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**AIR RIFLES FOR
PEST PROFESSIONALS**



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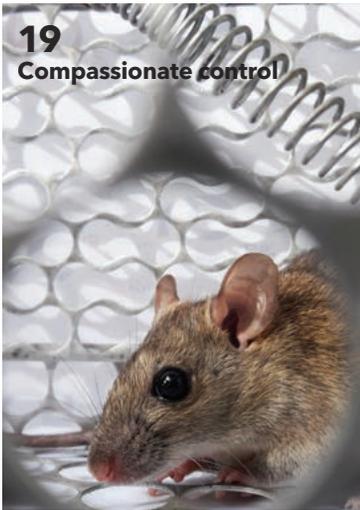
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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR EVENTS TEAM

As it's the PestEx showguide edition, I've stolen this page from the editors to talk about all the amazing event-y things we've got coming up!

PestEx is BPCA's flagship event and the biggest moment in the calendar for the pest management community. As Events Manager, I take the lead on the delivery of the show, and it felt only right to welcome you to this special edition. Sorry, Kat and Scott. Normal service will resume next issue.

Just when you thought we couldn't possibly squeeze in any more events, 2026 is the year we've gone all in.

Across the BPCA events calendar, we're doing more than ever to bring people together, share knowledge and support professionalism across the industry. Every month, we're hosting a free webinar for members, covering technical updates, live debates, guest-hosted sessions and Meet the Member interviews. They've become a real fixture for many of you, and we're proud of how engaged those sessions have become.

We've also built on our popular in-person Forums. Going forward, these will be Training Forums and this year we're delivering eight full-day events across the UK, with free, hands-on practical training sessions included. These events are designed to give you something practical to take back to the job, not just notes and good intentions.

We kicked things off with Glasgow in January and Peterborough in February, and the feedback has been brilliant!

Alongside that, we've introduced our new online Keynote sessions. These longer-format events allow guest speakers to dig deeper into a topic, with sessions split between pest management and business.

One thing we've learned is that online events aren't going anywhere. We wondered whether Digital Forums might lose momentum after Covid, but the opposite has happened. Attendance remains strong, engagement is high, and we're back with four more Digital Forums in 2026, bringing our total to 40 since we started these in 2020!

And then there's PestEx.

2026 is a PestEx year, and we're bringing you the biggest and best pest management event in the UK to date, with more exhibitors, seminars, hands-on challenges and networking opportunities than ever before.

While we have no plans to scale back our growing online offering, there is still nothing quite like being in the room. Getting hands-on. Sitting down with a cuppa. Seeing products, techniques and people in real life. PestEx is where learning accelerates, and relationships form naturally.

Behind the scenes, PestEx is a huge project for the BPCA team. Our team starts work on the next show almost as soon as the current one ends. The scale of the work is significant, but nothing beats the buzz in the hall.

The show simply wouldn't be possible without the exhibitors, speakers, panellists, sponsors, contractors and staff team, so I want to take this opportunity to say a genuine thank you to all of them.

PestEx takes time, effort and investment to deliver, but the money it generates is reinvested directly back into the Association. That supports work that benefits members and the wider industry, from lobbying the government to protect your toolkit, to providing member benefits such as CQMS, Quest and TrustMark, and much more besides.

So register online, come along, make the most of your time at PestEx, and we'll see you on the show floor.



Lauren Day
BPCA Events Manager



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PPC has been printed using carbon-balanced papers, showing our commitment to choosing a sustainable supply chain and reducing our carbon footprint with each edition.



BPCA Registered CPD points

Online CPD quiz = 1 point each

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



Basis Prompt point allocation

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



BPCA LAUNCHES NEW MEMBER BENEFIT WITH INSECTRAM

BPCA has launched a new member benefit in partnership with BPCA member company Insectram, giving members discounts and hands-on support with a digital platform built specifically for professional pest management businesses.

The new benefit is designed to help members streamline reporting, improve customer management and get more value from their operational data, without hidden costs or complicated onboarding.

What BPCA members get

As part of the new partnership, all BPCA members can access:

- 10% off Insectram subscriptions, available on both Standard and Pro packages
- One free day of on-site training or consultancy, delivered anywhere in the UK mainland
- Free onboarding support, including the migration of existing customer portfolio lists into the Insectram platform.

For members based in Ireland or Europe, the on-site training or consultancy is also available, with a travel surcharge applied.

These exclusive benefits sit alongside Insectram's core offering, which includes three free online training sessions per year, UK-based technical support and a transparent pricing model with no licence fees or hidden charges.

Supporting members on their digital journey

Craig Peniket, Partner and Operations and Commercial Manager at Purean Solutions and Technology Limited, said:

"Insectram is deeply committed to supporting the BPCA community. We understand the practical challenges pest management professionals face every day, and we're keen to help members bridge the gap between traditional ways of working and modern digital tools.

"By streamlining workflows and digitising essential processes, our aim is to help businesses of all sizes scale more effectively and stay focused on what they do best: protecting public health."

Scott Johnstone, BPCA Technology Manager, added: "We regularly hear from smaller pest control companies who know they need to start their digital journey but aren't sure where to begin. At the same time, larger businesses often come to us looking to refine or improve the systems they already have in place.

"This new member benefit from long-standing BPCA member and supporter Insectram offers something genuinely useful for everyone. If you're even a little bit curious about improving how you work, I'd encourage you to give them a call and explore what's possible."

How to access the benefit

BPCA members can visit insectram.co.uk to find out more about the platform and request a demo.

Members should mention their BPCA membership when signing up to access the discount and support package. Membership will be verified during onboarding.

insectram.co.uk/contact

2025 BPCA MEMBER AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The BPCA Member Award winners were announced at the festive special Digital Forum on 17 December 2025. The Awards celebrate positive contributions made by members to the Association and the wider pest management sector.

BPCA Chief Exec, Rosina Robson, said: "these awards are our way of highlighting those members who have made extraordinary contributions to the Association and the sector. "Congratulations to all the winners!"

BPCA Charles Keeble Award

The Charles Keeble Award is awarded to the person who achieves the highest score in the BPCA Certificated Advanced Technician (CAT) accreditation for the previous year.

WINNER: Ewan Chalmers (Rentokil)

BPCA Philip Halpin Award

The Philip Halpin Award is judged based on your BPCA Registered CPD Diary.

WINNER: Michelle Maddison (Hovis)

BPCA Special Contribution Award

This award is designed to recognise a significant and outstanding contribution to the Association, exceeding what might normally be expected from members. This may be based on a single but very important action or a continuing series of actions that have impacted others.

WINNER: Julia Pittman (Beaver Pest Control)

BPCA Commitment to Training Award

This award is judged based on the variety of training and development opportunities taken through BPCA.

WINNER: Pestology

Highly commended: Pest Solutions

BPCA Life Member Award

Life Membership is the highest award available to recognise the exceptional contribution of individuals to the Association and the pest management industry. It is therefore only awarded in exceptional circumstances.

WINNER: Mark Williams

NEW MEMBERS



Servicing members:

- Green Environmental Management Ltd
- Greenpest
- Guard Pest Control Ltd
- Liberty Environmental Ltd
- Pest Technologies Ltd
- BPE Pest Prevention

Observer members:

- Somlab Quality Assurance Services Ltd
- DEBUX - Inh. Kai Scheffler

Associate members:

- West Kent Housing Association

PGM PEST CONTROL PUBLISHES HEREFORDSHIRE PEST ACTIVITY DATA ANALYSIS REPORT 2025

BPCA member PGM Pest Control has released data analysis, identifying the most prevalent pest issues across Herefordshire based on recorded treatment figures

Key findings (most to least prevalent):

- Rodents - 48%
- Wasps - 15%
- Carpet beetles - 6%
- Bed bugs - 6%
- Woodworm - 4%
- Other pests (including ants, flies, fleas, cockroaches, moths and other species) - 21%

The full report provides a comprehensive data analysis of pest prevalence and treatment demand across residential, commercial, and rural properties in Herefordshire during 2025.

PGM Pest Control says their findings show that pest activity in Herefordshire is becoming less seasonal and more persistent throughout the year. Read the full report: pgmpestcontrol.co.uk/blog

WE HAVE A WINNER!

Congratulations to Andy Midgley of Devon-based Pests Off, winner of a brand-new iPad in our Future of Pest Management survey prize draw.



Thanks again to everyone who took part in our survey; the data supplied is so crucial to us being able to demonstrate the value of pest management services and to protect your toolkit.



HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE NEW LEVEL 4 PEST MANAGEMENT QUALIFICATION

The professional pest management industry is entering a key period of change. As standards rise, the need for a clear, credible and practical career pathway has never been more important.

Following extensive consultation, work on a new competency-based qualification framework is well underway. With the Level 3 qualification now progressing, focus is turning to the next step: defining what a Level 4 advanced qualification should look like.

This is where BPCA members and the wider industry can make a real difference. Anyone taking part in the consultation can opt in to a prize draw to win a brand-new 11th Gen iPad.

Why a progressive framework matters

A structured qualification framework brings clarity and consistency at every career stage, from entry-level technicians to advanced practitioners.

It sets clear expectations and ensures learning builds logically over time.

Crucially, the framework gives equal weight to practical competence and technical knowledge. Written exams alone cannot fully reflect the judgment, problem-solving and hands-on skills required in real-world pest management.

Evidence from across vocational sectors shows that strong practical training improves performance and productivity, backing up what the industry already knows: competence matters.

Built by the industry

The framework is being shaped collaboratively,

with training bodies, industry stakeholders and pest management businesses working together to ensure it reflects real operational needs and future skills.

What this means for people and businesses

A clear progression route benefits everyone. Employees gain motivation, structure and long-term career development. New entrants see pest management as a skilled, respected and rewarding profession. Businesses benefit from:

- Clearer development pathways and improved retention
- Increased productivity and efficiency
- Stronger marketing through demonstrable professionalism
- Higher customer satisfaction driven by technical competence.

Karen Dawes, BPCA's Training and Professional Development Manager, said:

"This framework represents a major step forward for our industry. By building qualifications that genuinely reflect modern pest management, we're supporting individuals, strengthening businesses, and raising standards across the profession."

Have your say

BPCA is now seeking feedback on what the Level 4 qualification should include, covering both knowledge and practical skills.

Your responses will directly shape the syllabus, assessment methods and definition of advanced practice.

Take part in the survey and help shape the future of pest management bPCA.co.uk/level4

EXPANDING TEAM FOR JM PEST SOLUTIONS

BPCA member JM Pest

Solutions have taken on their first technician, in a move

that owner Jamie Morgan hopes will lead to further expansion in the future.

Adrian Stephens joined the team in 2025, three years after Jamie first started the business.

"I worked in the industry for 10 years for a national company, but a redundancy pushed me into starting JM Pest Solutions.

"I'd love for the business to continue to grow at a nice, steady pace and to eventually have a few more vans on the road!"



iX5 PEST CONTROL LAUNCHES LIVE ONLINE VIDEO PEST ADVICE SERVICE

iX5 Pest Control has launched a new Online Pest Clinic, offering customers the ability to receive live pest control advice via video call with a qualified expert, to help with diagnosis and consideration of treatment options.

The service allows homeowners and businesses to speak directly with an iX5 Pest Control specialist and show the issue in real time using their smartphone or mobile device.

This approach helps to improve early pest identification, reduce misdiagnosis, and ensure that professional treatment is only recommended when genuinely required. It can also assist those on a budget trying to self-treat a pest problem.

"We regularly speak to people who are concerned but unsure whether they actually need professional pest control support," said iX5 Pest Control MD, Matt O'Donnell.

"Live video advice allows us to assess the situation quickly, give honest guidance, and help customers make informed decisions. In some cases, that reassurance alone is enough."

