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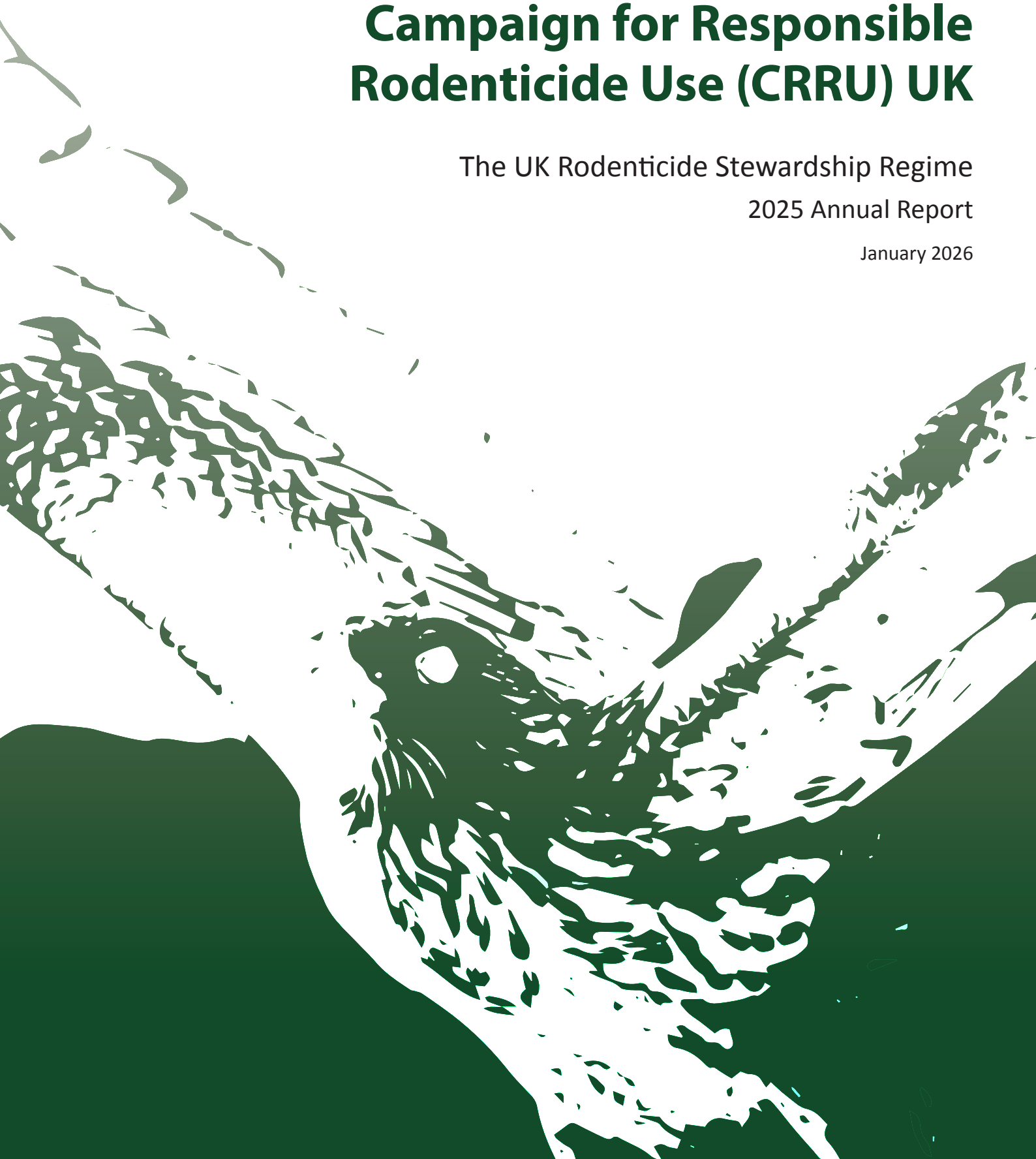
Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use
CRRU Stewardship

Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) UK

The UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime

2025 Annual Report

January 2026



The UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime
Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) UK
Annual Report 2025

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BASF plc

Envu

Bell Laboratories Inc

Killgerm Group Ltd

LiphaTech S.A.S.

LODI UK Ltd

Pelsis Ltd

PelGar International Ltd

Rentokil Initial plc

Syngenta Crop Protection AG

Unichem d.o.o.

