



South Derbyshire Badger Group

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The Badger

**Newsletter
Spring 2017**



Member



Affiliated to the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust



South Derbyshire Badger Group



@SDerbyBadger

...And Finally (From This Chair)

Most of those members who attend our group meetings will already know, but I have to announce to the wider group that, at the AGM at the end of March, I intend to stand down as Chairman of the South Derbyshire Badger Group.

By the time we get to that AGM, I will have been in the 'hot seat' for fifteen years, though where that time has gone, escapes me.

I will also have passed a certain landmark birthday, which will make me sound very old, so it is time to go and to have someone younger and more 'au fait' with modern communications systems, than I am. It appears that neither the Badger Trust nor the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust can cope with a letter anymore and certainly both have stopped writing to me!

Fortunately, we have just the man in our own Vice Chairman, Richard Thornewill, who agreed to take over. Richard works in the 'dreaded' I.T. and can communicate with anyone, anywhere and he has become much more involved in the Group and the welfare of the South Derbyshire Badgers over the last few years.

Personally, I shall still be involved with the Group and probably still a Committee Member if that is the wish of the members at the AGM.

So, in signing off as Chairman, I would like to thank all Committee Members, past and present, and all Group Members who have helped and given their support over the last fifteen years. Long may that continue under your new Chairman.

Stephen

Police Developments

Wildlife Crime Officers in South Derbyshire have created a Facebook page dedicated to raising awareness of wildlife crime in our area. It is also to raise the profile of the Specialist Wildlife Crime Officers and the issues with which they deal.

We do, in fact, have a new Wildlife Crime Officer at Swadlincote station. He is PC23, Paul Russell who contacted the group recently and is now aware of our existence, which is good. According to the County Wildlife Crime Officer, PC Emerson Buckingham, the county, being very rich in wildlife, is open to exploitation by certain people for no legitimate reason.

The page is, not surprisingly, 'Derbyshire Constabulary Wildlife Officers'. Do take a look at it if you are able.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Hardyal Dhindsa has continued in the wake of his predecessor, Alan Charles, in the battle against rural and wildlife crime by setting up a 27-strong rural crime unit in Derbyshire, due to begin work in the Spring.

High value rural crimes such as the theft of tractors and other major farm machinery as well as animal rustling and diesel theft can be devastating to our local farming communities. The new team will be concerned with all of the above as well as wildlife crimes which often include our badgers.

Obviously, any move which will get these specially focussed Officers in and around our local countryside can only be a good one, and hopefully might reduce the incidence of rural and wildlife crime in the County.

Food for Thought

1. Fools are in a terrible, overwhelming majority, all the wide world over.

Henrik Ibsen

2. What have we learnt in the two Millennia?
 - a. The budget should be balanced
 - b. The treasury should be refilled
 - c. Public debt should be reduce
 - d. The arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled.
 - e. The assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest we become bankrupt
 - f. People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance.

Cicero – 55BC
(evidently Nothing!)

Group Meetings

We have held three group meeting since the last newsletter of 2016. In November, Stephen Williams showed us more of his wonderful wildlife photography, to the delight of all those present.

We don't have a meeting at the end of December, there always seems to be something else going on! So, our January meeting was the famous general knowledge quiz, set by the Chairman this time, with plenty of food and drink which was brought along by everyone on the night. Nineteen members attended. The winners of the quiz were, AGAIN, Jane and Mark Taylor but this time they did have some help from Yvonne Marceau. As Jane and Mark won last year too, they have the dubious honour of setting the question for next year's quiz. We can't have them winning three in a row!

Ten days prior to the quiz we had, for the first time in several years, a group meal. This was held at the Coopers Arms, Weston on Trent and eighteen members were present. It turned out to be a very informal and jolly evening and excellent food was enjoyed by all. The whole thing was organised by Liz Oldring so thanks to her for reviving an event that we used to hold in the past, but which unfortunately had dropped away over the last few years. Keep a lookout in the Winter newsletter 2017 for details of the next one.

The February meeting at Ticknall was a talk by Ian Retson of the Woodland Trust. Ian had been to talk to us about the Trust a couple of years ago but this one was something quite different as he described his ascent of Kilimanjaro.

Assisted by excellent colour slides of the trek, Ian recreated what a wonderful experience this was for him, all the way up and down. Who is game for a Badger Group expedition up there next year?

We again had a good turn-out of interested members on the night.

