

Butterfly Conservation Hertfordshire & Middlesex Branch Guidelines

1. Name

The Branch shall be called the “Butterfly Conservation (BC) Hertfordshire & Middlesex Branch” and represent and promote Butterfly Conservation within the administrative county of Hertfordshire and the Watsonian Vice-county of Middlesex*

2. Mission

The Branch’s mission is to support the delivery of BC’s core aims as detailed in the organisational strategy agreed by the Board of Trustees

3. Membership

3.1 Membership of the Branch is only open to members of BC.

3.2 Membership may cease for the following reasons:

- (a) resignation of the member from BC;
- (b) resignation of the member from the Branch element of the membership;
- (c) failure to pay the annual subscription within the required period;
- (d) by decision of the Branch committee and subsequent approval of BC’s Chief Executive, where the member is found to have behaved unacceptably towards the aims of BC and/or the Branch or an individual. Any member excluded under this section has the right of appeal to Council, whose decision shall be final.

4. Management and Committee Structure

4.1 The day-to-day running of the Branch is the responsibility of the Branch committee. The committee must have a minimum of three persons, made up of a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The number may increase to a maximum of fifteen, and committee members may undertake more than one role. Additional post-holders may be associate members of the branch committee (see section 4.12). All branch post-holders must be members of both the Branch and BC.

4.2 The Branch committee and its sub-committees, associate committee members and post-holders are accountable to BC’s Chief Executive.

4.3 Branch committee Members are eligible for re-election every three years and this may take place at the annual Members’ Day. Co-opted Branch Committee members will stand at the next elections following co-option.

4.4 Any member may propose another for election to the committee at the Members’ Day, provided that the Branch Secretary is advised in writing of the proposal at least 28 days before the meeting. The Branch committee may accept proposals at shorter notice, at its discretion.

4.5 The committee will elect the Branch Chair from among the committee members and the majority of the committee must agree on the successful person.

- 4.6 A Branch committee may request to change the name of the Branch if all committee members agree. The request must be in writing and submitted to BC's Chief Executive for approval.
- 4.7 Branch committee members may request a geographical/boundary change if all committee members agree. The request must be in writing and submitted to BC's Chief Executive for consideration by Council.
- 4.8 Branch committee meetings may be held as often as the committee feels necessary. Any committee member can request a meeting if they feel there is a specific matter which needs discussion. The meeting will be held if it is supported by at least three committee members, or alternatively, deemed necessary by the Branch Chair.

Meetings should include a financial statement by the Branch Treasurer. BC's Head Office can provide your Treasurer with the financial information to enable the statement to be written. Meetings should also include an agenda item for the declaration of interests, and these should also be documented in the minutes, even if none were declared.

- 4.9 A quorum (minimum number of members present at the meeting to make the proceedings valid) of the Branch committee is one third of its committee members, but no less than three, and one must be either the Branch Chair, Branch Secretary or the Branch Treasurer. Anyone nominated by the Branch Chair can chair the meeting.
- 4.10 If an agreement cannot be reached, a vote of hands will be taken. In the event of a tie, the Chair will have a second, final vote.
- 4.11 Branch committee members should attend all Branch committee meetings wherever possible. If a committee member is unable to attend meetings for a period of a year they may be asked to resign from their committee position, but may continue as a post-holder or associate committee member under section 4.12, if agreed with the committee.
- 4.12 The Branch may have post-holders or associate committee members, in addition to committee members, but they will be unable to vote on committee decisions. They are able to attend committee meetings, although this is not normally required. Branch post-holders and associate committee members will be members of BC and the Branch, and will need to follow the Branch guidelines. They will also be subject to the same retirement and re-election rules as Branch committee members. (see section 4.3).
- 4.13 BC employees are not permitted to be Branch committee members and are unable to vote on Branch decisions. BC employees can attend committee meetings to provide advice or guidance as appropriate.
- 4.14 The Branch committee are to keep meeting notes and a copy of these need to be sent to Branches@butterfly-conservation.org within six weeks of the meeting.
- 4.15 The Branch committee are to inform BC Head Office using the Branches@butterfly-conservation.org email as soon as possible of any changes to committee members, post-holders, associate members or sub-committees and provide new contact details for individuals. Head Office will implement these notified changes within 10 working days.

5. Powers Of The Branch Committee

- 5.1 The Branch committee should carry out standard procedures for the smooth running of the Branch, such as:
- (a) set annual income and expenditure budgets as necessary, in keeping with BC's financial practices;
 - (b) review the Branch's financial reserves and submit plans for deficit, funds or surplus funds in excess of six months expenditure;

- (c) provide Head Office with branch records, e.g. contracts, legacies, grants, etc;
- (d) co-opt additional members and associate members as necessary;
- (e) establish sub-committees;
- (f) liaise with relevant organisations or individuals as necessary and invite representatives to attend committee meetings on a non-voting basis;
- (g) service of members, e.g. issue Branch newsletters, social media updates;
- (h) removal of members under 3.2 (d);
- (i) any other lawful act for the benefit of BC in delivering its core aims.

