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BPCA British Pest Control Association

PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROLLER **SEPTEMBER 2025**
THE JOURNAL OF THE UK PEST MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY

CPD

ISSN 2046-5025

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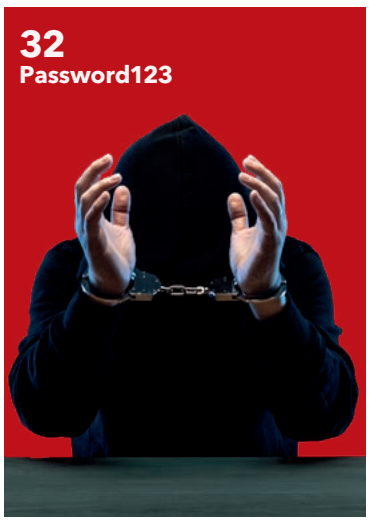

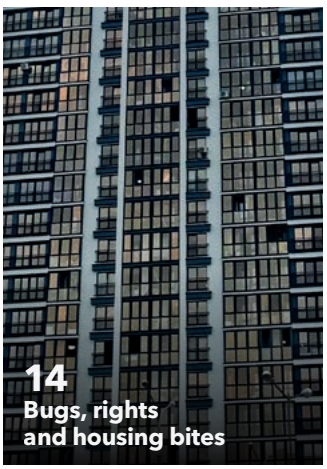

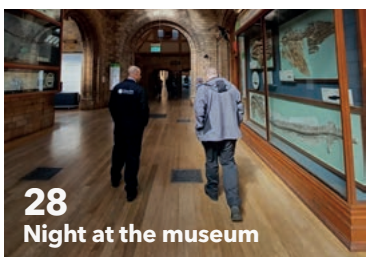

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BPCA Registered CPD points
Online CPD quiz = 1 point each

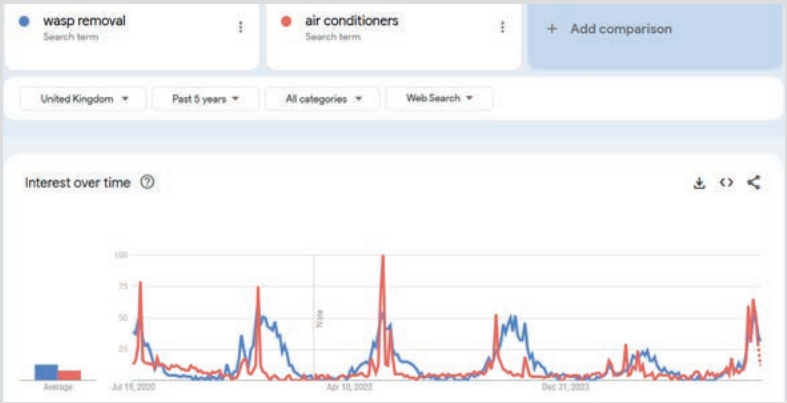
Remember to log anything else you've learned in your CPD diary for even more points. **bpca.org.uk/add**

Basis Prompt point allocation
Reading PPC mag = 2 points
Online CPD quiz = 1 point each
bpca.org.uk/find-cpd

Cause and effect

We were CC'd into a brilliant email thread this week between our technical team and the BPCA Technical Committee. It all started with a fairly standard request from Niall, who was looking for some information about wasp numbers and data sets for his webinar. But what followed was one of those strange conversations that could only happen in pest control.

One committee member chimed in with, "As we can see from the chart below, wasps are attracted by air conditioners, because the more air conditioners sold, the greater the number of wasp removals".



Source: Google Trends

Another member pointed out immediately: "I've extrapolated the data and discovered that wasps must originate from a place called Wimbledon."

Apparently, if we destroy every air conditioner and pop Wimbledon in a big glass dome, we'll solve the UK's wasp problems once and for all. Problem solved, right?

This kind of logic leap gave us all a chuckle, but it also sparked a proper discussion about the relationship between data and pest control. We're all surrounded by more data than ever before. Digital reporting, remote monitoring, AI-generated dashboards - they're useful tools, but without a professional to interpret them, they can lead clients to some strange conclusions. "Rodent sightings are down, so I can cut my pest control visits, right?" Hmm. "Wasp treatment callbacks are up 20% v 2024, so my products don't work, right?"

We've all fallen into the trap of thinking data = insight. But pest control isn't that simple. A fly catch analysis might show an increase in numbers, but that could be a rogue door left open on a hot day. A sudden spike in complaints doesn't always mean a major infestation. Sometimes it just means one loud customer and an enthusiastic Facebook group.

Even outside our day jobs, we're fed constant data and stats, and it's easy to mistake visibility for validity. Just because a topic keeps cropping up online doesn't make it true. Don't trust a social media algorithm to prioritise accuracy over engagement.

When the heat dies down and the wasp-graph tapers off, I'd encourage all of us to take stock. Talk to your peers. Reflect on your summer. Chat with your suppliers and with BPCA. Ask questions. Challenge assumptions.

Data is a starting point. It's through sharing experiences, swapping stories and a bit of trial and error that we sharpen our professional instincts.

It's not the chart or the dashboard that makes a difference - it's the expert reading it!

Scott + Kat

PPC editors
hello@bpca.org.uk

BPCA PLEDGES SUPPORT TO ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY WITH COVENANT COMMITMENT

British Pest Control Association (BPCA) has proudly signed the Armed Forces Covenant, strengthening its commitment to supporting current and former military personnel and their families.

By signing the covenant, BPCA has formally recognised the valuable contribution that service personnel, reservists, veterans, and military families make to the country, and pledged to ensure they are treated with fairness and respect in every interaction with the Association.

Rosina Robson, BPCA's Chief Executive, signed the document on behalf of the Association on 4 June 2025.

The signing comes with specific, practical commitments to help remove barriers for the Armed Forces Community entering the pest management industry. BPCA's pledges include:

Employment support

Provide reasonable accommodations for members of the Armed Forces Community in any job we advertise

Education

Provide comprehensive advice for the Armed Forces Community who wish to retrain or start a business in pest management

Promote

Encourage BPCA members to also support the Armed Forces Community, in whatever form they can.

Rosina Robson, Chief Executive of BPCA, said:

"We're proud to support those who have served our country and recognise the immense value they bring, not only to our communities but also to our industry.

"Signing the Armed Forces Covenant is more than a symbolic gesture. It's a promise to offer real support, whether that's through job opportunities, guidance on retraining, or encouraging our members to do their part.

"This is about making it easier for people to find a fulfilling new career and helping our industry benefit from their talents."

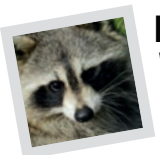
BPCA joins hundreds of organisations across the UK that have pledged their support through the covenant, demonstrating how businesses and associations can contribute to fair treatment and new opportunities for service leavers and their families.

Show your support by signing the covenant

BPCA is encouraging members to consider how they too can support the Armed Forces Community.

Whether you're offering flexible working for reservists, recognising military service in your recruitment processes, or providing retraining opportunities, every action counts.

If you'd like to join us and formally commit by signing your own Armed Forces Covenant, visit **armedforcescovenant.gov.uk**



RACCOONS ON WATCHLIST AS POSSIBLE INVADER

A team of experts representing 42 organisations across the UK and Europe have identified raccoons as being among 20 species most likely to become invasive in Britain over the next decade.

A horizon-scanning exercise conducted for the UK's Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) studied 145 different species.

The raccoon, or Procyon lotor, is the only vertebrate on the list, and retains its top 20 spot from an earlier exercise in 2019.

Why do I need to know about raccoons?

As with other potentially invasive non-native species, BPCA monitors closely to keep members informed of emerging pest risks and to prepare if a new species seems likely to establish in the UK.

While sightings are rare, raccoons are a Species of Special Concern and an NNSS alert species. Raccoons outside captivity should be reported to the secretariat.

In the past BPCA and our members have been called upon to help identify species of all kinds. If a client believes they've seen a raccoon, get as many details as you can and signpost them to the NNSS.

A map of raccoon sightings can be found at: **species.nbnatlas.org/species/NHMSYS0021109776**

NEW MEMBERS

Servicing members:

- Any Pest Control Services, Cornwall
- Belfast City Council, Belfast
- DFB Pest Control Ltd, West Sussex
- Essex City Environmental, Harwich
- Heritage Pest Solutions, Bristol
- Hunstman Pest Control, London
- IWT Services North West Ltd, Newton in Bowland
- London Area Pest Defence, London
- Oxfordshire Pest Defence Ltd, Oxford
- Pest24 Ltd, Swindon
- Pimlico, London
- Ramora Ltd, Shenstone
- Salix Pest Control, Stoke-on-Trent
- SDS Pest Control, East Devon
- Somerset Wildlife Services, Somerset
- Trash Wizard, Epsom
- Wolfguard Lock and Pest Management, Bedfordshire

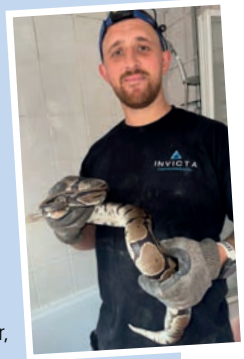
Observer members:

- Al-Esnad, Saudi Arabia
- Bawan Almemar, Saudi Arabia
- EFSIM Facilities Management, Saudi Arabia
- EverTrust Ltd, Taiwan
- HAMTE Group, Saudi Arabia
- Zahra al Hayat Cleaning Contracting, Bahrain

"I think I'm gonna need a bigger box!"

Lewis Clarke, from BPCA member company LRC Environmental Ltd, shared this great picture with us.

GATESHEAD PEST CONTROLLER'S BIG SSSSSURPRISE!



Carl Maddison, Technician at Invicta Environmental, got an unusual call out last month, when a customer rang their office bright and early to report a snake sighting in their bathroom.

"He rang us first thing and the company director, Norman, calmly spoke with him and reassured him that we would help, so I was tasked with finding and safely removing the snake."

Carl arrived to a panicking customer, who didn't know where the snake had gone.

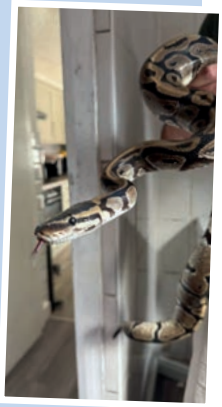
He explains, "I took the logical approach and started to look in enclosed areas. I took the bottom of the soil stack boxing off, used my camera to look up the stack and I spotted the end of the snake's tail.

"I went about gently removing the tiles and plasterboard and there it was, curled around the soil stack; a royal python, around 3-4 feet long."

Carl eventually managed to pry the snake away from the pipe work, not an easy task as the snake was very strong and resilient.

He continued, "The snake was very calm and happily stayed in my hands. At this point the snake's owner from a flat upstairs came knocking on the door, asking if anyone had seen it.

"The snake had previously escaped into another property 18 months ago, so it's pretty good at giving neighbours a fright."



Carl concluded, "I was excited the whole time; it's not often you get called out for snakes, especially in a residential street.

When I saw the snake I was shocked at how big it was. But it acted calm the entire time which helped."

AIR GUN SAFETY REMINDER AFTER MEDIA REPORTS OF PIGEON INCIDENT

You may have been made aware that the BBC reported an incident where a pigeon was found seriously injured in Glenfield, Leicestershire, having been shot with an air gun.

While there's no indication that pest management professionals were involved in the news story, we thought it would be a good idea to provide a quick air gun safety refresher for anyone carrying out pigeon management.

A reminder for pest management professionals

As professional pest managers, it's vital to ensure that any bird control work you carry out is done lawfully and humanely. Most work in England falls under General Licence GL41 – 'Take or kill for public health and safety' – although each devolved nation has its general licences.

You can find a table of these in the Member Library (log in required).

Key points to remember:

Exhaust non-lethal methods first

Under the general licence, lethal control can only be used if alternative lawful methods are impractical, ineffective or disproportionate.

Dispatch humanely

If lethal control is required, it must be quick and humane in a single swift action. If this isn't possible, apply an appropriate handheld dispatch tool where it's safe to do so.

Ensure competence and equipment standards

Training and demonstrated competency are essential. Keep your equipment regularly serviced and in good working condition.

Document everything

Robust records are critical if the use of lethal force is ever challenged. Documentation should include:

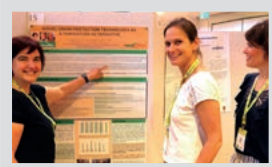
- Actions taken to comply with licence conditions
- Reasons why no satisfactory alternative was available
- Dates, locations, species and purpose for control
- Methods used for dispatch
- Number of birds taken or nests/eggs destroyed.

Keep these records for at least three years and be ready to produce them on request.

Further reading and support

If you're unsure about compliance, check the BPCA Codes of Best Practice or contact our Technical team for guidance.

- COBP - The Use of Air Guns in Pest Control
- COBP - Bird Management and Control



A GLOBAL GATHERING AT ICUP IN SWEDEN

Delegates from across the globe gathered at the 11th International Conference on Urban Pests (ICUP) held at AF-Borgen, in Lund, southern Sweden between 29 June and 2 July 2025.

This once again proved to be four unique days for an exchange of data, debate and networking amongst the leading researchers in the field of urban pests, writes Frances McKim.

In total, over 220 academics, manufacturers, regulators and service professionals representing all sectors of the urban pest management sector attended.

Irene Nilsson, Vice President of the Regional Council Scania, introduced the concept of smart sustainable cities, noting that with 85% of Sweden's population living in urban areas, rapid innovation has emerged through public–private collaboration.

Dr Bill Robinson, chair of the ICUP Executive Committee, warmly welcomed all delegates. He said: "The original concept behind the establishment of the ICUP event was to create an environment where delegates can exchange and share ideas. As participants, you are crucial.

Delegates need to exchange ideas and change what they think. To go away with ideas on what they can do next.

In total there were over 50 oral presentations which were a mixture of plenary and concurrent sessions, accompanied by poster presentations.

A vital part of these events is to include plenty of time for discussion and socialising, plus of course, as one delegate described them, coffee machine networking breaks.

The next ICUP Conference, when the 'ICUP family' will once again be able to get together, will be in 2028. Further details, including the location, will be announced when available.

BPCA SHORTLISTED FOR TWO MEMBERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARDS IN 2025

BPCA is proud to be shortlisted for two Memcom Membership Excellence Awards, which celebrate outstanding work across the membership and trade association sector.

BPCA nominations

BPCA has been nominated in two categories - Best Inclusion Initiative and Best Publication - alongside some prestigious organisations.

