



# PPC105

**SUPER FEATURE**  
**PEST MANAGEMENT'S**  
**DIGITAL FRONTIER**

**DIGITAL FRONTIER**



**GET ONBOARD OR**  
**GET LEFT BEHIND?**

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## PPC

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## VIEWPOINT

# I LIKE TECHNOLOGY. BUT I PREFER PEOPLE.



**M**y dad was an IT technician and, as a young(er) man, I always quite fancied the idea of being an IT consultant.

That's where the big money is, or so I thought.

However, he was quick to point out how fickle technology can be. It moves quickly, and by the time you've learned something, the next thing is just around the corner.

He was always far more enthusiastic about my chosen profession than his own; "There will always be rats and mice, Phil. Always."

Technology allows us to offer new services, get closer to our clients, train our staff quicker and connect with people we can't meet for coffee. It opens doors for us to automate monotonous tasks and systemise our practices to benefit our customers.

But it can also hide us behind a screen, disconnect us from our customers, or create a barrier between us and our curiosity.

As with all things, the use of technology needs to be balanced.

Someone at PestExtra asked in the little questions box: "Will we all have to be IT engineers to work in pest control?". I'm sure they were being a little tongue-in-cheek, but I think that points to a real fear that people have.

Smart traps, client portals and digital risk assessments are quickly making their way into our sector – so much so that this issue of PPC is themed around this situation.

Since my last foreword, and at the time of writing, BPCA has had two successful in-person forums and one board meeting.

I'm incredibly pleased to see people getting together and getting (sanitised) hands-on with events again. I love that members are joining 300 at a time to our digital events, but there's something very special about sharing ideas in person.

With 2022 looking like it's going to be a bumper year for human interactions, I want to personally invite you to get involved (if you feel ready to do so, of course).

With 11 Forums scheduled around the country, PestEx is returning, and our 80th birthday celebration is beginning to take shape; it's never been a better time to get to a BPCA event. You might even find that new piece of tech that inspires some business growth.

My time as BPCA president is slowly drawing to a close. I've got a PestEx, a couple of Board meetings, an annual report, a birthday party and an AGM to go. Thankfully most of these things will be in-person, pandemic-permitting.

It's been a learning experience for me and, while my time as a BPCA volunteer is far from over, I do want to reflect on how much I've learned from my peers. I'm a bit grumpy that Covid has stopped us getting in a room together as much as I'd have liked. It's in those real rooms, with real sandwiches, where the critical conversations happen.

Being on the Board has made me think more strategically about my own business. Don't get me wrong, I still love sales calls and problem-solving with a technician. But as I reflect on my time as a director of BPCA, I know I need to get more hands-on with our strategy to help Countrywide grow.

Realisations like this come from talking to other small business owners at BPCA events. I've never left a Board meeting or a Forum without feeling at least a little inspired to make a change in my own company.

So, if you can, get in those rooms. Have those conversations. Enjoy those sandwiches. Come to an event or volunteer for a committee.

You won't regret it.

We've got plenty to celebrate together. So until next we meet... stay safe!

### Philip Halpin

BPCA President

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

**PS** Also, I just wanted to shout about BPCA winning the Association Excellence award for 'Best Lobbying Campaign/Advancement of a Cause'.

The work we did together to campaign for key worker status shows what happens when members pull together for the common good.

Congratulations to all BPCA members – you're part of an award-winning association that drives excellence in pest management. We should all take some pride in that.

**#WeAreBPCA**



## BPCA WINS COVID-19 KEY WORKER CAMPAIGN AWARD

BPCA is delighted to announce that we've won the Association Excellence Award (AEA) for 'Best Lobbying Campaign or Advancement of a Cause During Covid-19'.

The Association Excellence Awards recognise and celebrate the work that associations, trade organisations, unions and industry bodies do for and on behalf of their members.

### The winning campaign

The award was based on the Association's work to get pest management recognised as an essential sector at the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020.

Following extensive lobbying efforts to government ministers, local councils, schools and the media, pest management workers were formally acknowledged as key workers in Northern Ireland on 26 March 2020 and in England on 13 April 2020, with Scotland and Wales following suit shortly afterwards.

BPCA Marketing and Communications Manager, Scott Johnstone, said: "We're absolutely delighted to have won the award for our work during Covid-19.

"Pest management can all too often feel like an invisible industry. For a few moments the entire UK recognised the work we do to protect public health and society as a whole.

"Pest management is critical. Our workers are key. Thank you to all our members that helped us get the recognition you all deserved!"

The award judges commented: "This campaign made a tangible difference to BPCA members by using the expertise of the Association to influence Government understanding of the sector and so revise its decisions.

"An excellent evidenced summary of the impact the BPCA had on raising the issue of pest management being an essential service during the pandemic lockdown."

## CDP'S FIRST KICKSTART EMPLOYEE TAKEN ON FULL-TIME

BPCA member company CDP Environmental is celebrating the appointment of their first Kickstart employee through the government-backed scheme.

The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to employers to create jobs for 16 to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit. BPCA has helped several members secure people through the programme.

19-year-old Matthew Swatton was made redundant at the start of lockdown. He loved the job so much he travelled across London at his own expense to CDP HQ in Greenford.

Director Chris Johnson said: "We've been looking to help a young person for a long time. We couldn't find any suitable apprenticeship schemes for pest control, so we wrote our own programme.



"Matt came to us via the unemployment office and shone at the interview. He has a strong background in problem-solving and does a lot of work in the community via his various Scouting associations."

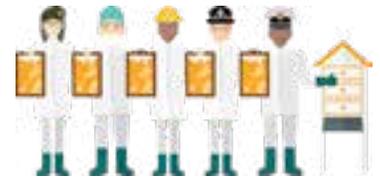
Matt has now completed the scheme and has been offered a full-time contract with further training and development planned for early 2022, when he'll sit his RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management.

Chris continued: "It was a big decision at first. The world has lost faith in apprenticeships. It's not been without its trials; the insurance cost alone was quadruple an existing employee. However, Matt has been worth the extra effort and cost. He's a very hardworking, talented individual, and we're glad that we have him onboard."



**UPDATE** In PPC104, we shared the story of 17-year-old Jack from Integrum Services passing his Level 2 Award in Pest Management. He's now passed his driving test and got his very own van. Drive safe, Jack!

## EDUCATION FOR THE NATION IS THE BEESKNEES



BPCA member Bees Knees is running a 'Therapbee programme' for retired or serving members of Her Majesty's Forces or 999 service providers.

The Pollination for the Nation Therapbee programme features up to 20 honey bee hives.

Attendees can learn, relax and play while learning about bumblebees and honey bees, making hives, frame maintenance and hive structures. Tea and honey sarnies are provided, and the event is entirely free.

Bees Knees owner Jim Webster, AKA "Mr Bumble", said: "Therapbee's whole goal is to provide a mental release from the stress and strife of the present. Through the art of beekeeping, hive management, Bumblebee box making and education, we provide an environment where relevant people can attend, mingle with others, enjoy banter, meet others in their own or similar field."

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



## BUZZING AT ONGOING SUCCESS

Fresh off the back of the successful return of the National Franchise Exhibition, PGH Beegone Franchising has announced the recruitment of its second franchisee who will run his pest control and live bee removal business in the south Birmingham area.

MD Peter Higgs said: "The franchise is really gaining momentum now, we put a lot of time and effort into getting PGH Beegone Bury St Edmunds up and running and profitable and will do the same with our next franchisees."

"The National Franchise Exhibition was a great platform for us and it made me personally even more excited for what's to come."

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

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR NEW ACADEMIC RELATIONS WORKING GROUP

BPCA is looking for members to join a new working group aimed at creating links with the academic community and keeping up-to-date with research. We want anyone with an interest in science, academia, and interpreting the latest and greatest research in our sector. The group will aim to:

- Create meaningful links with academics
- Find studies that help protect our toolkit
- Keep an eye on innovations coming from the scientific community.

Paul Westgate, BPCA Executive Board member and Managing Director at Veritas Pest Consultancy, is spearheading the group. He said: "This working group aims to identify and implement strategies to engage with the academic community to help drive professionalism, add value for our members and ultimately provide better, more environmentally sustainable solutions for our end-users."

If you work for a BPCA member company and would like to know more about getting involved, let us know.

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

## CONTEGO ACQUIRES PESTGUARD SERVICES SCOTLAND

BPCA member Contego expands market share in Scotland with the acquisition of Pestguard Services Scotland.

Founded in 1994, Pestguard is one of the most respected, family-owned pest control companies in Scotland.

Owner and founder Ian Fraser had grown his business over the past 26 years through his commitment to providing exceptional customer care and quality service as standard.

He remarked: "One of the most important decisions I had to make when selling the business, was to choose a company whose values aligned with ours and would give opportunity for growth and development for our teams. The level of detail that Contego put into every aspect of their service and digital systems really stood out. I'm absolutely confident that I'm leaving my customers and employees in great hands."

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## X-TRAP EFK EXCELS!

PestFix's new LED fly trap, X-Trap 50, passes independent testing with flying colours.

Reportedly more environmentally friendly than historical fluorescent tube traps, LED traps

have begun taking the lead, and the X-Trap 50 is one of the new generations of LED fly trap.

The X-Trap 50 saves 90 kWh per year and contains bulbs that last three times longer than standard fluorescent tubes with a 25,000-hour lifespan and save users both time, energy and money.

A PestFix spokesperson said: "The returned results were more than positive. During this test the X-Trap was the only unit to kill 100% of flies in a 24 hour period. With better efficacy, a simple fit and consumable replacement system, the X-Trap LED Insect light trap takes the lead."

## BAD MAY ACTUALLY BE GOOD, SAYS FOOD INDUSTRY AUDITOR

When it comes to audits within food premises, bad may actually be good. This surprising statement comes from AIB international food auditor Thomas Auer, during his recent interview with Daniel Schröder, host of the online Talking Pest Management series.

Based in Germany, Mr Auer explains how an audit or inspection should not be viewed negatively.

"Our role is to help clients. To show them where their problems are and to work on them together before anything, such as a recall situation, arises."

He says that often a 'bad' audit is in effect a 'good' audit as it spots problems before they become significant.

Pest control is an important part within an AIB audit and of the five chapters within an audit, each scoring 200 points, pest control has its own

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) chapter.

Auer explains the scoring system where IPM has always scored highly – even if the service is contracted out he makes the point that someone from within the company must be appropriately trained.

At AIB, the audits he undertakes fall into three categories as specified by the client; fully announced in advance, announced to management or totally unannounced.

His activities are truly international as not only do his audits cover most of Europe, but he also has responsibility for a global client that takes him all over the world.

The interview can be listened to on the Talking Pest Management website:

[futura-germany.com/our-industry/tpm/talking-pest-management.php](http://futura-germany.com/our-industry/tpm/talking-pest-management.php)



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## NEW PEST CONSULTANCY



PestAcuity is a new independent pest control consultancy founded by well-known industry figure Grahame Turner, with the aim of providing technical support to both pest control users and providers in the UK.



The company offers independent pest audits, field biologist visits, training, problem-solving and expert advice.

Grahame said: "Public health pest control is a complex and highly-skilled profession. There are multitudes of pest species, each one with a different biology and behaviour, along with hundreds of different pest management techniques, products and devices.

"I'm fascinated by pests; I have learned a huge amount about them over the years. My aim is to share my knowledge, ideas and enthusiasm for pest management."

**pestacuity.co.uk**

## SELONTRA WINS BEST PRODUCT AWARD

Selontra, the new rodenticide bait from BASF, has been awarded 'Best Product' by Pest magazine.

The prestigious awards recognise products that enhance the working lives and practices of pest professionals. Eligible products must have been launched between January 2020 and August 2021, and are nominated by readers.

Helen Ainsworth, BASF pest control specialist, said: "We're thrilled that Selontra has received this award – it's a fantastic accolade and great recognition from such a leading industry name. It's a pioneering product that we're immensely proud of, and being nominated by readers and pest controllers makes the win even more special!

"In such a short space of time since launching, Selontra has already proven to be incredibly popular, with pest controllers across the country seeing first-hand just how effective it is."



## NEW THIRD GENERATION PLUSZAP FOR FLYING INSECTS

Insect-O-Cutor, a Pelsis brand, has launched a new product to control flying insects in indoor, commercial environments.

PlusZap is a powerful electric fly killer that features pre-installed, staggered UV lamps and a grid to create an efficient light output to attract flying insects.

The third-generation product is hardwired to improve usability and is available in 16W or 30W models with a useful catch tray featuring anti-blow out folds which is simple to remove, offering easy and safe maintenance.

Insect-O-Cutor PlusZap also offers three simple mounting options for installation to a wall, desk and ceiling suspension, making it suitable for use indoors.

Speaking about the launch of PlusZap, retail channel manager, Gemma Hodgson at Pelsis Group, said: "We are pleased to announce the launch of our third generation PlusZap which features design improvements as well as a reduction in energy consumption.

"With its powerful fly killing capabilities and its efficient catch area, this product offers an effective solution to controlling flying insects indoors, particularly in commercial environments including office and hospitality premises."

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HM The Queen and Founder and Managing Director Peter Higgs discussing how PGH Beegone rescues bees



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## NEW MEMBER NOTICE

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- Mission Pest Control, Swindon
- PGM & Son Pest Control, Hereford
- Derbyshire Site Services, Matlock
- East Dunbartonshire Council, Glasgow
- Reeves Pest Management Services, Orkney
- D&R Solutions, Derby
- Koicom Services, Chelmsford
- LLP Maintenance, Bracknell
- Pest Response, Basingstoke
- James Dighton Pest Solutions (JDPS), Peterborough
- Mercury Pest Control, London
- LRC Environmental, Ipswich
- PGH Beegone Franchising, Surrey
- ARK Pest Control, Kent

### Observer members:

- Muheel Services LLC, Saudi Arabia
- Five Moons Company, Saudi Arabia
- Pest Pro Sp Zoo, Poland
- Xtrim Contracting Co WLL, Bahrain
- Al Asmakh Facilities Management, Qatar
- Pest Shields India PVT Ltd, India
- Ideal Services LLC, Dubai
- Eastern Alliance Co Ltd, Saudi Arabia
- United Cell for Pest Control, Saudi Arabia
- Protégér, Saudia Arabia

### Associate members

- Property Inspect, Portsmouth

### Consultant members

- PestAcuity, Ringwood

## SURVEY AND QUOTATION TEMPLATE NOW AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS

BPCA has created an example template for a survey and quote. It's now available in the BPCA member area. The template is suitable for one-off jobs and reactive work. It's simple to use and customise to meet your requirements.

Technical and Compliance Manager Natalie Bungay said: "Having a robust quote helps to move a survey forward and sets the expectations for the work that needs carrying out."

"We made this template to help members provide their customers with exactly the information they need to get their pest problems dealt with."

"Even if you have great documentation already, there's no harm in taking a look at our templates for a bit of inspiration or to reassure yourself that yours covers everything it should."

Suggest a new document – send an email to [technical@bpca.org.uk](mailto:technical@bpca.org.uk)



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Response to "There's nothing evil about me" by Alex Wade (PPC104)

"Really nice article, Alex. I have had too many customers ask me, "Don't you hate rats?", the answer is always no.

I tell them that they don't know that they are causing a problem. They are just taking advantage of a resource at their disposal, just like we would do in their shoes.

I hate customers who proudly declare they have been catching rats and mice in live capture traps and drowning them. I don't want to hear animal abuse stories; it is completely unnecessary. All animals deserve respect, more so even when you are taking their lives.

I fully agree that welfare is crucial in our line of work, and I wish more people (mainly customers) showed compassion when dealing with unwanted visitors.

Thank you for a great read."

**Chris E, Senior Pest Control Technician, AZK Pest Control**

### Your comments

If you see anything you read here that you'd like to comment on, do it!

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## REFLECTING ON AFGHANISTAN



We've all seen news reports regarding the UK and USA's withdrawal from Afghanistan. Neil Wotherspoon, from BPCA member company Elite Pest Management, was at Kandahar Air Base in 2013 as its pest control manager. He shares his warzone pest management experiences and reflects on his time now that the UK's involvement has come to an end.

With a team of six, we were tasked with looking after the entire Kandahar Air Base. At the height of the conflict, it housed some 35,000 people.

When I stepped off the plane for the first time (23 August, my birthday), the first thing that got me was the blazing sun and the heat. I was astounded by the amount of military personnel around. Welcome to Kandahar.

Animal control was very challenging for two reasons: firstly, rabies is still a prominent risk in Afghanistan, and secondly, we couldn't afford to have animals running over the runway while a fighter jet or plane was present.

Mosquitoes were always a significant concern. The camp lights attracted them to the base and so the control needed to be ongoing. We used light traps early in the season to help identify the species and provide early detection. We had larvicides on the ponds and streams. Then, at 2 am, we carried out treatments using

a London fogger, fitted to the back of the pickup truck.

Bird air strike hazard (BASH) was also very important due to the amount of aircraft and helicopters taking off from the airfield. Control was achieved through various methods, including habitat modification.

Then there were the snakes! The saw-scaled viper was deemed one of the most poisonous and dangerous on camp. We apprehended these using snake catchers and placed them into a large plastic barrel. I'll never forget a Tornado pilot who couldn't get into his plane, as one of these was asleep at the bottom of the steps leading to his cockpit!

Regarding the skillset of the foreign nationals who helped with pest control, my supervisor Robillo from the Philippines, stands out in my mind. He had years of experience and taught me a thing or two about mosquito control and helped with the language barrier.

Pests aside, I'll never forget the first time I heard the rocket attack siren and saw everyone hitting the deck. This truly brought home exactly where I was!

From a purely pest control perspective, it was a great experience. Learning new techniques in mosquito control, BASH, animal control and working with foreign nationals whose work ethics were fantastic. Ex-pats worked around 6.5 days per week for three months then had three weeks off - foreign nationals did 6.5 days per week for 47 weeks with five weeks off.

Looking back on where things are now, I hope everyone on the team is safe and well, including the Afghans I worked with during that period. Politics aside, I hope all the sacrifices that have been made haven't gone to waste.

