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# PPC115



**DONE AND  
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Shaking wasp control habits



**PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROLLER MAY 2024**  
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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](http://bpca.org.uk/add)



**Basis Prompt point allocation**  
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# A celebration of passion in pest management

Many who wandered the hall at PestEx 2024 commented on the passion, optimism and electric atmosphere.

We're keen to continue that theme in this issue of Professional Pest Controller (PPC) magazine.

We often get bogged down in what's wrong with the sector and not what's going right.

The professionalism and profile of our sector continue to flourish – we see that across numerous articles in PPC, particularly in our feature on TrustMark government-endorsed quality and our Future of Pest Management executive summary.

And in this issue, we celebrate our wealth of fantastic, energetic volunteers.

We face trying times ahead, but we hope that, when you explore the pages of this issue, you will see the incremental steps of progress and innovation evident in the sector. BPCA's ability to influence the Scottish Parliament with the support of hundreds of PPC readers is just one way that we've made a positive difference together.

Yes, our toolkit is under scrutiny. The cost of living crisis is hitting our customers. But, as a sector, we remain resilient.

Thanks to those of you who stopped by the BPCA stand at PestEx. Your encouragement keeps us all focused on supporting the sector and gives us the tools we need to make real industry change.

*Scott + Dee*

PPC editors  
[hello@bpca.org.uk](mailto:hello@bpca.org.uk)



A big thank you to everyone who came to see the team on the BPCA stand at PestEx 2024.

## BASF LAUNCHES SURVEY TO BREAK THE SILENCE ON MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

BPCA member and pest control manufacturer BASF has launched a survey to explore men's mental health issues in the pest control industry.

Recognising the difficult circumstances many in the sector deal with on a daily basis, and the specific challenges men face when it comes to mental health, the company hopes to shine a light on this important topic by exploring real-life experiences of professional pest controllers.

The survey, which takes less than five minutes to complete, seeks to delve into the underlying factors contributing to poor mental health in the industry, exploring issues such as feelings of isolation on the road, work-related stress and striking a work-life balance.

Laurence Barnard, Country Business Manager at BASF Pest Control, said: "In an industry where many are self-employed, spend long days alone, and deal with customers in various emotional situations, being a pest technician can be incredibly tough.

"Yet, sadly we know that there is still stigma surrounding men's mental health issues, and often we don't know how to reach out for help or feel reluctant to do so."

BASF hopes that the findings from the survey, which will be shared in June to coincide with Men's Mental Health Awareness Week, will help destigmatise issues that many may face, encourage open conversations and facilitate discussions among pest controllers.

Throughout the week, the company will provide advice on managing mental health, share useful resources and highlight support systems for those who need them.

To complete the survey, visit [form.jotform.com/240864809414057](http://form.jotform.com/240864809414057)



### NEW MEMBERS

#### Full servicing members

- Anston Pest Control, South Yorkshire
- BK Environmental, Berkshire
- Crawley Borough Council, West Sussex
- Ecotech Pest Control, Berkshire
- Greenerleaf Estate Maintenance, North Lanarkshire
- Nigel Caves Pest Control, Cheshire
- PestMax UK, Worcestershire
- Pest X Environmental, Greater London
- Premier Pest Services, Greater Manchester
- Protek Environmental, County Tyrone
- SJG Pest Control, Greater London

#### Observer members

- PestScan, Netherlands

## DID YOU SPOT BPCA MEMBER AND VOLUNTEER VICKI SIMS ON SATURDAY NIGHT TAKEAWAY?



Vicki Sims, Managing Director of BPCA member company Lady Bug, was part of an elaborate practical joke on ITV's Saturday Night Takeaway. Ironically, Vicki volunteers on BPCA's Outreach and Communications Committee - however she didn't know she'd be seen by 10 million people on ITV's prime time show.

Vicki said: "Being part of the show was absolutely amazing.

"I had no idea I had been set up. As far as I knew, I was attending the site to look at a potential contract. If I had known I would be seeing Ant, I would have worn makeup and looked a bit more presentable!

"We did much more than what was shown on Saturday Night, like singing into a cucumber that I found on the floor and using Lorraine Kelly's face as a dart board. Obviously, they could only show a small amount, but I was very happy with what they showed especially when we bounced with the giant orange space hoppers! Those just took me right back to my childhood.

"A lot was going through my mind that afternoon, but I just thought Ant and Dec love a laugh so this is how they must be in real life, so I just decided to go with the flow.

"I only knew it was all a set-up when Alison and Dermot came into the room with the cameras! I have had a huge response after appearing on the show with lots of positive feedback."

If you want to watch Vicki on Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway, find the segment on YouTube here [bit.ly/3vUFRo4](https://bit.ly/3vUFRo4)

## OCS ACQUIRES ABATE PEST MANAGEMENT SERVICES TO EXPAND UK PEST CONTROL BUSINESS



OCS, a global facilities service provider, announced that it has acquired BPCA member company Abate Pest Management Services, an independent provider of pest control solutions based in Norfolk.

OCS said: "This strategic acquisition significantly bolsters OCS's existing pest control capabilities, adding new expertise and exposure to different industries such as housing associations and food manufacturing."

Jon Blake, Managing Director of Abate Pest Management Services, said: "Abate has operated independently as one of the UK's premier pest control providers for over 25 years and we are proud to have built a strong customer base thanks to the leading service we provide. OCS recognises the strength of our business lies within our team who have been central to the success of our business. I am confident that together we can offer our customers a truly market leading service."



### SAVE THE DATES

All international pest professionals are invited to PestWorld 2024.

**When? 22-25 October 2024**

**Where? Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center, Denver, Colorado, USA**

Held each year, and organised by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) in the USA, PestWorld is the largest and most international gathering in the pest controller's calendar, regularly attracting over 3,000 delegates from around 50 different countries.

[npmapestworld.org](http://npmapestworld.org)



## WOMEN IN TRADE ASSOCIATIONS POWERLIST SPOT FOR BPCA EXEC BOARD MEMBER



Julia Pittman, BPCA Executive Board member and Director at Beaver Pest Control, has been included on the Women in Trade Associations 2024 Powerlist.

The Powerlist, put together by the Trade Association Forum, champions the role of women in trade associations, celebrates their achievements and aims to encourage the next generation of women into the association sector.

Julia was included in the Outstanding Member Contribution category: women nominated by their trade associations for their dedicated and continued contributions to their respective associations and sectors.

"I'm proud to be on this prestigious list of women, and want to thank Ian Andrew and BPCA for nominating me," said Julia.

"Over the last seven years, I have volunteered my time to the Executive Board of BPCA, contributing to the strategy for our industry. It's been both rewarding and challenging.

"This year I was very pleased to be joined by two amazing women, Anna Mollins and Rebekah Carral and I'm looking forward to their contributions."

During her seven-year tenure on the Board, Julia has also chaired the Outreach and Communications Committee. She is the current Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, focused on helping BPCA members recruit and retain talent.

Ian Andrew, BPCA Chief Exec, commented: "Julia is a valued member of our Exec Board and a dedicated volunteer to BPCA. Her passion for the pest control industry is commendable, and she 100% deserves to be recognised on this list for her contributions to the sector.

"Well done, Julia!"

## BPCA LAUNCHES NEW TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The BPCA Executive Board has constituted a new committee of the Board. The BPCA Technical Committee will focus on the provision of pest management services, best practices and guidance.

BPCA committees are made up of volunteers from member companies.

Both the BPCA Servicing and Manufacturers and Distributors (M&D) Committees have been discontinued. However, the members of these previous committees have been instrumental in creating the new Technical Committee.

The formative meeting of the Technical Committee saw members of the former Servicing and M&D Committees come together on 4 April to lay the foundations for the new configuration.

Martin Rose-King, BPCA Vice-President, chaired the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

### The role of the Technical Committee

Main areas of responsibility:

- **Standards of pest management service provision, including Codes of Best Practice, guidance documents and templates**
- **Technical advice through webinars, forums and events**
- **Matters related to member services and benefits**
- **Technical issues related to membership criteria and ongoing assessments**
- **Technical content for training, qualifications and continuing professional development**
- **Issues related to industry developments, toolkit products and processes**
- **Feedback to stakeholders, including CRRU, RRAC, RRAG, NPAP and specifiers**
- **Contributing to the overall strategy of BPCA including delivering strategic projects.**

### A special thank you to the Servicing and M&D Committees

The Servicing and M&D Committees have spearheaded numerous projects supporting members and the wider sector.

BPCA Vice-president Martin Rose-King said: "From industry research to developing BPCA Registered, protecting products, and producing Codes and best practice guidance - these long-standing BPCA groups have had many successes.

"I'm very proud of my time on the Servicing Committee. We would like to express our thanks to every committee member who volunteered.

"The new Technical Committee will bring together different types of companies and skills to continue their good work."

### Next steps - get involved

Former committee members from Servicing and M&D have developed the terms of reference for the new Committee.

The new Committee will initially be made up of 15 members of the previous committees, selected by ballot. Special provisions will be included in the terms of reference so that Servicing, M&D and Consultant members are all represented on the Technical Committee.

The first full meeting of the new Technical Committee is scheduled for 25 June.

If you're interested in observing any BPCA committee meeting or getting involved in volunteering, contact [membership@bpca.org.uk](mailto:membership@bpca.org.uk)

## RSPH PUBLISHES NEW REPORT ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

The Royal Society for Public Health has recently published a new report that outlines four key recommendations that would unlock the potential of the UK's wider public health workforce.

This 'wider workforce' includes any individual who has the opportunity or ability to positively impact the health and well-being of the public through their work. This includes pest control professionals, who are widely recognised as defenders of public health, particularly since the successful campaign by BPCA to secure key worker status during Covid-19.

The recommendations from the report include a whole workforce strategy for public health and greater recognition of the positive contribution to the UK's health. These are:

- Develop a cross-sector national strategy
- Resource, upskill and empower the wider workforce
- Recognise their contribution to public health and prevention
- Define clearer routes into public health.

Read the report at [rsph.org.uk/our-work/policy](https://rsph.org.uk/our-work/policy)



## GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY SUMMIT ANNOUNCED IN FLORIDA

NPMA has partnered with the Confederation of European Pest Management



Associations (CEPA)

and the Federation of Asian and Oceania Pest Managers Association (FAOPMA) on this global summit, which will focus on pest management in the public health and food safety sectors.

**When? 4-6 June, 2024**

**Where? Eden Roc Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida**

The Summit brings together pest management professionals, public health officials, food safety specialists, researchers and more to share the latest advances in public health and food safety protection, best practices, and cutting-edge strategies for controlling pests that contaminate food and threaten public health. This event is dedicated to advancing the crucial mission of increasing food safety and reducing pest-borne disease through top-level training and networking with industry experts.

BPCA's Natalie Bungay will be there, speaking about environmental sustainability in pest management.

[nmpapestworld.org/food-safety](http://nmpapestworld.org/food-safety)



### NEW ORKIN UK GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR

Kristian Dales has been appointed to the newly created role of managing director of Orkin UK Services with ambitious plans to expand and reorganise the pest control specialist.

Orkin said: "An experienced executive, Kristian has worked in the waste management industry and has outlined plans to develop and grow the UK subsidiary of US-based Rollins Inc."

He joins Orkin from his role as CEO of the UK arm of international waste specialists Tradebe, where he drove impressive growth. Kristian said: "Through acquisitions, the Orkin group of companies is now one of the top three pest control businesses in the UK, a fact that may surprise many industry observers."

"The potential for growth through further acquisitions, the development of specialist divisions and better business integration is huge. I'm confident that Orkin will be recognised as one of the leading pest control brands in the UK."

Orkin's UK business has grown significantly since the acquisition of Safeguard Pest Control in 2016. Since then, 11 companies have been added to their portfolio, the most significant being NBC Environmental in 2022, as well as Bird and Pest Solutions Ltd and Descale and Chlorination Services Ltd, both added in 2024.



Results of new independent trials have shown Advion Cockroach Gel was the fastest way to stop pest activity in domestic homes and food businesses. The practical research in premises infested with German cockroaches compared various commercially available gel formulations – with only Advion proving to stop all pest activity.

Reporting the results at PestEx 2024 in London, Syngenta Business Manager Richard Moseley said, "This research has confirmed that it's a challenge to achieve high levels of control of German cockroaches in practical situations.

"Palatability of products is clearly crucial where alternative food sources are available, along with their efficacy. Advion Cockroach Gel has proven it is both attractive to pests and extremely effective in targeting complete pest populations," he added.

Replicated European trials were undertaken by i2L Research on 16 sites, including apartments and bar areas, known to be infested with German cockroaches (*Blattella germanica*). Four products were applied as a crack and crevice treatment, by trained professional pest controllers.

The activity of cockroaches was monitored by researchers before and during the trial using multiple sticky traps.

"The monitoring revealed that only Advion gave a complete result – with no cockroach activity on all four sites and situations it was used at the end of eight weeks monitoring," Richard reported.

"In all other sites and with all other products cockroach activity was still being seen at the end of the eight-week trial monitoring period, albeit at reduced levels than the start."

The trial included commercially available products of clothianidin; dinotefuran and clothianidin plus pyriproxyfen, along with the Syngenta bio-activated indoxacarb in Advion Cockroach Gel.

Results showed that Advion achieved an average 48% reduction in the cockroach population in the first week after application across four sites.

## PELSIS LAUNCHES NEW REMOTE MONITORING SOLUTION

BPCA member Pelsis has launched its latest digital product EverSmart Rodent, an innovative remote monitoring solution for rodent control.



Developed by Philadelphia-based tech firm Microshare, the EverSmart product sends real-time alerts to users when rodent station activity is detected, improving fleet and operational efficiencies, as well as customer response times.

EverSmart Rodent produces an alert direct to a phone, tablet, or computer when rodents appear, providing insight into rodent activity and early warnings for preventative action.

This is the latest addition to Pelsis' growing portfolio of connected digital products following the successful launch of its digital insect light trap at the end of 2023.

Speaking about the partnership, Pelsis CEO Alex Ashmore said, "The EverSmart Rodent solution is a simple and effective way to manage large sites efficiently and to gather important insight into rodent behavior for an integrated pest management approach.

"We are excited to add this product to our digital portfolio and to be working with the team at Microshare."

Ron Rock, CEO of Microshare, commented: "As a technology-first company, we have listened to the market, collaborated with innovative thinkers like Pelsis, and have created a solution that can be deployed at scale. Our clients report increased sales, lower operating costs, reduced carbon footprints, and greater customer retention."

## ENTRIES NOW OPEN FOR THE NATIONAL PEST AWARDS 2024



The National Pest Awards are back for 2024, recognising those who have excelled in pest control across the UK.

This year's Awards, in association with the BPCA, NPTA and Basis, will culminate in a gala ceremony and dinner in London on Wednesday 11 September. Finalists will receive a pair of tickets to attend the ceremony.

The event will feature a drinks reception followed by a gala dinner and awards. There will also be a celebrity host and after-dinner entertainment.

BPCA Chief Exec, Ian Andrew, said: "You've got to be in it to win it. The Pest Awards are a fantastic way to celebrate your company's achievements. We encourage all BPCA members to get involved. If you need help putting together a nomination, get in touch. We'd love to see another year with many members taking top awards!"

The awards are free to enter and there are 11 categories. To enter the National Pest Awards 2024, complete your nomination form or contact Callum Daly on 01825 725 301. The deadline for all entries is Friday, 24 May.

[nationalpestawards.co.uk](http://nationalpestawards.co.uk)



## BPCA ELECTION RESULTS 2024 – THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

“We’ll now work on inducting our new Board members so they’re ready to join our Board meetings and help set the direction of the Association for years to come”.

BPCA President Chris Cagienard said: “As a membership organisation, it’s crucial that members have the opportunity to put their hat into the ring as a candidate and vote on their representatives.

“Our member volunteers are the lifeblood of the Association, and we’re looking forward to working with them on the Board.

“Thank you to all the candidates and the member companies that took the time to vote”.

Three new member representatives have been appointed to the BPCA Executive Board following a vote by BPCA member companies.

The successful candidates are:

- Rebekah Carral, Barricade Pest Control
- Anna Mollins, PestFix
- Martin Cobbald, Dealey Environmental.

They were formally appointed on 29 February at an Executive Board meeting.

The new members of the Board were chosen by their fellow members.

BPCA Company Secretary Lorraine Norton said: “It was a very close-fought contest, and we had much more engagement running the election online compared to how we previously made appointments at an AGM.

### Learn more about volunteering

BPCA is run by over 60 volunteers from different member companies who work on projects across several committees, the Executive Board and working groups. If you’d like to learn more about volunteering your time for the benefit of the sector, take a look at our committees and groups page or contact

[membership@bpca.org.uk](mailto:membership@bpca.org.uk)

## NURTURE GROUP ACQUIRES MIDLAND PEST CONTROL

Nurture Group has completed the acquisition of Birmingham-based Midland Pest Control Ltd, further strengthening its presence across the Midlands region.

The award-winning green services group, which has established an enviable national footprint since it started trading on 1 April 2008, has now completed its 45th successful acquisition.

The purchase of the Birmingham-based pest control business will allow Nurture Group to consolidate its position as one of the leading providers in the UK pest control market and extend its national reach.

Founded in 2000 by Stephen and Ruth Hurley, Midland Pest Control has emerged as a leading regional player in the pest control industry.

Commenting on the company’s acquisition, co-founder of Midland Pest Control, Steve Hurley, said “We have long admired Nurture’s outstanding reputation for operational excellence in pest control and more broadly in green services, so to be part of this group is an exciting move for us.”

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## NEW RESEARCH INTO EXPERIENCES AROUND PEST MANAGEMENT



Dr Hannah Fair, a departmental lecturer at the University of Oxford, talks to PPC editors about her research exploring the social, financial and emotional impacts of living with pests.

The professional pest management industry could benefit from a lot more data. That doesn't just include biological and chemical research, but also more insight into how and why people behave the way they do.