Zapi SpA

N.B. Where the acronym CRRU is used in this document it refers to the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use UK.

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1. Chairman's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Chairman's Report for the 2025 Annual Report of the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use UK (CRRU UK). This is the ninth year in which the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime has been in operation and co-ordinated by CRRU UK.

Over the past year, our organisation has been focussed on the implementation and communication of two key stewardship changes, with the sole purpose of being able to positively impact the environmental residues of second generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) found in non-target wildlife, a key government target for the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime.[1]

CRRU UK continues to work collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders to achieve this aim, in order that SGARs can continue to be made available to the users of professional rodenticides throughout the United Kingdom.

Progress and Achievements in 2025

The first change of note involved the removal of the option to use SGARs in "open areas" and "waste dumps"[2]. Whilst this change had been initiated in 2024 it was fully implemented from January 2025. The CRRU Code of Best Practice has been updated to reflect this change.[3]

The second change will take place from 1st January 2026 and will require for the first time that all professional SGAR users have:

Proof of certification to a CRRU UK approved training course within the past 5 years

OR

Proof of certification to a CRRU UK approved training course more than 5 years ago **and** current membership of a CRRU UK approved Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme.

This means that from January 2026 the membership of a Farm Assurance Scheme can no longer be used as proof of competence for a professional rodenticide user wishing to purchase professional products.

As a consequence of the changes to be implemented, adjustments to the Point of Sale Audit process have been agreed and have been widely communicated to auditors and users alike.

We recognise that this is a big change, for the Farming sector in particular, and I am pleased to be able to say that through to the end of July 2025 the number of users successfully completing training increased year on year by over 7%. Especially encouraging was the most recent data for July to September 2025 which shows that training uptake is circa 73% up on the equivalent period in 2024 across all industry sectors.

In addition to the latest data on training course uptake, the CRRU UK approved Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Schemes report that CPD membership has risen significantly* during the year (Aug 24 – Jul 25) and although this growth cannot be fully attributed to professionals joining CPD schemes due to the 2026 training requirements, it is another positive indication that training metrics are trending in the right direction.

Monitoring is a fundamental element of rodenticide stewardship, and several aspects of monitoring were under severe pressure in 2024, with the onset of Avian Influenza impacting our ability to monitor residues in Barn Owls due to the safety concerns around handling the birds.

Although this has left a residue monitoring gap for the 2023 and 2024 periods, I am pleased to say that the team at the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, along with other government departments, have managed to reinstate bird collections, which will allow us to generate a data set for bird residues for the 2025 period.

The CRRU UK monitoring team have also successfully set up an alternative DNA sequencing partner, following the withdrawal of APHA in 2024, due to an increase in statutory testing and capacity availability. CRRU UK have partnered with the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency (SASA) to reinstate the capability for CRRU UK resistance monitoring and this service has been up and running since Q2 2025.

Other activities of note for 2025 include the participation of CRRU UK in two government consultations on chemical legislation reform and alternatives for anticoagulant rodenticides.

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1 https://www.thinkwildlife.org/download/crru-annual-report-2023/

2 https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/16908203/esd_pt14_en.pdf/d27d3b7e-9aa6-8146-9228-f464901b526e

3 https://www.thinkwildlife.org/code-of-best-practice/

In addition, the CRRU UK Best Practice Work Group (BPWG) have continued their good work and have made various updates to the CRRU UK Code of Best Practice and other supporting guidance documents. The BPWG ensures that current information on the responsible use of rodenticides is always available via the documents available through the CRRU UK website.

Engagement and Communication
Effective communication remains fundamental to our success. Throughout 2025, CRRU UK has expanded its engagement with the three main industry sectors, Pest Control, Gamekeeping and Farming, with an emphasis on Farming as we estimate that it is this sector where most new user training will be required, as a result of the changes in training requirements from 1st Jan 2026.

Our website and social media channels have been updated with new resources and case studies to help ensure that all professional users understand what we do and why we are involved in the coordination of the Stewardship Regime.

As an organisation, CRRU UK members have also played an active role in the work groups established by the government oversight group. These groups were set up to look at whether additional measures could be taken to compliment and further strengthen rodenticide stewardship in the UK. These teams are due to report back soon and we look forward to reviewing their recommendations on how to take rodenticide stewardship to the next level.

