BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT
2025



Bat Conservation Ireland

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







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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.

Mission

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 2025 were:

Co Chair: John Curtin	Jason Guile (Co-Opted)
Co Chair: Caroline Shiel	Ruth Hanniffy
Treasurer: Eimear Barrett (Co-Opted)	Oisin O'Sullivan
Company Secretary: Brian Keeley	Chris Peppiatt
Emma Boston	

Charity No: 13016	**Charity Registered No:** 20039417
Tax Reference No: 9781345A	**Tax Clearance No:** 553662
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 Charites Governance Code issued by the Charites Regulator. It reported on its compliance with the code formally as required by the regulator in October 2025.


John Curtin

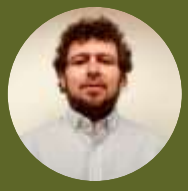

Caroline Shiel


Chris Peppiatt


Brian Keeley


Eimear Barrett


Emma Boston


Jason Guile


Ruth Hanniffy


Oisin O'Sullivan

SNAPSHOT OF 2025

CONSERVATION

- 5 Monitoring Schemes
- 615 Volunteers
- 936 Surveys completed

EDUCATION

- 366 Queries Answered
- 146,500 website page views

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 14 active bat groups;
- 20,325 followers on social media

RESEARCH & DATA

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



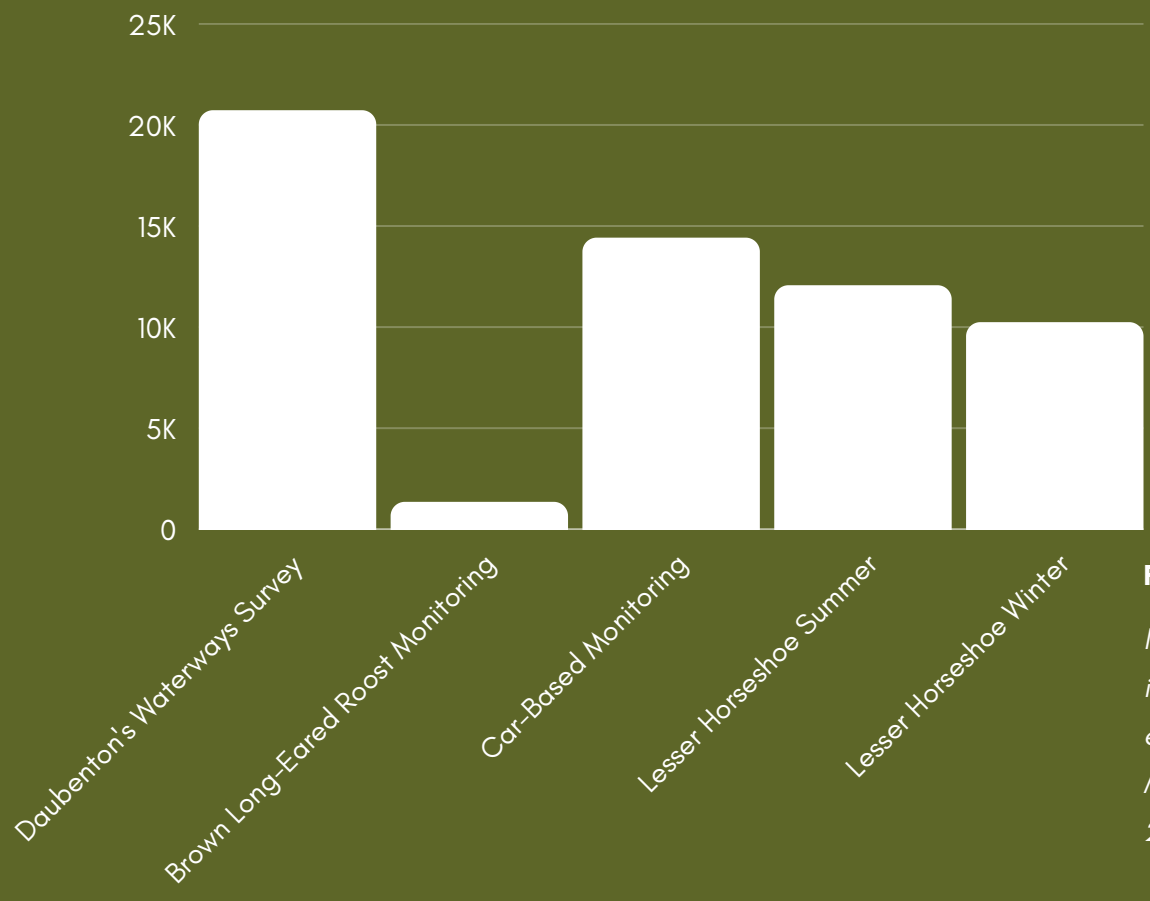


FIGURE 1.

Number of bat passes or individual bats counted by each scheme of the Irish Bat Monitoring Programme in 2025

Main Objectives pursued and achieved during 2025

education

conservation

community engagement

research

collaboration

EDUCATION

Ireland is currently 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 4 websites:
  - Bat Conservation Ireland - www.batconservationireland.org
  - Learn About Bats - www.learnaboutbats.com
  - Bats and Bugs - www.batsandbugs.ie
  - Online Training Platform - https://training.batconservationireland.org/
- 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 2025 staff dealt with approximately 366 queries; 303 by e-mail through our website and 63 through our Social Media pages.

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 information about the organisation and what we do, as well as 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: 140,000
First Time Visitors: 42,000
Bat Sightings Submitted: 226



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 2025, for Learn About Bats are as follows:

Page Views: 6,500

First Time Visitors: 2,300

EDUCATION

Online Presence - Social Media

Bat Conservation Ireland's engaged on 4 social media platforms in 2025 - Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter). Facebook and Instagram provide us with the opportunity to engage more on a community level, with members, supporters and across our 11 bat groups. In 2025, we created a LinkedIn Account to connect on a more professional level with the science-based community and share more of our research projects, data and papers. We ran 3 very successful social media campagins over the course of the year, to help increase knowledge of bats:

- 'Managing Hedgerows for Bats' as part of our community engagement for Biodiversity Week
- 'Bats and Castles' as part of our community engagement for Heritage Week
- Promotion of our 'Bat Spooklet' activity book for kids for Hallowe'en

In 2025, our social media following over the course of the year increased on both Facebook and Instagram by 1,910. By the end of 2025, we had 12,787 Facebook followers, 3,002 Instagram followers and our LinkedIn followers grew to 1,536. X (formerly Twitter) followers remained unchanged at almost 3,000 followers.

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

- Facebook - 297,400
- Instagram - 59,348



EDUCATION

Events

Building on our educational outreach from 2024, Bat Conservation Ireland had another very busy year in 2025. Our Projects Coordinator, Karen Healy built on gains made with the roll out of the bat panel in 2024 and as a result we were able to facilitate 56 bat walks, talks and educational events through this initiative. We continued with the '*Have a Natterer*' webinar series and developed an Education Focus Group to review our 'Learn About Bats' website, identify gaps and make improvements.

Biodiversity Week and Heritage Week were key events in the Bat Conservation Ireland calendar and we carried out 28 bat walks and talks during these two weeks. We also ran two very successful social media education campaigns - 'Bats and Hedgerows' and 'Bats and Castles' during this time.

We had our first ever presence at 'Bloom', which not only gave us the opportunity to educate the general public about gardening for bats, but also about bats and their ecology and the wider work that we do.

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 around the country to learn more about bats and promote their protection and conservation.







EDUCATION

Events

Key Events for Bat Conservation Ireland carried out in 2025 were:

- 'Gardening for Bats' project launch webinar
- 18 bat walks, talks and events to celebrate Biodiversity Week 2025
- Bloom in the Park, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8
- Native Species Weekend, Dublin Zoo, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8
- Launch of our 'Gardening for Bat's Pilot Workshops nationwide
- 10 bat walks, talks and Bats in Castles event and education campaign to celebrate Heritage Week 2025
- Cappaghmore Show, Co Limerick
- Nature Festival Wexford, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve
- 'Have a Natterer' webinars
- Training Workshops – '*Specialist Bat Trapping, Handling and Identification*' and '*Bat Identification and Survey Methods* '
- Participating in the Rediscovery Centre's 'Lets Talk Science Festival', which reached approx. 35,000 students;







EDUCATION

Biodiversity Week 2025



Biodiversity Week is a key week in the calendar for Bat Conservation Ireland and 2025 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. Our activities during the week were as follows:

- Nocturnal Bat Walk in Belvedere Gardens, Co. Westmeath – delivered by Midland Bat Group
- Ennis Bat Safari – delivered By Bat Conservation Ireland and Clare County Council Biodiversity Office
- Dark Skies, Bats and Biodiversity – delivered by Mayo Bat Group, Dark Skies Ireland and Mayo County Council Biodiversity Office
- Tully Bat Walk at St. Fiachra's Garden, Irish National Stud – delivered by Kildare Bat Group
- Bats at Barrack Hill Bat Experience – delivered by Donegal Bat Group
- Bats at Bushy Park – delivered by Dublin Bat Group
- Geashill Bat Walk, Geashill, Co. Offaly – delivered by Kildare Bat Group
- Enniscorthy Library Bat Talk – delivered by Gorey Bat Group
- Rossmore Park Bat Walk, Monaghan – delivered by David Clarke
- Rathcoffey Bat Walk, Co. Kildare – delivered by Kildare Bat Group
- Nocturnal Bat Walk, Athlone Sports Centre – delivered by Midland Bat Group
- Camolin Woods Bat Talk and Walk – delivered by Gorey Bat Group
- Bat Walk at Sonáirte, Laytown, Co. Meath – delivered by Niamh Roache
- Inch Island Bat Safari – delivered by Donegal Bat Group

EDUCATION

Biodiversity Week 2025



- Donegal Town Bat Walk – delivered by Donegal Bat Group
- Dromiskin Bat Walk, Co. Louth – delivered by Kildare and Louth Bat Groups
- Bats of Ballymore Eustace – delivered by Kildare Bat Group
- Batty Ballybofey Special Indoor Event – Delivered by Donegal Bat Group

All in all, we had a hugely successful Biodiversity Week 2025! However, as always, 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

To lean into the theme for Biodiversity Week 2025 – 'Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development' – we ran a Managing Hedgerows for Bats social media campaign across our social media channels. We provided information on why and how maintaining exisiting hedgerows and planting native hedgerows encourages bat activity. These posts ran throughout the week and had great engagement, as the stats indicate below.



Stats for engagement of these posts are as follows:

Post	Reach	Engagement	Shares
Managing Hedgerows for Bats Campaign	17,714	857	89

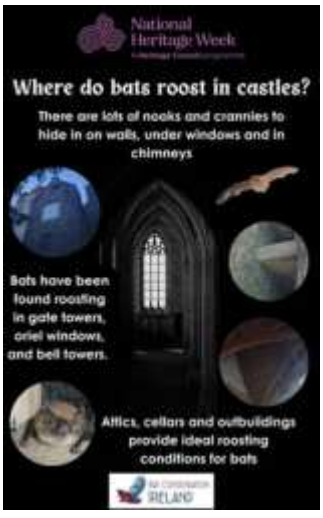
A big thank you to the Irish Environmental Network who provide year-on-year funding for events carried out in Biodiversity Week. We very much appreciate the support and funding of these activities, which allows the bat groups to cast the net wider in terms of education, community reach and recruitment of volunteers.

