

pest

The independent UK pest management magazine

Weather for wasps?

Issue 51
June & July 2017

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Aims

As the industry's only independent magazine, **Pest** aims to deliver a mix of unbiased news, impartial advice and topical technical features. We are committed to being as inclusive as possible covering every sector of the pest management industry.

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Will we ever get back to normal?

Is it us, or has something fundamentally changed in the UK? We'd just about got used to the uncertainty of Brexit but, at least it looked as if we'd have a government with a thumping majority to help its negotiating stance. And then we had the Corbyn factor. We'd written the headline to our allergen article on page 23 before the election, so the juxtaposition of the words 'May' and 'Nuts' is purely accidental – honest!

If it's not the election then the 24-hour media circus has been dwelling on the horrific terror attacks in Manchester and London. Some pundits have put forward the view that so much coverage only fuels the extremists' cause and encourages more attacks; they have a point.

More recently it's been the catastrophic fire in Grenfell Tower that has been the focus of attention. Is the enormous pressure local authorities are under to save money a contributory factor? It's too early to say. But, we do know that local authority pest control units have been struggling under austerity, see the latest BPCA local authority survey on page 15. The answer to the funding problem has come in many guises as our local authority feature, which begins on page 16, shows.

At least we've had some warm (maybe too warm for some) June weather so maybe this year will be the year wasp work gets back to normal.

Frances Hahn

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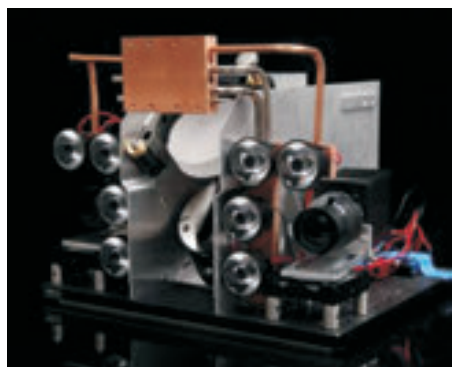
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Lasers to zap the bugs

Lasers are now established as good bird management tools but the machine, pictured below, which looks like something out of some Sci Fi movie, takes things further.

Global Good's Photonic Fence, or 'insect-zapping laser' was originally developed to control insects like mosquitoes to prevent vector-borne diseases such as malaria, but the technology is now being deployed in Florida to combat an insect invader destroying the sunshine state's oranges.

The technology has been refined so much that even when examined under a microscope it is impossible to tell how the insects have been killed. There are no single marks and no gaping wounds. So what's killed them? Essentially the laser works like a short-wavelength microwave oven. When you look at a cross-section of a chicken breast cooked in a microwave and a cross-section of an insect dosed with a laser, they essentially look the same. A pest control product for the future?



Pest control rated well by householders

Pest professionals scored highly for recommendation by word of mouth in an exclusive survey of property related services undertaken by SellingUp.com. Over 60% of those who had used a pest controller would recommend the pest controller they had used to others.

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Busters Group expands again

Birmingham-based Busters Group has made another addition to its portfolio with the recent acquisition of Positive Environmental, which covers Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The company has been ambitiously buying up pest control companies in recent years and the purchase of Positive Environmental is the fourth in as many years. The others were Evergreen Pest Control, Five Star Pest Control from Cambridge and Midlands-based Central Pest Control.

Dave Nash, founder and managing director of Busters Group detailed the firm is currently turning over £2.2 million pa, has over 50 staff and nationwide coverage.

He said: We believe we illustrate that with the right kind of mind set, SME's can compete with the big boys."

The Busters Group, which operates from Kings Norton has diversified into different groups of related environmental problems. There is Pest Busters, Garden Busters, and Hygiene Busters all operating under the Busters Group umbrella.



Managing director of Busters Group, David Nash (left) with Darren Brough

Bayer support for malaria group

Bayer has established a partnership with Goodbye Malaria, an initiative created and managed by African entrepreneurs, which deploys vector-control interventions for preventing malaria cases in Southern Africa. Goodbye Malaria focuses primarily on indoor residual spraying as the key tool to combat the disease.



Pest control moves to Poland

The Conference Center in Wroclaw, Poland, was the venue for the fourth running of ConExPest on 11 and 12 May 2017. This event is organised by the Polish pest control association and held only every three years. This was the first time it was held in the historic town of Wroclaw in western Poland.

In the exhibition there were nearly 50 stands. The companies present ranged from the usual international companies, such as Bayer, Bell, BASF, Babolna and Bleu Line to a clutch of more local Polish companies. As ever, exhibitors from the UK were well represented by familiar organisations such as Killgerm, Pest West, Russell IPM and International Pest Control. Making debut appearances were Simpson Turner, Yanco and Octavius Hunt.

Running alongside was a seminar programme. Although not as large as PestEx and some of the other international events it is worth a visit if you are involved with the export trade



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First ever World Pest Day

6 June 2016 was the first ever World Pest Day. The initiative, which originated with the Chinese Pest Control Association was marked by events around the world. The idea is to raise the awareness of the important role pest management plays in protecting public health. As well as an official launch conference in China, the Confederation of European Pest Management Associations' (CEPA) director general Roland Higgins reports that Vytenis Andriukaitis, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, marked the day by tweeting the logo to his followers from the European Parliament. Stefano Scarponi from the Italian company Bleu Line - BL Group found the fabulous (pests at Abbey Road) picture, below right, and circulated it widely via social media. Here in the UK the British Pest Control Association moved its PestAwareness Week to coincide with the global day and staff mucked in to help out at a local Blue Cross animal rehoming centre. The centre was given a free site survey and staff there received basic training in pest control.



Latent bait boxes readers' request

Here in the **Pest** office it's always nice to hear from readers. A couple of recent enquiries have been about the latent bait box idea, first suggested by Grahame Turner of Mitie Pest Control (and also one of the **Pest** Technical Advisory Board members).

In Grahame's article in **Pest** Issue 46: August & September 2016, he explained how Mitie had stopped using permanent baiting and, in many cases, had switched to simply leaving empty bait boxes in position in case of a rodent infestation. In this way any neophobic issues would be overcome if a rodent infestation occurred and, of course, with no bait in the station there was no chance of any secondary poisoning of wildlife. To satisfy the auditors, Mitie leaves an explanatory card in all the empty bait stations.

Our enquirers wanted to know what wording Mitie used as they thought this was a great idea. We've checked with Grahame and he's very happy for other pest professionals to follow his lead see photograph, right, of the wording.

Grahame also added that he had tried putting non toxic edible baits on a couple of sites and found that it appears to encourage infestation.



Grahame Turner



Will they, won't they

The National Pest Technicians Association (NPTA) has been canvassing opinion during its spring roadshow programme to discover how much support, or otherwise, there is for making membership of a recognised Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme a requirement of NPTA membership. The subject was raised at the NPTA AGM in January but, because the consultation prior to the AGM had resulted in so few responses NPTA did not feel it had a mandate to progress. Watch this space!

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BPCA Regional Forum



In recent months the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) has been holding regional fora up and down the country. The Midlands one, held on 20 June in Leicestershire, immediately followed on from the Annual General meeting – see pages 8 & 9.

Amongst the speakers was BPCA Executive Board member and chairman of the FaCE Forum, Martin Cobbald, pictured above.

His enthusiastic presentation covered the recently launched Contract Sharing Network which, basically, facilitates one BPCA member working cooperatively with another for the benefit of both. In Martin's case his company can offer the somewhat specialised fumigation service other members. As Martin put it: "Create a perceived point of difference. It's a case of small guys getting together to look like a big guy!"

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New global coalition

Following the second Global Summit of Pest Management Services for Public Health and Food Safety held in New York, USA between 3-4 April, a group of 21 pest management associations from around the world met. Out of this was born the Global Pest Management Coalition (GPMC).

The mission of the GPMC is to provide a unified voice across the globe promoting the value of pest management in ensuring the protection of health, home, food and businesses.

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Congratulations James

Customers at Tenv may have wondered where operations director James Mendoza was at the beginning of June. It turns out James had flown to New York to marry his fiancé, Kayleigh, in Central Park on 1 June. Friends and family accompanied them for the festivities after which the happy couple, with their respective children, honeymooned at Disney World in Florida.

James met Kayleigh some three years ago in a pub in Battlesbridge, Essex. She is studying to become a nurse, hoping to qualify next year. James seems to specialise in events abroad, as he proposed to Kayleigh in Dubai last October.



Going the extra mile... or more...

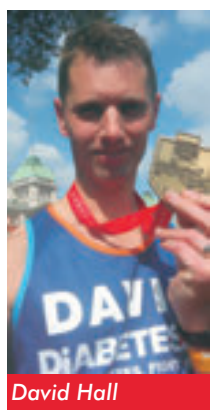
Although not in fancy dress this time around, David Hall, product manager for Rentokil Products, completed his seventh London Marathon on 23 April. Despite it not being in a time as fast as he would have liked, he did say the crowd support was the best ever and it helped him through the hard moments. Don't worry David, any time seems fast to us!

This was the ninth marathon he has run and on this occasion he raised £1,500 for his two charities – Meningitis Now and Diabetes UK – Rentokil have doubled the amount.

Although only a half marathon, Amanda Mountford from Deeside-based Russell IPM was pleased with her performance as she achieved a personal best time when completing the Chester half marathon on 21 May, which starts and finishes at Chester racecourse.

A member of Buckley runners, this was marketing assistant Amanda's third half marathon and she was kept company by her boyfriend and two other friends.

Sponsorship raised by Amanda amounted to £398 and this was doubled by Russell, meaning £796 was raised on behalf of the Alzheimer's Society.



David Hall



Amanda Mountford with friends from the Buckley runners

A large advertisement for BioGenius. The background is a close-up of green leaves. At the top center is the BioGenius logo, which consists of a green diamond shape with a white cross inside, followed by the word 'BioGenius' in a serif font. Below the logo, the text 'Expertise in the Authorization Jungle' is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Surrounding this central text are several rounded rectangular buttons, each with a different pest control category: 'INSECTICIDES', 'REPELLENT', 'RODENTICIDES', 'DISINFECTANTS', 'WOOD PROTECTION', 'ANALYTICS', 'EFFICACY', 'SHELF LIFE', 'APPLICATION TESTS', and 'SAFETY DATA'. In the center, below the main text, is a circular graphic with '360°' and a globe. At the bottom left, the website 'www.biogenius.de' is written in white. At the bottom right, the phrase 'How it works.' is written in a white, handwritten-style font.

From BPCA president to CEPA Chairman



Having served as president the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) between 2012-14, Henry Mott was elected Chairman of the Confederation of European Pest Management Associations (CEPA) at their General Assembly meeting held in Brussels on 14 June. Henry has served the last two years as vice chairman and succeeds Bertrand Montmoreau who stood down after a four year term. Henry is managing director of Rutland-based Conquer Pest Control, having begun his pest control career in 1993 with Rentokil in Central London, before purchasing Conquer Pest Control from Jack Kent.

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Alex getting to grips with pests at MCC

Following the departure of Michael Fowler last year from the role of Manchester City Council's pest control services manager, Alex Hill has taken on this position. This has been something of a challenge for Alex, as Mike had held this position for five years and had moved the service from being a cost maker into an income generator.

A further challenge for Alex was that he came with no pest control experience. He is the first to admit that he has relied on the expertise and experience of his team to get him up-to-speed. His previous experience in asset and financial management has proved highly useful though, to ensure that the service offered is of the highest standard and represents good value to the residents of Manchester.

Speaking to Alex he said: "Since moving into the role, one of the things that has struck me is the dedication of the staff when dealing with the issues that are presented by Manchester residents. Whether this is identifying unknown insects or eradicating a mice infestation, the aim of the team is to resolve the resident's problem as effectively as possible. I have learnt a great deal in a short space of time and have a feeling that my learning will continue for a while yet!"



Addition to the PelGar team

PelGar International is pleased to announce a new addition to the team with the appointment of John McGillivray as its new commercial director.

Graduating with a degree in agriculture, John joined a leading fertiliser and agrochemical distributor in Zimbabwe before moving to ICI Agrochemicals. His career has involved both technical and commercial roles, moving from the UK to lead businesses in India, Korea, Hong Kong and Malaysia. During this time he saw ICI Agrochemicals become Zeneca and, finally, Syngenta.

