



Toads on Roads

Patrol Pack

Important Information for Toad Patrollers
(updated November 2025)

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Patrol Pack

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Background

Common toads are very particular about where they breed and follow the same migration route back to their ancestral ponds each year. If something is constructed in their path, they carry on regardless. Unfortunately, if this something is a road then the toads are at risk of being killed by traffic or becoming trapped in drains.

To save these intrepid travellers there are various steps that can be taken - including displaying road warning signs to make drivers more aware, lowering kerbs and setting up a Toad Patrol. A Toad Patrol is a group of volunteers who help local toads and monitor the stretch of road that they are crossing.

Froglife holds the database of amphibian migratory crossings for The Department for Transport. A manager of a toad crossing that features on this database can apply to the local authority for road warning signs to be installed during the migration period (February to April) or for dropped kerbs to be installed along the stretch of road the toads are using.

Monitoring by Toad Patrols in a 30-year period showed significant population declines in common toads. In 2016 we released a report showing, on average, toads in the UK have declined by 68% in this period, and the decline has been greatest in the southeast of England. You can read the report [here](#).

Toads on roads FAQs

Toads on Roads receive a very high volume of enquiries via email and social media during the annual toad migration (Jan-March). Please note that due to limited capacity, **we cannot answer enquiries over the phone.**

We have put together a [Toads on Roads FAQs page here](#) where you can find answers to commonly asked questions about Toad Patrolling. Before contacting us, please read these carefully. This is the most efficient way that Toads on Roads can operate and can save a lot of time.

If you can't find the answer you're looking for, please email: toads@froglife.org



Information for all Toad Patrolters



1. What does toad patrolling involve?

How do I Patrol a toad crossing?

Patrollers are volunteers who take on the task of saving toads by seeing them across the road in spring at their habitual crossing. This usually involves picking each toad up and placing it in a bucket on one side of the road, then transporting them across to a safe release site on the other side.

You need to bring a clean bucket, a hi-visibility jacket, a strong torch, and any other equipment noted by your Patrol Manager. Most patrols are co-ordinated locally by a volunteer Patrol Manager, who works to create a rota, and to understand and communicate safety constraints on site.

Safety is paramount, and we ask that as a patroller, you **read the safety briefing** within this pack, and take responsibility for following it, along with any additional briefings from the Patrol Manager. Please note, if the road is too busy or has poor visibility, **DO NOT attempt to rescue toads**.

Some patrols are very busy and intense with up to a thousand toads crossing over a month, needing many volunteers. Others are slower, with rainy nights bringing toads in their tens rather than hundreds. Crossings can be long - a couple of miles; and complex - there may be several ponds in the same area. Toads may also be migrating *along* a road not across it.

For new patrols it may not be known exactly where the crossing is. Sometimes the toads are clearly heading in a particular direction and just watching them for a few minutes will reveal it. Others may take more time, and a bit of ingenuity. Asking passers-by, looking on maps and peering over hedges might reveal an answer - just remember, toads are not necessarily heading for the pond that is nearest!

When you have read the safety briefing, please fill in and send back the Patroller Declaration Form, this will ensure you have status as a registered, insured volunteer, and help with long-term communication if there are problems locally.

If you are planning to patrol with child volunteers, we are delighted. However, please note that for safety reasons, anyone under 18 must be accompanied by their parent or guardian, please read the section on patrolling with children below and consider for yourself if you are happy with the risks in your locality.



When should I Patrol?

Toads tend to start moving around dusk and will continue into the night, depending on how cold it gets; usually you only really need to patrol during the first part of the evening when there is a high likelihood of them encountering traffic.

Toads can emerge from hibernation any time from January onwards, depending on local weather conditions; they tend to emerge a little later than frogs. The patrol can then last through until April.

Amphibian movements are very dependent on weather so it's crucial to check local forecasts; key signs to look out for are the first mild temperatures (at least $>5^{\circ}\text{C}$), together with rain.

When these conditions have been identified it's a good idea to start monitoring the site - if you can, check the site every evening or at least during/after appropriate patches of weather. It may be easiest to have one person coordinating who can draw up a rota so not all volunteers are out all the time; if a Patroller discovers a particularly busy crossing one night, they can then call on reinforcements.

How/why should I record Numbers?

We ask Toad Patrollers to record the numbers of toads and other amphibians they help across the road and the number of amphibians killed. You can either do this nightly via the [Toads on Roads Portal](#) or a data recording sheet handed in to your Patrol Manager at the end of the season. The Patrol Manager will then enter this onto the portal for you.

This data feeds into national monitoring projects and helps us determine how the UK's toad population is faring as a whole.

The numbers can also give you a good idea of how successfully your patrol is helping local populations but bear in mind there can be various other influences on toad numbers, such as the weather, causing them to move later at night when they're not seen.

You can read up on how to use the Toads on Roads Portal [here](#). You can also find a data recording sheet at the end of the pack.

Remember to return your sheet to your Patrol Manager at the end of the season!



