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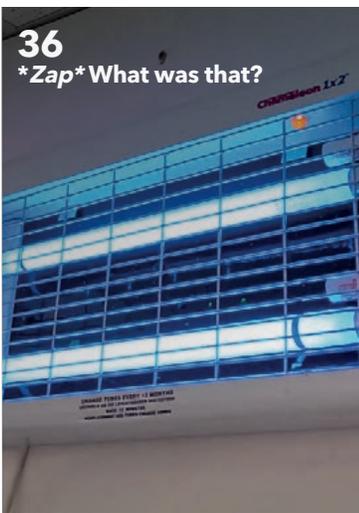
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British Pest Control Association
4a Mallard Way, Pride Park, Derby DE24 8GX
bpca.org.uk
01332 294 288
enquiry@bpca.org.uk



[instagram.com/british_pest_control](https://www.instagram.com/british_pest_control)



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[youtube.com/BPCAvideo](https://www.youtube.com/BPCAvideo)

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Editors

Scott Johnstone, Kathryn Shaw
hello@bpca.org.uk

Content team

Karen Dawes, Lauren Day, Harrison Ditheridge, Rachel Eyre, Niall Fairbrother, Niall Gallagher, Sarah Holland, John Horsley, Katrina Jellyman, Jordan McCay, Kristian Nettleship, Lorraine Norton, Clare Penn, Beth Reed.

Advertising

sales@bpca.org.uk

Design

Harrison Ditheridge

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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

Listening mode

As a magazine and a trade association, we're meant to be noisy. We need to shout loudly about what's going on in the industry and call out what's going wrong when we see it. BPCA's noisy open letter to Defra ([see page 13](#)) or our billboard bin-strike campaign ([see page 12](#)) are great examples of what a noisy professional association can do.

But as my old school teacher would say, you've got two ears and one mouth. Being a professional pest management association requires us to be twice as good at listening as we are at being noisy.

As you open PPC119, our brand-new Chief Executive, Rosina Robson, will have just taken the helm ([see page 14](#)). Her diary for the first few months is intentionally crammed with member site visits, staff huddles and getting to know the sector. You'll see her out-and-about (and if you happen to be doing your BPCA/RSPH Level 2 Award this summer, you might just share a classroom with her). If you spot her on the road, or in your inbox, don't hold back: tell her what matters to you - she's in listening mode.

In April, we held our inaugural Volunteer Days, bringing staff and volunteers together for a roll-up-your-sleeves session at BPCA HQ ([see page 9](#)). Strategy workshops, networking, and committee projects - it was a busy day of volunteers listening to each other and putting pen to paper to plan projects for the future. We hear those common themes: skills shortages, customer expectations, legislation and toolkit concerns.

With Niall joining the technical team, we've injected fresh energy into long-standing Special Interest Groups (SIGs), while launching two completely new groups: BugWise and RodentWise. The brief is simple: specialists talk, BPCA listens, and together we turn insight into guidance, CPD content and, when needed, lobbying campaigns. If you've ever muttered "someone should really look at that", now's the moment to get involved ([see page 5](#)) or head to bpca.org.uk/groups.

At PPC Live in Harrogate ([see page 17](#)), hundreds of pest professionals shared what's on their minds. The BPCA stand was busy all day with your questions and comments. Thank you to everyone who made their way to the sunny Great Yorkshire Event Centre to speak with us.

Nowhere has your feedback proved more valuable than the BPCA Qualifications Framework. After months of open consultation, surveys, focus groups and more than a few late-night calls, we're moving full steam ahead with new entry-Level 3 qualifications ([see page 10](#)).

Great things happen when BPCA members speak up, from committee projects to the future of pest management qualifications; everything you say really does matter. Don't be quiet about your industry.

And tell us what you want covered in PPC magazine or your BPCA Forums. Deep dives into rodent behaviour? Business-building case studies? Back-to-basics myth-busting?

Listening is only half the story; acting on what we hear is where progress lives. With your voices ringing in our ears and Rosina's notepad already brimming, we're confident the next twelve months will see BPCA deliver the support and representation you deserve. Let's keep the conversation going!

Welcome Rosina!

Scott + Kat

PPC editors
hello@bpca.org.uk



THANK YOU, KEN



PPC magazine's designer, Ken Davidson, has retired, passing the torch on to BPCA's very own Harrison Ditheridge.

For fourteen years, independent designer Ken has handcrafted every article, photoshopped every shaky member pic, diligently checked our grammar, and inserted (occasionally inappropriate) puns into 56 issues of PPC magazine.

Beyond PPC, Ken developed the current version of the BPCA logos, the visual identity of PestEx, and designed our BPCA Registered cards. BPCA's distinct, friendly yet professional look is entirely down to Ken's work.

BPCA Communications Manager, Scott Johnstone, said:

"It can't be overstated how big a part of the BPCA team Ken has been.

"He's been an instrumental sounding board and mentor to the BPCA comms team. He's a gentleman who works with professionalism and integrity, constantly challenging us to improve our comms.

"I'm thrilled to have worked with him, and the whole team will miss him. We wish him the best with his next chapter".

Congratulations, Harrison

One of Ken's final duties was to mentor Harrison Ditheridge. For the last seven months, Ken has helped Harrison take over the day-to-day responsibilities for design at BPCA, meaning for the first time in 119 issues, PPC119 has been produced entirely in-house by BPCA.

Harrison has now formally been promoted to BPCA's Design and Multimedia Officer.

Scott continued:

"Harrison has big shoes to fill, but we're all very proud of him at BPCA. He's put in a lot of work over the last seven months, and this issue of PPC magazine is a testament to his passion".

You can congratulate Harrison or provide feedback on his work at hello@bpca.org.uk

BugWise

INVERTEBRATE MANAGEMENT GROUP

JOIN BPCA'S NEW SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP: BUGWISE

BPCA has set up a new Special Interest Group (SIG) focused on best practice and guidance around arthropods.

The BugWise SIG will be run by our Technical and Compliance Manager, Niall Gallagher, and will meet once every quarter to discuss how to:

- Create new guidance or codes of best practice (COBP) around arthropods
- Improve existing guidance and COBP
- Build relationships with key stakeholders (ie Royal Entomological Society)
- Enabling an increase in professional standards for arthropod control
- Discuss increasing access to academic research around arthropods.

Anyone can join a SIG, whether you're a member, non-member or even from outside the pest control industry.

Niall commented:

"The volunteers in our other SIGs, WildWise and BeeWise, already do great work in other spaces for us. We want to extend that to other areas of interest, and BugWise was the next logical step.

"We'll be announcing other SIGs soon too, so watch this space!"



Want to join?

If you'd like to talk more about BugWise or register your interest in joining, get in touch.

technical@bpca.org.uk

GOODBYE, JORDAN



Jordan McCay, BPCA's Policy and Campaigns Officer, has left BPCA to pursue a role at the British Property Federation, working with their residential policy team.

Communications Manager, Scott Johnstone, said:

"Whilst Jordan has been with the Association for only 16 months, she has been instrumental in putting together BPCA's manifesto, formalising our public affairs work, and championing numerous high-profile campaigns.

"Her passion, wit, and willingness to help made her especially popular with volunteers. However, the BPCA staff team will remember her (fondly) as the person who takes pub quizzes and karaoke a little too seriously.

"Congratulations and thank you, Jordan. You'll be missed".

BPCA will seek to recruit a new Policy and Campaign Officer soon.

Full servicing members



- All Pest Solutions, Kent
- Beemoval, Devon
- Elite Environmental, Essex
- Kent County Pest Control Ltd, Tonbridge
- Peacocks Pest Control Ltd, Surrey
- Priors Pest Control Ltd, Essex
- RatMan Pest Services, Llandysul
- Reaper Bird Control Ltd, Suffolk
- RRL Pest Solutions, Kent
- Rosherville Repairs & Maintenance Ltd, Northfleet
- Stag Pest Services, County Durham
- The Pied Piper Pest Control Co Ltd, Chingford
- Urban Issues London Ltd, London
- Vanquished Pest Control, Torquay
- Vico Homes, Castleford.

Observer members

- Arab Pest Control Center - PESCO, UAE
- Balaveri Ltd, Georgia
- EverTrust Ltd, Taiwan
- Fujian Yangfan Plastic Netting Co. Ltd, China.
- Royal Pest Control Est, United Arab Emirates.

Manufacturer and distributor members

- Integrated Bird Management Ltd, Milton Keynes

NEW RULES ON WORKPLACE RECYCLING IN ENGLAND

New recycling rules in England, effective from 31 March, 2025, require businesses with 10 or more employees to separate waste into three categories: dry recyclables (including paper, metal, plastic, and glass), food waste, and general waste (non-recyclable items).

You should discuss the requirements with your waste collector and arrange separate dry recycling, food waste and non-recyclable waste collection. The waste collector can be a private waste collector or your local authority may also provide services.

You must make sure that the company is registered on the Public Register of Waste Carriers, Brokers and Dealers.



Read more about the new rules on the gov.uk website.



The International Conference on Urban Pests is taking place in Sweden this year and the full agenda is now available.

The Organising Committee for the International Conference on Urban Pests (ICUP) 2025 has been working hard behind the scenes to finalise the exciting and varied programme for the ICUP 2025 event.

This includes plenary sessions, a wide choice of parallel sessions, a poster session, a workshop plus ample time to network and catch up with colleagues.

Held only every three years, and at locations around the world, this time it is the turn of Sweden to host the event.

Where: AF-Borgen, the Academic Society (Akademiska Föreningen) building in Lund, southern Sweden

When: 29 June to 2 July 2025

Dr Jette Knudsen, chairman of the Organising Committee said:

"We reviewed an extremely large number of abstracts submitted by potential authors from across the globe and we are delighted to be able to offer such a great variety of topics for delegates to pick from. This truly is an international conference on urban pests.

"It is also exciting to see the continued emergence of a newer generation of researchers alongside the well-established global experts."

Exciting and varied programme

After a welcome reception on Sunday 29 June, the conference begins with a fascinating paper presented by Dr Erica von Essen from the Stockholm Resilience Centre, Sweden who will put forward programmes for human-wildlife interactions in today's city landscapes.

In the opening plenary session on the second day, the large-scale monitoring of urban pests in cities feature when Dr Bjørn Arne Rukke from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health in Oslo puts together the pieces in the puzzle for knowledge-based pest management.

Continuing the theme of cities, Dr Gabi Muller from the City of Zurich, Urban Pest Advisory Service, Switzerland will discuss why it is important to

consider pest prevention when planning heat reduction and sponge city projects.

The plenary session on the third day promises something truly unique with presentations from two professors from the University of California, Riverside, USA. Professor Michael Rust will review the rise of urban entomology over the last 50 years.

Looking to the future, Professor Chow-Yang Lee will detail the emergence, and future, of urban entomology in Asia.

Parallel sessions to choose from

Presentations covering a whole variety of urban pest issues will be given in the parallel sessions and delegates can choose which to attend.

These include the challenge of modern urban pest management, resistance to rodenticides and insecticides and a special session on resistance covering German cockroaches, bed bugs, Norway rats and stored product insects.

A session on behavioural research covers houseflies, blackflies and bed bugs.

Of particular relevance to public health, a separate session on pathogens covers new research on pathogenic bacteria associated with rodents, Norway rats and ticks.

Artificial Intelligence as an identification tool for rodent activity, features in a further session that also includes online monitoring of rodents and detection of bed bugs.

Also to be covered are novel control methods, product storage and urban planning.

The detailed programme is now available and can be viewed on the ICUP website at ICUP 2025 programme.

"This truly is an international conference on urban pests."

RECORDS BROKEN AT PESTWORLD EAST 2025

A record number of delegates from across the global professional pest management industry came together to attend PestWorld East 2025.

This was held between 15-16 April 2025 at The Palm, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Staged bi-annually, PestWorld East is organised by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) in partnership with Ecovar, the leading supplier of pest management solutions.

A delighted Dominique Stumpf CEO, NPMA declared: "This state-of-the art meeting continues to grow in popularity and attendance.

"It brings together attendees from across the Middle-East and around the world. NPMA is excited to announce that the 2025 conference was supported by over 450 attendees, representing more than 50 countries."

In the presentations over the course of the two days, attendees learned from experts about the latest advances in pest biology and elimination, ways to protect public health through new service techniques, the importance of rodent control programmes, and dealing with challenges in commercial accounts.

In addition to the comprehensive educational programme, attendees also had a chance to hear from vendors and explore the newest technologies available from the 40 exhibitors within the exhibition.

As expected, several stands were from Middle and Far Eastern companies, alongside a strong presence from European firms, especially from the UK and Italy.

Meeting of the Global Pest Management Coalition

With so many international delegates present, The Global Pest Management Coalition (GPMP) took the opportunity to hold an open meeting the day before PestWorld began chaired by the president, Manuela Cordeiro.

One of the main topics on the agenda was feedback from the recent survey of sustainability sent to pest professionals in the US, Italy, Portugal, Sweden and Spain.

Once translated, these results will help the Sustainability Workgroup, led by Chris Gorecki, determine their next steps.

Looking ahead, discussion centred around the forthcoming Global Pest Management Coalition conference to be held in Hong Kong in June 2026 to coincide with World Pest Day.

This event is to be hosted by NPMA in coordination with the Confederation of the European Pest Management Associations (CEPA) and the Federation of Asia Oceania Pest Managers Association (FAOPMA). Further information will be available in the coming months.



CLEANKILL SIGNS UP TO ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Following discussions with ex-services staff, Cleankill Pest Control has signed the Armed Forces Covenant to support the Armed Forces community.

With around 9% of its team being veterans, Cleankill recognises the strong alignment between military experience and the skills needed in pest control. Cleankill Director Clive Bury explains: "We considered what features the roles shared, how their training made them so compatible for a role in pest control and how we could best support current and future ex-services employees.

"We are delighted to have signed the pledge and hope it will encourage more ex-forces personnel to join us and start a new career in pest control.

"The Covenant is a pledge to support those who serve or have served, support their families and ensure they are fairly treated. It is a show of support not just to ex-service personnel and veterans but also to our customers, staff, contractors and the general public that we are serious about helping ex-service people."

The key qualities that both services share are:

- Punctuality
- Trustworthy
- Excellent training
- Problem solving
- Taking instructions
- Well-presented
- Organisation
- Teamwork
- Planning.

Cleankill Service Team Leader Neil Parker is excelling in his new career and finds it highly rewarding. A former Bombardier in the Royal Artillery, Neil served 12 years operating and commanding the Rapier missile system. He entered pest control by chance after working in the wine trade.

He said: "I started as a technician which suited me as it gave me an opportunity to transfer skills from the military that I hadn't used for a while. I now manage a team of technicians after being promoted to team leader. I really love my job and find it incredibly rewarding.

"I believe that the role of pest control technician is ideal for an ex-forces individual, particularly someone who likes to operate within a team and use their mental resources."

Cleankill Pest Control has signed the Armed Forces Covenant at Horse Guards Parade, London.

The team included Director Clive Bury, Lt Col Darren Johnston, and Armed Forces Champion Wayne Baron. Cleankill

is currently recruiting technicians in the South East and provides pest control services across London and the South of England.



BEST PEST PIC 2025 WINNER ANNOUNCED

BPCA were pleased to announce the winner of the #BestPestPic2025 competition at PPC Live in Harrogate.

Lizzie Mills, Rentokil, won the Association's competition to find the best image of public health pest control.

Entries were shortlisted by the BPCA Staff team, with the top 10 entries put on display at PPC Live 2025.

The winning photograph was then picked by a panel of judges from across the pest management industry, as well as PR and photography experts, and announced at the event.

The judges were:

- Simon King, Editor, Pest magazine
- Jane Shepherd, MD, Shepherd PR
- Scott Johnstone, Marketing, Technology and Communications Manager, BPCA
- Clark Smith-Stanley, Photographer and Aviator, Profile Studios
- Paul Westgate, owner, Veritas Pest Consultancy.

Lizzi has been shortlisted in the competition before, but this is her first win. She told us:

"I'm thrilled to have won Best Pest Pic 2025 - I've spent years losing chips to these winged bandits - feels good to finally get something back from them, and against some great competition too! Thanks again!"

Scott Johnstone, BPCA Marketing Manager, said: "Well done to Lizzi on her winning entry, it was a great photograph.

We always have such wonderful entries to this competition, and this year was no different. The standard is getting better year on year, so choosing a winner is not easy.

"We enjoy celebrating the important work that our sector does to protect public health and Lizzi's entry, along with all the others shortlisted, showcased it brilliantly."

The shortlisted entries were:

1. The Royal Bumble - Richard Marshall, Morrisons Supermarkets
2. It must be love, love, love - Peter Bott, PJB
3. No gulls on Fawkes's watch - Kiley Clement, OCS Pest Control
4. Forever stuck... - Ben Hunt, Rhino Pest Management
5. A view from the other side - Ben Hunt, Rhino Pest Management
6. World Wide Web - Dave Archer, DKA Training
7. Eyes of the colony - Chris Emmans, Musca Pest Management Services
8. Harlequin - Leigh Tovey, Yorkshire Pest Control Ltd
9. Where's my bloody chips?! - Lizzi Mills, Rentokil
10. Watching and waiting - Dom Glover.



NEW COMPANY SIZE THRESHOLDS FROM APRIL 2025: LOWER REPORTING BURDENS FOR UK BUSINESSES

On 6 April 2025, updates will be introduced to reflect inflation, ensuring smaller businesses benefit from reduced regulations.

Company size thresholds have not changed since 2013, so this is a welcomed change for small businesses.