Our work to support industry recruitment through Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) earned us a finalist spot for Best Inclusion Initiative. This includes launching the EDI Committee, toolkit, recruitment resources, and an onboarding framework.

We're also up for Best Publication for the BPCA Manifesto, which urges the UK government to prioritise public health through six key policy recommendations.

Staying ahead of the game

Rosina Robson, BPCA Chief Executive, commented:

"We're thrilled that BPCA has secured these nominations in two really important categories. We're especially pleased that the projects highlighted were worked on very closely with members, showcasing the collaborative efforts of the BPCA Staff team and our passionate volunteers from within membership.

"The nomination for our Manifesto shows the importance of our lobbying efforts, on behalf of the pest management industry. Pest management has drawn a lot more focus in Parliament and the devolved nations this last few years, and it's critical we stay ahead of that focus.

"We're also really proud of our EDI projects, which are vital if we're to make sure that the pest management industry has an evolving and growing workforce for years to come."

The awards ceremony takes place in London on 25 September 2025 - wish us luck!

BPCA SHORTLISTED FOR ASSOCIATION EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2025

BPCA is delighted to announce that we've been shortlisted in two different categories at the Association Excellence Awards (AEA).

The Association Excellence Awards recognise and celebrate the work that associations, trade organisations, unions and industry bodies do for and on behalf of their members.

BPCA has been shortlisted in the following categories:

- Sector Representation Award
- Best Membership Engagement.

Our nomination for this award is based on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee's work onrecruitment and retention in the industry. The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony taking place in London on Friday, 7 November.

Rosina Robson, BPCA Chief Executive, commented:

"Coming straight off the back of nominations for the Memcom Awards, we're thrilled that BPCA has once again been shortlisted for our collaborative work with the many passionate volunteers who are the backbone of what we do.

"The nominations highlight the importance of letting people within the industry lead on important topics while BPCA provides that much needed operational support to get the work done."

SHIELD PEST CONTROL PROUDLY MARKS 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

2025 is a milestone year for Shield Pest Control, who proudly celebrate 50 years since the business was founded.

This achievement reflects decades of hard work, loyal clients and a company culture built on care and quality.

Since its founding in 1975 by Allan Steward, the business has grown from a start up to one that holds a Royal Warrant, highlighting its dedication to reliability and excellence.

Today, Shield Pest Control is a legacy of generations of expertise, thriving under Managing Director Daniel Steward, Allan's son.

Over the past 50 years Shield Pest Control has served clients throughout the Southeast, both commercial and residential, including highly renowned clients like The Houses of Parliament, Harley Street clinics, and Lock & Co.

Shield has celebrated this business milestone with a heartfelt event at Davy's Wine Bar in London, one of its cherished long-standing clients.

The atmosphere was one of warmth and joy as staff, clients, family and friends gathered to celebrate five decades of growth, shared success and the unwavering values that have defined the company.

Shield Managing Director, Daniel Steward shared his thoughts on the accomplishment, expressing that "reaching our 50th anniversary is an incredible milestone for our team."

He continued, "It's a reflection of decades of hard work, loyal clients, and a company culture built on care and quality.

"Our celebration brought together so many people who have been part of our journey. As we look ahead, we remain committed to evolving with the industry while staying true to the values that got us here."

Congratulations and happy 50th anniversary, from the BPCA Staff team to Shield Pest Control!

NATIONAL PEST AWARDS 2025 FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

The shortlist of finalists for this year's National Pest Awards has been announced by organisers Pest magazine.

Organised by Pest in conjunction with the British Pest Control Association, the National Pest Technicians Association and Basis Prompt, the National Pest Awards are aimed at recognising and rewarding the best in the industry.

The judging panel is headed by Simon Lewis, group managing director of Lewis Business Media, the publisher of Pest magazine.

The remainder of the panel consists of:

- Rosina Robson, Chief Executive Officer of BPCA
- Kevin Lawrenson, Chief Executive Officer of NPTA
- Chris Cagienard, Managing Director of Pest Solutions
- Simon King, Editor of Pest magazine.

Mr Lewis said: "I was delighted to chair the judging panel for the National Pest Awards.

"I'd also like to thank the judges who gave up their time to judge the entries. I know it's nerve-racking to enter, but we treat applicants with respect, so don't be put off. Start planning your entry and why not have a go next year."

See all finalists including BPCA members online at **bpca.org.uk/News-and-Blog**

PESTS IN THE PRESS: APRIL TO JUNE 2025

Heading into April, BPCA had once more joined forces with Direct Line, offering an expert voice on their major survey of local authority pest call-outs, with our Technical Manager, Niall Gallagher on-hand for a flurry of interviews with journalists for both print and broadcast.

A press release from BPCA focusing on the damage caused by textile moths also garnered coverage across the country, while press activity ramped up in Birmingham as the bin strikes continued across the city.

BPCA also highlighted the issues reported by UNISON around increasing issues of pests in hospitals.

In May, BPCA highlighted sightings of yellow-legged hornets during Invasive Species Week, as well as responding to the news that West Nile virus had been detected for the first time in UK mosquitoes.

June started off with some regional press around the Technician Takeover of BPCA's social media platforms as part of World Press Day, with The Scotsman, The Star and Doncaster Free Press featuring BPCA technicians based in their areas.

More partnership work in June saw BPCA back BBKA's 'Swarm Savers' campaign, with regional press across England and Wales picking up the story.

An approach from The Sun resulted in coverage of Tapinoma magnum ants, with BPCA's press release on 'flying ant day' also gaining coverage in regional and national outlets from the Swindon Advertiser to Yahoo (UK). BPCA also worked with sector-specific titles to highlight the importance of professional pest management to decision-makers in the public and private sectors.

Working with the team at The Museums Association, BPCA produced a guide – Getting to grips with common museum pests – for the organisation's website, targeting an audience of museum professionals including restorers, archivists and curators.

Looking ahead to the summer months, BPCA will be looking at the impacts of jackdaws and monk parakeet, as well as highlighting what homeowners and businesses could be considering in terms of pest control for National Maintenance Week.

TOP 3 HEADLINES

EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL CHALLENGES CLAIM OF 300 PER CENT INCREASE IN PEST CONTROL CALL OUTS

Suffolk News

ALERT: INVASIVE HORNETS THREATEN KENT'S HONEYBEES

The Sun

BUG OFF RANCID-SMELLING SUPER ANTS THAT FORM WHOPPING COLONIES AND EVEN EAT CABLES RAMPAGING ACROSS EUROPE – AND COULD INFEST THE UK

TOTAL ARTICLES 2025 3,283

TOTAL CIRCULATION 2025 853,872,732

YOUR INDUSTRY NEEDS YOU!

JOIN BPCA'S QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUPS

It's common knowledge that BPCA is working on the strategic development of a new qualification framework for the industry.

We have put together a Qualification Development Working Group, supported by NPTA and RSPH, which includes representatives of member servicing organisations, regulatory bodies, manufacturers and distributor companies and training providers to work on the development of a new Level 3 Certificate in Pest Management qualification.

Alongside this, we are putting together sub-groups, which will work on two stand-alone Level 3 qualifications, specifically designed for those working as specialists within the sector.

We are now looking for representatives of organisations who are passionate about driving up standards within these specialist areas to join those groups.

"Join sub-groups shaping future training for pest control experts."

BIRD MANAGEMENT

This sub-group will work on the development of a Level 3 Bird Management qualification, which will include a robust syllabus and assessment plan for all areas of bird management.

This qualification will build on the BPCA's Certificate in Bird Management accreditation.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

This sub-group will work on the development of a brand new syllabus and assessment plan to support a Level 3 Wildlife Management qualification.

This will be a broad qualification covering the management of rabbits, foxes, moles, mink and other wildlife pests.

It's also expected that the syllabus will introduce an awareness of deer management as more pest controllers come across the consequences of unchecked deer populations.

Each sub-group will meet bi-monthly on Teams or Zoom for a period no greater than two hours.

If you have expertise in either of these areas and would like the opportunity to influence the structure of future qualifications please contact us at **training@bpca.org.uk**

CPD: DO YOU REALLY HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS?

Karen Dawes, Training and Professional Development Manager

"I've been a pest controller for 30 years! Why do I need to do CPD?"

This is a question I get asked often. If that's a question that resonates with you, I'm going to ask you to think back to what pest control was like when you first started out.

Would I be right to suggest that 30 years ago, it might have been general practice for pest controllers to take a more heavy-handed approach to the use of pesticides? For environmental issues or health impacts to not necessarily always be considered as much as they are today?

Back in the 50's, when genetic rodent resistance was just starting to be noticed and researched, pest controllers wouldn't have had access to the amount of information and support available now, and it would perhaps rarely have been at the forefront of everything you do, as it is today.

Regulatory changes have seen many products withdrawn or subject to label changes even over the last few years. Who remembers Ficam W? And we've seen all the talk around Ficam D this year, with people wanting to learn about alternatives.

The shift away from routine permanent baiting around rural buildings towards an emphasis on integrated pest management strategies demonstrates evolving attitudes and cultures.

So, if you've been working in the industry for 30 years, 15 years or just a few years, you will have seen plenty of change.

Whether that's the legislation that you need to adhere to, the technology you use, the approaches you take or the environments you work in.

Change is a constant and it represents a huge challenge for professional pest controllers. It's all too easy to find yourself behind the curve. BPCA mandates 20 hours of CPD every year for

all members' technical employees.

By doing this we aren't suggesting that you don't know how to control a rodent or an insect.

We do it because we know it's important to make sure that the knowledge and skills you gained when you first became qualified don't go out of date.

Achieving your qualification should never be the end goal. Becoming qualified is the starting point, the foundation on which you start to build your professional career.

CPD provides the building blocks with which you build – whether you're building your own business, your personal reputation or your career progression – CPD has never been more important.

It's also never been so accessible. The internet puts so much information at your fingertips.

Events run by associations, M&D companies and training providers are plentiful. Digital events such as webinars and podcasts offer flexibility, and social media sites enable the sharing of experiences.

So let's start to give CPD a better rep. It's not there to be a burden, to cause you stress or get in the way of doing your job. It's there to enable you to always be at the top of your game and to make sure you stay ahead.

YELLOW-LEGGED (ASIAN) HORNETS

LESSONS FROM ACROSS THE CHANNEL

By Christopher Venables, Venables Pest Control.

This year, curiosity finally got the better of me. Alongside Mick Nicholls from Pesky's Pest Control, I crossed the Channel to see first-hand the invasive menace that's been making headlines: the Asian hornet.

This non-native predator has built quite a reputation for aggression and environmental impact, and I wanted to know whether the hype matched reality.

Our host was Robert Moon of Applicateur 3D, who kindly invited us to see his work in France.

The Asian hornet's spread has been steady and relentless - moving from France, to Jersey, and now reaching the east coast of England.

I even found one dead in Cirencester on 7 August 2025, proof that this pest is already knocking at Britain's door.

From the moment we arrived, Robert wasted no time. On our very first day, we tackled nests tucked into trees, clinging to the sides of buildings, and hidden beneath rooflines - locations all too familiar to anyone who's dealt with wasps or European hornets.

Treatment methods were similar too, and I braced myself for the kind of furious retaliation I'd heard so much about. It never came.

Yes, the hornets were defensive, but they were far less volatile than I had imagined. Wearing a protective suit was still non-negotiable, especially in lofts, sheds, or when working directly underneath a nest, but much of their aggression seemed triggered only by the actual piercing of the nest rather than our presence.

In fact, I filmed two active nests up close without provoking so much as a buzz in my direction.

While nest locations can be tricky, French pest controllers are well equipped.

Fifteen-metre extension poles make quick work of high or awkward placements, and in particularly obstructed spots, Robert occasionally resorts to a paintball gun loaded with natural pyrethrum balls - a surprisingly efficient (and slightly sporting) solution.

Over two days, we treated close to a dozen nests. I was delighted to see how much recognition Robert receives from the local community for his work.

And the threat is taken seriously enough that even the municipal police are involved.

Nests are reported to the police, confirmed visually, and then passed directly to certified technicians for treatment.

Robert alone has treated nearly 60 nests this season, with an average of 300 in his area each year. The public's vigilance, combined with official cooperation, makes their response both swift and systematic.

I also had the privilege to speak with Senior Scientific Officer Alastair Christie in Jersey, and learned that the approach is much the same, with locals actively trapping hornets and alerting his team, who then track and treat nests.

Treatment techniques are identical, but the island's high public awareness and smaller size mean they work with exceptional efficiency.

GPS tracking is being explored to speed up nest location – a potential game-changer that could save time and boost the number of nests eliminated each season.

The UK, meanwhile, has been concentrating efforts in Kent and Sussex, primarily through the BBKA and NBU.

But in my view, if we truly want to get ahead of this problem, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) must work more closely with the pest control industry.

We already have the skills, equipment, and experience - no extra training required.

With collaboration, GPS, and a nationwide volunteer network feeding sightings to technicians, nests could be treated almost immediately across the country.

By the end of our visit, Mick and I left France with more than just new knowledge. We'd shed much of the stigma surrounding Asian hornets, learned practical strategies for control, and seen first-hand how community engagement, police involvement, and the right tools can make a measurable difference.

A huge thank you to Robert Moon for his hospitality, expertise, and generosity in sharing his methods. I'd recommend any pest controller spend time on the ground with this species - it's eye-opening, highly educational, and, in our case, worth an extra 10 CPD points.

What do you think about the threat of Asian hornets to the UK? Send us your opinion and you could get published in the next issue of PPC magazine.
hello@bpca.org.uk

BPCA EMAIL technical@bpca.org.uk

INBOX
SENT
ARCHIVE
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SPAM

ASK THE TECHNICAL TEAM

Speed read

- You're likely already 'green', with many sustainable pest solutions available
- When it comes to flea treatments, fail to prepare, prepare to fail!
- Regular maintenance of your equipment is crucial for keeping dust sticks usable in busy wasp seasons
- Yellow-legged hornets are a notifiable species, but you can get involved in other ways that don't involve control.

Should I be offering "green" pest control to my customers? And how do I go about doing this?

Green pest control or low chemical pest control has been available for many years, whether this is from steaming, pheromone traps, or even lower toxicity chemical use.

As a nation we are seeing trends leaning towards more greener options; this could be from ethical standpoints on sustainability and animal welfare, or changes in legislation and product registrations.

A lot of pest control treatments can be paired with solutions that are more sustainable, to reduce insecticide use:

- Vacuuming: whether it's for bed bugs, fleas, or even wasps. A good vacuum with the appropriate filters can be a worthwhile investment
- Temperature: Using temperature (hot or cold) can be devastating to insect populations
- Low chemical or non-residual insecticides: these come in various formulations and modes of action, helping you deliver an important service while balancing customer preferences.

