



**PEST CONTROL
SPECIALIST
SCRUTINY PANEL
2007/2008**

**Final Report
April 2008**

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PANEL FOREWORD



*Councillor Rajinder Mann
Chairman
Pest Control Specialist Scrutiny Panel*

As the Panel Chairman, I found the work of the Pest Control Specialist Scrutiny Panel very interesting and challenging.

Pests are a borough wide problem and those such as rats should be dealt with as a community problem rather than an individual one. There is evidence UK wide and in Ealing that the rat problem is growing year on year. Hence, it is very important for each of us to ensure that we do all that we can to reduce this problem in Ealing by taking small everyday matters such as disposal of waste responsibly.

There is a clear need for the different Council service teams such as the envirocrime, safer neighbourhood, park rangers and the pest control service to work together to contain and reduce the pest problem. The Council also needs to work with our external partners such as ECT's refuse collectors, Thames Water, British Waterways, London Underground, Network Rail, etc. to eradicate the pest problem in Ealing.

The education of the whole community in safe, efficient waste containment and disposal is fundamental to the limitation of pests in the borough. This will need the support and participation of all identified internal and external partners.

I would like to thank the Panel members and officers for all their hard work and particularly to our invited experts, residents and the co-opted members for their support and assistance.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee established the Pest Control Specialist Scrutiny Panel on 19 April 2007. The Panel held its first meeting on 12 July 2007.

The work of the Panel will assist the Council to meet the commitments of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan including its strategic goals of “making Ealing a better place to live” and “becoming a high performing organisation, focused on the needs of the borough’s communities”.

The Panel comprised of nine councillors and four non-voting advisory members. It had five scheduled meetings at which residents, experts and service officers gave their views and provided the necessary evidence for the Panel to consider.

The main *purpose* of the Pest Control Specialist Panel was to consider the factors that contribute towards the problem of rats and other pests in the borough and make recommendations on how this might be addressed.

1.2 Methodology

The Panel decided not to conduct any site visits as they were already familiar with rubbish dumps, unlikely to see pests in action or identify causes of infestation, etc. and therefore would not come across anything new.

The Panel received reports, presentations and examples of best practice with comparable organisations from the service officers, experts and other external partners.

The Scrutiny Officer conducted a survey of Ealing’s Councillors about pest control in their wards, invited the residents to give their views on pest control in their locality and for them to get involved in the Panel’s work. The comments received are included in the findings below.

Residents who expressed an interest in the Panel’s work were provided with background information and invited to attend the meetings.

The Chairman raised the profile of the Panel’s work in a live interview and phone-in on BBC Radio London regarding the fox problem within the borough.

Due to the wide-ranging nature of the pest problem in the borough and the time constraints, the Panel decided to concentrate on the three main pests as established by the community. The three main pests identified were rats/rodents, foxes and pigeons. Technically, foxes are not pests as they are wild animals but are considered to be a major nuisance in this borough and other parts of London.

Rats constituted in excess of 60% of all call outs to the service and was therefore agreed to be the main focus of the Panel.

Pigeons are a particular problem in parks and open spaces where members of the public tend to feed them.

Urban foxes constitute a major environmental problem where domestic and commercial rubbish sacks are found. They scavenge for food by ripping open the sacks and scattering the waste.

2.0 **FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 **Legislation**

The principal legislation in place for dealing with pest control issues is:

- Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949;
- Food Safety Act 1990;
- Health & Safety at Work Act etc 1974;
- Public Health Act 1936; and
- Housing Act 2004 (Houses in Multiple Occupation).

Tools for the enforcement of this legislation include informal/warning letters, improvement notices, formal cautions, prosecutions and the carrying out of works in default. Food premises with a pest infestation, which is an imminent risk to health, may be closed.

Section 2 of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 places a duty on Local Authorities to take steps to keep their district free from rats and mice. To comply with this duty they must carry out inspections and require owners and occupiers of land to carry out treatments by the use of their enforcement powers under the Act. They must keep their own land free of rats and mice. However, these duties do not require them to treat directly “in-house”, they may appoint contractors. External contractors currently provide pest control services on Ealing Council’s own land and property.

There is no statutory requirement on local authorities to provide free, in-house pest control services.

2.2 **National Context – Status of Pest Control within Local Authorities**

Historically, local authorities have generally provided free, in-house pest control services. The focus of these services was to protect public health and had the advantage of them being able to act strategically, rather than in a reactive, ad-hoc, property-by-property manner. This enabled them to react promptly and effectively with pest infestations that arose in the community. Services were not assessed on an individual’s ability to pay.

As financial pressures on local authorities increased, a review of the provision and identification of potential savings and income generation became important. This led to charges for pest control services being introduced, in many cases initially for nuisance pests (such as garden ants and wasps) but then extended more widely.

A small number of local authorities have ceased providing in-house services altogether. The long-term public health impact of such policies and the effect on the local environment will need to be evaluated.

2.3 Scrutiny Consultation

2.3.1 Councillors

During August 2007, the Scrutiny Officer surveyed Ealing's 69 elected members about pest control issues in their wards.

2.3.2 Local Residents

In the August 2007 issue of the Council's *Around Ealing*, a free monthly magazine delivered to every household, residents were invited to get involved in the Panel's work and give their views to the Scrutiny Officer on pest control issues in their locality.

The summary of responses received from this consultation revealed:

Table 1: % Respondents identifying specific issues within their area

Issue	Members	Residents
Rats/Mice	69%	78%
Foxes	46%	33%
Pigeons/Birds	8%	28%
Other	8%	-

The Panel considered whether there were any themes/messages emerging from the comments received and decided to concentrate their work on the three most prevalent pest problems identified from the consultation exercise and the call-out rates for the in-house pest control services that were provided.

2.4 Key Factors

The key factors affecting the pest population in Ealing are:

- accumulation of refuse;
- fly tipping in alleyways;
- a readily available supply of food, water and harbourage;
- poorly maintained premises; and
- refuse sacks placed on private premises, the highway and ripped open by pests, domestic and wild animals.

Adequate pest control is essential to the maintenance of a safe and reasonable environment for people to live in. Recognised pest control consists mainly of 70% - good housekeeping; 25% - repair of buildings and 5% - use of pesticides.

Pests cause damage to structures and contaminate products. Rodent activity is a nuisance and, at worst, can lead to fires and floods. Bird fouling can make pavements unsafe and result in significant claims for damages. Food and medical supplies are rendered unfit for sale or unusable when contaminated by either insect or rodent pests.

Pest infestations make urban areas undesirable and inhibit inward investment. They tend to be part of a vicious circle - poor housing, health and education together with social exclusion; low business investment and high unemployment are common in areas where chronic pest infestations persist. Existing businesses may struggle to survive, finding the environment both unattractive uneconomic and so may cease trading. Empty properties can become targets for fly-tippers and vandals.

2.5 **Perceived Major Pests**

2.5.1 **Rats**

The common rat and house mouse are the most common pests in homes and businesses today. The common rat is the most widespread of its species and is widely found in urban and rural areas. There are an estimated 80 million brown rats, an average of 1.3 rats per person, having increased by 39% since 2000. Rats live outside, indoors and particularly in sewers. Rats and mice can be found in homes, gardens, sheds and garages.