6. Sub-committees

- 6.1 Any sub-committee appointed should be authorised to act on behalf of the Branch committee, however, the sub-committee must regularly report to the Branch committee and follow Branch Guidelines.
- 6.2 Any expenditure by the sub-committee must be approved in advance by the Branch committee.
- 6.3 Sub-committees are to keep meeting notes and a copy of these, with any associated reports, need to be sent to the Branch committee. The Branch committee will then forward these to BC Head Office (section 4.14).

7. Annual Meetings

- 7.1 There is no legal requirement for Branches to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) as BC already fulfils this requirement, but Branches should normally hold an annual Members' Day and provide members with as much notice as possible. This enables the election/re-election of committee members and provides an opportunity to engage with members. This may be held in person or by electronic means agreed by the Branch Committee.

The annual financial report could be presented to members for their information but there is no need for members to approve the report.

- 7.2 All decisions should be made by a show of hands, with the majority being in favour (two thirds of the number of members voting). Voting may be held electronically or by proxy provided all proposals are presented in writing at least 21 days before the vote takes place.

8. Finance

- 8.1 The financial year of the Branch runs from 1st April in each year to 31st March in the following year.
- 8.2 The Branch committee has the authority to distribute the Branch funds, in accordance with these BC Branch Guidelines and the [Finance Information](#) provided on SharePoint. Head Office undertakes payment of Branch funds, on receipt of Branch authorisation. An annual financial report may be presented at the Branch Members' Day for information only.
- 8.3 The Branch committee are to follow any regulations set by Council and/or the Chief Executive on financial administration, including the need for Head Office approval on expenditures over agreed limits or outward giving of grants and donations.
- 8.4 The Branch Treasurer is required to forward all financial information to BC's Head Office on a monthly basis and ensure all year end information is sent within the agreed timeframe.

9. Branch Closure

- 9.1 In the event of a Branch closing, no refunds of membership will be given. After settlement

of outstanding Branch debts, any remaining funds and all other assets of the Branch will be reallocated or disposed of at the Chief Executive's discretion.

10. Miscellaneous

- 10.1 All new committee members are entitled to receive a copy of these [guidelines](#) that are available on the 'Running a Branch' area of SharePoint.
- 10.2 Branch members, and non-members supporting the Branch, should always have a professional attitude when representing BC and be respectful of third parties, such as landowners, NGO staff, reserve wardens and members of the public.
- 10.3 Whenever possible the Branch will look to promote BC and maintain a recognisable identity. Documents produced should include BC's logo, along with any Branch logos, and must be created by following BC's branding guidelines, which are available on the Branch area of [SharePoint](#).
- 10.4 Branch actions, communications and public statements made through any form of media must comply with BC's Policies and Statements. All Policies and Statements are available on the Branch area of [SharePoint](#).

11. Staff commitment to Branches

- 11.1 Maintain good levels of communication with Branches, ensuring regular updates are made.
- 11.2 Respond to emails from Branches within 5 working days. Staff to use alerts on emails if they are on leave or out of the office so Branch members know to expect a delay.
- 11.3 Generic materials for events and campaigns (such as the Big Butterfly Count) will be produced for branch use in a timely manner.
- 11.4 To be compliant in all legal and statutory requirements and update Branches on aspects that are relevant to them.
- 11.5 Provide adequate notice for invitations to events or requests for information.
- 11.6 Co-ordinate peer to peer best practice and information sharing between Branches.
- 11.7 Offer an induction for Branch Chairs and provide an induction pack to new Branch Committee members.

* The London Boroughs included within the Branch area are Barnet, Brent, Camden, City of London, City of Westminster, Ealing, Enfield, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Richmond (north of the Thames), Tower Hamlets and the Surrey District Council of Spelthorne.

Appendix 1

The following checklists have been split into three levels of priority for Branch Committees to undertake.

1. Essential Branch activities

All branches are responsible for delivering to and reporting progress against Butterfly Conservation's three organisational goals, and their activities must be aligned accordingly.