Since leaving Syngenta in 2007, John has gained further experience in South East Asia and Australia in the bio-ethanol and liquid fertiliser markets. In 2015 he returned to the UK joining Plant Impact as its commercial director for Europe, Middle East and Africa, before joining PelGar in May this year.

"I have substantial business and market development experience in overseas markets," explains John. "In my role with PelGar I plan to draw on that experience to expand the company's market position. Since PelGar acquired Agropharm there are several new and complementary business areas to pursue. There will be plenty of challenges and opportunities and I see PelGar as more agile, flexible and responsive to its customers than the multinationals. There are exciting times ahead for PelGar and I am pleased to be a part of it."



Additional sales support for 1env



Mark Peatling has joined distributor 1env as the new sales manager responsible for sales and technical support to customers stretching from Northampton to East Anglia.

Mark has over 10 years experience in the pest control industry having previously worked for Ecolab, OCS and Rentokil, so he has a wealth of knowledge on the day-to-day challenges faced in pest control. He also holds the RSPH Level 2 qualification.

Award for Ben

Ben Massey, the communications manager for the British Pest Control Association (BPCA), won a national award from the membership organisation, MemCom.

The 29-year-old was named young marketing executive of the year at the MemCom Awards. This recognition comes before the end of Ben's first full year in the job. The awards lunch took place in late May in London where Ben was commended for making 'an outstanding contribution' since joining BPCA in July 2016.

Activities recognised were his project management and renovation of key communication channels. He has also built the foundations of a network

bringing together member companies to produce joint contract bids and he launched an awards evening for BPCA members – as reported in **Pest** issue 50: April & May 2017.





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Richard Strand – new BPCA Life member

At the AGM held on 20 June, Richard Strand received life membership of BPCA and was presented with his certificate by outgoing President, Paul Rodman. BPCA life membership is awarded to individuals in recognition of their services to pest management.

After graduating with a degree in zoology, Richard started his career in pest control in 1973 with the then British Rail Pest Control Unit in Manchester. He went on to run the

London based Southern Pest Control Unit before eventually putting all of British Rail's pest control work out to contract.

Richard subsequently joined BPCA as the Executive Director, a post he held for 18 years, before departing in 2006 to form his own consultancy business – the Pest Information Consultancy. He was also Chairman of the Confederation of European Pest Management Associations (CEPA) in the 1990s and was instrumental in setting up, and then providing secretarial services for, the Irish Pest Control Association (IPCA).

He is an active tutor and examiner for industry bodies, including the RSPH/BPCA (Level 2) Certificate in Pest Control and a technical services verifier for Lantra Awards. Richard used to write a regular pest column in the *Sunday Times* and at **Pest** we are delighted to report that he is not only a regular feature writer for the magazine, but is also a member of the **Pest** Technical Advisory Board.



Richard Strand, right

Congratulations ladies

President Paul Rodman had two further tasks to perform at the AGM. To present 'thank you' gifts to both Lorraine Norton (left below), BPCA operations manager, who celebrates 10 years working for BPCA and also membership officer, Rachel Eyre, who has now been with BPCA a staggering 25 years.



Change of President at BPCA

At the British Pest Control Association's (BPCA) Annual General Meeting held on 20 June at the Catthorpe Manor Estate in Leicestershire, the office of President passed from Paul Rodman to former Vice-President, Tom Holmes.

Tom, who is head of product development at the Pelsis Group, replaces Paul from Monitor Pest Control who was sadly forced to step down suddenly from the position after just 12 months due to unfortunate family circumstances.

Tom's elevation also witnessed the election of two new Vice Presidents; Philip Halpin (Countrywide Environmental Services) and Alan Morris (Bayer CropScience).

The roles had become vacant due to James Ostler standing down from the board earlier in the year and Tom's early elevation to the President position.

Lewis Jenkins (Check Services) and Chris Corbett (Aderyn) were both re-elected onto the Executive Board alongside new members, Mike Ayers (Precision Pest Management Solutions) and David Lodge (Beaver Pest Control).

Mike and David take the place of James Ostler and Dan Gaskin who stood down from the Board prior to the June AGM. Rob Long (Sabre Kent), a long standing member also stood down to concentrate on his role on the Servicing Committee.

Tom will serve for two-years as President. He

identified the key priorities he and the Board will be working on as: the BPCA governance review, positioning the Association in a strategic position regarding any further product controls e.g. potential restrictions on insecticide use and driving a rolling three year strategy for the Association.



The new BPCA Executive Board. Back row (left to right); Martin Harvey (Harvey Environmental), Rupert Broome (Killgerm), Mark Williams (Ecolab), Tom Holmes (Pelsis), Philip Halpin (Countrywide Environmental), Savvas Othon (Rentokil), Chris Corbett (Aderyn), Simon Forrester (BPCA chief executive). Front row (left to right): Martin Cobbald (Dealey), Paul Rodman (Monitor), David Lodge (Beaver), Howard Taffs (Good Riddance), Mike Ayers (Precision), Rob Long (Sabre Kent) and Lewis Jenkins (Check Services)

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Wasps' nest obeying the Highway Code!

When Martin Rose-King from Bounty Pest Control in Kent was called in to deal with a wasps' nest at a school in Ashford he initially had to look hard to spot it. The nest was a very neat ball masquerading as part of a child's traffic game in the play ground.

The nest had reportedly been built in the space of a few days and posed a significant risk should a child try to pick it up to play with it.

As Martin explained: "I initially thought the nest must have dropped off the lean to edge of the toy garage, but on closer inspection it was attached to the floor. What particularly amused me was its position – was it waiting to go into the garage or to go over the level crossing?"

After the school had closed for the night, Martin very carefully treated the nest with Ficam D and then returned first thing the next morning to remove it.



Wasp nest removal man convicted of manslaughter

A court in Switzerland has convicted a man of involuntary manslaughter after wasps from a nest he was trying to remove from his friend's balcony stung two neighbours.

The husband and wife were having lunch on their balcony. The woman was stung several times but suffered no lasting ill effects. Her husband, however, went into anaphylactic shock and died two days later.

The court ruled that the man attempting to remove the nest had acted negligently and carelessly.

The judges were especially critical that he had begun removing the nest without checking whether anyone was on any neighbouring balconies.

This they deemed was "careless and in breach of duty", adding that the neighbour's death could most likely have been avoided had the accused acted more prudently.

The court concluded as all pest professionals already know that "Safety precautions are necessary when removing a wasps' nest."

Helpful British Beekeepers service

Pest controllers called out to honey bee swarms will find the swarm collection service offered by The British Beekeepers Association a great help. It's a simple online system. Plug in the post code and up pops the nearest swarm collector. Those with the right skills can also become collectors. Unfortunately, despite the 'British' in the association name, the system only covers England. Go to: www.bbka.org.uk/help/find_a_swarm_coordinator.php



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What a whopper!

Shane Jones from Basingstoke-based Ridtek Environmental got more than he bargained for when called in to treat a wasps' nest in the loft of an unoccupied, 400 year old, empty house in the Hampshire village of Baughurst.

Shane opened the hatch to the loft and found not one, not two, but ten wasps' nests each measuring around three feet in diameter. No wonder the painter who reported the problem had quickly shut the loft hatch and called for help!

Luckily for Shane these were all old nests except for two small live nests that were just starting up. However, the nests were so large as Shane explains: "We couldn't actually get the nests out without breaking them up, or damaging them, because they were just too big to get through the loft hatch. Except for the smallest which we did manage to get out in one piece.

"The nests were all close to the hatch, so as soon as you went in you were confronted by them. I have never seen anything like it before, nothing as huge as this. They were really big and it was a very cool discovery. Many of these nests were next to each other and some were so big their walls were touching the nests of previous years," he explains.

After removing the nests, Shane space sprayed the loft using ULV 500 (phenothrin with tetramethrin).

Story within a story

This story appeared in his local paper and then the online version of *The Daily Mail*. What has amazed Shane was how quickly this story went viral. Virtually overnight he was contacted by a variety of media including the BBC and he did a live radio interview, ITV with an appearance on *Meridian* news, *LADBible*, *Unilad* and even a Russian magazine.

Although Shane has enjoyed his 15 minutes of fame, the jury is still out as to whether this stardom has brought in any extra business. His phone has certainly been busier though.

Shane, 48 set up RIDTEK (Rodent & Insect Defence TEK) four years ago and works with his son Reef, 18 and wife Roo, 44.

Pest control in the blood

An Australian by birth, pest control is in his blood as it all started way back in the 1920s in South Eastern Australia when his great grandfather, Hof, was employed as a rabbit trapper during the great rabbit outbreak. This tradition was carried on through vermin eradication with Shane's grandfather and then his uncle through the 1970s and 80s.

Shane moved to the UK after his marriage to Basingstoke-born Roo so that they could be near her family.



Right: Shane Jones with the only nest he was able to get through the loft hatch in one piece.

Above: When Shane opened the hatch into the loft he found nests everywhere



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Two happy endings...

If the summer brings wasps to mind, often the spring brings birds, as these two good news stories illustrate.



Beaver technician, Eduart Enachi, successfully transfer the starling chicks to their new home

Family re-homed

South London-based Beaver Pest Control received something of a panic phone call from one of the hospitals they look after. Starlings had made a nest in the ceiling void of a clinical room. Not only were they causing a problem flying around, but the nest was also causing problems with bird mites in the room. As starlings are a protected bird species a special license was needed from Natural England to relocate them. The application was made, photographs sent and the degree of urgency stressed.

As Julia Pittman, head of sales explained: "Whilst we were waiting the go ahead, we agreed a plan of action with the hospital. So, as soon as permission was granted, some four days later, the nest was relocated that same evening. The ceiling was taken down, the five chicks caught and the nest transferred to a specially built nest box located as close as possible to the original spot. The entrance to the old nest was blocked-up and the bird mites treated. The site was also thoroughly surveyed and other potential entry points earmarked for proofing in the autumn to prevent this reoccurring next year. Job done."

After their move, the starlings were regularly monitored, but obviously did not suffer any ill effects as five chicks successfully fledged.



Board & lodgings provided

The six technicians who make up the pest control team at Wiltshire Council have lived up to their Council's slogan - where everybody (or maybe we should say every bird) matters.

The team discovered that some feathered friends had set up home in their pest control

store. They were alerted when they spotted robins flying in and out. Upon investigation the robins had built their nest in an empty rat bait box on the top shelf of the store!

A camera was set up to monitor progress and the footage was fed to YouTube. Meal

Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

worms were left out regularly to supplement their diet. Four days later and five eggs hatched successfully.



One of the robins that made their nest in a bait box in the pest control store



Five eggs successfully hatched

Beware of people power

Sainsbury's accused

All professional pest controllers should always bear in mind the very fickle nature of the general public when it comes to pests. Whilst none want an intimate encounter with rats, fleas, bed bugs or the like, they are all too keen to 'get someone out to fix them'. However, beware. These opinions can change all too rapidly if the pest in question is cute, furry and not directly in their 'back garden.'

Social media and the local press went into meltdown as word spread after a shopper at the Crayford, Kent branch of Sainsbury's reportedly witnessed a fox trapped in a cage being shot by the contracted pest controller. The story went on to report that this was none other than a lactating vixen and that cubs were later seen wandering around, destined to starve to death.

After contacting the Sainsbury's press department, their statement released on 16 June read: "We've completed a thorough review of how pest control was managed at our Crayford store, which involved the release of two mother foxes and extermination of three males. An independent expert has confirmed our



contractor correctly followed industry guidelines and in the interests of the safety of our customers and colleagues.

"However, we understand the killing of foxes is a topic close to the heart of many of our customers. Safety will always be our top priority, but we have worked with our contractor to set out new processes. In the extremely rare event there are issues with foxes in the future, we can confirm that we would only use humane deterrents," the statement concluded.

The law would more than certainly be on the side of Sainsbury's – but not the opinion of

the general public. Moral of the story – if faced with such a problem discretion is always the wisest option. Shooting a fox in front of members of the general public is never going to win the industry any friends.



