



ADVICE NOTE

Bats and Human Health

Last year a Scottish Conservationist died after contracting rabies from a bat bite. This is the first such case in the UK for over 100 years.

Rabies is a serious infection of the nervous system. It is caused by a virus usually transmitted by a bite from an infected animal. The European Bat Lyssavirus is a rare strain of the infection. In Europe where EBLV is more common there have been three such fatalities since 1977. Since 1996, those individuals who handle bats are advised that they should be vaccinated against the virus.

There is **no risk to the general public** and no evidence to suggest that the virus can be transmitted to other animals.

However, if your work or hobby brings you into close contact with bats then seek further advice. Try contacting your GP, nearest Scottish Natural Heritage Office or the Bat Conservation Trust (0207 627 2629). SNH are operating a Bat Helpline until September 2003 when its' need will be reviewed 07774 161219.

Bat Helpline 07774 161219