



## Pest control

We offer a free treatment to deal with rat activity (provided by a contractor) to those in receipt of the following means tested benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (not contribution-based ESA alone)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (not contribution-based JSA alone)
- Guarantee Pension Credit (not Savings Pension Credit alone)
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit (where annual income for the purposes of the tax credits assessment was below £15,050)
- and/or Housing Benefit

If you need more information, get in touch:

[Contact us](#) >

If you do not qualify for our free service, you will need to contact a private pest control company to arrange treatment.

**Please note we do not provide a pest control/treatment services for any other pests.**

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## Asian Hornets

There has been an increase in the number of credible and confirmed sightings of the Asian Hornet, mainly in the south/south-east region of the UK.

The Asian Hornet preys on a wide range of insects including honeybees and disrupts the ecological role they provide. It can also alter the biodiversity in areas where it is present as well as being a health risk to those who have allergies to hornet or wasp stings.



If you think you have seen an Asian Hornet:

- notify the Great British [Non Native Species Secretariat \(NNSS\)](https://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm) (<https://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm>) immediately
- in the first instance sightings should be reported through the [free Asian Hornet Watch App](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-app-to-report-asian-hornet-sightings) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-app-to-report-asian-hornet-sightings>)
- [Contact the UKGOV National Bee Unit](https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/diseases-and-pests/asian-hornet/so-you-think-youve-seen-an-asian-hornet/) (<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/diseases-and-pests/asian-hornet/so-you-think-youve-seen-an-asian-hornet/>) that is quick to respond and will get a team out to the location to verify and deal with the pest
- [Contact the Asian Hornet Action Team](https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-teams) (<https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-teams>)

A map showing sightings and latest news of Asian Hornet can be viewed on the [British Beekeepers Association website](https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-incursion-map). (<https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-incursion-map>)

## The common rat and the house mouse

The common Norway or brown rat typically has brownish fur on its back and grey underneath but its colour can vary from white through to black. Adult body length is 200 to 270mm plus a tail length of 150 to 200mm.

If you find a mouse in your house it will more than likely be a field mouse. Droppings or food packets being gnawed are the signs of the presence of the mouse in your house. Like rats, mice are controlled with poisons, but can also be controlled with traps. Many types of traps can be purchased from DIY stores.

Mice can survive in widely different temperatures, from the heat in a bakery to the cold of a refrigerator and, as long as the food they are eating is moist, they can survive without the need to drink.

The house mouse and the brown rat are common rodent pests. We all have a responsibility to ensure that our homes, gardens and local environment are kept free from rodents.

Rats and mice breed very quickly. A pair of rats can produce several litters a year, with each litter producing about eight young. The offspring mature three months after birth and breed at the same rate.

Rats are efficient burrowers and can burrow for several metres horizontally. Both rats and mice are good climbers and can climb vertical walls if the surface is rough enough, and “shimmy” up between walls and drain pipes. Rats are also reasonably good swimmers and have been known to enter premises through the water-traps of the toilet bowl.

### [Three main reasons rodents must be controlled \(#\)](#)

1. They can transmit many diseases to humans, including salmonella (food poisoning) and Weil's disease that is a serious and sometimes fatal infection transmitted to humans by contact with urine from infected rats. The infection can get into the human body through cuts and scratches and through the lining of the mouth and eyes after contact with infected urine or contaminated water. Anyone who is exposed to rats or comes into contact with canal and river water is at risk.
2. They contaminate food and food preparation surfaces.
3. They cause damage by gnawing woodwork, water pipes and electric cables which can cause house fires.

### [Prevent disease from rodents \(#\)](#)

- do not touch rodents with unprotected hands
- waterproof gloves should be worn when handling anything which may have been in contact with rodents
- all cuts and broken skin should be covered with waterproof plasters
- always wash your hands thoroughly after handling any animal or any contaminated clothing and especially before eating, drinking or smoking
- all utensils and surfaces with which rodents may have had contact should be thoroughly washed and disinfected

### [You have a legal responsibility to ensure your property is free from vermin \(#\)](#)

Householders can assist in preventing an infestation by taking a number of simple precautions:

- keep your home in good repair; rats only need a gap of 15mm to access buildings
- remove potential nesting sites by keeping yards and gardens clean and tidy and by cutting back overgrown areas
- ensure drain covers are in place and in good repair

- seal gaps around heating and water pipes
- ventilation bricks and slots should already have a fine wire mesh protection. If this is worn, replace it externally with 3.15mm insect mesh
- do not leave household waste where rats can get to it, close dustbin and composter lids
- if you have a compost heap position it on a hard surface such as on open jointed bricks, paving slabs or a fine steel mesh which will allow the liquids to drain away. [Visit the Recycle Now website for further information \(https://www.recyclenow.com/\)](https://www.recyclenow.com/)
- secure any gaps beneath your external buildings such as sheds and garages with galvanised wire mesh
- follow simple precautions when feeding wild birds

### [Feeding birds in gardens \(#\)](#)

The numbers of rats and mice in built up areas is considered to be on the increase and unsuitable bird feeding methods may be a significant reason for this. If you feed birds please follow these guidelines:

- do not scatter food on the ground
- do not put food on a bird table
- do not throw unwanted food waste into your garden
- do use bird feeders with a catch tray to stop debris falling on the floor
- do ensure feeders are sited with care and suspended from metal wire
- do place small quantities in feeders daily to ensure they are emptied daily

If you see rats or mice in or near your property you should stop feeding the birds. For further information [visit the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds website \(https://rspb.org.uk/\)](https://rspb.org.uk/).

