

With Bats in Mind

Springwatch is always going on about the importance of knowing your local patch, and this is a case in point. Jude and Bob live on the same road as the local office for Bedfordshire and Luton Mind, a charity that supports people experiencing mental health problems.



While working on the lottery bid, Jude had a brainwave and dropped in to see if we could involve them in the bat box building project. As luck would have it, local group and mentor co-ordinator, Hayley Seymour, was in the office doing some admin and over a cup of tea I talked her through our idea of using different groups to help us build bat boxes.

She was really enthusiastic, particularly as she thought it would appeal to male members.

We said we would provide materials, including tools, and in return for their help making boxes, the Bat Group will run some walks specifically for them.

A few weeks later Bob and I headed up to Bedford and met with some club members. We were made very welcome and the bat we took along proved a great hit.

I had explained to Hayley initially that we would not be able to start unless or until we had funding, which meant we would have to wait to hear from Awards from All. Then I got talking to Dan Merrett, Count Bat Project Leader (who was excited as I was by this project). He said that BCT would underwrite this part of the project, so we could begin it before we heard the outcome of the bid this means that we have started working in Bedford. She talked to centres in Luton, Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard and Bedford and all were keen to get involved at a later stage.

We have named this project the Bats in Mind Project.

One unexpected bonus is that one of the club members is a handyman and the second is that another is also a



skilled pyrographer who has offered to burn a bat image onto the boxes. The drawing is his sketch for the design he will add to the boxes.

They had a display of his work on show when we went up to Bedford to deliver the tools. Bob and I were mighty impressed. We have also discussed the possibility of selling these boxes and anything else they produce on the stall and dividing the money raised between us – so we can buy more

materials to make more boxes and the local Mind Group who can use the rest towards running events at the centre.

We are planning a bat walk for members as a thank you and Hayley knows a minibus firm that lets them hire buses at very reasonable prices, and we will be paying for their transport. This will be on June 3rd and the Priory Park Rangers have once again offered us free use of their visitor's centre, for which our grateful thanks as always.

I meant what I said about the pyrographer being talented, just look at the detail on this. I shall be posting these image on the next web update so you can have a closer look

Best of all the pyrograspher will take commissions- form an orderly queue.

Let me know if you are interested.



Jude