EDUCATION

Heritage Week 2025

In Heritage Week, our bat groups, staff and volunteers were out and about carrying out a number of educational activities as follows:

- 'Bats About Newbridge at Sunset: Liffey Linear Park, Newbridge' with Kildare Bat Group and Newbridge Tidy Towns
- 'Mad About Bats and Science' Workshop at the Irish National Stud & Gardens with Kildare Bat Group
- Athy Tidy Towns Moonlight Bat Talk and Walk with Kildare Bat Group and Athy Tidy Towns
- Explore the 'Nightlife' of Monaghan with Bat Conservation Ireland and Monaghan County Council's Biodiversity Office
- Discover Bats at Donegal Castle with Bat Conservation Ireland
- Grand Canal Bat Walk with Kildare Bat Group and Sallins Tidy Towns
- Ballybofey Bat Walk at Drumboe Woods with Donegal Bat Group
- 'For the Love of Bats' bat walk and talk in Ballycumber with Kildare Bat Group and LAWPRO
- Bats of Castletown House with Kildare Bat Group Office of Public Works
- Bat Walk in Merlin Woods, Galway with Galway Bat Group



National Heritage Week
A Heritage Council programme



EDUCATION

To lean into the theme for Heritage Week 2025 – 'Exploring our Foundations' – we ran a Bats and Castles social media campaign across our social media channels. We provided information on how castles and their environments help support bat populations. These posts ran throughout the week and had great engagement, as the stats indicate below.



Stats for engagement of these posts are as follows:

Post	Reach	Engagement	Shares
Bats and Castles Education Campaign	69,400	1,581	63

A big thank you to the Heritage Council who provided funding through their Community Heritage Fund, so that we could run events during Heritage Week, as part of this funding. We very much appreciate the support and funding of these activities, which allows us to cast the net wider in terms of education and community reach.

EDUCATION

Bat Panel

Following a very successful launch year in 2024, our bat panel were able to hit the ground running in 2025. Our Projects Coordinator liaised with 33 active bat panel members to carry out bat walks, talks and events throughout the country. In 2024, Bat Conservation Ireland's Council committed €3,000 from reserve funds to facilitate bat walks and talks for disadvantaged groups. They recommitted to this in 2025 and provided €3,000 in funding for walks and talks for disadvantaged groups. This funding was able to facilitate bat walks and talks for 20 groups in 2025.

Bat panel members carried out an additional 36 funded events, including events for Biodiversity Week. Additionally we were at Bloom in the Park, Native Species Weekend at Dublin Zoo, Nature Festival Wexford and the Cappamore Show. The bat panel also participated in workshops for ESB and Sonairte.



Bat Panel Members at the Native Species Weekend, Dublin Zoo 2025

EDUCATION

Education Focus Group

As part of our Education Strategy (2024), we carried out a review of existing resources, activities, and websites. Part of this highlighted the need to engage with those in primary education to seek their input on our online resources.

In May 2025 a social media campaign was launched to recruit members to our new Education Focus Group. The purpose of this focus group was to review our *Learn About Bats* website to identify gaps in resources, and promote inclusion. 11 members took part in an online information session on 15 July 2025 and were asked to look at our education website in detail: www.learnaboutbats.com. Each member then completed a feedback form. A report was produced detailing feedback from members on how to improve accessibility, our website, resources and events.

Funding was secured in late 2025 from Olive Mount Trust for our project 'Bat Champions' which will help us complete some of the recommendations in the report. as part of our appreciation to those that participated a '*Thanks from Bats Pack*' to be sent to Education Focus Group members in early 2026.







EDUCATION

Training

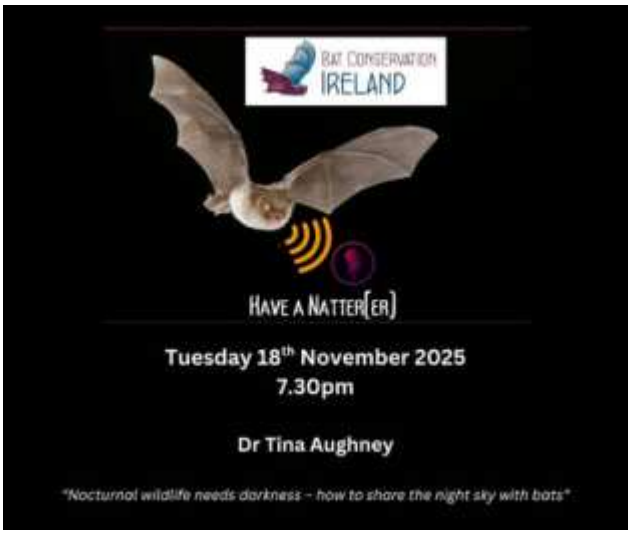
Irish Bat Monitoring Programme

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 2025, our Senior Projects Manager trained 7 new volunteer teams on the Car-Based Monitoring Scheme, during 3 online training workshops. 198 new volunteers were trained for the All Ireland Daubenton's Waterway Survey. All of the new volunteers were trained online in 4 training sessions. For the Brown Long-Eared Bat Roost monitoring 9 new volunteers were trained in 7 online training and an additional in-person training session was carried out in Newport. 30 new volunteers were trained for our newest monitoring scheme, the Woodland Bat Monitoring. 7 training workshops; 6 online and 1 in person, where carried out for this monitoring scheme.

'Have a Natterer' Webinar Series

Following on from the launch of the Have a Natterer Webinar Series in 2025, we delivered 2 more webinars in May and November 2025:



- 'Bats, Diets and Cosystem Services: What's for Dinner and Why it Matters' - A Study of the Brown long-Eared Bat and Soprano Pipistrelle in Ireland' - delivered by Dr Gwenaëlle Hurpy
- 'Nocturnal Wildlife Need Darkness - How to share the Night Sky with Bats' - delivered by Dr Tina Aughney;

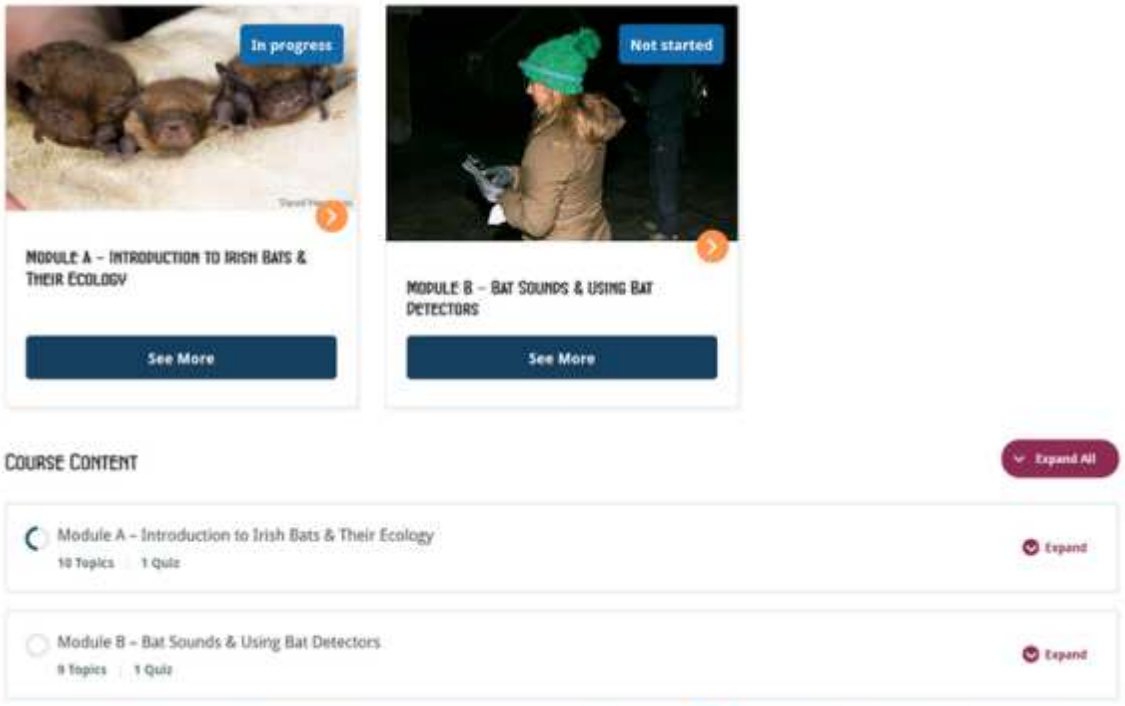
EDUCATION

Online Training Platform

In November 2023, we rolled out the first 2 modules on our Online Training Platform: An Introduction to Bats and Using Detectors. This free-to-access course, allows beginner bat enthusiasts to learn the basics of bats and their ecology and learn more about bat sounds and how to use a bat detector.

In 2025, 187 people registered to access this course. To date, 509 users have registered to access this course.





EDUCATION

LBAP and OPW Training

In 2025, many of the Biodiversity Officers recruited to the county councils nationwide in 2024, were well and truly established in their roles. We had collaborated with many of them throughout 2024 and worked on building relationships and finding common ground.

Karen Healy, our Projects Coordinator, has built connections with many of the biodiversity offices and has provided educators from our bat groups and bat panel to deliver bat walks and talks nationwide.

This enables us to have a wider reach in terms of educating all demographics on the imports of bats and the role that they play in our ecosystem. It helps support collaborations and develop new networks to further this kind of work.

David Clarke carried out 2 in-person training courses with OPW staff on 'Bat Roosts in Trees' in November 2025, so staff know how to conserve Irish bats when they come across a bat roost in a tree. These training workshops took place in Dublin and Cork.





EDUCATION

Bat Conservation Ireland Training Courses

Bat Conservation Ireland carried out 3 in-person training weekends as follows:

- 27-28 August 2026 - Specialist Bat Trapping, Handling and Identification
- 2-6 September 2026 - Bat Identification and Survey Methods
- 9-10 September 2026 - Bat Identification and Survey Methods (delivered to NPWS rangers)

Particpants learned about our Irish bat species, their ecology and roots. They learned how to identify bats in the field and in the hand and how to survey a bat roost and assess for roosting potential.

The specialist bat trapping course, is an advanced course and while participants learn about our Irish bat species, a large part of the course is dedicated to bat handling and trapping methods.

All together 55 participants attended the courses and received their course certificates.





EDUCATION

Publications


Bats

In November 2024, we finished up our 20th Anniversary celebrations with a Bat Ball in the Maldron Hotel in Galway. Everyone dressed up in their finery and arrived with their dancing shoes on, ready to party! During the evening, we also took time to celebrate some exemplary bat work, with a number of nominees for our new Aoibheann Gaughran Award. This award aims to characterise Aoibheann's legacy of fun, energy and enthusiasm, along with her dedication and commitment to wildlife conservation. The winner of the award was Dr Kate McAney who works for the Vincent Wildlife Trust and has been a champion of bat conservation in Ireland for over 10 years.

In December, we had our final online 'Have a Natterer' talk of the year with Tina Wiffen, who discussed her discoveries of pipistrelle hibernation roosts in northern England. You can see this talk on our YouTube channel @batconservationIreland7108.

We partnered with Alex Riniscribe of Undertory, with funding from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, to create a new publication 'A Beginner's Guide to Bat Surveying'. This booklet is for people new to batty adventures who would like some information on Irish bats, where to find them, and how to carry out simple bat surveys. It is available to download from our website here: https://www.batconservationireland.org/product/beginners-guide-to-bat-surveying.

This year has already been busy. In January, we held an online launch of our 'Gardening for Bats' project. You can see the videos we filmed last summer on our new website GardeningForBats.com or on our YouTube channel. The videos are 3-5 minutes long and cover five different topics. They are aimed at anyone who manages a green space and would like suggestions on how to make it more bat friendly. The videos are broken down into different topics such as choosing plants, features for bats, and easy techniques.

We have also recently published a report on our '2024 Neighbourhood Bats' project with local bat groups. Each bat group received a passive bat detector that they could place in a chosen location. Plenty of bats showed up in many places, including some of the rarer species like Nathusius' pipistrelle and whiskered bats. You can read the report here: https://www.batconservationireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/NeighbourhoodBats_2024_FinalReport.pdf.

