

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

WHAT ARE THE SERVICES YOU PROVIDE?

Environmental Health are responsible for the following functions :-

- Occupational Health and Safety - Workplace investigation, accident and complaint investigation
- Food safety - Inspection of food premises, complaint investigation, food related illness and outbreaks, food sampling
- Registration and licensing - Acupuncturists, ear-piercers, tattooists, riding establishments, pet shops, dog breeders and animal boarders, dangerous wild animal licenses Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences, registration of cooling towers
- Health Promotion
- Air Quality Maintenance
- Noise Pollution
- Smoke Dust and Odour Nuisances
- Approval of Specified Processes
- Pest Control
- Waste Management

HOW CAN I CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT?

Environmental & Health Services : Tel 01785 619402 ehadmin@staffordbc.gov.uk

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DO YOU DEAL WITH NOISE PROBLEMS FROM NEIGHBOURS AND WORK PREMISES?

Yes, this Service investigates complaints about noise pollution. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 gives local authorities powers to deal with some types of noise.

If the noise pollution you wish to make a complaint about occurs on a regular basis, you may wish to complete and return a diary sheet detailing when the noise is affecting you and the enjoyment of your property.

If you wish to make a complaint or obtain advice regarding noise pollution, please contact the Service on Tel 01785 619402 or use our online form <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/live/cme5027.htm>

WHERE CAN I GET ADVICE ABOUT ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND INSULATION?

The Council, in conjunction with the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, can offer free and impartial advice on ways to save energy and therefore money within your house. The contact number for the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre is Tel : 0800 512 012.

I HAVE GOT A WASP'S OR HORNET'S NEST, WHAT OPTIONS DO I HAVE?

There is no need to kill every wasp/hornet you see. In the summer they perform the useful task of killing hundreds of other insects that are themselves a problem in the home and garden. So if they are tolerable, leave them alone. On the other hand, if you are being pestered by dozens of wasps/hornets daily then there is probably a nest nearby that you may wish to destroy.

Wasp/hornets nests can often be located on a sunny day when wasps/hornets are most active. By following where a wasp/hornet is flying to you may find a hole leading to the nest in a roof, airbrick, shed or compost heap. The colony will die in autumn and the nest will never be used again. You may therefore decide to wait and let the wasps/hornets die off naturally. If you want to have the nest destroyed contact us on Tel 01785 619402. There is a charge for this service.

I HAVE GOT A BEE'S NEST, WHAT OPTIONS DO I HAVE?

This depends on the variety of bee:-

- **Honey Bees** Description:- wasp-like in size and shape, but more olive coloured, with hairy thorax. These are beneficial insects. If a swarm or nest is a threat to a household then our Pest Control Officer will visit to determine if it is likely that a Bee Keeper could capture the bees. If so a Bee Keeper will be called out. The Council does not charge for this service. However, if it is not possible to capture the bees and the householder wants the nest destroyed, then if the Pest Control Officer believes the bees pose a threat to the occupiers we will destroy the nest - but there is a charge for this service.
- **Masonry Bees** Description:- slightly smaller than honey bees but similar appearance. These insects are solitary. A single female will tunnel into soft mortar or sandstone to lay her eggs in 6 or so small chambers she builds off the tunnel. Each chamber is packed with food then sealed. Once complete the adults die off. 2 broods are produced each year - in April and July. These insects are incapable of stinging us, thus the Council will not destroy them. As these bees do dig into soft building materials, their presence is indicative of a structural problem - it is probable that soft mortar needs raking out and repointing - a job for a builder. Note that though solitary, if a wall offers a suitable site for tunnelling then it may attract many individual bees to tunnel - thus increasing the rate of damage.
- **Mining Bees** Description:- smaller than honey bees with hairy rump. This variety make their individual tunnels in the ground so property is not at risk. They are incapable of stinging humans. Thus no action will be taken by the Council to destroy these beneficial insects.
- **Bumble Bees:-** These beneficial insects are disappearing so in an effort to enhance their survival the Council would encourage householders to tolerate nests in their garden. Their nests have much fewer individuals than wasp nests or honey bees and though capable of stinging humans, bumble bees are the least aggressive of the stinging insects. If a nest does pose a threat to a household then, if possible, our Pest Control Officer may attempt to relocate the nest - if this is possible the Council makes no charge for this service. If the officer cannot relocate the nest and the householder wants the nest destroyed then there would be a charge for this service

I HAVE GOT MICE, WHAT OPTIONS DO I HAVE?

