

Oh rats! Brent second for rodent complaints across the capital

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Brent had the second highest number of rodent complaints in the capital in the last five years, figures reveal.

The borough logged 19,978 reports about rats and mice since 2012, approximately 11 a day, second only to Tower Hamlets with 30,000.

Camden came third with 13,558 complaints.

Around 180,000 reports of rodents were recorded across all London councils, more than 100 a day, according to Conservative assembly member Susan Hall, in her report Rat Land.

She said: “London’s crawling – and the problem is getting worse.”

Ms Hall began researching London’s rodents after a video of scavenging rats in Harrow went viral earlier this year.

Her freedom of information request revealed complaints rose by 10 per cent between 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Mice and rats are thriving due to fast food, excess rubbish on the streets and the fact people are living closer together, she added.

Brent has one of the highest incidences of flytipping and rubbish dumping, which the report said provides a fertile breeding ground for rodents.

Among Ms Hall’s recommendations are for the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan to kick-start a public awareness campaign about it.

She suggests he writes to councils urging them to take proactive action on bin collections and to outline how individuals and businesses can help to keep the areas they work in clean with proper food and waste storage.

National pest control firm Rentokil, which provided analysis for the report, warned numbers might increase over the winter.

A spokesman said: “As the weather starts to cool down and we experience more rainfall, rodents are more likely to make their way into homes and businesses to seek warmth and a food source.

“Prevention is certainly better than a cure when it comes to rodents.”

Ms Hall added: “Not only do these rodents present a public health issue, they risk damaging the reputation of individual boroughs and harming the global view of London as a clean and attractive city.”