

BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT
2022



BAT CONSERVATION
IRELAND

BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT
2022



BAT CONSERVATION
IRELAND

Our vision is for humans and bats to co-exist in harmony in Ireland



C o n t e n t s

WELCOME

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Mission Statement | 5 |
| Objectives | 6 |
| Values | 7 |
| Governance | 8 |
| Snapshot of 2022 | 9 |
| Objective 1 - Education | 11 |
| Objective 2 - Community Engagement | 30 |
| Objective 3 - Conservation | 52 |
| Objective 4 - Collaboration | 61 |
| Objective 5 - Research | 65 |
| Future Plans | 70 |
| Organisational Structure | 73 |
| Staff | 74 |
| Volunteers | 78 |
| Members | 79 |
| Financial Summary | 80 |
| Funding & Fundraising | 81 |

WELCOME



Caroline Shiel
Co-Chair

John Curtin
Co-Chair

2022 represented a reset, where after 2 years of a persistent global pandemic, our activities were able to return to somewhat normality and we were again, about to engage more with members, volunteers, bat groups, conservationists and bat enthusiasts through a number of different projects.

We launched a new 3-year Strategic Plan, which was the result of a consultative process carried out in 2021. This ambitious plan outlines how we will not only continue to deliver on core activities, but develop and deliver new projects, which will see us upscaling as an organisation. Key projects well underway are the development of new Windfarm Guidelines, the delivery of a Woodland Pilot Scheme to monitor Natterer's and Whiskered bats, pioneered and led by Dr. Tina Aughney and the development of an Online Training Platform, to deliver a wider range of education and training.

2022 saw us tendering for a new bat monitoring contract, covering a five-year period from 2022 to 2027 and we are delighted to say that this tender application was successful. This provides the framework for our ongoing-monitoring projects - the Daubenton's Waterway Survey, Car-Based Monitoring, Brown Long Eared Bat Monitoring and Lesser Horseshoe Bat Monitoring to continue uninterrupted, helping to ensure the continuity of data.

This was an important year at a national level, for Ireland to take steps towards a new approach to biodiversity and sustainability and we welcomed the opportunity to make a submission to the Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss. A key concern for us, is the affects of lighting on bat populations and a short animation created by Fionn Keeley provided an engaging visual representation of the impact of LED lighting on our native bats. We eagerly await where the recommendations will lead us as a nation, in how we move forward, to protect our vital flora and fauna.

Led by Dr. Niamh Roche, we were successful in securing funding from the Heritage Council to develop a publication and video on how to protect bat populations when carrying out restoration works to heritage structures. This project also involved delivering an online training programme to those involved in these types of restoration works, which was very successful.

We were delighted to welcome a new bat group on board from Wexford, who hit the ground running and carried out a number of activities in the latter part of the year. This now brings us to 10 very active bat groups, who are the linchpin in connecting Bat Conservation Ireland with the general public all around the country through educational activities.

Community engagement is an important strategic priority for Bat Conservation Ireland and we welcomed the opportunity to sponsor a Special Award through Tidy Towns to create an art mural, with a positive bat-related theme. The response to the application process was very impressive and we decided to sponsor 4 murals, which will provide a unique opportunity to reach different audiences on the importance of our Irish bats.

There was so much more achieved in 2022, which you can read about in this report. This is in no small part down to all of those involved in Bat Conservation Ireland - volunteers, management council, staff, consultants and the support and engagement we receive from members and the general public. We would like to thank each and every one of you for your contribution.

We look forward with hope to 2023, to growing the organisation, so we can continue to achieve the ambitious goals set out in our strategic plan.



A handwritten signature of John Curtin in blue ink, written in a cursive style.

JOHN CURTIN
Co-Chair



A handwritten signature of Caroline Shiel in blue ink, written in a cursive style.

CAROLINE SHIEL
Co-Chair

ABOUT US



BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND

Mission Statement

Bat Conservation Ireland is an independent, non-profit, charity that is Ireland's leading authority on bats. We conduct monitoring and research to increase knowledge of all Irish bat species, and work to secure and expand existing bat populations, and where feasible to extend their ranges. We aim to develop a genuine and widespread understanding and appreciation of bats amongst the public, state agencies and other organisations, and to secure consistent protection of all bat species and the ecological infrastructure necessary to support them.

M
i
s
s
i
o
n

Objectives

Bat Conservation Ireland's main objective is *'the advancement of education and the promotion of the conservation and study of bats on the island of Ireland and elsewhere in the world'*.

This is carried out through:

Education: Disseminating education materials;

Community Engagement: Giving talks and leading bat walks;

Conservation: Carrying out nationwide surveys and monitoring of bats;

Collaboration: Acting as an umbrella group for local bat groups;

Data Research: Providing a central repository for bat records.

VALUES

A core set of values guides all aspects of the work of Bat Conservation Ireland

Professionalism: We are committed to promoting the conservation of bats and bat habitats through science-based education, emerging research and contemporary best practices;

Collaboration: Together we are stronger and through collaboration our work is better as we strive to achieve our collective goals;

Learning: By learning from our experiences and each other, and implementing those learnings, we are continuously moving forward, innovating, and improving;

Respect: We foster and safeguard a culture where everyone's contributions and relationships are respectful and respected;

Integrity: We consistently conduct ourselves ethically with honesty, openness, fairness and accountability;

Diversity: We value the different ideas, strengths, interests, and cultural backgrounds that make our organisation successful. We welcome healthy debate and differences of opinion;

Reflection: We continuously monitor and evaluate our plans and performance to ensure that we meet our goals efficiently and effectively.

GOVERNANCE

Bat Conservation Ireland is managed by a Governing Council, who oversee the day-to-day running of the organisation. Council for 2022 were:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Chair: Brian Keeley | Miriam Ahern |
| Vice Chair: Caroline Shiel | Emma Boston |
| Treasurer: Chris Peppiatt | Anna Collins |
| Company Secretary: John Curtin | Patricia McAlernon |
| | Tanya Slattery |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Charity No: 13016 | Charity Registered No: 20039417 |
| Tax Reference No: 9781345A | Tax Clearance No: 838778 |
| Company No: 494343 | |

| |
|---|
| Registered Office: Carmichael Centre, 4-7, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7, D07 RHA8 |
| Auditors & Company Law Advisors: O'Dwyer Delaney, Auditors & Accountants, 33, Fitzwilliam Street Upper, Dublin D02 TF82. |
| Bankers: Bank of Ireland, Ashbourne, Co. Meath. |

We are members of the following organisations:

- Irish Environmental Network
- The Wheel
- Affiliated with: Bat Life Europe

Bat Conservation Ireland has adopted and implemented the Charities Governance Code issued by the Charities Regulator. It reported on its compliance with the code formally as required by the regulator in October 2022.



Brian Keeley



Caroline Shiel



Chris Peppiatt



John Curtin



Miriam Ahern



Emma Boston



Anna Collins



Patricia McAlernon



Tanya Slattery

SNAPSHOT OF 2022

CONSERVATION

- 4 Monitoring Schemes
- 496 Volunteers
- 706 Surveys completed

- 575 Queries Answered
- 146,798 website page views

EDUCATION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 10 active bat groups;
- 13,000 followers on social media

- Holds over 100,000 bat records
- Research collaborations with QUB and UCD
- Member of EU COST Action Network: CLIMBATS

RESEARCH & DATA

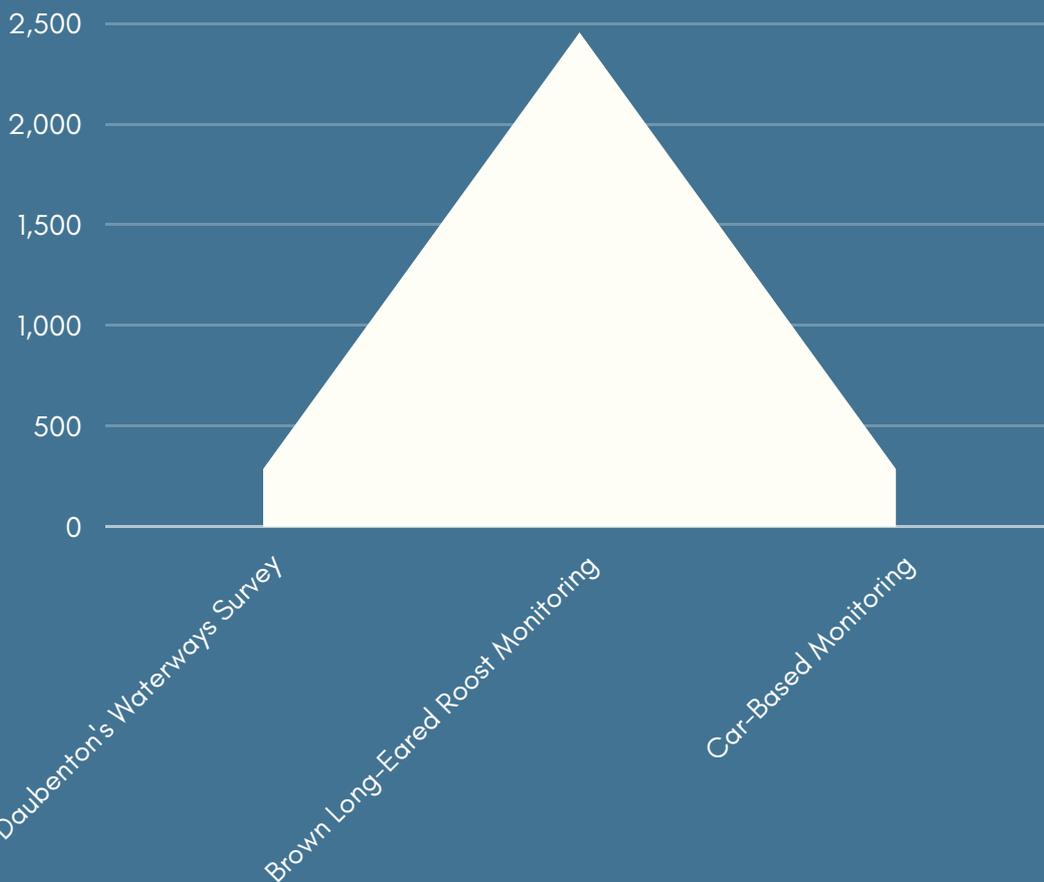


FIGURE 1.

Number of volunteer hours spent on the Irish Bat Monitoring Programme in 2022

Main Objectives pursued and achieved during 2022

education

conservation

community engagement

research

collaboration

EDUCATION

Ireland currently is home to 9 resident species of bat, all of which are protected under the Wildlife Act 1976 and subsequent amendments. It is an offence to intentionally disturb, injure or kill a bat or disturb its resting place.

Levels of education in Ireland differ in terms of knowledge that bats are resident here and also around their protected status. A substantial proportion of Bat Conservation Ireland's work is dedicated to educating the public about bats and addressing conflicts that can sometimes arise between bats and householders, where bats are very likely to roost.

Our educational activities include the following:

- Answering bat-related queries through our website and Facebook page;
- Facilitating and updating educational material through 3 websites:
 - Bat Conservation Ireland - www.batconservationireland.org
 - Learn About Bats - www.learnaboutbats.com
 - Bats and Bugs - www.batsandbugs.ie
- Organising bat walks and talks for the general public across the country;
- Conducting and participating in seminars and workshops to facilitate additional learning for our members and the wider public;
- Issuing a bi-annual Newsletter to update our members on our work;
- Hosting our triennial bat conference to bring together bat experts and share latest research and data;



EDUCATION

Queries

Bat Conservation Ireland operates a queries service through email and our social media platforms, which is facilitated by its staff members. While each query is individual in nature, in general queries can fall into a number of different categories as follows:

1. Householders who have a bat roost in their house and either
 - a. need further information;
 - b. the roost has become problematic and they need advice about what to do;
 - c. bats are entering the dwelling space in their house and they need advice;
 - d. they want to carry out works to their property and need further advice;
 - e. they want the bats removed and relocated.
2. A member of the public has found a grounded bat and needs further advice;
3. A member of the public wants to object to planning permission and either
 - requests assistance from Bat Conservation Ireland; or
 - need further information in relation to bats and planning permission
4. A member or member of the public wants to learn more about bats and would like more information on any courses run by Bat Conservation Ireland or educational materials for children
5. Student enquiries about internships or participation in research projects

In 2022 staff dealt with approximately 576 queries; 481 by e-mail through our website and 95 through our Facebook messenger.

Bat Conservation Ireland, sees this service as essential for educating the general public around bats' status as a protected species, which in the long-term leads to better outcomes for bats.

