



PREVENTION PROTECTION PROFESSIONALISM

A manifesto for public health
pest management in Scotland



bpca.org.uk/policy

Driving excellence in pest management

POLICY ON A PAGE



We want the next Scottish Government to commit to prioritising public health, and reducing the distress caused by inadequate pest control. The British Pest Control Association (BPCA) asks politicians to support four key actions:

Protect homes from pests

- Some renters and homeowners are living with entirely preventable pest infestations, making them ill and miserable
- Lazy landlords can leave tenants open to infestation through poor maintenance, slow action on repairs and inadequate waste management facilities.

Ensure that Scotland's 'Awaab's Law' is successfully implemented for the benefit of tenants, with pest infestations to be included as a qualifying repair under the regulations, and timescales for action that recognise the harm posed by living with pests.

Drive the TrustMark scheme

- All government estates require some element of public health pest management
- Government already has an approved scheme for quality pest control companies: TrustMark
- Council homes, hospitals, prisons and government buildings do not universally require TrustMark businesses (where available)
- Improve consumer confidence in tradespeople by championing TrustMark
- 80% of all pest management work is carried out by a TrustMark registered company.

Specify that all Scottish government-controlled estates must choose a TrustMark registered pest management company, wherever possible.

Restrict professional tools to professional users

- Pest management work is largely unregulated
- Public health pesticides have the potential to harm wildlife, birds of prey, aquatic life, pets, and human health
- Pest control products can have serious animal welfare concerns when used incorrectly
- Professional-use pesticides and traps can be accessed with little or no training
- Individual licensing schemes exist for certain products, but not for individual pest professionals
- Many pest management companies choose to self-regulate by becoming BPCA members.

Require professional pest controllers to be licensed in order to practice. Set a licensing standard equivalent to the voluntary standards that 80% of the sector already adheres to.

Evidence based approach to Gull management

- The growing presence of gulls in towns and cities poses risks to the health and safety of the public
- Developing a management strategy requires evidence based solutions, long-term investment, and a collaborative effort from all stakeholders.

Ensure that Scottish Ministers and NatureScot continue to work with pest professionals and other stakeholders.

By making decisive policy decisions regarding pest management, governments can make a real-world contribution to the protection of public health and safety in and around homes and businesses.

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Introduction

Professional pest management is an often overlooked and undervalued sector of the Scottish Economy but one that is actually playing a vital role in protecting public health, the food supply chain and food security, and contributing to biodiversity through managing dominant or invasive species. With climate change, these threats will only grow.

This manifesto is about how Scotland can best utilise the skills and experience found within our sector, for the benefit of all others.

How we can best ensure that people have liveable homes that safeguard both their physical and mental health; their access to safe and nutritious food; as well as how we safeguard our natural heritage from invasive non-native species, and our built heritage from physical damage by pests.

Even if you have never experienced an infestation before, you will have benefited from the unseen work of many pest management professionals. This manifesto is how we ensure that their work can continue as effectively and sustainably as possible.



Protect homes from pests

Landlords have a greater role to play in the protection of their tenants from pests than just calling a pest controller in a timely manner; they must follow the advice given by pest controllers. This could include improved management of communal waste disposal, the repair of defects in the building, or anything else for which the landlord alone has responsibility for.

Scotland's own version of Awaab's law, due to come into force following the election in October applies only to damp and mould, with no promise for protections against other issues like pests that also put tenants at risk.

Delivering the liveable homes that Scots, especially the young, struggle to find means matching the ambition of other parts of the UK. Both England and Wales will see their protections against pests come into force this year. It should not matter where your home is, or who owns it: the risks posed by pests are the same.

Rodents in the UK diseases like leptospirosis (Weil's disease), Salmonella, and Listeria; being transmitted to humans through rats' urine or direct contact with food preparation areas. Rodents must gnaw to keep their teeth in shape - gnawed pipes and wire can cause floods and electrical fires.

Insects can spread pathogens, infect your food, and damage your belongings.

We don't accept these conditions from restaurants for the risks to health it poses, so why do we allow those exact same conditions in people's homes?





"It should not matter where your home is, or who owns it: the risks posed by pests are the same."

BPCA asks that the next Scottish Government:

- **Recognise the danger that pests pose to the health and wellbeing of tenants**
- **Extend 'Awaab's Law' style protections to include pests**
- **Ensure protections for all renters** - all those who live in social rented, private rented, or temporary accommodation should be protected.