The service reflects a growing shift within the pest control industry towards responsible diagnosis, transparency, and customer education, using technology to enhance, rather than replace, professional expertise.

CONFIRMED: YELLOW-LEGGED (ASIAN) HORNETS IN WALES

A dead nest belonging to a yellow-legged hornet (*Vespa velutina*) has been found near Wrexham, making it the first confirmed discovery in Wales. Also known as the Asian hornet, it is an invasive, non-native species and was first seen in France in 2004. Since then, there have been sightings of it in numerous parts of the UK.

The Welsh government has asked the National Bee Unit (NBU) to take action in line with an existing Asian Hornet Contingency Plan, while people are being asked to "become familiar" with what the insect looks like.





INOVUS ANNOUNCE NEW TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Insect Light Trap expert, Tom Holmes, has joined Inovus as their new Technical Director.

Announcing the news of Tom joining the business, Steve Jackson, Inovus founder and Commercial Director, commented, "Having previously worked with Tom for many years, I know how highly he is regarded within the industry.

"His understanding of what matters to PCOs and helping us continue to deliver great products, training and technical support to meet those needs will be a huge asset to Inovus and our customers."

With a background in product design, Tom joined the industry in 2000, when he became Design Manager at P+L Systems.

As that business grew, ultimately becoming Pelsis, his role and exposure to the wider industry grew with it, spending time overseeing marketing activity, training and product development, along with representing the business on industry bodies and organisations.

On joining Inovus, Tom explained, "Having the opportunity to be part of a business which can always put the needs of its customers first, was hugely appealing to me.

"I've been really impressed with the direction Inovus has taken over the last eighteen months, in providing solutions to allow users to start enjoying the benefits of LED technology at a pace that works for them."

The full range of Inovus ILTs, replacement glueboards, Attracta LED and fluorescent UV lamps are available from Inovus's UK distribution partner and BPCA member, 1env.

LEGISLATION

WHAT THE EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT MEANS FOR PEST MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

The Employment Rights Act 2025 received royal assent, meaning it has become law. Some changes have come into force immediately, but those that will affect you will start coming into force in April next year.

If you run a pest management business and employ staff, here is what you need to know.

The measures directly affecting employees and employers are planned to start coming into force in three phases:

- Phase 1: April 2026
- Phase 2: October 2026
- Phase 3: 2027.

The reforms will apply to England, Wales and Scotland. Many of the reforms being introduced by the act are not yet set out in detail. This detail should be seen within the consultations and secondary legislation that will be required to give effect to each individual reform.

Phase 1: April 2026

- Paternity Leave and ordinary parental leave will become a right from day one, meaning a new employee could on their very first day of work give notice to take leave
- Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will now be paid from the first day of sickness instead of the fourth
- The lower earnings limit for SSP of £123 per week on average will also be removed, so those being paid below that amount will become eligible to receive sick pay
- Changes to whistleblowing protections against unfair dismissal or other detriment; sexual harassment will become a 'qualifying disclosure', meaning workers will be able to report any such wrongdoing at work without fear of repercussions
- The maximum protective award should you fail to consult with staff during collective redundancy will double from 90 to 180 days' worth of pay.

Phase 2: October 2026

- Fire and rehire will be banned
- There will be a number of changes in regards to how you handle harassment:
 - 1) Employers will have a duty to protect their workforce from harassment by third parties, this would include from customers
 - 2) You will also need to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment
- Clauses within Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) that would prevent someone alleging or disclosing harassment or discrimination, or how you the employer responded to such, will be unenforceable
- The time limit on making a claim to an employment tribunal will be doubled from 3 to 6 months

- If you are undertaking work that has been outsourced from the public sector, there will be an outsourcing 'two-tier' code. This code will be designed to prevent private sector employees receiving terms and conditions worse than those who have been transferred over from the public sector.

Lastly, this phase will feature several changes surrounding Trade Unions:

- Firstly, you will have a duty to inform workers about their right to join a trade union
- There will be new rules on a trade union's right of access to the workplace
- Trade union representatives will gain a new right to reasonable accommodation and facilities to allow them to carry out their own duties, and union equality representatives will also have a right to time off so that they can carry out their duties
- Workers taking part in industrial action will no longer be protected from just unfair dismissal, but also from any detriment.

Phase 3: 2027

- A voluntary requirement for you to produce gender pay gap and menopause action plans in April 2026 will become mandatory
- Protections against unfair dismissal will begin at 6 months, a reduction from the current 24 months
- Removal of a cap on compensation claims for unfair dismissal at employment tribunals; the cap currently stands at £118,223
- Pregnant workers and those returning from maternity leave will gain protections against dismissal
- There will be a new right to statutory bereavement leave
- Workers will be entitled to receive pay for shifts that are cancelled, moved, or cut short
- Employers will not be able to refuse a request for flexible working without giving a reason; you will also have to explain why your refusal is reasonable
- When carrying out redundancies you must carry out a collective consultation where you are proposing 20 or more redundancies within a 90 day period across the entire organisation - currently you only have to consult where those 20 redundancies are to take place within a single workplace.

HR SUPPORT FOR BPCA MEMBERS

If you require any support or guidance about your responsibilities as an employer, and how to prepare for these reforms, make use of your member benefits.

Quest provides unlimited free advice on all matters HR, health and safety, tax, and legal to you as a BPCA member.

bpc.org.uk/quest

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BASF RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS PRESSURES FACED BY PEST PROFESSIONALS

A BASF survey found nearly half of pest control professionals feel their career has harmed their mental health, highlighting the sector's pressures.

Stress and anxiety are the main issues, with 84% reporting stress, two-thirds anxiety, and over 60% exhaustion or fatigue.

Half of respondents also experience loneliness or isolation, reflecting the solitary nature of fieldwork and long hours on the road.

These challenges increase burnout risk, lower job satisfaction, and make it harder for professionals to find support or maintain work-life balance.

Key contributors to poor mental health

Survey participants identified several factors contributing to mental strain:

- Money worries or the cost of living was cited by over three quarters of respondents
- Long working hours affected approximately 70% of participants
- Tricky customers is a challenge for 71% of respondents.

Other contributors included challenging infestations, time spent alone, and organisational pressures such as poor management or lack of support.

Stigma remains a barrier

Despite growing awareness, stigma around mental health continues to prevent open discussion.

Nearly 70% of respondents believe stigma persists in the workplace.

Only 38% pest controllers reported feeling fully comfortable discussing mental health with colleagues - a notable shift from the 2024 survey, when the majority felt able to talk openly with peers.

Support and resources needed

Counselling and mental health training were the most requested support measures, showing a need for better recognition and education around mental health.

Laurence Barnard, Country Business Manager at BASF, said: "By having these conversations, we can explore ways to support pest technicians with guidance, peer support, and a safe community to share challenges.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to this survey; their insights have highlighted vital findings and confirmed that urgent action is needed to protect mental wellbeing in pest control."

PELGAR INTERNATIONAL PROVIDES VITAL SUPPORT FOR A MAJOR CONSERVATION PROJECT

Rathlin Island, one of the UK and Ireland's most important seabird breeding sites, is a step closer to ecological recovery thanks to the critical support of PelGar International. The island's globally significant colonies, including the largest breeding population of Guillemots in the UK and Ireland and the second-largest population of Razorbills in the UK, have been under severe threat from invasive Brown Rats and Ferrets. As part of the £4.5 million LIFE Raft restoration programme led by RSPB NI and partners, an ambitious eradication effort is underway to restore Rathlin's biosecurity and safeguard its fragile wildlife. At a pivotal moment in the project, as post-COVID cost pressures intensified ahead of full rat-eradication operations, PelGar International stepped forward with a substantial donation of rodenticide. The contribution proved to be a lifeline, ensuring that winter fieldwork could proceed at the scale and pace required. Without this timely intervention, thousands of hours of planning, specialist training, and community mobilisation risked being compromised. PelGar's support has directly enabled comprehensive island-wide deployment of more than 6,500 bait stations, carefully installed on a 50 x 50 metre grid to ensure complete coverage while protecting non-target species. Read the full story on ppconline.org



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PESTS IN THE PRESS: NOVEMBER 2025 TO JANUARY 2026

As is typical for the colder months, rats and mice have had a major part to play in raising BPCA's profile across the media since the last Pests in the Press update.

Advice for householders to check for uninvited guests at Christmas garnered coverage across the UK over the festive period, with a follow up on wood mice venturing indoors during the cold weather at the start of the year also doing well.

A sample of titles that have featured BPCA press release, information or comment in December and January:

Local news: Keighley News, Swindon Advertiser, Kidderminster Shuttle, Rhyl Journal, Wirral Globe, Hackney Gazette, Chelmsford Weekly News, Barry & District News, Ayr Advertiser, The Cardiffian

Regional news: Dorset Echo, Bradford Telegraph and Argus, Oxford Mail, Worcester News, Northern Echo, Lancashire Telegraph, South Wales Argus

National news: Countryfile.com, MSN, Yahoo UK, The National Scot, Wales Online, The Daily Mirror

TV and broadcast: GB News

Trade magazines: Bespoke articles for allied sectors continue to be a regular feature of content produced, with an article focusing on BPCA's recruitment campaign for Tomorrow's Cleaning, a column on training for British Cleaning Council's The Voice and a feature on ticks for The Landscaper.

Press releases highlighting the damage rodents can cause to tractors and machinery and raising awareness around pest problems in self-storage units were issued to magazines in those sectors.

Looking ahead

The first part of the year includes a focus on PestEx with press releases for titles catering to allied sectors including Local Authorities, Facilities Management, Cleaning and Maintenance, Hospitality.

TOP 3 HEADLINES



OH NO: THE TWO HALLOWEEN DECORATIONS THAT COULD ATTRACT SUPER-RATS INTO YOUR HOME AND BECOME A REAL-LIFE HOUSEHOLD NIGHTMARE - THE SUN

LOOK OUT FOR UNWANTED FESTIVE VISITORS - THE SENTINEL

BATTLE OF THE BINS: PEST PREVENTION A PRIORITY SAYS BPCA - GOVERNMENT BUSINESS



COVERAGE IN Q4 2025

TOTAL ARTICLES 242

TOTAL CIRCULATION 66,152,570



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PESTS IN POLITICS



Our lobbying and public affairs work currently focuses on three key aims: protecting the toolkit, implementing Awaab's Law and innovation in chemical regulation.

In this issue of Pests in Politics, Rosina Robson provides an update on our latest work in these areas.

Protecting the toolkit

Animal Welfare Strategy

BPCA is actively engaging with the UK government on the recently announced Animal Welfare Strategy for England, which proposes reviewing certain outdoor wildlife traps due to welfare concerns.

This strategy reaffirms the planned ban on snare traps and commits to assessing older spring traps, mole traps, and live-capture covid traps, though household rodent snap traps are excluded.

We met with Defra in late 2025 to discuss the potential impacts on pest management and are following up to provide further detail and gather member feedback.

We've emphasised the need for decisions to be grounded in evidence that recognises the responsible use of traps by trained professionals and have reached out to allied organisations to build a balanced, evidence-based case for policymakers.

If your work could be affected by the Animal Welfare Strategies proposals, we encourage you to share that real-world experience with us, to support effective engagement with Defra. policy@bpca.org.uk



Glue trap sales ban moves forward

BPCA has been actively supporting legislative progress that would allow parts of the UK to ban the sale of rodent glue traps, with MPs and Peers approving the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020 (Exclusions from Market Access Principles: Glue Traps) Regulations 2025.

This step would clear the way for Scotland to put into force their ban on the sale and supply of glue boards under the Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Act 2024.

BPCA has long lobbied for tighter controls on glue traps to address welfare concerns and misuse by untrained users. We will continue to push the government to extend a sale ban in England and Wales and to close loopholes that still allow the public to purchase traps legally, despite it being illegal to use them.