I'm a researcher based at the University of Oxford, and I'm launching a new project that's trying to address some of the social science data gaps in pest management.

In my research I use interviews and observation to explore people's values and behaviours, in order to try and address pressing social and environmental challenges.

I'm interested in ethical dilemmas, overlooked forms of expertise and everyday decision-making in complex situations.

Previously I analysed public attitudes to nature in terms of rare and charismatic species (orangutans) but now I'm keen to understand what happens when people's homes and lives get entangled with ordinary and unwanted creatures.

For one part of this research, I'm exploring the social, financial and emotional impacts of living with pests. When it comes to domestic infestations, what responses are taken, by whom, why and with what consequence?



**"I'm also hoping to accompany a range of technicians on calls, getting an insight into work on the ground."**

Do residents call in a pestie, use non-professional solutions or just ignore the pest and hope it goes away?

How does this change based on the type of pest, the resident's housing situation or other demographic factors?

To find this out I'll be interviewing UK residents (mostly in cities) about their experiences of managing infestations. We all know that for residents pest control is often a distress purchase, but we don't have much data about what that distress looks like or what the psychological costs of infestations might be.

By shining a light on this, this research will help make visible the social significance and value of pest management to everyday public well-being.

### How can pest professionals get involved?

As another side of this research, I'm interested in documenting the skills, practices and expertise involved in different aspects of professional pest management.

What are some of the everyday technical, ethical, and reputational challenges pesties face, and how are these navigated?

To find this out, I'm excited to interview professionals with a range of roles within the industry, and different degrees of experience, about their views on changes and challenges in the British pest management industry.

I'm keen to talk to sole traders, technicians working for large companies and managers of SMEs. I'm particularly interested in hearing from women working in pest control, and younger technicians, including graduates.

**"I'm interested in ethical dilemmas, overlooked forms of expertise and everyday decision-making in complex situations."**

I'd like to hear views on a range of issues:

- Changing legislation
- The role of digital technologies
- Public attitudes and misconceptions
- Industry recruitment
- Threats to the toolkit
- The skills and attitudes that make a great pestie
- Anything else that you think I need to know.

As well as interviews, I'd like to get a better sense of the practical realities of pest management. So, I'm also hoping to accompany a range of technicians on calls, getting an insight into work on the ground.

Through this I'm hoping to produce detailed and nuanced accounts of the work of pest management professionals that can challenge common public misconceptions about the industry.

I'm working with the BPCA's Academic Relations Working Group to ensure that the research is relevant and useful for the industry.

All data collected will be securely managed and all participants will be anonymised if they wish to be.

The research has received ethics approval and funding from the University of Oxford. As a researcher I'm impartial and have no commercial ties.

I plan to use this research to produce academic articles and reports for BPCA, that they can use in their policy and advocacy work to directly impact decision-makers. Of course, I'll also share the findings in PPC magazine.

### Questions? Feedback? Get in touch!

If you're keen to be interviewed or have me join you for a day on the job, just drop me a message on [hannah.fair@ouce.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hannah.fair@ouce.ox.ac.uk)

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## SPRING BUDGET: HOW WILL IT AFFECT PEST CONTROL BUSINESSES?

The 2024 Spring Budget from Jeremy Hunt brings several changes that may impact BPCA members, many of whom operate as small businesses or sole traders.

Here's an overview of how these budget announcements may affect pest professionals.

### VAT threshold increase

The VAT threshold is set to rise from £85,000 to £90,000, effective from 1 April 2024.

For pest professionals with turnovers below this threshold, this means they can continue to operate without being required to register for VAT.

This can be particularly beneficial for small businesses, as it reduces the administrative burden and associated costs.

### Self-employed National Insurance Contributions (NICs) reduction

The reduction in self-employed NICs from 9% to 6%, starting from 6 April 2024, could result in cost savings for pest professionals who operate as sole traders.

This measure aims to support the self-employed sector, providing financial relief and potentially increasing take-home income for these individuals.

### Fuel duty freeze

The decision to freeze the current level of fuel duty for 12 months is likely to be welcomed by pest professionals who rely on vehicles for their business operations.

The freeze means fuel duty will remain at 57.95p per litre, as it has done since March 2011.

This helps mitigate potential increases in operating costs associated with fuel, contributing to the stability of expenses for businesses heavily dependent on transportation.

### Recovery Loan Scheme extension

The extension of the Recovery Loan Scheme until 2026 is good news for small businesses, including pest professionals, as it provides continued access to government-backed loans.

This extension offers financial support and flexibility, enabling businesses to recover and invest in their operations, potentially assisting with equipment upgrades, expansion or adapting to evolving market demands.

### Summary

The budget measures seem generally favourable for pest professionals operating as small businesses or sole traders.

The increased VAT threshold, reduction in self-employed NICs, fuel duty freeze and the extension of the Recovery Loan Scheme collectively contribute to a more supportive economic environment for their operations, potentially easing financial burdens and providing opportunities for growth and recovery.

However, it is important to note that this is likely the last large fiscal event before the due election, these measures may not be in place by the end of the year.

## A BABY AT BPCA

PPC Editor and BPCA PR and Publications Manager, Kat Shaw and her partner Jake are happy to announce the birth of their first daughter, Casey Jayne Brookes.

Casey was born on 4 April, weighing 6lb 13oz. Both mother and baby are doing well.

Congrats Kat and Jake! We're all looking forward to meeting Casey soon.



## NIGEL CHEESERIGHT RETURNS TO CRRU AS CHAIRMAN



The Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use UK's new chairperson is



Nigel Cheeseright. He began a three-year term on 1 May following a two-month handover from Dr Alan Buckle, who is retiring after two decades in the role.

From 2010 to 2021 with Rentokil Initial as head of technical services then director of product development, Mr Cheeseright was also the company's representative as a CRRU director.

In addition to "exemplary leadership and personal qualities", the CRRU selection panel's decision was based on "nearly four decades of operational and general management success in technical contexts."

Balancing the pest control imperatives of public health protection, fire prevention and building damage minimisation on the one hand, and shielding non-target wildlife from rodenticide exposure on the other, demands high priority and continuity of leadership, according to Nigel Cheeseright.

"CRRU's successes to date, of which there have been many during Alan Buckle's watch, are built on the combined efforts of our many and diverse stakeholders," he says.

"Foremost among these, of course, are the working members of our three industry sectors: professional pest control, gamekeeping and farming."

## IMPROVED LED UV EFK

BPCA member PestFix announces that its leading LED UV electric fly killer is now even better than before.



Pestfix said: "When first released in the UK by PestFix in October 2021, the X-Trap 50 was proven to be the best LED UV EFK when tested against the leading brands in independent third-party testing. Testing showed that the X-Trap 50 had a faster catch rate for all fly species and was the only unit that killed 100% of flies.

"Working with their Dutch manufacturers, the unit now boasts its advanced AstronUV LED II bulbs. These new bulbs again underwent independent third-party testing with significant results showing a 35% increase in fly attractant effectiveness and 20% more energy savings."

## 10 YEARS OF LAUREN

BPCA Events Manager, Lauren Day, celebrated 10 years working with the Association this April. Lauren's been instrumental in developing PestEx, PPC Live and our Forums.

When asked for a comment on her decade with BPCA, Lauren said: "This is not something we need to shout about. I'd like people to still think I'm a spring chicken!"

Congrats, Lauren!

## PESTS IN POLITICS: JANUARY TO MARCH 2024

### Scotland's Wildlife Management and Muirburn Bill

An amendment in Stage 3 of the Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Bill has passed, leaving room for pest professionals to continue with glue traps in their crucial work across Scotland.

This significant development, championed by Scottish ministers, ensures ongoing effectiveness of pest control measures while prioritising public health and safety.

Scottish MPs can now regulate the responsible use of glue traps, ensuring they are used only to safeguard public health and as a last resort for professionals when other methods of rodent control are not feasible.

### BPCA's lobbying efforts

In response to concerns raised during the Bill process, Minister of Agriculture and Connectivity, Jim Fairlie, emphasised the potential threat of increased rodenticide resistance in rodent populations.

Fairlie stated: "During the Bill process I have heard from the British Pest Control Association, which raised concerns that increased rodenticide resistance in rodent populations is a real possibility, which could lead in the future to a situation in which professional controllers have very limited options to deal with infestations in high-risk areas."

Furthermore, the Future of Pest Management Survey, conducted by the BPCA, was discussed in Stage 3.

Rachael Hamilton highlighted the survey findings, stating: "In a recent survey conducted by BPCA, 65% of the 816 respondents stated that a ban on glue traps would impact their ability to control rodent infestations.

"Respondents reported that glue traps had the lowest rate of behavioural resistance, making them a more reliable option as a last resort."

Rachael Hamilton discussed a Freedom of Information Request (FOI) requested by the BPCA in February.

Hamilton stated: "The response to a FOI request showed that 200 glue traps have been used in the Scottish Parliament since the Bill was introduced last March, spanning two pest management treatments.

"Without those treatments, Parliament buildings could have been closed due to infestations. We have very important matters to discuss in Parliament and it should be ensured that business can carry on."

This amendment signifies a balance that prioritises public health while addressing animal welfare concerns.

### BPCA responds

BPCA Chief Exec, Ian Andrew gave evidence to the committee, representing the pest management sector.

He said: "We've been working hard to make sure politicians in Scotland are well briefed on the potential consequences an all-out ban on glue traps would have.

"We're thrilled that the Minister has heard our concerns and tabled these amendments. It's a great victory that a relatively small sector can influence politics

to help protect public health.

"Thanks to all BPCA members who supported the campaign, and those in the sector that completed our Future of Pest Management survey. Without your support, we'd be looking at a complete ban."

The next steps are for the Bill to receive royal assent and to develop a scheme to provide pest professionals access to glue traps in last resort circumstances.

Ian continued: "As always, the devil is in the detail – BPCA will now work hard to influence the scheme to make sure it's workable for pest professionals. The scheme needs to ensure that approval to use glue traps must be either rapidly issued or applied for retroactively as by the nature of glue traps treatments, they're an emergency tool."

### The next steps

This successful lobbying effort demonstrates cooperation between industry stakeholders and policymakers, highlighting BPCA's commitment to addressing the issues of rodent infestations with a focus on both animal welfare and public health.

Amidst the ongoing legislative proceedings, pest controllers are at the forefront of a significant discussion that will influence the trajectory of rodent management in Scotland. BPCA will continue to campaign to protect glue traps for professional use as NatureScot develops a workable scheme. Similarly, we continue to provide support to Defra in creating a similar scheme in England.



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**PESTS IN THE PRESS: JANUARY TO MARCH 2024**



TV has been at the centre of BPCA's press activity in the first three months of the year, as ongoing work to position BPCA as a voice for the industry continues to bear fruit.

BPCA's Natalie Bungay featured on Britain's most popular current affairs programme, Tonight, on ITV at the end of March.

The team at Tonight – part of ITV News – reached out to BPCA in January and worked with the Association to understand the role of professional pest control and the important part it has to play in protecting public health for their episode 'Home invasions, Britain's pest problem.'

And, while an enquiry from the team at This Morning withered on the vine, the Association featured in a quiz question on tea-time ITV game show The Chase in February.

In the Final Chase, host Bradley Walsh asked contestants Claire, Bethan and Paul, "The BPCA is the British Association for Pest... what?" which they answered correctly.

The trio managed to score 18 points in the Final Chase – which Chaser, Anne (The Governess) Hegerty couldn't quite match, running out of time on question 17.

Online and in print, the seasonal push to raise awareness of rat and mouse issues took the lead in the press in early 2024. It showed no signs of letting up during the first quarter of the year, alongside a few silverfish articles carried over from the tail end of 2023.

As always, BPCA worked with titles dedicated to associated trades, this time focusing on PestEx 2024 in the run-up to the event for Tomorrow's Cleaning and zeroing in on SPIs for Food and Drink Manufacturing UK.

In March, rats again hit the headlines, with a report into council spending on pest control and an article in the Daily Mail claiming a rat infestation could knock a fifth off property prices.

**Read all about it!**

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

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**DAILY EXPRESS**

**TOP 3 HEADLINES**

**ASK DR ROSEMARY LEONARD: IS IT UNHEALTHY TO HAVE A MOUSE IN MY KITCHEN**  
Daily Express

**FIGHTING THE RAT RACE**  
Platinum Business

**BRITAIN'S PEST PROBLEM - IN PLACES WHERE SOCIETY FAILS, VERMIN FLOURISH**  
ITV

**TOTAL ARTICLES TO-DATE 479**

**TOTAL CIRCULATION 2023 132,857,331**



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# FREE EVENTS AND WEBINARS

Event type **Webinar – Members only**  **Local forum** **Virtual forum**





Name	When?	CPD	Sponsor
Prevention: Integrated insect management	8 May	1	
PRESTON - networking event	15 May		
NOTTINGHAM	22 May	5	PestFix
DIGITAL 24: World Pest Day	6 June	3	Purean
Monitoring: Integrated insect management	12 June	1	
READING/OXFORD - networking event	13 June		
Control: Integrated insect management	3 July	1	
DIGITAL 25: Science of pest management	10 July	3	Purean
Lead generation and marketing	7 August	1	
DIGITAL 26: Unusual pests	14 August	3	PestFix

## Pssst!

5pm –  
18/07, 21/11

### Non-member 'open day'

Special online event 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](http://bpca.org.uk/secret)

Name	When?	CPD	Sponsor
Controlling rats in drains	4 September	1	
BELFAST	18 September	5	1env
DUBLIN - networking event	18 September		
ESSEX - networking event	2 October		
Controlling rats in homes	9 October	1	
DIGITAL 27: Starting your pest control journey	16 October	3	Killgerm
Controlling rats in flats and HMOs	13 November	1	
LEEDS	27 November	5	Killgerm
Delivering pest awareness training	4 December	1	
DIGITAL 28	11 December	3	Bell Labs

[bpca.org.uk/events](http://bpca.org.uk/events)

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# BPCA PestEx Round-up

As BPCA's flagship event, PestEx is a landmark occasion in the industry calendar – and PestEx 2024 certainly lived up to its promise of being bigger and better than ever before.

With over 150m<sup>2</sup> of additional floor space, more exhibitors than ever and a huge array of networking opportunities, seminars, panel debates and more, the two-day event

attracted delegates from across the UK – and the world – to ExCel London in March.

The event was officially opened by Paul Scully MP, former Minister for Small Business.

Mr Scully was among the first visitors to enter the exhibition hall, which quickly filled with the buzz of people meeting old friends, making

new acquaintances and networking with exhibitors and visitors alike.

He said: "I was really delighted to open PestEx 2024 for the BPCA. The Association is one voice for the sector and brings together all of that collective learning into one space."

"There's plenty for small businesses to be excited about here in the UK, and in terms of pest control there's so much technology that can help small businesses and allow technicians to get on with their frontline job."

### Exhibitors

One of the key elements of any expo is ensuring a varied mix of exhibitors, and this year's PestEx offered exactly that.

Set around a central refreshments area, sponsored by Bell Laboratories, PestEx 2024 offered visitors a huge amount of information and advice, with a great mix of manufacturers and suppliers alongside regulatory bodies and government agencies, support services, member benefit providers and industry publications.

Matthew Solo, Sanitation Manager for Tate and Lyle Sugars, was a big fan of the event. He said: "I love it. I was looking around for something quite specific, and I've already found some options for that and discovered some new stuff, so it's all good."

"Events like this are important for the industry. It allows us to meet like-minded people, suppliers, manufacturers, all in one place and see the different options that are available rather than finding one brand and not seeing what's comparable in the marketplace."

Alongside the latest products and innovations, delegates were also able to discover new ideas and techniques and observe – or even take part in – some impressive demonstrations.

1env Solutions celebrated 10 years of supporting the UK pest control industry with a smart product



showcase, while envu's eye-catching balloons and demonstration bed – complete with some very large bed bugs – attracted clusters of onlookers throughout the event.

Visitors could also try their hands at an air rifle simulation - or even sit for a cartoonist who created individual 'pest portraits'!

Lodi UK marked its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a BPCA supporter – and the gang certainly pulled out all the stops, bringing a 'festival' vibe to the exhibition. In the company of The Grain Beetles, Elvis Pestly and The Mice Girls, it was all 'pun' and games, along with some stellar giveaways and special show discounts – including prizes for those who snagged a selfie with Razzle the mascot.



## PESTEX IN NUMBERS

PestEx 2024 as rated by visitors and exhibitors...

**GOOD/ EXCELLENT**

95%

SEMINAR VARIETY

UP 11%! 96%

EXHIBITOR RANGE

96%

WEBSITE

97%

STAFF

97%

VENUE

98%

SEMINAR QUALITY

99%

BPCA STAND

99%

REGISTRATION SPEED

99%

GENERAL ATMOSPHERE

Were your expectations met or exceeded by PestEx?

100% REPLIED YES



Would exhibitors recommend PestEx to customers?

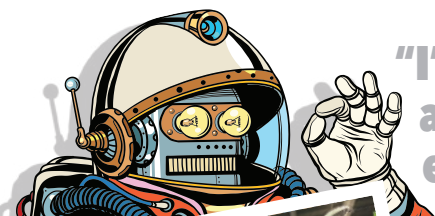
100% REPLIED YES



How likely is it that you will attend PestEx 2026?

96% REPLIED YES





**"I've caught up with lots of old friends, and the atmosphere is buzzing. I'm enjoying it and learning a lot."**



Among the awareness organisations at the show was the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU), which was on hand with plenty of information and advice, including copies of the CRRU UK Code of Best Practice. RSPH, International Pest Control magazine, Rodenticide Resistance Action Group (RRAG), and others also provided bedtime reading to take away.

There have been some great talks on Asian hornets and rat behaviour – and it's good CPD points. It's absolutely brilliant."

Sponsored by Advion Syngenta – which also had a larger-than-life ant and cockroach team roaming the hall - the Technical Theatre was also the venue for the BPCA Member Awards as the first day of PestEx drew to a close.