Why did the flea treatment fail?

Flea treatment failure is often down to preparation or application issues. Failures may stem from poor customer compliance, the wrong insecticide, or miscalibrated equipment. Overdosing or mixing above the label rate not only breaks the law, but can reduce effectiveness of the product used. Another big 'no' is using spray mixed the day before. It's against best practice and can also lead to poor results, as the product may have already deteriorated.

How do I stop my dust stick from clogging with pyrethrum-based insecticides?

Keep the powder dry. Store it correctly, use silica gel packets to absorb moisture, and empty your dust stick at the end of the day. Regularly maintain your equipment and check your pumps are working properly.

Some members also add objects like golf balls into their dust applicators to help agitate the powder, or use a compressor to increase output. I haven't tried these methods myself, so experiment with caution!

If you're struggling with a clogging dust stick, speak to your manufacturer. They can help you with advice on how to properly maintain your equipment. You can also visit **bpca.org.uk/dust-stick-tips** where Darran Lebeter gives some top tips for keeping dusters working properly.

Why can't I treat a Yellow-Legged (Asian) Hornet nest?

This question comes up a lot, especially within online forums. If it's a problem, why can't we treat it?

At the moment Asian hornets are a notifiable species within the UK, and the National Bee Unit has been tasked in the destruction of Asian hornet nests, however if you wanted to get involved in helping with the Asian hornet monitoring there are ways you can do this.

- You can sign up with your local Asian hornet Team. These are typically made up of members of the beekeeping community who respond to reports of Asian hornets within their areas
- Raise public awareness – This will be key, as we've seen this year there has been an increase of nests found (73 so far at the time of writing) and with each colony able to produce 350 queens. There is a good chance if they are overwintering in the UK these will become further widespread and establish within the UK.

BPCA is working to ensure that pest professionals can join the fight to protect our shores from these invasive pests. Watch this space!

Are you a BPCA member with a technical question? Get in touch...

technical@bpca.org.uk
01332 225 104
x.com/britpestcontrol

WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

The members of our technical team are happy to come out to visit sites with BPCA members who are struggling with a tough infestation and need hands-on advice. Get in touch!

MIND THE GAP

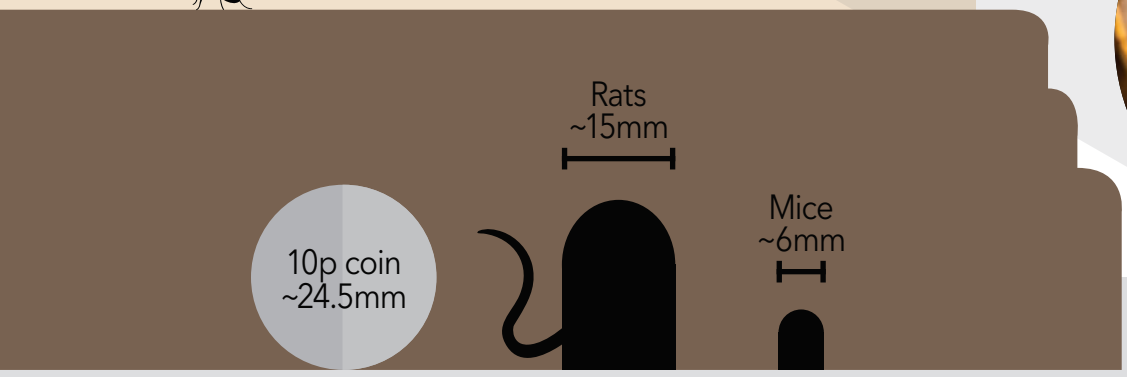
Tiny spaces, big problems! We show just how small a gap pests can squeeze themselves into in this to-scale infographic.

House Sparrow

Grey squirrel

European mole

Common wasp
~5mm



AWAAB'S LAW PUTS PESTS ON THE HOUSING AGENDA

In her debut article, BPCA Chief Executive Rosina Robson explains how the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the phased rollout of Awaab's Law will likely affect the pest management industry.

When the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 passed into law, it marked one of the biggest shake-ups in tenant rights and housing regulation for a generation. Pest management will likely form part of a landlord's legally enforceable duties from 2026, under the phased introduction of Awaab's Law.

That matters. It matters for tenants living with infestations that affect their health and well-being. It matters for landlords who will need professional support to meet their obligations. And it matters for pest management companies, because this law could significantly increase demand for our services in social housing.

But it also comes with risk. If landlords cut corners or pest professionals don't communicate clearly, things could go very wrong.

Let's look at where this new legislation came from, how it's progressing, and what it means for pest professionals.

What is Awaab's Law?

Awaab's Law is named after Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old boy who died in December 2020 after prolonged exposure to mould in his family's social housing flat in Rochdale. The coroner ruled the cause of death was a respiratory condition caused by mould, and heavily criticised the housing provider, Rochdale Boroughwide Housing, for failing to act on repeated complaints (BBC).

The case sparked national outrage and led directly to new housing legislation. Awaab's Law is now enshrined in the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (housing.org.uk). Its purpose is to make social landlords legally responsible for fixing health and safety hazards within set timeframes.

Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner said:

"We have a moral duty to ensure tragedies like the death of Awaab Ishak never happen again. Landlords cannot be allowed to rent out dangerous homes and shamelessly put the lives of their tenants at risk.

"Our new laws will force them to fix problems quickly, so that people are safe in their homes and can be proud to live in social housing." (Gov.uk)

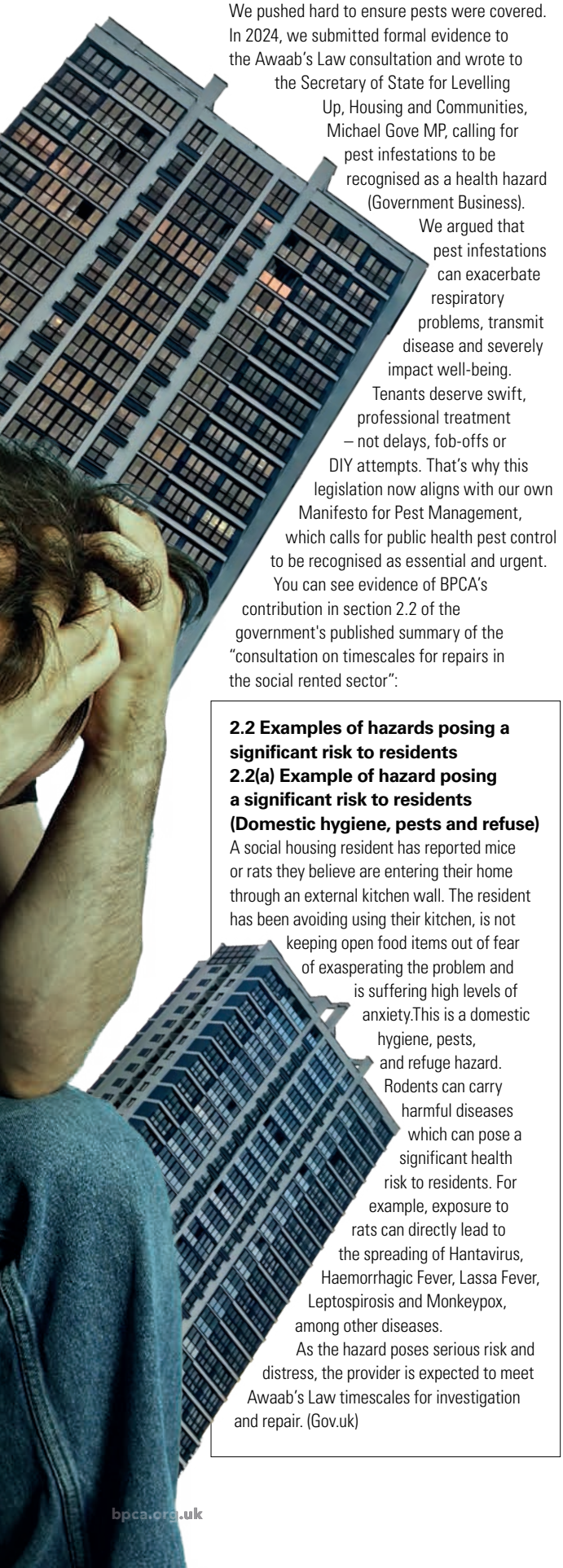
How pest control fits in

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) explicitly defines hygiene hazards as risks arising from poor sanitation, waste accumulation and pests, such as rats, mice and insects (Gov.uk).

This means that from 2026, we can expect landlords to be legally required to investigate and remedy pest problems within strict timelines, in the same way they must deal with damp and mould.

Tenants will have new rights to escalate pest issues if not resolved. If an infestation poses a health risk and is not addressed promptly, landlords may face enforcement or court action.

Timeline of implementation	
October 2025	Social landlords must fix serious damp and mould risks within set timeframes and carry out all emergency repairs, including these, as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
2026	Awaab's Law will expand to cover more hazards, including excess cold and heat, falls, structural issues, fire, electrical risks, and hygiene problems like pest infestations.
2027	The requirements of Awaab's Law will expand to the remaining hazards as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (excluding overcrowding).
Beyond	The Housing Minister has signalled plans to extend Awaab's Law to the private rented (Gov.uk) sector via the Renters' Rights Bill, subject to consultation.



BPCA helped secure this change

We pushed hard to ensure pests were covered. In 2024, we submitted formal evidence to the Awaab's Law consultation and wrote to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove MP, calling for pest infestations to be recognised as a health hazard (Government Business). We argued that pest infestations can exacerbate respiratory problems, transmit disease and severely impact well-being. Tenants deserve swift, professional treatment – not delays, fob-offs or DIY attempts. That's why this legislation now aligns with our own Manifesto for Pest Management, which calls for public health pest control to be recognised as essential and urgent.

You can see evidence of BPCA's contribution in section 2.2 of the government's published summary of the "consultation on timescales for repairs in the social rented sector":

2.2 Examples of hazards posing a significant risk to residents

2.2(a) Example of hazard posing a significant risk to residents (Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse)

A social housing resident has reported mice or rats they believe are entering their home through an external kitchen wall. The resident has been avoiding using their kitchen, is not keeping open food items out of fear of exasperating the problem and is suffering high levels of anxiety.This is a domestic hygiene, pests, and refuge hazard. Rodents can carry harmful diseases which can pose a significant health risk to residents. For example, exposure to rats can directly lead to the spreading of Hantavirus, Haemorrhagic Fever, Lassa Fever, Leptospirosis and Monkeypox, among other diseases.

As the hazard poses serious risk and distress, the provider is expected to meet Awaab's Law timescales for investigation and repair. (Gov.uk)

What does this mean for us?

While pest control duties likely won't be legally enforced until 2026, housing providers are already reviewing their procedures and supplier contracts in preparation.

Here's how pest professionals can get ready:

Raise awareness now

Many landlords still treat pests as minor nuisances. Help them understand that pests will soon be subject to legal timeframes and tenant rights.

Offer support with HHSRS compliance

Educate clients on how vermin and infestations are scored under HHSRS and the role pest professionals play in mitigating those risks.

Review your service levels

Expect tighter deadlines and more structured contracts from housing providers. Get ahead by offering prompt response times and transparent reporting.

Document everything

Clear records will help landlords prove compliance. Invest in reporting templates or software that makes it easy to share findings, treatments and follow-up recommendations.

What does this mean for us?

As always, this isn't just about fixing infestations: it's about preventing them. Pest professionals can play a huge role in helping housing providers meet their new obligations in all the usual ways:

- Offer preventative inspections and monitoring
- Provide clear written reports on findings, actions and recommendations
- Advise on structural issues, waste management and tenant behaviours that contribute to infestations
- Offer pest awareness training for housing officers and maintenance staff.

It's in everyone's interest for infestations to be handled swiftly and professionally. Tenants stay healthier. Housing stock is protected. And local authorities avoid enforcement action.

The consequences of getting it wrong

For landlords, from 2026, failing to act on infestations under Awaab's Law could result in:

- Regulatory enforcement by the Housing Ombudsman or Regulator of Social Housing
- Compensation claims or legal challenges from tenants
- Public naming-and-shaming or media scrutiny.

For pest professionals, poor communication, slow reporting, or ineffective treatment could damage relationships and reputations. Keep clear records of all site visits, treatments, pest activity and recommendations. Make it easy for landlords to demonstrate that they acted and show them how to improve.

"Tenants deserve swift, professional treatment – not delays, fob-offs or DIY attempts."

Final thoughts and looking ahead

This legislation is not the end of the story. It's the beginning of a broader shift toward professionalisation, prevention and better public health outcomes. The Decent Homes Standard is also being updated (Gov.uk), and more scrutiny is coming to the private rented sector.

The message is clear: infestations are a serious housing problem. And pest management is a public health service.

So let's step up. Let's continue to raise standards, build trust, and show the value of our profession.

We helped get pests recognised in Awaab's Law. We now have a duty to help landlords prepare and ensure that tenants live in safe, pest-free homes.

Further reading:

- gov.uk/government/publications/social-housing-regulation-act-2023
- gov.uk/government/news/landmark-social-housing-act-receives-royal-assent-to-become-law
- gov.uk/government/publications/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-guidance-for-landlords-and-property-related-professionals/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-guidance-for-landlords-and-property-related-professionals
- housing.org.uk/resources/awaabs-law/
- england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/news_and_updates/social_housing_regulation_-_what_why_and_when
- gov.uk/government/news/awaabs-law-to-force-landlords-to-fix-dangerous-homes
- gov.uk/government/news/measures-to-ensure-decent-homes-for-all
- governmentbusiness.co.uk/features/trade-body-calls-better-pest-protection-tenants
- bpca.org.uk/manifesto

NOT MY BUG!

NON-PEST INVERTEBRATE BIOLOGY, BEHAVIOUR AND ADVICE

Niall Gallagher, BPCA Technical Manager, provides an overview of several insect species that, although often distressing, are not classified as public health pests.

Body louse (Pediculus humanus)

Arthropods (or bugs, if you believe the marketing department here) come in many forms. We are all familiar with our traditional public health insects, such as cockroaches and bed bugs, but sometimes we come across ones that throw us a curveball in our line of work.

As pest professionals, we are often more than happy to roll up our sleeves and help reach a positive solution. But which bugs do we have limited scope to address?

From the invisible itch of dust mites to the unmistakable irritation of lice, a variety of tiny arthropods live in close association with humans. While most are more nuisance than danger, some can cause significant health issues, especially among vulnerable populations.

We've all been in situations where we've been asked to identify something that isn't a public health pest, or asked to give medical advice that is outside our scope of expertise.

