

Jim McMahon OBE MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dr Carolyn Wilkins
Chief Executive
Oldham Council
Civic Centre
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1UG

Our Ref: SB/OMBC01002/01160623

31 October 2016

Dear Carolyn

Re: Super Rats

Please find enclosed a copy of what I think is a disappointing and dismissive reply from a DEFRA Minister regarding the current problems with rodents due to the overuse of conventional poisons and the huge cuts in funding that have led to the lack of control.

I don't really the reply is helpful and misses the point about the need to have a plan in place to deal with future problems. Please don't hesitate to get back to me if you would like to respond to the reply.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim".

Jim McMahon OBE MP
Member of Parliament
Oldham West & Royton

Encl.

Serving the Communities of Chadderton, Royton and Oldham

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for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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Jim McMahon OBE MP
House of Commons
London
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Your ref: SB/OMBC01002/01160623
Our ref: MC409392/AD

18 October 2016

Dear Jim,

Thank you for your letter of 25 July to Sajid Javid MP on behalf of Oldham Council about rodents. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area and apologise for the delay in replying.

We agree that rats can be a problem; that is why there are powers available to local authorities and other authorised persons to kill or take rats. Professional pest controllers with a specialist skill in this area are likely to be the most suited people for this task.

Responsibility for dealing with problems caused by wild rats in England normally rests with the occupier of the land concerned. To address public health risk, the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 obliges local authorities to ensure that their districts are kept, as far as is practicable, free of rats and mice. To enable them to do so, the Act empowers local authorities to serve a notice on landowners or occupiers requiring them to take such steps as may be specified in the notice to destroy rodents on their land.

Rats may become resistant to certain chemical control measures if they are overused and ineffectively deployed such that resistance is allowed to build up in targeted populations. The control of rat populations should never rely solely upon the use of chemical control measures. In addition to the use of chemical control measures, a control programme may also use trapping; environmental and habitat management (restriction of access to food, water and harbourage); and proofing, exclusion and restriction of movement.

Yours sincerely,

Thérèse Coffey
WESTMINSTER OFFICE

5 OCT 2016

RECEIVED

DR THERESE COFFEY MP