Over the winter, we've also been busy analysing thermal imaging footage and bat sounds recorded during our volunteer-led bat monitoring schemes that took place last summer. Once we had all that done, the data was sent in February to our statistician, Steve Langton. Once Steve has completed his analysis, we will find out how our bat populations got on in 2024 and send feedback to the volunteers who helped us. Thanks again to everyone who collected data for us last year! Anyone interested in volunteering in 2025 can email us at niamh@batconservationireland.org.

We held our AGM in Mullingar in February and Owen Murphy, who was recently awarded a doctorate for her bat research in UCD, presented some of the results of her investigations into the diet and ecosystem services provided by brown long-eared and soprano pipistrelle bats. She will be delivering this talk online for us in April for anyone who missed the AGM – keep an eye on social media or our events page on our website for updates.

We are already gearing up for a busy Biodiversity Week in May. With our Bat Panel and Bat Groups across the country, we are planning a series of in person bat walks and talks. Later in the season, we are also planning some two-night in person training events. Details will be on our events page in due course or you can keep an eye on our social media for announcements. We are also hoping to attend Bloom in the Park this year for the first time, so we look forward to meeting you there!

Dr Niamh Roche
BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND
niamh@batconservationireland.org

Biodiversity Ireland – Spring/Summer 2025
Biodiversity Tales – Bats

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

- The Bat Ball and the inaugural presetation of the Aoibheann Gaughran Award
- Publication of 'A Beginner's Guide to Bat Surveying'
- Launch of the Gardening for Bats Project
- Publication of the 2025 'Neighbourhood Bats' Report

Biodiversity Ireland – Autumn/Winter 2025
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 2025, including:

- Biodiversity Week 2025
- All Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey
- Woodland Monitoring Scheme
- Gardening for Bats Project and Bloom
- Summer Training Courses



EDUCATION

Publications



THE BENEFITS OF BATS
IN OUR LANDSCAPE

'The Benefits of Bats in our Landscape' – Dr. David Clarke – Organic Matters Magazine (Irish Organic Association) Winter 2025 Issue 153.

This article focuses on the benefits of bats in our landscape with a particular focus on their value in the agricultural sector as a biocontrol for pest insects, as well as tips on what landowners, farmers and gardeners can do to promote bat friendly habitat in their area.

'*Tracking Natterer's through the Trees'* – Dr Niamh Roche – CRANN Ireland's Tree Magazine; Spring/Summer Issue 2025, No. 121.

This was an article introducing Bat Conservation Ireland's Woodland Monitoring Scheme. It details the two target species – Whiskered and Natterer's bats. It also explains the method we use to track trends in these species in woodlands across the island.



EDUCATION

Media

Bats and bat conservation work received very good media coverage in 2025. This work is important, as it provides another avenue for us to engage with the public. We highlighted that bats are protected species and that 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:

- 4 February 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager, carried out an interview on the Gardening for Bats Project with Ray D'Arcy, as part of 'The Ray D'Arcy Show' on RTE Radio 1 - https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/22374576/;
- 12 February 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager, carried out an interview on the Gardening for Bats Project with Rosalind Skillen - Irish Farmer's Journal - https://www.farmersjournal.ie/entertainment/around-the-country/country-vibes-a-few-of-our-favourite-things-854730
- 22 February 2025 - Bat Conservation: Simple ways you can help these tiny mammals to thrive in your local area - Ella McSweeney - Irish Times - https://www.irishtimes.com/environment/2025/02/22/bat-conservation-simple-ways-you-can-help-these-tiny-mammals-to-thrive-in-your-local-area/
- 1 May 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager, carried out an interview on the Gardening for Bats Project with Rosie May for The Irish Garden
- 31 May 2025 - The data centre, the bat, and the High Court decision - Alison O'Reilly - Irish Examiner - https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/spotlight/arid-41602603.html
- 14 July 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager, carried out an interview on the Gardening for Bats Project with Alan Morrissey of Clare FM
- 18 July 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager, carried out an interview on the Gardening for Bats Project with John Breslin of Highland Radio

EDUCATION

Media

- 23 July 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager with Bat Conservation Ireland, carried out an interview with the Leitrim Observer on the Gardening for Bats Project - https://www.leitrimobserver.ie/news/local-news/1854812/bat-conservation-ireland-brings-evening-workshop-to-leitrim-this-saturday.html
- 28 July 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager with Bat Conservation Ireland, carried out an interview with Terry Flanagan on 'Mooney Goes Wild' - RTE Radio 1 - about the Gardening for Bats Project - https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/22534116/
- 16 September 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager, contributed to the 'Book of Leaves' Podcast - https://bookofleavespodcast.com/2025/09/29/ep-129-a-bit-about-bats-with-niamh-roche-bat-conservation-ireland/
- 17 September 2025 - Niamh Roche, Projects Manager, contributed to pre-production site visit for 'Underground Ireland' series on 'Bats Autumn Swarming in Dunmore Cave - New Decade Productions - https://www.newdecade.ie/tv-shows-and-series/. Further filming will take place in the 2026 season.



Bat Conservation Ireland brings evening workshop to Leitrim this Saturday

The Gardening for Bats workshop will cover a range of topics, including inform Irish bats and their habitat needs and a hands-on session at the Organic Centr from 7:30pm to 10:30pm.

Organic Centre, Rossinver pictured right.



Go batty

Niamh Roche (left), and Sharon Mathews (right) feature in a video on the BCI website

Bat Conservation Ireland has launched a new resource about gardening for bats. It teaches people how to make their gardens welcoming to the nine species of bat in Ireland. Bats are amazing insect and pest controllers, eating midges, dung flies, spiders and beetles. Turning off outside lights when they are not needed, composting waste, and avoiding pesticides can make your garden bat-friendly.

See *GardeningForBats.com*

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 2025, we published a 'Gardening for Bats' Special Edition and a an Autumn Newsletter, both of which were sent out to our membership.





COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Bat Groups

Following on from a tremendous amount of work by Anna Collins of Kildare Bat Group in 2024, we saw 2 additional bat groups affiliate with Bat Conservation. The new bat groups in counties Offaly and Louth, now bring the number of bat groups affiliated with Bat Conservation Ireland up to 13. 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 for 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	Donegal Bat Group
Dublin Bat Group	Galway Bat Group
Gorey Bat Group	Kildare Bat Group
Limerick Bat Group	Louth Bat Group
Mayo Bat Group	Meath Bat Group
Midland Bat Group	Offaly 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. Short reports from each of the groups follows.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Cavan Bat Group

There are currently 5 members of Cavan Bat 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 2025 - 2 surveys were carried out in Deerpark Forest, Virginia, Co. Cavan
August 2025 - 2 surveys were carried out at Ballyduff Bridge, Ballinamore, Co. Cavan
August 2025 - 2 surveys were carried out at Nine Eye Bridge, Co. Cavan

Brown Long-eared Roost Monitoring Survey:

June/July/August 2025 - 3 roost counts were carried out at Drung Church, Co. Cavan
June/July/August 2025 - 3 roost counts were carried out at the Church of Ireland, Swalinbar, Co. Cavan
June/July/August 2025 - 3 roost counts were carried out at St. Dymna's Church,, Bailieboro, Co. Cavan
June/July/August 2025 - 3 roost counts were carried out at Ardbraccan Church (St. Ultan's Church of Ireland Cemetery), Navan, Co. Meath

Woodland Monitoring

Cavan Bat Group also particpated in the Woodland Monitoring Scheme at the following locations:

- Deerpark Woodland, Virginia, Co. Cavan
- Killykeen Forest Park, Co. Cavan
- Castle Lough, Ballieboro, Co. Cavan

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Cavan Bat Group

Bat Box Monitoring

Cavan Bat Group carried out monitoring of bat boxes at Killeshandra (3 visits) and Kilnacrott (6 visits), Co. Cavan and Ramparts Co. Meath (4 visits)

Other Activities

- In April, they undertook a tree roost preliminary assessment at Annagh Lough Woodland, Ballyconnell
- In collaboration with Midland Bat Group, Cavan BG undertook a night of trapping with the Midland Bat Group at Coolure, Co Westmeath on the 7th September

Bat Walks/Talks

Cavan Bat Group carried out 3 bat walks during 2025:

- Iniskeen, Co Monaghan
- Bawnboy, Co. Cavan as part of Heritage Week
- Cavan Burren Park, as part of 'Stories under the stars', with Cuilcagh Lakelands Geopark with funding by Cavan Co. Co.

Additionally, the group participated in the Neighbourhood Bats Project. A static detector was deployed at Cavan Town for the duration of the project



COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Dublin Bat Group

There are currently 6 members of Dublin Bat Group and the main activites they carried out in 2025 were as follows:

Bat Walks/Talks

- 21 May 2025 – Bushy Park DCC
- 1 June 2025 – Ballyboughal Bat Walk
- 30 July 2025 – Bushy Park
- 20 August 2025 – Baldoyle,
- 20 August 2025 – Marlay Park, DLR, as part of Heritage week
- 1 September 2025 – Ballymun
- 1 October 2025 – Bat Talk at Rush Library, Rush, Co. Dublin

Additionally, members of Dublin Bat Group participated in the All Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey at a site in Swords, North County Dublin.



Dublin Bat Group carrying out a Bat Walk in Rush, Co. Dublin

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Donegal Bat Group

Donegal Bat Group formed in 2024 and headed up by our Projects Coordinator, Karen Healy, has now grown to 8 members. They carried out a number of public events for Biodiversity Week and Heritage Week, as well as carrying out a Brown Long Eared Roost count at Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal as part of the bat monitoring programme:

Bat Walks

- 21 May 2025 - Bats at Barrack Hill, Co. Donegal, delivered By Donegal Bat Group
- 23 May 2025 - Inch Island Bat Safari, Co. Donegal, delivered By Donegal Bat Group
- 24 May 2025 - Donegal Town, Co. Donegal, delivered by Donegal Bat Group
- 25 May 2025 - Batty Ballybofey, Co. Donegal, delivered by Donegal Bat Group
- 22 August 2025 - Donegal Castle, delivered by Donegal Bat Group and OPW
- 23 August 2025 - Drumboe Woods Bat Safari, Co. Donegal delivered by Donegal Bat Group

Hallowe'en Events

Donegal Bat Group delivered 2 batty themed events for Hallowe'en as follows:

- 10 October 2025 - Carndonagh Scouts Hallowe'en Event delivered by Donegal Bat Group
- 17 October 2025 - Fanavolty Bat Talk & Walk at Fanavolty, Fanad, Co. Donegal delivered by Donegal Bat Group





COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Gorey Bat Group

Gorey Bat Group formed in 2025. The main mission of the group is to educate the North Wexford community (area between Enniscorthy and Arklow) on the importance of our native bat species, to kill myths and generally to promote their protection. They carried out the following activities in 2025:

Bat Walks

- 22 May 2025 - Bat Talk at Enniscorthy Library, delivered By Gorey Bat Group
- 23 May 2025 - Bat Walk and Talk at Camolin Woods, delivered By Gorey Bat Group
- 18 July 2025 - Bat Walk and Talk at Courtown Woods, delivered By Gorey Bat Group
- 16 August 2025 - Bat Walk and Talk at Courtown Woods, delivered By Gorey Bat Group
- 20 August 2025 - Bat Walk and Talk at Slaney River Enniscorthy, delivered By Gorey Bat Group
- 24 August 2025 - Bat Walk and Talk at Clone Strand, Castletown delivered By Gorey Bat Group
- 28 August 2025 - Bat Walk and Talk at Bunclody Parish Church, delivered By Gorey Bat Group
- 21 September 2025 - Bat Walk and Talk at Wexford Wildfowl Centre, delivered By Gorey Bat Group







COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Gorey Bat Group

All Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Surveys

- August 2025 - North Slobs, Wexford
- August 2025 - Glandoran, Wexford
- August 2025 - Hollyfort, Wexford

Brown Long Eared Roost Monitoring

- July and August 2025 - St Pauls Church Clone, Wexford

Common Pipistrelle Roost Survey

- July and August 2025 - St Pauls Church Clone, Wexford

Neighbourhood Bats Project

Gorey Bat Group also took part in the Neighbourhood Bats Project and deployed detectors at sites in Gorey and Courtown, Co. Wexford over the summer in 2025.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Kildare Bat Group

Kildare Bat Group had a very busy year in 2025 and carried out numerous activities throughout the country.

