

Pests and infestations

Preventing unwanted visitors in your home



This leaflet contains information to help you prevent and deal with unwanted pests and infestations in your home.

There may be times when you find pests in your home, and for a variety of reasons. We understand it's not pleasant and it's really important that we work together to try and make sure your home is free of infestations. Even the cleanest homes can be host to unwelcome visitors, no matter how careful you are.

Whose responsibility it is?

Dealing with a pest infestation is usually your responsibility as a resident.

It is our responsibility as a landlord to deal with any infestation in an internal communal area, which affects more than one property in a building, where access is through a defect in the fabric of the building, or is within a housing for older people scheme or one of our empty properties.

There are three simple rules to follow to prevent unwelcome pests in your home:

- 1. Don't let them in** – If you see any external holes or believe rats, mice or squirrels are gaining access to your home please call us and let us know. Rats, mice and squirrels, looking for a warm place to sleep/nest, can use any external holes to get in and cause havoc.
- 2. Don't feed them** – Keep your home clean, especially the kitchen. Don't leave any food uncovered or easy to access. Put rubbish out in sealed bin bags or bins and if applicable please ensure you use any communal bins provided.
- 3. Don't make them feel welcome** – Avoid leaving any bulky items or waste outside or in communal areas as these can provide places for mice and rats to nest. You can ask your local council to collect any bulky household waste if you can't take it to the tip yourself.



Ants

Tackle them using an ant spray or powder which you can purchase in most DIY stores. Treat the nest if you can find it. You may be able to locate it by following the trail of ants. If you can't reach the nest, treat all entry points to your home (doors, windows and drains). The ants should carry the insecticide back to their nest.



Bedbugs

Bedbugs live in bedding and mattresses and can leave nasty bite marks. Wash all bedding at 60°C and try to find an insecticide that's safe to use on the mattress, headboard and other affected areas.



Bees and Wasps

Bees are not technically classed as pests. Honeybees must not be killed as they are protected by law, but they may be re-homed with a local beekeeper.

If you think you have a honeybee swarm, please contact the National Beekeepers Association which provides help and advice. You can find your local beekeeping association on their website: www.bbka.org.uk/find-beekeeping-near-you

Wasps only become a problem if they build nests in the loft or eaves of your home, cavity wall space or in your garden. If you have a problem with a nest please get in touch with us. Don't go near to or disturb a nest. Bees and wasps can swarm when they feel threatened and may attack when disturbed.

Cockroaches



Cockroaches can lurk in warm, dark, humid parts of homes, in areas around pipe ducts in kitchens and bathrooms or underneath cookers. They can cause food poisoning and other health problems.

You may need expert help to deal with cockroaches. Further information on cockroaches and how to deal with them can be found on the British Pest Control Association website: www.bcpa.org.uk

Dust Mites



Dust mites live in mattresses and bedding. They can make your symptoms worse if you suffer from eczema, asthma or any other breathing problems.

Dust mites prefer warm, humid environments. To keep them under control, wash your bedding regularly at 60°C and try to keep your bedroom cool and well ventilated.



Fleas

Fleas from pet cats and dogs don't spread disease but flea bites can be itchy and uncomfortable for you and your pets.

To deal with fleas, treat your pets, bedding, furniture and carpets with flea sprays or powders. If you are unsure of which type to use, you may wish to speak to a vet for advice.



Mice and Rats

Mice and rats can cause damage to your home and furnishings and chew through electrical wires, increasing the risk of fire and electrocution.

They are most active at night which makes it easier to spot signs of a problem rather than the rodent itself.

You may be able to keep mice under control using traps or poison and you can buy these in most DIY stores. Contact your local council to find out if they provide a service to remove rats and mice: www.gov.uk/report-pest-problem



Moths and Carpet Beetles

Tiny holes in your clothing could be a sign that you have an infestation of moths particularly if found in clothes made of wool and silk. It is the larvae that cause the damage as adult moths do not feed on fabrics.

You can buy moth traps and place them in any wardrobes and cupboards where you store your clothes. Washing all your clothes will kill the eggs.

Carpet beetles can damage woollen carpets or rugs in your home. You can buy kits to tackle them from homeware/DIY stores.

If you have any concerns about pests in your home, please contact us and let us know.

If you are using any poisons or insecticides from DIY stores to prevent or deal with pests in your home, always follow the manufacturer's instructions and keep them away from children and pets.

Our contact details can be found below.

This leaflet can be translated into other languages, large print and Braille or recorded on to an audio CD. Please contact us for details.

If you need to speak to a Sanctuary member of staff in your own language, please contact your local office and they will arrange an interpreter for you.

0800 131 3348 (landline) 0300 123 3511 (mobile)

contactus@sanctuary-housing.co.uk

www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk

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