

# PEST CONTROL DEPARTMENT

## FLEAS

Fleas are insects that live on hosts and feed on blood. Adult fleas are classed as parasites, living off warm-blooded animals. Surveys showed that over 90% of flea infestations are cat fleas.

Animal fleas will attack humans as well as their own hosts feeding on our blood, which can be the reason for the transmission of some infections by this insect.

## LIFE CYCLE

Flea eggs are about 0.5mm long, pearly-white in colour and are laid on the pet or in its bedding. 4-8 eggs are laid after each the flea feeds, and therefore a single female can produce between 800-1000 eggs during her lifetime - which may be as long as two years.

The eggs hatch in about 1 week into larvae which live in dark, humid places such as animal bedding and carpet fluff, feeding on debris and adult flea excrement. At worst, a cat's bedding can support up to 8000 immature and 2000 adult fleas.

After 2-3 weeks, the larvae spin cocoons and pupate and may spend winter in this state.

The adult flea will then be stimulated to emerge by the vibrations set up by a passing host. Development from egg to adult is normally completed in 4 weeks but at low temperatures will take much longer.

## HOME TREATMENT

The use of Insecticide sprays or powders obtained from a vet or a pet shop on domestic pets can be used, **Always make sure you read the instructions on the product packaging before treatment.**

Before you start, you should thoroughly clean your home with a vacuum cleaner. Placing a small quantity of insecticidal dust onto a carpet and vacuuming it up will control any fleas that may get sucked into the vacuum bag. You can use a domestic insecticide to treat your home, after this treatment, avoid vacuuming for between 7 and 10 days.

Pets' bedding must also be thoroughly cleaned and washed or disposed of.

### **Does the Council treat for fleas?**

Yes, our fully qualified Pest Control staff are available to carry out a professional chargeable treatment.

If you require our assistance then please use the contact us on 01254 388 111

**PUBLIC INFORMATION SHEET No4**

**FLEAS**