

Rats

Pest control facts – Rats

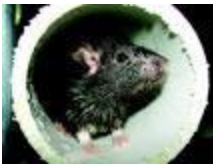


The common rat has coarse, reddish/brown fur on its back and a light belly, but colour can vary. An adult rat has body length of approximately up to 19cm plus a scaly tail of up to 12cm. They have a pointed nose and small ears.

Where rats live

Common rats live where they can find food, water and shelter.

In homes



- loft spaces
- wall cavities
- cellars
- under floorboards

They do not normally live in occupied homes.

In gardens



Entrance hole in paving

Rats will burrow into:

- compost heaps
- grassy banks
- under sheds
- back of ponds

They can even burrow into rockeries.

They are also commonly found living in sewer systems and are good climbers and swimmers.

Signs of infestation



Rat droppings

- Seeing rats
- Droppings, which can be 1cm long and resemble a 'spindle' shape
- Tracks – rats travel along the same routes and leave trails through grass
- Footprints and tail swipes on muddy or dusty surfaces
- Smear marks from grease and dirt from their coats can be seen on corners of walls and surfaces
- Burrows – entrance holes approximately 7.5 – 10 cm in diameter:
 - at the side of sheds
 - in grassy banks
 - under tree roots
 - log piles
 - edge of paving stones
 - around drain covers
- Gnawing – rats gnaw all the time, even on non-food material, to wear down their front teeth

What rats eat



Their favourite foods are cereal products although they will eat almost anything.

Most of the damage they do is by gnawing and ripping open packets.

They also foul food with urine and droppings.

Reasons for rat control

Rats can transmit many diseases to humans.

The main disease they carry is Weils Disease. This can cause flu like symptoms when bacteria enter the body through cuts in the skin or through contact with contaminated water.

They are also carriers of salmonella and rat bite fever amongst others.

Apart from transmitting disease, rats can cause damage to buildings and other structures through gnawing and burrowing.

Preventative treatment



Rats in rubbish

- Remove potential nesting sites by keeping gardens clean and tidy and cutting back overgrown areas.
- Do not leave out food late at night for wild birds and animals, as this will encourage rats.
- If you wish to feed wild birds and animals, then take in food at night and provide fresh in the morning.
- Keep your home in good repair so rats cannot gain access to it.
- Ensure drain covers are in place and undamaged.
- Do not leave household waste where rats can get at it.

Treatment we provide

- The Council offer a chargeable service for the treatment of rats.
- Our pest control officers will survey all of your property to confirm the nature and extent of your problem.
- This depends upon how easily they can access void areas (under floorboards, lofts, kitchen kickboard etc).
- Control will be achieved using an appropriate method, which may not involve poison.

Our officers will attempt to identify possible access points to the property that may be used by pests, but they do not carry out repairs.

Please make provisions to block these areas if you do not want the pest problem to return.