We also raised issues in Parliament about enforcement, professional access to traps for public health use, and engagement with the pest control sector. We will keep working with Defra and policymakers to ensure future laws protect animal welfare, public health, and professional pest management standards.

Implementing Awaab's Law

Decent Homes Standard (Northern Ireland)

BPCA has submitted evidence to the Decent Homes Standard review in Northern Ireland, engaging with proposals to update housing quality requirements for social homes. BPCA is urging that pest management and the condition of rented properties be properly considered in the revised standard.

By contributing expertise, we've highlighted how poor housing conditions affect pest problems and public health. Our input reflects our wider engagement with housing and welfare policy to protect residents' wellbeing and support effective pest management in rented accommodation.

Innovation in chemical regulation

BPCA joins the Alliance of Chemical Associations (ACA)

BPCA has been voted into the Alliance of Chemical Associations (ACA), strengthening our influence in chemical regulation and public health policy by working with other UK trade bodies.

By joining the ACA, BPCA will collaborate on coordinated, evidence-based advocacy to government and regulators on chemical issues affecting professional pest management.

The move gives members a stronger platform for consistent lobbying on chemical regulation, helping ensure decisions reflect real-world use by trained professionals and support public health, food safety, and environmental protection.



Other public affairs work

BPCA joins cross-sector call for stronger partnerships with government

BPCA and others have signed a joint letter to the Minister for Skills arguing that embedding professional standards, accredited training and frontline expertise in policymaking will support economic growth and public service reform.

As part of this coalition, we want closer structured engagement between government and industry to help shape practical, proportionate policy and ensure pest management's role in public health, environmental responsibility and workforce development is recognised.

We also:

- Were mentioned twice in UK Parliament; once on the animal welfare strategy and again on the general sale of glue boards ban
- Recently met with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government officials to talk about Phase 2 of Awaab's Law and the Renter's Rights Act/private landlords and we will be feeding into government guidance on implementation
- Set up political monitoring so that we can be more proactive in our lobbying with the UK and devolved governments
- Continued stakeholder mapping of MPs/Peers for targeted campaigns
- Engaged with the British Cleaning Council (BCC) about how we can collaborate on lobbying in 2026.

Event/ course name	From (£)	Date	Location
Non-member open evening- Learn about BPCA membership	Free for everyone	27/03/2026	Online
MEET THE MEMBER WEBINAR: Matt O'Donnell from iX5 	Members Only	01/04/2026	Online
Safe use of Aluminium Phosphide	358.00	07-08/04/2026	Southwick
Safe use of Fumigants	1,081.00	13-16/04/2026	Derby
Chester Training Forum	Free for everyone	15/04/2026	Chester
Hands-on practical pest management	250.00	18/04/2026	Stafford
Level 2 Certificate in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	18-25/04/2026	Stafford
Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	19-24/04/2026	Stafford
WEBINAR: 2026 best practice and legislation updates for pest professionals 	Members Only	06/05/2026	Online
Becoming a Field Biologist/Technical Inspector	132.00	07/05/2026	Online
KEYNOTE WEBINAR: Bee disease training with the Animal and Plant Health Agency 	Members Only	13/05/2026	Online
Certificate in Bird Management	216.00	14/05/2026	Online
Cardiff Training Forum	Free for everyone	20/05/2026	Cardiff
Level 2 Award in Pest Management (non-residential)	930.00	18-22/05/2026	Edinburgh
Starting out in pest control	132.00	01/06/2026	Online
DEBATE WEBINAR: Are our control methods fuelling neophobia in rats? 	Members Only	03/06/2026	Online
Hands-on practical pest management	250.00	06/06/2026	Stafford
Level 2 Certificate in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	06-13/06/2026	Stafford
Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	07-12/06/2026	Stafford
DIGITAL FORUM 38: your online pest event	Free for everyone	10/06/2026	Online
Level 2 Award in Pest Management (non-residential)	930.00	15-19/06/2026	Northern Ireland
GUEST WEBINAR: A forensic approach to food safety in pest control 	Members Only	01/07/2026	Online
KEYNOTE WEBINAR: Employment Rights Bill 	Members Only	08/07/2026	Online
Non-member open evening- Learn about BPCA membership	Free for everyone	17/07/2026	Online
Hands-on practical pest management	250.00	18/07/2026	Milton Keynes
Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)	1,165.00	19-24/07/2026	Milton Keynes

WATCH NOW



Take a behind the scenes look at BPCA's residential Level 2 Award in Pest Management training course.



BPCA EMAIL

technical@bpca.org.uk

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ASK THE TECHNICAL TEAM

What can I do for fox control if we're no longer allowed to use lead bullets?

Yes, the UK is phasing out the use of lead ammunition, including large-calibre bullets, for most outdoor shooting and hunting purposes, and this will affect fox control too.

The intention is for legislation to be introduced by summer 2026, followed by a three-year transition period, meaning the full prohibition will be in force around 2029.

You can still use shooting as a method of control, as the lead ammunition ban only affects calibres of 6.17mm (approx. .243) and larger.

But you should have a specialised fox management plan that takes into account the hierarchy of controls, surroundings (urban vs peri-urban/rural setting) and the law in the area in which you live.

If you're a BPCA member and you need help putting a plan together, get in touch.

Will steam work to eradicate a flea issue on its own?

The short answer is that you should use steam in conjunction with other integrated pest management practices.

As a stand alone treatment, the use of steam itself would be largely labour intensive, and doesn't provide a residual effect.

With direct contact to eggs, larvae and pupae, it would control these. These three stages are the largest portion of the flea population (roughly 95% altogether).

But you should also make recommendations such as hot laundering of pet bedding, human bedding and upholstery such as chair covers.

Hoovering is also a good way to remove large parts of the flea population, and can also cause additional stimulation to the pupae which encourages hatching before being followed up with a residual insecticide.

I've been asked by a company I'm tendering for a contract with if I'm CIS registered. The contract is for installing bird netting in the UK. Do I need to be CIS registered?

This comes up a lot in specialist installs, so you're not alone. The short, practical answer: you don't legally have to be CIS-registered to do the work, but it's usually in your best interest to be registered.

The Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) applies to "construction operations" in the UK.

Installing bird netting on buildings is generally treated by HMRC as construction work, because it's a permanent or semi-permanent installation attached to a structure. In practice, most main contractors will treat bird netting installers as CIS subcontractors.

You generally don't need CIS if:

- You're working directly for a domestic homeowner
- You're supplying netting only (no installation)
- You're installing on a genuinely temporary basis (rare for bird netting).

If you need any more help with this and you're a BPCA member, please get in touch!

I'm not good at technology stuff, but people keep saying SEO can help my business. How?

Scott from the marketing team here! Technical outsourced this answer to me, and yes, SEO sounds like tech wizardry, but the idea behind it is actually pretty simple.

SEO = Search Engine Optimisation. It's the stuff you do so your business shows up higher on Google when people search for things like "pest control near me".

Pest control is a "right now" service. People don't browse for fun, they search when they've got a problem. Higher on Google means more calls from people who already need your help.

When people are searching online, Google looks at a few big things, so make sure these are up-to-date and correct:

- Your Google Business Profile
- Your website content
- Reputation, ie Google reviews

SEO isn't instant, it takes time to build. If you're a BPCA member and you'd like a more in-depth chat about marketing, get in touch for a one-to-one session. bpca.org.uk/book



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

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



WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

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

BACK-TO-BASICS

AIR RIFLES

FOR PEST PROFESSIONALS



Image by George
Larcombe, Wildforce

bpca.org.uk



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



In this article, BPCA Technical Manager Niall Gallagher goes back to the beginning on air rifle fundamentals.



Image by Alastair Fernie, Killgerm

In rural and agricultural societies, firearms have long been essential tools for protecting crops and livestock from damage caused by various animals, including rodents, birds, and in some places around the world, even large predators, like wolves and coyotes.

Well, bonus: we don't have to worry about coyotes in the UK. But if you're new to the world of controlling pests with guns, you do have to think about a wide variety of things like training, the law, gun models and calibres.

It's never been a better time to add shooting to your pest control toolkit. Modern rifles are efficient, accurate and supported by a wide range of accessories. When used correctly, they can be an effective, non-toxic tool within an integrated pest management plan.

Shooting should never be seen as a stand-alone solution. It must sit within a wider programme of inspection, proofing, housekeeping and monitoring.

This article gives an overview of the main types of air rifles, how different calibres perform, what the law says and how to build competence if rifles form part of your work.

Knowing UK law

You must understand the law before you buy, hold or use an air rifle. Even though air rifles are different from full firearms, they are still regulated in a similar way in the UK.

If you break the law, you risk large fines and prison. It can also affect your future ability to work under the General Licence.

Laws differ between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. If your work takes you across borders, you need to stay up to date with each legal framework in the devolved nations.

The following legislation is particularly important:

- Firearms Act 1968
- Firearms (Dangerous Air Weapons) Rules 1969
- Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004
- Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The main principles in those apply across the UK.

General licences for bird control change often, and in January 2026 illuminated devices were once more allowed under General Licence GL41, for the purpose of managing feral pigeons for public health.

This may change again in the future. It is your responsibility to check the latest version before undertaking work.

Police forces and wildlife licensing bodies publish updates throughout the year. Keep a record of the versions you use and check them regularly.

You must also:

- Know the current legal power limits
- Store and transport your rifle safely
- Understand your obligations under wildlife licences
- Know when you can shoot and when you cannot.

The three main rifle types

There are three common types of air rifle used in pest management. All can be effective if used within the law and with good technique.

The right choice depends on your budget, how and where you work, and how much time you can spend developing your skills.

Spring powered rifles

Spring powered rifles are often the first rifles used by new technicians.

They are usually the most affordable option and they do not need extra equipment such as pumps or dive bottles.

When you fire a spring rifle, the internal spring compresses and then expands quickly. This can cause recoil, vibration and movement inside the rifle.

These forces can make accuracy more challenging, particularly for new shooters.

Shooting a spring rifle well takes practice. You need to develop a consistent grip, body position and follow through. It can also take time to learn the best pellets for your rifle.

Maintenance is simple if you follow the manufacturer's guidance. Many technicians learn to strip, clean and tune their spring rifles with support from online guides and forums.

If you make changes yourself, always stay within legal power limits and keep notes of any work done.

Spring rifles can be harder for people with limited strength or mobility because cocking the rifle takes effort. Some models can be adapted, but you should always check the manufacturer's advice before modifying equipment.

Gas ram rifles

Gas ram rifles work in a similar way to spring rifles.

The difference is that the spring is replaced with a sealed gas cylinder. When you cock the rifle, you compress the gas rather than a coil spring. This design gives a smoother firing cycle with less vibration. Many technicians find gas ram rifles easier to shoot accurately.

They are also less tiring to cock and can offer consistent performance over long sessions.

Gas ram rifles are a good option for people who want the simplicity of a spring system with a little more comfort and control.

Pre-charged pneumatic rifles

Pre-charged pneumatic (PCP) rifles store compressed air in a built-in reservoir.

You fill this reservoir with a hand pump, a compressor or a dive bottle. The rifle then releases a small amount of air with each shot.

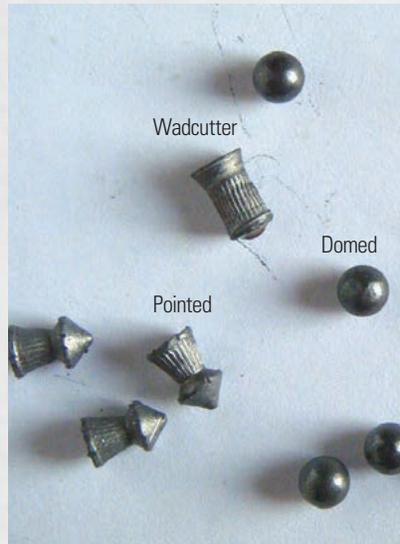
PCP rifles have very little recoil. This makes them easier to shoot accurately, even for people with limited wrist or shoulder strength. PCP rifles come in two main types:

- Unregulated
- Regulated.