Looking Ahead
As we look to 2026 CRRU UK will continue to focus on communication to all professional sectors as the training requirements for users comes into effect.

We also plan to hold another Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey, which will allow us to gauge the effectiveness of our work and will help us understand how the professional user base has advanced since the last survey was held in 2023.

We will continue to collaborate with user groups and stakeholders to improve stewardship, and we look forward to the outcome of the various HSE consultations, which may result in us to making further adjustments to stewardship practices.

In closing, I would like to thank all CRRU UK member companies, partners and collaborators who provide the volunteers to resource our workgroups and all those who have supported CRRU UK activities throughout the year. A special mention also goes to the individuals who volunteer to lead the CRRU UK Work Groups. Their collective passion and professionalism continue to be critical to our shared success.

Signed,

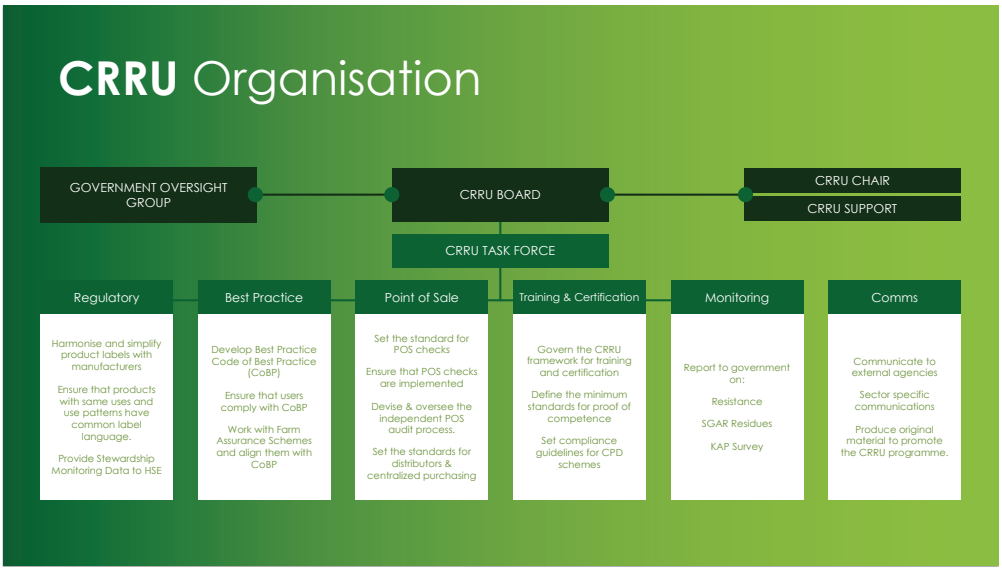
Nigel Cheeseright
Chairman, CRRU UK

2. Reports from CRRU UK Work Groups on progress during 2025

2.1. General

Rodenticide stewardship is operated through six Work Groups (WGs), each headed by a Work Group Leader. Five are populated by expert representatives from CRRU UK and stakeholder organisations. The sixth WG, communications, also employs a specialist contractor. The functioning of all six WGs is directed by the CRRU Board and Task Force, the latter comprising 45 representatives from 31 different stakeholder organisations.

Figure 1: CRRU UK Organisation Structure 2025



More information about the six CRRU UK WGs can be found on the CRRU UK website (https://www.thinkwildlife.org)

2.2 Best Practice Work Group (Leader, Nic Blaszkowicz, PelGar International Ltd)

2.2.1 Purpose

The Best Practice Work Group (BPWG) provides guidance and promotes responsible use of rodenticides to ensure a “competent workforce” across all professional user groups. The objective is to ensure that all users of authorised rodenticides, within the UK Rodenticide Stewardship Regime, are aware of and apply the requirements of the CRRU Code of Best Practice (COBP) and other relevant guidance set out on product labelling.

From 1 January 2026, membership of farm assurance schemes will no longer be accepted as proof of competence for the purchase of professional rodenticides. Instead, only individuals who have successfully completed an approved training course and hold a recognised certificate of competence will be able to access these products. While the BPWG will remain the primary point of contact for farm assurance schemes in relation to the stewardship regime, its role will evolve to ensure that competence is demonstrated solely through training and certification, and that assurance schemes continue to align their standards with the CRRU Code of Best Practice where possible.