This article gives you an overview of a couple of usual suspects, tips on how you can ID them and where you can signpost people to for help.

Scabies (Sarcoptes scabiei)

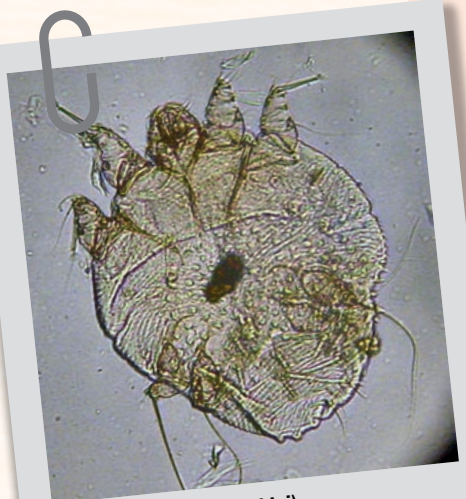
Scabies mites burrow into the skin, causing intense itching and rash.

Identification:

The actual scabies mites are not visible to the naked eye; they require magnification for detection.

However, scabies rash looks like tiny red bumps or blisters, sometimes with visible burrows (tiny tunnels) in the skin where mites have burrowed. The rash can appear anywhere on the body, but is commonly found between fingers, on wrists, elbows, and genitals. In darker skin tones, the redness may be harder to see, but the rash may appear purple or brown.

Of course, as pest professionals we never diagnose skin ailments. You may be fairly certain that it's scabies, but that diagnosis must come from a medical professional.



Scabies (Sarcoptes scabiei)
By Kalumet - de.wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3

Transmission, symptoms and control

Scabies is a highly contagious skin infestation caused by the mite Sarcoptes scabiei var. hominis.

These microscopic mites burrow into the upper layer of the skin, causing intense itching and a rash.

Classic scabies mites can survive off the human host for 24 to 36 hours.

Scabies spreads rapidly in settings involving close personal contact.

Outbreaks are particularly common in shared living environments such as households, long-term care facilities, schools, and child-care centres, where close personal contact increases transmission.

The mites usually infest warm, moist areas of the body, with common sites including skin folds, between fingers and toes, around the waist, and in the groin, often leading to irritation and discomfort.

In infants and young children, scabies may also affect the scalp, neck, palms of the hands, and soles of the feet.

Effective control of scabies requires medical intervention.

Signposting and advice

Pest management professionals cannot treat scabies infestations directly, and individuals suspected of being affected should be referred to a healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment.

Prescription topical medications or oral treatments are typically used to eliminate the mites.

In addition to medical treatment, environmental hygiene plays a key role in preventing reinfestation.

Bedding, clothing, and towels used by affected individuals should be hot washed–ideally at temperatures above 60°C-and dried thoroughly.

Education is the key

Human-associated arthropods are often unseen yet can spread disease, cause allergies, or be a nuisance. For professionals, education is key–helping clients prevent issues and know when to seek medical help. Vigilance and knowledge remain our best defences.

Lice: Body and Head (Pediculus humanus and Pediculus capitis)

Lice are small, wingless, blood-feeding ectoparasites that infest humans. While body lice (Pediculus humanus) and head lice (Pediculus capitis) appear nearly identical in size and color-typically beige or greyish, with males measuring 2-3 mm and females 3-4 mm - they differ significantly in habitat, behaviour, and health implications.

Identification and habitat

Head lice live directly on the scalp and in the hair, especially around the nape of the neck and behind the ears.

Body lice reside primarily in the seams of clothing, occasionally migrating to the body to feed, and may be found in body hair in severe infestations.

Both types are wingless with inconspicuous eyes and short, five-segmented antennae.

Biology and life cycle

Lice feed exclusively on human blood and are highly dependent on their host. Feeding is enabled by a specialised mouthpart called the haustellum – a flexible, toothed tube used to anchor into skin and draw blood.

Head lice lay 6-8 eggs per day on hair shafts near the scalp.

Body lice deposit 6-9 eggs per day on clothing fibers, especially in undergarment seams.

Eggs hatch within 7 to 10 days, and both types go through three nymphal moults before reaching adulthood. Lice typically live 2 to 4 weeks, during which a single female may produce up to 200-300 eggs. Without a blood meal, head lice die in 2-3 days, while body lice may survive up to 10 days post-feeding.

Behaviour and transmission

Head lice infestations are usually limited to 10-20 lice and are spread primarily through close personal contact, especially common in school-aged children. Severe cases may lead to hair matting and secondary infections due to scratching.

Body lice infestations are associated with poor hygiene and crowded living conditions, including homeless shelters, refugee camps, and prisons. They emerge from clothing to bite exposed skin and are more likely than head lice to transmit diseases such as:

- Louse-borne typhus
- Trench fever
- Louse-borne relapsing fever.

Lice are highly sensitive to temperature. Neither species survives well in environments over 40°C, and they often abandon a host shortly after death due to the drop in body heat.

Signposting and advice

While pest professionals cannot treat lice infestations directly, there are several important recommendations:

For Head Lice:

- Use fine-toothed lice combs for daily mechanical removal
- Wash hair with warm water and soap to reduce lice populations
- Over-the-counter chemical treatments are available, but resistance is common–repeated applications and a combined approach are often needed.

For Body Lice:

- Wash infested clothing and bedding at temperatures above 60°C to kill lice and eggs
- Maintain good personal hygiene and replace or clean clothing frequently
- Pharmacists can provide topical treatments, but medical attention is necessary if scratching has led to infection.

Head louse (Pediculus capitis)
By Gilles San Martin CC BY-SA 2.0

Dust Mites

House dust mites are microscopic arachnids that feed on skin flakes and thrive in humid environments.

Identification: Size: 0.2-0.3 mm, translucent bodies
Biology: Life cycle: 65-100 days; females lay 60-100 eggs in their last five weeks.

Dust mites are prolific microscopic organisms, with a single mite capable of producing up to 20,000 fecal particles over its lifetime. These waste particles, along with their shed skin, are the primary triggers for allergic reactions in humans.

Though too small to be seen with the naked eye, dust mites play a significant role in indoor air quality and human health.

Despite their microscopic size, dust mites have natural predators. In particular, silverfish and pseudoscorpions are known to feed on them, providing a natural check on their populations in some environments.

However, in most indoor settings, dust mites thrive with little interruption.

Dust mites are found around the world, but they flourish in environments with high humidity, poor ventilation, and damp conditions.

Their populations are particularly dense in older mattresses and in lower floor levels of buildings, where moisture tends to accumulate. These factors make certain homes more susceptible to mite infestations, especially in regions with warm, humid climates.

From a health perspective, dust mites are a major source of indoor allergens. They produce a protein called tropomyosin, which is also found in shellfish–explaining the common cross-reactivity between dust mite and shellfish allergies.

In severe cases, ingestion of mite-contaminated food products, such as improperly stored flour, can lead to a rare but serious condition known as oral mite anaphylaxis, or "pancake syndrome."

Signposting and advice

There are some things you can recommend to someone with an allergy to dust mites, such as reducing the humidity in their home, washing bedding and fabrics regularly, using allergen-proof covers on mattresses or pillows, replacing carpeting with wood or vinyl flooring, and improving ventilation.

You could also signpost them to an allergy specialist. The NHS has allergy specialists, but they would need to get a referral through their GP. There are also many private allergy specialists but these are paid services.

House dust mites (Dermatophagoides)

Signposts

Find a GP:
nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp/
Find a pharmacist;
nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy

TINY FLIES

KNOW YOUR ENEMY: THE KEY TO TINY FLY CONTROL

In this article, Killgerm's Avril Turner explains the importance of species identification in fly monitoring and control programmes.

As per the shifting seasons, we always see an uplift in flying insect numbers following spring and into the summer due to better climatic conditions for all flies.

During trend analysis, a seasonal trend is the only one we would reasonably expect to see.

In any fly data appraisal, this is accepted and probably the only trend we wouldn't do anything about. If the seasonal trend builds year on year as a total count, then we would need to find the reason why.

The crux of any monitoring and control programme absolutely must begin with the correct species identification.

Whatever small fly species that is peaking, being reported, noticed, creating a general nuisance or any other public health concern.

We have seen a large number of small type flies causing more issues this year. The climate has been even more perfect for many of them.

Of course, always check the wing venation, and if you don't know, send a sample off for identification by an entomologist.

Fruit flies

Those irksome, small (approx. 2.5-4.0mm), weak flyers, with the distinctive red eye, buff to yellow and black striped abdomen, and a sneaky habit of infesting whatever is fermenting.

Confusingly Drosophila spp. most commonly, Drosophila melanogaster has many names from the common fruit fly, vinegar fly or beer fly usually associated with the particular environment where they are causing issues.

There are also other species of fruit flies. One of the more challenging is the dark-eyed fruit fly, Drosophila repleta.

These individuals have a dark red eye (who could have guessed?) but overall very similar to D. melanogaster.

Behaviours do differ, though. As opposed to hovering weakly around the breeding source, D. melanogaster will alight on higher surfaces as adults, whilst their eggs and larvae stay within the feeding medium.

The challenge arises when the breeding source is overlooked, resulting in repeated fly treatments without solving the issue. The advice is simple: always check the drains, as there is likely one you've missed.

Fruit fly monitoring

Fruit flies are highly attracted to UV light, making fly units a good option; fruit flies can become bleached by UV and end up appearing a ghostly white shade so watch out for body composition and as always, characteristic wing veins for identification. Yellow is also an attractive colour to fruit flies, therefore yellow boards in demi-diamond type traps can be used, utilising the small well at the base of the demi-diamond for added attraction with a fruit fly lure for example cider vinegar or the specialised AF fruit fly trap and lure.

Fruit fly control

Start by locating breeding sources or even potential sources. Any drink residues, build-up of damp or liquid debris, anything rotting or fermenting.

Key sources are fruits or sweeter substances. Decaying fruit or vegetables, even dairy, can be subject to fruit fly infestations.

Checking behind fitments, drip trays, bottle bins (a favourite place!). Cleaning of these areas can cut off the breeding source, leaving the adults, which can be treated with space treatments such as fog, mist or ultra low volume (ULV). Certain products can also be directly applied to an alighting surface, providing direct contact dosing.

Fruit flies as adults do not have a particularly long life-span. Under ideal conditions, an average of 40-50 days can be expected.

They are among the fastest in the flying insect world, completing their full metamorphosis from egg to adult in around 7 days at 28°C.Consider this incredibly fast breeding and living cycle when inspecting and treating.

In severe cases, insecticides and strict hygiene must work together for lasting control.

Drosophila melanogaster (fruit fly)

ONLINE CPD

An online CPD quiz based on this feature is now available on the BPCA website. BPCA Registered members and affiliates can take a CPD quiz at any time **bpca.org.uk/find-cpd** or sign up at **bpca.org.uk/affiliate**

Drain flies

This general description covers several types of small flies.

Let's take a look at some of the more common species that lurk below the surface. Which, by the way, are even worse flyers than the fruit flies.

Phorid flies, whose other names include humpbacked flies, scuttle flies or coffin flies. These are all the same Phoridae family.

Confusingly, these flies tend to be a similar size to the fruit fly, but overall much darker in appearance.

Not confusingly, the various common names are typically based on their visual characteristics and behaviours.

They are poor at flying; therefore run or 'scuttle' across the alighting surface. They also have a pronounced humped back (a convex mesonotum).

One of the most common Phorid flies is Megaselia scalaris, and the coffin fly reference comes from their skill to locate a dead body (6ft under), lay their eggs, and continue to proliferate the species.

Another feature is their legs, noticeably longer and tending to hang down.

Owl midge, Psychodidae family, Psychoda spp. Other common names include: filter fly, moth fly, drain fly.

They appear to be 'fluffy' because they are coated in tiny setae and scales.

They also tend to hold their wings out and above their body, similar to a pitched roof.

They can range in size, usually they are tiny at 2 to 5mm but larger species can be found, all with a visually similar appearance.

Potentially found in any damp environment, although usually even more drain-related than the other species we have looked at so far.

The larvae must have a liquid or semi-liquid food source to swim around in to enable feeding. They have a siphon for oxygen exchange at the surface meniscus in the liquid.

Very large numbers of this pest can occur, creating huge dense clouds, especially seen when the drainage system is opened.

Owl midges are a typical secondary issue, due to an initial problem with drains, drainage, organic buildup, slime formation or biofilm accumulation. All due to a faulty system that's not free running or free draining, hence another strong association with sewage.

Inspection for drain flies should include searches for anything that is decaying, particularly organic matter present in drains, sewage, rubbish disposals, and generally damp, rotten areas and items.

Drains in my experience, are usually key to drain flies (who knew!), but seriously, we may want to carry out in-depth drain inspections using cameras to look for any decaying matter within the drain itself, any breaches in the system, any dead ends, any accumulations of organic decaying debris.

Drain fly monitoring

These small flies are very easy to see when they are scuttling or weakly trying to fly around; they just don't move very quickly.

Standard monitoring with fly units is possible; they may be found in fly units, window traps and again, simple demi-diamond type yellow sticky pads may give good results.

Drain fly control

Location and removal of the breeding source should always be the first action when treating drain type flies.

Following source identification, we can usually carry out knockdown treatments in the area, surface treatments or space treatments such as aerosols, fogs, mists or ULV. This can limit adult numbers, but won't solve the issue.

There are also specialised drain treatments using enzymes or a microbial action (such as PX Viribus) to break down the decaying organic matter which work incredibly well.

They do need to be used on a regular basis, just a one-off treatment will not cut it.

Remember to always read the label, carry out a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment, and follow a risk assessment, safe work procedure/method statement for any insecticides used.

The enzyme-based treatments are a little different but should still be risk assessed.

Other remedial works by a plumber or drainage specialist may be required to prevent the problem from coming back.

"They appear to be 'fluffy' because they are coated in tiny setae and scales."

Psychodidae (drain fly)

Sciaridae (fungus gnat), Killgerm Chemicals

Fungus gnats

Fungus gnat, Sciaridae family, other common names include: sciarid flies.

These tiny flies (2 to 8mm) are a nuisance to humans but are not known to be disease vectors or cause any harm to humans.

Typically, an issue in environments with house plants, many more offices and other types of premises have more plants due to the aesthetic and environmentally enriching attributes the greenery brings.

However, if overwatered, fungus starts to inhabit the layer just below the top soil.

This is where the fungus gnat larvae thrive: feeding on the fungal growth due to the damp environment in the compost.

They can also thrive amongst mushrooms, decaying plant matter, and industrial plant growing environments such as herbs, and plants destined for garden centres and can seriously affect crops.