New size thresholds

A company qualifies for a category if it meets two of the three criteria:

Size of business	Turnover (up to)	Balance sheet (up to)	No. of employees (up to)
Micro	£1m (was £632k)	£500k (was £316k)	10 (no change)
Small	£15m (was £10.2m)	£7.5m (was £5.1m)	50 (no change)
Medium	£54m (was £36m)	£27m (was £18m)	250 (no change)

These changes also apply to LLPs.

Key impacts:

- 113,000 companies will move from small to micro, 14,000 from medium to small, and 6,000 from large to medium
- Newly small businesses won't need a statutory audit unless part of a group
- Medium entities no longer need a Strategic Report; large entities moving to medium can skip certain disclosures
- Reduced requirements for large and medium-sized businesses. Fewer disclosures including:
 - Financial instruments
 - Post-year end events
 - Future developments
 - R&D activities
 - Overseas branches.

How this affects your pest control business

Now a small business? (previously Medium)

- No more statutory audits (unless part of a group requiring one)
- No need for a Strategic Report, reducing reporting complexity
- Reduced Directors' Report obligations, simplifying compliance.

Now a medium business? (previously Large)

- No need for a Section 172(1) statement in the Strategic Report (which details directors' considerations of stakeholders)
 - Reduced Directors' Report obligations, simplifying compliance.
- Now a Micro-Entity? (previously small)
- No need for a statutory audit
 - Exempt from Directors' Report requirements.

Transitional rules

To make the transition easier, companies can assume the new thresholds applied in the previous financial year.

This means businesses can benefit from reduced reporting immediately.

What should business owners do?

- Check your company's new size category and understand how it affects reporting
- Review audit and reporting obligations – you may no longer need a statutory audit
- Consider restructuring opportunities to simplify compliance further
- Seek expert advice to maximise the benefits of these changes.



A LANTRA-APPROVED NIGHT SHOOTING COURSE

Karolien Van der Vorm, Founder and Owner of 360 Wildlife Control Ltd and member of BPCA's WildWise group, talks about how she believes there's a lack of available shooting training in the industry and what's being done to fill the gaps.

With night shooting being a core part of 360 Wildlife Control operations, we are always seeking ongoing training and qualifications for the team. Which, for an industry that uses lethal weapons and control, seems to be in short supply!

Whilst there are readily available courses and certification for deer management, such as the Lantra-approved PDS1, there is a void in training for fox, rat, feral pigeon and rabbit shooting at night.

The lack of available training is a big concern to me, and we often get called in as subcontractors to work with other shooters, often with inappropriate equipment and a shortfall in experience.

It's challenging and concerning, so we now state in contracts that we won't work with unqualified shooters who wish to provide their own rifles and equipment.

Against a backdrop of headlines in the tabloids, like the incident in which a fox night shooter was sadly killed last year, along with other coverage of accidental shootings of both non target species and shooters, it is surely on the cards that mandatory regulations will be imposed on us, unless swift self-regulation is adopted by the industry.

A person can purchase a lethal rifle and night vision scope and be employed by an unsuspecting client, to go out at night to shoot, unsupervised, without any formal training, as the industry standard doesn't require this. This sorry state of affairs led to a conversation last year with Peter Jones, CEO of the Shooting and Hunting Academy.

Peter is renowned for his professional deer stalking expertise and popular County Deer Stalking YouTube channel, as well as having developed online training courses with other leading industry professionals, such as the Proficient Deer Stalking Certificate (PDS1), Airgun Proficiency Course (APC) and Grey Squirrel Management Course, to name but a few. Through the S&H Academy, Peter has recognised the urgent need for more industry wide, professional training.

In the latest course developed by the Shooting & Hunting Academy, Peter has brought together a collaboration of leading industry experts including:

- Hikmicro
- Jelen PWS
- DNT optics
- County Deer Stalking
- Tom's Targets
- Wild Track Pro
- National Gamekeepers Organisation

to deliver a Lantra-accredited Night Shooting Course that is suitable for all those that shoot deer, fox and vermin at night.

The 360 Wildlife team have been delighted to assist in the production of the course and have contributed significantly to the content, presentation and footage, which has arisen from many years of varied UK-wide, urban experience in this space.

The comprehensive Night Shooting Course now delivers advanced, up-to-date information on the use of thermal and night vision equipment, along with crucial guidance on the law, and training to implement safe, effective and humane control methods in both urban and rural environments.

Particular emphasis is given to safety and species identification, which is in our view, critical.

Candidates must complete a short test after each module and a final exam to pass the course.

Upon successful completion of the assessed Lantra award, candidates are immediately awarded a Lantra certificate.

The benefits of the course, aside from instant certification and the ease by which candidates can complete the course online, are that it covers the entire United Kingdom, with additional sections on both Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Alternatively, for colleagues North of the Border in Scotland, there is a very good and enjoyable classroom-based course delivered by the Scottish Gamekeepers Association. However, this course only provides certification for Scotland.

In my opinion the new Lantra Night Shooting Course provided by the Shooting and Hunting Academy should be an essential requirement of any pest controller engaging in nighttime shooting, if we are to avoid the roll out of mandatory qualifications.

To find out more about the course, visit the shootingandhuntingacademy.co.uk/course/night-shooting-course



And don't forget, all training will qualify for CPD points on BPCA Registered!

UNLEASHING MEMBER POWER

BPCA's first Volunteer Days

In April, BPCA held its first-ever Volunteer Days, a two-day event designed to put members at the heart of shaping the Association's future. Held 2-3 April 2025, the event brought together nearly 50 volunteers from across the sector for a packed programme of collaboration, creativity and curvy.

For decades, BPCA committees have played a vital role in steering our work. However, as our industry evolves, so must our methods of working. That's why, towards the end of 2024, BPCA set out to rethink how we engage volunteers. The result? A new model rooted in co-creation, and a fresh calendar of in-person workshops, committee projects and strategic discussions.

What happened on the day?

Volunteers arrived on Wednesday, 2 April, to a warm welcome, with the day set aside for context-setting and connection. BPCA's Board and Staff team shared key updates and strategic goals, and members had the chance to connect through icebreakers and informal discussions.

Later that evening, a good meal and a lively pub quiz helped everyone unwind and build camaraderie across committees. For many, it was the first time meeting peers in person, giving everyone a chance to put faces to names and forge new relationships.

The second day was where the magic happened. Committees participated in hands-on workshops designed around real BPCA projects, utilising templates and tools to generate ideas, address challenges, and advance work.

Key topics included:

- Improving recruitment and accessibility in pest control
- Developing clearer career pathways and qualifications
- Enhancing member benefits and communication
- Strengthening standards in the rented housing sector
- Tackling the regulatory pressures on our pest management toolkit.

The atmosphere was energising. By lunchtime, the walls were covered in Post-it Notes and plans; by the end of the day, volunteers had delivered draft roadmaps, shared feedback with staff leads, and kickstarted informal working groups to continue progress beyond the room.

The impact so far

BPCA Communications Manager, Scott Johnstone, said:

"The ripple effects were felt immediately. Our committees have arranged extra meetings to continue working on new projects.

"They're excited to pitch strategic project ideas to the Executive Board later in the year.

"And it's not just about what got done: it's about how people felt doing it. BPCA is a member-owned, member-led organisation. Seeing it place out over two days of hard in-person work was really special.

"Thank you to everyone who gave up their time to volunteer."

Get involved

BPCA's new volunteer model isn't a one-off. If you're from a BPCA member company and want to shape the direction of our work, there's never been a better time to get involved.

Learn more about volunteering with BPCA and help set the direction for the entire sector. bpc.org.uk/groups



Alex Wade, BPCA Outreach and Comms Chair

I am forever harping on about Trade Associations and how they work. Well, here it is IN ACTION, Staff team and Committee volunteers all spending two days getting things done.

But Alex, what do you mean by "getting things done?"

Well, exactly that, the Staff team asked the Committees how THEY would like to see the next five years rolling out, what THEY thought was the best way to achieve that and how WE can work together to realise these goals.

"Hang on a minute, how dare the BPCA make decisions for me and this industry?!"

LOOK AROUND THAT ROOM, there are consultants, micro businesses, SMEs, servicing companies, manufacturers and distributors, people from every part of our industry... they are all inputting into this, they're having their say... There was literally nothing stopping you from joining a committee and being part of this... and there still isn't. You can sign up for a committee tonight and have your say, have your voice.

"But Alex there WAS plenty stopping me..."

"The BPCA is just for the big boys".

Nope, over 70% of the membership are small and micro businesses.

"But it too expensive".

On average, membership is less than 3% of your annual turnover.

"I don't have the time to do this".

on average it's one meeting every three months which is accessible online.

"No one cares what I have to say".

Well, that's patently untrue.

No more excuses, our industry is changing whether we like it or not, make sure its change you want to see.



FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR ENTRY-LEVEL 3 QUALIFICATIONS ON BPCA QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

After extensive consultation with members, the sector, and awarding body RSPH, BPCA has committed to developing new Level 3 pest management qualifications as part of a new industry qualification framework.

The BPCA Framework covers five qualification skill levels, from basic awareness to Field Biologist.

Work will soon begin on the most critical qualification: a Level 3 Certificate in General Pest Management.

This will be the pivotal qualification for those entering the sector wishing to be a public health pest technician.

Other specialist Level 3 qualifications for bird and wildlife management will also be developed for specialist technicians.

Those with an existing RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Award or Certificate in Pest Management can choose to upgrade their current certificate or retain their old qualification.

BPCA Training Development Manager, Karen Dawes, said: "We now have broad agreement across the sector that our vision for pest management qualifications is right for the whole industry.

"It's now time for the real hard work to begin: to develop a syllabus for this new Level three qualification that will put our entry level qualifications on a par with other respected professions and trades"

Jenni Peprell, the Royal Society for Public Health's Director of Qualifications, said

"We're delighted to be supporting the pest management industry to develop this exciting new qualification framework. The majority of the areas of the public health workforce that we work with are facing real issues around workforce recruitment and retention.

"We know that educational pathways are a vital part of the puzzle in addressing these issues, attracting people to these sectors, helping them to understand the different routes available to them and to access the training that helps them to progress and achieve their aspirations.

"We look forward to working with partners from across the industry to build a pathway that is clear, inclusive and accessible to all"

The entire framework is expected to be completed by 2030; however, work on the Level 3 Certificate in General Pest Management will begin immediately.

All qualifications will be in partnership with our preferred awarding body partner, RSPH.

Martin Rose-King, Chair of BPCA's Professional Standards Committee, said

"A robust training framework for the sector will attract new talent, and level up our image to customers and the government, protecting our toolkit

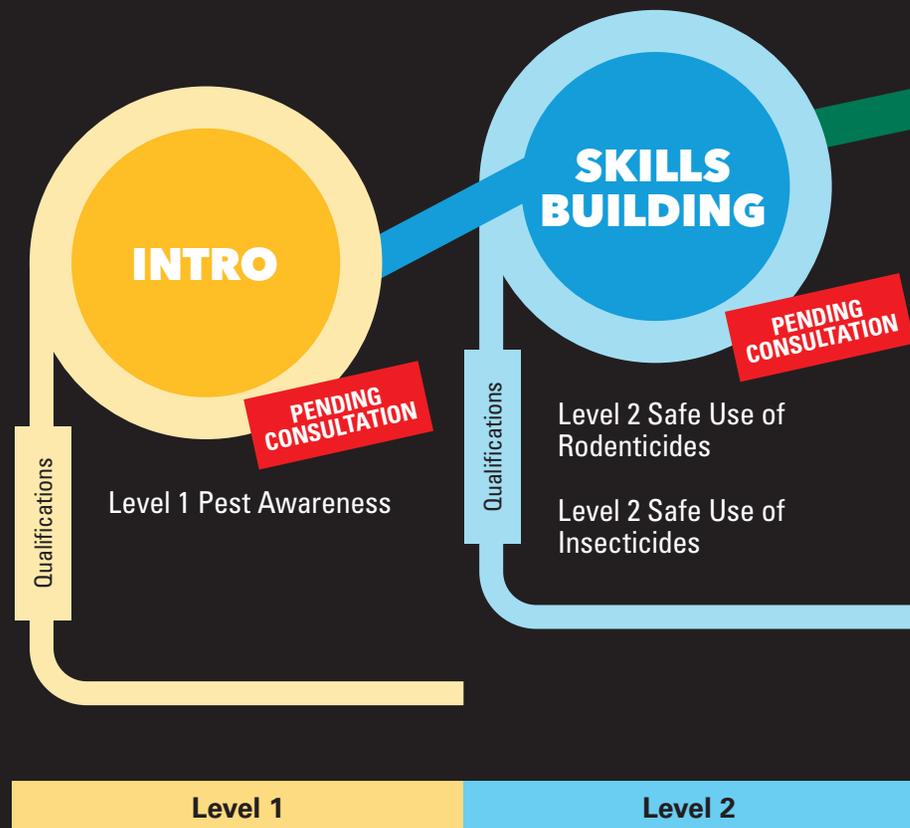
"BPCA members have strongly supported the committee's proposals, and we're excited to get started with the most important qualification

"Please don't feel anxious about these changes: we strongly believe BPCA members are already working at a Level 3 standard. This change means we'll actually be recognised for it!"

New to the sector	Already hold a RSPH/BPCA level 2 award or certificate in pest management	
	Option 1	Option 2
Safe use of pesticides qualification upon recruitment, followed by a Level 3 Certificate in General Pest Management taken within the first 18 months. Some people may go straight in for their Level 3 qualification; however, we anticipate new technicians will spend some time learning at work before investing in their Level 3 qualification.	Upgrade existing qualification with a single module assessment.	Retain RSPH/BPCA Level 2 award or certificate.

THE BPCA PATHWAY SO FAR...

PEST AWARENESS LICENCE TO PRACTICE



GET INVOLVED – LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE WORKING GROUP

BPCA is seeking volunteers from across the pest control industry to join the BPCA working group for the Level 3 Certificate in Pest Management.

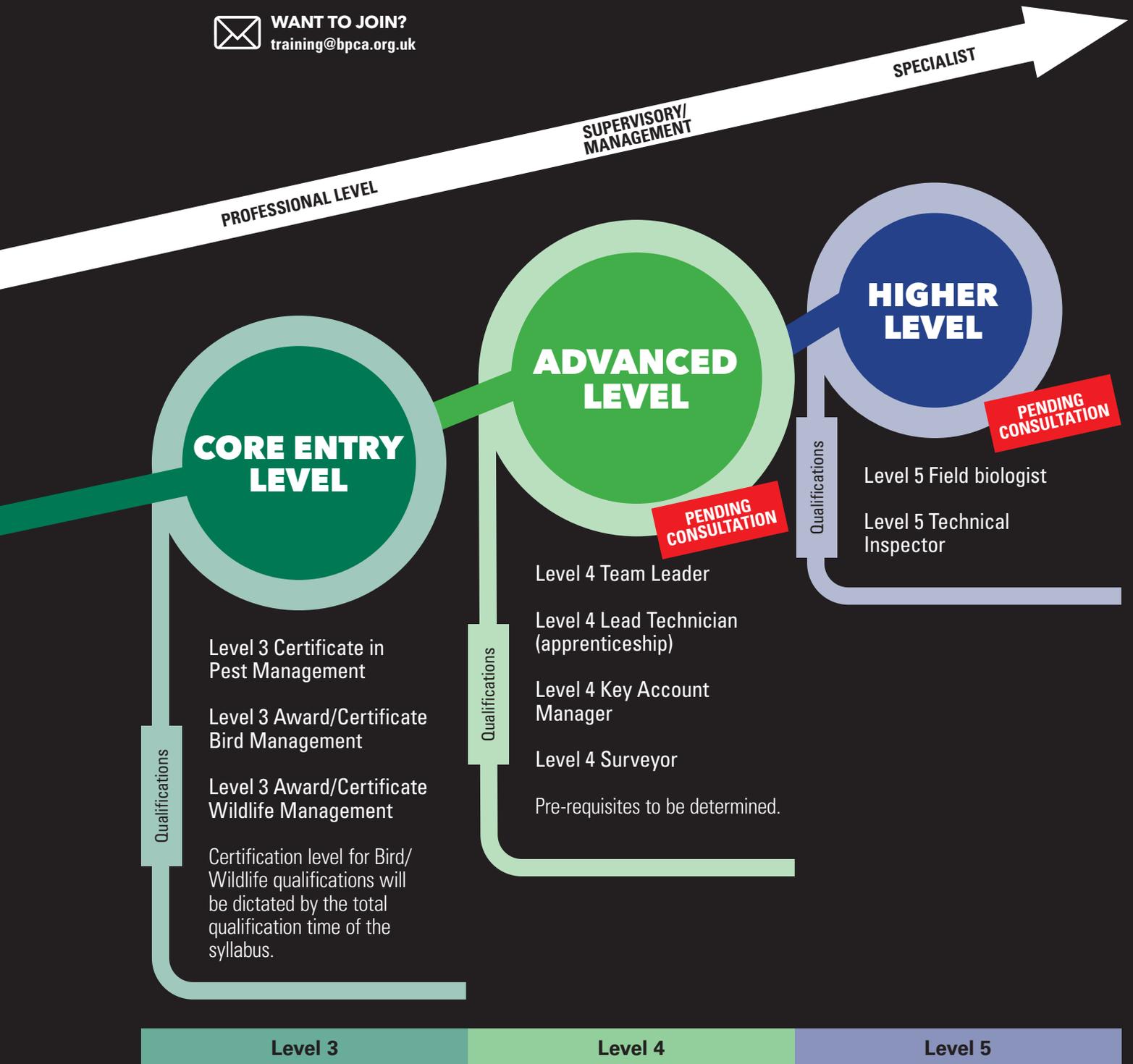
Stakeholders will include RSPH, NPTA, and pest management companies.

If you're interested in getting involved with the General Certificate or the Bird and Wildlife Management specialist qualifications, contact Karen Dawes for an informal chat to see if the group is right for you.