Meanwhile, in the Spotlight Theatre, sponsored by PestFix, the first day of the expo was dedicated to a series of Big Debate panel discussions on subjects including insect resistance, social media and marketing, post-EU chemical regulation, behavioural resistance, digital pest control and AI.

/continued...



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
2024	2,791	1,207	720	318	1,609	1,927
	PRE-REGISTERED VISITORS	DAY 1 VISITORS	DAY 2 VISITORS	2-DAY VISITORS	TOTAL VISITORS	TOTAL VISITS EXC. EXHIBITORS

The development of PestEx since 2017



THE PANDEMIC EFFECT IS CLEAR - BUT NUMBERS SHOW A RETURN TO FORM.



Did you find what you were looking for?

**95%**  
REPLIED YES



Visitor role in the buying process



**"It's good to meet new people, network a bit and get some experience. It's a positive and informative atmosphere."**



David Bryden from GP Environmental was at PestEx with colleague John McCartney. David said, "It's good to meet new people,

network a bit and get some experience. It's a positive and informative atmosphere.

"I've been to the social media talk and got the tips I need to go forward with that."

**Networking**

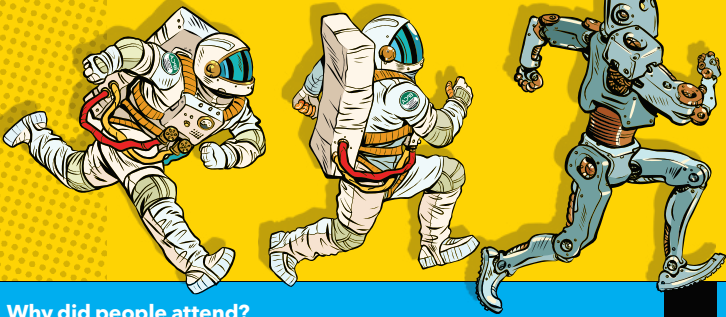
Every stand, debate and presentation offered food for thought, and a brief pitstop in the central coffee lounge was enough to see that delegates had plenty of thoughts on what they had seen and heard over the two days.

It was also clear that some new friendships had been forged and business contacts made. Mandy Haggart from Tudor Pest Control appreciated a chat over coffee. She said: "It's great to have the chance to network with other pest control technicians. The atmosphere's very friendly and everyone is very talkative and approachable."

For those who couldn't make it to London for the event itself, the networking continued online, with BPCA, exhibitors, speakers, and visitors sharing their thoughts and photos on social media.

After a busy two days, which also included BPCA's member meeting, we checked in with BPCA's events team. They revealed they had spent 14 hours setting up the exhibition hall ahead of the event opening, with 20 of the BPCA Staff team in attendance throughout the event. Then, they had to dismantle the show in just five hours after the last visitor left at the end of the second day.

With a 10% increase in visitor numbers this year – including delegates from 62 different countries – it's safe to say that PestEx was, without doubt, a resounding success.



**Why did people attend?**

	FIND NEW PRODUCTS OR SERVICES	73%
	KEEP UP-TO-DATE	69%
	NETWORK	57%
	ATTEND SEMINARS	48%
	ATTEND A SPECIFIC MEETING OR MEET A COLLEAGUE	39%
	EARN CPD POINTS	37%
	LEARN MORE ABOUT A PRODUCT	24%
	FIND OUT ABOUT THE INDUSTRY AS A NEWCOMER	15%

**Top ways to hear about PestEx**

- EMAIL INVITE 32%
- WORD OF MOUTH 19%
- SENT BY EMPLOYER 13%
- BPCA WEBSITE 12%  
bpc.org.uk
- PPC MAGAZINE 4%
- ONLINE FORUM 4%

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# ASK THE TECHNICAL TEAM

## Can I use rat traps for squirrels?

No. The Small Ground Vermin Traps Order, 1958, addressing break-back traps commonly used for the destruction of rats, mice or other small ground vermin states: "The traps referred to in the Schedule to this Order are hereby specified as being adapted solely for the destruction of rats, mice or other small ground vermin."

Common snap traps are developed and sold for rats and mice, not squirrels. The right traps to use for squirrel control are those permitted under the Spring Trap Approval Order for your nation.

The Order lists those traps authorised for species specific pests and the conditions associated with them. For most traps, the Order also states "The trap must be set in a natural or artificial tunnel which is, in either case, suitable for the purpose." Always be up-to-date with which traps are suitable and how to use them properly.

## I don't want to continue with CEPA certification. Is my BPCA assessment enough?

In pest management, any certification to a body is a business and professional decision that you need to make, considering all the benefits that the certification/membership provides you.

CEPA certification can offer a key rung in the ladder towards successful tender applications but BPCA membership can also provide that. All BPCA members are actually assessed to the principles of the BS EN 16636 Standard (which is the same standard CEPA use) and we also provide the necessary support to complement this assessment.

## An auditor says I need bait boxes by each door, which seems old fashioned and unsuitable for my food site. What should I do?

Each site should have its own bespoke pest management plan. This plan will have to consider any accreditations that may be applied to the site, together with any associated standards.

A standard may be very specific in the expectations for monitoring practices and locations, as well as reactive measures. Where this is the case, and you feel it is unnecessary or even

## What should I advise customers when they call about ladybirds?

Ladybirds only really cause a nuisance issue within homes around early spring and with the onset of autumn. Customers will notice them when they are entering and exiting hibernation.

If a customer experiences high numbers that cause concern, simply vacuuming up the visible adults can form a good part of the control work.

Proactive proofing, during summer, to cracks and crevices around windows can help deter the reappearance of ladybirds, but this can only have limited effect as some gaps may not be sealable.

There may be insecticides approved under the term crawling insect but be sure to first check with the manufacturer or supplier and always consider the lowest hazard product.

## What's best for badger proofing?

Badgers and their setts (tunnels and chambers where they live) are protected by law and only when you have applied for a licence can you work directly with badgers and their setts.

Remember that you must not damage, destroy or block access to their setts or disturb badgers in setts. Any proofing considerations have to take this into account. If you think badgers are causing damage to property or land then you may be able to solve the problem without getting a licence.

For example, you could:

- Use fences (including electric fences) to stop badgers from entering your land, provided this doesn't block access to the sett
- Add two-way gates to fences so badgers don't damage them.



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

[technical@bpca.org.uk](mailto:technical@bpca.org.uk)  
01332 294 288  
[twitter.com/britpestcontrol](https://twitter.com/britpestcontrol)



## WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

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

EXECUTIVE REPORT

# FUTURE OF PEST MANAGEMENT SURVEY



Jordan McCay gives PPC readers a first look at the Future of Pest Management Survey results in a comprehensive summary.

HELP US  
PROTECT  
YOUR TOOLKIT!

The Future of Pest Management Survey was conducted to gain insights into current trends, challenges and opinions within the pest management industry. The survey covered various aspects including tools and techniques used, experiences with control methods, thoughts on future challenges and considerations regarding sustainability.

816 UK pest professionals responded to the survey. They included business leaders and technicians from both BPCA member and non-member companies. 84% of participants had a Level 2 Award in Pest Management qualification (or above).

### Non-chemical toolkit and techniques

Break-back traps are utilised most frequently, with 76% of respondents indicating their widespread use in the industry.

Non-chemical rodent control traps ranked by common usage are:

- 1 Break-back (snap) traps
- 2 Spring traps
- 3 Live capture
- 4 Digitally enabled trapping devices
- 5 Electric/electrocution devices
- 6 Gas-powered traps.

In the case of traps, 63% of participants routinely bait them with lures. Notably, 77% of professionals modify the lure during deployment, highlighting a strategic approach to sustaining their effectiveness over time.

Crucially, only 58% of participants agreed that using traps works better than other control methods. 59% agreed that there are situations where traps do not work well.

Pest professionals indicated that traps alone do not reliably eliminate a long-term infestation, particularly in commercial settings, such as food factories (see figure 1).

This clearly suggests that a trap-only pest management toolkit would not be appropriate for professional pest management in the UK.

Interestingly, pest professionals favour making only approved and regulated traps available for rodent control with 68% of participants calling for tighter control.

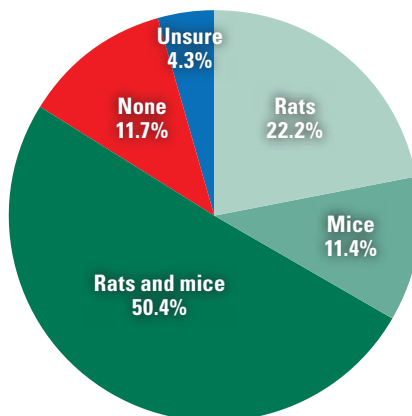
Respondents expressed mixed views on the ability of traps alone to reliably eliminate long-term infestations, with 12% occasionally finding rodents alive in break-back traps.

65% stated that bans on glue boards would impact their ability to control rodent infestations, with 20% anticipating a significant impact.

Additionally, 63% believed glue boards are the best solution in certain circumstances, often as a last resort. This shows that glue boards are crucial in specific scenarios where other methods might be less effective.

Biological resistance was reported by 59% of respondents with 84% experiencing rodent behavioural resistance (see figure 2).

Figure 2 Resistance experienced



Glue boards had the lowest rates of behavioural resistance (20%), compared to bait boxes (72%) and traps (66%). This suggests that

rodents may be less likely to exhibit behavioural resistance to glue boards, making them a more reliable option in last resort situations.

### Monitoring

Pest professionals continue to use an array of monitoring devices for rodent treatment, and we can see a trend towards increased use of technology such as wildlife cameras (74% of participants have tried them – see figure 3).

A significant portion (89%) reported experiencing control failure due to suspected trap avoidance with neophobia identified as a contributing factor.

Furthermore, 90.89% encountered triggered traps without an obvious cause. This raises concerns about potential malfunctions or unidentified factors affecting trap functionality.

These findings suggest that, while break-back traps and bait traps with lures are widely used and preferred by pest professionals, there are challenges related to trap avoidance and unexplained failures.

The identified factors, such as neophobia and triggers without apparent causes, emphasise the need for ongoing research and innovation in trap design and deployment strategies to enhance the overall effectiveness of pest control efforts in the industry.

### Control strategies - rodenticides

As expected, second generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) continue to be the most popular chemical tool available for pest professionals, with 77% of participants saying they used them often or always (see figure 4).

In terms of formulation, block, wheat and pasta baits continue to be the most used (see figure 5).

70% of participants believe anticoagulant rodenticides are more palatable than cholecalciferol (22%) and alphachloralose (7%) baits.

Figure 1 Locations of long-term infestation by how reliably control is achieved using traps only

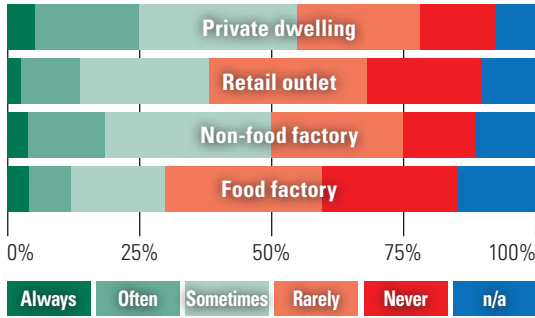


Figure 3 Non-lethal monitor-only devices by frequency of use

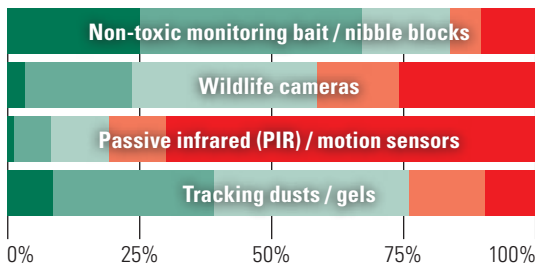


Figure 4 Rodenticide type by frequency of use

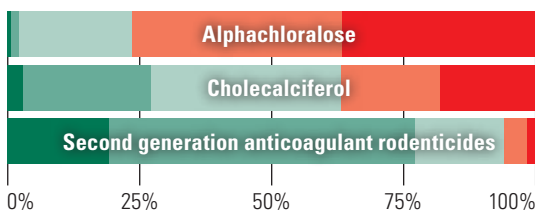


Figure 5 Formulation type by frequency of use

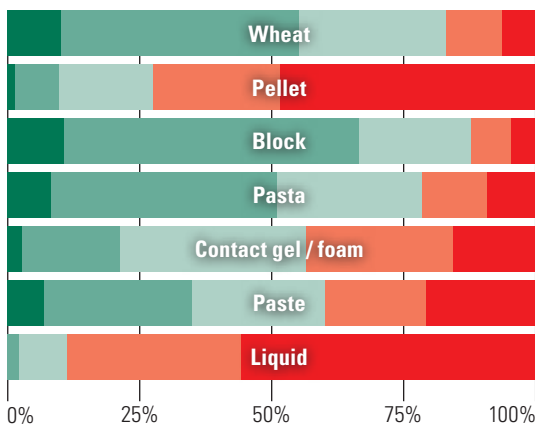
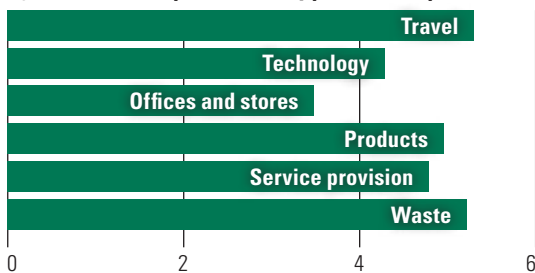


Figure 6 Carbon footprint factors by perceived impact



**“A significant percentage supported increased regulation, licensing for pest professionals and tighter restrictions on sellers.”**

41% of respondents reported experiencing biological resistance. Respondents commonly addressed biological resistance by adopting strategies such as swapping active ingredients and transitioning to physical control methods. This suggests a proactive approach to managing resistance issues within the industry.

**Industry trends**

A noteworthy majority (89%) of respondents believe that rodent control will become harder in the next five years. More than half (53%) anticipate that it will be much harder, signalling a perception of increasing challenges in the field of pest management.

A significant percentage supported increased regulation, licensing for pest professionals and tighter restrictions on sellers. Most respondents believed pest professionals should be licensed (92%) and supported various measures to ensure competence and accountability. A significant minority believe that, while they’re in favour of licensing, they don’t believe now is the time to push for licensing (11%), suggesting we may still have work to do regarding training, qualifications and competency before we push for a formal licensing scheme.

**Trainings and qualifications**

97% of respondents had pest management qualifications, with 84% having RSPH Level 2 Award/Certificate in Pest Management equivalent or higher.

44% are responsible for the recruitment or management of pest professionals.

66% would support career progression via an apprenticeship scheme if funding were available to support it. Respondents recognise the value of such programs; however, concerns were raised regarding the financial implications, particularly concerning vehicle insurance for apprentices. This highlights a practical challenge that organisations may face in implementing apprenticeship schemes.

**Sustainability**

Respondents expressed concerns about the industry’s carbon footprint, giving an average rating of 5.27 (see figure 6).

Most common suggestions for lowering carbon footprints were:

- Compact service area and better route planning
  - Recyclable packaging from manufacturers
  - Reduce waste and implement better waste management.
- Respondents’ broad opinion is that lowering the pest management industry’s carbon footprint is the responsibility of manufacturers or employers.

**Final thoughts**

The survey offers comprehensive insights into the pest management industry’s current landscape, revealing strengths, vulnerabilities, and proactive strategies.

Notably, the industry’s proactive approach to addressing resistance issues, such as swapping active ingredients and transitioning to physical control methods, highlights a commitment to adaptability and resilience.

Anticipated difficulties in rodent control over the next five years underscore the need for continuous evolution. Concerns about glue board bans and biological or behavioural resistance emphasise the call for increased BPCA lobbying and research.

Additionally, regulatory support for licensing reflects a collective commitment to competence and accountability.

In conclusion, the survey provides a snapshot and outlines key areas for improvement, emphasising collaboration, innovation, and sustainability in pest management practices.

These findings have already proved useful in helping to protect our toolkit, with the data being cited in the Scottish Parliament regarding the proposed glue board ban.

Our Academic Relations Working Group is still analysing the data, and we’re likely to have more articles based on this research available in PPC.



**What’s next?**

If you’re interested in this research project, get involved with the BPCA Academic Working Group. Register your interest: [technical@bpc.org.uk](mailto:technical@bpc.org.uk)

# WHAT'S BUGGING US?

**BED BUGS IN 2024 - WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW?**



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



Dr Richard Naylor, from Cimex Store and The Bed Bug Foundation CIC, has studied bed bugs for over two decades. With his wife Alexia and team based near Chepstow, they run a bed bug R&D lab, testing products and culture insects for research and detection dog training. In this article, Dr Naylor shares insights from his studies and discusses the implications for bed bug management in 2024.

**In 2019, you constructed two test bedrooms to evaluate bed bug products in a realistic environment. Why do you need them?**

Bed bugs are inherently difficult to study. Once discovered, most people want them eradicated immediately, so there is usually no time to conduct any kind of meaningful field trial. Arena trials lack realism and, in particular, access to a host, which completely changes bed bug behaviour. A monitor might perform well in a small laboratory arena, but luring bed bugs in complex, room-scale environments, with a live host present, is quite different.

Our test bedrooms allow us to simulate infestations and conduct controlled, replicated experiments. They look like normal bedrooms with double beds, bedside tables, carpets and a window with a blind.

In one room, we have a wooden frame bed, and in the other, we have a divan-style bed, which has been fitted with an encasement to prevent the bugs from getting inside. Pitfall traps across the doorways prevent bugs from escaping from the rooms and allow us to see what impact the treatment is having on dispersal, which is always important to consider.

Over the past five years we have used this setup for testing traps, monitors, barrier tapes, bed isolation devices and insecticidal treatments.



Insecticide test in progress.



**“These bugs are given access to a human host (me) every week or so, to provide nourishment and to elicit the natural foraging and harbouring behaviour.”**





Infrared time-lapse camera.