Restrict professional tools to professional users

The tools used by professional pest controllers if misused have the ability to cause unnecessary harms to wildlife, the environment, and human health. Scotland must continue to keep them out of the hands of the general public, and ensure access only to licensed professionals.

Scotland has lead the way in animal welfare protections, with the **Wildlife and Muirburn (Scotland) Act 2024** restricting the availability of a number of professional use tools to the public. However, it has also restricted their availability to professionals, those who can use them humanely and effectively. The ability of our sector to protect public health has been degraded.

Protecting public health, animal welfare, and Scotland's priceless natural environment requires a comprehensive reform of how our sector and our tools are regulated. The current mix of self and piecemeal government regulation is insufficient, and inefficient.

- Glue traps - completely banned, with there being a potential to introduce licensing
- Wildlife traps - will soon require their own license to be applied for
- Rodenticides - can be purchased by anyone with a certificate following an hour long online course and multiple-choice quiz
- Insecticides - no specific requirement other than the user being 'trained and competent' with reputable suppliers having to assess what that means on their own, other suppliers may not make any assessment at all.





"Protecting public health, animal welfare, and Scotland's priceless natural environment requires a comprehensive reform of how our sector and our tools are regulated."

BPCA asks that the next Scottish Government:

- **Require professional pest controllers to be licensed** - set the standard to be equivalent to the standard that 80% of the sector already adheres to
- **Restrict all professional tools to licensed pest controllers**
- **Ensure licensed professionals have the tools necessary to protect public health** - stop the licensing of individual products and streamline regulation, allowing licensed professionals to access and use them as required to protect public health.

Drive the TrustMark scheme

All government estates require pest control, but in a system where pest professionals are unlicensed it is difficult to ensure that taxpayer's money is being spent on quality services. TrustMark simplifies that process.

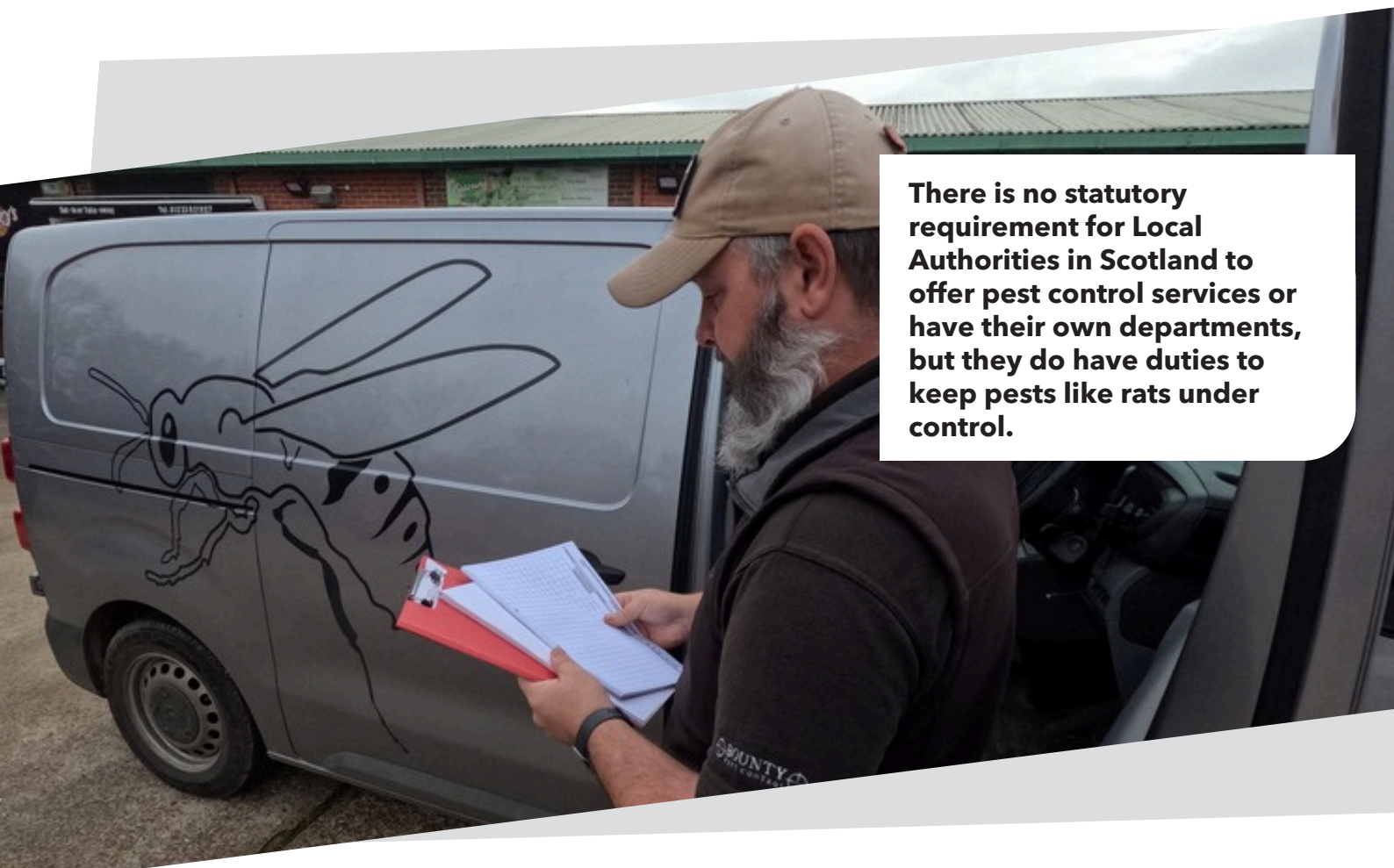
Local authorities have a statutory duty to keep rodents in their areas under control. Hospitals, schools, prisons and parliament buildings too will all have agreements with pest professionals for proactive and reactive pest management, normally in the form of a contract through a tendering process.