EDUCATION

Online Presence - website

Bat Conservation Ireland's main website - www.batconservationireland.org - provides general information about the organisation and what we do and also provides general information about bats and more specifically to householders on bat roosts. Our website is an effective educational tool, as the following statistics will verify:

Page Views: 130,721

Unique Page Views: 106,376

Bat Sightings Submitted: 445

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Bat Conservation Ireland website. At the top, a dark purple banner contains the text "An all-Ireland charity that promotes the conservation of bats and their habitats". Below this is the logo for Bat Conservation Ireland, featuring a stylized bat wing. To the right of the logo are three circular buttons: "JOIN" (purple), "DONATE" (dark blue), and "SHOP" (blue). Further right, a shopping cart icon indicates "0 ITEMS - €0.00". A navigation menu below the logo includes "OUR WORK", "IRISH BATS", "NEED ADVICE", "GET INVOLVED", "EVENTS AND TRAINING", "BAT GROUPS", and "ABOUT US". The main content area features a large image of a bat in flight. The text reads: "WE ARE IRELAND'S LEADING AUTHORITY ON BATS" followed by "Bat Conservation Ireland works to protect and expand existing bat populations and to develop a widespread understanding and appreciation of bats amongst the public, state agencies and other organisations." Below this text are two buttons: "Become a member" (purple) and "Get involved" (white). At the bottom, three columns of text describe the organization's goals: "Help protect Ireland's bat populations by supporting our work", "Learn more about bats and Ireland's bat populations", and "Specialised education and training to help protect Ireland's bats".

EDUCATION



Learn About Bats
with Bat Conservation Ireland



Bat Conservation Ireland runs a website that provides educational material for our younger bat enthusiasts, aged 6 - 12 - www.learnaboutbats.org. Children can learn about bats and their lifecycle, download materials, which provide a fun way to enhance their learning and there is also a resource section for teachers, providing materials they can bring into the classroom. The statistics in 2022, for Learn About Bats are as follows:



Page Views: 16,077

Unique Page Views: 12,586



EDUCATION

Online Presence - Social Media

Bat Conservation Ireland's added an additional social media accounts to it's online presence in 2022. We now run Facebook Instagram and Twitter. Facebook and Instagram provide us with the opportunity to engage more on a community level, with members, supporters and across our 10 bat groups. Twitter, on the other hand, gives us the opportunity to reach out more to the science-based community and share more of our research projects, data and papers.

In 2022, we had a large increase in our social media following over the course of the year. Page Likes increased by 1,008 to 9,482 and we dipped our toes further into Instagram and generated 55 new followers. Twitter remained steady and by the end of 2022 we had almost 3,000 followers.

Our reach through these channels has been very successful, as these stats show:

Facebook - 150,298

Instagram - 2,484



EDUCATION

Events

2022 saw the country and organisation get back to a much fuller range of activities and more akin to life pre-Covid. There was a great appetite for Bat Conservation Ireland members, bat groups, volunteers and the wider public to get out into nature and engage with many activities run around the country to learn more about bats and promote their protection and conservation .

Additionally, the triennial bat conference was postponed until March 2023, with a firm date and booking for this important conference to go ahead.

Key Events for Bat Conservation Ireland carried out in 2022 were:

- Biodiversity Week, where we held series of online and in-person events which helped educate adults and children about bats, their habitats and the importance to our environment;
- Continuation of the 'Thursday Talks' series, which saw bat specialists share their expertise on specific areas of bat conservation and research;
- Participation of Wexford Bat Group in Seal Rescue Ireland Hallowe'en Bat Special,



EDUCATION

Events

- Delivery of a workshop to conservation architects, engineers, planners and heritage site managers on protecting bats during management, maintenance and restoration of heritage structures;
- Heritage Week, where we carried out a number of educational events, with the highlight being the launch of our 'Bats and Heritage Structures: Project Overview' video, explaining what this project is about;
- Series of Bat Walks carried out in Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford, over the summer by BCIreland member, Harm Deenan, as part of our Small Grants Scheme;
- Participating in the Rediscovery Centre's 'Lets Talk Science Festival', which reached 35,000 students;

Online presentations/talks carried out by Bat Conservation Ireland in 2022 were:

- 22 May 2022 - "Bats in your Back Garden" - Tina Aughney;
- 16 June 2022 - Thursday Talk - "Rice farmers that got along with soprano pipistrelles: a nice story of a friendship" - Adrià López-Baucells;
- 18 October 2022 - "Bats and Heritage Structures" - Niamh Roche, Tina Aughney & Fergal McNamara of 7L Architects.



EDUCATION

Biodiversity Week 2022

Biodiversity Week is a key week in the calendar for Bat Conservation Ireland and 2022 we hosted a number of bat walks and talks at various locations around the country. It was great to get out and about meeting lots of different people and to share our knowledge and passion for these wonderful mammals, after a hiatus of 2 years. Our activities during the week were as follows:



- 'Kilcock Bat Walk, Co. Kildare, facilitated by Kildare Bat Group
- 'Looking for Daubentons' at UL Rowing Club facilitated by Limerick Bat Group
- Bat Walk at Kellsborough Mill, Kells, Co. Kilkenny, facilitated by Tina Aughney
- Explore the hidden world of Kilkenny Castle Park: Dusk Bat Walk for adults -. facilitated by Tina Aughney
- Bat Walk - Friends of Merlin Park Woods, facilitated by Galway Bat Group
- Naas Canal Bat Walk, Co. Kildare, facilitated by Kildare Bat Group
- Bat Walk at Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford, facilitated by Harm Deenan, BCireland member
- 'Bats: Longevity, immunity, genomes... why care?' - Dr. Emma Teeling, UCD Bat Lab
- Bat Walk at Galway Cathedral, facilitated by Galway Bat Group
- Rathcoffey Bat Walk, Co. Kildare, facilitated by Kildare Bat Group
- Kilcoole Bat Walk, Co. Wicklow, facilitated by Wicklow Bat Group
- 'Lesser horseshoe bats and more', Curraghchase, Co. Limerick, facilitated by Limerick Bat Group
- Bat Walk with Friends of Bearna Woods and Rusheen Bay, facilitated by Galway Bat Group
- Bat Walk at Portlick Forest Park, Co. Westmeath, facilitated by Midland Bat Group

EDUCATION

Biodiversity Week 2022

- Belcarra Community Centre talk & riverside walk, facilitated by Mayo Bat Group
- Sallins Canal Bat Walk, Co. Kildare, facilitated by Kildare Bat Group
- Live talk 'How to build a bat box and improve your garden for bats', facilitated by Limerick Bat Group
- Bat Walk at Sonairte Eco Centre, Co. Meath, facilitated by Meath Bat Group
- Bats in your Back Garden, facilitated by Tina Aughney
- Bat Walk and Talk, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan, facilitated by Tina Aughney

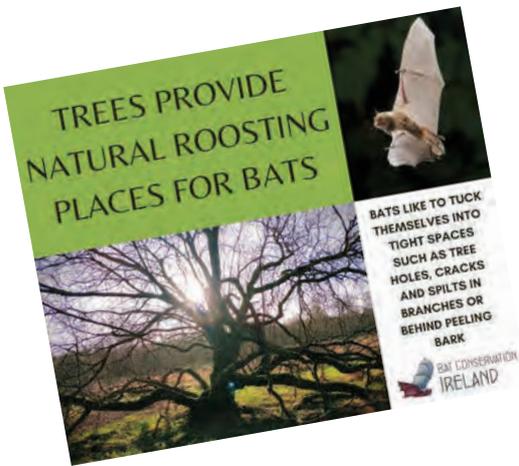


All in all, we had a hugely successful Biodiversity Week 2022! However, we couldn't carry out the amount of bat walks, talks and educational events without our fantastic bat groups, who every year provide excellent educational opportunities for the public to learn more about bats, their habitats and why they are so important for biodiversity. We would like to say a huge thank you to our Bat Groups who carry out all this work voluntarily and so passionately.



EDUCATION

We also carried out a number of online educational campaigns during the week, where we shared a number of posts through our social media channels on the importance of hedgerows for bats and trees as roosts for bats. These posts ran during biodiversity week and had great engagement, as the stats indicate below. We also ran our hugely popular 'Bats out the Back' project, where we ask people to submit bat sightings in their local area.



Bats out the Back

Submit your bat sightings and track bat activity in your area!



Stats for engagement of these posts are as follows:

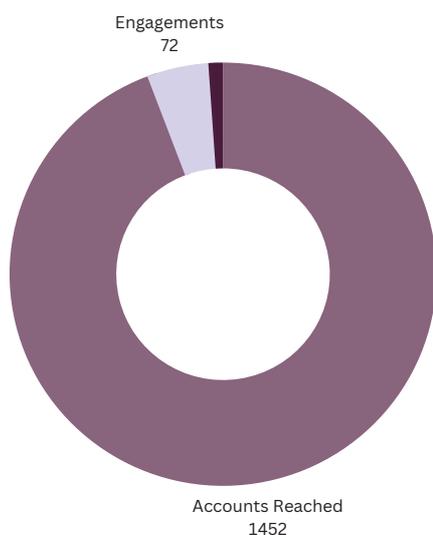
| Post | Reach | Engagement | Shares |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------------|--------|
| Bats out the Back (Submit Sightings) | 53,991 | 2,356 | 188 |
| Trees as Bat Roosts | 7,530 | 287 | 48 |
| Hedgerows for Bats | 14,512 | 579 | 90 |

EDUCATION

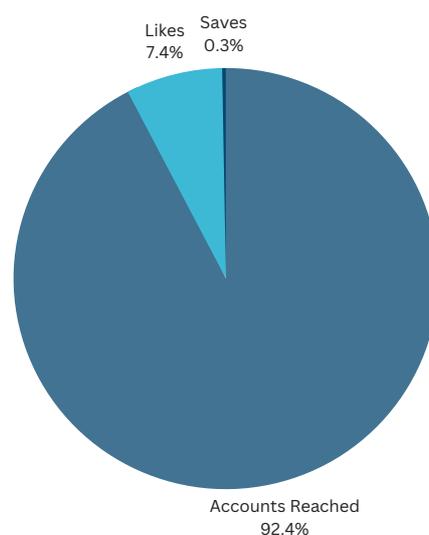
Heritage Week 2022

In the first quarter of 2022, we applied to the Heritage Council for funding as part of their 'Capacity Capacity Fund' to develop a project called 'Bats and Heritage Structures: Protecting Bats during Management, Restoration and Maintenance Works at Heritage Sites'. The aim of this project was to produce two on line resources - a documentary-style live action information video, and a downloadable pdf booklet - to explain the importance of heritage structures for bats and how they can and should be protected during maintenance or restoration works. The resources are aimed at state agencies, local authorities and professionals involved in renovations and other works at heritage sites, with the long-term outcome being a higher standard of works, that takes into account both built and natural heritage.

As part of Heritage Week this year, we produced a short video presentation on this project and shared it through our social media channels. Below is representative of the engagement and reach these posts achieved.



Facebook



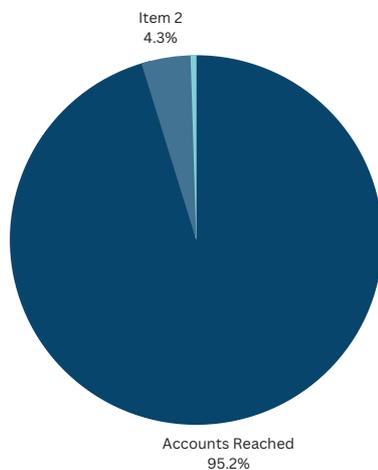
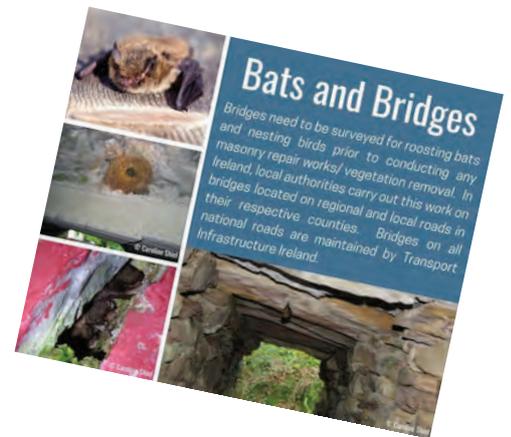
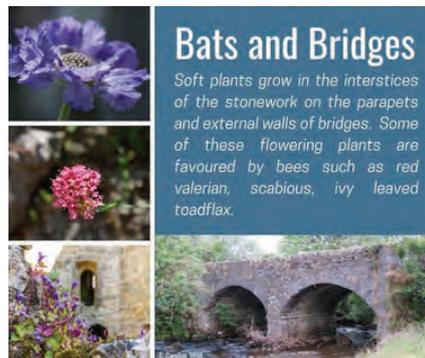
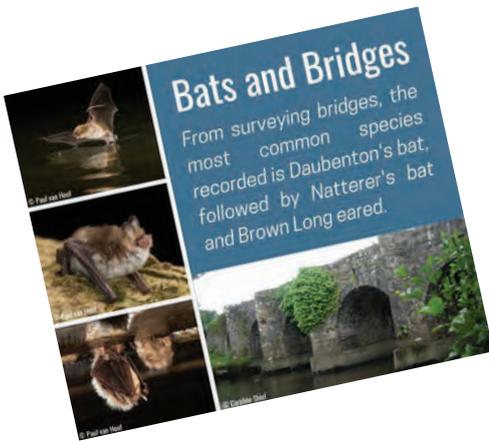
Instagram

EDUCATION

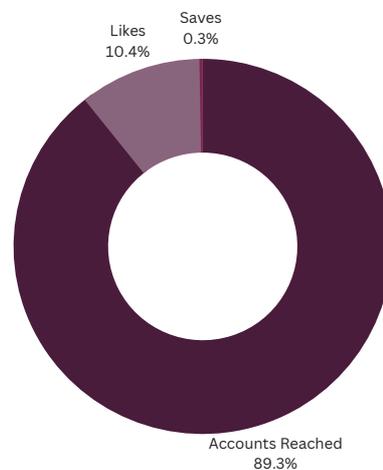
Heritage Week 2022

We also created an information campaign during Heritage Week to link in with our Bats and Heritage Structure Project, by developing a number of information posts an 'Bats and Bridges'. These posts highlighted the most common bats recorded from bridge surveys, that bat roosts are much more common at bridges than is probably realised,, what kinds of plants grow on bridges and the importance of leaving this type of growth on bridges and the importance of carrying out a bat survey before any kind of work is carried out at bridges.