Common rats live in any situation that provides food, water and shelter. In homes they will live in loft spaces, wall cavities, cellars or under floorboards. In gardens, they will burrow into compost heaps and grassy banks or under sheds. They are also commonly found living in sewer systems and one in ten rat problems in Ealing are due to rats living in sewers. This is particularly an issue where drainage systems are not in use and not blocked off.



A common rat

2.5.1.1 **Problems Caused by Rats**

Rats can transmit many diseases to humans, including salmonellosis (food poisoning), typhus, trichinosis, and jaundice (Weils disease). An estimated 4-5% of properties in London are infested with rodents.

Rats will eat or contaminate food intended for humans. Approximately, 5% of the food produced world-wide is lost as a result of rodent activity. Rats can cause damage to buildings and other structures by gnawing and burrowing including through lead, aluminium, concrete. Only hard metals, like steel, stop rats.

2.5.1.2 **Alleviation**

Rats are difficult to eradicate once an infestation takes place in a property. They are adaptable, highly mobile and breed rapidly. This combination makes rat control a difficult task for the untrained individual. Pest Control services would need to be employed for the treatment of rats in domestic properties. Fully trained pest control officers would normally survey the infestation and then place poison bait in the most appropriate locations. Follow up visits are made in order to ensure the success of the treatment.

People with rat infestations tend to blame neighbours, nearby disused land, etc. Rats are inclined to live outdoors so it can be difficult to establish the origin of the problem. Therefore, rat infestations are more likely to go untreated than mice problems.

Rats should be dealt with as a community problem rather than an individual one. Current estimates suggest that professionals treat only 10% of the rat infestations.

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) advises a free provision of pest control treatment for rats. A decision to recommend free treatment in Ealing would require a radical review of the service and its charges.

2.5.2 **Pigeons**

Feral pigeons have developed from the rock dove, dovecote and domestic pigeons. They are increasing in numbers in town centres where they have adapted well to the artificial cliffs of buildings and have become a pest, fouling buildings, pavements, parklands, gardens; contaminating food stores and transmitting diseases. They rely mainly on food scraps, bread, cakes and birdseed given to them by the public.

The birds normally feed in flocks and are highly efficient at finding roosting places near to a food source where they will wait until they are fed.



A flock of pigeons being fed in a public square

2.5.2.1 **Problems caused by Pigeons**

The fouling of buildings and monuments frequently occurs at places where pigeons roost and nest. The acidic droppings react with chemicals in the stonework causing erosion of the surfaces. Accumulations of droppings can become infested with mites and insects, which are pests of stored products and houses.

They also block gutters and downpipes causing water damage through seepage coming into the property; and block chimneys causing smoke problems or gasses such as carbon monoxide being forced back into the house.

Large numbers of roosting pigeons give rise to odour and noise complaints. Accumulations of droppings pose a risk to health and safety causing slip hazard on pavements and fire escapes.

Pigeons carry many diseases including chlamydia, cryptosporidiosis, campylobacter, salmonellosis, erysipelas, extrinsic allergic alveolitis (pigeon fancier's lung), histoplasmosis and psittacosis.

2.5.2.2 **Controlling Pigeons**

The only effective way to control pigeons and other pest species of birds is to remove food sources, roosting sites and breeding sites.

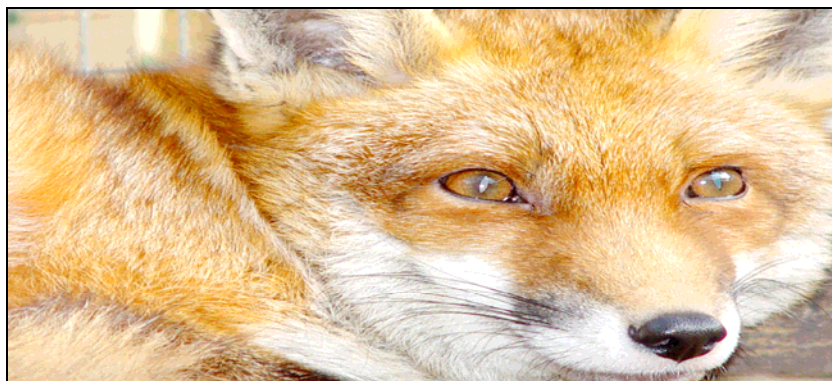
Removing food sources is the key factor in reducing the number of feral pigeons in a town. Feeding wild birds can lead to dangerous dependency and tameness. It also attracts them away from their more nutritious natural food. Left over food encourages moulds and algae that may be harmful to birds and attract rats into the area, which in turn attack birds and their young feeding on the ground. It is not necessary to feed birds except in the harshest of winters and then the food should only be left within the curtilage of one's own yard or garden.

Proofing of empty buildings is particularly important as any access points into such buildings allows pigeons time to establish a large colony as they are left undisturbed for long periods of time, hence having nesting places and roosting sites.

2.5.3 **Foxes**

Controlling urban foxes is difficult, expensive and not successful. A number of local authorities, particularly in London, tried and most have now given up any form of fox control.

Foxes have been in urban areas for so long that they have reached a state of equilibrium and regulate the size of their own population.



An urban fox

The moment the mortality rate increases, the foxes compensate by increasing the number of vixens that breed. So the number of foxes in the area is not reduced. What is achieved, however, is a disruption of the fox population so that new foxes move in to try to take over the territory of the animal that has been killed. Invariably, more than one fox moves in and there are fights over the territory with more noise and fouling of gardens.

Urban fox control is both difficult and very expensive. Shooting is obviously not acceptable in urban areas, nor is snaring and so only live trapping is left. This is not usually very effective.

Any form of control is expensive, ineffective and considered inhumane by some people.

2.6

Ealing Context – The Current Service

Ealing Council currently operates an in-house pest control service for domestic properties, which includes a contract with Ealing Homes (an arms length management organisation managing tenanted and leasehold properties on behalf of Ealing Council) to provide a service for Council tenants. At present it does not offer a similar service to the commercial sector.

The pest control team is located within Environmental Health and Trading Standards (EHTS) and operates from Greenford Depot. The team currently comprises of seven pest control officers and a supervisor reporting via a service head to the Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards. Four administrative officers based in Perceval House provide clerical support.

The services provided are shown in Table 2. Approximately, 40% of the service is delivered to Ealing Homes’ residents. Much of the rest is provided to residents in the private sector and is part funded by income from fees levied for the services. Residents in receipt of a state pension or means tested benefit are given concessionary (free) treatments.

Table 2: Pest Control Services Currently Provided/Not Provided

Services Provided	Services Not Provided
All Tenures	Bees
Rats	Feral cats
Mice	Pigeons
Bed bugs	Stored product insects (beetles, weevils, etc.)
Wasps	Silverfish
Fleas	Spiders
	Woodworm
Ealing Homes Properties Only	Woodlice
Cockroaches	Black and red ants
Squirrels	Brown tail moths
Tropical ants	Foxes

The service was inspected by the Audit Commission in 2005, as part of the inspection of Environmental Health and Trading Standards, and was considered to be “Fair” with “Promising Prospects for Improvement”.

2.7

Service Volumes

2.7.1

General

The service operates on a reactive basis in response to service requests from residents of all tenures and on a proactive basis where whole-block infestations are identified in Ealing Homes estates.