A regulated rifle uses a valve system to ensure that each shot receives an equal amount of air. This improves consistency and can make long range shooting easier, while unregulated rifles experience a power drop as pressure decreases.

PCP rifles can be more expensive, especially when you include the cost of filling equipment. They also need more checks and seals tend to wear over time.

However, many technicians prefer them because they are quiet, accurate and reliable.



Choosing a calibre

Most pest management work uses either .177 or .22 calibre pellets. Other options, such as .25, exist but are less common.

Trajectory and range

A .177 pellet is about 4.5mm in diameter and a .22 pellet is about 5.5mm. This difference affects how the pellets behave.

Because .177 pellets are lighter, they travel faster and drop less over typical air rifle distances. This flatter flight path means you have to adjust your aim less often.

It is one reason why .177 is popular for target shooting and training.

The slower .22 pellet has a more curved trajectory. This means you must estimate distance more accurately.

Once you know your rifle well, this becomes easier, but it does take practice.

Pellet design also plays a role. Common shapes include domed, hollow point, pointed and wadcutter.

Choose a design suited to your role and always test to find which performs best in your rifle.

Effective range depends on your skill, your rifle and the pellet. Many technicians are comfortable shooting out to 20–30 metres once they have trained regularly and know their equipment.

You should only shoot at distances where you can place every pellet accurately in the vital area.

Energy on target

Under UK law, all air rifles with a muzzle energy over 12 foot pounds would be classed as a firearm.

At equal power levels:

- .177 delivers speed and accuracy
- .22 delivers more momentum and often better energy transfer.

For pest management, energy delivery matters. A .22 pellet can offer an advantage when dealing with small mammals and robust birds because it transfers more energy into the target.

However, no calibre can make up for poor shot placement. A humane shot relies on precision first, then on choosing a suitable pellet.

Wind behaviour

Wind affects pellets differently. The lighter the pellet, the more it will drift. Good technique can overcome both issues.

You should test your rifle outdoors in different conditions so you understand how your pellets react.

Which calibre to choose

There is no single right answer. Many technicians use both calibres depending on the job.

Choose .177 if you want:

- A flatter trajectory
- Ease of training
- Precision work where distance varies.

Choose .22 if you want:

- Better energy on impact
- Work on rabbits, squirrels or pigeons at sensible distances
- A pellet that handles wind a little better.

"Shooting should never be seen as a stand-alone solution."



Image by Matt Arnold, Squeak-a-Boo Pest Management

Ditch the carrots, illuminated devices are back

Illuminated devices help you work in low light or darkness. Common options include:

- Torches
- Scopes with illuminated reticles
- Night vision
- Thermal imaging equipment.

These devices can make shooting safer by helping you identify species and judge body position. However, they can also create risks if used without training.

Lamping

Lamping means using a high powered light to detect and identify animals. The light can be handheld, attached to the rifle or fixed to a vehicle.

Light can reflect from objects such as glass, metal or even dew. Sometimes these reflections look like the eye shine of an animal. You must always confirm the species before you shoot.

If a target is partly hidden in shade or vegetation, you may see only a glint of reflected light. Move to a better angle, lower the light or switch to a filter. Never shoot without full identification.

Infrared night vision

Infrared night vision uses ambient light and an infrared torch to improve visibility. Animals usually cannot see this light.

Night vision is useful but has limitations. Reflective surfaces can still mimic eye shine.

Judging distance can be harder than in daylight. This can lead to poor shot placement if you are not experienced.

Practice with your device and learn how your pellets behave in low light.

Thermal imaging

Thermal imaging equipment detects heat rather than visible light. It works day or night.

Thermal imaging is excellent for detection. It can quickly confirm whether pests are present.

However, it is weaker for identification. You may need a second device, such as a lamp or night vision scope, to confirm species before you shoot.

Never rely on heat signatures alone to identify your quarry.

“Competence develops through training, practice and reflection. Shooting is a physical skill. It needs regular attention...”

Training and building competence

Competence develops through training, practice and reflection. Shooting is a physical skill. It needs regular attention to stay consistent. Good training includes:

- Safe handling and storage
- Pellet selection and testing
- Zeroing your rifle at sensible distances
- Understanding how wind and weather affect shots
- Practising from realistic positions.

Shooting ranges are ideal places to build confidence.

Many technicians train with colleagues or join local clubs. Group sessions can help you share knowledge and improve faster.

You should keep a record of your training, including dates, distances and pellet types.

This helps you learn what works best for you and your equipment, and can also be recorded as CPD.

Shoot safe

Air rifles can play a valuable role in pest management when used safely and legally.

The right rifle is one you can shoot accurately and confidently.

Whether you choose a spring, gas ram or PCP model, regular training and a clear understanding of the law will keep you, your clients and wildlife safe.



Special thanks to the WildWise special interest group for providing some images and expertise for this article.

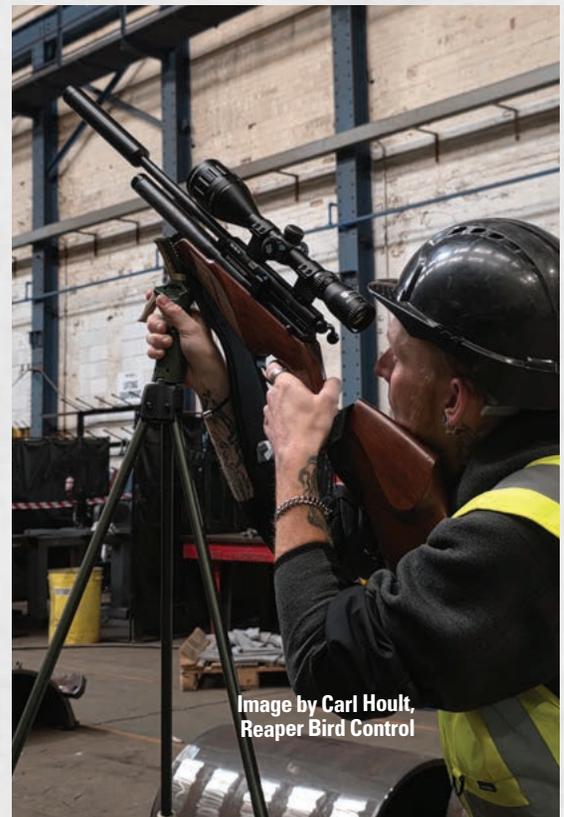


Image by Carl Houtt, Reaper Bird Control



SHOTGUN LICENSING CHANGES NOT EVIDENCE-LED

In 2023, the Conservative government launched a consultation on various firearms licensing issues.

This had been considerably watered down after the Home Office called a meeting to ask shooting association representatives their views about the Plymouth Coroner's recommendation that firearms licensing legislation for shotguns should be brought into line with that for other firearms, such as sporting rifles.

There was opposition to it and the matter dropped. Fast forward to February 2025, when the new Labour government made its formal response to the consultation, saying that it would resurrect the whole business.

The reason given was "disappointment" amongst law enforcement respondents. None of the advocates for change have put up any empirical evidence to sustain their positions so this whole issue is not evidence-led.

Rather, it comes from a long-standing police wish list. One reason I have heard is that as shotguns and other firearms are both lethal, then they should have a common standard for licensing.

That is not comparing like with like. It is clear from the Firearms Act 1920 (the basis for all subsequent firearms legislation) that Parliament understood the clear difference in performance and legislated accordingly by excluding shotguns from any controls. Shotgun certification only dates from 1968.

In terms of the EU Weapons Directive, shotguns are firearms controlled by "notification", ie you have to tell the police when you acquire or dispose of one. Other firearms are controlled by "prior authorisation" from the police.

In my opinion, the GB shotgun licensing regime is the only efficient part of the licensing system, as it licenses suitable people to possess a class of firearms.

That is reinforced by checks and balances which requires them to be secured when not in use and creates an audit trail of acquisition and disposal.

In contradistinction, the Section 1 regime is bureaucratic in the extreme, in that it licenses individual guns rather than licensing people. It also limits the purpose for possessing every firearm, where it can be used, who may use it and what it may be used for.

If Section 2 shotguns were to be licensed in the same way as Section 1 firearms, the consequences would be drastic and far reaching for everyone.

Fundamental to this regime is the requirement to satisfy the "good reason" test for each and every shotgun possessed.

You would have to prove - to the satisfaction of the police - your reason for acquiring every gun, what you wanted it for, what you wanted to shoot with it and where you wanted to use it.

On the face of things, that sounds uncontroversial; but dig down and you immediately run into problems particularly when it comes down to numbers. I can hear it now "You've already got one 12 bore why do you need another".

The fact that you have a pump-action for flocks of corvids and an over-and-under for general use will not cut any ice with people who are trained to apply a binary analysis.

Every gun would have a restrictive condition applied to it specifying what it may be used for and where it may be used.

The police love conditions: I'm told that the National Firearms Licensing Management System is littered with hundreds of them, the legacy of thirty-eight licensing authorities each doing their own thing.

You can't appeal

against conditions, and it is a criminal offence not to abide by their terms.

Your shotgun cartridges would be restricted in number and probably even down to their shot size; and you would have to lock them away in a steel cabinet. The facility for people to borrow shotguns from another certificate holder would vanish.

We have yet to see the terms and scope of this consultation; however we should expect the worst. When it comes, everyone who owns a shotgun - whether for work or leisure - needs to respond otherwise your voice won't be heard.

The last time the shotgun regime was altered was in 1988. Since then the number of shotgun certificates has fallen by 45%.

Based on that, I confidently predict that if Section 1 controls were to be applied to shotguns, then we would see a loss of 30% in five years.



Bill Harriman

BASC Director of Firearms

TELL US HOW THE PROPOSED LICENSING CHANGES MIGHT AFFECT YOU

BPCA is working closely with BASC to ensure that the professional use of shotguns in pest management is properly understood and represented.

Fill out our survey to ensure we have the data we need to protect your tools.

bpca.org.uk/firearms-survey

If you are particularly affected by or interested in these potential changes, please contact the Policy team at policy@bpca.org.uk



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OPINION: TALKING HUMANE DISPATCH



Niall Gallagher **PPC**
 Technical and Compliance
 Manager, BPCA (chair)



Paul Westgate **PW**
 Managing Director of
 Veritas Pest Consultancy
 and BPCA Executive
 Board member



Gemma Sutherland **GS**
 Service Manager,
 Pest Solutions



Chris Cagienard **CC**
 Managing Director of
 Pest Solutions and BPCA
 President



Adrian Gough **AG**
 PRM Group and BPCA
 Executive Board member

For anyone new to pest management or considering a career in the industry, the idea of humanely dispatching an animal can feel daunting. It's a topic that's rarely discussed openly, yet it's an important part of what professionals do to protect public health and prevent suffering.

Recently, a group of experienced pest professionals got together to talk honestly about the realities of humane dispatch; the emotions, the responsibilities and the professionalism it demands. In this PPC round table, we tackle the subject head-on.

PPC I suppose the opening question is simple. Should a pest controller be expected to kill things?

PW Yes. It's part of the job. It doesn't happen every day, but as professional pest controllers, we have to be prepared and competent when it does. That doesn't mean we need to feel comfortable about it. Confidence is more important than comfort.

GS I agree. When we're using tools that might trap or injure us, we need to be ready to act if something needs dispatching. It's our responsibility.

CC We have to be honest about this. It is part of what we do. The responsibility is to do it well and to make sure the animal's suffering is minimised. Even after 25 years in the industry, I've never found it easy – and I don't think it should be. But if it needs doing, I'd rather do it myself and know it's done properly.