Well-established harbourage, complete with faecal spotting, cast skins and eggs.

One room is currently used for studies involving fixed numbers of bugs, which are released and later recaptured. Trials like this can last from 12 hours to more than six weeks, depending on what we are testing. In the second room we allow infestations to develop more naturally over a longer period.

These bugs are given access to a human host (me) every week or so, to provide nourishment and to elicit the natural foraging and harbouring behaviour. The current 'infestation' is around nine months old and has well-established harbourages, complete with faecal spotting, cast skins and eggs.

We use infrared time-lapse cameras to observe bed bug behaviour. This lets us see how bed bugs interact with monitoring devices or treated surfaces. Bed bugs are fussy about the surfaces they will walk over.

If a trap is performing poorly, we can usually see from the videos whether bugs are avoiding traps altogether or if they are entering and subsequently escaping. Details like this help to inform product development.

**What have you discovered? Do you have any recommendations?**

We recently worked with Engineering students from KTH Royal Institute of Technology, who are working on a monitoring device that attracts bed bugs with heat and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) released from a cylinder. Our infrared cameras allowed us to directly observe the effect of CO<sub>2</sub> release on bed bug activity, allowing them to optimise release profiles.

Last year we completed a study on Nattaro Safe (aka Insectosec Barrier Tape). This is a self-adhesive paper barrier tape containing diatomaceous earth (DE).

The tape is designed to be installed around sleeping areas as a long-lasting preventative measure against bed bugs. Ideally, the tape should be installed in such a way as to form a continuous barrier between the host's sleeping area and where the bed bugs tend to hide, which varies according to bed design. Hungry bugs easily cross the barrier in search of a meal, but in doing so, they cross through the DE-coated internal surfaces and subsequently die from desiccation.

The results of our study are very encouraging. Installing barrier tape on the underside of the bed frame resulted in an 86% reduction in the number of bed bugs present after six weeks compared to no-treatment controls. By the end of the trial, control populations were growing exponentially, while populations in rooms with barrier tape were in decline. Those bugs that did survive to the end of the trial were sickly and laid few, if any, eggs.

We are now evaluating Aprehend, a suspension of entomopathogenic fungal spores (*Beauveria bassiana*) from ConidioTec (USA). The spores are applied in narrow barrier treatments around the bed frame and legs using a small electric sprayer. Insects that walk over treated surfaces pick up spores and become infected with the fungal pathogen, usually dying in about a week.

The initial results of our trial look very promising! Aprehend is already popular in the USA and Canada and may soon be available to the European market via Andermatt Biocontrol Suisse.

**Are bed bug numbers really soaring and spreading from Paris to London and beyond, as the global media suggested in late 2023?**

It is a bit more complicated than that. There has been a recent increase, but let's put that into perspective.

**The rise**

Bed bugs evolved with cave-dwelling bats, and the transition from bats to humans probably occurred while early humans were still living in caves, thousands of years ago.

Egyptian pharaohs, Romans and ancient Greeks were all plagued by bed bugs, but the first record from the British Isles was not until 1583. They are believed to have arrived on cargo ships and were initially slow to spread due to the cool climate.

Bed bug activity is closely linked to temperature, which affects their development time, reproductive rate and mobility. Below 13°C, bed bugs become completely inactive, they stop feeding and their eggs don't hatch. So improvements to housing construction and heating, along with transportation, allowed bed bugs to establish and spread.

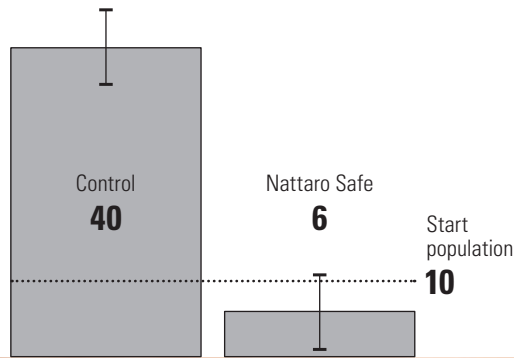
By the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, they were common across the UK and, by the 1930s, nearly 11% of homes in British cities had them. There are reports that in parts of London every home was infested.

/continued...

# WHAT'S BUGGING US?



Insects that walk over treated surfaces treated with Aprehend become infected with a fungal pathogen.



Reduction in final population size after six weeks with Nattaro Safe installed.



### The fall

Between 1934 and 1943, efforts to clear slums and improve living standards drove bed bug infestation rates down. In the mid-1940s, the introduction of DDT and other organochlorine insecticides revolutionised bed bug control and, throughout the 1950s, bed bugs across Europe became increasingly scarce. For nearly 50 years, bed bugs were hardly known.

### The resurgence

Towards the end of the 1990s, bed bug numbers began to increase in many parts of the world. Their success has been attributed to various factors, including low-cost travel and human population density.

Many of the most potent insecticides have now been withdrawn on health or environmental grounds, and there is now widespread resistance to those that remain.

### Impact of the pandemic

Covid-19 shut down the hospitality sector and restricted people's movement. Hotels, hostels and transport networks that had been battling bed bugs for years suddenly found themselves with a window of opportunity to tackle the problem.

By 2021, bed bugs had virtually disappeared from the hospitality and transport sectors. Data from the Swiss Pest Advisory Service in Zürich suggests that, in 2021, bed bugs reached their lowest level since 2013.

But bed bugs in residential sectors, particularly low-income and sheltered housing, were much less affected, and the impact of social distancing rules on pest management services probably exacerbated the problem. So, as travel restrictions were lifted in early 2022, bed bugs were quick to return to their old haunts. This post-pandemic bed bug recovery seems to be what triggered the late-2023 media attention.

In reality, outbreaks of bed bugs in Paris have no significance for the bed bug situation in London or elsewhere. Bed bugs have had a global distribution for centuries. Warmer environments facilitate more rapid reproduction, and high human population density facilitates their spread.

### What does the future hold?

Almost all professional residual insecticides approved for bed bug control are now based primarily on pyrethroids, but overuse of these compounds has resulted in widespread resistance.

In multiple occupancy buildings, where bed bugs easily move between rooms or apartments, this loss of residual efficacy allows them to keep re-infesting rooms that have already been treated, making building-wide control difficult to achieve with chemicals alone. In this situation, it is worth considering the options available.

Diatomaceous earth (including DE-barrier tape) can offer lasting residual protection. Efficacy can be affected by high humidity, so keep this in mind if you're using it in conjunction with steam.

Bed isolation devices (eg Climbug Insect Interceptor) also help break the cycles of re-infestation and limit dispersal. Encasements for bed bases prevent bugs from hiding inside, where they are difficult to detect or treat. They also make future bed bug inspections and treatments much simpler.

Not every solution is suitable for every situation, but there is a growing range of tools available.

**“Covid-19 shut down the hospitality sector and restricted people's movement. Hotels, hostels and transport networks that had been battling bed bugs for years suddenly found themselves with a window of opportunity to tackle the problem.”**



# RAT PROBLEMS DRAINING YOU?

## DRAINAGE INSPECTIONS FOR RODENTS



Darron Pearce from BPCA member company, Rattraxs Pest Control, has over 30 years of industry experience in both pest control and drainage. He carries out surveys for insurance and mortgage companies, and domestic customers looking for rodent ingress from defective drainage.

We all deal with rats within properties. Sometimes, it's easy: something obvious like a damaged air brick or a hole in a wall where a sink pipe once was. And then there are the calls where we are just left scratching our heads.

You've checked everything over and over... it can only be the drains, so you advise that a drainage company should carry out a specialist CCTV survey. Confident that you have carried out a full and thorough site inspection, you move on and let the drain people find the fault.

Then the customer calls a few days later to inform you that the drains are fine. They're not happy that they still have rats and now they've spent extra on a needless survey. You return to scratching your head.

Now, there are some very good and competent drainage surveyors out there – those who know what to look for and where to look for it. Then there are those who only see what the camera sees and, in many cases, the obvious is missed – although it's only obvious if you know where to look!

Rats live in drains, that's a fact. It is estimated that, on average, 80% of rat infestations within the home

originate from drainage, be that from a defective drain, a dry line not capped off correctly when an extension was carried out, or drainage that has been altered to add extra

utilities. In these cases, it is advised that a drainage company is contacted to carry out a full CCTV survey with a report to, hopefully, identify the defect and offer a solution.

Before we rush into expensive surveys, have we, as pest controllers, carried out our own survey regarding the drains?

You don't have to be a drainage specialist or have extensive knowledge of drainage. What you do need is a good pair of gloves and a willingness to lift a chamber lid!

### Safety first

Put on gloves and ensure a safe working environment. Inform your customer that, as part of your inspection, you will be lifting manhole covers and inspection chambers within their boundary. Make sure pets and young children are safely within the property.

Lift and set aside the chamber lid, to allow the chamber to vent for a short while. The drainage we will largely come into contact with will naturally vent through soil vent pipes (SVPs) and breather pipes fastened to the property. Nonetheless, allow the chamber to vent, in case those pipes are non-existent or impaired in some way.

Health and safety are paramount. There are so many safety concerns regarding entering manholes so, in brief, just don't.

Inspection chambers close to the property are the ones we are interested in. These are usually shallow, many less than one meter, and are relatively easy to inspect.

So, working from the top down...

### The cover and frame

Have you ever thought of checking the customer's drainage cover when you are called to a complaint about rats in the garden? If the cover is defective, old and rusty, or the supporting edges have given way, this is an open door to and from the sewer system. It's always worth a look at the drain cover when



The underside of the frame can reveal large rodent entry points.



rats are noticed above ground.

Check the underside of the frame where it meets the brickwork. Is it flush and secure?

If the chamber is shallow enough for the rat to jump its height, rats will often squeeze between the frame or surround and brickwork. From here, they will burrow unnoticed as the excavated soil will get washed away in the wastewater flow.

/continued...



# RAT PROBLEMS DRAINING YOU?



This chamber wall looks great from above...  
...but not so good from below the service pipe.



If you are inspecting a 'poly' or plastic inspection chamber, check to see that it has not warped and has kept its shape. If you have a round cover and frame meeting an oval chamber, the two will not match and will not be secure. Again, this is another area taken advantage of by rodents that often goes completely unnoticed.

### Chamber wall

Is it in a good state of repair? Have there been any alterations or add-ons where new pipework has been introduced into the chamber? If the customer has had an extension with a new toilet or utilities, builders will often bring in the new drainage at a shallower depth and break it in through the chamber wall.

This is common practice and not an issue, provided that the new drainage is secured and sealed correctly within the chamber wall.

All may look great from above, but not so good where you can not see. Mortar finishing may be incomplete under pipe entrances – an easy exit from the drains, excavation spoil will be washed away.

**"Where several channels enter the chamber, ensure that the areas between them are inspected. Quite often, there is little or no concrete in these areas..."**

I have never seen a correct or successful 'add-on' to a plastic inspection chamber. I would go as far as to say it's impossible. If a builder thinks this is satisfactory when it can be seen, what is his work that can not be seen?



I wonder how the rats are getting in?



Benching often deteriorates after long exposure to splashing water.



Intersecting pipes and ducts create voids which installers often neglect to fill.

### Benching and channels

The benching within inspection chambers and manholes constructed of brick or concrete raising sections is usually constructed with concrete and shaped to secure the pipework entering and exiting.

After years of continuous flushing or water splashing, benching often deteriorates and collects wastewater and all the other delights we flush away. A regular food and water source for your common rat.

What starts as a collection point can soon turn into an area where rats will burrow. Again these areas are often overlooked.

Where several channels enter the chamber, ensure that the areas between them are inspected. Quite often, there is little or no concrete in these areas, allowing rats to start their exit campaign.





**“An additional benefit is the potential to do right by your customer by saving them time and money, ”**



Another area missed by drainage contractors and very often not inspected by us pest controllers is the back of toilet bowls, especially in a fitted bathroom or wc. If the customer has a downstairs toilet, it is critical to check. If the toilet is connected to the drainage by a flexi pipe, then this could be the entry point into the dwelling.

**Redundant lines**

If you suspect you have an obvious point of entry into the dwelling from the manhole, drain ‘bungs’ can offer an immediate solution. It is vital to carry out a full flow test before fitting a bung.

If in doubt, do not fit a bung but, in many cases, it’s the obvious way forward.



Service lines no longer in use present opportunities for rodent ingress. A bung may be employed but only after ensuring a full flow test has been conducted.



A non-return valve can be used in private drainage sections but is probably best used as a diagnostic tool – further investigation is advised.



**Non-return valves (NRVs)**

If you suspect that there is a section of drainage allowing infestation, then an NRV could be an option, provided it is fitted in a private section of drainage.

While I do use NRVs as a process of elimination, I try not to use them as a permanent fix.

If rat activity stops after fitting an NRV, a CCTV survey should be carried out to identify the defect and then a permanent solution be executed. After all, the defect could lead to more sinister issues like water loss, loss of structural integrity and subsidence. There is also the risk of the NRV failing and rats re-entering the property.

NRVs serve a purpose, but further investigation is advised.

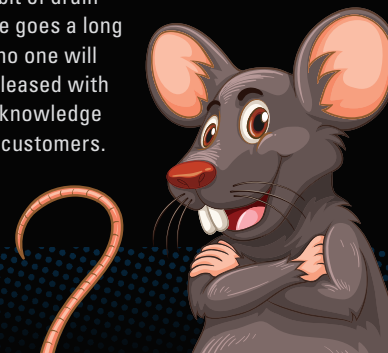


**Final thoughts**

By incorporating simple drainage inspections into our site surveys, we could potentially solve the problem permanently and reduce our use of rodenticides, which would be better for the customer and the environment.

An additional benefit is the potential to do right by your customer by saving them time and money, and the benefit for you via a nominal increment in your fees.

A little bit of drain knowledge goes a long way, and no one will be more pleased with your new knowledge than your customers.



# BEST BETS FOR BAITING

PERMANENT VS LONG-TERM BAITING: UNBLURRING THE LINES ON CONTINUOUS RODENT CONTROL

**"This approach helps to mitigate the risk of a full-blown rodent infestation by pre-emptive targeting of areas that are most vulnerable."**



Laurence Barnard, Country Business Manager at BASF Pest Control Solutions shares his advice on best practice, as well as outlining important considerations for safe and effective pest control.

**W**hen it comes to recurring and severe infestations, it can be a minefield for pest controllers to determine the best approach to staying in control, whether it be via a permanent method or a long-term baiting programme. Both methods have limitations and precautions to consider, and with guidance frameworks ever-changing, it is easy to become unclear on what is considered the most suitable approach.

## Permanent baiting

I think the easiest way to explain the meaning of permanent baiting is to use the term 'insurance baiting', or placing bait in areas of no current issues, but where you

deem the risk of infestation or reinfestation as very high. This could be due to a rodent problem in neighbouring buildings where you have no access, regular incoming goods from infested sites, or simply the nature of the site you are trying to protect. This approach helps to mitigate the risk of a full-blown rodent infestation by pre-emptive targeting of areas that are most vulnerable.

The aim for permanent baiting is to prevent and protect, by baiting target points using secure tamper-resistant boxes. Pest controllers can position these bait boxes inside and outside of buildings, but this does not cover sewers or open areas. If permanent baiting is to be implemented outside, some

extra precautions should be taken. Remember, too, that only trained professionals can undertake permanent baiting.

When baiting outdoors, non-chemical methods should be considered first, such as non-toxic monitoring products, traps and increased preventative measures like proofing and environmental management as part of an ongoing integrated pest management (IPM) strategy. Not only is this much more cost-effective, and offers a more targeted approach, but it also reduces the risk to non-target species.

If a chemical approach is required, it's vital to know that not all products are authorised for lawful use.

# “Baits containing the actives brodifacoum, difethialone or flocoumafen are not authorised for permanent baiting.”

Cholecalciferol rodenticides like Selontra® are authorised for use when permanent baiting, whereas only a selection of rodenticides containing the active bromadiolone and difenacoum are approved for this use, so always ensure you refer to the product labels before proceeding. Baits containing the actives brodifacoum, difethialone or flocoumafen are not authorised for permanent baiting.

It is also of paramount importance that the user completes a full environmental risk assessment (ERA) prior to any working on the site, to determine the most appropriate form of action.

## Long-term baiting

A long-term baiting strategy is usually employed if an infestation hasn't been cleared in at least 35 days. This could be due to the volume of rodents, the nature of the site, or neophobia to new bait or bait boxes. In some cases, it could also be due to rodenticide resistance, making it difficult to reduce the infestation using some second-generation baits containing difenacoum and bromadiolone.

If you notice consistent bait uptake but no decline in activity after the 35-day mark, it is vital to review and establish the likely cause. When other elements have been excluded, such as new entry points or access to preferred food

sources elsewhere, consider using an alternative rodenticide with a different mode of action. It might also be beneficial to implement traps as an additional method of control. Just ensure that you refer to product labels when using a new product and continue to follow the product label conditions for long-term baiting.

## Reducing the risk to wildlife

When using both the long-term and permanent baiting strategies, it is crucial to consider the risks to non-target species. If it becomes evident that any non-targets, or a species not outlined as the intended target on the product label, such as voles, field/wood mice (*Apodemus sylvaticus*), have consumed the bait, then the rodenticide should be removed immediately to protect wildlife and the reputation of the pest controller.

Pest controllers are required to carry out an ERA, with consideration to potential poisoning of non-target species, the potential risk to human health and to determine if the site is high risk. Also ensure that CRRU documentation and advice is adhered to, to reduce the risks to wider wildlife, secondary-toxicity and also to protect yourself and your professional reputation.

## MANAGING HIGH-RISK AREAS WITH SELONTRA® AND MONITORING PASTE



Selontra® is an effective rodenticide for use in permanent baiting strategies when there is a higher risk of secondary poisoning. Its active ingredient, cholecalciferol, is not persistent in the environment, does not bioaccumulate and is

readily metabolised by rodents – in fact it is the only product on the market that is approved for use against wood/field mice (*Apodemus sylvaticus*)!

