

NOTTINGHAM RAT NUMBERS JUMP 25% AS ADVICE GIVEN ON HOW TO KEEP THEM OUT OF YOUR HOME

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The number of rat infestations in Nottingham is increasing.

A jump of 25 percent in the rat population during 2020 from 537,195 to 671,493 is stressing pest controllers, as rats migrate from commercial areas to residential – leading to more reports from worried residents about rat sightings around Nottingham.

Reports of rats being seen in open public areas during lockdown are common, with Nottingham City Council's pest control department being sent an increasing number of reports of rats in inner-city residential areas as they search for food and shelter.

"Lockdown is presenting a serious challenge for pest controllers in Nottingham, none more so than where financial cuts and social distancing is hampering the local authority department in their ability to tackle rat populations," said Jenny Rathbone of Nottingham based Pest Controller Pest.co.uk.

"This is not only a funding issue – the population of rats is growing - now to a staggering 671,493, and the ability to control them with traditional means is decreasing as 74% of UK rats have been shown to carry immunity to popular poisons."

The issues currently affecting the control of the rat population in Nottingham are:

The first lockdown in 2020 allowed rats to get a foothold, and breed well. The population increased 25% in 2020 from 537,195 to 671,493.

Traditional pest control methods are becoming ineffective as the 2019-20 Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use survey of rats showed that 74% of rats in the UK carried a resistance gene to popular rodenticides, and even more worrying in some locations in the UK, 20% have two different genes, making them super resistant

Pressure on Local Authority Pest Control departments to provide more services.

Pest.co.uk is advising anyone living in urban areas in Nottingham to take proactive measures before problems start, these include:

- **Block up holes** – Fill any gaps in brickwork, shed doors and any holes on external walls of your home including cellars and attics
- **Clear cupboards** – Empty unused cupboards of bags, clothes, rags and keep them clean
- **Secure all food sources** – Make sure food is not left out, tidy away any open food sources and keep worktops and floors clean of crumbs

- **Prepare traps** – by leaving out rat traps you can pre-empt any future infestation, however it is better to bait with official rat poison than leaving food scraps out

“2021 could be interesting and the longer the lockdown continues, the higher the risk that rats get a real foothold that will be hard to control come summer”, said Jenny Rathbone.

A **Nottingham City Council** spokesperson previously told Nottinghamshire Live: "There's a range of things people can do to try to prevent infestations in or around properties, including removing or securely storing food sources, clearing overgrown vegetation and rubbish from gardens and repairing holes in walls, missing drain covers and other defects.