



Welcome to GBG's Winter/Spring newsletter, with an article on our **Badger crime training day** for members, the new **End the Cull petition** from Badger Trust and our usual round up of some of the group's badger-related activities across the county.



Badger crime training day

GBG would like to extend a big thank you to **Craig Fellowes**, Badger Trust's Wildlife Crime Officer, for his helpful and informative **Badger Crime Training** session back in November (see pictures above). Bringing badger-related crime to prosecution is notoriously difficult but the session demonstrated how to navigate both the legislation and the system. For the second part of the

session we relocated to an active badger sett, complete with full latrine, to learn how to recognise and, importantly, record and document the signs of activity (both badger and criminal) so crucial to a successful prosecution.

KEY POINTS:

- A sett has to be proven to be active before the police will take action!

- Dial 999 if the crime is in progress
- Dial 101 or report online if the crime has already been committed
- **Report to Badger Trust**
Via the Badger Trust website [here](#) or by using the new Badger Trust *Badger Watch* app (see the *Badger Trust website for details*).

Use the Badger Trust's **Badger Watch app**. to help you record the details.

You can download the app. free of charge from the **Apple Store** or from the **Google Play Store**.

If you are concerned about a sett near you, you can obtain an **Operation Badger Gloucestershire** sign from

Gloucestershire Police and put it up yourself, or ask your local Wildlife Crime Officer to do so.

If you have any concerns over sett-blocking, tree felling over setts or danger to setts through construction-site activity, don't forget you can get in touch with **GBG** for advice and/or report the activity to the police.

- **Make a note of the police incident number!**

You can also report wildlife crimes anonymously via **Crimestoppers**.

RECOGNISE, RECORD, REPORT!

Please sign the new Badger Trust petition!

Badger Trust's NEW petition has launched, following the publication of BT's report '*Tackling Bovine TB Together*' and calls for an *immediate* end to *all* badger culls operated by the UK government in England.



Please **SHARE SHARE SHARE!**



Together we can
END THE CULL

DON'T FORGET TO SIGN AND SHARE BADGER TRUST'S NEW PETITION TO END THE CULL AND SAVE BADGERS

You can also sign the petition by clicking [here](#)

The Clare Hammacott Grant



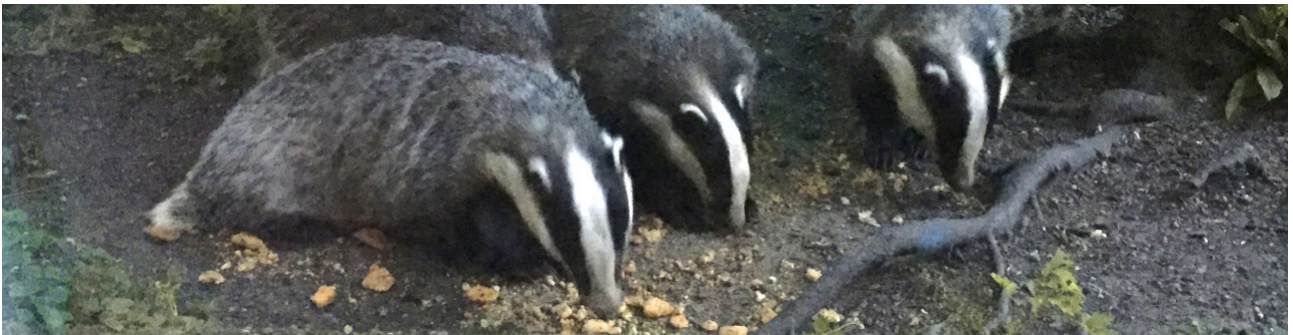
GBG is extremely grateful to Badger Trust which has provided invaluable support to enable us to grow and develop as a group through a very generous grant from the Clare Hammacott Fund.

The **Clare Hammacott Grant** is available to all affiliated Badger Trust Badger Groups in order to help assist and promote the projects and work being done by the Badger Groups on the ground in their local area. The Clare Hammacott Grant opened in 2018 and awards grants of up to £1,500 for a wide range of projects aimed at promoting badger awareness and protection.

