

**18 LICENSING IS COMING:
LOOK BUSY!**

PPC considers the prospect of formal regulation



**28 REPORTING PEST
CONTROL INCIDENTS**
Best practice guide

**20 THREE DECADES IN
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT**
Paul Butt reviews his career



PPC107

LICENSED TO KILL? PROFESSIONALS vs HAVE-A-GO HEROES



**35 LOBBYING AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS**
BPCA shouting with
your voice



**14 PESTEX'22
ROUND-UP**

Reviewed in pictures,
words and
numbers.



**23 HOW REGULATED IS
PEST MANAGEMENT
IN THE UK?**



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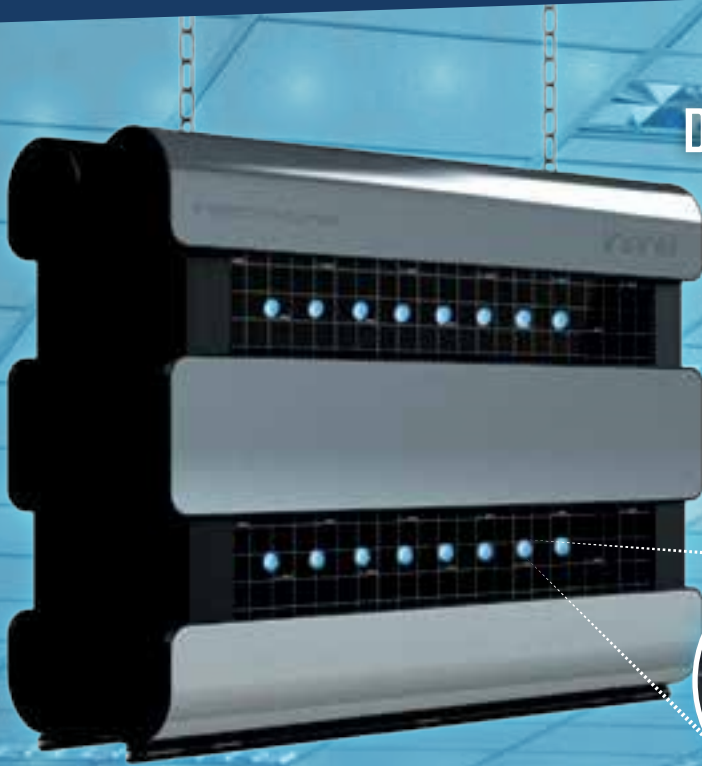
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PPCCONTENTS



14 The UK's premier pest management show reviewed

BPCA
PestEx
The pest management show



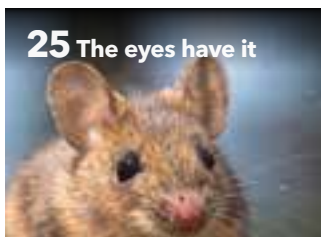
18 "Did anyone pack your toolkit for you?"



20 Wildlife management from the horse's mouth



28 On report!



25 The eyes have it



32 Finance at a glance

NEWS	5	ASK THE TECHNICAL TEAM	29
FREE EVENTS AND WEBINARS IN 2022	12	Your questions answered: field mouse control, glue traps ban, Codes of Best Practice and rising product prices.	
PESTS IN THE PRESS	12		
PESTS IN POLITICS	13		

PESTEX'22 ROUND-UP	14	OPINION	
Pest professionals from all over the world came together for the first time in two years, as PestEx returned to ExCeL in London on 16 and 17 March.		WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?	30
		Alex Wade puts forward the notion that licensing, should it happen, will be good for the sector.	

LICENSING IS COMING: LOOK BUSY!	18	AM I COVERED?	31
Papers, please! Pest professionals already operate under certain licensed conditions for some of the work we do, but are formal requirements likely to materialise?		Peter Knowles looks at diversifying pest control services and managing associated risks.	

THREE DECADES IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT	20	KNOW YOUR NUMBERS!	32
Paul Butt on his experience working in the pest control field, with some cases he worked on during his tenure in wildlife management.		Julie Holland MIBC presents a handy guide to SME business finance.	

TECHIE LEGAL TOOLBOX	22	OPINION	
A quick rundown of the most important pieces of legislation you need to keep up-to-date with.		TIME TO PUT UP PRICES?	34

HOW REGULATED IS PEST MANAGEMENT IN THE UK?	23	BENEFIT IN FOCUS	
Dawn Kirby looks at current regulation and speculates on what may change.		LOBBYING AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS	35

PESTWATCH		INTERVIEW	
FIELD MICE CONTROL	25	BETWEEN TWO PRESIDENTS	36
Chris Parmiter clarifies the legal nuances of controlling field mice in the UK.		At PestEx, PPC caught up with BPCA's then President, Phil Halpin and President-elect Chris Cagienard.	

NEW SERIES		INTERVIEW	
PEST RISK ASSESSMENTS	26	COME FLY WITH ME!	38
Grahame Turner turns his attention to different aspects of common standards.		Meet Mark Bower, quite possibly PPC's king of 'carpe diem'.	

REPORTING PEST CONTROL INCIDENTS	28	VIRTUAL ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE	40
PPC investigates the best approaches to reporting; who should you report what to, and why?		BPCA TechAssure is go!	
		TRAINING CALENDAR	42



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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

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

Taking the law into our own hands (the right way)

It's incredible to experience how quickly we can go from feeling like an invisible industry to one that is in the spotlight.

Five years ago, debating pest control in the House of Commons would seem very unlikely. But here we are. New legislation referencing professional pest control has received Royal Assent (page 13), and BPCA hosted an event for politicians and stakeholders in the Churchill Room of Westminster Palace.

Making our voices heard has never been more critical, so BPCA has levelled up public affairs and lobbying work (page 35).

Keeping up with all that's happening in politics and the press feels like a full time job right now. Thankfully you can just read the highlights (pages 12 and 13)!

In PPC107, we're continuing the conversation about pest control regulation we started at PestEx.

The team talked about industry-wide licensing in the wake of the Glue Traps (Offences) Act. The pros and the cons; what is the likelihood of the sector being licensed, like gas technicians and tattoo artists (page 18)?

We go back to basics in order to refresh your pest management legislation knowledge (page 22) and ask experts just how regulated is pest management (page 23)?

New guest author Chris Parmiter looks at the legalities and best practice for field mice control (page 25). And we also summarise ex-wildlife officer Paul Butt's fascinating PestEx talk, reflecting on all that's changed in the last 30 years (page 20).

We're all feeling pressure from the cost of living crisis – when fuel prices soar, and suppliers start omitting prices in their catalogues, maybe it's time to rethink your pricing structure (page 24)?

It was great to see so many readers at PestEx back in March (see page 14 for the review). With the PestEx showguide packaged with PPC106, our little trade mag appeared in more hands than ever before.

Remember, this is your magazine. If you have an idea for an article or want to submit something yourself – get in touch.

PPC107 – for professionals, by professionals – enjoy this issue and see you soon!

Scott + Dee

Scott and Dee

PPC editors
hello@bpca.org.uk

BPCA MEMBER AWARD WINNERS AND MEETING WRAP UP



On 8 April 2022, BPCA held a wrap-up meeting for members to recap all the work of 2021. We also held our annual Member Awards.

You can watch the meeting on the BPCA Youtube channel.

President, Treasurer and Committee reports

BPCA President Philip Halpin gave his last annual report on BPCA's work and achievements. Honorary Treasurer, Mark Williams gave us a state of play on BPCA's healthy finances.

Each of the four member-run Committees gave us their yearly reports too. You can read their updates in BPCA's Annual Report 2021 – featured in PPC 106.

AWARD WINNERS

The BPCA Member Awards recognise positive contributions made by members to the Association and the wider pest management sector.

BPCA Charles Keeble Award

The Charles Keeble Award for the highest score in the Certificated Advanced Technician assessment went to **James Smith** of Rentokil.

BPCA Outstanding CPD Award

When judging this award, the team looked for those who had made the most of 2021 and excelled in their CPD journey.

Several individuals stood out from the thousands of people on BPCA Registered, and therefore four winners were announced this year:

- **Kevin Pugh** Pest Solutions
- **Michelle Pope** MP Environmental
- **Niall Gallagher** Rokill Limited
- **Ben Sartain** Precision Pest Management.

BPCA Spotlight Award

This award is designed to recognise those working behind the scenes who keep the industry going.

The BPCA Spotlight Award for 2021 went to the **Admin Team at London Network for Pest Solutions**.

Two highly commended awards were also awarded to those who narrowly missed the top prize. They went to:

- **David Burgess** Dealey
- **Hayley Rafferty** Pest Solutions.

BPCA Special Contribution Award

This award is given to someone who generously gives their time to the Association and shares their passion with the whole pest control community. The BPCA Special Contribution Award for 2021 went to **Mark Wenman** of Edialux.

BPCA Commitment to Training Award

This award recognises a BPCA member who has committed to upskilling their employees through BPCA. The award for 2021 went to **Nightshift Pest Control**.

BPCA Growth Award

This year, the award went to a company that had seen substantial growth in 2020 and 2021, driven by massive investment in their staff and work culture. The winner was **NBC Environment**.

BPCA Innovation Award

This award was presented to a company that is well known within the sector, having developed mobile gentle targeted heat treatment systems.

Their systems reduced the sector's reliance on using the ozone-depleting substance methyl bromide, which is all but completely banned by the Montreal protocol. The winner for 2021 was **Thermokil Insect Control Services**.

Nominations are now open for next year's awards. Anyone from a member organisation can submit a nomination for an award. You can find out more at bpca.org.uk/awards

CRRU: RODENTICIDE SURVEILLANCE FINDS STUBBORN BARN OWL RESIDUES



Rodenticide residues have been found in 88% of barn owls by the latest annual surveillance for the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime, operated by the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use. The previous year's figure was 87%.

Since this latest 2020 sample of barn owl remains was collected, CRRU has published an updated and highly detailed Code of Best Practice in Pest Rodent Control and a companion practical user-guide in newsletter format.

Both are available widely and free of charge to pest controllers, farmers and gamekeepers, explains CRRU chairman Dr Alan Buckle.

"These publications support user training and certification, secure point-of-sale control of access to professional-only rodenticides, widespread promotion of responsible use, and standards embedded into and audited by farm assurance schemes," he says.

"Among pest controllers, farmers and gamekeepers, three large scale 'Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice' surveys since 2015 have found big increases in awareness of rodenticide stewardship and significantly improved practice, for example markedly reduced permanent baiting.

"However, it is no comfort that only one of the 100 dead owls, for the second year running, showed signs that rodenticide could have contributed to the cause of death. Most died from malnutrition or road traffic collisions."

"For rodenticide stewardship to be judged effective by the regime's government overseers, lasting reductions are expected in rodenticide residues carried by non-target wildlife, for which barn owls are the formal sentinel," he says.

"Without such evidence, we might anticipate more stringent restrictions on how rodenticides can be used, and by whom. Clearly, responsibility is squarely in all users' hands to eliminate bad practice."

The surveillance was carried out under contract to CRRU by the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH).

To read more about CRRU and the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime, visit thinkwildlife.org

JAIL TIME FOR PEST CONTROL FRAUDSTER CAUGHT OUT BY BPCA MEMBER UNBUGGED

Darren O'Connor of Rapid Clear Pest Control in Morecambe was recently sentenced to five months in custody after pleading guilty to two offences under Consumer Protection legislation.

This was a welcome outcome for Lancaster City Council's Unbugged Pest Control, who had reported the case to Lancashire County Council Trading Standards in May 2020.

Unbugged, a BPCA member, had received a call from a lady in Lancaster about a bed bug infestation and when technician James Bland attended he found the lady in an extremely anxious and distressed state.

He felt she was probably suffering from delusional parasitosis and he was able to confirm using insect monitors that there were no bed bugs or other insects present in the property.

However James found out from the lady that she had more recently called in Rapid Clear to deal with the problem.

O'Connor made a number of visits and charged her several thousand pounds. He had also stripped her house of furniture, clothing and other belongings, telling her that these needed to be disposed of.

When James visited the house the only thing left in her sitting room was a plastic garden chair.

The lady told James that she was still being contacted by Rapid Clear and she felt threatened by them.

She showed James text messages from them saying that she still owed them money, and she told James that they had demanded to take her to cash machines to withdraw money.

This was obviously an extremely vulnerable lady who needed urgent help.

Unbugged Pest Control contacted the police and sent details of what had happened to Lancashire County Council's Trading Standards.

Unbugged also got in touch with Social Services to make sure she was on their radar and receiving the support necessary for her mental well-being.

CONTEGO MAKES A DIFFERENCE AT SCHOOL



BPCA member Contego's pledge to give back to their local community continues. In this article, they talk to Jill Wood, School Principal at Yarm Primary School, about how their donation will make a difference to pupils.

CONTEGO How will our donation help you support your youngest pupils?

JILL WOOD Contego's sponsorship will allow teachers to attend training through the ICAN Early Talk resource to support the children's speech, language, and communication skills.

C What is the ICAN Early Talk resource?

JW It's targeted support that's designed to help three to four-year-olds who struggle to speak and understand language. At the moment, that's around 10% of children in the UK.

C How will the ICAN Early Talk resource help your school?

JW It will allow us to make a long-term positive impact on our staff in supporting them to have the strategies to work on with the children and share with parents.

It is a four-session programme and costs £345, which at the current time is not within our financial capabilities.

I would like to thank Contego so much for their generosity, on behalf of everyone at Yarm Primary School.

DETAILS ANNOUNCED FOR PESTWORLD 2022 IN USA



This year, the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) is extending a particularly warm invitation to all international delegates to attend PestWorld 2022.

Where: Boston, Massachusetts, USA

When: 11-14 October 2022



After a gap of two years caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the organisers and exhibitors are already getting excited at being able to greet their international friends and colleagues face-to-face.

"We look forward to once again greeting our international colleagues this year at PestWorld 2022," said Dominique Stumpf, NPMA's Chief Executive Officer.

"We have missed the collaboration and participation of our counterparts across the globe."

Details which will be updated regularly, covering registration, the programme, exhibition, hotel accommodation and travel arrangements can be found on the PestWorld 2022 website at pestworld2022.org



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LNPS BIDS FAREWELL TO LONG-SERVING TECHNICIAN



Newham-based London Network for Pest Solutions (LNPS) is toasting the retirement of Martin Lowther, after a long and distinguished career as a pest control technician.

Martin has worked with the LNPS team for five years and before that for seven years as a member of the in-house Newham Council pest control team.

During this time, Martin has built a solid reputation as a kind, caring and honest man with a genuine love of the community in which he lives and works.

BPCA and its members wish Martin all the best for an enjoyable retirement!

DES BONE HANDS REIGNS TO CLEANKILL

After 25 years of running Des Bone Ltd, Ann and Richard Bone will hand the business over to Cleankill Pest Control.

Richard Bone commented: "After over 40 enjoyable years in the pest control industry, and 25 years of trading as Des Bone Limited, myself and Ann have decided that it's time to move to the next stage.

"We will transfer to the new company and will remain available to our customers. Administration will change, but the telephone number and website contact details remain the same.

BED BUG TAPE LAUNCHED BY ANDERMATT UK

InsectoSec Tape was successfully launched by Andermatt UK at PestEx 2022 in March.

This is a self-adhesive tape containing diatomaceous earth that can be used to discreetly prevent and control bed bug infestations.

InsectoSec Tape is described by Andermatt as being "long-lasting, functional and effective against all life stages of bed bugs (*Cimex lectularius*), including those resistant to the commonly applied insecticides."

InsectoSec Tape was researched and developed by Nattaro Labs in Sweden, the manufacturers of Nattaro Scout bed bug traps and attractants.



It is available in the UK from East Sussex-based Andermatt UK and also from Killgerm Chemicals.

Summing up the launch at PestEx 2022 Dr Andrew Brown, Andermatt UK Managing Director, said: "The interest in InsectoSec Tape was impressive. Pest professionals were quick to see the unique opportunities offered by the product and how they can incorporate it into their bed bug treatment programmes."

RARE UK EAGLE'S RODENTICIDE DEATH

A poisoned white-tailed eagle found in Dorset is dramatic and regrettable evidence of the need for universally responsible use of rodenticides, states the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use.

"Whether caused by deliberate abuse or unintended secondary poisoning from eating poisoned rodents, this incident rightly focuses attention on how rodenticides are used," says CRRU chairman Dr Alan Buckle.

Media reports say brodifacoum was the rodenticide that may have been involved in the rare eagle's death. Brodifacoum is approved for use by the HSE under strict conditions in and around buildings and in sewers.

The eagle was found in January, having been released on the Isle of Wight in a reintroduction programme.

To read the full story, visit ppconline.org/ppc-news

TWO NEW BPCA MEMBER BENEFITS ANNOUNCED

BPCA members can look forward to IT equipment discounts and SME funding support, thanks to new member benefits recently announced.



Dell UK and BPCA have teamed up to help pest control businesses grow, and to support members' IT needs.

Dell is offering members up to 20% off laptops, desktops and accessories for their businesses.



FundOnion

And FundOnion, a leading commercial finance brokerage, is offering exclusive free consultations, with the aim of helping BPCA member companies secure funding for business development.

For more info visit bpc.org.uk/benefits





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BPCA OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU

**HELP SHAPE THE
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You'll often hear us talk about how BPCA is YOUR Association; run by members, for members. That's true, and

committees are an important part of that.