Monitoring products, like Monitoring Paste from BASF, are also invaluable, not only giving pest controllers early indication of rodent activity but also offering a cost-effective alternative to permanent baiting with baits containing active ingredients.

Monitoring products is a cheaper way to reduce the risk of an infestation without using harmful toxic baits year-round when they are not required, and it is also much more cost-effective. Unconsumed bait can go mouldy or be eaten by slugs and snails, therefore proving ineffective and a waste of time, money, and resources. As it is fundamentally the same recipe as Selontra®, minus the dye and active ingredient, it also ensures a smooth and quick uptake when swapped with the active alternative after rodent activity has been detected.



## Decision matrix for continuous baiting

	Permanent baiting	Long-term baiting
<b>Infestation present at start</b>	No (IPM-protect and prevent site) control infestation	Yes, if difficult to control after 35 days
<b>Visit frequency</b>	Indoors – PCO decision Outdoors – at least every four weeks	According to label
<b>Pest species</b>	All on the label	All on the label
<b>Permitted baits</b>	Some difenacoum and bromadiolone baits (but not all – read label) Both cholecalciferol baits	All following environmental risk assessment
<b>Commencement</b>	After risk assessment, day 1 of baiting	After 35 days baiting with no or limited success and following revised risk assessment and baiting programme
<b>Indoors</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Outdoors</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Remove anticoagulant if there is evidence of non-targets eating the bait?</b>	Yes – redo your risk assessment and reevaluate your treatment	Yes

## OPINION

# NO STINGS ATTACHED

## CHANGING YOUR WASP MANAGEMENT TREATMENTS



Alex Wade from BPCA member company, Wade Environmental, spoke at PestEx about a topic that is close to all our collective thoughts and fears. The way we carry out wasp work is likely to change drastically over the next few summers, Alex shares his thoughts with PPC readers.



**W**hat are we going to do about wasps? Firstly we have to ask ourselves, do we even need to do anything about them? Surely they have a point to their existence beyond causing mayhem? They are, after all, pollinators (if not nearly so successful as their bee-like cousins), they offer waste disposal, clearing away carcasses and other protein-rich debris and, finally, they are nature's pest controllers. Perhaps we should have a little more affinity for these tiny stripy balls of rage, hated by so many.

After all, there are many species of wasps which aren't considered pests. They are small, beautiful and frankly terrifying but that's a story for another time.

What we really need to talk about is the elephant in the room: how do we control pest wasps with the loss of Ficam? (Considered by many to be the only reliable option for management).

### What are we currently doing about them?

We have a fantastic solution that seems tailor-made for dealing with large numbers of insects in a confined and awkward space.

For starters, for this purpose, we have historically tended to use dust, a formulation rarely used in any other pest control job but is the current mainstay of wasp control. What makes dust better than liquid? Well, the reason it is good is also the reason that it is terrible at most other jobs: it moves with the slightest breeze.

This is unlike a liquid formulation which, through its physical nature, tends to remain largely where it is deposited. Dust will flow and move around an enclosed space, perfect for voids, even more so for the enveloped nests of wasps. Dust will roll around a corner, down a tunnel and, even after it's come to rest, can be agitated to move again.

The second big feature of our current control solution is that it uses a chemical with some fairly unique properties. Not only is it highly effective at killing insects, it most notably has a lack of repellence. This means that we can have a deposit which can move freely after deposition, which allows insects to pass recklessly through it. The combination of these two factors almost certainly facilitates its movement deeper into the nest. And this is the simplicity and uniqueness of its success – it means an effective solution can be deployed without being able to see the nest. We just need to be able to locate the main avenues of movement and ingress to a nest.

**What challenges will come from losing these approaches?**

Unlike bendiocarb, the majority of insecticides currently on the market are pyrethroids, and exceedingly few of these are dust formulations.

And, unlike bendiocarb, pyrethroids are repellent which, under normal conditions, makes them great tools for flushing insects out of gaps or for treating bed nets to deter mosquitoes. Yet, as previously mentioned, one of the great boons we currently have is the relative lack of agitation caused by these treatments.

With a large number of nests not fully visible or reachable at the time of treatment, the use of a dust that insects will naturally try to avoid can cause significant issues with control. Insects will cease moving through or even around the dust, leading to reduced control or even a total failure as the wasps find alternative paths of movement.

**Do we have alternatives?**

Surprisingly enough, we do.

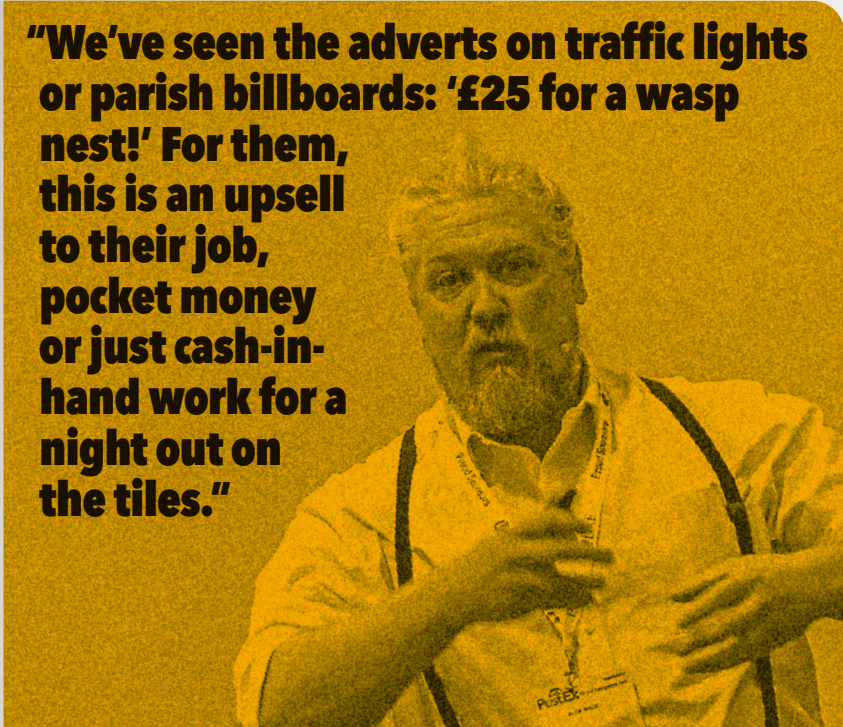
And they're not pie-in-the-sky research projects coming down the line (although I am sure there are a couple of those waiting in the wings!). We have options, but the thing is that they don't look like our current favourites, and if they are used like a direct replacement with no thought for what makes them different, they will fail.

Even swapping one dust formulation for another comes with sufficient changes in behaviour and tactics that, if we are not careful, will see a persistent failure in control, not through a failure of the product but of our ability to effectively deploy it.

To put this into perspective, if I asked you to hang a picture on the wall, you would probably get out your trusted hammer and nails. Perfect – a tool and a solution tailor-made for hanging objects on walls. Now, what if I tell you there are no more nails being produced, but I still want that picture hung?

You DO still have a tool bag full of screws, and they'll work for the job, but if you still persist in using that hammer to put the screws into the wall... well, you'll still get the picture up but do an awful job of it.

**“We’ve seen the adverts on traffic lights or parish billboards: ‘£25 for a wasp nest!’ For them, this is an upsell to their job, pocket money or just cash-in-hand work for a night out on the tiles.”**



It's not rocket science; it's hardly even basic science. And yet, we are doing precisely this, aren't we? We use all our dust formulations and our tools as though they were interchangeable, when we know from training and experience that they are significantly different beasts.

But the world of insecticides is greater than just those contained within dust formulations, so why do we limit ourselves? We have a whole range of aerosols, for example, specifically designed to target nests, some as space treatments, others which will create foams and other insecticidal barriers.

We also have a huge range of liquid formulations. Water-based ones require physical penetration into the nest (not impossible with the right access kit), but others such as emulsifiable concentrates (ECs) (mixed with solvents or ready-to-use (RFUs) that have been pre-formulated this way), prove incredibly effective at being able to dissolve the envelope of wasp nests. They require only the smallest surface to be visible to be able to penetrate and treat from a distance.

We have the tools – we've had them for a long time – but the 'new' thing that we need is a strategy to deploy them effectively.

**Is all of this a good thing?**

I do honestly believe that it is because, while this radical operational change will make our lives harder, it will also make it even harder for any two-bit, cut-rate, powder monkey with a ladder.

We've seen the adverts on traffic lights or parish billboards: '£25 for a wasp nest!' For them, this is an upsell to their job, pocket

money or just cash-in-hand work for a night out on the tiles. For us, these are our jobs and it's our profession. We couldn't and shouldn't sell ourselves so cheaply, but what choice did we have when every ladder jockey had a fire-and-forget system in their back pocket?

After this change, to control nests you'll need to have a thorough knowledge of the tools to ensure that the right one is deployed in the right situation, the skills to access those nests, and the ability to marry both together to achieve swift and lasting control with no callbacks.

Suddenly, for wasp work we can charge a price that reflects the treatment programme, like any other job we price and do, rather than participate in a screaming, spiralling race to the bottom.

This change puts wasp control back on par with our other work, back into the realm of the professional. Use this time to learn and build these strategies while we have that safety net in place, so come D(ust)-day, we are already well ahead of the game.

**Are you changing your treatment plans this summer?**

Are you spending this summer working on your wasp management strategies? Are you carrying out your own field research with products you've never tried before?

Let us know how you're getting on and you might feature in the next issue of PPC magazine.

**hello@bpca.org.uk**

# TAKEN IN BY A WINK AND A GRIN

PROTECT YOUR  
PEST BUSINESS  
FROM SCAMS

Which? Trusted Trader explains some of the main ways fraudsters might target you or your customers and shares top tips to avoid your pest control company getting stung.

Falling victim to a scam can be devastating – both personally and financially – and fraudsters are coming up with ever more sophisticated ways to get their hands on your money.

More than £1.2bn was stolen through fraud in 2022, according to the latest data from industry body UK Finance. Although this was less than in 2021, it's still a staggering amount – the equivalent of over £2,300 per minute.

But if you know what to look for, you can take steps to protect yourself and your customers and prevent the theft of hard-earned cash.

Here are four types of scams you might encounter as a pest management business owner. We also explain how to avoid them.

## Authorised push payment scams

Over £485m was lost through authorised push payment (APP) – or bank transfer – scams in 2022. These are where you are duped into transferring money to a scammer pretending to be someone else, such as a trusted organisation like your bank or HMRC.

Your customers could even be targeted by someone impersonating you, a scammer convincing them to transfer money to their bank account instead of yours.

You can help to protect you and your customers by taking these steps:

- **Be wary of any unexpected requests to make a payment. Contact the company or organisation directly (using a phone number you know is safe) to check whether the request really came from them. Provide invoices and bank details to your customers in person where possible so they can be sure they've come from you.**

- **Warn your customers to be suspicious of any emails, letters or calls saying you've changed your bank details. Ask them to contact you directly if they receive anything that looks suspicious.**
- **Act quickly if you think you've been the victim of an APP scam, contact your bank to report it as soon as possible – as well as the bank you sent the money to – and follow our advice to try to get your money back. Advise any customers who've become victims to do the same.**

## Invoice scams

Invoice fraud involves a criminal pretending to be from one of your suppliers. The scammer will ask you to change the bank details you usually use to pay the supplier so they get the money instead.

These scams can be very sophisticated, and the criminals can find out real invoice and payment details to make their request look genuine. They can intercept emails, spoof emails from the supplier or even hack into its email system.

To avoid invoice fraud, follow this advice from the government-backed Take Five campaign:

- Always confirm any bank account details with the supplier directly before paying, either in person or over the phone, and check them against any details you've used previously
- Don't use the contact details in an email, as the scammers may have changed them - instead, check the company's official website to find out how to get in touch or use a phone number you already know is genuine
- Be wary of requests to make payments using a method other than the one you usually use to pay the supplier
- If you're making a payment to an account for the first time, transfer a small sum first, then check with the company that it's arrived (using contact details you're sure are genuine)
- Regularly check your bank statements to look for any suspicious payments

- Contact your bank immediately if you think you've been a victim of fraud  
Read more advice for businesses from the Take Five campaign [takefive-stopfraud.org.uk](https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk)

## CEO scams

This is when a scammer sends an email posing as someone's boss or another senior manager, asking them to make an urgent payment or change the bank details they use to pay a supplier.

**"Your customers could even be targeted by someone impersonating you, a scammer convincing them to transfer money to their bank account instead of yours."**

The criminals might create a spoof email that looks like the real deal, or even hack the boss's real email account to send the request.

If a member of staff transfers the money, they'll be sending it straight to an account controlled by the criminals.

To avoid this scam, make sure staff know about CEO scams and to do the following:

- Always check unusual payment requests with you directly or with the company they're told is requesting any changes - do this over the phone using a number they know is safe
- Be suspicious of any request to make a payment outside of usual processes
- Be cautious about any unexpected emails or letters requesting urgent bank transfers, even if it seems to have come from within the company
- Let you know immediately if they think they've been a victim of fraud so you can contact your bank.

### Companies House scams

A scammer contacts you via a telephone call, email or letter pretending to be from Companies House asking you to make a payment or provide personal details.

In a scam telephone call you may be told you need to pay a late filing penalty, or asked for your authentication code or directors' details, such as their dates of birth.

Scam emails may have documents attached or ask you to enter your authentication code, or you may be sent a fake complaint about your business or request to correct information. Some also ask you to click on a link to download a document or verify your identity.

Fake letters include ones asking for payment for company registration or from prosecuting solicitors asking for payment to clear an unpaid invoice.

Advice to avoid Companies House scams:

- Don't make payments or provide personal information over the phone to someone claiming to be from Companies House
- Never give your authentication code over the phone
- If you receive any suspicious calls from someone claiming to be from Companies House, try to get the caller's return telephone number and contact Companies House on 0303 1234 500
- Be wary of any email that appears to be from Companies House, and don't click on any links, open any attachments or reply to it
- Forward any suspicious email to **phishing@companieshouse.gov.uk** then delete it.

For more information on Companies House scams and what to do if you spot them visit [gov.uk/guidance/reporting-scams-pretending-to-be-from-companies-house](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reporting-scams-pretending-to-be-from-companies-house)

### More from Which?

BPCA members get discounted Which? Trusted Trader membership. Learn more at [bpca.org.uk/which](https://www.bpca.org.uk/which)



## SPOTTING EMAIL SCAMS

### 1. CHECK THE SENDER'S EMAIL ADDRESS

A scam email usually comes from an unrecognisable email address. This may consist of random numbers, letters or words that have nothing to do with the organisation the scammer is impersonating.

To find out if there's a fraudster behind what appears to be a genuine email, hover your cursor over or right-click on the sender's name, and you should be able to view the email address behind it.

### 2. IS THE GREETING IMPERSONAL?

Some email scams include your name in the first line of the message. However, not all do.

Sometimes scam emails will just say "Hi" and not include a name, or your email address will be used after "Hi". This impersonal approach is a sign that it's likely to be a scammer behind the email.

### 3. CHECK CONTACT INFO AND DATES

Hover your cursor over anywhere you'd usually expect there to be a link in the email.

For example, check the bottom of the email for 'contact us' buttons or links to terms and conditions.

By hovering your cursor over any links, you can see the URL they'll send you to without clicking on them.

It's also worth checking whether any dates in the email are correct. Often, scammers will forget this detail.

### 4. CHECK THE BRANDING

Take a look at the quality of any logos in the email. For example, if the images are pixelated, this can strongly indicate that the email is a scam.

Compare the branding in the email to the company's genuine website or any genuine emails you've received from the company in the past.

### 5. CHECK IF THE LINKED WEBSITE IS LEGITIMATE

If you've clicked through to a website from an email thinking it is genuine, double-check the authenticity of the website before entering any details.

The domain information checker Who.is will show you when the website was created. If the site was created recently, it's likely to be dodgy.

If it's a big brand or company being impersonated, open a new tab and visit its genuine website to compare the URLs.

If you haven't yet clicked a link but are being asked to do so you can access a message on your account, avoid the temptation to act quickly.

Instead, navigate to the company's website to log in to your account. If no message or alert is present, you'll know the email is dodgy.

### 6. IS THE EMAIL ASKING FOR PERSONAL INFORMATION OR BANK DETAILS?

If an email asks you to update or re-enter your personal information or bank details out of the blue, it is likely to be a scam.

Most companies will never ask for personal information via email.

### 7. DOES IT HAVE POOR SPELLING, GRAMMAR AND PRESENTATION?

Scammers are getting better at presenting phishing emails that are more or less free of poor spelling and grammar - but you should still watch out for these tell-tale signs.

You might also notice a lack of consistency with the presentation of the email, which may include several different font styles and sizes and a mishmash of logos.

### 8. IS IT TRYING HARD TO BE 'OFFICIAL'?

Scammers often try hard to make a dodgy email sound official. They will do this in a number of ways, including by using the word 'official'.

You are unlikely to see the messaging in a truly official email shouting about how official it is.

Scam emails may also contain information such as account numbers and IDs designed to trick you into thinking the email is genuine. Check any of these against your records to see if they match.

### 9. IS IT TRYING TO RUSH YOU?

Fraudsters will try to pressure you with time-sensitive offers, encouraging you to act now or miss out on 'exclusive' deals.

Take your time to make all the checks you need. If the message regards an account you have with the company, organisation or retailer, you should log in separately to your account in a new tab or window.

It's better to miss out on a genuine deal than risk compromising your personal details.

### 10. CHECK WITH COMPANY, BRAND OR DEPARTMENT

If you're still unsure whether a scammer is behind the email you received, get in touch with the brand or company featured in your email directly via social media or its 'contact us' page.

Check the brand or company's help and customer services pages. Big companies are sometimes aware of scams and publish advice for customers on what to watch out for.

## OPINION

# STARTING BLOCKS

Where should you begin in pest control? Do you need experience working on the tools to start a business? What are the barriers to entry? At PestEx 2024, we asked several members about how they started out. We've summarised the conversation here.