They can damage the root structure, stunting the growth and affecting the overall health of the plant.

Development is rapid, fuelled by the warmth and humidity in their preferred indoor environment.

Fungus gnat monitoring

Akin to the other species of small flies, fungus gnats are generally attracted to yellow, and yellow boards can be used.

Many of the amateur use products are yellow sticky boards featuring different shapes, used in the pot of the plant you want to monitor.

On an industrial scale, large yellow fly boards can be used.

Fungus gnats are attracted to UV light, so fly units may be utilised.

Fungus gnat control

Let the top layer of soil dry between waterings to help control fungus gnats. Their presence often signals overwatering, which can lead to fungal growth and root decay.

Besides drying the soil, surface sprays can be used–avoiding leaves. In severe cases, apply synthetic pyrethroids or pyrethrins as a knockdown, following label directions. Few insecticides are approved for plants, most falling under horticultural rather than public health rules.

To sum up: first, identify the species–this guides inspection and reveals attractants and breeding sites. Once located, remove these sources by cleaning drains, fixing system breaches, or drying topsoil.

Alongside this, treat to reduce adult numbers, target alighting surfaces, and use space sprays if needed. Combine these steps with customer cooperation to prevent recurrence, following integrated pest management principles.

FROM GRAIN TO GROCERY

BATTLING STORED PRODUCT INSECT INFESTATIONS

Richard Faulkner, Envu's National Account and Technical Manager for the UK and Ireland, gives PPC readers an overview of the Stored Product Insects (SPIs) that UK pest professionals are most likely to encounter.

For as long as I can remember, I have been fascinated with insects. They are amazing and unbelievably complex creatures.

We should never dismiss or ignore these tiny organisms that play such an important role in our environment, ecosystems and day-to-day lives.

In these next few paragraphs I will give a little bit of insight into the more common SPIs that we come across in the UK, taking a brief look at their biology, their impact and how they can be treated.

WHAT ARE STORED PRODUCT INSECTS (SPIs)?

SPIs are a group of insects that infest and damage stored food products, including grains, processed foods, and even tobacco.

They get introduced into your customer's stores, factories, and homes via commodities.

As a result, SPIs cause significant problems across the whole food chain, from farm to fork; in raw material storage, processing, retail environments and domestic properties.

Most SPIs originate from tropical or semi-tropical climates where they infest dried plant-based materials

Where do we find them?

- Raw material storage
- Grain silos, farms, feed mills, grain collectors
- Ports and harbours
- Transport
- Ships, containers, vehicles and trailers
- Processing
- Mills, bakeries, food processing plants
- Feed mills and stores/warehousing
- End users
- Shops, supermarkets and private households.

CATEGORISING STORED PRODUCT INSECTS

SPIs can be divided into two categories; Primary and Secondary. Primary SPIs are insects capable of attacking and damaging whole, intact grains, such as the Rice Weevil.

Secondary SPIs, however, need the grain to be broken, processed, or damaged before infestation can occur. Examples include Indian Meal Moths and Merchant Grain Beetles, both commonly found in stored food products.

STORED PRODUCT BEETLE AND MOTH LIFE CYCLES

Like all other beetles and moths, SPIs exhibit 'Complete Metamorphosis'.

Egg - Larvae - Pupae - Adult

The larval stage is the growth stage; this is the stage that does the most feeding and therefore causes the most damage and loss of commodity.

The Adult stage is the reproductive stage of the life cycle. As the majority of the life cycle takes place in the food commodity, this can cause a number of issues with the infested product such as:

- Direct feeding
- Contamination with bodies, body parts, faeces, webbing and frass
- Promotion of mould growth
- Grain germination
- Discolouration of products, especially flour
- Taint (Unpleasant flavour).

All of this can have a major economic impact, reduction in yield, downgrading of product, spoilage, product rejection, fines from authorities, damage to production machinery, recall and destruction of product.

SPIs are said to be the world's most expensive pest.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM)

An IPM approach is fundamental when dealing with stored product insects.

Deep cleaning at high levels and in dead spaces in production machinery, service voids, drains and the fabric of the building needs to be meticulous.

This will remove breeding sites and, when dealing with active infestations, will remove at least 75% of the problem.

This will make your job easier as you will only have to treat the remaining adult insects.

TREATMENT OF GRAIN STORES

Grain stores should be thoroughly cleaned before new grain is introduced.

Firstly the store should be deep cleaned, removing any old product and debris that could be harbouring or providing breeding sites for SPIs.

The internal structure (fabric) of the store must then be treated with a specially formulated residual insecticide.

To optimise efficacy this should be carried out as close to two months before the newly harvested grain is introduced into the storage area.

This allows the insecticide to knock down and kill the resident SPI population, giving the new grain optimum protection on its arrival.

The store needs to be well-ventilated, dry and properly sealed.

The newly harvested grain should then be loaded into the store using a conveyor. As the grain travels on the conveyor it is treated via a sprayer system that coats the grain with another specially formulated insecticide, which will provide optimum protection for the grain for up to 12 months.

INSECTICIDAL TREATMENTS

Spray treatments
When dealing with SPI infestations, spray treatments can be very effective. Especially when dealing with localised infestations or immediately after cleaning has taken place.

Crack and crevice treatment
Taking the insecticide to the insect in harbourage.
- . 1 Barr pressure
- . Pin Stream Nozzle.

Band treatment
Putting a residual insecticide on a surface so the insects land and travel across it.
- . 2 Barr pressure
- . Fan Nozzle.

Cold fogging (misting/ULV)
This space treatment is most effective for knocking down adult flying insects in open areas.

Cold Fogging machines use high pressure to turn the insecticide into tiny particles that are dispersed into the air.
- Size = 5 to 30 microns.

Thermal fogging
This space treatment is particularly effective for rapidly knocking down adult flying insects.

Thermal fogging can quickly fill large-capacity areas, ensuring the insecticide reaches all parts of the space.

The heat used in the process converts the insecticide into fine particles that are then dispersed throughout the air, targeting insects wherever they are.

Thermal foggers generally produce smaller particles (droplets) than cold foggers.
- Size = 0.5 to 10 microns

Sitophilus granarius (Grain weevil)

Category: Primary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis
- 30-35 days at 21°C to 35 °C
- 6 months or more at 13°C to 20°C
- A female can lay ~ 350 eggs in her lifetime
- Adults ~ 2-5mm in size
- Can be found in the following commodities: wheat, oats, rye, barley, rice and maize.

Sitophilus oryzae (Rice weevil)

by Olaf Leillinger

Category: Primary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis
- 25 days at 30°C
- Up to 6 months or more at temperatures of 13°C-20°C
- A female can lay from 300-400 eggs in her lifetime
- Adults ~ 3-5mm in size
- Can be found in grains such as rice, maize, and oats.

Stegobium panicium (Biscuit beetle aka Drugstore beetle)

by Kamran Iftikhar

Category: Secondary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis
- One generation per year at <15°C
- Five generations or more at >23°C
- A female can lay 100 eggs in her lifetime
- Adults ~ 2-4mm in size
- Can be found in the following commodities: bread, biscuits, chocolate, spices and milk powder.

Tribolium castaneum (Rust red flour beetle)

Category: Secondary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis
- 40-90 days, temperature and food dependent
- A female can lay 300-600 eggs in her lifetime
- Adults ~ 3- 4.5mm in size
- Can be found in the following commodities: flour, dried fruit, cereal and spices.

Tribolium confusum (Confused flour beetle)

by AfroBrazilian

Category: Secondary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis
- 30-120 days, temperature and food dependent
- A female can lay from 300-400 eggs in her lifetime
- Adults ~ 3- 4.5mm in size
- Can be found in commodities such as: cereals and they have a preference for clean flour.

Oryzaephilus surinamensis (Sawtoothed grain beetle)

by Udo Schmidt

Category: Secondary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis
- They can breed within the temperature range of 17.5°C - 40°C
- 20 days at 32°C-35°C
- A female can lay ~ 400 eggs in her lifetime
- Adults ~ 2.5-3.5mm in size
- Very similar to Merchant grain beetle
- Can be found in commodities such as: flour, grain, dried fruit, cereals and rice.

Fumigation

Fumigation can be used to treat whole buildings, machinery, containers and commodities.

Fumigants kill all life stages of the insect. They are extremely toxic and therefore dangerous, which is why fumigation can only be carried out by fully trained Fumigators.

Once the treatment is completed and the area properly vented, then there is no residual chemical left on site.

Common fumigants used in the UK are:

- Aluminium Phosphide
- Sulfuryl Fluoride.

Controlled Atmosphere Treatment (CAT)

CATs are used to treat high value items such as artwork and museum pieces for the control of insects.

Food items such as coffee or any raw commodity that is classed as organic can also potentially be treated this way.

The main gases used for CAT treatments are Carbon Dioxide and Nitrogen.

The regulated concentrations of inert gases are used to replace the extracted air. This treatment is slow but environmentally friendly. It leaves no residues after treatment.

Heat treatment

Heat Treatment kills all life stages of the insect. These work by heating the environment to over 50°C. At this temperature proteins (DNA & RNA) denature and breakdown. This results in the death of all life stages of the insect.

This temperature should be held for a minimum of 30 minutes. Machinery and buildings can be treated using heat. Once the treatment is completed there is no residuality.

Mating disruption

This method is used against Plodia and Ephestia species. Devices are placed that flood the environment with sex pheromone.

It masks the natural plumes of sex pheromone produced by the females.

This excites the male moths causing them to fly around trying to find a mate. They exhaust themselves and die without finding one.

This needs to be carried out in conjunction with deep cleaning of machinery for the best efficacy.

This is best used as part of an Integrated Pest Management Programme and needs to be used in conjunction with high levels of cleaning, machinery inspections, monitoring and chemical treatments.

Insect monitors and insect light traps

Due to innovation and advancements in technology, traps and the way that we monitor SPIs are becoming more advanced.

We have multi-species traps, species specific lures, and patented LED light technology.

Insect monitors and Light Traps are essential parts of our tool kits.

They can help us pinpoint areas that need to be investigated, help us secure specimens for correct ID and allow us to set critical limits with our customers to trigger cleaning and treatment schedules.

Tenebrio molitor (Yellow mealworm beetle)

by Didier Descouens

Category: Secondary SPI/Scavenger
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis

- 20-30 days at 30°C to 35°C
- A female will lay ~500 eggs in her lifetime
- Adult 12.5-18mm, larvae 25mm
- Larvae used for both animal and human consumption and can break down polystyrene into usable organic matter
- They feed on grains, oatmeal, cornmeal, and cereal.

Plodia interpunctella (Indian meal moth)

by Mvuijlst, CC BY-SA 4.0

Category: Secondary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis

- 45-60 days >10°C, 15-20 days at 20°C, 8-11 days at 25°C, 7-8 days at 30°C+
- A female can lay 100-300 eggs in a lifetime
- Adults ~ 8-10mm in size with a wingspan
- of 16mm to 20mm
- Found in grains, flour, pasta, rice, spices, and nuts.

Ephestia Keuhniella

(Mill moth aka mediterranean flour moth)

by Andy Reago and Chrissy McClarren

Category: Secondary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis

- Life cycle in hot weather takes 5-7 weeks
- Can complete development in temperatures from 12°C-30°C
- A female can lay ~400 eggs in a lifetime
- Adults ~10-12mm in size with a wingspan of up to 26mm
- Can be found in commodities such as: flour, grains, cereals and spices.

Ephestia elutella

(Cocoa/Tobacco/Warehouse moth)

by Clemson University CC BY 3.0

Category: Secondary SPI
Life Cycle: Complete metamorphosis

- Life cycle in hot weather takes 5-7 weeks
- Can develop from 12°C-30°C
- A female can lay ~ 280 eggs in a lifetime.
- Adults ~10mm in size, wingspan of 14-20mm
- Can be found in commodities such as: cocoa, chocolate, tobacco, cereals, dried fruit and nuts.

CONCLUSION

The main thing when treating SPIs is to make sure that you have a correct ID.

If you know your enemy, you'll know how to break the insect's life cycle.

Good communication with your customer is key. They need to understand the importance of cleaning, of being thorough and what they need to do in order to help you solve their SPI issues, to protect their image, brand, and ultimately, their business.

Ever since humans began storing food commodities, SPIs have posed a problem.

Over time, they have evolved and adapted alongside changes in our food manufacturing processes and storage facilities, becoming more resilient as these systems have grown larger, more sophisticated, and increasingly complex.

These tiny insects are both fascinating and challenging to treat, which is just one of the many reasons why working as a pest controller can be so rewarding – and, yes, great fun!

Small Fly BIG PROBLEM

PESTWATCH

THE LESSER HOUSEFLY

Niall Gallagher, BPCA Technical Manager, gives PPC readers this complete guide to the biology, risks and control of the lesser housefly.

The lesser housefly (Fannia canicularis) is a familiar but often underestimated pest in homes, farms, and food-handling environments across the UK and the world.

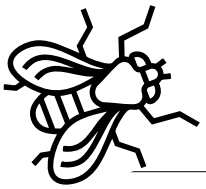
While smaller and less conspicuous than its cousin, the common housefly, this species is a master of survival, thriving in a wide range of conditions and playing a significant role in the spread of disease.

Understanding its biology, adaptability, and control is essential for anyone involved in pest management, agriculture, or public health.

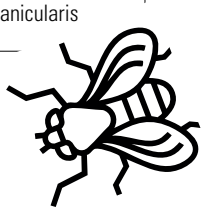
Originally native to temperate regions, the lesser housefly has spread globally, closely following human activity and commerce.

Its ability to exploit decaying organic matter and animal waste has made it a mainstay in both rural and urban environments, particularly where livestock are present.

In northern climates, it can even outcompete the common housefly.



Taxonomic Classification	
Order	Diptera (true flies)
Family	Fanniidae
Genus	Fannia
Species	F. canicularis



Diptera is the order of true flies, characterised by a single pair of wings and a pair of halteres (balancing organs).

The Fanniidae family is known for small- to medium-sized flies that often breed in decaying organic material, with the lesser housefly being a classic representative.

Appearance

- Size: 3.5–6 mm
- Wings: Median vein is straight
- Thorax: Brown-grey with three black longitudinal stripes in males (stripes faint in females)
- Abdomen: First two segments yellow with a dark brown base
- Eyes: Males' eyes meet at the top; females' are widely separated.

Behaviour and habits

You can find lesser houseflies making base in a number of locations, such as:

- Compost heaps
- Bins (domestic/commercial/food waste)
- Silage and animal housing
- Dog faeces, decaying vegetables, and general waste.