2. Staying Safe

Your own safety is the primary concern, if the road is clearly dangerous, or has poor visibility, **DO NOT** attempt to rescue any toads. Likewise, if you have any health conditions that might make you more vulnerable to traffic, please keep yourself safe and do not take on any exposed patrolling without support.

Road safety:

- Where there is no footway or verge, walk in single file along the right-hand side of the road.
- Cross busy roads in a group, and if applicable, at the point designated by the Patrol Manager.
- Wear reflective clothing -- *when picking up toads, kneel sideways on to the road to ensure that the high-visibility strips are visible to both sides of traffic, and where possible, make sure that your reflective clothing is not covered by coats and/or bags.*
- Wear good, solid shoes so you don't slip or trip.
- Carry a torch and/or a head torch. This is to help you find toads and to warn approaching traffic. Take spare batteries or a spare torch just in case. **DO NOT shine your torch directly at drivers** as this could cause an accident.
- Be sensible and remain aware of your surroundings.
- Keep your ears open - do not use headphones or your mobile phone in the road.
- If traffic is coming towards you and a toad, encourage the driver to slow down with your torch before rescuing. If the driver does not slow down, please move out of the road. **DO NOT shine your torch directly at drivers** as this could cause an accident.
- Please remain courteous and professional to drivers, neighbours, and each other.



Other safety measures

- Make sure you have someone with you, or that someone knows where you are
- Stay in touch - If possible, carry a mobile phone and the numbers of other patrollers if you are in a group.
- Wear a warm, waterproof coat and trousers with gloves if it's cold. – *toads like wet weather more than we do!*
- Make sure you know where the safe place to release toads is.
- Keep safe from germs – *You may want to wear disposable gloves when handling amphibians. We recommend single use disposable gloves (powder-free vinyl gloves if possible). Wash your hands thoroughly after a patrol. **Please do not use hand sanitiser** before patrolling as amphibian skin is sensitive to this.*
- Be careful of cuts and scratches- use plasters on these if appropriate. Avoid contact with dirty water. If patrolling away from home, carry a first aid kit.
- Some patrols may find it appropriate to place advance warning signs for drivers to help protect both the toads and you – these might be provided by the Council, or homemade. Please see the Patrol Managers section on signage.

Follow any additional safety instructions from your Patrol Manager which may be verbal or written.

Make sure you fill in and return a Patroller Declaration Form, which will ensure you are covered by our insurance. Please return it to your Patrol Manager so they can enter your details onto the Toads on Roads portal.

*You are under **no obligation** to undertake or take part in a Toad Patrol. If you are uncertain or have concerns about undertaking or taking part, under no circumstances should you continue.*



3. Patrolling with children and vulnerable people

Froglife welcomes and endorses children who volunteer at toad crossings. This is a rewarding way of supporting nature for a stronger future, moreover, children bring sharp eyes and toad-rescuing energy!

However, we cannot ask children to take the same responsibility for themselves that adults do, nor can we ask them to decide if a patrol is safe for them – this is entirely down to the parent or guardian. You are the best person to make these decisions as you know your child and their capabilities. We thus ask that anyone under 18 is accompanied by a parent or guardian, and that they are registered by the parent or guardian too. On the other hand, we suggest parents listen to the advice of Patrol Managers, who know the area and the hazards well.

The same applies to vulnerable adults in need of support, in which case we would ask that a keyworker or parent accompanies the adult participating.

While the final decision is down to the parent, we would suggest that patrols with children will be safer and more satisfying in some of these circumstances:

- If the collection area is wide and level and with space for children to rescue toads away from the road.
- The road is a minor road with slow traffic and good visibility.
- In ideal circumstances: the edge of the road is fenced, or a temporary fence is erected.
- Children collect toads into a bucket on one side of the road, then are escorted across the road by an adult for release.
- Children are briefed not to follow toads onto the road, and not to rescue toads from the road or its verge.
- All parties follow the safety instructions.

Occasionally we have enquiries from groups such as scout groups about helping with a patrol. Unfortunately, Froglife cannot take liability for children without their parents or guardians if they are working at the roadside, however it may be that the group's own insurance covers you for this activity.



4. Note on your personal information

Froglife commits to hold your data securely and only for the purposes it was given.

When you volunteer with us as a Toad Patroller, your contact details automatically pass to the Patrol Manager, and/or Area Co-ordinator where there is one. We request that the Patrol Manager, and Area Co-ordinator also holds your information securely and only for the purpose it was given.

In most cases, the Patrol Manager and Area Co-ordinator are volunteers. In a small number of cases, they are professional or voluntary representatives of an organisation, for example, a Wildlife Trust, Amphibian and Reptile group (ARG), County Council, or local city farm. In all these cases, the organisation will only keep the information for the purpose it was given and will not share it.

5. Roles

Patroller – A volunteer who helps toads across roads. They should read the safety information and fill in a registration form for official status.