The block treatments resulted in 2,264 dwellings being treated during 2006/2007. In addition, 751 external bait boxes were serviced monthly on estates (312 on South Acton) entailing a total of 9,012 restocking and maintenance visits.

The volumes for numbers of dwellings treated for pests during 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 are shown in Table 3 overleaf:

Table 3: Service Volumes

Pest	Totals (Ealing Homes)	Totals (Private)	Grand Total	Totals (Ealing Homes)	Totals (Private)	Grand Total
	2005/2006			2006/2007		
Rats	615	530	1,145	403	929	1,332
Mice	523	450	973	477	737	1,214
Wasps	145	280	525	118	402	520
Bedbugs	114	198	312	161	244	405
Cockroaches	2,088	No service	2,088	995	No service	995
Fleas	20	31	51	18	30	48
Pharaohs Ants	862	No service	862	600	No service	600
Ghost Ants	243	No service	243	995	No service	995
Totals	4,610	1,589	6,199	3,767	2,342	6,109

2.7.2

Hot Spots – Pest Service Distribution

The distribution of overall pest eradication service requests is not consistent across the borough and Table 4 below reveals distribution by area showing that over half the demand comes from Acton and Southall.

Table 4: Service Requests by Area – 2006/2007

Area	% Demand	Cock-roaches	Rats	Mice	Wasps	Bedbugs	Fleas	Pharaohs Ants	Ghost Ants	Squirrels	Total Demand
Acton W3	33.31	66	3,943	363	52	172	7	20	84	3	4,710
Southall UB1/2	23.14	243	2,354	500	77	91	1	2	-	5	3,273
GNP HA0/UB6	9.92	81	1,015	141	109	45	5	2	-	5	1,403
West Ealing W13	9.84	445	572	33	54	30	4	252	-	1	1,391
Hanwell W7	8.47	18	416	55	52	40	9	27	575	6	1,198
Ealing W5	7.04	5	450	76	117	25	4	310	2	7	996
Park Royal NW10	3.63	-	471	32	6	5	-	-	-	-	514
Northolt UB5	3.05	49	187	57	73	36	7	9	6	7	431
Chiswick W4	1.46	1	99	59	28	13	4	-	-	3	207
Hayes UB4	0.10	3	9	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	14
Ruislip HA4	0.02	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Shepherds Bush W12	0.01	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total (Rounded)	100										14,142

2.8 Performance Measurement

The performance achieved against key indicators of performance in 2006/2007 is shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Key Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	Actual Performance 2006/2007
First treatment within 5 working days (Ealing Homes)	81%
First treatment within 5 working days (all tenures)	79%
Number of service requests (Ealing Homes)	3,767
Number of service requests (all tenures)	6,109
Number of dwellings treated in proactive block treatments (Ealing Homes)	2,264
Total number of dwellings treated (all tenures)	8,373
Number of external bait boxes services on estates (monthly)	751
Total number of individual bait box servicing	9,012

It should be noted that for private properties, residents do not have to use the service, as there are a number of private contractors who offer pest control services at commercial rates. It is not possible to give figures for the proportion of private homeowners who choose the Council in preference to private contractors.

2.9 Funding

All 33 London Councils provide an in-house pest control service. 31 provide comprehensive services although the range of pests treated and the fees charged vary. One (Havering) provides a completely free service for rats but does not treat any other pests. Islington provides a free service for a range of pests but only treats Council owned housing.

Ealing offers comprehensive free advice for pests not currently treated via the website, telephone and leaflets. Services are provided to residents in all tenures but treatments for cockroaches, squirrels and tropical ants are currently restricted to Ealing Homes properties.

The Council's Pest Control service is funded by a combination of fees, contribution from Ealing Homes and the general fund. An outline of income and expenditure is shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Summary of the Pest Control Service Funding

	2006/2007 Actual £	2007/2008 Budget £
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Gross Expenditure (net of corporate recharges)	527,113	572,000
<u>Income</u>		
Recharge from Ealing Homes	202,169	205,000
Fees and Charges	56,753	99,000
Net Cost of Pest Control Service Provision	268,191	268,000

2.10

Charges

Services are free for owner occupiers in receipt of a state pension or means tested benefits. This concession is not available if there are one or more standard wage earners living at the property.

A free service is provided at point of contact for all Ealing Homes tenants and leaseholders through the annually negotiated Ealing Homes service level agreement.

Services for other tenures are funded from the charges for services (see Table 7 below) but these do not meet the full cost of the service provided. A small number of commercial contracts remain in place but staffing levels have not been sufficient in recent years to permit new signings or any proactive commercial work. Approximately, half of the total resources are expended in Ealing Homes' properties.

The Panel identified that the charging policy and charges had not been reviewed since 2003 and were generally half the cost of that of private contractors.

Table 7: Current Charges

Service	Charge £	Details
Rodents (Domestic)	60.00	Commonly 3-4 visits
Rodents (Commercial)	60.00	Per hour
Wasps Nests	40.00	Per nest
Bedbugs	30.00	Per room
Fleas	60.00	Per house
Cockroaches	50.00	Per visit
Disinfection	60.00	Per hour per officer

The Portfolio Holder suggested an option to pursue a reduction in the domestic charges after the introduction of a commercial service (see later in report) rather than a free service. A free service would introduce additional financial and resource constraints on the service. Further, offering a free service may reduce the importance of responsible rubbish containment and clearance.

2.11

Benchmarking of Charges

2.11.1

Benchmarking Exercise

The Ealing Pest Control Service officers recently undertook a benchmarking survey by telephone with all the 33 London Boroughs. Summary findings of the survey are included in the following paragraphs.

2.11.2

Benchmarking Survey Findings

2.11.2.1

Free Services

The majority of London Boroughs (66%) provide a free service for rat treatments to all residential premises. 17% provide free mice treatments, 15% free cockroach treatments, 15% free bedbug treatments, 19% free pharaoh ant treatments and 4% free flea treatments. Ealing does not provide free treatments for any of these pests except within its concessions policy.

2.11.2.2 **Charging**

Although Ealing charges for all its services, the levels of its charges are significantly lower than the London wide average for those authorities where charges are levied. This is true for all pest types.

2.11.2.3 **Charging Comparison**

The largest proportion of the Pest Control team's work relates to rats. When comparing Ealing's charges with the ten other London Authorities who levy charges for rat treatments, only one charges a lower fee. Ealing's fee is less than half that of the highest.