BPCA has four committees to drive the Association's functions, with an Executive Board member chairing each.

The Outreach and Communications (O&C) Committee is just one of those and is chaired by Julia Pittman from Beaver Pest Control.

The O&C Committee is currently looking for volunteers to join them in working on things like:

- Lobbying legislators and governments
- Public relations and talking to the press
- Promoting the sector
- Collaborating with other industries
- Events and publications.

“

Individually, we as pest management professionals all have a significant amount we can offer our industry. But when we work collectively we can provide not only the foundation for positive change for our industry, but a legacy for those who will follow. Groups such as this allow individuals like myself an opportunity to be heard, to voice our concerns as well as our ideas, and from there to see that my industry has the best possible chance to progress, evolve and grow.

Alex Wade (Wade Environmental), Vice Chair, Outreach and Communications Committee

“For me, the Outreach and Communications Committee is leading the way for the future of the BPCA,” says Julia. “The work we do supports the BPCA as the voice of the industry and increases our influence with a wide range of stakeholders such as national and local government, local authorities, the general public as well as the pest control industry as a whole.

“Having a voice at the table is very important, deciding what that voice should say is part of the work we do.”

Commitment required

- Four meetings a year (on Zoom or in-person)
- Occasional ad-hoc project work.

As a pest professional I feel it's important to give back to the industry. The Outreach and Communications Committee is a great one to be on; we're constantly trying to find ways of getting important information out to members and non-members, and positively promoting our industry to protect it for the next generation of pest controllers. This is why I feel that volunteering my time is so important: to help protect and promote the job I love.

Lewis Clarke (LRC Environmental Ltd), Committee member

”

Why you should join

- Develop your marketing and communication skills
- Meet like-minded professionals
- Earn CPD points for meetings attended
- Help your fellow members and industry
- Make a difference.



Register your interest

You must work for a BPCA member company to join any committee, and have permission from your employer if applicable. Email us to observe a committee meeting.

hello@bpca.org.uk

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RARE ALBINO MOLE CAUGHT IN ESSEX

Pest control technician Josh Ketley from St George's Pest Control couldn't believe his eyes when he pulled out one of his mole traps, to reveal an 'albino mole'.



"With the common mole being black in colour, the odds of finding a rare albino mole is estimated to be 1-in-100,000, this is definitely a pest controller's dream to catch one," says Josh.

Josh has since decided to find a local taxidermist to preserve the rare mole.

MONKEYING AROUND

"In my time doing pest control I worked with some right old monkeys. But today, installing red top fly bags, it's been given a whole new meaning!" Pictured:



Lewis Clarke, LRC Environmental Ltd with a bemused onlooker.

TOTAL PEST CONTROL HELP WITH UKRAINIAN CHARITY APPEAL

Didcot-based BPCA member Total Pest Control recently helped out with Ukrainian aid efforts by temporarily donating one of their work vehicles to charity workers in Cholsey, South Oxfordshire.

The van left fully stocked on a Thursday morning, heading towards the Poland/Ukraine border, and returned back the following Tuesday.

They delivered aid supplies for Ukrainians who have been displaced by the war, as well as provided gifts for the children in temporary shelter.

Total Pest Control covered all fuel costs, and a spokesperson said that they were "delighted to help in some small part".



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NOTTS TV STARS

BPCA member Nottingham Pest Control Ltd are aiming to be local TV stars, with an advert that will run for three months on a local TV channel.

Damian Widdowson, Operations Director at NPC, said: "We're very proud of the service we provide and our history in offering a first class pest prevention service to our customers throughout the Midlands. By advertising through Notts TV it enables us to reach out to other potential customers within our area as well as increasing the capacity to hit a much larger audience."

He continued, "It was great fun to make. A freelance camera lady arrived to take interviews with myself and the owner of the company Paul Swift. Filming was then carried out in our offices and stores (we even got the BPCA logo in)."

"Honorable mentions go to staff team members Fiona McMillan, Jayne Allen, Vicky Green and Dave Hodgkin, the stars of our ad."

"If the advert proves to be successful we may look at other avenues of advertising as we continue to adopt a forward thinking approach to the business."

BUSY PERIOD FOR PEST CONTROL ACQUISITIONS

The last few months have seen announcements from three big players in the pest control industry regarding mergers and sales.

US-based Rollins, best known for its subsidiary pest control brand Orkin, finalised the acquisition of NBC Environment in early April.

BPCA member Bayer has entered into a definitive agreement with Cinven regarding the sale of Bayer's Environmental Science business for a purchase price of \$2.6 billion. The transaction is expected to close in the second half of this year.

And Terminix Global Holdings, following its merger with Rentokil, has announced the sale of Terminix UK to Norvestor.

For more, visit ppconline.org/ppc-news



The team at NBC Environment.

PESTFIX LAUNCHES BENEFIT SCHEME FOR BPCA SERVICING MEMBERS

From 22 April 2022, PestFix began offering a range of perks to all full BPCA Servicing members.

The benefits include:

- 'BPC8' – 8% off the trade price on a host of core pest control products
- Free training days for members, redeemable against a wide variety of courses from the PestFix Academy
- Access to the unique PestFix Portal, with its fantastic features designed to streamline aspects of a servicing business, such as ordering stock, storage of documents, van stock counts, asset management and up-to-date information from BPCA, plus many more features.

PestFix said: "We're proud to support BPCA in driving excellence in pest management and [we're] rewarding its members for this."

These benefits renew annually with a company's BPCA membership. Members will receive a BPCA Member Benefit Card directly from PestFix.

If you think BPCA membership might be for you, get in touch membership@bpca.org.uk



SAFE, SECURE SPRAYING TO TACKLE PEST CONTROL DUTIES

Sprayer specialist Laser Industrie has launched its comprehensive range of professional-grade compression units in the UK.

The sprayers are robust and versatile enough to apply aggressive liquids designed to combat viral, bacterial and fungal pathogens while conveniently handling specialist cleaning agents.

A brand within the Hozelock Exel portfolio, ISO 9001 certified Laser Industrie commands a 30-year track record in manufacturing speciality ranges for every sector.

Made in France, the hand-held sprayers provide the perfect partner for pest control operators working inside and out.

The range is colour coded to provide easy access to the most appropriate sprayer for the purpose. Sturdy key components such as cup seals, o-rings and woven Tricoflex hosing match content demands, standing up to punishing spray schedules and environments.

EPDM, Viton and Nitrile seal options ensure safe, secure containment and application of liquids as diverse as acids, solvents, detergents and bases.

The full range of parts and accessories for Laser Industrie's technically advanced, robust hand-held sprayers (some models including hygienic stainless steel lances) are readily available.

Service and support are available on all leading social media platforms, overseen by a national account manager covering the UK and Ireland.

Enquiries and orders should be directed to Spindrift Sprayers by calling 01995 600001 or email sales@spindriftsprayers.co.uk spindriftsprayers.co.uk



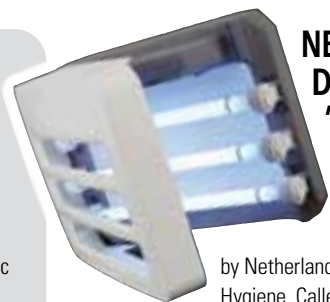
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Richard Lamb (Technical Manager of 1env) and Jim Kirk (Sales Director of Deadline) in Antigua at the Sir Viv Richards Stadium, watching the West Indies v England.

Pictured with Sir Viv Richards, a fantastic time was had by both.



NEW FLY TRAP DESIGNED TO 'SEE IT ALL'

A new range of discreetly designed professional UV flying insect light traps was launched at PestEx 2022

by Netherlands-based manufacturer, Alcochem Hygiene. Called the Omniceo range, this picks up on the Latin word 'omni', meaning 'all', and 'veo' which is Spanish for 'I see', so Omniceo 'sees it all'.

Wall mounted, the units offer the inclusion of either two or three 15W Astron tubes. Uniquely, these can be either conventional UV-A fluorescent lamps, or low energy consuming UV-A LED lamps – very handy for the day when fluorescent lamps disappear from the European market.

Both models are fitted with glue boards which can be mounted in one of three positions. As an optional extra, insect activity and catches can be monitored with an inbuilt camera and communication module. Data is relayed via 2G / LTE-M to a server where both the service technician, and the client, can keep an up-to-date check on activity. For inspections on site an additional link-up can be made via Bluetooth.

An app is available to download from both the Google Play and Apple stores.

The Omniceo range, available in the UK from PestFix, is ideal for use in the food and beverage industries, pharma, dairy, restaurants and shops.

BP
CA

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Control
Association
MEMBER

NEW MEMBERS

Full servicing members

- Ash Enviro, Wilberfoss
- Aurora Pest Control, Essex
- BioNET Pest Control Services, London
- Fen Pest Control, Kent
- Hide and Seek Pests, London
- Procure Environmental Services, Staffs
- Pro-Check Environmental Services, Fife
- Reliance Service Solutions, Swansea
- Smyth Pest Control, Somerset
- Waspsrats.com, Motherwell
- Whelan Pest Prevention T/A HPC247, Hampshire

Observer members:

- Al-Masader Al-Dualiyah for Environment and Quality Systems Co., Saudi Arabia
- Eco Pest DDD, Kosovo
- Green Planet Pest Management Services, Galway
- Kofandez Ltd, Nigeria
- Meindýravarnir Eyjafjarðar ehf, Iceland

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FREE CPD EVENTS AND WEBINARS

Event type **Webinar** **Local forum** **Virtual forum**

Name	When?	CPD	Sponsor
NORTH	7 June	6	BASF
HIERARCHY OF INSECTICIDE USAGE	9 June	1	
SCOTLAND	21 June	6	Edialux
DIGITAL 14	29 June	3	Lodi UK
UNDERSTANDING ULV FOGGING TREATMENTS	7 July	1	
DIGITAL 15 SUMMER SPECIAL	19 July	3	Bell Labs
WRITING THE PERFECT PEST MANAGEMENT REPORT	4 August	1	
MOUSE CONTROL BEST PRACTICE AND TIPS FOR MANAGEMENT	1 September	1	

Pssst! **NEW**
 5 pm, 21 July
 5pm, 24 November

Non-member 'open days'
 Special online events for pest management companies that are NOT members of BPCA. Learn about membership, meet Board members and ask questions. Learn more and book at bpca.org.uk/secret

Name	When?	CPD	Sponsor
WEST	20 September	6	Killgerm
NORTHERN IRELAND	5 October	6	1env
RODENT BEHAVIOURAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL RESISTANCE	6 October	1	
SOUTH	1 November	6	Syngenta
PROFESSIONAL PEST PROOFING STRATEGIES	3 November	1	
DIGITAL 16	29 November	3	Edialux
ZOONOSES: PEST-TO-PEOPLE PATHOGENS	1 December	1	
MIDLANDS	6 December	6	Lodi UK

The best pest events

For the latest information on all of our free events, visit bpca.org.uk/events

PESTS IN THE PRESS: JANUARY TO MARCH 2022

PESTEX IN THE SPOTLIGHT

PestEx was the main story for BPCA in the first quarter of the year, with work promoting the show starting in January and coverage of the event itself live from ExCel London.

The 'National expo putting pest control in the spotlight' story was picked up in regional and trade press targeted at pest control and related sectors - highlighting the event and raising awareness of the wider industry and BPCA.

Activity in winter and spring

The importance of professional pest management drove the news agenda in January in response to reports of fake pest controllers scamming people out of their hard-earned cash.

BPCA was quick to issue a press release urging householders and businesses to check the credentials of their pest controller and look for accreditations such as BPCA membership.

The press picked up the story in the tail end of January and ran it through into February, appearing in newspapers from Brighton and Romsey to Midlothian and Mearns.

Press activity around woodlice issued in December continued to reap results into the new year, and, as thoughts of spring cleaning started to creep into the national consciousness, BPCA reminded householders to check for bed bugs and encouraged hospitality businesses to tackle any issues before the start of the holiday season.



In February, 'How clean is a rat?' was the question posed and answered in a feature for Tomorrow's Cleaning magazine, urging cleaning operatives to be aware of the signs that rodents are present and take steps to prevent an infestation.

Country Smallholding's February edition featured 'Ditching unwanted visitors', the first in a series of articles for the magazine aimed at small farmers, about simple steps to deter pests.

This partnership is set to continue throughout 2022, offering pest advice and signposting to BPCA members for smallholders who may not have the know-how or confidence to deal with potential pest issues.

Other farming titles including Midland Farmer and Anglia Farmer ran with 'Top tips to keep rodents out of your grain store' highlighting the 'prevention is better than cure' approach advocated by BPCA.

As always, BPCA achieved a mix of regional and national press coverage to raise the profile of the Association among the general public, as well as tailored articles for specific sectors such as contract cleaning, facilities management, agriculture and hospitality.

TOP 3 HEADLINES

BUG BEAR THE FIVE SIGNS YOU HAVE A BED BUG INFESTATION – AND HOW YOU CAN TREAT BITES
 The Sun Online

HELPING TO SMELL A RAT
 Shields Gazette

WARNING ON PEST SCAMS
 Bridport News

ARTICLES TO-DATE 2022 **48**

CIRCULATION **13,174,806**

Looking ahead to spring and summer

BPCA will highlight the importance of seeking professional help if birds are becoming a nuisance during nesting season, and urging householders to check for signs of cockroaches when spring cleaning.

And work will continue with farming titles, as BPCA and James Grundy MP discuss protecting the right to rodenticides by promoting responsible use, and Country Smallholding features a detailed look at rodent zoonosis in relation to avian flu.

Read all about it!

Spot something in the press? Idea for a press release? Tell us.

hello@bpca.org.uk

PESTS IN POLITICS: WINTER TO SPRING 2022

With pest management under the spotlight, particularly regarding glue boards, BPCA has spent more time than ever monitoring what's happening in the UK parliament and the devolved administrations. PPC helps keep you firmly in the loop.

Glue Traps (Offences) Bill, Animal Health and other welfare bills receive Royal Assent



New legislation restricting glue trap use in England became law after receiving the go-ahead from the monarch, alongside several other animal health and welfare bills.

The Glue Traps (Offences) Bill received Royal Assent as part of a package of measures by the Government to increase protections for wildlife, pets and livestock.

Welcoming the Royal Assent of the Glue Traps (Offences) Bill, Jane Stevenson, MP for Wolverhampton North East, said: "I am absolutely thrilled that my Glue Traps Bill has been granted Royal Assent, meaning it has now become law.

"The banning of the use of glue traps by the general public is another step forward in the strengthening of animal welfare legislation in England, and I want to thank everyone involved in making this happen."

Dee Ward-Thompson, BPCA's Head of Technical, commented: "The reason we require the use of glue boards is for the rapid control of infestations on sensitive sites, like hospital wards and care homes. If licences need to be issued on a case-by-case basis, then this could render glue boards useless too."

BPCA has already begun conversations with Defra and Natural England on what a licensing scheme could look like.

FAQS

Do I have to stop using glue traps immediately?

No, you can continue to use glue traps during the two-year lead-in period set out by the Government, during which the licensing scheme will be created and rolled out. BPCA will keep professionals updated regarding this.

What will the conditions of a glue traps licence for professionals be?

The details of the licensing scheme have yet to be decided and BPCA will be engaging with stakeholders wherever possible, in order to make sure that the system is workable.

Bird control licences



Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

Four new draft general licences and a report on the decisions surrounding those general licences are among the key documents being shared with pest controllers.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

The withdrawn consultation on bird licences in Northern Ireland will not go live again until after the NI elections. On gulls, they confirmed to BPCA that all licence applications had been granted and they will be publishing a piece of research work shortly.

Brodifacoum safety

On 21 April 2022, Rosie Duffield MP asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will review whether Brodifacoum is safe and appropriate to be used in the open countryside.

Minister for the Cabinet Office, Chloe Smith replied: "During the authorisation process, HSE conducts rigorous evaluation for safety and efficacy using scientific data, with restrictions placed on authorisations as appropriate. In order to avoid secondary poisoning risks to non-target species, current product authorisations restrict the use of SGARs in open areas to farmers, gamekeepers and other trained professionals where other integrated pest management approaches fail to control rodent populations. Some SGARs, including brodifacoum, can only be used in sewers and in and around buildings. There has been no change in the authorised areas of use of brodifacoum products since the renewals of their authorisations from 2017.

A stewardship scheme is in place in the UK for professional use of SGARs, including brodifacoum. A cornerstone of the stewardship scheme is the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) Code of Best Practice, which sets out guidance on the safe use of rodenticides. It is a legal requirement to comply with this Code.

"The stewardship scheme is overseen by a Government Oversight Group (GOG) led by HSE with representatives of other government stakeholders, who meet annually to assess its impact.

"This year the GOG is conducting a review of the stewardship scheme after five years of operation and will publish its findings in due course. The review will look at the performance of the scheme in three key areas: the governance of the supply chain, improving workforce competence and the monitoring of compliance. The latter includes considering the monitoring of exposure arrangements and looking in more detail at monitoring data."

Pest control regulation

On 5 April 2022, Jim Shannon MP asked the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will take steps to streamline the regulatory framework applying to pest control.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Rebecca Pow replied, "Local authorities have certain responsibilities for the control of some types of pest and have the flexibility to allocate resources to address local priorities, based on an assessment of risk.

