to the audience and site, were maintained – this was agreed

GB clarified to LB that Bat Group members are insured on walks and explained that Dot & Rob were no longer leading National Herb Centre walks. JoW said that Phil Pointon might help at that site.

Training

PA explained that she and GB were now N.E. licensed trainers of roost visitors and wished to discuss roost visits and grounded bats

PA&GB hoped to train with help of existing licensed workers. Efforts were being made to identify those with conservation licenses in Warwickshire

LB thought RRF's were sent to WCC and would chase as GB (Record Keeper) stated he had not received any RRF's since approximately 2007

LS asked about licensing for grounded bats, none was required unless captured bat held for considerable period

PA suggested training session on grounded bats/care. Many were interested. JU volunteered to help (brief discussion ensued)

LS was concerned about euthanasia and was it quick and easy? PA replied that it was indeed quick and easy and a discussion took place on vets' role in such situation

It was explained that rabies jabs were required for both Roost Visits and Grounded Bat care with a form available for Natural England to take to GP. The jabs were free to bat workers.

AS explained about a possible pill-box hibernaculum conversion on a WCC small holding. Advice to follow. Did Andy Warren recall an STWL hibernaculum conversion at Newbold Comyn? SN recalled this and [via GB] John Waller had stated that he recalled a definite pillbox conversion near Radford Semele which members of the Group visited "years ago" plus an underground reservoir.

Talks

Possible talks were discussed to complete the winter season:

- Jon Russ - Talk before end of winter – subject t.b.c. Feb/March
- David Brown - Possible talk about moths in relation to bats Feb/March - AS to contact
- Henry Schofield - JU to contact re: possible LHB talk in April
- PA - Walks training evening – pointers not specifics

Any other business

LB-WCC were organising a recorders group meeting to encourage discussion and standardisation; records would be sent to NBN and improving mechanisms of record keeping were envisaged.

JU queried whether WBG should charge for records – GB explained that there was a reciprocal arrangement with WCC as they had funded car survey equipment etc.

Meeting closed