WANT TO JOIN?
training@bpca.org.uk

"We look forward to working with partners from across the industry to build a pathway that is clear, inclusive and accessible to all."



PESTS IN THE PRESS: JANUARY TO JUNE 2025

Rats and mice continued to dominate the pest-related headlines in the first part of 2025, with regular mentions through January and February and into March.

But it was moths and bin strikes that were ramping up the coverage as spring really got underway.

Press releases from BPCA featured in a wide range of digital and print news outlets, from the Kirkintilloch Herald north of Glasgow to thisiscent.co.uk in the South East.

The spread of coverage also ranged from smaller publications such as Barry District News in Wales to national platforms including The Sun, Yahoo! (UK), Daily Mail Online and Thisismoney.co.uk.

We talked about topics like the distress that can be caused by an infestation, the importance of choosing a BPCA member to deal with pest issues, raising awareness around the importance of professional pest control for properties with bats and reassuring residents that moth infestations might be distressing but are not dangerous.

Comment from BPCA was also featured in a range of press articles including coverage of bed bug infestations in Brighton, Glasgow and Whitehall, problems with neighbours feeding foxes and who to call for a rodent sighting.

BPCA was also featured as bin strikes ramped up in Birmingham in March, with comments sought by journalists from the BBC, CNN and Yahoo! (UK) as well as press releases targeted to city residents affected by the industrial action.

BPCA also worked with sector-specific titles to highlight the importance of professional pest management to decision-makers in the public and private sectors.

'Housing, health and pests: infestations as indicators of systemic standard living conditions' by BPCA's Policy and Campaigns Officer, Jordan McCay, appeared in Government Business magazine in January.

If you spot something in the press or have an idea for a press release, get in touch with the team by email: hello@bpca.org.uk

TOP 3 HEADLINES



EMERGENCY ADVICE IN WAKE OF BIRMINGHAM BIN STRIKES, BIRMINGHAM WORLD



DON'T SUFFER WITH PEST DISTRESS, CUMBERNAULD NEWS



PICK A PROFESSIONAL FOR PROTECTION FROM PESTS, COUNTRY SMALLHOLDING

TOTAL ARTICLES IN 2025 2,409

TOTAL REACH 50,979,768

BPCA CARRY OUT PUBLIC HEALTH CAMPAIGN FOR BIRMINGHAM RESIDENTS

BPCA has been highlighting the serious health risks associated with the bin strikes for people living in Birmingham.

Birmingham residents are facing an increased risk of pest infestations due to the amount of uncollected household waste that is mounting in the city.

As a major public health incident, BPCA felt it necessary to deploy a rapid response information campaign, so residents are aware of the risks and know where to look for help.

This campaign included:

- Billboard advertising
- News articles
- Media appearances
- Sponsored slots on local news sites
- Banner advertising on local news sites
- A YouTube video
- A dedicated web page with information and links to find a pest controller.

Scott Johnstone, BPCA Marketing Manager, commented:

"A spike in pest activity is inevitable given the disruption to bin collections in Birmingham.

"As a sector, all we can do is offer reliable pest prevention advice and help direct people to trusted pest management companies.

"The last thing we want is for the people of Birmingham to miss or ignore signs of a pest infestation; education is critical in protecting public health right now."

Visit bpca.org.uk/binstrikes for more information.

"A spike in pest activity is inevitable given the disruption to bin collections"



PESTS IN POLITICS: JANUARY TO JUNE 2025

OPEN LETTER: Glue Board Act fails to protect animal welfare or public health, says BPCA

BPCA has written an open letter to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Steve Reed.

The letter outlines how the glue trap licensing scheme in England has failed.

We're seeing growing public health risks due to prolonged infestations, while amateur misuse of glue traps continues to rise, largely because the traps remain easy to purchase.

The current approach is not working.

Our open letter outlines the changes urgently needed, including:

- Ban the sale of glue traps
- Strengthen enforcement efforts
- Improve the professional licences.

If you are interested in co-signing the letter, please contact us at policy@bpca.org.uk

Read the full letter at bpca.org.uk/openletter

"The result is an increase in unregulated, inhumane use: precisely what the Act was meant to prevent."



Rt Hon Steve Reed MP
Secretary of State for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs



RE: Open letter: The Glue Board (Offences) Act 2022 has failed to protect animal welfare or public health

Dear Rt Hons Steve Reed,

I am writing to urgently bring to your attention the failure of the Glue Traps (Offences) Act 2022 and its licensing scheme.

The British Pest Control Association (BPCA) represents the UK pest management industry and promotes high standards of professionalism to safeguard environmental and public health.

The Glue Traps (Offences) Act 2022 was intended to protect animal welfare by restricting the use of glue traps to licensed professionals.

However, due to a lack of enforcement, public awareness, and a failure to ban sales, the Act is not achieving its goal.

Instead, it has placed unnecessary restrictions on pest professionals while allowing unregulated and inhumane use to continue.

Since the Act came into force, there has been no serious attempt to educate the public or retailers on the new restrictions.

Trained and trusted pest professionals, who already follow high welfare standards, have complied with the law, whilst untrained individuals continue to use glue traps illegally and unchecked.

A December 2024 Freedom of Information request revealed that the Metropolitan Police have received no training on enforcing the ban. If the authorities responsible for enforcement are unaware of their role, how can the law be expected to work.

The failure to ban the sale of glue traps exacerbates the issue. While qualified professionals have all but ceased using glue traps due to the licensing requirements, amateurs can still purchase them online or in shops without oversight.

The result is an increase in unregulated, inhumane use: precisely what the Act was meant to prevent.

The British Pest Control Association (BPCA) recently surveyed its members and found that 40% of professionals have encountered illegal glue trap use by amateurs. Yet Natural England has taken no visible enforcement action.

Ironically, if pest professionals report illegal use, they risk losing clients to untrained individuals who can simply purchase traps online and attempt pest control themselves. The Act has, in effect, punished compliance while allowing non-compliance to flourish.

Additionally, the licensing scheme must be revised to make it more practical and affordable for professionals. The current requirements are prohibitively expensive.

In many cases, the cost of keeping a technician on-site overnight (~£680) is so high that it negates any benefit of obtaining a licence in the first place.

The financial disincentive, however, does not mean the infestations are being dealt with through other methods. Our members have reported that this has meant that infestations have become unmanageable or that the clients have put glue traps down themselves.

We have also received reports of incredibly inhumane DIY traps, that are left for long periods of time without being checked.

A more balanced approach is needed to ensure humane and effective pest control without imposing excessive financial burdens on professionals.

We suggest that through obtaining a licence and completing a training course, pest professionals should be trusted to carry out the work humanely.

Without a level of trust in professionals, unqualified businesses and homeowners will throw traps down themselves and are unlikely to use them humanely...

/continued online

INTRODUCING ROSINA ROBSON, BPCA'S NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Rosina Robson joined British Pest Control Association (BPCA) as Chief Executive in June 2025. With more than 20 years' experience in lobbying and government relations, Rosina brings a strong track record of championing membership organisations and influencing change in Westminster. In this issue of PPC, Rosina sits down with BPCA President Chris Cagienard to talk about her career, first impressions and what she hopes to bring to the Association.



PPC Hi Rosina - welcome! Let's start with your background. What's brought you to the pest management sector?

RR Most of my professional life has been in membership organisations and trade associations. I've worked across a range of sectors, from small businesses to higher education and the creative industries. I've always had huge respect for people who take risks and start their own businesses, and my work has always centred around representing their interests to government. That's really been the golden thread throughout my career.

PPC Much of the pest management industry is made up of small businesses and sole traders. Do you think your background gives you a unique perspective on their needs?

RR Absolutely. I've spent my career acting as the bridge between experts in their fields and government decision-makers. I understand how to package up knowledge and evidence in a way that gets listened to in Westminster. It's not just about understanding the technical side of the sector, it's about making sure your voice cuts through and reaches the people who can help.

PPC You've had some big lobbying wins in the past. Could you share a few examples?

RR One example that might resonate with pest controllers is when I helped introduce a licensing regime for aesthetic procedures through the Health and Care Act. That campaign started with a strong evidence base and built momentum through an all-party parliamentary group. We got national media coverage and worked in coalition with about 20 different organisations. Eventually, we got a clause into the legislation itself. That experience taught me how to build coalitions and get real results.

In the creative industries, I worked on campaigns alongside Baroness Floella Benjamin to improve child protection in film and TV, and to secure a £500 million tax relief package for children's television. And at the Federation of Small Businesses, I pushed for improvements to the Bribery Act and helped make small claims courts more accessible for micro-businesses.

CC That's exactly why we're so excited to have Rosina on board. For too long, our lobbying work has been defensive. We've been reacting to challenges, rather than setting the agenda. What we need now is someone who can make our voice heard before decisions are made – someone who can help us move from defence to offence. And that's where Rosina comes in.

PPC Chris, what do you see as the big priorities for lobbying in our sector?

CC Recognition. We need pest professionals to be seen as professionals. Right now, our core qualification is the Level 2 Award in Pest Management, and it simply isn't giving us the credit we deserve. If we want to build sustainable careers and charge a fair price for the value we bring, then we need to reframe how people see us.

That might mean pushing for licensing, developing an institute, or getting our qualifications properly recognised. We're also facing pressure on the tools we use to do our jobs. We need someone who can help protect that toolkit while also showing the public that animal welfare and environmental responsibility matter to us.

RR I think there's a really strong narrative here. BPCA members play a crucial role in protecting public health, food security, and biodiversity. That matters to this government. It's about finding the overlap between what we want and what government wants. If we can tell the right story to the right people, we can have a real impact.

PPC Rosina, what made you want to apply for this role?

RR I was looking for a Chief Executive role where I could put my lobbying experience to use. What stood out to me about BPCA was how clearly the job description focused on public affairs. That's quite

rare, and it made me think: this is an organisation that knows what it needs.

I was also struck by the history. BPCA was founded in wartime, with food security at its heart. That's still relevant today, especially as climate change brings new pest challenges. And growing up on the edge of the North York Moors, the interaction between people and the natural world has always felt personal to me.

PPC There might not be an obvious link between pest control and your last role in hair and beauty... any surprising similarities?

RR More than you'd think! The National Hair & Beauty Federation represents lots of micro-businesses, often embedded in their local communities. Like pest control, we talked a lot about professionalism, standards, skills and regulation. And the language around licensing and qualifications was surprisingly similar.

CC And let's be honest, bringing in a CEO from outside the traditional pest control mold is refreshing. We're an ageing industry with diversity issues – just 5.5% of our workforce is female. Rosina's appointment helps break down those stereotypes and shows we're serious about change. Since her appointment, we've had a surge in board applications. That speaks volumes.

PPC Rosina, you unofficially joined us at PPC Live earlier this year. What was your first impression of the sector?

RR Passion. The enthusiasm at PPC Live was infectious. People really care about this industry and want to drive it forward. I was struck by the breadth of expertise too.

There are falconers, insect specialists, rodent experts – all under one roof. And the interest in technology and innovation was really exciting.

PPC Have you got anything you're particularly looking forward to in your first 100 days?

RR The visits, without a doubt! I can't wait to get out and meet members, see how they work, and hear what matters to them. I'm also looking forward to my Level 2 Award training – going back to school, as it were! That kind of CPD is important to me, and I know how much value BPCA places on professional development.

CC We'll be getting Rosina out into all sorts of places – everything from city centre cafes and restaurants, to airports. Pest control takes you everywhere, and there's no better way to learn about it than seeing it first-hand.

PPC Last question – when you're not lobbying or studying pest management, what do you like to do?

RR I love being outside. I live near the Chilterns with my partner, so I spend a lot of time walking, running and cycling. It's a beautiful part of the world, and a great place to unwind.

PPC Thanks, both! We're looking forward to seeing what the next few months bring.



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INBOX

SENT

ARCHIVE

BIN

SPAM

ASK THE TECHNICAL TEAM

My customer is experiencing problems with wood pigeons in a food factory, but they aren't on the general licence. What is the best approach?

Wood pigeons in a food factory environment is definitely a public health issue, but as they aren't on the general licence, you'll have to approach this holistically.

Yes, you can apply for an individual licence, but before that you'll have to show that you've carried out a comprehensive survey, and attempted non-lethal methods of control (where practicable).

Depending on the site and whether or not it would be cost prohibitive, you could try scarers, lasers, even birds of prey.

Take plenty of photo evidence, document everything you've done and all the decisions you've made. If you haven't tried something, you'll need to explain why.

Provide as much detail as possible, because the licensing body needs to be able to make an informed decision in approving your licence and want to see that you've attempted a comprehensive bird management strategy.

My customer has badgers on their property, and they are asking what I can do to make them leave.

We have some wonderful native wildlife in the UK, and for me, badgers top that category. While they are not endangered, badgers and their setts (burrows) are protected by law in the UK under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is illegal to intentionally or recklessly disturb, damage, or destroy a badger sett or to cause any harm to a badger.

Interference with a badger sett can come with large fines for the individual involved. We would recommend that you contact a local Ecologist, who will be able to provide a survey and potential options for mitigation methods to ensure that badgers can remain protected whilst we are carrying out vital public health work.

Visit the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management website, where you can find a list of ecologists near you. cieem.net

I keep getting calls about swarms of 'wasps' and when I say it's a bee swarm they don't believe me. What do I say in that situation?

This is a great example of being able to showcase your technical knowledge and customer service skills. Pest controllers are often the first call when the public spots a swarm.

- **Explain:** Tell them wasps don't swarm and explain that when honeybee colonies become too crowded, some of the bees start to look for somewhere else to live.
- **Reassure:** Let them know that it's temporary and that the bees will move on by themselves.
- **Refer:** Swarms happen like clockwork every year, so while you can pass on the details for BBKA, it is always a good idea to have your local swarm collector info readily available. Build those relationships with people local to you.

Why bother with all of that? You're showing off your expertise and approachability, so when the customer has a real pest issue, they'll come straight back to the person who helped them before: you!

I live in a rural area and I've had a few calls from people asking how they can tell if a bite is from a tick and if it is serious.

We have 20 species of tick within the UK, with the most widespread and abundant species being the sheep/deer tick (*Ixodes ricinus*), which can be responsible for transmitting a variety of pathogens such as tick-borne encephalitis virus and louping ill virus.

It's important for people to regularly check themselves if working or hiking in environments where these pests are prevalent.

Signs of having a tick bite can include a red lump with a red circle (like a bullseye), pink or red rash and a temperature of 38°C or above.

If they're experiencing flu-like symptoms, headaches, joint pain, fatigue and swollen lymph nodes, then they should contact their local GP.

If you're interested, you can contribute to the Animal Plant and Health Agency's (APHA) Tick Surveillance Scheme here. gov.uk/guidance/tick-surveillance-scheme to help provide data of populations.



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

technical@bpca.org.uk
01332 294 288
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!

BPCA

PPC LIVE



PPC LIVE
REVIEWED

REVIEWED

A SHOWCASE OF PEST CONTROL EXPERTISE

PPC Live returned to Harrogate on 19 March 2025, once again bringing together the UK pest industry for a day of networking, learning and expert insights.

As always, BPCA has been listening to your feedback, analysing the data, and reflecting on what made this year's event special. Whether you came to connect with suppliers, sharpen your skills, or catch up with familiar faces, PPC Live 2025 had something for everyone.

So, what were the highlights? BPCA's Jordan McCay rounds up the key moments, standout sessions, and biggest takeaways from the UK's best one-day pest control trade show.

A hands-on experience

Leading up to my first PPC Live, I wasn't sure what to expect. Having attended PestEx last year, I thought PPC Live was its smaller counterpart. However, PPC Live had a very different atmosphere and purpose.

It was clear very quickly that PPC Live is much more rooted in the practical aspect of technician work, with interesting demonstrations, both indoor and outdoor, for attendees to get stuck into.

My favourite area was the outdoor demo area, maybe because the sun did us a favour by shining all day. The beautiful backdrop of the Great Yorkshire Event centre certainly helped drive people outside, but the captivating speakers kept them there.

Simon Whitehead and his demo on ferreting for rabbit control was a stand-out. It was interesting to hear more about rabbit management in sensitive

sites and meet the ferrets that help him in his work.

Darron Pearce from Rattrax Pest Control gave a highly engaging demonstration on rats in drainage systems, drawing a large crowd. His insights were incredibly valuable and reinforced the importance of the connection between pest control and the built environment.

Inside the event centre, the roundtable area generated very interesting discussions on topics like recruitment and break-back trap regulations. The input from attendees in those discussions has given the BPCA staff a lot of food for thought on the projects we are working on.

Our very own John Horsley's roundtable on the new Qualifications Framework provided a great opportunity for people to feed into his work. The roundtables also encouraged conversation between professionals who may not have time to join BPCA committees.

"I'm pleased with the way BPCA are developing the framework and I'm fully on board with revamping the qualifications," said Mandy Haggart, at Tudor Pest Control. "We all come from different backgrounds with perspectives from larger companies compared to sole traders, so it was good to hear a conversation about this. I enjoyed feeling part of the discussion rather than being lectured to, which made me feel more involved."

There were also plenty of indoor demos, and as always Elaine Bliss drew quite the group for her hands-on session, showing technicians how to safely fit bird netting.

In the Indoor Seminar theatre, Dr Vicky Caulfield drew a bigger crowd than Taylor Swift to her presentation 'Rodents without rodenticides: Are we headed for Rodentageddon?'. The 100 seats provided weren't enough, with lots of people standing to hear what she had to say. I was happy to see such a big crowd for this one, as it shows the industry is aware and looking ahead at future threats to the toolkit.

It was amazing to see so many important stakeholders at the event, such as TrustMark, HSE and CRRU.

