

## **Summer stings: Callouts to wasp & hornet pest controllers set to peak by 150% as warmer months approach**

With summer fast approaching, experts from home assistance provider [HomeServe](#) are predicting a peak in callouts for wasp and hornet issues.

This is based on an average call increase of 150% in the past two years, when compared to non-summer months.

Overall, rodents remain the biggest pest problem, with over half (56%) of pest callouts in previous years due to vermin.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the capital is the epicentre for rodent callouts with a third (36%) of calls coming from the capital, followed by the South East (14%), and then the West Midlands (12%).

In response, a Home Expert at [HomeServe](#) has offered their top tips on how to deal with rodents, wasps and other common pests this summer:

### **Deter rodents with peppermint oil**

Damage to the home is commonplace with rodents chewing through wires, damaging furniture, or even creating fire hazards by nesting in, or around, electrical items.

Due to their highly tuned sense of smell, strong scents such as peppermint oil are overwhelming and unpleasant for them so can be used as a deterrent. Try leaving cotton wool balls with 8-10 drops of peppermint essential oil in the corner of rooms or near suspected entry points (you'll need to refresh them every couple of days or so).

### **Protect yourself from wasps and hornets – particularly during the summer**

To deal with wasps and hornets, you can use a solution – which doesn't rely on harmful chemicals – of washing up liquid and water. Spraying this on the pests will effectively suffocate them and can either be sprayed directly on them or in the nest. Other tactics include keeping the doors/windows shut when possible, keeping rubbish away from entry points as this can attract them, and fill any holes in the walls.

### **Throw the conkers out, spook spiders with a mix of water and white vinegar**

The idea that conkers will scare off your eight-legged invaders is an old wives' tale. The story goes that conkers contain a noxious chemical that repels spiders but no-one's ever been able to scientifically prove this. An alternative solution is mixing equal parts of water and white vinegar in a spray bottle, and spritzing directly on spiders, webs, or in places where you find them like corners, cabinets, or closets. White vinegar contains acetic acid which is harmful to spiders.

### **Use copper tape to stop slugs in their tracks**

Slugs enter buildings in search of food and will remain in any areas where damp conditions occur, for example a damp cellar or behind kitchen appliances.

In the first instance, it's important to identify their entry point and block them with a sealant to stop them being able to come into the house. You can also stick copper tape across common entry points i.e. doorways and windowsills as the tape will emit a small charge and stop the slug

going any further. For slugs which are already in the house, you can use salt to dehydrate and kill them.

### **Don't use mothballs to get rid of moths**

Moths can be a real pest – particularly when they get into your wardrobe and chew holes in your favourite jumpers. But mothballs are no longer widely used as there is evidence that the chemicals they contain can be harmful to humans. Instead, proper storage techniques can be used to ward them off. Keep seasonal clothes vacuum packed in the wardrobe, and open food in the pantry stored in sealed containers. Ensuring to thoroughly clean and organise these spaces is also a simple tactic to keep areas moth free.

### **Call a specialist to help**

If you have unsuccessfully tried to deal with your pest solution yourself, it would be wise to call in a trusted specialist, like HomeServe, to help you get to the root of the issue. They'll have specialised equipment and training to help get your home pest free and will advise on how to stop the problem from recurring.

For more information visit HomeServe's blog page [here](#).

**Ends**

### **Notes to editors:**

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### **About the research**

Internal data was collected in May 2023, and unless otherwise specified refers to callout data from 2022 and 2021.

### **A little bit about HomeServe**

As one of the country's leading home assistance providers, HomeServe has got almost 30 years' experience looking after UK homes. From plumbing, drainage, boiler, heating, or electrics cover to new boilers and one-off repairs, they're always looking for ways to bring you better care for your home, through their range of products and services. With a nationwide network of Home Experts and a claims line that's open 24/7, 365 days a year, you can count on them to be there when it matters most.

### **Diversity and inclusion**

HomeServe is proud to promote equality and inclusion through all their partnerships, including Business in the Community, Stonewall, Race at Work Charter and the Business Disability Forum. In recognition of these efforts, they've become a signatory of the Race at Work Charter, voted Best Place to Work for Women 2020, achieved accreditation to become a Disability



Confident Committed employer and are now ranked in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. In 2021, HomeServe also earned a place on the list of European Great Places to Work.

To find out more, visit [homeserve.com/uk](https://homeserve.com/uk)  
HomeServe - we're on our way.