2.2.2 Code of Best Practice and Other Guidelines

The principal instrument by which CRRU promotes best practice is the CRRU Code of Best Practice (COBP). This is based on latest knowledge of safe and effective use of rodent pest management techniques, concepts of risk mitigation developing as a result of the implementation of the Biocidal Products Regulation and with consideration to the two HSE legacy guidance documents, one for professional pest controllers and one for farmers, which preceded it. The first version was finalised and published in March 2016 after a process of consultation with all user stakeholder groups and HSE, and ahead of the introduction of the stewardship regime. However, regulatory processes, changes to use practices, development of risk mitigation measures and introduction of new active substances resulted in a need for revision. Consequently, the latest version of the code was issued by the WG in July 2024. A number of other guidance documents and on-line training aids have been produced, including advice on permanent and burrow baiting, guidance

about rodent pest management for gamekeepers and on how to conduct environmental risk assessments. The importance of the CRRU code of best practice, other guidelines and advice documents provided by the WG is demonstrated in the label phrases that appear on all authorised professional rodenticide products, as follows:

To be used only by professional users holding certification demonstrating compliance with UK rodenticide stewardship regime requirements. When this product is supplied to a user for the control of rodents, it shall only be supplied to a professional user holding certification demonstrating compliance with UK rodenticide stewardship regime requirements. Read the label before use. Using this product in a manner that is inconsistent with the label may be an offence. Refer to the CRRU UK Code of Best Practice (or equivalent) for guidance.

Where possible, prior to the treatment inform any bystanders (e.g. users of the treated area and their surroundings) about the rodent control campaign in accordance with the CRRU UK Code of Best Practice.

To reduce risk of secondary poisoning, search for and remove dead rodents during treatment at frequent intervals, in line with the recommendations provided by the CRRU UK Code of Best Practice.

2.2.3 Changes to product authorisations and use scenarios

All product authorisations for the use of bromadiolone and difenacoum products in 'open areas' and at 'waste dumps' were voluntarily withdrawn by manufacturers on 1st January 2025. This was because, although declining, residues of these substances still contributed to the majority of residues in barn owls, and it is considered that 'open area' use presents the greatest risk of their exposure to wildlife. This measure also brought all SGARs in line so there is no confusion as to where they can be used. At the time, there was no specific regulatory definition of a 'building' to assist users in understanding the permitted scope of rodenticide applications under these scenarios.

The BPWG consulted among its members from different user sectors, and with HSE, and provided the following additional guidance, published in the July 2024 revision of the COBP:

"In and around buildings" is defined as: 'In and around buildings' is understood to include the entire building that is the subject of the treatment, or those areas of it that are or may become infested. It also includes the infested area around the building that needs to be treated in order to deal with the rodents that are potentially moving into the building, causing damage to the building or property, or present a risk to the health of people or other animals.

The term 'outdoors – around buildings' is now the officially authorised use and is seen on some product labels and in regulatory documents.

For the purposes of rodent pest management, a building is typically considered to be a permanent fixed structure forming an enclosure and providing protection from the elements. Buildings can be used to exclude certain nontarget animals and birds from taking baits placed inside. They are usually erected on foundations, largely enclosed and constructed from wood, brick, concrete or metal. Temporary structures or structures that can easily be moved would not generally be considered to be buildings.

Given the diverse use areas for rodenticide products in this use scenario, it is understood that this may not directly address all situations encountered during practical rodent pest management operations. Cases where temporary structures are erected or moved into open areas to justify continued baiting will not be considered acceptable. Recognising that these products are only for use by trained professionals, reasonable judgement will be necessary.

The WG also noted the absence of a definition of the use scenario 'waste dumps' and provided the following additional guidance, revised for the 2024 COBP:

"Waste dumps" are also now considered to be a separate use scenario. Only baits may be applied at waste dumps that permit such use on the label. This scenario covers control of rats and disposal of rats in waste dumps and landfills where the exposure is assumed to be higher than that described in the open area scenario. For example, waste dumps do not include municipal waste management facilities (e.g. recycling centres) where treatment is undertaken to prevent risks to public health in urban settings.

Waste dumps are particularly challenging for a number of reasons. There is usually an abundance of alternative food that may compete with baits for the attention of target rodents. This food is also an attraction for a wide range of nontarget animals that may also be present at the site and may be at risk. Operations at the site may mean that substrates are moved and there is a likelihood that baits will be disturbed. All these considerations require special attention when conducting treatments at waste dumps.