Specifications of these processes will vary wildly, making it difficult to ensure that money is being spent on quality services.

The UK government has already developed an approved scheme for quality pest control companies: TrustMark. Started in 2005, it is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to raise standards and help consumers choose a trusted tradesperson.

TrustMark registration signifies adherence to industry standards and codes of conduct, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability in the provision of pest management services.

Making registration a requirement to bid for contracts on government estates will help elevate standards within the industry, and empower consumers to make informed decisions when seeking assistance.



There is no statutory requirement for Local Authorities in Scotland to offer pest control services or have their own departments, but they do have duties to keep pests like rats under control.



"Raise standards and help consumers choose a trusted tradesperson."

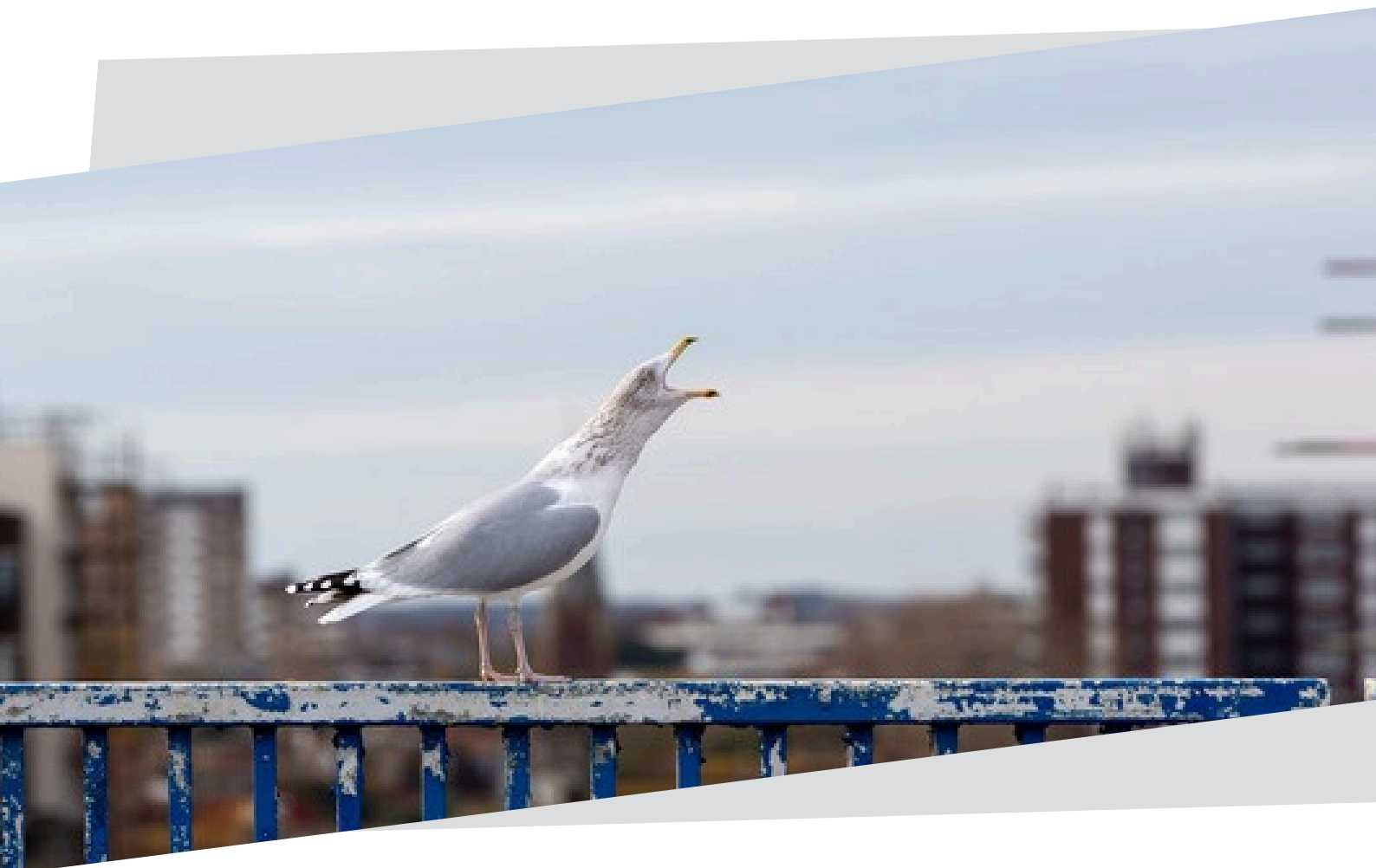
BPCA asks that the next Scottish Government specify that all government-controlled estates must choose a TrustMark registered pest management company, wherever possible

