

# The Northern Echo

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## Ferryhill car park overrun with rats that chew through car parts

By Patrick Gouldsbrough @PJG\_JournoLive reporter (County Durham)



A group of rats have taken over a Ferryhill car park.

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**A MOTORIST who had her car wires chewed through by rats has hit out at Durham County Council for allowing the rodents to overrun a Ferryhill car park.**

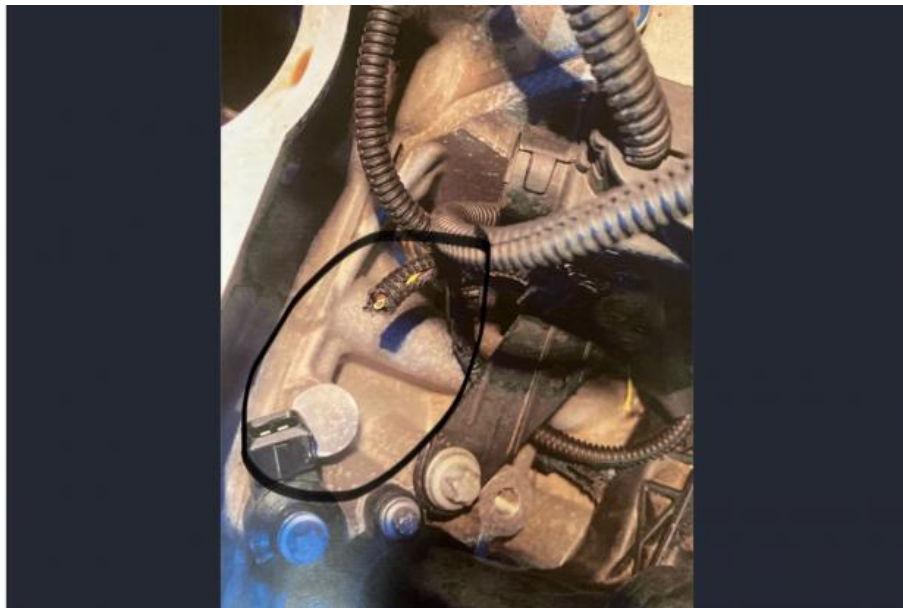
For the last few years, Joanne Clark has chosen to park her car in Church Street – a short walk to her workplace at a local dentist – without issue.

However, after working what she thought was a routine nine-hour shift on November 3, Joanne returned to her car at 5.30pm to find a group of rats sitting in the car park.

Over time, Joanne has said that the issue with rats has got worse, with her and her colleagues noticing a rise in the amount of “vermin” that hang out at the car park.

Despite Joanne making the unwanted discovery earlier this month – this isn’t the only mystery that the motorist had to solve.

After getting an engine warning light on her car later that day – Joanne was shocked to find that two wires had been chewed through completely and some more minor damage was left under the bonnet.

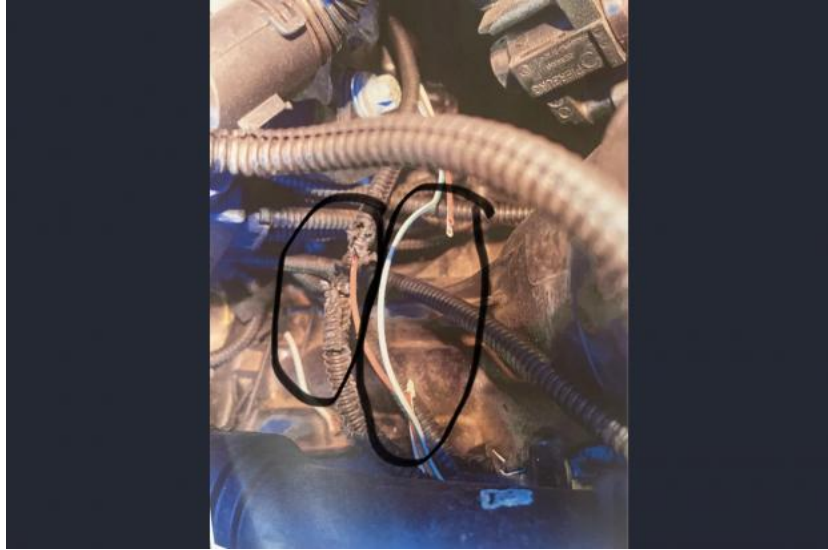


Joanne's car wires that were chewed through by rodents.

Upon further inspection from her mechanic, Joanne was without a car for at least a week, despite the engineers working on her car saying that she “could drive it safely if she wanted”.

Following the incident, Joanne has now called out Durham County Council for their “lack of action” in tackling the vermin problem in Ferryhill and Church Street Car Park.

According to the County Durham motorist, the council “need more complaints” before they can take action – an answer that hasn’t calmed the situation, with Joanne feeling like this is “an environmental hazard” that needs instant attention.



Along with the destruction of car wires, the rats also created minor damage on the car.

She told the Northern Echo: “Over the last year, me and my colleagues have started to notice rats in the car park – it’s disgusting and not something that anyone should have to deal with. However, a couple of weeks ago, I was greeted with a check engine light.

“At first, I thought it was just a coincidence, but after the mechanic confirmed that rodents had chewed the wires, I knew what had happened.

“With Greggs and several food places along there, I’m sure the rats were just trying to find somewhere warm, but I just want to warn other people and stop them going through what I did.”

Now that Joanne has “first-hand proof” of the rats, she has rallied several of her colleagues and some patients of her dental practice to petition Durham County Council but hasn’t managed to make the impact she first hoped.

Joanne added: “Why won’t the county council take action after even one complaint? They are vermin. We’ve made complaint after complaint and still no action!”

In response to Joanne’s complaint, Durham County Council have said that they are actively investigating the case and have confirmed that councillors covering Ferryhill are working on the rat infestation.

Ian Houlton, neighbourhood protection manager for the council, said: “We are aware of the complaints in this instance and have requested further details to help us understand the issue and target our enquiries.”

<https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/19733899.ferryhill-car-park-overrun-rats-chew-car-parts/>