Other updates to the COBP included an update to the availability of First Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (FGARs) - there are currently no rodenticide baits available for use in the UK that contain first-generation anticoagulants as their active ingredients (only a contact foam).

In addition to this the 2024 review also included updated guidance on the use patterns and risks associated with cholecalciferol baits:

Cholecalciferol baits may be used against Norway rats, black rats and house mice, including resistant strains (see Annex 3)

Cholecalciferol is not persistent in the environment and therefore it may be assumed to present a lower risk of

secondary poisoning. However, it is not free from risks to non-targets as it is, like many rodenticides, acutely toxic to some species.

Some baits containing cholecalciferol are permitted for use against wood mice (Apodemus sylvaticus). However, they are not authorised for use against the closely related yellow-necked mouse (A. flavicollis) and care should be exercised to ensure that this species is not inadvertently exposed to cholecalciferol baits. Some products containing cholecalciferol are authorised for use in 'open areas' and at 'waste dumps'.

Following the updates made in the 2025 publication of the COBP there have been no further significant changes which would required the COBP being further updated. This will be reviewed following any changes that may come from the 2025 HSE consultation.

2.2.4 Farm Assurance Schemes

At the introduction of the regime, and the requirement to produce proof of professional competence at the point-ofsale, it was decided that membership of an approved farm assurance scheme (FAS) provided proof of competence. From March 2018 all CRRU-approved schemes published standards compliant with the CRRU COBP. Members of 17 different schemes, totalling more than 80,000 farm businesses, are now audited regularly to schemes' standards.

In late 2023, a decision was taken by the CRRU directors to further strengthen rodenticide stewardship and introduce the requirements from the 1st January 2026 that all buyers and users of professional rodenticide products must hold an approved training certificate and, if this is more than five years old, membership of a stewardship-specific Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme. For the first time, this means farmers, gamekeepers and pest control technicians will have to be equally qualified. It also ensures that those with older qualifications are regularly brought up to date with any changes regarding the use of rodenticides.

The biggest impact of this will be on those farmers currently covered to buy and use professional rodenticides by their membership of an approved FAS. Taking this decision in late 2023 has meant that a full two-year period has been made available for those needing to gain certification or join an approved CPD scheme, details of current approved certification CPD schemes will be covered in the Training and Certification work group update.

This decision has not pleased some FAS members, and CRRU is currently working with the FAS to keep as many elements as possible that were introduced to bring them in line with the COBP. Any changes to the vermin control sections of the current CRRU approved FAS standards prior to 1st January 2026 would result in the members of that scheme no longer qualifying for the purchase and use of professional rodenticide products. Through liaison with the FAS, no changes have been made to date and all will remain compliant until the end of 2025 when the new regulations come into effect.

2.3 Training and Certification Work Group (Leader, Dr Matthew Davies, Killgerm Chemicals Ltd.)

2.3.1 Purpose

All aspects of the work of the Training and Certification Work Group (T&C WG) are intended to support the development and maintenance of a "competent workforce" and disseminate the fundamental requirements of responsible rodenticide use of across the three user sectors: professional pest control, gamekeeping, farming. "Governance of the supply chain" is also implemented through the certification procedure applied by the T&C WG.

2.3.2 Training Courses and Certification

The major deliverable of the work group continues to be provision of CRRU UK approved training through 134 training providers serving four awarding organisations, namely BASIS (Registration) Ltd. / Open Awards, City and Guilds/National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC), Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) and Lantra. In the period August 2024 to July 2025, eight different CRRU UK-approved courses were offered and examined (the gamekeepers course started being delivered again in April 2025). A total of 4,439 certificates were awarded to training participants during the period, bringing the total number of certificates awarded for CRRU UK approved courses to 49,457 during the period of the regime (Table 2). This continues to be a very substantial contribution to maintenance of a "competent workforce". CRRU UK has been monitoring separately the training uptake, on a quarterly basis, since the start of the year. This indicates that although the annual data below (Table 2) is only 7.2% up on the same period in 2023/24, Q3 (Jul-Sept) 2025 versus the same period in 2024 is circa 73% up. This seems to indicate that users are getting the message and taking up training towards the second half of the year. This increase is not fully captured in the annual data that cuts off in July.