Evidence based approach to Gull management

Scotland's gull populations are concentrating increasingly in urban areas, and so too are the issues they cause. Gulls pose a risk to the public's health and safety with attacks on often vulnerable people or those working at height, contamination of foodstuffs, and nests blocking chimneys, gas flues and drainage systems.

Balancing the needs of both our urban communities, with businesses and public health at risk; and the wild gull population which is in decline requires a nationwide strategy that takes into account the needs of local communities and the expertise of a range of stakeholders.

Following the success of People and Gulls Summit hosted by the Scottish Government and NatureScot, professional pest controllers who are on the front-line of gull management must continue to be included in future forums and the development of best practice.



A photograph of two seagulls interacting with a yellow litter bin. One seagull is perched on the edge of the bin, which has the word 'LITTER' printed twice on its side. The other seagull is in mid-air, flying towards the first one. The background shows a body of water and a cloudy sky.

"Professional pest controllers who are on the front-line of gull management must continue to be included."

BPCA asks that the next Scottish Government:

- **Continue to engage with professional pest controllers and other stakeholders**
- **Commit to a national strategy for gull management**
- **Ensure that future strategy and practice is evidence led** - pest controllers, local authorities, academics and others have valuable expertise which is necessary for any strategy. This should be backed by the regular collection and review of data on urban gulls.

INFESTATION PUTS HOMES AT RISK

"The rat infestation is so severe and longstanding that the hardstanding ground around the properties is starting to sink."

Daily Record / 10 May 2025

About our members

Pest Solutions are a Glasgow based business serving the whole of Scotland, protecting homes, businesses, farms, food production centres and well-known cultural attractions.

It's a business that's all about problem solving, people and protecting public health. The business has grown and now employs 60 people with a proactive recruitment policy of young professionals including women and diverse candidates from Scottish universities.

Pest Solutions have used valuable funding from Developing the Young Workforce Scotland to support their recruitment of young people and have won multiple awards for their team and sustainability initiatives from the Glasgow Business Awards and the National Pest Awards.



About us

BPCA is the UK's not-for-profit membership organisation for the professional pest management sector. We represent over 700 companies and individuals, ranging from family-run businesses to multinational service providers.

The Association advocates for elevated standards and professionalism in the industry. BPCA focuses on safeguarding public health, promoting consumer confidence, and ensuring that the effectiveness of pest management continues to improve by utilising innovative solutions and new technology.

BPCA's overarching aim is to professionalise the industry, emphasising the vital role of pest professionals in public health management. BPCA calls on the Scottish Government to keep homes safe, improve the regulation of our sector and keep tools out of the hands of untrained users, and to promote the use of TrustMark registered companies.

By working collaboratively, BPCA's member community strives to create safer and healthier communities – free from the threats posed by pests.

If you'd like to support BPCA's Manifesto and the professionals who prevent and protect us from pests, contact us today.



"The Association advocates for elevated standards and professionalism in the industry."



BPCA launched their PestCareers Hub and are working with Developing the Young Workforce Scotland, supporting the future of the sector by encouraging new entrants into a skilled profession.



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