

# **Warwickshire Bat Group Constitution**

## **1 NAME**

The Group's name is the WARWICKSHIRE BAT GROUP (herein referred to as the Group). It is partnered to the Bat Conservation Trust

## **2 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE GROUP**

- (1) to advance the protection and conservation of bats, their roosts, feeding areas and hibernacula in the areas of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull;
- (2) to educate the public and the Group members in all matters relating to bats;
- (3) to actively participate in the research and recording of bats in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull;
- (4) to train members in the identification, care, and handling of bats and as licensed bat workers;
- (5) to provide a network of volunteers who are able to care for grounded and injured bats.

## **3 THE COMMITTEE**

The Group shall be managed by an elected committee of members who are appointed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Committee will consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of ten members. At meetings of the Committee a quorum of three Committee members will be required to conduct business. Committee members are required to resign at the next Annual General Meeting following their appointment but will be eligible to stand for re-election.

## **5 MEMBERSHIP**

Anyone who supports the work of the Group can become a member upon payment of an agreed annual fee. Membership lasts for 1 year. The Committee will maintain a list of members. The Committee may withdraw a person's membership if they believe it is in the best interests of the Group to do so. A member has the right to be told of the pending withdrawal of membership and given the opportunity to be heard by the Committee before the withdrawal is finalised.

## **6 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - AGM**

- (1) The AGM must be held every year and within fifteen months of the previous AGM. Members should be given at least two weeks' notice of the meeting. Minutes must be kept of the AGM and presented for adoption by the members at the next AGM. The agenda and minutes of the previous AGM will be available on the Group's website prior to the meeting.
- (2) There must be at least four members present at the AGM to validate decisions;
- (3) Every member has one vote and voting is conducted by a show of hands. Where a family membership is held, up to two votes may be cast by those members. In the event of a tied vote, the chair will have the casting vote;
- (4) The Committee members shall present the annual report and accounts;

(5) The meeting shall elect between 3 and 10 Committee members (including chair, treasurer, secretary and other posts identified as fundamental to the work of the Group) to serve for the following year.

## 7 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(1) There will be at least 4 Committee meetings each year. The Committee will act by majority decision;

(2) At least 3 Committee members must be in agreement for decisions to be taken. Minutes shall be kept for every meeting;

(3) Committee members will declare any conflict of interest;

(4) During the year, the Committee may appoint additional Committee members to undertake specific functions. Such co-opted committee members will stand down at the next AGM;

(5) The Committee may make reasonable additional rules to help in the running of the Group. These rules must not conflict with this constitution or the law and must be ratified at the next AGM.

## 8 FINANCE AND PROPERTY

(1) The money and property of the Group must only be used for the Group's purposes;

(2) A record of all receipts and payments must be kept and an annual financial statement prepared for submission to the AGM for approval. The most recent annual accounts can be viewed by any member on request;

(3) Committee members cannot receive any money from the Group except to refund reasonable out-of-pocket expenses;

(4) Group members cannot receive any property from the Group except to hold it for use by the Group;

(5) All money pertaining to the Group must be held in the Group's bank account.

## 9 GENERAL MEETINGS

If the Committee consider it is necessary to change the constitution, or wind up the Group, they must call a General Meeting to put this before the membership for decision. A General Meeting will also be held if a written request is received from the majority of members. All members must be given 14 days' notice of a General Meeting and be told the reason for the meeting. All decisions require a two thirds majority of those present. Minutes must be kept of the meeting;

(1) Winding up - any money or property remaining after payment of debts must be given to a Group with similar purposes;

(2) Changes to the Constitution - can be made at the AGM or at a General Meeting. No change can be made that would result in the dissolution of the Group;

(3) General Meeting - called on written request from a majority of members and/or may also be called to consult the membership on other fundamental matters relating to the work of the Group.

## 10 CONSULTATION OF MEMBERS IN LIEU OF A GENERAL MEETING

At the discretion of the committee, an electronic poll may be used to obtain the views of the membership. In such a case, the following conditions shall apply:

- (1) The poll shall remain open for 10 days, to allow members time to respond;
- (2) The poll will not be deemed valid unless a minimum of 20% of paid-up members cast a vote. Note: In calculating the number of paid-up members, a family membership will count as 2 members; where a family membership is held, up to two votes may be cast by those members;
- (3) For a decision to be carried, a strict majority of those voting must vote in favour. In the event of a tied vote, the chair will have the casting vote.

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