Their activity is somewhat seasonal. In spring to early summer is when activity peaks, although during particularly hot summers activity can decline. Larvae/pupae overwinter during mild winters.

Males form persistent swarms in still air, often indoors, flying in circles at head height. Females are less active and remain near breeding sites.

Public health risks

In terms of disease transmission, lesser houseflies are efficient mechanical vectors, transferring pathogens such as:

- Salmonella
- E. coli
- Campylobacter
- Viruses (eg, Newcastle disease in poultry).

They move freely between waste and food, contaminating surfaces and increasing the risk of foodborne illness, especially during warm months.

Their presence in kitchens, food storage, and preparation areas can result in direct contamination of food and surfaces.

"This species is a master of survival"

Control strategies

There are some environmental and physical controls that can be implemented, to help manage lesser housefly numbers:

- Clean bins and waste areas regularly, especially in warm weather
- Remove decaying organic matter and animal waste promptly
- Avoid standing water (prevents mosquito breeding too)
- Ensure good airflow in waste storage areas
- Install fly screens on windows and doors
- Use fly traps and bags carefully to avoid cross-contamination
- Seal cracks and entry points.

When environmental and physical measures are insufficient, chemical controls play a key role.

In the UK, several classes of insecticides are approved for use against flies, each with distinct active ingredients and modes of action.

/see tables

DID YOU KNOW?

A single female lesser housefly can lay up to 2,000 eggs in her lifetime—enough to start a new infestation in just a few weeks under the right conditions!

Residual Insecticides (surface sprays) Applied to surfaces where flies rest (walls, window frames, light fittings).		
Active ingredient	**Chemical class**	**Mode of action**
Permethrin	Pyrethroid	Disrupts sodium channels in nerve cells, causing paralysis and death.
Cypermethrin	Pyrethroid	Similar to permethrin; rapid knockdown and residual effect.
Deltamethrin	Pyrethroid	Highly potent; affects nervous system, causing paralysis.
	Application: Spray onto alighting surfaces; effect persists for several weeks, depending on cleaning and environmental conditions.	

Larvicides Target the larval stage at breeding sites (e.g., animal manure, compost).		
Active ingredient	**Chemical class**	**Mode of action**
Diflubenzuron	Insect growth regulator (IGR)	Inhibits chitin synthesis, preventing larvae from developing a proper exoskeleton; larvae die during moulting.
Cyromazine	Insect growth regulator (IGR)	Disrupts molting and pupation processes in larvae.
	Application: Directly to manure or organic waste where larvae develop; breaks the life cycle at the source.	

Aerosols and space sprays Used for rapid knockdown of adult flies in enclosed spaces.	
Common active ingredients	**Mode of action**
Pyrethrins (natural extract)	Rapidly disrupts nerve function, causing quick immobilisation and death.
Synthetic pyrethroids (eg, permethrin, tetramethrin)	

Baits and fly strips

Some products contain attractants combined with insecticides (often sugar-based baits with imidacloprid or spinosad), but these are more commonly used for common houseflies than lesser houseflies, which are less attracted to baits.

Best practice when using insecticides or baits in lesser housefly control, particularly when considering resistance management, includes:

- Rotating active ingredients to prevent resistance buildup
- Combining chemical control with good hygiene and exclusion for sustainable management
- Always follow label instructions and ensure products are approved for use in the intended environment (domestic, commercial, agricultural).

Conclusion

The lesser housefly is a highly adaptable pest, capable of thriving in a wide range of temperatures and environments.

Its rapid life cycle and ability to transmit disease make it a significant concern in homes, farms, and food-related businesses.

Effective control depends on vigilant hygiene, exclusion methods, and, when necessary, targeted chemical interventions.

Understanding the biology and adaptability of Fannia canicularis is the first step toward keeping this persistent pest in check.

Life cycle and reproductive adaptability

The reproductive success of the lesser housefly is closely tied to temperature and humidity.

Warmer, moist conditions accelerate its development, leading to rapid population booms.

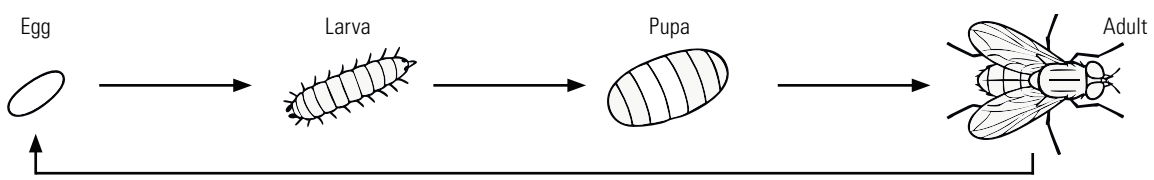
Life cycle stages:

- Egg: Laid in batches of ~50; white, buoyant, deposited on moist organic matter
- Larva: Flattened, spiny maggots feed on decaying material
- Pupa: Hardened, brown casing.
- Adult: Emerges ready to mate within days.

Thresholds: Below 10°C, development slows drastically; above 35°C, survival drops due to desiccation and heat stress.

Humidity: High humidity (60–80%) is optimal for egg and larval survival. Dry conditions can stall development or kill eggs/larvae.

Temperature-dependent development table					
Temp (°C)	**Egg stage (days)**	**Larval stage (days)**	**Pupal stage (days)**	**Total life cycle (days)**	**Potential generations/year**
10	6-8	18-25	18-22	42-55	6-7
15	3-5	12-16	12-15	27-36	10-13
20	2-3	8-12	8-10	18-25	14-18
25	1-2	6-8	7-9	14-19	19-26
30	1	5-6	6-8	12-15	24-30
35	<1	4-5	5-7	10-13	28-36
	*Assumes continuous breeding and optimal humidity; actual generations may be lower in the field due to environmental constraints.				



ALPHA ULV INSECTICIDE

BROAD SPECTRUM

- Rapid Knockdown
- Hot or Cold Fogging
- ULV or RTU Spray

Rapid knockdown insecticide for the control of flying and crawling insects, delivered as either a ULV spray or surface spray without residual effect in sensitive environments.

Suitable for use in & around domestic properties (including hospitals & unoccupied wards), military barracks, farm buildings, milking parlours, avian housing & refuse tips. Effective knockdown with low application rate.

Contains: Permethrin 0.31 %, Tetramethrin 0.124 %

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MEET THE MEMBER

JURASSIC PESTS: PROTECTING THE PAST WITH TOTAL IPM

PPC Editor Kat Shaw, took a trip to London in spring to visit Greg Fee, founder of Total IPM.

While taking a tour of the Natural History Museum, a client of Total IPM, they talked about carrying out pest control in some of London's most iconic and sensitive sites.

Back to the beginning

PPC Let's talk about how you got started in pest control. Was it something you always planned?

GF I hadn't exactly planned on a pest control career, but my path wasn't that far out of the way in some respects. My roots lie in the countryside, with a background in agriculture and gamekeeping.

All my friends were farmers, and I went to agricultural college. After college I started doing some gamekeeping initially, but then my mum got sick.

I had to come back home to pay rent, and I saw a pest control job advertised. I knew a bit about it from the farms, so I applied.

PPC And that decision kickstarted a decades-long career in pest control! Which company was that first job with, and where did you go from there?

GF I started at Eagle Pest Control as a technician in Kent before the company was sold to Mitie.

From there, I moved over to Absolute Pest Control which was started by my former supervisor Rob Long and Roger Weeks, who were both also previously at Eagle, before taking a bit of a dramatic detour.

A year in the wild

GF Unfortunately, my father passed away, and I was left with some inheritance. I had a drive to do something different with it, so I signed up for an intensive course in South Africa to become a FGASA qualified field guide.

PPC You weren't kidding about a big detour!

GF Yeah, haha. It was tough though, not for the faint hearted. I passed and spent a year as a guide, doing anti-poaching patrols, guided walks with rifles, and working with trackers.

My job was to keep guests safe in some of the most dangerous environments on earth. But probably not for the reasons you think!

It was a dangerous place for kidnappings, robberies, and violent crime. The main lodge had been held up at gunpoint the week before I got there.

But the animals were feared by locals, so in a strange way, being with them was the safest place to be.

> **"My path took me from farms, to gamekeeping, to museums and heritage sites."**

Building Total IPM

PPC But you obviously ended up back here, in the UK, and back into the world of pest control?

GF Yeah, after coming home in 2010 I joined Safeguard Pest Control, and I worked my way up from technician to surveyor over nearly a decade.

It was there I met my wife – she was working in the sales department at the time.

From there I went to work for Total Support Services (TSS) as their Specialist Services Director, managing all their pest control subcontractors.

However, we found that it was difficult to provide the level of service we wanted via subcontractors on the kind of sensitive sites that we had on the books.

Added to this the importance of maintaining high standards of housekeeping in pest prevention and control, it just made a lot of sense to bring pest control into a business that also provides the cleaning services.

We risk-assessed everything and showed our clients the value of doing things in-house rather than subcontracting.

And so Total IPM was born as a wholly-owned subsidiary of TSS: we come under their umbrella, but we're a separate company.

Thanks to that relationship with TSS, we launched with prestigious contracts like the British Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and several Historic Royal Palaces already in place.

Over time, we added further sites that came from TSS and have since grown, offering the combined service on completely new contracts, like Wimbledon.

We also do work independently from TSS, such as Royal Museums Greenwich and more recently English Heritage, London Museum and Goldings Homes.

Greg Fee, Total IPM and Kat Shaw, PPC Editor

Specialising in the historic

PPC We're at the Natural History Museum right now, one of my favourite buildings in London so this is very exciting to be shown behind the scenes.

What goes into managing a pest control contract at such a complicated site?

GF It definitely isn't standard pest control, there's a lot more to be aware of and hoops to jump through.

Total IPM's core focus is high-end commercial pest management, and because of the contracts we have with museums, heritage sites and listed buildings, we have a great understanding

of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for sensitive environments.

At sites like the Natural History Museum, Tower of London and Greenwich Observatory, you can't just block a hole with whatever material you fancy. There are procedures and permissions involved for any alterations, and a lot of hoops to jump through!

Exhibits and artifacts present unique challenges too.

Many of these sites have dedicated IPM managers and conservators who we work alongside, who all know how to protect specimens and collections properly without causing damage. It's not standard pest control – it's its own field.

PPC The building we're currently in is huge, is it an organisational challenge to monitor for pest activity and carry out work?

GF Definitely! We have over 600 rodent monitors on this site alone, all numbered and colour-coded by zone due to the sheer scale of the building.
And that's not even counting insect monitors. And if we have to carry out any work it has to be carefully executed; the museum is always busy, even at night when they have classrooms of kids doing sleepovers.

A growing team

PPC You mentioned that from the outset, Total IPM grew quickly?

GF Yes, in the first year I hired our first staff member and now, five years in, the company operates with two full-time technicians on foot and a mobile tech in London, and another in tech in Kent. Plus, there's myself and we also have operational staff in the background. As and when required we can also call on TSS resources.

My philosophy is simple: if my guys are happy doing what they're doing, then we don't have staff turnover and we have fewer problems. If staff are happy, clients are happy, and I'm happy. We are very fortunate to have a fantastic team now, who are highly experienced.

Love me tender

PPC The contracts you mention can't be easy to tender for, as they can be complex jobs. Do you find the tender process difficult?

GF Tendering can be tough; however we have the bonus of doing joint applications with TSS and that support and experience is invaluable. We also feel we now have a pretty unique service offering for our clients.

But once you have written a few tenders and understand the process and terminology it gets easier, and they don't tend to differ too much.

Sometimes it's tough though. There are some contracts where they expect you to register interest, submit a tender proposal and then start the contract within a month's turnaround.

With larger contracts there's always going to be a significant mobilisation period needed, for familiarisation of sites and recruitment (unless existing staff TUPE over). It simply can't be done in the short timeframe they suggest. With tenders you have to pick your battles, and sometimes there's just too much risk.

"If my team are happy doing what they're doing, then we don't have staff turnover, fewer problems, and happier clients."

And finally...

PPC My last question, which I have to ask since you took us into the basement here today and it was spectacularly creepy: do you think any of the old sites you work on are haunted?

GF Haha, working in some of the UK's oldest buildings can come with a weird atmosphere. The Tower of London is definitely one of the creepiest, Luckily, we don't have too much night work in there. But being in the Natural History Museum galleries alone at night? That's probably the spookiest in my opinion.

Want to be interviewed by PPC?
We're always looking for members to tell their stories in PPC magazine. If you have an interesting journey to share, let us know!
hello@bpca.org.uk

BEE-FUDDLED – BEE MANAGEMENT AND PEST CONTROL

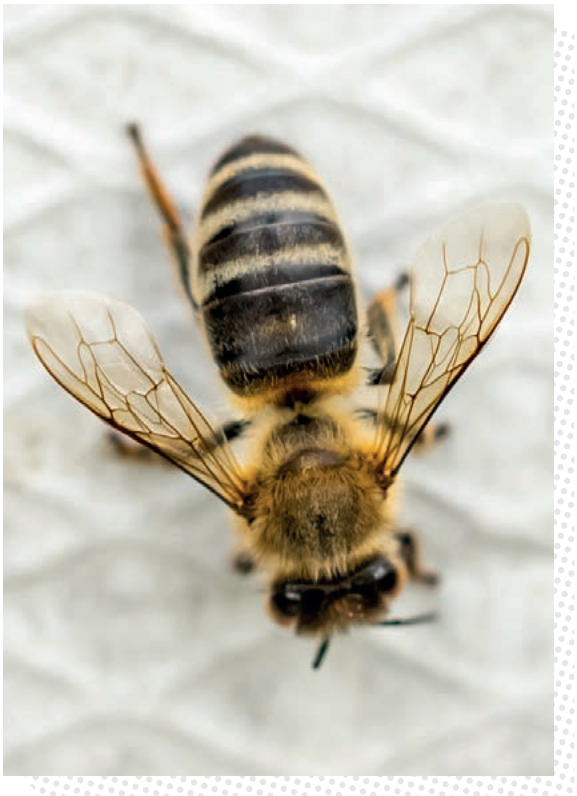
Pollinator protection legislation, tightening planning controls around listed buildings and a public obsession with all things eco-friendly have made feral honey bee jobs some of the most sensitive call-outs in the modern pest controller's diary. As part of BPCA's online debate series, four specialists came together on 7 May 2025 to unpick the practical, legal and ethical knots of bee work – from the first panicked phone call to the last drop of comb honey dripping behind a chimney breast.

