



Rats: information and advice

Recent media reports have highlighted a global rise in rat populations, including in the UK. This growing issue is attributed to environmental changes linked to global warming and increasing resistance to rodenticides. Rats naturally live in outdoor urban environments, much like birds, foxes, cats, and badgers.

Outdoor presence is generally not a concern; however, it is strongly advised to wash hands after working or playing in gardens or yards due to the presence of pathogens in soil, water, and on outdoor surfaces.

Indoor infestations **do** require your attention.

Property owners have a responsibility to protect their premises from infestations by:

- **proofing** buildings to prevent rats from entering.
- **practising good waste management** to limit food sources

Steps to resolve an infestation

Under the **Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949**, it is the responsibility of the landowner or householder to control rats on their property.

Signs of infestation

- fresh droppings (brown/black, approximately 20mm)
- gnaw marks on wood, cables, or furniture
- burrows (50 to 80mm diameter) under sheds or paving
- unpleasant odour or scratching noises at night

Prevention tips

- seal gaps (rats need only 25mm to enter)
- inspect manholes regularly
- store food and water securely
- use closed bins for waste

Recommended actions when you have an indoor infestation

Pest proofing:

- address structural or drainage defects

- if drains are suspected, check your insurance for survey coverage

Pest control:

- use a professional contractor for baiting
- we offer a pest control service
- private providers are also available

Note:

- to protect wildlife the use of rodenticides outdoors is restricted and is often ineffective
- treatments are most successful when targeting indoor infestations
- proofing properties to prevent entry is essential for long-term control

Request a pest control treatment

To book a treatment call **0161 217 6017** or visit www.stockport.gov.uk/request-a-pest-control-treatment