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Woodworm

Woodworm can become a very serious problem in all wooden objects if not treated correctly, and should not be taken lightly as it can take some time to eradicate. Woodworm can cause major structural damage within properties if not treated. Before deciding on the treatment the species should be identified to prevent costly mistakes and this is why you should always use a member of the Property Care Association because they will have the knowledge and expertise required.



What is Woodworm?

Woodworm is the common name for Common Furniture Beetle, Wood Boring Weevil, Death Watch Beetle or any other type of wood boring insect.

Types of wood boring insect

1. Death Watch Beetle
2. Common Furniture Beetle
3. Wood Boring Weevil
4. House Longhorn
5. Powder Post Beetle

There are a number of wood boring insects, all of which, like us, have their favourite diets.

1. **Death Watch beetle** (*Xestobium rufovillosum*) for example, likes old woods, like Oak, that have already been attacked by a wood rotting fungus. **Death Watch Beetle** normally only attacks hardwoods. The name, 'Death Watch Beetle', is derived from the fact that this insect is particularly partial to old oak beams of the type that are often seen in churches.
2. **Common Furniture Beetle** (*Anobium punctatum*) is the most common species found within properties today. Its diet is generally the waney edges of soft wood timbers, and can cause major structural problems if left untreated. It is not uncommon to have to replace a complete floor due to an untreated infestation. The grub can live within the timber for 3 to 5 years before it matures and flies off to lay its eggs.

3. **Wood Boring Weevil** (*Euophryum confinis* / *Pentarthrum huttoni*) will attack only after timber has already decayed and has been pre-digested by a wood rotting fungi. Removing the source of the moisture will eradicate the weevil although timber replacement will normally be required as it will have suffered from decay due to the moisture.
4. **The House Longhorn Beetle** (*Hylotrupes bajulus*) is a species of wood boring insect that originated on the continent, but is now becoming increasingly common in southern parts of England in particular N.W. Surrey, isolated outbreaks have been reported in other parts of the country normally due to infestation of packing cases. The beetle is relatively large and has a life cycle that can span eight years. It can grow to almost an inch in length, which gives it the potential to cause considerable structural damage to a building.
5. **The Powderpost Beetle**, (*Lyctus brunneus*), likes newer hardwoods, it almost always comes from timber yards or storage areas. Many modern buildings will not suffer from attack by this beetle as softwood timbers are immune to the *Lyctus* Powderpost Beetle. The original infestation will invariably have occurred prior to the timbers being introduced into the building, (i.e. timber yard or storeroom) though will continue for some time. Plywood and blockboard manufactured from susceptible timbers is quite commonly attacked and occasionally infestations will be found in solid hardwood block and strip floorings.

How is Woodworm Treated?

Treatment of wood boring insects varies depending on the species. The most popular being a permethrin based insecticide. This is generally by spray application that penetrates between 3 and 5mm of the timber. The life cycle of the woodworm continues until adult hood where the beetle comes to the surface of the timber and eats the top layer that has been treated, this poisons the beetle and prevents it from flying and laying eggs.