

Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor: Expression of Interest Form (VBRV1) including Doctors Declaration (Annex 1).

Please complete all sections of this form. We need this information should we register you as a Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor (VBRV) or trainee, and if we need to try to find you a Licence Trainer.

Your Details					
Forename		Surname		Title	
Address				Postcode	
Tel. No. (daytime)		(evening)		(mobile)	
Email					
Preferred method of contact: Email <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Letter <input type="checkbox"/>					
Date of birth	/ /	Please note you must be over 18 to train or act as a VBRV			
What days / times are most suitable for you?					
Do you have a full UK driving licence?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

Emergency contact / Next-of kin information			
We will only record this information should we register you as a VBRV or trainee.			
Emergency contact name		Daytime telephone number	
Evening telephone number		Mobile telephone number	

Your Licence		
Do you already hold or have you previously held either a species licence which includes the purpose 'Conservation: Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor' or a VBRV Class Licence (CL)?		
I currently hold a Licence <input type="checkbox"/>	Licence number:	Expiry date:
I previously held a Licence <input type="checkbox"/>	Licence number:	Expiry date:
I have never held a Licence <input type="checkbox"/>	Note: Expiry dates are not applicable for Class Licences (CLS)	
Other Information. Please provide any other details you think might be relevant (courses undertaken, qualifications, previous experience etc. Click here to enter text.		

Your Trainer: Please complete this section if you have never held a Licence	
You must identify a Licence Trainer who is willing to train you before we can register you as a trainee. See the VBRV training page for further information. If you are unable to identify a Licence Trainer via your Local Bat Group (LBG we will try to find one for you but we cannot guarantee that a Trainer can be found.	
Have you identified a Licence Trainer who has agreed to train you for your licence?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Licence Trainers name:	
No, I could not find a Trainer via my LBG <input type="checkbox"/>	No, I have not tried to contact a Trainer via my LBG <input type="checkbox"/>

Your Rabies Vaccination status

There is no requirement for VBRV trainees to be rabies vaccinated. From 2020 trainee VBRVs do not meet the category of 'regularly handling bats' as defined in [Chapter 27 of The Green Book](#). This is to reflect that:

- ❖ Trainees are always accompanied by experienced Level 1 and 2 licensed VBRVs on roost visits while training;
- ❖ The UK is one of two countries to be considered as low risk for rabies transmission;
- ❖ VBRV adherence to existing Natural England Health & Safety policy and practices;
- ❖ The nature of the VBRV role in conducting mainly observational and advisory surveys.

Level 1 and 2 licensed VBRVs must be vaccinated before conducting surveys on Natural England's behalf. Public Health England (PHE) state that vaccinations and booster treatments are free of charge to licensed volunteers who may regularly handle bats. Volunteers who are also Bat consultants and/or those who receive payment/salary, be it on an employed or self-employed basis for handling bats must meet the costs of vaccinations and booster treatments. Once you complete your training as a VBRV you will be expected to provide up-to-date rabies vaccination records. Please see attached Annex 1 doctors declaration form detailing the process involved in obtaining your rabies vaccination. If you wish to be vaccinated now you are free to do so, however Natural England cannot meet the costs of rabies vaccination while you are a trainee.

Immunosuppressed individuals

Please note if you are currently taking or have previously taken medication or other treatment that severely suppresses the immune system should you be exposed to bat lyssavirus it is possible that you may not respond to post-exposure vaccine, and it may not be possible to treat you. PHE advises that in these circumstances you should give consideration to not handling bats and therefore cease volunteering as a VBRV, if only as a temporary measure. When you become rabies vaccinated in all cases where immune suppression is present Natural England requires an antibody test to be taken two weeks after the last dose of vaccine to ensure an adequate immune response to the necessary minimum level of at least 0.5 IU/ml. Further guidance is available from your GP surgery and can also be requested from PHE directly on **020 8327 6204**.

Are you currently vaccinated? Yes ☐ No ☐

Date of most recent vaccination or antibody test: / /

Primary course? <input type="checkbox"/>	Booster? <input type="checkbox"/>	Antibody test? (Test must show antibody reading of 0.5IU/ml or more) <input type="checkbox"/>
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Are you a Bat consultant and/or someone who receives payment/salary, be it on an employed or self-employed basis for handling bats? Yes ☐ No ☐

Volunteer Health & Safety

We are committed to ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to provide for the health, safety and welfare of our volunteers in keeping with Natural England's Health and Safety policy. Volunteers are also responsible for their own health and safety and have a duty to inform us of any health condition that may affect their ability to carry out their voluntary duties.