The Council offers a free service to all residents to eradicate house mice. We use poisoned bait, wherever possible in small boxes away from children and pets. If you prefer, you could employ a private pest control contractor or buy traps and poison

from a hardware shop to use yourself. The Council does not provide a service to eradicate mice in the garden. Tel 01785 619402 for further information

I HAVE GOT RATS, WHAT OPTIONS DO I HAVE?

If you see any signs of rats in your house or garden, please contact the Council as soon as possible on Tel 01785 619402. We offer a free survey and eradication service to all residents. We use poisoned bait, wherever possible away from children and pets.

Please clear any food spills thoroughly. Take care that all waste foods are disposed of into your refuse bin and not left lying around in bags or sacks. If you are composting, do not use meat or cooked products.

Bird food is a tasty treat to vermin, so use a rat-proof bird table.

Seal up any gaps around pipes going through walls, repair broken airbricks or drains quickly and make sure doors fit properly.

I HAVE SEEN RATS, WHAT SHOULD I HAVE?

Please contact the Council as soon as possible. We will investigate and identify appropriate sites for treatment. Tel 01785 619402 for further information

I WANT TO SET UP A BUSINESS, WHAT SERVICES DO I NEED TO CONTACT?

There are a number of services available ranging from refuse collection to business rates and business advice, details of which can be found within the Council's website. <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk>

DO I NEED A LICENCE FOR MY BUSINESS AND IF SO, HOW DO I OBTAIN ONE?

Advice on the types of business that require a licence are available on our website. <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk>

IF I THINK I HAVE FOOD POISONING WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you think you may be suffering from food poisoning, visit your GP who will take a faecal sample for analysis. Your GP will then contact this Service. If your sample contains food poisoning as a result of eating at a premises in the Borough contact us on Tel : 01785619402

Information leaflets are available for the following:-

- Campylobacter
- Salmonella
- Giardia

- Dysentery
- Cryptosporidium

Reports of food poisoning are investigated by Officers employed by the Service. Outbreaks are investigated by an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) as a lead officer with assistance from other EHO's and Technical Officers.

I HAVE FOUND A FOREIGN OBJECT IN A PRODUCT, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Again, look on our website for more information.

MY NEIGHBOUR KEEPS BURNING RUBBISH, WHAT CAN I DO?

Report what you have seen and we will investigate.

WHAT IF I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MY DRAINS?

If you are troubled by a drainage problem you may contact the Council who will advise you. For enquiries on this matter please call Tel : 01785 619402 or email environmentalhealth@staffordbc.gov.uk

Broadly speaking the following persons or bodies are responsible for drains and sewers:

Public or Adopted Sewers (usually to be found in the road) are the responsibility of Severn Trent Water Limited on Tel : 0115 962 7269

The private drain leading from a dwelling and serving only that dwelling is the responsibility of the occupier/s of that dwelling, to the point where it meets the sewer.

Sewers built before 1937 and serving more than one dwelling are deemed to be public sewers and are the responsibility of Severn Trent Water Limited who may be contacted on Tel : 0115 962 7269

Sewers built after 1937 and serving more than one property are deemed to be private sewers and are the shared responsibility of all those who take benefit from them. This shared responsibility ends where the private sewer meets the public sewer.

Where persons fail in their responsibility this Council may serve a Notice to ensure they take necessary action.

Please note that the Council no longer offers a drain-clearing service.