

20th November

Giant rat leaves disabled woman scared to live in her Greenock home

Lorraine Tinney [@greenocktele](#) Reporter



A DISABLED woman has told how she has been left scared to stay in her own home — after finding a giant rat in her cupboard.

Catherine Bruce, who has a brain tumour and is registered deaf, was shocked to find the huge rodent in her hall.

Housing bosses have admitted they are dealing with an infestation of the vermin at the block in Cathcart Street where Catherine lives.

The 54-year-old got her neighbour to call environmental health, who came out to remove the dead animal.

She said: “I opened up the electricity cupboard to check how much credit I had in my meter and I found it lying under the fusebox.

“I’ve been ill ever since.

“I had a panic attack brought on by the stress of it all. My whole body started shaking and I had to go to the doctor.”

Catherine was told by environmental health that the rat had come through the communal loft and down a gap in her ceiling which leads into the cupboard.

She added: “Their worker was shocked by the size of it and said it was ridiculous these were in people’s homes.

“I’m frightened they come into my bedroom next and I’m scared to make anything to eat in case they come into my kitchen.

“Environmental health said they can’t put down poison, although I don’t know why, as I don’t have any children.”

She said her neighbour has also complained after finding a rat in his kitchen.

Catherine added: “You used to see the rats on top of the bin sheds at the back and now we’ve got metal bins, so there’s obviously a big problem.”

She is so worried that she has applied for another house, despite having moved into her current flat only a year ago.

She said: “I like my home and I’ve spent a fortune decorating it, but I can’t live like this.”

The Telegraph visited the block and found huge rat droppings all over the communal close.

River **Clyde** Homes manage the flats while the shops below are owned by the council.

The Telegraph contacted both agencies and was told that various works to tackle the problem are now being carried out by the council and River Clyde Homes.

These include setting bait, clearing gutters, drains, cellars and bin chutes and installing metal mesh screens to block off air vents.

A council spokesman said: “We are working closely with River Clyde Homes to deal with this problem and will continue to monitor the situation closely and offer advice where necessary.

“Residents have an important part to play as well by making sure rubbish is securely bagged and bins are not overfilled and lids are secure.”

Elaine Cannon, service improvement manager at RCH, said: “There is a current issue in this area at the moment and we have been working with our contractor and the council’s environmental health team.

“Action has been taken, not only to eradicate the vermin but to locate the source of the infestation to prevent it happening again in the future.

“We have been supporting our customers during this period with advice and practical help.

“Anyone experiencing similar issues should contact us directly at any time of the night or day on 0800 013 2196.”