### Got a story to share?

Send us your pest-related stories, and we'll help you share them with the pest management community.

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



## END OF AN ERA AT SAFEGUARD PEST CONTROL

Following the retirement of Tim Sheehan and Paul Butterick from Safeguard Pest Control, PPC caught up with their team to talk about days gone and the end of an era.

Tim and Paul met at Rentokil in the late 70s, however Tim took a break to become a house husband to his three children. He started a company at his kitchen table and, when it began to expand, he got back in touch with Paul. In 1988 Safeguard was formed, and together they took it from the kitchen table to a multi-million pound company servicing London and the south east.

Over the years their unique partnership has seen them win contracts like the Natural History Museum and the installation of bird deterrent systems at London St Pancras station.

Pennie Gadd, Managing Director at Safeguard, said: "They were the two most brilliant bosses. They looked after staff in all sorts of ways, not just at work but in their personal lives too. They're just nice people and being successful never changed them.

"We'll always be grateful to have worked with Tim and Paul, and we wish them all the best in retirement!"

Read the full story at [ppconline.org/ppc-news](http://ppconline.org/ppc-news)



International

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**PESTS IN THE PRESS: SUMMER 2021**



**TOP 3 MENTIONS**  
 How to get rid of maggots in your wheelie bin (MSN UK)  
 BBC Radio Newcastle  
 Why are seagulls so noisy? (The Sun)

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES INCLUDED:**  
 Sunday Times  
 The Times  
 Good Housekeeping  
 The Daily Mail  
 Sunday Mirror  
 Sun Online  
 Local BBC Breakfast – Coventry & Warks

**SUMMER CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING ON THE BPCA PR FRONT – WASPS!**

In our new regular feature, we take a look at public relations. BPCA spends lots of time working with the press to educate the public about pest awareness and the importance of using a BPCA member for all pest-related issues.

We appeared in national and regional newspapers across the country, and this year also focused on farming and gardening titles, as well as glossy magazines and websites.

A feature article in the Federation of Window Cleaners magazine, Window Talk, also helped drive home the message to window cleaners that having a ladder isn't always enough if you find a well-established wasp nest under the eaves.

Meanwhile, bird proofing stepped up as the 'misunderstood issue of the year' for 2021.

Following concerns in South Wales over 'cruel' seagull spikes and nets, a BPCA article on bird proofing garnered coverage across the UK. In it, we explained why bird proofing should be installed properly for welfare reasons, helping to hammer home the message that professionals should be called in if birds are becoming a nuisance.

A press enquiry on 'Dracula horseflies' provided us with the classic 'DRACULA HORSEFLY HORROR FOR BRITS' headline from the Daily Star. This proved popular, with BBC stations serving Leeds,

**ARTICLES TO-DATE: 322**

Guernsey, Coventry and Warwickshire picking up the story as well as BBC Radio 4, Talk Sport and Talk Radio. On all these channels we were able to get a measured

response on the benefits of using BPCA members and the importance of pest control for public health.

Mosquito deterrence proved a further success in September, with articles in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire helping drive more traffic to the Find a Pest Controller tool, while raising awareness about simple steps such as getting rid of stagnant water.

In the trade press, we targeted titles with specific technical articles including Grain Fumigation for Feed Compounder magazine, Pest Maintenance Cycles for

SOFHT Focus – the magazine for the Society of Food Hygiene and Technology, and more wasps in the workplace for Tomorrow's Cleaning.

As September ended, we issued releases on fleas and cockroaches, with an overview of insect stings and bites as requested by the Derby Telegraph.

We continue to champion the role BPCA members play in keeping everyone safe while steering the conversation about public health pests across the UK press, acting as the go-to organisation for pest control information and advice.

**Read all about it!**  
 Spot something in the press? Idea for a press release? Tell us.  
**hello@bpca.org.uk**

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## PESTS IN POLITICS: SUMMER 2021

With pest management under the spotlight, particularly regarding glue boards, BPCA has spent more time than ever monitoring what's happening in the UK Parliament and the devolved administrations. This new regular feature will help keep you in the loop.

### ▶ The Welsh Government has announced its intention to ban the use of glue boards in Wales

While the Welsh Government had previously said it plans to ban snares, this is the first time they have committed to doing the same for glue traps.

The announcement follows RSPCA Cymru's recent #LawsForPaws campaign - where animal lovers across Wales sent thousands of emails to their members of the Senedd, urging them to propose RSPCA-backed animal-friendly proposals, including a Glue Trap Offences (Wales) Bill.

The Welsh Government has responded by confirming it backs the Bill.

David Bowles, the head of public affairs at the RSPCA, said: "These traps can cause immense pain and suffering to animals, and should have no place in modern Wales. So we're absolutely delighted that the Welsh Government has now announced plans to outlaw glue traps once and for all, as it outlines its next steps linked to the landmark Agriculture (Wales) Bill."

This comes in the wake of the UK government publicly backing a Bill banning the use of glue boards for pest control, making the continued use of them hard to defend.

A Government press release from June stated: "The new Bill will enable a full ban on the use of glue traps to catch rodents.

"The UK has a strong history of leading the way on animal welfare and now that we have left the EU, the Government is committed to improving these standards even further by delivering a series of ambitious reforms, outlined in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare."

Helen Hayes, the Labour MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, asked the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps his department is taking to prevent birds and small mammals from being caught in glue traps.

Rebecca Pow MP (Conservative, Taunton Deane) replied: "In our Action Plan for Animal Welfare, published in May this year, we announced that we would look to restrict the use of glue traps as a means of pest control. Accordingly, we are supporting the Honourable Member for Wolverhampton North East's Glue Traps (Offences) Private Members' Bill, which proposes to ban the use of glue traps for catching rodents. The Bill was introduced to

Parliament on 16 June, and we will work closely with her over the coming months as the Bill progresses through Parliament.

"Anyone using glue traps already has a responsibility under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to act within the law to ensure their activities do not cause any unnecessary suffering. The industry's code of best practice, produced after consultation with Defra, the Animal and Plant Health Agency and Natural England, provides clear principles for the legal use of glue traps, including measures to protect non-target animals."

### ▶ [pmalliance.org.uk/codes-of-best-practice](http://pmalliance.org.uk/codes-of-best-practice)

Following consultation with members, it was decided that BPCA would lobby the government to consider the continued use of glue boards for pest management professionals.

### ▶ Beyond glue boards

Steve Reed, the Labour (Co-op) MP for Croydon North and Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, asked the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, "What assessment has he made of the effectiveness of pest control services provided by local authorities?"

Rebecca Pow, Conservative MP for Taunton Deane, replied: "Depending on the cause of an infestation, local authorities have certain responsibilities where pest control is concerned, and they have the flexibility to allocate resources to address local priorities, based on an assessment of risk. Local priorities will vary across geographical areas and might involve one or more types of pest ranging from wasps, rats, mice and bedbugs.

"Under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, local authorities have a duty to deal with infestations of rats and mice. In order to help coordinate central Government's expectation of regulatory services in local government, including environmental health services and, to propose short and long-term options to support these essential services, the government is supporting regulatory services teams through the Regulatory Services Task and Finish Group."

▶ In the House of Lords, Lord Beith asked Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to issue guidance to local authorities about the control of badgers in cemeteries and burial grounds.

This was answered by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park, stating: "Natural England is authorised, on behalf of the Secretary of State, to grant licences for this purpose. In situations where badgers are causing damage

to cemeteries or burial grounds, NE can provide case-specific advice to the local authority if requested, and this may include a site visit where this would be beneficial.

"If the damage is caused by foraging activities, then advice will normally relate to preventive measures that do not require a licence, such as the use of fencing and other proofing. Where the sett itself is causing damage to graves, then an application for a licence to exclude badgers from the sett may be appropriate."

▶ In the Northern Ireland Assembly, Andy Allen MLA (East Belfast) asked ministers numerous pest-related questions. He asked The Minister for Communities...

- If the Housing Executive defines pest control requests as urgent, routine or as an emergency; and to outline the criteria used to assess priority
  - To detail the number of pest control requests received by the Housing Executive in each of the last five years, broken down by constituency
  - The total amount the Housing Executive has spent on pest control services in each of the last five years.
  - The Housing Executive's response time to each pest control request in each of the last five years, broken down by constituency.
- BPCA is interested in Mr Allen's replies, and is reaching out to him to understand his concerns better.

▶ The Countryside Alliance Wales has publicly come out in opposition to Wales's proposed snare ban. Countryside Alliance Wales support the code-compliant use of snares and see them as a vital tool in pest control.

They say that removing this option will be detrimental to improving biodiversity in Wales and make fox control in some agricultural areas of Wales extremely difficult to undertake.

▶ The MSP for Banffshire and Buchan Coast Karen Adam chaired a public meeting virtually on Wednesday 22 September with 45 attendees on the seagull issue prevalent in Aberdeenshire and Moray. Residents in the area had contacted her with concerns about the number of gulls along the north coast and the impact on the public's well-being and safety. She invited Council representatives, conservation and pest control figures and locals to partake. Ms Adam said: "...collaborative working is so important, by introducing a package of measures, we may be able to tackle the gull issue head on."

BACK TO BASICS

# TREATMENT REPORTS

## WHAT SHOULD THEY CONTAIN?

- Q** As a professional, what's the best way to protect yourself from legal action when working with harmful chemicals and specialist equipment in homes and businesses?
- A** A pest management treatment report.



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



**T**here may be times in your career when you're asked to justify the work you have carried out. It could be that you've installed bird control netting, and members of the public have complained that it's harmful. Or maybe you carried out an insecticide treatment in a residential property, and now that customer is accusing you of poisoning their pet. These aren't crazy examples; we've heard all of this and more.

But a thorough and honest account of the actions you have taken, and the products you have used during your work, can help you if a customer brings legal action against you (or simply threatens to do so).

When an end-user employs a professional pest management company, be it residential or commercial, they will have certain expectations, including:

- Clear, detailed information on what you've done
- Any recommendations made
- Any pesticides that may have been used.

This is your treatment report. A treatment report will form part of your evidence or defence, should you need to show that you carried out the appropriate actions, safety measures, information sharing and visit quantities.

### Legislation - the highlights

Some pieces of legislation you'll need to keep in mind when carrying out your pest management work and to write up the subsequent report are:

- Biocidal Product Regulations (BPR) 2012 - (label conditions)
- Control of Pesticide Regulations (COPR) 1986 - (label conditions)
- Health and Safety At Work Act 1974
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regs 2002
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

These pieces of legislation may be used in a case against you, and if you do not record your activities thoroughly, you have no way of proving you followed the law correctly.

## THE ESSENTIALS

As you know, being a BPCA member means following our Codes of Best Practice. We have one for report writing, and the following items are included in it. These must always be carried out or followed, whether it is in handwritten or electronic format. Verbal communication, on its own, is not acceptable.

Every visit you carry out, you must complete a detailed report and leave a copy with the customer.

If you have any recommendations for hygiene, proofing, and housekeeping, these must be recorded on the report.

Reports must be dated.

Reports must have a customer signature or electronic confirmation, which shows they have read and understood the treatment report.

Reports must have the technician's name and signature and must be legible.

Any post-treatment requirements must be included within the report or in a supporting document.

If you have multiple customers (eg landlords with tenants), you must ensure the occupier of the premises has details on the actions taken and the pesticides used. This must be done directly, in addition to the paying customer.

Information on any chemicals used must be provided. The active ingredient, trade name, quantity and location (eg 'behind kickboards in the kitchen') should all be included as a minimum.

Any warnings must be discussed and recorded with the customer (eg 'do not go into the treatment area until dry').

Any relevant follow-up information must be stated on the report.

## DON'T FORGET THE FREE TOOLS WE PROVIDE!



Members can access templates for all kinds of things, including treatment reports, client log sheets and visit logs. It could also make you look professional to provide your customer with detailed information on the pest you are treating, and we have advice leaflets for the following:

- Bed bugs
- Birds
- Cockroaches
- Fleas
- Mice
- Rats
- Stored product insects
- Squirrels
- Wasps.

FREE!

### Download the Code

All BPCA Codes are freely available to download and review online.

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

BPCA

# PestEX

16-17 March '22  
ExCeL, London

REGISTER NOW AT

The pest management show [pestex.org](http://pestex.org)



WE  
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Connect and protect at PestEx: networking+trade hall+seminars+CPD



**WE'RE  
BACK!**

**While PestExtra brought us together virtually, we're ready to be united again in those halls!**

Here's an exclusive sneak-peek at some of our confirmed plans:

## THE BEST SEMINAR THEATRES

Two seminar theatres, packed full of technical and business seminars across the two days.

Here are some that we've already confirmed:

### Rodent zoonoses – what next?

Professor Mark Viney  
(University of Liverpool)

### Three decades in wildlife management

Paul Butt

### Pest control mythbusters 2: "Now it's personal."

Alex Wade, Jonathan Wade  
(Wade Environmental)

### What's the beetle? Identification simplification

Grahame Turner  
(PestAcuity)

### How pest control products are born; launching regulated products

Jim Kirk and Dawn Kirby  
(Rentokil)

### Asian hornet nest destruction

Robert Moon (Applicateur 3D)

### Paws for thought – medical problems and infections from pests

Dr Alex Kew (NHS)

### Predicting and preventing the arrival of invasive non-native species in Britain and beyond

Professor Helen Roy (UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology)

### Animal welfare impacts in Norway rat management

Dr Sandra Baker (University of Oxford)

### The science of scent: new approaches for pest control and disease diagnosis using nature's toolkit

Dr Vanessa Chen-Hussey  
(BugScents)

...plenty more to be announced!

## SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

This year we'd like to showcase pest professionals with interesting case studies. If you'd be interested in talking at PestEx, and sharing your knowledge with others, get in touch with our events team: [events@bpca.org.uk](mailto:events@bpca.org.uk)

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## THE BIGGEST TRADE HALL

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NPTA and PMA

OSD Gruppo Ecotech

Orma SRL

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Trece Inc

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WAINS GmbH

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...and more added every week!

Want to exhibit at the pest management show? Get in touch today: [events@bpca.org.uk](mailto:events@bpca.org.uk)

REGISTER NOW AT

**pestex.org**



## OPINION

CONSIDERING  
THE FUTURE OF  
DIGITAL PEST  
CONTROLA WILD  
FRONTIER?

Daniel Schröer is the CEO of Futura, a company specialising in digital, toxin-free pest control solutions, based in Germany. He's also the host of the popular pest management podcast Talking Pest Management. We tasked him to look into his crystal ball and share his thoughts on what 'digital pest control' means for the sector. Will we soon all need to be IT engineers to catch a rat?

In 2005, we invented the first digital mousetrap. Sixteen years later, digitised IoT traps have made it to the annual reports of the large corporations of our industry. But did they make it to every shop floor or every warehouse? Not at all.

Experts like Bobby Corrigan said in 2015, "It's a no brainer," and we were convinced IoT sensors, cameras, and AI-driven traps would reign supreme over the next five years in pest management.

Well, they haven't yet.

They've been present, but they didn't 'pop' exponentially – for now, at least.

Here are my thoughts as to why; some will likely surprise you!

Building a smart trap is like building and understanding an iPhone. You need to build the product, the software for the product, connect it to the internet, have everything certified and approved, host secure servers, work on algorithms, build an app and web portal, deploy a service, sales and marketing team and much more.

**False starts**

When the product is finished and hits the markets, it suddenly sends 30 false alerts per day, isn't protected enough against dust, water and corrosion, or doesn't have a connection to the internet despite the installation of 12 costly repeaters. This is a common problem for a start-up that smells 'big money' with potentially millions of traps to be connected over the next decade, and I've experienced it over a dozen times.

**Barrier to entry**

The entry barrier for start-ups is significant, and the fail rate is high. Most new entrants make basic mistakes like using the wrong standards such as WiFi (not secure and low distance), Sigfox or LoRaWan (both are decentralised networks, trying to tackle Telekom, Vodafone and the likes with little success).

**Talking Pest Management** is a popular pest control podcast, designed for business leaders and opinion formers around the globe. Hosted by Daniel, videos feature interviews with prominent industry figures to bring you pest management insights. Previous interviews include BPCA Chief Executive Ian Andrew and former CEPA President Henry Mott.

[futura-germany.com/our-industry/tpm/talking-pest-management.php](http://futura-germany.com/our-industry/tpm/talking-pest-management.php)



Complexity





# “Times will get wilder, with more people popping up and promising more than they can deliver.”

## Trust

Many start-ups sell an idea and a 3D printed prototype with great sales and marketing endeavours for a tried and tested product. I've witnessed and befriended many entrepreneurs who've fallen for it in the past. They invested five or six-figure amounts into a solution that, after installation, stopped working after weeks or months. Of course, the money was gone, and so was the start-up. Entrepreneurs lose trust, and the transformation again loses speed.

## Technology

Good tech is complex! It's one thing to create a prototype, but another to maintain, update and service it over ten years. As a serious pest control service company, if you look ahead 10-20 years, you will agree that 10-20,000 IoT sensors could become a reality even for mid-sized operators.

Well, would you buy these from a young start-up and lever all your risk on them? Technology is complex and needs trust and years of validation. Little tech companies in our industry can offer this reputation, but you have to find them before you risk that the investors of the start-up sell their equity to the next competitor of yours with your data.

All of this doesn't just apply to the IoT tech solutions; think of all the software companies out there. Software should be 'easier' to realise as it's 'just code' with no product involved. But still, the same obstacles apply.

## What do I think the next five to ten years look like?

Times will get wilder, with more people popping up to overpromise and underdeliver.

I made a video in 2015 about how IoT can be a large financial risk to your business and that my main advice is to buy a few different products and test them for a year.

Ask as many questions as you can and try to become a professional yourself. I uploaded a 15-question webinar for this in 2016. It's still online, and just as accurate and valid as today.

[futura-germany.com/customers/webinare/online-course-digital-pestcontrol.php](http://futura-germany.com/customers/webinare/online-course-digital-pestcontrol.php)

After this initial investment, you're likely to eventually find yourself with 10,000 sensors surveilling your pest boxes ten years down the line.