Conservation

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help deliver the Regional/Country Conservation Strategy by developing local conservation |
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action plans and projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support conservation staff developing and delivering funded landscape-scale conservation projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert staff if anyone hears about sites under threat in Branch area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support BC's efforts to defend key sites in Branch area

Recording and Monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote BC's recording and monitoring schemes on butterflies and moths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there are effective County Recorders and good data flow into the national schemes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is an effective Butterfly Transect co-ordinator in the Branch area

Nature Reserves (for Branches with BC reserves in their area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help maintain and manage BC nature reserves in liaison with staff (e.g. work parties/advice)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help co-ordinate finances on reserves as agreed with staff, if required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help monitor the wildlife on our reserves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the non-conservation value of reserves (e.g. education, access)

Members and Supporters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good care of members and supporters (e.g. events, welcome letters, when face to face)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality newsletters and communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality presence when attending events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote BC membership at existing Branch events/talks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for volunteers to get more involved in Branch activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run bespoke events to promote Big Butterfly Count and other public engagement campaigns led by Head Office

Publicity and Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact news@butterfly-conservation.org about local PR opportunities/contacts/ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow BC brand guidelines on newsletters, websites, social media, leaflets etc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make use of the In Your Area section of BC website and keep content (particularly events) up to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate at least one social media account (in order of priority: a Facebook business page, Twitter or Instagram)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote/engage with Big Butterfly Count, Munching Caterpillars and other public facing schemes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support BC central campaigns via Branch social media channel(s)

Fundraising
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify Fundraising Team of any possible Major Donors and Corporate fundraising opportunities that become aware of
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Fundraising Team before submitting funding applications

Running the Branch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align branch activities to the organisational goals and strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report progress against KPIs when requested
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Branch follows BC's Branch Guidelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit new Committee members to refresh Committee/maintain skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan succession for key posts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure good communication with all staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Branch follows BC's Health & Safety rules and guidance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and terms of BC's insurance.

Branch Finances

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare annual budget of income and expenditure with Finance Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide authorisation to Finance for payments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Finance Team of any income paid in to the bank account by the Branch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure any outward payment to other Charities/public bodies are discussed with Head Office before committed

Review Branch Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct annual review against the above checklist to identify any areas for improvement/training. Please contact Branches@butterfly-conservation.org if you require assistance from Head Office on a Branch activity.

2. Desirable activities for Branches where capacity is available

Conservation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With staff support, help sustain conservation projects in priority landscapes which are no longer funded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide land management advice directly to landowners, in liaison with relevant staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Branch experts share their expertise and train others within the Branch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint species experts of landscape champions to co-ordinate conservation effort and liaise with staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend local action group or conservation targeting meetings in liaison with relevant staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the conservation of widespread species
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support BC campaigns (e.g. land management, policy, planning)

Recording and Monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce summary reports on the status and conservation of species in Branch area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively encourage uptake of recording and monitoring of national schemes (e.g. training days)

Nature Reserves (for Branches with BC reserves in their area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise work parties on any reserves in Branch area (unless these are already being led by staff)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise work parties on other key sites

Members and Supporters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run special events for new members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal approaches to new members (e.g. phone calls etc) in consultation with Head Office Membership Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote BC's online shop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit and train volunteers to maintain recording/monitoring/work parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a paper or electronic newsletter for members

Publicity and Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run programme of events/talks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Media Team with national/regional Press Releases etc

Fundraising
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise funds at existing events/talks (e.g. raffle/donation tins)

Running the Branch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and share best practice with other Branches, via Branch Liaison Officer or at Branch Liaison Meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and train a volunteer to oversee branch Health & Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety to be added to each committee agenda

3. Optional activities where Branches could help support UK programmes

Conservation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help foster and develop strong local partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Run projects to conserve widespread species and/or urban habitats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in local campaigns to defend key sites from development or look for enhancement opportunities, in liaison with staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support staff in developing local projects and providing volunteer time and branch funds

Recording and Monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise awareness of impacts of land management on butterflies and moths locally
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disseminate BC information on key policy areas such as impacts of climate change as they develop

Members and Supporters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organise bespoke recruitment events with support from Membership Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit/train volunteers for other activities (see above) with staff support as necessary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrate the achievements of volunteers and the impact they have had on butterflies, moths, people and the environment.

Publicity and Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appoint volunteer Media Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek support from Media Team about how best to promote events
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit more Branch activists to join social media pages (e.g. Twitter, Facebook etc)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use analytical tools to assess use of existing Branch websites
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify potential volunteers to do school visits for Munching Caterpillars (discuss with Head of Engagement and Volunteering)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer activities and use BC materials aimed at young people if attending appropriate events

Fundraising (in conjunction with BC staff)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organise bespoke fundraising events with Fundraising Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support/help develop local projects with UK staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support local appeals and identify possible major donors and corporates, etc
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support Fundraising Team with local knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support Fundraising Team with legacy events and/or passing on donor prospects