HSE brought staff from their WIIS and BPR teams, which proved useful for the industry to pose questions and get immediate answers.

Having key stakeholders at our events reinforces industry professionalism, fosters collaboration, and provides pest professionals with valuable opportunities to engage directly with regulators and stay informed on best practices.

PestFix win the award for best freebies for me, providing fresh popcorn throughout the day, while giving attendees a chance to prove their athletic skill in a basketball challenge on their stand.

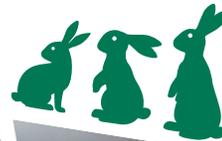
However, the bright yellow sunglasses from Powered Now, who also sponsored the bacon baps, have also made me rethink my summer wardrobe.

In fact, the whole Powered Now team were incredibly coordinated, right down to their yellow shoes.



THERE'S
MORE!
TURN OVER!

"It was clear very quickly that PPC Live is much more rooted in the practical aspect of technician work, with interesting demonstrations, both indoor and outdoor, for attendees to get stuck into."



And as always, the Defender Bird Spikes plush gulls and pigeons went down a treat, along with their ice sculpture drinking fountain.

All the exhibitors brought new and interesting products to our attention, and stands like BJ Sherriff, WaspPole Pro, BASC and Barretine looked busy – not surprising, as Barretine were giving away mini eggs!

Rhino Pest Management's Ben Hunt drove from Derbyshire to be at the event. He said:

"It's a great excuse to put down the tools for the day and catch up with some of my industry pals, and other pest folk I haven't met in person before.

"PPC Live has better seminars than any other pest control event in the UK. I particularly enjoyed the 'life after bendiocarb' talk by Paul Westgate and the outdoor demo by Darron Pearce from Rattrax, on rodents in drains.

"I'm not there for the free pens, I'm there to learn stuff, and to have a coffee and chat with other professionals. On that score, PPC Live delivers. The pens are just a bonus!"

The winner of the Best Pest Pic 2025 competition was announced on the day, with the gong going to Rentokil's Lizzi Mills for her fabulous picture of a gull, titled 'Where's my bloody chips?!'

She commented, "I'm thrilled to have won Best Pest Pic 2025 - I've spent years losing chips to these winged bandits - feels good to finally get something back from them, and against some great competition too! Thanks again!"

Overall, I give PPC Live a very unbiased A*. I loved the friendly and collaborative atmosphere and learnt even more about this amazing industry.

Congratulations to our Events team, Lauren, Sarah and Beth! They pulled off another amazing industry event, and I know they'll pull out all the stops again for PestEx 2026.

Speaking of which! As there's never a moment's rest here at BPCA HQ, they've already started planning PestEx. If you didn't manage to get to PPC Live and this review has given you major FOMO, make sure you mark your diaries: 18 and 19 March 2026 at the Excel in London!

PPC LIVE: IN PICTURES

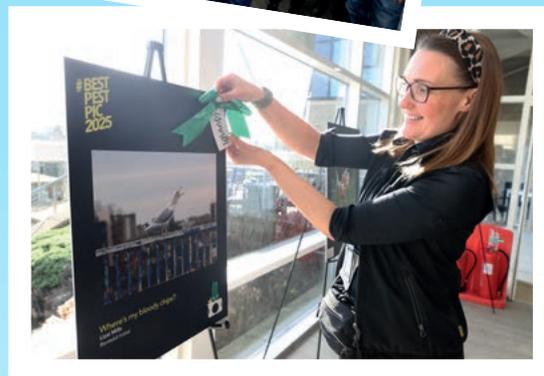
Didn't make it to PPC Live? Here's a roundup of what you missed in pictures.

Give us a steer

Got an idea for an event that you want to share with the team? Contact us!

events@bpca.org.uk

"It's a great excuse to put down the tools for the day and catch up with some of my industry pals, and other pest folk I haven't met in person before."



90%
said they found
what they were
looking for at
PPC Live

94%
of visitors would
recommend
PPC Live to a
colleague

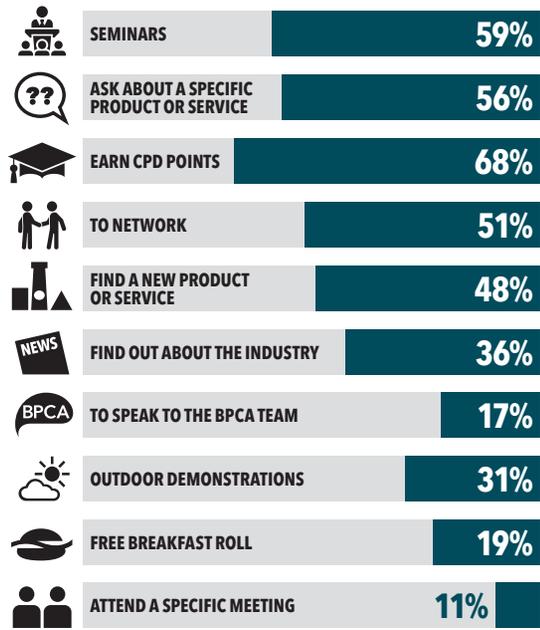


PPC Live 2025
as rated by
visitors and
exhibitors...

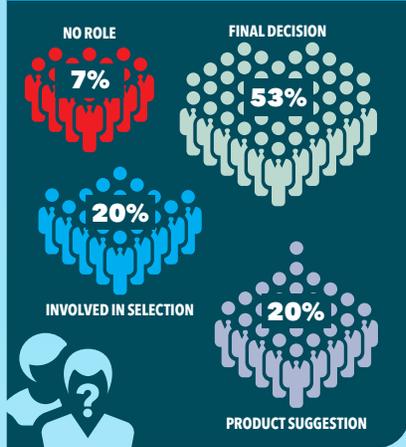
**GOOD/
EXCELLENT**



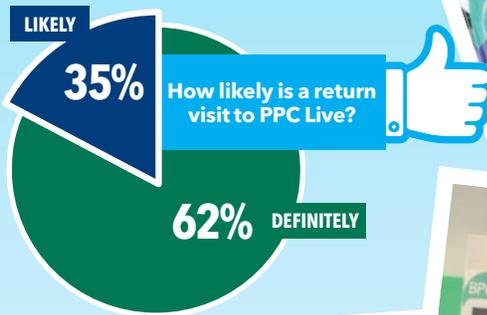
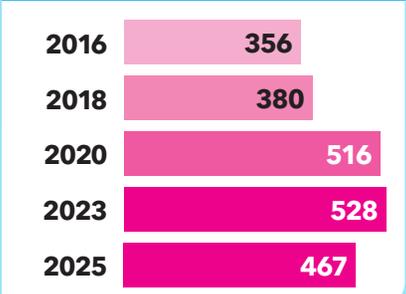
Why did people attend?



Visitor role in the buying process



Total visitors excluding exhibitors



Top 10 ways to hear about PPC Live

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 BPCA eBULLETIN 28% | 6 SENT BY MANAGEMENT 16% |
| 2 BPCA WEBSITE 26% | 7 WORD OF MOUTH 12% |
| 3 PPC MAGAZINE 23% | 8 SOCIAL MEDIA 15% |
| 4 PEST CONTROL NEWS 20% | 9 EXHIBITOR INVITE 11% |
| 5 PEST MAGAZINE 23% | 10 OTHER 9% |



WARMING CITIES, RISING RATS

CLIMATE CHANGE AND URBANISATION FUELLING RAT INCREASES

In this article, we summarise research led by Jonathan L Richardson from the University of Richmond, which examines the concerning rise in urban rat populations globally and its implications for the pest management industry. Using over a decade's worth of complaint and inspection data from 16 cities around the world, researchers found that 11 of these cities reported significant increases in rat numbers.

KEY FINDINGS

The majority of cities studied showed significant increases in rat numbers. Cities that experienced greater rises in average temperatures over time also saw the most significant increases in rat activity.

Rapid urbanisation, especially the loss of green spaces, was strongly linked to faster rat population growth.

Higher human population density was positively associated with rat increases, as more people generate more food waste and shelter opportunities.

The wealth of a city did not seem to affect rat trends, with both affluent and less affluent cities experiencing growth.

Rising temperatures, rising rat numbers

One of the strongest drivers identified was climate warming. Cities experiencing greater increases in average temperatures saw the largest growth in rat populations.

Rats are naturally limited by cold temperatures. Warmer winters mean less winter mortality, longer breeding seasons, and more foraging opportunities. The result? More rats, more often.

This has real implications for pest controllers in the UK. With milder winters becoming more frequent, particularly in urban centres where the heat island effect is stronger, pest activity could become a year-round issue rather than one that peaks seasonally.

Urbanisation: paving the way for pests

The research also revealed that urbanisation plays a critical role. Cities that lost more vegetation and

gained built-up areas saw greater increases in rat numbers.

In heavily urbanised areas, food waste, shelter, and nesting sites are plentiful. The study found that rats particularly thrive where greenspace is reduced, highlighting the importance of considering urban design and waste management in integrated pest management (IPM) strategies.

For pest controllers, this means anticipating rat problems not just in densely built areas but also in locations undergoing major development or redevelopment.

Lessons for the pest sector

Richardson and his team make it clear that traditional approaches alone will not be enough.

The environment is shifting, and rodent management will need to keep pace with these changes.

The recommendations this research makes will be of no surprise to the pest management sector:

- Warmer conditions mean rats could be active outside even during colder months
- Green areas may help mitigate rat populations indirectly
- Secure waste storage and regular refuse collection are essential
- Continue to focus on proofing and habitat modification rather than relying on chemicals
- A holistic IPM approach is more vital than ever, combining surveillance, exclusion, education, and, where necessary, targeted control.

Perhaps most importantly, we need to engage with clients and communities about the broader context behind rat problems.

Climate change and urbanisation aren't abstract concepts: they're realities shaping the pest management landscape today.

As Richardson et al. warn, unless local government and property owners adapt their strategies, rat populations are likely to keep increasing. The research presents a compelling case for proactive, integrated, and science-based pest management to address the growing rat challenge.

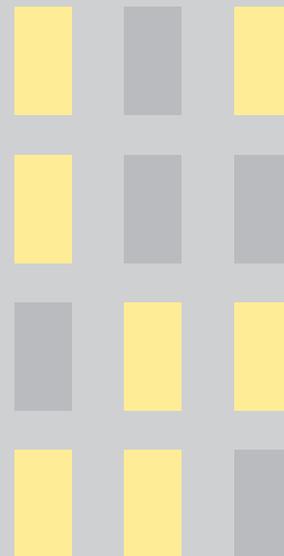


The 16 cities studied in the research by Richardson et al. (2025) were:

Washington, D.C. ↑
 San Francisco ↑
 Toronto ↑
 New York City ↑
 Amsterdam ↑
 Oakland ↑
 Buffalo ↑
 Chicago ↑
 Boston ↑
 Kansas City ↑
 Cincinnati ↑
 Dallas →
 Saint Louis →
 Tokyo ↓
 Louisville ↓
 New Orleans ↓

↑ = Significant increase
 ↓ = Significant decrease
 → = No significant trend

These cities were selected because they had between 7 and 17 years (an average of 12.2 years) of consistent rat sighting and inspection data available.

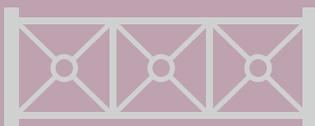
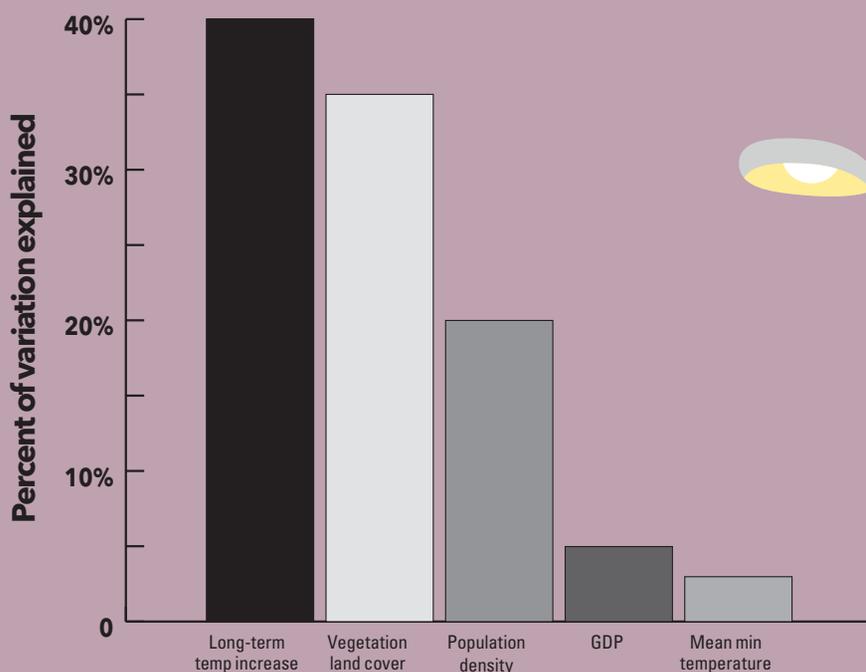


Human density: more people, more rats

The study also confirmed a positive correlation between human population density and rat increases. More people mean more food waste, more refuse, and more opportunities for hidden harborage, all of which support larger rat populations.

Interestingly, rat numbers rose equally in wealthy and less affluent cities, suggesting that without targeted control, rats thrive regardless of council budgets.

“Rats particularly thrive where greenspace is reduced.”

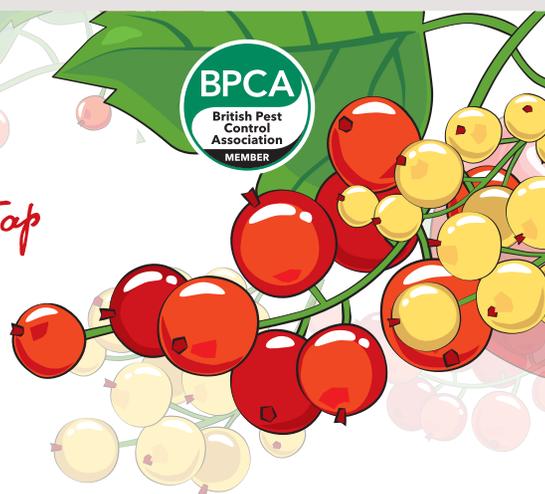


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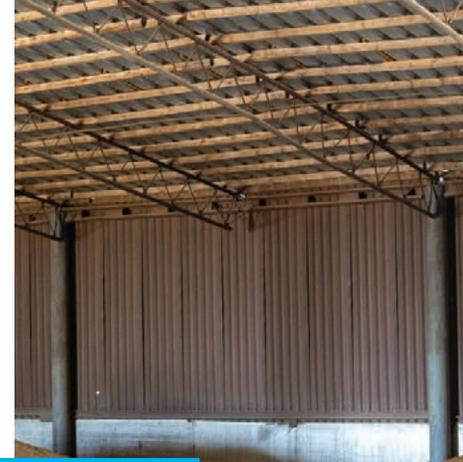
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- ✓ Grain Borer (*Rhyzopertha dominica*)
- ✓ Sawtoothed Grain Beetle (*Oryzaephilus surinamensis*)
- ✓ Bean Beetle (*Acanthoscelides obtectus*)



FLYING

- ✓ Warehouse Moth (*Euphestia cautella*)
- ✓ Rice Moth (*Corcyra cephalonica*)
- ✓ Indian Meal Moth (*Plodia interpunctella*)
- ✓ Grain Moth (*Sitotroga cerealella*)

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TINY INSECTS

HOW SMALL ARE THEY?