Imagine having invested over £1m, and then this start-up sells to your competitor with your data or goes bankrupt and discontinues the product!

The next five to ten years will be very relevant for our digital future.

Be patient; you won't miss out on anything.

Don't let yourself be sold to, based on a promising marketing presentation. Try to educate yourself slowly by speaking to the right people and asking for their cost-free advice. And sooner or later, the right product will appear.

It'll enable you and your business to thrive in digital pest control and secure your business model for the next 20 years. And I do genuinely believe digital pest control is going to be the future.

It's a slow transformation, but it makes so much sense considering efficiency – it's inevitable.

## Got a question about digital pest control?

Daniel and his team are on hand and happy to answer any follow-up questions. Contact them directly or ping them to us; they might appear in the next issue of PPC, complete with answers!

[hello@bpca.org.uk](mailto:hello@bpca.org.uk)  
[futura-germany.com](http://futura-germany.com)

## THE NOKIA EFFECT

The big corporations of our industry will deploy over 500,000 devices until the end of the year, and approximately 3,000,000 until 2026. This leaves them with an army of fragile IoT sensors of an 'early generation' developed around 2016.

These 'legacy' systems will soon get replaced by better, smaller, longer-lasting solutions from other companies that the clients will prefer and demand.

Of course, the pest managers will remain gatekeepers, but the clients will drive the change to the modern iPhone from a Nokia device. And the Top 200 companies in this industry will be the drivers of this change, and it will be quicker than we all expect it to be.

## Glossary

### IoT

The Internet of Things describes physical objects that are embedded with sensors, processing ability, software, and other technologies and that connect and exchange data with other devices and systems over the internet or other communications networks.

### IP

Ingress protection. For example, protection from water spray from any direction. Protected from total dust ingress. Protected from low-pressure water jets from any direction.

### Sigfox/LoRaWan

Different standards of low-power wide-area networks. They're different methods of connecting devices together as part of the IoT.

# WHAT'S OUT THERE?

DIGITAL PEST MANAGEMENT REPORTING SOFTWARE



Making the switch from paper reports to digital might feel daunting, but there are plenty of potential benefits.

Once a system is in place, you'll potentially save time and improve communications between you and your clients. Plus, your piles of paper records will stop cluttering your limited office space.

But implementing the wrong technology can be expensive, frustrating and potentially disastrous for your business.

Lin French from BPCA member company 5 Star Pest Control got in touch to tell us about her experience of going digital.

"We began to use a job management solution to replace the Word invoices and spreadsheet database that we'd been using for ten years.

"We were totally paper-based, using pads of inspection reports. The copies had to be filed in ever-increasing numbers of filing cabinets.

"We noticed Powered Now had inspection forms for gas, electric etc but none for the pest control industry, so we asked if they could create one for us.

"Together, we came up with an inspection report that had all the information required, which is sent directly to the customer."

**How many PPC readers use digital reporting?**  
259 respondents



### Data processing

Remember, your client data is subject to the General Data Processing Regulations (GDPR). You are responsible for keeping your client's data safe, secure and ethical. BPCA members have free access to our GDPR and Data Processing Microlearning course.  
[bpca.org.uk/online-learning](http://bpca.org.uk/online-learning)

**We reached out to the pest control software marketplace to help you decide if the time is right to go digital.**



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

### They say...

PestScan offers you complete pest control software. People often choose PestScan because they consider it the most user-friendly software on the market. We have 12 years of experience in the pest control industry and developed a package that is tailored to the processes of every pest controller. We are home in the UK and Europe and work worldwide.

With PestScan, you set up your business processes optimally and you can monitor them with advanced reports complying to all IPM rules. You monitor pest activity on site using our app on your phone, tablet or scanner.

### Features

- Advanced reporting and trend analysis
- Mobile app can be used offline
- Your own logo and colour scheme
- Customer portal
- Automatic sending of visit reports by e-mail
- Customers recommendations with photo documentation.

### Bolt-on extras

Planning tool (interactive calendar), role management (grant different access levels to staff and customers), stock control (charts of used products), permanent monitoring (integration with different smart traps), invoicing (for contract holders, work orders and jobs).

### Coming soon

Route optimisation, automatic back-ups, Google/Outlook calendar integration.

### Based in Holland (fluent English support)

**Price: £158 per month**  
**£1,896 per year**  
**office users free / no setup charge**





### powerednow.com

#### They say...

No one goes into business to do paperwork. If forgotten quotes, unpaid invoices or filing cabinets full of pest control paperwork is keeping you awake at night, Powered Now can help.

Our affordable and easy-to-use software runs on your mobile, tablet or computer and even works offline, so even if you don't have a signal you can keep your business running smoothly. Our software is backed up by an award-winning UK based support team and comes with a free 14-day trial. If you would like to learn more, sign up for a free demo on our website.

#### Features

- Cover all major paperwork including quotes, invoices, job sheets and have a form for pest control companies
- Works on every device on and offline, you can literally manage your business from your phone
- A full contact system that allows you to look after single customers as well as housing associations, landlords or construction sites
- Everything is stored in a project, so you always have a record of everything you've done for a customer
- Detailed financial overview including compliance with HMRC so you can submit your VAT returns without the need of an expensive accountant or bookkeeper
- Feature-rich diary and scheduling system so you can manage your jobs, staff and customers easily
- Team features such as team tracking and chat so you can easily dispatch staff and manage routes.

#### Coming soon

New customer portal, your customers can log in and access all their records from a single place.

Support for sending messages via WhatsApp.

New team HR features including managing staff holiday and sickness records.

#### Based in UK

Price: £125 per month  
£1,250 per year



### propertyinspect.com/uk/pest-control-software

#### They say...

Property Inspect allows for complete control of pest management in public spaces, agriculture, residential and commercial buildings to protect people and the environment. Our Pest Control software allows companies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their customers by automating all aspects of operations providing compliant pest control and documenting.

Create unlimited digital forms to capture property conditions, photos and pest issues right from your mobile or tablet using our friendly inspection app.

#### Features

- Online dashboard with live timelines and audit trails of all events and activity across all your properties and users
- Assisted scheduling – schedule any kind of property or site visit, including schedule of condition, inspections, moves in/out, advance allocation to specific team members and notes/information for key collection or access
- Automated scheduling – create custom schedules of different property visits or reports to automate notifying when inspections are due
- Offline app for in-field report data collection, photos, audio and video that works on any Apple or Android device
- Team diary of property visits with ability to sync to and from calendars and external systems
- Custom workflows – automatic transfer of reports to office staff for review or directly to landlords/tenants to view online configured on a per-user basis
- Automated SMS reminders of scheduled visits for tenants or property owners.

#### Bolt-on extras

Advanced fields, premium templates, advanced scheduling, live bookings availability, SMS messages.

#### Based in UK

Price: £149 per month  
£1,490 per year  
Free trial available  
500 properties included





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

 **They say...**

ServSuite is an enterprise pest control software solution. Our cloud-based technology gives pest management professionals the flexibility to work from anywhere while driving efficiency in operations both in the office and in the field.

For over 20 years, we've been making it easier, quicker, and cost-effective for pest control companies to build strategic growth. In 2021, ServicePro partnered with ServiceTitan, the no. 1 software for contractors. Together with ServiceTitan and its reputation as one of the fastest-growing solution providers in the service industry, we will build best-in-class software for the pest, lawn, and arbour industries.

 **Features**

- A powerful mobile app that empowers technicians in the field and provides a stable connection between office and field staff throughout the day
- ServSuite scheduler complete with drag and drop scheduling provides a user-friendly way to manage technicians' workflow and dynamic visibility of productivity
- The routing feature makes it easy to update technicians' schedules and add more services to routes according to their availability and location
- Reporting is fully customisable and enhanced with flexible report assignment, meaning that business owners have full control to build reports based on their unique business needs
- Customer web portal means customers can access their account information, view service history, and even pay their bills - improving a business's bottom line in the process
- Advanced mapping technology allows sales representatives to view other opportunities in the area, manage proposals, and even capture e-signatures on the spot
- You can see vehicles' locations in real-time, setting up real-time updates meaning that the route being taken can be compared to the planned route with ease.

 **Based in USA**

 **Price: contact sales team**



[servicetrackersystems.com](http://servicetrackersystems.com)

 **They say...**

Run your entire business more efficiently, more productively and more harmoniously, all from a single device and from anywhere in the world. We provide you with competitive clout, giving you the edge in the industry with your own bespoke customer portals and bespoke treatment reports while taking care of your compliance, regulations and unifying all key functions of your business.

Put simply, ServiceTracker is a software solution developed by the pest control industry for the pest control industry. We are not just a team of techies; we understand pest control and we understand your business.

 **Features**

- Schedule once and the system will take care of the rest
- Electronic service reports with photos, trend analysis, signatures and CRRU
- Simple report writing and graph tools
- Fully customisable customer portal, replacing logbooks
- Sales and marketing tools via the Salesforce.com platform
- Recommendation reporting and Action management for BRC
- Dynamic mobile device for iOS and Android with barcode scanning and much more.

 **Bolt-on extras**

Integration with Sage50, Xero and Quickbooks, bespoke Integration with additional systems, online booking system, SMS text services, remote monitoring integration.

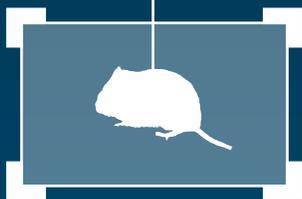
 **Coming soon**

Detailed site plans captured via the mobile, interactive site plans on the customer portal with heat maps, supplier integration for stock ordering.

 **Based in UK**

 **Price: £1,800 per year no set up costs**





## workpal.app

### They say...

WorkPal offers businesses an end-to-end field service management solution that streamlines operations from initial quotation through to invoicing. Developed and supported in-house, WorkPal will save you time and money allowing you to complete more jobs per day, deliver a better service to your customers and remain compliant for auditing purposes.

Improving communication between field workers and office staff, the software creates a better way of working. The utilisation of barcode scanning of monitoring points allows operatives to complete jobs more efficiently.

### Features

- Live job scheduling
- Asset management
- Tasks and parts
- Client/sub-contractor portals
- Management
- Quotation and invoice management
- KPI/SLA reporting.



### Bolt-on extras

Vehicle and hardware tracking, custom forms and reports.

### Coming soon

Stock management, purchase ordering, API integration.

### Based in NI, UK

 **Price: Pro version £2,100 per year**  
**Apprentice version £1,500 per year**



## OTHER REPORTING SOFTWARE

As part of our PPC Technology Survey, we asked what software pest control companies used to report.

Here are some of the other popular providers not included in our comparison:

 **Big Change**  
Save valuable time and stay connected to every aspect of your business with our field service management software. BigChange uses an innovative cloud-based technology which helps you track and control every job from a single platform – all backed by our dedicated expert support.  
[bigchange.com](http://bigchange.com)

 **Salesforce**  
Manage and improve the relationships you have with your customers, prospects and partners from one unified platform.  
[salesforce.com/uk](http://salesforce.com/uk)

 **FormConnect**  
FormConnect, your business app for collecting and sharing information on the go. Download it from the iTunes App Store.  
[formconnections.com](http://formconnections.com)

 **Field Motion**  
Designed to fit your unique workflow. Our software doesn't change what you include in your job sheets. But it can radically change how you complete and manage them.  
[fieldmotion.com](http://fieldmotion.com)

 **HS Direct**  
We're here to help take care of all your health and safety, human resources and employment law needs. From documents and templates, to software solutions and elearning programmes, we're here when you need us.  
[hsdirect.co.uk](http://hsdirect.co.uk)

 **Service M8**  
Simplify and streamline your operations. Take control and work smarter from the client's first call through to scheduling, quoting, job completion, invoicing and payment.  
[servicem8.com/uk](http://servicem8.com/uk)

## DIY SOLUTIONS

Not ready to invest? Document sharing services like OneDrive, Google Docs and DropBox enable you to share Word or Excel documents with your customers. Simply set up folders for each of your clients and drop in digital versions of your reports.

You can then share a link to the folder with your customer, and whenever you update a file, they'll see the latest version.

It'll take a bit of set-up, and it might feel like a very manual process, but this might be worth trialling with a few customers to see if digital reporting is right for you.



# STATE OF PLAY

HOW TECHNOLOGY IS SHAPING PEST CONTROL STRATEGIES IN 2021



Pest management is going through a technological revolution thanks to smart traps, remote monitoring, data availability, and the Internet of Things becoming more affordable and reliable. We asked Paul Blackhurst, Head of the UK Technical Academy at BPCA member company Rentokil Pest Control, to share his views on how technology can enhance our management programmes.

**T**he pandemic has accelerated digital transformation across many sectors. Numerous companies and even the government, schools, and GP surgeries pivoted to operate remotely for periods of time. These rapid shifts have shown just how vital technology is for continuity as well as for strategic planning, helping organisations to make smarter decisions. The pest control industry is no different.

As the UK's vaccination programme continues to roll on, the government is keen for businesses, schools and workplaces to cautiously get 'back to normal'. For some sectors, this means people will be back at their regular places of work full time, but the reality is that many will adopt a hybrid approach. Office workers, in particular, are likely to split their time between offices and working from home. This fluctuation in traffic is likely to mean that homes, offices and businesses will require better monitoring solutions to manage pest activity, and this is where technology and pest control converge.

With new technology, the pest control industry can use data to better understand the impact of pests and develop the best solutions for customers in the hybrid work era. But what do these intelligent solutions look like? Let's explore some of the latest innovations in the industry by taking a deep dive into tackling rodents.

## A growing threat?

While rodents have long plagued residential and commercial properties, there is evidence that their numbers have increased. Data released by Rentokil Pest Control found that online traffic to its rodent pages has increased over five consecutive years – 37% higher in 2020 compared to 2015. [walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/people-needing-help-rats-up-19757359](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/people-needing-help-rats-up-19757359)

Weather patterns could also be one element contributing to this increase. Warmer weather in the UK in recent years could be creating favourable conditions for rodents to produce more litters in a season and then survive the winter when colder weather usually curtails the population. In addition, many unoccupied office blocks during the pandemic provided a quiet and safe place for rodents to hide, creating favourable conditions for rats and mice to breed.

[inews.co.uk/news/uk-weather-climate-change-summer-temperatures-too-hot-britain-1167747](https://www.inews.co.uk/news/uk-weather-climate-change-summer-temperatures-too-hot-britain-1167747)

[wired.co.uk/article/office-mutant-rats](https://www.wired.co.uk/article/office-mutant-rats)

But now, as businesses plan for the return of workers, clients will be looking to the industry to help ensure that their premises are hygienic and pest free. Here's where new technology comes in, as data can play a valuable role in helping to inform pest prevention strategies as well as providing assurance to employers and staff.

## Harnessing data for better pest monitoring

Previously, data collection has been the biggest barrier in holding the pest control industry back from being more data-driven. But with improvements in connected technology, as well as innovations from some of the key players, such as Rentokil, the pest control industry is on a data collection drive.

New technology, including connected traps and bait boxes, provides 24/7 monitoring and data collection to help inform the understanding of pest control professionals' understanding of where, how, and when rodents have entered premises. This means that they can work with clients to better pest-proof their premises and ensure the root cause of any pest break-in is dealt with quickly.

After all, once rodents gain access to premises, they can be very difficult to control, so preventing them from gaining access in the first place is key. The data from intelligent pest management systems, like Rentokil's connected solution PestConnect, can prove invaluable in helping facilities managers and pest controllers understand rodent behaviour in relation to different types of premises. For example, when we analysed the data from thousands of PestConnect devices deployed across the country, we discovered that the most common time that a rodent is active in an office setting is 0:36am.

While it is useful to know when rats and mice are most active, PestConnect can also identify exactly where they are located. In turn, this can help our experts target their pest prevention strategies for customers, and help identify hidden ingress points and rodent hiding places that otherwise may not be discovered.

**We can use data to understand the impact of pests better and develop the best solutions for customers**

**Traffic to Rentokil's rodent pages has increased over five years**

**Warmer UK weather could be favourable for rodents to produce more litters**

**Data indicates that the most common time for rodent activity in an office is 0:36am**

**30% of rodent infestations in warehouses originate in the loading bay**

**Tesco sites reduced reliance on rodenticide by up to 40% using the latest technology**



PestConnect, combined with the MyRentokil Floor Plan App as part of a wider cloud-based digital ecosystem, have transformed the way Rentokil technicians work on-site. They can now visualise and interact with customer sites digitally, which is improving the quality of service delivered and the efficiency of frontline colleagues. With the FloorPlan app, technicians can see exactly where pest prevention measures have been implemented, making their time on-site focused on pest proofing and prevention strategies, as opposed to locating traps and bait boxes. They can also quickly access the locations of previous pest issues or areas of concern to give a complete pest prevention overview to the client.

Data can also help pest controllers suggest behavioural solutions for clients. For example, analysis of our data found that 30% of rodent infestations in warehouses originate in the loading bay, where building entrances are frequently open. So, in this case, technicians were able to work with the client to encourage employees to ensure loading bay doors were closed when not in use to prevent rodents from entering.

These behavioural insights based on data can also help pest controllers both on the frontline, and in the research and development teams, to plan, design and execute better pest prevention products.

### **The technology for a holistic, humane solution**

In today's world, clients are likely to have a responsibility for helping their organisations

improve their environmental footprint. Pest control is not solely about getting rid of pests but doing it in an effective, humane and sustainable way.

A digital system such as PestConnect is a connected and fully integrated pest control solution that acts like a rodent burglar alarm. This not only provides the data to enhance pest prevention strategies but also helps improve environmental outcomes by reducing the reliance on toxic baits. By deploying PestConnect at Tesco sites across the country, this British retailer reduced its reliance on rodenticide bait by up to 40%.