"Local priorities will vary across geographical areas and might involve one or more type of pest such as wasps, rats, mice and bedbugs. Under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, local authorities have a duty to deal with infestations of rats and mice. Defra has no plans to amend this legislation."

Scary world of politics



It's hard to keep track of all the pest control chatter in each devolved administration. Never fear – BPCA is in regular communication with different government departments and politicians. We're here to represent pest management at every level. Read more about our lobbying work on page 35.

Remember, if you want to talk to your MP, BPCA can support the conversation.

hello@bpca.org.uk

PESTEX'22 ROUND-UP



After a longer than usual wait, pest professionals from all over the world came together for the first time in two years, as PestEx finally returned to ExCeL in London on 16 and 17 March. PPC's roving reporter, Kat Shaw rounds up her first time at the pest management show.

From a BPCA Staff team perspective, the road to this event has been a long one – when it became clear that Covid restrictions would prevent PestEx 2021 taking place, it was all hands on deck to provide an alternative and then plan for the return of the live show.

And while PestExtra was a great way to connect digitally (and we even won an award for it) the team were delighted to get the go-ahead for an in-person show this year.

Over two days, 1,460 visitors, some from as far away as the USA and Australia, poured into the ExCeL exhibition hall, ready to network, learn and make lasting connections.

Here's how it went.

EXHIBITORS

More than 80 pest management manufacturers and distributors packed out the exhibition hall with incredible-looking stands, fantastic new products and creative games with giveaways for winners.

Lots of PestEx regulars were in attendance, like Bayer, Bell Labs, Killgerm and Lodi UK, all with impressive and busy stands.

It's worth noting that Ienv were added to Bayer's list of pest control product distributors at the start of this year, making them the first new distributor for Bayer in over a decade.

The Lodi team's superhero backdrop was a talking point, drawing the eye and the attendees in too.

Smaller exhibitors like Airgun Training and Education Organisation (ATEO), RSPH and International Pest Control (IPC) are a staple at these types of events, so it was nice to see those familiar faces back again.

We spoke to Anna Wilson-Barnes from British manufacturer PelGar, who insisted that PestEx is "firmly fixed in the PelGar calendar, as the UK's largest pest control show and a must attend event."

She said, "It's where we can reconnect with our peers and customers, catch up on industry news, launch new products and maintain our exposure as the leading manufacturer in global pest control."

Sussex-based PestFix team had a lot to bring to the event this year. They're well known as specialists in the bird sector and general distributors, but they were able to show visitors all the other products and services that PestFix now has to offer.

Anna Mollins was at the event representing PestFix. She commented: "PestEx 2022 was delightful, we felt like we were dusting off the cobwebs after the pandemic had forced the industry onto electronic meets only.

"As always, BPCA pulled out all the stops to make the event run smoothly and provide visitors with two days packed with activities, learning and insights.

"At no point was our stand empty of visitors, PestEx is one of the best industry events in which we strengthen and build connections, both national and international."

“PestEx 2022 was delightful, we felt like we were dusting off the cobwebs after the pandemic...”





COMPETITIONS AND GIVEAWAYS

From the Barretine F1 racing simulator to BASF's ever-popular Whack-a-Rat, and with new exhibitors like BBWear holding competitions, there was plenty for attendees to try and win.

And that's not to mention the PROtect at PestEx reaction game on the BPCA stand, which saw those with the speediest reactions duke it out for the top prize – a PS5.



In the end, a high score of 51 bagged technician **Alister Ketley (St George's Pest Control)** the games console, with runner up prizes for the following:

- **Harry Miller, Destrodent Pest Control**
10 Rotech Alert Rat trap tunnels and 20 Rotech rat snap traps (1env)
- **Scott Mckenzie, Acute Pest Control**
Elleven TSA 17" computer backpacks with techtrap (BASF)
- **Karen Brett, John O'Conner Pest Control**
A family of plush gulls (Jones & Son)
- **Harry Tucker, Prokill Shropshire**
Installer pack of Ratwall (Metex)
- **Matt Edwards, Predator Pest Solutions**
Pestfix product bundle
- **Steven Trim, Venomtech**
Ultra Bee Suit (BBWear)
- **Daniel Stanley, Wynsdale Waste Management**
Killgerm vouchers
- **Nick Webb, John O'Conner Pest Control**
Amazon Echo dot
- **Martin Watret, Covkil Pest Control**
Ferret Pro inspection bundle (Barretine)



Then all you need to do is cut it to size and shape – because of the steel mesh, you should cut the tape with tin snips and ensure gloves are worn as the cut edges can be sharp.

Mark also has further tips on applying Rat Tape: "Don't use disposable gloves, as the Rat Tape sticks to it and just pulls them off. Wear a dedicated pair of thick gloves. We use scissors to press onto the tape to stick in position."

Italian manufacturers Microwave Technology SRL were there for the first time with a range of non-toxic pest control solutions.

You would have found it hard to miss the huge metal box taking up a large part of the stand. Luca Bernabei, Technical Director at Microwave Technology SR, told us it was designed for the treatment of woodworms, their larvae and eggs. "You place affected furniture inside and it sterilises the wood safely, stopping the whole lifecycle. We also have portable systems for wooden ceiling beams and even bigger machines than this for soil sterilisation!" he explained.



We spoke to Luca about their first time exhibiting at PestEx. He said: "Exhibitions are always a good time, so we're very happy to be here."

"We've been producing microwave technologies for various industries for over 25 years and we're glad to be showing them here in London."

Another new and busy stand was the Fen Pest Control set up – their thermal imaging equipment drew quite the crowd. The team told PPC that they were even struggling to find time to go for their lunch!

One very popular newcomer was the BBWear stand, manned by James Bright and Andy Roberts (and guest-starring the always cheery Robert Moon). The stand was hard to get to at times, with a crowd of visitors interested in the company's Ultra Bee Suits.

In fact, the suit was so popular that a lot of people told us they wanted to win one in the PROtect at PestEx game instead of the PS5! Luckily BBWear had already generously donated one as a runner-up prize, which is now winging its way to Steven Trim at VenomTech.

James is the Sales Director at BBWear, and he told PPC magazine how much the team enjoyed the show. He said: "The event was really well organised, and it was a great trade hall too."

"It was great to get in front of a new market and show off our suits. I was told by a few people that our suit was the product of the show, so that's quite something!

"Overall I am very pleased with how it went; nothing but positivity and good feedback from the customers, and an incredible amount of interest. It's really good to be there in person so people can see and feel the product."

And it's fair to say they made quite an impression.



“ It's really good to be there in person so people can see and feel the product. ”



PESTEX'22 SEMINARS

On the roster for giving seminars as well as exhibiting were representatives from Syngenta, PestFix, Planet Mark, Deadline Products, CRRU, Bayer, Syngenta, Killgerm, BASF and Edialux.

Alongside these speakers were industry experts like Alex Wade, Grahame Turner and Kunal Puri. Some of the seminar highlights included:

- A talk from Dr Alex Kew, an expert from the Hospital for Tropical Diseases London, who gave a great talk on the medical implications of contact with pest species
- An overview of the recent paper on the assessment of common rat management methods and related welfare impacts, from the author herself, Dr Sandra Baker
- A licensing panel discussion from members of the BPCA Team; Chief Executive Ian Andrew, Training Manager Karen Dawes and Head of Membership and Technical Dee Ward-Thompson.

Some of the most popular talks were the case studies in our new Spotlight Theatre, which saw topics on mental health, pest control in Afghanistan, rodents in horse stables, moths in food businesses and much more, from a variety of knowledgeable speakers.

Ian Andrew, BPCA Chief Executive, commented: "There's nothing better than seeing the whole spectrum of the pest control sector coming together in real life once more.

"Our exhibitors were fantastic. Their stands looked amazing and kept the visitors well engaged.

"However, PestEx isn't just about technicians and business owners finding new products.

Important connections were made at every level.

"The BPCA team has learned a lot about connecting with the pest community digitally over the last couple of years, but that will never replace the physical human connection that our sector's built on.

"From the team talks in the coffee area, to the collaborations between exhibitors, and the ideas shared between companies from across the world – nothing beats PestEx for making long-lasting relationships."

He continued, "Exhibitor and visitor feedback so far has been extremely positive. For us, the main celebration was that PestEx finally went ahead.

"Beyond that, there is no point in comparing it to previous years as the world and how we live our lives daily has changed. The whole events sector is still very much in recovery, and while I'm sure attendance figures will grow again in the future, we were extremely pleased with the 1,460 visitors we welcomed to ExCeL.

"Our range of seminars was exceptional, with many filled to the point where it was standing room only.

We'd especially like to thank those amazing speakers from outside the sector that came to share their insights.

"I was very encouraged by the number of international exhibitors and visitors. I welcomed guests from sister associations, including the USA, Australia, Europe and Pakistan. I was delighted that Dominique Stumph could join us at our 80th-anniversary celebration at the Palace of Westminster, home of the UK parliament.

"Thanks again to everyone who made PestEx 2022 so special, and we look forward to seeing you at PPC Live in Harrogate, Yorkshire next March."

Lauren Day, Events Manager at BPCA, added: "We were thrilled to be back at ExCeL for PestEx again and it was amazing to see all the effort our exhibitors put into making their stands exciting and engaging.

"As always, we couldn't do it without their support and the support of our seminar speakers, so a huge thank you to them.

"And of course, the BPCA Staff team had a wonderful time meeting attendees and putting faces to names, and we can't wait to do it all again next year at PPC Live!"



THE NUMBERS!

PestEx 2022 as rated by visitors and exhibitors...

GOOD/ EXCELLENT

87%

EXHIBITOR RANGE

91%

SEMINAR VARIETY

94%

VENUE

95%

SEMINAR QUALITY

96%

PESTEX WEBSITE

97%

BPCA STAND

98%

GENERAL ATMOSPHERE

98%

REGISTRATION SPEED

98%

STAFF HELPFULNESS

2015	1,605	1,040	487	228	1,527	1,755
2017	1,307	1,146	699	298	1,845	2,143
2019	2,109	1,448	935	332	2,383	2,715
2022	2,691	920	540	208	1,460	1,668
	PRE-REGISTERED VISITORS	DAY 1 VISITORS	DAY 2 VISITORS	2-DAY VISITORS	TOTAL VISITORS	TOTAL VISITS EXC. EXHIBITORS

The development of PestEx since 2015



THE PANDEMIC EFFECT IS CLEAR - BUT NUMBERS ARE ENCOURAGING AND A SIGN OF A RETURN TO FORM.



88%

UK vs international visitors

UK

OVERSEAS

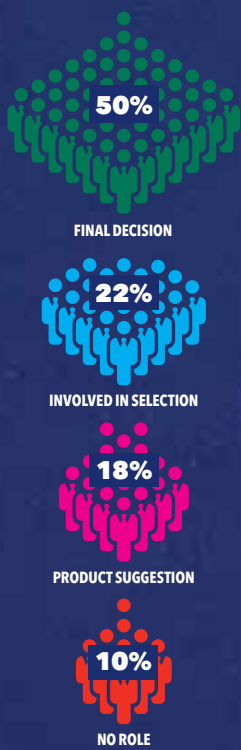
12%



Why did people attend?

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT A PRODUCT	77%
TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE	73%
TO ATTEND A SPECIFIC MEETING OR MEET A COLLEAGUE	42%
TO NETWORK	50%
TO ATTEND SEMINARS	41%
TO EARN CPD POINTS	36%
TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE INDUSTRY AS A NEWCOMER	17%
TO FIND NEW PRODUCTS OR SERVICES	16%

Visitor role in the buying process



Visitor role in pest management

RODENT CONTROL	77%
INSECT CONTROL	76%
BIRD CONTROL	55%
FOOD INDUSTRY	38%
FUMIGATION	36%
SALES AND MARKETING	29%
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT	28%
TRAINING	20%
AGRICULTURAL	20%
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT	19%
COUNCIL / LOCAL AUTHORITY	18%
CONSULTANCY	16%
ADMINISTRATION	14%
NEW TO THE INDUSTRY	11%
SPECIFIER	4%

Top 5 ways to hear about PestEx

- EMAIL INVITE 34%
- BPCA WEBSITE bpc.org.uk 21%
- WORD OF MOUTH 15%
- FACEBOOK 5%
- PEST CONTROL NEWS 5%

How did you rate the exhibitors?



Did you find the product or service you were looking for? **92%** REPLIED YES

Would exhibitors recommend PestEx to customers? **98%** REPLIED YES

BPCA SAVE THE DATE!
PPC LIVE
The professional pest control show

22 MARCH 2023 Yorkshire Event Centre, Harrogate
bpc.org.uk/ppclive

LICENSING IS COMING: LOOK BUSY



SHOULD THE PEST MANAGEMENT
SECTOR BE LICENSED?

Papers, please! Pest professionals already operate under certain licensed conditions for some of the work we do, such as bird control and Glis glis. Rodenticide stewardship and other voluntary qualification checks at the point of sale are already established. Formal requirements are likely to broaden further with glue board licensing on the horizon.

We're left with some big questions:

- Is it better that the activities of a pest professional are licensed on a piecemeal basis, or should we push for a fully licensed sector?
- Should it be the pest technician who is licensed rather than just some of the activities they undertake?
- Should professional products only be available to trained users?
- As a sector, are we ready for licensing?

PESTEX PANEL HIGHLIGHTS

BPCA Chief Exec Ian Andrew on licensing

To be absolutely clear, there are no plans from BPCA or the UK governments to implement licensing for pest control. That said we can't stick our heads in the sand – it might well come in at some point.

Much of our work already comes with licensed conditions and there's no doubt there will be more that will end up licensed. We need to be ready for that.

Different sectors get licenced at different times and for different reasons. Often it takes some horrific circumstance – like a death that led to the gas sector being licensed. Most recently, tattoo artists have been licensed because of the risk of infections.

Pest controllers deal with substances that can cause illness, even if death is unlikely. So we absolutely need to be ready if tragedy comes to the sector.

We're clear that BPCA members, in particular, are well positioned for licensing. We suspect much of the broader sector is too, although there's no way for us to confirm that as we don't have the visibility in those areas. As a sector, we'll find ourselves caught out if we don't get things in place should licensing happen. However, all the marks of professionalism that we would need in order to obtain a licence, like qualifications, CPD and so on, are all criteria of BPCA membership anyway. That makes our members uniquely future-proofed.

If you look across the channel to our neighbours, most European countries have some form of licensing for pest controllers. The situation in the UK is quite

rare in that we aren't licensed, although there have been schemes unfolding over the years that came close to it. The Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use Stewardship scheme is like a licensing system, so we have a lot of good frameworks that can be built upon.

This is about readiness, about getting to the point where we're confident that we can prove to the government, or anyone else, that we are professional.

From a quick show of hands, we see that about two thirds of the audience believe we should be licensed.

BPCA Training and Development Manager Karen Dawes on demonstrating professionalism

A licensing scheme will have, at its heart, a skilled and competent workforce; BPCA and its members have already been doing quite a bit of work around that to provide the building blocks should licensing ever come.

One of the things that you will already know about is BPCA Registered, an individual recognition and CPD scheme we launched in 2019.

It enables individuals to demonstrate that they've got the training and the qualifications. And because we recognise unstructured learning, that also goes quite a way to demonstrating competence.

"Papers please! ...we'll find ourselves caught out if we don't get things in place should licensing happen."



DISCUSSION TIME

As you can see, we have already been operating under various licences and more are expected. However, those are for certain types of pest control and we just don't know whether or not every individual will need to be licensed to do general pest control.

Does the government want us to be licensed? The simple answer is no, they have got no appetite for licensing. Does it mean it won't ever happen? No, but absolutely not at the moment.

Rather than having it thrust upon us, our aim is to make sure we've got the right things in place if that day comes.

We're in a much stronger position now than we've ever been to face something like that.

And, of course, licensing operates differently across the four nations of the UK, but none of the four governments have any appetite for general licensing of pest control.

PPC I think we should be pushing, if we can, for licensing of pest control as a sector. The reason I'm thinking that is because on different fronts we have problems with products being misused and then taken away. So if we had proof of professionalism, we could protect our toolkit and the future of our industry. But how do you prove someone is a professional?

IAN A definition of a professional pest controller was

signed off by CEPA a couple of years ago and it's what BPCA membership criteria covers. So that's training, qualifications, CPD requirements, competency and so on. So, that definition exists, and these are the marks of a professional and we are fortunate that BPCA members meet that definition. We've still got some work to do on the competency element as Karen mentioned, but I'm sure most businesses have got a way of signing off staff to do the job.

PPC Does BPCA want pest control to be licensed?

IAN I think it could do members a lot of good if we are licensed, but obviously we don't want you to have the additional burdens that a licensing regime would bring. But if it is only that you're showing your training, your qualifications, your CPD and some sort of assessment of competence why wouldn't we? All of these things are in place already, across most of our members.

PPC What worries me is making sure that the licence is the same in all four nations across the UK. Otherwise it won't be a level playing field and companies that operate across multiple nations will have a difficult time trying to manage it all.

IAN Absolutely, if it was going to be that all pest controllers need to be licensed then my stance would

be it's got to be the same across the nations, so a very good point.

PPC Would a licence stop amateur use of pesticides?