Squirrel campaign backfires

What started out as an all too reasonable recruitment drive by the Wildlife Trusts for volunteers to work on a red squirrel project all too rapidly ended up as a negative campaign. Volunteers were sought by the Wildlife Trusts to work with partner organisations in their local area, logging squirrel sightings, monitoring feeders for reds, setting up camera traps to film their behaviour, controlling grey squirrel populations in key areas, and teaching the public and schoolchildren about this treasured native species.

This request was siezed upon by the largest UK animal rights group, Animal Aid, who mounted a counter campaign for help to stop, what they called, 'disturbing new plans to continue with a mass cull of grey squirrels, and even recruit volunteers who will bludgeon these animals to death'.

Animal Aid produced a series of posters, one of which is shown alongside, for supporters to circulate.

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Local authority cuts continue to threaten public health, says BPCA survey

On 6 June 2017, World Pest Day, the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) published the results of its fourth annual survey of pest control services undertaken by local authorities in the UK.

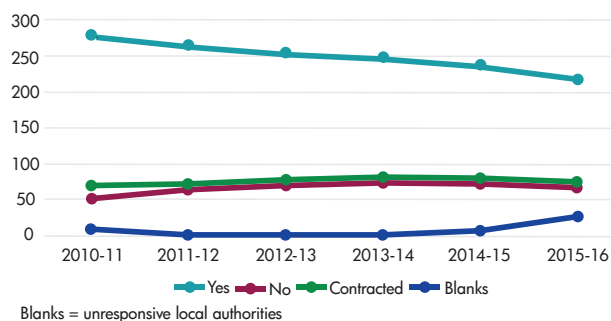
In the headline data sent out to accompany the survey results, BPCA highlighted that spending cuts are leaving parts of Britain increasingly exposed to the threat of a major pest infestation. The Association said it believed the 'alarming' slide was due to a significant drop in staffing levels and is calling on councils to ensure adequate funds are allocated to what it describes as, a vital facility.

These new figures were once again gained following a Freedom of Information (FOI) request issued by BPCA to the 390 district, borough and unitary authorities in the UK. All but 26 replied in some shape or form, but the responses from a further 131 were somewhat minimal.

Downward trend

Coming as no surprise to readers is the downward trend in local authorities offering pest control as shown by these figures over the four years since 2010/11 – see Figure 1 below.

Fig 1: Local authorities offering pest control services



This time around, 80% (292) of local authorities said they offered some form of pest control to the general public. This represents a decrease of 8% compared to the previous year (from 316 to 292) and a decrease of 14% (from 340 to 292) since 2011/12.

Of the 292 authorities who do operate a pest control service, 75% offered an in-house service. This represents a decrease of 8% (239 to 219) over the previous year and of 18% since 2011/12 (267 to 219). The remaining 25% (73) said their pest control services were contracted to third party companies. This represents a decrease of 6% from the previous year (78 to 73) and no change overall compared to 2011/12.

The remaining 20% (72) offer no pest control service to the public. Whilst this was no change from the previous year, the number who do not provide a public pest control service has increased by 9% (66 to 72) since 2011/12. As readers will know, residents in these authorities who request pest control will simply be advised to look in Yellow Pages or, as often occurs, to contact BPCA or the National Pest Technicians Association (NPTA) – on such occasions the pest control contractor locators on both websites prove their worth.

Looking to the future

Of the 292 local authorities currently offering a pest control service, 89% (260) said they had intentions of continuing this service for the following year. This represented an 8% decrease compared to the previous year (from 282 to 260) and a 16% decrease (309 to 260) since 2011/12.

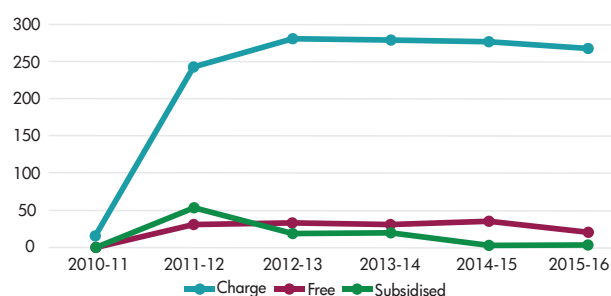
Five percent of authorities (16) said they would not offer a pest control service next year. This represents a 167% increase since 2011/12 (from 6 to 16).

What price pest control?

The survey showed that in 2015/16, 92% of local authorities who offer a pest control service now demand a charge. This represents an increase of 3% from the previous year (276 to 268) and 10% since 2011/12 (243 to 268). Only 1% (4) recorded that they subsidised their pest control services, which represents a 20% decrease compared to the previous year (from 5 to 4) and a 92% decrease since 2011/12 (from 53 to 4).

Just 7% of authorities (20) do not charge for public pest control services – a decrease of 44% from the previous year and 38% since 2011/12.

Fig 2: UK local authorities charging for pest control



However, what a local authority calls 'demand a charge' can frequently be far less than what a commercial pest control company would charge. Take as an example Neath & Port Talbot County Borough Council, in Wales, which the survey identifies as the authority with the highest total pest call-out rate per 1,000 people. Referring to their website, a fee of £31 for up to five visits is quoted for rats or mice in domestic properties. A commercial company would go out of business with this level of charging! Yet only four authorities recorded that they subsidised their service - really?

Survey of the commercial sector?

Having undertaken this survey of local authorities four times now, one is left wondering why BPCA has so far failed to implement any similar sort of survey of its own members who must make up a significant proportion of the market? This would then give a much more complete view of the entire UK pest control sector.

Not giving up, but going forward

The number of local authorities giving up their pest control services due mainly to financial pressures is rising, but not all authorities are packing-up without a fight. In fact several are developing innovative programmes to ensure the continuance of their activities as **Pest** has discovered.

Leeds City Council, outsourcing services – 10 years on

The first to explore is Leeds City Council. Back in 2010 **Pest** featured this council's activities (see **Pest** issue 9: May & June 2010) as in 2007 it set up a unique part council/part contractor arrangement. We posed the question: "Was this a marriage of convenience or a match made in heaven?" Here Ian Masterton, who has been the pest control manager throughout this process, updates us on progress – is it wedded bliss or a trip to the divorce courts?



Ian Masterton

The decision was taken in 2007 to outsource the provision of domestic pest control services at Leeds City Council (LCC). At the time I believe we were the first core local authority to consider doing so.

Three LCC staff transferred to the external supplier (under TUPE) and in May 2007, after a full competitive tendering process, Rentokil Pest Control was our first successful external provider.

Ten years on and Leeds continues to outsource domestic pest control to provide a value for money value public service.

Close monitoring of standards

Our current partner is Mitie Pest Control which we have been working closely with since 2012. The administration of the service is carried out internally but the actual pest control work itself is undertaken by Mitie. The council charges customers directly and pays the contractor their agreed fee per job. The contract includes a raft of key performance indicators to ensure a high standard of customer service.

Leeds covers a large geographical region, with heavily populated urban areas, in addition to a significant amount of outer

rural towns with a lot of countryside. With a population around three quarters of a million, LCC pest control services currently receives around 5,000 service requests a year.

Steep learning curve

During this time it has been a steep learning curve for us all, working in partnership with our contractors based on performance, integrity and most of all trust, all takes time.

The partnership we now have with Mitie is a good one, with four pest technicians dedicated to the contract, a service manager and access to their real time record keeping system, Pest Alert.

Financial pressures

As everyone working in local authority pest control teams will appreciate, we have to look at new and innovative ways in which to deliver a quality and affordable service in the face of financial and resource pressures.

In order to ensure the domestic pest control service is financially sustainable, whilst continuing to provide a service of good quality and value, the council recently aligned it's charges to residents to reflect contractor prices.

Some pest treatments have increased in price whereas others have reduced. The council also includes a small additional fee to cover the administration of the service. This May our last remaining concessionary pest control services were removed, namely free rats inside for owner occupiers and free wasps' nests for pensioners on full Pensioner's Credit. The service, after operating at a deficit for a number of years is now cost neutral.

In-house commercial team

All this time we have retained a small 'in-house' service, consisting of three pest officers, who work on a purely commercial basis. Over the past 14 years we have built a strong portfolio of customers ranging from internal buildings, schools, other departments and external commercial businesses. The internal part of the service has been self-financing for some time.

At Leeds City Council, we have a formula that currently works. Getting a modern, responsive and accountable service for our residents, provided by our current contractor, alongside an in-house commercial operation with an ambition to grow.

Pest control: paying its way and adding value...

With local authority budgets shrinking and the need to support services through income generation, can pest control become self funding and still add value? This was the question posed at Brighton and Hove City Council as Roy Pickard, environmental health manager with responsibility for pest control, explains.



Roy Pickard

Brighton and Hove City Council has been developing its pest control service to become sustainable, environmentally-friendly and self funding. Not only are we still providing quality pest control services to residents and businesses, but we also ensure that the local authority still has the capability to meet its statutory duties of keeping land free from rodents while protecting the environment.

Self-funding

To make pest control self funding we have had to restructure. Once free to residents, we now charge fees for treatments. We have also looked at other areas to make savings, whilst keeping in mind that we need to remain competitive, such as keeping our fixed costs controlled, ensuring maximum productivity per officer, confirming our pricing structure reflects real costs, capitalising on our reputation as a trusted brand, increasing market share and finally providing a quality service that meets the needs of our customers.

Benchmarking our services against price and quality with other local private and public providers has been important to enable us to structure our prices correctly and to offer a value service that will not price us out of the market.

Keeping our fixed costs controlled was a question of going through our budget and expenditure line-by-line and working out whether the spend was necessary, or if we could purchase the same at a lower cost. We also had to ensure we were matching staff resources to demand and, in turn, increase productivity. Each pest officer completes 12 jobs per day – a mixture of new visits and revisits.

New computer system was key

A really important way we have saved time, so that we can focus on improving productivity, is to build a new computer system.

This new system allows customers to book and pay online and enables the pest control officers to complete all their paper work electronically, using a tablet out on site. It allows managers to see which customers have outstanding payments and how much business we are doing at a glance.

Previously, our systems were paper based, creating significant administrative work. Now our new electronic systems frees up an hour a day for the pest control officers, an hour a day for managers and cuts out all the transactional administration work for the sales team. This system is for sale, if local authorities or private companies want to purchase this from us.

We increased market share and attracted new business by low cost advertising through Facebook, Local Food Safety News and our website and brochure. Recently we have been advertising our services on local radio. We also provided new services by responding to people's environmental concerns and creating pest control services focusing on environmental management methods.

To generate additional income, we had to expand the services we

offer. New services we have created include treatment for carpet moth, humane mouse trapping, break-back traps for rats, self help treatments for insects for customers on low incomes, fox repellent and advice service, squirrels in lofts, wildlife management service and a pest proofing service. The sales team and pest control officers were fully involved in the change process and much of the innovation for services came from the feedback they had received from our customers.

We have also been working in partnership with a local contractor to offer a bird proofing service, which has been popular with local residents. And, we are developing a hawking service, to scare and control birds at factories, industrial parks, schools, warehouses, hotels, sports stadiums, hospitals and domestic properties. This approach is environmentally friendly and ethical.

Working together

Offering our service to other council departments such as parks, seafront office, schools, social services, travellers' team, museums, housing and working with colleagues in Environmental Protection for filthy and verminous premises, allows us to offer an in-house value and expertise.

We have also been working with local letting agents and advertising our services with them.

Interestingly for us, the only price sensitive treatment has been rats. We believe that this was due to us previously doing large number of rat jobs in gardens for free, but now these outdoor jobs have been greatly reduced and the bulk of our work for rats is for treatments inside homes. The added benefit of this is that it reduces the amount of bait used outside with the risk of non-target organisms being poisoned. It is also much better for the environment.