2.11.2.4 **Bedbugs**

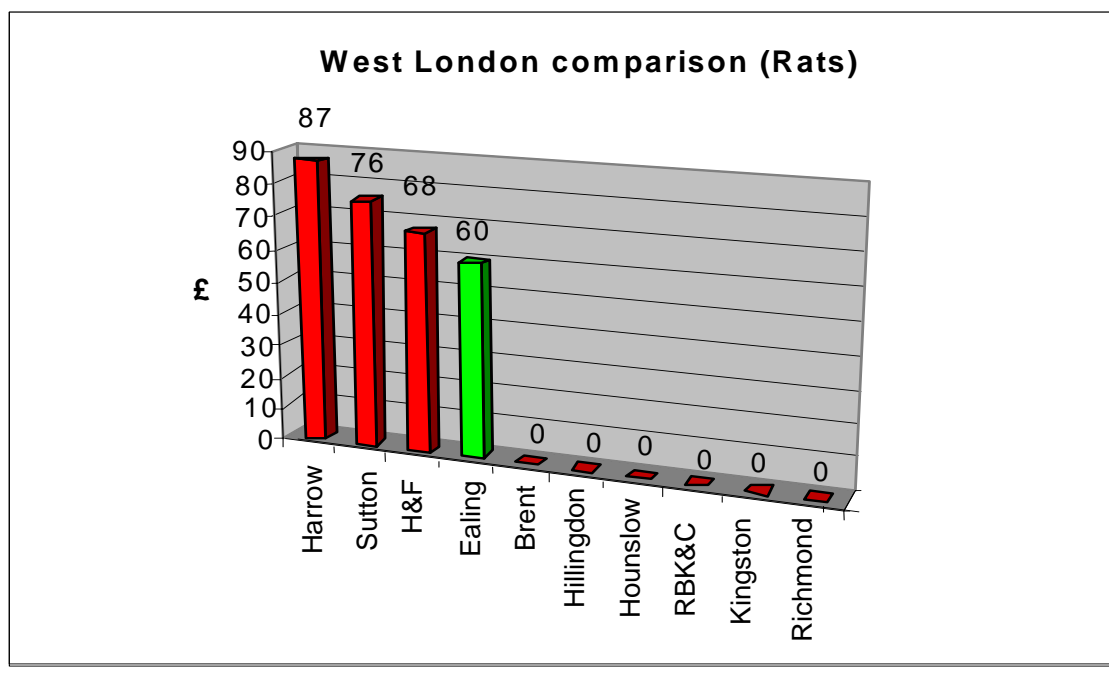
Bedbugs are one of the most rapidly increasing pest control issues (see 2.17.1). The same comparison for bedbug charges (for a standard three room treatment) produces similar results with Ealing being cheaper than the lowest charging top quartile Council and less than half the cost of the highest.

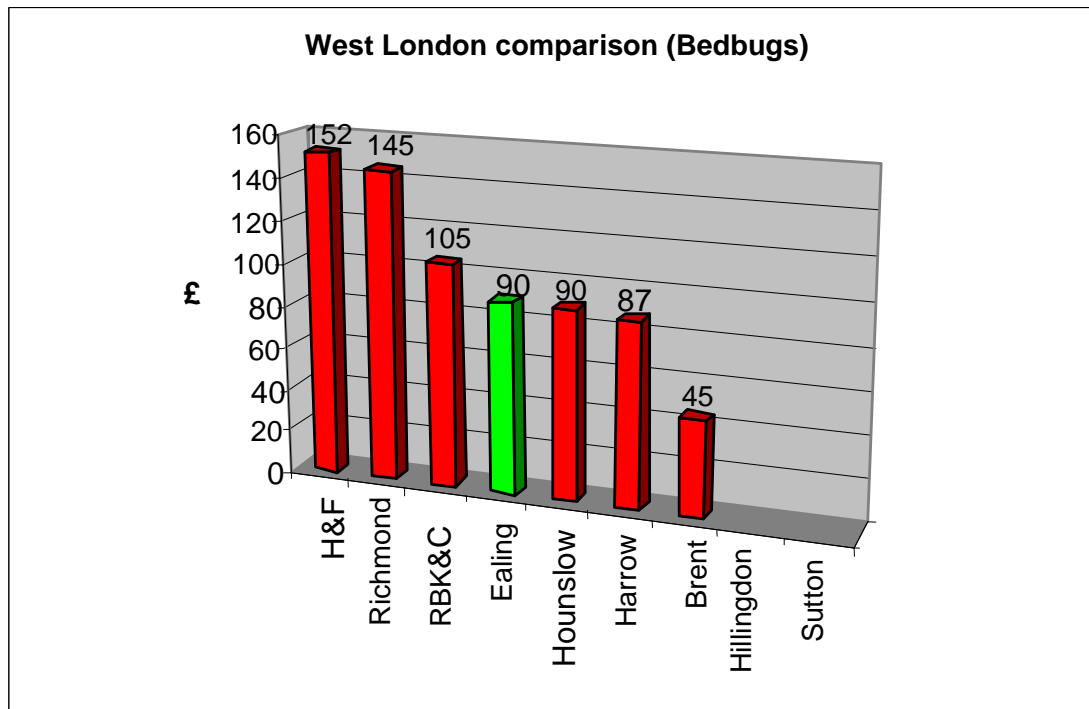
A change to the charge for treatment of bedbugs is proposed later in this report. This is because of an anticipated change to the treatment regime to ensure a more effective outcome.

2.11.2.5 **West London Comparison**

Comparison was also undertaken with West London Councils and this showed that Ealing's charges were significantly lower than those of its neighbours. Although in the case of rats, most do not charge at all whereas Ealing does.

Whilst not all councils levy charges for rats, Ealing's charges structure represents extremely good value when compared with other Councils that charge. A significant increase in the charge would be required to bring Ealing up to the average London level.

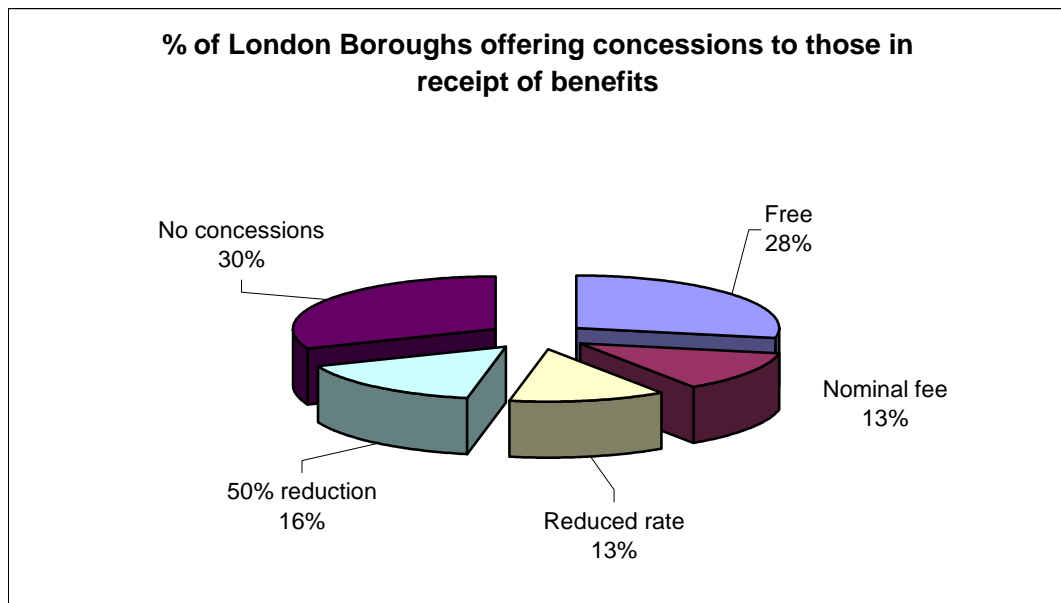




NB: Hillingdon and Sutton – No Service

2.11.2.6 **Fee Concessions**

Ealing has a generous concessions policy for those on low incomes. Free treatments are offered to those in receipt of a state pension or means tested benefit. The survey found that, including Ealing, only 28% of London Councils offered similar concessions, 30% offered none at all the with remainder offering either a reduced rate or just a nominal fee.