DEE It's a big topic with our membership - lots of our conversations with the government suggest that they are not going to get rid of amateur use products ever, it's not going to happen. What we have seen over the last few years is a change in the amount of product that amateurs can buy, so the actual toxicity to the LD50 and pack sizes is less for amateur users. But, as far as the government is concerned, we always need to give people the option to do it themselves. And you know, if you think about other things that we can actually buy, such as bleach for example, there are products that are quite dangerous. When HSE grades things it uses criteria like how dangerous it is for the environment, how dangerous it is to the end-user and so on. Amateur pest control products, if used in the right way, don't show a huge risk as far as HSE is concerned. I think even if licensing did come out for professionals, amateur products are never going to go away.

It's a big education piece really: making the public aware that if you don't get a professional you could be making the problem worse. And BPCA does a lot of work around that.

It's going extremely well, with nearly 3,000 individuals already on BPCA Registered.

Last year a BPCA working group, part of the Professional Standards Committee, was tasked with exploring what a qualification framework would look like five years from now. If we started with a blank piece of paper what would the basic qualification for a pest professional look like and what would be needed?

Another avenue we've been working on is the assessment process, to make sure that we can assess the ability to conduct pest management competently. This morning you might have seen the 3D competency assessment 'TechAssure' over on the BPCA stand. Last year, we received funding through Ufi VocTech to develop a competency assessment that mimics a realistic environment, where pest controllers can enter, move around as they would in a real job and be able to identify the pest causing the problem and the best treatments. This will give technicians the ability to demonstrate competency in a safe but realistic way.

Learn about TechAssure and the Ufi VocTech scheme.
bpc.org.uk/ufi-funding

We also have another working group that's exploring gap analysis of practical training that BPCA currently offers.

It's all good preparation for if licences do come in, as we'll have those building blocks already set in place.

BPCA Head of Technical and Membership Dee Ward-Thompson on licensing history

I've been around the industry quite a while now, and every grey hair I've developed is from being in pest control. When I first joined the industry there was very little that even looked remotely like licensing, but in the intervening years I think we can all agree the landscape has changed quite a lot.

Government has never really been keen on licensing pest controllers. However, over those years we have seen more and more things that come in that either are described as licensing or look like licensing.

If we think back to 2015, that was quite a turning point for pest management companies. Stewardship came in and, while that isn't a licence per se, it does require rodenticide users to gain a qualification.

Then, if you think of insecticides, most of you will know that when you go to manufacturers and distributors to buy their products, they expect you to show your competency in one way or another. So it's not licensing as such but you will have to show some sort of qualification.

Then we nearly lost aluminium phosphide, and I know Karen was really involved and so was RAMPS when we came under attack on that front. Everyone involved worked really hard to keep that product on the market, but you have to have a qualification. So again, they didn't call it licensing but you have to have a qualification now to buy aluminium phosphide.

"So it's not licensing as such but you will have to show some sort of qualification."

How many of you remember the day that, all of a sudden, the general licences got revoked? That was a very stressful year and it put the sector under a lot of pressure.

Fortunately, they were revised and now most pest control companies are familiar with having to apply for a licence.

The closest thing to what we're hoping for when it comes to glue board licensing, which is incoming, is licences for controlling Glis glis. In terms of knowing what to expect, it's worth doing some CPD and having a look at those, to see how they work.

In short, you have to be qualified, you have to have had experience in capturing Glis glis or an equivalent mammal and then you apply for a licence. That licence lasts for a year and you can trap them up and down the country. So, like with Glis glis, not having to apply for a glue board licence on a case-by-case basis is an ideal situation, otherwise we worry it won't be workable.

THREE DECADES IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

At PestEx in March, Paul Butt gave a seminar on his experience working in the pest control field, with a focus on the highs, the lows and some examples of cases he worked on during his tenure in wildlife management.

The talk began with Paul ticking off the years and realising that it should really be titled 'Four decades in wildlife management', laughing that time has a way of getting away from him. We can all relate to that!

But how did he get started all those decades ago? Paul tells us that prior to going to agricultural college, he completed an apprenticeship. This was followed by his first full-time job at the National Institute for Research into Dairying ("it inevitably became known as a NIRD!" he laughs).

In 1974, he joined the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) as a Field Officer in Maidstone, Kent.

"This was a varied role involving three main areas," says Paul, "authorising grants and subsidies, farm safety monitoring and advising on vertebrate species pest control."

During this time he developed an interest in wildlife-related problems and pesticides; providing advice, responding to complaints, and handling incidents related to the storage and use of a range of pesticides.

Paul explained in detail the hazards associated with working in agriculture.

"Farms had the potential to be dangerous working environments, and remain so to this day. Machinery hazards were regularly encountered and worker exposure to a wide range of pesticide compounds (including organophosphorus) was a concern.



"Large air blast sprayers were routinely employed to apply a range of chemicals to the large areas of fruit and hops grown in Kent at that time. The images of machine operators kitted out in varying levels and efficiency of PPE, receiving head to foot significant doses of colourful pesticides, live long in the memory!"

Subsequently, responsibility for farm safety transferred to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), a career option that Paul chose not to follow.

Countryside conflicts

Continuing on his path in the pest control and wildlife management fields, Paul's casework was generally dominated by seeking the co-operation of land occupiers to address the damage to growing crops caused by rabbits harboured on their land.

"This was covered by the Pests Act 1954, a piece of legislation now lost in the sands of time," says Paul. "Many an hour was spent walking land areas, which included rail and major road embankments that provided ideal habitat for these animals."

He expresses frustration at some of what he calls the "countryside conflicts" he had to deal with. "It often became apparent that the main motivation for the complaints were neighbour disputes over aspects such as boundary issues and claims of rabbits being used as a weapon in 'the fight'."

One of the stories Paul tells during his talk is that of an individual who was turned down for a licence to remove badgers from land she wanted to build on, and wrote a letter to call him "the worst type of uncaring civil servant". Paul tells the audience that he took this as a compliment and was one of many points in his career that had an influence on him.

However on a positive note, these cases did help to develop his negotiating skills and the art of persuasion proved useful in a wide range of future situations. "After all, how often do we complain that it is the people involved that are the problem,

not the wildlife that are unfortunate enough to be present!?" he exclaims.

As in many roles, people-skills were key factors that could only be developed through experience.



MAFF had a close working relationship with local authorities who ran their own pest control departments, and this provided an early opportunity for Paul to become involved in providing training on a range of mammal and bird-related topics.

"I consider myself fortunate to have received training and instruction from both experienced local colleagues and staff at the Pest Laboratory in Worplesdon, Surrey," says Paul.

"It was established to develop improved methods for preventing damage by harmful mammals and birds, and their colleagues in the laboratory at Tolworth were charged with undertaking research into food losses caused by rodents."

An opportunity arose for Paul to be seconded to the Worplesdon site, to become involved in a study of rabbit clearance societies. These were formed by groups of local landowners/occupiers and supported by MAFF.

This work also involved field trials on fencing to exclude rabbits and other control/damage reduction measures.

On the move - again!

A change of location to Oxfordshire came next for Paul, and his role became focused on the wider issues of mammal and bird management, and helping to develop policies and procedures for the wildlife teams as a whole.

Providing guidance to advisers and setting up training for staff became a regular responsibility.

Promotion followed, with a move to Norwich where similar work continued, accompanied by the inevitable management responsibilities.

"My last move was to Kent, virtually coming full circle to 'home territory' despite it taking about 20 years to achieve," says Paul.

"Here I took on a new role at Natural England, with responsibility for wildlife management work across Kent, Surrey, East and West Sussex."

It triggered a new era that enabled Paul to develop contact and effective working practices between Natural England and the pest control industry.

Over the subsequent years, significant wildlife management issues provided a great deal of work for the teams across the UK.

Protected species licensing of otherwise illegal actions formed a major part of this, and included badger damage and site development casework, the impact of fish eating birds on commercial fisheries, and numerous other mammal and bird-related problems.

Challenges and changes

Paul says that the actual or potential involvement of wildlife in the transmission of disease to humans and livestock became a real issue.

These included the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak of 2000, where demand for the control of rats on affected farms resulted in a large-scale national programme.

Avian Influenza had a serious impact on poultry enterprises and again, rodent control was required.

Longer term problems relating to the presence and spread of Salmonella in commercial egg production farms, where significant infestations

of house mice were often present, resulted in collaboration on projects with the Defra Veterinary Laboratory Agency.

Concerns regarding anticoagulant residues in wildlife had a big impact on the availability and use of rodenticides particularly in outdoor locations.

"Joint working with manufacturers, distributors, users and regulators enabled important changes to be introduced and guidelines published under the guidance of CRRU," he commented.

"This demonstrated the importance of dialogue between Defra, HSE and the industry as the way forward in resolving problems, particularly where there are diverse interests and pressures."

Major changes to the approvals, availability and use of a wide range of pesticides in all sectors played a major part of the work that Paul undertook, as education, awareness and, where necessary enforcement, played a significant part in encouraging responsible use.

Incidents and cases involving the misuse (careless, negligent use) and abuse (deliberate targeting



of wildlife and other animals) were investigated under the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS). This encouraged working relationships with a number of agencies including the police, RSPCA, RSPB and other organisations.

"I am of the opinion that building relationships with the numerous action groups, industry bodies and individuals who often undertook work behind the scenes contributed significantly to advancing an understanding on sensitive and complicated issues," explains Paul.

"Feeding back information to Defra and others, and introducing such subject matter through training and briefing of wildlife adviser groups, helped considerably in achieving a better understanding of respective interests and responsibilities."

Changes to Natural England, and the direction of policies involving wildlife and the role that should be adopted by the advisory teams involved, persuaded Paul that the time was right to step away.

"However, despite having taken this decision I look back with very few regrets and count myself as fortunate to have been allowed the time and latitude to develop what was a unique role," summarised Paul. "And to have met such a diverse range of individuals (despite my earlier comment that it's the people not the wildlife that are the problem) was the most stimulating and rewarding thing."

"...an individual who was turned down for a licence to remove badgers from land she wanted to build on ...wrote a letter to call him 'the worst type of uncaring civil servant'."



TECHIE LEGAL TOOLBOX

Pest management professionals aren't just 'ratcatchers'. In order to carry out our jobs safely and effectively, we need an understanding of the law. Here's a quick rundown of the most important pieces of legislation you need to keep up-to-date with.

Log your CPD

Reading updated or new legislation can count towards your BPCA Registered unstructured learning. Even re-reading old legislation to refresh your knowledge counts. Record your points at bpca.org.uk/add

PEOPLE

Public Health Act 1936/1961

With most public health issues, it's the local authorities that take responsibility for implementing public health legislation. Depending on how the local authority is structured, there will be something like a clean neighbourhoods team, with environmental officers who carry out inspections, and implement any legislation.

- Section 19 – disconnection of drains and the sealing of disused or unnecessary drain to be sealed
- Section 29 – demolition of structures
- Section 74 – local authorities have power to deal with nuisance or damage from certain bird species in built up areas.

PLACES

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

Every local authority is responsible for keeping as far as practical their district free of rats and mice.

They do this by:

- Carrying out periodic inspection of their areas
- Destroy rats and mice on land occupied by the authorities
- Enforce private landowners to control rats and mice on their land.

CRITTERS

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

This makes it an offence to kick, beat, impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild animal with the intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

Animal Welfare Act 2006

Under this Act it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering (physical or mental) to an animal under your control; this is anything from pets to rats caught in a live catch trap.

THINGS

The Small Ground Vermin Traps Order 1958

This covers all traps that have been adapted for the destruction of rats, mice or other small ground vermin.

Control of Pesticides Regulations (COPR) 1986 and Biocidal Products Regulations (BPR) 2012

COPR and BPR approve pesticides. Without approval, a chemical can't be advertised, supplied, used or even stored. COPR will eventually be replaced by BPR.

Rag Flock and Other Filling Materials Regulations 1981

All filling materials to which this act applies are sold free of vermin. The classification of vermin under this act is eggs, larvae and pupae of insects and parasites.

Pest Act 1954

The whole of England and Wales is a rabbit clearance area (excluding the City of London, the Isles of Scilly and Skokholm Island.)

London Local Authorities Act 2004

Used by any London borough council to control bird populations causing a nuisance. This could be a build-up of birds under a bridge, causing risk to health and safety to the public below.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

This act covers a large range of issues, from crime and disorder to nuisance parking, litter and stray dogs.

- Section 101 – applies to any insect emanating from a relevant industrial, trade or business premises and being prejudicial to health or a nuisance.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

This act is in four parts. It is part one which is of particular relevance to those carrying out pest control work. You will also find the schedules of protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. It is this Act which influences bird licensing.

Protection of Animals Act 1911-27

This has largely been replaced by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 but two sections still remain relevant to pest control. Section 8 makes it illegal to lay poison on any land or within any building, except for the control of insects, other invertebrates, rats, mice and other small ground vermin. Section 10 states that spring traps for hares and rabbits shall be inspected at reasonable intervals at least once a day, between sunrise and sunset.

SCRAN

Food Safety Act 1984

The Food Safety Act is managed by the local authority's environmental health team and implemented by environmental health officers. They will use improvement notices, prohibition orders and emergency prohibition orders to deal with food safety issues.

Food and Environmental Protection Act (FEPA) 1985

Part 3 of FEPA protects the health of human beings, creatures and plants, safeguards the environment, gives secure, safe and humane methods of pest control and makes information about pesticides available to the public.

The Food Hygiene Regulations (England) 2006

Adequate procedures to control pests must be in place:

- Proofing where pests can enter
- Insect screens where applicable
- Electronic fly killers (EFKs)
- Good stock rotation (FIFO or first in first out)
- Regular surveys by a competent person.

HOW REGULATED IS PEST MANAGEMENT IN THE UK?



Pest management is highly skilled work. However, entry requirements to the sector are lower than other comparable trades. We asked Senior Regulatory Manager Dawn Kirby from BPCA member company Rentokil to look at current regulation and speculate on what may change.

To work in pest management, you need to be thorough, have good attention to detail, and communicate well with the customer. Patience is also essential, as is the ability to work well under pressure. The working environment can be dirty, cramped and sometimes at height. There is a requirement to have good investigative skills and knowledge of pest identification and behaviour.

The ability to carry out minor repairs is also useful to prevent pests from entering the building, and collecting dead animals is often not for the faint-hearted. Knowledge and skill are needed to choose the correct method of pest control, handle the often hazardous materials, and stay within the law that governs activities within the industry.

There are so many rules to follow, record keeping requirements, risk assessment and other paperwork to complete – but just how regulated is the pest management industry in the UK?

What is regulated?

Depending on where you fit into the pest control industry will probably influence the first thing you think of when posed with the question, “How regulated is the pest management industry in the UK?”

Products **HIGH REGULATION**

Manufacturers and distributors will probably immediately think of the authorisation of pesticide products under the UK’s national legislation.

Everyone will think of the extensive labelling requirements, products being withdrawn from the market or more restrictions being applied.

Chemical pesticides are regulated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Chemicals Regulation Division (CRD). Chemical manufacturers submit swaths of evidence of the safety and efficacy of products – CRD then approves (or rejects) the product and generates label conditions that are legally required to be followed. The process is robust, time-consuming and expensive.

Previously this was done at a European level; however post-Brexit, the UK now looks after its own chemical approval system. We are (for now at least) reasonably aligned with the EU regarding chemical regulation.

Product users

MEDIUM-LOW REGULATION

The UK has no licenced pest technicians or mandatory professional bodies for companies like many other countries do.

Instead, we have many voluntary ‘self-regulating’ initiatives to help technicians conform to legislation, such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the legally-binding label conditions of biocides. Remember - the label is the law!

Qualifications like the RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management, various Codes of Best Practice and guidance documents are in place to ensure pest controllers understand how to control pests safely while remaining compliant.

Labels of professional products now regularly state they can only be applied by ‘trained professionals’. However, no official definition of a ‘trained professional’ exists, but note that CRRU UK keeps a list of approved training courses to purchase professional rodenticides.

CRRU UK is an interesting example of self-regulation that is almost second nature to us now. The CRRU Code and guidance documents regularly appear on rodenticide labels, meaning that they are effectively the law too.



There is also legislation in place to protect non-target species and wildlife, their breeding sites, and there are clear rules relating to the safe and humane use of live capture traps.

Service Users **LOW REGULATION**

While not the focus of this article, it’s worth pointing out that service users are not usually required to control pests, with a few exceptions.

Food premises must keep premises pest-free but are not required to hire a professional to conduct the work.

Local authorities and councils are required to keep their local areas rat and mouse free, as far as is reasonably practicable.

Why all the regulations?

The tight regulation of pest management is there to mandate the requirement to safeguard the health of the public and prevent damage to property, and the rules ensure it is done safely and humanely, with a high level of protection for humans and the environment.

There will be plenty of opinions about whether the current level of regulation is sufficient.

Some of the UK’s close neighbours in the EU have comparable levels of regulation relating to pest management, while others approach regulation of the industry in a different way. For example, certification of pest technicians, category of users, and restriction of chemical product use outdoors.

Without a doubt, the pest control industry continues to evolve as a result of new innovation, technology and skills, and the regulations that form a foundation for the industry will also adapt and change.

/continued...



What is the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Usage (CRRU UK)?

Government agencies responsible for the regulation of rodenticides have raised concern that many species of wildlife, such as barn owls, kestrels and red kites, are being accidentally exposed to these products. These agencies have called for better stewardship of rodenticides to prevent wildlife exposure.

CRRU UK is a response to that call. Under the banner ‘Think Wildlife’, CRRU promotes best practice and responsible rodent control, thereby protecting wildlife from rodenticide exposure.

thinkwildlife.org

HOW REGULATED IS PEST MANAGEMENT IN THE UK?