We had great engagement from this campaign, the results of which are outlined below.



Facebook



Instagram

EDUCATION

Training

Irish Bat Monitoring Programme

Bat Conservation Ireland runs Ireland's only All-Ireland bat monitoring programme, as part of our conservation efforts. Volunteers are essential for us to carry out the level of monitoring that we do. Every year new volunteers are trained as part of this programme and this not only helps create more citizen scientists around the country, but also helps develop unique skills for those involved.

In 2022, our Project Managers trained 7 new volunteer teams on the Car-Based Monitoring Scheme, with revision training provided for an additional team. 111 new volunteers were trained for the for the All Ireland Daubenton's Waterway Survey. All of the new volunteers were trained online, utilising online training that had been developed in the previous 2 years.

Thursday Talks

May and June saw the return of our successful Thursday Talks series. These talks were carried out online in order to reach as wide an audience possible and help stay environmentally friendly. We heard from some very interesting speakers, talking about how bats help farmers in developing countries and how studying mammals, such as bats help us to better understand and manage ageing and a number of conditions, including deafness and blindness, in humans.



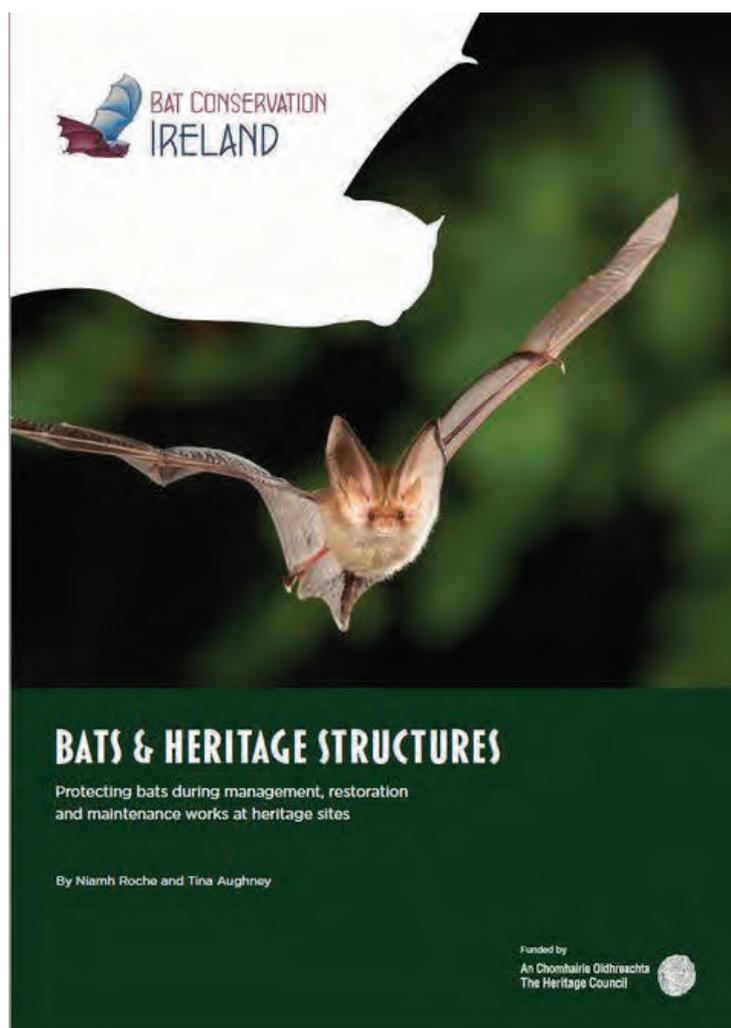
The talks carried out over the period were:

- Rice farmers that got along with soprano pipistrelles: a nice story of a friendship - Adrià López-Baucells National Geographic Explorer
- Bats: Longevity, immunity, genomes... why care? - Prof. Emma Teeling, UCD Bat Lab

EDUCATION

Publications

As part of the funding we received from the Heritage Council through the Heritage Capacity Grant, we published 'Bats & Heritage Structures: Protecting bats during management, restoration and maintenance works at heritage sites'. This publication is a guide to anyone planning restoration, maintenance, or other works on a heritage site or structure where they know or suspect bats are present. Bats should be considered at the start of any projects on heritage structures, because, if they are present, this may have implications for timing of the works.



Cover: Bats & Heritage Structures
Protecting bats during management, restoration
and maintenance works at heritage sites

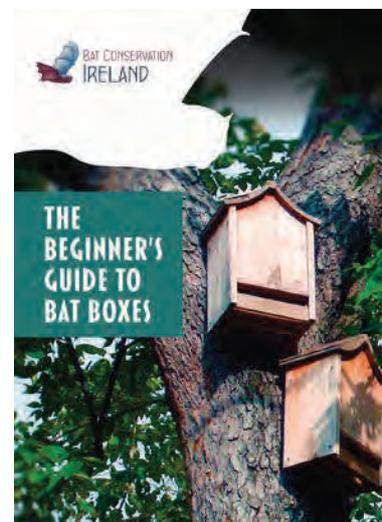
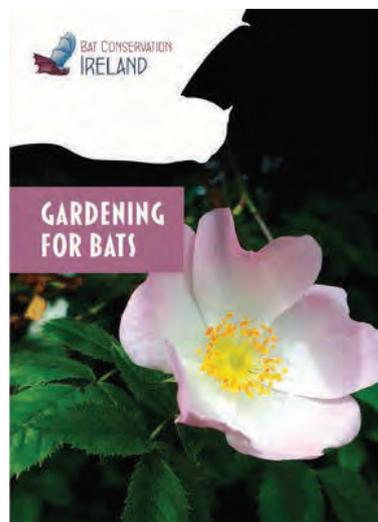
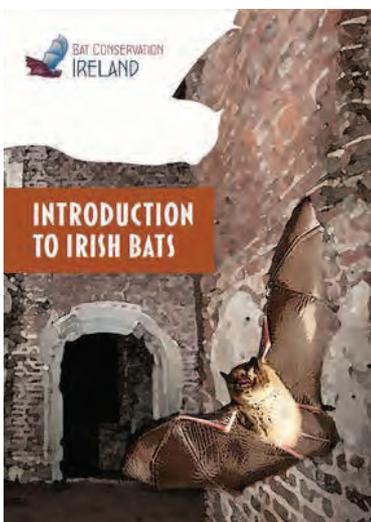
EDUCATION

Publications

in 2021 we applied to the Irish Environmental Network's Capacity Building Fund, for funding to develop a suite of educational leaflets to help support our work. This application was successful and over 2021 and 2022 we developed a number of leaflet publications in areas that we new the general public were interested in learning more about. Two leaflets focused on general information about bats and why they are important to the Irish environment and biodiversity. Additionally we developed leaflets which made the connection between the importance of different types of flora and bats and bat activity and a final leaflet on bats and alternative roosts in bat boxes.

The leaflets were printed and distributed to our bat groups, new members, stakeholders, and the wider public at bat walks, events and seminar and conferences. The leaflets produced area as follows:

- Introduction to Irish Bats
- Why Bats Matter
- Gardening for Bats
- Managing Hedgerows for Bats
- A Beginners Guide to Bat Boxes



EDUCATION

Publications

Biodiversity Ireland - Spring/Summer 2022

Biodiversity Tales - Bats

Dr. Niamh Roche contributed to this publication produced by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, to update readers on the projects Bat Conservation Ireland were working on in 2022, including:

- Thursday Talks Series
- ID Guide to Irish Bats
- Ecosystems Services Project
- Biodiversity Week
- New Project - 'Bats and Heritage Structures'
- Irish Bat Monitoring Programme



Biodiversity Ireland - Autumn/Winter 2022

Biodiversity Tales - Bats

Dr. Niamh Roche contributed to this publication, to update readers on the projects Bat Conservation Ireland were working on, including:

- Ecosystems Services Project
- 'Bats and Heritage Structures'
- Irish Bat Monitoring Programme
- Submission - Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity loss
- Tidy Towns Special Award

EDUCATION

Media

Bats and bat conservation work received very good media coverage in 2022. This is important, as it provides another avenue for us to engage with the public, that not only are bats a protected species, but they they play a very important role in biodiversity and sustaining a healthy environment.

Media pieces which featured Bat Conservation Ireland, or which we contributed to were:

- 11 May 2022 - Niamh Roche, Project Manager of the Bats and Bugs Project carried out an interview with Claire Byrne on Radio 1 to discuss this project and bats;
- 19 June 2022 - 'The Liffey' documentary aired, which was filmed in 2021 and featured Anna Collins of Bat Conservation Ireland, bringing a group of local enthusiasts to Newbridge Linear Park to keep tabs on the bat population along the Liffey in Kildare;
- 10 June 2022 and 3 July 2022 - Niamh Roche, Project Manager of the Bats and Bugs Project carried out an interview with Derek Mooney on 'Mooney Goes Wild, on Radio 1 to discuss this project;

In October 2022, Tina Aughney participated in '*Root and Branch*', a new series of documentaries for RTÉ lyric fm's Lyric Feature which looking at Irish trees from a variety of angles. Series presenters Anja Murray, ecologist and botanist and palaeoecologist, Michael O'Connell, visited Tina in Cavan to discuss how bats use Ireland's ash lined hedgerows.



EDUCATION

Media

- 31 May 2022 Anne Norris of Shannonside Radio interviewed Niamh Roche about the bats and bugs project
- 3 June 2022 Maria McCann of Waterford FM interviewed Niamh Roche about the bats and bugs project
- 1 September 2022 Jerry O'Sullivan of Kerry FM interviewed Niamh Roche about Lesser horseshoe bats
- 6 August 2022 Michael Viney wrote an article for the Irish Times about analysis of bat droppings and what they can reveal and mentioned the bats and bugs project
- 28-29 October 2022, the Donegal Daily, the Galway Daily and Extra.ie ran articles on the Tidy Towns Awards, mentioning the Awards which Bat Conservation Ireland sponsored
- 19/12/2022 Shannonside Radio Niamh Roche Joe Finnegan Bats in people's houses Interview