Bat Walks

- 02.05.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Balintore & Crookstown Scouts
- 20.05.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Irish National Stud, Co. Kildare
- 21.05.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Geashill, Co. Offaly with Geashill TT members.
- 23.05.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Rathcoffey, Co. Kildare with Rathcoffey TT
- 24.05.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Drumiskin Co. Louth with Louth Bat Group
- 25.05.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Ballymore Eustace with Ballymore Eustace TT
- 20.06.2025 Bat Walk & Talk IPCC Centre, Lullymore, Co. Kildare
- 18.07.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Cowpark, Co. Meath
- 09.08.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Rossnaree, Co Louth with Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland
- 20.08.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Athy, Co. Kildare
- 23.08.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Sallins, Biodiversity Group
- 24.08.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Ballycomber Tidy Towns with Offaly Bat Group
- 30.08.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Castletown House with OPW
- 03.09.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Tullamore Town Park with Louth Bat Group for National Hedgerow Week
- 19.09.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare for Culture Night
- 23.09.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Backweston, Co. Kildare with Department of Agriculture
- 01.10.2025 Bat Walk & Talk Digby Bridge, Co. Kildare with Newbridge Scouts

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Kildare Bat Group

Other Events

- 05.05.2025 Radio Tracking Telemetry with Dr. Tina Aughney
- 11.07.2025 Exhibition Stands Entente Florale, NUI Maynooth - Representation European Competition
- 18.08.2025 "Mad about Bats" Irish National Stud - Educational Workshop
- 24.08.2025 "For the love of Bats" Ballycumber, Co. Offaly with Offaly Bat Group - Bats for kids
- 04.10.2025 Workshop: Bat ID & Tree Scoping Techniques - Dundalk Library with Gorey, Kildare, Louth, Offaly & Wicklow Bat Groups
- 28.10.2025 Event: Bat Basics learning to Coexisting with bats for Wildlife Rescue
- 30.10.2025 Halloween Event: Bats in the Belfry St. Patrick's Church, Newbridge for Samhain Festival

Bat Box Installation/Monitoring

- 23.01.2025 Pre-workshop review & Box Monitoring Visibility Survey Kildare Irish National Stud, Co. Kildare
- 27.01.2025 Bat Box Visibility Survey, NPWS Wexford
- 01.02.2025 Bat Box Monitoring, Newbridge Linear Park with Newbridge TT
- 01.02.2025 Bat Box Visibility Survey with Old Kilcullen Residents Association
- 19.02.2025 Icarus Project Bat Boxes Installation - Co. Wicklow
- 23.03.2025 Bat Boxes Installation - Raven, Co. Wexford
- 21.04.2025 Bat Boxes Installation with Geashill Tidy Town

Habitat Surveys/Bat Surveys

- 21.04.2025 Bat Survey: Church of Ireland Church Geashill Tidy Town
- 26.04.2025 Pre-Woodland Study Survey Tullynisk, Co. Offaly with Offaly Bat Group
- 27.04.2025 Pre-Woodland Study Ravensdale with Louth Bat Group

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Kildare Bat Group

18.06.2025 Pre-Bat Way Assessment - Cloughjordan
19.06.2025 BLE Pre-survey Site Assessments x 8 with Louth Bat Group
19.06.2025 Roost Count - North Dundalk with NPWS & Louth Bat Group
28.06.2025 Bat Monitoring - Townley Hall with Louth Bat Group
01.07.2025 Roost Count - Birr Castel Gate Lodge with Offaly Bat Group
03.07.2025 Roost Count - Lexlip Fire Station, Co. Kildare
05.07.2025 Bat Surveys - Moorehall, Co. Mayo with, Louth & Mayo Bat Groups
27.08.2025 Bat Roost Count Birr, Co. Offaly with Offaly Bat Group
05.09.2025 Roost Count St Marys Church, Geashill with Offaly Bat Group
29.09.2025 Bat Survey RHI Shrinrone, Co. Offaly
Sept 2025 Mini Song Meter deployed at: Dean House, Rathangan; Old Kilcullen Round Tower; Carburry Castle; Johnstown Mill

All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Surveys

- 01.08.2025 Daubenton Survey Ballycomber AC & Offaly Bat Group
- 06.08.2025 Daubenton Survey Ardee, Co. Louth AC & Louth Bat Group
- 2 Sites: Kilcock & Pikes Bridge, Maynooth, co. Kildare
- 2 Sites: Slate Rive & Grand Canal, Rathangan
- 1 Site: Clane, Co. Kildare

Woodland Pilot Scheme

- 26.05.2024 Woodland Bat Monitoring Training with Dr. David Clarke
- 07.06.2025 Woodland Bat Survey Killinthomas Woods
- 07.06.2025 Woodland Bat Survey Assessment, Townley Hall Woods
- 08.06.2025 Woodland Bat Survey Assessment, Clonard Woodland, with Offaly Bat Group
- 14.06.2025 Woodland Bat Survey Tullynisk, Co. Offaly with Louth Bat Group

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Kildare Bat Group

- 15.06.2025 Woodland Bat Survey Clonard, Co. Offaly with Louth Bat Group
- 27.06.2025 Woodland Bat Survey, Townley Hall with Louth Bat Group
- 23.07.2025 Woodland Bat Survey, Killinthomas Woods, Co. Kildare
- 24.07.2025 Woodland Bat Survey, Donadea Co. Kildare
- 25.07.2025 Woodland Bat Survey, Townley Hall with Louth Bat Group

Brown Long Eared Roost Monitoring

15.07.2025 BLE BAT Survey - Donadea, Co. Kildare

01.09.2025 BLE Survey Dromiskin, Co. Louth AC & Louth Bat Group

Icarus Project

08.10.2025 Icarus Project: Bat tagging at Castletown House Park

12.10.2025 Icarus Project: Bat Tagging various sites

Neighbourhood Bats Scheme

Kildare Bat Group also participated in the Neighbourhood Bats Project and deployed static detectors at the following sites:

- Two Sites - Roscrea Abbey, Templemore, Tipperary
- Two Sites - Ballyteague Castle, Hill of Allen, Co. Kildare

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Limerick Bat Group

Native Species Weekend at Dublin Zoo

Members of Limerick Bat Group joined the Bat Conservation Ireland crew and facilitated a stand throughout the weekend. This is a great opportunity to help educate all ages on our Irish Bat Species!

Bat Walks

Limerick Bat Group carried out 1 bat walk in 2025:

- 16 May 2025 – Biodiversity Week walk at Brunee, Co. Limerick, carried out by Limerick Bat Group and Bat Rehabilitation Ireland;

Woodland Monitoring Scheme

Limerick Bat Group completed 2 surveys as part of the Woodland Monitoring Scheme at Curraghchase, Co. Limerick.

Neighbourhood Bats Project

Limerick Bat Group participated in this project at 2 sites in September 2025:

- Meadowbrook, Co. Limerick
- Caherdavin, Co. Limerick







COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Mayo Bat Group

Mayo Bat Group joined the Friends of Mayo Dark Skies and the Co. Mayo Biodiversity Officer, Sheila Murphy to give a talk and walk in Westport on 18 May 2025, as part of Biodiversity Week 2025. They met at the Gráinne Uaile pub in Newport, where the talk was given and the walk followed the path down to St. Patrick's Church on the hill.

There were 21 attendees booked in for the talk and walk. 3 bats were detected on the walk, using heterodyne detectors.

Bat Rehab

Mayo Bat Group continues to support bat rehabilitation, by giving advise and care of sick and injured bats through their custom-built bat rehab clinic in Co. Mayo.







COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Meath Bat Group

Meath Bat Group, even though still a relatively small group, had a busy year in 2025, where they were involved in a number of education films about and the importance of bats in the environment and why hedgerows and woodlands are so important for bats:

- Quickcrop YouTube Channel - Conversation with Why Bats are so Important - https://www.youtube.com/shorts/daxf7n_X9UA
- Quickcrop YouTube Channel - Conversation with nature habitats - https://www.youtube.com/sho
- Cavan County Council YouTube Channel - The Importance of National Hedgerows in County Cavan - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Bd94R85GpI



Meath Bat Group also took part in a film on Riparian woodlands (and added bats) with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Roy Spence, which has been shown in 3 venues so far in Monaghan.

Bat and Moth Weekend

On 26 July, Meath Bat Group in collaboration with Green Foundation Ireland and Connecting Cabra, ran a Bat and Moth weekend, where at least 50 people came to Golashane Nature Reserve, camped out, and watched bats overnight. They put out moth traps and watched an amazing array of moths, and finished up by all going kayaking in the local lake - a great weekend had by all!

Meath Bat Group also participated in the All Ireland Daubenton's Waterway Survey and surveyed 1 site in Meath and helped lots of householders with bat issues - A special thank you to Sophie and all in Kildare Wildlife Rescue, which have been their nearest help for injured and sick bats.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Midland Bat Group



Midland Bat Group - Bat Walk BDW 2025

Bat Walks & Other Events

Midland Bat Group were involved in three Biodiversity week events. All three were in County Westmeath and facilitated by Westmeath Biodiversity Officer Christina Sweeney. This entailed two bat talks and one bat walk in Westmeath for Biodiversity week. The first talk was held with Andrew and Áine Fenner in Belvedere House on Friday the 16th of May during the lovely dry spell. With such lovely weather in Belvedere, there was a good turn out of 18 people. By far the most common bat identified was the common pipistrelle followed by soprano pipistrelle. They also heard a Leislers bat. It was a very clear night, so much so it was easy to see the people and bats as we walked around the park.

The next walk was held in conjunction with Scouting Ireland at Thomastown Bridge, near Kinnegad led by Bat Conservation Ireland bat panel member, Michael Wycherly. There was a good turn out of people at this event.

The sunny weather we had been having finally broke just before the talk and walk in Athlone on Friday the 23rd. That didn't dampen the spirits of the group of 26 people who turned up at Athlone Sports Centre for the talk. Almost all the people who attended the talk went for the walk afterwards in the "intermittent" rain showers. There were some very obliging common pipistrelles who were feeding just as we entered the greenway so the group got to hear the sound of the bats on the bat detectors. Then there was a soprano pipistrelle flying along the greenway. On the way back there was less rain and bats could clearly be seen flying.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Midland Bat Group

Neighbourhood Bats Project

Midland Bat Group received a “Mini” detector for the Neighbourhood Bats project in late August. It was to be used from September and up until the middle of October. The guidelines were a bit different this year - the emphasis was on Autumn activities including finding swarming sites, caves and tunnels. The group considered what caves were around and decided on Roscommon being their best bet. They considered the servant's tunnel in Lough Key, as Brian Keeley had found a Lesser Horseshoe bat there many years ago. Unfortunately, there have been many developments at this site including lights that have been installed in the tunnel since, so it wasn't a practical choice. Over the years doing the car-based bat monitoring survey Midland Bat Group picked up a lot of Leisler’s bat calls when going through Strokestow,n so they decided to test out the theory that the bats were using Strokestown House. They approached Strokestown House as there is a servant's tunnel there too. Luckily this tunnel is not lit for most of the year. The exception being Christmas when it is used as Santa's grotto.