Patrol Manager – Co-ordinates the local patrol. In some cases, they are the only patroller. Responsible for risk assessments, communication, general support, and data recording at the end of the season. **You must provide an email address** to us so volunteers are able to contact you via the [Toads on Roads map](#).

Area Co-ordinator – supports all patrols in an area. Not all areas have one. The Co-ordinator will usually help with volunteer co-ordination, liaison with the council and profile raising across the area. In some cases, they will stand in for Patrol Managers when absent.

Council – Is responsible for making decisions about signage. In some areas, they have an ecologist who can help and champion Toads on Roads crossings. They may be able to provide other help.

Froglife – Co-ordinates the overview of all crossings across Britain and updates the official database of crossings (this work is currently unfunded).



6. Code of conduct for volunteers

This Code of Conduct for Volunteers outlines the standards of behaviour expected from volunteers to ensure the safety, effectiveness, and integrity of Froglife's activities while promoting respect for wildlife, public safety, and community co-operation. All volunteers must read and comply with this Code of Conduct. Toads on Roads volunteers must also ensure they read and will comply with the Toads on Roads Patrol Pack as updated from time to time.

1. Volunteer conduct

Volunteers should maintain the highest standards of behaviour in the performance of their duties by complying with the following rules:

- . Fulfilling their role safely, competently and in line with their written volunteer role description.
- . Representing Froglife and its mission with integrity and acting honestly and responsibly at all times.
- . Acting in line with Froglife's purpose, values and policies, as well as abiding by any instructions or directions reasonably given to them by the Project Manager or Patrol Manager.
- . Meeting time and task commitments and providing sufficient notice when they will not be available so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- . Keeping all confidential matters secure and returning any such documents or materials in their possession at the end of their volunteering.
- . Seeking authorisation before communicating externally on behalf of Froglife.
- . Ensuring that any research activities are conducted ethically, with proper care for wildlife and habitats.
- . Using equipment, tools, and resources provided by Froglife responsibly and returning them in good condition.
- . Participating in training sessions, briefings, or meetings relevant to their role to ensure competence and alignment with Froglife's mission.
- . Collaborating with other volunteers, staff, and stakeholders to foster a positive and inclusive working environment.



. Reporting any issues, safety concerns, environmental risks, or unusual observations (e.g., habitat damage, wildlife distress) promptly to [Froglife's Chief Executive Officer: Kathy.Wormald@froglife.org].

1.1 Additionally, volunteers must not:

- . Bring Froglife into disrepute (including via social media or public statements).
- . Feed or otherwise interfere with wildlife except as required for the performance of their role.
- . Engage in any activity that may cause physical or mental harm or distress to another person (such as verbal abuse, physical abuse, assault, bullying, or discrimination or harassment on the grounds of sex, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, disability or race).
- . Be affected by alcohol, drugs, or medication which will affect their abilities to carry out their duties and responsibilities, while volunteering.
- . Provide a false or misleading statement, declaration, document, record or claim in respect of Froglife, its volunteers, employees or charity trustees.
- . Engage in illegal activity while carrying out their role.
- . Use Froglife's resources (e.g., equipment, funds, or facilities) for personal purposes without authorisation.
- . Share sensitive data or research findings without prior approval from Froglife management.
- . Post photos or information about sensitive locations (e.g., breeding sites) or injured wildlife online without permission

Toads on Roads Volunteer Rules

2. Respect for wildlife

- . Handling wildlife with care, in accordance with the guidance set out in the Toads on Roads Patrol Pack.
- . Releasing animals in safe places.
- . Minimising stress to animals and refraining from using flash photography, loud noises, or sudden movements around wildlife.



2.1 Personal and public safety

- . Observing safety procedures, including any obligations concerning the safety, health and welfare of other people in line with training provided to volunteers.
- . Wearing high-visibility clothing or vests and solid shoes with grip.
- . Carrying a clean bucket and a torch or head torch.
- . Wearing warm and waterproof clothing in wet weather. Froglife follows the Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the UK Advice Note 4 on Amphibian Disease Precautions. To minimise the risk of disease spread and minimise damage to the mucus layer on amphibian skin, all Froglife staff wear **vinyl powder-free gloves** for handling amphibians or reptiles. Gloves should be wetted in the source pond when possible before handling amphibians and must be changed between sites (locations over 1km distance apart). All volunteers and trainees on Froglife projects, Toad Patrol members on patrols linked to Froglife and students on research projects associated with Froglife are expected to follow this practice and should wear **vinyl powder-free gloves**, except in unplanned situations where the movement of animals is a priority to avoid risk of injury or death.
- . Taking appropriate care of cuts and scratches or other injuries.
- . Staying with the Toad Patrol group.
- . Carrying a mobile telephone and the numbers of the other patrollers.
- . Reporting any potential hazards (e.g. aggressive drivers, injured animals or unsafe conditions) to the Patrol Manager and if appropriate the rest of the patrol group.
- . Taking care of and responsibility for the health and safety of any vulnerable adults or children they are accompanying.

2.2 Environmental responsibility

- . Staying on designated paths and avoiding trampling vegetation or disturbing habitats.
- . Respecting public park rules.
- . Picking up and disposing properly of litter when practicable.