#### **[thegrocer.co.uk/tesco/rat-burglar-alarms-cut-harmful-rodenticide-use-across-tesco-estate-by-40/655458](https://thegrocer.co.uk/tesco/rat-burglar-alarms-cut-harmful-rodenticide-use-across-tesco-estate-by-40/655458).article**

PestConnect uses three 'connected' traps:

- Dual AutoGate Connect with infrared sensors to detect rodents outside the premises, exposing rodenticide in external bait stations to the target pest only once they have been detected, and then closing again to seal off rodenticide from the outside environment after the target pest has been controlled
- RADARConnect for those mice that manage to find their way indoors
- Rat Riddance Connect, a smart trap used to monitor and control rat activity inside.

This network of connected devices helps to provide further confidence when it comes to using rodenticides responsibly. RADARConnect traps kill mice using carbon dioxide, a faster and more humane method of elimination, without using rodenticide. Rat Riddance Connect is a connected mechanical trap, and Dual AutoGate

Connect is a device with a barrier between bait and the environment, which only opens during an active rodent infestation.

### **Final thoughts**

Digital pest control solutions can provide 24/7 monitoring and control of rodents as well as an unprecedented level of insight. Pest professionals are then able to use this data with their clients to implement bespoke pest management strategies, that not only comply with all health and safety legislation but also deliver environmental benefits, such as a reduction in toxic bait usage.

While we remain hopeful that life will return to normal in the long term, the next few months will inevitably bring their own challenges. But with the right technology and systems in place, pest management does not need to pose an additional challenge for clients. Employing a preventative strategy using digital solutions will mean that, while many areas of life remain uncertain, costly infestations are much less likely to disrupt businesses from getting back on track.

### **What does technology mean to you?**

Love it or hate it, technology is going to have an increasingly crucial role to play in managing pests. Share your thoughts on embracing technology, and we might just print them in a future issue of PPC.

**hello@bpca.org.uk**

# WHERE ARE WE IN 2021?

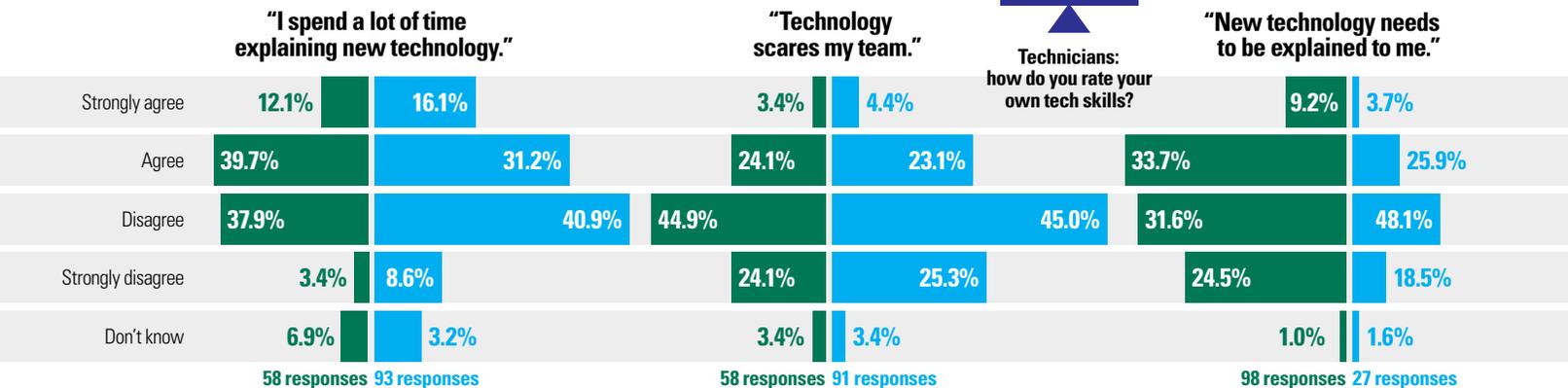
## PEST CONTROL AND TECHNOLOGY

If Back to the Future was to be believed, we should all be chasing pests on hoverboards wearing augmented reality goggles by now. Alas, we're not quite there yet, but the sector has come a long way since the birth of the digital age. We asked PPC readers to share their insights on how technology impacts their pest management processes. Here are our key findings.

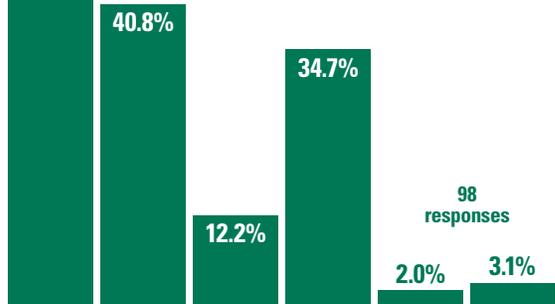
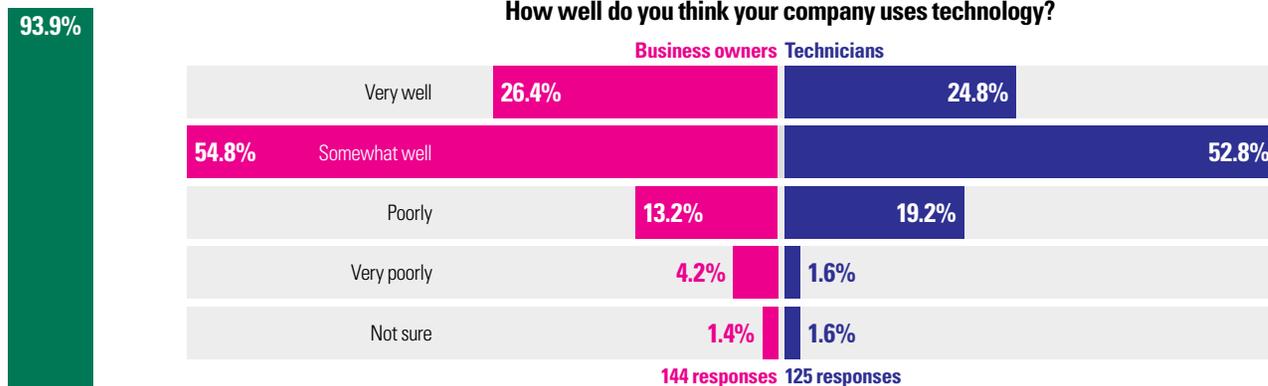
Managers / owners:  
how do you rate your  
team's tech skills?



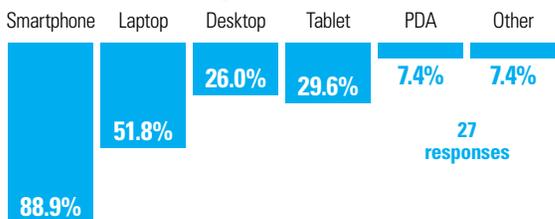
Technicians:  
how do you rate your  
own tech skills?



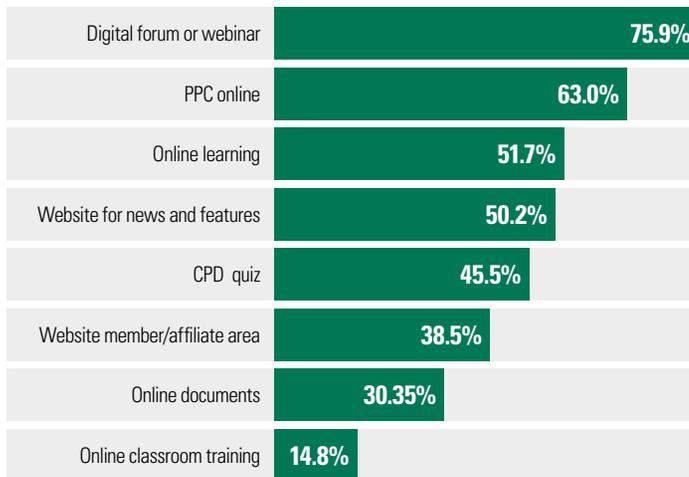
### How well do you think your company uses technology?



### What technology is issued to technicians?



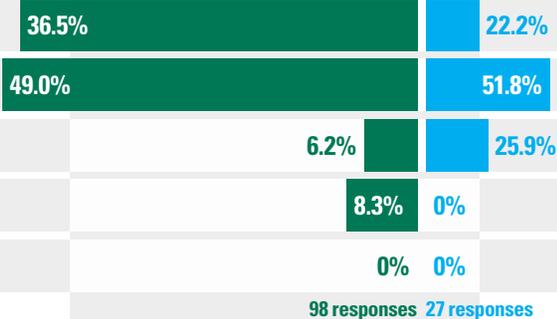
### Most popular BPCA online resources





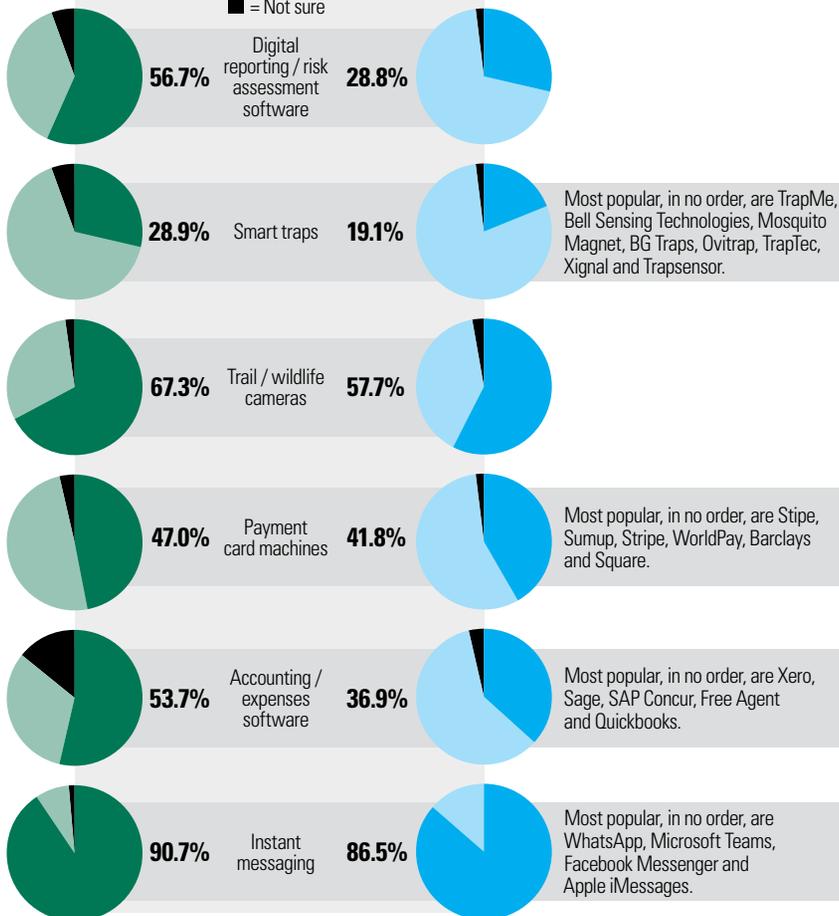
## TECH AND APPS IN ACTION

"I enjoy gadgets and new technology."



### Specific technology in use

■ = Not sure



Those who regularly learn things online.

98% 92%

Technicians are doing a lot of CPD online.

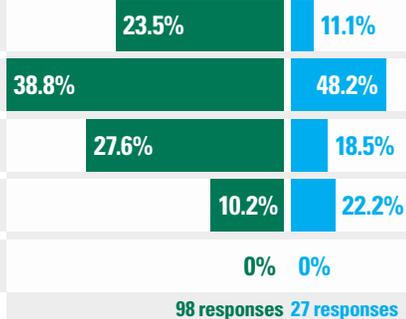
BPCA member technicians who play video games.

45%

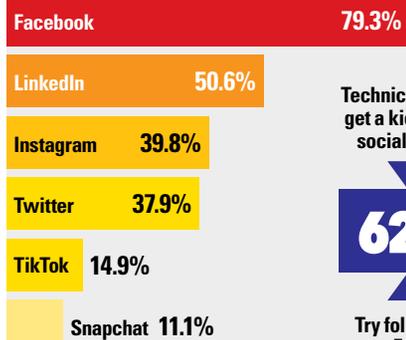
Any gamers in the room?

## SHARES AND SOCIALS

"I enjoy using social media."



### Top social media channels



Technicians that get a kick out of social media.

62%

Try following us on Facebook and Twitter!

### Are you a part of an online pest control group?



Most popular, in no order, are Rat Detectives, UK Pest Controllers, British Pest Control Group, Discount Pest Control, Professional Bird Proofing and Pest Control Training.

Technicians who regularly forget passwords!

42%

"Where did I write it down again?"

Technicians that take pics of their work.

97%

We're all nature photographers.



### Digital, Professional Pest Control Software

Property Inspect allows for complete control of pest management in public spaces, agriculture, residential and commercial buildings to protect people and the environment.

Our software automates all aspects of operations providing compliant pest control and documenting.



## Say Goodbye to Paper & Pen Forms

When your company has won a pest control contract to manage a building, your main objective is to deliver a high standard of control, prevention & management for your customer.

This management process should include, protecting the internal as well as external areas of the building in a safe & organised manner without impacting or harming non-targeted species or humans.

Our Live Dashboard allows businesses to schedule, track and manage in real-time. Assign inspections and work orders between your staff and suppliers. Property Inspect keeps a live timeline of all events, notifications and history, alerts you instantly when something happens and provides summaries of your outstanding and past reports.



### Diary management, servicing & tools

By developing software to a high standard, our App will help you forward plan your routine servicing or treatments with sync diary management, compare past services visits, treatments, update locations & bait plans, which can be site specific templates for each building (templates agreed prior to going live), keep audit trails and stay compliant.

Allocate appointments between your staff and clients, with instant alerts when something happens and quick summaries of your outstanding and past reports.

Grant your clients or property managers an account to accept online bookings, schedule appointments in advance and download completed reports.

### Pest Control Templates

Pest Control Template  
Risk Assessment  
Health & Safety

Location/Bait plan  
Treatment Reports  
Hygiene Reports





INBOX

SENT

ARCHIVE

BIN

SPAM

# ASK THE TECHNICAL TEAM

## Subject: Remote monitoring

### Can you use remote monitoring devices to check live traps?

Technology in this sector has been developing quickly over recent years, and devices can now stream live video or send up-to-date pictures in real-time.

If you can demonstrate the effectiveness of the remote monitoring devices and reliably check there is nothing caught, then this could reduce your physical inspection times. However, you must be aware of the risks that failure of remote monitoring devices pose and that you could be open to prosecution if the traps are not inspected at the required legal frequency.

And, as always, you should be confident that unnecessary suffering is not caused.

## Subject: ICO and data protection

### I've had a letter from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) telling me I have to register as a data processor? Is it a scam?

As part of the Data Protection Act, any entity that processes personal information will need to register with the ICO and pay a data protection fee unless they are exempt.

This is the case for every type of company, from sole traders and SMEs to multinational corporations.

There are some exemptions to the rules. You are not required to register with the ICO and pay a fee if you only process personal data for staff administration, accounts and records, not-for-profit reasons, personal or family affairs, and advertising, marketing and public relations purposes.

You are also exempt if you only keep paper records and do not use an automated system such as a computer to process personal information.

If in doubt, use the ICO self-assessment form to determine if you are exempt or not. [ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-fee/self-assessment/](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-fee/self-assessment/)

Members have access to our Data Protection and GDPR microlearning course - for free!  
[bpca.org.uk/online-learning](https://bpca.org.uk/online-learning)

## Subject: Digital reporting

### Am I legally required to provide a digital reporting option if my client asks for it?

No, however you are legally required to provide a report regarding the treatment you have undertaken. More specifically, as a minimum, the pesticides used and the associated safety information.

This could be a handwritten paper report or a digital one.

It's also essential that the report contains the correct information such as visit details, products used, active ingredients, percentages, locations used, emergency procedures, and any proofing or housekeeping.

A good solution for when your customer requests a digital copy would be to take a picture or scan of your written report, and attach that to an email, along with any photos.

If you aren't currently using digital reporting but are thinking about it, there are plenty of good options out there (check out pages 18-21). Why not talk to other people in the sector or pop along to PestEx to get some inspiration?

## Subject: Spider season

### My customers are seeing lots of spiders at the moment. What can I do?

Spiders are great pest controllers themselves, so explain this to your customer, and they may decide to keep them.

You should also explain to your customer that spiders in the UK are not generally considered a pest, as they are not dangerous or a threat to health. False widows can bite, which causes pain similar to a wasp sting, but they rarely do.

The easiest, non-chemical solution is to put a glass over the spider, slide some paper underneath and pop it outside! We should only be offering other control options if there is an extensive infestation of spiders indoors.

Sticky insect traps may be a good option for that physical control, which will reduce sightings for your customer. In terms of insecticide use, there may be products available for chemical control. If assessed as needed, it would be best to speak to your distributor regarding products approved for this use.

Remember the golden rule: always follow the label!



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

technical@bpca.org.uk  
01332 294 288

twitter.com/britpestcontrol

SPEED VIEW

**Remote monitoring can be helpful but be cautious about over-reliance**

**Digital reporting is not mandatory, but don't be afraid to bring your reporting into the 21st century**

**You can use an ICO self-assessment form to determine whether you need to register with them**

**Spiders are our pest control colleagues - save them if you can!**

## OPINION

# SEEING THE LIGHT

ADVANCES  
IN OPTICAL  
ILLUMINATION



Night vision attached to a rifle-scope.

Regular contributor Dave Archer is back. And now he's got optics in his sights. Dave reviews the technology that significantly changed his practice.

Over the past few decades there have been huge technological advancements made in the pest control world. Whatever facet of the industry you're employed in, you cannot fail to have been impacted by the developments. There's digital images or alerts of sprung traps being sent to your mobile device, or real-time vehicle tracking and monitoring information.

For me, even in the field of rural wildlife management, the changes are apparent, especially in the recent developments of night-time illumination and rifle optics.

To be totally honest, I am no techie, as those who have seen my displays at events will readily agree. But here's the thing - I can walk in the woods or on an open field under a new moon without any need for artificial illumination.

I've trained my eyes over the years to be as efficient as they can be under the cover of darkness. It now makes me smile that at the first phase of dusk (did you know dusk has three specific phases?) my comrades are using torches, mobile phones or whatever and basically making their presence fully apparent. It is more like a rural Mariah Carey concert than a hunting foray.