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE BADGER GROUP
MONDAY 27th MARCH 2017
AT TICKNALL VILLAGE HALL 7:30 PM**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Adoption of minutes of previous AGM
3. Chairman's Report
4. Presentation and adoption of accounts
5. Any other reports
6. Notice of Motions
7. Election of Officers and Members of General Committee
8. Any other business

Notices of motions or additions to the Agenda will be at the discretion of the General Committee and must be received by the Secretary not less than seven days before the Annual General Meeting.

Nominations to the General Committee must be received by the Secretary not less than seven days before the Annual General Meeting and must be supported by a Proposer and Seconder who are members of the Group. Retiring members shall not require the support of a proposer and seconder to stand for re-election.

All members are urged to attend the AGM. The officers and General Committee need to be elected for the coming year and the balance sheet for 2016 needs to be approved. The Secretary has received nominations for Chairman and Vice Chairman.

The Committee is still short of the ideal number to operate – could **YOU** help?

Everyone is invited to bring something to eat as we did at our Quiz evening in January, tea and coffee will also be available.

All Members are reminded that Subscriptions are due on the 1st March 2016 so could you please return your fee and the completed bottom half of the enclosed membership form to Alan Stone.

Look forward to seeing you all at TICKNALL VILLAGE HALL on 27th March 2017 at 7.30pm.
Stephen.

Looking Back

SDBG Newsletter Spring 2001

Fifteen years ago, the first newsletter of 2001 reported that during the previous October, November and December, approximately 400 badgers were trapped and shot by MAFF on the border between Staffordshire and Derbyshire, in an area off the Ashbourne to Leek Road. As yet, no badger had been found to be carrying bTB!!!

Brian Jones, the Chairman, announced that this was to be his last Newsletter as he was standing down after eleven years (is that all! - SHG) and appealed for someone to take up the role - wonder what happened?

Editor Dan Hastings repeated the appeal in his editorial and revealed that the Group was also in dire need of a Vice Chairman and a Secretary. Without these Officers in 2001, the Group was apparently under threat of terminating. Thankfully we are not in that position today.

Drapers Wood Report

Our own wood and badger sett continue to flourish. Peanuts have been left on a fairly regular basis over the short, colder spells of this winter. These have been taken repeatedly and there does seem to be more activity. As we move into the 'cubbing' season, it would be nice to think that, as I write this, there might be one or two new additions underground.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, three dates were selected for work parties at the wood and as promised these dates were released to Members at our annual quiz & social on January 30th.

The first work party was organised for Sunday, 5th February 2017 and a record number of twelve Members turned up to help. Bird boxes were emptied, cleared out and repaired as necessary; only three had nests this time. Many sacks of rubbish were also collected, including quite a lot of glass and old bottles which still keep appearing above ground from the old District Council tip, and some tree trunks, felled last year, were logged up for workers to take away. The snowdrops we planted the first year we took over the wood are also doing well.

On the badger front, one brand new entrance on the eastern bank of the wood had been dug out only the night before the work party with a large amount of spoil in evidence. The pathways and tunnel under the brambles at the top north eastern corner, where the badgers exit the site, was very heavily used and looked like a main road under the bushes.

We had set up our new wildlife camera, purchased last year, and are pleased to report that, throughout the day and night that it was in place, it recorded several pigeons, a fat cat, magpies, a squirrel, another cat and finally a very fit looking badger who devoured the dish of peanuts we had left for him under a heavy rock. At last!



The work team was so efficient that at the end of the morning it was decided that the next work party was not necessary and that we would reconvene in a month for the final one when a few trees need to be thinned out and some dead/diseased ones removed.

We must mention here, however, that the day of the first work party was Committee Member Mark Taylor's birthday. He appeared with a wonderful lemon sponge cake, conjured up by wife Jane, and this was divided very easily and equally into twelve and



enjoyed by all when we broke off for coffee.

You see, it's not all work when we arrange these things, so please feel free to come along and join us next time.



RTA totals

The total number of Badger RTAs which were reported to us in 2016 was 107. This, compared with the previous year's total of 81, may seem a little high but twice during the last ten years our reported total was 104, so nothing out of the ordinary really. Our average over the eleven years since the start of 2006 is 89.5 per year.

Once again, members are urged to report any dead badgers they see at the roadside so that we can keep an accurate running total each year. Please note that, unlike many badger Groups, we do attend approximately 95% of these RTA's in order to firstly check them over and then to move them out of sight so that they don't remain in view of the public while they take weeks to decompose.

Obviously we are unable to attend on motorways and some fast dual carriageways where it would be unsafe for Members to do so. However, please do still report road deaths, should you spot one, on these major roads.