Niall Gallagher NG
BPCA (host)

Clive Stewart CS
Westart Apiaries

Sam Thorpe ST
Predator Pest Solutions

Diane Drinkwater DD
British Beekeepers Association (BBKA)



Balancing public health and pollinator protection

NG How do we square client safety with saving bees?

CS Education first. Most callers simply don't understand what they're seeing. Calm the situation, explain the insect's behaviour and nine times out of ten, the panic subsides and we can discuss options rationally.

DD Our BBKA swarm-line operators have the same problem: every flying insect is "a bee or a wasp". We insist on a photograph to confirm the species. Often it turns out to be three bumble bees, not a 30,000-strong honey colony. Reassurance (not insecticide) is usually the answer.

ST Being able to say, "actually, these pollinators can stay", demonstrates professional green credentials and builds long-term trust. Turning down an unnecessary treatment today often wins a bigger maintenance contract tomorrow.

NG It's pest management, not pest control. Exactly.

Swarm calls, triage and public education

DD The secret is a robust triage script. First: honey, bumble or solitary? Second: is the swarm accessible? Third: does it genuinely need moving? We remind householders that most bumble nests are tiny and finish naturally by September.

ST A reliable ID network is gold dust. If I'm unsure, I ping a photo to Diane or Clive rather than guess. The public's confused; we can't be.

CS One leisure complex had a hive three storeys up. We put up an information board and left the bees. Diners loved it. Free wildlife show, zero risk, zero chemicals.

Bee colonies in buildings – listed headaches

NG Listed façades add a layer of red tape. Any tips?

DD Phone a conservation specialist before you lift a finger. We steer BBKA members away from structural jobs entirely. The insurance won't cover cutting into fabric.

CS Lines of communication are everything. Talk to conservation officers early, record the health and safety rationale for removal, and obtain a written agreement. Remember: public-health risk can trump listed status, but you must evidence it.

ST Know your limits. We're H&S-accredited and still bring in scaffolders or another BPCA firm for Grade II jobs. One mistake can bankrupt a business.

Training, insurance and the quarantine question

NG What's the first step for a technician who wants to offer swarm work?

DD Join your local beekeeping association. Shadow an experienced collector. Crucially, learn to wait until dusk before lifting the box; otherwise, half the field force is still out foraging, and you'll get a "second swarm" call the next day.

CS Pest controllers must check their own insurance policies. Standard cover often excludes livestock removal. BBKA insurance is public liability for volunteer beekeepers – it's void the moment you charge.

ST We pair every new bee tech with a mentor and insist on Cat B asbestos awareness. Bee logic and human logic diverge quickly; a mentor saves painful lessons.

DD And quarantine. Every swarm, cut-out or free-flying, goes into an isolation apiary for disease checks. With tropilaelaps edging west, we can't take risks.

Hidden hazards: asbestos, heights and honey seepage

ST Every invasive job starts with a structural survey. Bee flights can be 10 m from entrance to brood. You may drill through three ceilings to reach them. If there's any doubt about asbestos,

we stop and test. Clients understand; reputational damage from an exposure incident is far worse than a delayed removal.

CS Cat B training is the minimum. If you aren't certified, step back and contract someone who is. The same applies to working at height. Hire a cherry picker, not a bigger ladder.

NG And remember the aftermath: kill a mature colony with insecticide and you inherit fermented honey, wax moth, carpet damage and the world's stickiest insurance claim.

Can every feral colony be moved? And should it?

DD If it's simply clustering on a branch, yes - textbook swarm collection. Inside masonry is different: beekeepers shouldn't touch fabric, and BBKA cover forbids power tools.

CS In theory, any honey-bee colony can be removed: cut-out, trap-out or trunk-and-transport. The question is cost-benefit.

ST We refuse chemical knock-downs. They rarely work, violate the spirit of pollinator stewardship, and usually result in a second call-out when the entrance powder fails.

NG As a sector, we need to normalise that stance: no to pesticides, yes to professional removal or toleration.

Costs, complaints and customer persuasion

ST Some clients flinch at a four-figure quote. I frame it as an investment: relocate the colony, turn the story into positive PR and avoid dripping honey repairs. Most boards sign off once they see that calculation.

CS There are ways to trim the bill - client arranges scaffold, builder opens and reseals voids, etc. But never undersell the bee work itself. It's a specialist trade.

DD Also sell the risk: untreated colonies can throw cast swarms all summer, spreading European foulbrood or varroa bombs across the postcode.

Final take-aways

DD Forge relationships. If you won't keep the bees yourself, line up a trustworthy beekeeper with a quarantine apiary before the season starts.

ST Build a framework. BBKA for entomology, UKBR for removal methods, and BPCA for safety and legislation. Add a mentor and you'll learn twice as fast.

CS Education, education, education. The more you can explain species, disease, and legislation, the less resistance you'll meet.

NG And if you're serious about driving standards, it's worth joining BPCA's BeeWise special interest group. We work together to ensure bee management remains a professional, pollinator-friendly service.

JOIN OUR NEXT DEBATE

Our series of online debates is ongoing, plus we'll be holding some special in-person debates at PestEx 2026! **bpca.org.uk/events**

"Education first. Most callers simply don't understand what they're seeing. Calm the situation, explain the insect's behaviour and nine times out of ten, the panic subsides and we can discuss options rationally."

WHAT IS INVOICE FRAUD, AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT TRADERS?

Which?

Invoice fraud is a threat to everyone. It occurs when criminals target a legitimate payment by a customer to a business and redirect that money to another bank account. PPC asked our friends at Which? Trusted Trader for some advice on how pest management companies can avoid being stung by invoice scams.

Interested in joining Which? Trusted Trader?
BPCA members get special rates with Which? Take a look at the benefits and offers at **bpca.org.uk/which**

Invoice fraud is a threat to everyone. It occurs when criminals target a legitimate payment by a customer to a business and redirect that money to another bank account.

- Scammers may target you directly by impersonating a supplier or subcontractor that you are expecting to pay
- Or, they may contact your customers, pretending to be you, claiming that your bank details have changed to trick them into paying the wrong account.

The scam will only come to light when it's too late - either because your real supplier is chasing you for payment, or your customer is insisting that they've already paid you.

Invoice fraud is categorised as an 'authorised push payment' or APP scam. It's called that because victims are tricked into making the transfers themselves. UK Finance, a trade association for the banking industry, says that invoice fraud losses hit £50.3m in 2023, up 2% year-on-year.

Invoice fraud: the tactics

Scammers typically hack into your email account to intercept messages with customers and suppliers. This isn't as difficult as you might think – your password may have been leaked online, for example, or they may have used phishing tactics to steal your login details.

Once they're in, they can search for messages about invoices you regularly send or receive, making note of the way you write and any other details that could help them impersonate you.

Armed with this information, they can then send fake invoices to your customers or suppliers – either by doctoring an existing invoice, or creating a new one – using their own bank details.

Even without access to your emails, fraudsters may simply imitate your business name by falsifying the 'sender name' of an email, as you can see below. The real sender is shown in <brackets> here, and has nothing to do with Tesco Bank.

From: Tesco Bank <auth.mail@tesmail.com>
Date: 24 June 2019 at 15:19:08 BST
To: <[redacted]>
Subject: Recent Uprade. Access Verififcation Required.

What to tell a customer about invoice fraud

"Criminals may send you fake invoices, posing as a legitimate business, to trick you into sending them money. You are more likely to become a victim of this kind of fraud when you are expecting an invoice or payment request from a trader.

If you're paying a business for the first time, or you've received a payment request to a different

bank account, confirm that it is genuine before sending any money.

To help protect you, I will include my bank details and a confirmed contact number on every written quotation. If you accept my services and receive a request to pay a different bank account, please call us – using the number on the original quotation – to confirm we sent it"

Remember:

- Criminals can impersonate a legitimate business and convince customers to pay into a fraudulent bank account
- Always verify change of details with a trusted source
- Where has the invoice come from? Check the email address and contact details.

"Fraudsters may simply imitate your business name by falsifying the 'sender name' of an email."

How to protect your business

As a business, you may also be targeted. Criminals can create flashy websites and official-looking emails to impersonate suppliers in an attempt to defraud you.

Spot the following signs:

- An unusual or unexpected financial request
- Poor spelling and grammar or unusual language – it could be translated
- No sign-off
- Check for the spelling of the company name on the invoice for subtle differences and check the email address carefully (for example .org instead of .com).
- Be wary of links and attachments in emails and keep your guard up, especially if you receive an email you are not expecting. Train any staff to look out for invoice scams.
- Ensure your online accounts are protected
- Secure your online accounts to keep fraudsters out.

Here are a few top tips:

- Keep your computer up to date – you will be better protected if you keep the operating system (such as Windows or Mac) updated. You should receive notifications when you need to update the system.
- Use the latest version of your internet browser (such as Edge, Chrome and Firefox) – this will help to provide better protection from scams, viruses and other possible threats.
- Use security software (for example, anti-virus, antispyware and firewall) to protect your computer. Some computers already have security software installed, or you can check www.getsafeonline.org for advice on reputable providers.
- Use a different, strong password for every online account in case one gets hacked.
- You can use a password manager to help you store your passwords securely – this means you'll only have to remember one strong master password.
- Enable multi-factor (or two-factor) authentication on your email account. This makes it much harder for someone to hack your account.

What to do if you think you have been scammed

Contact your bank immediately and report the incident to Action Fraud, or to Police Scotland if you live in Scotland. Secure any online accounts by changing your passwords, and review them for any suspicious activity. You should also inform all customers and suppliers who may have received fraudulent invoices, so they can take appropriate precautions.

Individuals, micro-enterprises (fewer than 10 employees and turnover under £2 million) and small charities (annual income under £1 million) are now covered by new mandatory rules on reimbursement for authorised push payment (APP) fraud. From 7 October 2024, firms using Faster Payments or CHAPS must refund victims in most cases.

The cost is split between the bank sending and the bank receiving the money.

Banks must reimburse you within five working days, up to a cap of £85,000. They may apply an excess of up to £100, but this does not apply if you are classed as vulnerable. Refunds can be refused if there is clear evidence of gross negligence or fraud on your part.

If your payment was made before 7 October 2024, some banks still follow the voluntary Contingent Reimbursement Model (CRM) Code, and Which? has a template letter to help with these older cases.

Whatever the date, you should make a formal complaint to your bank explaining what happened and that you are a victim of APP fraud. Payment service providers must reply within 15 business days.

If they do not respond in time, or you disagree with their final decision, you can escalate your case to the Financial Ombudsman Service.

STAY SAFE

Sign up for Which? Scam Alerts.
which.co.uk/scam-alerts

"UK Finance says that invoice fraud losses hit £50.3m in 2023, up 2% year-on-year."

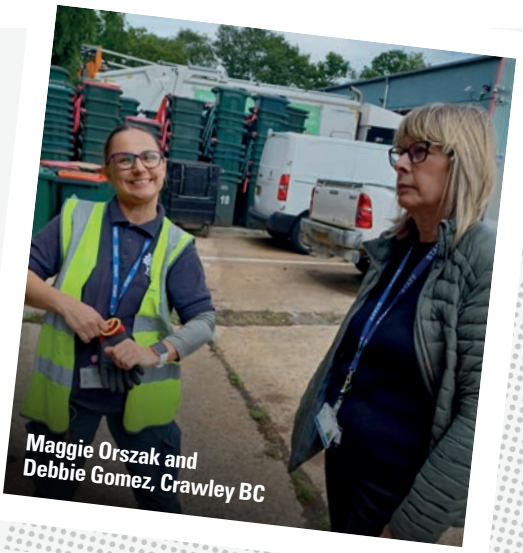
Reporting invoice fraud helps authorities trace patterns, identify suspects, and catch the criminals before they target someone else!

MEET THE MEMBER

FLYING SOLO: INSIDE CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S PEST CONTROL TEAM

PPC magazine editor Kat Shaw took a trip to Crawley in May, to visit Pest Control Officer Maggie Orszak, and her manager Debbie Gomez, at Crawley Borough Council.

With a strong stomach, a fascination for pests, and an impressive background in environmental services, Maggie represents the modern face of pest control–highly skilled, compassionate, and deeply committed to public health.



Maggie Orszak and Debbie Gomez, Crawley BC

Getting your hands dirty

PPC Maggie, your route into pest control began in quite a strange way, is that right?

MO I guess so! After moving to central London from Poland around 15 years ago, I began doing deep cleaning and clearances for Jarsen, carrying out contracts for councils in areas like Camden and Westminster.

It was tough work. Sometimes we'd be called in after someone had passed away alone, and we'd be cleaning out properties full of maggots and flies.

PPC I suppose a lot of people would be put off by that kind of grim work?

MO It was unpleasant at times, but someone needs to do it. Plus the pay was good and we had a great team.

PPC So how did you make the transition from environmental clearances to pest control?

MO It was actually a very funny moment. We were clearing out a loft when my colleague and our customer started to scream. There was a snap trap with a mouse still alive in it! I couldn't let it suffer. So I asked for something to dispatch it humanely. That was my first real pest control moment!

As Jarsen had a pest control arm to it, the company director supported a move into a pest career for me.

I took my Level 2 Award in Pest Management qualification and never looked back.

A new challenge

PPC How did you end up working at Crawley Borough Council?

MO After more than a decade in London, my partner and I relocated to Crawley around 2023.

But I was still working in London, and the commute was exhausting.

Getting up at 4 am, sitting in traffic every night. Eating your breakfast and dinner on the way to and from work. We wanted a better quality of life.

That's when I applied to work at Crawley BC and got the job.

PPC Today, you're the sole pest control officer at Crawley BC. Is that a lot of responsibility?

MO Yes, it can be. I have to know how to handle everything from rats and mice to bed bugs and squirrels. I have to deal with every pest control call that comes into the council, and there are a lot.

But I love meeting people, talking to them and helping them as much as I can. I'll always do my best to squeeze as many customers as possible into my schedule.

DG Yes, even when it means working much later than you should!

PPC What are you most passionate about in pest control?

MO I love rodents, they're my favourite. But I find bed bugs fascinating too. They're tricky to deal with, and I enjoy the challenge.

I'm always reading, learning, and watching webinars. I actually really enjoy my CPD!

PPC Debbie, you're Maggie's manager, so I'm assuming this enthusiasm from Maggie hasn't gone unnoticed?

> "Crawley's parks, streams, and ponds are wonderful, but they also mean there's a lot of rat activity, so education is key"

DG Yes, I work in the Environmental Health team, which pest control falls under at the council.

Maggie's amazing. Customers love her. She goes above and beyond, not just treating pests but educating residents and even liaising with our repairs team to tackle structural issues. She's a great listener and she really cares.