2.3 Community interaction



- . Treating others, such as members of the public, motorists and property owners, with courtesy, fairness, equality, dignity and respect.
- . Communicating respectfully and honestly at all times.
- . Directing any media enquiries, and if necessary, questions regarding Froglife's activities, to [the Patrol Manager] and Froglife's Chief Executive Officer (Kathy.Wormald@froglife.org).

2.4 Road safety

- . Complying with the Highway Code as updated from time to time whenever on public roads. Staying aware of traffic and never blocking roads or putting themselves or others in danger.
- . If there is no footway or verge, walking in a single file along the right-hand side of the road. Not attempting to rescue toads if the road is too busy, dangerous or has poor visibility. Crossing busy roads in a group and at the point designated by the Patrol Manager if applicable.
- . When picking up animals, kneeling sideways on to the road to ensure that the high-visibility strips are visible to both sides of traffic and ensuring when possible that the reflective clothing is not covered by coats and/or bags.
- . Encouraging drivers coming towards them and a toad to slow down using a torch before rescuing the toad, without shining the torch directly at the driver, and moving off the road if the driver does not slow down.

2.5 Reporting and record keeping

- . Notifying the Patrol Manager of unusual sightings or trends (e.g. significant increase in toad deaths, other species observed).
- . Reporting any health and safety concerns.
- . Raising concerns about possible wrongdoing witnessed by a volunteer in the course of their volunteer role with Froglife to [Froglife's Chief Executive Officer].
- . Recording and sharing all information requested to be collected by them accurately and in a timely manner.



2.6 Additionally, volunteers must not:

- . Shine a torch directly at drivers.
- Use headphones or mobile phones when on the road.
- . Engage in any activity that may damage property.
- . Trespass on any property or otherwise enter property without proper authorisation.
- . Take unauthorised possession of property that does not belong to them.
- . Share sensitive locations (e.g. breeding sites) without authorisation from the Patrol Manager.
- . Post photos of injured or dead animals online without permission.

Declaration

By volunteering, you agree to abide by this Code of Conduct to protect amphibians, serve the public interest, and ensure a safe and effective experience for everyone involved.

Where a volunteer is found to be in breach of the standards outlined in this Code of Conduct or any of Froglife's other policies and procedures this may result in the volunteer's position being terminated. Notwithstanding the foregoing, volunteers should note that Froglife may terminate a volunteer's position without cause.

Volunteers acknowledge that no employment relationship is created in the context of their role with Froglife.

The board of charity trustees will review the Code of Conduct for Volunteers as appropriate. The [Froglife's Chief Executive Officer] is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively. All other staff and volunteers, including charity trustees, are expected to facilitate this process.



Additional Information for Toad Patrol Managers



The Patrol Manager Role

Thank you for volunteering to take the lead with a patrol and joining hundreds of people around the country who co-ordinate one or more Toad Patrols. You might be running a large patrol on a busy road, moving toads single-handed on your evening stroll from your door, managing several patrols with experienced patrollers on hand at each of them, putting up signs every year and taking them down again, or even fishing toads out of land drains every night.

The basic role as a Toad Patrol Manager will include the following:

1. Taking care of safety of yourself and other Patrollers including assessing the site for risks and communicating these to the patrollers
2. Recruiting volunteers, registering their details, and keeping their personal information safe.
3. Counting numbers of amphibians crossing each night, along with numbers of volunteers, collating this and entering it onto the Toads on Roads portal.
4. Understanding the site, the local amphibian population, and sometimes working with the local council on improvements such as safety signs or road closures.
5. Letting us know if you change your contact details or need to stop your role as a Patrol Manager, and if possible, helping to find and induct a replacement.

Froglife send out updates to patrol managers three or four times a year, and we may occasionally need to contact you to ask about local circumstances. We do value your privacy, and we won't bombard you with information. **You must provide us with an email address** so volunteers are able to contact you via the [Toads on Roads map](#).

If you would like regular updates from Froglife, please sign up to our monthly [Croaks newsletter](#).



Safety Information for Patrol Managers

1. **Do not** undertake or take part in a Toad Patrol without first undertaking a full Risk Assessment.

2. **Do not** undertake or take part in a Toad Patrol without first sending the forms to register you and your patrollers for insurance purposes.

Toad patrolling is an immensely rewarding and important activity; however, it does take place in the dark and wet, and on roads. For these reasons we ask that you take safety very seriously.

We have included a basic list of 'Staying Safe' guidelines in the '*Information for all Patrollers*' section above. This is unlikely to be enough on its own because local circumstances can vary. You should carry out your Risk Assessment then review the '*Staying Safe*' list to include local information.

