

MICE



Pest Control Factsheet

The house mouse is found throughout Britain and is the most important species affecting domestic properties. It is also found living outside and in outbuildings.

Description

- Adult mice weigh around 25 gm and are about 20 cm long, including tail.
- Colours vary but they usually have brown fur on the back with lighter grey underneath.
- They have poor sight but excellent hearing and sense of smell.
- Strong teeth allow them to chew through most materials.
- Their droppings are dark and rice size and they pass urine drops frequently.
- They are highly inquisitive and very agile.

Life Cycle

- Mice live for 9 to 12 months.
- Breeding occurs all year, especially in our heated homes.
- The female has up to 8 litters each year with 5 to 6 young. She can become pregnant again whilst she is suckling a litter.
- Young mice start to breed when they are 6 weeks old.

Importance

- Mice spread many diseases which are harmful to man, especially because they get onto work surfaces, food, equipment and utensils so easily.
- They breed rapidly so that colonies grow and spread quickly.
- They eat our food but spoil even more with their droppings, urine and hairs.
- Their gnawing damages timber, pipes, cables and household items.

Getting the Problem Under Control

- Our Officers will provide the professional help needed.
- They will inspect the property to determine the extent of the problem.
- Treatment will be carried out, normally with baits being laid.

Advice for Clients

The Officer carrying out treatment for you will explain what has been done and point out things you need to do or ways in which you can help us to control the mouse problem.

Proofing

It is important to check for places mice are getting in and take action to stop them -

- Fit bristle strips to the base of exterior doors if there is a gap beneath.
- Fill holes and gaps through walls, especially around pipes.
Tips – fill *both* sides of cavity and partition walls.
– push wire wool into the holes first and finish with mastic or filler.
- Check floors for holes and large gaps under skirting boards. Seal with wire wool, mastic, filler or sheet material cut to shape.
- Replace damaged or missing air vents and grilles, small gauge mesh can be fitted **but never block them as stopping ventilation can be dangerous and cause damage to the property.**

Hygiene

Do all you can to remove sources of food for the mice, they will be more likely to feed on our baits -

- Clear up after every meal and don't leave any food lying around, especially overnight.
- Keep waste in a bin with a lid.
- Clean kitchen floors regularly and vacuum carpets thoroughly.
Tip – don't forget to move kitchen equipment and lounge furniture and clean beneath.
- Clean and remove pet food bowls after feeding.
- Wipe work surfaces with disinfectant before preparing food.
- Remove mouse droppings whenever they are found. As well as improving hygiene this will help our Officer to tell where mice may still be active.

Housekeeping

- Keep food in wall cupboards rather than base units.
- Use jars or sealed containers for packaged or loose food.
- Tidy up cupboards and check the loft and cellar, they can be favourite places for mice to nest.