“...pest controllers will need to prepare for further regulation in the future, otherwise, business operations cannot continue. Simply having worked in the industry for many years will not be enough.”

The future of regulation

The basics of good pest control will never change, but what does the future look like?

Despite exiting the EU, the UK regulator remains closely aligned to their regulatory decisions. We are seeing moves to ban glue traps in England (with similar moves in Scotland and Wales) under the Glue Traps (Offences) Bill. For England and Wales, glue traps will likely remain for use under licence, but we wait to see what licensing looks like.

Conversations continue under the EU NoCheRo (No Chemical Control of Rodents) Initiative about the need to test the quality and performance of break-back traps when users are aware that the power of these traps can vary widely.

The UK regulator has recently enforced a requirement that all tamper-resistant bait boxes used for rodent control must be fit for purpose. The requirement is detailed on the product label, but they should be lockable/sealable and strong enough to prevent destruction by children or dogs, and weather conditions.

Monitoring of pests has always formed an important part of integrated pest management, but technology is changing the face of how this is done. Digital and internet-connected traps continuously transmit data about rodent conditions and the number of animals caught. While inspections will remain important, there is the possibility of doing more remotely and sustainably.

There is a general trend to control pests sustainably with the minimum environmental impact, whether that is reducing energy outputs, reducing plastic, reducing pesticide use or choosing non-toxic alternatives such as traps.

Regulators are keen to reduce chemical control methods through the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability initiative, which has a zero

pollution ambition, but the green agenda is also driven by the customers who are looking for pest controllers to deliver pest management more sustainably.

Final thoughts: what does this mean for the pest controller?

Pest management has always been a highly skilled industry, operating within a regulatory framework.

Currently, a large percentage of the regulation is self-governed and this is largely done at the product level with some success. As product users, engaging and volunteering with your trade association is a great way of having a say in what self-regulation looks like in the UK.

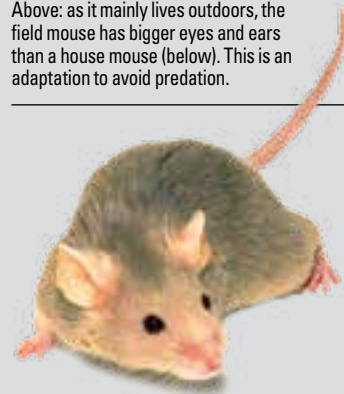
Either way, pest controllers will need to prepare for further regulation in the future, otherwise, business operations cannot continue. There will be more training to access products, and prove competence to buy products which can be picked up easily today. It could be completed via CPD points or a licensing scheme. Simply having worked in the industry for many years will not be enough. We don't know what form this increased regulation will take, but these regulations will continue to evolve in order to meet the growing needs of the population that lives alongside pests of all shapes and sizes.

There will always be a balance between controlling the pests and the risk of disease and damage. Still, the legal framework allows standards and quality to be maintained while ensuring pests are controlled with minimum risk to operators, bystanders and the environment.

Environmental considerations will drive a lot of the future regulatory decisions, as will the fast pace of new technology and innovation, which will likely reduce some of the need for chemicals.



Above: as it mainly lives outdoors, the field mouse has bigger eyes and ears than a house mouse (below). This is an adaptation to avoid predation.

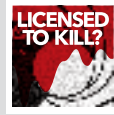


An online CPD quiz based on this feature is now available on the BPCA website. BPCA affiliates can take a CPD quiz at any time bpca.org.uk/cpd-quiz or sign up at bpca.org.uk/affiliate

“Apodemus sp. is not a protected species and therefore, under certain circumstances, can be legally controlled - albeit never deliberately with rodenticides.”

PESTWATCH

FIELD MICE CONTROL



In this issue of PestWatch, guest author Chris Parmiter from BPCA Consultant Member company Pesttrain clarifies the legal nuances of controlling field mice in the UK.

Clarification of rodenticide product labels by CRRU UK (Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use) in 2020 highlighted that the widely used authorisation phrase of ‘mice’ on the products label should only be interpreted as ‘house mice’ (*Mus domesticus*).

As a result of this update, and the more specific wording relating to *Mus domesticus* only, ‘field mice’ (*Apodemus* sp.), cannot legally be controlled using any rodenticides on the UK market.

While this change has been rightly welcomed by most and has many environmental benefits, it has led to confusion as to whether it is ever appropriate to control *Apodemus* sp., even with non-rodenticide methods. Many professionals are confused with regards to the different meanings of the terms ‘non-target’ and ‘protected’ and indeed whether they can ever be categorised as a pest or be lethally controlled with traps.

Definitions

Pest – widely accepted as any living organism which has the potential to cause harm to humans or human concerns.

Under this definition therefore, it is feasible that *Apodemus* sp. can be assessed as a pest - although equally this doesn’t equate that they are always classified as such. If they are in the wrong place at the wrong time, causing a risk to humans then they may be deemed a pest.

Non-target – this term is open to much interpretation but if we use the above definition of a ‘pest’, it would seem fair to assume that a simple classification of a non-target animal would be any living organism which is not causing harm to humans or human concerns.

Under this definition, in the vast majority of situations, *Apodemus* sp. would be classified as non-target animals, if they are not causing concern to humans and their health

Protected – Certain species of mammals are protected by law, meaning that it is illegal to kill, injure or in many cases, interfere with them, their young or their breeding sites.

Apodemus sp. is not a protected species and therefore, under certain circumstances, can be legally controlled – albeit never deliberately with rodenticides.

Controlling field mice internally

Mice indoors in most situations will usually be classified as a pest. However this should still be determined by doing a pest risk assessment.

Good practice would dictate that, prior to resorting to lethal control, steps should be taken to identify the ‘root cause’— eg how did the rodents enter and what can be done to exclude them?

This is particularly important with *Apodemus* sp. as they are predominantly an outdoor species (as opposed to house mice which will live for prolonged periods indoors).

Subject to the necessary pest risk assessment, control of *Apodemus* sp. indoors is likely to be carried out using traps (which can then usually be removed once control is achieved).

Controlling field mice externally

In most situations, *Apodemus* sp. found outdoors will not be classified as a pest (and would be ‘non-target’) however there will be exceptions, especially in some large and complicated commercial, food or distribution sites.

Again, the justification will come down to a pest risk assessment which should include the potential consequences of not controlling them.

Before adopting any lethal control, an assessment should also be carried out (and ideally documented) to determine if there are other actions which can be carried out to make

Pest calendar

PROBLEM MAJOR PROBLEM

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ants												
Bed bugs												
Birds												
Bluebottles												
Carpet beetles												
Clothes moths												
Cockroaches												
Deathwatch beetles emerge												
Fleas												
Foxes												
Fur beetles												
Harvest mites												
Head lice												
House flies												
May bugs												
Mice												
Mosquitoes												
Moths												
Rats												
Red spider mites												
Spiders												
Squirrels												
Wasps												
Wood rot												
Woodworm												

the site less attractive and deter rodents. This could be environmental changes (eg reducing vegetation close to the buildings, having a clear buffer to site edges etc) but should also investigate the current pest monitoring strategy.

If the site is using food-based monitor blocks, these can encourage habitual feeding of rodents close to the building, increasing the pest risk. With this in mind, your assessment may state that food-based lures should not be used for monitoring purposes.

Once all other reasonable steps have been taken, if there is still a serious risk posed by *Apodemus* spp. (such as building ingress, damage to stock etc), an assessment can justify external control of the rodents – again using non-rodenticide means.

Once the infestation is controlled, in most cases, lethal control apparatus should be removed.

This article is available as a standalone briefing and guidance document for BPCA member companies. You can download the document at bpca.org.uk/library

Want more?

Pesttrain can help with reducing pest risks, including pest risk assessments, independent pest audits, biologist inspections, training and troubleshooting. For further information contact chris@pesttrain.co.uk 07827 917542

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS IN FOCUS

PEST RISK ASSESSMENTS



Food Accreditation Standards can be a minefield, with different specifiers needing different things from you. In this new series, Grahame Turner from BPCA Consultant member company PestAcuity, will turn his attention to different aspects of common standards. First up are pest risk assessments - what are they, how do you do one and why does a site need one in the first place?



Increasingly, food safety standards require that the specification of the pest control contract for a site is based upon a 'pest risk assessment' (PRA). The assessment needs to evaluate the business for the potential for intrusion or infestation by any animals that might affect the safety or quality of the products being manufactured or handled at the site.

A PRA needs to be completed at least annually and reassessed if there has been a significant infestation or building modification. The key expected outcomes from the PRA are for guidance on which pests need to be monitored for and on how frequently the technician and biologist inspections should be undertaken.

The frequency of 'routine' inspections would typically be selected from 8, 12, 26 or 52 per annum. But if the site has seasonal variation, then it might differ from this by having intensive visits during part of the year and less frequent visits at other times. The frequency of biologist visits will usually be 1, 2, 4, or 12 per annum.

The PRA needs first to consider which pest types might infest a site. Rats, mice, flies and cockroaches are always a potential threat; but whether or not any stored product insects need to be monitored for will differ for different products, and whether proactive external wasp controls need to be implemented will also be product/ingredient specific.

Once the species to be included in the contract specification have been considered and decided, the PRA then needs to determine how likely each of them is to infest. And the risk of each will depend on a wide variety of factors, such as neighbours, building fabric type and condition, building configuration, door policy, waste control, raw materials suppliers, site cleanliness, complexity and cleanability of equipment, etc.

Infestation history is also an important detail to be considered as, if nothing has subsequently changed, it can be a good indicator of future re-infestation potential.

OK, so you have checked the site and the practices and noted a series of factors that could have a positive or negative impact on different pest infestation potential. But what do you do then to help you decide the pest risk? How can you score it? And how can you document and present it?

Here are three techniques:

Simple subjective assessment

For a subjective view of risk based on your observations, you could record as you inspect the site a list of positive and negative features.

You could then form a view as to which are significant risks when combined (eg for rats it could be 'infested neighbour' plus 'poor proofing'); and which attributes might offset which hazards (eg with rats a 3m gravel band around a building might help to counteract grounds with potential rat harbourage).

Or you could give a subjective risk score to each of say low risk, medium risk, high risk. Then you could judge the overall risk and recommend visit frequency accordingly eg:

- Low risk – 8 visits per annum
- Medium risk – 12 vpa
- High risk – 24 vpa.

Risk matrix

The overall likelihood (risk) of an infestation will vary depending on a series of local factors. Those factors can be assigned a risk number based on the likelihood that they would lead to an infestation.

Showing your observations and calculations in tabular form can clearly illustrate to the customer what risk you have assigned to each of your observations.

For example, for the risk of internal rat infestation, your table might look something like table 1.

And for each different level of controlled risk, you might have a pre-assigned number of vpa for checking external rat boxes, eg.

Controlled risk	vpa
5	52
4	26
3	12
2	8
1	4

So, for the above scenario the recommended number of vpa to inspect external rat boxes would be 12 (ie monthly).

Table 1

Risk factor	Risk	Worst risk	Controls (since previous rat infestations)	Controlled risk
Neighbouring farmland	3	5	Building well-proofed 3m gravel band around building Good door policy Pair of rat break-back traps placed internally each side of Goods In and Despatch doors	3
Neighbouring railway	2			
Accumulation of storage in grounds	1			
Dense vegetation in grounds	1			
Poor waste management	5			
Product highly attractive to rats	3			
Three internal rat infestations in last two years	5			

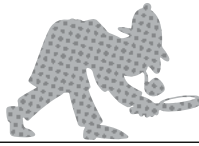


Table 2

Risk factor	Risk	Worst risk	Controls	Controlled risk
Poor proofing (very old buildings)	4	4	Good waste management	2
Untidy fast food restaurant next door	4		No previous rat infestations	
Urban area	3		Good door policy	
Litter accumulations on pavements	2		Vigilant staff Packaging manufacturer (not attractive for rats)	

“Standards regularly change - always make sure you are working from the current documents.”

An alternative scenario might look like table 2. Or it could be any number of other combinations of risk components and controls.

The severity (hazard) of an internal rat infestation would be classed as high (ie severity 5) because they could not only affect food safety, but also spread potentially fatal diseases to staff. But in my view, we don't need to include hazard severity for each pest type in the table, as that would just complicate it for no additional benefit. The hazard can just be taken into account in the risk scoring.

You might like to make it clear to the customer in your PRA document what they can do to help reduce the risk. So, you might like to include a full list of all the factors you consider when compiling your PRA, along with the associated risk score.

“The rationale behind pest risk assessments is that... the ongoing contract specification is determined by intelligent reasoning, which is a better scenario for both contractor and client.”

Decision tree

To simplify the process, you could use a 'decision tree'. So, for example, with external rat monitoring, you could have a table along the lines of the condensed one below.

As you do your survey, you tick all that apply. The lowest tick would then tell you what the recommendation to the customer should be. In your working tick list, each factor would also have space for comments to record some supporting information.

Factors affecting external rat visit frequency	Tick	Routine inspection frequency
Minimum frequency	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 vpa
High potential for infestation from neighbour	<input type="checkbox"/>	12 vpa
Grounds provide favourable habitat for rats	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fabric or management of the building allows rodent entry	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No2 + no4 or no3 + no4 above applies	<input type="checkbox"/>	24 vpa
Food waste management issues in grounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Two or more separate internal rat infestations in the last 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The assessment needs to be repeated for each pest type (internal rodents, crawling insects, flying insects etc), taking into account relevant risk factors for each pest type. And the risk factors might vary depending on the product eg 'high-risk' foods might demand a greater frequency of visits than dried foods.

You might end up with different visit numbers for different pest types eg fortnightly visits for SPI, but monthly for rodents; or different numbers of visits for different internal parts of the same site. And with the PRAs being regularly repeated, the infestation risks and the frequency of visits can change over time.

Of course, it's the client who has the ultimate say in pests monitored and the number of visits,

because it is them who are paying for it. So, they are at liberty to specify either fewer or more visits than the PRA outcome. Deciding on fewer visits might negatively impact audit scores from their customers or from accrediting bodies, so they would be wise to document their justification for it.

In addition to the PRA, some standards have individual requirements that can affect visit frequency.

Three supermarkets specify that their suppliers have a minimum of eight routine and four biologist vpa; one standard requires that all external monitors are inspected at least monthly; and one supermarket requires that where rodent break-back traps are used for internal monitoring, these need to be inspected weekly.

In my experience, this hampers proactive pest management, as instead of using traps in place permanently to catch any rodents that do enter a premises, pest companies use non-toxic bait for all internal monitoring. So, infestations can get well-established between routine visits. This can be the case where COSHH assessments, CRRU considerations, other standards, or high risk of wood mice intrusion, rules out permanent toxic baiting.

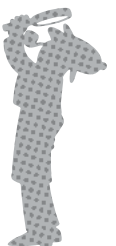
The rationale behind pest risk assessments is that instead of the site just selecting pests monitored and frequency of visits based on cost, the ongoing contract specification is determined by intelligent reasoning, which is a better scenario for both contractor and client. There is no prescribed way to carry out a PRA (yet), so you are free to decide your own system.

Standards regularly change – always make sure you are working from the current documents.

Need help?

Grahame Turner of PestAcuity Ltd is available for advice on pest risk assessments and food industry pest control.

grahame.turner@pestacuity.co.uk



REPORTING PEST CONTROL INCIDENTS

If you've worked in pest control for any amount of time you'll have come across poor practice or potentially dangerous incidents.

Likewise, established companies can be blighted by a poor technician or two.

In the UK, pest management companies aren't licenced, meaning professionals may be incorrectly identified as unqualified chancers.



Even the best companies and technicians might be involved in an incident that needs reporting to an authority – accidents happen. We all know the reputational and environmental damage poor practice or an unlucky accident can have on the sector.

In the UK, there are paths available for the purpose of reporting incidents that occur, be they health and safety related or, the improper use, sale or storage of pesticides. Being aware of how to report correctly will benefit the whole sector.

Health and safety in UK workplaces

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. Its aims are to prevent and investigate work-related death, injury and ill health.

The most notable legislation that the HSE works with, in terms of these aims, is RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

RIDDOR puts duties on employers, the self-employed and people in control of work premises (the Responsible Person) to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses).

RIDDOR lists those that require reporting by an employer, an employee, a self-employed person and/or a member of the public. These include, but are not limited to:

- Fractures
- Any loss of consciousness caused by a head injury or asphyxia
- Over-seven-day incapacitation of a worker
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Occupational dermatitis
- Any disease attributed to an occupational exposure to a biological agent.

To make a report, the responsible persons should submit reports under RIDDOR by completing the appropriate online report form listed here

hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm

Incidents that happen in Northern Ireland should be reported to HSE NI under 'The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997'.

hseni.gov.uk/report-incident

Pesticide misuse in premises

HSE inspectors will normally investigate all pesticide incidents involving ill health where these occur in places such as:

- Factories
- Farms
- Public amenities
- Hospitals and nursing homes
- Schools and colleges.

You can report your concern by calling 0300 003 1647 and a call handler will complete the form for you. Further guidance on reporting a concern is available on the HSE website.

Local authority (LA) inspectors are responsible for investigating incidents at other places such as:

- Leisure premises
- Hotels
- Shops
- Restaurants
- Home gardens.