**Lewis Clarke** **LC**  
LRC Environmental



**Karen Green** **KG**  
John O'Conner



**Malcolm Stowell** **MS**  
Safeguard Pest Control



**Dee Ward-Thompson** **DW**  
BPCA

**PPC** Can anyone get into pest control?

**LC** If I can, anyone can. I learned my trade by working for bigger companies and then three years ago decided to go solo.

**MS** I came from a completely different trade. I fell into it as many people do. The thing was, I absolutely loved it; the work, the experience and people you meet are unbelievable.

**KG** I'd worked in retail and then started at John O'Conner in admin for the ground maintenance team. I just got the buzz for pest control, quite literally!

You never know what the day is going to bring. I did my Level 2 and built on that – now we have a separate pest control division and I'm the manager.

**DW** I worked in the food industry and I used to get this guy every six weeks with a pest control report for me to sign. I didn't want to manage a contract I didn't understand, so I did the BPCA eight-day course about pest control. I got qualified three months later.

I'd done quite well, got an award, then had a lot of approaches from pest control companies who wanted me to work for them. So yes – anybody can be a pest controller.

**PPC** If I set up my own company, how do I create a profile?

**LC** I already had a name, but through other businesses, so we pushed to Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and LinkedIn.

You are the product. You just have to find out what your market is – are you bird-proofing? Contract-based? Residential? Find your market and pursue it.

**PPC** What support is there for new businesses?

**KG** We found that BPCA was a huge support for us. Finding a new technician is never easy.

We use BPCA's onboarding programme to make sure that our technicians have a full understanding and awareness of what they need to do in the role. It supports new technicians and we all do the CPD to keep up with legislation and ensure we're all continually learning.

BPCA has been a massive support and there's so many functions from the templates and guides to support with tenders or if there are any problems. We use every function that BPCA has to offer. And there are lots of great people out there who will support you and give you advice.

**MS** I was part of BPCA's Professional Standards Committee, then the Servicing Committee, both of which were part of getting the onboarding and suchlike going.

If you've got young people coming in, the onboarding programme is absolutely fantastic. It takes the onus off businesses to create their own onboarding system and ensures new people coming into the industry are being taught the correct way.

We've had people go through the onboarding who then passed the RSPH with flying colours – it was obviously worthwhile and it saves us time in the end.

**PPC** How can I find a mentor?

**MS** I'm an old dinosaur! When describing a mentor, I had to look it up in the dictionary. It's defined as 'an experienced and trusted adviser.'

That's very relevant. It goes through the whole industry from top to bottom. Are older people experienced and trusted advisers? People who are mentoring others – are they really up to it? If you're mentoring, always remember you are in a privileged and responsible position.

**DW** Mentoring is a very difficult thing to do in our industry.

If you're mentoring someone and you don't understand the role, you can pass on bad habits. A mentor isn't necessarily someone who's been in the company since year dot, though those people can help with understanding contracts and paperwork.

But a mentor is an expert with experience who won't put you wrong. I do a lot of mentoring for women and young people coming into the industry. I'm available!

Having a mentor is having someone to support you and who can set you right in what you're trying to achieve in your business – and that could be someone you've met here today.

**LC** Two years ago, I had been a BPCA member for one year. I had a question and shared it with BPCA's President and a few of the older members that have a lot of input and say in the Association.

If you're open to listening and asking questions, they are not scary. None of us are scary. If you've got a question and need an answer, message people! We are all out there to help each other. We all want to keep our customers and clients happy.

**PPC** Why should I get qualified if the law doesn't require it?

**MS** You don't have to get qualified. But if you do anything wrong, you're going to be in a court of law.

I did a five-year apprenticeship as an electrician – you wouldn't want an unqualified electrician working on your home. Why shouldn't we be called professional pest controllers?

We're very qualified people dealing with dangerous stuff. Some of the work that technicians do can be extremely dangerous, so why shouldn't we have a proper qualification to say we are indeed 'professionals'?



**“We’ve had people go through the onboarding who then passed the RSPH with flying colours – it was obviously worthwhile and it saves us time in the end.”**



BPCA is fighting to put this forward. If there’s ever a survey that comes out, please respond. It’s only by your input that we can make that professional recognition happen.

**LC** I want to get rid of the window cleaner who’s got a bit of rat killer in the back of his shed and doesn’t worry about whether that’s going to kill a barn owl or a bird of prey next door.

It’s about reputation. We’re selling a product. You don’t want to sell pest control, you want to sell professional, clean, crisp, qualified services. We did a loft clearance last week – the electrician, the plumber and roofer wouldn’t go in because of rats.

We went in first with specialist equipment, making it safe for the other trades to do their work. We are out there providing a service that other people don’t want to do, and we’re doing it properly.

**KG** I think everyone needs it – we need to show we are professionally trained. I wouldn’t want to have any of my technicians without it.

If you go for bigger contracts, they ask about training and qualifications. It’s like any career – you’ve got your ticket to show you’re fully trained and are doing things properly. We know what we’re doing and we’re doing it correctly.

**DW** We insist that people are qualified before they join the Association. We’re the only Association that makes people prove they are qualified and have CPD, so our members can show that they’ve done their due diligence.

Your clients don’t have to check that you’re qualified, they know by seeing the BPCA logo.

**PPC** Which course should we be looking at?

**DW** It depends on what you’re interested in. Understand your public health pests, that’s your foundation. Once you’ve got that, think about what makes you tick. When I started, I was interested in rats and mice, but then got into insects really quickly. That was my area to specialise in.

We get very passionate about things we’re really interested in. In pest control you have to be a bit of a Jack-of-all trades, but don’t try to be an expert in all of them. If you love rats, then focus on that. Match your training to your business model so you’re in a position to do the best job you can.

**KG** I agree. It’s important to specialise in what you want to do. Our technicians do the Level 2 Award in Pest Management which is your basic requirement.

I did my ‘steps to management’ training because I wanted to go that way. We’ve started doing more bed bugs and so we’re going deeper into that, which I’m really passionate about. Have a starting point and build on it.

**MS** People come into this industry, take RSPH Level 2 and that’s where it stops and they don’t keep up with the times.

You should always educate yourself to learn about insects, rodents and wildlife. If you want to be an expert, follow your dreams but keep your learning going.

**LC** Keep learning is absolutely right.

I failed at school completely; I had to re-sit all of my exams. I went down the work route because I can work out the practical things, but I can’t work out pen and paper.

It doesn’t matter though – if you work with BPCA, your suppliers, you’ll find out what you need. I’ve done courses on spraying, safe handling and storage of chemicals. Extra courses that I didn’t necessarily need to do, but I’ve learned something.

**PPC** Does being a BPCA member give you a better chance of winning tenders?

**LC** Without the BPCA I wouldn’t get them. I enjoy agricultural pest control. As soon as they see BPCA, you sail through it.

At one job, the auditor didn’t ask about a qualification certificate or insurance, they asked “have you got your BPCA registration certificate?”

**DW** We work with suppliers, supermarkets and so on, to make sure BPCA is in those specifications. The bit we need you guys to do is help us change the ‘rat man/woman’ image – that’s the amateurs.

We want people to know that we are professionals - show them what you do. Show your qualifications, that you’re continuously learning. Changing that image is the only way we will get to a point where hopefully only professionals can use professional products.

**MS** I joined BPCA because I wanted to help move it forward. They’ve got masses of documents that will help you no end. They know people; these people are immensely knowledgeable and will spend time talking to you.

Ian Andrew joined the BPCA around six years ago and has taken the Association forward in leaps and bounds. The BPCA Staff team does a great job so please use them, they are there for you. They’re here to work for and with all pest control companies – small, medium and large.

### Got a tip for those starting out?

Send it in and your opinion may appear in a future issue.

[hello@bpca.org.uk](mailto:hello@bpca.org.uk)

MEMBER BENEFIT IN FOCUS

# ON YOUR MARKS!



**TRUSTMARK**  
Government Endorsed Quality



BCPA Servicing Members can now become TrustMark Registered Businesses. We asked Nicola Waller, Membership Director at TrustMark, to introduce the new member benefit and explain the scheme in detail.



**W**e'd like to introduce you to TrustMark, the only UK Government-endorsed quality scheme for work carried out in and around the home. This new member benefit is another way to grow your business and give your customers peace of mind, knowing that you're a reputable tradesperson.

At TrustMark, we're passionate about quality and assurance, and what that means for homeowners and our Registered Businesses.

Since we started in 2005, we have worked to drive up standards across the industry and improve the protection offered to homeowners when having work done.

We're a not-for-profit business which means we can focus on our customers – tradespeople and homeowners – and not on shareholders. We continually reinvest into the scheme to enhance the support we provide to our Registered Businesses and consumer protection.

We help homeowners find a skilled, trained and competent tradesperson to carry out the work they need through our online search facility, 'Find a Trader'.

If you're a tradesperson looking to demonstrate your commitment to doing a great job with high levels of customer service, you can apply to join around 15,000 other TrustMark Registered Businesses.

### Licence to operate

TrustMark is a not-for-profit social enterprise that operates under a Master Licence Agreement issued by the Government's Department for Business and Trade. This Agreement sets out what we do and how we do it.

We licence and work with our network of Scheme Providers – of which BPCA is now a Provider – and they are all committed to meeting the requirements of our Quality Scheme.

In turn, our Scheme Providers licence and work with their TrustMark Registered Businesses to ensure they commit to, and maintain, the required standards of technical competence, trading practices and customer service.

These practices provide assurance and confidence for homeowners when they use a TrustMark Registered Business and, for the trades, it demonstrates quality and professionalism.

### Our Scheme Providers

TrustMark licenses and audits over 38 Scheme Providers with around 15,000 Registered Businesses, all of which are committed to maintaining the required standards of technical competence, trading practices and customer

**“We work with third parties to identify and create new avenues for work opportunities across all our trades.”**

service. These encompass over 150 different service types and include everything you might expect, from plumbers, electricians and builders to carpet cleaners, landscape gardeners and leadwork specialists – and now pest professionals! BPCA is the only TrustMark Scheme Provider for pest management businesses.

Under TrustMark Framework Operating Requirements\*, Scheme Providers are responsible for the conduct of their members and must help resolve disputes between businesses and customers. If the dispute is complex, the Scheme Provider may suggest using an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) provider to help.

Dealing with disputes can be stressful for the homeowner and the business. Our priority is to achieve fair, timely and cost-effective solutions. Our role is not to investigate specific consumer complaints, but we work closely with Scheme Providers, and their Registered Businesses to ensure that correct processes within the TrustMark quality scheme have been followed.

### Who we work with

We work closely with several partner organisations that share our mission to raise trading standards and improve consumer protection. Working together, we can enhance the work our Registered Businesses carry out, and offer advice and support, ranging from safety online to energy use.

Our partners span many sectors and range from finance, government, accommodation, and charities to consumer protection professionals and energy efficiency. They include Age UK, Airbnb, Chartered



Trading Standards Institute, Citizens Advice Bureau, Department for Business and Trade, Energy Saving Trust and Grand Designs, to name just a few.

### Exclusive offers and discounts

TrustMark has teamed up with several industry-leading organisations to offer Registered Businesses exclusive offers and discounts which will benefit them both in their working and personal lives. They include the following:

- AA – business breakdown cover
- ARMD – protect tools with a unique new protection package
- Churchill Expert – 10% off business insurance
- EasyToolhire – 20% off on all hire tools and equipment
- Fuel Card Services – save up to 10p per litre on fuel
- Europcar – hire a car or van from 3,835 locations in over 140 countries worldwide
- Mellor Financial Training – 75% saving on finance training
- My Staff Shop – Employees can get savings on their food shopping, holidays, dining etc
- Octopus Electric Vehicles – cost-effective vehicle leasing options
- Vendigo – flexible financing options for their customers
- Wickes TradePro – 10% off every sale.

### Helping your customers

TrustMark also produces guidance and help for its end-users - your customers. Helpful guides and articles can be found on the TrustMark website in the homeowner section. One of these tools is the TrustMark home improvement app.

Free to download, TrustMark's unique 'one-stop shop' home improvement app is aimed at helping consumers to better understand the process, requirements and considerations around having home improvement work carried out on their property. The app guides consumers through the many steps and considerations involved in improving their home, assisting them to ask the right questions of tradespeople, particularly when this may be their first experience.

The content includes information a homeowner needs to consider when planning a project - from finding skilled and competent tradespeople to agreeing on a contract and what to expect, project timelines, example costs, planning permissions, building regulations and insurance requirements, health and safety considerations and much more. The next update will include pest control!

\* [trustmark.org.uk/docs/default-source/scheme-documents/framework\\_operating\\_requirements-v2-6.pdf?sfvrsn=d749507\\_2](https://trustmark.org.uk/docs/default-source/scheme-documents/framework_operating_requirements-v2-6.pdf?sfvrsn=d749507_2)

### Learn more

TrustMark Registration is included as part of BPCA Servicing membership. For further information about TrustMark and what the quality mark can provide for your registered business, visit [bpc.org.uk/TrustMark](https://bpc.org.uk/TrustMark)

## BENEFITS OF BEING REGISTERED

As a BPCA Servicing member, you'll get access to the following TrustMark benefits:

### Access to new work

- We work with third parties to identify and create new avenues for work opportunities across all our trades
- We provide access to exclusive finance and cashback options for your customers from leading financial institutions
- We are recommended by lenders, local authorities and well-known brands and services.

### Build your business

- Customers can easily find you using TrustMark's 'Find a Trader' online directory
- Your unique TrustMark profile, which you can link to your website, will let you manage customer enquiries, track progress, manage your business presence and build positive feedback
- Visible campaigns and marketing support – displaying the TrustMark logo on your letterheads, marketing material, website and vehicles will provide additional assurance to potential customers that you are a quality business
- Benefit from our marketing initiatives aimed at driving customers to the TrustMark website and gain more exposure for your business
- Trading Standards – as a TrustMark Registered Business, you will be eligible for our national Trading Standards Approved scheme (£90.00+VAT).

### Making your life easier

- 24/7 access business portal - promote your business with a personalised profile page to showcase your work, collect reviews and build your reputation
- Quality management and continual improvement – access to advice, guidance and template contracts all based around the TrustMark Code of Conduct, providing clear legislative support in partnership with Trading Standards.

### Protecting you and your customers

- We provide guidance on managing and resolving customer complaints including access to the independent Dispute Resolution Ombudsman (DRO) service, giving businesses and customers the tools to handle complaints in a smooth and professional manner
- Protect your payments – using Trustmark's low-cost payment protection (Escrow) service provides a protective financial arrangement when entering into a contract for both Registered Businesses and your customers
- Becoming a TrustMark business means that you may be able to access finance options and cashback offers provided by our partners, to help remove financial barriers for your customers.

No additional cost for BPCA Servicing members.



## MEMBER BENEFIT IN FOCUS

# GRIEVANCES, GRUMBLES AND GRIPES

## MEMBER COMPLAINTS AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION



BPCA Technical Manager Natalie Bungay is responsible for investigating complaints and ensuring that BPCA members comply with BPCA's standards. Nat examines the process and how the new alternative dispute resolution (ADR) scheme could be a fantastic new member benefit for your company.

**B**efore we discuss the BPCA complaints process and how we deal with them, it's crucial to set out readers' expectations – a key to all successful communication, and a significant step in dispute resolution.

BPCA has one overriding goal: to drive excellence in pest management. This is our motto and our mantra. It means that we want to provide the end-user with a reliable route for contracting a professional pest management service.

We do this in many ways, such as ensuring qualified pest professionals have continual professional development, Codes of Conduct and Best Practice, and a detailed in-person assessment process.

We also do this by providing the consumer with a route for raising concerns and complaints about any work a member company may have carried out. This provides confidence and an element of security in that the consumer can have support at hand if, in unfortunate circumstances, they're not happy with a service they receive from a BPCA member.

This is also a benefit to members as consumers will actively seek out the BPCA logo because they have this extra level of support.

We don't see complaints as a smear on your company's reputation. We see them as an opportunity to put the spotlight on an area of work that may have fallen short. Through this spotlight, we can work together to raise standards and, ultimately, improve the pest management industry.

### What kind of complaints does BPCA deal with?

BPCA is a membership organisation and, as such, can only deal with complaints that are related to member companies.

For any customer who experiences a bad service and cannot resolve the issues directly with the organisation, BPCA can assist in reaching an amicable solution by working with both parties. This is referred to as mediation.

BPCA can take complaints regarding:

- Poor pest control service (public health, wildlife)
  - Poor customer service standards
  - Suspected illegal conduct
  - Unprofessional conduct
  - Concerns over health, safety and well-being.
- However, we can't look at complaints about:
- Issues that happened more than a year ago (unless there are special circumstances)
  - Employment, personnel or most contractual matters
  - Legal proceedings are already underway
  - Non-member companies
  - Non-pest control-related services (for example, specialist cleaning)
  - Hearsay, opinion, informal second opinions or complaints lacking evidence.

### What is ADR and what's changed?

An ADR scheme is a way of resolving disputes between consumers and traders without going to court.

BPCA has always provided a route for customers to raise concerns about its members – this hasn't changed.

### BPCA members can now promote being part of an ADR scheme on their website or documentation

Suggested wording is: "[Your Company] is a part of an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) scheme through our membership of the British Pest Control Association (BPCA). By choosing us as your contractor, you can be assured that a third party service is available for mediation should you ever need it."

However, after refining some processes and changing the way we keep records, BPCA is now an ADR scheme provider certified via the Chartered Trading Standards Institute.

### The law and ADR

Alternative Dispute Regulations 2015 introduced the need for traders doing business with consumers to be able to point to an ADR scheme when in dispute.

The regulations did not make participation in ADR schemes mandatory for traders, but they required almost all businesses that sell directly to consumers – and cannot resolve a dispute in-house – to point them to a certified ADR scheme and declare whether or not they intend to use that scheme.

Government has been slow to ensure this regulation has been adopted. However, ADR has come back into focus as a key element of necessary post-Brexit legislation.