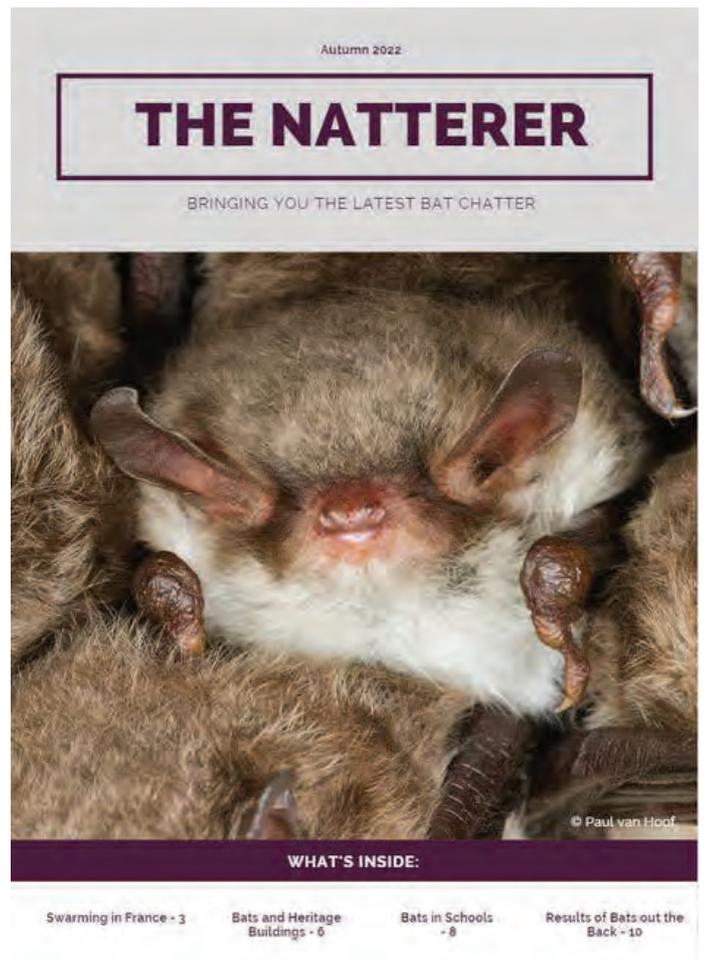
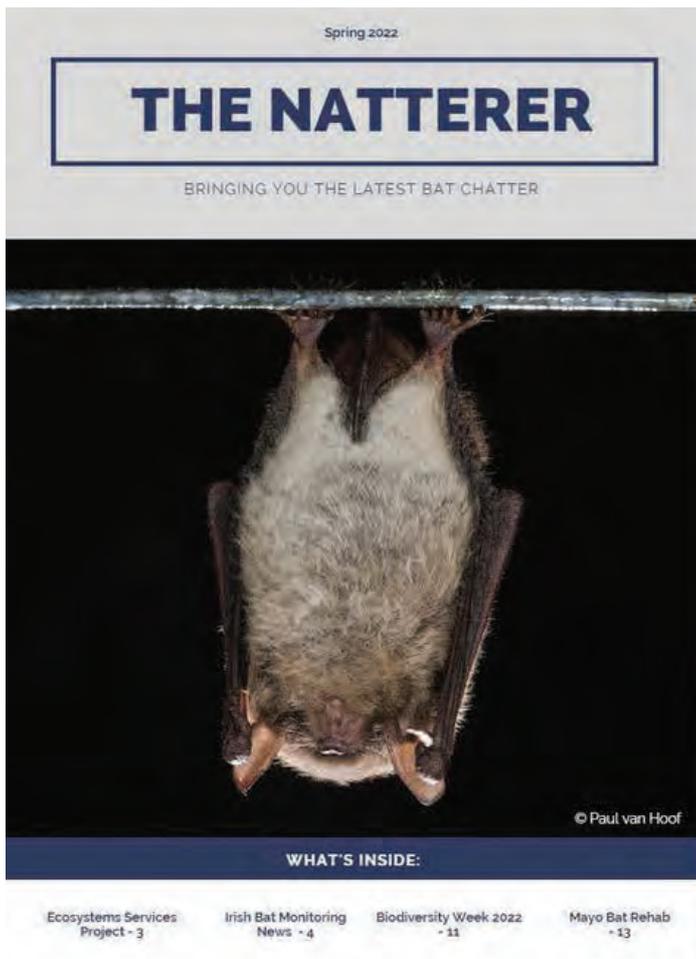


EDUCATION

Newsletter

Bat Conservation Ireland publishes a newsletter to update members about the work that we are doing and to share the latest information about developments in the world of bat conservation. In 2022 we published 2 newsletters as follows:

- The Natterer Spring 2022
- The Natterer Autumn 2022



COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Bat Groups

There are currently 10 bat groups around the country that are affiliated with Bat Conservation Ireland. Galway Bat Group preceded the foundation of Bat Conservation Ireland, with its formation going back to the 1980's. The Bat Groups offer the opportunity to members to get more involved in activities in their local communities, as well as develop their bat-related skills, such as carrying out roost counts and bat surveys. It is also an opportunity for like minded individuals to come together around a shared interest in biodiversity and our natural wildlife.

The bat groups currently affiliated with Bat Conservation Ireland are:

- Cavan Bat Group
- Dublin Bat Group
- Galway Bat Group
- Kildare Bat Group
- Limerick Bat Group
- Mayo Bat Group
- Meath Bat Group
- Midland Bat Group
- Wexford Bat Group
- Wicklow Bat Group



Additionally Northern Ireland Bat Group exists as an individual entity, however there are close links between Bat Conservation Ireland and all of the bat groups around the country. In 2022, a new bat group formed - Wexford Bat Group and they hit the ground running with events. The groups had a great year, as they were able to get out and carry out in-person activities. Short reports from each of the groups follows.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Cavan Bat Group

Cavan Bat Group is still in it's infancy, however they carried out a number of activities in 2022. There are currently 4 members of the group and they were very active on the Irish Bat Monitoring Schemes during the monitoring season, as follows:

All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey:

August 2022 - 2 surveys were carried out in Virginia, Co. Cavan

August 2022 - 1 survey was carried out at Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim

Brown Long-eared Roost Monitoring Survey:

Summer 2022 - 1 roost count was carried out at Drung, Co. Cavan

Summer 2022 - 1 roost count was carried out at Ballyconnell & Kilmore, Co. Cavan

Summer 2022 - 1 roost count was carried out at Swanlinbar, Co. Cavan

Car Based Monitoring:

July & August 2022 - Car Transect Survey was carried out in Co. Cavan

Additionally, they carried out research in conjunction with the Nathusius Pipistrelle Research Project, to carry out static surveillance of large lake bodies within the county to attempt to identify populations of this bat species. For this survey, the group deployed AudioMoths (small full spectrum detectors) along the shores of lake bodies across the county. A GIS investigation was undertaken and lake bodies 1km long or greater were targeted, with a total coverage of a massive 50 locations across the county. The project was funded under the NPWS Small Recorder's Grant and the group are hoping to progress this work in 2023.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Cavan Bat Group



Thermal imagery support!.



Natterer's bat Roost Survey with Ben, Chris and Kat.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Dublin Bat Group



With Covid restrictions finally easing, the Dublin Bat Group was considerably more active during 2022 than the previous two years. However, with almost all of the Group's members bringing new future chiropterologists into the world and as we continue to mourn the loss of our friend, Aoibheann, we took time to pause and reflect on the previous two years. It has been a difficult few years for the Group but we persist and still managed to get quite a few Bat Activities completed including several bat walks, talks and the discovery of several new bat roosts.



It was great to be able to have bat meetings and talks in person again after the couple years of Zoom meetings and get together for roost surveys and meetings to create a plan for 2023.

***Left - Aoibheann examines a potential tree roost in Fern Hill, 2021.
We badly miss her enthusiasm and humour
- Dublin Bat Group***

Bat Walks

In May, Dublin Bat Group members Colm Clarke and Paul Scott led a bat walk in the Phoenix Park for Leif Barry of the OPW. There was a good turn out and before looking for bats the DGB members discussed bat ecology with the attendees. The talk was aimed at the general public with limited existing knowledge of bats and covered topics including:

- Bat species in Ireland and in the Phoenix Park.
- Interesting facts on our bat species.
- Important habitats that bats depend upon; and
- Where to find bats in the Phoenix Park and surrounding areas.

Species found on the walk included the Soprano Pipistrelle and Common Pipistrelle.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Dublin Bat Group



This bat walk was repeated in September, this time with DBG members Colm Clarke and Kevin Delahunty. Species noted during the September walk included the Soprano Pipistrelle, Common Pipistrelle and the Daubenton's Bat. A Leisler's Bat was also noted flying overhead at the start of the bat walk.

In May, Kevin Delahunty also led a bat walk for Rush Tidy Towns in North County Dublin. This walk was promoted by Rush Tidy Towns on their social media accounts and there was a big turn out for the event, including a number of students from the local secondary school, St. Joseph's, Rush. The walk was conducted in Kenure Park - a relatively small park surrounded by well lit residential estates. However both Soprano Pipistrelle and Common Pipistrelle bats were recorded.

Bat Surveys

The group undertook emergence surveys at two locations in 2022. An emergence survey was undertaken at a school in Stillorgan after the group had been contacted by the principal. 68 Leisler's Bats were recorded during the emergence survey.

The group was contacted on Facebook about a possible bat roost in the Phoenix Park also. The bats had been observed around a dead tree to the west of the Phoenix Park. 142 Leisler's Bats were recorded during the emergence survey making this the largest known Leisler's roost in Dublin. These two roosts, along with a smaller roost at St. Enda's Park in Rathfarnham (where 12 Leisler's Bats were recorded during an emergence survey in 2021) are possibly the only known Leisler's roosts in the Dublin area.

The OPW were contacted to let them know about the roost in the Phoenix Park so they wouldn't cut it down. However, the tree was badly damaged during a storm towards the end of 2022. The roost itself is still intact and an emergence survey is planned for Spring/Summer 2023.

We look forward to continuing to monitor this roost going forward.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Galway Bat Group

Galway Bat Group had a relatively busy year and managed to organise 11 events during the year.

Caitriona Carlin led a walk at Merlin Park Woods on 16 May for Biodiversity Week. Ger O'Donohoe and Gesche

Kinderman led a bat walk on 22 June in Galway City and Caitriona

Carlin led an additional bat walk in Merlin Park Woods on 18 August for National Heritage Week.



The Hallowe'en bat walk in Bearna Woods for 'Friends of Bearna Woods' was led by Ger O'Donohoe and Elaine O'Riordan led the Kinvara Cub Scouts on a walk in April, to seek out some early bat activity. One of the best attended walks was led by Caitriona Carlin, where a 60 strong group tuned up at the University of Galway on 23 September.

In addition, a batbox monitoring project (60 batboxes on 15 trees) was installed at University of Galway, as part of a project funded by Bat Conservation Ireland's Small Grants Scheme, in conjunction with Campus Explore which had been delayed due to Covid-19 and shortages of batboxes. As part of the bats on campus project, static and heterodyne bat surveys were conducted on University of Galway campus between September and November 2022.

The Galway Bat Group was also involved with the Neighbourhood Bat citizen science project, where their static detector was placed at Bearna Woods South and the group carried out 3 roost counts for the Brown Long Eared Roost Monitoring Scheme, 2 surveys for the Car Based Monitoring Scheme and 2 survey's for the All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Galway Bat Group

Most walks were held during Biodiversity Week, or Heritage Week, and entailed combined walk/talks. Most events included dead specimens, opportunities to hear and see bats as the participants walked around, learning about Irish bats, their ecology, threats, and conservation needs.

Most events, whether walks or monitoring, are carried out on a voluntary basis, however, the bat group received funding from Gort River Walk for leading a walk there this year. This funding will go towards funding the group activities and equipment.

Several events were fully booked, and very popular.



Galway City Bat Walk
June 2022



Galway City Bat Walk
June 2022

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Kildare Bat Group

Kildare Bat Group had a very busy year and were delighted to be the recipients of the Biodiversity Award as part of the National Heritage Awards, in October, along with Bird Watch Ireland. This award is facilitated by the Heritage Council and was awarded for the joint event 'Bats about Rooks'.



Events/Bat Walks

- 14 May 2022 - Kilcock Tidy Towns/Community Garden; Bat Walk
- 16 May 2022- Naas Town Bat Walk
- 19 May 2022 - Rathcoffey Community Garden Bat Walk
- 21 May 2022 Sallins Biodiversity Group Bat Walk
- 19 August 2022 - Heritage Talk: "Bats about Rooks" People's Park Portlaoise
- 20 August 2022 - Heritage Walk along River Liffey, Linear Park Newbridge
- 23 September 2022 - Culture Night: Bat Walk at Linear Park Newbridge

Bat Box Installation/Monitoring

- 16 March 2022 - Bat Box installation in Kilcock in conjunction Kilcock Tidy Towns
- 2 April 2022 - Bat Box monitoring
- 23 April 2022 - Bat Box monitoring - Donadea Forest Park
- 30 April 2022 - Bat Box monitoring - Newbridge
- 07 May 2022 - Bat Box monitoring - Newbridge
- 8 May 2022 - Bat Boxes monitoring, Donadea
- 16 June 2022 - Bat Box Inspection

Projects

- Participated in the Neighbourhood Bats Project, setting out static detectors at 2 sites in Celbridge and Rathangan, Co. Kildare.
-

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Kildare Bat Group

Listening to Bats Series, with Kildare Bat Group

- 15 June 2022 - Listening to Bats, Kilcock
- 23 June 2022 - Listening to Bats, Naas Town
- 10 July 2022 - Listening to Bats, Kilcullen
- 14 July 2022 - Listening to Bats, Oldtown Stud, Naas

Roost Counts

- 13 June 2022 - BLE Roost Count, Clogharinka Church
- 4 July 2022 - BLE Roost Count
- 29 August 2022 - BLE Count, Clogharinka

Bat Surveys

- 23 April 2022 - Sallins Bat Walk: Location Review Survey completed
- 30 April 2022 - Clonfert Petting Farm: Location review survey completed
- 11 June 2022 - Woodfield Ecological Project: Site Location presurvey assessment completed
- 23 June 2022 - Bat Survey, Sallins Train Station

All Ireland National Daubenton's Waterway Survey Sites - August 2022:

- 4 Sites - Meath Bridge, Pike Bridge, North Kildare, Carton House.
- 2 Sites - Rathangan
- 1 Site - Clane
- 1 Site - Monasterevin

Media

- 19 June 2022 - RTE *The Liffey* Series aired, featuring a segment on bats on the Liffey at Linear Park, Newbridge, with an interview with Anna Collins - <https://www.rte.ie/player/series/the-liffey/SI0000012797?epguid=IH000414516>

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Kildare Bat Group

- 21 October 2022 - Leinster Leader 'Kildare Bat Group is joint recipient of National Heritage Award' - <https://www.leinsterleader.ie/news/home/944309/kildare-bat-group-is-joint-recipient-of-national-heritage-award.html>
- 27 October 2022 - Bird Watch Ireland - BirdWatch Ireland Celebrate Win at the Heritage Week Awards 2022 - <https://birdwatchireland.ie/birdwatch-ireland-celebrate-win-at-the-heritage-week-awards-2022/>
- 28 October 2022 - Irish Times - National Heritage Week Award Winners 2022 - <https://www.irishtimes.com/sponsored/2022/10/28/national-heritage-week-award-winners-2022/>

Training/Conferences

- 5 March 2022 - Bat Ambulance Training with Karen Healy of Northern Ireland Bat Group
- 21 August 2022 - Wildlife Crimes & Conservation Conference - participated in workshop in conjunction UK veterinarian Heidi Hargraves and Brian Keely, Bat Conservation Ireland Chairperson
- 7 - 29 September 2022 - Kilcock Biodiversity Training in conjunction with Kildare County Council

Bat Rehabilitation

Kildare Bat Group continued to offer advice and take in grounded bats & pups under NPWS license.

