

Data dive: WHAT THE 2025 BPCA FUTURE OF PEST MANAGEMENT SURVEY TELLS US

Fergal Flynn, PPM Services, spoke at PestEx on behalf of BPCA's Academic Relations Working Group. Fergal looks at what the 2025 Future of Pest



Management survey tells us about resistance, trapping, rodenticides, regulation and where the sector might be heading next.

We first ran the BPCA Future of Pest Management survey in 2023. We ran it again in 2025, over a few weeks in October and November, and this article gives you a bit of a dive into what has changed, what has stayed the same, and what might need a closer look next time.

I'm part of BPCA's Academic Relations Working Group. It was originally Paul Westgate's initiative, and has grown into a really interesting group of BPCA members, lecturers and academics. We're meant to talk about surveys, studies and research links with universities, although quite often we end up talking about random pest control things. Very interesting meetings, if that's your sort of thing.

In 2025, we had 473 respondents, compared with 816 in 2023. Fewer people, but still enough to draw useful conclusions. We covered trapping, monitoring, glue boards, rodenticide use, regulation, licensing, behavioural resistance and physiological resistance.

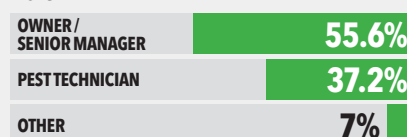
Figures are averaged across respondents, so percentages may not total 100%.



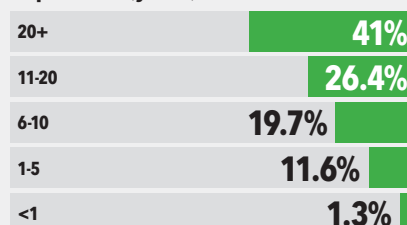
Who answered?

It's worth starting with who actually filled in the survey, as it affects how we interpret the data.

Role



Experience (years)



Most respondents were owners, senior managers or pest control technicians. We also saw a lot of experience in the results. Around 41% had more than 20 years in the industry, and 26.4% had 11 to 20 years. That fits with what we already know about the sector: a lot of knowledge sits with people who have been doing this for a long time.

98%

hold formal pest control qualifications.
Up from 97% in 2023.

17%

hold advanced qualifications.
Up from 14% in 2023.

Qualifications were strong. In 2025, 98% of respondents held formal pest control qualifications, up from 97% in 2023. RSPH Level 2 AiPM or the BPC Diploma remains

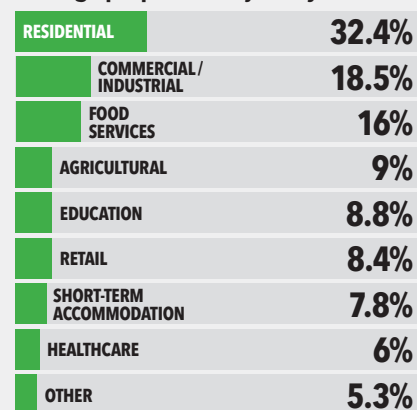
the standard qualification. We also saw 17% holding advanced qualifications, up from 14% in 2023. Company size is important too. Sole traders were the largest single group, rising from 26% in 2023 to 30% in 2025.

So, when we look at this data, we need to remember that it is strongly shaped by smaller businesses. That's not a problem, because smaller businesses make up a huge part of the sector, but it is worth keeping in mind.

Where the work is

Residential work accounted for about a third of jobs, at 32.4%. Commercial and industrial work made up 18.5%, and food services 16%. Then you've got agriculture, education, retail, short-term accommodation, healthcare and entertainment making up the rest.

Average proportion of jobs by sector



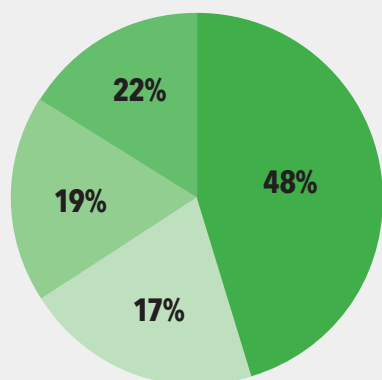
That probably won't surprise many people. Most of us know that residential, commercial and food work are a big chunk of the day-to-day industry.