The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Bill is working its way through Parliament, and it aims to lay down a duty on the trader to notify consumers of ADR arrangements and will cover:

- The making of the contract
- Anything done by the trader before or after making the contract
- Any obligations of the trader under or relating to the contract
- The performance by the trader of its obligations under or relating to the contract.

[bills.parliament.uk/bills/3453](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3453)

The Bill states the trader must, when communicating the outcome of the trader's consideration of the complaint to the consumer, also inform the consumer about any ADR or other available arrangement if the consumer is dissatisfied with the outcome.



### What happens when BPCA receives a complaint?

The first thing we will do is listen to the complainant and understand what they are experiencing, both good and bad. These notes are taken in various ways but normally via email and phone conversations.

Often, a complaint is easy to deal with, and we're dealing with a little miscommunication that is resolved by a simple conversation.

However, sometimes the issues may be a little more complicated. That's when a consumer can utilise the BPCA complaints page at [bpca.org.uk/complaints](https://www.bpca.org.uk/complaints). This sets out the expectations for how complaints are handled. We then require a form to be submitted detailing the intricacies of the complaint.

The next stage is for BPCA to contact the member in question. This is, where possible, done initially by telephone and then followed up by an email with the complaint details attached.

We always like to speak with members before sending out an email that states 'complaint received' in the title, as this can sometimes seem worrying for members. But we always want to ensure that our members see this process as a benefit to them and the consumer. Who wouldn't want to know about consumer issues where their business reputation is at risk?

Following these initial communications with the complainant and the member,

BPCA will ask for feedback from both sides. Depending on the complaint's intricacies, this process can take anywhere from two weeks to two months to complete.

BPCA works hard at making sure the consumer goes away happy and the member company has benefitted from the support and guidance of the Association.

### What about members complaining about members?

Dissatisfaction between members can arise because of misunderstandings or a breakdown in communication and can often be resolved by direct discussion with the fellow member concerned.

Respectfully reaching out to a fellow member to raise a concern almost always results in

positive actions. We just need to keep it civil!

If your own efforts to resolve a grievance fail, then the Association may be able to investigate the matter on your behalf.

Any complaint must be made in writing to the Chief Executive. A letter (ideally on your company letterhead) should be sent

to the Association's Derby office setting out the details of your complaint.

The letter must include copies of all correspondence between yourself and your fellow member and any evidence of the alleged improper conduct. It should be noted that hearsay is not acceptable evidence and will not be considered.

## hearsay

*/'hɪəsəri/*  
[ heeuh-say ]

noun

Information received from other people which cannot be substantiated; rumour.

"I've heard that Roadkill Pest Control is selling mousetraps to school children."

### Want to complain about someone who is not a member?

BPCA can only take complaints regarding our own members. If there is a concern about a non-member pest control company, consider the following:

- If the company is a member of another trade association then report to them in the first instance
- If the company is suspected of breaking the law then report them to the appropriate authority (see table).

### Does anyone ever really get kicked out of the Association?

Members do get removed from membership if they fail to meet membership criteria or refuse to take remedial action when a complaint is made. This is pretty rare, as we work closely with members to put things right when they go wrong. Members are expelled by the BPCA Executive Board.

Expulsions for non-compliance: 2024 2 members (to April); 2023 3 members; 2022 3 members.

### Reporting authorities for suspected breaches of the law

Health and safety in UK workplaces	Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	<a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm">hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm</a>
Pesticide misuse in factories, farms, public amenities, hospitals, nursing homes, schools and colleges	HSE	0300 003 1647 <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm">hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm</a>
Pesticide misuse in leisure premises, hotels, shops, restaurants, home gardens	Local authority (LA) inspectors	Your council's website, or you can consult <a href="https://www.gov.uk">gov.uk</a>
The environment	Environment Agency (EA) in England	0800 80 70 60
	Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)	0300 200 7856
	Natural Resources Wales (NRW)	<a href="https://www.naturalresources.wales/about-us/contact-us/report-an-incident">naturalresources.wales/about-us/contact-us/report-an-incident</a>
Wildlife	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)	<a href="https://www.beta.sepa.scot/about-sepa/contact-us/report-an-environmental-event">beta.sepa.scot/about-sepa/contact-us/report-an-environmental-event</a>
	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS)	0800 321 600
Selling professional-use rodenticides incorrectly	The Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU UK)	<a href="https://www.thinkwildlife.org/stewardship-regime/report-a-concern">thinkwildlife.org/stewardship-regime/report-a-concern</a>
Selling amateur use rodenticides incorrectly	HSE	0300 003 1647 <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm">hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm</a>
Selling other pesticides	HSE	<a href="mailto:crd.ppp.compliance@hse.gov.uk">crd.ppp.compliance@hse.gov.uk</a>

## MEET THE MEMBER

## TOO TALON TED

Paul Gill charts his career in pest control over more than 25 years, from accidentally getting a job in fumigation as a teenager to launching Urban Hawks.

**PPC** We hear a lot about people 'falling into' pest control, but you went for a pest control job initially?

**PG** I got into the industry when I was 18. I was at college in the second year of a sports coaching course, but I'd become disillusioned and bored with it. I went to the JobCentre to see what was available, and there was a job posted for a trainee technician at a fumigation company.

I thought it was a pest control technician – I didn't realise there was a difference between fumigation and pest control!

My uncle worked as a pest controller for Manchester City Council then, so I thought I'd do similar work. He'd spoken to me about his job, and it sounded quite enjoyable, so I applied.

It wasn't until I started that I realised that fumigation was a little bit different to your normal pest control.

**PPC** There are definitely a few differences. So, you had some knowledge from your uncle, but not necessarily about fumigation. Was that a steep learning curve in your first job?

**PG** Very! But it was enjoyable as well. In my mind, I would be working on a little area, probably somewhere around Manchester, going into peoples' houses, doing ants and rats and mice.

The reality hit on the first day when we had a job somewhere in North Yorkshire to fumigate about 100 tonnes of cocoa beans. It was totally unexpected, but I really enjoyed it.

I got qualified in pest control, fumigation, wildlife management and bird control, and gained quite a lot of varied experience from heat treatments to netting jobs, spiking, all that type of stuff but, after 10 years, I thought it was time to leave and work somewhere else.

I got a job with Warrington Borough Council as the Pest Control and Dog Warden Supervisor.

**PPC** The dog warden bit must have been completely different to what you'd done before.

**PG** Totally. I actually bluffed my way into that job because when they asked about how I was with dogs, I just said, 'Oh yeah, great,' when, in truth, I was petrified!

It was a bit of a sink-or-swim situation, but luckily, I didn't have to handle the dogs much; I was just supervising. I did eventually get used to

**"I'd been going for about two months when it really took off.**

**I got a bird mitigation job for Amazon and it was dawn until dusk, seven days a week from March until June."**

the dogs – to the point that I've had three myself since then!

The first dog I had was one that was handed into the service. Molly was only a puppy, and I've still got her to this day. She's nearly 15 but still going well.

**PPC** That's very cute! Moving on to Urban Hawks, at what point did you decide to set up on your own?

**PG** It took another 10 years or so. I worked for other companies and kept telling myself I should do it. I then got moved into a sales role, which I never thought I could do but actually did really well in.

After about two years, I thought, 'I can do all the work, I can sell the work – why am I not doing it for myself?' So that was the final piece of the jigsaw, really.

I just took the plunge. It wasn't ideal timing. We had a 12-month-old child and then I handed in my notice a week before our wedding. As if life wasn't stressful enough, I just decided to add to it!

I think that was probably the push I needed – I had to make it work. I did a detailed business plan, set my targets and got to work.

I'd been going for about two months when it really took off. I got a bird mitigation job for Amazon and it was dawn until dusk, seven days a week from March until June.

One of my last roles as a tech was in bird control and using birds of prey. I'd had birds of prey myself, so I set up the business as Urban Hawks, doing pest control and bird management but not really looking at fumigation initially.

By the third month, I'd had several customers asking if I still did fumigation. Now, the business is about 50/50 fumigation and bird control.



**PPC** Were you flying solo in the early years? And how big is your team now?

**PG** At first, it was just me, with the occasional sub-contractor or part-timer.

After two years, I took on my first member of staff, Steve Evans, who I'd worked with in my first job.

My wife is a chartered environmental health officer, so she had a career of her own that took a lot of time and hours, but she joined the business about two years ago. She qualified in fumigation and has been instrumental in changing the way we work.

James Garrett is also on the team, along with new recruits Max and Jay.

**PPC** Let's talk about your birds of prey. How many do you have at the moment?

**PG** We've got five at the moment that are owned by the company. Every member of staff is a falconer – we all do it as a hobby as well, so between us, we've got maybe 30 or 40 birds. That's more than we need, and any of us can use the company birds, but we all use our own as well, so we can get straight out on jobs.

**PPC** Tell us about some of the bird jobs you do.

**PG** We do a lot of bird deterrent work across different industries. We cover everything from universities and schools to chemical factories and ports. Probably the most interesting are bird mitigation jobs on greenbelt or long unused land.

MEET THE BOARD MEMBER

## NEW BLOOD

They call us in to be there from dawn until dusk with dogs and birds of prey, so it's not a desirable site for nesting. We're there daily, right up until the point they put a spade in the ground.

**PPC** And the fumigation side of the business?

**PG** That also took off quickly. At the same time that we got the first big bird job, we also got our first fumigation for about 4,500 tonnes of grain. I was flying solo, totally unprepared for it. It was a sudden big investment in the fumigation tarpaulins, getting all the gear and materials, and we've never looked back since.

The demand is there, it's regular and it's growing.

Not that many companies do fumigation and the ones that do generally use phosphine. We got registered around three years ago for a fumigant called Profume which is only used by us and another company in Britain.

It's like a specialism within a specialism. We're a registered user, and we have to be part of a stewardship scheme. All our staff have to be audited and take exams every year, so that keeps us on our toes and helps with the CPD a bit.

**PPC** You talked about setting and meeting targets for your business. That doesn't happen just by chance, does it? You have to put in the work.

**PG** Absolutely. I'd say to anyone thinking about making the leap: do a business plan. Work out your finances and the target of what you need to achieve.

You've got to be adaptable, take on lots of different roles – be able to sell, do the finance, the marketing, so many other things like that.

Just be realistic with yourself. Get a business plan sorted, set your targets and keep it realistic; you should be able to make a go of it.

### Want to be interviewed by PPC?

We're always looking for members to tell their stories in PPC magazine. If you have an interesting journey to share, let us know!

[hello@bpca.org.uk](mailto:hello@bpca.org.uk)

Run by pest professionals for pest professionals – the BPCA Executive Board sets the strategy of the Association. Following our 2024 election, members chose three new directors to join the Board. We caught up with them after their first meeting to see what they're bringing to the table.



**Rebekah Carral** **RC**  
Barricade Pest Control



**Martin Cobbald** **MC**  
Dealey Environmental



**Anna Mollins** **AM**  
PestFix

**PPC** First, congrats on being voted onto the Executive Board – and welcome back to Martin! Martin, what made you decide to return for another stint?

**MC** I felt like I had unfinished business, to be honest. I didn't leave by choice, it was out of necessity with Covid kicking off, and I needed to focus on work as we're a small business. And we were a much smaller business at the time, so I still had a lot I wanted to do.

**PPC** Anna and Rebekah, you're both new to the Board, but you are both on other BPCA committees. Can you tell us how you've found volunteering on committees so far and why you decided to go to the next level?

**AM** I was in the Outreach and Communications Committee and have filled in on the M&D Committee at times. I wasn't aware that I could have so much of an impact on BPCA with volunteering.

From there I thought, let's take this a notch up. I speak to a lot of sole traders and SMEs and people talk to me and share their opinions. So, I think my purpose on the BPCA Board is to represent the people I speak to daily.

**RC** We became members of BPCA only a couple of years ago. That's when I found out that there's a lot more to BPCA than what I'd first thought.

I joined the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee and I got a lot of value from that, and achieved a real insight into the industry itself.

**"Once your eyes are opened, you suddenly realise that BPCA is made up of its members, and its members determine what happens."**

I set up my own business when I was 24, which is very young in this industry. I came in with little to no experience and struggled to get the information I needed to expand. By joining the Board, I hope I can bring more opportunities to represent smaller businesses and create opportunities for people to join the industry.

**PPC** Do you think you would have ever applied to the Board without being on committees before?

**AM** I would not have jumped onto the Board if I hadn't done the committees first. My idea of BPCA as a body, and what my influence as a member is, were two different things before.

Once your eyes are opened, you suddenly realise that BPCA is made up of its members, and its members determine what happens. I learned that from spending time on committees, and it showed me I could be valued on the Board and help shape the direction of the Association.

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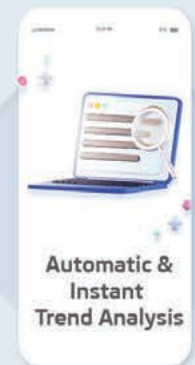


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## NEW BLOOD



**“Being part of BPCA is like you’re part of a wider team of sharing, collaboration and networking, which is just as important as education.”**

**PPC** You all represent fairly diverse types of pest control businesses: a servicing member in Scotland; a distributor from southern England; a fumigation expert from East Anglia. How do you think this helps when setting the direction of the Association?

**AM** I’m from an M&D member in the very south of England, so we are completely different from many of the servicing members. Through being on committees and getting more involved in BPCA, I found that my skills, advice, and opinions can impact the industry.

I hope I represent a collection of skills that perhaps others don’t already have on the Board.

**RC** What I’ve found over the years in Scotland is that courses, training sessions etc are very few and far between. There’s maybe one or two in Scotland a year, and even then the uptake on those courses is very small. So I’m excited to bring more Scottish representation, even though Chris Cagienard does a fantastic job as BPCA’s President.

We’ve seen with glue boards that we’ve got this separation between the different parts of the UK, and this highlights the need to ensure representation from all parts of the UK.

**MC** We’re right in the east of England, which is the breadbasket of the country. We’re in proper farming country, which means we are into fumigation. It’s great to have representation of that tiny niche of our sector.

**PPC** Martin, having been on the Board previously, what are you looking forward to the most about being back?

**MC** I want to talk about licensing. It’s a largely unregulated industry, and if it is regulated, it’s regulated through supply.

I think fumigation indeed has shown that regulation is workable. If we had a better-regulated industry, I think professionals would see great benefit from it, as well as seeing our public profile increase.

**AM** That’s right, public opinion needs to be changed so that the importance of licences and qualifications matter too. We can flash a load of badges and things but we need to show why these regulations matter and how they signify professionalism.

**PPC** What are some goals that you’re all hoping to achieve from your time on the board?

**AM** Mine is just to apply my skills to benefit every member of BPCA and the wider pest control industry, while being a voice for the sole traders and SMEs I speak to everyday.

I’m in a place to gather lots of opinions to bring them to the Board and get their voices heard, without them having to take time away from their businesses.

**RC** I think it’s too early to set a specific goal because I still have a lot of learning to do. I just hope that overall my time serving on the Board does make an impact.

Ask me again in six months and I will have goals set out about what I want to achieve!

**MC** I want to raise the profile of fumigation as much as possible because it’s a sector that nearly died. We’ve been growing it as much as we can, with training, collaboration, and spreading knowledge on what it is and what it can do.

**PPC** Why do you think volunteering for BPCA is important?

**AM** I believe if you want things to change, do something. So this is me doing something.

**RC** I was one of these people before becoming a member who was of the opinion, based on other people’s opinions, that BPCA is just a sticker on the van. It wasn’t until I joined that I discovered that you get out of it what you put in.

There’s so much available to everyone, and so many people are missing out. By volunteering, you can get the most out of your membership.

**PPC** What would you say to anyone who has thought about volunteering but has not quite taken that leap yet?

**AM** Going onto a committee, or even just shadowing a committee for one session, greatly opens your eyes. If you want to make a difference, this is the way to do it.

Also, everyone has multiple skill sets that will benefit BPCA. Don’t limit yourself to sharing only the skillset you practise in your day job. So don’t judge yourself.

**MC** Networking in BPCA is amazing. If people don’t know you’re there, how can they possibly get in touch with you to hear what you have to say? That’s a massive thing for a small business. If you’re a sole trader and you’re looking to expand your business, getting more involved is really helpful, as you can see how other people do things.

Being part of BPCA is like you’re part of a wider team of sharing, collaboration and networking, which is just as important as education.

**RC** Most people in the industry know me because of my involvement with BPCA. There’s so much happening in BPCA that there’s something there for everyone.

To some, it might sound like a massive contribution, but the time commitment is minimal for what you get back from it: you build so many valuable connections.

If you’re going to pay for membership, you should push to get as much as possible out of that membership. Take the opportunity to get involved and find out what interests you, it might be something different from what you would assume. You find out all the good work BPCA does and find out that the Association means so much more than a badge on a van.

### Interested in volunteering?

Joining a committee or the Board is a fantastic way to develop yourself professionally and give back to the pest management community. Contact us today to find out how you could get more involved in YOUR Association.

**hello@bpca.org.uk**

MEET THE **LIFE** MEMBER

# CROSS PURPOSES

David Cross from BPCA member company Rentokil was awarded a BPCA Life membership at our annual member meeting at PestEx. David has contributed to many committees and industry groups and has been instrumental in several pest management qualifications. We met him to learn more about his career and volunteer work.

**PPC** David, how did you get into pest control in the first place?

**DC** I was doing a degree in ecology and animal behaviour at Manchester, and I chose to do my final year project on the harbouring behaviour of the American cockroach.

Other people were doing exciting topics like going off into the Peak District and observing red deer behaviour, while I was in a dark room looking at cockroaches and seeing if I could get more cockroaches into a harbourage that had previously been occupied by other cockroaches.

Later I got a job with the Forestry Commission. That was proper pest control because we were looking at the great spruce bark beetle invading the Welsh Marches.