Clare was a proud supporter of Badger

Trust and was determined to see a future where badgers and humans coexisted peacefully and in harmony. After a long battle with cancer, Clare sadly passed away in December 2016. She was resolute in her determination to protect badgers, leaving a significant legacy to Badger Trust to help champion and protect badgers for years to come.

Clare believed volunteers and Badger Groups are at the forefront of badger protection efforts in the here and now. This grant fund has been set up in Clare's memory, as per her wishes and using money left to Badger Trust, and is offered in order to preserve her legacy and provide Badger Groups with much-needed support for their ongoing efforts and projects.



Badger road traffic casualties

Spring is on the way, but sadly this time of year means badger groups see a rise in the number of badger road traffic casualties (RTCs), a result of badger movement recommencing after the winter, as well as the start of cub season.

You can help GBG by reporting to us any RTCs you encounter.

If it's safe to do so, you can check if the badger is still alive, and if it is, please do contact us as soon as possible via our field officer on 07752 754097. If it's possible, do check whether the casualty is a lactating sow, (identified by swollen teats on a badger found Jan-Jun). There will be cubs in a nearby sett and again, you'll need to let GBG know as soon as possible.

Deceased badgers can be reported at gloucestershirebadgergroup.org or directly to BT. It's especially helpful if you're able to give a very accurate location.

What3Words is a good option and the app is free to download. Otherwise, clear directions, including road names and any nearby landmarks, are very useful.

Badger Trust says that there seems to have been an earlier-than-normal increase in incidents so far this year and GBG have



already had a high number of reports in recent weeks. Most casualties so far have been boars starting to roam further afield after the winter months.

By reporting RTCs to either BT or GBG, you help badger organisations track incident numbers. BT estimates that over 50,000 badgers are killed on the roads every year; a horribly high figure. You can help in other ways too: if driving around dawn, or dusk in particular, slow down and be alert to wildlife, especially on country roads.

March to May and September to November are the most risky months for wildlife, particularly for badgers. Many of us at GBG feel speed limits on rural roads are too high and we routinely drive well below the limit to try to avoid wildlife casualties.

Out and about



Garden waste, latrines and building sites

Our sett checkers have been out, braving cold, wind and rain (oh, the rain!) visiting both local, as well as some less-familiar, setts across Gloucestershire.

At times, it looks like there's a bit of a rural/urban divide, with setts situated closer to towns faring better than many in idyllic rural locations. Could this be something to do with several years of culling in the countryside resulting in badger dispersal or, worse, eradication? Sometimes badgers do leave a sett to go to a 'holiday home' on a seasonal basis, but sadly, once-majestic setts now showing no signs of activity other than rabbit occupation are becoming more common throughout the county.

Urban setts may seem to be doing better, but they still face lots of issues! One sett we know of is 'camouflaged' by an old sofa and mounds of household waste. GBG visited another sett with a building site for a next-door neighbour. As if that wasn't bad enough, local residents had been depositing garden waste on top of a large section of the sett! They consequently received a friendly visit from the team who pointed out this was not only detrimental to the badgers (as the ►



sett looked in danger of collapsing under the sheer weight of shrubbery and turf), but also illegal. Hearteningly, most people seemed genuinely fond of their mustelid neighbours and very keen to avoid harming them.

On a more positive note, several setts visited on a regular basis continue to be in good health, evidenced by wonderful trail cam footage of badgers and badger bums emerging

from them. Another sett, brutally targeted in the cull, repeatedly blocked by the local hunt and then subjected to tree-felling, has sprung back to life and is

currently surrounded by joyous snuffle holes and fresh latrine pits.

“One sett we know of is ‘camouflaged’ by an old sofa and mounds of household waste”

Which just goes to show, badgers are consummate survivors!



DATES FOR THE DIARY Sunday May 12th 2024

● **GLOUCESTERSHIRE BADGER GROUP AGM AND SOCIAL**

Stratton Village Hall, Cirencester, 1.30-3.00pm. All members welcome.

Invitations will be sent out nearer the time but until then - **save the date!**