Every year you should:

- Review Froglife's '*Staying Safe*' list in the '*Information for all Patrollers*' section above.
- Always visit the site in the daytime before the start of the season, even if you think you're relatively familiar with the site. Check how easy it is to walk along the collection and release areas, clear vegetation if necessary.
- Then carry out a Risk Assessment based on local needs such as those above. You can invite other patrollers to join you and do it together if it helps. Review the Risk Assessment every year.
- You can write any additional instructions from the Risk Assessment onto the '*Staying Safe*' list. E.g., gathering point, instructions for calling for help, etc. Then make sure each of your patrollers receives a copy of the revised list, along with the information to all patrollers.
- Please show that you are taking a healthy attitude to safety, explain any points that need clarification, dress appropriately for the weather and for safety and make sure your patrollers do the same.



Some points On Managing safety

- If your crossing is particularly large, try to make sure you have one or more experienced Patrollers around to help manage each evening. Try to get volunteers booked in advance so you have an idea of numbers.
- Try to have a car park/meet point away from the road and toad crossing where you can safely brief and equip your volunteers. Sign a safe route (off the carriageway) from here to the toad crossing; if this isn't possible, make sure you walk as a group on the roadside facing oncoming traffic, wearing your hi-vis clothing.
- Think about setting up additional road signs – 'Toad Patrol', 'People on the road', etc. Make sure they are at a distance that gives motorists plenty of warning, if possible, have two sets – one in each direction. You may need to seek the Council's and landowner's permission to display signs, check first.
- Make sure all volunteers have their own safety equipment and are sensibly dressed with a torch, hi-vis, phone, etc.
- Count your volunteers in and out – we don't leave our Toad Patrollers behind!
- The Patrol Manager should carry/have access to a fully charged mobile phone and, ideally, a first aid kit. If there is no mobile coverage in the patrol area and you are all away from home, make sure everyone knows how to get help in an emergency.



Risk Assessments

Before starting a Toad Patrol, it is vital that you identify the risks involved by doing a Risk Assessment and share any modifications from this with your patrollers. **If you do not undertake this, we cannot prove to insurers that you have taken all reasonable steps to manage safety in the patrol should an accident occur.**

This Patrol Pack contains a sample Risk Assessment which outlines some example dangers that might occur at a toad crossing and which you need to control for. On the same form, there is space for you to write down any risks specific to your site if needed. **Froglife DO NOT need to see your Risk Assessment**, this is for you and your patrollers to read and sign before patrolling each season.

You can also access and edit a Risk Assessment on the Toads on Roads Portal. Find out how to do this [here](#).

With your local site knowledge, you will be able to consider safety issues including:

- whether the road is busy, fast, slow, quiet with occasional fast drivers etc.
- whether there are nasty bends people should avoid,
- where the safe gathering areas are and aren't,
- where there might be overhanging bushes,
- if there are any potholes or trip risks.
- cars –a few patrols use their own car as protection, in some places this is not appropriate, and any cars should be parked off site. Where would this be?
- Emergencies -some sites are a mobile phone blackspot, so please consider how to get help if necessary.
- Strangers – some patrols are very locally based, in others where patrollers are coming in there may be misunderstandings with locals or passers-by that warrant a minimum number for patrolling.
- There may be other local issues – these are all examples to help you consider.

If you have concerns about safety on a busy road, under no circumstances should you undertake a Toad Patrol.



What is the Legal Position?

All Toad Patrols registered with Froglife are entitled to request signage and other safety measures from your council. While your council should consider this, they are not obliged to provide any mitigation.

All the UK's rare amphibians and reptiles; natterjack toad, pool frog, smooth snake, sand lizard and great crested newt are protected by law from intentional killing and injury; their habitats (ponds and terrestrial habitats) are also protected. Unfortunately, the other widespread, more common species, are only protected against trade/sale.

Often patrols end up moving other amphibians along with the toads they are rescuing, frogs and newts are not as specific as toads regarding their return to their spawning pond, but they are still vulnerable.

Great crested newts and other amphibians can be collected and moved across the road without breaking the law so long as you are removing them from an area of danger where they are at immediate risk of being killed. This only applies where animals are being moved across the road to an area of safety in the immediate vicinity (confirmed by Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Nature Scot). This does not apply when they are being moved off a site to another site (translocation).

Common toads (*Bufo bufo*) are recognised as being of priority importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Therefore, legislation requires that planning authorities need to ensure that common toads are protected from the adverse effects of development. Installing signs would be seen as supportive of a council's general biodiversity duties (under section 41) of the NERC Act.



How do I get Insurance?

Froglife are insured to a total of £5,000,000 for any one incident, so long as we, and you, and your registered volunteers operate responsibly- which is why we ask you to consider risk and complete a Risk Assessment.

All you need to do is ask each Patroller to read the 'Staying Safe' section above, adding any detail from your Risk Assessment, and then ask them to sign a volunteer declaration form.

We are only covered for registered Patrols, volunteers we have details for, and registered Patrol Managers, so if you find a new site that needs help, please register it with us as soon as you can.

The insurance covers you, and your volunteers, for personal accident, and third-party liability (if you inadvertently cause an accident to someone else). It doesn't cover you for your belongings, travel to the patrol area, or wider issues like reputation. We tend to find that being part of a registered and insured patrol gives a stronger credibility with any potential detractors too.