Midland Bat Group - Site 1 Neighbourhood Bats Project - Gate to Tunnell in Strokestown House

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Midland Bat Group

The staff at Strokestown House were very much on board and a detector was put on the gate at the entrance to the tunnel there for the first week of the project. When bat group member Áine Fenner was there, she was shown where the bats exited a building at the back and it was obvious from the droppings and wear on the wall of the building that there were a lot of bats present. This site proved very active, so active in fact that the SD card was full! Another group member, Peter spoke to the staff in Rathcroghan and they were very supportive of the group putting a detector at Owennagat cave nearby. So Peter put a new SD card in the detector and left it there for a week. It is possible to see on the app if there are any recordings and disappointingly there were no bats recorded there during the week. They wondered if there was a problem with the detector or SD card, so to rule this out, they put one of their own audio moth detectors at the same site in Rathcroghan for another week. The result was the same, so they took from that, there were no bats in Owennagat cave in Rathcroghan at that time.

The next site we chose was further west: the Kesh Caves Boyle, Co Roscommon, in Sligo. As the group were aware of the chances of also not getting many calls in these caves, they brought two of our own Audio Moth recorders along and placed all three, the Neighbourhood bats "Mini", with the two Audio Moths at this site. They placed the "Mini" detector inside the caves to make sure it wasn't exposed to the elements and they placed an Audio Moth detector in another cave nearby. Then on the outside of the same cave they put an Audio Moth detector. The Audio Moth detector picked up a Myotis bat (possibly Natterers) early in the evening and later on some Leislers.



Owennagat Cave near Rathcroghan, Co. Roscommon

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Midland Bat Group

The two detectors inside the caves didn't seem to pick us as many calls.

The Neighbourhood Bats project was a good opportunity to study bats at a time of year when the group is usually winding down and they are look forward to getting the full official results in the Q1 2026.

Woodland Monitoring

Piotr Otręba, Andrew & Áine Fenner took part in the Woodland Survey at Newcastle Woods this year. This is the second year of this survey. Storm Eowyn in January of this year took its toll in these woods and Coillte had already started to remove some of the trees along the route. Interestingly this made it hard to navigate the route, as the clues to the stopping points had changed. Since then there has been more tree felling in Newcastle wood. The group were grateful to have gotten the first survey done before Storm Eowyn and the felling as they had a baseline from when the trees were all there.

Brown Long Eared Bat Roost Monitoring

Once again Midland Bat Group carried out the Brown Long Eared Survey in the roost County Longford.

Bat Talk Corlea Kenagh Co. Longford.

Midland Bat Group had an unusually late bat talk in at the Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre on the 1st of November 2025. Although the talk was very well attended, it wasn't possible to do a bat walk because of the stormy weather that evening. There was very good interest from the audience with some very well thought out questions. They plan to return in the late spring of 2026 and hopefully the weather and bat activity will be better.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Offaly Bat Group

Anna Collins, Chairperson of Kildare Bat Group (KBG), helped establish Offaly Bat Group in February 2025. Ricky Whelan, Offaly Biodiversity Officer, with Offaly County Council, organized an event in Tullamore Library on 15 February 2025, with Anna Collins who gave a presentation on bats and their ecology and a group of like-minded people decided to form Offaly Bat Group.

Offaly Bat Group have been involved in the All Ireland Daubenton's Waterways Survey on various rivers in Offaly (Tullamore, Ballycumber and Ferbane). They have completed training courses, bat walks, surveys, woodland scoping and surveys throughout the year. Their biggest achievement was reaching the National Heritage Awards with their event "*For the Love of Bats*" walk, where they were runners up. Offaly Bat Group's main aim is to promote and increase awareness of bats, and the conservation of these special species in Co. Offaly.

Bat Walks

03/04/2025: Group meeting and Bat walk in Ballycumber, Co. Offaly
10/04/2025: Bat Walk in Geashill, Co. Offaly
02/05/2025: Bat walk in Pollagh, Co. Offaly
21/05/ 2025: Biodiversity Week - Geashill Bioblitz Bat Walk
24/08/2025: Heritage Week - Bat walk in Ballycumber (this event was shortlisted for the National Heritage Awards)
03/09/2025: Bat Walk in Tullamore Town Park as part of Hedgerow Week

Other Events

National Heritage Week: 2 Mosaic Art Workshops in association with Ballycumber Tidy Towns, with local artist Tara Mulvihill

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Offaly Bat Group

All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey

August 2025 - Ballycumber, Co. Offaly
August 2025 - Pollagh, Co. Offaly
August 2025 - Grand Canal Tullamor, Co. Offaly

Woodland Monitoring

June/July 2025 - Birr, Co. Offaly
June/July 2025 - Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Brown Long Eared Bat Roost Count

July 2025 - Castle lodge, Croghan, Birr, Co Offaly
September 2025 - St Mary's Church, Geashill, Co. Offaly
Birr, Co. Offaly

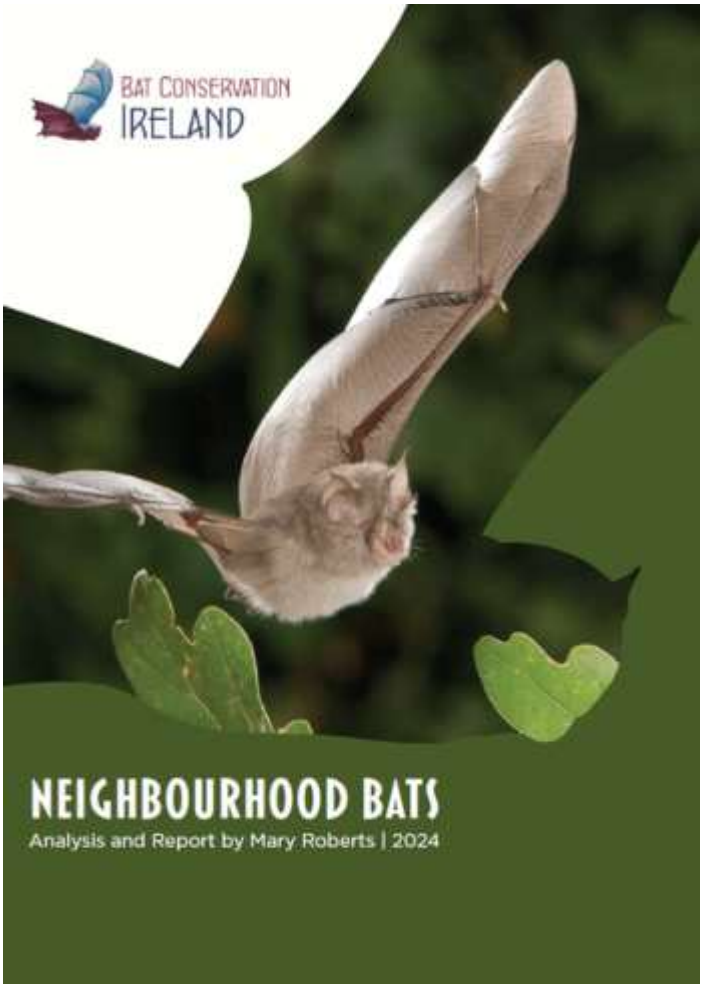
Neighbourhood Bats Project

September 2025 - Edenderry, Co. Offaly
September 2025 - Acres Folly, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Neighbourhood Bats -

with a Little Help from Neighbourhood Citizen Scientists



In March 2021, Bat Conservation Ireland applied to the Heritage Council for funding to carry out a project 'Neighbourhood Bats: With a little help from Neighbourhood Citizens Scientists', which was a volunteer-led, citizen science project to gather data on bats in particular locations around the country. The funding received allowed us to purchase 10 Song Meter Mini Bat detectors, which culminated in the Neighbourhood Bats Report 2021, 2022 and 2024.

Since then, the project has been wholly funded by Bat Conservation Ireland. In 2025 as in 2024, Mary Roberts acted as project coordinator and data analyst on the project. This project recommenced for the 4th time in 2025 for 2 x 1-week periods (weekend starting 30th August to 15th October). For the 2025 project, we asked volunteers to choose two sites. The detector could be placed at each site for a one-week period. These sites were selected from the following options:

1. A general site, greenfield or urban, where there was a specific interest in assessing bat diversity and species presence in early autumn.
2. A coastal site where the bat group could place a detector to check for peaks in Nathusius' pipistrelle bat activity, as a possible indication of autumn migration.
3. An underground potential autumn swarming site.

As always, there was good participation in this year's Neighbourhood Bats project with 20 locations covered by 10 bat groups. The criteria for the project were changed to allow a more diverse choice in detector deployment location.

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Neighbourhood Bats

with a Little Help from Neighbourhood Citizen Scientists

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 collecting records of their local bat fauna.

Sites used for the Neighbourhood Bats Project

Site		Site	
1.	White Father's Cavan, Co. Cavan	11.	Strokestown House, Co. Roscommon
2.	Cave in the Cavan Burren, Co. Cavan	12.	Kesh Caves, Co. Sligo
3.	Hill of Allen Tower, Co. Kildare	13.	Acres Folly, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
4.	Ballyteague Castle, Co. Kildare	14.	Edenderry Library, Edenderry, Co. Offaly
5.	Caherdavin, Co. Limerick	15.	Monastery Orchard, Co. Tipperary
6.	Meadowbrook, Corbally, Co. Limerick	16.	Templemore Gardens, Co. Tipperary
7.	Gyles Quay, Co. Louth	17.	Mass Path, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow
8.	Dunany Point, Co. Louth	18.	East Coast Nature Reserve, Co. Wicklow
9.	Girley Bog, Co. Meath	19.	Private Garden, Craanford, Gorey, Co. Wexford
10.	Laytown Sea Front, Co. Meath	20.	Courtown, Co. Wexford

COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Tidy Towns

Sponsorship of Special Awards

Bat Conservation Ireland was delighted to again be one of the sponsors of Tidy Towns Special Awards 2025 – sponsoring 2 of the Special Awards.

We sponsored the production of a public mural or street artwork and the development of an area in a village/town to help encourage bat activity, which was a nod to our 'Gardening for Bats' project. We also asked entrants to highlight how bats can inspire the creation of a beautiful, creative and colourful space/beautiful art to enhance the visual aspect of the area (as well as a more practical aspect in the case of the the Gardening for Bats Design Space). The theme for both awards was '*Bats Benefit our Community*'!

The competition launched in Spring 2025 and we received very high quality applications, with Sneem Tidy Towns winning the competition for the 'Gardening for Bats' Design Space and Ballycumber Tidy Towns winning the competition for the art mural.



COMMUNITY ENAGAGEMENT

Citizen Scientist Bat Surveyors

The All-Ireland Bat Monitoring Programme, relies on volunteers to complete surveys. We provide training give them the skills to carry out surveys on 4 of the 5 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 more than 600 participants in the numerous schemes we manage. In 2025, 615 volunteers contributed their time and skill to participate in the All Ireland Bat Monitoring Programme and the Woodland Monitoring, which was an increase of 62 on 2024.



CBM Surveyor Phil Bradley

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 2025, training courses were primarily carried out online, which reduces the carbon emissions associated with travel and offers more flexibility for those wishing to attend the training.

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.

Summary of the Car Based Monitoring Scheme 2025

Training via Zoom was provided to new surveyors in Donegal, Dublin, Fermanagh, Antrim, Mayo, Westmeath, Carlow/Wicklow & Limerick. A number of surveyors who were carrying out the survey for the second year also attended these sessions.