10mm

9mm

8mm

7mm

6mm

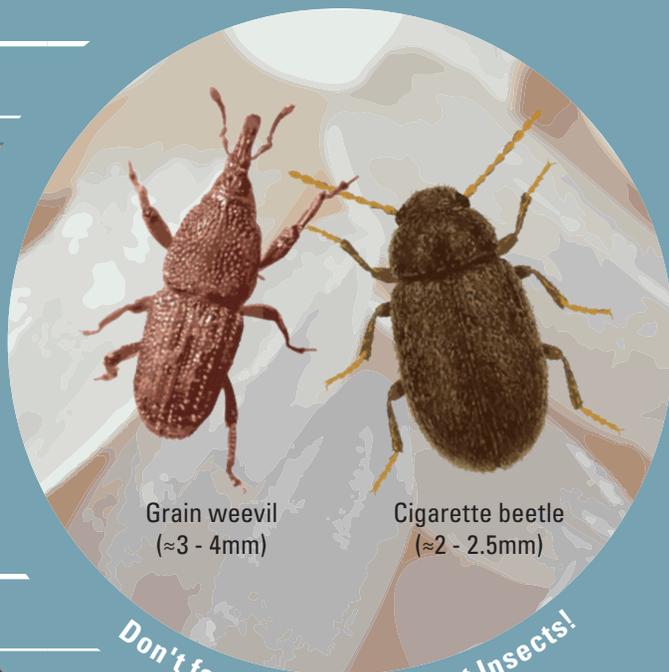
5mm

4mm

3mm

2mm

1mm



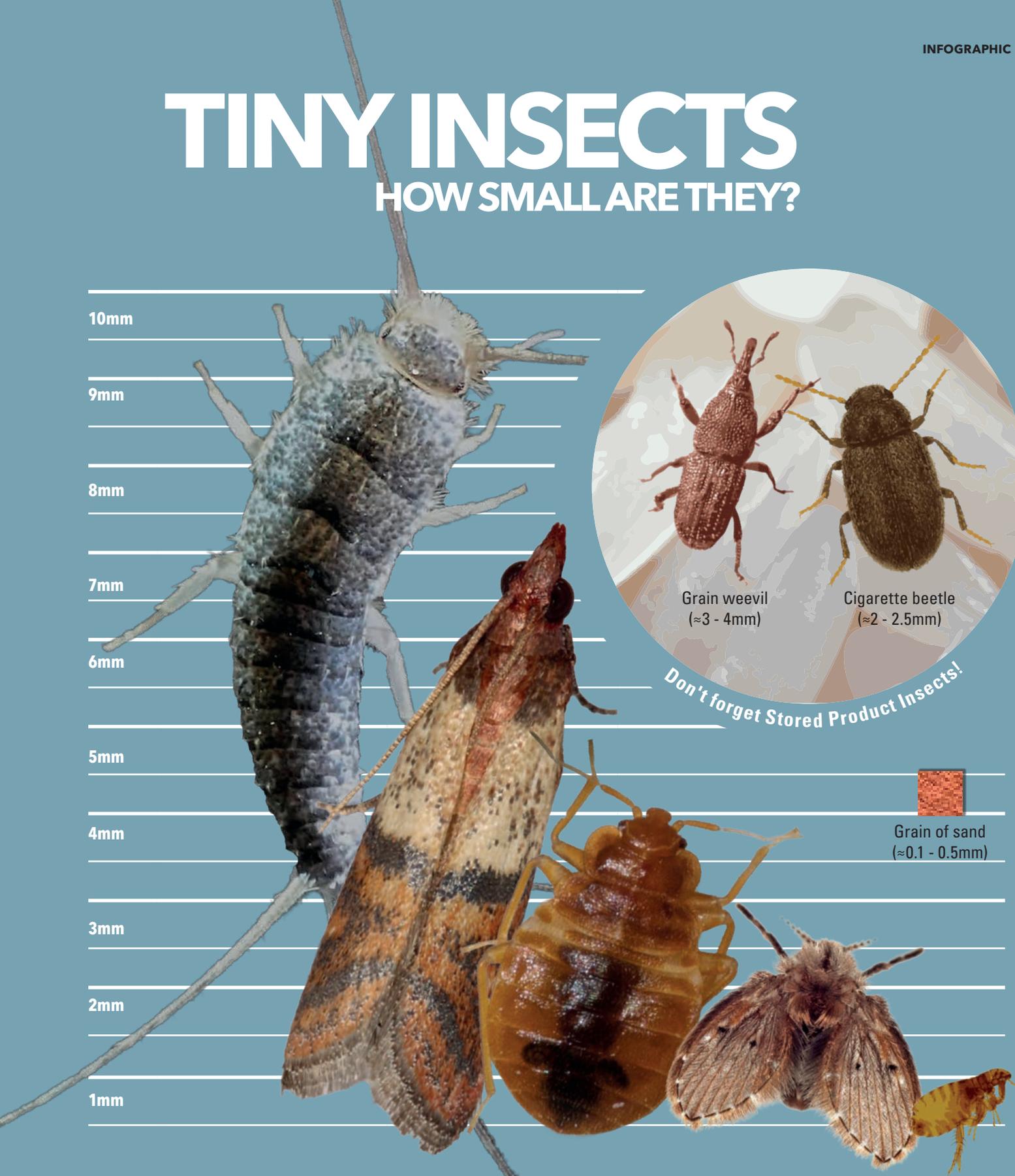
Grain weevil
(≈3 - 4mm)

Cigarette beetle
(≈2 - 2.5mm)

Don't forget Stored Product Insects!



Grain of sand
(≈0.1 - 0.5mm)



Silverfish
(≈12 - 20mm)

Indian meal moth
(≈8 - 10mm)

Bed bug
(≈5 - 6mm)

Drain fly
(≈1.5 - 2mm)

Fleas
(≈1.5 - 2mm)

HOW TO WIN (FACEBOOK) FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PEST MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Speakers



PPC
Scott Johnstone
 BPCA (host)



JS
Jane Shepherd
 Shepherd PR



AM
Anna Mollins
 Veritas Pest Consultancy



KF
Kelly Farrant
 Pest-Tech



Share your thoughts



Post

PPC Do pest management companies really need to be on social media?

KF It's your way of being able to knock on people's doors without knocking on their doors. But how you go about it is important.

Educate people, give information. Help them identify the problem so they return to you and say, "I've got this; what do I do about it?" It gives confidence to the customer that you are the person they want to speak to if ever they have a problem.

JS All businesses can benefit from having an online presence. Social media can be a really useful tool for reaching customers that you might not otherwise find.

PPC All marketing has risks. What are the biggest risks for social media?

JS We call it the risk/reward see-saw. The rewards are a lot more business, the risks are people making odd comments.

Keep an eye on what people are saying and react quickly. There will always be people who will say things. People that are going to choose your service will see what's on there. Think about why people choose you and put out those messages. Choose three key things about your business and use them for your content – keep pushing those messages through online.

KF There are always haters out there, so it doesn't matter what you do or say. Be professional about it. It's okay to explain your case or agree to disagree, but don't go down the argument route because then it becomes an unprofessional post. "Sorry you feel that way" is a good comment to use!

AM Don't be afraid to use the hide or block button. Only you and them know that they've been blocked. You can always message them to say you'd rather not have that conversation via social media.

PPC Where should pest control companies get their content from?

KF I used to take pictures of everything I did to build content. People like to see a story, so if you get a photo, you can tell the story of what the picture is.

It can be hard to rally the techs to bring those pictures in. I used to say to my guys, "I want one picture a day," and that started producing the content we needed.

PPC We see many members' social media pages, and the most common mistake is using many stock images or posting five times a day.

The most exciting place to focus on is techs on the ground. Make it real. Currently, the BPCA team is incentivised to produce content for our social media.

JS We always follow the journalistic values of who, what, when, where, why and how. Keep to that formula; it will help you provide content that is engaging and informative.

AM As a consultancy, we don't have techs on the ground, but sometimes it's about offering a perspective on what you're doing - it could be just your face, by your car, a little thing in our business production lines. Make it personable.

PPC Our most engaged-with post was our events manager had her 9th birthday because she was born on a leap year. You don't want

to be shouting out about every staff member's birthday, but it was an unusual one and we got lots of messages and likes for that.

PPC What are more effective - videos or photos?

JS A mix is most important. Video is really compelling, video is the number one choice, but even that isn't as engaging as having a nicely balanced mix of text, graphics, photos and video.

KF I love a bit of video. It all depends on the message you're trying to put across as well. Sometimes a picture doesn't explain. A video you can explain what it is, what's happening. Photos are easy. Boom. Done.

Don't try to make it too perfect. It's you being real and life goes on. You can get bogged down with it all. Keep it real and don't try to make it too perfect.

AM We have done some videos. There's a lot of pressure when you do a video around how to do it, whether you're stumbling on your words, starting again and again.

Don't try to make it too professional - you don't need to show yourself as perfect. You're showing yourself as a professional and as a human being.

PPC Play to your strengths. If you're a great photographer, Instagram might be better than TikTok. The more time you spend creating the post, the less engagement you tend to get. Less thinking, more doing!

PPC Does having a social media presence make you appear more legit?

AM In my view, we're always trying to put out social media content that shows we're here, we are active. Your knowledge will show you have a skill set. We are a skilled group of people and the public don't realise that until they need us.

KF I don't post on everything every day. You want to be present, but not over present because people can switch off to you as well. It's about getting the balance right. Present yourself as being professional. Always take a moment before you hit that button to think, "is this sending the right message, or could this be misunderstood?"

JS Increasingly, with younger audiences, they'll be put off if they don't see a presence online.

Very often people just want to know your story before they get in touch.

Get other people to say how good you are – to leave reviews - that counts for more in some ways. If you've got a happy customer ask if they'll do a short video?

What you're looking for is a consistent content flow of messaging that is building a story about your business. Showcase BPCA in posts that align with your business. Have a whole 'big picture' story.

PPC Should we be on all the social media platforms?

AM Our two main ones are Facebook, which is linked to an Instagram account for the public, and LinkedIn for professionals. It's about your target audience.

PPC Go where your people are!

KF Do what you want to do. If you're not enjoying it, why are you doing it? Facebook is good for getting into groups in your local area and LinkedIn is good for pest control contractors getting to people you'd never get to. Do what you're happy to do. It's trial and error.

PPC What do I do if animal rights activists start posting or commenting on my socials?

AM If you're getting the haters, I think it helps to know that if they have a pest control problem in their home, their opinion is likely to change very quickly.

PPC Respond professionally. Don't be drawn into an argument. Social media platforms feed off conflict.

Don't let them use your business to keep people on their platforms. Keep it professional, educational, and informative.

KF We stay completely away from that – our stance is that we have to protect public health. Be professional and leave it there.

PPC And finally - what's a top tip for starting out with social media?

AM Whenever you're thinking of making a post, always ask yourself what's the point of this? That will steer you in the right direction.

KF Make it interesting. Tell a story, include a photo – make it worth a few minutes of their time.

JS The work you do is hugely valued and massively important – don't be afraid to show that.

PPC Use social media to help spread the message about how important a role you have in society. Everybody in this room is responsible for spreading that message. Don't be afraid to put some value on yourselves, your businesses and what you do for society.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Share your thoughts on social media and pest management; it might appear in a future issue of PPC magazine!

hello@bpca.org.uk

"Use social media to help spread the message about how important a role you have in society."



FOR: There's a reason people watch wildlife documentaries

By Stuart Blair, Strathearn Pest Control

The general public enjoys watching lions kill prey on TV because it showcases raw nature, survival instincts, and the predator-prey dynamic. These scenes evoke awe, excitement, and respect for wildlife.

It's my view that this also transfers to the culling of pests. It provides insight into natural behaviours and the food chain, satisfying curiosity and a primal fascination with life and death.

Pest control, including trapping and dead rodents, should not be censored. By doing so, the industry misses out on a real chance at promoting public awareness and hygiene, safety, and transparency. Hiding these realities fosters ignorance about disease prevention and urban health. Honest depictions encourage responsibility, community vigilance, and effective pest management, ensuring cleaner environments and reduced health risks for everyone.

Posting images of effective pest control trapping on social media has been a hot topic of late, however I believe it can offer several benefits!

Credibility and trust

Showcasing real results can help build credibility with current and potential clients. It demonstrates your expertise and effectiveness in pest control. Being seen to use the correct "tool for the job" highlights that you are a professional company.

Engagement

Visual content tends to attract more engagement than text alone. Where more interesting dialogue can take place! Pictures can generate likes, shares, and comments, increasing your reach to potential customers.

Education

Sharing your success stories can educate your audience about pest issues and the importance of professional pest control, increasing awareness and understanding.

Marketing

It serves as a form of advertisement. Potential clients can see the effectiveness of your services, making them more likely to contact you for help.

Community connection

It can help connect with the local community, as people often share concerns about pests in their area. Engaging posts can foster a sense of community.

Feedback and testimonials

Encouraging customers to share their own experiences alongside your posts can provide powerful testimonials and feedback.

Brand identity

Regularly sharing real-life content can help establish your brand's personality and values, making it more relatable to your audience.

Developing technology

If you use innovative traps or techniques, sharing these in imagery can highlight your commitment to using the latest and most effective methods of control.

By leveraging these benefits, pest control businesses can enhance their online presence and attract more customers while promoting conversation and innovation within their industry.

GRUESOME OR NECESSARY? SHOULD YOU POST DEAD THINGS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



AGAINST: Showcase what's interesting about our industry, not the dead stuff

By Kelly Farrant, Pest-Tech

Pest-Tech Ltd have been operating for over ten years, and during this time I have always been keen to have a strong social media presence and I've done it all myself.

Right from the very start, I was clear that I did not want to show graphic images of dead animals, as I felt it would have a negative impact on my business.

Presenting a professional image is crucial for any business, and in my opinion, graphic content may appear unprofessional and weaken your credibility.

We have built our brand identity focused on helping and educating customers with positive, informative, and engaging content. Mixed with this are interesting tips, useful infographics and images of success stories.

I do this to build trust and confidence with potential customers (which is what all our

followers are) so it's essential for lead generation.

By showcasing dead animals, it makes us appear unapproachable, uncaring and can create fear and unease rather than trust, making clients hesitant to engage with your social media or even worse, your services.

Whether we like it or not, the general public is sensitive to animals being harmed or killed. We do what we have to do in order to resolve pest problems, and it's sometimes a grim task.

Customers who love animals just want the issue resolved without knowing or seeing how we did it. It's the old saying about how the sausage gets made. Ignorance is bliss, and I think that applies here.

Showing graphic images makes those potential customers uncomfortable or distressed and can cause a negative perception of your brand. You will alienate people, which is the opposite of good business practice.

And we know that the animal rights community can be vocal, so a negative reaction from animal rights groups can harm your reputation and lead to potential boycotts or

even harmful hate campaigns being directed at your business.

While we may not agree with their aims, it doesn't help us run our businesses to provoke people unnecessarily.

Social media platforms are a free marketing resource, allowing us to build our brand awareness. The platforms have strict guidelines regarding graphic content, and violating the guidelines can lead to post removals or account suspensions.

The rules are also forever changing, so what is acceptable now may not be in 12 months.

Sharing graphic images on your social media can be high risk, with the possibility of having to start your business page from scratch.

We are confident our engaging content should not offend anyone, which is a safe strategy to follow.

Pest control is a very emotive subject, and we have to be careful of public perception during the search for new customers and clients.

It goes without saying, you should aim to be professional at all times, and this includes how you present yourself to your audience on social media.

It is for these reasons that I will continue to post engaging, informative content and no graphic images on my feed.

WHATEVER'S THE MATTER NOW, DEER?

NATIVE DEER
MANAGEMENT
IN THE UK



In PPC117, regular contributor and rural pest expert Dave Archer wrote about non-native species of deer in the United Kingdom, and why and how they're a problem.

Continuing with this theme, this article examines the world of our native deer, their ecological status, and the need to manage their numbers to benefit both them and ourselves, in the absence of natural predators.

NEED TO CATCH UP WITH PART 1?

Head to ppconline.org/ppc117

"Lowland red deer in England can often outweigh their leaner cousins in Scotland due to the greater availability of food in the south."



Red deer

The red deer is, without doubt, a truly magnificent spectacle to observe in the wild. Ranging from the Scottish Isles to the lowland English moor and woodland, it is the largest land mammal remaining in the British Isles.

Red deer are herding deer, and populations can reach huge numbers if left unmanaged. Indeed, some Scottish Islands and the Highlands, as well as the lowland areas of England, are subject to intensive damage by overpopulation of deer.

Since October 2023, as numbers are so prolific, the males of all deer species in Scotland, including red deer, may now be culled all year round, instead of having a close season.

As herding deer, reds use well-worn tracks to enter feeding grounds, which may be fields of valuable arable crops such as maize or wheat.

Fences and posts are often broken and pushed over by deer. It is not uncommon for severe injury or even death to occur to deer when this happens, especially with high-tensile or barbed wire.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that, in the main, this species of deer usually is crepuscular or nocturnal in lowland habitats.

Stags will also form large wallows in any area that affords some degree of water containment.

Interestingly, lowland red deer in England can often outweigh their leaner cousins in Scotland due to the greater availability of food in the south. It is not uncommon for stags to weigh up to 180 kilos, necessitating the use of heavy mechanical lifting equipment to extricate the fallen deer.

Roe Deer

This is the only species of truly native deer that is not a herding species. The Roe Deer are our most widespread native deer. Does form winter groups, but these disperse in spring before the fawns are born.

Interestingly, this is the only species of deer to exhibit delayed implantation, whereby the embryonic stage is suspended. Often called "the fairy of the woods," roe deer have an amazing capacity to blend into the scenery and seemingly just appear, even when you are looking hard for them.

Bucks can cause damage to saplings and specimen or ornamental trees by fraying bark with their antlers to mark territory. They can inhibit growth on vegetables and certain fruits by nipping the tops out of the new shoots. Still, by and large, this species of deer is not as prolific nor as environmentally damaging as the other species mentioned. However, as

mentioned earlier, the deer cannot self-regulate, and a competent deer manager will know the resident deer within a territory and manage the population accordingly.

Roe are described as looking like they've been eating ice cream, with white chins.

Fallow Deer

I include the Fallow Deer (*Dama dama*) here, as it has been so long established (since Roman times) that it is widely regarded as a naturalised, but not native, species.

Fallow Deer are perhaps the most elegant parkland deer, with their white and chestnut mottled coats and huge spread (palmate) antlers in adult bucks.

Fallow (as well as red deer) also roar in the autumnal rut, giving a true sense of season to all who hear this deep bellow. For the unwary, both these and red deer in parkland may appear somewhat tame, encouraging members of the public to inadvertently try to befriend a stag or buck, to get that self-important photograph, misunderstanding that by entering the deer's territory too close, this may lead to sudden violent reaction from the deer towards the onlooker, which views the encounter as a challenge or threat. No person can outrun a rutting stag or buck, so beware!

Deer control and management

All deer are subject to legal restrictions regarding types of firearms, bullet weights, and close seasons. Depending on the location, the legalities may vary from one country to another. Just because you are conversant with the legislation in England, it does not mean the same applies in Scotland or Ireland. Ignorance of the law is no excuse!

Deer can be susceptible to infections such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Bovine Tuberculosis, and are prone to pneumonia. However, it must be stressed that most wild deer in the UK are healthy specimens, as most infections develop rapidly and deer succumb to their effects quickly.

Being able to observe or manage deer means that you may discover specific ailments, which unmanaged herds may carry unchecked. Additionally, once trained and qualified, you will be a valuable asset in identifying and notifying relevant regulatory bodies, where applicable, regarding deer diseases.