What is interesting is the split between routine work and active infestations.

Across the survey, 48% of work was routine monitoring or maintenance. Another 41% involved active infestations requiring treatment, and 17% were emergency responses.

That tells an important story. Pest management is not just turning up when something has gone badly wrong. Almost half the work captured here is routine monitoring or maintenance. In other words, prevention at scale.

"Recording whether you're catching juveniles or adults can tell you more about the population you're dealing with. It can also help separate your reporting from someone who just writes 'two mice caught'".



- Routine monitoring
- Minor infestation
- Significant infestation
- Emergency response

Delays cost money and create risk

We asked pest professionals what happens when clients delay intervention or try to go down their own route.

Reputational Damage
68%
Weighted avg 6.78/10 likelihood

Health Risk
64%
Weighted avg 6.39/10 likelihood

Financial Loss
65%
Weighted avg 6.48/10 likelihood

Longer Disruption
62%
Weighted avg 6.22/10 likelihood

In a commercial setting, a pest issue can very quickly become a business issue. What happens if it ends up on Facebook? What happens if word gets around? What happens if a problem that could have been nipped in the bud turns into something that needs closure, extra visits or a much bigger intervention?

The sectors where respondents were most likely to report escalation after delayed response were residential, at **72.7%**, and food services, at **70.9%**. That also lines up with what we see in practice. In housing, you may have housing officers involved. In food premises, you may have environmental health officers. There are clearer enforcement routes, and problems can become formal quite quickly.

Overall, the message is simple: pest professionals see the value of early intervention. The sooner we are involved, the better the outcome is likely to be.

Trapping and monitoring

The trapping data was very similar to 2023.

60%
Use traps for monitoring (internally, externally, or both)
2023: **65%**

58%
Routinely bait traps with some form of lure
2023: **63%**

78%
Routinely change lure/bait during deployment
2023: **76%**

86%
Use traps in tunnels or stations
2023: **87%**

89%
Note numbers caught
2023: **85%**

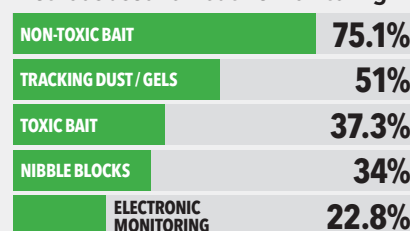
40%
Record approximate age (juvenile/adult)
2023: **42%**

In 2025, **60%** of respondents used traps for monitoring, either internally, externally or both. But only **58%** routinely baited traps with some form of lure. So, more than four in ten people

using traps were not routinely using a lure.

That's a useful point for technicians to reflect on. If you're putting traps into boxes with no lure, are you giving yourself the best chance?

Methods used for routine monitoring



The positive news is that **78%** routinely changed lure or bait during deployment, **86%** used traps in tunnels or stations, and **89%** recorded numbers caught. Only **40%** recorded approximate age, such as juvenile or adult.

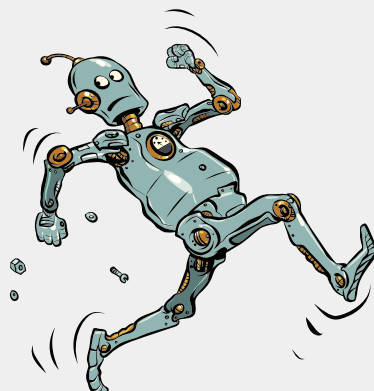
That's one of those small things that can add value to reporting. Recording whether you're catching juveniles or adults can tell you more about the population you're dealing with. It can also help separate your reporting from someone who just writes "two mice caught".

