



Tool Box Talk

Focus on Performance

Bats

Sust. 17

What?

Bats are small flying nocturnal mammals. They can be found in many locations, urban and rural and are often sighted at dusk as they leave their roosts to feed on insects, commonly above hedgerows, ponds and streams. Bats rest and breed in roosts. Roosts can include hollows and cracks in trees, roof spaces, underneath bridges, in caves or old tunnels. Britain has 18 species of bats (17 breeding), which include the tiny 5g pipistrelle to the largest noctule, still smaller than the palm of your hand.



Pipistrelle bat

Why?

All bats and their roosts are protected by legislation. This includes causing injury or death of bats and damage or destruction of roosts. Prosecution can lead to fines of up to £5,000 and 6 months in prison. Work that requires the disturbance of bats requires a licence.



Bat being relocated by a trained and licensed bat worker

How?

- Check the site and adjacent areas (especially woodland, hollow trees and roof spaces) for signs of bat activity. This could involve looking for signs of droppings, or asking site users. Bat roosts may have been identified in ecological surveys.
- If you are unsure whether your work may affect a bat roost, seek expert ecological advice.
- Stop work immediately and report any bat sightings or discoveries of roosts after works have started.
- Only licensed bat workers are permitted to enter known bat roosts handle bats. Never pick up and move bats unless you have been trained and it is under direction of a licensed bat worker.

If the works are likely to disturb a bat roost, a licence is needed from the relevant body:

- England: Natural England
- Scotland: Scottish Natural Heritage
- Wales: Countryside Council for Wales

Questions

1. Where might you find a bat roost?
2. What is the maximum fine per offence for damaging or destroying a bat roost?
3. How many species of bats are there in Britain?

If you have any queries regarding the content of this tool box talk please contact your Sustainability Advisor or Line Manager.