

PEST CONTROL DEPARTMENT

WASPS

The Common Wasp (*Vespula vulgaris*) are beneficial garden insects, they feed on small insects such as greenfly, aphids etc. to feed to developing wasp larvae in the nest during the summer months.

They also feed on a variety of foods including fruits such as apples, pears and plums. They collect wood to construct nests and may therefore damage the wooden fences and garden furniture.

By the end of the summer, the queen wasp stops laying eggs and the workers no longer need to collect food for the young in the nest. They become free to search for sweet things such as cakes or sweets and therefore can become a nuisance.

It is the ability of wasps to cause painful stings that concerns people most. People's reactions to wasp stings can vary considerably from intense pain and swelling round the area of the sting, to a severe allergic reaction (known as anaphylactic shock) which can be life threatening.

LIFE CYCLE

The fertile queen lays eggs in the nest, they hatch into larvae within a few days, 4-6 weeks after the eggs are laid the first generation of workers emerge. These are female wasps and are smaller than the queens they take over responsibility for maintaining the nest and finding food, in particular high protein foodstuffs for the larvae such as flies, caterpillars, or spiders.

The queen then devotes all her time to laying eggs and by the end of the summer the nest may contain 30,000 or more wasps. In the autumn the new queens and males produced from the nest mate and the fertilised queens search for hibernation sites. Over winter the nests die out and nests are never reused.

HOME TREATMENT

**Treating wasps nest can be a dangerous operation.
For this reason professional treatment is always advised.**

If you do try to treat wasp nests yourself wear 'bee keeper' type protective clothing to prevent being stung, treat the nest either late in the evening or early in the morning, the nest will be less active.

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Nests can be found by looking for signs of wasp activity on fine days. You can find the position of the nest by looking for foraging wasps flying either towards or away from the nest entrance.

You can obtain do-it-yourself packs from garden centres and DIY stores.

.Always make sure you read the instructions on the product packaging before treatment.

You should apply insecticide powder around and into the entrance of the nest, workers returning to the nest become contaminated and carry the insecticide into the nest. Control is usually achieved within a few hours.

Never fill in the hole to deny wasps access into the nest, doing this could make the problem worse, they will get in and out whatever you do.

Does the Council treat for wasps?

Yes, our fully qualified Pest Control staff are available to carry out a professional treatment, if you require our assistance then please use the contact us on 01254 388 111 to make an appointment.

PUBLIC INFORMATION SHEET No5

WASPS