Trap avoidance remains an issue. In 2025, **15%** said they experienced trap avoidance often, up from **11.5%** in 2023.

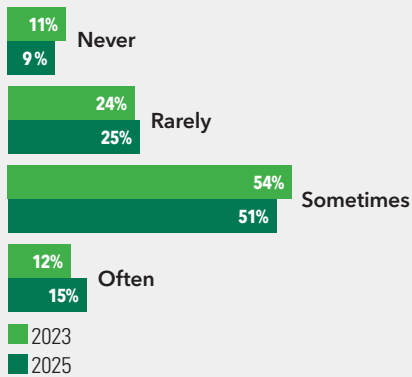
15%
experience trap avoidance 'Often'
up from **11.5%** in 2023

Top cited causes:
Neophobia, alternative food sources, prior DIY trapping attempts, plastic box avoidance.

Now, we need to be cautious. Different people answered each survey, so we should not overclaim. But we can say trap avoidance is definitely something pest professionals are seeing.



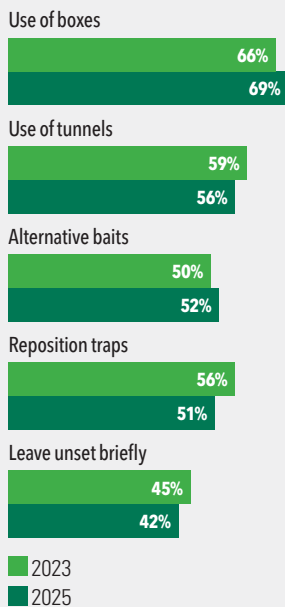
Control failure from trap avoidance



The top cited causes were neophobia, alternative food sources, prior DIY trapping attempts and plastic box avoidance.

When people try to improve trap success, they are mainly using boxes, tunnels, alternative baits, repositioning traps and leaving traps unset briefly. Those are practical, grounded responses, and they show technicians adapting to what they see on site.

What measures professionals use to improve trap capture likelihood



Resistance is not just one thing

Resistance was one of the most interesting parts of the survey.

In 2025, **82%** said they had encountered some form of resistance, up from **77%** in 2023. Also, 49% correctly described resistance as all forms of rodent non-engagement, up from **44%**.

82%

have encountered some form of resistance

Up from **77%** in 2023

49%

describe resistance as all forms of rodent non-engagement

Correct understanding improving - up from **44%**

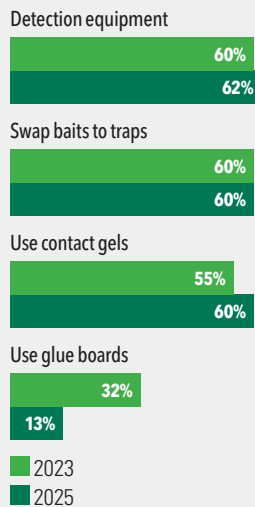
That matters because resistance is not just physiological resistance. It can be behavioural too. It can be reluctance to engage with bait boxes, reluctance to take baits in boxes, or reluctance to engage with traps.

Behavioural resistance was the most commonly encountered type, reported by **62%**. Of those, **59%** had experienced it in both rats and mice. The top behaviours were reluctance to engage with bait boxes, at **72%**, reluctance to engage with baits in boxes, at **61%**, and reluctance to engage with traps, also at **61%**.

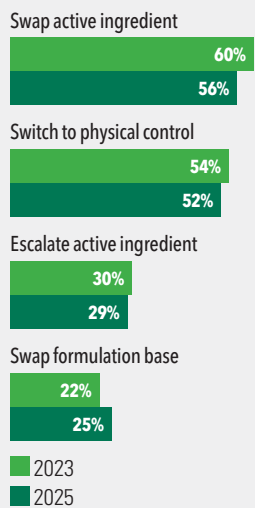
Physiological or metabolic resistance was reported by **43%**. Most respondents were aware of resistance status checks, including tail sampling. The top responses to physiological resistance were swapping active ingredient, switching to physical control and escalating active ingredient.