### Hindsight is a wonderful thing

In the 1970s, nighttime illumination was, at best, very primitive as far as pest control

was concerned. The commercial market did not have any high-intensity night beams or high-powered LED torches.

If there was a need for night-time illumination more than a single torch bulb, it was necessary to construct something.

To assist me in seeing foxes on my nocturnal forays, I attached a motorcycle battery to an old car headlight to illuminate the fox's eyes at night. The battery was light enough to be kept in a wax jacket exterior pocket. However, the only wax jackets available in those days were expensive and had to last a good many years.

On one occasion, when moving around outside, the battery slipped in my pocket and battery acid leaked out. This event went undetected especially as it was during the hours of darkness, until around three weeks later when I discovered the wax stitching had corroded due to the acid leak and the pocket fell off! An expensive mistake!

### Seeing the light

Nowadays all this has changed – there are now thermal imagers that show an animal through a lens in total darkness. Added to this, night vision rifle scopes will give a clear image of the target. Look through any shooting magazine and it is full of these devices. (Later, I will elaborate on some reservations I have about these devices.)



A modern thermal imaging device used to detect heat sources (wild animals).

Modern technological advances now mean one can hunt, say, a fox or rabbit in complete darkness and even shoot it with no assistance from torchlight.

However, be warned – shooting at night is one of the most dangerous forms of pest control! You don't have the luxury of being able to ascertain distances and backgrounds as you can in daylight. And, if you are looking to further this aspect of your work, I cannot impress more strongly that, in your first forays, you should be accompanied by a very experienced person.

Read all you can on the subject and check on available training via shooting organisations.

Don't go onto unfamiliar land or where you have no permission, even to shoot rats. It's illegal!

"My mantra for any pest control shooting activities: once you pull the trigger on any weapon, you must be 100% sure of your actions because you can be 100% sure that the bullet will never ever go back into the gun."



## TAPESTRY OF LIGHT

Before we look at modern optics, you may often wonder why certain animal's eyes reflect so brightly at night; the so-called 'cat's eyes effect'.

The reason is thus – nocturnal mammals need to gain as much light as they can when moving or hunting in darkness. The tapetum lucidum (tapestry of light), the eye's biological reflectors, give the eye a second opportunity for visual sensitivity to reflect light back, rather than be absorbed as is the case in diurnal mammals.

This reflected light is picked up by nightlights and is the animal's unfortunate giveaway.

Having had over forty years of hunting experience, eyes tells me straight away what species of animal is in the lamp: foxes, deer, cats etc.

Not only does the colour give a good indicator, but also the way the eyes move in the darkness tell me a great deal regarding the animal the light is being directed toward.

Check areas in daylight, and know both yours and the topographical boundaries and limits. My mantra for any pest control shooting activities: once you pull the trigger, you must be 100% sure of your actions because you can be 100% sure that the bullet will never ever go back into the gun.

For all the technology available, unless in very special circumstances, it's illegal to shoot any deer, with any weapon, one hour after sunset or one hour before sunrise.

You will invariably see deer through thermal imagers etc but that does not give you the right to pull the trigger.

### Technoskeptic

On a personal level, I'm still not convinced by the new technology. I feel it gives the shooter an unfair advantage; do we start to lose respect for our quarry and lose all the skills of fieldcraft? Yes, I am an old hand at this now but when people tell me night vision is a game-changer I think it confirms my thoughts.

I would much rather know my quarry by daytime and catch them with their 'pants down' at dusk or in sunlight on an open field.

I shoot more foxes in daylight now than I ever did at night in years gone by. At dusk, whistling foxes is in far safer than during the cover of darkness. Additionally, one can purchase electronic fox callers to simulate an animal in distress, which makes the fox



A digital fox caller.

come running to see what's happening.

The units have many types of digital distress calls built-in or, on higher-end models, the distress call can be downloaded to the device.

The calls range from distressed rabbits to crows. These are useful in daytime forays as the sender unit can be set up away from a field hedge; the fox loses wariness when travelling to the middle of a field as opposed to coming toward you directly in a hedgerow.

Some modern units can emit the call from around 275m from the sender but I think this is too far. I'd never attempt a rifle shot at that distance, 180m is my maximum. Further than this, then the shooter may not be patient enough to wait until the animal is within their range of competency. Long distances risk wounding as opposed to a clean kill.

But as I stated earlier, I know I'm an anachronism but I really don't mind. You may be totally at ease with the new technology or the article may have sparked an interest for you – and that can only be a good thing.

### Agree or disagree with Dave? Tell him!

Send us your replies for Dave.

Alternatively, you can write your own opinion piece for PPC. Contact PPC today.

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

# SHINE A LIGHT ON BPCA MEMBERS!



## NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN FOR THE BPCA MEMBER AWARDS 2022

The awards recognise positive contributions made by members to the Association and the wider pest management sector.

**BPCA LIFE MEMBER**  
The highest award for an individual who has contributed to the sector and the Association.

**SPOTLIGHT AWARD**  
For that amazing team member constantly working behind the scenes.

**BUSINESS GROWTH AND INNOVATION AWARD**  
For a company that has continued to thrive, even in tough times.

**OTHER AWARDS**  
Nominated by the BPCA team or based on training and qualification achievements.

**BPCA COMMITMENT TO TRAINING AWARD**

**BPCA CHARLES KEEBLE AWARD**

**BPCA SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION AWARD**

**BPCA OUTSTANDING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD**

**BPCA HONORARY EDITOR AWARD**

**IF YOU ARE, OR KNOW AN AWARD-WORTHY MEMBER SEND YOUR NOMINATIONS NOW!** ►

For the full criteria and submission forms visit [bpca.org.uk/awards](https://www.bpca.org.uk/awards)

Nominations must be submitted by Monday 31 January 2022.

All awards will be bestowed at the BPCA 2022 Annual General Meeting.

# UP, UP AND AWAY!

SEVEN WAYS TO  
SCALE YOUR  
PEST CONTROL  
BUSINESS



Our industry is full of ambitious small and medium-size businesses delivering fantastic quality, problem-solving pest control that protects public health. But when is the right time to scale up? Michael Taylor, CEO of BPCA member company Contego Environmental Services, looks at some of the fundamentals of scaling a business regardless of whether you have one employee or one hundred.

**"I love 'process'. It's the only thing that helps me understand why something's gone wrong and ultimately how to stop it from happening again. I'm a huge fan of technology and systematisation."**

**T**he pest control market in the UK is currently highly buoyant, fast-moving and constantly evolving. As an industry (and certainly as BPCA members), we all have real ambition to drive standards in training and service delivery, to safeguard the environment and protect public health.

In my opinion, now is a great time to push forward with opportunities presented in all market sectors.

Are you ready to scale your business?

Disclaimer: there's risk. It's hard work. It's competitive. It's frustrating and often worrying.

But of course, there are many upsides: freedom, the potential to generate more money than available from a 9-5, and even an asset to sell when the time comes.

I've heard many owners say, 'business is great, we're all really busy'. That's amazing, but when everyone's 'really busy', who's focusing on growth, improvements and identifying opportunities?

It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking you're too busy to grow. But if your life depended on it, you'd make it happen. So why not just get on with it now?

/continued...

# UP, UP AND AWAY!

1

## START WITH THE END GOAL

Fundamentally, your vision and the clarity of your end goal will determine your business success.

A boxing match is 12, 3-minute rounds with one goal in mind: to win. There are multiple ways to get there, and you may even get knocked down a couple of times on the way. Business is very much the same.

Think big. Or small. At the end of the day, it's your goal and your ambition. If you love the idea of a lifestyle business with three staff members, where you pick up the slack when it's busy – then that's fantastic. But, if you dream of more, then absolutely go for it.

I'm a big thinker, and even at the start of the business (when I was 18), I talked about running a national bird and pest control business. And we pulled it off. I got there by having a clear vision of that big goal.

Of course, your goals can and will evolve. And this is where reflection, reassessment and reevaluation come in.

Not sure where you want to get to? Here are a few suggestions:

### The final sale price of your business

A million-pound exit in 15 years at retirement or a million-pound business in 5 years so you can move on to another sector.

### Your dream lifestyle costs per annum

Holidays, school fees, cars, food and house, etc, then come to a figure that becomes your goal.

### 120k net profit

This might allow for dividends, tax and investments to fund your dream life. You don't necessarily need to go big to achieve that. Being small with limited overheads could be the right way forward as scaling any business requires significant investment in overheads, systems and processes.

### More staff to cover more areas

Ten staff. One-hundred staff! Where do you want to expand to?

We all think differently, but you should always work to a plan and have your exit strategy in mind.

2

## INVEST IN YOURSELF

If you just run your business day-to-day, you'll likely never achieve full market value at exit.

Investing in yourself is a great place to start. That can be specific courses, mastermind style groups or one-to-one mentoring. Your mentors don't need to be from the industry. I'd say it is a benefit if they weren't. Look outward at 'what good looks like' in similar sectors and implement what you see working.

Understand the numbers. If you're not confident at understanding a balance sheet, taking apart a profit and loss calculation, or running a cash flow forecast, start here. Everything in business revolves around the basic numbers.

Business podcasts and social media channels are great ways to reach out and learn from others. Exploring business opportunities and sharing ideas will help you grow and develop as a business leader.

Give yourself time to work on the business each day. You'll be amazed at the progress you can make when you give yourself one hour per day to work on planning and implementing ideas and processes. Reading, Googling, planning with a notebook and creating task lists will keep you on track and accountable.

**"There are multiple ways to get there, and you may even get knocked down a couple of times on the way."**

3

## FOUNDATIONS OF GROWTH; KNOW YOUR MARKET

Understanding your market, your niche and the opportunities for growth within. Set your plan and your targets.

There are many niche service areas to explore, so be aware of geographical positioning, seasonality specialist service training and potential market-specific requirements such as courses or approved industry body status.

Many companies consider providing primarily domestic or commercial services. There are a few things to consider here, so let's start with how these customers buy our services:

### Domestic customers

The need and demand for instant response are high, and cost vs reaction time is less critical.

"I have a wasp nest and I need it sorted in the next ten minutes."

They tend to be relatively easy to attract using social media channels, including local groups, small paid adverts in local magazines, Google Ads, etc. They provide instant cash flow as domestic customers typically pay at the point of service delivery and can be a useful marketing tool via word-of-mouth recommendations.

### Commercial customers

It's usually a 'thing we need' and therefore an ongoing service. If the client has very few issues, then it's almost an unseen service.

They are slower to acquire and often take multiple conversations to build rapport and trust. The benefit is a long-term recurring revenue client.

### Seasonal customers

Be aware of seasonal trends, especially when scaling up to cover workloads. Falconry bird control is a great example of this. Everyone needs coverage in the breeding season and forgets that gulls exist from September to March when suddenly they're causing issues again.

How do reoccurring customers vs recurring customers grow value in the business? Contract customers are a regular revenue stream. You build up routes and route density.

Reoccurring revenue, where a customer calls once a year or maybe every second year, has very little value in a sales process when you come to exit.

# "...give yourself one hour per day to work on planning and implementing ideas and processes."

4

## SYSTEMS AND PROCESS

I love 'process'. It's the only thing that helps me understand why something's gone wrong and ultimately how to stop it from happening again. I'm a huge fan of technology and systematisation.

Work-based apps, tracking, and customer access make everyone's lives easier.

We're here to provide customer care. Our technicians are often the first point of contact, and we should be making their lives easier with clear job notes and easy reporting.

Make sure your staff have what they require to do the job correctly. The quickest way to demotivate a team is not to give them the correct tools for the job.

Explore your strengths and weaknesses, look at your service offering, your brand position and address them each based on your proposition.

Does running a small business equate to being weak? Or, since we run a small business based locally that can be onsite within 20 minutes, 24 hours a day, surely that means we are strong? There aren't any rules here. Your brand and voice create your proposition.

Set the rules. It's easy to get frustrated with staff for doing something 'silly', but without clear guidance and rules, whose fault is it? To be clear: it's you!

It's the fundamental foundation of business. It doesn't matter the sector, the niche, the product or service; it's all down to you as the key person in the business. Everyone's mistakes are all your fault.

Processes drive success. Clarity of vision drives the team.

Before you decide to move forward and grow, you must ensure you're ready to take responsibility. Learn to look at it from above like a helicopter, see the root cause and then how you can improve the process. When you do, you create clarity for everyone.

Don't focus on what went wrong. Focus on how to prevent it from happening again.

5

## CREATE A CLEAR VALUE PROPOSITION

Think about where you add value to your offering. What makes you different?

Know your value proposition and your positioning. It's difficult to articulate differences between service providers without these being in place.

Being able to express your value proposition helps them quickly understand what you're all about and gives confidence in your company.

Look at Coca-Cola as an example. The brand invites people to create a positive reality by thinking of Coke as happiness in the bottle. The unique selling proposition is the main reason why Coca-Cola has been around for a long time now, since 1886. Coca-Cola doesn't sell beverages; it sells happiness in a bottle.

Think of it as your reason for being, what makes you different, your 'elevator pitch' – the one line that explains it all.

6

## BE AGILE AND WORK SMART

Being a smaller business is a huge advantage in any market. You can think of an idea, explore it and implement it the same day across multiple technicians or locations.

Likewise, no company can scale when all the policies, processes and systems exist only in the mind of the founder or key team members. Work smart with clarity, keep open channels of communication with your team and listen.

Don't be afraid to try something and fail. For every nine failures, you might have a huge success. This is your growth.

7

## CULTURE AND VALUES

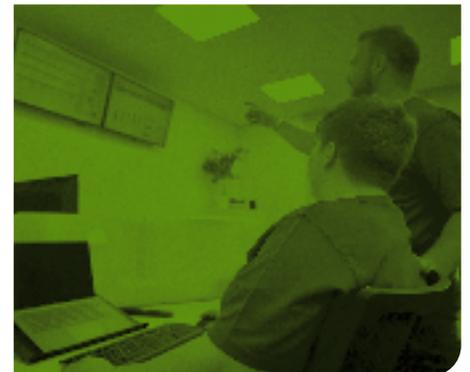
You set your culture. Be clear and open with your goals and ambitions. Invest in your team, their training and give clear guidance on 'what good looks like'. Do this for every department and document everything.

Recruiting is crucial. Don't hold back and always employ the right person for the job (that doesn't always mean the most qualified). It's the old adage of skill vs will; you can teach skill, but it's very difficult to drive willingness.

For me, willingness to learn and attitude wins every time.

Create a culture that knows the importance of outstanding customer service. No matter your size, scale or level of experience, delivering outstanding service wins out every time.

If you focus on only one thing, make it your customer.



# "If you focus on only one thing, make it your customer."

### Ready to grow, but something's holding you back?

BPCA is incredibly passionate about member companies getting to where they want to be. If you want to talk through your ideas, get in touch today.

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

# RISING MOUSE NUMBERS DOWN-UNDER

## INCREASING MOUSE POPULATION EXPLOSIONS



The house mouse (*Mus domesticus*) was introduced to Australia by the first European settlers during the late 18th century. Its distribution is now widespread throughout the whole of the country, but it is in the key grain growing areas of southeastern Australia where mouse numbers have had the greatest impact. With the start of another surge of rodent activity being reported, Gerwyn Jones, Asia Pacific Manager for PelGar International outlines some of the reasons for mouse plagues and potential outcomes.

**M**ouse plagues have been regularly reported in Australia, the first being cited in a Victorian newspaper in 1917. On this occasion, in the town of Lascelles in the state of Victoria, around 200,000 mice (3 tons in weight) were caught in one night. By the end of June 1917, a total weight of 544 tons, equating to some 32 million mice, had been reported from this one plague.

Since then significant mouse plagues have appeared regularly in the country causing major losses in agricultural production. In 1993 one of Australia's worst mouse plagues hit the grain-producing areas of Victoria and South Australia, causing an estimated A\$96 million worth of damage. The plague caused the destruction of standing and stored crops, livestock were attacked, vehicles damaged and electrical and rubber insulation in buildings destroyed. In 2011 and 2019, mouse numbers built to plague proportions in southern Queensland, New South Wales, western Victoria and South Australia. "Now again in 2021 we are seeing an alarming rise in rodent numbers," explains Gerwyn Jones. "It is therefore crucial that we monitor and put in place strategies for control".

**"Wheat is the main winter cereal crop grown in southern and eastern Australia and is the crop that suffers most from mouse plagues."**

### Plague triggers

A mouse plague is defined as an excessive and increasing population of mice that are having an economic and/or environmental impact. The density of mice in crops, in non-plague years is normally <math><50\text{ mice ha}^{-1}</math> but at peak densities can exceed

What triggers an actual plague, compared to the normal annual fluctuation of the mouse population, seems to be dependent on a number of factors:

- There is a supply of quality food and water
- Environmental temperatures are not extreme
- Soil is moist and easy to dig
- Nesting conditions are favourable
- Diseases, parasites and predation levels are low.

It is also suggested that changes in agricultural practices may be increasing the frequency of mouse plagues. Stubble retention for example will provide additional habitat and extra food from split or unharvested grain, as was evident in the 2010 winter crop harvest. Plagues will often occur following a period of drought with a subsequent wet spring and summer which provides extra food and cover.



A pile of field mice that were poisoned by Australian farmers during the mouse plague of 1917. Although mice plagues are rare elsewhere in the world now, evidence suggests that they have blighted humans throughout our history.

