



Squirrels

Why are grey squirrels a pest?

The grey squirrel was introduced into Britain in the late 1800's. Since then they have become widespread in both woodland and urban areas. As the name implies they are generally grey in colour with patches of red fur on their feet and face.



Grey squirrels often live and breed in roof spaces where it is safe and warm. They use loft insulation and other materials to create large nests (dreys). They can cause damage by gnawing fascia boarding and roof joists, stripping electrical wiring and damaging stored belongings. These destructive activities increase the risk of fires and repairing the damage can be costly. Food left out for birds can attract grey squirrels to your garden. They can cause damage to the local environment

by stripping bark from trees (which can kill them) and by raiding bird nests for their eggs and fledglings.

Signs of squirrels

The following are signs that squirrels may be present:

- Noises in your loft space
- Droppings shaped like a raisin and ¼ inch
- Damaged bird feeders
- Damaged fascia boards and electrical wiring from gnawing
- Loft insulation dragged into piles

All rodents (rats, mice and squirrels) can cause damage in roof spaces. If you are not sure what is causing the problem, call us on the number below and we carry out a survey.

How to prevent squirrels

There are many things you can do to avoid having a problem with grey squirrels, many of them are simple and things you can do in your day to day life. To reduce the attraction of your home and garden to squirrels you should:

- Clear up and remove anything in your garden which might provide a food source for squirrels such as fallen fruit and spilt pet food
- Don't put bird food directly on the ground
- Feed birds responsibly using mesh feeders or suspended tables
- Use squirrel proof mesh bird feeders where possible
- Cut back tree branches so they do not overhang your property
- Trim wall climbing plants to prevent them reaching from ground to roof level
- Squirrels are excellent climbers and will utilise anything to access your property
- Place protective mesh on redundant chimneys
- Repair any damaged fascia boards or roof tiles (if you can see daylight from inside your loft then you have a hole)



If your property is joined to another property (for example a terraced house) you should encourage your neighbours to follow the above steps too.

Control measures

If you find that you have squirrels in your home contact the Environmental Health Department on 01442 228543/ 228455, or email pestcontrol@dacorum.gov.uk