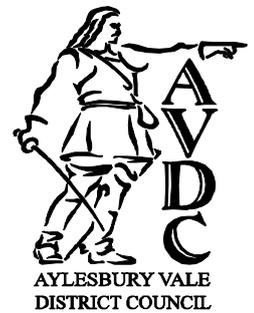




## **Pest Control Guidelines to prevent wasp infestation.**



Is there anything that can ruin our enjoyment of the summer more than the droning buzz of wasps? The formation of a nest inside roof spaces or wall cavities can make these pests an unwelcome presence in people's homes. These guidelines will outline ways to prevent a wasp infestation or limit the impact of having a wasp nest on your property.

### **Preventing wasps**

During the summer months, worker insects seek out sweet substances. The following steps can be taken to reduce their presence in your home and garden:

- Cover sweet smelling foods
- Cover open beverage containers, especially soft drink cans and fruit juices
- Make sure dustbins have tight-fitting lids
- Rinse out containers before placing them into recycling baskets
- Clear away fallen fruit from around the base of trees
- Avoid camping or picnicking near rubbish bins
- Store food in sealed containers when camping



If individual wasps appear in your home, an 'ozone-friendly' fly or wasp killer aerosol can deal with them, but be careful not to spray near exposed food, drink or fish aquariums.

### **Preventing nests**

Queen wasps begin to build nests during the spring and early summer, long before most people would think to be concerned. If you are worried about a nest being formed on your property, you should factor this into your plans and act promptly. Screens on doors and windows can prove an effective barrier to prevent wasps' entry into the home.

A coating of petroleum jelly i.e. Vaseline along possible entry points can deter potential invaders; this is especially effective in roof spaces as the petroleum jelly has the added benefit of protecting wooden rafters from damp.

### **What to do if a nest has formed**

Depending upon their placement, some nests may prove not to be much of a nuisance and so the easiest course of action may be to wait until the wasps die with the onset of winter. An old nest can be removed once all activity has ceased, this can be done by anyone with access to the nest and does not require any specialist knowledge. This task is not undertaken by the Council.

If a nest is a sufficient nuisance, it may be best to call in a pest control service to remove the nest. Nests in roofs and hanging in sheds or rafters, etc. are best left to experts and it is not advisable to try tackling this type of nest yourself.

The standard treatment for dealing with a wasp nest is to spray insecticidal dust at the entrance of the nest and onto surfaces over which the wasps walk to and from the nest. The dust clings to their legs and will be carried into the nest, eventually killing all the wasps inside. This method takes several days to take effect and is not always successful in the first instance, depending upon how accessible the nest is.



### **Wasp stings**

Wasps do not normally sting unless frightened or in defense of their nests. This habit increases as the insects become more irritable with the onset of cooler weather and the ingestion of fermenting, overripe fruit juices.

The sting is caused by the injection of venom. Wasp stings can be treated with a cold compress and antihistamine creams applied within 20 minutes of stinging.

A suitable antiseptic cream should also be rubbed into the skin to prevent infection. Multiple stings can have a dangerous cumulative effect, hence the need for caution. Seek medical advice promptly.

If the wasps are not causing problems, best advice is to leave them alone. Remember, they will die after the first few winter frosts. It is unusual for a queen wasp to establish a new nest in the same location the following year and they never use the same nest twice.

### **For further information or to book a treatment please contact:**

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