

WINTER NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026

THANK YOU

Hello, and welcome to your winter newsletter. As we edge towards spring, we're reflecting on the previous season and want to say a very big thank you for supporting Cleveland Bat Group throughout 2025. Your membership and interest continues to ensure that this small group can make a big contribution to protecting and restoring bats in our area.



IMAGE LAURA MASKERY. COMMON PIPISTRELLE.



IMAGE LAURA MASKERY. COMMON PIPISTRELLE.

BATS IN OUR AREA

Bats are currently hibernating, either solo or in small groups. Old trees with little crevices, disused buildings and other cool, quiet places are favoured spots.

Bats may begin to leave their roosts occasionally for a drink of water or to seek food, on warmer February nights.

BAT CARE

Cleveland Bat Group currently has six active carers.

Throughout the 2025 season, 19 bats were taken into care; 8 were released; 1 remains in care and is continuing to recover. The bats who did not survive either died in care or were supported to pass peacefully with vet assistance.



IMAGE LAURA MASKERY. COMMON PIPISTRELLE.

If you'd like to learn more about bat care, please email clevelandbatgroup@gmail.com or visit Cleveland Bat Group on Facebook.





CARE CASE STUDY

Bat carer, Hannah cared for this juvenile, male common pipistrelle from Stockton last season. Named Crash (for his ungainly landing), he was found grounded and very weak.

After three months of care, nutrition and flight time, Crash was successfully released where he was found. Well done Crash and Hannah!



IMAGE HANNAH WILSON. COMMON PIPISTRELLE.



IMAGES HANNAH WILSON. COMMON PIPISTRELLE - WITH MEASUREMENT TOOL, AND WITHIN GLOVED HANDS.

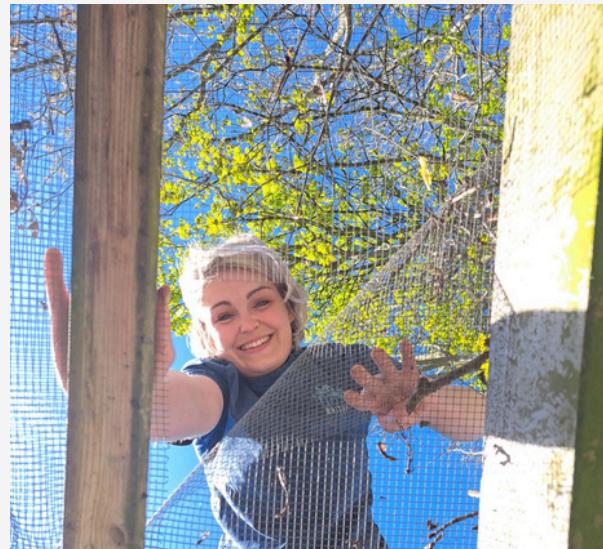
FLIGHT CAGE

To support the rehabilitation of bats in care, Cleveland Bat Group has a flight cage.

After four years of use, important maintenance work was carried out on the flight cage in the spring. Rotten and weathered plywood was replaced, holes were filled, gravel was added to the flagstone flooring to seal gaps and the entire structure was made bat proof, ensuring a safe and secure flight practice environment for rehabilitating bats from Cleveland and Durham Bat Groups.

The flight cage is a hugely important addition to bat care work, giving carers the opportunity to test flight bats outdoors, in the safety of a large, enclosed space. It provides exercise for rehabilitating bats and bridges the gap between indoor care and safe release back to the wild.

A huge well done and thank you to all the volunteers involved in this important work. Our continued thanks go to the landowner, a friend of the bat group, who hosts the flight cage. The flight cage plays a vital role in helping bats recover and return to the wild.



IMAGES OF THE FLIGHT CAGE AND OF CARER, JENNY DIXON, WORKING ON THE CAGE. IMAGES, SARAH BARRY

BAT CARE WORKSHOP

An introductory bat care workshop was held in July at Askham Bryan College, Stewart's Park, Middlesbrough.

Delivered by volunteer bat carers from Cleveland Bat Group, the session was aimed at adults interested in learning more about bat care. The workshop covered the basics of bat care, local bat species, common issues and carer experiences, and offered a great first step towards future training. Since this event, a number of attendees have received bat care training and have become active carers. An amazing outcome.