Details can be found in your telephone directory under 'Environmental Health', your council's website, or you can consult [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

The environment

If you think that the environment has been polluted then the incident should be reported to the Environment Agency (EA) in England, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), or Natural Resources Wales (NRW). If contamination happens in Scotland, then you will need to contact the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

These organisations are responsible for preventing the pollution of watercourses.

Inspectors will investigate reported cases of water pollution caused by pesticides and will take the necessary enforcement action.

These agencies are usually also responsible for preventing the contamination of land, and have powers to prosecute anyone deliberately or negligently contaminating land. Yes, you heard that right – ignorance is not a defence!

Wildlife

The Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme makes enquiries into the death or illness of wildlife, pets and beneficial invertebrates that may have resulted from pesticide poisoning.

The scheme has two objectives:

- To provide information to the regulator on hazards to wildlife and companion animals and beneficial invertebrates from pesticides
- To enforce the correct use of pesticides, identifying and penalising those who deliberately or recklessly misuse and abuse pesticides.

The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) runs the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS) which investigates the deaths, not just of wildlife, but also of livestock and some pets, where there is evidence that pesticide poisoning may be involved.

If you believe that livestock or pets have been affected or you find the remains of any wildlife that has died in suspicious circumstances, you should report it to WIIS.

Report suspected incidents to 0800 321 600.



ILLEGAL SALES

Professional use rodenticides

All sellers in the UK should be adhering to the CRRU UK Guidance for Internet Sales of Rodenticides.

If you see anyone selling professional rodenticides online that are not meeting the requirements please report to thinkwildlife.org/stewardship-regime/report-a-concern

Amateur use rodenticides

Any sales of amateur use only products above the maximum pack sizes should be reported to the HSE via their online reporting system hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm



Reporting an eBay listing

BPCA, Crop Protection Association, and eBay have worked

together to help stop unauthorised pesticides sales happening online.

With 13.4 million listings added weekly by mobile alone on eBay it's a difficult job to monitor everything being sold on the site – however anyone who suspects a shop of doing something illegal should report it to BPCA.

technical@bpca.org.uk

Other pesticides

If you see anyone selling professional products for amateur use you can report this directly to HSE. The best way to check whether a product is professional use or not is to check the product in CRD's pesticides database using the products name or MAPP number at secure.pesticides.gov.uk/pestreg/ProdSearch.asp

You can make your report at crd.ppp.compliance@hse.gov.uk



BPCA members

Have you made a mistake and need some advice before you report the incident? Nobody is perfect and at BPCA we're here to help members through the good times and the bad. Having your trade association on hand for support can be a huge relief. Never think twice about putting your hand up and asking for help!

technical@bpca.org.uk
01332 294 288



BPCA EMAIL

technical@bpca.org.uk

INBOX

SENT

ARCHIVE

BIN

SPAM

ASK THE TECHNICAL TEAM

**Subject: Field mouse control
Are field mice protected?**

An important question – the industry is still a little confused as to whether we can actually lethally control field mice or not, based on the fact that there are no authorised rodenticides for use on field mice.

While it is true that you have no options for using a rodenticide, the fact is that you can lethally control field mice if they pose a public health risk. There is nothing in law to say you cannot.

Using snap traps, for example, would be a common method if the need was there. If you need advice on a specific situation, get in touch with us. For more, see Chris Parmiter's article on page 25.

**Subject: Codes of Best Practice
What are BPCA Codes of Best Practice (COBP) actually used for?**

BPCA works hard at setting standards and professional expectations across the industry and our COBP are an integral part of this.

If you are a BPCA servicing member then you will know that you are expected to follow and adhere to all BPCA COBP. Our codes are not guidance, they are strict dos and don'ts set out in a document, covering a wide range of topics.

We have codes on treatment reports, bed bugs, spring traps and much more. To familiarise yourself with these codes, visit bpca.org.uk/codes and be sure to claim those CPD points for reading them!

**Subject: Glue traps ban
When will glue boards be banned?**

Animal welfare gets a lot of scrutiny and the use of glue boards for catching rodents is no exception.

In England, the Glue Traps (Offences) Bill has received Royal Assent and is now the Glue Traps (Offences) Act. There is now a two-year lead-in period before this law becomes enforceable. Exemption for pest controllers, which BPCA fought for, is still included. This will be managed by a licensing regime, but details are yet to be decided. All this applies only to England; devolved administrations can work on this issue and almost all have expressed an interest in doing so.

We'll keep you updated as this progresses through our email bulletins, social media and on our website, as well as in future issues of PPC.

**Subject: Rising product prices
Will I see price rises for pest control products in 2022?**

Due to shortages in raw materials for manufacturing some pesticides, there is a high chance that pest management companies will see price increases across the board. Things like wheat and coconut oil prices are rising for manufacturers, so this cost is likely to be passed on.

It is advised that pest management companies also take a look at their pricing schedules and keep an eye on their purchasing.



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

technical@bpca.org.uk
01332 294 288
twitter.com/britpestcontrol

SPEED VIEW

There is nothing in the law to say you cannot control field mice

As it stands, glue traps will be banned for public use but a licensing system will be in place for professionals

BPCA Codes of Best Practice are strict dos and don'ts for pest professionals

Increases in raw material costs for manufacturers may be passed to pest control companies – keep an eye on your outgoings

OPINION

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?



Regular PPC writer Alex Wade from Wade Environmental is back - and this time he's talking through the opportunities licensing could bring.

Who do you even think you are? That rat man, the wasp lady, that pest guy?

"My mate down the road does wasps, makes a good buck in summer! Yeah, but really, I reckon I can do what you do mate, just pop off to the shops to get some poisons and I'll show you how it's done, you just have to leave it out under the bird feeder where they can see it."

How often do we encounter this? And if the answer is 'only once' then this is once too many.

Who owns pests?

Consider this: when your boiler breaks you call a certified gas engineer. After they apply their craft, they ask you for money and you pay without a fuss. When your main fuse board breaks, you call a professional electrician because, although you feel competent rewiring a plug, faffing with the fuse board is a terrifying concept where one slip could result in a crispy death.

But, when you have a rat under the decking and someone comes in to recommend the best solution for management, you often hear: "its not my fault, its next door!". Closely followed by: "how much?!"

These may seem like two things, but also very much the same thing. Why should anyone listen to you, and how can you justify charging what you do? How do we prove we are professionals? We can show our qualifications, but what do they mean to the average person?

Prior to undertaking the job and then letting our actions speak for ourselves, we cannot prove with any degree of substance that we are any different to the guy down the road and his bucket of ant powder, which is the plain and simple truth. What makes this even worse is the perception that our industry, and all those who work in or for pest management, are by default cowboys and vagabonds.

A light in the darkness?

Licensing could very easily fill this gap. It would validate that we have a minimum set of standards. Without these any have-a-go hero with a can-do attitude can waltz in and brute-force a solution with no regard for public health, animal welfare or any form of due diligence and professionalism.

But it is those words, 'a minimum set of standards' which strike fear into many, because what if you aren't good enough? Well let me stop you



This article is narrated by the author. To listen, scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/wdytua

right there, because if you have taken the time from your day to subscribe to one of our trade associations, and taken the additional time to read publications pertaining to our industry in an effort to keep abreast of the latest news and changes, then it is highly unlikely that you are the problem, nor that a set of standards required for licencing would provide any real obstacle to continue as you are doing. So we have nothing to lose and much to gain?

No stick and a mouldy carrot

This however, may be the biggest detractor from licensing: just who will be responsible for its maintenance? Furthermore, who upholds these standards of behaviour, rewarding those who do it well with visibility and plaudits to the public while also sanctioning those who flout these rules. Because if this is to be a tool for our industry, we must ensure that it does not become a two-edged blade.

It's all well and good being paragons of virtue and justice, but if we pay a membership to a club that no one knows or cares about, then what's the point? This question goes doubly-so when one considers the shift from a voluntary system to a compulsory one, because then all a licence becomes is a tax on good behaviour.

A silver bullet

There is no such thing as a silver bullet, and while some may see licensing as the cure to many of our industry's ailments, it certainly will not be the only solution we are to rely on. It's likely to be a momentous upheaval for our industry with many pitfalls along the road, but within this journey there is great hope. Hope that our profession will become legitimised, that our tools will become safeguarded for future use, that our value will be understood, and our worth is redeemed financially and socially.

Agree with Alex?

Write to the Editor and get your email printed in the next issue of PPC.

hello@bpca.org.uk



AM I COVERED?

MAKING THE DIVERSIFICATION LEAP



Peter Knowles, Director at animal-related industries insurance broker Cliverton, looks at the opportunities of diversifying pest control services and the importance of managing the associated risks.

To say that the past year has been trying and tiresome would be somewhat of an understatement.

The vast majority of companies hunkered down to survive the volatile economic conditions or reinvigorated their business model to seize new opportunities, with very few emerging from the pandemic unscathed and unchanged.

For small business owners, an entrepreneurial spirit, industry insight, and business acumen put them in the advantageous position of adapting swiftly to a changing market.

The pandemic was indeed a time fraught with worry about health concerns and financial hardship, but it was also a time of resilience. The number of businesses that diversified their activities was evidence of this.

From distilleries turning their hand to producing sanitisers to restaurants creating 'at-home' kits for their most popular dishes, almost every industry saw business owners get creative to meet evolving needs and bolster their compromised income.

The pest control sector was no exception.

Pest control professionals were deemed key workers during the pandemic after the industry lobbied local MPs for recognition that pest management services were essential.

Though this classification provided some stability, the industry still felt the economic squeeze keenly.

In response, pest control professionals diversified their operations, widening their offering to include services such as cleaning and disinfection, driven by the demand for increased hygiene and sanitisation.

Risky business

With any new venture comes new risks. It is imperative that pest control professionals who have branched out into other services, or are thinking of doing so, address the gaps in their knowledge and potential gaps in cover.

This can be achieved by seeking expert advice from industry specialists and obtaining comprehensive insurance that adequately meets the evolved needs of the company.

Pest control professionals should also take the opportunity to check the full extent of what they are covered for.

Pest control comes with a myriad of risks: damage to properties being treated, use of pesticides, working at height, disposal of trade waste, use of specialist equipment like falconry or firearms. The list goes on.

Some insurers will automatically provide insurance for the use of rifles and shotguns and include public liability for the use of birds of prey for pest and vermin control.

Seeking public liability cover for third party injury or property damage caused by negligence whilst carrying out pest control service may also be a prudent business decision.

It is worth noting that often insurers offer discounts for being a member of professional bodies - like BPCA. By becoming a member of such an organisation, pest control professionals can underline their commitment to upholding professional standards to prospective clients and benefit from lower premiums.

Businesses adapting their offering for a new purpose should also check if they need to comply with different regulations and put measures in place to ensure they are effectively managing the risks of both the core and extended services.

Post-pandemic outlook

Some pest control professionals may have seen the expansion of services as a stopgap until the effects of the pandemic dissipated and 'business as usual' resumed.

According to the Office of National Statistics' latest 'Business insights and impact on the UK economy' report, the percentage of businesses trading in mid-August 2021 was up to 90%, a significant improvement from the 71% reported in January 2021.

However, the road to recovery is set to be long and arduous.

When asked how their turnover compared with normal expectations for this time of year, the percentage of businesses reporting a decrease in turnover was 30%.

Furthermore, 37% of businesses reported less than three months' cash reserves.

Though many businesses are returning to a state of normality, finding sustainable solutions to the new economic environment looks to be a challenge for some time.

Therefore, many businesses – pest controllers included – may continue to offer extended services on a more permanent basis or longer than first intended or expand their offerings.

Whether the extension of services is planned as a temporary or long-term measure, pest control professionals need to ensure that shrewd business planning, prudent risk management, and clarification of any insurance or regulatory requirements are established from the outset.

For those who have already commenced operations, retrospective business mapping and contingency planning can help mitigate against any ensuing risks and future-proof the business.

Failure to take such action could be a costly oversight that spells the end of the new venture and the core business.

After weathering the storm of the pandemic, this is the last thing pest controllers – or indeed the industry – wishes to face.

Insurance for pest companies

Cliverton offers discounted insurance for BPCA members.

Make contact today to talk about all things pest control insurance.

cliverton.co.uk/policies/pest-control-insurance
01328 857 921



KNOW YOUR NUMBERS!

FIGURING OUT FINANCES FOR YOUR PEST CONTROL BUSINESS

If you're serious about growing your pest control business, you will have to learn the basics of business finances. Reading and understanding a profit and loss report, and knowing where all your money flows in and out from is essential for any business. We asked the owner of Blu Bookkeeping, Julie Holland MICB, to give PPC readers a handy guide to SME business finance.



Most businesses succeed today because their leader is flexible, a good planner, a brilliant organiser and spent time learning about the numbers.

If you want to build a business to sell on, or even leave to your kids, you need to know and understand your business numbers.

Business finances are nothing more than:

- Knowing where the money came from (and where it's going to)
- Ensuring there's enough cash in the bank to cover what needs to be paid
- Knowing what profit you make (otherwise, why are you doing this?).

If you don't know there's a problem financially, how can you fix it? This is why it is crucial to get monthly reports and read them!

Let's apply this philosophy to pest control. For this example, I've based it on a sole trader.

Simple overview of a profit and loss (P&L) report

Are you making a profit? I wonder how many of you know what your profit figure is now?

All accounting software has a P&L report. Running and analysing this report is helpful to see sales trends, understand your costs, and see what your business profit is.

For those not comfortable with numbers, think of it like this:

Sales = invoices sent to the customer

Cost of sales = costs relating directly to making the sale, like pesticides, proofing materials, etc

Overheads = generally all other expenditures related to the business (like van costs, uniform, stationery, insurance, BPCA membership).

The P&L report is split into two profit figures – gross and net profit (often called the bottom line).



It's a good idea to start monitoring these figures monthly, as these will generally tell you if there are any profitability issues.

Gross profit = (sales)-(cost of sales)

Your gross profit should allow enough of the sales to pay for other business expenses.

Net profit = (sales)-(cost of sales)-(overheads)

Deduct the overheads, and what is then left of sales is your profit – but remember, profit isn't cash in the bank!

Cash planning

Does a profitable business revolve around sales? Well, yes and no.

Cash is where most businesses crash and burn. Cash is almost as important (and arguably more important) than sales.

Looking after your cash in the bank is extremely important. I cannot stress this enough!

You need a plan for your money. Just because there's a nice sum in the bank does not mean you can go on holiday or buy a new TV for home.

Plan for the money the business needs, but also include the cash you need personally to pay bills and live your life.

- Make a list of all the money your business needs to spend in a month
- Work out how much you need for personal stuff and pay yourself a wage (can be once a month or once a week)
- Keep personal expenses out of the business – if the item is not 'wholly and exclusively for business purposes', it is not allowable by HMRC, plus it doesn't give a complete picture of how the business is doing if not business-related
- Make sure that you keep enough in the bank to cover everything to keep your business running and to pay yourself a wage
- Think ahead – work out how much you need to pay for tax and NI (National Insurance) for your self-assessment based on the amount you earn each month.

If you're VAT (Value Added Tax) registered, put away 20% of all cash received in a separate bank account, and you will have more than you need at the end of the quarter.

MORE MONEY IN... ...LESS MONEY OUT

Upsell your other services

Can you do disinfecting, cleaning, more extensive proofing or other preventative measures while you're there? Make sure you're getting the most out of every customer transaction. It's good for you and your customer, after all.



Review prices regularly

Check the competition but don't be afraid to charge more. Give value for money with customer service. It's amazing what value can be added for nothing (listening, advising and smiling goes a long way with people, and a 'thank you for choosing me' card, with your business details, of course!).



Be clear about what is included in the price and any guarantees

Don't get caught up in further visits if not included or paid for. In the bookkeeping world, it's called scope creep, and because we're nice people, we like to 'do a bit extra'.



If you can, run a cash flow forecast at least into the next 30 days to see any 'pinch points' where cash is short (and possibly you go overdrawn), then you can take action to cover the shortfall.

Growing the business

Taking on a new customer contract can be draining on your cash in the bank, so set up costs need planning.

Growth is good, however, if you have more than one new customer, it may be that staggering site set-up is a good call, so it doesn't drain your cash. My best advice would be to invoice in advance and get a payment tool like Go Cardless. Getting paid as soon as possible is your goal; think like an entrepreneur!

Ensure your contract states that invoicing in advance (quarterly is probably best) is how you operate and request payment by direct debit mandate through a payment system. If your customer won't agree to that, give them no more than 30 days to pay the invoice.

If a contract start date is 1 April, try invoicing on 1 March, thus allowing 30 days for the customer to pay, and you get cash in the bank when the contract starts (in theory, anyway).

If you're paying out for materials, bait boxes, etc, for a site, you are down that money until they pay their first invoice. So don't give them 60 or 90 days credit terms, whoever they are.

Understand the costs of employing more staff

Taking on a new employee is potentially more costly than you think. Employer National Insurance contributions have increased by 1.5% in April 2022.

The cost to your business for an employee is an annual salary plus employer National Insurance, employer pension contribution, payroll bureau and pension pot fees and holiday pay. Then you have vehicle costs, uniform, training, insurance, etc.

Again, you must plan strategically for this. You should know your breakeven point for covering the costs, which also equates to how many jobs a day they need to do for you to cover their costs.

Get organised

Make sure invoicing is done on the day of the job. The sooner it's created, the sooner it's paid.

Have invoices that offer more than one payment option (bank transfer, direct debit or PayPal, or call to make a card payment).