Badger Carcass Collection Scheme

The last three injured badgers due to RTA that we have taken to Pride Park Veterinary Hospital have all had to be put to sleep as they were too badly injured. Each time this happened the staff asked us if it would be acceptable if they sent the badger to the Nottingham University Veterinary School at Sutton Bonington to have a post-mortem and to be checked for bTB. We readily agreed, obviously.

Over the last few months we have been made aware that this processing of dead badgers and the collection scheme has been growing and a couple of Committee meetings ago, Member Lynn Smith distributed special collection bags and instructions to each Committee Member. She had collected these from the Pride Park vets and Lynn has already taken two badgers back there to be examined.

At the beginning of February, Richard and I attended a meeting in Belper, at the invitation of Mid-Derbyshire Group, where we were addressed by Professor Malcolm Bennett who is in charge of the whole scheme, accompanied by one of his PhD students Jess Phoenix. The intention is to examine one hundred dead badgers from each of the counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Cheshire. These are all designated 'edge area counties' as far as bovine TB outbreaks are concerned. Obviously, it will be of great interest to each group to find out if any badgers in their own areas are infected. For the badgers to be collected and sent in they need to be fresh and/or intact, so if you spot one at the roadside do call a Committee Member that same day please, in order that we can get things moving quickly.

We can take the carcasses to the vets at Pride Park or to Sutton Bonington, and the vet school is happy to collect them if we let them know. There is even talk of a (pseudo cash back reimbursement) payment per carcass, which will prove useful to the Group. Unfortunately, for the badger of course, I did have an RTA reported to me the morning after the above-mentioned meeting and so I attended, bagged her up as required and contacted Sutton Bonington, only to have the Professor himself call about two hours later to pick her up. So the system does work!

If anyone else would like a collection kit to keep in the car, do let me know.

Web site describing the study:

<http://nottingham.ac.uk/vet/survey-for-tb-in-road-killed-badgers.aspx>

Stephen

Although the final results of this study will be some time, we have been enlightened with the fact that a very small number of the Badgers studied so far have exhibited a condition known as pseudo Hermaphroditism, where the badger looks male on the outside but is female on the inside. We hope to learn more as the study progresses.

High Peak Badger Group

A few newsletters ago, we reported the new Chair for the Mid-Derbyshire Group. This time, we can report the new Chair for the High Peak Badger Group. The lucky individual is Andy Banks, contact details on final page.

Chester Badger March 10th December 2016 (Carol Sharratt)

Even though it was getting close to Christmas and everyone has a lot of commitments at this time of year a large number of people gathered in Chester to support "Cheshire against the Cull" and protest against the government's strategy of culling badgers to control BOVINE TB. People of many ages and different backgrounds marched through Chester to draw attention to the plight of these iconic animals that have inhabited the UK far longer than the human species.

Speakers included the Vice Chair of the League against Cruel Sports and also Dominic Dyer, the CEO of the Badger Trust.

Dominic gave an impassioned speech pointing out that TB only accounted for 5% of premature cattle deaths. Other causes include mastitis, infertility and lameness but these cannot be blamed on the badger as a convenient scapegoat.

The taxpayer would get far better value if the money spent on the badger cull was spent on better cattle testing procedures and better biosecurity measures.

<https://goo.gl/photos/ck8mb9jKF9KhwgLLA>

Badger Vaccination Update

While the original sole source of the BCG Vaccine used to date in the UK still appears to indicate no dates for availability, the Badger Trust has sought alternative supplies, worldwide. There may be some light at the end of that tunnel this year and we remain hopeful that Vaccination could resume later this year.

Elsewhere in the News

8th February 2017 – Badger Trust Response to: Guidance to Natural England on licensed badger control to prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis.

The Badger Trust has been working alongside the Born Free Foundation, RSPCA and Humane Society International to co-ordinate responses to the DEFRA Consultation:-

"Bovine TB: supplementary badger disease control"

This closed on Friday 10 February. This link tells you more. Click > [here](#) <

This link shows you the full Badger Trust response. Several committee members have also responded before the deadline. Click > [here](#) <.

8th February 2017 – The Badger Trust has welcomed the government's rejections of calls from the Environment Select Committee for the charity to lose its private prosecution powers.

<https://www.badger.org.uk/single-post/2017/02/08/Badger-Trust-welcomes-government-decision-for-RSPCA-to-carry-on-prosecuting-animal-cruelty-cases>

6th February 2017 – On 4 February the Government e-petition set up by naturalist and broadcaster Simon King reached 100,000 signatures. Badger Trust calls for an urgent debate in Parliament on planned extension of badger culls.