MO It's a good job they like me, because Crawley is so small that I'm always bumping into my customers at Tesco!

Public sector pest control in practice

PPC Tell me about how the pest control service works at Crawley BC.

"With officers like Maggie on the front line, Crawley's pest control service isn't just about eliminating pests, it's about building trust, educating communities, and safeguarding public health."

DG Crawley's pest control service is currently self-funding but not fully subsidised. Residents can book treatments for a range of pests, with discounts available for those on benefits.

Our core service is for rats, mice, and squirrels. We're trying to strike the right balance; keeping it affordable for residents but sustainable for the council.

MO The service is increasingly focused on prevention and education. A major challenge is how residents interact with local wildlife.

Crawley's really green, with loads of parks, streams, and ponds. That's great, but it means there's a lot of rat activity. Some residents feed birds, or even feed the rats, so we do a lot of education around that.

DG We're finding that people want more knowledge, not just a quick fix. Maggie's great at taking the time to explain what's going on and how they can prevent it happening again.

An invasive pest purview

PPC You mentioned earlier that the pest control team is part of Crawley's wider Environmental Health department?

DG Yes, as well as pest control, we monitor pollution, food safety, and air quality.

One growing area of concern is the potential arrival of invasive mosquito species, especially at Gatwick Airport.

We work with the UK Health Security Agency to monitor for tiger mosquitoes. We have traps both landside and airside at the airport. If anything suspicious is found, it goes straight to the lab.

PPC I'm a total airport lingo layman. What's the difference between landside and airside?

DG "Landside" encompasses the public areas accessible to everyone, like check-in counters, baggage claim and departure halls.

"Airside" refers to the secure area beyond security checkpoints, where aircraft and related facilities like boarding gates and runways are located.

Although Maggie isn't directly involved in the mosquito monitoring yet, she's keen to get involved.

MO It's fascinating. I'd love to do more of that in future.

Devolution on the horizon

PPC A potentially big question, but do you know yet if devolution will alter the way Crawley BC's pest control team operates?

DG There are no answers just yet. We don't know how it will affect us at the moment, but what we do know is that our residents will still need some form of pest control treatment available to them.

How it's organised might change; it may be that services are offered more centrally. And perhaps Maggie will be part of a larger pest control team, no longer a one-woman band.

There are some big decisions to come, and I'm sure we'll find out soon what that means for our team before the end of the year.

Being a role model

PPC As a woman in a traditionally male-dominated field, do you find that challenging?

MO I think we bring a different approach to customer service, and I find that particularly older residents really appreciate that gentler approach.

I also read somewhere that rats can detect male pheromones and act more aggressively towards them, so maybe we even have an advantage there!

PPC Do you have any plans for the future, in terms of your career?

MO Yeah, I definitely want to advance my skills further. I'd love to do the Certificated Advanced Technician qualification (CAT).

There's so much more to learn, and I want to stay ahead.

DG With Maggie on the front line, Crawley's pest control service isn't just about eliminating pests. It's about building trust, educating communities, and safeguarding public health.

She's a fantastic role model for anyone wanting to make a difference in their community.

Want to be interviewed by PPC?
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hello@bpca.org.uk

TAKE CARE OF YOUR KIT: HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR SPRAYER PROPERLY

B&G
a Pelsis brand

In this article, Anna Iversen from US-based equipment manufacturer B&G, shares her expert guidance on compressed air sprayer maintenance. Drawing on over two decades in pest management, Anna walks us through the must-do routines and fixes that keep your kit in top shape–so it works as hard as you do.

Speed read

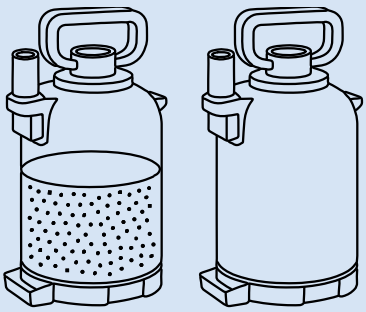
- Proper sprayer storage and maintenance prevent damage, improve safety and reduce chemical waste
- Cold weather can cause serious damage-never leave liquid in the tank during winter
- Inspect and clean all components regularly, especially nozzles and strainers
- Replace key parts like gaskets and valves every 6 to 12 months to ensure consistent performance
- A well-maintained sprayer can last decades-and save you money in the long run.

Look after your kit, and it'll look after you

Let me start by saying: your sprayer is more than just a too, it's a teammate. And just like a teammate, it deserves proper care. I've seen too many pest control technicians run into problems that could have been avoided with a bit of routine maintenance.

Whether you're using a B&G Prime Line or another compressed air sprayer, the principles are the same. And while I'll be focusing on our classic one-gallon model, these tips apply broadly across the industry.

1



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Stop storing your sprayer full

One of the most common problems I see is people storing their sprayers with chemical still inside, sometimes in freezing conditions. That's a double whammy for damage. Cold weather can freeze the liquid, leading to burst components like the wand, valve, or hose. It's just like frozen plumbing in a house.

Even if your climate's milder, residual chemicals can corrode internal parts and lead to costly failures. Always store your sprayer empty and clean, ideally inside a protective case or at least a bucket to catch leaks.

If it's cold where you are, remove the valve before storage. It's one of the most vulnerable (and expensive) parts.

Prep your tools and PPE

Before you start any maintenance, suit up with the right PPE. Even a "clean" sprayer can have residual pesticide inside, so always protect your hands, eyes and lungs as needed.

You don't need fancy gear. Basic hand tools like spanners, screwdrivers, nylon brushes and a good workspace are enough. Keep your repair kit close at hand. If you're working in a team, get everyone together and make a sprayer workshop out of it. It's a great way to share knowledge and stay on top of regular upkeep.

3

Inspection isn't just for clients' sites

4

Just like you inspect a property for pest entry points, you should be inspecting your sprayer - every day, if possible. Check for chemical residue, signs of wear, cracks in the hose, clogged filters, or leaky fittings. If your spray pattern suddenly changes, it's often a blocked nozzle or strainer.

One common issue I see? Dirty strainers. It's a tiny part, but if clogged, it can severely restrict flow. Take it out, give it a clean with soap, water, and a nylon brush. If it's rusted or bent, replace it. And make sure it goes back in the right way round!

Cleaning basics: no bleach, no shortcuts

5

You don't need harsh chemicals to clean your sprayer. In fact, don't use bleach. It can stain or corrode metal. Just stick to simple soap and warm water, and use a long nylon brush to get into the base of the tank where about 30ml of liquid often lingers.

Be gentle with the siphon tube. It's easy to bend or snap during overenthusiastic cleaning. Think of it like cleaning a toilet bowl: it's routine, but it matters.

Replacement isn't failure – it's planned maintenance

6

Your sprayer's not disposable. It's made to last. But to do that, a few components need replacing on a schedule- just like your van's tyres or oil.

Here's what I recommend:

Every six months:

- Check valve
- Plunger cup
- Lock spring
- Soft seat gasket
- Nozzle gasket.

Every 12 months:

- Pump tube gasket
- Nozzle tip.

Why so frequent? Because regular use (even with just water) causes wear. Nozzles, for example, can widen with use and increase your output by 10%. That means more chemical being applied than intended, which can breach label conditions and waste money.

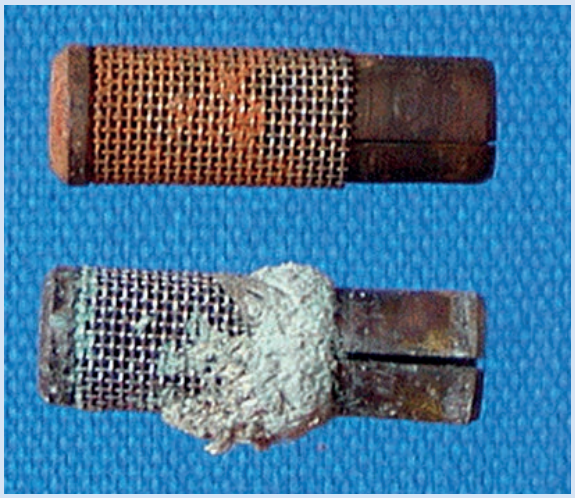
Strainer and nozzle care: where most issues begin

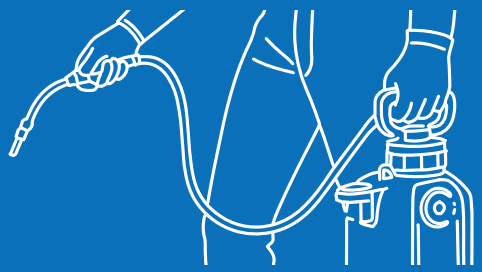
7

Strainers catch debris and keep your system clean. But they need regular attention. If it's too dirty to clean, replace it. When putting it back, make sure the closed end faces the hose. Get that wrong, and you'll wonder why your flow rate is off.

Nozzles wear out with use. Fact. They're cheap to replace, and essential to keep your output accurate. Never poke them clean with a safety pin or paperclip. It'll mess up the spray pattern. Nylon brushes only, please.

And don't forget the nozzle gasket. That little black ring can fall out without you noticing, leading to frustrating leaks. If you're seeing drips, check it's still there.





8

Key components to understand

Even if you're not mechanically minded, get familiar with the parts that matter most:

- Pump tube gasket: be aware that this is prone to cracking or swelling under pressure
- Check valve: this is a small, essential disc at the bottom of the pump which is easy to replace if needed
- Pump tube: this can also develop cracks, if overexposed to chemicals
- Plunger cup: make sure you change this every two years, at least. Leather options are great and provide a better seal
- Hose: if the metal connectors swivel, a top tip after you tighten them is to use Teflon tape for a better seal.

And always use two wrenches-one to hold, one to turn-when tightening or removing fittings. That little trick will save you a world of hassle.

Use your sprayer like it's built to last–because it is

9

I've worked with sprayers that are 50+ years old and still going strong. That's the goal. But you only get there if you treat your kit right.

My top tips?

- Keep your sprayer empty and clean, especially in winter
- Replace key parts on a schedule—not just when they fail
- Use the right tools and PPE every time you work on it
- Get to know your sprayer. Take it apart, rebuild it. The more familiar you are, the easier the job gets.

Sprayer maintenance might not be glamorous, but it's one of the most important things you can do to stay compliant, efficient and professional.

bpca.org.uk

Event type	Event/ course name	From (£)	Date	Location
Forum	**Medway Forum**	Free	17/09/2025	Kent
Training	**Certificate in Bird Management (online, class and examination)**	180.00	18/09/2025	Blended
Training	**Becoming a Field Biologist/Technical Inspector (online class course)**	132.00	22/09/2025	Online
Forum	**DIGITAL 34**	Free	24/09/2025	Online
Training	**Starting out in Pest Management (online class course)**	132.00	29/09/2025	Online
Webinar	**GUEST: Mole control**	Members Only	01/10/2025	Online
Training	**Level 2 Award in the Safe use of Aluminium Phosphide**	358.00	02-03/10/2025	Southwick
Networking	**London - networking event**	Free	09/10/2025	Clapham
Forum	**Exeter Forum**	Free	15/10/2025	Tiverton
Forum	**DIGITAL 35 - Duty of care special**	Free	22/10/2025	Online
Webinar	**DEBATE: Money down the drain - drainage surveys and inspections**	Members Only	12/11/2025	Online
Training	**Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)**	1,165.00	16-21/11/2025	Milton Keynes
Forum	**Belfast Forum**	Free	19/11/2025	Belfast
Open evening	**Non-member open evening- Learn about BPCA membership**	Free	120/11/2025	Online
Training	**Becoming a Field Biologist/Technical Inspector (online class course)**	132.00	24/11/2025	Online
Training	**Level 3 Award in Safe Use of Fumigants**	1,081.00	24-27/11/2025	Derby
Training	**Certificate in Bird Management (online, class and examination)**	180.00	27/11/2025	Blended
Webinar	**WEBINAR: Tricky flea infestations - a planned approach**	Members Only	03/12/2025	Online
Training	**Hands-on practical pest management**	250.00	06/12/2025	Stafford
Training	**Level 2 Certificate in Pest Management (residential)**	1,640.00	06-13/12/2025	Stafford
Training	**Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)**	1,165.00	07-12/12/2025	Stafford

Exams for Level 2, Certified Field Biologist, Certified Technical Inspector and Fumigation Unit 1.

Date	**Location**
14/10/2025	Exeter
18/11/2025	Belfast
21/11/2025	Milton Keynes
09/12/2025	Leigh, Manchester
12/12/2025	Stafford

Bulk booking discounts

We now offer discounts on bulk bookings for our online Level 2 Award in Pest Management course, for both members and non-members: 0-2 licences – standard price; 3-9 licences – 20% discount; 10+ licences – 40% discount. Exam costs remain the same. Contact the training team to find out more.

Terms and conditions

All costs are members only and exclude VAT. Non-member prices are available at **bpca.org.uk/training**

Venue details are provisional and may change – please check the BPCA website before booking.

BPCA reserves the right to cancel a programme if insufficient bookings have been received.

Delegates will be offered an alternative date or a full refund of the programme fee if a programme is cancelled. BPCA will not be liable for any costs incurred by the delegates.

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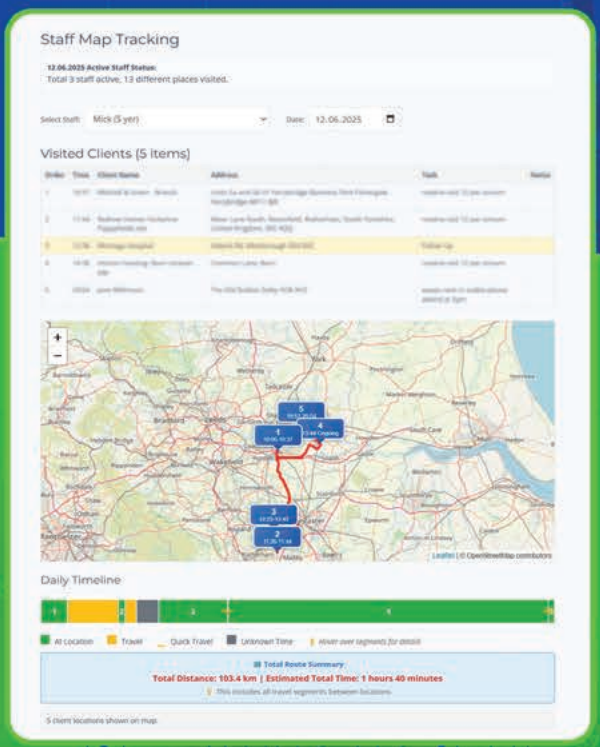

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