With the future challenges of climate change and the change in the pattern and ecology of pests, I am proud that in this day and age, we can still deliver this service in-house, adding value, generating income and helping the council to ensure it meets its statutory duties, in keeping its land free from rats and mice, specified in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

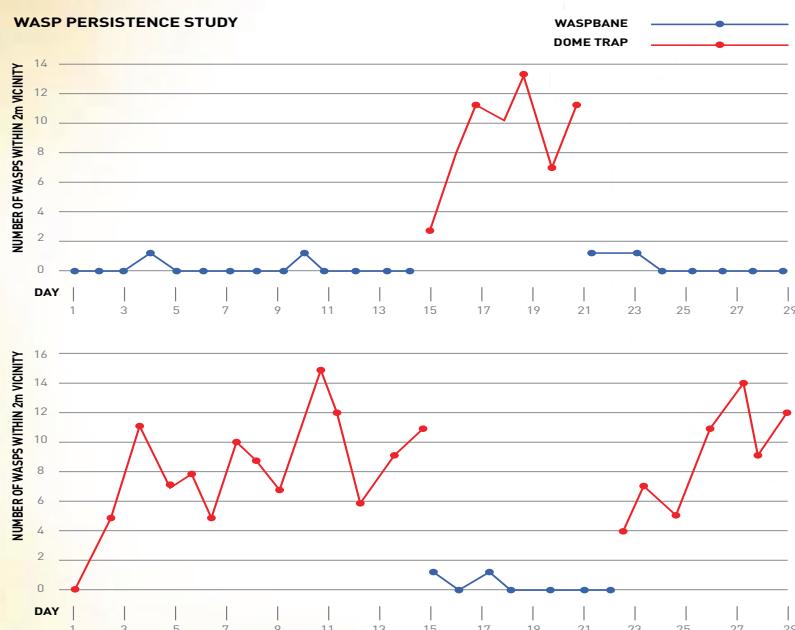
Brochures are used to promote Council pest control services



This article has been updated from a longer version which first appeared in *Environmental Health News* December 2016



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Inspirational initiative

If judged on enthusiasm and determination alone, the initiative to provide a quality and affordable pest control service to the people of the London Borough of Newham is sure to succeed. What Newham has achieved is yet another means of retaining this public service.

Faced with the now all too familiar requirement to slash his budget by externalising certain services, Newham's inspirational mayor, Sir Robin Wales, set about finding various ways of not only retaining vital services, but also improving what they offered. Amongst the services under scrutiny fell pest control.

A ground breaker himself, Sir Robin has been part of Newham Council for more than 20 years, serving first as a councillor before becoming its Leader and then, following a local referendum in 2002, becoming the first directly elected Labour mayor in England. A position he still holds today. Under Sir Robin's leadership Newham is at the forefront of public policy and has led the way on a number of ground-breaking schemes. Amongst these is the creation of independent businesses under the control of Newham whose role is to provide appropriate services to the council.

Being local government, setting up this type of commercial operation is by no means easy. In brief, rules, known as Teckal exemptions, apply when a contracting local authority exercises arms-length control over a legally separate, wholly-owned company which carries out services that previously may have been undertaken by an in-house provider. It means a council wishing to award a contract does not need to run a lengthy procurement procedure or outsource it to the private sector. Reading this it sounds simple, but Google Teckal and you discover there is considerable more to it!

However, other councils in England have made it work. For example, Cheshire East was one of the first to use wholly-owned companies to handle its in-house waste services. Another, Waste Solutions SK was established by Stockport Council following a resource management and governance scrutiny committee report circulated in 2004. It provides local commercial waste and recycling services for businesses in Stockport and the surrounding areas. But as far as is known, Newham is the first council to address pest control services in this manner.

So, on 1 February 2017 the London Network for Pest Solutions was born. This is a registered limited company but with only one shareholder – the London Borough of Newham. There are three directors; Paul Cooper, Michael Marbe and James Smith.

In charge of managing London Network for Pest Solutions is Paul Cooper: "It's been a long journey setting up a business within a local authority," explains Paul. "You run into all sorts of problems, the politics within the local authority being just one, and then there is a whole raft of issues relating to state funding and anticompetitive practices. We might work for and be a part of the council, but we are required to buy-in any services we use from the council at full commercial rate. However, this also gives us the freedom to contract services from outside suppliers if we wish, for example our payroll activities are provided externally rather than from Newham council.



The management team at London Network for Pest Solutions. Left to right: Mike Bailes (business development manager), Michael Marbe (employee appointed director) with Paul Cooper

"But one constraint we do have to follow under Teckal requirements is that we can only earn 20% of our income from external sources," adds Paul.

Hard work certainly, but Paul enthuses as to what has been achieved and feels it has been well worth the effort. He might, but what of the other members of staff? "We've got seven full-time and three part-time staff and they too have been energised by the change. They all have a say in how it is managed. Our prices are fair and our philosophy is, yes we are here to make a profit, but everyone works to the belief that we first of all have to deliver a quality service and then make a profit. At the end of the year, half of the profit is divided equally as a profit share to all the staff, and that's per head, not in proportion to what they earn. We also adopt a local charity each year and they get a share too."

City of London service

Like most local authority teams, council and private residents are their target market, along with schools, libraries, local food shops etc. Paul has no ambitions of taking on large commercial customers, particularly the large multi-national chains. But what is quite unique is Newham now provides the facility pest control service to the City of London. So one day it might be a tenant in a Newham council flat and the next a High Court judge's chambers in the Old Bailey! Other iconic venues cared for include the Guildhall, the Mansion House and Tower Bridge.

Speaking to Paul you can't help but get caught up in his enthusiasm. He was head-hunted to join Newham in 2015 and says he really wants to make a difference. This desire has come about following a career within the industry. Fifty-five years old, Paul started out in 1986 working for Rentokil, followed by spells at Lambeth Council and, most recently, Ecolab. He quite openly credits his knowledge and commercial expertise to his time with these organisations and feels that the British Pest Control Association, which his company has recently joined, is doing a great job of driving up professionalism within the industry. For the longer term he feels there are too many pest control teams, each with their own admin set-up in the 32 London boroughs, yet not with a single field biologist amongst them. His dream is for these local authorities to link-up and work together. We will have to see.

PelGar sets the scene at Church Farm

In the **Pest** office we get quite a few invitations to go and visit this company or that, or to go and see some super-whiz new machine, so when invited to revisit PelGar's Church Farm facility near Basingstoke in Hampshire **Pest** editor, Frances McKim, had a pretty good idea what she was letting herself in for – live rats for one thing! Having paid a visit some six years ago (see **Pest** issue 15: May & June 2011) it was going to be interesting to find out what had changed.

Upon arrival, my first, but not my last, impression was that not much had changed! With visits to Church Farm being by invitation only, signage is minimal as the site prefers to remain discreet. The only give-away as to what happens behind closed doors is the fleet of pest control vans parked outside.

But first impressions can be deceptive. Once inside the first building it's obvious there have been more than a few changes since PelGar International took over the running of the facility from the owner, Dr Steve Havers, in January 2016. Historically PelGar, whose headquarters are about a 30 minute drive down the road in Alton, has worked closely with Dr Havers, for example using the facilities for some of its practical palatability trials. But, since taking on responsibility for the site, PelGar has invested heavily in the venue, extending the buildings to include further meeting rooms, adding a wide array of mock-up 'scenarios', as well as smart new laboratory and insecticide testing facilities. And, the company is now proactively marketing the venue as a training facility.

Rats, mice and insects at first hand

As Alex Wade, who manages the site explains: "Dr Havers established a strong foundation here at Church Farm, but what PelGar has done is extend and consolidate it. The classroom facilities have been enlarged, the simulated training scenarios considerably widened and purpose-built laboratories added. We have moved all our live insects, equipment and testing facilities to Church Farm. Those who come on courses can see, at first-hand, not just rats, but also a very wide selection of live insects."

Not only have the insects relocated, but so has Alex. From two staff



From left PelGar's Alex Wade, who manages the Church Farm site, Nic Blaszkowicz UK & Ireland business manager and new commercial director, John McGillivray

at the old labs in Bentley, Hampshire, the team has expanded to four working at Church Farm. There are another two staff based in the field conducting trials on a contract basis. In addition to this, PelGar's research director, Dr Jo Wade has a watching brief. On the day of my visit we were also joined by John McGillivray who had recently become PelGar's new commercial director.

For anyone visiting Church Farm the stars of the show remain the colonies of rats – both brown rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) and, uniquely, black rats (*Rattus rattus*) plus a large colony of house mice (*Mus musculus*). Visitors have the opportunity of watching and interacting with these pests at first hand – as Dr Havers said on my previous visit: "There's not much point being a pest control technician if you are afraid of the pests you have to control!" Delegates not only have the chance of watching both these species at close quarters in their custom-made pens, but can also get 'close-up and personal' with supervised walks in the pens.

However, the rat colonies are much more than simply exhibits – they are used for research purposes too. As Alex said: "There is a large population of brown rats here. To ensure the health of the population every month we conduct a population census and cull around 50 of the older, less fit ones. This is the only selection pressure they experience with a lack of any predators and a constant supply of food. The colony is disease free as no new rats are introduced.

"By doing this we can monitor their weight and the effects of



The rodent pens at Church Farm house large colonies of house mice, brown rats and, uniquely in the UK, black rats. The rodents are used for research purposes as well as to give course delegates a real rodent experience

temperature variations on the population. We can also test out the palatability of any new formulation before taking it into the field."

The rats might be the natural stars but once their novelty has worn off what is very impressive is the extensive range of practical treatment scenarios PelGar has added. Within the industry there are now a number of training centres which include demonstration rooms where pest controllers can get to grips with the practical problems they will encounter. Excellent as they are, most are limited to the likes of a bedroom, living room, kitchen, food area, roof and loft space.

Scenarios to pose practical challenges

The previous selection of 'rooms' at Church Farm has been radically expanded and each is set-up so as to pose a series of realistic practical challenges that technicians are liable to come across in their work. In addition to those one would expect, such as a commercial kitchen and hotel bedroom, washrooms, an office, a convenience store and a public bathroom have been added. Reflecting some of the less savoury locations pest controllers encounter, a very untidy squat is replicated, there's a drug user's bedroom, which includes discarded syringes and, for specialist training in biological decontamination, a bedroom crime scene after a murder which includes fake blood splattered walls and furnishings. For the future, plans are afoot to include an area representing working within confined spaces and 20 feet of underground ducting to simulate rodent control in sewers.

On the more practical outdoor side, bird netting, external rodenticide training and aluminium phosphide application can be accommodated and there is even an indoor area, with a target range, dedicated to shooting courses which can also be used for large scale space treatments.

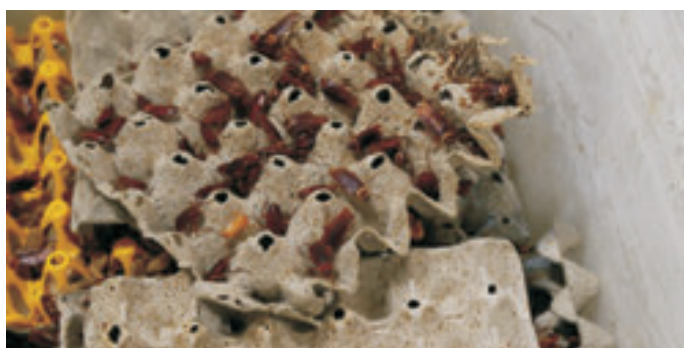
With this selection of demonstration 'scenarios' plus the seminar rooms and comfy break-out areas, these facilities are available to other companies to run their own internal training courses. PelGar do also run on their own behalf CPD accredited courses.

Drawing the visit to a close, Nic Blaszkowicz, PelGar's UK & Ireland business manager said: "At Church Farm the aim is to set up not only a first rate classroom training facility, but also a unique range of room settings where delegates can put theory into practice. Any company is welcome to hire the facilities and we already have bookings from a wide range of clients including national organisations, distributors and pest control companies, both large and small."



Interested in using Church Farm?

All enquiries about the use of the facilities at Church Farm should be emailed to: alex@pelgar.co.uk



American cockroaches (*Periplaneta americana*) are just one of 30 plus insect species cultured on site for training and testing

Just four of the unique scenarios. From the top: drug den, commercial kitchen, public toilet and convenience store

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Pest control and food allergies



Mention the term 'anaphylactic shock' in pest control circles and the potential effect of wasp stings is likely the first thought that comes to mind. But, as independent consultant and **Pest** Technical Advisory Board member, Richard Strand heard at PestEx, for people with food allergies danger is not preceded by a visual warning pattern of black and yellow stripes!