Do you have any medical condition or allergy that you consider may affect your voluntary activity (for example immune suppression)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes please provide details (include details of any treatment by a doctor or hospital visit within the last two years [Click here to enter text.](#)

Volunteer Health Declaration

"I understand that being a volunteer may be physically demanding. I consider myself fit to undertake the tasks I have expressed an interest in, and should I be offered a volunteer placement I agree to inform Natural England of any changes to my health".

Signed:

Date: / /

Do you have any convictions which are unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Signed:

Date: / /

Using and Sharing your Information

Your information will be stored and processed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 for the purposes of managing and supporting your volunteering role. Please see our privacy notice <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-england-privacy-notices> for more details. Sensitive data about personal health gathered on this form will be processed to ensure you and others are kept safe whilst you volunteer for Natural England. We will use the data to inform risk assessments and to implement other measures appropriate to the risk involved, in keeping with our Health and Safety policy. If no suitable role is immediately available we will keep your details on file for up to six months.

Thank you for completing this form and offering your valuable time and skills in support of the natural environment

Please return to batvolunteers@naturalengland.org.uk or post to Bat Volunteer Application, Natural England, Mail Hub Block B, Whittingham Road, Worcester, WR5 2LQ

**DOCTOR'S DECLARATION
RABIES VACCINATION FOR NATURAL ENGLAND
VOLUNTEER BAT ROOST VISITORS**



Note for GPs Surgeries

Natural England in consultation with Public Health England (PHE) have redefined the risk of pre-exposure to rabies in England for Volunteer Bat Roost Visitors (VBRVs.) From 2020 trainee VBRVs do not meet the category of 'regularly handling bats' as defined in [Chapter 27 of The Green Book](#). This is to reflect that trainees are always accompanied by experienced Level 1 and 2 VBRVs, that the UK is one of two countries to be considered as low risk for rabies transmission, VBRV adherence to existing Natural England Health & Safety policy and practices and the nature of the VBRV role in conducting mainly observational and advisory surveys.

Natural England operates three levels of VBRVs:

1. Trainees. VBRVs who have yet to complete their training.
2. Level 1. VBRVs who have completed their training.
3. Level 2. VBRVs who have completed their training and are licensed to train other VBRVs.

As a Health & Safety measure Natural England is operating a system of pre-exposure prophylaxis for Level 1 and Level 2 licensed VBRVs to reflect where practices necessitate handling of bats (for example species identification). Public Health England will therefore meet the costs of pre-exposure vaccination for Level 1 and Level 2 licenced trainer (and active) VBRVs only. The requirement for trainee VBRV pre-exposure prophylaxis is removed. When assessing your patient please provide information on the organisation the individual is volunteering for and their Licence status within the organisation (see criteria above). This information will be used to determine if the correct groups of individuals are being targeted for the vaccination.

Contact Natural England if you require confirmation a patient is our volunteer and to arrange payment for pre-exposure prophylaxis if the volunteer meets the criteria listed above.

batvolunteers@naturalengland.org.uk

I can confirm [name] is not severely immunosuppressed (See point 4 below) and has completed a pre-exposure prophylaxis course as listed below. I can also confirm that the above has been risk assessed to determine costs (if any) of vaccination or booster treatments using form IMW 248 V2 as stated in [PHE guidelines on requesting rabies October 2019](#) Yes ☐ No ☐

Date of 1st vaccination: ____/____/____

Date of 2nd vaccination: ____/____/____

Date of 3rd vaccination: ____/____/____

Date of 1st booster vaccination: ____/____/____ (Due 1 year after primary course)

Date of booster vaccination (3-5 yearly): ____/____/____; ____/____/____; ____/____/____

DOCTOR'S
STAMP
HERE

OR

Date of most recent rabies antibody test ____/____/____

Results of most recent rabies antibody test:IU/ml

Date recommended for next vaccination: ____/____/____ and/or antibody test: ____/____/____