### Impact of mice plagues

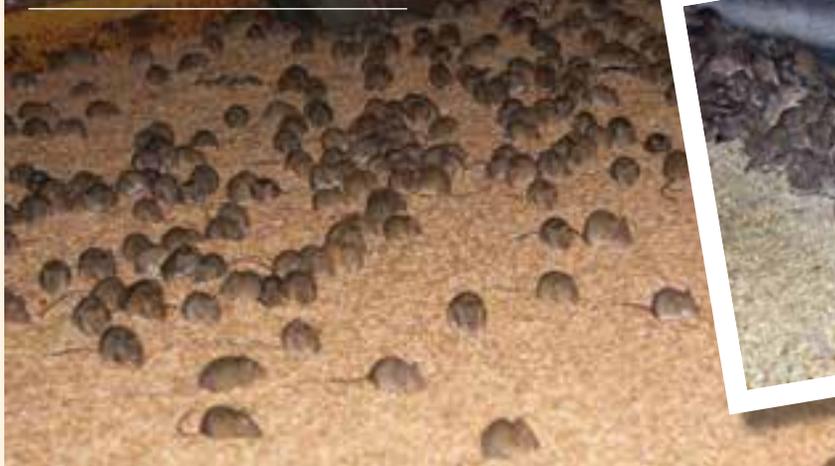
Wheat is the main winter cereal crop grown in southern and eastern Australia and is the crop that suffers most from mouse plagues. However, mice can also damage other cereal crops, soybean, maize, sunflower, rice, lucerne and a range of horticultural crops. They can impact farm storage areas and animal husbandry facilities, such as pig and poultry sheds and cause damage to farm machinery and vehicles.

In storage areas, mice can enter via the smallest of holes so maintaining a mouse-free store is virtually impossible. Their droppings will contaminate stored grain and livestock feed.

They are also known to transmit a range of diseases and pathogens to both livestock and humans including:

- Salmonella to humans and domestic animals
- Encephalomyocarditis virus to pigs
- Leptospirosis to humans and animals
- Tapeworms, roundworms and fungal diseases.

Mice at the Penong farm of Bill Oats, west of Ceduna in South Australia during the 2010 mouse plague (source: News Corp).



Mice seen in grain stores can be an indicator of a bigger problem to come. They will consume the grain and contaminate it with their droppings.

### Control tactics

Guidelines issued by the New South Wales Government in Australia recommend monitoring and observation techniques before the use of rodenticides for control.

Once monitoring has taken place and a problem is identified then the use of rodenticides may be the only option. The most commonly used anticoagulant rodenticides used in Australia are: brodifacoum, coumatetralyl, flocoumafen and warfarin but these are not for field use and can only be used in and around farm buildings.

Two rodenticides currently permitted for field use are:

- Bromadiolone – a grain-based bait for crop-perimeter baiting only. Here the landowners supply the grain to the Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) who mix the grain with the bromadiolone.
- Zinc phosphide – this produces toxic phosphine gas on ingestion. The bait is registered for in-crop use and can only be laid if a monitoring programme shows significant mouse activity.

It is important that an integrated pest management strategy should be employed to reduce damage caused during a plague. This includes mouse-proofing buildings, reducing the amount of farm rubbish around buildings and employing good farm hygiene practices. These strategies will help to reduce mouse populations exploding when conditions are optimal. It is also crucial that the threat to non-target species is minimal and as in-crop and perimeter baiting is an accepted method of minimizing the effect of mouse plagues on the Australian grain harvest assessing the impact of rodenticides on non-target species is recommended.

### Problems for manufacturers

“From a manufacturer’s point of view it is quite difficult dealing with a mouse plague,” explains Gerwyn Jones. “I have personally been in the industry during two mouse plagues in Australia, and there were some challenging problems that we faced.”

“As an overseas manufacturer, PelGar usually plans to have products stored in Australia based on the previous season and forecasts given to us by customers and end users. When a plague strikes you can throw all of that out of the window. Within a few weeks, stocks that would normally last months are gone.”

**“With weather and the climate certainly having an influence on seasonal mouse populations, it is likely that climate change will have a significant impact on the number and magnitude of plagues in the future.”**

“It is a real Catch 22 situation – you want to have stock to tackle a plague, but then you don’t want to be overstocked. I have seen manufacturers stock their warehouse with products, in preparation for a bad mouse season, which then did not materialise. You are then left with ageing stock and the cost of warehousing products until the next season.”

Research work, which focuses on understanding the mechanisms leading to increasing mouse populations, and developing predictive models, are only able to achieve 70% accuracy. It is therefore vital that farmers and growers on the ground recognise and monitor the early signs of increasing mouse numbers and act to put control measures and management practices in place early on. It is far easier to control a small mouse infestation than the economic and environmental impact of a plague. With weather and the climate certainly having an influence on seasonal mouse populations, it is likely that climate change will have a significant impact on the number and magnitude of plagues in the future.

### What’s coming next? Gerwyn recently gave us an update on the situation

As we go into spring, which started on 1 September here in Australia, there looks to be no let-up; everyone had hoped that a cold spell would have helped with their demise – but it didn’t come. The professional pest control sector is ticking along quite nicely with steady sales, but it is definitely the rural/farm market that is pushing the demand for rodent bait. Farmers are due to plant summer crops into the fields and have already noticed quite a few active mice burrows which is not a good sign, because those seeds could provide an ideal food source for the mice to consume and then breed, and the plague cycle starts all over again.

Based on an article first published in *International Pest Control*, May/June 2019 volume 61:3.

# TRIGGERED!

## MENTAL RESILIENCE FOR PEST PROFESSIONALS

"This job feels thankless at times, lonely too... much of your week is spent working alone."



Everyone has bad days. But when these bad days add up to a cycle of destructive feelings and behaviours, it's time to pause and reassess. PPC asked Karen Mason and Lewis Smales from Essentially Human for some tips on recognising early warning signs and some practical tips for maintaining a happy and healthy work-life for pest professionals.

**H**ave you noticed how certain people, events, or situations 'set you off' – they 'trigger' you in some way?

The first you're aware that you've been triggered is when a flood of negative feelings fill your body. Maybe anger leads you to utter expletives in traffic as yet another driver cuts you up, you feel your blood pressure rising as your heart pounds faster.

Your day goes downhill from here.

A sense of overwhelming exasperation washes over you as the phone rings. Your 'difficult' client at the end of the phone is pushing all your buttons as they react angrily to advice you've shared.

This job feels thankless at times, lonely too... much of your week is spent working alone. Most of the time you like it this way; no one breathing down your neck, telling you what to do, you are self-reliant. Yet there are times you'd like to feel appreciated and supported by your clients and colleagues.

Long days on the road, a relentless workload and tough targets to meet – all conspire to leave you exhausted by the time you get home. You have little left for yourself or your family.

Low motivation means a diet of ready meals and fast food.

You've no time for exercise, which impacts your physical health. To top it off, there's an undercurrent of conflict within the family, as you're not much fun to be around these days.

It's a slippery slope, and not sustainable.

### Time to pause

Left unaddressed, this relentless cycle takes its toll, and your physical and mental wellbeing start to suffer.

As energy and motivation wane, your inner critic starts to doubt your ability. It questions if you'll meet your targets and notes you don't provide a quality service like you used to. There's simply never enough time.

Your confidence takes another knock.

Your ability to make light of tricky situations with clients diminishes. Every conversation feels like a difficult one. It's stressful dealing with people who just don't understand.

You start to wonder what it's all for. It's groundhog day and feels like nothing ever changes for the better.

We often hear people comparing the number of emails they have waiting for them after a few days away from work.

Or how many meetings are crammed in their diary, with no space to think in between.

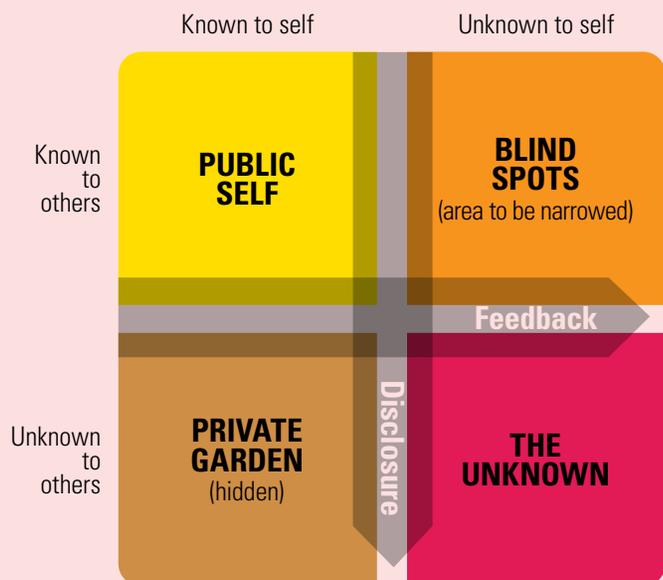
We think this is normal; that we should be able to cope. After all, everyone else manages their workloads and meets targets, right? Or so we perceive.

We armour up and build a tough outer image for ourselves. One that demonstrates that we're coping, and showing no signs of weakness. The last thing we want is to damage our 'be strong' reputation. And so it continues, as we keep accepting more of the same.

We live in a world that rewards busyness as a sign of success.

Yet nothing could be further from the truth.

The busier we become, the more we lose sight of who we really are and what we truly need for our success. We lose sight of the fact that we're human, not machines, and wonder why the world is in chaos around us.



Let's take a moment and pause. Breathe. Take your foot off the gas. Take yourself off autopilot and create space to think.

### Recognising negative thoughts and behaviours

So much of our behaviour comes from our conditioning and societal norms, that we never question ourselves. We form habits and beliefs without question, based on what we see others doing. We subconsciously tell ourselves 'that's what you have to do to get on in the world'.

Most of our behaviours, attitudes and actions are routine habits and out of our awareness; they are in our subconscious blind spots. We don't intentionally set out to have a bad day, but this too becomes habitual.

The Johari Window, shown above, is a model that can help you to reflect so that you start to become more aware of yourself.

The top left box refers to our Public Self – this is the part of our identity known to us and known to others. For example, this will include the kind of things you'd highlight on a CV or in an interview. You know your strengths and skills, the things you enjoy doing. There's a good chance others will know this about you too.

The lower left box is the Private Garden – this is the part of our identity known to us and unknown to others. For example, actions we've taken, or not taken, that we're not particularly proud of. Hobbies and interests we perceive may not fit with other people's expectations of us.

The top right box refers to Blind Spots - this is the part of our identity unknown to us and known to others. For example, others may hear us making calls and are aware that we sound stressed by the tone of our voice. We may not see this for ourselves.

Finally, the lower right box refers to The Unknown - this is the part of our identity unknown to us and unknown to others. Much of our personality resides here, out of our awareness. This is where a huge opportunity for growth lies. When we make time for ourselves to go within, we start to appreciate what really makes us tick.

The programmes, memories and beliefs from our past inform much of what we do today. If we never pause to explore what lies beneath the surface of our reactions, our future becomes a repeat of our past.

### Fresh thoughts

If you're curious and would like to explore some simple things you can do to gain fresh insight, here are some ideas:

Pause and make time for yourself at least once every day, away from the demands of work and other people.

Use this quiet time to tune into your feelings and allow them to surface. Be curious, they are signals from your body about your health. Does your energy feel negative or positive? Simply notice, without any judgment.

Try to pay attention to patterns within your day. Which activities bring joy? Which activities bring dread?

Think about what you want for your future. Define what success means for you.

Read, watch or listen to inspirational content.

Now you get to decide and choose your next actions:

- What do you need to stop doing?
- What will you start doing?
- What will you continue?
- Journal or meditate on your discoveries.

Our human journey can be a challenging one, especially if we've lost sight of who we really are. When we appreciate what it means to be human, we value our emotions and feelings as indicators of our health and wellbeing. If we don't feel good, it's our responsibility to look inward and bring about the change needed to restore balance.

We need to gain access to our subconscious mind and understand what drives our thoughts, feelings and actions. Becoming aware of who we are is essential for us to find balance and become confident and resilient within.

### Want to delve a little deeper?

If you're curious and want to dig a little deeper within we'd love to help. We're Karen and Lewis co-founders of Essentially Human. We support leaders to create work experiences that feel human. We know that when people are respected for being human, rather than thought of as machines, they bring their best selves to work. You can find how we support people on their journey on our website: [essentiallyhuman.org](https://essentiallyhuman.org)

Join us on Thursday 9 December from 15:00-16:30 for a free, live webinar when we'll explore how our triggers are valuable signals, not to be ignored. Book your place here: [bpca.org.uk/webinars](https://bpca.org.uk/webinars)

## BACK TO BASICS

## DUST, UP TO SNUFF?

## MAINTENANCE TIPS FOR PRESSURE DUST APPLICATORS AND STORING PESTICIDES



A bad workman always blames his tools, but are we doing everything in our power to make sure our arsenal is fit for purpose? We asked Darran Lebeter, Sales Specialist at BPCA member company 1env Solutions, to give us a rundown of his best tips for keeping your equipment up to snuff.

**W**hen I was approached and asked to put something together on 'maintaining pest control equipment properly', I immediately started to pull apart a DR5, looking at all the seals, valves, nuts and bolts. But that got me thinking.

Do these guys want me to go on about the internal parts of a pressurised dust applicator or sprayer?

We all know how important these bits of equipment are to us, and in order to optimise our productivity and performance,

regular maintenance is essential, so I will spend some time looking at this.

But my thoughts led me to think about 'equipment' more widely.

The definition of 'equipment' is: '(noun) the necessary items for a particular purpose.'

It struck me that this widens our interpretation of 'equipment', the maintenance of which could be considered as important as the aforementioned application method. One could argue that it matters little how pristine your pressure sprayer is if your bottle of insecticide has been stored in the freezer!

The emphasis seems to be given largely to the applicators, and not so much the preparation, which is equally as necessary as a piece of 'equipment'.

I'm going to touch on the importance of correct storage, preparation and application which could also benefit the tools we all use to apply any particular product.

### Pressure dust applicators

Let's now take a look at some specific examples, starting with what most of us hope will be our most important piece of application equipment during the summer months: our pressure dust applicators.

This piece of relatively inexpensive equipment can be our best friend and most loyal ally during a busy wasp season. That being said, I suggest that a large percentage of us may have had issues with these at least once during our careers as pest professionals.

Now, without wishing to teach people how to suck eggs, I would ask you to indulge me for a few paragraphs while I highlight some of the key 'do's and don'ts'.

These dust applicators require pressure to be built up within the tank. When we activate the trigger, the dust is drawn through the hose, through the trigger itself, the length of however many extension lances that may be attached, through the spike and only then into the wasp nest (or entrance of the nest).

**"This piece of ... equipment can be our best friend and most loyal ally during a busy wasp season."**

In some cases, this can be a total distance of eight metres. This requires a lot of pressure.

With this in mind, I would like to look at a few of the seals that, in my opinion, are the components most likely to fail at some point which would either prevent us from being able to generate the required pressure or, not enable the duster to hold that pressure.

This part of the applicator has three essential seals/washers that will require particular care and attention. The o-ring at the top of the thread, the valve at the base of the pump and the internal washer.

Another issue that will have caused issues for most, I'm sure, is some form of blockage within the dust applicator.

Discounting a manufacturing fault, which is possible, there could be a number of reasons for this, the most common of which would be:

- Moisture within the applicator and/or dust
- Overfilling and/or over pressurising the tank.

Every effort should be made to keep all parts of your applicator, including extension lances, free of moisture.



**A NEW DUSTER FOR FREE?**

If you have owned a duster for a few years and have never taken any of the steps shown below, I would urge you to do so. Believe me, it'll feel like you have a new duster!



**1** The o-ring creates a seal at the top of the thread to prevent loss of pressure in the tank.

The inert carrier for all insecticidal dusts is a very fine talcum powder (some of which are finer than others). If there is any build-up of moisture, this can create a 'clump' of powder which could seriously diminish the performance.

With regards to the amount of dust put into an applicator, there is no definitive or legislative amount recommended. Different strokes for different folks, I think is fair to say.

That being said, I advocate not exceeding a quarter full of powder for a couple of reasons. As we know, we need to generate enough pressure to send the product a potentially long distance. This pressure can only be generated in available space within the duster.

If the tank is three quarters full, that leaves limited space to build pressure. What can also occur as a result is compacting the dust in an effort to gain the pressure we need. As mentioned before, roughly 98% of the contents of your tub of insecticide dust is a fine talc, over-pressurising can lead to blockages just as easily.

At the end of the season, we need to empty the contents of the duster, ensuring it is as free of dust as possible including the hose and extension lances. Any remnant of powder in these units can harden over winter.

There is also value in considering having a 'back-up' sprayer and duster.

This is not a selling pitch, but would I need to 'sell' you a spare wheel for your van? The hope is you'll never need to use it, but it's there to get you out of trouble if you do. Accidents can happen so let's mitigate the potential impact and lost revenue by having something there to fall back on.



**2** The valve at the base is one-way – allowing air to be pumped into the tank without drawing dust into the pump. Both of these can be replaced in a matter of seconds, and if either fracture or break down, this would render the applicator useless.



**4** Another seal that could do with attention at some point is that around the pressure release valve. As the image shows, this again can be changed within a couple of minutes.

**Pesticide storage**

Consider those eggs sucked, now for our second course. More eggs I fear but please indulge me.

The storage of pesticides generally, whether insecticide or rodenticide, is also something that we should all pay particular attention to, especially when it comes to temperature extremes. This is particularly important with oral feed preparations.

I will pick an example: rodenticide paste bait in a caulking tube.

These are preparations designed for ease-of-use and pinpoint application. If our 'store' is our vehicle, it is important we are mindful of the temperature.

In the depths of winter, with minus temperatures, the paste can harden. The reverse can happen when we are in the midst of a hot spell, not that this happens often! Some of the components such as lard and/or oil can become overheated, start to separate and loosen the paste significantly.

This is just as applicable with insecticidal gel baits as well but must be considered for all chemicals we carry. A major frustration is taking your tube of cockroach bait only to find it is leaking from the reverse of the tube and not in the stable condition we need.



**3** The internal washer is also vital – this pushes air through the pump which then passes through the valve to build the pressure. Rarely does this washer fail, but it is not uncommon for them to lose efficiency. The application of a small amount of Vaseline or WD40 around this washer will ensure a smooth action through the pump mechanism.



**5** Complete seal kits are readily available for all industry dust applicators.

Every chemical has a safety data sheet (SDS), on which, under section 7.2, the storage conditions are specified.

While most do not specify a minimum or maximum temperature, the overwhelming majority state 'store in the original container in a dry, cool and well-ventilated area'. Please bear this in mind for everything carried. The better our essential chemicals are stored, the better our chances are of getting the most effective and efficient treatment.