Additional telephone and Whatsapp support conversations were held with several teams to address queries about the surveys in 2025. All equipment was posted to surveyors.

Survey work in 2025 was carried out from mid to end July and a repeat survey was carried out in early to mid-August. The median date of the first survey in 2025 was 24th July. The median date of the second survey was 19th August.

Twenty seven squares were surveyed in July 2025. All of these yielded usable data. Twenty eight squares were surveyed in August 2025. All of these, yielded usable data. In total 1,327km of monitoring transects were surveyed and approximately 360hrs of survey time was spent on the scheme by the volunteers.

Overall, the quality of data collected in 2025 was excellent. No errors arose with data being lost due to faulty cards in 2025.

Squares that were surveyed in 2025 cover the length and breadth of the island with squares in the north, west, south and east of the island included, along with a good spread of squares in the midlands (see Figure 3.1).

The total number of bat passes recorded in 2025 was 14,425.







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 2025

A total of 256 waterway sites were surveyed by 224 survey teams in 2025, consisting of 482 individual surveys. This is the highest number of sites ever to be surveyed in a single season in the 20 years since the scheme began.

Of these 256 sites, 226 (89.7%) were surveyed twice in the month of August. A total of 20,729 'Sure' Daubenton's bat passes were recorded on 231 waterway sites (90.2%). The number of Daubenton's bat passes recorded in 2025, was higher than for 2024 (18,294), and higher than each of the survey years from 2019-2021. Overall, the trend line for Daubenton's bat across the island appears to be fairly steady from year to year with error bars consistently encompassing the baseline.





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 2025

For Brown Long-eared Bat Roost Monitoring, 51 volunteers participated in 2025, which included three roost owners. Volunteers provided count data for 35 roost sites while an additional four roosts were surveyed by the coordinator. Three roosts were surveyed by the coordinator and volunteers. In total, 101 monitoring surveys were carried out at 42 roosts. Using the highest results for each roost monitored in 2025, the total number of brown long eared bats counted was 1,355 individuals. Average counts in 2025 were the lowest since the early years of the survey, and this has resulted in the curve dipping downwards, rather than 5 following the gentle downwards slope of recent years. As always with trend analyses, results like this where one year's results have a big influence on the curve, should be treated with caution because they frequently prove to be a temporary anomaly. It will therefore be interesting to see if this decline continues next year, or whether numbers bounce back to be more in line with previous results.

Thermal cameras are proving to be useful, resulting in more accurate counts and positive clarification for volunteer teams in relation to their surveying ability. Therefore, night vision aids will continue to be deployed where filming increases the accuracy of routine monitoring surveys.





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 2025

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Vincent Wildlife Trust (VWT) regional staff forwarded count data from 127 lesser horseshoe bat sites in Winter 2025 and 117 sites in Summer 2025.

In Winter 2025, 10,244 bats were counted, and 12,071 bats were counted in summer 2025. 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 3.37% per annum. Summer trends mirror this, slightly less steeply (2.94% per annum since 2004). A high number of new sites have been found by local NPWS staff in the past few years, in 2025, 10 new sites were added to the roost database.





Woodland Pilot Monitoring Scheme

This scheme aims to monitor woodland bat species, namely the Myotis species Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*) and Whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*) and also brown-long eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*). The surveys involve volunteers undertaking walking transects in participating woodlands at night, using a special full spectrum bat detector to record bat echolocation activity along the route.

The monitoring scheme was very successful in 2025 and built on the work carried out in 2024, which developed from the 2023 pilot study.

Summary of Woodland Bat Monitoring 2025

In 2025, a total of 40 woodland sites were surveyed across the Island. This number consisted of 25 sites that were already established in either 2023 or 2024 and were re-surveyed, as well as ten new sites in the ROI in the counties of Kilkenny (two sites), Limerick (two sites), Offaly (two sites), Donegal (two sites), Meath (one site), Louth (one site). Also, a total of five new sites were established and surveyed in NI in 2025. These were located in Derry (one site), Tyrone (one site), Down (one site) and Antrim (two sites).

In total, 79 nights of data were recorded, comprising more than 40,000 individual recordings, each of which was manually verified for the presence of woodland bats.



Natterer's bat hibernating © Paul van Hoof



Whiskered bat hibernating © Paul van Hoof

Woodland Pilot Monitoring Scheme

Of the 40 sites surveyed in 2025, Natterer's bat was detected at 28 (70% of total). Whiskered bat was also detected at 23 (88.5%) of the sites surveyed, while both species were detected at 24 (60%) of the sites. The months with the highest activity levels of woodland bat species, was the months of June in 2025.

We are currently preparing for the 2026 scheme, and will be adding a number of new sites located throughout NI.



Natterer's bat in flight © Paul van Hoof



Whiskered bat in flight © Paul van Hoof

Bat Conservation Ireland Small Grants Scheme

The Small Grants Scheme was launched in February 2025, with an April deadline for the receipt of applications. This Scheme helps fund small bat education, conservation and research projects around the country. In all 19 applications were received and, of those, 12 projects were awarded funding. By the end of 2025, 7 projects were completed. The Projects completed are as follows:

	Project
1.	Douglas Bat Walks
2.	Solar-Powered Data Collection: Refining Lesser Horseshoe Bat Monitoring
3.	Investigating the Winter and Spring diet of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat (Rhinolophus hipposideros) across its current distribution in Ireland
4.	Mad About Bats! Survey of Beaumont Quarry Cork City
5.	Northern Ireland Bat Box Check Project
6.	Veteranisation at Fota Wildlife Park
7.	Batwatch Raheny - Bat monitoring and Awareness in Raheny
8.	Bat walks and talks (Mayo Bat Group)
9.	Offaly Bat Group – Survey and monitoring equipment
10.	Alternative accommodation for collapsing lesser horseshoe bat roost
11.	Tracking of long distance movements of Leisler's bats on the east coast of Ireland
12.	Bats In Cape / Sciatháin Leathair Chléire

COLLABORATION

gardeningforbats.com

Gardening for Bats Project

Gardening for Bats Phase I was carried out under the Capacity Fund from the Heritage Council in 2024. We drew together a small steering group and developed a new website (GardeningforBats.com) along with five videos to explain gardening for bats. We also promoted the project via press releases and national and local media. The videos have now had almost 4000 views on YouTube. We also attended Glás, the gardening and landscaping professionals expo in July 2024, to meet members of the industry and gauge interest in the project.

In 2025 we wanted to continue this project by:

- engaging with members of the public about the project at Bloom in the Park
- developing a means to measure success by allowing people to record their gardening for bats actions on our website
- bringing Gardening for Bats workshops to different locations across Ireland
- providing pilot materials to garden centres

Phase II 2025: Four elements addressed in 2025:

1. Bloom in the Park

We attended Bloom in the Park in the Phoenix Park, Dublin during the June bank holiday weekend (29 May - 2 June) to meet members of the public and promote this project. This was Bat Conservation Ireland's first visit to Bloom. During the weekend we made a number of appearances on the Bloom Sustainability stage to discuss gardening for bats and wildlife conservation more generally. We developed information leaflets specifically on the Gardening for Bats Project, which were disseminated at Bloom, alongside our Gardening for Bats and other information booklets. While it is difficult to be certain of numbers who visited our stand, at least several hundred people came to speak to us, and there was good attendance at all of our appearances at the Sustainability Stage.







COLLABORATION

Gardening for Bats Project

2. Adding Your Garden to the GardeningforBats.com Website

We have now made additions to the GardeningForBats.com website with Made in Trenbania (web developer) to enable people to upload information about spaces where they have taken action for bats. While we have not yet promoted this facility, we plan to do so at the start of the next gardening season in 2026.

So far, just a couple of gardens have been added to the portal. Users can view the map of all sites here https://www.batconservationireland.org/get-involved/gardening-for-bats/actions.

From the back end of the website we can download information about the actions undertaken across the country that are reported to us. This will help us track uptake and interest in the Gardening for Bats project as it progresses.

3. Gardening for Bats Workshops

We completed four Gardening for Bats workshops in July and August at the following locations:

- Irish Seed Savers, Co. Clare
- The Organic Centre, Co. Leitrim,
- GIY HQ, Co. Waterford
- Sonáirte, Meath







COLLABORATION

gardeningforbats.com

Gardening for Bats Project

Overall in excess of 40 people booked and attended these workshops. The workshops included an introductory presentation with information about Irish bats and their needs, as well as the principles involved in gardening for bats. At each site we then took a walk in the surrounding gardens prior to sundown to look at different measures that benefit bats in those areas. After a tea/coffee break we then had a short session of potting up cuttings from locally sourced native honeysuckle and/or roses along with a discussion about saving locally sourced native wildflower seed. Each workshop finished up with a short bat walk after dusk. We followed up each workshop with a request for feedback from participants to see how we can improve the workshop in the future. Feedback was very positive overall e.g. see sample screenshot below.



An excellent presentation and delivery, so informative and the host passion for bat conservation was very evident.I really enjoyed the evening.

COLLABORATION

Gardening for Bats Project

4. Garden Centre Pilot

We were keen to engage with Garden Centres in order to bring bats to the fore in people's plant-purchase and garden design decisions. To do this, we designed and produced materials that Garden Centres could use to promote gardening for bats among their customers. The materials were decided-upon following discussions with our Steering Group in 2024.

Firstly we put together a short '*Guide to Gardening for Bats*' for garden centre staff. This short document aims to introduce bats and the gardening for bats concept to staff who may need to increase their knowledge in order to answer questions from members of the public. It is written in very simple English and takes very little time to read. As part of the guide, with the help of Dr Fiona McCorry, we reviewed and compiled a list of herbaceous plants that are potentially available in garden centres and that are likely to be beneficial to nocturnal pollinators in a garden setting.

We also designed and printed pot tags that were waterproof and reusable so they can be moved from pot to pot as stock is sold (see Figure 10). In addition, we provided two of the garden centres with large A1 posters for their retail spaces, one of the pilot garden centres did not have a suitable wall to place a poster. All three of the garden centres also received 100 postcards that they could disseminate to members of the public for free.



Materials for garden centres, Guide for Garden Centres top left

COLLABORATION

gardeningforbats.com

These materials (1x poster, 100 x postcards, approx 30 pot tags) were sent to three pilot garden centres in September 2025:

- Bud Garden Centre, Bunratty, Co. Clare
- Future Forest, Bantry, Co. Cork
- Mount Venus, Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin

All three garden centres were contacted approximately two weeks after having been sent the materials to check if they had any questions. We then followed up with a more detailed phone questionnaire with two of the garden centres in late October. One garden centre (Mount Venus) has closed for the winter and will be followed-up with when it reopens in spring.



The pilot garden centres who completed the questionnaire described their involvement in the project as a positive experience. They found that members of the public had been interested in it - children were interested in the poster. They noted that it had been a way to open discussion with some customers. One garden centre manager said she had acquired knowledge from the materials and was able to apply it in her garden design practice and suggestions to customers.

The garden centres provided feedback on the poster and postcard designs for future improvements - for example they suggested adding a QR code so people could check the gardening for bats website. They also had suggestions for other kinds of labelling and signage that can be used outdoors. On the basis of the findings from this limited number of garden centres we believe there is a strong interest in promoting bats and bat conservation in these retail spaces.

These suggestions can be acted upon in 2026 subject to funding and we hope to continue the roll out to more garden centres.

COLLABORATION

Northern Ireland Species Recovery Partnership

The Northern Ireland Species Partnership brings together eNGOs working on species conservation across Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales with statutory agencies and other stakeholders to ensure a range of conservation and policy mechanisims are addressed.

