

RATS ON ALLOTMENTS

With immediate effect, pest control services are no longer provided at Brackenhill Allotments.

Discouraging rats is everybody's responsibility and following these tips will help minimise numbers.



Removal of Harbourage (places to live / shelter)

- * Remove all debris, rubbish, old equipment from the plot
- * Minimise the amount of materials you keep on plot (e.g. timber)
- * Ensure that any structure is housed on hard standing (e.g. concrete; paving slabs) to prevent rodents from burrowing in underneath. For example, shed/s, storage units, greenhouses etc.

Removal of Food Sources

- * Not leaving household waste on site, including in compost bins
- * Harvesting fruit and vegetables promptly
- * Don't leave discarded fruit and vegetables around
- * Turn the contents of your compost bin/s regularly
- * Keep any food/compost securely (e.g. use bins with solid sides and lids; add heavy duty wire mesh lining in the base etc.)
- * Do not feed birds or other animals at your plot. If you have chickens, clear up any left-over food as soon as possible
- * Store seeds, bulbs, chicken feed etc. in rodent-proof containers

Good Housekeeping

- * Keep your plot tidy – encourage neighbouring properties to do the same
- * Visit regularly, make your presence known (e.g. kicking compost bins)
- * Inspect the plot regularly
- * Thoroughly wash (and peel, as appropriate) the fruit and vegetables you harvest and destroy all vegetables with signs of rodent damage. Note that rats carry risk of disease including Weil's, Salmonella and Leptospirosis and they urinate everywhere)
- * If you discover you have a rat infestation, make sure you wear disposable gloves when dealing with the problem and harvesting your vegetables
- * Keep your shed/s / chicken runs / storage unit/s / greenhouse/s etc. secure and in good order; check regularly for signs of rats living underneath.

Finally

Killing rodents can only provide short term control of populations. Sustainable control can only be achieved by reducing the rodent carrying capacity of the environment. The best way to deal with rodent infestations is not to have them in the first place.

Remember, it's a criminal offence to cause unnecessary harm to any animal. You could be fined or imprisoned if you kill non-target species when putting down poison or traps. You should always seek professional pest control advice.

If you have any questions regarding this, or if you would like to share any information, please contact the Parish Council by telephone 01977 611583 or by email to allotments@ackworthparishcouncil.gov.uk