Signed: [GP / Nurse / Health professional]

Date: ____/____/____



In order to protect your right to confidentiality, the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) sets rules for processing personal information. The information we hold about your vaccination status is collected to enable our staff and/or contractors to arrange bat visits in accordance with our health & safety policy on EBLV rabies. The information will not be used by us for any other purpose. However, for ease of administration, we may share information about your vaccination status with other relevant and responsible organisations such as the Bat Conservation Trust – if you would prefer us not to share your vaccination details please tick this box. ☐

Your information will be stored and processed in accordance with the GDPR Act 2018 - please read the Volunteering Privacy Notice at www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-england-privacy-notice/volunteers-privacy-notice for more information.

Guidelines for rabies booster vaccination for Level 1 or Level 2 licensed bat volunteers at risk of handling bats

These are condensed from the 2018 revised rabies chapter (Chapter 27) in the Department of Health's Immunisation against Infectious Disease: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-the-green-book-chapter-27>

Primary immunisation: Three doses of rabies vaccine (2.5 IU; one vial) should be given on days 0, 7 and 28 by intramuscular injection in the upper arm or anterolateral thigh. **Boosters:** A single booster should be given one year after the primary course and subsequent boosters at 3-5 yearly intervals.

1. TIMING OF FIRST BOOSTER

Guidance recommends that the first booster be given one year after the primary rabies vaccination course.

2. SUBSEQUENT BOOSTERS

Once a first booster has been received, antibody levels seemed to be maintained in the longer term and boosters for those who remain at ongoing risk can be given every 3-5 years.

3. THE ROLE OF SEROLOGY (ANTIBODY TESTING)

Regular blood tests for rabies antibody levels are not offered in England. If the individual would prefer to have antibody levels taken rather than a booster, this will need to be paid for by the volunteer, and should be organised through the GP and sent to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) laboratory, Weybridge.

4. IMMUNOSUPPRESSED INDIVIDUALS

Please note if your patient is currently taking or has previously taken medication or other treatment or has been diagnosed with certain medical conditions that severely suppresses the immune system that this can affect their response to rabies immunisation and booster doses. Be advised that should they be exposed to bat lyssavirus it is

possible that they may not respond to post-exposure vaccine and it may not be possible to treat them. If they are diagnosed as being immunosuppressed you must request your patient notify Natural England so that we can review their status as a VBRV. PHE advises that in these circumstances they should give serious consideration to ceasing their volunteering as a VBRV whilst their immune system is suppressed and for a specified period of time afterwards (to be specified by you).

If they are immunosuppressed and still wish to potentially be exposed to bats (despite awareness of the significant risks) Natural England will require an antibody test at their expense to be taken two weeks after the last dose of pre-exposure vaccine to determine the response to the vaccination (greater than 0.5 IU/ml). Ongoing contact with bats will require annual antibody tests at their expense to ensure they are still protected. Please contact PHE for further information at 020 8200 4400.

5. Access to advice & vaccine (for occupational vaccination) & post-exposure vaccine & immunoglobulin Rabies vaccine for bat roost visitors is available from PHE (For potential costs see **Note for GPs Surgeries** above). For advice contact PHE on 020 8327 6204. For *pre-exposure* (occupational) requests, GPs should:

- Use the online pre-exposure form IMW 248 V2 from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-pre-exposure-request-form> and send by secure email to lg.clerks@nhs.net.

For *post-exposure* use, vaccine & HRIG are supplied through PHE Rabies and Immunoglobulin Service (RIgS) at 020 8327 6204.

NOTE FOR VBRV

Please return completed form to your Natural England support adviser at batvolunteers@naturalengland.org.uk.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Department of Health guidance on rabies vaccination - Chapter 27 of The Green Book: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-the-green-book-chapter-27>

Public Health England guidelines on requesting rabies pre-exposure prophylaxis <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-pre-exposure-prophylaxis-guidelines>

Natural England information on VBRVs' need for rabies vaccination:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/voluntary-bat-roost-visitor-how-to-volunteer> (click 'Vaccination against rabies')

Public Health England post-exposure treatment guidelines

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-post-exposure-prophylaxis-management-guidelines>

Natural England is here to conserve and enhance the natural environment, for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings.

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england

