



Vigo Parish Council

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Problems with Rats in Vigo

The following advice for dealing with rats was received from the Environmental Protection Team Lead at Gravesham Borough Council:

The increase in rat activity can be caused by many things although it is normally seen later in the year when the cold nights start. **It is therefore likely that there is an abundance of food in gardens, attracting the rats.**

Rats make their homes in earth embankments, in someone's home/property or in a sewer. The presence of long grass, brambles or other sort of undergrowth would not affect where they make their nests or where they go for food and while this could provide cover for them moving around, **it is the again the presence of readily available food that is the prime reason for the increase in numbers.**

The following is some brief advice with a link to the pest control advice on the council's website:

- Good storage of waste is essential, where rats cannot get access to it e.g. in wheelie bins, pest proof containers and sheds which will help prevent attracting them to a garden.
- The over feeding of birds with bird feeders or ground feeders as well as feeding foxes, badgers, hedgehogs, and other wildlife, should be reduced significantly so that all the food is eaten up quickly and none is left overnight, which is when rats are most likely to come out.
- The advice re compost heaps and compost bins is that their use should be avoided as rats like to nest in them. Foods such as meat, fish, bones, bread or any cooked foods should never be composted as these definitely attract vermin. Put these foods in your Food Waste caddy.

If compost heaps are used **no** food scraps should be put on them, not even egg shells or vegetable peelings as these are liked by rats and are an easy food source for them. The heap should be turned over regularly to disturb any nesting rats.

If you use bins, be sure to restrict rodent access. Standing bins on paving slabs to prevent the rats burrowing in from underneath could help.

- The use of poison bait available to householders is likely not to work as it is not as strong as the commercial bait used by pest control companies. Using bait could harm other wild animals and pets if it is not placed correctly, or if a poisoned animal is eaten by another predator. It is therefore advisable to use a pest control company for any treatments. It is recommended that only those contractors that are members of the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) are used.
- Residents and businesses can find contractors who are members of the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) <https://bpca.org.uk> or through a link on the council's pest control webpage
- Residents should also ensure that their homes are fully pest proof.

Further advice can be found on the council's pest control webpage here
<https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/environmental-health/pest-control-advice>