Many thanks to everyone who attended and supported the event.



IMAGE OF C. PIPISTRELLES AT WORKSHOP, SARAH BARRY



IMAGE OF JUVENILE C.PIPISTRELLE, LAURA MASKERY



EVENTS ROUND-UP

Thanks to the engagement of you, the members, and of interested members of our extended community, 2025 was a great year for events.

Cleveland Bat Group attended a Brilliant Bats events at Ormesby Library on 31 October (Halloween!), sharing batty gardening tips, making crafts and playing games. A big thanks for Dave Stocks for sharing some fascinating bat facts!



IMAGE DAVE STOCKS.



IMAGES OF 2025 EVENTS ATTENDED BY CLEVELAND BAT GROUP. IMAGES, DAVE STOCKS.

Other events included a bat walk and talk at Great Ayton in September. Within 30 minutes of detecting around the waterfall park, the group identified daubenton's bats, common pipistrelles and soprano pipistrelles. A talk followed the bat walk in Great Ayton Library.

Another very successful bat walk was held at Guisbrough Forest Walkway in August, with more than 50 people turning out to detect bats and more than 300 passes being recorded for pipistrelles, myotis species', and noctules.

Also in August, a bat walk was held in Saltburn Woods, beginning in the valley gardens and exploring the area around the viaduct.

In June, Kirkleatham Owl Centre hosted a detector overnight and picked up a wealth of bat passes as part of Wildlife Weekend. During the day, children and adults alike thoroughly enjoyed engaging with Cleveland Bat Group, learning about bats and making batty crafts.

Aside from bat walks and detecting, the group held a stall at the Move with Nature Festival in Saltburn on 17 August, sharing lots of bat information and making many bat puppets with interested children! Cleveland Bat Group was delighted to be part of this event; a wonderful celebration of nature and community.

A huge thank you to Dave Stocks for coordinating many of these bat walks, and to all other Cleveland Bat Group volunteers and members for supporting these events.



A BATTY BOOK

Friend of Cleveland Bat Group, Ian Bond published a new children's book in 2025. It's a "just so" poem speculating on how the bat might have got its wings, followed by some educational material. Ideal for children aged roughly 6-10 years.

The book is £5.99 plus £2 for P&P.

75% of any profit that the book makes will go to the Bat Conservation Trust.

If you would like a copy or more information, email Ian at ravenonthewing@hotmail.co.uk

PLEASE HELP YOUR LOCAL BAT GROUP

Cleveland Bat Group currently has vacancies available on its committee. If you'd like to help contribute to conserving bats in our area, please get involved. It's a great opportunity to support local wildlife and gain valuable experience. You don't need any specific skills, just an enthusiasm to help local bats! Give as much or as little time as you choose. Email clevelandbats@gmail.com for more information.

Ordinary committee members - attending meetings, contributing to discussions

Secretary - writing minutes, checking email, group coordination, admin

Treasurer/membership manager - funds and expenditure; paying for equipment; checking fees; processing membership forms

Other - help on a bat walk, fundraise, care, collect grounded bats (requires own car)

SEE YOU SOON!

Thank you for your continued support of Cleveland Bat Group.

For any queries, to volunteer, or to renew your membership, please email clevelandbatgroup@gmail.com.

Please keep an eye on your inbox and our Facebook for 2026 events!

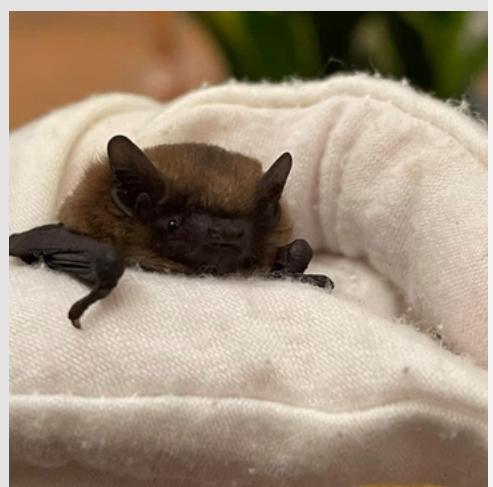


IMAGE OF C.PIPISTRELLE, LAURA MASKERY