Should you find a fawn or kid of any species of deer, DO NOT try to pick the deer up! Although the deer's defence is to keep still, once human scent is on the youngster, its parent will abandon it by instinct! Many a young deer is taken to a rescue centre, mistakenly being considered abandoned by its mother; it is rarely the case. Deer are very attentive in their nursing duties unless (yes, here we go again), man has erroneously intervened.

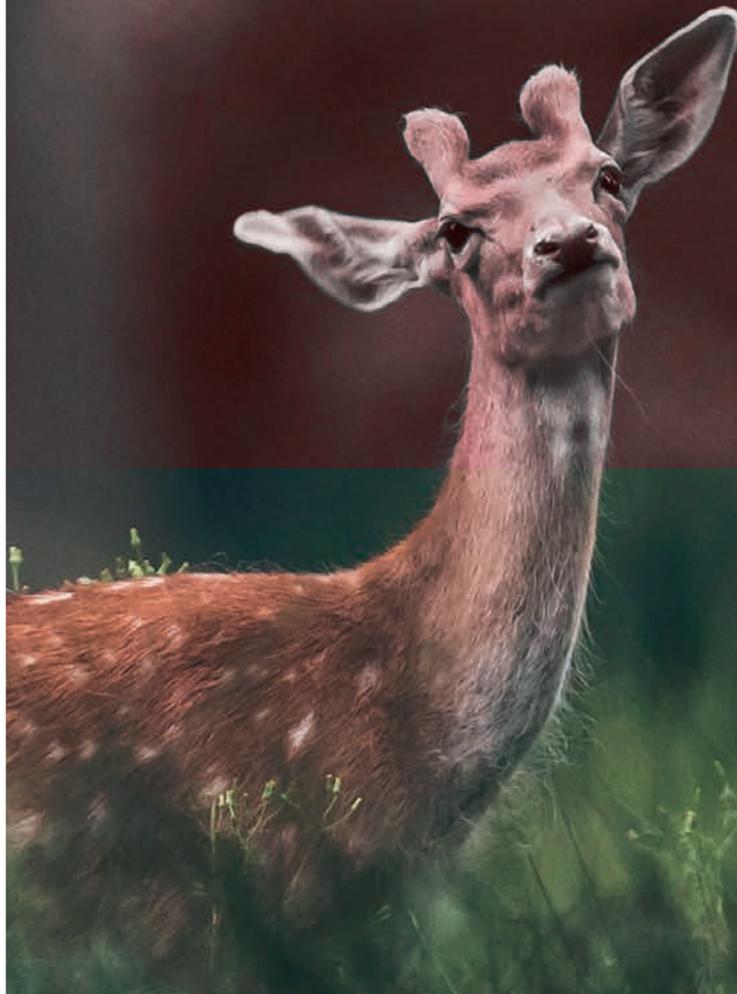
A rifle rest or high-seat, is an absolute requirement to ensure shot placement is as accurate as possible. The use of a rifle rest ensures the rifle remains steady; at distances of up to 200 yards, the element of steadiness is crucial. A high seat allows you the opportunity to sit in the seat for long periods and shoot from a front rail or bar. Controlling your breathing is also paramount to a successful shot.

A solid background is also essential as bullets can carry literally for miles and still be lethal. This is where the high seat can be advantageous as the shot is travelling downwards.

For ALL species of deer, once shot, you must have suitable means of extricating the deer from the site in a hygienic manner. Vehicular or tractor/quad bike access is usually needed for the larger species of deer, and means of hygienic storage are essential to meet stringent meat hygiene requirements.

I make no apology for reiterating my mantra here: Once you pull any firearm trigger, the bullet is NEVER coming back, so make ABSOLUTELY sure of your background and safety before you shoot!

"A rifle rest or high-seat, is an absolute requirement to ensure shot placement is as accurate as possible."



Male fallow deer (Dama dama)

Getting started in deer management

Firstly, please don't think deer management is above you, or that the opportunities to work in this field won't ever come your way. If you provide any form of rural pest control, you are well-positioned to explore this work.

In the first instance, try your utmost to observe deer in the wild. A reasonable pair of binoculars is a must, and wherever you are, you will not be far from one or other species of deer.

Observe their habits and times of day for feeding, etc. Dawn or dusk are ideal times to observe deer moving to and from their feeding grounds. Look for slots or hoof marks, hair on fences, runs, etc. For me, it is better viewing than any TV programme. And it's not only deer you will see; all manner of wildlife is there and to learn from. I have found that Mother Nature has always been the best teacher one could ever want!

Nevertheless, you must keep still, quiet and stay downwind of deer if you can. Deer are excellent at spotting movement, and drab country colours are a must. However, the one exception is bright orange, as deer are colour blind to this spectrum of colour... but you will be visible to pretty much everything else!

Read as much as you can from reliable sources; organisations such as The British Deer Society or The British Association for Shooting and Conservation are great starting points. Industry-recognised Deer Stalking Qualifications at various levels are available to demonstrate professional competence. These qualifications include quarry identification, habits, legal aspects, safety, firearm handling and placement of shot, as well as on-site training and competence tests.

There are separate sections on large-game handling and meat hygiene. Once you have passed the necessary examinations, you are potentially able to provide venison to game dealer establishments, etc. Additionally, you will understand the various diseases of deer and be able to identify any health issues upon performing the gralloch.

Your certificate has a unique hunter identification, which will be traceable back to you, should you present the carcass to any game dealer. If you are a recreational stalker, then certain shooting organisations provide free insurance for Recreational Shooting, but if your work is on a professional basis, whereby you are paid for the work carried out, or you are paid for your venison sales, I strongly advise a business liability insurance to cover your shooting needs.

If you are fortunate enough to know a stalker personally, then ask if you can be given guidance or accompany them on stalking trips.

Should you wish to obtain a rifle, the legalities in the United Kingdom are among some of the most stringent of any country. You will need to be of proven good character, have "good reason" to

obtain a rifle, a secure approved firearms cabinet to store it, a "mentor" to guide you, and two referees to state you are of good character.

Previous offences or criminal convictions will be taken into consideration when reviewing your application and may have a detrimental effect, or even prevent your application from being considered further.

A landowner will also need to provide written confirmation that you are allowed to shoot deer upon their land. But should these articles spur you on toward pursuing the world of deer stalking, I have found that if you provide rural pest control services, inevitably, you will be asked at some stage or other about wild deer management.

Certain police forces request the need for qualified deer managers to be called upon where deer have collided with motor vehicles and are still alive but not able to be treated, or are injured, but evade capture (broken legs, etc).

If you are, as I have been, heavily involved with deer management, you will undoubtedly need the services of a well-trained dog, who will always have better scenting skills than any person. They possess up to three hundred million olfactory receptors in their noses, compared to about six million in us. And the part of a dog's brain that is devoted to analysing smells is about forty times greater than ours (don't ponder that point for too long!).

I have known many people who have entered this field and are now competent deer stalkers, providing valuable deer management services.

That is a wonderful feature of our industry. It is such a huge umbrella. You may have a real passion for bed bugs. You may be ecstatic about brown rat control on farms. You may be employed in rabbit control, or be fully employed in mole catching!

Whatever you do, you owe it to any of your quarry to carry out your work in the very best and humane manner you can, and learn about all facets of what is out there for you. Remember, it is we humans who are the biggest pest of all... and we are only just starting to realise it!

"Whatever you do, you owe it to any of your quarry to carry out your work in the very best and humane manner you can..."



A red deer gralloched and presented clean and fresh after a morning stalk, ready to enter the food chain.



A roe buck. A well-trained gun dog is an invaluable asset to deer stalking, especially when working in thick woodland.

PEST MINDS: SPEAK YOUR MIND WITH NEW MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE



PPC magazine spoke to pest industry marketing bod Anna Mollins, about her new project to help pest professionals reach out and share the mental load.

PPC Tell us about Pest Minds

AM Pest Minds is a site for people in the pest management industry to tell their mental health journeys anonymously, with the hope that by talking openly, we can show that you are not alone. People submit their stories, which are then edited to ensure anonymity and to also follow the guidelines set by Mind, on portraying mental health in media. The submissions are then published online for anyone to read.

pestminds.co.uk

PPC What was your inspiration for starting Pest Minds?

AM I've always been passionate about mental health and wellbeing, and after hosting a talk on mental health at a trade association conference a pest professional sought me out to thank me. They said that in hearing mine and another person's experiences with mental health struggles, it gave them the courage to seek help.

Knowing that they weren't alone had helped them to take the first positive steps in improving their own mental health.

I realised that we needed a safe, anonymous place to share our stories with each other, so that even more people can feel seen. As pest professionals, our struggles can sometimes be quite unique, so I wanted to provide something that was specific to people in this industry.

PPC What has been the feedback so far?

AM Since launch I have had a wonderfully positive response from a wide range of people in the industry, praising the concept and the importance of speaking up about mental health overall.

While I do work for Veritas Pest Consultancy, this project is not affiliated with any business or professional body, it's not making any money or a way of fundraising. It's solely me, giving up my free time to provide a platform for people to communicate, and I think that helps people feel they can open up more and there isn't an ulterior motive to it.

PPC Why do you think it's important for pest controllers to have this kind of space to share?

AM There is still a lot of stigma and stereotyping when we think of people and their mental health experiences, and that can make people afraid to speak about those experiences.

- "What would happen if my boss found out?"
- "What happens with my gun licence if I'm diagnosed with depression?"
- "Will people treat me differently?"
- "Will I be held back in my career?"
- "Will people think I am weak?"
- "Will people avoid me?"

Our industry should understand stereotyping better than most, because of the 'rat catcher/animal killer' image that so many see in us.

PPC What do you hope to see for Pest Minds in the future?

AM I have no huge ambitions here. I just want it to grow organically, because this isn't about me and my aims, it's about each and every person in this industry feeling they have an outlet to share their mental health journeys.

I hope this website provides a safe space for anyone to submit a mental health story. It doesn't have to directly relate to pest control, it can be big or small, hard hitting or subtle. You can be confident in knowing that your story will be edited to maintain your anonymity, and you can even submit under an alias.

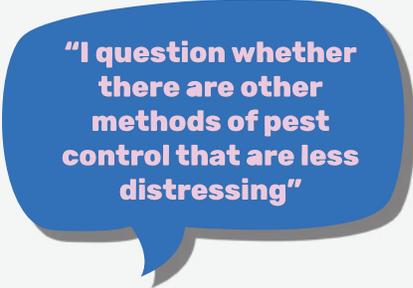
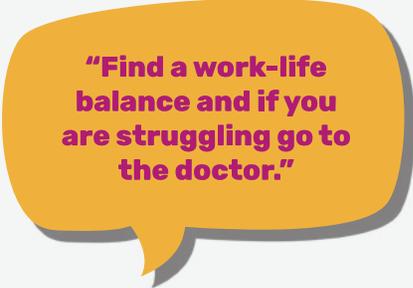
I want as many people to submit their stories as possible; it may only take 10 minutes to write your story but if only one person reads it and feels seen, then isn't that worth it?

Find out more

Check out stories from others and submit your own today.

pestminds.co.uk

If you need further support, contact Mind, the mental health charity mind.org.uk



ASHES TO ASHES,



LIFE AFTER BENDIOCARB AND INVESTING IN SKILLS FOR PROFESSIONAL WASP CONTROL

In this article, Paul Westgate, Managing Director of Veritas Pest Consultancy and a BPCA Executive Board Member, shares his thoughts on the changes facing pest professionals following the withdrawal of Ficam D. Speaking at PPC Live 2025, Paul urged the industry to view this as an opportunity to invest in professionalism, rather than a setback.

SPEED VIEW

Ficam D has been withdrawn from the market: using or even storing it now is illegal

Wasp control will require new skills and a deeper understanding of chemical properties

Pyrethroid-based dusts behave very differently from bendiocarb-based products

Reading and understanding product labels is more important than ever

Pest controllers who invest in their professionalism will thrive in the new environment.

DUST TO DUST

“The days of ‘spray and walk away’ are over. And that’s a good thing.”

Saying goodbye to an old friend (and why that’s okay)

We’re here to say goodbye to an old friend: Ficam D. It served us well, but it’s time to move on. And honestly, that’s a good thing.

The end of Ficam D isn’t a disaster. It’s an opportunity. A chance to sharpen our skills, improve our professionalism, and differentiate ourselves from those who cut corners or don’t know better.

As I said during my talk at PPC Live, I’m not here to sell you anything. I don’t have all the answers. However, I do want to encourage you to invest in yourself and raise the standards across our industry.

Why was Ficam D withdrawn?

Ficam D contained bendiocarb, a highly effective active ingredient, but also a highly toxic one.

When you look at LD50 values (a measure of toxicity), bendiocarb is dramatically more dangerous than modern alternatives like permethrin. If you’re in charge of protecting public health, and two products are equally effective but one is much safer, it’s a no-brainer which one you would keep.

Ficam D was withdrawn because it no longer met modern safety standards, not because it didn’t work.

And as professional pest controllers, our responsibility is to adapt.

New dusts, new challenges

There are alternatives to Ficam D on the market: various pyrethroid-based dusts. But they behave very differently.

Where bendiocarb was slow-acting and non-repellent, allowing wasps to pick up the dust, re-enter the nest, and spread it. Pyrethroids are faster-acting and often repellent. That changes everything.

When we used bendiocarb, the wasps did the work for us. They carried the pesticide deep into the nest without realising. With pyrethroids, a wasp might die at the entrance or be repelled before spreading the product effectively.

That means we can no longer rely on the same “spray and walk away” techniques. Wasp control is becoming a skilled job again, and that’s something to celebrate.

Professionalism matters more than ever

We all need to get better at:

- Reading product labels (and genuinely understanding them).
- Understanding active ingredients and how they work.
- Choosing the proper formulation for the situation.
- Managing customer expectations.
- Updating our risk assessments in light of new products.

If Cristiano Ronaldo were a pest controller, he wouldn’t be better than you because of better boots - he’d be better because he puts in the work.

Training. Studying. Practising. Investing in his skills. That’s the mentality we need in pest control.

Illegal use is never an option

Sadly, there will always be those who ignore the law. Those who hoarded tubs of Ficam D will continue to use it, believing it gives them an advantage. Let them.

We don’t need to compete with illegal cowboys. We need to outclass them. Be the pest controller who says, proudly:

“I use legal, approved products to protect you, your family, and the environment.”

That’s how we build trust. That’s how we future-proof our businesses.

Wasps will behave differently now too

One final point: because pyrethroid dusts are faster acting and more repellent, you might see more defensive behaviour from wasps during treatment. That makes full PPE even more critical.

It might also change the best time of day to treat a nest. Evening treatments, when most wasps are inside, could become more effective, but you’ll need to adjust your risk assessments and working practices accordingly.

A future built on skills, not shortcuts

The end of Ficam D isn’t the end of wasp control. It’s the start of a new era - one where pest controllers who genuinely understand their craft will rise above those who simply relied on easy chemicals.

Read your labels. Update your risk assessments. Sharpen your skills. Be Cristiano Ronaldo, not a Sunday League player.

Invest in yourself, and you’ll be ready for whatever comes next.



“We’re not losing wasp control. We’re gaining an opportunity to be better.”

“Read your labels. Understand your chemistry. Invest in yourself.”

PRACTICAL CHANGES TO YOUR WASP CONTROL

Here’s how the end of Ficam D changes our approach:



Always:

- Wear full protective clothing, even when treating “easy” nests
- Document your chemical use and method properly
- Offer nest removal as an additional service
- Communicate openly with your customers about why things have changed.



If you can’t access the nest:

- Manage customer expectations about potential two-visit treatments
- Consider alternative formulations like aerosols or wettable powders
- Consider the application equipment you select and how far they will deposit the product
- Be clear that complete eradication might take longer.



If you can access the nest directly:

- Inject products carefully into the nest, not just around it
- Use lower-repellency products where possible
- Consider other formulations, such as liquids and foams
- Monitor carefully after treatment.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENTS: CRRU-APPROVED CPD



John Horsley spoke at a BPCA Digital Forum about environmental risk assessments (ERAs) – essential for protecting wildlife, complying with the CRRU code, and staying within the law. Here's a summary of his insights.

Speed read

- Rodenticides (especially AVKs) can harm birds and mammals directly (primary poisoning) or indirectly (secondary poisoning).
- Under stewardship rules, pest professionals must complete an ERA if there's a significant risk to non-targets and the environment.
- Before using an AVK, survey for non-target species, watercourses, and other environmental risks, then record your findings.
- An ERA is your due diligence if a non-target poisoning incident is investigated. Keep good records of what you used, why you used it, and the measures you took.
- Permanent baiting now requires strict justification. Follow CRRU guidance closely if you consider it.

PREFER TO WATCH THE VIDEO?

Head to youtube.com/bpcavideo

UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENTS

Rodenticides and the bigger picture

Rodenticides, commonly known as anticoagulant vitamin K antagonists (AVKs) remain a vital tool against rodents, especially rats and mice. But every use carries potential risks to the environment:

- Bioaccumulation
- Once ingested, AVKs can remain in an animal's tissue for a long time. A predator that eats contaminated prey may receive a secondary dose.
- Long half-life
- The toxicity can persist in tissues, posing a threat to predators or scavengers up the food chain.
- Hazards to wildlife
- AVKs can affect all birds and mammals. If mishandled, they may also enter watercourses, endangering fish and aquatic ecosystems.

Because of these concerns, AVKs are classified as "candidates for substitution." If a safer, equally

effective alternative becomes available, the rodenticides we rely on might be phased out. Hence, the industry must act responsibly to keep these tools available.

Primary vs secondary poisoning

- **Primary poisoning** - A non-target organism (such as a songbird or even fish, if bait enters waterways) directly consumes the rodenticide.
- **Secondary poisoning** - A predator bird, mammal, or scavenger (think buzzards, barn owls, or foxes) eats a poisoned rodent or insect and ingests rodenticide residues.