What professionals do when encountering resistance

Behavioural resistance



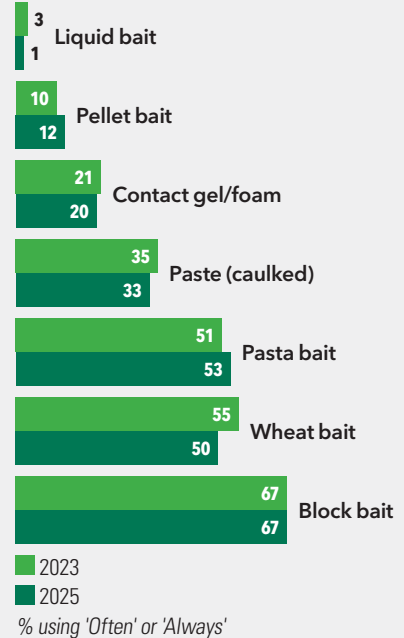
Physiological resistance



One interesting point is that **25%** said they swap formulation base when dealing

with physiological resistance. That might help palatability, but it does not necessarily deal with physiological resistance. If the active ingredient is the same, changing from pasta to grain does not change the resistance issue. That suggests there is still some education to do.

Rodenticide use is changing



Block bait remains the most commonly used formulation, with **67%** using it often or always. Wheat bait and pasta bait follow. Liquid bait is rarely used.

The survey also showed a useful split between internal and external second-generation anticoagulant rodenticide use.

Brodifacoum dominated internally, ranked number one by **41%**. Bromadiolone led externally, ranked number one by **32%**.

That is good to see; it suggests many pest professionals are matching products to risk. The more persistent, more bioaccumulative products are being used more cautiously.

Anticoagulants are still the main go-to product. In 2025, **66%** ranked them as the most palatable and effective. But cholecalciferol is growing. It rose from **22%** ranked number one in 2023 to **26%** in 2025, and usage often or always rose from **28%** to **38%**.

Ranked by palatability and effectiveness

Anticoagulant

66%

ranked #1 most palatable

Score: 2.63/3 2023: 2.67

2023: 70% ranked #1

Still preferred #1 but declining

Cholecalciferol

26%

ranked #1 most palatable

Score: 2.18/3 2023: 2.12
2023: 22% ranked #1

Growing adoption – up from 22%

Alphachloralose

7%

ranked #1 most palatable

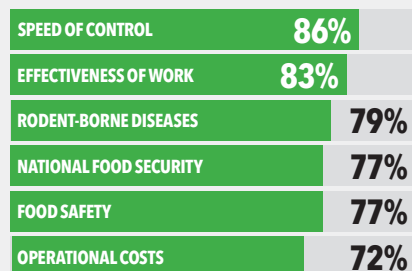
Score: 1.51/3 2023: 1.56
2023: 7% ranked #1

Niche use – 48% never use

That feels like a real shift. It may reflect changes to SGAR labels, regulatory pressure and technicians looking for different tools.

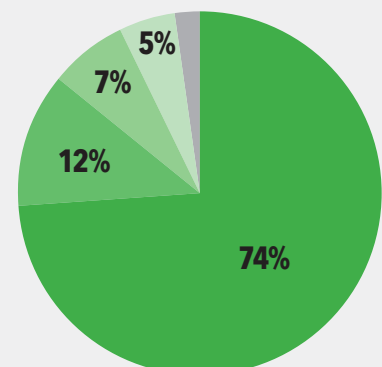
Protecting the toolkit

We asked what would happen if anticoagulant rodenticides were removed or restricted. The responses were strong.



% saying 'Much worse' or 'Somewhat worse'

Respondents said speed of control would be worse, at **86%**, effectiveness of work worse, at **83%**, rodent-borne diseases worse, at **79%**, and food safety worse, at **77%**. If SGARs were banned externally, **86%** predicted decreased rat control, with **74%** predicting a significant decrease.