2.11.2.7 **Commercial Charges** **Rats**

The charge made by a private commercial company would depend on the complexity of the work, speed of response, etc. For a standard 48 hour response to treat an infestation a typical charge would be £180 for three one

hour visits. In the case of a persistent infestation customers would be encouraged to take an annual contract.

A typical one-year contract would cost an estimated £240. The customer could expect eight visits per year, plus a free call out. Bait boxes are an additional cost and can be bought or obtained on a hire/maintenance arrangement.

Ealing's fees are considerably lower than commercial alternatives. It is, therefore, inevitable that the large majority of homeowners use the Council's services instead of a private contractor.

2.11.2.8 **Opportunities and Improvement Options**

A number of opportunities for improvements in the service were identified including:

- a potential service level agreement with Facilities Management and Education for pest control services in Ealing Council owned premises – this will increase capacity and provide better value for money;
- additional resources to reduce waiting times in the private residential sector – this can be self-funding and will increase overall capacity and bring efficiency gains;
- closer working with the commercial enforcement team in Environmental Health in respect of food businesses; and
- greater capacity will facilitate more strategic, proactive working.
- Ealing should actively identify whether external grants or other income sources are available.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R1	The service should carry out a comprehensive review of the fee charging policy and the types of service that should be provided.
R2	The charging policy review should consider all services provided (including to Ealing Homes) and decide whether these should be provided, and if so, which should be chargeable and if any should be free.
R3	The service should review current funding levels to establish if this is adequate to deliver the recommended services to the local community.
R4	The Pest Control Service should identify and evaluate the availability of external grants and other income sources.

2.12 **Commercial Premises**

2.12.1 **Responsibilities**

EHTS deals with refuse accumulations within commercial premises; the provision of refuse storage in houses in multiple occupation and the clearance of filthy and verminous residential premises. The role of the Commercial half of EHTS is to improve and enforce standards of food safety, health and safety and public health for residents, businesses and visitors to the borough. EHTS deal

with all aspects of environmental health relating to commercial, trade and industrial activities within the borough.

The law requires that there must be adequate procedures in place to prevent infestation by pests, which include insects, rats, mice and birds. Officers use a range of methods for dealing with pests including closure of food premises that are an imminent risk to health. It is a legal requirement under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 (Section 34) that all businesses have a duty of care to ensure their waste is disposed of properly. Waste must be collected by a licensed waste carrier regardless of the amount generated.

Legally, the Council is obliged to ensure that its streets, buildings and sewers are as free as possible from mice, rats and other vermin.

2.12.2 ***Refuse and Commercial Premises***

Refuse is inherently linked to pest control problems as it provides food and nesting opportunities which can give rise to infestations. Refuse accumulations associated with commercial premises are split into the following categories:

- Commercial food premises
- Other commercial premises
- Private alleyways to the rear of commercial premises
- Alleyways - mixed residential and commercial premises
- Industrial estates
- Vacant commercial land
- Service roads

2.12.3 ***Associated Problems***

A range of factors exacerbate pest control problems including:

- Refuse in alleyways to the rear of premises and on wasteland including vacant sites.
- Poorly maintained industrial estates.
- Expansion of commercial premises without adequate refuse containment sites.
- Fly tipping – service roads and alleyways.
- Abandoned cars attracting fly tippers and encouraging pests.
- Refuse dumped on land that has not been adopted by the Council.
- Alleyways that have no traceable owners.
- Private access roads for commercial and domestic premises.
- Illegal disposal of meat and clinical waste.
- Businesses operating without trade contract arrangements.
- Public feeding of pigeons encourages growth in population and attracts rodents.
- Foxes and rodents can easily tear black sacks and cause spillage.
- Limited baiting of the sewers increases the rat population.
- Climate change causing an increased survival rate of pest population.
- Increased number of takeaways and associated litter problems.

2.12.4 ***Barriers to Success in the Commercial Sector***

Pest problems are often indicators of wider environmental health problems, and contracting out services to private pest controllers makes it more difficult for local authorities to implement co-ordinated solutions e.g. block treatments.

Absence of a clear boundary between adjacent commercial and domestic land, and difficulties in ascertaining ownership of land can cause enforcement difficulties.

The alleyways in Ealing are mostly privately owned and enforcement notices under section 4 of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 have to be served on the persons responsible, or in their absence, the owners/occupiers of the land. Remedial action is often delayed due to the requirement to serve notice on private owners of a privately owned alleyway.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R5	Increased enforcement activity to include targeting areas of known pest infestation and closing businesses that are an imminent risk to public health.
R6	Consult with the Planning Service on controlling the expansion of commercial premises that do not have adequate facilities for the storage and disposal of refuse.

2.13 **The Business Case for an In-house Commercial Service**

2.13.1 **Outline**

The Council's Pest Control service could be extended to include commercial premises with charges reviewed and set by the Council annually because pest control is essential to the control of disease and the maintenance of a safe and reasonable environment for people to live in.

Ealing Council could offer annual contracts to non-residential premises to provide regular and comprehensive treatment. The charge for such contracts would be based on the assessed frequency of visits and the size and physical characteristics of the premises.

Although such a scheme should be financially viable this would require all work to be chargeable.

2.13.2 **Benefits**

An expanded service would generate income and be self-financing and by offering this facility to the business community would deliver against the organisational improvement aspect of the Ealing Council's Corporate Strategy and the business element of Ealing's Community Strategy.

A commercial pest control service would complete the circle with EHTS having the capability to inspect, advise, serve notice, deliver a pest control service to residents and businesses and/or carry out works in default.

2.13.4 **Staff Implications**

A service manager post for business support has been created to deal with the strategic elements of the service.

The present Pest Control service staffing would need to be increased if an in-house commercial service were introduced.

2.13.5 **Financial Implications**

The funding arrangement would also require strict control of the operation to ensure that self-financing staff are not used for any other purposes.

Initially, there would be a need for capital investment in the provision of additional vehicles and equipment together with an increase in office and storage space at Greenford Depot.

2.13.6 **Possible Options and Solutions**

The review of the commercial provision and the proposed business case identifies a number of issues, possible options and solutions including:

- Continuation of the residential pest control service that includes services to Ealing Homes.
- A comprehensive pest control service that could provide regular pest control contracts and provide a quick response to serious infestations.
- A feasibility study for a pest control service that would provide a service to local businesses and to all Council owned premises e.g. halls, offices and schools.
- At present the schools pay for private pest control services from their own devolved revenue and can choose what contractor they use and what type of work they require.
- Increased enforcement and works in default by relevant enforcement partners e.g. Environmental Health and Envirocrime.
- Development of a pest control educational programme to include internal and external agencies, educational establishments, businesses, hospitals and residents.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R7	The Service to identify the level of interest from local schools in the provision of a comprehensive pest control service to schools.
R8	A survey of local businesses and other stakeholders e.g. hospitals be carried out by the Service to identify the level of interest in the provision of a comprehensive pest control service for commercial premises.
R9	Environmental Health and Trading Standards to consider tendering for the Facilities Management contract so that the Council's Pest Control service serves all Council buildings.
R10	Consider the provision of an integrated service that would provide a limited service to commercial premises where they coexist with residential premises and have an impact on the immediate environment.
R11	Produce an in-depth costing of providing full pest control services, to include increased office space, additional staff, equipment and administrative costs.
R12	On completion of the consultation exercises, a detailed business case for expansion of the service to provide services to the commercial sector be completed and reported to Cabinet.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R13	Ensure that the business case takes into account the total cost of delivering the scheme and builds in a robust monitoring and review process.