I think that's enough eggs for now. Thank you for taking the time to read through this piece and I hope that it has, at least, given some food for thought.

**Want a follow-up?**

Would you like some additional pest control equipment maintenance tips and tricks? What equipment should we cover? What issues do you have to deal with in the field? Send us your suggestions or your own equipment maintenance tip and we might cover them in a future article.

hello@bpca.org.uk

# UK RODENT PREVALENCE

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PEST SIGHTINGS



Did 18 months of lockdowns cause an increase in rodent populations and sightings? Dr Mark Lambert, Defra, writes for PPC about what the available data shows, from here to Tokyo.

“Reopening of the restaurants meant more opportunities to find food, and reports of rat sightings in New York went on to exceed pre-lockdown levels.”

In 2020, shortly after the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) virus in the UK, BPCA ran a survey to find out how the outbreak had impacted pest control professionals in the UK.

One of the most striking findings was the report of substantial increases in rodent activity. Over 900 people responded to the survey, and nearly 50% of them reported an increase in rat and mouse activity.

[bpcanews.org.uk/News-and-Blog/covid-19-pest-management-impact-survey-results](https://bpcanews.org.uk/News-and-Blog/covid-19-pest-management-impact-survey-results)

Six months later, 708 people responded to a follow-up survey and 78% reported an increase in rat activity, while 63% reported an increase in mouse activity.

[bpcanews.org.uk/News/covid-19-impact-study-pest-control-and-management-bpca/265254](https://bpcanews.org.uk/News/covid-19-impact-study-pest-control-and-management-bpca/265254)

Inevitably these results generated considerable interest in the UK media. Reporting the results of the BPCA surveys, the BBC’s Science Focus asked “Has the pandemic unleashed a plague of rats on our cities?”

[sciencefocus.com/news/has-the-pandemic-unleashed-a-plague-of-rats-on-our-cities/](https://www.bbc.com/news/science-focus-56421210)

Increases in rodent sightings were also reported by the media in some other countries, and these increases were linked to lockdown measures.

Interestingly however, in some countries, the number of rat sightings stayed the same or declined during lockdown. The BBC article reported that in Manhattan, New York, the

number of rat sightings following lockdown decreased by 30% compared to a normal year.

This decline was attributed to a reduction in rodent numbers caused by the closing of restaurants, and it was suggested that selection pressures led to changes in the behaviour of the remaining rodents who exploited alternative feeding sources.



Reopening of the restaurants meant more opportunities to find food, and reports of rat sightings in New York went on to exceed pre-lockdown levels.

[bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-04-10/new-york-city-rat-complaints-surge-as-urban-life-revives](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-04-10/new-york-city-rat-complaints-surge-as-urban-life-revives)

An increase or decrease in rodent sightings does not necessarily equate to a change in the number of rats or mice of course, and changes in the number of sightings could be a result of changes in rodent distribution.

In Sydney, Australia, a rapid increase, and then decline, in the number of rodents trapped during lockdown was attributed to the redistribution of rodents in response to changing patterns of food resources.

[nature.com/articles/s41598-021-92301-0](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-021-92301-0)

The number of rodent-related complaints received by the City of Sydney Council was not affected by lockdown, although the spatial distribution of rodent-related residents' complaints did change between lockdown and post-lockdown, providing further evidence that the distribution – rather than the number of rodents – had changed.

### Professional vs public sightings

Another recent study highlighted a mismatch between changes in the number of sightings reported and changes in the number of rats or mice trapped during the lockdown. In Tokyo, Japan, the number of public service calls regarding rat sightings increased after the implementation of social distancing measures, however the majority (60-70%) of pest management professionals said they had not experienced an increase in their activities.

[ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8259536/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8259536/)

It is difficult to be certain whether these reports are evidence for changes in rodent numbers, changes in rodent distribution, or changes in our daily activities (such as working from home) that mean we are more likely to see, or report, rodents.

However, an increase in sightings or reports of rodent activity is obviously a cause for concern, particularly as during lockdown many people were spending more time at home, and many of the increases in sightings or increases in reports of rodent activity are likely to have been in and around domestic properties.

The BPCA surveys recorded reports of rodent activity by pest control professionals, rather than public sightings. This suggests that, unlike in Tokyo and Sydney, the changes in the UK were not due to an increased likelihood of reporting by the public. Is this an indication of increased rodent activity in

and around our homes, and could these increases really be a direct result of the lockdown measures?

It turns out we have quite a good idea about the factors that influence the likelihood of rodent prevalence in domestic properties, and increased levels of resources is one of them.

In a 15-year survey of domestic properties in England published in the nature journal Scientific Reports in 2017, data from the English House Condition Survey (EHCS) and English Housing Survey (EHS) indicated that rats and mice were more likely to be found in homes with pets or livestock (and hence animal feed) in the garden for example.

[nature.com/articles/s41598-017-15723-9](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-017-15723-9)

Like in Sydney and Manhattan, rodent distribution could have shifted in response to lockdown measures. With fewer feeding opportunities from restaurants and other food outlets that closed during the lockdown, it is likely that some rodents will seek out feeding opportunities elsewhere, which could include domestic properties.

This might not be the only reason for the increased rodent activity reported by the BPCA surveys however. Lockdown measures in the UK were first introduced in March 2020, and the first BPCA survey was carried out shortly after this.

The second BPCA survey was six months later, in the autumn. We know from extensive surveys of farm buildings carried out by staff of the then Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) in the late 1960s, that the prevalence of Norway rats in farm buildings fluctuates seasonally, with peaks in spring and autumn.

These seasonal changes seem to be related to changes in the distribution of food resources on farms, which drives the movement of rats out into the fields during summer, and back again during autumn when crops are harvested and weather conditions deteriorate.

Seasonal peaks in breeding activity, which again could be resource-dependent, are also likely. However, our analysis of the EHCS and EHS data and other studies have found no seasonal association with urban rat prevalence.

[journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0091654](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0091654)

We did find a seasonal effect for mice, with lower prevalence in domestic dwellings during summer, although this was a relatively subtle effect.

It is likely that under normal circumstances, food resources do not dramatically change throughout

### This time last year (October 2020) you told us:



the year in urban environments, and hence rodent populations tend to be relatively stable.

It is therefore unlikely that seasonal effects explain all of the increases in rodent activity reported in the BPCA surveys, although they could explain some of the increases in rural areas.

We also know that some rodent populations change dramatically from year to year. This is particularly apparent in Scandinavia and elsewhere in Northern Europe, where vole populations undergo regular cycles with peaks every three to five years.

[link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00442-020-04810-w](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00442-020-04810-w)

The causes of these population cycles are not fully understood, although climate, and a mechanism whereby oscillations in vole populations and their predators are interdependent, have been suggested as possible reasons.

Regular population cycles in rodents become less obvious at lower latitudes, however in our analysis of the EHCS and EHS data we found two peaks in the prevalence of mice inside, and rats around, domestic dwellings in England, one in 2002 and the other in 2008.

Extrapolating this trend, we suggested that another peak would be expected in 2014, and another in 2020. To establish whether reports of increased sightings or increased rodent activity are a result of lockdown measures it is important to make comparisons with previous years.

We are fortunate in the UK to have a relatively long-term data set that shows that the increases we have seen here could be, at least in part, due to an underlying cycle of rodent prevalence.

While it is tempting therefore to link an increase in rodent sightings with a high-profile event such as lockdown, this could just be a coincidence.

### Ask the big questions

PPC has access to industry experts that can answer your toughest questions. What do you really want to know about? Send us your suggestions.

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

## PESTWATCH

# ARE YOU LOCAL?

## COMMUNITY PEST ISSUES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES



SPEED VIEW

**Pest control is usually a high priority item for local councillors**

**Enforcement officers can use public health legislation, environmental protection and also the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act (PDPA) to deal with pest issues**

**The PDPA requires all LAs to keep districts free from rats and mice so far as is reasonably practicable**

**Each LA will have environmental enforcement - a statutory duty**

### NATALIE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

I've worked in the pest management industry since 2002. When opportunity knocked, I relocated to Yorkshire and began my experience within a local authority as a supervisor for their pest control team.

I worked alongside enforcement officers, environmental health officers and also local councillors. This, in turn, has given me a deeper understanding of how you, as private pest control organisations, can use the services that LAs provide to better deal with pest problems.

It's common for pest technicians to feel like they are up against a brick wall when dealing with community-related pest problems. BPCA's Technical and Compliance Manager Natalie Bungay shares her insights into how you can approach your local authority for help.

**P**rofessional pest management is a career focused on delivering a service that is a matter of unprecedented importance for many of your customers. As we know, pests can cause some serious emotional responses.

To help our customers, we need to have a wide range of skills, experience and knowledge. We end up becoming jacks of all trades - and masters of pest control.

Among that knowledge should be legislation, and the role of local authorities in helping tackle community and residential pest issues.

#### What's a local authority?

A local authority (LA) is an organisation responsible for vital services for people and businesses in defined areas. Services can include well-known examples such as provision of social care, schools, housing and planning, and waste collection.

Lesser-known ones include licensing, enforcement, business support and pest control.

Local councils (the most common type of local authority) are made up of councillors elected by the public in local elections. Councillors work

with local people and partners, such as local businesses and other organisations, to agree and deliver on local priorities.

These decisions are implemented on an operational level by permanent council staff, who deliver services daily.

Pest control is usually quite a high priority item for local councillors. They will react, on behalf of their constituents, to rid an area of a particular pest issue, usually rats and mice. They will do this by 'demanding' both cleanups, clearances and even enforcement action.

In this article, we will explore two main areas of utilising a local authority:

- On an individual basis (single, residential property)
- From a block or community perspective.

We will look at the legislation that can help you and the support that local authority enforcement officers are legally obliged to deliver, which you can access if you know what to ask for.

**"Enforcement officers are not pest experts; they need advice from professionals."**

#### Let's talk rats and mice

When it comes to enforcement officers (EOs), they aim to solve a particular problem. EOs have many pieces of legislation at their disposal, and it is up to them to decide which will get the best results in terms of serving notices.

Just like pest professionals, we have many tools we can use to rid a property of pests: which tool we use is sometimes down to individual preference.

In terms of environmental concerns (waste, rats, mice, other pests, hoarders, etc), there are a few pieces of legislation that an EO can use: public health legislation, environmental protection and also the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act (PDPA).

In the following scenario, we will focus on the PDPA but don't worry; if you experience a slightly different piece of legislation being used by an EO, it all has the same objective.

### The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 (PDPA)

The PDPA is a piece of legislation that requires all LAs to keep their districts free from rats and mice so far as is reasonably practicable.

The LA may serve a notice to the owner or occupier of land where rats or mice appear to be a problem. This requires them to take reasonable steps to rectify the infestation in a specific time.

Section 4 suggests that the works usually required will be the removal of waste, but any such notice may require:

- The application to the land of any form of treatment specified in the notice
- The carrying out on the land of any structural repairs or other works so specified, and may prescribe the times at which any treatment required by the notice is to be carried out.

Let's establish a scenario so that we can picture how you can make an LA work for you:

**Problem** Your customer is in a private terraced house, with rats in the garden, but you can't find any harbourage. You believe they are coming from a neighbouring property as you can see, from a distance, holes under a shed. Once you realise that you can't do anything from your customer's garden, and obviously you can't wander through other gardens, your customer should seek support from the LA. If you can guide them on this they're likely to be thankful.

**Solution** Each LA will have a department dedicated to environmental enforcement. All LAs have to provide this statutory service. Your customer needs to find this department within their LA, which can be a challenge in itself, and make a report. Below is an example of what might be found online.

Following a report of suspected rats on a neighbouring property, the following is a common approach from most LAs:

- An EO will first expect your customer to have communicated with their neighbours and asked them to get their own pest controller. This can be emotive, and sometimes residents are not happy to do this. This would be considered by the EO.
- The EO will also want evidence from your customer that rats are causing a problem, and the cause is from a different property. This is where you, the pest professional, comes in – your report will help with this evidence. EOs are not pest experts; they need professional advice to support the suspicion of pests harbouring in neighbouring properties.
- Once the EO is happy that there is a case for enforcement, the goal will always be to solve the problem. There may be different approaches from officer to officer, but generally, the following will happen (with variations from LA to LA):

- The officer will want a copy of the treatment report saying where the rat activity is suspected – this is their 'professional witness'.
- Then, a few things may happen – a letter may be sent to the suspected property, a telephone call or maybe even a visit – it will depend on current LA staffing levels, resources, etc. They will encourage the neighbour to deal with their infestation as detailed under the PDPA, section 4, improvement notice.
- If the neighbour does not comply then the EO can progress the complaint to a court, which may order the occupier to permit the work. Sometimes LAs will provide this service and then put a charge on the property to recoup costs. Mostly, this is when you have hoarder properties that LAs have to clear out.

### Plot twist: what if your customer lives in a local authority-owned property?

This is, usually, a little more straightforward as the housing department within the LA will deal with any rat and mouse issues in their properties. Your customer should have the right contacts for their housing office. The same reporting should commence, just to a different department.

### What if your customer is a commercial business with a rat problem caused by a neighbouring company?

Generally, you'll take the same pathway. It needs reporting to the LA environmental enforcement team, and then action will be taken. There is a possibility that a different piece of legislation will be used, such as the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or even the Public Health Act 1936, but the principles will remain the same.

A similar approach can be taken if the rat infestation is coming from a privately-owned drain or sewer that does not belong to your customer.

If you have a public sewer that is causing the emergence of rats, then your customer will need to contact their local water authority, which will take the necessary action to fix its sewer.

### Is an entire block of flats an issue?

And finally, this process also works for larger-scale problems that may spread over a whole street or block; it will just take a little longer to gather the information needed.

### Insect pests

The Public Health Act 1936, section 83, gives powers and responsibilities to LAs concerning verminous premises. The act provides vermin with the definition of "in its application to insects and parasites including their eggs, larvae and pupae".

### Pest calendar

PROBLEM MAJOR PROBLEM

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ants												
Bed bugs												
Birds												
Bluebottles												
Carpet beetles												
Clothes moths												
Cockroaches												
Deathwatch beetles emerge												
Fleas												
Foxes												
Fur beetles												
Harvest mites												
Head lice												
House flies												
May bugs												
Mice												
Mosquitoes												
Moths												
Rats												
Red spider mites												
Spiders												
Squirrels												
Wasps												
Wood rot												
Woodworm												

Suppose you have a property with a substantial insect problem, possibly filtering over from a neighbouring property. In that case, you can again advise your customer to follow the same process as mentioned in the previous scenario.

### Arm yourself with knowledge

LAs exist to serve their communities, and your customers are part of those communities, whether they're a private resident or represent a business. It's always worth doing some research on your LA to find where such services would be requested.

Find out where you can get advice online, bookmarking those essential pages. Make a note of telephone contact details and maybe even find your relevant local councillors' contact details. This research can then be part of your toolbox should you need it, and you'll have the bonus of presenting yourself as professional and knowledgeable to your customers.

### Want some help with a tricky pest problem?

If you're a member of BPCA, our technical team is on hand to help you figure out any tricky situations you might find yourself in during your work. Get in touch.

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



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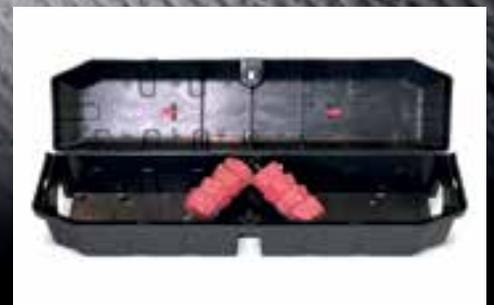
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## MEET THE MEMBER

# JUST THE BEE-GINNING!

With a business that's gone from strength to strength, Peter Higgs talks to PPC magazine about getting started, the obstacles he has overcome and his ambitions for the future.

**PPC** Let's start from the beginning – how did you get into the pest control industry?

**PH** As a teenager I began working on a farm with a gamekeeper. I built up my agricultural experience and then part of that role is pest control. I got into Sparsholt College in Hampshire and did a course there, a national award in gamekeeping. Pest control was one of the modules, and when I look back at my certificate it was the only one in the whole course I got a distinction in, so I think I was always interested in it and good at this area of work.

At this point I continued with the gamekeeping work and had several jobs with farmers, then I started earning a bit more money on weekends doing pest control work. Slowly I was building up the pest control work I was doing and it was making more money than my gamekeeping job, so I asked my employer for a raise. Long story short, I stopped working for that employer and that's when I went into pest control full-time.

**PPC** Tell us about starting PGH Pest Control and Prevention.

**PH** It was 2008 when I had the idea to start my own business. The recession had just hit and nobody was taking anyone on. I thought, "Well if they don't want to hire me, I'll go start my own business". I would have preferred to work for an established company for a few years first to get some more experience, but the recession sped up my plan and I decided I'd do it on my own.

I'd never run a business before, so I was new to business ownership and pest control. Luckily I managed to get a place on the Prince's Trust Enterprise Scheme where I learned skills to help build the business. I never thought it would be as successful as it's been.

**PPC** From there you started trading as Beegone – what made you decide to offer a live bee removal service?

**PH** When I did my pest control training, I was never told that there was an alternative to lethally treating bees and I didn't know much about bees at all. They were basically considered the same kind of pest as a wasp, to most people.

And then I stumbled across all this stuff about them, how important they are to the ecosystem and food chain, and that's how I came to start Beegone.

If you could go back to 2008, 2009, you would be really hard-pressed to find anyone in the UK outside of beekeeping saying that they safely remove bees, particularly from buildings. Live honey bee removal from properties was very big in America, but not here. That's when I knew Beegone could be a really big thing.

In fact, it's the reason we were able to get the name Beegone. I bought loads of domains in the beginning; beeremoval.co.uk and about 20 similar ones. And the only reason I was able to do that is because of how few businesses in the UK offered that service.

**PPC** What do you think has made Beegone such a success?

**PH** Fast forward from 2008, and because of social media people understand about bees and how important they are. Attitudes have changed a lot and when you know better, you do better. So people are more likely to ask for bees to be saved now than to be lethally treated.