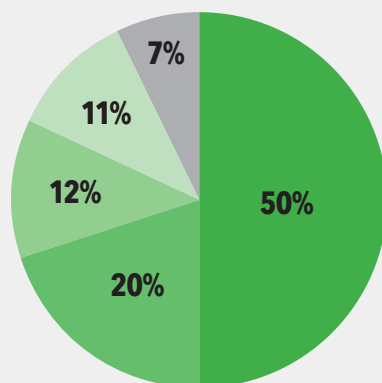


- Significant decrease
- Slight decrease
- Not sure
- No change
- Improved

This is important data. Pest professionals are saying that losing tools would affect speed, effectiveness, public health and food safety. That matters when regulators or agencies suggest alternatives can simply replace rodenticides.

People also reported that the open areas rule change is already being felt.

Has the change in rules about using SGARs in open areas negatively affected public health?



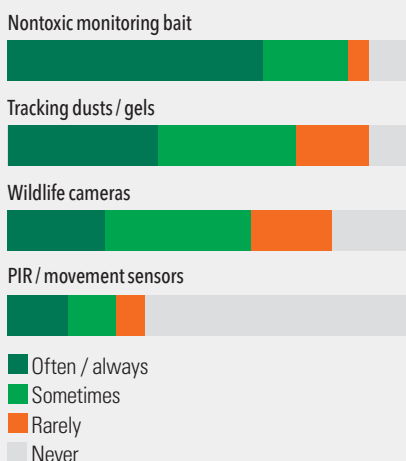
- Some effect
- Minimal effect
- Not sure
- Massive effect
- No effect

In 2025, **61%** said it had some or massive negative effect on public health, although this was lower than the **77.5%** who predicted an effect in 2023. That is still not a small number.

Technology is growing, but slowly

Non-toxic monitoring bait remains common, used often or always by **63%**. Tracking dusts and gels were at **37%**. Wildlife cameras were at **24%**, and PIR or movement sensors at **15%**.

Non-lethal monitoring devices used during rodent treatments



We are seeing more technology on the market, and walking around PestEx you could see plenty of it. Personally, if I'm dealing with a complicated

rodent issue, having a camera in a loft can make a real difference. It helps you see where rodents are moving and where to focus your attention. I'd expect this area to keep growing.

The future looks harder

Will rodent control be easier or harder in 5 years' time?

88%

believe rodent control will be harder in 5 years' time
(53% say much harder, 35% somewhat harder)

In 2025, **88%** of respondents said rodent control will be harder in five years' time. That is almost unchanged from 2023. At the same time, there is strong support for regulation.

In 2025, **88%** supported licensing for pest professionals, **86%** supported heavier rodenticide regulation, and **62%** supported approved regulated traps only.

There was also **98%** support for banning unqualified buyers, **93%** support for tighter restrictions on sellers, and **84%** support for mandatory CPD.

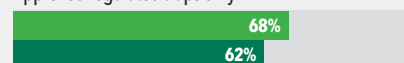
Licensing for pest professionals



Heavier rodenticide regulation



Approved regulated traps only



2023 2025

That tells me pest professionals see the value in what they do. They want the toolkit protected, but they also want the industry to be professional, competent and properly recognised.

The survey is not perfect, and there is more to unpack, including insects and better segmentation by location, company type and demographics. The message is clear: pest professionals prevent financial loss, protect public health and manage problems early. Resistance is becoming more visible. Cholecalciferol use is rising, technology is growing, and rodent control is expected to get harder. There is strong support for licensing and tighter control over who can buy and sell professional products. We need to keep building the evidence.

TAKE RESEARCH SERIOUSLY AND WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

BPCA's Academic Relations Working Group is at the forefront of protecting your toolkit and supporting our evidence-based policy work. Want to join in? hello@bpca.org.uk