If anything does go wrong, please make sure you get the names and details of any other parties, take a photo if possible (e.g., if an accident involves a vehicle) and contact us at the earliest opportunity at: toads@froglife.org

Our ultimate aim of course, is to make sure there are no accidents.

A few of our patrols are run by professionals within their separate employment- for example as part of a day's work as a Conservation Officer. If this is the case, you should also be covered by your employer's liability insurance.

Likewise, if you are running the patrol as part of your active volunteering for a charity you may be covered by their insurance scheme. Do check with your representative to find out if your group is covered for this.



Recruiting volunteers

Many patrols are more efficient and friendly for involving a wide range of volunteers. Please read this section if you would like any help with recruitment.

You may have friends and family you can involve as volunteers. Once you are registered, any individuals volunteering through Froglife's website will be passed straight on to you by email, do please reply and encourage them, even if it is outside the patrolling season.

Putting together a list of interested people is helpful, and this should be kept away from your personal and other professional information so you can easily pass it on if you ever move away. Registering your volunteers on the Toads on Roads portal means that we can also pass them on if you stop patrolling for some reason.

If someone takes an interest, do get their details straight away. From here-on, try and keep the group focused on the run-up to the toad migration season via phone calls, group emails or even a WhatsApp group chat. Some patrollers like to arrange a site visit for all volunteers during the daytime sometime before the migration starts.

Remember we are all responsible for keeping volunteers' personal information safe and not sharing it with others or using it inappropriately.

Advertising for help

Posters are available at the end of this pack for displaying in the local area (shops, pubs, notice boards, car windows etc).

If there is a local event/fete in your area, consider having a stall with posters and pictures to promote your Toad Patrol. This often proves a good way to raise support and awareness. Get in touch with Froglife if you would like any promotional materials or colour posters. If there are no organised events, think about holding your own! Set up a stall in your local town/village centre. Remember you may need to seek permission.



Other organisations

You could also consider contacting local schools. Some children may be too young to take part, but they might be interested in hearing about the project; get them involved by designing their own toad crossing sign or thinking about how they could help toads in their garden or school conservation area. Visits like this help raise awareness amongst the local community.

Don't forget to contact local wildlife groups who may be able to help. If there are any nature reserves nearby, ask if you can put posters up on the notice boards promoting your cause. Useful starting points may include the local ARG (www.arguk.org), Wildlife Trust (www.wildlifetrusts.org) or your local authority's Biodiversity/Wildlife Officer.

Media and your Toad Patrol

Over the years, toad migrations and Toad Patrols have been featured regularly on regional TV, radio and in newspapers. You might decide that you'd like to raise awareness of your toad crossing in this way – if so, the following might be of use...

Does your site really need publicity?

In some cases, media exposure can have a positive effect on a toad crossing: it can make drivers drive more slowly; it can raise awareness of the site to the local council, increasing the likelihood of required action (e.g., sign installation); or it can attract volunteers to help. All these have positive implications for your toads.

On the negative side, media exposure can sometimes lead to anti-social repercussions, where signs are stolen, or where toads (or worse, patrollers) suffer abuse - a situation which unnecessarily affects your safety.

These are issues you must weigh up before publicising your toad crossing.

Who do I tell?

Should you decide to publicise your toad crossing, there is a draft press release in this pack, which you can use as a template. Send this to local media outlets. A good place to start is by phoning up your local newspaper and asking for the newsroom, where you can then speak to a journalist about your toad crossing. Another good idea is to get in touch with your local BBC news office - the email will be: 'county name'@bbc.co.uk (e.g., Devon would be devon@bbc.co.uk). This could then lead to both BBC radio and TV coverage. If you would like a copy of this template emailed to you just get in touch: toads@froglife.org



Be prepared!

It's notoriously difficult to tell how much publicity your site might get: it might be that you hear very little, or it might be that you are overcome with enquiries. One thing that's important is that you have some key messages ready for when the journalists ring: (e.g., "we want volunteers", "we want the council to listen to us", "we want to help our local toads" etc.) this way you can get your message heard clearly, before the interviewer takes you off the subject with other questions.

Other resources

There might be other people you could forward media enquiries to. Your County Coordinator (if there is one in your county, find out from Froglife) or your local Amphibian and Reptile Group (www.arguk.org), will be good contacts for local enquiries. For more national information on Toads on Roads, contact Froglife at: toads@froglife.org. Information on free photos is available in the notes section of the press release template at the end of this pack.

Feedback to Froglife

Keeping track of where your Toad Patrol has appeared in media is useful for a number of reasons - it means you can re-contact journalists should you need to the following year, plus it means you have a public record of the site's importance, which could be useful if the site should become threatened by development in future years. Please also send photocopies (or web links) of any coverage to Froglife, who will insert this information into your Toad Crossing file and feedback the level of publicity the Toads on Roads project has received nationally each year.



