

## **PUBLIC PROTECTION – ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE**

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### **Pest advice - Bed bugs**

#### **What do they look like?**

Adult bed bugs are oval shaped, flattened and about 6mm long. When unfed they are pale brown in colour but become reddish brown to mahogany when full of blood. Young bugs (nymphs) are nearly colourless, becoming browner as they mature. The legs are well developed and they can crawl up vertical surfaces of wood, paper and plaster. They are unable to crawl up smooth polished surfaces.



#### **Where do they live?**

Bed bugs are usually found in floor cracks, under carpets, behind loose wallpaper, wall pictures, loose skirting boards and door frames, and in the seams of bed mattresses etc.

#### **What do they eat?**

They feed on blood, generally only in darkness. Although human blood is preferred, they can survive on other blood from rabbits, rodents etc. Bed bugs can survive extremes of starvation and have been known to survive for up to 12 months without feeding.

#### **Pest status**

Bed bugs aren't thought to transmit any serious illness to humans. However, the bite can cause considerable irritation and may result in loss of sleep and lowering of general health.

#### **Control measures:**

##### **Hygiene**

The routine washing of bedding and clothing, followed by drying in a tumble dryer at normal temperature will kill any bedbugs and eggs present. The use of second hand furniture and bedding should be avoided.

##### **Chemical**

The standard treatment for infested premises is the application of a residual insecticide. The insecticide is applied to cracks and crevices where bed bugs could be hiding.

**How can I get rid of bed bugs?**

Powys County Council no longer provides a treatment service for a bed bug infestation.

Commercial pest control companies are listed on the internet, in the Yellow Pages and Thompson's Local Directory.

However, even after a thorough treatment, monitoring over a few weeks may be required to determine if the infestation has been eradicated.