Other changes between then and now are things like legislation, codes of best practice, label conditions. We've moved away from 'kill first, ask questions later' approaches. As a result, there are more and more people who have started dabbling with live honey bee removal, which has its good and bad points.

What I like is that there's now a movement where more people want to save the bees than harm them.

The issue comes when there are more unscrupulous people out there who think that it might be quite lucrative, but do a poor job and don't have the construction knowledge to do it safely.

There's a lot that goes into what we do; we'll provide the scaffolding, we take the building apart, we remove the bees and clean it up, we'll put the building fabric back together properly. We aren't just pest controllers here; we have roofers, scaffolders, stone masons.



**"Live honey bee removal from properties was very big in America, but not here. That's when I knew Beegone could be a really big thing."**

Unfortunately there are still companies, or cowboys, who will spray bees with insecticides. They'll then either leave that contaminated comb in there or dispose of it incorrectly, both of which then leave it available for other bees to rob.

You know, I'm actually really careful about what honey I eat and I would never take honey from a removal because of the chance of contamination – even if I haven't used insecticides myself, that doesn't mean someone else hasn't tried.

**PPC** And if all of that weren't enough, you decided to launch a PGH Beegone franchise! How's that going for you?

**PH** We're a relatively new franchise, we launched in December 2020.

Our first franchisee David has done fantastic, I have a little leaflet in my office that says, "Be more David". He's brilliant, he's a testament to the fact that it does work. He's followed our plan, taken the leads we've given him and his turnover is fantastic. He's a great franchisee for us. He's very patient and willing to learn, accepts ownership, he has the right attitude to make it work. You can always train people to do the practical side, but the attitude is something you can't teach.

/continued on page 47

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## JUST THE BEE-GINNING!

We've definitely learned as much from him as he's learned from us, as we're a new franchise model. When people look into being part of our franchise, they can be put off when they ask how many franchisees we have and they hear "one". But what they don't realise is, that's the great thing about it – you get more one-on-one time with me, more time to work with you and make you a success. You aren't in a tiny little territory, you could have the whole west coast because there's nobody else there! This is the hayday, you won't be restricted and you'll be successful like David. You get to be a part of a growing franchise, you get to be a part of that growth.

Editor's note: since the interview was conducted PGH Beegone recruited its second franchisee, who will run his pest control and live bee removal business in the south Birmingham area.

**PPC** We hear you're not going to be stopping at a franchise – what's next for you?

**PH** We've started looking into setting up an association, specifically the British Bee Removers Association (BBRA). Not a small task!

There was a gent who kept asking us questions at beekeeping events, and then he started the 'UK Bee Removers' group on Facebook. And we thought that was a good idea, so we decided to launch the BBRA group. We've got 120 members on Facebook since launching about a month ago and we're trying to create a movement there.

But we want to legally register as a proper association, so there's a foundation that might be able to work in tandem with BPCA on things like lobbying for proper bee removal without insecticide.

We also want to be able to provide codes of practice, training, helping people carry out bee removal safely by training people to work with things like asbestos and ladders. We've seen it on Facebook with people holding asbestos flues with honey dripping from them, and I think that's so unprofessional. The bad practices you see online make me cringe.

We wanted to create a group where there's a place to go for a safe bee removal service for the public and the right kind of advice for professionals carrying out the work.

We saw a post where someone had a picture of a ladder leaning against a chimney, which makes me shudder because you don't always know what the condition of the underlying masonry is - to put it simply, sometimes it looks hard but behind it's soft. If you put a ladder on it, the whole thing will

come over and you've got tonnes of chimney bricks falling on you.

So these kinds of posts we'll pick up on, advise people of the correct way to go about it and share that knowledge.

We want to branch that out by using the association to do that.

We've talked to organisations like Bradshaw Bennett about insurance so that we have those benefits of being part of the Association as well. And I think that as part of membership there should be some partnership with BPCA because, in essence, if you're removing bees you're removing a pest. And you'll be bound by the same codes of best practice with things like waste disposal.

And I think that's the thing with pest control; you're either small time with no interest in appearing more professional and you'll always stay that way. Or you'll take it more seriously, work hard with your CPD and knowledge, and be more successful as a result.

There's a lot of legal red tape we have to abide by, so we're working through that at the moment. I'm excited by it, it'll be a great place to find professional people who are properly trained.

It's funny, there used to be a time when businesses would be looking for a bee removal contractor and they'd say, "I need to get three quotes" but we'd get a call back a week later saying they couldn't find anyone else. And it's not necessarily that they can't find anyone to remove the bees, but that they can't find anyone who can also do the construction work, has the correct insurance, gives a fixed quote and so on.

But that's why we want to build up as an association. I'd rather people were competing against us but have all the right training to do a great job, and are able to cover even more of the UK.

Bees also have no protection, so that's something we would want to campaign for. It's a mess really, they're under threat but have no protection under law. And we hear a lot of 'as a last resort, spray the bees' and we don't agree with that at all. I think there's room for campaigning there and I think a lot of people would be behind that. It's not just about bees that are in the building, it's about the general health of the bee population.

In terms of a timeline, we're looking to be up and running by spring next year, so it's quite soon.

**PPC** Finally, during lockdown you were awarded Entrepreneurs Circle's 'Most Inspiring Business Person of the Year' award. How did you come to be nominated and how did it feel to win?

**"I'd rather people were competing against us but have all the right training to do a great job, and are able to cover even more of the UK."**

**PH** It was one of my employees who nominated me; truth be told, I didn't know much about it and next thing I hear I'm a finalist for some award!

I think the reason I won was due to the history of how my company came about. I left school in year six so I don't have any GCSEs. Instead I worked for farmers and gamekeepers, doing practical basic jobs. To then go on to do something where you need to use your intellect and be creative and be a manager, it's been a challenge I must admit.

I have dyslexia, and I'm not great with numbers. That's not a powerful position to start from so I've had to learn a lot and find the right people to work with and learn from. It's a massive mountain to overcome.

I wouldn't say Richard Branson is an inspiration to me or anything, but he has dyslexia too and I see similarities to me in the way he communicates, so it's nice to know that other people with things like dyslexia or learning difficulties can make a success of themselves and show that it can be done. As long as you have a good idea, a good service, a good product and you work hard, you can make a success out of what you're doing.

I also don't have a management or business degree, you know, so the idea of starting a business when you have no business training is a huge obstacle. I've spoken to people before who don't employ anybody unless they have degrees and I started to judge myself a little bit, because I don't have that level of education. But then I thought back and realised that it's important for me to surround myself with people who have the knowledge that I don't, to fill those gaps.

From the very start there have been massive mountains to overcome but we're still here, still going. I'm 33 now – where life will go, who knows? But I'd like to make as much of an impact as I can.

**Interested in hearing more about PGH Beegone or the British Bee Removers Association?**

Get in touch with Peter and the team on **020 3890 5106**.



ONBOARDING A PEST TECHNICIAN

# NEW RESOURCES FOR NEW STARTERS

Onboarding an employee that's new to the industry can be time-consuming, expensive and sometimes inconsistent.

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.

BPCA has developed a training framework for onboarding people new to the pest management sector working towards their Level 2 Award in Pest Management.

### Delivering an onboarding programme

We've created a framework that sets the standard for the level of knowledge and practical experience recruits need to gain on their journey to becoming a qualified pest professional.

The onboarding framework sets out a programme of required training and field experience.

The time taken to complete the framework can be flexible, however we recommend that it should take no longer than six months to complete.

A series of theory and practical assessments are included as part of the framework to ensure that the learner achieves competency in the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of a pest professional.

### Want to book some onboarding?

Contact our friendly training team today.  
**01332 225 113**  
**training@bpca.org.uk**



## GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR ONBOARDING A PEST TECHNICIAN

A full guidance document and templates are now available for BPCA members to download and use to aid with new recruits.

- The document includes:
- An introduction to delivering an onboarding programme
  - The pest management onboarding framework
  - Practical assessment criteria
  - Onboarding checklist template and sign-off form.

Download it now at:  
**bpca.org.uk/member-documents**



**AVAILABLE NOW!**

**“If you don’t have the internal resources or facilities to deliver an onboarding programme, BPCA can provide you with a support package.”**

### SPECIAL THANKS

This guidance and programme was created by the BPCA Professional Standards Committee with the support from the Staff Team.

**Dr Mike Ayers**  
Precision Pest Management

**Paul Blackhurst**  
Rentokil Pest Control

**Chris Cagienard**  
Pest Solutions

**Martin Harvey**  
Harvey Environmental Services

**Simon Parker**  
Ecolab

**Martin Rose-King**  
Bounty Pest Control

**Grahame Turner**  
PestAcuity

## PEST MANAGEMENT ONBOARDING FRAMEWORK

### WEEKS 1-2

#### BEHAVIOURS

Coronavirus  
Policies and procedures  
Systems and resources  
Customer types  
Dress codes and responsibilities  
Communication  
Customer service  
Working in teams  
Assessment  
Employability assessment  
Health and safety at work  
Risk and environmental assessments (and COSHH)  
Manual handling  
Work at Height  
Asbestos awareness  
Ladder safety  
Biological hazards  
Vehicle safety  
EFKs

#### Assessments

Knowledge assessment  
Practical assessment

### WEEKS 3-25

#### KNOWLEDGE

Health, safety and legal aspects  
The confines of relevant regulation and legislation  
The requirements of product labels and data sheets  
CRRU stewardship  
Vertebrates  
Rodents  
Squirrels  
Moles  
Foxes  
Minks  
Rabbits  
Other mammals  
Birds  
Invertebrates  
Classifications  
Insect biology and behaviour  
Cockroaches  
Flies  
Social insects  
Biting insects  
Household insects  
Stored product insects  
Non-target species  
Integrated Pest Management (IPM)  
Eradication, Restriction and Destruction (ERD)  
Food hygiene

#### Specialisms only

Bird control and legislation  
Bed bug control  
Wildlife control

#### Assessment

Knowledge-based  
multiple choice

#### PRACTICAL SKILLS

Qualification:  
Using Rodenticides Safely (or equivalent)  
Site surveys  
Integrated Pest Management (IPM)  
Eradication, Restriction and Destruction (ERD)  
Inspections  
Vertebrate work  
Invertebrate work  
Wildlife work  
Bird work  
Routine service  
Report writing  
Customer skills  
Sales  
Equipment use and maintenance  
Follow-ups  
Non-chemical treatments  
Chemical treatments  
Proofing  
Hygiene  
Monitoring

#### Assessment

Weekly practical  
assessment of fieldwork

### WEEK 26

#### GATEWAY TO NEXT STAGE

#### Assessments

Portfolio/log book  
Organisational skills  
Technical knowledge  
Technical skills  
Customer service skills  
Teamworking skills  
Communication skills



**NEW!**

## MANAGED ONBOARDING WITH BPCA

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.

This support is fully subsidised by your membership discounts, meaning the programme can be provided as one comprehensive product.

You'll get:

- Access to our award-winning online learning platform. All the theory-based elements of the onboarding programme are included in the price.
- Weekly reports to line managers of employee progress on the online training programme.
- Access to an online portfolio showing all completed knowledge training. Learners can develop a portfolio of their field-based practical experience.
- Downloadable sign-off documents for line managers and learners to complete and upload to their portfolio record.
- Line manager access rights to review and use portfolio records during internal assessments.
- Knowledge assessments will open to the learners upon completion of each module.

You don't need to be a huge company with a dedicated training department; BPCA can support your staff onboarding.

This programme is only available to BPCA members and costs £950+VAT per technician.

Learn , share and connect with your virtual and local pest events.

# FREE EVENTS AND WEBINARS IN 2022



It's another action-packed year of free CPD events. We've kept a mix of digital and in-person events so everyone can get involved. CPD points are available for all events. Physical events are subject to change or cancellation depending on Covid-19 restrictions.

Event type **Webinar** **Local forum** **Virtual forum**

Name	When?	CPD	Sponsor
KNOW YOUR PESTICIDE LABELS	13 January	1	
SCOTLAND	25 January	6	Edialux
PEST MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION – A REFRESHER	3 February	1	
EAST	9 February	6	Bayer
DIGITAL 12	22 February	3	Pestfix
HIERARCHY OF RODENT CONTROL	3 March	1	
 <p><b>WE'RE BACK!</b></p> <p>ExCeL, London 16-17 March Connect and protect at PestEx: networking + trade hall + seminars + CPD <a href="http://pestex.org">pestex.org</a></p>			
DIGITAL 13	6 April	3	BASF
TRENDING ANALYSIS FOR EFK CAPTURE	7 April	1	
CARRYING OUT PEST SURVEYS BEST PRACTICE	5 May	1	
WALES	17 May	6	Deadline
NORTH	7 June	6	BASF
HIERARCHY OF INSECTICIDE USAGE	9 June	1	
DIGITAL 14	29 June	3	Lodi UK

Name	When?	CPD	Sponsor
UNDERSTANDING ULV FOGGING TREATMENTS	7 July	1	
DIGITAL 15	19 July	3	Bell Labs
WRITING THE PERFECT PEST MANAGEMENT REPORT	4 August	1	
MOUSE CONTROL BEST PRACTICE AND TIPS FOR MANAGEMENT	1 September	1	
WEST	20 September	6	Killgerm
NORTHERN IRELAND	5 October	6	1env
RODENT BEHAVIOURAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL RESISTANCE	6 October	1	
SOUTH	1 November	6	Syngenta
PROFESSIONAL PEST PROOFING STRATEGIES	3 November	1	
DIGITAL 16	29 November	3	Edialux
ZOOZOSES: PEST-TO-PEOPLE PATHOGENS	1 December	1	
MIDLANDS	6 December	6	Lodi UK

### The best pest events

For the latest information on all of our free events, visit [bpc.org.uk/events](http://bpc.org.uk/events)

## NOT ALL RAT BLOCKERS ARE EQUAL

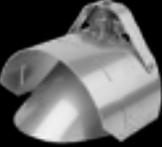
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**POOR**

- Low quality
- Unproven
- Little or no testing

**BETTER**

- Easy to install
- Great value
- Best seller




**BEST**

- WRc Approved
- Unbeatable quality
- 100,000+ installed

# TRAINING CALENDAR

## Courses and exams

Course/exam	From (£)	Exam	Start date	Location
			05-10/12/2021	Stafford
			30/01-04/02/2022	Stafford
<b>Level 2 Award in Pest Management (residential)</b>	1010	✓	24-29/04/2022	Stafford
			05-10/06/2022	Edinburgh
			17-22/07/2022	Stafford
<b>Principles of Pest Identification</b>	95		16/12/2021	Online classroom
<b>Bed Bug Control</b> <b>NOW ONLINE</b>	95		29/11/2021	Online classroom
<b>NEW Flies and their Control</b>	95		13/12/2021	Online classroom
<b>NEW What's in that Formulation?</b>	95		18/11/2021	Online classroom
<b>Certificate in Bird Management</b> <b>NOW ONLINE</b>	95		02/12/2021	Online classroom
<b>Stored Product Insects (SPIs) in Food Factory Environments</b>	95		25/11/2021	Online classroom
<b>Introduction to Wildlife Management</b>	95		30/11/2021	Online classroom
<b>Resistance isn't futile: resistance in rodents and insects</b>	95		01/12/2021	Online classroom
<b>Waste Management for Pest Control Companies</b>	95		22/11/2021	Online classroom
<b>Fundamentals of Pest Biology and Behaviour</b>	95		09/12/2021	Online classroom
<b>Practical Insect Control</b>	155		29/11/2021	Stafford
<b>Practical Vertebrate Control</b>	155		30/11/2021	Stafford
<b>Becoming a Field Biologist or Technical Inspector</b>	95		15/11/2021	Online classroom
<b>Starting and managing your own pest management business</b>	95		16/11/2021	Online classroom
<b>Level 3 Award in Safe Use of Fumigants for the Management of Invertebrate Pests</b>	780		17-21/01/2022	Stafford

## Exams only

Exam	From (£)	Start date	Location
<b>RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management</b>	155	10/12/2021	Stafford
		04/02/2022	Stafford
<b>Technical Inspector Exam</b>	155	10/12/2021	Stafford
		04/02/2022	Stafford
<b>RSPH Level 3 Award in the Safe Use of Fumigants for the Management of Invertebrate Pests</b>	305	10/12/2021	Stafford
		04/02/2022	Stafford
<b>NEW Certificated Advanced Technician (CAT) in Pest Management</b>	294	Book anytime	<b>NOW ONLINE</b>

## Online learning

The flexible approach to pest control training, learn at your own pace at times to suit you [bpca.org.uk/online-learning](http://bpca.org.uk/online-learning)



	From (£)
<b>Individual GPC Level 2 Award modules – Introduction to Pest Management: Health, Safety and Legislation; Invertebrates; Vertebrates</b>	110
<b>Full Level 2 Award in Pest Management – online course</b>	300
<b>Using Rodenticides Safely – online course and exam</b>	75
<b>Foundation Certificate in Pest Management</b>	55
<b>Pest Awareness for Non-technical Staff</b>	55
<b>Completing Risk Assessments</b> <b>PRICE DROP</b>	20
<b>Working at Height</b>	20
<b>Asbestos Awareness</b>	20
<b>Manual Handling</b>	20
<b>Ladder Safety</b>	20



**Enquiries and bookings**

[training@bpca.org.uk](mailto:training@bpca.org.uk)  
01332 225 113  
[bpca.org.uk/training](http://bpca.org.uk/training)

## Bulk booking discounts

We now offer discounts on bulk bookings for our Level 2 Award in Pest Management course, for both members and non-members: 0-2 licences – standard price; 3-9 licences – 20% discount; 10+ licences – 40% discount. Exam costs remain the same. Contact the training team to find out more.

## Terms and conditions

All costs are members only and exclude VAT.

Venue details are provisional and may change – please check the BPCA website before booking.

BPCA reserves the right to cancel a programme if insufficient bookings have been received.

Delegates will be offered an alternative date or a full refund of the programme fee if a programme is cancelled. BPCA will not be liable for any costs incurred by the delegates.

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