

London's rat problem worsens with 100 complaints a day

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There's an urban myth that you are never more than 6 feet from a rat in a city, but perhaps there is more truth in that than we would like to believe. A report called "Rat Land" by London Assembly member Susan Hall has found that the capital's rodent population is on the rise. Local authorities and pest control firms in London received over 186,000 complaints relating to rodents over the past five years. That's more than 100 per day, and the problem is getting worse.

In July of this year footage was posted on Facebook showing rats swarming over rubbish bags that had been left on the street in Harrow, North-West London. The video prompted Ms Hall, a Conservative London-wide Assembly Member and a Councillor in Harrow, to look closer at the capital's rat problem.

London's rodent population is on the rise and, as the city continues to grow and its

density increases, that trend could well continue. The Mayor of London and local authorities across the capital have a responsibility to ensure the prevalence of rats and mice in the city does not get out of control.

– SUSAN HALL AM, 'RAT LAND' REPORT AUTHOR

In the report, London-based rodent experts MG Pest Control identified reasons why rats and mice thrive in London. These include the vast sewer systems, excess rubbish on the streets and the fact people are living closer together.



Through freedom of information requests, all 32 London boroughs were asked how many rodent complaints had been reported to them by members of the public over the past five years. Tower Hamlets had the highest number of cases, dealing with 30,000 reports since January 2012. Brent dealt with nearly 20,000 complaints, whilst Camden and Lambeth both received over 13,000 each. Ealing handled over 12,000.

The report has called on the Mayor of London to play a role in preventing the spread of rodent populations and leading from the front with policies on street cleanliness. Among the recommendations suggested are a public awareness campaign, reassessing fortnightly bin collections and urging boroughs to publish the number of rodent sightings reported at least once a year.