<https://www.badger.org.uk/single-post/2017/02/06/Badger-Trust-calls-for-urgent-debate-in-Parliament-on-planned-extension-of-badger-culls-as-e-petition-exceeds-100000-signatures>

3rd February 2017 – Ireland Oral Vaccines. Found from a tweet seen from Badger Trust CEO Dominic Dyer. This appears to report that both injectable and oral Badger TB Vaccine has been used in the Republic of Ireland, as well as Vaccines for cattle! Click > [here](#) <

11th Jan 2017 – DORSET CULL RESULTS

Check out this open letter on the badger cull results in Dorset. Results indicate the cull company claims to have killed 3000 badgers in just 50 nights of killing operations. That amounts to 60 badgers a night for 50 nights! Much cynicism and questionable counting methods is discussed.

<https://www.badger.org.uk/single-post/2017/01/23/DORSET-FOR-BADGER-AND-BOVINE-WELFARE-BADGER-CULL-RESULTS>



Tel: Chairman Stephen Grimley – Tel. 07754 094177

Web: <http://www.southderbyshirebadgergroup.co.uk/>

Email: info@southderbyshirebadgergroup.co.uk

COMMITTEE CONTACT NUMBERS

CHAIRMAN	STEPHEN GRIMLEY	07754 094177
VICE CHAIR	RICHARD THORNEWILL	
SECRETARY	CAROL STONE	
TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP	ALAN STONE	
COMMITTEE	LIZ OLDRING	
	LYNN HAZEL SMITH	
	MARK TAYLOR	
	VAL STEPHENSON	

Contacts/Details for Neighbouring Badger Groups

<u>MID DERBYSHIRE GROUP:</u>	BARRY DAWBER	01773 822590
	IRENE BRIERTON	01773 852647

<http://www.midderbyshirebadgergroup.co.uk/> meet Wednesdays

HIGH PEAK BADGER GROUP:

ANDY BANKS 01298 27100?

LEICESTERSHIRE and RUTLAND BADGER GROUP:

PAM MYNOTT 0116 2715006

<http://www.badgergroup.org.uk/> meet Thursdays

STAFFS BADGER CONSERVATION GROUP:

SANDRA DUDLEY 01543 503236

ADAM PETTIT 07563 730609

PAUL KEELING 07838 377612

<http://staffordshirebadgers.co.uk/>

WARWICKSHIRE BADGER GROUP:

Steve Hawkes 01926 832534

<https://sites.google.com/site/warwickbadgergroup/>



Member



Affiliated to the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust



South Derbyshire Badger Group  @SDerbysBadger



Please detach and keep for future reference
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Tel: Stephen Grimley – Tel. 07754 094177

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Email: info@southderbyshirebadgergroup.co.uk

All indoor meetings at Ticknall Village Hall Board Room at 7:30 pm

2017 Programme

Monday March 27th

Group **A.G.M.** and social evening. Bring some food and/or drink to share after the business of the evening.

Monday April 24th

Gerald Price of the **Woodland Trust** will tell us all about the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood (Normanton)

Monday May 22nd

(avoiding bank holiday) – The late **George Pearce** – Shropshire Badger Man (70 years of getting to know badgers) by his son Tristram.

No meetings in June, July and August

Monday Sept 25th

New Forest, a Wildlife Wonderland by Chris Hollis

Monday October 30th

Peter FitzPatrick – An illustrated **Visit to China** – The Great Wall to the Warriors

Monday Nov 27th

Dot Morson will take us on a Photographic Tour of the **Isle of Anglesey**

No Meeting in December

Please detach and keep for future reference



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SOUTH DERBYSHIRE BADGER GROUP

Visit our Website <http://www.southderbyshirebadgergroup.co.uk>

Email us on info@southderbyshirebadgergroup.co.uk

Membership Form

Membership fee single Adult : £7:00 Two or more Adults/Family : £12:00

Please make Cheque made payable to: South Derbyshire Badger Group

Or you can pay Via Bank Transfer and email the form to info@southderbyshirebadgergroup.co.uk to save on postage.

[LLOYDS BANK Sort Code 30.91.47 Account No. 02538113 State Surname]

Please Return To : Alan Stone
South Derbyshire Badger Group
6 Hastings Road
Swadlincote
Derbyshire
DE11 9AH

Please detach

Title (Mr/Mrs/etc):.....

Surname:

First Name/s:

Address:

.....

.....

Post Code:

Telephone No:.....

Email Address:.....

Occupation:

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN DOING FIELD WORK, i.e.

Surveying setts, going out to injured badgers, etc?

Signed :

Date:

