

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BADGER GROUP

Actively involved in the welfare of badgers
in Northamptonshire



RESCUES. SETT RECORDING. EDUCATION. WELFARE. ADVOCACY



Welcome to the Winter Newsletter!

Badgers are now all fattened up for winter, having been eating the bounty that autumn has given. They will have done some sett preparation including fresh digging and bedding collection. Whilst they do not hibernate, they will be less active during the colder winter months. It is a crucial time for females who, due to delayed implantation, will be pregnant in December and due to give birth in February.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. We look forward to telling you all about cubs in the Spring!

Rescue Activity Update

Sally & Rich were called to Towcester Vets where a person had picked up a concussed badger they'd found in the road. It had since woken up in the footwell of their car. They got it out and it was sedated for a vet check & had its broken tooth dealt with. A few hours later after recovering, they released it back where it was found, which was right by a mammal path crossing the road.

Pat and Sally.R. went to a badger collapsed in Bozeat. Sally left her shopping in the supermarket to rush to the scene. The vet found it had bite wounds to the face, a severe maggot infestation, & leg injuries. It sadly had to be put to sleep.

Sally & Rich had an 11pm call for a badger in the road unable to move its back end, having been hit by a car. The caller waited, ensuring the badger was not hit again. She was taken to Swanspool Vets and was there within 45 minutes of the initial call. The female badger was in perfect condition but the collision meant she had a shattered leg and broken spine, so sadly she had to be put to sleep.

Sally & Mick went to a badger Kettering that had an enormous open rump wound. After treatment at Swanspool Vets, it was taken to our friends at Animals in Need for rehab. Such a large wound needed extra time to heal, but Sally & Mick were then able to release it back to the site it was found.

ALL ABOUT BADGERS TALK

We held a talk at The Ark Northampton called 'All about badgers'. Peter, our sett recorder & longest serving committee member shared his wealth of knowledge on everything to do with badgers and had host of stories to share.

A great evening was had and our lovely badger merchandise purchased.

We are currently planning and looking forward to hosting more talks next year.



Have you seen our new T-shirts?

Amy James Art donated this beautiful picture that she had drawn just for us. We are pleased that we have finally been able to use it on T-shirts to help us raise funds for the work we do protecting badgers.

Buy them from our website shop:

www.northamptonshirebadgers.co.uk/shop



XMAS SHOPPING?

WE HAVE LOTS OF LOVELY ITEMS IN OUR WEBSITE SHOP WHICH ARE PERFECT FOR PRESENTS! PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AS ALL PROCEEDS HELP US TO FUNDRAISE FOR THE WORK WE DO.

TRAINING - INTRODUCTION TO SETT SURVEYING

We have now reached a good time of year for sett surveying as the foliage has died down. Whilst sett activity can be less, the visibility of setts is better. Therefore we have some more of our training sessions planned for any members who want to learn more about sett surveying:

Saturday 8th January 2022

Tuesday 11th January 2022

Saturday 5th February 2022

Monday 7th February 2022

Email to book your place: northantsbadgergroup@gmail.com

BADGER CRIME

A VERY BAD YEAR FOR BADGERS

Reported badger crime surged by over a third in 2020, to 36% with sett interference & illegal shooting showing a significant rise, the former driven by a huge rise in development driven crime.

'Wildlife Crime in 2020' is produced by [Wildlife and Countryside Link](#) and compiles statistics, insight and commentary from key wildlife organisations. This is the fourth annual report and a key reason for its existence is the lack of official numbers on wildlife crime. This situation, whereby police forces are unable to gauge just how much wildlife crime is taking place, will remain whilst wildlife crimes are not notifiable to the Home Office.



Northamptonshire Badger Group sees a huge increased in crime reporting during fox hunt season between August and March. We have a number of reports in with Northants Police about blocked setts, many of which are blocked multiple times.

Report crimes by calling 999 if taking place, or 101 if it has already happened. Please ask for a crime reference number and please also let us know.

Recording of Setts, Rta's & Live sightings by Peter Edwards (Sett Recorder)

We would like to highlight the fact that as badgers are most territorial during February when cubs are being born, boars patrolling their borders & other badgers on the move to make room for the new arrivals etc. February/March is always the worst time of year for badgers getting killed on our roads, so can I ask that we stay especially vigilant in reporting please.

Thanks to all your fantastic hard work surveying setts & reporting this year. For new members wishing to get involved with surveying, wintertime is the best time to get out there searching as the vegetation has died down making setts more visible in hedgerows etc.

When reporting setts please include date you visited, accurate location (map reference/pin drop map/what3words), number of active holes, is there fresh dung pits/bedding/footprints/hair/spoil present?

Your sett reports are so important to us as they can be used when new developments & roads are in the planning stage, consultants liaise with us so the best mitigation measures can be made to protect the badgers.

Also thanks to all the people who have been sending in Rta's & Live Sightings to me & a big thanks to those who include a map, a pin drop map or what3words, as these help me not to duplicate any of the reports. Anyone who is unable to do a map reference could also give me the distance from a junction that I can identify on the map, please.

Accurate location & current activity is really useful to us, as it can be used during planning, sett interference investigations when co-ordinating with the Police & when returning rehabilitated badgers back to the wild in the right sett.

RTA STATISTICS UNTIL 30/11/2021.

STATS ARE INCLUDED FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS FOR COMPARISON:

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
2019	13	76	68	34	24	30	22	11	26	19	9	3	335
2020	17	73	59	36	26	23	19	19	21	16	9	3	321
2021	11	52	54	61	38	25	17	28	25	18	14		343

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UPDATE SETT REPORTS REGULARLY & ADD NEW ONES WHENEVER POSSIBLE. WE ARE ALWAYS PLEASED TO GET REPORTS OF LIVE SIGHTINGS OF BADGERS AS THIS IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF OUR RECORDS.

NORTHANTSBADGERRECORDER@GMAIL.COM

[WEB FORM](#)



Artificial badger sett built for four rescued cubs

Committee members Sally & Mick, Sally & Rich built their first artificial sett this year. The group has built many in the past, but hasn't been involved in this aspect for a number of years.

We had a bumper year for cub rescues, where sadly the cub could not be returned to the natal sett (which is always the first & best option to be considered). We take our rescued cubs to Nutkin Ward for initial assessment and treatment and then on to Cuan Wildlife Rescue in Shropshire, who are experts in cub rehabilitation. They receive any vet treatment they need and have three bTB tests, as well as bTB vaccinations.

Rescued cubs are grouped into new family units so they can be released together as one family. but they need somewhere to be released to. Badger groups and rescue centres across the Country need to built artificial setts for this reason each year.

You may have seen that we put a call out for anyone who had land where we might be able to build the sett and we were lucky to have a few options available to us. The one we chose was just perfect, many acres of meadows and wildflowers with a natural water source nearby. There was a long established badger sett on the edge of the area, so we knew it was suitable for badgers to live there. The owners were also incredibly gracious and giving and an absolute pleasure to get to know.

The artificial sett cost us over £1500 for all the materials including the wood, drainage pipes and all of the materials for the two electric fences. Although we can reuse most of the electric fences next time. It took us a day to build the sett and another day to fit the double electric fencing. We had a lot of advice and support from various people, including Cuan & Shropshire Badger Group, but it was still a baptism of fire! Yet we can definitely say it is one of the most rewarding things we have done.

We collected a group of four cubs from Cuan in August and released them into the fenced off new sett area. The electric fence remained for a couple of weeks to ensure the cubs could get used to their new home. It also allowed any local badgers in the area to get to know that they were there. As they were still seen as cubs, they are more likely to be accepted, which is why this was done in August and not later. We fed them every day for a number of weeks before reducing the food so they could be independent.

Day 1 (8th August)



Day 4 (11th August)



Day 36 (12th September)



THE BADGER CULL ARRIVES IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

We now know that the cull arrived in Northamptonshire in the South of the County. Whilst we did not get a Northamptonshire licence, our County was named on the Oxfordshire Area 41 licence which was new in September 2021. We are sad to say that we believe Northamptonshire is likely to get its own named cull licence in 2022, which will mean 4 years of intense culling.

However, it is not decided yet! We know the West of Northamptonshire, particularly near the Oxfordshire border, Brackley and north from there, are key areas. Landowners and farmers will be under intense pressure from the pro-cull lobbyists to sign up. They need to know that culling will not solve any bTB problems.

We are working out a plan to raise awareness about this and of course to ensure we know of setts in the area. If you are interested in helping us please get in touch by emailing northantsbadgergroup@gmail.com as we will need to start in the New Year.

How about sending your MP a #CanTheCull card this season?

There's still time to get a FREE action pack with postcards to send to your MP, before parliament goes into recess or send it to them for when they return in the New Year!

www.badgertrust.org.uk/can-the-cull



HOW MANY MORE BADGERS MUST DIE?

IT'S TIME TO #CanTheCull

CAN THE CULL

ACT NOW! Get your Cull Action Pack

THE BADGER CULL FACTS

Over 140,000 badgers have been killed since the current badger cull began in England in 2013. Badgers are killed in their thousands from Cornwall to Cumbria under misguided and fundamentally flawed attempts to control bovine Tuberculosis (bTB), an infectious respiratory disease which affects cattle. Bovine TB is always present in the environment and can affect or be carried harmlessly by many species, livestock and wildlife alike. Yet the government has focused on badgers, even though 94% of cattle infections are from cow to cow. Many in the farming community wrongly believe that badgers are a significant vector in the spread of the disease. For many years, independent scientists, vets, researchers, as well as Badger Trust, have rightly challenged this claim.

The Badger Trust has a wealth of information about the cull. It can be a very complicated and misunderstood topic, so we urge you to take a look at their website for more information.

www.badgertrust.org.uk/cull



WE ARE LOOKING FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

WE'RE LOOKING FOR...

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
BADGER GROUP

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The committee consists of a variety of people, from different backgrounds, with various skills & experience, all of whom care about badgers. We help shape the group to help badgers across Northamptonshire.

- Attend once monthly meetings (as much as possible).
- Help shape the future of the group & the work it does.
- Have an active role within the group and the work it does.
- Work with and support other group members.
- Willingness to learn about badgers and keep this knowledge updated.
- Some roles involve liaising with the public and need a polite, courteous attitude and manner.
- Specific roles are also available such as Treasurer.

For more information contact:
northantsbadgergroup@gmail.com

DO YOU CARE ABOUT BADGERS?

Can you help us be their advocates in Northants?

We are looking for people like you to join our committee!

We are currently a small group of only 8 people and do our best to cover all aspects of badger related welfare and advocacy. However, the County of Northamptonshire is large and we need more help to cover everything.

The committee actively promotes badgers, manages the group membership, designs leaflets and marketing, runs the website, shop and social media accounts. Some of us go out checking setts and respond to public queries or crimes, others comment on planning applications that affect badgers, keep our sett records or do rescues. Some of us do many of these things.

The role is very rewarding and we are a lovely friendly bunch of people. We have some exciting ideas but need more hands to make light work!



THANK YOU!

A huge thank you to our committee, group members and all our supporters who send us badger reports.

You all have an important role in helping us and badgers across Northamptonshire.

Next year, 2022, is going to be a crucial year for our badgers and we need to stay strong and pull together to do all we can for them.

We have big plans and are grateful for your help.

KEEP IN TOUCH & UPDATED



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