

Health & safety guidance for voluntary bat roost visitors: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

What about Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

PPE is often used as a way of managing a hazard. For example, goggles can stop dust and grit getting into your eyes and gloves can stop you from absorbing hazardous substances through your skin, give you a better grip and protect you from cuts and grazes. But in terms of risk management PPE comes as a last resort.

The last resort

PPE is a last resort because it has a lot of potential problems:

- It only protects the person wearing the PPE and not those nearby.
- The user must remember to put it on.
- It needs maintaining, storing correctly, cleaning and replacing regularly.
- It can also become a hazard in itself if not used correctly or is poorly fitting.

While bat workers often rely on PPE to help protect them from hazards it is vital you always think through the activity / task first and try to manage the risk in another way before solely relying on PPE. There is additional guidance in the Natural England '[Risk Management Technical Information Note](#)'.

PPE from Natural England

Natural England provides PPE free of charge to registered volunteers and trainees. All NE-issued PPE meets Health and Safety regulation standards.

If you choose to source and purchase your own PPE and equipment please ensure you have the right standard (see below). As Natural England provides suitable PPE you will not be reimbursed for kit you have purchased yourself.

The tables below list the EN-standard PPE and other safety equipment most commonly used by VBRVs, issued and recommended by Natural England. This kit is easy to order from us using the form at [VBRV H&S web page](#). The form gives details of available fit / size.

Fitting & using PPE

It is essential your PPE fits correctly:

- Please ensure that dust masks fit tightly enough to prevent hazardous particles from entering your nose and mouth.
- Goggles should not interfere with your vision or spectacles.
- Clothing, footwear, hats and gloves should be comfortable and not too loose.

You must always use PPE in line with the guidance provided by the manufacturer to ensure it works properly.

Health & safety guidance for voluntary bat roost visitors: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE must also be stored and cleaned in line with manufacturer's guidance.

Replacing PPE

We issue an annual PPE checklist so you have the opportunity to request replacement kit where necessary.

If any item of your PPE falls into the 'unsuitable if' category in the tables below you can also get a replacement from us at any time by emailing the form on [VBRV H&S web page](#) to batvolunteers@naturalengland.org.uk.

Reporting an incident

You must report any accident, near miss or incident which occurs whilst performing or travelling to / from a roost visit to Natural England as soon as possible:

- Contact the Natural England 'near miss and incident reporting line' at any time on 0300 060 0100.
- If the incident results in injury to another person or damage to property please also contact: Martin Rhodes 0300 060 2676 or Lucy Foster 0300 060 0666.

Feedback

If you have any feedback about this guidance or would like to see additions / amendments please

get in touch by emailing:

batvolunteers@naturalengland.org.uk.

Further information

Please see our website page and other VBRV health and safety leaflets at:

[Health and safety for voluntary bat roost visitors](#)
[Publications for voluntary bat roost visitors](#)

Natural England Technical Information Notes are available to download from the Natural England website: www.naturalengland.org.uk.

For further information contact the Natural England Enquiry Service on 0300 060 0863 or e-mail enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk.

Copyright

This note is published by Natural England under the Open Government Licence for public sector information. You are encouraged to use, and reuse, information subject to certain conditions. For details of the licence visit

www.naturalengland.org.uk/copyright/. If any information such as maps or data cannot be used commercially this will be made clear within the note.

© Natural England 2014

ISBN 978-1-78354-081-5

Health & safety guidance for voluntary bat roost visitors: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Safety equipment

PPE	For...	Preferred Standard	Unsuitable if...
Gloves	Hazardous substances Contact with zoonoses Rough surfaces	EN 374 and EN 388	Any tears or holes
Gloves - heavy duty	Sharp edges	EN 420:2003 or BS EN 388	Torn Too large
Goggles	Dusts, airborne particles contacting eyes	EN 166 1B 34	Don't provide an adequate seal Scratched / impair vision Don't fit, too large / small Elastic loose
Coveralls (disposable)	Dusts, particles, fibres contacting skin / personal clothing	EN ISO 13982-1 Type 5	Torn Missing fasteners Too big / small
Coveralls	Dusts, particles, fibres contacting skin / personal clothing	EN 340:2003	Torn Missing fasteners Too big / small Not washed regularly
Safety Helmet (hard hat)	Low ceilings, beams Being struck by falling objects Penetration by sharp objects	EN 397	Out of date Subject to impact / damage Not compatible with other PPE Too big / small
Bump cap	Low ceilings	EN 812	Out of date Subject to impact / damage Not compatible with other PPE Too big / small
Safety boots	Slips Protruding sharp objects Anti-static	EN ISO 20345:2007 EN ISO 20345:2011	Too big / small Excessive wear and tear Broken fastenings
Safety trainers	Slips Anti-static	EN ISO 20345:2007 EN ISO 20345:2011	Too big / small Excessive wear and tear Broken fastenings
Dust masks (disposable)	Inhalation of hazardous substances	EN 149:2001 FFP2	Don't provide an adequate seal Don't fit, too large / small Elastic loose
Knee pads	Hard surface for prolonged periods	BS EN 14404	Too big / small Excessive wear and tear Broken fastenings
Hi-vis jacket	Hi visibility, low light conditions	EN471:2003+A1 2007 Class 2	Dirty, too big / small

Health & safety guidance for voluntary bat roost visitors: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Other safety equipment

Equipment	Unsuitable if...
Hand torch	Flickering / dim light Draining battery quickly Very heavy
Head torch	Flickering / dim light Draining battery quickly Very heavy Unable to secure to head Not compatible with other essential PPE
First Aid kit	Out of date
Ladders	Non compliant with EN131 No completed annual inspection