Allergies to common food materials seem to be on the rise. To apply some perspective, however, whilst 35% - 40% of the population regard themselves as 'intolerant' to certain food materials, only 2% - 3% suffer from a true 'food allergy'. This figure rises to 5%-8% in children with one in 50 children suffering from peanut allergy. The difference between an allergy and an intolerance is that an 'allergy' can kill, whereas, an 'intolerance' won't.

In a recent high profile case a restaurateur was jailed for six years having been convicted of manslaughter. He swapped expensive almond powder for a cheaper ground nut mix in a take away dish.

At PestEx 2017 held in March this year, Peter Littleton the technical director of Warrington-based Klenzon Christeys described, and, via a disturbing piece of video, demonstrated the impact that an allergy can have.

He then called on pest controllers to review their own activities. Could our actions be unwittingly causing problems, particularly when working in places where food is prepared, stored or sold?

Experts have identified some 120 foods as being allergenic. Those foods most

commonly causing serious allergic reactions on a worldwide basis are: cereals containing gluten, milk, egg, tree nuts, peanuts, soyabeans, fish and crustacea.

There can be 'cross allergies' too. Peanuts are not actually 'nuts' but are legumes. Individuals with a peanut allergy can also react to exposure to other legumes such as lupins, chickpeas and lentils. In total, the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation lists 14 prepacked foods that are used as ingredients that may contain common allergens (see box overleaf).

How much is too much?

The old adage that 'the dose makes the poison' leads us to ask just how much/many 'allergen' does it take to trigger a reaction? For people who are extremely susceptible to

peanuts, as little as 1 mg is enough. Putting this into context, it amounts to as little as one thousandth of one peanut.

Holding back on 'handing out the snacks' is not, therefore, enough on its own, to protect the vulnerable from a possible fatal reaction. Hand to mouth transmission, having touched a tray on which nuts have been served, might be all it takes. In the video, described above, a lad sent his girlfriend into anaphylactic shock by kissing her after eating some peanuts – a 'fatal kiss'! ▶ ▶ ▶



Peter Littleton from Klenzon Christeys who spoke about allergens at PestEx 2017

Foods that may contain allergens

The Food Information for Consumers Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 brought together EU rules on general food and nutrition labelling into one piece of legislation. This was brought into domestic law via The Food Information Regulations 2014.

The key changes introduced in relation to allergens were:

- For pre-packed foods, allergen information must be emphasised in the ingredients list;
- For non-prepacked foods (including catering), allergen information must be made available to consumers.

The foods that may contain allergens listed in the legislation are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Cereals containing gluten, namely: wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat), rye, barley, oats; | ■ Celery (including celeriac); |
| ■ Crustaceans for example prawns, crabs, lobster, crayfish; | ■ Mustard; |
| ■ Eggs; | ■ Sesame; |
| ■ Fish; | ■ Sulphur dioxide/sulphites, where added and at a level above 10 mg/kg in the finished product. This can be used as a preservative in dried fruit; |
| ■ Peanuts; | ■ Lupin, which includes lupin seeds and flour, and can be found in types of bread, pastries and pasta; |
| ■ Soyabbeans; | ■ Molluscs – clams, mussels, whelks, oysters, snails and squid. |
| ■ Milk; | |
| ■ Nuts – almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia nuts; | |

Pest controllers may find themselves in the position where they may unwittingly transfer allergens in the course of their work. How many of us have asked our suppliers what exactly is in the other 99% of the rodenticide, that is not active ingredient?

The obvious concern is, in the course of our work, that we might be, inadvertently, contaminating food premises. There is, however, an issue, closer to home. On the basis that 2% of us harbour a food allergy, one in 50 pest control technicians may themselves be at risk!

A bit of a problem!

The rodenticide manufacturers are certainly aware but have a problem. They have to make their products attractive to rodents and so many of these foods, not just peanuts, are potential allergens, wheat and soya for example.

As part of its response, Bayer, is planning to release a range of 'hypoallergenic' baits.

The first of these, Harmonix, is now available, (see page 37). It is a non-toxic pasta bait designed for use in the food industry. As well as being peanut free, Bayer has replaced wheat with rolled oats. The company also produces 'Allergen Statements' for each of its products, offering the user the choice about where specific products should be used.

Anne Withall, regulatory manager at PelGar International observed that PelGar had been approached by food manufacturers on the subject of food allergens. She confirmed that the company has taken action to look at the formulation of baits so as to avoid allergens, wherever possible.



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BASF too is addressing this question stating: "We are aware of potential allergens in rodenticide bait bases. For each of our products we have information on these potential allergens, such as wheat, and this information can be provided upon request. However, none of our rodenticide baits contain nuts, or nut products, as an ingredient."

No more special mixes

All rodenticides available these days are ready-to-use. Adulteration by the pest controller with his/her favourite secret taste enhancing additive – chip shop oil, molasses etc, is now contrary to the terms of the approval and so a thing of the past. Provided that care is taken when selecting an appropriate bait for the premises being treated, the rodenticide itself should not prove problematic.

The 'hierarchy of control' requires us to consider alternatives to rodenticide before undertaking a treatment. When it comes to food premises, even those that do not specifically preclude the use of chemicals, pest controllers will consider that by setting break-back traps, they are both complying with the hierarchy and significantly reducing the risk of contaminating food with chemicals – a 'win/win'. However, ask any group of pest controllers what their preferred bait is for break-back traps, peanut butter or fruit and nut chocolate, will be up there in the top two! Some traps are even supplied with a peanut butter lure. Better perhaps to position the traps with skill and forget about baiting them entirely.

Indirect contamination

All of the above are examples of 'direct transfer'. Peter Littleton, during his presentation, emphasised that there was

indirect risk of transferring allergens as well.

Pest controllers undertake many jobs during a typical day in a wide variety of businesses. How many change their coveralls after each job? Remember how small an amount of peanut could trigger a reaction in a susceptible person, just one thousandth of one peanut. It is so easy to transfer that on coveralls or footwear.

To conclude

In summary, this is a real problem that, in the past, has not been given much consideration. As part of the drive towards professionalism this must change. It is gratifying to see that the manufacturers are taking the problem seriously, pest controllers are showing concern too. **Pest** hopes that this article will encourage more business managers and individual pest controllers to think about their own working methods.



Rokill's Brian Duffin

What does it mean in practice?

But what are the practical implications for pest professionals servicing the food sector?

We asked **Pest** Technical Advisory Board member and Rokill's chief technical officer, Brian Duffin, about the impact: "I didn't get to the session on allergens at PestEx so it's good to have an article on this topic," he said. "It's definitely something the industry needs to be aware of."

That said, he explained that in practice not a lot has changed since the implementation of the Food Information Regulations under which new allergen labelling rules were introduced from December 2014.

"On arrival on site you are generally asked to fill in a questionnaire which will include questions checking that you are not bringing anything containing peanuts onto the site. It will also ask if you, personally, are allergic to anything that might be on site and then you go in and get on with the job."

Allergen statements usually sufficient

"Some customers have asked for information about allergens in rodenticide bait and bait manufacturers have been very good at supplying allergen statements about their products. These point out which potential allergens are used in the products and which are not. We've found that making reference to the use of tethered tamper-resistant bait boxes is the best means of mitigating against the risk of baits coming into contact with food generally satisfies the customer."

"For customers that still have concerns then we'd go down the route of traps using the NARA lure, which is a hypoallergenic non-toxic attractant, provided, of course, that the standard the site is operating under allows the use of a lure," he adds. "However the use of break-backs in food manufacturing plants will require

regular inspection which is sometimes done by the client following some training," he adds.

The presence of allergens is clearly an issue, but there are plenty of other potential threats that must be considered. The focus in BRC version 7, for example, includes not only HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Path) but also a greater emphasis on TACCP (Threat Analysis Critical Control Path) recognising terrorism as another potential threat and emphasising the precautions the food industry needs to take to prevent malicious food contamination. From what Brian has seen, some sites have plenty of scope for improvement in this respect.

"Bacterial cross contamination is another issue and a pest technician moving from a low risk to a high risk area on a food site will often be asked to change their boots and coveralls. But what about the equipment – a set of steps, a clipboard? In my experience very few sites have worries about these!"

Biggest threat is from the pests

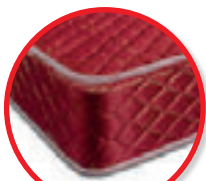
"But, at the end of the day, mice in the production area pose a far greater threat, because of the diseases they carry and their potential for bacterial cross contamination, than any allergen in a rodenticide in a secure bait box," he suggests.

What's more, in most cases and, definitely on those sites following the major standards such as BRC, Tesco and M&S, rodenticide bait will only be used in open product or packaging areas when there is an ongoing infestation. This reduces still further the chances of anyone with an allergy coming into contact with the rodenticide.

The possibility that the technician handling the rodenticide might have an allergic reaction to it is of rather more concern. "I would hope that by the time we come to recruit them as pest technicians, individuals will know whether they have a serious allergy or not. However, maybe it's a question we ought to be asking at interview," concludes Brian.

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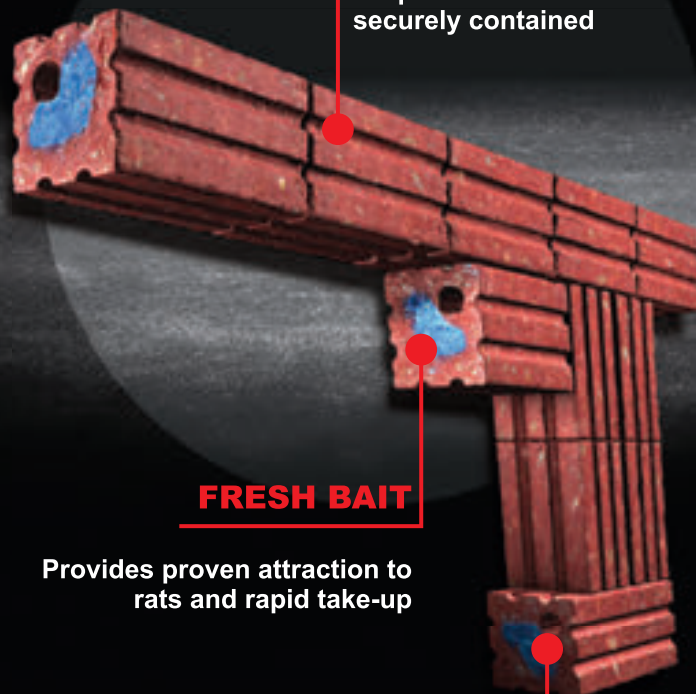
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Insect monitors defended

We have good news to report, the industry has succeeded in persuading the Commission's Directorate-General Health and Food Safety's Standing Committee on Biocidal Products that bringing insect monitoring traps that contain attractants into the biocides regulatory system makes no sense.

A big pat on the back to all those who made the effort to explain to the European Commission that the proposal to class attractants in insect monitors as biocides was, to say the least, counterproductive.

To recap the Commission's idea was to class pheromone attractants in insect monitors as biocides. This would mean that they would have to go through the long and expensive EU regulatory approval system. The costs associated with this do not add up for manufacturers, so the result would have been the loss of these useful integrated pest management tools.

BCPA leadership role

The British Pest Control Association (BCPA) was instrumental in pulling together the UK response as Simon Forrester explains: "BCPA led a two-pronged attack on the European Commission's proposal to classify monitoring traps containing attractants as biocides. First we lobbied the UK's representatives on the Biocidal Products Standing Committee, where we were able to explain in detail the impact of the wrong decision on this issue. We also submitted a strong lengthy statement and encouraged both our members, and their clients, to do the same, to ensure the Committee rejected the proposal. We were extremely pleased with the volume and quality of responses. This unified response from the UK really helped to steer the Committee's thinking.

"Had the proposal gone

through unchallenged, the binding decision would likely result in most insect monitoring traps being withdrawn from sale and, longer term, could have had a significant impact on the use of other substances to attract or repel pests.

"This activity is a key example why professional trade and membership organisations are so important in protecting the interests of their industry," he concludes.

The Confederation of European Pest Management Associations (CEPA) also played a key role in defending the industry. As well as submitting a position paper to Committee members, CEPA managed to get an invitation to present evidence at the Committee meeting itself.