Both scenarios emphasise the need for careful usage and disposal protocols. Data from the last 50 years shows that a wide variety of species can be harmed, ranging from cats and dogs to raptors and badgers.

As John explained, top-ten lists of contaminated species often feature buzzards, kites, foxes, barn owls, and more.

Monitoring by organisations such as CRRU reveals that rodenticide residues remain a problem in many wild birds.

The legal imperative

When you use rodenticides, you must conduct an environmental risk assessment (ERA) to show you've considered and mitigated risks:

- **Stewardship scheme** - In the UK, the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) oversees stewardship guidelines to reduce rodenticide impacts on non-target wildlife. Compliance is checked through residue testing in barn owls and other species.
- **Potential prosecutions** - Pest controllers have faced legal action for improper rodenticide use. Even if a non-target animal dies of other causes (eg, road traffic collisions) but is found with high rodenticide residues, investigators will look for where and how it was exposed.

John highlighted a 2011 prosecution: a dead fox tested positive for rodenticides, and a pest controller was charged with failing to produce a proper environmental risk assessment and using AVKs improperly.

ERAs are thus a cornerstone of legal defence, proving your professionalism and diligence.

BUILDING YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT

1

THE SITE SURVEY

Before completing an ERA form, conduct a thorough site survey:

- **Identify the infestation**
Is it rats, mice, or both? Indoors or outdoors?
 - **Check for non-targets**
Which birds of prey are in the area? Are there dogs, cats, or livestock on site? Any watercourses, ponds, or protected habitats?
 - **Assess the pest situation**
How large or entrenched is the infestation? What are the potential reinfestation risks?
- Record these details in a site survey report and assign it a unique reference number. If you detect a significant risk to non-targets from using AVKs, proceed with a dedicated ERA.

2

FILLING OUT THE ERA

CRRU has a standard ERA template (downloadable at thinkwildlife.org):

- **Risk factors**
Document all potential non-target species on or near site and the likelihood of them coming into contact with the bait.
- **Justification**
Why are rodenticides necessary here? Could other methods suffice, such as trapping, proofing, or housekeeping improvements?
- **Site specifics**
Note any watercourses, special scientific interest areas, farmland restrictions, or local wildlife trusts' protections.
- **Bait choices**
Which product are you using (including active ingredient and concentration)? Which species is it licensed for? (Bear in mind, many AVKs cannot legally be used for wood mice or field mice.)
- **Risk mitigation**
Outline how you'll protect non-targets, for instance by using tamper-resistant bait stations, placing bait only in secure or inaccessible areas, or removing any leftover bait immediately after the infestation is controlled.

3

FOLLOW THE CRRU RISK HIERARCHY

In integrated pest management (IPM), lethal control (including AVKs) should be a last resort if non-toxic methods alone aren't sufficient. CRRU's hierarchy reminds you to:

- **Always consider proofing, hygiene, and housekeeping**
Restrict rodent access and remove attractants.
- **Consider traps or alternative active substances**
For house mice indoors, alpha-chloralose or cholecalciferol might be more appropriate.
- **Use AVKs responsibly**
If you must, confine rodenticide use to essential areas, document your choices, and check the bait and carcasses frequently.

4

MONITORING AND DISPOSAL

Rodents killed by AVKs can still pass on harmful residues if scavenged. The product label and CRRU guidance both emphasise:

- **Frequent carcass checks**
The label's recommended frequency for visiting bait points often matches how often you should remove carcasses. In heavy infestations, more frequent checks may be needed.
- **Safe disposal**
Confirm whether you can incinerate carcasses on a farm, or place them in double-bagged waste if permitted by local authority guidelines. Always keep records.
- **Waste carriers licence**
As John mentioned, if you're transporting any form of waste (e.g., used bait, dead rodents) in a commercial capacity, a waste carriers licence is mandatory (though the lower-tier licence is free).



An online CPD quiz based on this feature is now available on the BPCA website. BPCA Registered members and anyone with a MyBPCA account can take a CPD quiz at any time [bpca.org.uk/find-cpd](https://www.bpca.org.uk/find-cpd) or sign up at [bpca.org.uk/mybpca](https://www.bpca.org.uk/mybpca)

"Keeping rodenticides available depends on evidence we can use them responsibly."

5

PERMANENT BAITING (CAUTION REQUIRED)

Permanent outdoor baiting was once standard, but the potential for non-target harm is high. The CRRU code makes it clear:

- **Only in exceptional cases**
If there's a real, ongoing risk (eg, critical sites where re-infestation is certain), you must document why permanent baiting is necessary.
- **Follow label and CRRU guidelines**
The product label might prohibit permanent baiting or limit it to specific circumstances. Failing to comply could lead to enforcement actions.
- **Audit trail**
Justify permanent baiting with site data (previous large-scale infestations, high-risk premises, etc). Even then, you must regularly inspect and remove bait if it's not actively in use.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Is an ERA needed for indoor-only house mouse treatments?

Even inside a domestic roof space, you should assess risk. While the exposure risk outdoors is lower, you still need to consider whether non-target species could access the bait (eg, pets or children). Document either:

- A short-form ERA - If the risk is minimal, record the reasoning in your site notes.
- Full CRRU-approved ERA - If any external risk or potential non-target presence is identified.

How often must I redo an ERA on contract sites?

Each time you use rodenticides. An annual or one-off site survey can gather broad environmental data, but any new rodenticide application should be backed by up-to-date information and an ERA referencing that site survey.

What if barn owls or raptors are common nearby?

If your site is in an area known for high bird-of-prey populations (e.g., red kite hotspots), you'll need heightened caution. Your ERA should reflect that you're aware of these species, and any rodenticide use is planned to minimise risk, potentially leaning more on non-toxic or alternative methods.

What about watercourses or farmland run-off?

Rodenticides in flood zones can end up in rivers. Part of your ERA is ensuring baits are protected from the elements and removed if severe weather threatens. You should also consider adjacency to farmland or run-off channels. Proof your bait placements against rain, flooding, and wildlife intrusion.

Watch the video now

Head to [youtube.com/bpcavideo](https://www.youtube.com/bpcavideo)

2026 AND BEYOND



CRRU-APPROVED CPD

To continue to purchase rodenticides in 2026, you must complete three hours of CRRU-Approved CPD in 2025 and register it on an CRRU-Approved CPD scheme, such as BPCA Registered.

CONTROL, MONITOR OR SUPPRESS? WHAT ARE INSECT LIGHT TRAPS FOR?



Pest management consultant Tom Holmes has spent much of his career developing insect light traps (ILTs), providing training on how they work, and crucially, how to use them. In this PPC article, Tom shares his extensive knowledge to help pest professionals better understand these vital tools.



"Monitoring with ILTs helps track insect activity and guides when action is needed."



What are ILTs for? Firstly, let's start at the top. What do we, as professionals within the pest management industry, do? I argue that we help maintain public health, reducing the risk of disease, damage and distress for our customers and theirs.

How do we do that? We use our experience and knowledge to solve problems, with appropriate tools to help us along the way. And that's all ILTs are: they're tools to help us maintain public health. But they can be used in different ways, and that's what we'll explore here.

I'm going to make the case that there are three fundamental ways in which to use ILTs:

- For control
- To monitor
- For population suppression.

Let's explore each in a little more detail.

Control

Firstly, what do we mean by 'control', within the context of flying insects? We'd probably all describe it differently, but for now, I'm going with "Remove all flying insect pests from a given environment". And ILTs can absolutely be used in this way. For example, in regions where the climate is always going to support large numbers of flying insects (South East Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, etc), ILTs can, and are, used to help remove all insects from a space.

Closer to home, non-sensitive applications (such as non-food-based warehousing) can benefit from ILTs to remove flying insects from that space. In these environments, electric killing grid models are often used, where the impact of 'zapping' the insect has minimal public health implications. This style of ILTs can also require less effort to maintain, with emptying the catch tray and a quick wipe down, all that is needed to keep them running.

Finally, seasonal pests sometimes call for dedicated solutions. Take cluster flies for example. In Autumn, as the last days of summer disappear, they take refuge in loft spaces and similar environments, and can congregate in huge numbers - hundreds, if not thousands. In this scenario, I'd recommend a specialist ILT, typically an electric killing grid model with a larger catch tray, of which there are several available on the market.

Here again, we're trying to 'control' the infestation (to eradicate it), albeit typically over a limited period of time.

Where we want to "control", what do we need to consider? Well, we need the right tool for the job. I've already talked about dedicated ILTs for cluster flies, but in a large warehouse facility, we'll likely need a large unit, and the right number to manage the space (don't get me started on so-called 'coverage areas' of ILT models - that's something for another day!). Similarly, are they positioned appropriately to be effective and simple to service? And whilst we've made that call to use them as 'control', it's always worth regular reviews of the environment and results, to see whether the dynamics (and required action) have changed.

Monitor

Monitoring is a cornerstone of an integrated pest management approach to maintaining public health. Much is made of this, and at times it can be overthought.

Put crudely, if there is no pest activity right now, we should keep reviewing to see if the situation changes. If it does, let's take appropriate action. This gives me my definition of 'Monitor' within our context of ILTs as "Review changes in insect activity, before taking action where needed".

Using ILTs to monitor is a big subject, and could quite easily justify a dedicated exploration on its own. However, as an overview, where might we want to monitor? To put it crudely again, wherever and whenever, there is a high-sensitivity activity. Typically, (but not exclusively), this is where food production or processing - food and beverage (F&B) establishments, high-end hospitality, and nutritional or pharmaceutical facilities are located. Within all of these environments, any change in flying insect activity matters. How do we know if there's been a change? We monitor.

Those who've been in the game a while will remember the term "catch tray analysis"—a simple concept that was hugely problematic in reality. The idea was that technicians could analyse the quantity and species of insects caught by reviewing the contents of a catch tray within an electric killing grid ILT (anyone know which insect this wing belongs to?).



An online CPD quiz based on this feature is now available on the BPCA website. BPCA Registered members and anyone with a MyBPCA

account can take a CPD quiz

at any time

bpca.org.uk/find-cpd

or sign up at

bpca.org.uk/mybpca

Thankfully, with the widespread adoption of glueboard technology ILTs across Europe in the early 1990s, our lives became much easier. By recording the number of insects caught upon a glueboard at regular intervals, we can assess whether the insect population is declining, increasing, or remaining stable. We can do this from service to service or by comparing it to the same period in previous years. Throw the captured data into a simple bar chart, and we have a hugely powerful, visual picture of flying insect activity on site. In short, we're monitoring.

Population suppression

The third scenario is an application where flying insects will always be present, but we can use ILTs to help keep the population stable. Think waste management facilities, water treatment sites, etc.

We'll never be able to completely remove (to control) the insects, but ILTs can help suppress the population to manageable levels. My definition of this use? "Keep ongoing insect populations in check".

What do we need to consider in these scenarios? We're almost certainly going to need large units

"Make sure you are clear about why you are using it."

And it's an uncomfortable one - Compliance.

As pest management professionals, it's a slightly sordid reality that in low sensitivity applications (high street stores, takeaways, butchers, bakers, etc), more often than not, they just want a tick in the box for their health inspector. And throwing a cheap and nasty zapper on the wall may well do that for them – make them compliant.

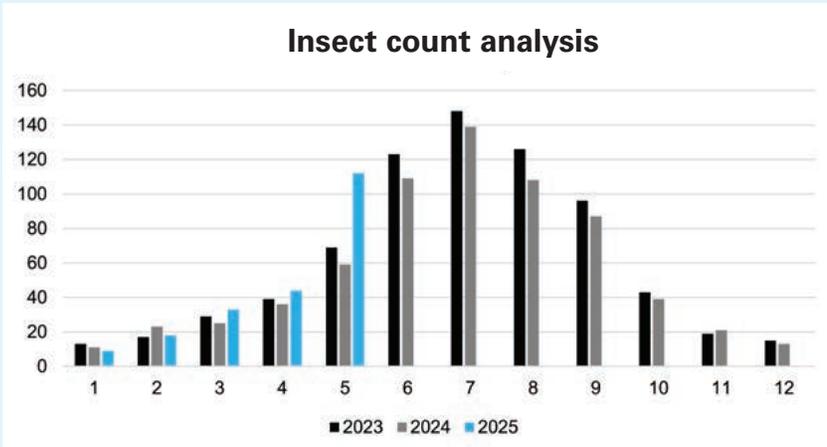
There are some impactful considerations for us to manage in this scenario. If the ILT has been sourced elsewhere (quite possibly a low-cost, electric killing grid unit), what are the fly catch efficacy expectations of the end user? If we are to service it, what are the consumables (UV lamps and glueboards), and can we source them? How easy is the ILT to service and maintain?

If it's a low cost electric killing grid unit, it may not be designed with serviceability in mind, so what does that mean for how long it will take us to service (who else has had the pleasure of attempting to service a unit that requires you to release screws to get inside it, dropping the screws, then spending ten minutes searching for them on the floor?). This can seriously impact the profitability of that contract.

A low-cost unit might seem appealing, but what about sustainability? Will it last, can it be recycled, or is it headed for landfill? We should aim to do better in this regard.

In summary

Control, monitor, population suppression and compliance; four uses of ILTs. All are valid and catered for by the vast array of models on the market. And there is no right or wrong use of the four. But, make sure you are clear about why you are using it. Because, as we've discussed, that impacts which model you select, and how you use it, as a tool to help you maintain public health for your client, whilst delivering profit for yourself.



What do we need to consider when we're monitoring? We start, of course, with IPM. To monitor flying insects with ILTs we need data. Typically, this means having installed the ILT in an appropriate position, we return at regular intervals (monthly, quarterly, possibly even weekly), to collect the agreed catch data. What data? Possibly we go all the way to insect species identification, or perhaps a split between 'large fly' and 'small fly' (to help us identify between pests originating inside, or those entering the facility from the outside), but as a base level, we will certainly require 'a count'.

Comparing insect catch count data across fixed periods is the beating heart of using ILTs for monitoring. Again, catch analysis warrants its own detailed discussion, we also consider:

- How comparing data against the same period from previous years helps combat the impact of seasonality
- Variations in 'how to count' - a full count, a representative count of the glueboard, (eg, count a quarter and multiply by four), or as is more than common that you'd imagine, a visual guess.
- How the recent emergence of remote monitoring technology might help with some of these challenges, along with many others.

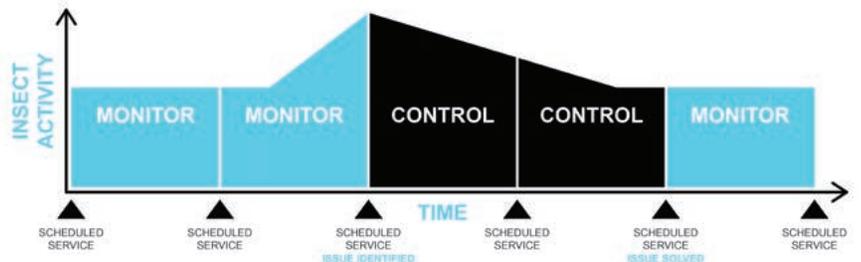
However, we'll save these thoughts for another day.

with significant capacity. If you're selecting a glueboard model, it will need a large glueboard, but a large electric killing grid model might be a better bet in these locations. Either way, the units will require regular servicing to ensure the glueboard or catch tray isn't full and the ILTs remain in working order to attract and catch insects.

With these three uses explained, let's revisit our central question: What are ILTs for? Well, all three uses are entirely valid. However, what is really important is that you are clear which reason you are using them. If we're using an ILT for monitoring, we will interact with it very differently than if we're using it for population suppression.

That said, the particular use can change over time. For example, an ILT used as a monitoring tool can support control activity once an infestation has been identified, before returning to an ongoing monitoring tool once the problem has been managed.

But here's the twist in the tale. There's a fourth.



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MEET THE MEMBER

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY WITH PESTBUSTERS EAST KENT

Carl Morris runs PestBusters East Kent and spoke to PPC magazine about the pleasure of working with family and his pack of pest control dogs.



PPC Hi Carl, thanks for talking to us today. Did you want to tell us a little bit about how you got into pest control?

CM I'm 66 this year and I started rabbiting when I was about 9 or 10 years old. I had my first terrier when I was 9 and I had a lurcher when I was about 14. It's been my hobby all my life.

About 20 years ago, I sold my business but I was too young to retire. Before I sold I didn't have time to do it professionally, I just used to do the ratting and the rabbiting as a hobby for a couple of farms. And then I was down on this farm one day and another farmer said "we've got loads of rabbits, loads of rats, come sort them out". I went up there a couple of days later and his sister was there too. She had a farm of her own and asked if I could come over to hers to take a look. So I had about six farms within around two weeks.

Then someone suggested to me that I do wasps. I said no at first, but then I looked at the BASF course and decided to go on that.

As it started to snowball, I went on a couple more courses and then after a few more years, I took the plunge and did the Level 2 in Pest Management residential course through BPCA. I honestly learned more in that week than in all the years of doing it on my own. It was Paul Westgate who ran the course, and he was brilliant. I think that bloke could motivate the dead.

It just lit my fire, you know, it was so exciting. I remember sitting there, probably the oldest on the course, and I thought "I'm never going to fit in with this". All these kids are younger than me, they're going to be so smart. But it really was such a good week, invaluable.

PPC Fast-forward, and you've now owned Pestbusters East Kent for around 18 years? Is it a family business?

CM Yes, it's me and my daughter, Gemma. We work together and we both have bed bug dogs.

She actually did her Level 2 recently as well, but she's been doing pest control for years because I trained her and she'd done some of the other courses too.

