

Pembertons

Property Management



DEALING WITH
URBAN FOXES ON
YOUR DEVELOPMENT

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ARE YOU TROUBLED BY FOXES?

As Property Managers we recognise that foxes that are found in urban areas can produce mixed reactions amongst residents. Some people will loathe them but others will love having foxes living locally.

Most cities in southern England have urban foxes, as do a few cities further north. For most towns and sites the fox population reached its carrying capacity (ie: the maximum number of animals the habitat will sustain) many years ago and contrary to popular belief, the population is stable, with no significant increases or decreases.

There are only a few cities where fox numbers are probably still increasing and these are ones that have only recently been colonised.

The aim of this leaflet is to explain the types of problems that can be caused by urban foxes and give some practical advice on how to alleviate any problems.

ARE URBAN FOXES DIFFERENT FROM RURAL FOXES?

No. Not only are they the same species, they are very often the same animals. Urban Foxes are no smaller nor pose any greater risks to health than rural ones.

WHY CAN'T THE FOXES BE REMOVED OR PUT BACK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE?

There is a misconception that foxes belong in the countryside and not in urban areas. They are adaptable creatures and can be found in almost any habitat.

To remove foxes is considered inhumane, such action could well be an offence under the Abandonment of Animals Act 1960.

DO URBAN FOXES HAVE RABIES?

No. Rabies was eliminated from the country in the early part of the 19th century. Britain is currently one of only a few countries without rabies.

SHOULD I FEED THE FOXES?

We would highly encourage you not to feed the foxes if they are known to be present around your development.

CAN I STOP THE FOXES MAKING THOSE AWFUL SCREAMING NOISES?

Unfortunately not. Foxes live in family groups that defend a joint territory. When travelling around their territory, the calls they make are to maintain contact with other members of the family group and to warn off intruders.

Their calls are most obvious during the mating season. It is then their barks and screams that are most likely to be heard; the calls are usually short-lived and they tend to quieten down fairly quickly.

WHAT CAN RESIDENTS DO TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF FOXES ON OUR DEVELOPMENT?

The most likely reason for a fox to enter a development is in search of food. We recommend that residents follow the following guidelines:

- Keep all domestic refuse in a plastic bag within a wheelie bin or closed container.
- Ensure that you put all rubbish in the bin store. Don't forget to safely close the bin store door behind you.

- Do not leave any food out.
- Do not leave any article of leather, such as shoes and gloves, as these are attractive to foxes.

WHAT CAN PEMBERTONS DO TO CONTROL URBAN FOXES?

The specialist pest control advice that we have been given is that, unfortunately, controlling urban foxes is quite difficult, expensive and rarely successful. In the past, a number of local authorities tried this, particularly in London but most have now given up on any form of fox control.

The problem is that foxes have been in urban areas for so long that they have reached a state of equilibrium and regulate the size of their own population. The moment you increase the mortality rate, the foxes compensate by increasing the number of vixens that breed.

Not only is urban fox control unlikely to achieve anything, but it would also result in the increase of service charge costs for Property Owners. Whilst we can put the appropriate measures in place, catching a fox may take weeks if not months. Foxes live in family groups, with an average size of around three adults and four or five cubs.

Therefore direct action against urban foxes is not recommended due to the time and resultant cost issues. However, if you have concerns about urban foxes on your development, please contact our Property Management team on **020 7483 8429** who will be happy to review the problem on a case by case basis.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you require further help or advice, please contact the Fox Project on their **24hr Fox Deterrence Helpline 01892 514863**. Although the Fox Project is a charitable wildlife group, they have developed a wealth of knowledge and expertise on fox deterrence. Their advice will vary according to the time of year and can be tailored to your own particular situation.

THE FOX PROJECT'S WEBSITE:

www.zip-pix.com/foxp has further useful information leaflets on deterring foxes.

It may be possible to resolve the problem without controlling the foxes. Advice on how to achieve this can be obtained from contacting: **National Fox Welfare Society**, 135 Higham Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 6DS **Tel:** 01933 411996 **Fax:** 01933 397324 **Web site:** www.nfws.org.uk

CONTACT PEMBERTONS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT:

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