FLEAS

Fleas pose a health risk because they feed on the blood of animals including humans and may cause infection in the person bitten. However this is very rare and apart from the stigma and unpleasant psychological factor of your home being infested with fleas, the main problem for humans is the itching and discomfort caused by the bites.

There are many different types of flea, all of which prefer to feed on the blood of a specific animal. However most will feed on any other animal if their preferred host is not available. The most common fleas are cat and dog fleas. They are generally about 2 mm long and dark brown in colour. Their hind legs are extremely well developed, and relative to their size this enables them to jump vast distances. Human fleas are comparatively rare. Fleas breed by laying eggs which usually hatch out after about 1 week, but in cold conditions, or if there is no host available at that time, they may take up to 6 months to hatch. This is the reason why people may find that an empty property suddenly becomes infested when they move in, with the dormant eggs hatching as soon as the building warms up and the new occupants begin to move around.

The legal position

There is no legal requirement for the Council to provide a flea treatment service.

The Service Provided

The Council carries out Flea Treatments in both Domestic and Commercial properties. However the Council is not legally obliged to provide this service and therefore has to make a charge to its customers. The treatment consists of spraying an insecticide onto surfaces where the fleas land. The insecticide works rapidly and kills most insects on contact. The insecticide will continue to work for up to 2 months and so you should not clean it off until after all the fleas are dead. It is recommended that you vacuum all carpets before the treatment and avoid vacuuming again for at least 2 weeks. It is also important that any pets, which may have fleas, are treated at the same time with a suitable insecticide. Your vet will be able to recommend and provide this for you. You will usually notice a reduction in the number of fleas within 2-3 days but it may take longer to kill off all the insects, as eggs will continue to hatch. The treatment is very effective but there are rare occasions when it does not completely work, should you still see fleas 4 weeks after the final treatment please let the Council know and re-treatment will be arranged at no extra cost.

Safety Information

The insecticides that the Council uses are the safest available and do not pose any risk to people or pets with the exception of fish which have similar body structures to insects and so can be affected if they come into contact with the insecticide. You will however be left an information sheet on the insecticide used by the operative.

Contacting the Service

Treatments can be requested by contacting the Pest Control Service. You can also request a service by completing the online form.