



Wasps



Why are wasps a pest?

Wasps are not considered a public health risk but can present a nuisance when a nest is found in or around your home or garden. Wasps like other insects are beneficial to the environment as they eat other insect pests. Unless the location of the nest is causing a problem to either yourself or other members of the public treatment should be avoided. Wasps can sting and can pose a hazard if the nest is disturbed in any way. The elderly and those who suffer from anaphylactic shock are especially vulnerable. Treatment should be sought when the wasps pose a risk to residents or to the public.

Signs of an active wasps nest

Wasps can often be confused with other types of winged insects. A true wasp will have buttercup yellow and jet black warning stripes. Queen wasps sleep over winter in safe locations like wood piles and roof spaces. They emerge from April onwards and seek a suitable place to build a new nest. Signs of a nest may include:

- Many wasps entering and exiting one location
- Wasps visible on the outside of the nest
- Wet patches on walls or ceilings if a nest is in your loft or wall cavity
- A dull buzzing noise
- The nest can sometimes be seen. This will usually appear as a grey ball which can range from the size of a golf ball to the size of a car tyre.



Wasps build a new nest every year and never return to an old nest. This means that old nests will remain in place but will never become active again. For this reason it is not necessary to remove old or treated nests. You can determine if a nest is old by the lack of any wasp activity.

How to prevent attracting wasps

There are many things you can do to avoid attracting wasps, many of them are simple and things you can do in your day to day life:

- Keep bagged refuse and lidded bins with potential food sources away from your house
- If you plan to have a barbeque in the summer there is a risk of wasps homing in on your food. Purchase and install wasp traps before the event (available from most garden centres and supermarkets)
- Inspect your loft periodically throughout the summer to check for any new formations of a nest (especially where there is a history of wasps nests)

Pest Control

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

