

The Urban Fox

Are foxes a threat to my family?

A small number of fox attacks have been reported in the press. Although, this behaviour is very rare, it may have been caused by foxes losing their fear of humans. This behaviour could be caused by people feeding them as cubs and semi-domesticating them.

What laws apply to foxes?

Unfortunately, there is not any legislation that the Council can use to enforce householders or landowners to remove foxes living on their property.

How effective are fox control measures?

It has been reported that to make an impact in the overall number of the foxes 70% of them need to be destroyed every year for many years. One pair of foxes can have 4-5 cubs per year which under ideal conditions would result in over 400 in 5 years. This would make any attempts to control the overall fox population extremely difficult prolonged and costly.

How many foxes live in towns?

Adult foxes do not live in family groups as they are territorial, this behaviour forces the cubs to find unpopulated areas and helps control their numbers far better than we can. In an urban situation one fox will defend a territory of over 100 gardens, or more depending on the availability of food.

What happens if foxes are removed from an area?

Once foxes are removed from an area, the void that is created would be repopulated by fox cubs from nearby locations the following autumn. It is much better to control foxes by denying them the conditions that they need to survive such as a food source and a place to live.

What is the best way of controlling foxes?

It is more effective to look at prevention techniques rather than to engage in a prolonged campaign to destroy foxes. For example poultry can be protected by housing them in fox proof accommodation and household waste can be stored in lidded metal bins. If a fox den is discovered there are various methods that can be applied to encourage the foxes to move on which are recommended on the website below.

Where can I find out more?

For information about foxes or guidance on deterrence and preventative techniques visit the following website <http://www.foxproject.org.uk> or telephone the pre-recorded advice line on 07778 909092.