

If prevention by removing food sources and/or nesting sites is not successful then pest control treatment is the best solution. This can be done by the home owner using appropriate rodent poisons bought over the counter in hardware stores.

However it is strongly recommended that a professional pest control contractor is employed as they will ensure that bait is placed in species-specific lockable containers. It is illegal to place poisonous bait in the open air as non-targeted species, including pets and children, may eat the poison. The Pest Control Operative will also use the most effective poison and be able to locate the nest and identify where rats are entering your property or outbuildings.

You may wish to contact a private pest control company through either your local directory or through Hampshire County Councils, Buy With Confidence Scheme at

<http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk>

or contact Hart District Council on the details overleaf.

Hart District Council's Pest Control Service

The Council's Pest Control Contractor offers a competitive service for the following pests:

- Rats and Mice
- Wasps
- Bedbugs
- Cockroaches
- Fleas



There is a charge for the treatment of these pests in both domestic and commercial premises. A discount may apply for domestic customer who can provide evidence that they receive qualifying benefits.

If you would like to make an appointment for our Pest Control Contractor to visit, please:

Book Online:

<http://www.dialapest.co.uk/council/council.php>

Phone: 03444 828325

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Environmental Health



RATS

Description

Two types of rat are commonly found in the UK, these are the Brown Rat and the Black Rat. Of the two the Brown Rat is the most common.

The Brown Rat, fully grown has a body length of up to 25cm including a tail which is typically about half the length of its body.

Brown rats have coarse fur which is usually brown or dark grey in colouration with slightly lighter undersides.

The Black Rat is rare in the UK and tends only be found at ports.

Biology and Habitat

Rats are typically found where humans live and easily adapt to any environment. They tend not to travel significant distances to forage for food and usually stay close to their nesting site if there is a constant, easily accessible source of food nearby. They must drink water daily.

Rats nest in areas which are dry and rarely disturbed, for example, under sheds or compost heaps. They tunnel and can excavate large underground nesting sites to accommodate their growing population.

How can I tell I have a rat problem?

Common signs that alert people to a problem is sighting a rat during the day in the garden or noise in the loft or roof space.

There are, however, other signs you should look out for such as:

- Holes usually around 5cm or larger in diameter appearing in flower beds, under sheds or in compost heaps.
- Gnawing damage to fences, corners and bottom of doors, plumbing, wiring, bin bags and bins.
- Droppings - the number, age and density gives an idea of population size and how frequently they visit. Rat droppings are 1cm to 2cm long.

Why is it important to control rats?

Rats can cause a large amount of damage to the home or the garden through gnawing with their powerful jaws and incisors and through burrowing.

Rats can transmit many diseases to humans, including Salmonella and Weil's disease through their droppings and/or urine.

Rats are a public health risk and we can enforce treatment if needed under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

What measures can I take to prevent a rat infestation?

If you feed birds, be careful on how you feed them, if you follow the guidance below you can significantly reduce the likelihood of rats visiting your property.

- Don't scatter food on the ground or throw unwanted food waste into your garden.
- Use bird feeders with a catch tray to stop food falling
- Only place small amounts of food in the bird feeders to ensure that they are emptied daily.

If you see rats in or near your property you should stop feeding the birds until the rat activity has stopped.

In addition you should also consider the following measures:

- Make sure that any pet food kept outdoors is kept in secure metal containers.
- Keep a close eye on compost heaps, bins and structures in gardens that have a suspended floor as these provide excellent nesting sites for rats.
- Keep your garden tidy, cut back any long grass or vegetation that could provide rats with cover in your garden.