### [Traces left by rats or mice \(#\)](#)

- Holes - rat holes are about 80mm in diameter and are usually found outside in compost heaps, under sheds, in hedge banks and similar places. Inside buildings the rat makes nests in wall cavities or under floor boards. The house mouse is generally a pest found only inside buildings. Mouse holes are easily distinguishable by their smaller size, about 20mm in diameter.
- Runs and smears - rats and mice tend to use certain routes regularly when they travel to and from their nesting sites, and so create pathways or "runs". Indoors on hard surfaces the runs are less clearly defined, but become marked in places by black greasy smears.

- Droppings - the number of droppings, their position and age may help to identify where rats and mice are abundant, and where they are moving and feeding. Common rat droppings are between 10 and 20mm long and often found in runs. Mice droppings are like very small rat droppings, about the size of a grain of rice.
- Signs of damage - signs of damage include gnaw marks, half-eaten food and damaged packing. The more rodents there are, the more damage you will expect to see.

### [How can I get rid of rats and mice \(#\)](#)

To see if you qualify for the council's free rat removal service please phone 01256 844844 or

complete

**Contact us (<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/get-in-touch-online>)**

Rats and mice are adaptable, highly mobile and breed rapidly to produce large infestations. This can make their control difficult for the untrained individual and we recommend that, if you do not qualify for the council's free service, you employ the services of a reputable pest control contractor approved by the [British Pest Control Association](https://bpca.org.uk/) (<https://bpca.org.uk/>) or phone 01332 294288.

However, if you decide to carry out the work yourself there are two main options, poison or break back traps:

- Poison (rodenticide) can be bought from most hardware stores and garden centres. Put the poison in a safe and secure place out of reach of children and pets and always wash your hands after use. Rodenticide can take four to 12 days to take effect, and may result in a localised foul smell due to the presence of carcasses.
- Warning: when using any pesticides always follow the instructions on the label. Remember that pesticides may be harmful to other animals. The use of bait boxes can restrict other animals accessing rodenticide. Do not put rodenticide on your bird table.
- Break-back traps should be placed next to walls where rats tend to travel. The trap should be baited with chocolate, biscuit or cereal. Most rats are wary of new objects placed in their environment and will avoid them for a period of time. So do not set the spring on the trap until bait has been eaten then re-bait and reset the trap. Use several traps and examine them daily, removing dead rats as soon as they are discovered. All traps should be handled with care and placed so that household pets and children cannot access them.
- If after two weeks of self treatment there is still evidence of rodent activity you should employ the services of a reputable pest control contractor.

## Pharaoh's ant

The Pharaoh's ant requires artificial heat to survive and reproduce. In the past you would mainly have found them in hospitals, bakeries, laundries and institutions such as prisons. We are now

finding these in domestic properties as well.

The control of the Pharaoh's ant is best left to the professionals, as the treatment can take many weeks to complete.



## Bed bugs

The bed bug is an oval, flattened insect which measures 4 to 5mm in length. When unfed it is pale brown in colour, but much darker when full of blood.

Should you find this insect you should call a private pest control company for advice and treatment.

## Bees

The council does not provide a service for removal of bees.

There are three main types of bee:

- honeybees
- bumblebees
- solitary bees

[The British Beekeepers Association \(BBKA\) website can help you identify what type of insect you have and what to do about it \(http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/do\\_you\\_have\\_a\\_swarm.php\).](http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/do_you_have_a_swarm.php)

Alternatively, contact Basingstoke and District Beekeepers Association by visiting [Basingstoke and District Beekeepers Association website \(https://basingstokebees.co.uk/\)](https://basingstokebees.co.uk/).

## Cockroaches

The treatment of the cockroach needs professional control as the treatments vary from species to species.

If you operate a retail business and find anything that looks like a cockroach you are strongly advised to contact a pest control company immediately.

## Fleas

Fleas are parasites of warm-blooded animals. There are a number of species, the most common being the cat flea and the dog flea. An adult flea is approximately 3mm long and brownish in colour. The eggs are 0.5mm in length, oval in shape, pearly white in colour and are sticky.

Fleas can be effectively controlled by treating pets regularly with one of a range of products available from your vet.

## Wasps

The number of wasp nests can vary from year to year, possibly connected to the climate in the early part of the year. If we have a particularly cold start to the year then we don't usually have the same volume of nests in the summer months.

The treatment of a wasp nest is dangerous and should only be attempted by professionals who have the proper protective clothing and equipment, even then it can still be dangerous. You are strongly advised to consult a private pest control company if you have a wasp nest near your property.

## Foxes

There are no particular powers available to the local authority to control foxes as there are for other forms of pests. Further advice can be found by visiting [RSPCA](http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild/foxes) (<http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild/foxes>) or [The Fox Project](http://foxproject.org.uk/) (<http://foxproject.org.uk/>).

## Related

- [Search for local pest controllers](https://www.yell.com/) (<https://www.yell.com/>)
- [Trading Standards Approved Traders](https://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk/find-business?biztype=141&postcode=RG22+4XD&name=Basingstoke+and+Deane+Borough+Council) (<https://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk/find-business?biztype=141&postcode=RG22+4XD&name=Basingstoke+and+Deane+Borough+Council>)
- [British Pest Control Association \(BPCA\)](https://bpca.org.uk/) (<https://bpca.org.uk/>)