Bat Conservation Ireland's Projects Coordinator, Karen Healy attended an in-person workshop in April 2025, in Belfast with Bat Conservation Trust to put cases forward for 5 bat species. All 5 bat species successfully made it to the list:

- Leisler's bat
- Nathusius' pipistrelle
- Whiskered bat
- Natterer's bat
- Brown Long-Eared Bat

Meetings took place each month between partners to develop draft species action plans.

Karen attended 2 online workshops in November, to discuss collaboration/community group involvement, cross taxa actions and key site selections.

Bat Conservation Ireland and Bat Conservation Trust put together a panel of experts to read through the first draft of the documents. Work will continue into 2026 and beyond.

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 a dedicated representative on the Environmental Pillar. Niamh Roche Bat Conservation Ireland's representative on the Environmental Pillar, was also re-elected to the Pillar Steering Committee in 2025.

In 2025, the following work was carried out in this capacity:

Meetings/Workshops Attended:

- Fourteen Pillar meetings and one Pillar Steering Committee meeting
- Attended NRL leaders forum in spring 2025
- Contributed to Mareire Knowledge Gaps document on Offshore Renewable Energy
- Attended meetings with Minister Darragh O'Brien in June, and EU Commission and Parliament in Brussels in October.

myEarth NI

Bat Conservation Ireland become a new delivery partner for myEarth NI, which is a new central environmental education hub in Northern Ireland. The online portal aims to '*engage people in action, educate through resources and offer opportunities to become involved in making a difference*'.

As a delivery partner we will make our education resources available through the portal enabling us to expand our educational reach throughout Northern Ireland.

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's nominated Trustee, Donnal Mullen stepped down in 2025, after completing her term on the Steering Committee of Bat Life Europe. She was replaced by Bat Conservation Ireland's Bat Ecologist, Dr. David Clarke, who joined the Steering Committee to represent Irish interests in this capacity.

Donna is a former Council member and one of the founding members of Bat Conservation Ireland and we were very grateful to have her extensive experience as an independent bat expert during her term with Bat Life Europe. She attended virtual monthly meetings as Bat Conservation Ireland's rep in 2025, until she completed her term. We have publicised Bat Life Europe's online events through our membership and suppoorter base.

Collaborative work carried out in 2025:

- CEDaR and Bat Conservation Trust - We provided Northern Ireland data from our monitoring programmes to CEDaR & BCT in the Spring of 2025 and continue to collabrate with Bat Conservation Trust on bat monitoring in Northern Ireland;
- Vincent Wildlife Trust: Attended a seminar in Limerick on Lesser Horsshoe Bats and gave a talk there. We also worked with the Vincent Wildlife Trust on the recent Lesser Horseshoe Bat mapping project;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC): Discussed Locally Important Biodiversity Areas and provided data as part of this discussion;
- The Bat Lab: Worked with Ph.D. graduate Dr. Gwen Hurphy on on her research papers;
- Climbats: Contributed to a published research paper in 2025;
- Native Woodland Trust: Worked with this NGO on our recent Lesser Horseshoe Bat modelling work;
- Cloughjordan Eco-village: Worked with them on their submission for funding;
- Wildacres - gave a talk and walk at one of their events and provided advice on bat houses
- Liaised with Grow It Yourself, Organic Centre, Sonairte and Irish Seed Savers to run workshops in their venues.

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

Nathusius' Pipistrelle Research Group

Nathusius' Pipistrelle Research Group received an NPWS Small Recorders Grant in 2024, to carry out an '*Investigation of Nathusius' pipistrelle and Leisler's bat activity along the eastern coastline of Ireland from Counties Louth to Wexford, Ireland.*'

Static bat detector units were deployed along the coastline of 5 counties on the east coast. The data was analysed using Kaleidoscope Pro and a total of 270 nights of recordings were completed for Period 1 (range from 10 – 24 nights per unit). A total of 281 nights of recordings were completed in Period 2 (range from 2 – 30 nights per unit). Nathusius' pipistrelle was recorded at twelve (86%) of the fourteen locations surveyed during Period 1. The number of bat passes ranged from 0 to 62 bat passes.

A second project – Project Icarus– targeted the potential for migratory behavior amongst Leisler's bat using innovative telemetry to allow tracking of long distance movements. Research undertaken in 2023 under Dr Dina Dechmann at the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior involved tracking several individual Leisler's bats. These bats were caught and small "Tinyfoxbatt" transmitting tags attached to them to allow tracking using the passive Sigfox network. The results were groundbreaking in that they demonstrated transboundary scale movements across continental Europe. The All Ireland Nathusius's pipistrelle group carried out similar tracking studies in 2024.



Static 3, Port Oriel, Clougherhead, Co. Louth (Photo: Tina Aughney)



Figure 1: General location of static units during Phase 1, 2024 study.

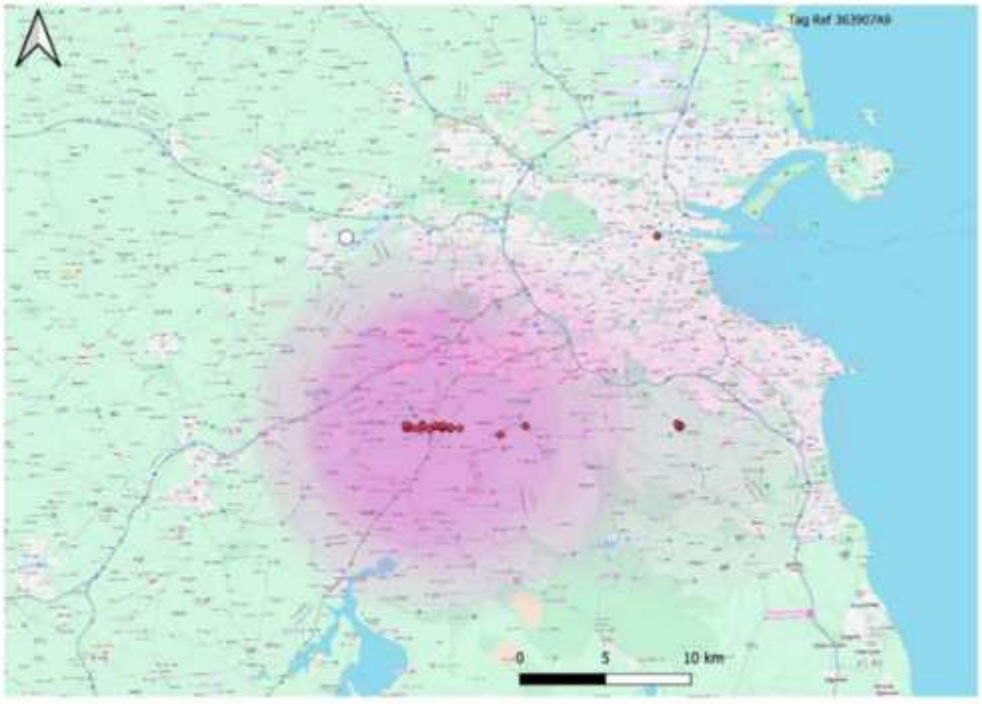
Nathusius' Pipistrelle Research Group

In 2025, It was proposed to repeat the Project-Icarus work undertaken in 2024 but to target bats at coastal locations. In theory this would increase the likelihood of bats being recorded offshore or even moving across the Irish Sea to Wales or England.

The choice of locations was influenced by access to bat box networks. 4 bats were found in boxes at coastal locations as St Ita's demesne, Portrane and 4 bats were also tagged from boxes at Marlay Park, located 6km inland. A bat was found in a box at Castletown House, Co. Kildare. Two bats that were released after being found by the public were also tagged - but in both cases the tags failed to communicate for more than a few hours.

None of the bats tagged in Ireland in 2025 showed movements that suggested long distance migration in Ireland. Only one bats showed movement of a significant distance and whilst this may suggest a long-distance seasonal shift, since the bat moved back a forth over this distance it would suggest this is not abnormal for this species.

8. Tag reference 33E07A9



This 17.1g adult female Leisler's bat was tagged at Castletown House (white dot) on 8 October 2025. Unfortunately the tag only lasted 3 days, during which the bat moved from the tagging location and spent almost all of the time in south-west County Dublin. There was no data that suggested offshore or migratory movements.

RESEARCH

The Community Foundation for Ireland

Research Collaboration with UCD

Bat Conservation Ireland has been working in collaboration with Prof. Emma Teeling at the Bat Lab in UCD since 2019, on 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. Analysis of the Bats and Bugs faecal samples was completed in late 2022/early 2023 by the UCD BatLab. We continued to promote these resources and presented the research results at 2 conferences/symposia (I domestic and I international) in 2024.

Other work on this topic continued in UCD during this time period, with a research PhD student (Gwen Hurpy) working on bat diets in Ireland supported by Bat Conservation Ireland.

In 2025, a research paper was published as follows:

Ecology and Evolution (published) 2025 - *Metabarcoding Reveals the Dietary Patterns of Bats Within a Unique European Habitat, the Pasture-Dominated Landscapes of Ireland;* Authors: Gwenaelle Hurphy, Tina Aughney, Ilze Skujina, Niamh Roche





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 represented Bat Conservation Ireland on Working Group 2 on Bat Monitoring, having a wealth of experience in running 2 All-Ireland bat monitoring progammes 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.

There were no meetings held in 2025 as the project had come to an end, however Niamh Roche Contributed to 2 research papers:

- Paper published in *Ecography: A Journal of Space and Time in Ecology* (published) - 2025 - Title '*The effects of climate on bat morphology across space and time'; Authors: Laura Paltrinieri, Orly Razgour, Et. Al.*
- Paper published in *Conservation Biology* (published) 2025 - *Changes in community composition and functional diversity of European bats under climate change; Authors: Penelope C. Fialas, Luca Santini, Danilo Russo, Francisco Amorim, Et. Al.*

RESEARCH

Lesser Horseshoe Bat: Mapping Landscape Connectivity to Facilitate Species Recovery and Expansion in Ireland

This project was a collaborative piece of research with the Vincent Wildlife Trust and Native Woodland Trust. The work was funded by the Biodiversity Hub of the Irish Environmental Network. The work is a new study on landscape permeability for the lesser horseshoe bat throughout its range.

We used modelling to identify pathways that link known roosts with areas that may contribute towards the recovery and range expansion of the species. The funding application, project planning and modelling took place in 2025.

Lesser Horseshoe Bat: Landscape Models

Earlier this year we received funding from National Park and Wildlife Service to carry out species distribution modelling of lesser horseshoe bat summer and winter roost network. The models created landcover favourability maps for the species across the Republic of Ireland, in both winter and summer. This work was carried out as part of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat Species Action Plan.

The resulting maps indicated that there are some noticeable gaps in the species roost network - even within its core areas. It is possible that the species is already present in some of these areas but unrecorded, or that the creation of artificial roosts would benefit it and allow it to move into these locations.

The full report can be downloaded here https://www.batconservationireland.org/what-we-do/publications.

FUTURE PLANS

Bat Conservation Ireland's plans for 2026 and beyond are as follows:

Organisational Structure

- Bat Conservation Ireland's current Strategic Plan (2022-2025), is coming to an end. Bat Conservation Ireland will commit to developing a new Strategic Plan in 2026;
- In 2024, an independent consultancy, carried out an interim review of our Strategic Plan, the Council and Staff will continue to implement the recommendations in 2026, as well an incorporating these into the next strategic plan;
- In 2025, Bat Conservation Ireland formally reported to the Charities Regulator on our compliance the Governance Code. In 2026, we will continue reviewing, amending and updating our governance policies and procedures, to ensure 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 2025. We will continue to liaise with the bat groups, provide administrative support and advice necessary to help them meet compliance requirements;
- In 2025, our new organisational database and CRM was launched. This has proven to be a very useful tool in managing and communicating our work to our members and supporters. We will continue to develop this in 2026, to enable us to widen our communications reach.