HSE clear statement

Since the vote against the proposal, the UK regulator, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), has issued a clear statement.

Garry Wiles from HSE's International Chemicals Unit in London wrote: "I am writing to confirm that the UK position remains as stated below, i.e. that traps purely for monitoring purposes to assess the necessity for, or success of, pest management measures, clearly labelled, sold and used as such, are not within scope of the EU Biocidal Products Regulation 528/2012 and so do not require authorisation in order to be placed on the UK market.

"Such traps should be labelled and marketed to make it clear to the user that the trap is purely for monitoring purposes and should not make any claims or inferences



that it could be used as a biocidal product, e.g. claims to reduce/control/kill the pest insect, or images such as dead insects. To help avoid potential confusion, we would advise that such traps should clearly indicate they are for monitoring purposes in the product name, e.g. Insect Monitoring Trap, Fruit Fly Monitoring Trap, or similar.

"Traps intended for use beyond purely monitoring, such as those intended to help to reduce the insect population/to control the pests/for mass trapping, may be considered to be being marketed primarily for biocidal purposes and may therefore be regulated as biocidal products.

"Note that traps which do not contain a pheromone, other attractant or other biocidal active substance and that capture insects on a sticky surface simply by random 'chance' may be considered to be acting by merely physical means and would therefore not fall within the scope of the Biocidal Products Regulation."

HSE however, emphasised that: "This is the UK Biocides Competent Authority's position on this matter; other EU Member States may hold a different opinion and companies should seek advice from a Member State's competent authority before making a monitoring trap available in that Member State."

So, perhaps this story still has further to run, with some Member States choosing to ignore the Commission's decision and to

refuse to allow insect monitors with attractants to be sold locally – another example of the curiously pragmatic way in which the European Union operates.



What's hot & what's not

Using thermal imaging in pest management

Anyone can buy a thermal imaging camera but a camera just delivers pictures, not solutions. If thermography is to be used as part of a pest professional's armoury, knowledge of how to interpret the pictures is a prerequisite. In this article, which has been adapted from an article that first appeared in the German pest management magazine, *DpS*, Swiss pest management experts Ulrich Lachmuth and Pascal Frei highlight the benefits and pitfalls of applying thermographic techniques to a pest control service.



Pascal Frei



Ulrich Lachmuth

A standard camera delivers a picture created by visual light alone. It provides a representation of all objects within the focal range and angle of the lens.

A thermal imaging camera does much the same but, instead of using visible wavelengths it captures the infrared spectrum, i.e. the thermal emissions from the things being photographed. The infrared captured can either be from something which is itself warmer (or cooler) than its surroundings or it may come from a reflection from an independent heat source.

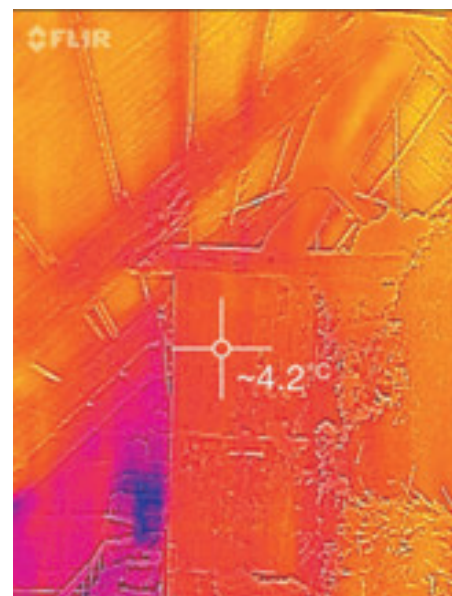
The two pictures below show what we mean. The person (one of the authors) is not really present in the captured area, he exists only as a thermal reflection on the computer screen. This difference is an important one to mention because it is not self evident in the images produced by a thermal imaging camera. Standard pictures speak for themselves – thermal images need interpretation before they have any meaning. Such possible effects should be considered when deciding where to stand and at which angle the camera should be pointed when taking the images.

The colour spectrum seen in the photographs is usually preset although different filters are available and may be used depending on what needs to be seen. With the filter used for our examples, the spectrum ranges from almost black/dark blue for the coldest areas in the picture via

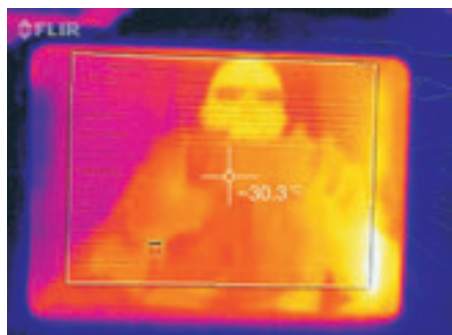
some variations of violet and orange into bright yellow/white which are the hottest areas. This colour spectrum remains the same, showing the relatively hot and relatively cold areas in an image regardless of the actual ambient temperature in the place the picture was taken. Orange may be 30°C but it could just as easily be 4°C. The colours in the image itself tell you nothing about the actual temperatures. Careful interpretation is therefore absolutely necessary.

Using thermal imaging in pest control

Thermal imaging is absolutely useless in most cases of insect infestations, because insects, being poikilothermic creatures, do not produce any heat in their bodies. If you are dealing with silverfish or cockroaches for example, thermal imaging offers no help whatsoever aside from a certain 'Voodoo



Thermal image in a cold environment. The colour spectrum is essentially the same as in the picture bottom left which was taken in a warm living room



Thermal image of the iPad taken during the writing of this article with a clear, reflected image of one of the authors



The same exposure as the picture left, but in the visible light range. The author's reflection is completely invisible

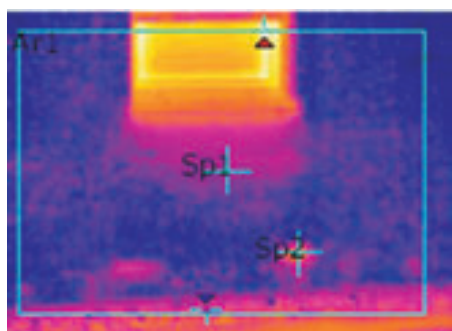
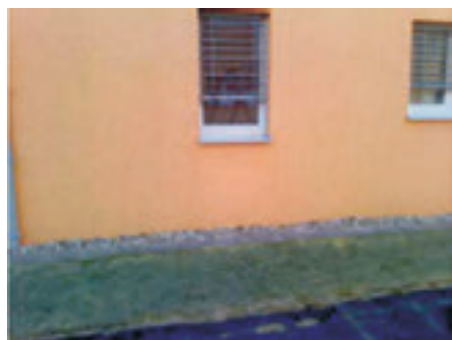
effect', in other words, the use of high tech equipment with the sole aim of impressing customers but without achieving anything treatment-wise!

The technique however can be useful during heat treatment, for example against bed bugs or stored product insects where it provides a real time assessment of the treatment itself helping pest professionals to locate areas where the target temperature has not been reached. A small gap in a wall or around a door could offer a safe haven for the target insect and would certainly not be found using standard heat monitors or handheld thermometers. With a thermal camera even the smallest 'cool spots' are easily seen and the treatment can be adjusted to bring these areas up to temperature.

Thermal imaging can also be helpful during inspections for rodent activity. Whilst rodents do have a fairly high body temperature, they are, unfortunately, very small and fast, making thermal imaging difficult. However the technique can be useful when searching for rodent nests in packaged commodities provided the commodity or packaging has only limited insulation capacity and doesn't itself emit lots of infrared radiation. In addition, during 'normal' inspections, single rodents might be picked up when hiding (but not moving!) in otherwise dark corners.

Locating an ants' nest

We have also found thermography useful in locating ants nests in wall insulation. Recurring ant problems at one property led us to try the thermal camera on the building depicted here – and a suspicious area was identified. With the owner's permission the inspection was continued with a more traditional pick-and-shovel approach and the nest was indeed found (and subsequently removed) in the exact spot thermography had indicated. But, again – the circumstances have to be right, otherwise the technology will yield no practical results.



A suspicious area was identified on the wall and with pick and shovel the ant's nest was found in the exact spot the technology has indicated

Another example of where thermal imaging has been used successfully is to back-up expert opinion in the context of booklice/mould problems in buildings. Beware however, this particular area offers its own range of pitfalls if the person 'behind the camera' is not truly experienced in what they are doing.

One reason is that whilst booklice do feed on mould, the particular mould they favour is seldom seen – and its presence is only indirectly related to temperature. Essential for its development is high relative humidity and, in particular, the absolute humidity on certain surfaces. Having recorded the relative humidity, a dew point diagram helps to determine where the temperature leading to the condensation of water carried in air, i.e. the dew point, is reached. Only then is the thermal image helpful in locating the dew point areas. This is an awkward procedure, with plenty of potential for error along the way.

Professional thermography systems however significantly facilitate this work, since they offer the possibility to record all relevant parameters through external sensors and

then feed the data right into the camera. The image taken immediately identifies all areas where mould growth might be expected. Of course, this does not necessarily prove that mould is actually growing there, neither does it allow any conclusions to be reached on why it has become so damp exactly at that point!

The resolution of thermal imaging cameras is very low compared to the visual resolutions of modern digital cameras. This means that best results are obtained if the temperature differences within the photographed area are as high as possible. Too complicated? Here's a simple example – if you are hunting for insulation defects take the thermal images preferably in winter when it is cold and stand inside a room pointing your camera towards the outside.

What did we work with?

We had two different FLIR cameras at our disposal – a professional FLIR T420bx sSystem and a FLIR ONE, a small smart phone clip-on camera (both cameras are owned by the authors and were not provided for marketing purposes).

Since this article was written the T420bx has been discontinued. The nearest equivalent is the T440bx which a Google search shows will cost in the region of £8,000 + VAT. In

addition FLIR has launched the FLIR ONE PRO at a price of £329.99 +VAT and it no doubt has a few extra whistles and bells compared to the FLIR ONE!

	FLIR T420bx	FLIR T440bx	FLIR ONE
Resolution (visible spectrum)	3.1MP	3.1MP	0.3MP
Resolution (thermal)	320x240px	320x240px	160x120px
Temperature range	-20°C to 350°C	-20°C to 650°C	-20°C to 120°C
Sensitivity	0.04°C at 30°C	0.04°C at 30°C	0.1°C at 30°C
Accuracy	±2% at 25°C	±2% at 25°C	±5% at 25°C
Powered by	Rechargeable & changeable battery	Rechargeable & changeable battery	Rechargeable internal battery
Runtime	4 hours	4 hours	1 hour
Zoom	2x & 4x digital	2x, 4x & 8x digital	No
Emission level adjustable	7 presets	6 presets & 2 user presets	4 presets
Evaluation software	Integrated, desktop	Integrated, desktop	Separate Apps for camera interface and basic evaluation
Various lenses	Yes	Yes	No
Accessories	Extensive range	Extensive range	No
Price	£7,399 +VAT	c£8,000 + VAT	£179.99 +VAT

A bit more about the authors

Biologist and pest management expert, Ulrich Lachmuth is managing director of Formaco pmc, a company specialising in pest control training and the provision of expert advice. Pascal Frei is a qualified pest control technician and fumigation expert. He is managing director of the Swiss servicing company, Insekta Schädlingstechnik GmbH.



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Membership of PROMPT hits all time high

The pest controllers professional register, PROMPT is now the second biggest professional register administered by the independent standards organisation, BASIS. Speaking at the National Pest Technicians Association Midlands Roadshow, Lucy Cottingham from BASIS explained that, as of April 2017, PROMPT membership stood at 4,177. The largest register, the one for crop consultants, stands at 5,779.