Funding/Equipment

Kildare Bat Group received a grant from Kildare County Council, which helped fund new equipment for the group. They also received 2 Heterodyne detectors funded through the IEN Capacity Building Grant, received by Bat Conservation Ireland.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Limerick Bat Group

Artist in the Community Scheme

Since August 2021, Limerick Bat Group has been collaborating with the artist/composer Fiona Linnane. We will continue to engage with Fiona at meetings/events that may take place during the year and look forward to the potential this project has for encouraging more people to appreciate and understand bats. Through funding received from the Arts Council of Ireland “Artist in the Community Scheme”, Fiona will develop her project ideas for the Limerick Bat Group, which could be developed into a larger project. This partnership will involve creative workshops with interested parties in summer 2022. Project details are as follows:

- The funding has come from the Arts Council of Ireland Artist in the Community Scheme and Fiona has used this in her work. None has been received by Limerick Bat group.
- Fiona and Limerick Bat Group facilitated some creative workshops in Curraghchase where Fiona worked with groups of children and Adults with support from Limerick Bat Group members. After the workshops, an installation was presented where segments of music were mixed with bat calls and conversations from bat group members discussing bats.

Lesser Horseshoe Bat Night Roost Connectivity Project

This project was not progressed in 2022. It is hoped that it will continue in 2023. This project is led by Tanya who will be stepping back from the bat walks and talks.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Limerick Bat Group

Neighbourhood Bats project with BCI

We took part in the Neighbourhood bats project and placed a detector in a members garden in Limerick City. This involved several visits to the site to assess its suitability and interactions with group member Isabelle.

Heritage Week Events

Funding was received from BCIreland/IEN for three talks provided online during Heritage Week. Tanya Slattery and Susan Kirwan provided an “Looking for Daubentons” on 15th May, which introduced bat habitats and conservation, and provided recommendations for the best places to look for Daubentons Bats around Bruree, in County Limerick. Sean Hartigan ran the bat box building workshop in Castletroy on the 21st of May and a walk and talk on Lesser horse shoe bats and an additional bat walk was run on the 20th of May in Curraghchase by Albert Nolan and Susan Kirwan.

Other

We posted some videos on our Facebook page, shared lots of posts on Facebook and promoted bats through our work.



COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Mayo Bat Group

Mayo Bat Group is a relatively small group, but they continue to carry out bat walks and talks, post to social media and run volunteer bat rehabilitation, at a custom designed facility in Co. Mayo, which was built with generously donated funds from bat supporters!



During Biodiversity Week, Mayo Bat Group ran a bat walk and talk in conjunction with Belcarra Community Group, at Belcarra, Castelbar, Co. Mayo.

They also participated in the Neighbourhood Bats Project and placed a static along the River Deel, Crossmolina Town Centre for 2 weeks.

Additionally, they received 2 Heterodyne detectors funded through the IEN Capacity Building Grant, received by Bat Conservation Ireland



COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Meath Bat Group

Meath Bat Group are still in the early stages of development and carried out a bat walk during Biodiversity Week at Sonairte, Eco Centre and Gardens, Co. Meath.

This walk was fully booked and a great success.

Additionally, Meath Bat Group did participate in the All Ireland Daubenton's Waterway Survey, carrying out a survey in Moynalty, Co. Meath and the Neighbourhood Bats Project, where they set out static detectors at 2 sites.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Midland Bat Group

Midland Bat Group were carried out a number of activities as follows in 2022:

Bat Walk and Talk, at Portlick Forest, Co.

Westmeath, as part of Biodiversity Week

Bat cycle at the Streamstown Greenway, Co.

Westmeath, as part of Biodiversity Week.



Midland Bat Group pre-Covid

They also participated in the Irish Bat Monitoring Programme as follows:

Car-Based Monitoring

- M87 - July & Aug 2022

All Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey

- Inny River, Ballymahon - August 2022
- Abbeyshrule, Co. Longford - August 2022
- The Mall, Longford Town - August 2022
- Coolnahinch Bridge, Kenagh - August 2022

Brown Long Eared Survey

- Ballymacormick, Longford - May, June August 2022

Additionally, they participated in the Neighbourhood Bats Project, where they put out a static detector in Westmeath.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Wicklow Bat Group

Wicklow Bat Group held one bat walk event in 2022 a Bat Walk in Kilcoole on behalf of Kilcoole Biodiversity Group/Kilcoole Tidy Towns, as part of Biodiversity Week. Almost 40 people who turned out for the bat walk in Kilcoole on Thursday night. The weather conditions were good and the bats didn't disappoint.

We had 4 species in the end:

- Common Pipistrelle
- Soprano Pipistrelle
- Leisler's Bat
- Whiskered Bat

Additionally, Wicklow Bat Group were active on social media, sharing posts and information about bat activities and events.



COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Wexford Bat Group

Wexford Bat Group officially affiliated with Bat Conservation Ireland in 2022. Efforts were made to publicize the formation of the group and a number people emailed wexfordbatgroup@gmail.com to express their interest. On the 16th of September the group held its first walk and talk on the farm of Alan Poole near Gorey. The invitation was only extended to people who had expressed prior interest in forming the group. In total about 12 people attended.

Harm Deenen gave an introductory talk about bats, and then after sunset the group went for a walk and were treated to some good views of Daubentons on the River Bann.

At Halloween, Alan Poole gave 2 talks at the Seal Rescue Sanctuary in Courtown. These were small events, with small number.

Wexford Bat Group also participated in the Irish Bat Monitoring Programme as follows:

All Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey

- River Bann, Ballyowen, Gorey - August 2022
- River Bann, Holyfort, Gorey - August 2022

Brown Long Eared Survey

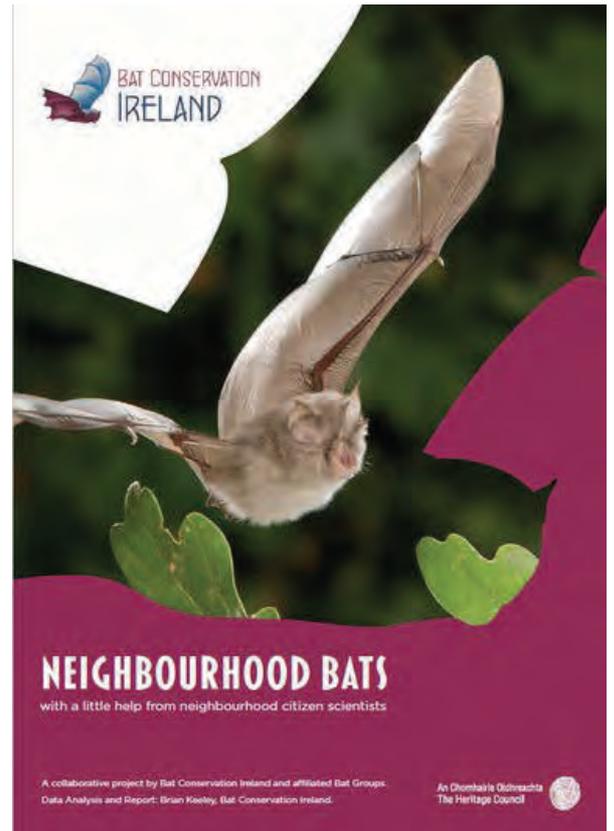
- Clone Church, Solosboro - Summer 2022



COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Neighbourhood Bats - with a Little Help from Neighbourhood Citizen Scientists

In early 2021, Bat Conservation Ireland applied to the Heritage Council Community Heritage Grant Scheme for funding to run a community project through the county Bat Groups, affiliated with Bat Conservation Ireland. The purpose of this project was to carry out a small scale monitoring of bats at a static location for a 6-week period to see what data could be recorded. This project resulted in the successful publication of the report: Neighbourhood Bats: with a little help from neighbourhood citizen scientists.



This project was run again in 2022, with the majority of the Bat Conservation Ireland bat groups participating.

Similarly to 2021, 9 sites were selected to put out static detectors over a number of weeks. The group volunteers identified locations, set up the equipment and set it up at the site, monitored the detector through a specialised App on their phone, visited the site on a weekly/bi-weekly basis to check the detector, batteries and SD cards, recorded specific data on custom designed data sheets and returned the SD cards and data sheets for overall analysis.

The data was analysed with Kaleidoscope Pro software, examined by a bat specialist to provide identifications of the bats producing the calls and compiled to look for

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Neighbourhood Bats -

with a Little Help from Neighbourhood Citizen Scientists

overall trends in the activity.

The benefits of the project are that there is an increased level of data available on bats throughout the island that can be checked now and into the future for any trends similar to the projects already undertaken by Bat Conservation Ireland. It also allows anyone with no expertise in bats, to contribute to research and monitoring of their local bat fauna.

Sites used for the Neighbourhood Bats Project

| | Site | | Site | | Site |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|--------------------------------|----|---------------------|
| 1. | River Deel, Crossmolina, Co. Mayo | 5. | Site, Co Meath | 9. | Site, Co. Westmeath |
| 2. | Garden, Limerick City | 6. | Site, Co. Cavan | | |
| 3. | Celbridge, Co. Kildare | 7. | Site, Co. Wicklow | | |
| 4. | Rathangan, Co. Kildare | 8. | Bearna Woods South, Co. Galway | | |

Bat Conservation Ireland, would like to thank all of the Bat Groups Volunteers and Communities, who participated in this project

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Tidy Towns

Sponsorship of Special Awards



Bat Conservation Ireland were delighted to be one of the sponsors of Tidy Towns Special Awards 2022.

The competition launched in Spring 2022 and deadline for receipt of applications was June 2022. Overall, we were delighted to have a great response to this competition and the quality of applicants was so good, the Council made the decision to provide 4 awards. This meant that in 2023 we will have 4 bat murals at different locations around the country.

This is another way for use to educate and promote the conservation of Irish bats, with the general public and provides an avenue to a different audience.

The main awards took place in October 2022 in the RDS, with the Regional Awards taking place a various locations around the country in 2023.

Winners of the Bat Conservation Ireland Special Award

| | Tidy Town |
|----|------------------|
| 1. | Castlefinn |
| 2. | Gort |
| 3. | Labashida |
| 4. | Sneem |

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Citizen Scientist Bat Surveyors

The All-Ireland Bat Monitoring Programme, relies on volunteers to complete surveys, where we train volunteers and give them the skills to carry out surveys on 3 of the 4 schemes managed by Bat Conservation Ireland. Without volunteers, we could not monitor Ireland's bat populations or map their distribution. We are greatly in debt to Irish citizen scientists who gladly give up their time to complete surveys. In any given summer season there can be up to 600 volunteers participating in the numerous schemes we manage. In 2022, 460 volunteers contributed their time and skill to participate in the All Ireland Bat Monitoring Programme, which was an increase of 36 on 2021.



CBM Surveyors

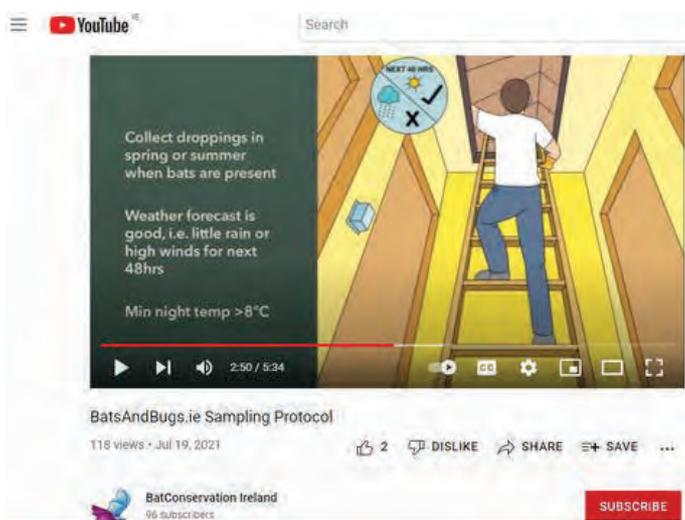
Training is provided for volunteers in a tiered manner, allowing volunteers to participate in schemes according to their level of expertise. Participation in the All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey is the first step for novice volunteers whereby, once completed, each surveyor can identify one species of bat, Daubenton's bat, in flight over waterways. Training consists of an evening lecture followed by field work after dusk.