Working With Partners

2.14 **Internal Council Services**

2.14.1 **Street Services**

ECT provides street cleansing services in Ealing as part of the Clean and Green integrated waste management contract. The contract specification requires that all streets in the borough be cleaned at least once a week, with a higher frequency in shopping areas, transport routes and other areas of high footfall. The cleansing regime is based on a system of weekly cleaning and monthly deep cleaning.

Some of the major issues affecting Street Services are identified in the following paragraphs.

2.14.1.1 **Commercial Waste**

Any waste generated in commercial premises is considered commercial waste. Commercial outlets must have a legal contract with a registered waste company (such as Ealing Council) and be able to provide evidence of how they dispose of their waste.

2.14.1.2 **Fly Tipping of Builders Waste**

There has been a significant increase in the checking of waste carriers to ensure that they carry a licence. Issues surrounding littering and fly tipping can only be successfully dealt with using a variety of techniques including enforcement, education and information.

2.14.1.3 **Tackling Commercial Waste Issues**

Statutory notices are issued to commercial premises stating how they should store waste. Such notices have been issued across the borough to businesses. Increased use of fixed cameras in town centre areas (Hanwell, West Ealing and Southall) is being utilised to collate CCTV footage of fly tippers.

2.14.1.4 **Waste Placed Out Too Early**

Statutory notices are issued to domestic properties stating how waste should be properly stored and the penalties/implications of not doing so. This includes indicating when waste should be placed ready for collection. A significant number of notices have been issued to householders to tackle this issue – in hot spot areas. Prior to the issuing of a statutory notice, general information is circulated.

The table overleaf identifies the increasing level of actions taken to enforce efficient waste management.

Table 8: Street Services – Actions Taken

Action	Volume 2007/2008 01/04/07 to 31/10/08	Volume 2006/2007
Investigations into litter and fly tipping issues e.g. searching of sacks by envirocrime officers	1,259	447
<i>Statutory Notices</i> To commercial premises requiring them to provide receptacles of a particular kind for the storage of waste. To domestic properties requiring the occupier to place waste for collection in receptacles of a kind and number specified. Requesting waste transfer notice evidence from businesses to ensure that they are fulfilling their duty of care for disposal of waste.	2,814	2,399
Stop and search monthly waste carrier checks against vans that are carrying waste and suspected of not carrying a licence. Action is to help prevent fly tipping in the area.	18	8 x 2hrs
Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued (FPN values range from £80 to £300 – depending on the nature of the Litter/waste FPN served).	260	215
Successful Prosecutions for fly tipping offences only.	5 (4 pending)	3

2.14.1.5 Waste Containment – Southall – Wheelie Bins

Residents across the borough were consulted at the beginning of 2007 to identify their preference for residual waste containment. The majority of Southall residents preferred wheelie bins to replace refuse sacks.

In November 2007, wheelie bins collections were introduced in the Southall Green, Southall Broadway, Lady Margaret Wards and parts of Dormers Wells and Norwood Green Wards.

All residences (approximately 15,000) have bins sufficient to hold up to 3-4 refuse sacks. Larger households may request additional bins but these are only provided following assurance that residents are making full use of recycling services. The activity of the waste education team is key to ensuring that waste is managed appropriately and effectively.

The Council has agreed a no side waste policy in the wheelie bin area. This means that only residual waste contained in the wheelie bin will be collected. In the early stages of service implementation excess waste was generated and that this would continue until residents increase their participation in recycling collection services.

It is expected that once the service is fully embedded, the capacity or scope for persistent rat infestation as a result of poor domestic waste containment, will reduce.

2.14.1.6 **Waste Education**

Waste education will be the key to ensuring compliance and delivering effective domestic waste management. The introduction of wheelie bins will also facilitate the identification of fly tipping hotspots for targeted action. Information will be gathered and analysed in advance of agreeing and implementing the most appropriate long-term waste education and enforcement strategy.

2.14.2 **Pest Control in Parks and Open Spaces**

Park Rangers tackle pest control through educational activities in open spaces centres and enforcement from targeted patrols.

Since January 2007, 67 targeted patrol sessions have been undertaken, some as part of partnership task force days with the police.

Members of the public who are observed feeding pigeons and other birds are approached by uniformed staff and given a warning. Rangers have issued 53 warnings that include recording the individual's details and taking photographs. Repeat offenders are issued with fixed penalty fines for littering and 8 of these have been served since January 2007.

The specific sites that have been targeted are chosen in response to observation of food dumping or as a result of complaints.

Problems with rats in parks and open spaces are usually related to pigeon and other bird feeding problems.

Information about the effects of leaving food for wildlife is distributed by leaflet, by site signage and at educational events.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R14	Review the effect on rat infestation and fox nuisance levels in the wheelie bin areas of Southall to establish what lessons can be learnt.
R15	Implementation of the no side waste policy in the wheelie bin area.

2.15 **External Partners**

2.15.1 **Thames Water**

In 2000, Water UK issued a protocol providing a mechanism for improved communication and co-ordination between local authorities and sewage undertakers on the control of rats in sewers. The protocol called for co-operation on rodent control and for sewer baiting and surface treatments to be undertaken in a complementary manner and in agreement with all relevant agencies. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) supported the National Protocol and continues to work with DEFRA and Water UK to improve its profile nationwide.

The aim of the London Sewer Rat Baiting and Treatment Protocol is to clarify and support improved communications between all the relevant agencies and set in place a system of developing appropriate and agreed plans for treatment, remediation and prevention of rat infestations.

The overall co-ordination of the London Rat and Sewer Baiting/Treatment programme is through a strategic group formed of representatives of all relevant agencies including London Councils, Greater London Authority, Thames Water, Network Rail, CIEH, Pest Control Liaison Group and British Waterways.

Ealing Council works through the West London Resource Group to direct Thames Water to different hotspots and works best in conjunction with surface baiting by the Council.

Working in partnership with Thames Water, the Council has recently undertaken proactive, co-ordinated projects in West Twyford and Southall.

2.15.2 **Other Agencies**

The Council also needs to develop partnership communications and working arrangements with other agencies including London Underground and Network Rail.

2.15.3 **Co-ordination with External Partners**

Working together in partnership will support improved communications between all the relevant agencies and set in place a system of developing integrated and agreed strategies. Action plans for treatment, remediation and prevention of pest infestations can be effectively managed. Partnership working will also enable resources to be more effectively and efficiently utilised, provide a better value for money service and improve the quality of response to the public.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R16	Establish a closer working partnership with internal and external stakeholders e.g. Ealing's Street Services, Thames Water Authority, National Rail, etc. and work together to provide a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to pest control.
R17	Establish Partnership strategies, arrangements and procedures with external partners to deliver a cohesive and comprehensive service to the community.
R18	Include within their sewer baiting strategies an element of proactive sewer baiting for the parts of local authority areas where this approach is most appropriate.
R19	Increased joint working and better channels of communication through the Safer Ealing Partnership to solve problems in alleyways.