Lucy Cottingham

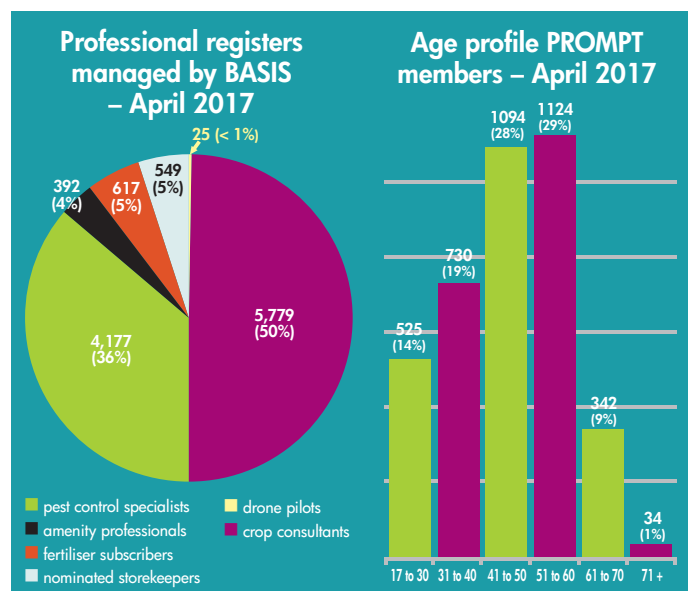
PROMPT membership has been growing rapidly since 2010 when it stood at just 337. Recent growth has been at over 10% pa. If that rate continues in little over three years, PROMPT could overtake the crop consultants to become the biggest BASIS membership register. BASIS believes that there are around 9,000 active pest professionals in the UK, so there is plenty of scope for the register to grow.

One thing that would boost membership would be if the National Pest Technicians Association (NPTA) decides to make membership of PROMPT compulsory. This topic has been under discussion for some time now but, which way NPTA will jump, is, as yet, unclear.

Lucy also revealed some other interesting statistics about PROMPT. Not surprisingly, the men outnumber the women by almost 16 to 1. In terms of age profile, the how shall we say? – more mature outnumber the youngsters, as can be seen in the bar chart below. Little wonder therefore that one of the aims for PROMPT is to promote the profession among young people.

For those who are concerned that they will find it difficult to collect the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points needed to stay on the register, the figures show otherwise. In 2016 the total CPD requirement for all members of PROMPT was 64,750 points. The CPD achieved by members comfortably passed this at 65,147 points.

If you need CPD then why not have a go at our Issue 51 **Pest** Test, opposite. You can fill in the answers on the printed questionnaire or go online where you get the benefit of real time marking so you know when you have passed the test and earned your CPD.



Pest Test 51

Now also
online

BASIS has made two PROMPT CPD points available if you can demonstrate that you have improved your knowledge, understanding and technical know-how by passing the **Pest Test**.

So, read through our articles on 'BPCA's local authority survey' (page 15), 'May contain nuts' (pages 23 to 25) and 'What's hot & what's not' (pages 28-29) in this issue of **Pest** and answer the questions below. Try to answer them all in one sitting and without referring back to the articles.

SEND COMPLETED QUESTIONS to: **Pest** Magazine, Foxhill, Stanford on Soar, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 5PZ.

We will mark your **Pest Test** and, if all answers are correct, we will enter the results onto your PROMPT record held by BASIS.

- What percentage change has there been in the numbers of local authorities offering pest control services since 2010/11?

<input type="checkbox"/> a) None	<input type="checkbox"/> c) An increase of 14%
<input type="checkbox"/> b) A decrease of 14%	<input type="checkbox"/> d) A decrease of 8%
- What percentage of the population suffers from a true food allergy?

<input type="checkbox"/> a) 2% to 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> c) 10% to 15%
<input type="checkbox"/> b) 5% to 8%	<input type="checkbox"/> d) 35% to 40%
- What proportion of pest professionals might harbour a food allergy and therefore be themselves at risk?

<input type="checkbox"/> a) One in 1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> c) One in 100
<input type="checkbox"/> b) One in 500	<input type="checkbox"/> d) One in 50
- What does Brian Duffin suggest is the biggest threat to health in a food factory?

<input type="checkbox"/> a) Bacterial cross contamination	<input type="checkbox"/> c) Potential allergens in the rodenticide
<input type="checkbox"/> b) Mice running amok in the production area	<input type="checkbox"/> d) Malicious contamination by terrorists
- For which of the following pests would a thermal imaging camera be potentially useful?

<input type="checkbox"/> a) Silverfish	<input type="checkbox"/> c) Rodents
<input type="checkbox"/> b) Cockroaches	<input type="checkbox"/> d) Clothes moths
- For what reason is thermal imaging useful when conducting heat treatments for bed bugs?

<input type="checkbox"/> a) Locates areas below target temperature	<input type="checkbox"/> c) Not useful, but it impresses the client
<input type="checkbox"/> b) Locates areas above target temperature	<input type="checkbox"/> d) Bed bugs run away from cameras

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

PROMPT account number: 200 _____

Pest control goes arable

Held each year, the Cereals event is a highlight in the summer calendar for all arable farmers. This year Cereals 2017 was held at Boothby Graffoe, not far from Lincoln on 14-15 June, so **Pest** editor Frances McKim went along to see if the professional pest control sector was present.

For anyone who has never been before what hits you first is the sheer scale of the Cereals event. Readers of this magazine might think PestEx is a large exhibition, or for those lucky enough to attend, PestWorld in the USA, but both these events are dwarfed by Cereals.

A massive event

OK, it's an outdoor event, but it covers in excess of 64 ha, attracts over 20,000 visitors and more than 500 exhibitors. These range from those organisations with enormous stands which include growing crops to show their products, to machinery manufacturers who are allocated areas to demonstrate their products, right down to



Cereals 2017 is much more than just an exhibition. It includes growing demonstration crops

the more modest tent with a few display boards.

So, large it might be, but hunt a bit harder and you soon stumble across some familiar names and faces and realise that this sector shares many of the same regulatory challenges.

Take as one classic example, the effort the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use

(CRRU) has put in to bring in the certificated use of rodenticides, not only to the professional pest control sector, but also to farming and game keeping.

But in agriculture the use of rodenticides pales almost into insignificance when compared with the challenges faced by three of their leading pesticides.

The National Farmers Union (NFU) took



On the BPCA stand from left: Lauren Day, Robert Brewster (Command Pest Control) and Kevin Higgins



The BASIS team, from left Lucy Cottingham, Michele Williams, Sue Mason and Stephen Jacob



Bayer's Richard Moseley explains Racumin Foam to a visitor



Barretline's Josh Randall with Joanne Crowell

advantage of the visit by Michael Gove, the new Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) secretary, to press home their concerns calling for evidence-based decisions on plant protection products as three major decisions from Europe that could have wide-ranging impacts on arable farmers are expected within the next six months.

Decisions are expected from Brussels on the definition of endocrine disruptors (this will likely have an impact on biocides), a proposal that would see the use of all neonicotinoids banned for outdoor agricultural use (bear in mind several leading public health insecticides fall within this class, notably imidacloprid in the Bayer Maxforce range), and the reauthorisation of glyphosate (Roundup) before the end of the year.

Some familiar faces

Many of the products from the professional sector also have a key role within agriculture. Look no further than the Environmental Science section of Bayer, who could be found alongside their arable colleagues on their impressive stand – with rodenticides and grain treatment products featured.



Lodi's three little gems. From left: Roger Simpson, Tony Knight and Ross Goodman

Likewise distributors Lodi-UK and Barretine Environmental Health were promoting their rodenticide and grain protectant products.

With over 60% of their business coming from the arable sector, the presence of Suffolk-based Command Pest Control came as no surprise. Grain fumigation, offered nationwide is one of their specialities.

Picking up on the grain fumigation theme was the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) who also had a stand. This owed much to Martin Cobbald who, as chairman of the BPCA Fumigation committee, felt the

association should be promoting its members' fumigation services.

Finally, from those exhibitors spotted, BASIS was also present. In a scheme very similar to PROMPT (see page 31), advisers in the agrochemical and fertiliser sector are required to be members of the BASIS Professional Register and they too have to collect CPD points.

So, if you get the chance, find time to visit this event and see 'how the other half live'. You might be surprised at some of the similarities.

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Amateur rodenticide use not forgotten

When a group of pest controllers get together to discuss rodenticides you can often hear the refrain: 'but what about the amateurs, they scatter rodenticide everywhere!'

Whilst it is true that the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime only covers professional use, that is not to say that amateurs have been forgotten.

As the National Pest Technicians Association's (NPTA) Iain Turner explained to delegates to the Association's spring Roadshow tour, within the next 12 months there are some big differences opening up between amateur and professional rodenticide products:

- Following the reclassification of rodenticides as 'toxic to reproduction' amateur products will all contain less than 30 parts per million active substance, whilst professionals will still have access to full strength products;
- Maximum amateur pack sizes will be down from 1.5kg to 300g for rats and 100g for mice;
- Amateur mice products will be only for 'indoor use';
- Amateur rat products will be only for use 'in and around buildings', whilst professionals will still have access to 'open areas' products.

Stewardship policing plans

BASIS Registration is to take a more prominent role in the policing of the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime by establishing a system of independent auditing of rodenticide point of sale controls.

BASIS, the organisation that runs the professional register for pest control specialists, PROMPT, already has plenty of expertise in administering independent audits of pesticide stores. Indeed it was for this purpose that the organisation was originally established back in 1978, so that's almost 40 years of checking that pesticide stores comply with regulatory and industry standards.

Joint announcement

The plans were announced jointly with the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) at the end of May. The BASIS Stores Inspection Scheme will be extended to cover rodenticide stewardship requirements. Applying controls at the point of sale, such as checking distribution staff are aware of the regulations and best practice requirements, is an important part of stewardship.

Audits will apply to all supply routes – trade and retail, premises and internet – with the first audit cycle conducted by BASIS between February and November 2018.

Rupert Broome, CRRU UK point of sale work group leader, says: "Any company or outlet selling professional use rodenticides must have passed a BASIS Point of Sale audit for rodenticide stewardship compliance by 30 November 2018.

Failure to comply with any aspect of the stewardship regime may lead to the company concerned being reported to HSE, Trading Standards and any other relevant body.

hi Environmental Health

Hockley International

NEW PRODUCT RANGE



Permost CS



Permex 22 E



Permost Uni Fly Spray



Piretrox



Tetrapiu



Piretrox PU



SoFast



HokoEx

Piretrox™ and Piretrox™ PU contain pyrethrum, Permex 22E®, Permost Uni Fly Spray and Tetrapiu contain permethrin and tetramethrin, Permost CS contains permethrin, SoFast contains Imidacloprid and HokoEx contains cyromazine. Use biocides safely. Always read the label and product information before use.

www.hockley.co.uk

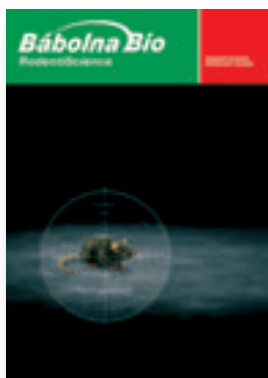
Rodenticide brochure from Bábolna Bio

To accompany their recently launched Protect Sensation bait block comes this brochure from Hungary-based Bábolna Bio.

Not only is this new fresh bait with the convenience of a wax block product detailed, but also Aroma Permeable which is available in certain markets and is on track for the UK, regulatory authorities permitting.

The brochure also outlines the company's background and resources devoted to pest control which stretches back over 50 years – see **Pest** issue 41: October & November 2015. Also detailed is their involvement, as a founding member, of the Bromadiolone Task Force.

Download your copy from the **Pest** Library.



Remote food pest awareness training from Acheta

Pest control companies are often asked to provide pest awareness training to their customers, but not all have the ability to do so. Even those that do find it disruptive and, as it is often provided free of charge, it may offer little or no commercial benefit.

To meet this need, the pest management consultancy, Acheta, has launched two levels of food pest awareness training.

Essential Pest Awareness is a short course aimed at achieving compliance with BRC clause 4.14.4; 'Employees shall understand the signs of pest activity and be aware of the need to report any evidence of pest activity to a designated manager'.

The second, *Advanced Pest Awareness* is aimed at those responsible for managing pest control or those who audit pest control as part of a wider food safety audit.

These courses are available for resale by pest control companies, and may be delivered via a self-managed portal, in which the supplier takes control of candidate enrolment. All include an assessment, with a certificate issued automatically on completion.

Acheta explains that for companies that have not previously offered pest awareness training to their customers, or who do not normally charge for this, this is a new source of 'low-touch' revenue generation.

