

Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board

Policy No: 29

Policy for the Control of Rabbits, Rats and other Rodents in Board Maintained Watercourses

Review	Audit & Risk Committee on 17 th October 2018
Board Approved	Board on 7 th November 2018
Due for Review	Within 5 years

Introduction

The Board has in the past responded to any request to control rabbits and rats in Board's maintained watercourses.

The response has been to send workmen from the roding gang to investigate the situation, and they were expected to place phostoxin tablets into the holes dug by the rodents, a process known as "gassing".

Some Workmen have been trained to handle and place the phostoxin pellets in a safe manner. However, there is a question whether workmen have the environmental knowledge to correctly differentiate between say rat and water vole habitat.

There is also a question about whether the Board has adequate resources to be able to respond to every request to control rabbits and rats.

Proposed Policy

If a request is received from a ratepayer or a member of the public to control vermin, this should be passed to the Works Manager. The person taking the enquiry should tell the applicant that the Board does not automatically carry out control of vermin, but the Works Manager will visit site to assess the situation before taking any action.

Methods of Control

The Works Manager when he visits the site should make the following assessments:

- (a) Is damage being caused to the bank of the watercourse?
- (b) Is it clearly vermin that are causing damage?
- (c) Is the problem only in the watercourse, or is it associated with an adjoining site.
- (d) Can control be safely carried out?

If the Works Manager considers the damage to be such that if uncontrolled extra maintenance will be required to the bank, then control of vermin can be considered.

Control can also be considered if the landowner(s) concerned are prepared to also carry out control on adjoining land/properties.

If the Works Manager is unsure of how to proceed he should seek a second opinion from the Operations Manager.

The Board reserves the right to implement Byelaw 12 (Control of Vermin) and / or Byelaw 13 (Damage by animals to bank).