

BVA and BVZS position on the use and sale of rodent glue traps

Executive summary

BVA and BVZS consider that glue traps are an inhumane method of trapping and killing rodents and should be replaced by alternative methods of rodent control.

We recognise that it may be necessary to control or eradicate rodents due to their negative impacts on human and animal health, food, agriculture, property and the environment.^{1 2} Indeed, in the UK, there is also a legal obligation, as set out placed on local authorities in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act (1949) to control these species in some circumstances.³

The methods used to control rodents are, however, controversial, due to their impact on animal welfare^{4,5,6} and this is especially so in the case of the use of glue traps.⁷

Glue traps significantly compromise animal welfare for the period during which animals are trapped, and there are welfare concerns associated with methods of killing of trapped animals. Glue traps are also indiscriminate and may capture wild and domestic species for which their use is not intended.

We are therefore calling for:

- An outright ban on the use and sale of glue traps, applying to both the general public and pest control professionals;
- If the use of glue traps by pest control professionals is still to be permitted, UK governments should introduce strict legislative control for limited use of glue traps by individual pest control professionals in exceptional circumstances eg. through training, licensing and close monitoring;
- Ethical use of pest control, with a focus on integrated pest management (IPM);
- Further research to develop alternative methods for the deterrence of rodents and where necessary, more humane methods of killing.

Summary of recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Pest control methods should be used ethically, with a focus on integrated pest management (IPM).

Recommendation 2: Further research should be carried out to develop alternative methods of the deterrence for rodents and where necessary, more humane methods of killing.

¹ Meerburg BG, Brom FWA and Kijlstra A, 2008. The ethics of rodent control. *Pest Management Science*, 64, 1205–1211.

² BVZS Position statement on the control of free-ranging wildlife. Available at: <https://www.bvzs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/BVZS-Position-Statement-on-the-control-of-Free-ranging-Wildlife-Final-Feb-2021.pdf>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/12-13-14/55/contents>

⁴ Mason G and Littin K, 2003. The Humaneness of Rodent Pest Control, *Animal Welfare*, 12, 1-37

⁵ Meerburg BG, Brom FWA and Kijlstra A, 2008. The ethics of rodent control. *Pest Management Science*, 64, 1205–1211.

⁶ Yeates, J. 2010. What can pest management learn from laboratory animal ethics? *Pest Management Science*, 66, 231–237.

⁷ Fenwick, N., 2013. Evaluation of the humaneness of rodent capture using glue traps, prepared for the Canadian Association of Humane Trapping, 31 July 2013. Available at: <http://www.caht.ca/evaluation-of-the-humaneness-of-rodent-capture-using-glue-traps/>

Recommendation 3: The UK Governments should introduce an outright ban on the use and sale of rodent glue traps.

Recommendation 4: If the use of glue traps by pest control professionals is still to be permitted, the UK governments should:

- **Introduce an immediate ban on the public use and sale of glue traps;**
- **Introduce strict legislative control for limited use of glue traps by individual pest control professionals in exceptional circumstances eg. through training, licensing and specifying the frequency with which traps should be checked.**

Recommendation 5: Any licensing system for pest control professionals should be time-limited and subject to review within three years of its introduction, with a view to ending the use of glue traps altogether. Professional pest control companies should also be encouraged to invest in research and development aimed at the identification of additional humane methods that would replace the apparent need for glue traps.