

# 'Serious mouse infestation' found at Middlesbrough mini market selling food at risk of contamination

By Bethany Lodge, 9 NOV 2017

A convenience store was found to be infested with mice and to be selling food at risk of contamination.

Mini Food Store, on Clarendon Road, central Middlesbrough, was paid a visit by environmental health officers in December.

Middlesbrough Council officers found a serious mouse infestation, foods at risk of contamination and poor standards of cleanliness during the visit.

The shop was temporarily closed but has since re-opened.

Appearing before Teesside Magistrates' Court on October 17, owners Parvin Akhtar, 62, and Mohammad Aftab, 65, entered guilty pleas to three charges under the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013.



The charges included:

- failing to keep the food business clean

- failing to ensure that adequate procedures were in place to control pests
- failing to protect food against risk of contamination

At a sentencing hearing on Tuesday, Akhtar and Aftab, both of Clarendon Road, Middlesbrough, were fined £1,500 each and ordered to pay £885 costs, and £100 charges. Judith Hedgley, Middlesbrough Council's head of public protection, said: "Food business operators are fully responsible for ensuring that basic hygiene requirements are met.

"They should keep their premises clean and free from pests, and they should protect foods from risk of contamination.

"When Environmental Health Officers find pests or other poor conditions in any food business in Middlesbrough, they will always take the most appropriate action to protect consumer safety.

"This premises was closed using emergency powers when it was inspected in December."

Councillor Julia Rostron, Middlesbrough Council's executive member for adult social care and public health, said: "Breaching food hygiene rules puts consumers at risk.

"The conditions found in this shop were completely unsatisfactory and this led to the closure of the business and the prosecution of its owners.