AG Killing pests is inevitable in our line of work. We don't think much about it when it's insects, but with rodents or larger animals, it becomes personal. It's okay not to be OK about it. What matters is that you're supported and prepared.

Preparing yourself mentally and physically

PPC There isn't much formal training around dispatching. How do you prepare yourselves for it?

AG For me, it's a private moment between me and the animal. It's not something I want to do with an audience. My job is to end that animal's suffering quickly and humanely.

PW Speed and competence are everything. It has to be swift and clean. Because we can't exactly "train" on live animals, most of us learn by experience. If something doesn't go as planned, reflect, learn, and improve. And yes, it's okay to feel uneasy about it. That's what empathy looks like.

CC Preparation starts long before the moment itself. You need the right tools, the right mindset, and a clear plan. If you're fumbling for a kit or second-guessing your method, it's not fair to the animal. None of us enjoy doing it, but being prepared ensures it's done swiftly and properly.

Having a process

PPC What about a process? Do you have one that helps you mentally get ready for dispatch?

CC When we live-catch grey squirrels in Scotland, we're legally required to dispatch them because of the risk they pose to reds. We use cage traps, so the process is very controlled. Transferring the animal to a sack, immobilising it, and delivering a precise blow is essential. You can't do that without proper preparation and equipment.

PW Choosing the right tool and method beforehand makes a huge difference. Personally,

I avoid live-capture traps where possible because I believe a well-set kill trap can be more humane than leaving an animal stressed in a cage. That's part of the professional judgement we bring to every job.

GS I think it's also about perspective. When I have to dispatch something, I remind myself it's part of protecting public health. Doing it properly now means preventing more suffering later.

Decompressing afterwards

PPC Dispatching can affect people emotionally. How do you deal with that?

AG I talk to someone. Even after 27 years, it still gets to me. We often work alone, so having someone to speak to after helps you process it.

PW Absolutely. Talking to others in the industry reminds you that you're not alone in how you feel. No one here relishes doing it. Sharing those experiences keeps you grounded and supported.

Shooting, training and competence

PPC Shooting presents different challenges. Should there be more formal training for that side of the work?

PW Definitely. If you're using an air weapon, you need evidence of both training and competence. Knowing where to shoot, how to calibrate, and how to follow up if it doesn't go perfectly are essential. Shooting is easily mishandled and highly visible to the public.

“We have to be honest about this. It is part of what we do. The responsibility is to do it well and to make sure the animal’s suffering is minimised.”

CC In Scotland, the air weapon licensing helps filter out people who might see it as “fun”. We’re not shooting targets; we’re dealing with live animals. Only trained professionals should be allowed to do that work.

When someone can’t do it

PPC What about people who can’t bring themselves to dispatch an animal; can they still have a career in pest management?

CC It’s an important question. If you can’t get to a place of confidence and competence, it could lead to suffering for the animal. That’s not acceptable.

AG You can survive in pest management without handling every aspect (bird control, for example, often has specialists), but you do need to be prepared to dispatch small rodents or squirrels. In nearly three decades, I’ve only had to do it a dozen times. It’s rare, but you need to be ready.

PW It’s not something you’ll do often, but you must be able to do it when required. That’s part of being a professional.

Learning by doing

PPC How do you advise someone doing it for the first time?

PW Treat it as a private, professional moment. Prepare properly, act decisively, and if it doesn’t go as planned, make it right and learn from it. Mistakes happen, but what defines you is how you handle them.

GS For me, keeping perspective helps. Remind yourself that your actions are preventing wider suffering; both for animals and for people affected by infestations.

Animal welfare

PPC Some might ask whether our work harms or helps animal welfare overall. What do you think?

GS When we take over a contract where someone’s been doing DIY pest control, the difference is huge. We see rats drowned in buckets or half-caught in traps. Professional pest control is far more humane. Educating customers is part of that welfare improvement.

CC I completely agree. A professional pest controller can deliver one of the most humane ends an animal could have. Most wild rodents die from starvation, predation or disease. When we do our job properly, we minimise suffering and prevent worse outcomes.

PW Exactly. Our role actually improves animal welfare. We stop infestations before they escalate, proof properties, and prevent conflict between wildlife and people. Every hole we seal saves more animals than we ever have to dispatch.

AG And developments like cholecalciferol baits and the move away from cumulative rodenticides have made a huge difference to non-target species. We’ve evolved as an industry, and that’s something to be proud of.

Looking ahead

CC The industry’s changing faster than ever. 40% of our workforce could retire in the next ten years. As we bring in new people, we need to help them understand dispatch properly—not to make them comfortable with killing, but to ensure they are confident and humane when it’s required.

PW Dispatch is a very small part of what we do, but it’s the part that demands the most professionalism. Every proofing job, every hygiene improvement, every conversation about prevention – that’s pest management. Dispatching is just one tool in the wider responsibility of protecting public health.

CURIOS ABOUT PEST MANAGEMENT?

PPC magazine is creating more and more articles aimed at those new to the sector or just considering a career in pest management. This article will also be on PestCareers.org.uk, BPCA’s new project to encourage the next generation of pest professionals to join our work in protecting public health.

To learn more about this project, visit PestCareers.org.uk



If you have an idea for an article targeted at new technicians or people considering a career in pest management, contact us today.

hello@bpca.org.uk



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THE 2026 GULL CONTROL PLAYBOOK:



Niall Gallagher, Technical Manager at BPCA, shares practical insight on one of the most challenging bird species facing pest professionals today. Niall explores gull identification, licensing, behaviour and the practical realities of managing gulls legally and effectively as we head towards the 2026 season.

I'll be honest from the outset: gulls are not the easiest species to work with. They're protected, highly adaptable, increasingly urban and, when nesting, can be downright confrontational.

Add licensing complexity and public scrutiny into the mix, and it's easy to see why so many pest professionals approach gull work with caution. That's exactly why we need to get better at it.

What follows isn't theory for theory's sake. It's how I approach gull management in practice: understanding the law, reading bird behaviour properly, planning work at the right time of year and building programmes that stand up to scrutiny.

Understanding licensing before you touch a site

Everything starts with licensing. If you get this wrong, nothing else matters.

In England, most gull-related work sits under class licences or individual licences issued by Natural England.

These licences tell you exactly what species you can act on, why you can act, when you can act and how you can act. They're not suggestions. They are conditions.

You must always check the current version before carrying out work. If you're relying on last year's wording, you're already on shaky ground.

Blessed are the scribes

Record keeping is where many people fall down. But it's one of the most important things you do and will be your saving grace if you find yourself in a spot of bother with authorities.

You must document:

- All alternative lawful methods tried first
- Why those methods were not satisfactory
- Why your proposed action is reasonable and proportionate
- The species involved, using the scientific name
- Dates, locations and methods used.

These records should be kept for at least three years. If Natural England (or local wildlife licensing body) asks for them, you need to produce them quickly and confidently.

Good digital reporting makes this far easier than trying to reconstruct events months later.

Knowing your gulls matters more than you think

"Seagull" isn't a species. It's a catch-all term that causes no end of problems when it appears in reports or licence applications.

In the UK, we regularly encounter around a dozen gull species. Each has different behaviours, conservation status and legal implications. Misidentification can undermine an entire control programme.

I don't pretend gull ID is easy.

I don't have a natural knack for it.

What helps is breaking identification down into manageable features:

- Leg colour
- Beak colour and markings
- Size and wingspan
- Back and wing shading
- Seasonal plumage changes
- Vocalisations.

Conservation status is another factor you must understand. Some species are amber or red-listed in the UK despite being classed as 'least concern' globally.

That distinction matters because licensing decisions increasingly lean on UK population data. We are seeing overall declines in several gull populations. That doesn't remove the need for management, but it does mean scrutiny is increasing.

The better your evidence and justification, the smoother your licensing process will be.

SQUAWK THIS WAY

Audio is often overlooked as a method of identifying gull species, but their calls are surprisingly distinct. If you can recognise them, it adds another layer of confidence to your survey work.

Visit the online version of this article to hear audio recordings of common gull species: ppconline.org/ppc122



YOUR 2026 GUIDE TO IDENTIFICATION, LICENSING AND TACTICS.

Bird pressure is not uniform across a site

One of the biggest mistakes I see is treating a site as if bird pressure is the same everywhere. It rarely is.

I break bird pressure down into light, medium, and heavy, but those pressures can coexist across a single site.

A roof may have heavy nesting pressure, a courtyard medium loafing pressure and a façade only occasional use.

Understanding that allows you to design targeted solutions rather than blanket measures.

Surveys are critical here. Desk-based reviews using mapping tools are useful, but nothing replaces a proper on-site assessment.

Drones can help on complex roofs, but only if you understand what you're looking for.

Colour-coding pressure zones on site plans can be incredibly effective when explaining issues to clients. It turns a vague "we've got a gull problem" into a clear, evidence-led discussion.

Timing is everything

If there's one message I try to drum home, it's this: gull work is won or lost in winter.

From roughly September through to February, you have the greatest opportunity to intervene without running into nesting restrictions. As soon as you move into March, things become far more complicated.

Even early nest-building counts. A couple of twigs on a roof can legally constitute a nest. Miss that window and your options narrow rapidly.

Gulls typically:

- Return from wintering grounds in late winter
- Establish territories in early spring
- Lay eggs from late April
- Hatch chicks through May and June
- Fledge in July
- Disperse from August onwards.

This lifecycle should dictate your management plan. When clients call in July demanding immediate action, your winter recommendations suddenly make a lot more sense. Planning ahead avoids panic-led decisions later.

Integrated pest management applies to gulls too

IPM isn't just for rodents and insects. The principles apply just as strongly to birds.

You need to look beyond the building itself. Gulls will travel kilometres to feed. Ask why your site is attractive compared to those around it.

Key factors include:

- Building design and sheltered features
- Waste management and food availability
- Human behaviour
- Nearby redevelopment or displacement
- Seasonal changes in food sources.

Early involvement in building design can save clients huge amounts of money. Bird deterrence built into new developments is far more effective and far cheaper than retrofitting later.

"Seagull" isn't a species. It's a catch-all term that causes no end of problems"

Waste management is often the simplest win. Open bins, overflowing containers and poor cleaning regimes will undermine even the best deterrent systems.

Deterrents, proofing and realism

No deterrent works forever on its own.

Audio systems can work well for gulls, although noise concerns must be considered.

Visual deterrents often have limited long-term effect, but they still have a place, particularly when demonstrating that alternatives have been tried.

Hawking and dog work can be highly effective as part of a wider programme, especially to prevent establishment rather than react to it.

Used in isolation, their impact is usually short-lived.

Proofing remains one of the most reliable long-term solutions, provided it is designed and installed correctly.

Netting must be fit for purpose, properly tensioned and regularly inspected. Poor netting creates welfare issues and reputational risk for the entire industry.

Spiking needs careful specification. Not all spikes are suitable for gulls. Length, angle and placement matter. This is where working closely with knowledgeable manufacturers and distributors pays dividends.

And don't be fooled into thinking that photographs, measurements and detailed plans are admin for admin's sake. They protect you and demonstrate professionalism.



TECHNICAL

Control options and licensing reality

Egg oiling, pricking or removal can be effective population management tools if your licence allows for the use of them. They are not quick fixes and should be presented as part of a longer-term strategy.

Lethal control sits firmly behind individual licensing and must be supported by strong evidence.

Licensing officers are making decisions without seeing the site. The quality of your application determines the outcome.

Incomplete or vague applications are the most common reason for refusal.

If you're unsure, ask for help. We would much rather support you upfront than see you struggle through enforcement action later.

We have documents and articles on applying for licences, so get in touch and we can guide you through it.

Data, evidence and the future

One thing I'm increasingly passionate about is data.

Surveys, nest counts, population trends, and site records all matter.

