

OBG Volunteer Protocol for Badger Casualties

This guidance applies to badger road casualties (RTAs) but can be used for any casualty. Ill and injured badgers will try to get back to safety if possible. Bodies may be found away from a road, in gardens, fields or near a sett.

Location reporting

- Note date seen
- name of road (eg A415 or Abingdon Road), which town, village or parish, any landmarks or road signs.
- badger location (ideally 8 figure Grid Reference or what3words, (address/ postcode, or map pin etc. will do).
- If driving, make mental note of landmarks (road signs, junctions, bridges etc.) and locate via 'map pin' later.
- Any comments - whether or not you checked the badger (if so, report your findings & any actions taken).
- Report online at <https://www.oxonbadgergroup.org.uk/report/> as soon as practicable.

Stop & check option

If you have time, and **if** you feel comfortable looking closely at an injured/ dead animal, stop to check the badger. Do this **only** if it is safe to do so. Be aware that poor lighting and weather conditions increase the risk of accident.

Your safety is paramount. Remain alert to traffic hazards and ground conditions at all times.

- If driving, park legally and safely. Try to park where car will protect you from oncoming traffic. Switch on car's hazard warning lights, use warning triangle(s) if you have them.
- Wear your High Vis Jacket, appropriate clothes and shoes. Take mobile phone or other means of communication. A stick can be useful. Take care when walking and be alert to road side conditions – there may be dangerous litter, hidden holes and general poor walking conditions, especially on unpaved verges.
- Wear appropriate PPE near the badger (Disposable gloves, face mask).
- Approach with caution, be sure badger is actually dead. Do not go close or handle a badger that is bloated or smelly or very badly damaged. Be aware of the biohazards and risk of infection or contamination.
- If badger is still alive but injured or sick, see emergencies below & Badger Rescue Protocol (OGB_032).
- Note size of badger, (cub, young adult, adult, sex). Unusual colouration (albino or brown). (Take photos)
- Wear disposable gloves or use a stick to handle or turn the badger. During January to June, does the badger have prominent teats along belly? If so, it is probably a lactating female and there may be orphaned young cubs nearby. [Optional: wearing disposable gloves & mask, squeeze a teat to try and express milk]. Inform OBG ASAP if you find a potential lactating badger.
- Check for suspicious injury, (e.g bullet wounds, poisoning etc). If you have a metal detector, scan for bullets. If you suspect foul play go to Wildlife Crime Protocol (OGB_034) Leave in situ, take photos /video.
- **! If possible and you are able) lift or drag badger into less visible position to hide it.** [REDACTED] N.B. Dead animals on the road/ public hazards can be reported to the council for removal <https://www.gov.uk/report-dead-animal>
- Remove gloves & mask and dispose safely. Sanitise your hands & anything used to touch the badger.
- Signs of badger activity in the immediate area? Nearby sett? runs, push through, snuffle holes, latrine?

Emergencies

If you find a live, injured badger or abandoned cub needing rescue call Debbie on 07748 086915

If you can do so safely, keep a wounded badger warm and immobilised till help arrives. Do not attempt transport.

Report crime by calling 101, ask for the wildlife officer and get a crime number. Do not interfere with the scene.

Members of OBG WhatsApp groups should message for advice or assistance.

Useful equipment

- Mobile phone, ideally with camera, GPS locator app (e.g. what3words / Grid Reference) and OBG contact numbers. (Or camera, pen and paper, and local map).
- Hazard warning triangle(s), 1st aid kit, emergency flashing torch
- High Vis jacket, disposable gloves & face mask. Clean water, disinfectant wipes or gel, walking stick.

Oxfordshire Badger Group: Risk Assessment for Road Casualty (RTA) Reporting

Protocol and Risk Assessment carried out by: Linda Ward on 11th April 2021.

Review date: May 2023

Reviewed and approved by Debbie White and Richard Tilley.

Note: This assessment applies only to the specific hazards of RTA reporting. It supplements other relevant field work protocols.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take?	Who/ when by?	Date Done
Distraction of sighting the RTA could cause driver to lose control of their vehicle and crash. (very unlikely)	Occupants of the vehicle and others may be very seriously injured in the accident.	Not previously considered.	Provide advice on how to note point locations reasonably accurately while driving.	Linda	11/4/21
Stopping and working on a road that carries motorised traffic.	Volunteers at risk of very serious injury or death if hit by oncoming traffic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put personal safety first. RTAs will only be checked if it is safe to stop and do so. If driving, park legally and safely, using the car as a shield if possible. Deploy hazard warning lights and triangles. Hi-Vis clothing advisory Carry mobile phone or other means of communication 	Advise to remain highly alert to traffic throughout the exercise. If conditions become unsafe / not comfortable abort and get back to safety.	Linda	11/4/21
Slips & trips.	Volunteers may be injured if they slip or trip attending the RTA. Road side verges can be uneven and littered with objects including broken glass, sharp metals. The badger may be in a ditch or difficult location	Not previously considered.	Update protocol to add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear appropriate footwear. Be aware of hidden holes and litter hazards along the roadside. Take special care on unpaved verges Carry mobile phone or other means of communication 	Linda	11/4/21
Low light levels, & working at night	Increases likelihood of risks happening.	Not previously considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess conditions and abort if unsafe or unsure. Torches and HiVis/ reflective gear should be used. 	Linda	11/4/21

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Poor weather conditions	Increases likelihood of risks happening.	Not previously considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess conditions, including appropriate clothing and abort if unsafe or unsure. 	Linda	11/4/21
Manual handling: lifting or pushing the RTA. Adult badgers are bulky and weigh about 12kg (more in autumn).	Risk of sprains or bruising from lifting or pushing a RTA.	Only attempt to move the RTA if you are able/ it possible safe to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more action needed 		
Biohazards – The RTA is likely to have open wounds. It may be infected, contaminated or decomposing. It may (unlikely) have been poisoned. Badgers may carry bovine TB and other infectious diseases. They have fleas.	Volunteers checking the animal risk infection from proximity and handling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPE (disposable mask & gloves) should be worn. Decomposing or bloated animals should not be handled or moved. Disinfect hands and any implements (e.g stick) used to touch the RTA afterwards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure protocols for managing biohazards in the field are consistent & include COVID guidance Volunteers to assess and decide if it is safe to go closer &/or handle the RTA Volunteers should carry clean water and disinfectant wipes or gel for washing hands. Recommend carrying a first aid kit 	Linda Linda Linda Linda	End April 21 11/4/21 11/4/21 11/4/21
Animal handling	Volunteers attending a wounded RTA may attempt rescue. They could be injured (bites and claw wounds) if it recovers consciousness and attacks them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice is to call for help and wait for trained back up. Only approach and offer 1st aid (immobilise and keep warm) if safe to do so. Cubs can be handled safely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure RTA volunteers have copies of rescue protocols Do not attempt to transport (without a restraining cage). 	Linda Linda	End May 21 11/4/21
Emotional distress.	Volunteers may be upset by seeing/ handling a RTA. They may feel conflicted or guilty if they cannot/ don't want to check it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking an RTA is optional and a matter of personal choice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no pressure to approach or handle a RTA. RTAs with very severe wounds/ squished should be left alone. Contact the council to remove if appropriate 	Linda	11/4/21