Once surveyors have expressed an interest in further developing their skills they can participate in training and workshops for other monitoring schemes. Volunteers are also encouraged to join their local bat group to gain further experience. In 2022, training courses were primarily carried out online, which helps the environment.

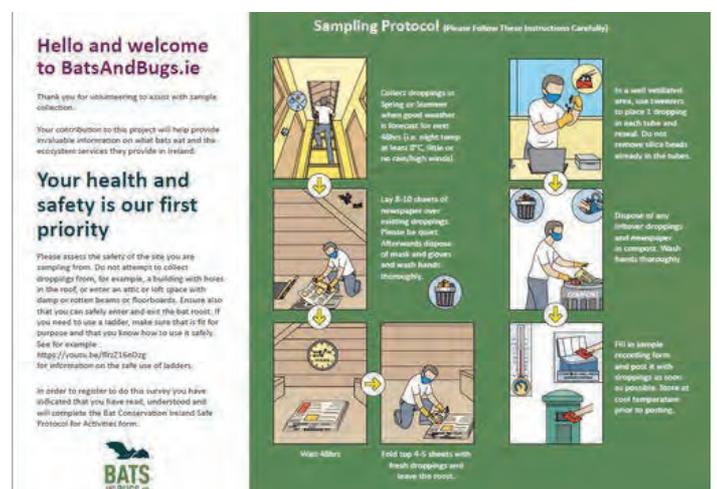
COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Citizen Scientist Bat Surveyors

An additional recruitment drive was carried out in 2022 seeking citizen scientists who have access to bat roosts. These individuals were asked to sign up to participate in the Bats and Bugs project (see page 55 for more details). The participants were provided with detailed instructions on how to carry out the survey via a Youtube video as well as an instructional leaflet. Each participant was provided with the tools needed to collect bat droppings and send them to UCD for analysis. 156 new volunteers signed up to the project which is ongoing and will be completed in 2023.



YouTube Video on how to carry out a bat roost survey as part of the Bats and Bugs Project



Instruction Leaflet on how to carry out a bat roost survey as part of the Bats and Bugs Project

CONSERVATION

Irish Bat Monitoring Programme

Bat Conservation Ireland's main objective is *the advancement of education and the promotion of the conservation and study of bats on the island of Ireland and elsewhere in the world*. As part of this objective, we monitor Ireland's bats to see how their populations are doing, e.g. are populations increasing, decreasing, or remaining stable. Regular monitoring is the key to picking up any declining (or increasing) trends, which are in turn, important in forming conservation policy and management on a nationwide and EU level. Bat Conservation Ireland manages four monitoring schemes to track trends in bat populations as follows:

1. Car-Based Monitoring;
2. The All-Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey;
3. Brown Long-Eared Bat Roost Monitoring;
4. Lesser Horseshoe Bat Roost Monitoring

Car-Based Monitoring

Despite high levels of legal protection for all species, until 2003 there was no systematic monitoring of any species apart from the lesser horseshoe bat in Ireland. To redress this imbalance, The Car-based Bat Monitoring Scheme was first piloted in 2003 and targets the two most abundant pipistrelle species (common and soprano pipistrelles) and Leisler's bat. These species are relatively easy to detect and distinguish from each other on the basis of echolocation calls. The car-based survey makes use of a full spectrum bat detector, which picks up a range of ultrasound that can be recorded in the field and analysed post-survey. This method allows survey work to be carried out by individuals with little or no experience in bat identification since identification is completed post survey work. Nonetheless, all surveyors are fully trained in carrying out the survey method, which can be tricky to implement initially, and are provided with a full set of equipment in order to complete the survey. In this way, results are standardised across the island of Ireland.

CONSERVATION

Summary of the Car Based Monitoring Scheme 2022

For the Car-Based Bat Monitoring Scheme 61 individuals participated in surveys of all 28 squares around the island. Online training courses were provided in 2022 for seven new teams, and revision training was provided to one team, also via Zoom. Fifty-five surveys were carried out, but due to some technical problems, data from 47, all of which had >12 completed transects, were available to include in the dataset. In total 10,220 bat passes were recorded, 46% of which were common pipistrelles. The soprano pipistrelle was second most frequently recorded bat species and Leisler's the third most common.

Trends of some species continued to increase in 2022, although the yearly estimates of common pipistrelle levelled out a little. Confidence intervals of the three target species, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and Leisler's bats were all above their baseline indices indicating they each show a significantly increasing trend. Nathusius' pipistrelle trends are still unclear but decreased a little in 2022, whilst the brown long-eared roadside trend in 2022 was reasonably stable. Numbers of observations of both these species are extremely low using the car-based method, leading to wide error bars.

The yearly estimate for the *Myotis* spp. group steadied out a little but overall the smoothed trend for this group is still well below the baseline. While this method records relatively few of these species every year, since 2015 there has been a decrease and narrowing of confidence intervals that suggests observed declines are consistent across many sites..



CONSERVATION

The All-Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey

This scheme follows a survey methodology devised by Bat Conservation Trust (BCT UK). Narrow band, heterodyne detectors are used so volunteers who conduct the survey are trained in the identification of Daubenton's bat prior to field work. Surveyors count the number 'bat passes' of this bat species for 4 minutes at each of the ten fixed points on linear waterways. The onset of this scheme was a very significant development in bat monitoring here, since it represented the first large-scale recruitment of members of the Irish public to bat conservation-related work.

Summary of the All-Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey 2022

Training courses were carried out online as part of the All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterway Monitoring Scheme in 2022. A total of 164 potential new volunteer teams registered in 2022 to participated in the monitoring survey. These volunteers were invited to attend one of the Zoom training sessions and 111 people registered to receive training. Five live Zoom sessions were organised for volunteers to participate in on the following dates: 12th, 14th, 16th, 19th and 21st July 2022.

Two hundred and forty-three waterway sites were surveyed by 197 teams in 2022, 241 of which were returned in time for statistical analysis. Of these 243 sites, 196 (81%) were surveyed twice in the month of August. 19,334 'Sure' Daubenton's bat passes were recorded on 218 waterway sites (90%). Twenty-seven waterways sites were located in Northern Ireland and 216 in the Republic of Ireland. Waterway sites surveyed in 2022 were distributed throughout the island with every county on the island of Ireland represented. The highest number of waterway sites surveyed in 2022 were located in County Cork (n=25 waterway sites), Co. Dublin (n= 24 waterway sites) and Co. Kildare (n=19 waterway sites).

In 2022 'Sure' Daubenton's bat passes were recorded on 218 waterway sites (90%). All-Island Daubenton's bat numbers trend line appears to be fairly steady from year to year with error bars consistently encompassing the baseline.

CONSERVATION

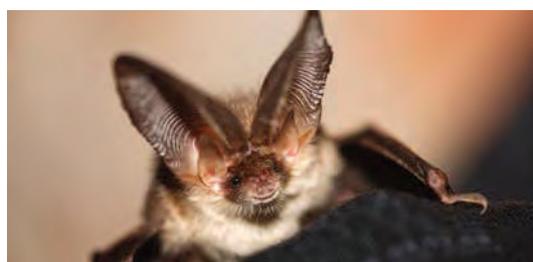
Brown Long-eared Bat Roost Monitoring Scheme

More recently, in 2007, the Brown Long-eared Bat Roost Monitoring Scheme was piloted and established. This project concentrates on counts of brown long-eared bats at their roosts and is conducted by individuals with a greater level of experience in bat identification than is necessary for the waterway surveys or car-based surveys.

The roost survey protocol involves at least two counts per annum (mid-May to August) using three potential survey methods depending on the structure, access and location of bats within, and emerging from, the roost.

Summary of Brown Long-eared Roost Monitoring 2022

For Brown Long-eared Roost Monitoring, 41 volunteers participated in 2022, which included three roost owners. Volunteers provided count data for 26 roost sites while an additional 4 roosts were surveyed by volunteer teams assisting the scheme co-ordinator. In total, 131 monitoring surveys were carried at 46 roosts. Using the highest results for each roost monitored in 2022, the total number of brown long-eared bats counted was 1,789 individuals, the third highest number of individuals counted since the scheme started. Results from a GAM model indicates that there was an increase from 2008 followed by a fluctuating trend above the baseline since 2010. While the index is currently above the baseline value for 2008, there has been a very slight downward trend of the smoothed trend since 2017 or thereabouts. Nonetheless, the error bars encompass the baseline so the population is, overall, considered to be stable.



CONSERVATION

Lesser Horseshoe Bat Monitoring Programme

In 2013 Bat Conservation Ireland won a contract with NPWS to manage and administer the Lesser Horseshoe Bat Monitoring database (managed by Dr. Niamh Roche). This involves liaising with local National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Vincent Wildlife Trust (VWT) staff who conduct counts at lesser horseshoe bat sites in the west of Ireland in summer and in winter. Bat Conservation Ireland gathers the data, ensures it is entered into the database and carries out trend and other analysis on it.

Summary of Lesser Horseshoe Bat Monitoring 2021

NPWS and VWT regional staff forwarded results from 254 counts at 95 lesser horseshoe bat sites in winter 2022 and 124 sites in summer 2022.

In winter 2022 5,761 bats were counted and over 13,000 bats were counted in summer 2022. From 2012 onwards there has been excellent consistency in counts at lesser horseshoe sites, which improves the robustness of the monitoring dataset.

Over the past 20 years this species has increased in winter by an average of 2.4% per annum. Summer trends mirror this, albeit more steeply (3.2% per annum since 2003). Some low counts in winter 2022 pulled the trend line downwards but this may change with the coming year's data.



CONSERVATION

Woodland Pilot Monitoring Scheme

There is currently no standardized monitoring scheme in Ireland to track trends in whiskered bats (*Myotis mystacinus*) or Natterer's bats (*M. nattereri*).

A number of studies have been undertaken to determine the feasibility of different approaches and in collaboration with Bat Conservation Trust, UK, a new woodland survey was piloted in 2021. The purpose of this pilot was to determine whether AudioMoths are a suitable tool to monitor Irish woodland bat species.

Eleven woodlands were surveyed using AMs in 2021, nine of which were previously surveyed in the 2016/2017 Woodland Survey. A total of 49 nights of surveying were completed by eight survey teams ranging from 2 to 5 survey nights per woodland. The two new woodlands are Deerpark Woodland, Co. Cavan and Glengarriff Nature Reserve, Co. Cork.

In 2022, trials were undertaken in October to determine the "best" full spectrum detector to use for woodland walking transect surveys. This was coupled with static surveillance. These Autumn Trials were undertaken in preparation for a 2023 Pilot Woodland Survey grant application, which will be submitted in Spring 2023.



Natterer's bat hibernating © Paul van Hoof



Whiskered bat hibernating © Paul van Hoof

CONSERVATION

Bats and Heritage Structures

At the start of the year, we received a grant from The Heritage Council for a project “Heritage Structures and Bats: Protecting Bats during Management, Restoration and Maintenance Works at Heritage Sites”. This involved a new departure for us, working with a small film crew from GK Media on location in County Galway and interviewing professionals in order to form a narrative framework. We had great cooperation from staff at the Heritage Council, the OPW, the NPWS, National Trust Northern Ireland, Thor Ballylee, and TRIUR Construction. We also applied-for and received, a licence to film on location at bat roosts from the NPWS for the months of July and August 2022. Filming took place at Claregalway, Thor Ballylee and Craughwell, Co. Galway in August 2022.

During Heritage Week 2022 we advertised the project with a Facebook post and YouTube Project Overview - www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0NKjxZ8SHrshP3vBizxHyiVC1jCXqKWHWHHWuS3VNIMobqXFwQ9wXDAzN7k58CTLqI&id=232836321981. The Facebook post reached 1322 people, there were 68 engagements and it was shared 17 times during Heritage Week. The YouTube short video about the project was viewed 43 times. www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7r1gqu-UrM.



A still taken from the film made



Interview with Colm Riordan, TRIUR

CONSERVATION

Bats and Heritage Structures

The video piece was edited throughout September. The final edit was uploaded to YouTube in October, where it is available for public viewing: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNR5c2Xtv9M and has been viewed 135 times. A BCIreland Facebook post launching the video was liked by 38 individuals and shared 23 times.

We then organised a workshop on the topic to be held on October 19th 2022 with presentations from Niamh Roche and Tina Aughney of Bat Conservation Ireland as well as Fergal McNamara of 7L Architects. The Irish Planning Institute offered 2 CPD points to its members who attended the course and it was also advertised by Engineering Ireland.

This workshop was provided free of charge to participants. It covered a basic introduction to Irish Bats and their ecology and lifecycles. This was followed by a presentation on bat surveys and bat mitigation measures, and then a talk by conservation architect Fergal McNamara on structural conservation works carried out on a Norman Tower House where bats were present. We finished up with a Q&A and discussion session. The workshop was fully subscribed beforehand with 50 people registered to attend. In the event we had very positive feedback from those who attended.