**PPC** That's a mouthful – great spruce bark beetle. Sounds like an interesting project though.

**DC** It is a mouthful! They were an import from Norway, decimating the Forestry Commission plots. We had to try to control them. That project went on for about three years, but all of the time, I was thinking more about getting into the public health aspects of pest control.

I applied for some jobs within Rentokil, and was eventually taken on in around 1988, as a pest control technician in one of the Birmingham branches, which was fantastic.

There was a pack of cards with the names of all your customers, how many times a year you had to visit them, and what pest they were on contract for - nothing digital. And then, twice a day, I had to find an old payphone to find out if there had been any callouts for me.

I eventually moved from Birmingham to Manchester as a field biologist and loved that job.

**PPC** You got to see many different types of pest control in action?

**DC** Absolutely. When I worked for the Birmingham branch, I was responsible for city centre pest control and rural pest control on farms in the West Midlands.

**"I went to PestEx a couple of weeks ago, and you can feel the passion in that room."**

It was also the time when behavioural resistance in mice was becoming known. You couldn't get mice to eat bait or go into bait boxes. We constantly experimented to get them to feed on anticoagulants, but we also heavily trapped them and used glue boards. Getting on top of the mice in the old Bull Ring in Birmingham was a lot of work.

**PPC** Why did you love being a field biologist so much?

**DC** I looked after two big flour mills in Manchester and Trafford Park and visited those every week. We looked after big food and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

We had lots of stored product insect pest activity. This started to interest me because it's not just about spraying – it's about managing a site.

It's all proper integrated pest management, where you sit down with the site's management team and discuss hygiene and proofing issues. We're educating people at the site to recognise pests, why everyone has a role to play in pest management and what they can do to prevent pests.

**PPC** Is that where your love of education came from?

**DC** It started when we were doing pest awareness training for our customers, but I was also getting into training technicians.



New starters would come out, and I'd show them around the site, explaining what we do and why we do it. It was hands-on practical training for those guys.

Rentokil is a very innovative organisation, so whenever we got a new control solution or monitoring device, it was the field biologist's job to stand up in front of the technicians and explain what it is, how it works, and all the rest of it.

I was a field biologist for around seven years, then joined another company called Igrox, which was very much into fumigation. At the time, they looked after about 65% of all the flour mills in the UK.

**PPC** Have you seen a lot of changes over the years in terms of what's expected for pest professionals to know to do their jobs?

**DC** With Rentokil training, there's a field aspect, a classroom aspect, and then a knowledge check at the end. You know a technician has the knowledge and practical skills to work independently.

That is great for a large to medium-sized business, but some sole traders don't have the luxury of getting that level of support in their initial training.

It became more apparent when I started getting involved in BPCA meetings. There was a time when the BPCA diploma existed, and at the same time, the Royal Society of Health (now the Royal Society for Public Health – RSPH) had a qualification. This was pretty much for the council type of pest control, whereas the BPCA qualification was favoured by private sector pest controllers.

That's when I started getting involved in meetings to discuss how to merge those qualifications. We would discuss what the curriculum would look like, and that's when we began to develop the Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in pest management.

Our work meant that there was a single qualification available offered by an official awarding body subject to Ofqual scrutiny – in other words, a nationally recognised qualification. It was a proper qualification awarded by RSPH.

**PPC** You've volunteered extensively with BPCA, especially in pest control education. When you started, did you think you'd end up creating the qualifications for a whole sector?

**DC** No, not at all. When I started with BPCA, it was the Servicing Committee meetings, and again, they were nothing like what they are now. Sometimes, you would be lucky if four or five people attended!

There wasn't that level of commitment and enthusiasm in those days that there is now. I'll take that back – there was an awful lot of enthusiasm, but it was just a small number of people that attended on a regular basis, and something so massive came out of it.

**PPC** How did your small group start pulling together something like the RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Award?

**DC** We started off with these two streams that seemed to be going off in different directions, so it felt important to bring them all together.

A National Occupational Standard for pest control did exist but it was not widely known and the two sectors had not come together and said "right, this is what a pest controller needs to know to be able to go out and do the job."

BPCA recognised it, and together we got it done.

While the qualification is established now, it also has to evolve. I still attend meetings – they're correct that it's a lot of book learning. There's a lot to know!

You can sit down and pass the exam, but are you a well-rounded pest controller when you actually go out after that qualification? Becoming good at your job is all about knowledge, skills and behaviours.

If you're in a big organisation like Rentokil, you've got the luxury of honing your skills while being supervised by somebody else. Unfortunately, a lot of the smaller companies can't do that. You can get the knowledge, but then you have to develop your skills by yourself in the field.

**PPC** Much of that work continues today as part of your work in the BPCA Professional Standards Committee.

**DC** Yes, exactly. I'm also involved in CEPA, and I'm starting to see the same discussions in European countries as in the UK.

**PPC** Are you still on the RSPH advisory panel?

**DC** Not any more, no. I offer my time outside of Rentokil as an examiner for the level 2, level 3 and fumigation qualifications. I attend examiner meetings focusing primarily on making sure that there is consistency between examiners but also on the validity of current questions based on the changing landscape within our industry.

It's a tough qualification to get, and there are often debates about whether it should be a level 2 or 3. I don't really mind what number it is, as long as it covers what a technician needs to know to be able to work independently.

**PPC** Ramps is another organisation you continue to be a large part of, right?

**DC** I'm involved in the Register of Metal Phosphide Standards (Ramps UK), which we developed around 2000 when I worked for Igrax.

It's still going now, although it's not as urgent as it was because when we were first developing it, there were changes in legislation.

So, we had to develop two qualifications: one for vertebrate control and one for invertebrate control. But then we've also got a load of fumigators out there who had already been through the BPCA Diploma in Fumigation.



**"You can sit down and pass the exam, but are you a well-rounded pest controller when you actually go out after that qualification? Becoming good at your job is all about knowledge, skills and behaviours."**

The BPCA Diploma in Fumigation was a really good qualification with many practical aspects, which are needed when dealing with something as harmful as a fumigant!

Unfortunately, it was not an accredited qualification because it was awarded by the BPCA (not an awarding body). Then, we had to have long and complex conversations with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to get them to accept the BPCA qualification, despite it not being awarded by an awarding body.

We managed to get the fumigation industry recognised as qualified, so that was a tough but necessary time!

**PPC** Your help producing courses and volunteering with various industry groups earned you a BPCA life membership. How did you feel when you found out you'd been nominated?

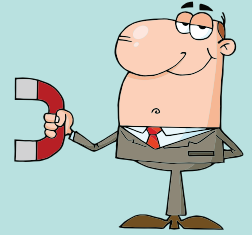
**DC** I was a bit gobsmacked. I didn't know why, but I was. I recognise this is the pinnacle BPCA award and I'm really proud of that.

If you're passionate about the industry, you've got to get involved. Otherwise, nothing will change – or if there are changes, you might not like them! I went to PestEx a couple of weeks ago, and you can feel the passion in that room.

Get yourself onto a committee and speak up. You'll meet some fantastic people, and you'll have contributed to the advancement and development of the industry.

# ENTICING ENGAGING AND RETAINING

TACKLING  
RECRUITMENT  
CHALLENGES  
WITH BPCA'S  
ONBOARDING  
SCHEME



BPCA Training and Development Manager Karen Dawes investigates how the new BPCA Onboarding Scheme is helping companies of all sizes induct and retain their new talent.

**"...build a more productive, motivated and engaged workforce that helps to drive long-term success."**

**R**ecruitment and retention of pest management employees are two of the biggest challenges our industry faces. 90% of employees decide whether to stay at a company within the first six months of employment, and as much as 22% of employee turnover happens within the first 45 days of employment.

Employee onboarding is important for providing a consistent approach to training and aligning employees with the company's culture, values, policies and practises.

Onboarding should be an integral part of the new employee experience, and companies should plan to allocate the necessary resources to ensure that they feel valued and supported.

By investing in effective onboarding programmes, organisations can build a more productive, motivated and engaged workforce that helps to drive long-term success.

## Our solution

BPCA's Onboarding Programme continues to go from strength to strength, with John O'Conner Pest Control and Safeguard Pest Control spearheading the programme since its inception. Both companies kindly agreed to share thoughts about the benefits (and the challenges) of adopting and embedding the programme.

**Research suggests onboarding programmes can:**

**Improve retention of new employees by up to 82%**  
Brandon Hall Group

**Improve customer service by up to 10%**  
Gallup poll

**Increase productivity by over 70%**  
Brandon Hall Group

## CASE STUDY 1

### JOHN O'CONNER PEST CONTROL

John O'Conner Pest Control of Hitchin in Hertfordshire, is a loyal supporter of the BPCA Onboarding Training Programme. Their Pest Control Manager, Karen Green, is responsible for recruitment.



#### Karen

As a company, we now use onboarding as our main recruitment tool.

We see the BPCA Onboarding Programme as a partnership with everyone working towards the same goal. The monthly review meetings give us all the chance to chart the progress of our new recruits, ensuring that they stay on track and enabling them to ask any questions they might have.

Attracting new people to the industry is very hard, and we find that having a robust onboarding programme in place helps people see the opportunities for a career in pest control.

We always offer interested candidates a trial day to ensure that pest control is something they want to do, and once recruited, the BPCA Onboarding Programme provides comprehensive training and support.

Alongside this, once our new employees have achieved their rodenticides qualification, we assign a team leader to work alongside them for a few weeks as they begin working in the field.

Then, as they progress, we allocate people with a range of different skills to them to provide them with different perspectives. This can be in areas of specialist proofing, problem sites, or simply those with expertise in specific species. All of this helps to build up the knowledge and skills of our new employees.

We put all our new recruits through the RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management training. We also enrol them in the BPCA Hands-on Pest Management training course which helps build up their practical skills.

A big part of the Onboarding Programme is developing students' portfolios, which form the basis of their assessments.

As well as detailing all the training they've completed, our employees build their portfolios by reflecting not only on the practical work they've been involved with but also, more generally, what they have learned as they progress through the programme.

We believe looking after our staff and valuing their achievements is the best way of retaining our employees and building a strong team.

**"...looking after our staff and valuing their achievements is the best way of retaining our employees..."**

CASE STUDY 2

SAFEGUARD PEST CONTROL

Daniel began working at Safeguard in November 2022 and joined the Onboarding Programme in December of that year. He was completely new to pest management, so he was an ideal candidate. In this case study, we hear from Daniel, National Service Director Mark Gomar and National Operations and Compliance Director Malcolm Stowell on their experiences.



**Daniel**

My opinion on the onboarding training course was that it was a brilliant way for me to enter the industry without any experience. Using the combination of in-person and online training assisted my understanding and development.

Having the monthly meetings allowed me to stay focused on the programme and meet the required targets for every meeting.

When taking the Safe Use of Rodenticide examination, the training had set me up for it, and I passed easily. This then improved my work when I started on my own patch.

The rest of the programme then sets you up perfectly to take the Level 2 Award in Pest Management qualification and continues to improve the quality of my work.

The completed portfolio is always available to look at and use for all other training methods. The programme gives you a great understanding of all materials available to BPCA members and the CPD points.

Overall, this training programme was brilliant and assisted me with my learning in this industry. It made it easy for me to understand what was required of me and aided my development in a future career in pest control.

**“To see them flourish and have the confidence to write treatment reports comparable to those who have been in the industry for many years is a testament to the programme.”**



**Mark**

Effective onboarding is much needed within our industry. Historically, once you brought someone in, they would do the RSPH Level 2 qualification and nothing else. I particularly like the BPCA Onboarding Programme as it gives new employees structure and headway about where they should be.

The monthly review meetings bring everyone together to review where we are, make sure everything is on track and cover any questions. These meetings are invaluable as far as I’m concerned.

There are downsides, of course. Realistically, when you bring someone brand spanking new into the industry, there’s often a need to get them out on the road as soon as possible. Then there’s the question of how quickly we should enrol someone into the Onboarding Programme if we or they decide the role isn’t for them.

Our answer is that we give new employees three weeks with the company before we enrol them.

From a manager’s perspective, yes, it can be time-consuming, but we have noticed a huge benefit from doing it. In addition to Daniel, we have four others who also did the programme and are now out in the field.

To see them flourish and have the confidence to write treatment reports comparable to those who have been in the industry for many years is a testament to the programme.



**Malcolm**

Having been part of the Professional Standards Committee that initially contributed to the development of the Onboarding Programme, I knew that the only way to really test it was to sign up one of our trainees to trial it.

As a business, we learned that successful onboarding requires ongoing communication between all parties: BPCA, the organisation and the employee. The monthly review meetings provided a platform and a safe space for that communication.

Daniel did everything that was required of him; building up a substantial portfolio, completing his online training and demonstrating a passion in his field work. I believe that our commitment to Daniel in terms of providing solid training, line manager support and encouragement when he was working in the field, ensured that Daniel felt valued and championed.

We look forward to having Daniel on the team for the long term. From Safeguard’s perspective, the Onboarding Programme was a great success and we have now adopted it as part of the training schedule for trainees.

Daniel has now sat his RSPH Level 2, which he passed with flying colours. On behalf of Safeguard – congratulations Daniel!

**Give your newbies a head start**

BPCA can provide you with an onboarding package. It includes a full online training and development programme, regular knowledge assessments, and learner review meetings.

**01332 294 288**  
[bpca.org.uk/onboarding](http://bpca.org.uk/onboarding)



**“Having the monthly meetings allowed me to stay focused on the programme and meet the required targets for every meeting.”**

# TRAINING CALENDAR

Can't see what you're looking for?

Ask us about bespoke training!

training@bPCA.org.uk

## Courses and exams

Course/exam	From (£)	Exam	Date	Location
<b>Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)</b>	1,165.00	✓	02-07/06/2024	Stafford
			08-13/09/2024	Stafford
			01-06/12/2024	Stafford
<b>Level 2 Certificate in Pest Management (residential)</b>	1,538.00		07-14/09/2024	Stafford
			30/11-07/12/2024	Stafford
<b>Hands On Practical Training</b>	270.00		07/09/2024	Stafford
			30/11/2024	Stafford
<b>Principles of Pest Identification</b>	132.00		16/07/2024	Online
			17/10/2024	Online
<b>Bed Bug Control</b>	132.00		28/11/2024	Online
<b>Waste Management</b>	132.00		05/11/2024	Online
<b>Fundamentals of Rodent Biology</b>	64.00		03/10/2024 1/2 day	Online
<b>Fundamentals of Insect Biology</b>	64.00		03/10/2024 1/2 day	Online
<b>Advanced Insect and Rodent Biology</b>	132.00		31/10/2024	Online
<b>Root Cause Analysis for Pest Technicians and Field Biologists</b>	64.00		10/10/2024 1/2 day	Online
<b>Mole Control</b>	168.00		29/08/2024 1/2 day	Derby
			23/05/2024	Derby
<b>Certificate in Bird Management</b>	132.00	✓	26/09/2024	Online
			14/11/2024	Online
			16/05/2024	Online
<b>Formulations and Applications</b>	132.00		19/09/2024	Online
			18/07/2024	Online
<b>Stored Product Insects (SPIs) in Food Factory Environments</b>	132.00		25/10/2024	Online
			10/07/2024 1/2 day	Derby
<b>Introduction to Wildlife Management</b>	168.00		29/10/2024 1/2 day	Derby
			02+03/10/2024	Southwick
<b>Aluminium Phosphide</b>	358.00	✓	08/05/2024	Online
			12/07/2024	Online
<b>Becoming a Field Biologist or Technical Inspector</b>	110.00		08/07/2024	Online
			01/10/2024	Derby
<b>Starting Out in Pest Control</b>	132.00		01/10/2024	Derby
<b>Level 3 Award in Safe Use of Fumigants for the Management of Invertebrate Pests</b>	901.00	✓	13-16/05/2024	Derby
			25-28/11/2024	Derby
<b>Steps to Leadership Management</b>	219.00		05+11/06/2024	Online
			07+15/10/2024	Online
<b>Grey Squirrel Control</b>	168.00		30/08/2024 1/2 day	Derby
<b>Flies and their Controls</b>	132.00		07/11/2024	Online
<b>Non-native Pests and their Control</b>	168.00		11/07/2024 1/2 day	Derby
			30/10/2024 1/2 day	Derby

## Exams only

	Exam	From (£)	Date	Location
<b>RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management</b>		170.50	07/06/2024	Stafford
			26/07/2024	Milton Keynes
			13/09/2024	Stafford
			06/12/2024	Stafford
<b>Technical Inspector</b>		170.50	07/06/2024	Stafford
			26/07/2024	Milton Keynes
			13/09/2024	Stafford
			06/12/2024	Stafford
<b>RSPH Level 3 Award in the Safe Use of Fumigants for the Management of Invertebrate Pests</b>		335.50	07/06/2024	Stafford
			26/07/2024	Milton Keynes
			13/09/2024	Stafford
			06/12/2024	Stafford
<b>Certificated Field Biologist</b>		335.50	07/06/2024	Stafford
			27/06/2024	Derby
			26/07/2024	Milton Keynes
			13/09/2024	Stafford
			06/12/2024	Stafford
<b>Certificated Advanced Technician (CAT) in Pest Management</b>		294.00	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](https://bPCA.org.uk/online-learning)

	From (£)
<b>Full Level 2 Award in Pest Management – online course</b>	363.00
<b>Using Rodenticide Safely leading to the Lantra Level 2 Award in Rodent Management</b>	75.00
<b>Foundation Certificate in Pest Management</b>	60.50
<b>Pest Awareness for Non-technical Staff</b>	
<b>Asbestos Awareness, Completing Risk Assessments, COSHH, Ladder Safety, Manual Handling Working at Height</b>	22.00

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## Terms and conditions

All costs are members only and exclude VAT. Non-member prices are available at [bPCA.org.uk/training](https://bPCA.org.uk/training)

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

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

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



Enquiries and bookings

training@bPCA.org.uk  
01332 225 113  
[bPCA.org.uk/training](https://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.

# TAKE CONTROL OF THE WAY YOU LEARN



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- Working Safely at Height
- Introduction to Bird Management

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