Take payment upfront, at least a deposit on a big job (like bird proofing) but most definitely do not give more than 30 days credit terms for commercial clients.

If customer debt is escalating, start chasing for payment or, if you don't have time, get someone to help.

Know your numbers – look at your P&L report every month. Have you captured all your spending, or is a supplier purchase missing? Are all your sales invoices in the correct month?

Use accounting software. Using the right tool will help with several points above. Professional looking invoices can be emailed to customers, for example.

Use a snap capture app (like Autoentry or Dext). Some software providers give you a free app like Xero's Hubdoc or Freeagent, which work on your phone to store fuel receipts, equipment purchases, and supplier invoices directly to the accounting software.

Paper receipts in a shoebox are not ideal, so get digital and get rid of the paper. MTD (Making Tax Digital) for both VAT (1 April 2022) and ITSA (income tax and self-assessment) (1 April 2023) need digital records.

Have a separate business bank account. This makes identifying business transactions so much easier.

Know when you hit the VAT threshold. It's based on your sales for the past 12 months, not just for this financial year!

If you're confident enough, you can set up a spreadsheet of your sales and expenses, but HMRC will need you to interface with their system in 2024 to submit your quarterly returns for MTD ITSA. You would be better off buying accounting software now and getting used to using it. If you don't have the time or the energy, invest in a bookkeeper!

I hope this has given you insight into business financials. Learn it in chunks – Work through your reports, ask questions, get a good bookkeeper to explain anything you don't understand.

Above all – know your numbers!

Want to talk numbers with Julie?

Julie has supported pest management companies with their finances for many years. If you want her to look at your numbers, she's always interested in meeting new clients.

blbookkeeping.co.uk
facebook.com/BluBookkeeping
linkedin.com/in/julie-holland-blbookkeeping

OPINION

TIME TO PUT UP PRICES?

INFLATION AND PEST CONTROL



If you've looked at your energy bills or recently fueled the van, you'll be uncomfortably aware of how much the basic costs of doing business are going up. BPCA Marketing and Communications Manager Scott Johnstone looks at the cost of living crisis and how it's likely to affect pest management this year. Spoiler – you probably want to reconsider your pricing structure.

It's not often we talk about pricing in PPC or at BPCA. Pricing is a personal thing, and it's not the role of a trade association to suggest pricing. But given the extraordinary cost-of-everything crisis that'll affect all our businesses – we didn't want to bury our heads in the sand.

In short – is BPCA telling you to put up your prices? No – that'd be wrong. Are we saying you should seriously review your overheads and consider adjusting your pricing – definitely yes!

What's happening?

After 15 years of relatively low inflation, soaring costs aren't something we're used to in western Europe. Between Covid-19, Brexit and the war in Ukraine, we have the perfect storm for high inflation.

In the 12 months to February, prices rose by 6.2% on average, and they only look to be going in one direction: up.

You may have noticed that many suppliers have avoided putting prices in their print catalogues this year. Frustrating as that may be, it's a very prudent approach, given your suppliers will undoubtedly have rising costs that they cannot predict.

DON'T FORGET THE COST OF YOUR EMPLOYEES

Just as your business might feel the squeeze, remember that your employees will feel it too. As inflation rises, the actual worth of employee salary goes down in real terms.

With a record 1.2 million job vacancies in the three months to November 2021, more than half of businesses that reported a worker shortage stated they could not meet demands.

ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/changingtrendsandrecentshortagesinthelabourmarketuk/2016to2021

Don't be tempted to cut costs by slashing or stagnating employee salaries. It's a very competitive job market right now – and if you're not willing to keep up with inflation, someone else might be.

Wheat and oil are vital components in many rodent baits. Ukraine produces 10% of the world's wheat and 80% of the world's supply of sunflower oil. Much of the fertiliser used to grow wheat comes from Russia and Belarus, so the cost of your baits may fluctuate this year.

theguardian.com/science/audio/2022/mar/15/10-of-the-worlds-wheat-comes-from-ukraine-will-war-change-that

The UK relies on goods moving quickly into the country. Some of the products you use on a daily basis are produced in the UK, but many aren't. Even products made in the UK rely on international trade for raw materials. Brexit bureaucracy is certainly affecting almost all imports.

Manufacturers and distributors have reported that materials and products are moving slower and costing more to move. For example, a single storage container costs nearly three times as much to get into a UK port. Reports suggest UK businesses and consumers have paid 42% more in customs duties since 1 January 2021. Pest management companies are likely to share some of those cost burdens.

uhy-uk.com/insights/jump-customs-duties-uk-businesses-and-consumers-brexite-record-level-22billion-firs

One soaring cost that isn't in the news is the cost of plastic polymers. PVC, PP and HDPE pipe grade prices have hit all-time highs. Supply shortages, rising feedstock, energy costs and logistics bottlenecks are the main price drivers, meaning £100-170/tonne price rises. Everything from packaging to monitoring stations requires these plastics, which means another spike in your suppliers' costs.

sustainableplastics.com/news/november-december-polymer-prices-soar-higher-feedstock-and-energy-costs

Aside from this, your direct costs for electricity, gas, fuel, etc are high and likely to rise again this year. The Chancellor is facing increasing pressure to tackle these massive rises but, as of yet, the Government's response to the cost of living crisis hasn't yielded many savings for individuals or businesses.

"Maybe it's time the industry shook up its pricing structure (or perhaps we're already late to the party)?"

What can you do?

How do you sell pest control in high inflation times?

In short, you might have to raise some of your prices on contracts and job work. By all means, use this article to explain the changes to your clients. They'll be hearing it from many other businesses they rely on, so don't sell yourself short because you're too nice.

Many companies have traditionally fixed prices on their contracts for 12 months as a selling tool. While this is a fair business decision in times of low inflation, it might not be so sensible going forward.

Finally, check your terms and conditions paperwork and make sure it has a 'force majeure' clause to build in some flexibility. A 'force majeure' event is unexpected circumstances outside a contracting party's reasonable control that prevents you from performing your contractual obligations.

Remember, professional pest management costs money. We already have some of the lowest prices in Europe for pest services (see page 36). Maybe it's time the industry shook up its pricing structure (or perhaps we're already late to the party)?

Whether or not you decide to change your prices, keep track of your income and expenditure this year. Prudent financial management has never been more crucial.



Client template

BPCA has drafted a template client letter for members, to help explain a price rise to contract clients. You can download it now from the BPCA Member Library.

bPCA.org.uk/library



BENEFIT IN FOCUS

LOBBYING AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

It's probably not a benefit you think about every day, but it is one of the most crucial tasks your membership fees help fund. What is lobbying? How does it work? And what is BPCA doing to promote meaningful change in the pest management sector?

Engaging with politicians might not sound like a great way to spend your day, but as a trade association, that is exactly what we were designed to do. After all, we're the voice of our members.

Governments appreciate trade associations because we're the single voice of the hundreds of members we represent.

Political engagement has quadrupled over time since devolution, and different pieces of legislation and regulation are now controlled in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast rather than just London.

BPCA represents its members in all four Parliaments and Assemblies of the UK, plus their relevant Civil Service departments eg Defra, Daera and their Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) such as Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, NatureScot and HSE.

BPCA monitors political activity across the UK. We answer consultations and direct questions from politicians and departments to help dispel any misconceptions and ensure public health is well represented. We also meet with politicians in person, host pest-related events and generally build deep connections with the sector.

What we've done so far

Lobbying has never been so high on BPCA's agenda – and rightfully so, given how much pest management has been in the spotlight for the last few years. Recently we've:

- Held parliamentary events at Holyrood and Westminster
- Met the Ministers for Housing, Small Business, the Home Office, Pacific and the Environment at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- Met with MPs and members of the House of Lords
- Sent hundreds of introductory letters to MPs, MSPs, MLAs, MSs and Ministers in Westminster, Holyrood, Stormont and Cardiff
- Sent briefing notes on various pest-related issues to those debating the Glue Traps (Offences) Bill
- Replied to several national and European consultations on behalf of members
- Met with senior civil servants in all four nations and have productive ongoing relationships with senior leaders in the NDPBs
- Sat on the Cleaning and Hygiene All-Party Parliamentary Group in Westminster and the Cross-Party Group on Animal Welfare in Scotland.

BIG WINS

Key workers BPCA campaigned for pest professionals to be considered key workers in the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, the UK, Northern Irish and Scottish Governments confirmed pest professionals as essential workers.

Glue boards BPCA fiercely defended the use of glue boards for professional users. BPCA gave evidence in the Scottish Parliament. We campaigned to amend the Glue Traps (Offences) Bill to include a licensing scheme. The Bill was amended as a direct result of our arguments.

Bird control licences BPCA has worked with Natural England, Defra and Nature.Scot to ensure bird management licences are fit for purpose. We continue to work closely with Daera and NRW to ensure their consultations produce a viable licensing regime.

Why bother?

Governments control much of what and how we do things. While many of laws we observe are pretty old, the animal welfare lobby is loud and well-supported, so we have to fight for our toolkit in order to protect public health. New laws are introduced, old ones are amended. We have to keep on top of what's happening and make the sector's voice heard.

Without lobbying in our sector, we're left to the whims of those who don't have our interests at heart.

Someone needs to stand up for public health and good pest management. If it's not us, who will?

While we might be a relatively small sector, we have a huge impact on society. Together, with one big loud voice, we can make a difference.

Learn more or get involved?

Interested in engaging with your local politicians or just want to learn more about BPCA's work in this area? Members can contact us to find out more and join our various committees that help dictate our public affairs agenda.

hello@bpca.org.uk

BPCA 80TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN WESTMINSTER



On 16 March, BPCA held a celebration in the Churchill Room of the House of Commons, hosted by Nigel Mills MP.

BPCA members were invited by ballot and some special guests from associated industries. Several MPs and the Minister for Small Business, Paul Scully, heard short speeches.

BPCA President Philip Halpin gave us a whistlestop tour of the 80 years BPCA has helped protect public health. He said: "There will be times when some misunderstand our purpose or don't want to listen to us. But if our 80-year history teaches us anything, it is this: BPCA members are the voice of professional pest control. Together we'll speak against the destruction, misery and disease pests cause. Between us all, we can achieve anything we set our minds to."

BPCA Chief Exec Ian Andrew talked of the challenges we face today, saying: "I have one request of our elected officials that sit and debate our profession in this palace: by all means, hold us to account for any animal welfare concerns, but don't let this get in the way of us protecting your constituents and our clients."

"Remember, every method of control - however harmful it may be to the pests - is only used to protect public health. Our greatest challenge right now is the swing of the pendulum. The more it swings in favour of animal welfare, the more it swings away from protecting public health."



Gemma Sutherland, a graduate service technician at BPCA member company Pest Solutions, spoke about her hopes for the future of pest management. She said: "I've learned that this job requires a great deal of integrity and respect when dealing with animals and customers. It is not a job for everyone, nor is it a job for a particular sex."

"I have confidence that as an industry we will continue to encourage and support diversity, shift public preconceptions and, in the near future, pest control will be a comfortable career choice for many young people and women like myself."

INTERVIEW

BETWEEN TWO PRESIDENTS

DRIVING PROFESSIONALISM IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS



“For someone like me, who runs a small company in Scotland, to help steer the whole industry and guide the decision making... I think it shows it is OUR industry. We can do anything if we put our minds to it.”

At the time of writing, BPCA is saying goodbye to one president and introducing a new one. At Pestex, PPC caught up with then President Phil Halpin and President-Elect Chris Cagienard.

PPC Phil, congrats on coming to the end of three years of being BPCA’s president. What’s it like being in the top seat?

PH It’s gone by so quickly. As a member, you never realise how much goes on behind the scenes.

I thought I’d be a vice-president for a few years before moving to president. But when Tom Holmes left the industry, suddenly it was thrust upon me!

I had some great support. Alan Morris from Bayer, Mark Williams from Ecolab on the Board, and Lorraine Norton from the Staff team were fantastic supporters. My first piece of advice for Chris is to use your Staff team really well. They’re so knowledgeable; Lorraine has an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of the Association!

PPC Chris, why did you decide the time was right to go for the president role?

CC Coming from the vice-president role, there is an expectation that you need to move forward.

From my time on the Servicing committee and then on the Board, I agree with the Association’s goals. Driving professionalism is good for business. It’s good for small-to-medium-size companies like mine; it’s good for those smaller members – all of us.

The industry’s professionalism is what will protect us in the years to come. As we raise standards and create a slightly higher bar to entry, we protect ourselves from the shifting tides.

Plus, I don’t think we can complain about what we get if we’re not involved in making it happen. BPCA is a good thing for our industry, and it’s rewarding to be a part of it.

I have some big shoes to fill – Phil makes being president look effortless. I think we all look to him for leadership.

PH That’s nice to know!

CC It’s reassuring that Phil will still be around as our immediate past-president. With our Officers team of Mike Ayers and Mark Williams, and Martin Rose-King joining us, we can ensure that the Board carefully considers

the challenging work we have ahead in our strategy. I think our work today will help to define the industry tomorrow.

PH I think we’re in a really good place right now compared to, say, five years ago. We do have a louder voice.

CC That’s before my time on the Board – I don’t have any experience of what it was like before.

PH We never had a public affairs strategy. We weren’t having regular conversations with politicians or government departments. We weren’t holding events in the Houses of Parliament like we are tonight. Ian Andrew is a great leader in this space. And as president, it’s great to be working alongside a strong CEO.

CC That’s certainly part of why I want to step up as President because Ian and his Staff team are all pulling in the same direction.

PH It’s a great time to be a part of BPCA and an excellent time for me to pass over the torch.

You were almost earmarked as President, and you certainly are present in the industry – with your articles in PPC and Pest magazines you're everywhere at the moment!

CC I'm not someone that wants to inject myself at the front of the room – I'd be happy at the back! But I really want to encourage the membership to engage more. For someone like me, who runs a small company in Scotland, to help steer the whole industry and guide the decision making... I think it shows it is OUR industry. We can do anything if we put our minds to it.

If I can get involved – then the rest of the membership can do it too.

PPC That's a good point for context – you're both business owners and member volunteers of the Association. No one is paying you to drive down from Scotland or up from Berkshire. There are nearly 60 member companies currently giving up their time – again unpaid – to help run the Association.



"I think we're in a really good place right now compared to, say, five years ago. We do have a louder voice."

PH It's been really rewarding. I encourage anyone reading this to get involved. You might be concerned that you'd be out of your depth, but start by joining a committee. You're with like-minded members who already share a passion and ambition to grow your businesses and be professional.

Now we have four committees aligned with the strategy – so those committees are delivering the work of BPCA more than ever before.

You only have to think of BPCA Registered. It started at the Servicing committee, then was considered by the Board, costed out, and launched by the Staff team. That's real change straight from the membership.

CC From my time on the Servicing committee, seeing something like BPCA Registered being developed was probably the biggest hook.

I don't like the options we had before, and now we've come out the other end with a system that is more than 'just another option' – it's far more supportive to technicians. There are more options for learning, more opportunities to engage, and they can take it as far as they want. It's not a box-ticking exercise.

PH BPCA Registered has driven so much of our training. Think of all the resources we have now because of BPCA Registered – online learning and webinars. They're almost the consequence of BPCA Registered.

CC I got involved with BPCA initially because I wanted to see what was going on in the industry – and that in itself was very rewarding because of the friendships and the personal development. But when we created real-world change for members – it made it feel like we can make the industry we want rather than us having to deal with what we get.

It does beg the question: what else can we achieve?

Yes, like PPC said, there is a cost in terms of time, travel, and making the commitment – but it's paid back in spades: our teams see that we're interested – they see that we take it seriously. Getting involved directly correlated with my business going into a massive growth stage – not because of any cronyism – it was just our people took it more seriously.

PH Yes, same. You raise the bar, and your technicians say, "Hey, hang on a minute, we're a big part of this industry. We're at the forefront." Pinning their name to the flag, so to speak.

CC I'm worried it sounds a little sinister, like we've inflicted ourselves on the forefront of the sector, but honestly, I want all my peers to do the same.

One professional company to another – we're not a threat to each other. It's the underbelly of the market that is the threat. They put our toolbox at risk. They drive prices to an unsustainable point, where professionalism is absent, and standards are low. We're already cheaper than anywhere in Europe, and we need to reform. Especially with price increases and salaries increasing because of inflation (and they should), we need to reform and professionalise to thrive, flourish, and be sustainable.

PPC Phil, you've had an exciting presidency, having seen us through a pandemic, Brexit, bird licence reforms and now attacks on glue traps. Chris, you're likely to have just as an interesting time with an impending recession, and more attacks on our

tool kit. It feels as if there are more eyes on pest control than ever before. Is that a daunting task?

PH It has been exciting. This was a new space for BPCA. We've found ourselves right at the forefront and leading by example as these things happened. BPCA issued advice quickly to members and non-members during the pandemic, which was well-received when everyone else was quiet.



"...we see a route through these halls of power; it shows we have some control. But we need all members to get involved in having our voices heard."

CC As somebody who grew up in deepest, darkest Ayrshire, going to events in Parliament and meeting Ministers is a little surreal, but it does show our voice is present. I didn't think we'd get traction on these things just a few years ago.

But now, we see a route through these halls of power; it shows we have some control. But we need all members to get involved in having our voices heard.

PH And that's always the challenge. We're good at keeping everyone informed, but when it comes to engagement and them stepping up, perhaps not so much?

