



Scottish Charity – Registered No. SC034297

**Guidance Notes for Badger Rehabilitation.
From initial contact to final release.**

Badgers occasionally require assistance for a variety of reasons and the following points are intended to be a guide to helping achieve a satisfactory outcome.

Road traffic accidents kill many badgers and occasionally they can leave an animal disabled. Where a female is killed (check for distended teats) for what ever reason during the period from March to the end of June and the location of the sett is known, orphaned and dependant cubs may emerge from the sett searching for food.

1. Road traffic accidents should be checked for vital signs of life. They may appear dead but may only be unconscious. If safe to do so, relocate badger to a safe position and cover the animal if possible, this may keep it quiet until help arrives. Personal safety is paramount and handling an injured badger should not be undertaken unless the person understands the implications and is confident action will be beneficial. If the badger can be manoeuvred into a plastic dust bin, this could contain the animal for transportation. Contact SB, SSPCA, police, animal rescue centre or veterinary practise.
2. Veterinaries should provide initial first aid. Oral re-hydration (bowl of water) as first option for treatment if veterinary not available.
3. Locate holding centres with suitable cages and nets able to secure and hold badgers. The holding centres may be a secure barn or similar building with a box and hay – straw bedding, water and food suitable for badgers aged four months or older.
4. Identification features, tattoos with licensed code agreed with SNH. Tattoos should be laterally both side of the abdomen and micro-chip in scruff of neck; this should be undertaken when sedated to reduce stress levels. In addition blood tests should be undertaken to inform of any notifiable disease. Remove all external parasites.
5. Old males, assess injuries, broken front leg, euthanasia should be considered.
6. Females, with abdominal injuries especially broken pelvis, euthanasia should be considered.

7. Young, at least up to 8 weeks in captivity can be integrated with others. Syringes feed initially, then change to bottles then wean onto solids, continue with syringe or bottle feed if solids refused. Keep weight records weekly.
8. Two badgers constitute a minimum group size for orphaned cubs. Play and handling cubs important up to maximum of 16 weeks. At eight to 12 weeks develop a group.
9. After 16 weeks change location and maintain minimum contact to prevent habituation. If possible mix a wild cub with hand reared cubs.
10. Check mobility using large board behind badger to observe locomotion.
11. With the agreement of landowners assess and maintain a list of suitable release sites for badgers, with regard to habitat and future welfare issues to include game keepers and snaring policies (pending decision of new parliamentary administration).
12. Return animals to same area or integrate with others to form a group before rehabilitation.
13. Do not use marked vehicle when visiting sensitive sites.
Check release sites over several months and immediately before release to ensure that any abandoned setts have not been re-occupied. Releases; preferably in August – September – October or November when natural food should be plentiful.
14. If release site is difficult to ring fence with electrified rabbit fencing then provide artificial sett, which could be a structure of straw bales with chambers covered with boards and impermeable membrane then topped with more bales. This needs to be sited adjacent to preferred site to enable badgers to visit the intended site, food and water required inside fence.
15. If possible monitor after release; observe at sett and produce a report or if available with radio collars and trackers, possibly University based and licensed.