Conservation Work

- As we won the tender for monitoring for Irish Bat Monitoring Programme (2022-2027), we intend to meet the requirements of this tender through the 5 year period;
- Continue to develop materials and resources for the 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;
- We will continue using reserve monies that are available, to fund the Small Grants Scheme, which support conservation projects and activities throughout Ireland;

FUTURE PLANS

- Develop our work on monitoring schemes and roll out an expanded Woodland Bat Monitoring pilot scheme in 2026 to encompass additional counties and sites in Northern Ireland, as per our commitments;
- Bat Conservation Ireland will continue its 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 3 websites - www.batconservationireland.org, www.learnaboutbats.org, www.batsandbugs.org;
    - Updating our main website www.batconservationireland.org and www.learnaboutbats.org, based on feedback from the education focus group, to ensure it is user friendly and provides current and relevant information;
    - Conduct bat walks and talks, centrally through Bat Conservation Ireland staff, county bat groups and bat panel 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;
    - Carry out educational activities during Biodiversity Week and Heritage Week for the general public;
    - Maintain and update our social media platforms, continue to develop our social media presence through, platforms newly engaged with - LinkedIn and TikTok, to help engage and educate the general public about bats;
    - Continue to deliver events through our bat panel of educators across the island, support them in delivering events and provide ongoing refresher training to panel members.

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 Phase III of 'Gardening for Bats' project, which aims to improve gardens as bat habitats, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas. In this phase we will continue to engage with garden centres and plant suppliers through an educational and awareness campaign;
- Ensure the projects sponsored through the Tidy Towns Special Awards to date are

FUTURE PLANS

all completed and promoted, with a view to sponsoring additional special awards in 2027;
- Help support Tidy Towns on projects such bat box schemes, 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 and Eurobats through our representative appointed, to ensure that issues around Irish bats are well represented at European Level;
- Continue working with national environmental organisations around the country to ensure that bat issues receive good exposure;

Data Research

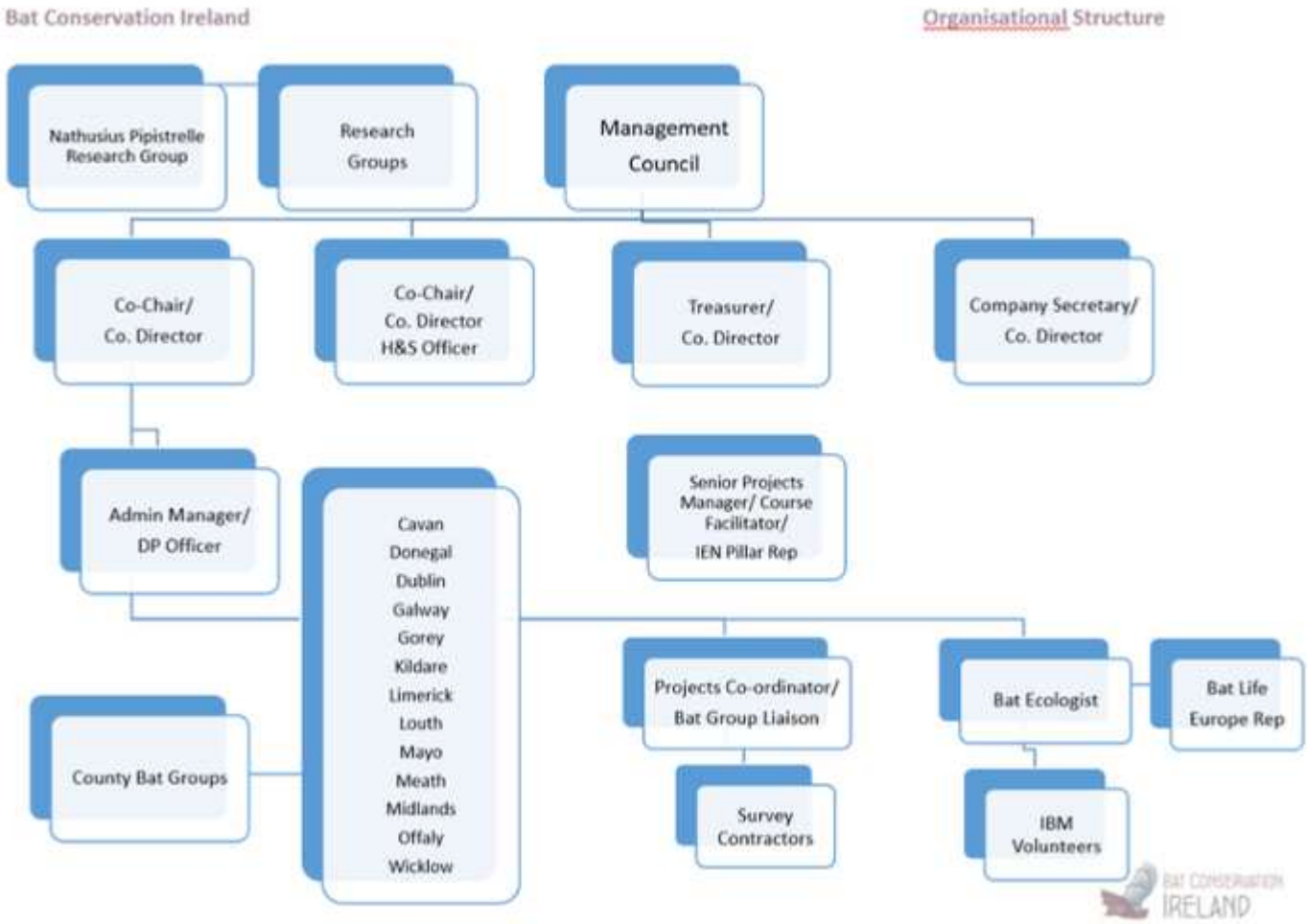
- Ensure that data is uploaded to our database housing bat records to ensure it is accurate and up to date;
- Liaise with NBDC around housing of bat records and feed data into their database repositories;
- Continue participating in research collaborations and if the COST Action Network: Climbats receives new funding to continue their work, we will collaborate with them
- Continue participating in research collaborations such as UCD's Batlab and any future work on Ecosystems Services and bat research;
- Continue collaborating with researchers 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 (Comprised of 9 Council members in 2025) and a small, paid part-time staff. We have 14 bat groups at various stages of development, around the country. Our current organisational structure is laid out in the matrix below.



STAFF

David Clarke



David joined Bat Conservation Ireland in May 2023 as a Bat Ecologist. He has over ten years' experience working in environmental education and conducting research in a range of ecological fields.

David became interested in bats while working and living in New Zealand. During this time, he initiated and coordinated two research projects examining the presence and distribution of long-tailed bats in the wider Auckland region, a species classed as 'Nationally Critical' and needing urgent conservation action to protect remaining populations. Both projects involved active collaboration with communities, ecological consultancies, local and regional authorities, and universities.

David has an honours degree in Environmental Science from the University of Galway, and a Ph.D. in Acarology, also from the University of Galway.

STAFF

Karen Healy



Karen joined Bat Conservation Ireland in November 2023 as Projects Co-ordinator. Karen has over seventeen years' experience working in the community and environment sector in Northern Ireland.

Karen has over seventeen years' experience working in the community and environment sector in Northern Ireland. As Environmental Officer at Creggan Country Park, Karen worked with a wide range of groups through the environmental volunteer programme, nature themed events, community fridge, tree nursery and environmental education programme.

Karen has been an active volunteer committee member of the Northern Ireland Bat Group since 2007 and served as Chairperson from 2015 - 2022. In both roles she has helped recruit and train new volunteers, created an education resource, organised member meet ups, and volunteer events. Karen is a licenced roost visitor (NIEA) and registered bat carer (Bat Conservation Trust). She has volunteered in the Irish Bat Monitoring Programme (Car-Based Bat Monitoring and All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterway Survey) and completes a Roost Count and Hibernation Survey each year for Bat Conservation Trust's NBMP.

Karen has a degree in Environmental Science and MSc in Environmental Management from Ulster University and has a TQUK qualification in Education and Training and ILM qualification in Volunteer Management and Mentoring.

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, as well as carrying out conservation project on a local level
- 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







MEMBERSHIP

Bat Conservation Ireland is a membership organisation that greatly values its members, volunteers and supporters, all 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 2025, through their membership and also through their invaluable voluntary work.

Volunteers with Bat Conservation Ireland play a key role in supporting the work of the bat monitoring projects carried out annually. In 2025, there were 290 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 2025, we were able to provide a range of activities and volunteering opportunities for members to engage in.

In 2025, with funding from the Heritage Council, we launched our new membership CRM platform in order to ensure that membership fees are processed in an efficient manner. Our CRM also allows us to manage member engagement and communicate with our members more efficiently and effectively. This has enabled us to use staff time in a more efficient manner and has allowed for more effective engagement with friends and supporters of Bat Conservation Ireland.

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)	€117,009
Woodland Pilot Monitoring Scheme	€52,859
Core Funding (IEN - Dept. of the Environment, Climate & Communications)	€47,761
IEN - Biodiversity Week	€3,300
Membership and Donations	€8,285
Sales of Merchandise, Data Searches, Events & Training Courses	€49,907
Heritage Council	€25,583
Bat Group Projects	€6,098
Other Funding (IEN)	€20,295
Once-off Bat Projects	€15,932
	€347,029

Expenditure

Irish Bat Monitoring Programme	€13,796
IEN Biodiversity Week	€-
Once-off Projects	€35,324
Bat Group Projects	€ 25,719
Woodland Pilot Monitoring Scheme	€22,250
Bat Workshops/Courses/Walks	€12,244
Merchandise	€1,409

Core Costs

Wages and Salaries	€150,030
Social Welfare Costs	€17,056
Staff Defined Contribution Pension Costs	€3,919
Staff Training	€2,341
Management Expenses	€3,731
Insurance	€3,994
Printing, Postage & Stationery	€6,842
Computer Costs	€12,497
Motor Expenses	€1,113
Hotel, Travel & Subsistence	€-
Legal & Professional Fees	€-
Consultancy Fees	€-
Bank Charges	€167
Bad Debts	€388
Staff Welfare	€-
General Expenses	€2,871
Subscriptions	€385
Auditor's Remuneration	€5,105
Depreciation	€-
	€321,181
Net Surplus	€25,848

*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, including a bat house. Net Surplus for 2025 includes project monies deferred from previous years.

Funding IN 2025

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

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

Purpose: Core Funding
Grant Term: 2025-2026
Total Value of Funding: €47,761

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

Purpose: Biodiversity Hub - Shadow Nature Retoration Plan
Grant Term: 2025-2026
Total Value of Funding: €16,369

The Heritage Council, Organisation Support Fund

Purpose: Build an Online Training Platform
Grant Term: 2024-2025
Total Value of Funding: €50,000

The Heritage Council, Community Heritage Grant Scheme

Purpose: Gardening for Bats Project - Phase II
Grant Term: 2025
Total Value of Funding: €15,583

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

Purpose: National Bat Distribution Project
Grant Term: 2025-2026
Total Value of Funding: €23,009

Funding

IN 2025

Donegal County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €4,836

Kildare County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €2,636

Kilkenny County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €4,836

Longford County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €2,636

Louth County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €903

Limerick City Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €4,837

Meath County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €2,636

Monaghan County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €2,636

Offaly County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €5,000

Sligo County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €2,636

Wicklow County Council

Purpose: Woodland Monitoring Pilot Scheme 2025
Total Value of Contract: €2,636



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

NIEA Northern Ireland Environment Agency
www.ni-environment.gov.uk



Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

IEN



Irish Environmental Network

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



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BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND

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