2.16 **Education and Promotion**

The education of the whole community in safe and efficient waste containment and disposal is fundamental to the limitation of pests within the borough.

An important element in the success of initiatives is the promotion and communication of achievement and new initiatives to the widest audience. Residents, the business community, support organisations and other stakeholders need to be aware what initiatives, services and support exists

when they are experiencing pest problems. This could be done, for example, by including appropriate articles in the Council's free monthly magazine (Around Ealing) that is distributed to every household, etc.

Establishing an education programme for stakeholders to include a media campaign, a pest control seminar and workshop to include all stakeholders, proactive and reactive advice for businesses and residents is essential.

The education programme will need the support and participation of all identified partners in delivering pest control measures.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R20	Establish an education programme for stakeholders to include a media campaign, a pest control seminar and workshop for all stakeholders, proactive and reactive advice for businesses and residents.
R21	Work with key partners to maximise promotional activities, roadshows, recycling and similar activities to educate residents and businesses to sensibly dispose of waste in order to reduce pest problems in the borough.
R22	Regular monitoring to ensure that equality and diversity is applied consistently to the service.

2.17 **New Threats**

2.17.1 **Bedbugs**

Bedbugs are proving to be a new threat to the community. Bedbugs, which feast on human blood at night, are now being detected in London.

There is no discernable reason why bedbugs are returning, as by the 1980s bedbugs were almost nonexistent in Britain. In parts of London, bedbug infestations have risen tenfold since 1996. Possible factors include growth in international travel, increased resistance to certain insecticides and climate change.

Common bedbugs are oval wingless insects, approximately 5mm long, with six legs and two antennae. They are red-brown in colour and flat in shape. Their colour turns to red/purple after a blood meal and they become more rounded in shape.



A common bedbug

2.17.2 ***Where do they live?***

Bedbugs hide in mattresses, within bed frames, under bed bases, within bed headboards, behind loose wallpaper, within paintings, wall sockets, telephones, behind wall partitioning, suspended ceilings, skirting boards, on clothing or furnishings, and anywhere with a dark crack/crevice/seam providing harbourage. They breed by laying eggs and can lay between 150 and 345 eggs.

The presence of bedbugs in a room can be detected by the following:

- blood spotting on bedding
- brown excrement spots close to where they live and on bedding
- whitish/opaque un-hatched and hatched eggs
- in heavy infestations, a sweet almond smell is common
- bedbugs are not normally seen during the day

Bedbugs are most likely to be transferred from place to place via infested linen, clothing, furniture and other articles. This means that transfer can occur by travelling on public transport, within public buildings and other points of contact between people.

2.17.3 ***A Health Hazard?***

Bedbugs are not known to carry disease. However, they feed on human blood usually at night whilst people are asleep in their beds. These bites cause irritation and itching. Some people are particularly sensitive to the bites and experience an allergy and inflammation especially to the arms and shoulders.

2.17.4 ***Eradication***

High standards of hygiene and housekeeping ensure that the presence of bedbugs is revealed at an early stage. Bedbugs can thrive where hygiene standards are poor and housekeeping sloppy.

In hotels and hostels, house-keeping staff should be trained to identify the signs of bed bug infestation and when cleaning rooms should alert management to the possibility of infestation.

Infested bedding and furnishings should be laundered in a hot wash and care should be taken not to aid dispersal of the infestation via laundry baskets. In severe cases, items of furniture will require removal and burning.

It is difficult to treat bedbugs by oneself and professional help should be sought. Treatment consists of the application of an insecticide, usually in a spray form, in and around the infested areas.

2.17.5 ***New Treatment Methods***

In recent years there has been a huge increase in calls for bedbug treatments, especially in London. In line with expert advice, it is proposed to introduce a "two visit" regime as standard. Various local authorities, including Ealing, have found that single visit treatments are not fully effective and incur revisits. The proposed new standard treatment will consist of two visits within a 7 to 10 days interval. In order to cover the additional cost, service officers proposed to raise the charge to £50 per room (currently £30 per room). A proposed additional

charge of £25 per room will be made for a further visit within one calendar month of the second standard treatment visit.

Table 9: The reported cases of bedbugs in 2006/2007

Area	% Demand	Bedbug Cases
Acton W3	38	172
Southall UB1/2	20	91
Greenfod/Perivale HA0/UB6	10	45
Hanwell W7	9	40
Northolt UB5	8	36
West Ealing W13	7	30
Ealing W5	5	25
Chiswick W4	3	13
Park Royal NW10	1	5
Total	100	457

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R23	The Pest Control service develops a business plan to confirm the changes to the treatment of bedbugs including the setting of revised charges.

2.18

Future Monitoring

The Panel suggested that the scrutiny panel reviewing environmental matters, currently the Transport and Environment Scrutiny Panel, should undertake the monitoring of the implementation and ongoing monitoring of pest control.

No.	Proposed Recommendations
R24	The Pest Control Specialist Scrutiny Panel nominates the Transport and Environment Scrutiny Panel to undertake the monitoring of the Council's Pest Control Service including the implementation of the agreed recommendations.

3.0

KEY LEARNING POINTS

Some of the key learning points for the Panel were:

- Engaging with the community – seeking the views of the local people through Scrutiny Officer surveys and media interviews were a very valuable source of gathering information directly from the community representatives.
- Benchmarking exercises provided important comparisons.
- Site visits would not have made a significant difference to the information received.
- Established good contacts with some external agencies.
- Recognised the difficulty in engaging some external agencies and areas of the community.
- Concentrating review on the major pests provided more time to look at specific issues in greater detail.
- An important element in the success of initiatives is the promotion and communication of achievement and new initiatives to the widest audience.

4.0

MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

The Table below shows the membership and attendance of Panel Members at the meetings during the year.

Membership and Attendance at Panel Meetings

Name	Total Possible	Actual Attendance	Apologies Received
<u>Councillors</u>			
Cllr Rajinder Mann (Chairman)	5	5	-
Cllr John Cowing (Vice Chairman)	5	5	-
Cllr Elizabeth Brookes	5	3	2
Cllr Joanna Dabrowska	5	4	1
Cllr Tejinder Singh Dhani	5	2	2
Cllr Diana Pagan (in part)	1	0	1
Cllr Clifford Pile (in part)	1	1	-
Cllr James Randall	4	4	-
Cllr Gurcharan Singh	5	3	1
Cllr Philip Taylor	5	3	2
Cllr Edmond Yeo	4	3	1
<u>Co-optees</u>			
Ms Ruth Barnes (Ealing Primary Care Trust)	4	2	2
Reverend Michael Bolley (Southall Anglican Churches)	4	3	1
Mr Mahanta Shrestha (Ealing Chamber of Commerce)	4	3	1
Mr Michael Byrne (Local Resident from Ealing W5 - Mr Byrne was appointed on 20 September 2007 but resigned in November 2007 due to work commitments.)	1	1	-
<u>Substitutes</u>			
Cllr Edmond Yeo substituted for Cllr Diana Pagan at the first meeting. Cllr Gregory Stafford substituted for Cllr Philip Taylor at the second meeting. Cllr Colm Costello and Cllr Shahbaz Ahmed substituted for Cllr Edmond Yeo and Cllr Elizabeth Brookes respectively at the third meeting. Cllr Mohammad Aslam substituted for Cllr Elizabeth Brookes at the fourth meeting. Cllr Justin Anderson and Cllr Param Sandhu substituted for Cllr Joanna Dabrowska and Cllr Tejinder Dhani respectively at the fifth meeting.			
<u>Other</u>			
Cllr Sue Emmet, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, attended the fourth meeting.			