National datasets are often incomplete and rely heavily on volunteer reporting. Industry data can help paint a more accurate picture of urban gull populations.

If we want proportionate regulation in the future, we need evidence to support it.

That's why groups like the BirdWise Special Interest Group exist. They bring together industry expertise and external stakeholders to promote best practice and defend sensible, welfare-led bird management.

We work closely with regulators not to block change, but to shape it in a way that protects public health, animal welfare and professional standards.

If you fancy observing a meeting or joining the group, just let me know: technical@bpca.org.uk or learn more at bpca.org.uk/groups

Final thoughts

Gulls are not going away. Urban populations will continue to test buildings, businesses and patience.

Our job is not to promise miracle cures. It's to provide honest, lawful and effective management based on evidence and good planning.

If you take one thing from this article, let it be this: the best gull control work starts months before the first complaint comes in.

Plan early. Record everything. Know your species. And don't be afraid to ask for support.

“Netting must be fit for purpose, properly tensioned and regularly inspected. Poor netting creates welfare issues and reputational risk for the entire industry.”



WANT TO WATCH BACK THE FULL WEBINAR?

Members can watch Niall's webinar and hundreds of other videos at bpca.org.uk/cpd-videos (login required)



JUMPING ONBOARD

WITH DALE SEAMAN



Dale Seaman, Pest Control Technician at Bounty Pest Control, completed the onboarding scheme and his Level 2 Certificate in record time. He spoke to PPC magazine about how he found the industry and how the structured onboarding framework gave him confidence and direction from the outset of his pest management career.



*The Level 2 Certificate is a progression from the Level 2 Award, and this extended training course provides both the practical skills tuition and knowledge-based training required for this enhanced entry-level qualification.

DS I started out learning to be an apprentice mechanic with my granddad for his company. Unfortunately, my nan was diagnosed with cancer, so he had to wind the business up. I didn't have enough experience to take it on myself, so I went into an office role in construction. I worked my way up over about 25 years and in my last role I was transport manager.

On paper it was a good job, but it was draining. Long hours, weekends, constant pressure. It really took a toll, and I got to the point where I knew I had to make a change.

PPC Had pest management ever crossed your mind as a career at that point?

DS Not at all. Honestly, I was very naïve. I had the same view a lot of people do. I thought pest control was just going out, killing a rat and leaving. Looking back now, I couldn't have been more wrong.

PPC So what changed your mind?

DS A conversation with my family, of all things. I'm not shy talking about it, but work had really been affecting my mental health, as well as the pressure to always put everyone else first. I was taking some time away to get my head on straight and figure out what I wanted to do. I knew I still had at least half of my working life left and wanted to do something I actually enjoyed.

My family suggested pest control and I dismissed it at first. But later, I actually took the time to research the industry properly.

That's when I realised how much there is to it. Pest management, bird proofing, drainage work, invasive species, public health. The variety really surprised me.

I've always been interested in animals and behaviour, how species adapt and survive.

Once I started learning about that side of pest management, it really grabbed me.

PPC What happened next?

DS I'm Kent born and raised, so I asked a local business, which turned out to be Bounty Pest Control, if I could shadow a technician for a few days. I wanted to see what the job was really like.

That was the turning point. I kind of fell in love with it. Every job was different. Different properties, different people, different pest behaviour. You're constantly thinking, problem-solving and adapting.

It's definitely not a desk job, and that's exactly what I wanted.

The next part was a stroke of luck: one of their technicians handed his notice in that week. I don't quite know where I'd be now if he hadn't, but Martin grabbed me at the end of the week and asked if I'd like to join full-time.

"If you're unhappy, take the chance. A year ago, I'd never have imagined myself in this industry. Now, I can't imagine doing anything else."

PPC And that brings us to you being part of the BPCA onboarding programme through Bounty. What was that experience like?

DS I'd been involved in onboarding before as a manager, but this was on another level.

BPCA onboarding is structured, thorough and supportive. You're not just given information and left alone. There are reviews, check-ins and real people asking how you're doing and whether you need help.

Coming from a completely different industry into pest control, that support made a massive difference.

PPC How did onboarding help when you got to the Level 2 course?

DS On the course, there were people with no industry experience at all. You could see how overwhelming it was for them. Because of onboarding, I had context and confidence. I could follow the training properly and even help others.

Without the onboarding, I don't think that would have been possible.

Onboarding gave me a foundation to build from. Not everything, but enough to understand what I was being taught. Without it, I'd have felt completely lost.

But it wasn't just useful leading up to me taking my course; the aftercare was great too. You don't just complete the onboarding and then get forgotten about; BPCA checks in afterwards to see if there's anything else the training team can help with or additional materials needed for 'onboarders'.

PPC Did anything about the industry surprise you once you were in it?

DS Yes, how much pest professionals care about animals.

There's this idea that pest controllers hate animals. That couldn't be further from the truth. If we could do this job without killing anything,

we would. Every pest professional I've met feels the same.

Our role is about public health, prevention and safety. The animals are just trying to survive, like we are.

PPC Is there a particular area of pest management you've become passionate about?

DS The responsible use of rodenticides, without a doubt.

There's so much misuse by untrained people, and it causes real harm to wildlife and pets. A big part of my job now is education. Explaining risks, explaining why professional pest management matters.

If I can leave a job knowing I've protected a customer's home and reduced risk to non-target species, that's important to me.

PPC Are there any areas you'd like to specialise in as your career develops?

DS Bird proofing really interests me, as does CCTV drainage work. Before this job, I'd never even thought about drains. Now I find it fascinating.

That's one of the biggest things onboarding showed me. Pest management isn't just one job. There are so many paths you can take if you want to specialise or develop.

PPC How have you found the wider pest management industry?

DS Coming from construction, it's been a breath of fresh air.

People share knowledge. They help each other. There's competition, of course, but it's healthy. Everyone understands that we're all working toward the same goal of protecting public health.

And with BPCA and employers like Bounty, you're encouraged to keep learning. Even very experienced technicians are still doing CPD and developing their skills.

PPC Finally, what would you say to someone considering a career change into pest management?

DS If you're unhappy, take the chance. A year ago, I'd never have imagined myself in this industry. Now, I can't imagine doing anything else. BPCA onboarding gave me confidence, structure and a clear route into pest management.

It's not just a job. It's a career, and it's one I'm genuinely proud of.

TIME TO JUMP ONBOARD

A good onboarding process can drive the professionalism of a pest control company and ensures a technician knows how to stay safe in the field. It will also enhance their knowledge-based learning with practical skills developed in the field.

If you don't have the internal resources or facilities to deliver an onboarding programme, BPCA can provide you with a support package. You'll get a full online learning training and development programme, along with regular knowledge assessments and learner review meetings.

Find out more:

bPCA.org.uk/onboarding





OPINION: DIVERSITY IN PEST CONTROL IS ABOUT MORE THAN REPRESENTATION - IT'S ABOUT SKILLS

Julia Pittman, Chair of BPCA's EDI Committee, gives her view on why diversity isn't just a tickbox exercise - it's good for business.

In discussions about diversity, we often focus on gender, race, age, or disability. And rightly so. Representation matters.

But if we stop the conversation there, we risk missing a vital point: diversity isn't just about who's in the room, it's about what they bring to the table.

In the pest control industry, where a significant proportion of the workforce is nearing retirement and only 5% of technicians are women, there's an urgent need to think differently.

We need to think beyond filling quotas or "doing the right thing"—and start thinking about what our teams are capable of. Because diversity, at its core, is a business advantage.

It's about having access to a broader range of skill sets, perspectives and ideas that help us solve problems more effectively.

A degree in app development... in a pest control office?

I'm currently working on a project with a young woman in our customer service team. She recently graduated from university with a degree in app creation. That's not something we hired her for: her role is customer-facing. But now that I know about this skill, it's unlocked a whole new avenue for innovation within our business.

Had our hiring process prioritised only experience within pest control, or had our team all shared similar life paths, we might never have tapped into that talent.

Her knowledge could lead to real efficiencies in how we manage data, schedule work, or communicate with customers. And she's just one example.

This is why diversity matters. It gives us access to skills and thinking styles we might not otherwise consider. It's not about tokenism or box-ticking - it's about making our businesses stronger and more adaptable.

Strength vs. Skill

One of the most common objections I hear around increasing gender diversity in our industry is strength. But if you actually break down what most pest control professionals do every day, the vast majority of tasks don't require significant physical strength.

Yes, some tasks like lifting drain covers require physical effort, but they represent only part of the job.

In reality, pest control is about communication, problem-solving, and investigation. It's about educating customers, observing environments, identifying risks, and implementing targeted solutions.

These are all skills in which women (and others who have historically not been attracted to the industry) can and do excel at.

"They might leave"

Another concern I often hear when recruiting young people is: "What if they leave?" And it's true, they might.

But they might also stay. And while they're with us, they bring different ways of working, fresh ideas, and technological fluency that can benefit the entire business.

We can't future-proof our industry by clinging

to outdated models. We need to be flexible enough to evolve, just as the pests we tackle are constantly evolving. Young people can help us do that, not in spite of their differences, but because of them.

Neurodiversity and hidden talent

Similarly, individuals with disabilities - particularly those who are neurodivergent - often think in ways that many of us can't. Their ability to spot patterns, focus intensely, or perceive details differently can be a huge asset in a field that requires observation and root-cause analysis.

But if we build teams where everyone thinks in the same way, we limit our ability to innovate or solve complex problems. Hiring neurodiverse talent isn't a gesture, it's a strategic advantage.

Ultimately, we need to stop thinking about diversity as a moral issue and start thinking about it as a strategic one.

We should be building teams not just with different faces, but with different brains, backgrounds, and skills.

That's how we become more resilient as a business, more innovative as an industry, and more relevant in the modern world.

So, the next time you're hiring, promoting, or even mentoring, ask yourself: what skills are we missing?

Chances are, the answer won't come from someone who looks, thinks, or works just like you.

SHAPE THE FUTURE

Want to help shape EDI policy and recruitment initiatives in the pest control industry? Come join an EDI Committee meeting and get involved! hello@bpca.org.uk

Which?

Which? Trusted Trader looks at how to create a cohesive brand for your business to help you stand out from the crowd.

Whether you're a sole trader or have a larger business, branding is important for creating an identity for your business and building relationships with customers. Having a brand that appeals to your target market and is recognisable will help you attract both new and repeat customers.

Your brand isn't just your logo - it also includes your business name, colour scheme, tone of voice and values.

It should be used to represent your business through every aspect that's visible to the outside world; your website, social media, business cards, stationery, premises, company vehicles, adverts, printed marketing materials and more.

You could even create branded workwear. Consistency is key to building a recognisable brand.

It can be useful to create brand guidelines. This is a document setting out what your business's identity is, how you want to portray yourself and how you're going to communicate this.

They can help you be clear about what you're trying to achieve and be a useful reference when you're doing something new, like setting up a new website or designing new business cards, for example.

Read our tips to create the perfect brand for your business and make it work for you.

Aa Bb
Cc Dd

BRANDING TIPS TO...

Know your customers

If you don't know who your potential customers are, you won't know what kind of branding will appeal to them, so it's essential that you consider who your target audience is.

Consider your customers; basics such as age, sex and where they live, as well as their likes and dislikes, what they want from a business like yours and any challenges they might face (such as time or financial pressures).

Think about how you can solve their problems and how you can deal with any issues that may be faced by people seeking the type of service you offer.

Knowing your customers also involves thinking about how they look for businesses when they need a job done. Are they likely to take notice of leaflets through their door, use Google or ask people for recommendations?

It's worth considering their values too - for example, if environmental concerns could be a factor you might want to address this in your colour scheme or the wording you use.

Research your competitors

For your business to be successful you need to stand out from your competitors, so have a look at their branding to see how you can differentiate yourself. One way is by being a BPCA member and/or Which? Trusted Trader, which associates you with a recognisable brand and can boost trust in your business.