We reported back successfully to the Heritage Council in December 2022 on this project.



CONSERVATION

Bat Conservation Ireland - Small Grants Scheme 2022

In early 2022, we relaunched the Bat Conservation Ireland Small Grants Scheme, which helps fund education, conservation and research projects around the country.

The closing date for applications was 2 March 2022 and grantees were notified of the status of the applications in April 2022.

In all 12 applications were received, 8 projects were successful, 2 projects withdrew their interest and 2 projects did not progress their application.

By the end of 2022 4 projects were completed, with 4 projects being given extensions into 2023.

The Projects completed are as follows:

| | Project |
|----|---|
| 1. | Series of educational workshops to be held in schools on bats and building bat boxes. |
| 2. | Running 4 bat talk/walk events at Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford |
| 3. | DNA Analysis of bats and bugs |
| 4. | Bats on Campus Project, University of Galway |

Once all of the project are completed, a detailed report of the projects and their outcomes will be published and made available.

COLLABORATION

Working with Other Groups

Bat Conservation Ireland has long-standing working relationships and collaborations with key groups working across the environmental sector.

Irish Environmental Pillar

Bat Conservation Ireland has been a long-standing member of the Irish Environmental Network (IEN) and has dedicated representative on the Environmental Pillar. Niamh Roche took up the mantle as Bat Conservation Ireland's representative on the Environmental Pillar.

In 2022, the following work was carried out in this capacity:

Meetings Attended:

- Environmental Pillar Meetings
- Irish Environment Workshop on Cross Border Cooperation
- Environmental Pillar Plenaries
- Initial Meeting on Citizens' Assembly Biodiversity Loss
- IEN Meeting with EPA
- IEN Gathering Cloughjordan

Additionally, the following Policy Submissions were made:

- Submission on National Biodiversity Action Plan
- Submissions on Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity



IEN



**Irish
Environmental
Network**

COLLABORATION

Submission to Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity

The Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss is comprised of 99, randomly selected, members of the public and an independent Chairperson (Dr Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin) who are considering how the State can improve its response to the issue of biodiversity loss.

The Assembly was in session throughout 2022 and its fourth meeting took place at the end of November. In September, Bat Conservation Ireland made a submission to the Citizens' Assembly, highlighting some threats to bats and suggesting some ways we think these can be addressed. The submission is available to view on our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@batconservationireland7039>).

Fionn Keeley also produced a short animation on behalf of Bat Conservation Ireland and Green Foundation Ireland on Bats and Street Lighting to help inform the assembly members of how street lighting can affect bats. This animation can be viewed here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0WnUohvTe0>.



[WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=S0WnUohvTe0&T=4S](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0WnUohvTe0&T=4S)



COLLABORATION

Bat Life Europe



Bat Conservation Ireland is also a member of Bat Life Europe, an international non-governmental conservation organisation, built from a partnership of national bat conservation organisations that are committed to promoting the conservation of all bat species and their habitats throughout Europe. Bat Conservation Ireland has a nominated Trustee to represent Irish interests in this capacity, Brian Keeley. Brian is the former Chair of Bat Conservation Ireland and as an independent bat expert, has extensive experience in this area. He has attended virtual meetings as Bat Conservation Ireland's rep in 2022.

Collaborative work carried out in 2022:

- National Council for the Blind of Ireland – gave a talk on behalf of the Heritage Council
- Hedgerows Ireland – provided them with our new leaflet publication and shared social media campaigns
- Vincent Wildlife Trust – data sharing, Lesser Horseshoe Bat Species Action Plan
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – liaising with individual staff and with research unit, Lesser Horseshoe Bat Species Action Plan
- Irish Planning Institute – they awarded our Bats and Heritage Structures seminar 2 CPD points and advertised the seminar to their membership
- OPW – contributed staff time and resources to our video on Bats and Heritage Structures, OPW staff attended our training seminar
- National Trust, Northern Ireland – they contributed to our video on Bats and Heritage Structures
- University College Dublin, BatLab – continued project on Bats and Bugs with staff and students there
- CEDaR, Northern Ireland – provided data from monitoring schemes in Northern Ireland and met with staff to discuss moving monitoring schemes forward in Northern Ireland
- Bat Conservation Trust – liaised with BCT on woodland monitoring project and met with staff to discuss future woodland monitoring proposals for Ireland.

COLLABORATION

We have long-term collaborations with the following organisations:

- An Taisce
- Bat Conservation Trust UK
- CEDaR, NI
- Environmental Pillar, IEN
- EUROBATS
- The Heritage Council
- Local Men's Sheds
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC)
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)
- Northern Ireland Bat Group
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Teagasc
- The Bat Lab, UCD
- Tidy Towns Groups
- Vincent Wildlife Trust



RESEARCH

Nathusius Pipistrelle Research Group

Nathusius' Pipistrelle Research Group received an NPWS Small Recorders Grant in 2022 to undertake research into the distribution of this species of bat in County Cavan. A total of fifty locations were surveyed using AudioMoths while three trapping nights were undertaken. Four individuals were ringed and biometric data was collected. Nathusius' pipistrelle favours the larger lakes or lake complexes in County Cavan. But overall, the bat species is distributed widely across the county but in a less encounter rate in the south and east of the county. AudioMoths proved to be a suitable static unit to sample the bat activity levels and presence of this species of bat species. As a cheap static unit, it is a cost effective unit to sample large areas over a short period of time.

Cavan Bat Group will be returning to locations within the Lough Oughter Complex, White Lough and Lough Gowna in 2023 to undertake trapping sessions to potentially capture and ring further Nathusius' pipistrelles. Future survey work may entail a radio tracking survey to locate potential roosting sites. This should be targeted in the Lough Oughter Complex initially.



Photograph of Nathusius's Pipistrelle (under licence held by T. Aughney)

Research Collaboration with UCD

Bat Conservation Ireland has been working in collaboration with Prof. Emma Teeling at the Bat Lab in UCD since 2019, to develop the framework for an Ecosystems Services Research project.

The overall aim is to determine the role that bats play in Ecosystems Services. In other words, what insects do bats consume and how does that help maintain a healthy and diverse environment as well as provide a service for food production, for example as an alternative to controlling pests using pesticides?

A project to examine this topic was awarded funding (2/3 funding) by the Community Foundation for Ireland with project partners the National Biodiversity Data Centre and University College Dublin in late 2020. There were two planned stages to the project in 2021 – one to develop a field guide to Ireland’s bats and the second to set up a website and recruit volunteers to send samples of bat droppings to UCD using a specific protocol and sampling kit.

Following on from the successful launch of the project in 2021 and publication of the new field guide to identify Irish bats in December 2021, we continued the project in 2022. We started in May 2022 with a new media campaign to particularly target counties and areas of the country where we had received few or no samples to that point. We also redesigned the instruction manual to allow for collection of droppings from outside roosts. In 2022, 156 new volunteers came on board and were sent sampling packs to safely collect droppings from roosts. In total, by the end of 2022, we had received 119 samples from volunteers across the island. UCD worked on refining the DNA metabarcoding techniques in the lab in order to carry out the analysis. Preliminary results by the end of 2022 showed that 6 bat species had been sampled and hundreds of species of invertebrate had been consumed by them. We also reprinted the field guide due to the large number of sales. We also put out an RFT to an animation firm to commission a piece to explain the project and its results.

Research Collaboration with UCD

By the end of 2022 we had appointed WhiteNoise Studios in Belfast to carry out this work and had written the script for the piece.

The final elements of this project will be completed in the first half of 2023.



Volunteer Bat Surveyors



Home Page of Bats and Bugs Website

RESEARCH

COST Action Network: Climbats

Climbats is an EU Action Network funded by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) which aims to bring together bat researchers, academics, NGOs and others to examine how climate change affects bat distribution in Europe and how this is likely to impact on the ecosystem services that they provide. Climbats is made up of 3 different working groups, with each group having a main objective as follows:



1. Define, predict and quantify the effects of climate change on bats across Europe (Working Group 1);
2. Establish strategies to develop a network to monitor and predict changes in bat distribution and inform future management and policy (Working Group 2);
3. Evaluate the effects of climate change on insect consumption provided by bats in farmland (Working Group 3).

Bat Conservation is represented on this network by Niamh Roche who joined the Management Committee in 2020. Niamh also continues to represent Bat Conservation Ireland on Working Group 2 on Bat Monitoring, having a wealth of experience in running 2 All-Ireland bat monitoring programmes over 18 and 8 years respectively. As part of the action, Bat Conservation Ireland has already contributed over 40,000 Irish bat records and these data, along with thousands of other bat records from across Europe, will enable modelling of bat occurrence and climate.

In 2022, Niamh attended 4 Meetings. which amounted to 17 hours invested in this initiative. One of these meetings was attended in person over 2-day period, giving the opportunity for networking and discussing areas of mutual interest outside of the formal meeting structure.

RESEARCH

Research Papers

Report prepared for NPWS by the Nathusius' Pipistrelle Working Group in conjunction with Cavan Bat Group

Title: *'An investigation into the distribution of Nathusius' pipistrelle on lakes in County Cavan using Audio Moths'*.

Authors: Tina Aughney, Chris Liu, Katarina McNabb & Ben Quinn.



FUTURE PLANS

Bat Conservation Ireland's plans for 2023 and beyond are as follows:

Organisational Structure

- In 2021, Bat Conservation Ireland developed a new Strategic Plan for the years 2022-2025. Bat Conservation Ireland is committed to start realising the work of this plan in 2022;
- In 2021, Bat Conservation Ireland formally reported to the Charities Regulator on our compliance the Governance Code. In 2023, we will review our governance policies and procedures and continue working on ensuring compliance with the code and our commitment to developing and implementing good governance;
- Following on from the affiliation with Bat Conservation Ireland in 2020, the Bat Groups met compliance by providing reports on their activities in 2021. We will continue to liaise with the bat groups, provide administrative support and advice necessary to help them meet compliance requirements.

Conservation Work

- As we won the tender for monitoring for Irish Bat Monitoring Programme (2022-2022), we intend to meet the requirements of this tender through the 5 year period;
- We will report on the Ecosystems Services Project on completion of the project to Community Foundation for Ireland as we requested an extension of this project to continue throughout 2022;
- Look to apply for funding and build an online training platform to provide training on bat surveying and different aspects of conservation to fill a gap in training provision and free up resources currently carrying out in-person training;
- Evaluate our our small grants scheme and relaunch it in 2024 using reserve monies, to support the work of small, volunteer and community-led conservation work around the country;
- Recruit a Bat Ecologist to support and develop our work in our monitoring schemes and develop and support other conservation work.

FUTURE PLANS

- Bat Conservation Ireland will continue it's work of educating the general public about the importance of bats for a healthy environment in the following ways:
 - Continue to deal with queries submitted through our website;
 - By maintaining and updating our 2 websites - www.batconservationireland.org and www.learnaboutbats.org;
 - Carrying out an interim upgrade of our main website www.batconservationireland.org to ensure it is user friendly and provides updated and relevant information;
 - Conduct bat walks and talks, centrally through Bat Conservation Ireland staff and through the county bat groups around the country;
 - Carry out training (either in person or online) for members, the general public, ecologists, NPWS staff, students, bat rehabbers and anyone with an interest in learning more about bats, or in upskilling people in specific areas;
 - Rerun our training course, 'An Introduction to the World of Bats' to train/upskill those working or volunteering in the area of bat conservation/bat surveys;
 - Carry out educational activities during Biodiversity Week and Heritage Week for the general public;
 - Maintain and update our social media platforms, to help engage and educate the general public about bats;

Community Engagement

- Provide support for bat groups for their work in running bat walks and talks and educational events and conservation projects in their local communities;
- Consider supporting another Tidy Towns Special Award to help reach different audiences and educate them on bats and bat conservation;
- Help support Tidy Towns on projects such as our bat box scheme, to ensure there is wide coverage of these conservation projects;

Collaboration

- Continue engaging with the Environmental Pillar, to ensure that bat issues are well represented at national level;
- Continue to work with Bat Life Europe through our representative appointed, to ensure that issues around Irish bats are well represented at European Level;

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue working with national environmental organisations around the country to ensure that bat issues receive good exposure;

