

## Pest problems & solutions

Warm summer nights on the patio, enjoying a glass of chilled wine with food on the BBQ, lying lazily under the sun on the grass after a pleasant picnic. It all sounds idyllic, but the reality can fall short of this. It's as if all those bugs and insects know it's picnic time for them too when they see us coming. Ants march up the picnic table in search of all those sweet things intended for the kids. When they find them they literally tell their ant-mates and bring them along for the party. Flies, usually very adept at avoiding our attempts to swat them, commit suicide by drowning themselves in the wine, or turn their attention to what is about to go on the BBQ and walk all over it. Wasps check out what's on offer, noisily and persistently. As afternoon turns to evening, the night shift comes on duty: dusk brings out midges, gnats, mosquitoes and other bugs – often in hordes! Even if they don't bite, they can still get into your food and spoil the fun.

### Here are a few top tips to avoid summer pests:

**Prevent wasp stings:** Don't try to swat wasps away. You'll just make them cross and more likely to sting you. Instead, calmly and slowly move out of their way. Like other stinging insects, wasps love bright colours, so wear white or neutral clothes to deter them. Look out for wasps' nests in your home or garden, and have them removed immediately by your local council or a pest control expert when you find them.

**Prevent bee stings:** Stay still and calm when a bee buzzes around you. Bees love sweet drinks, and the last thing you want to do is swallow one, so be sure to look before you sip your drink at picnics and barbecues.

### Prevent tick bites:

Wear long sleeves and trousers when you're walking in forested, overgrown areas, and use a tick repellent.

**Prevent mosquito bites:** Smells and bright colours attract insects. If you're going to spend time outside avoid using scented hand or body creams and strong perfumes, as well as sparkly, colourful jewellery. Insect repellents are also effective. Don't forget to cover up and use repellent at night if you're camping.

**Prevent midge bites:** Midges tend to attack in swarms, especially in hot weather, so use an insect repellent and cover up at dawn and dusk. Protective gear, such as mesh covers for your face, can be very effective too.

**Prevent ladybird bites:** Wear gloves when gardening, but try not to intentionally kill ladybirds. All ladybirds are good for the garden.

**Prevent ant bites:** Use over-the-counter ant repellent.

**Prevent spider bites:** Don't disturb spiders if you can help it – they tend to bite you only when they feel threatened.

Please refer to section 3.1 of your Tenancy Handbook for more information; Hexagon are responsible for assisting you with the following pests:

Mice (treatments can be provided once every 6 months), rats, cockroaches and Pharaoh ants



DIY Top Tip