Surveying the competition is also useful for getting ideas for the kind of branding that works, as well as the visuals and tone of voice to use. There are some aspects of what

your competitors are doing that you may want to replicate.

How do your competitors market themselves? Do they have a website? Do they use social media and which platforms do they use? You may need to do the same to compete.

This will also inform the kind of branding you use. You'll need something that looks good online as well as in print if you're going to promote your business in this way or have a variation of your branding to use online.

"Having a brand that appeals to your target market and is recognisable will help you attract both new and repeat customers."



NOTICE SOMETHING ODD IN THIS ARTICLE? ~

Choosing a font and being consistent are key to maintaining a cohesive brand image.

Get your story straight

To communicate who you are as a business to your customers, you first need to be clear about this yourself.

What are your strengths and values? What do you feel passionate about when it comes to delivering your services? How do you do things differently or better than your competitors? What would you like your customers to say about you once the job is done?

These are all worth thinking about as part of the process of creating your branding.

The name of your business will help to convey what you stand for, so if you're just starting out and don't have a name yet this is something to consider carefully.

You could also write a tagline to go with your name or logo on your website and marketing materials to make your unique selling point clear.

“Your brand isn't just your logo... It should be used to represent your business through every aspect that's visible to the outside world.”

Think visually

The look and feel of your branding will be a big part of the image you convey. Think about the types of colours that might work well for the kind of business you have - bright greens and other vibrant colours if you're a gardener, for example.

However, it's best to keep your colour scheme simple so your branding is clear and smart. Choose a primary and secondary colour to use.

You should also choose the fonts you use carefully. Someone who runs a building firm might choose something that looks solid and sturdy but an interior designer might choose a more flowing font. Just make sure any font you choose is easy to read. Think about images and illustrations too.

Your logo will be an important part of your brand identity so consider hiring a professional graphic designer to create it.

There are a number of websites that let you search for freelance designers, such as Fiverr and Upwork.

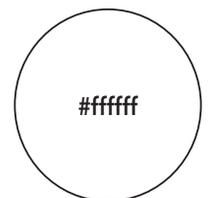
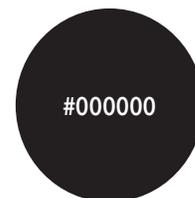
Once you've created your visual identity, consider creating branded items such as pens or fridge magnets to boost the visibility of your business and help people remember it. The more useful the items and the more relevant they are to your business the better.

It's also important to display your logo on items such as your workwear, vehicles, business cards and other merchandise to maximise brand recognition and create a consistent image.

...BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

Which? Trusted Trader membership

Become a Which? Trusted trader through your BPCA member benefits and get 50% off your first 6 months (application fee applies). bpc.org.uk/which



Driving excellence in pest management

BPCA is the professional association for the UK public health pest management industry. Our aim is to promote professional pest management, representing the industry, driving standards and ethics while protecting the environment.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

COMMITTEE REPORTS

TREASURER'S REPORT

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

JANUARY BPCA published a Freedom of Information (FOI) response from the Met Police, which revealed that no training had been provided to officers on glue trap protocols.

FEBRUARY BPCA issued precautionary guidance for pest professionals working alongside birds and cattle during a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak.

MARCH PPC Live 2025 is held in Harrogate, bringing the UK pest management industry together for networking, expert talks and hands-on demos.

APRIL BPCA hosts its first-ever Volunteer Days, a two-day residential bringing together committees, Board and staff to reshape how volunteers contribute to the Association's work.

BPCA launches "While the Binman's Away, the Pests Will Play" emergency awareness campaign in Birmingham, using billboards, digital ads, print and video to share pest prevention advice during bin strikes and direct residents to professional BPCA members.

BPCA publishes an open letter to Defra Secretary of State Steve Reed, highlighting failures in the glue trap licensing regime and calling for reform.

MAY BPCA confirms appointment of Rosina Robson as Chief Executive, bringing extensive lobbying experience to the role.

BPCA and NPTA agree the structure of a new Level 3 pest control qualification, developed with RSPH and other stakeholders.

JUNE BPCA announces the results of the 2025 Board elections, welcoming six new Member Directors to help guide the Association's strategic direction.

To mark World Pest Day, BPCA hands over its social media channels to frontline technicians, giving the public a real-world insight into professional pest management.

JULY BPCA signs the Armed Forces Covenant, formally committing to support serving personnel, veterans, reservists and their families, and encouraging member companies to do the same.

AUGUST BPCA hosts a first-of-its-kind Young Pest Professional Special Digital Forum, showcasing a new generation of speakers and supporting early-career professionals across the sector.

SEPTEMBER BPCA invites volunteers to join a new Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Working Group, to co-create a practical ESG Toolkit for pest businesses.

BPCA's EDI Committee is Highly Commended for Best Inclusion Initiative at the 2025 Memcom Awards.

BPCA releases four free one-hour CRRU UK-approved online CPD sessions, helping professionals meet new proof-of-competence requirements for professional-use rodenticides.

OCTOBER BPCA officially launches **pestcareers.org.uk**, a sector-wide careers hub promoting pest management as a career choice and providing resources for schools, colleges and those looking for a career change.

BPCA premieres "Drive the Talk", a recruitment film produced with Liquona and featuring real pest technicians.

BPCA launches the Future of Pest Management Survey 2025, gathering sector-wide data on skills, demand and challenges.

BPCA confirms submission of its formal response to the HSE consultation on anticoagulant rodenticides, including detailed evidence and real-world case studies from members.

NOVEMBER BPCA wins an Association Excellence Award for membership engagement, with the new committee model and Volunteer Days highlighted as standout initiatives.

BPCA responds to the Scottish Parliament's Good Food Nation proposals, ensuring professional pest management is represented in national food policy discussions.

DECEMBER BPCA publishes "Opening doors to the next generation of pest professionals" (PPC121), bringing together the Pest Careers hub, Armed Forces Covenant and Open Doors Charter into a single, joined-up workforce strategy.

BPCA joins the Alliance of Chemical Associations (ACA) to help fight for fairer chemical regulation.

BPCA announces it has been shortlisted in five categories at the 2026 Trade Association Forum Awards, recognising the scale and impact of its work throughout 2025.



2025 MILESTONES

Our annual report is published in PPC magazine - making it accessible to thousands of pest professionals and the entire sector.



It's BPCA's job to...



REPRESENT



SUPPORT



ASSURE



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A YEAR OF PROGRESS, PROFESSIONALISM AND PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE

Guided by purpose and looking ahead to 2030

It gives me great pleasure, as President, to reflect on the past year for BPCA. It has been a year with a huge amount to celebrate, driven by the shared commitment of our members, volunteers, staff and Board to strengthening professionalism across the UK pest management industry.

At the heart of everything we do is our purpose: working for the benefit of members and driving standards forward. That has continued to guide us through the final phase of our 2025 strategy.

While we are proud of what has been delivered under that plan, work is already well underway on our next strategic refresh as we look ahead to 2030. The key question is simple but important: what should our industry look like by the end of this decade, and how can BPCA help get us there?

Members at the heart of a strong Association

Member input will be vital. Whether through committees, working groups, consultations or informal feedback, I strongly encourage members to get involved and make their voices heard.

Your Association is strongest when it reflects the real needs and experience of the people working at the sharp end of pest management.

A year of delivery and volunteer commitment

We have much to celebrate this year. Many of the achievements delivered have resulted in real, practical benefits for members. That progress has been driven by a highly committed staff team, supported by an exceptional volunteer network of more than 70 individuals who give their time and expertise freely.

This level of volunteer engagement is rare among trade associations and something we should be genuinely proud of.

That commitment has not gone unnoticed. BPCA was recognised at the Association Excellence Awards for excellence in member engagement, a direct result of our first Volunteers' Forum. We were also delighted to be shortlisted as finalists in five categories at the Trade Association Forum Awards, reflecting the

quality and impact of the work being delivered across the organisation.

A major highlight of the year has been the arrival of our new Chief Executive, Rosina Robson. In her first six months, Rosina has made a remarkable impact.

She has met members across the country, completed her Level 2 Award in Pest Management to deepen her understanding of our work, and brought fresh energy and focus to our lobbying and public affairs activity. In an increasingly complex legislative and political environment, being proactive and influential is essential. Rosina's experience and skillset put BPCA in a strong position to represent members' interests effectively.

"Your Association is strongest when it reflects the real needs and experience of the people working at the sharp end of pest management."

Events, training and flagship shows

Events and training have continued to thrive. Our Training Forums, both online and in person, have been well attended, with strong engagement and valuable discussion.

PPC Live in Harrogate provided a great opportunity for hands-on learning and networking, and it's hard to believe that PestEx 2026 is almost upon us. With increased floor space, more exhibitors and an expanded seminar programme, it promises to be our biggest and best show yet.

Growing member benefits and raising standards

Member benefits have also grown. TrustMark is now available to all BPCA members, underpinned by our adherence to the EN

16636 European Standard. This is a powerful, government-endorsed mark of quality that reinforces professionalism and public confidence in our sector.

BPCA Registered continues to go from strength to strength, with more than 4,000 pest professionals now using the scheme. It remains the largest CPD programme in the industry, supported by an expanding range of learning resources and an improved app to make recording CPD easier than ever.

CPD, qualifications and workforce development

Progress has also been made on qualifications and workforce development. Work continues on a revised qualification framework, with strong member support for a Level 3 Award that better reflects the skills, responsibilities and professionalism of modern pest management.

Alongside this, the BPCA Onboarding Scheme is helping new entrants become competent and confident more quickly, supporting both recruitment and retention.

A stronger voice in public affairs and inclusion

In public affairs, our growing policy capability is strengthening relationships with decision-makers and ensuring the industry has a credible, evidence-based voice. At the same time, our EDI work and new careers resources are helping members address one of the industry's biggest challenges: attracting and retaining the next generation of pest professionals.

As we look ahead, challenges remain, but so do opportunities. I would like to thank our volunteers, staff and members for their dedication and support. BPCA is a stronger association because of your involvement. I encourage all members to stay engaged as we move into 2026 and continue working together for the benefit of our industry.

Chris Cagienard
BPCA President
president@bpca.org.uk

COMMITTEE CONVERSATIONS



How BPCA committees are shaping the future of pest management

We held a roundtable conversation with our four committee chairs to reflect on the great work they all achieved with their fellow volunteers in 2025.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN ACTION

PPC Let's start with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Julia, you've had a busy year and picked up a few awards along the way.

JP We have, and thank you. I think the biggest thing for the EDI committee this year has been moving from talking about EDI to actually doing something tangible. That's been a really deliberate shift.

PPC What did that look like in practice?

JP Three main projects. The Open Doors Charter, the careers video, and the careers website, pestcareers.org.uk. The charter was actually written about two years ago, but we held off launching it because we weren't sure the industry was ready. This year we decided we couldn't wait any longer.

PPC Why now?

JP Because recruitment and retention are the number one issues I hear about when I speak to pest control companies.

Everyone raises it. So we felt we needed to act

and do something visible and practical that helps attract new people into the industry.

PPC The careers video feels like a big moment for BPCA.

JP It does. What I really love about it is that, aside from the lead actor, everyone in it is actually from the industry. It shows different customers, different situations, and different people. That was important to us. We wanted to show that pest management is welcoming to a wide pool of talent.

PPC And this is just the start?

JP Definitely. In 2026, our focus is on young people. We're good at bringing in people who already have a connection to the industry, but we're not great at reaching those who don't. That's what we're working on next. We'll be doing something at PestEx for young people and building better links with education and careers networks.

Julia Pittman
EDI Committee Chair

COMMITTEE CONVERSATIONS

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS OPENING UP THE CONVERSATION

PPC Alex, you sit on a very different committee, but there's an overlap here. Outreach and Communications has had a busy year too.