She's a great technician, she does a lot of the insect stuff. And she's really exceptional on those bed bugs, we very rarely ever need to go back on a bed bug job thanks to her. She developed that side of the business and we've got a brilliant reputation for it now.

She's so good at what she does because she's so passionate about it. And she's compassionate too; we had these two situations really close together, where these women were single mums and couldn't afford the cost of treatment straight off the bat. She knew we couldn't do it for free but she negotiated a payment plan with them over 18 months so that it was affordable for them. She said they shouldn't have to put up with pests just because they were low income.

We're a really good team; I'm the problem-solver and she's the people person.

"Working in pest control has a really simple outcome: you've improved somebody's quality of life, essentially."

PPC Did you ever think that you'd be working together? Is it something that you always wanted or did it come as a surprise that she wanted to go into the same business as you?

CM It wasn't a surprise really, I was in manufacturing for years and she worked with

me then. When I told her I was going into pest control, with the rabbits and rats, she wasn't into that side of it. But once people started phoning up about bed bugs, fleas and wasps, she was much more interested. So she shadowed me, did the course and here we are.

And one of my grandchildren, Charlie, he's only 14 and he wanted me to pay for him to do his Level 2 as well, so it looks as though it's going to be three generations in it before long!

PPC What would you say to anybody who's thinking of working with family?

CM Oh do it. It can bring you all together in such a wonderful way. My other grandson, Morgan, comes with me if I'm on a big job. It's helped me build bonds with the kids.

There are challenges still. I think you expect more from your family. But the pros outweigh the cons and if I wasn't in this industry, I'm not sure I'd have the same bond with my grandchildren that I've got, it's helped us spend even more time together.

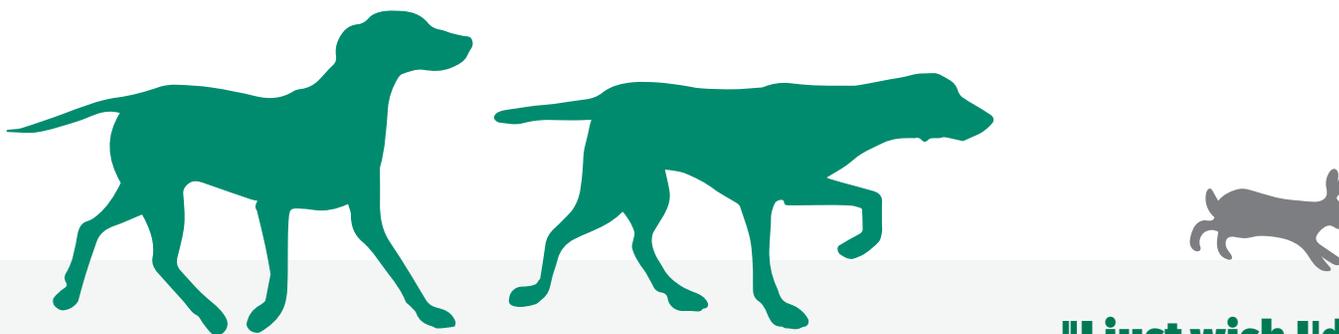
And if I don't mention Eileen my life isn't going to be worth living. She does all our admin work, books our jobs in, she's a vital part of the business.

PPC What's your favourite thing about working in pest control?

CM My passion is integrated pest management, to be honest. I use a lot of working animals in my job; ferrets, two lurchers, two jack russell terriers, two spaniels, two Harris's hawks.

It's a good non-toxic approach to pest control and that's my preferred method. Then I love figuring out how to combine this with trapping when needed, maybe pesticides if totally necessary. It feels good to put a plan together and see it working.

PPC Was that always the case, that you were passionate about IPM?



CM Not really, no. It was the BPCA course and Paul Westgate; he was so passionate about what he does and the way he explained things, it was impossible not to take it on board.

He made me realise there's lots of ways to skin a cat. That's probably not the best analogy to use in this job but you know what I mean!

And I think CPD points feeds into that too, they're a really good thing. The industry is changing all the time, isn't it? You have to keep up with it, and I've never been on a course where I didn't learn anything.

My mate said to me, "you're 65 this year, what are you still going on these courses for?". I think it's a very rare person who already knows it all and doesn't need to learn anything new.

PPC Tell me more about your dogs, you said that you've been ratting and rabbiting for years?

CM I have, and my terriers and lurchers are from some of the best lines in the country. I've been breeding them for a long time. I'm a Welshman living in Kent, but my pups sell in Scotland, Yorkshire, all over the place.

PPC Tell me about the jobs that you do with your animals.

CM They all have their specialities. My hawks, Serendipity and Storm, they do bird control work.

My terriers do the rats and rabbits, my spaniels do bed bug jobs. I just love seeing the dogs work and I love seeing the people's faces as well when we've done a good job.

I train the bed bug dogs myself. Initially my terrier, Trixie, would bark when she found bed bugs. After some complaints from a hotel manager who said that disturbed his guests, I started training spaniels to sit at the mark instead. It works much better, fewer complaints!

I do a lot of rabbiting with my lurchers, terriers and ferrets, like a little team. The terriers mark where the rabbits are, the ferret

goes into the hole to flush them out and they run up into the lurcher.

The ferrets can do rat jobs too, they're quite multi-skilled like that.

I train working animals and sell them to other professionals too. Most of the dogs I breed end up in working homes.

I just wish I'd got into it all as a profession 20 years before I did. I was in another business and I was enjoying that, which is great. But now I do feel blessed because now my business and my career are also my lifelong hobby. How lucky is that? It doesn't get much better than that.

PPC Well, you know what they say, don't you? If you do what you love, you won't work a day in your life.

CM And that's the way to feel about my job. It's just a great industry to be in and I'll tell you one thing I want to say about the British Pest Control Association. My standards have always been good, right? I've always worked to a high standard, no matter whatever I've done.

But since going on that Level 2 course and joining BPCA as a member, I've raised that bar right up, my standards have never been higher. We raised our game by doing those things and we've both got constant work all the time.

You do your best, always. But if you have that network of support, and someone shows you a better way of doing something, you're going to improve all the time. And that works better for the environment and for the customer too.

It's coming full circle now; animals are how they used to deal with pests a few hundred years ago, before all the chemicals. It's now going back to that a bit more, with the toolkit being reduced.

It's the same with the birds and the bird licences, if you can scare them off without killing them, why not? Just because we do pest control for a living, it doesn't mean we want to kill everything underneath the sun. Our role is to control the pests, not eradicate them.

"I just wish I'd got into it all as a profession 20 years before I did... But now I do feel blessed because now my business and my career are also my lifelong hobby. How lucky is that? It doesn't get much better than that."

PPC It's been really nice to speak to you.

CM Yeah, I've enjoyed it as well. It's nice to talk about all the stuff that you do, because you can do it day-to-day, but it's not until you actually sit down and you think about everything that you do, that you get a feeling of achievement. Working in pest control has a really simple outcome: you've improved somebody's quality of life, essentially.

Yes, we get paid for it. But it's a great feeling to help someone and the job satisfaction in this industry is fantastic. I'm proud that I'll spend the last years of my life doing it, and getting paid for what I love doing. Honest to God, I couldn't think of anything I'd rather be doing. The only thing that I'm so annoyed about is that I didn't get into this 20 years before I did.

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



GETTING ROUND THE TABLE TO REVIEW RECRUITMENT

EDI COMMITTEE: BOOSTING RECRUITMENT IN THE PEST CONTROL INDUSTRY

Julia Pittman **JP**
EDI Committee Chair
(host)

Karen Dawes **KD**
BPCA

Mike Cook **MC**
City Facilities
Management

John Dickson **JD**
Inbervel Ltd

Emily Vickers **EV**
Precision Pest
Management Solutions

Beth French **EV**
PR for Pelsis

JP Over the next 10 years, 40% of people working in the pest control industry are going to retire. We need to broaden the pool of people we are recruiting from to include women and ethnic minorities. Over the next 10 years, it is expected that we will need to replace 3500 roles as people retire and people leave the industry. As part of the work we're doing within the EDI Committee, we spoke to women inside the industry and outside the industry to try and understand what we can do and what attracts people into the industry at the moment.

MC I was a civil engineer and lost my job in the big recession. I saw a job advert for Rentokil and thought it would be dealing with woodworm and dry rot. I phoned them up, went there and it was pest control. I took the job because I needed a job, and I've stayed in the industry ever since.

JP That's interesting - we find that often once people are in the industry they then tend to stay.

JD I joined the industry 30 years ago, starting in bird control and went on to pest control. I used to run NBC Environment and one of the problems I saw was that there's a type of stigma attached to pest control. We tried to do different things there to

attract people. If I advertised a pest control job we couldn't recruit anybody. We started calling the role 'wildlife management' and advertised for a wildlife management operative and we got more interest. But I wasn't convinced that the interest was from the right people. There are not many people who leave school thinking they want to be a pest controller.

We get gamekeepers coming in, but they don't necessarily want to do the routine technical pest control.

MC I haven't had to do a lot of recruitment because people do tend to stay a long time. My team covers big areas and don't tend to have overnight stays. But they are paid well and well looked after. City is a good employer to be fair.

JD I had a colleague who went to City. He knew it wasn't necessarily better pay. He went down a role and got the same pay as a general technician as he'd had as area manager.

MC Exactly. Our technicians can be on around £36k, and they're on call once a month.

JD That's very much above what a lot of technicians get paid.

JP There is a very small number of people that are doing this work. We've got to widen out our talent pools. Would you consider recruiting women?

MC My team is pretty stable so there's not a lot of recruitment required, but there are three or four female operatives.

JP In adverts we're using a lot of masculine wording. There's research that shows masculine-coded wording will put women off completely, whereas feminine-coded wording doesn't put men off from applying in the same way.

JD We tried to get innovative. We got into roadshows - we'd advertise where we were going to be in an area and attract people to come and have a look and talk to people. Come and do a presentation, see what the experience was, try to recruit. We recognised we wouldn't always get people with qualifications. If you did get people through though, they would stay. There are a lot of people with zoological degrees with nowhere to go, they were excellent recruits. Quite academic, used to process, new to industry and a lot of women. I think trying to connect with universities and with people doing those degrees is a good way to go.

JP Liaising with universities has been very successful.

BF I've genuinely never considered pest control as a career option, it was never even floated as an opportunity when I was younger, it was never discussed. Personally, I'm a bit squeamish, but I'm here.

MC I don't think people want to do dirty jobs. Young people just don't want to get their hands dirty.

JD That isn't unique to the pest control industry. Everybody is fighting for staff. You're not just trying to recruit - you're trying to stop people going to supermarkets or construction.

EV I feel very strongly about it. Some of the views coming across I really strongly disagree with because they go completely against my view on the position of women in the workplace and issues like maternity leave.

JD Any business that wants to succeed is going to have to embrace 50% of the population.

EV Exactly. It's 50% of people that aren't always considered because people think that women can't lift as much, or are more risky for a smaller business in terms of maternity leave.

JP Are we thinking about all the barriers that prevent people coming into the industry? For example, if we're to recruit younger people, driving lessons can be an issue. Any technician is going to need to travel to a site. Driving lessons can be really expensive. It can be something unexpected like that, something you might not really think about, that is a very real barrier to someone who might have everything else you need, deciding they can't apply for a job with you.

EV We're getting more young people who only passed on automatic licenses. Age is a factor in terms of insurance as well. We have members of staff who can only drive certain vans within our fleet.

MC The roles we advertise for are all ones with a vehicle.

JD The job is a good job. It pays well, it's varied. There are good opportunities. I think it's perception. Are people going to search for opportunities in pest control? It pays a bit better than a lot of other jobs and there's a lot of opportunity in a marketplace desperate for people, but it's not being considered.

EV I think a framework would help to set expectations to get people into pest control – set out that these are the general company benefits

you'd get. What a company car means for you in real terms. What are the benefits of the job?

JD I think it's just not being considered by the majority of people out there and it's how to get people to become aware of the job, break down the barriers and if you can, get rid of the perception that they are just ratcatchers.

EV We've used recruitment agencies in the past. If you get someone that's good at their job, it works out cheaper in the long run. We've had a few people through recommendations as well.

JD I used to give bonuses for recommendations. There needs to be a certain strategy. Recruitment is often reactive. The main thing is getting some people applying.

MC I've recently taken someone on, and the quality of the candidates was dross. This one guy shone out through the rest of the candidates – and we had about 20 or so applicants. I interviewed five and there was really only one guy who I'd even consider.

JP In one of the projects, the suggestion was a careers video similar to the fire service, to showcase what the opportunities are.

JD Pest management is surprisingly technical and I don't think people appreciate the science behind it. People enjoy the problem-solving elements of it. It's getting these things across rather than the thought of 'I'm going to be a gamekeeper.'

I see a lot of job adverts and I used to get frustrated by the people who would just post the job description. The problem with promoting it as wildlife management is people don't necessarily realise it's pest control.

EV We want a science background, possibly people who have already come from university, but that doesn't mean to say they are the only good people. We have people who don't have degrees but are in the mindset of learning.

JP What is an attractive advert? We ran some jobs through the decoder and 90% came back masculine. In one, the first line was 'must be good with tools.' I think that needs work. Some of these adverts could bring in more untrained people than trained - we've got to recruit outside the industry.

JD I think a lot of companies are reactive and need to spend time on this.

MC The South East is a nightmare, but there's a lot of opportunity there as well.

JD Someone I spoke to recently was changing jobs - the pay difference was about £2.5k.

"Over the next 10 years, 40% of people working in the pest control industry are going to retire."

MC I was involved in recruiting a technician training to do my job in the South West. They are all on a lot more money than what we pay. Our salary in the North West is one of the best. In the South West it's not.

JD What is the industry looking at in regards to pay rises?

KD BPCA is trying to push people up to Level 3 and we would hope that's reflected in the wages.

EV The challenges for our part are if they're younger than 18 we can't get them into factories, so we can't take them into our sites to train them.

MC One of things I've suggested is if you look at other trades, electricians, plumbers, they all have apprenticeship schemes.

JP BPCA has a working group that is working with universities, and I think that will be discussed in the round table about qualifications.

Following the round table, Mike Cook, Pest Supervisor at City Facilities Management said: "The discussion was really good. It gave us a few ideas about how we word our job adverts going forward.

"It's about trying to attract the right calibre of candidate and for me, personally, it's somebody that's trained and ready to go, that wants to do the job and is prepared to learn."

Emily Vickers, Training Quality Manager at Precision Pest Management Solutions added: "It was a really good session and really informative. I'm on the EDI Committee with Julia and I think it's important that we talk about these issues that perhaps not everybody is talking about to help encourage and support young people coming into the industry.

"We don't want there to be a block to people doing the job. A lot of pest control jobs are working solo, so for women and young people, they need to have the back up and have managers who they know will help protect and support them."

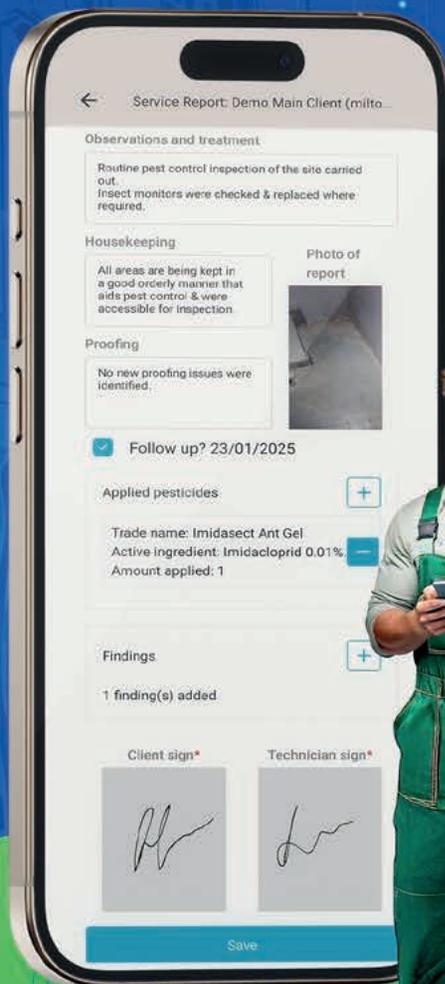
For more information about the work of BPCA's EDI Committee, go to: bpca.org.uk/groups

Event type	Event/ course name	From (£)	Date	Location
Networking	Birmingham - networking event	Free	19/06/2025	Birmingham
Training	Starting out in Pest Management (online class course)	132.00	23/06/2025	Online
Webinar	GUEST: Insecticide formulations and applications	Members Only	02/07/2025	Online
Forum	DIGITAL 32	Free	16/07/2025	Online
Open evening	Non-member open evening	Free	17/07/2025 - 5pm	Online
Training	Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	20-25/07/2025	Milton Keynes
Webinar	The world of wasps: behaviour, biology and evolving control strategies	Members Only	06/08/2025	Online
Forum	DIGITAL 33 - Young pest professional special	Free	13/08/2025	Online
Webinar	DEBATE: Behavioural resistance in rats and mice	Members Only	03/09/2025	Online
Training	Hands-on practical pest management	250.00	06/09/2025	Stafford
Training	Level 2 Certificate in Pest Management (residential)	1,640.00	06-13/09/2025	Stafford
Training	Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	07-12/09/2025	Stafford
Forum	MEDWAY	Free	17/09/2025	Medway
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	London
Training	Level 2 Award in Pest Management (non-residential)	930.00	12-17/10/2025	Edinburgh Zoo
Forum	EXETER	Free	15/10/2025	Exeter
Forum	DIGITAL 35 - Duty of care special	Free	22/10/2025	Online
Webinar	DEBATE: Money down the drain - drainage surveys and inspections	Members Only	05/11/2025	Online
Training	Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	16-21/11/2025	Milton Keynes
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
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

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