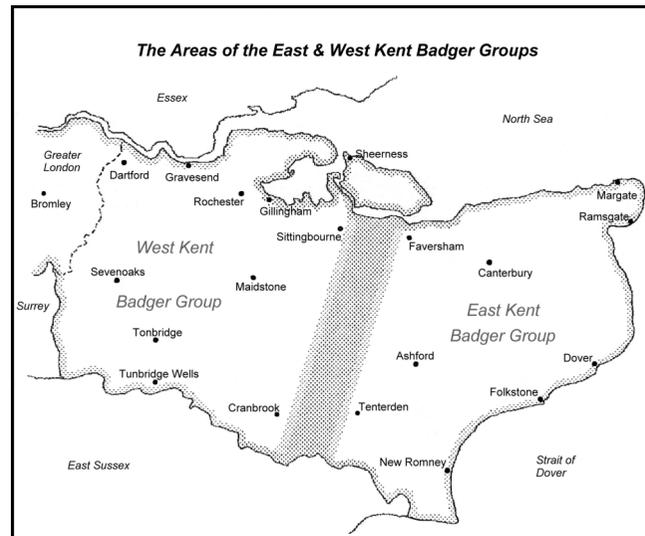


Please use the map to decide which Group you need to contact:

Email: westkentbadgergroup@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.wkbg.org.uk

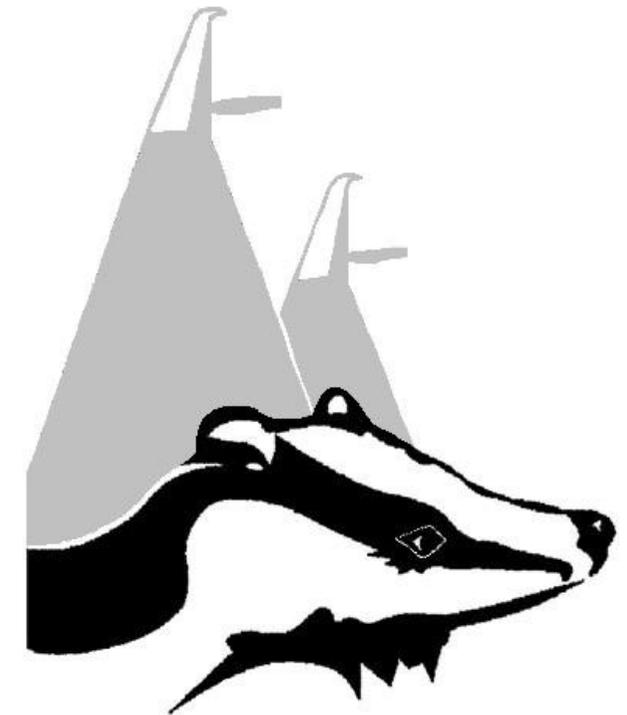
For the East Kent Badger Group please
telephone: 01233 720 229



The West Kent Badger Group produces leaflets on the following topics:

1. General Information about Badgers
2. What Badger Groups do
3. WKBG: Protecting the Badger
4. How to Watch Badgers
5. The Badger's Enemies
6. Badgers in your Garden
7. Badgers and Developments
8. *Badgers and Farming*

Badgers *and* *Farming*



A free information leaflet from the
West Kent Badger Group

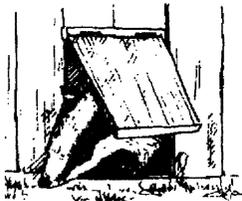
BADGERS AND FARMING

WE KNOW THAT, in most cases, farmers and landowners are happy to have 'old Brock' on their land. Both families may go back centuries, and an affinity grown between them over those years. However, this relationship can become strained when the badger's habits begin to cause problems.

Badgers are always digging: new entrances, opening up old ones, extending the sett to accommodate a larger family, and maybe from a hedgerow or bank into a field. Here the holes may be hidden by the crop, and the spoil builds up humps on an otherwise level terrain. Thus a large piece of machinery may sink into a hole. There are dangers here for the driver and the badger, and a consequent loss of income because of necessary repairs, and the holding-up of work for the farmer.

On a dairy farm cows may break limbs or sustain other serious injury by slipping into an unseen sett entrance.

Sometimes badgers only pass through a field on their way to foraging areas. A farmer may not mind this but, if holes



are left in the fences, rabbits are also able to get in and ruin his crop. Badger gates, which are too strong for rabbits, can be fitted across the badger paths allowing them to pass through.

Most farmers do not begrudge the badger a little gleaning of their cereal crop, although oats are taken with more enthusiasm. Stalks are pulled down by one paw and the oats run through the badger's jaws; then the same is done with the other paw, so leaving the straws criss-crossed and trampled down as the badger moves forward. But it is understandable if tempers begin to fray when the more serious incidents occur. Unfortunately some farmers and landowners are tempted to take the law into their own hands, shooting badgers when they can, laying poison, setting snares on known badger paths, or filling in or digging out setts. All these acts, and other methods of control or eradication without a licence, are illegal, as the badger and its sett are protected by law.

In counties with bovine TB, mainly in the West Country, there is a real problem for farmers. Livelihoods are lost with the slaughter of herds of cows which have reacted to TB tests. Badgers can have TB and over many decades

thousands have been killed by successive Governments in an attempt to control this disease. When the outbreak of Foot and Mouth had ceased, farmers re-stocked with untested cattle, which brought bTB to places previously clear.

When the Krebs Experiment, set up in 2000 to find how and which way the disease travelled, began again after Foot and Mouth, it came to a conclusion in 2005 that the culling of badgers caused bTB to explode, and the experiment stopped. Farmers still called for a cull, but only of diseased animals. But it is not possible to tell if a live badger has TB. However, in 2007 the Government's Independent Scientific Group concluded a cull would make no meaningful contribution to cattle TB control, and advised that bTB could be reversed, and geographical spread contained, by the rigid application of cattle-based control measures alone.

[For up to date information about bTB and badger culling proposals, see flyer: *Badgers & Bovine TB.*]

Your local Badger Group is happy to advise and help with any problems you may have with badgers. It may take a little while to solve a large problem, but we hope that, with patience, 'old Brock' and his neighbouring farmer can eventually continue their harmonious coexistence once again.

The RSPCA, Police and Local Councils should be able to put you in touch with a member in your area, or write to your local Group, details on the back page.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

The Badger Trust,
P O Box 708, East Grinstead, RH19 2WN
Tel: 08458 287 878
www.badgertrust.org.uk

DEFRA (Natural England), Wildlife Management and Licensing,
International House, Dover Place, Ashford, Kent, TN23
1HU Tel: 0300 060 4797