Email: john.simmons@acheta.co.uk



Local authority survey

As reported on page 15 of this issue, the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) has once again undertaken a survey of local authority pest control activity following a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. All but 26 of the 390 district, borough and unitary authorities in the UK replied to this FOI request, although the responses from some were rather sparse.

This is the fourth time BPCA has undertaken this survey, so it does present a useful trend reflecting overall activity – a very similar trend also reflected in the results of our own UK National Pest Management Survey, to be reported on in our forthcoming **Pest** issue 52.

The 51-page 2016 BPCA survey report reviews five years of data, and for the first time relates activity to population. As well as total numbers and comparison by region, the report also presents averages and using trend analysis, attempts to forecast future levels of local authority activity. In addition, it includes some budget data where this has been provided.

A copy of the report can be downloaded from the BPCA website or from the **Pest** library.



Ordering made easy with new app



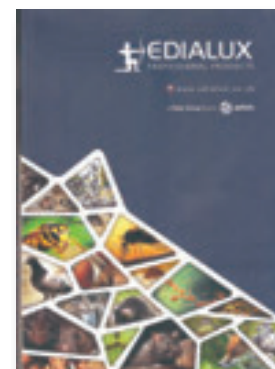
For pest controllers on the go, Edialux has developed a brand new iPhone app so customers can place their orders when it's most convenient for them – be it in the middle of a job, or at home after hours.

The app includes product information by type, then once a category is selected every product is detailed and price shown. Simply click on what you want, pop it into your 'basket' and off the order goes.

To download the app simply go to the Apple app store and search for 'Edialux'. For customers who already use the Edialux website to order online, their current username and password lets them log in. For those without an iPhone, there's a brand new mobile website.

For those keen on paper copies, all the products in the app are also included within the bumper 242-page Edialux catalogue.

Email: info@edialux.co.uk



INVENTOR'S CORNER

Your chance to become a dragon!

Cornish doctor, inventor and entrepreneur, Toby Bateson, is aiming to raise £65,000 to manufacture his first RatMat order.

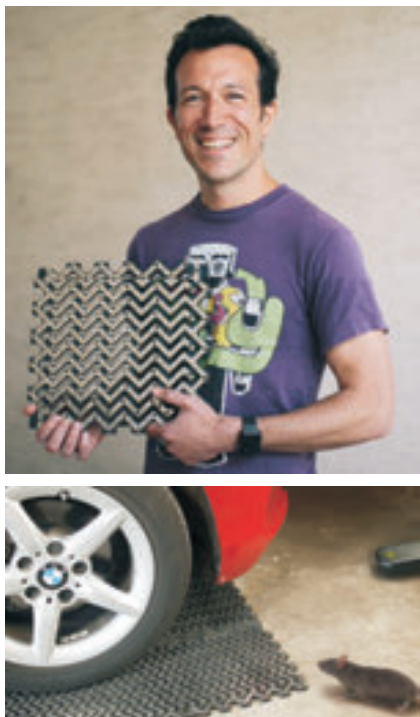
RatMat is designed to safely and humanely protect motor vehicles and other valuable property from rodent damage. The scalable floor device, which gives rodents an unpleasant shock to deter them, was developed with Cornwall-based industrial design consultants Dufort Associates. It is the brainchild of Dr Bateson after a colleague experienced costly damage to his car engine caused by rats.

Using the principles of an electric fence, the RatMat device is made up of inter-lockable tiles with a conductive steel surface, that lie flat on the ground. The tiles are completely safe, scalable and transportable and can double as a hard-wearing floor surface.

Commenting on the invention, Dr Bateson, says: "I have spent six years researching and developing the RatMat to provide classic and valuable car owners with a cost-effective and long-term solution to damage caused by rats and mice. I now need help to raise funds to help make this long-term, humane pest control a reality."

Whilst damage to a classic car may have sown the seeds of this invention, Dr Bateson seems unaware of the applications this product could have in the commercial pest control sector, for example in the storage of high value food ingredients and items or even as a threshold to buildings.

Dr Bateson wants to raise £65,000 through New York-based global project fundraising platform Kickstarter. See www.kickstarter.com/projects/2094321450/rat-mat-rat-repellent-electrified-flooring



Congratulations Jim and Ratagon



Jim Steele receives his award from Scottish National Party MP, Hannah Bardell

Jim Steele of Troon-based Ratagon has proved that there is hope for inventors in the pest control sector as he has won £60,000 and a business support package as part of Scottish EDGE - Scotland's leading business competition for innovative, high growth potential entrepreneurial talent.

In the Scottish EDGE press release it says: 'Ratagon, founded by Jim Steele, aims to change the barbaric trapping methods still used to trap the millions of rats that swarm the earth carrying disease, eating our food and damaging our homes. Using cutting-edge science and innovative technology, the company has invented, tested and patented an ethical, painless trapping device that, using no poisons, brings trapping into the 21st century.'

Jim commented: "This financial support will allow me to establish my factory, employ young people who currently have no jobs and to bring to the world an invention that will change if for the better."

So what's this all about? There is a website (www.ratagon.com) but this tells you virtually nothing as to how it works! After tracking down inventor Jim, who describes himself as the James Dyson of the rat catching world, it is a bit clearer. Having heard on the radio a couple of years ago that rats were becoming immune to rodenticides he activated an idea he had had some years ago. Namely to develop a trap which he describes as "an interesting way of attracting rats" and once caught they are dispatched via hypoxia i.e. from a lack of oxygen.

At the moment he is somewhat reluctant to give too much away as he is still resolving patents, scaling-up production and sorting out commercial arrangements. Watch this space for further details.

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Hypoallergenic pasta bait for rodents

A new hypoallergenic, non-toxic rodent monitoring bait called Harmonix Monitoring Paste has just been launched by Bayer. It is specifically designed for the food industry and other sensitive sites – as referred to in the article on hypoallergenic sensitivity in this issue – see pages 23-25.

It is a pasta style bait that is highly palatable to both rats and mice, without containing any of the main eight food allergens, as it's based on oat flour, rather than the standard wheat base. This means it is suitable for application in facilities such as food production factories, schools and hospitals without contamination. It has been independently certified by food science organisation, HACCP International.

Bayer explains this product is set to change the way pest controllers detect an infestation, both day and night. It is clear to see if rodents have eaten the bait, as their droppings will glow blue when a UV light is shone in the dark and they are also easy to spot in the daylight too, as they turn dark red.



www.environmentalscience.bayer.co.uk

Double effect with Effect products

Developed by Unichem from Slovenia are two insecticides both based on tetramethrin and permethrin in different ratios. Both products are available in the UK from Killgerm.

Microencapsulation for long term control

To control heavy infestations of crawling insects is Effect Microtech CS. This is a micro-encapsulated insecticide offering both knock-down effect and long-term residual activity up to six months, claims Unichem.

The membrane of the microcapsule protects the active ingredients against different weather conditions whilst the insecticide outside of the microcapsule offers immediate effect. The microcapsules stick to the insect's body, so spreading them around and transporting them back to the nest.



Quick knock-down

For more immediate control of flying and crawling insects is Effect Ultimatum. This is a non-systemic insecticide with contact action, fast knock-down and residual activity suitable for such pests as flies, ants, cockroaches and bed bugs.

The product is UV stable and can be used both in and outdoors, even as a ULV treatment.



www.killgerm.com

The soft non-toxic option

Talon Track is a non-toxic formulation that Syngenta explains has identical palatability to the rodenticide paste, Talon Soft. Pest controllers can use the tracking paste to safely detect the presence of rodents – and then switch to the active product for quick control, with no risk of bait aversion. Once the infestation is treated, technicians can return to Talon Track for monitoring any future re-infestation.

Talon Track has the same palatability, texture and 'look and feel' to the complementary Talon Soft rodenticide. The only difference is that it is non-toxic and an off-white colour, to aid differentiation for operators when swapping from Track to the blue Talon Soft.

It is supplied in 300g cartridges for application using a caulking gun.



www.syngentappm.com

Heritage trap from Russell

This clothes moth trap from Russell IPM is the very one English Heritage is using in their Operation Clothes Moth programme with the general public – see **Pest** issue 50: April & May 2017.

It is a discreet pre-baited sticky trap that monitors and detects infestation at an early stage. It effectively traps the male specimens of the pale backed clothes moth, *Monopis crocicapitella*, and the webbing cloth moth, *Tineola bisselliella*, without the need for insecticides.

Instead, the trap's adhesive layer contains a pheromone which specifically targets these moths. The trap is odourless to humans and will not leave behind a bad smell.

Regular trap catch counts inform the operator if there is a problem and its severity. As illustrated by English Heritage, it can be customised for a company.



www.russellipm.com

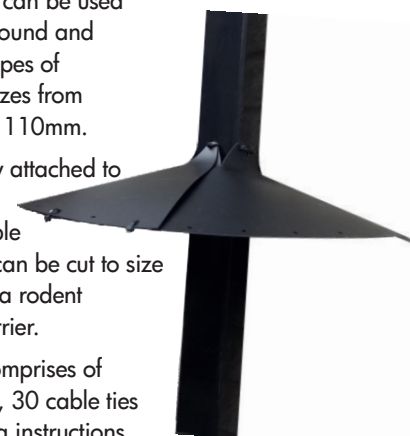
Cone kit bars rodents

The AF Rodent Proofing Cone is a quick and simple solution to help prevent rodents from gaining access to properties.

The cone can be used on both round and square pipes of various sizes from 50mm to 110mm.

It is easily attached to the pipe using cable ties and can be cut to size to create a rodent proof barrier.

The kit comprises of 10 cones, 30 cable ties and fitting instructions.



www.killgerm.com

NEW



THE POWER OF TALON®SOFT NOW AVAILABLE AS A MONITORING BAIT.

Talon®Track is a new solution that allows the identification and tracking of rodent activity. It displays the same high palatability as Talon®Soft, without the active ingredient.

- ▶ Allows the detection of rodent activity
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- ▶ Optimizes rodenticide use and allows PCOs to have an integrated and responsible approach to rodent control

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best
product
award
2017
pest

Still time to nominate

There's plenty of time to nominate your favourite new product for the coveted **Pest** readers Best Product of the Year Award. The deadline for nominations is midnight on Friday 8 September 2017.

Pictured left are some of the products already nominated: In no particular order these are:

- 1 Cimetro Super from PelGar International;
- 2 Hidden Kill from Bell Laboratories;
- 3 NARA Spray from Futura;
- 4 Probird Solar Spike from Tenv;
- 5 Rotech Bullet Rat Bait Station from Tenv;
- 6 Rotech Ranger Dual Trap Mouse Station from Tenv;
- 7 Romax Venom Lipo Gel from Barretine;
- 8 Romax Venom Wheat from Barretine;
- 9 Romax Venom Pasta from Barretine.

What we are looking for is the product you feel has made the most improvement to your working life and/or working practices. It needs to have been introduced to the UK market between 1 January 2016 and 31 August 2017.

Don't worry if you're not sure about when a product was launched, we can check that for you. So, go on, what's stopping you. Let us know your favourite and we'll add it to the nominations already received ready for the **Pest** readers' vote later in the year. Use the form below or email editor@pestmagazine.co.uk with the details.

Nomination form

I would like to nominate this/these product(s):

1

2

3

4

5

Name:

Organisation:

Tel:

Email:

SEND YOUR COMPLETED FORM to Pest Magazine, Foxhill, Stanford on Soar, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 5PZ

All the rules are at: www.pestmagazine.co.uk/en/bpa-rules

Diary dates

9-12 July 2017

9th International Conference on Urban Pests (ICUP)

Conference Aston, Aston University, Aston Street, Birmingham B4 7ET UK

www.icup2017.org.uk/icup2017-venue/

28-29 September 2017

Parasitec 2017

WOW Convention Center, Istanbul, Turkey

www.parasitec.org/

24-27 October 2017

PestWorld 2017

Baltimore Convention Center, Hilton Baltimore Baltimore, Maryland, USA

www.pestworld2017.org/

15 November 2017

PestTech 2017

Ricoh Arena, Judds Lane, Longford, Coventry, West Midlands CV6 6AQ

www.npta.org.uk/pesttech/



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