

Spring Trapping of Rodents – Method Statement

1. Scope of Work

This method statement describes the inspection, placement, operation, and monitoring of **spring traps and break-back traps** for the humane control of rodents (rats, mice, and squirrels) in domestic, agricultural, and commercial premises.

All trapping will be undertaken in accordance with current UK legislation, manufacturer guidance, and the BPCA Code of Best Practice for Spring Trapping.

2. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments)
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006
- Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
- Protection of Animals Act 1911
- Pest Act 1954 / Agricultural (Scotland) Act 1948 / Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011
- Spring Trap Approval Orders (STAOs) for each UK nation
- PMA Code of Best Practice for Humane Use of Break Back Traps
- BPCA CoBP – Spring Trapping (2020)

3. Objectives

- Achieve humane and effective rodent control using approved traps.
- Prevent suffering or injury to non-target species.
- Comply with all statutory and BPCA requirements.
- Protect public, pets, and wildlife from exposure to trapping devices.

4. Preparation and Survey

1. Conduct a **site survey** to:
 - Identify signs of target species and likely travel routes.
 - Assess environmental risks (children, pets, livestock, public access).
 - Confirm appropriate traps are legally approved under current STAOs.
2. Record survey findings, trap types, and locations on an **RPPC Survey & Treatment Record**.
3. Obtain customer consent for trapping programme and agree check frequency.

5. Equipment and Materials

- **Approved traps:** e.g., *Kania 2000, DOC 150/200, Tully, Fenn Mark IV/V, Goodnature A24*, or equivalent HSE-approved break-back traps.
- **Tunnel housings** or protective covers to exclude non-targets.
- Baits/lures appropriate to target species (e.g., nut-based or cereal attractants).
- PPE: gloves, overalls, eye protection, and waterproof boots.
- Tools: securing stakes, markers, warning signage, and disinfection materials.

6. Method of Work

6.1 Trap Placement

- Set traps only after reviewing manufacturer instructions and BPCA guidance.
- Always locate traps **within tunnels, boxes, or covered runs** to prevent access by non-target species.
- Anchor traps securely to prevent removal or disturbance.
- Where accessible to others (lofts, outbuildings, gardens), apply **warning signage**.
- Record GPS/grid reference or sketch plan of all trap placements.

6.2 Setting Traps

- Handle traps safely, keeping hands clear of striking mechanisms.
- Ensure traps are baited with a non-toxic lure; avoid meat or live bait.
- Check triggers for smooth operation and correct sensitivity.
- Place traps along walls, runs, or near burrow entrances—position jaws perpendicular to the travel line.

6.3 Inspection and Maintenance

- Inspect traps **at least once every 24 hours**, ideally early morning.
- For automated traps (e.g., Goodnature A24), check in accordance with manufacturer interval guidance.
- Remove any captured animals promptly and humanely.
- Replace fouled or sprung traps immediately.
- Document all findings on the RPPC Treatment Records (catch/no catch, bait condition, reset status).

6.4 Carcass Handling and Disposal

- Wear gloves and appropriate PPE when handling carcasses.
- Double-bag carcasses and dispose of via approved waste route (licensed waste carrier or deep burial on-site where permitted).
- Disinfect equipment and gloves after handling.

7. Humane Considerations

- Only **approved traps** listed in the relevant national STAO may be used.
- Traps must be used strictly for the species and setting specified in that approval.
- Technicians must ensure quick kill and avoid body-part or foul catches.
- If an injured live animal is found, it must be dispatched immediately and humanely by a competent person.

8. Non-Target Species Protection

- Identify and exclude risks to birds, hedgehogs, and small mammals.
- Fit **restricted entrances** (e.g., 45 mm x 45 mm for rats) to tunnels.
- Do not set traps in open or accessible public areas.
- Review placement if non-target activity is detected.

9. Safety and PPE

- PPE: disposable or nitrile gloves, protective clothing, safety footwear, and RPE where contamination possible.
- Maintain hygiene: wash hands and tools after work.
- Keep bait/lure substances and traps out of public reach during deployment and transport.

10. Customer Communication

- Explain the trapping process, safety measures, and expected inspection schedule.
- Provide emergency contact number for accidental interference or pet capture.
- Record all advice and communications on the treatment report.

11. Waste Management

- Dispose of carcasses and contaminated materials following **BPCA Pesticide and Waste CoBP**.
- Do not discard in domestic refuse or watercourses.
- Maintain waste-transfer records as required by law.

12. Training and Competence

Technicians undertaking spring-trapping must:

- Hold **RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management** (or equivalent).

- Have received specific **trap-handling and humane dispatch training**.
- Be familiar with the **Spring Trap Approval Orders** relevant to each region.
- Maintain up-to-date CPD records through BPCA Registered or equivalent scheme.

13. Emergency Actions

- Accidental trap strike: administer first aid and seek medical help.
- Accidental pet capture: contact local vet or wildlife rescue immediately.
- Report any non-target captures or incidents to RPPC management and, if required, to Natural England or relevant authority.

14. Records and Documentation

- Site Survey Sheet
- Risk Assessment & Method Statement
- Trap Location Log
- Daily Inspection Log
- Waste-Disposal Record
- Customer Sign-Off

15. Review

This method statement will be reviewed **annually** or upon revision of the BPCA Code of Best Practice, Spring Trap Approval Orders, or applicable legislation.

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