AW We have, and I'll start by saying we were very happy to support Julia and her committee with the careers video. If you watch it closely and you know the industry, you'll spot some familiar faces.

PPC Including yourself.

AW Allegedly. And despite what some people will tell you, I only messed my lines up twice.

PPC Beyond the video, what's been the biggest change for your committee?

AW Honestly, how we work. We've changed the format of our meetings. Instead of fewer big meetings, we've gone for more frequent, smaller, drop-in, drop-out sessions. That makes it far more accessible, especially for smaller businesses that can't take a whole day out.

PPC And that feeds into next year?

AW Absolutely. In 2026, we want to open things up even more. We're planning drop-in workshops and working groups where people don't have to commit to a committee long-term to have their say. We want honest feedback from across the industry.

PPC On what sort of topics?

AW Everything from member benefits to qualifications to what BPCA should be doing better. We'll gather that feedback, discuss it properly, and take it up to Board level. It's about making sure decisions are grounded in reality.

PPC What's in the future plans for this committee?

AW Without giving too much away, look out for something called Uninvited Guests next year. It's a new way of sharing information. Not a magazine, not an email, but something we think people will enjoy engaging with.

Alex Wade
Outreach and Communications Committee Chair

COMMITTEE CONVERSATIONS

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND RAISING THE BAR

PPC Martin, Professional Standards tends to be less flashy, but arguably just as important.

MRK That's fair. We don't have paid actors, but we do have some very big projects.

PPC The qualification framework being the obvious one.

MRK Exactly. It's a huge piece of work and incredibly important for the industry. It links to professionalism, recruitment, retention and how government views us as a sector.

PPC What else has been keeping the committee busy?

MRK Onboarding has been a big success. It's about bringing people into the industry properly and building a culture of CPD from the start. We've seen some really strong people come through that process already.

PPC You mentioned culture there.

MRK That's the key thing. We've been working

on changing how CPD is perceived. People aren't being dragged through it anymore.

They're talking about it, sharing ideas, engaging with learning. That shift didn't happen overnight.

PPC And next year?

MRK Next year brings change. I'll be stepping down, which the committee is very excited about. But seriously, it means fresh voices coming in while the big projects continue. We'll be looking at assessments, the Master Technician scheme, and pushing the qualification framework into its next phase.

PPC Some people worry qualifications might put young people off.

MRK I'd really encourage people to talk to us about that. This isn't about academic barriers. It's vocational, hands-on, and about recognising competence. It gives people something to be proud of and helps customers and regulators understand what professional pest control actually looks like.

"Onboarding has been a big success. It's about bringing people into the industry properly and building a culture of CPD from the start."

Martin Rose-King

Vice President and Professional Standards Committee Chair

COMMITTEE CONVERSATIONS

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES AND PROTECTING THE INDUSTRY TOOLKIT

PPC Kunal, the Technical Committee has had to deal with some thorny issues this year.

KP That's putting it politely. One of the biggest has been the rodent glue board licensing scheme. It's had unintended consequences, and members have been very clear about that.

PPC How did the committee respond?

KP We started by listening. We held a debate to gather views, then wrote an open letter to the Secretary of State setting out industry concerns.

That included calls to ban public sales of glue traps, strengthen enforcement, run public awareness campaigns and expand the professional licensing scheme.

PPC You've also shifted approach on pest-safe housing.

KP Yes. With the government commitment to implement Awaab's Law, we believe our goals are best achieved by supporting and shaping that legislation rather than running parallel schemes.

Ultimately, we all want healthier, pest-free homes.

PPC What's on the agenda for next year?

KP Updating Codes of Best Practice will continue, but a big focus will be break-back traps. We want to look at a voluntary approval scheme before external regulation is imposed, to make sure traps are humane and effective.

"This is where ideas turn into action."

PPC And your pitch to members?

KP This is where ideas turn into action. It's a low-pressure, high-value way to influence standards and protect the industry's toolkit. If you want to be part of meaningful change, this is where it happens.

Kunal Puri

Technical Committee Chair

TREASURER'S REPORT

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE,
RESILIENCE AND INVESTMENT
FOR THE FUTURE

I'm pleased to present my first Treasurer's Report, having taken over the role from Mark Williams. I would

like to place on record my thanks to Mark for his ten years of dedicated service. He has left some big shoes to fill, and I will do my best to follow his example.

Accounts, transparency and reporting

This report covers the financial accounts for 2024. It's a little early for 2025 to be ready, and we were later than usual with 2024.

The delay was largely due to challenges in integrating our new CRM system alongside reduced staffing levels, which placed additional pressure on the team. We anticipated some disruption and successfully applied a month filing extension for 2024, which allowed the accounts to be completed, independently examined and finalised within the permitted timeframe.

As always, BPCA's accounts are fully transparent and available for members to view once approved by the Board.

Income, expenditure and overall performance

Turning to performance, our finances continue to reflect the biennial nature of some of our largest income-generating activities, most notably PestEx. Since bringing the event in-house, it has delivered significantly greater value for the Association, although the income is received every other year. As a result, we typically generate a surplus in PestEx years and a deficit in non-PestEx years, with reserves used to smooth that cycle.

Income growth and membership confidence

Total income for 2024 rose by £420,000 to £2.12 million. The largest contributor was PestEx, generating approximately £430,000.

Membership subscriptions increased by £73,000, driven by both an inflationary uplift and continued growth in member numbers, while examinations contributed an additional £24,000.

We recorded a net gain of 59 members during the year, with a further

42 applications currently in progress. This growth reflects strong confidence in BPCA's representation, influence and member support.

Investment and cost pressures

Expenditure also increased, largely due to higher inflation, investment in the new CRM system, wider technology improvements and additional staffing costs. These included expanding our lobbying capability to protect the industry's toolkit and supporting the development of the qualification framework.

Despite this, the Association delivered a post-tax surplus of £46,820, which was transferred into reserves.

Reserves and financial resilience

Reserves play a critical role in ensuring financial resilience. They act as a buffer against unexpected events, fund major projects and cover losses in non-PestEx years.

Member funds stood at £982,000, although nearly half of this is tied up in the value of the Association's building and is not immediately accessible. Cash reserves are approximately £550,000, equating to around six months of staff costs. Our long-term aim is to hold closer to nine months of operating cover.

Acknowledgements and closing remarks

The year brought challenges, particularly for the staff team managing system changes alongside staffing gaps. I would like to thank them for their hard work and professionalism.

Finally, I encourage all members to make full use of the benefits available through BPCA, many of which offer tangible cost savings.

Thank you.

Mike Ayers

Honorary Treasurer

finance@bpca.org.uk

THEY WORK
FOR YOU

The Executive Board is the governing body of the Association, and Board Members, as Directors, have a duty of care to both BPCA Members and the BPCA Staff team. The Board's emphasis is on strategy, performance,

stewardship and conformance.

The Board also ensures that resources are used appropriately (money, time, staff, etc), and that relevant legislation is adhered to.

		Meetings attended
President	 Chris Cagienard Pest Solutions	7
Vice President, Treasurer	 Mike Ayers Precision Pest Management	6
Vice President and Professional Standards Committee Chair	 Martin Rose-King Bounty Pest Control	5
Vice President	 Martin Cobbald Dealey Environmental Ltd	4
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Chair	 Julia Pittman Beaver Pest Control	6
Outreach and Communications Committee Chair	 Alex Wade BASF	6
Technical Committee Chair	 Kunal Puri Precision PMS & Consulting	7
	 Peter Bowers-Davis Integrum Services Ltd	4 App. Jun 2025
	 Rebekah Carral Barricade Pest Control	3 Res. Jan 2026
	 Jason Cholerton CSS Pest Services	4
	 Adrian Gough Pest Risk Management Group Ltd	4 App. Jun 2025
Board Members	 Alan Morris Envu	3 App. Jun 2025
	 Christopher Venables Venables Pest Control	5 App. Jun 2025
	 Karolien van der Vorm 360 Wildlife Control Limited	4 App. Jun 2025
	 Paul Westgate Veritas Pest Consultancy	5

2025 IN NUMBERS

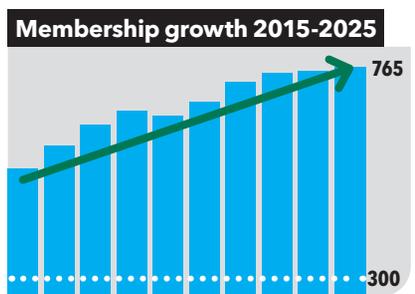


Spreading the word

16,144 copies of PPC printed
 PPC Now subscribers = >14,491
 26,886 followers on social media
 541,833 PestCareers video watches
 BPCA releases were picked up by hundreds of news agencies with a total circulation of 41M across 161 news stories
 Website visited 1.6M times (including the new PPC Online)

Member benefits

116,449 clients searching Find a pest controller
 55 member benefits
 16 new member documents
 100% of Servicing members TrustMark endorsed



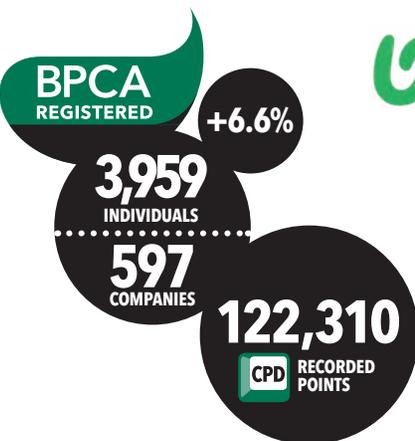
Politics

- 10 meetings/events with Ministers/MPs/Peers
- 6 letters to Ministers
- 8 government consultations and parliamentary inquiries

REWIND

BPCA's Forums and webinars got 68,000 viewers online (4,100 hours!), with 3,819 people attending the events.

Average feedback **90%**



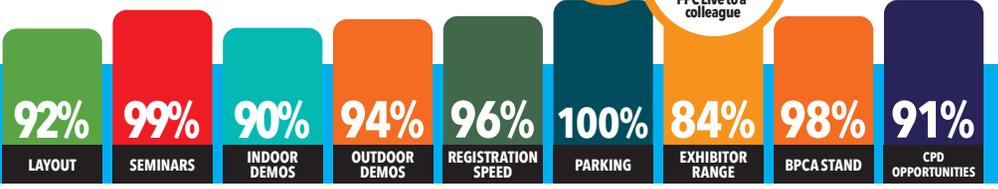
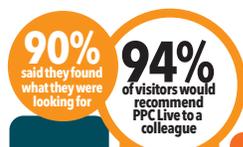
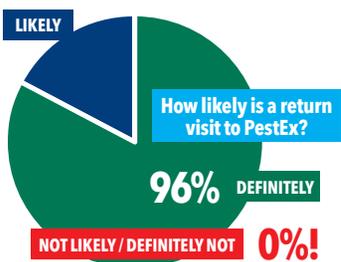
Charity

Trussell
trussell.org.uk

With the aid of members and the pest community at large, BPCA raised **£1,934** and **198KG** of food donations for Trussell Trust

Top ten PPC ONLINE articles

- 1 Sticky situation: Met Police caught unprepared on Glue Trap law
- 2 Hantavirus and the role of pest control in preventing its spread
- 3 BPCA mourns the passing of former CEO Oliver Madge
- 4 OPEN LETTER: Glue Board Act fails to protect animal welfare or public health, says BPCA
- 5 GUIDANCE: Using wildlife cameras in customer premises - staying ethical, legal and professional
- 6 Ashes to ashes: Life after bendiocarb
- 7 HSE launches consultation on anticoagulant rodenticides
- 8 Licensing updates for England and Scotland in 2025
- 9 Air gun safety reminder after media reports of pigeon incident
- 10 What impact might council devolution have on pest management in England?



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