

Why are bedbugs a pest?

Bedbugs are not considered a public health pest officially, but they can be an unpleasant and persistent nuisance due to their feeding habits.

Bedbugs draw blood from their hosts by piercing the skin. It is the bedbug's saliva which causes the redness, swelling and itching. Some people could have an allergic reaction which is a concern for those at risk of anaphylaxis.

Unlike mosquitoes and ticks there are no confirmed cases of bedbugs spreading diseases from one human to another, even though the bedbug possesses all the correct tools to do so!

Signs of bedbugs

The following are signs that you may have a bedbug infestation:

- * **Sightings** - adult bedbugs are roughly apple pip size and may vary slightly in colour. After a feed they will appear red / purple. Hungry bedbugs will appear opaque. You may find adults near the food sources for example in mattress seams, corners and buttons. You may also be able to see bedbugs in sockets, cracks and crevices, on curtains or along skirting boards and carpet edges

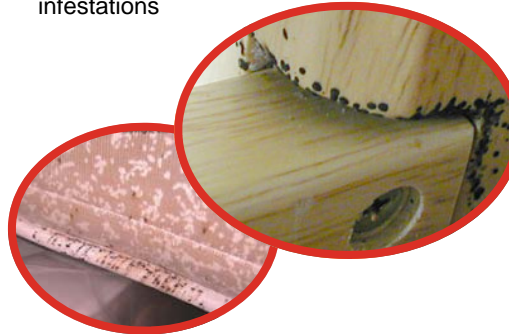


The approximate size of a bedbug

- * **Bites** - bedbugs are nocturnal creatures and will feed when humans are asleep at night. These bites will be red, slightly swollen, itchy (an anti itch cream such as calamine lotion may help) and may appear in clusters



- * **Staining** - bedbugs deposit their faeces after every meal. This will appear as dark brown stains on bedding especially around the edges of mattresses and bed frames where they are mainly found. This will be more pronounced with heavier infestations



- * **Blood** - spots of blood may be found in bedding. This is caused from the bedbugs feeding or from the crushing of the insect

How to prevent an infestation

Bedbug infestations are on the rise, mainly due to the increase of world wide travel.

It is mainly places where people are very transient such as hotels and hostels that tend to report repeat infestations. Bedbugs are excellent travellers and holiday makers can often carry infested suitcases back and infest their homes.



By following these tips you may be able to prevent an infestation:

- * Store any suitcases and bags off the ground and away from your bed when staying in any multi occupied establishments abroad or in the UK
- * If you have travelled and stayed in public accommodation then store your suitcase in an isolated area until you or a qualified pest technician can thoroughly inspect it
- * When buying second hand furniture inspect it thoroughly looking for insects within the seams, cracks and crevices
- * Vacuuming the mattress and fabrics of the infested areas may help reduce the number of insects and eggs. The vacuum needs to be emptied outside into a sealed bag and disposed of in the outside bin. This will not prevent bedbugs but will help control numbers



Control Measures

How to treat an infestation

The treatment of bedbugs can be a long process. They are notoriously difficult insects to eradicate especially where high levels of infestation exist. Treatments often have to be tried and varied to ensure success.

Treatment can take from 2 weeks to 2 months and sometimes longer if a infestation is severe. New control methods are being tested all the time, including sealed bags around mattresses, new insecticides and even treatments with temperature manipulation.

For these reasons we do not recommend that you try and treat an infestation yourself. Treatments are extremely difficult and even professionals can struggle to control the problem completely. However, with your cooperation and understanding treatments are usually always successful.

Private Contractors

We recommend that you seek an experienced expert in bedbug control. They should be a member of the British Pest Control Association. You can contact them by calling 01332 294 288 or by visiting www.bpca.org.uk.

You should expect, even with a minor infestation, a minimum of three visits. During these visits the contractor will treat the problem and use sticky monitors to check progress.

When seeking the services of a private contractor you should always obtain a minimum of three quotes. This will allow you to compare value for money.

Always ask the contractor what the price will be to eradicate (i.e. a fixed charged). Otherwise they may charge you per visit which could spiral out of control.

Leeds City Council Service

The council offers competitive rates for the treatment and control of bedbugs in both domestic and commercial properties.

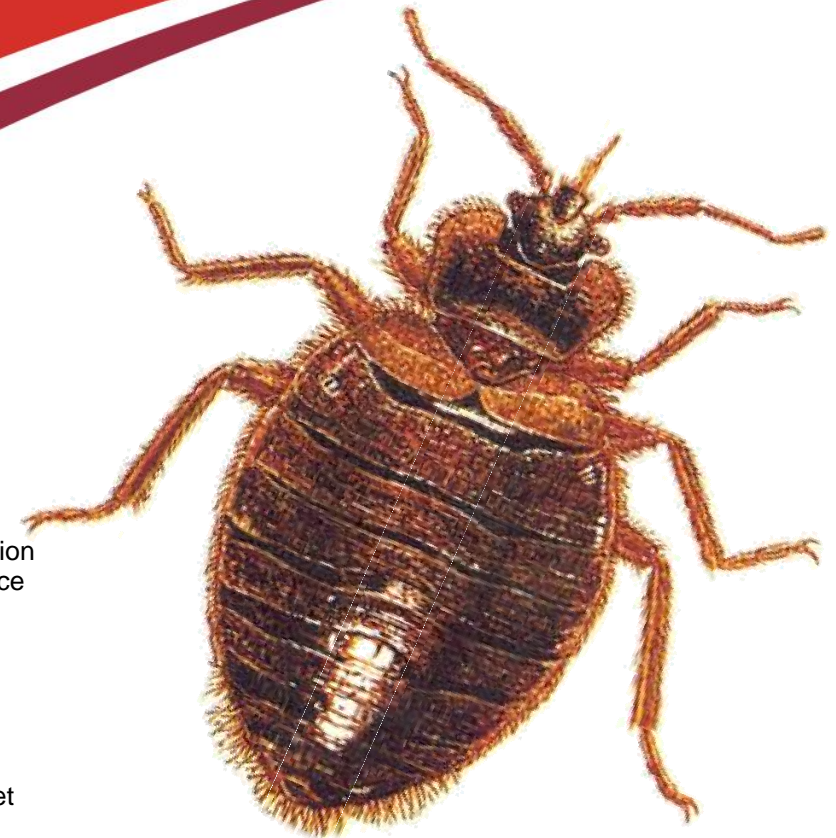
For further information or to book a treatment by a qualified and experienced pest control officer please call **0113 2224406**.

Commercial premises can arrange for a free survey and quotation.



Bedbugs

Pest information leaflet



Contact us

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet or would like professional advice please contact

Leeds City Council Corporate Call Centre
0113 2224406
or email
pests@leeds.gov.uk

Further information and copies of this leaflet can be found on the council's website
www.leeds.gov.uk/pestcontrol