



Mice

How do I spot them?

The first indication that there are mice in a property is often the discovery of droppings in cupboards, drawers or work surfaces. The droppings are dark brown and about the size of a grain of rice.

A House Mouse is approximately 7-9cm long excluding the tail. It has large ears and small eyes. House Mice are light brown to dark grey in colour and weigh between 10 and 25 grams.

How do they affect me?

Mice carry diseases such as Salmonella. They urinate and defecate indiscriminately producing up to 80 tiny droppings per day, contaminating food and surfaces.

Mice can cause considerable damage to property through their constant gnawing. They can affect cables, plastic, paper, pipe work, lagging, putty and many other household materials.

How can I prevent mice?

Mice can squeeze through holes the size of a biro, typically living and breeding under floors, in cavity walls, ceiling voids and behind skirting boards where they are able to build small nests.

They are very agile and excellent climbers. Although mostly nocturnal, mice can be seen during the day. They are inquisitive creatures and will feed from numerous sources, often nibbling small amounts of a wide variety of foods.

Maintain your property

Buildings can be proofed against mice by blocking any openings through which they may enter. They can squeeze through any hole larger than 6mm so check your property for damage, and repair with suitable materials.

All air vents should be covered with 3mm gauge perforated zinc. Gaps above 3mm around window or door thresholds should be filled.





Any gaps around pipe work serving meters or plumbed-in washing machines and any pipes that travel through the cavity wall should be filled.

Do not attract mice

Follow basic food hygiene guidelines. Don't leave stale or mouldy food lying around, and keep food off the floor, preferably in sealed containers.

* **Use your wheeled bin**

Take care that all waste foods are put into your wheeled bin and not left lying around in bags or sacks. Make sure that your dustbin lid fits properly!

* **Control rubbish**

Avoid the build-up of rubbish, piles of wood and other garden waste. Clear areas of overgrown garden. These can all provide excellent nesting places!

Clear away pet food and ensure good housekeeping when keeping animals, storing their foodstuffs in sealed bins.

Do not put waste food on the garden for birds. Try and use specialised bird feeders that cause minimal spillage.

* **Maintain your compost.**

If you have a compost bin only dispose of garden and vegetable matter. **DO NOT** dispose of meat or cereal products on compost heaps. Make sure that the compost bin is resting on a hard standing to stop mice burrowing up into it. A badly constructed or poorly maintained heap will provide an attractive home for mice and rats.

What can I do if I discover I have mice?

Mice can be dealt with in a number of different ways:

- You can use traditional mousetraps.
- Poison baits can be bought over the counter, but always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- You can call a professional pest control operator.
- Reading Borough Council offers a treatment service for rats and mice in domestic premises.

Reading Borough Council Pest Control Charges

- Householder without a concessionary 'Your Reading Passport': £72 (inclusive of VAT)
- Householder with a concessionary 'Your Reading Passport': £46 (inclusive of VAT)
- £12 missed visit charge if you do not keep an appointment

This charge covers the initial callout by the Pest Control Officer, and, if bait is laid, up to 2 further visits.

What Reading Borough Council Pest Control WILL do

- Assess the problem that you have with rats or mice.
- Lay poison/bait in appropriate areas.
- Leave advisory information detailing the poison/bait used.
- Offer some advice on any structural work that may be necessary to help you solve the problem (e.g. drainage work).
- Revisit as necessary up to a total of three visits to check that the poison/bait has been taken and that the rat/mouse problem is reducing or is resolved. You will need to pay again if we agree that further visits are needed (and allowed).

What Reading Borough Council Pest Control will NOT do

- Carry out any structural work to keep rats/mice out of houses, buildings or gardens (including lifting floorboards or heavy manhole covers). For people over 60 who are unable to do the work themselves the 'Handihelp' scheme (01635 588822) might be able to help.
- Start a second course of treatment if you do not undertake any necessary structural work or investigation that is advised.
- Start a third course of treatment without referring the case to a senior officer for further investigation on the matter.
- Lay poison/bait in inappropriate or unsafe areas. This is usually at the discretion of the operative but includes open spaces, alleyways or other areas where children or pets may have unsupervised access to poison/bait.
- Routinely remove dead rats or mice. (To dispose of these, double-bag them and put them in to your wheeled bin.)

To arrange for a visit by Pest Control ring 0118 937 3737