5.0 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Useful Papers

London Borough of Ealing Constitution
Pest Control Specialist Scrutiny Panel:

- Terms of Reference;
- Work Programme 2007/2008;
- Agenda Papers and Minutes of Meetings; and

Other information about Scrutiny at Ealing are all available at
www.ealing.gov.uk/services/council/scrutiny

5.1 **Useful Websites**

Ealing Council

www.ealing.gov.uk/services/environment/pest_control

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

www.cieh.org

National Pest Technicians Association

www.npta.org.uk

British Pest Control Association

www.bpca.org.uk

5.2 **Further Information**

For further information about the Pest Control Specialist Scrutiny Panel please contact:

Harjeet Bains

Scrutiny Review Officer

Tel: 020-8825 7120

Email: bainsh@ealing.gov.uk

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including any Resource and Legal Implications)	Cabinet Response
R1	The service should carry out a comprehensive review of the fee charging policy and the types of service that should be provided.	Benchmarking against neighbouring authorities. Review will be under the direction of the Director of Finance and in consultation with the stakeholders including Portfolio Holders.	Accepted
R2	The charging policy review should consider all services provided (including to Ealing Homes) and decide whether these should be provided, and if so, which should be chargeable and if any should be free.	Consultation with stakeholders including Portfolio Holders. The service broadly accepts this recommendation, however would consider the focus is: that: that the charging policy considers all the services provided and then determines a set of options based on the review.	Accepted
R3	The service should review current funding levels to establish if this is adequate to deliver the recommended services to the local community.	Consultation with stakeholders including Portfolio Holders. Currently there is an efficient service in place, and as part of the review of pest control, the services further income potential and additional expenditure will be considered. Should there be any further requirements and associated cost implications these will be compiled as part of a business case. However, the focus will be on self funding any expansion.	Accepted
R4	The Pest Control Service should identify and evaluate the availability of external grants and other income sources.	Safer Communities to proactively seek out funding to improve services and give value for money. Recommendations is broadly accepted . accepted. As part of the review of pest control potential income streams will be evaluated.	Accepted

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including any Resource and Legal Implications)	Cabinet Response
R5	Increased enforcement activity to include targeting areas of known pest infestation and closing businesses that are an imminent risk to public health.	<p>The Food Safety Act 1990 allows the LA to close food businesses through the Magistrates Court.</p> <p>Businesses are also able to close voluntarily.</p> <p>This is a core activity dealt with by the Commercial team in EH.</p>	Accepted
R6	Consult with the Planning Service on controlling the expansion of commercial premises that do not have adequate facilities for the storage and disposal of refuse.	EH have powers to require adequate storage and removal of refuse from commercial and residential premises and will increase enforcement to reduce waste. The service will continue to utilise the powers.	Accepted
R7	The Service to identify the level of interest from local schools in the provision of a comprehensive pest control service to schools.	A consultation survey to be commissioned, implemented and analysed. The results will be reported on..	Accepted
R8	A survey of local businesses and other stakeholders (e.g. hospitals) should be carried out by the Service to identify the level of interest in the provision of a comprehensive pest control service for commercial premises.	Accepted. EHTS will undertake the survey.	Accepted

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including any Resource and Legal Implications)	Cabinet Response
R9	Environmental Health and Trading Standards to consider delivering the Council's Pest Control service to all Council buildings.	Broadly accepted .accepted. A consultation survey will survey will be carried out to ascertain the extent of interest in the service. A business case will be compiled based on the outcomes along with options (based(based on projected costing)	Accepted
R10	Consider the provision of an integrated service that would provide a limited service to commercial premises where they coexist with residential premises and have an impact on the immediate environment.	Accept recommendation. The service will adopt as part of the continued improvement of the Environmental Health Service.	Accepted
R11	Produce an in-depth costing of providing full pest control services, to include increased office space, additional staff, equipment and administrative costs.	As part of the review of the Pest control service a business case will be presented to Cabinet covering direct and indirect costs of providing the service.	Accepted
R12	On completion of the consultation exercises, a detailed business case for expansion of the service to provide services to the commercial sector be completed and reported to Cabinet.	As part of the review of the Pest control service a business case will be presented to Cabinet covering direct and indirect costs of providing the service	Accepted

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including any Resource and Legal Implications)	Cabinet Response
R13	Ensure that the business case takes into account the total cost of delivering the scheme and builds in a robust monitoring and review process.	Agreed.	Accepted
R14	Review the effect on rat infestation and fox nuisance levels in the wheelie bin areas of Southall to establish what lessons can be learnt.	Difficult to do as no base line implementation data.	Accepted
R15	Implementation of the no side waste policy in the wheelie bin area.	This is being implemented at the moment.	Accepted
R16	Establish a closer working partnership with internal and external stakeholders e.g. Ealing's Street Services, Thames Water Authority, National Rail, etc. and work together to provide a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to pest control.	Protocols are already in place with the Thames Water Authority.	Accepted
R17	Establish Partnership strategies, arrangements and procedures with external partners to deliver a cohesive and comprehensive service to the community.	Agreed	Accepted

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including any Resource and Legal Implications)	Cabinet Response
R18	Include within their sewer baiting strategies an element of proactive sewer baiting for the parts of local authority areas where this approach is most appropriate.	The serviceThe service will bait council owned land adjoining problem area and the costs would be contained within existing resources.	Accepted
R19	Increased joint working and better channels of communication through the Safer Ealing Partnership to solve problems in alleyways.	A joint working partnership is in place.	Accepted
R20	Establish an education programme for stakeholders to include a media campaign, a pest control seminar and workshop for all stakeholders, proactive and reactive advice for businesses and residents.	Agreed.	Accepted
R21	Work with key partners to maximise promotional activities, road shows, recycling and similar activities to educate residents and businesses to sensibly dispose of waste in order to reduce pest problems in the borough.	Agreed.	Accepted

Rec No.	Proposed Panel Recommendation	Service Officer Comments (Including any Resource and Legal Implications)	Cabinet Response
R22	Regular monitoring to ensure that equality and diversity is applied consistently to the service.	To be included in the service equality action plan. Moreover any proposed changes in the service reported to Cabinet will include an Equality Impact Assessment.	Accepted
R23	The Pest Control service develops a business plan to confirm the changes to the treatment of bedbugs including the setting of revised charges.	A full review of fees and charges will be carried out in 2008/2009.	Accepted
R24	The Pest Control Specialist Scrutiny Panel nominates the Transport and Environment Scrutiny Panel to undertake the monitoring of the Council's Pest Control Service including the implementation of the agreed recommendations.	Agreed.	Accepted