

## **Pest Control Review 6 Month Update Report**

At the Committee meeting in March 2010 there was a request from Members to provide an update after 6 months on the progress made following the review of the Pest Control Service last year.

### **Changes in Pest Control Fee Structure**

Commencing in April 2010 there was an increase in the fees charged for pest control services (rats in or on domestic premises remain free of charge) and a change to the circumstances under which concessionary discounts became available from previously all pensioners being eligible, to just those residents in receipt of Council Tax or Housing Benefit. The rate of the concessionary discount is 25% and the effect on the numbers of discounted concessions has been to reduce them by over 50%.

### **Increasing Commercial Customers**

Following an article in *Uttlesford Life* and the targeted distribution of publicity material to local businesses there has been a small increase in the number of new contracts; however in these difficult trading conditions there have also been a number of previous customers who have cancelled their contracts with the Council. Very recently the Council's two Pest Controllers have completed a 'Wildlife Aware' course and further publicity is planned targeted at rural businesses.

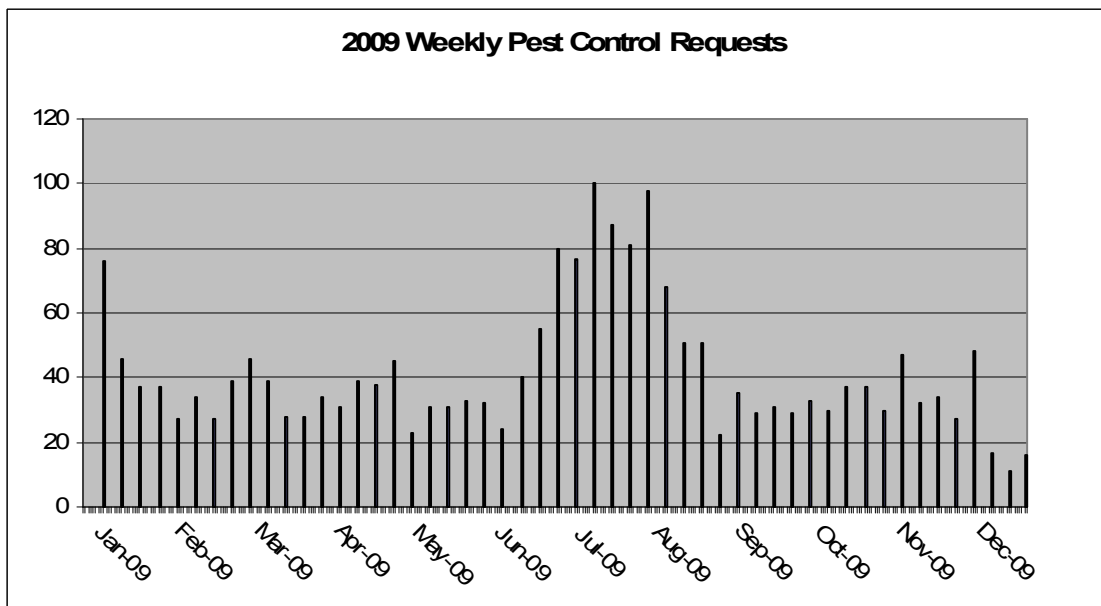
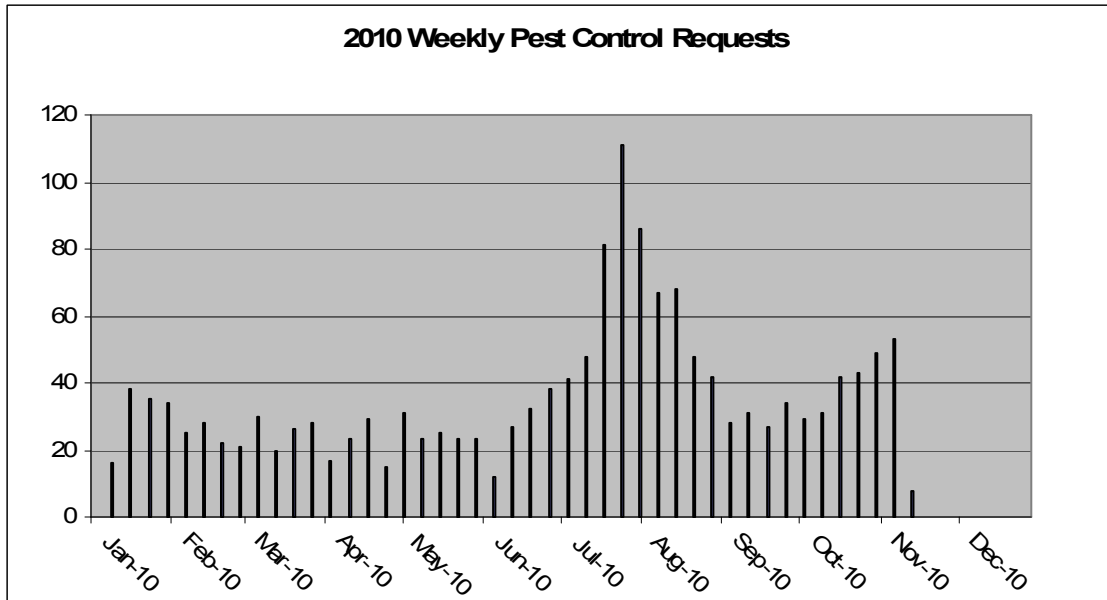
### **Customer Satisfaction**

The first report from the Citizens Panel rated the Pest Control Service highly and as one where the Council should maintain the current level of financial support (76.90%) or increase expenditure (9%), and similar high levels of satisfaction have been recorded from the Environmental Health Division's own satisfaction survey.

### **Current Trends**

The main influences on the numbers of requests for pest control services, especially wasps, are seasonally related, although the cost of the service does appear to be deterring some potential customers. The table overleaf shows the differences in requests for our services during the same 6 month period in 2009 and 2010, and the graphs show the weekly demand over the calendar year 2009 and 2010 to date.

As at Month 6	Wasps	Rats	Mice	PH Pests	Other	Total
2010	599	358	26	20	72	1030
2009	686	442	20	21	97	1266



### Financial Situation as at 1 October 2010

The table below shows the income from pest control activities during the first 6 months of 2010 and for comparison the same period in 2009. Income from rodent pest control is seasonal and usually peaks during the autumn and winter months.

	<b>Wasps etc</b>	<b>Rodents</b>	<b>Other Insects</b>	<b>Total</b>
2010 Month 6	24574.20	1600.67	1489.38	27664.25
2009 Month 6	23110.37	2307.71	1277.42	26695.50
2009/2010 Outcome	24309.86	5675.69	2751.87	32737.42

Expenditure on materials, primarily pesticides, and on equipment is shown in the following table.

	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Equipment</b>
2010 Month 6	1571.52	375.61
2009 Month 6	1178.51	339.26

## **Conclusion**

In spite of a downwards trend in requests for wasps' nest treatments so far this year income levels have been retained and there is an expectation of an increase in income from rodent control services as the year progresses. There is still a need to concentrate on obtaining further commercial contracts and increase income from rodent treatments.