

# Toolbox talk – Environment

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## Bats

### What?

- there are 18 (17 breeding) species of bat in the UK and all are protected by law
- because so many bats are endangered, both UK and European legislation gives them complete protection
- they tend to return to the same roosts each year, so these sites are also protected whether the bats are present or not
- the most common UK bat is the Pipistrelle. It is only 40 mm long and weighs about 5 grams.



### Identification

- places where bats may be found include holes and cracks in trees, roofs and walls of houses and buildings, under bridges, underground in caves and old railway tunnels
- every building and mature tree is a potential bat roost. Smooth, stained areas may be found around the entrance to roosting sites
- look out for bat droppings – dark brown or black, about 4 to 8 mm in length. They look like mouse droppings but crumble easily, as they are made up of insect fragments. In well-established roosts, droppings may be several centimetres deep
- other signs include a sharp characteristic odour and large numbers of moth wings discarded by feeding bats
- bats can crawl into holes only 15 mm wide.

### Why?

- **avoid prosecution:** it is a criminal offence for anyone without a licence to:
  - kill, injure or handle a bat
  - possess a bat (whether alive or dead)
  - disturb a roosting bat
  - damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not
  - breaking the law can lead to fines of up to **£5000 per bat and/or up to six months in prison.**

### Questions

- 1 Where are signs of bats expected to be found?
- 2 What tell-tale deposits will help identify bat roosts?
- 3 If it is suspected that bats are present, what should be done?
- 4 Where might bats be seen on this site?

### Do

- ✓ if a bat or a bat roost is found on site, stop all works in the area **IMMEDIATELY** and inform a line manager.

### Don't

- ✗ try to touch or handle a bat. They are very delicate and this can cause them serious harm – it is breaking the law.

Title:

Given by:

Date:

Site:

Name	Company	Signature

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