Annual checklist for a busy patrol

As the run-up to the migration season begins, you might find this checklist useful to make sure you are adequately prepared!

- ☐ It's important to get in touch with all your regular Patrollers from previous years and advertise for new ones if necessary. There are posters available for you to display in local shops / community centres / etc.
- ☐ When you hear back from potential Patrollers, find out their availability, experience and get their contact details (daytime and evening).
- ☐ If you do not live particularly near to the crossing site, try and find a local person (e.g., a dog walker, or someone who lives or works nearby) who can keep an eye out for toads starting to move – they can then let you know, even if they're not able to patrol themselves.
- ☐ It's a good idea to arrange for all the Patrollers to visit the site in daylight to familiarise themselves well in advance of the migration season. Perhaps organise an informal meeting (at a local pub or café?) and then use this opportunity to ensure all new patrollers are briefed on their task and understand the recording forms.
- ☐ Carry out an annual Risk Assessment review and make sure everyone has the updated information.
- ☐ Be prepared for a few toadless nights, especially on quieter crossings.
- ☐ Remember the toads will be most likely to move during or just after appropriate weather so the migration may happen in waves.
- ☐ Have recording forms ready for volunteers so they can record the number of live and dead toads, frogs, and other amphibians for collation and sending on.
- ☐ Toad migrations can start anytime between late-January (southwest England) and late-March (northeast England, eastern Scotland) with temperatures around 5-10 Celsius and upwards. Be sure to check the local weather forecast for the first run of consistently mild, wet nights and make sure all Patrollers are prepared. It will help to have someone nearby or who can check the road regularly to inform you when the toads are beginning to move.



- ☐ Websites that may be of use (remember to look at night-time conditions not just day time): www.metoffice.gov.uk or www.bbc.co.uk/weather
- ☐ Once you have collected all the records, please enter your data onto the Toads on Roads portal.
- ☐ Please pass on our thanks to all volunteers for all they are doing.



Blank Forms and Posters

(These can also be found on our website [here](#))



Risk Assessment

Please keep this, do not return it to Froglife



TOAD PATROL:

TOAD PATROLLER:

DATE:

Hazard	Nature of Risk	Degree of Risk	Prevention/control measure	Adjusted degree of risk
Your local issues				
Issues common to most patrols – please add detail where relevant				
Cold wet and windy weather	Cold and chill, potential for hypothermia and confusion. Slips on wet roads.	Moderate	Advise all patrollers to wear warm waterproof clothing and sturdy shoes or boots and read 'Staying Safe' section.	Low.
Dark	Risk of walking into potholes, brambles, steep slopes and other hazards, risk of getting lost	Moderate	Advise all patrollers to carry a strong torch and visit the site during the day to check for hazards	Low
Traffic	Risk of road accidents, either with a car or causing a collision.	High	Advise all patrollers to wear hi vis clothing and carry a torch. Take care crossing the road, read the 'Staying Safe' section. Other local advice –added above. Park safely in pre-designated area – above	Moderate
Infections	Risk of tetanus and other infections from water, soil, amphibians etc.	Moderate	Cover cuts with waterproof plasters. Carry first aid kit.	
Strangers	Risk of verbal abuse, or attack	Low	Note any concerns above. Advise all patroller to remain professional and courteous.	

I(insert volunteer name), have read, understand and will take action to prevent/control for the above risks and I understand that I am not obliged to undertake this voluntary work. Signed: (OR CONFIRM BY EMAIL)

www.froglife.org/toads-on-roads

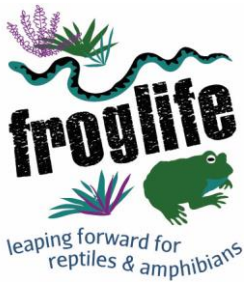
Toads on Roads data recording sheet

Site (name and ID):	
Year of data collection:	

Patrol Effort:		
Start date	Last date	Total No. of days patrolled

[illegible]

Please complete and enter the data onto the Toads on Roads Portal: toadsonroads.froglife.org
Find instructions on how to use the Toads on Roads Portal here: www.froglife.org/toads-on-roads-portal



Patroller Declaration Form

Froglife provides free insurance to cover patrollers for Public Liability and Personal Accident. To be covered, all patrollers **must sign one of these forms and return it to their Patrol Manager.**

You only need to fill this in once unless any circumstances change. You can put members of the same family on one form. Please read the [Patrollers Health and Safety Information](#), before filling this in. Further copies can be downloaded from the [Froglife website](#).

Please write in **BLOCK CAPITALS** so that your information is clear and concise.

YOUR DETAILS

Name(s):

Address:

.....

.....

Email address(es)

.....

CROSSING DETAILS

TOAD CROSSING

.....SITE ID

CONFIRMATION

I confirm that, I will be patrolling at these sites. I understand the risks associated with Toad Patrolling and will take responsibility to follow the Patrollers Health and Safety Information, and any further instructions from the local Patrol Manager.

I will take responsibility for the following children and under 18s:

Name:

.....

D.O.B:

Name:

.....