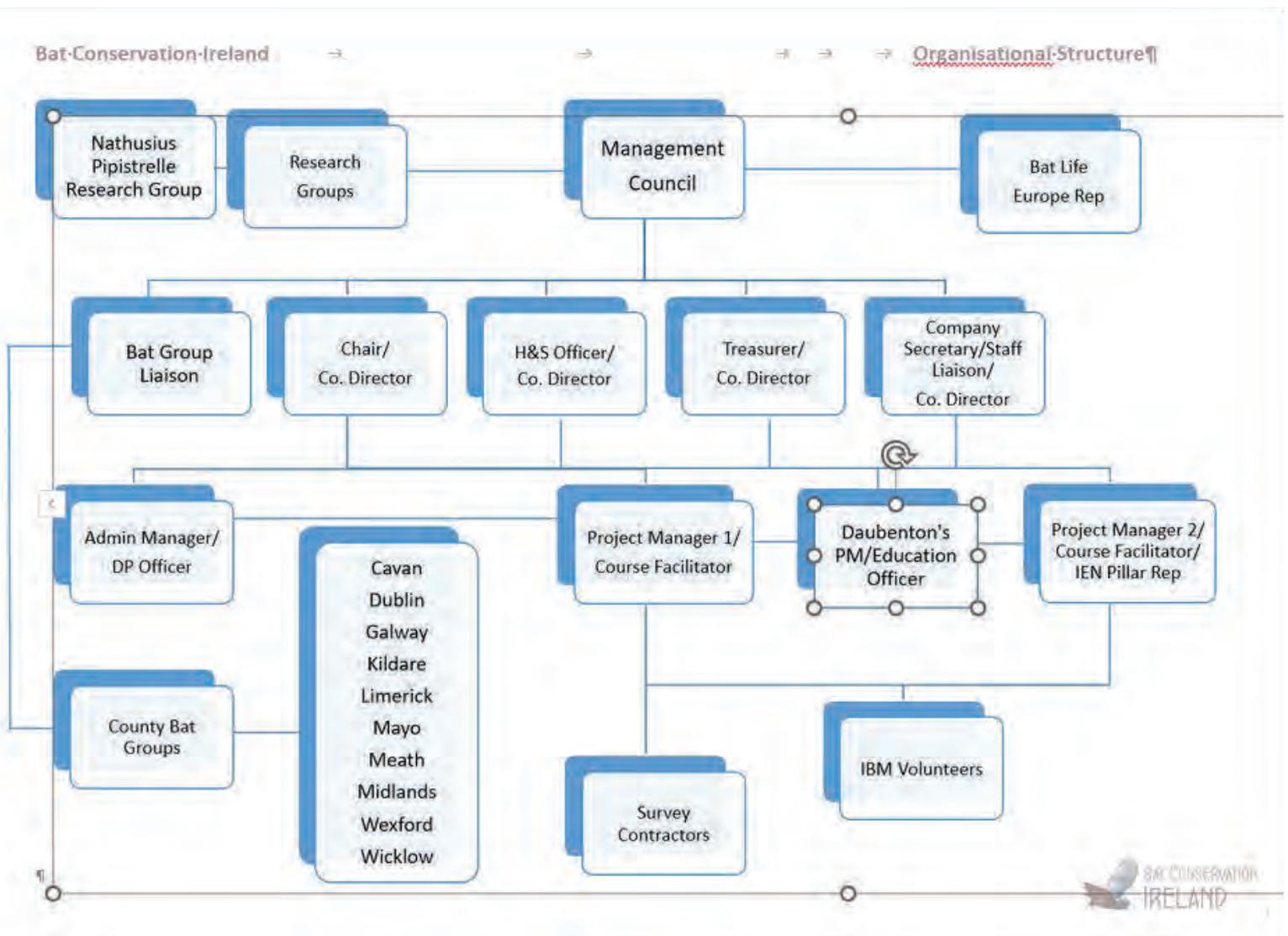
Data Research

- Ensure that data is uploaded to our database housing bat records to ensure it is accurate and up to date;
- Liaise with NBDC around housing of bat records and feed data into their database repositories;
- Continue participating in research collaborations such as COST Action Network: Climbats and UCD on the Ecosystems Services Project;
- Continue with research and contributing to research publications.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Bat Conservation Ireland is a non-governmental organisation with charitable status. We are a membership organisation, with a governing Council (currently comprised of 9 Council members) and a small, paid part-time staff. We have 10 bat groups at various stages of development, around the country. Our current organisational structure is laid out in the matrix below.



STAFF

Bat Conservation Ireland currently has 3 paid part-time staff members.

Tina Aughney

Tina has managed the All-Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey since 2006 and the Brown Long-eared Bat Monitoring Scheme since 2007. She works for Bat Conservation Ireland on a part time basis.



Under Tina's management, the All-Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey has developed into a monitoring scheme with a large and committed volunteer base. By liaising on a county level with local authorities and community groups, promoting the project with local press and radio stations, and presenting training courses throughout the island, Tina has trained in excess of 2,000 volunteers since 2006. This scheme continues to thrive with over 400 waterway sites surveyed across the island providing extensive information on the distribution of this species.

Tina has an honours degree in Environmental Science from NUI Galway and completed a Ph.D. thesis on the impact of the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) on lowland farm habitats in the west of Ireland. For her extensive work in relation to bats and facilitating members of the public to become actively involved in the conservation of Irish bat species, Tina was awarded Distinguished Recorder of the Year 2011 by the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

She is an active active collector of biodiversity data that is regularly submitted to National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC).

STAFF

Aideen Kane

Aideen Kane joined Bat Conservation Ireland in the role of Education Officer and Project Manager of the All-Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey in May 2022. She works for Bat Conservation Ireland on a part time basis.



Aideen has extensive experience working in environmental education, working most recently for Inland Fisheries Ireland as Education and outreach coordinator.

She is a Co-Founder and former Director of "Cork Nature Network", an NGO based in Cork where she held the role of Social Media officer. Prior to that she spent a number of years working in research within the marine sector.

She has a Masters in Marine Biology from UCC, an Honours Degree in Freshwater and Marine Biology from GMIT and a Degree in Physics and Instrumentation from GMIT.

She is keen naturalist and spends much of her spare time in nature with her dog. she also enjoys traveling as well as cooking and previously trained as a chef.

Long driven by a genuine fascination with nature, Aideen is enthusiastic to join Bat Conservation Ireland in their work to protect and expand existing bat populations and to develop a widespread understanding and appreciation of bats amongst the public, state agencies and other organisations.

STAFF

Dawn Quinn

Dawn joined Bat Conversation Ireland in 2019 as its part-time Administration Manager. She has over 20 years' administrative and financial experience, working in both the private and NGO sectors.



Dawn has worked in variety of different roles including managing and implementing administrative systems, volunteer management, project and network coordination and event management in the human rights, social justice and international development sectors.

She holds an honours degree in Audio Visual Communications from the Institute of Technology Tallaght and a Master's Degree in Comparative Ethnic Conflict from Queen's University Belfast

STAFF

Niamh Roche

Niamh has managed the Car-based Bat Monitoring Scheme since 2004 and the Lesser Horseshoe Bat Roost Monitoring Scheme since 2012. She works for Bat Conservation Ireland on a part time basis.



Under her direction, the car-based scheme has grown from a pilot project covering fewer than 10 survey squares, to an island-wide survey with a committed surveyor base. She has also presented Bat Conservation Ireland's work at national and international conferences. She was lead author of the book *Irish Bats in the 21st Century*. Niamh has also been the main organiser of several national bat conferences. More recently Niamh has been involved in analysing long-term bat trend datasets collected by Bat Conservation Ireland monitoring schemes to see if predictions can be made about how they are likely to change with future climate change.

Niamh represents Bat Conservation Ireland on the Management Committee of the EU Cost Network Project on Bats and Climate Change. Niamh also represents Bat Conservation Ireland on the Environmental Pillar.

She has a degree in Environmental Biology from UCD and a Ph.D. from the University of Warwick, which examined bat activity in broadleaved woodlands

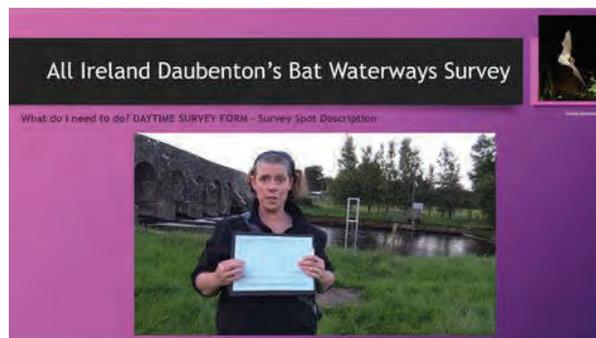
VOLUNTEERS

In any given year, Bat Conservation Ireland could have 600 volunteers helping us achieve our goal of 'the advancement of education and the promotion of the conservation and study of bats on the island of Ireland and elsewhere in the world'.

Our volunteers are critical to our work and we could not achieve our goals without them.

Volunteers work across key areas as follows:

- Education - conducting bat walks and talks around the country
- Bat Monitoring - carrying out bat surveys for the Car-based Monitoring Scheme, the All Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey and the Brown Long-Eared Bat Roost Monitoring and more recently the Woodland Pilot Monitoring Project
- Community Engagement - Liaising with other Community groups such as Tidy Towns and Men's Shed for our Bat Box scheme



Irish Bat Monitoring Programme Video 2 Waterways Survey



MEMBERSHIP

Bat Conservation Ireland is a membership organisation that greatly values its members and volunteers, both of whom are vital to the work of conserving Ireland's bat populations. Many of our members participate in activities such as our national monitoring programmes, which are carried out annually.

We would like to sincerely thank all of our members and volunteers for their kind and generous support in 2022.

Volunteers with Bat Conservation Ireland play a key role in supporting the work of the bat monitoring projects carried out annually. In 2022, there was a significant jump in members on previous years up to 293 paid members of Bat Conservation Ireland. As we are very active around the country in any given year, carrying out bat walks and talks, participating in events and educational activities, this helps with encouraging new members to join. In 2022, we were able to get back out to pre-Covid usual activities, which could be attributed to the increase in membership.

In order to ensure that membership fees are processed in an efficient manner and decrease staff dealing with cash and cheque payments, we have an online recurring membership payments system which allows annual membership fees to be automatically renewed, thereby decreasing the amount of administrative time spent on following up on payments.

**Bat Conservation Ireland
would like to thank all of our
members and volunteers for
their invaluable support.**

Financial Summary

Income

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Irish Bat Monitoring Programme (NPWS & NIEA) | 152,434 |
| Woodland Pilot Monitoring Scheme | - |
| Core Funding (IEN - Dept. of the Environment, Climate & Communications) | 37,486 |
| IEN - Biodiversity Week | 2,400 |
| Membership and Donations | 8,086 |
| Sales of Merchandise and Training Courses | 9,151 |
| Heritage Council | 14,057 |
| Bat Group Projects | 12,520 |
| Other Funding (IEN) | 3,249 |
| Project Monies Deferred | 24,188 |
| UCD-NPWS Research Project | 1,200 |
| Community Foundation for Ireland Project | |
| | 264,771 |

Expenditure

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Irish Bat Monitoring Programme | 20,021 |
| Once-off Projects | 10,370 |
| Woodland Pilot Monitoring Scheme | 651 |
| Ecosystems Services Project | 6,854 |
| Biodiversity Week 2021 | 1,600 |
| BCIreland Grants | 3,000 |
| Bat Group Projects | 8,046 |
| IEN Other Funding | 2,152 |
| Bat Workshops/Courses/Walks | 856 |

Core Costs

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Wages and Salaries | 75,848 |
| Social Welfare Costs | 7,663 |
| Staff defined pension costs | 1,412 |
| Staff Training | - |
| Management Expenses | 2,095 |
| Insurance | 6,534 |
| Printing, Postage & Stationery | 1,985 |
| Computer Costs | 4,764 |
| Motor Expenses | 185 |
| Professional Consultancy | 664 |
| Bank Charges | 346 |
| Bad Debts | - |
| General Expenses | 933 |
| Subscriptions | 135 |
| Auditor's Remuneration | 4,202 |
| Depreciation | 608 |
| Charitable donations | 4,000 |

Net Surplus*

164,924
99,847

*Net Surplus funds will form part of our reserve funds, intended to be used to fund BCIreland Small Grants Scheme and longer-term conservation projects
2022 Annual Report and Financial Statements were properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland"

Our full audited accounts for 2022 are available on our website.

IN 2022

National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Purpose: Irish Bat Monitoring Programme

Contract Term: 4 years (2018-2022)

Total Value of Contract: €323,000

National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Purpose: Irish Bat Monitoring Programme

Contract Term: 5 years (2022-2027)

Total Value of Contract: €536,866

Community Foundation for Ireland - Environment and Nature Fund

Purpose: Ecosystems Services Project

Grant Term: Carried over into 2022

Total Value of Funding: €46,446

Irish Environmental Network - IEN, on behalf of Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Purpose: Core Funding

Grant Term: 2022-2023

Total Value of Funding: €37,486

Northern Ireland Environmental Agency (Natural Environmental Division) Bat Monitoring in Northern Ireland (Irish Bat Monitoring Programme)

Purpose: National Bat Distribution Project

Grant Term: 2021-2022

Total Value of Funding: €9,693

IN 2022

The Heritage Council, Capacity Building Fund

Purpose: Bats and Heritage Structures

Grant Term: 2022

Total Value of Funding: €14,057

National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Purpose: To collect and input bat data to the bat records database

Grant Term: 2022

Total Value of Funding: €5,000



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



**Bat Conservation
Ireland would like to
thank our partners and
funders for their
financial assistance**

Bat Conservation Ireland
Registered Address:
Carmichael Centre
4-7 North Brunswick Street
Dublin 7.

E-mail: admin@batconservationireland.org
www.batconservationireland.org



Registered Number: 494343
Charity Number: 13016
Charity Registration Number: 20039417