CC Yeah, there's no direct financial gain, but there is an indirect financial gain associated with professionalism and the trust that builds with your customers.

I encourage anyone reading this who may think they're too insignificant to get involved, from a one-person operation to a larger company, your voice can AND SHOULD be heard.

Got a question for Chris?

Contact him today.

president@bpca.org.uk

Ready to get involved?

bpca.org.uk/groups

INTERVIEW

COME FLY WITH ME!

Pest professional Mark Bower spoke to PPC about his time 'down under' and the wealth of overseas opportunities for pest controllers willing to step out of their comfort zones.

In around 1998, I was looking for a job and saw an ad for a wasp technician at Rentokil. It was a summer temp position and I thought it was quite cool. You drive around in your van doing jobs, people are always pleased to see you and grateful for the work you do.

That was my introduction to pest control as a career.

Since then I've been quite lucky; I've done and seen so much – youth hostels in Snowdonia, pigeon shoots at a large chemical factory in Liverpool, a big American college in London – I've travelled all over the country.

TV star 'down under'

While I was working with Positive Environmental we went to Birmingham for PestTech and there was a TV crew attending. They were looking for people to go to Australia and work with pest controllers over there.

I thought it sounded cool and that the show was going to be a serious study on pest control; it turned out to be more of a comedy documentary, where they put you in situations so that they could film you screaming. And the people who screamed the most got aired the most, which (luckily for my ego) wasn't me.

Anyway, for the price of looking a bit of a plonker on TV, I had all my flights paid for, plus accommodation and living expenses for three months. I asked my gaffer if I could have three months off, sorted out my direct debits, got on a plane and went.

I went to Sydney, Brisbane, all over. One of the best things I got to do while out there was go into the Blue Mountains in New South Wales and complete a venomous snake handling course.

It was run by a guy called Neville, and basically he put me in an empty swimming pool with a bag, a snake hook and some venomous tiger snakes (*Notechis scutatus*).

It was 45 degrees, and the snakes were very hot and annoyed. At one point Neville put a snake on the floor, then got distracted talking to the staff. I just had a hook in my hand but I didn't have the bag! The snake started coming towards me with an attitude and I nearly jumped out of the pool!

But I grabbed the bag and managed to hook it, which takes a lot of skill and nerve.

As well as tiger snakes, we dealt with:

- Eastern brown snakes – if they bite you your blood goes like silicone from a caulking gun
- Red-bellied black snakes – their venom is necrotising so it starts to rot your flesh.

So, some serious health implications from these animals we were dealing with!



Sun's up at Sydney Harbour Bridge!

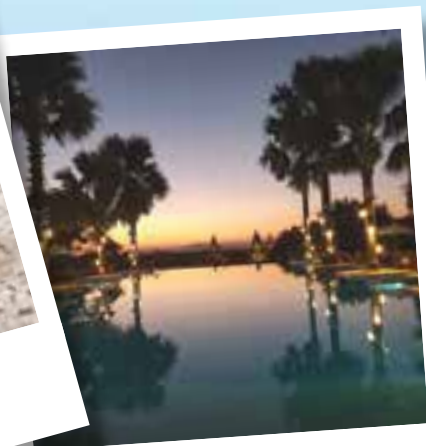
Then I worked in Sydney with a guy called Harley, driving around and getting snakes out of properties.

We also dealt with funnel web spiders. There was a female under a log and we got it out, put it in a little case, touched it with a screwdriver and it just reared up right on its back legs; you could see its two fangs just dripping venom.

At one point, I remember being in Harley's van, driving over Sydney harbour bridge. He received a call from a guy with a snake in his house and I had a moment where I thought, "I'm on this iconic bridge, looking out over the harbour, getting calls for venomous snakes" – and it was surreal.



Red bellied black snake



"Living the dream!!"



Schwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Myanmar

"I'd go back in a heartbeat. It was an amazing thing to be a part of, a once-in-a-lifetime experience!"

Itchy feet

I'd been back from Australia a while, and working in Birmingham, when I saw an advert calling for pest controllers to go to Myanmar.

I rang the manager and got a phone interview. He wanted someone to come out for three months, with paid flights and accommodation, to train his team up to British standards.

It turns out you don't have to ask me twice, so off I went.

In a nutshell, they were flying me all over the country looking after different sites. The manager would say, "Tomorrow you're going to Mandalay, and you're going to work at the hotels there supervising the team, and treat cockroaches and termites." So I would do that and then write reports for the management on what I'd found.

We performed mosquito inspections on tourist boats traversing the Irrawaddy River. Then there'd be a problem with cockroaches in a shopping centre in Yangon, so I'd fly back there and deal with that. I'd train company staff in five-star hotels and big companies using an interpreter. I was all over the country.

I'd get put up in a hotel suite and every morning I'd be out with my guys doing the audits. I'd get to try some amazing food (noodles for breakfast took me a while to get used to) and when I'd get home from work I could take a swim in the hotel pool.

There's no feeling like waking up for a job doing an audit, being in a luxury lodge by the sea and just walking down to a tropical beach.

Pigeons, rats and Buddhist monks

While in Myanmar I went to a big hotel at Bagan, a vast plain with lots of Buddhist temples.

They had luxury hotels there with pigeon problems; I trained Burmese technicians in the use of neck break pliers to dispatch pigeons, which was difficult.

It needed to be done, but they were Buddhist so they believe there's a spirit in every living thing. We had to work with the Buddhist monks to get permission to do that.

I also worked at one of the biggest Buddhist temples in the middle of Yangon. They had trouble with rats and, again, we had to get permission from the monks to put bait boxes in. We also had to do all the installations of these bait boxes in bare feet, as it's disrespectful to do otherwise.

Bagan was a highlight; I was right up in the roof sorting the birds out, and I looked out at sunset and you could see the plains of Bagan right in front of you, stretching on for miles, with all these beautiful Buddhist temples. Pictures don't do it justice.

Risk and reward

If you have a job that can be utilised in any country in the world and the opportunity arises, take it.

Of course you do have to be careful, as sometimes these jobs abroad sound great but they can be a bit dodgy. Top tip: do your homework, check the small print.

Having said that, I was able to spend six months in two beautiful countries doing my job. If I pop my clogs tomorrow, I will have gotten every bit of use out of my pest control knowledge and have no regrets.

People can be trapped by their domestic circumstances, but this kind of trip can benefit your family.

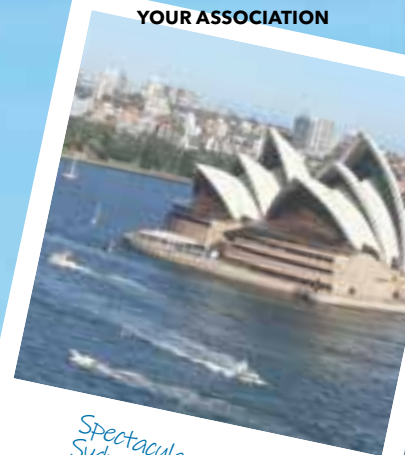
When I came back from Myanmar I was headhunted by Mitie for a training officer job. So, instead of just being a run of the mill pest controller, people can see there is more to you. You've got more work and life experience than the average technician.

It's understandable that people are scared, but I say get out of your comfort zone and take risks – especially young people who don't have anything tying them down. This can be a hell of an interesting career if you take the chances when they come up.

I'm very lucky; I've seen more of the world through doing pest control than I would have in another job. I'll certainly take the next adventure when the opportunity comes along!

Your stories. Your magazine.

Got a story for PPC? Get in touch. We can support you with an article, conduct an interview or come and meet you out-and-about.
hello@bpca.org.uk



Spectacular
Sydney Opera House



Out and about with a carpet
python in Sydney, Australia.



With the team in
Yangon, Myanmar.

FUN FACT

The plain of Bagan, one of Asia's richest archaeological sites, is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. The ancient city was once home to over 13,000 temples constructed between the 9th and 13th centuries.

VIRTUAL ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

BPCA

AVAILABLE NOW!

TechAssure



BPCA has launched a 3D interactive competency assessment with support and funding from the Ufi VocTech Trust. BPCA Training and Development Manager Karen Dawes explains TechAssure and the gaps it helps fill for newly qualified technicians.



What defines a pest professional? It's an often-asked question and one to which the answer given is usually 'a qualification'. And anyone qualified to the recognised Level 2 Award in Pest Management is undoubtedly taking the proper steps. However, it is more complex than that.

The European definition of a professional pest controller takes a four-pronged approach. It requires professional pest controllers to demonstrate:

- They have undertaken relevant training
- They are qualified to a minimum recognised level
- They are committed to continued professional development
- They are competent to carry out safe and effective pest management.

And it's that last bullet point that is the troublesome one.

COMPETENCE

noun /'kɒmpɪt(ə)ns/

The ability to do something successfully or efficiently.

How do you demonstrate competency? Certainly not through a written assessment. That, at best, tests your knowledge and understanding of pest management. At worst, it simply tests memory.

Imagine a learner driver takes their theory test and is immediately allowed to drive, unsupervised, on UK roads and motorways. Unthinkable, right?

But is that not what's happening in pest control? A trainee pest controller passes a written examination and is immediately allowed unsupervised use of dangerous chemicals where people live, work and play.

A written assessment doesn't test whether a candidate has the skills to carry out pest management.

Testing competency

Now, I'm not saying that the competency of newly qualified technicians isn't checked.

I know many BPCA member companies have robust internal training programmes

in place. Their trainees are supervised throughout their induction period, with processes in place for line managers to sign off their competence through observation.

For many reasons, line manager sign-off is the ideal solution for ensuring competency. However, it's not always possible in every business. Micro-businesses and new entrants to the sector are unlikely to have the resources to do a competency check.

In 2019, BPCA facilitated an Employer Group of BPCA members to develop and publish an English Level 2 Pest Technician apprenticeship through the Institute of Apprenticeships. The apprenticeship would take a minimum of 12 months to complete, and during that time, trainees would be given both theory and practical training and be assessed regularly by independent assessors.

However, the numbers of learners forecast, and the likely geographical spread of those learners, meant that no commercial training provider or assessment organisation considered it a financially viable prospect – mainly due to the cost of the requirement for regular physical observations of candidates.

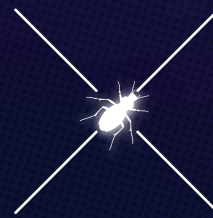
And that is where this story starts.

Pilot programme funded by



BPCA

TechAssure

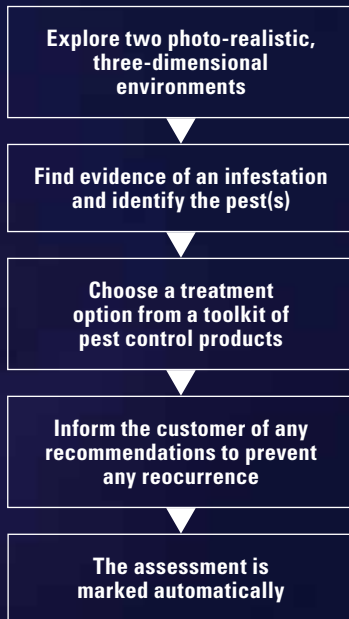


Introducing TechAssure

By their very nature, independent physical observations are costly. Plus, there are challenges in finding the relevant pest issue in the right environment for when an assessment is needed.

In 2021, BPCA successfully secured funding to develop a pilot virtual platform to assess learners' practical skills in realistic environments. And in March this year, at BPCA's PestEx exhibition, TechAssure was introduced to the sector.

HOW IT WORKS



Because the assessment marks itself automatically, learners will know immediately if they've passed or failed their assessment. If a learner fails, feedback is provided to guide any additional training needs.

If they pass, they have demonstrated their competency in dealing with a real-life pest infestation – albeit in a virtual environment.

And this can happen at a time and place to suit the learner and their organisation!

The assessment is designed to support the learners at entry-level and is an add-on opportunity for those who have recently passed their Level 2 Award in Pest Management.

RECRUITMENT TOOL

TechAssure is an excellent tool for employers recruiting technicians. You'll be able to assess a potential employee's practical skills during recruitment.

TechAssure could be a valuable part of your hiring process.

Easy to access

It couldn't be easier to access TechAssure. All you need is a quiet space, a computer or tablet and an internet connection.

- Each learner will be sent a URL and given login details to access the portal
- They'll enter a practice room where they can familiarise themselves with moving around and using the toolkit to place treatments
- Learners stay in the practice room as long as they need to feel comfortable with the controls
- When ready, learners move into the assessment area, where they'll have a specified amount of time to complete the assessment
- Once they submit a treatment assessment, they'll be asked for client recommendations
- The learner will receive notification that the assessment is complete and get results instantly.
- Once we've validated the results, further feedback will be sent to the learner and the organisation.

When learners pass the assessment, they will receive a BPCA Practical Skills in Rodent Control accreditation.

Final thoughts

I couldn't be more proud of the work that has taken place on this project.

This assessment has been developed by pest professionals for pest professionals. Through the project group of member volunteers, we had access to the highest level of expertise and experience in the sector.

I believe that TechAssure, in its pilot phase, will benefit so many learners by giving them confidence in their ability to carry out safe and effective pest control. It'll help employers direct training resources where needed. It will reassure clients that the professionalism of their pest control contractors is demonstrable at all levels.

And this is just the beginning. This is a pilot project – if successful, we can add more environments, more pest species, and increased levels of complexity if we can find the right partners.

Special thanks to...

Our project group:
 Simon Taylor, Ecolab
 Alex Wade, Wade Environmental
 Paul Blackhurst, Rentokil
 Martin Rose-King, Bounty Pest Control
 Our project partners:
 Mike Newbould, The Learning Tank

Find out more or book

TechAssure is ready for its first candidates! Contact us today to get started.
bpca.org.uk/techassure
 01332 225 114
training@bpca.org.uk

"How do you demonstrate competency? Certainly not through a written assessment. That, at best, tests your knowledge and understanding of pest management. At worst, it simply tests memory."

TRAINING CALENDAR

Courses and exams

Course/exam	From (£)	Exam	Date	Location
Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)	1010	✓	17-22/07/2022	Stafford
			11-16/09/2022	Stafford
			04-09/12/2022	Stafford
Principles of Pest Identification	95		24/05/2022	Online
			17/11/2022	
Bed Bug Control	95		28/09/2022	Online
Advanced Insect Biology	95		22/11/2022	Online
Advanced Rodent Biology	95		27/09/2022	Online
Fundamentals of Rodent Biology	55		01/09/2022 1/2 day	Online
			24/11/2022 1/2 day	
Fundamentals of Insects Biology	55		01/09/2022 1/2 day	Online
			24/11/2022 1/2 day	
Root Cause Analysis for Technicians	55		06/07/2022 1/2 day	Online
			11/10/2022 1/2 day	
Root Cause Analysis for Field Biologists	55		14/07/2022 1/2 day	Online
			27/10/2022 1/2 day	
Certificate in Bird Management	95	✓	09/07/2022	Online
			29/09/2022	
Formulations and Applications	95	✓	21/06/2022	Online
			13/10/2022	
Stored Product Insects (SPIs) in Food Factory Environments	95		23/06/2022	Online
			06/09/2022	
			08/12/2022	
Introduction to Wildlife Management	95		13/06/2022	Online
			19/10/2022	
Aluminum Phosphide	310	✓	12+13/11/2022	Southwick
How to solve resistance	95		08/09/2022	Online
			01/12/2022	
Legislation and Labels	95		28/06/2022	Online
			20/10/2022	
Waste Management for Pest Control Companies	95		06/10/2022	Online
Becoming a Field Biologist or Technical Inspector	95		30/06/2022	Online
			02/12/2022	
Starting and managing your own pest management business	95		03/08/2022	Online
Level 3 Award in Safe Use of Fumigants for the Management of Invertebrate Pests	780		06-10/06/2022	Yarnfield



Enquiries and bookings

training@bpca.org.uk
01332 225 113
bpca.org.uk/training

Bulk booking discounts

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

Exams only

Exam	From (£)	Date	Location
RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management	155	22/07/2022	Stafford
		16/09/2022	Stafford
		09/12/2022	Stafford
Technical Inspector Exam	155	22/07/2022	Stafford
		16/09/2022	Stafford
		09/12/2022	Stafford
RSPH Level 3 Award in the Safe Use of Fumigants for the Management of Invertebrate Pests	305	22/07/2022	Stafford
		16/09/2022	Stafford
		09/12/2022	Stafford
Certificated Advanced Technician (CAT) in Pest Management	294	Book anytime	Online

Online learning - take at any time

The flexible approach to pest control training, learn at your own pace at times to suit you bpca.org.uk/online-learning

	From (£)
Full Level 2 Award in Pest Management – online course	300
Using Rodenticides Safely – online course and exam	75
Foundation Certificate in Pest Management	55
Pest Awareness for Non-technical Staff	
Completing Risk Assessments	
Working at Height	
Asbestos Awareness	20
Manual Handling	
Ladder Safety	
COSHH	

Night school - bite-sized evening masterclasses

	From (£)	Date	Location
PestSense: How do Pests Communicate?	25	31/05/2022	Online
Putting Together Amazing Pest Site Folders	25	14/06/2022	Online
Introduction to Root Cause Analysis	25	28/06/2022	Online
Surveys and Environmental Risk Assessments	25	12/07/2022	Online
Form, Forms, Forms	25	26/07/2022	Online

Terms and conditions

All costs are members only and exclude VAT.

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

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

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

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