D.O.B:

All named persons must sign in the box below, or note 'returned by email'

Signed:

Date:

Please return this form to your Patrol Manager. Thank you!



Patroller Press Release Template



[insert date here]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers step up to save local toads at [insert site name]

Local toads are to be helped across a busy road at [insert site name], as part of a national campaign to help save the common toad from disappearing in the region.

With spring arriving and the weather turning milder, volunteers from [insert town/village] are gearing up to visit the site over the next [weeks/days] and will carry toads over the busy road to help them reach their breeding ponds on the other side.

[insert quote here, example below:

“Our Toad Patrol has been running x years, and over this time we’ve rescued x toads. It’s really good fun and great to know that we are helping with the plight of toads in the area.” Said [insert name]

“We’re eager to get more people volunteering though, and we want to hear from people with an interest in helping an unusual and charismatic amphibian for a few nights this month.”]

The common toad- a wonderfully charming amphibian with ‘warty’ skin and waddling gait- is thought to be experiencing declines in the UK, in some cases caused by the effect of road traffic as toads travel slowly back to breeding ponds, often used for generations.

These local volunteers are part of a national campaign named ‘Toads on Roads’, coordinated by the national wildlife charity Froglife, and supported by ARG UK, a national network of volunteer groups concerned with amphibian and reptile conservation. Over the coming weeks, thousands of volunteers across the country will be preparing to help toads across roads in a coordinated effort to help save the common toad from further declines.

Other toad patrols exist in [insert county] details of which can be found on the Froglife website: www.froglife.org – for more details: toads@froglife.org

-ENDS-

Editor’s notes

1. Press enquiries

Toad Patrol Manager: [insert your details here- mobile number helps]

Froglife: Kathy Wormald, Froglife: Kathy.wormald@froglife.org;

Toads on Roads photos: toads@froglife.org

Please credit ‘Froglife’ unless otherwise stated.

2. Notes

Facts about common toads:

IDENTIFYING FEATURES

- Adults grow up to around 8cm long
- Dry, 'warty' skin
- Body colour is generally brown-green-grey and can have some dark markings on the back. Like the common frog a toad's colour can change depending on the environmental conditions it experiences
- Has a gland behind each eye that secretes a toxin (bufotoxin), making it distasteful to predators
- Moves by crawling, but will do small hops
- The eye has a bronze/gold coloured iris and a horizontal pupil
- Belly is a light colour and can be spotted

Toads feed on slugs, worms and insects, mostly at night, and may be found around the garden hiding under plant pots, logs and bins during the day. They return to the same ponds year after year to spawn and prefer larger ponds often with fish (unlike other amphibians)- fish do not like to eat toad spawn/ tadpoles because they find them distasteful.

The common toad is widespread in England, Scotland (except the Northwest where it is rare or absent) and Wales. They are not found in Ireland.

Current status:

There have been declines in toad numbers in much of lowland England and similar decreases are thought to have occurred in Scotland and Wales. This appears to be partly because of road traffic during the breeding season and the loss of breeding ponds. Common toads are a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species.

Further information on Toads and Roads and Toad Patrollers: <https://www.froglife.org/what-we-do/toads-on-roads/>

- In addition to death by cars themselves, common toads also fall foul of badly designed road features such as high kerbs which steer toads towards drains, where they become trapped and die.
- Many of the toad crossings registered under the Toads on Roads project have the iconic Toad Crossing signs approved by the Government's Department for Transport
- Research by Froglife and the university of Zurich found that the common toad has declined by 68% in the last 30 years (<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0161943>)
- One third of the world's 6,000 amphibians are officially threatened with extinction (www.amphibianark.org)

TOAD TIMES

Between the end of **February and mid April**, toads all over the country will come out of hibernation and begin their hazardous journey back to their spawning ponds.

Common toads are declining in the UK with thousands of toads being killed on our roads every year, and they really **need our help**.

Toads usually **move after dark** when the temperature is above 6°C on damp evenings.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We welcome **new volunteers** for a couple of hours a week to patrol in teams of two or three. Short training, insurance and answers to all your questions are provided.

If you can help us protect these animals please contact:

.....

.....

.....

froglife



LOCAL DRIVERS

We need your help too!

We put up toad signs with lights on when we are patrolling the roads.

Please take care, **slow down** and look out for our patrollers in the **Hi-Vis jackets**.





WHY DID THE TOAD CROSS THE ROAD?

Common toads are declining in the UK. Thousands are killed crossing roads each spring as they make their way to breeding ponds that they have used for generations

Can you spare some time to help local toads cross a road?

Volunteers are needed to help a local 'Toads on Roads' patrol on mild, wet evenings from January- March.

If you are interested, please contact:

All you'll need for patrolling is warm clothes, something reflective, a bucket and a torch. You can take part as little or as often as you like.



Photo: Cheryl Frost

www.froglife.org/toads-on-roads



Toads crossing

on mild, damp evenings.
Please drive carefully!

www.froglife.org/toads-on-roads