A report containing more details of the courses provided and certificates awarded has been provided in confidence to the GOG. From 2019 onwards all the awarding organisations provided, to GOG, information on examination pass rates.

Table 1. The total numbers of CRRU UK approved training certificates and qualifications awarded by the following awarding organisations: BASIS (Registration) Ltd. / Open Awards, City & Guilds / NPTC, Lantra, Royal Society for Public Health.

Time Period	**Total number of certificates/qualifications issued**
August 2015 to July 2016	7,285
August 2016 to July 2017	6,044
August 2017 to July 2018	5,498
August 2018 to July 2019	4,711
August 2019 to July 2020	3,916
August 2020 to July 2021	4,424
August 2021 to July 2022	5,192
August 2022 to July 2023	3,807
August 2023 to July 2024	4,141
August 2024 to July 2025	4,439
Total	49,457

2.3.3 Training and Continuing Professional Development Requirements for 2026.

Preparations continued in readiness for 1st January 2026, when users must hold a stewardship-approved certificate obtained within the last five years (i.e. from 2021 onwards in 2026) or evidence the alternative of older approved certification in conjunction with CRRU UK approved CPD scheme membership (to prove up-to-date knowledge). This will be required at the point-of-sale.

These changes are laid out on the CRRU UK website and below https://www.thinkwildlife.org/training-certification/ and https://www.thinkwildlife.org/training-certification/continuing-professional-development-cpd-and-stewardship/ :

Important Changes to Proof of Competence Requirements for Purchasers and Users of Professional Use Rodenticides from 1st January 2026

As part of measures taken to strengthen stewardship, CRRU UK has decided that from 1st January 2026 the following two options will be the only criteria at the point of sale which sellers of professional use rodenticides will consider as proof of competence for the purchase and subsequent use of professional use rodenticides in the UK.

Either :

Proof of certification to a CRRU UK approved training course within the past 5 years (https://www.thinkwildlife.org/training-certification/)

Or:

Proof of certification to a CRRU UK approved training course more than 5 years ago and current membership of a CRRU UK approved Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme.

As five-year certificate expiry dates approach, holders can either repeat the training and requalify, or join a CPD scheme. https://www.thinkwildlife.org/training-certification/continuing-professional-development-cpd-and-stewardship/

Note: users joining a CRRU UK approved CPD scheme for the first time will need to join as soon as possible in 2025, and complete their membership criteria during this period, in order to be ready for the 1st January 2026 changes.

CRRU UK approved CPD schemes:

Basis Prompt https://basis-prompt.co.uk/

BPCA Registered https://bpca.org.uk/registered

British Pest Register https://cpd.pest-register.co.uk/login.php

(CRRU UK approved CPD schemes feature 3 points / hours / credits, of rodent control content that conforms to CRRU UK guidelines, required each year as part of the normal quota for membership).

2.3.4 CPD Resources

Table 2. The total numbers of downloads of CRRU UK learning resources to support CPD (correct at 10.10.2025)

CPD presentation	**Total number of times downloaded (new versions introduced February 2025)**
Stewardship update – 2025. Strengthening measures and Code of Best Practice update	15,594
Environmental Risk Assessments	12,793
Direct bait application in burrows. Justification and mitigation measures	15,443
Total	43,830

2.3.5 A summary of the CRRU UK T&C WG achievements, 2024/25

- The list of CRRU UK approved certification has been updated to include information on certificate dates regarding re-certification requirements and also where membership of a CRRU UK approved CPD scheme is required, in order to remain compliant from 1st January 2026 https://www.thinkwildlife.org/training-certification/

- British Pest Register CPD scheme was given CRRU UK approval and added to the website

- The Open Awards Level 2 Award in Rodent Control for Gamekeepers and Rural Environments started being delivered in April 2025.

- New CPD resources were launched in February 2025, to support CRRU UK approved CPD:
    - Stewardship update – 2025. Strengthening measures and Code of Best Practice update
    - Environmental Risk Assessments
    - Direct bait application in burrows. Justification and mitigation measures

- Previous CPD resources were removed or updated
    - Environmental Risk Assessments (updated).
    - Exposure of Wildlife to Rodenticides (removed).
    - Direct application of bait in burrows. Justification and mitigation measures (updated).
    - Changes to the classification of anticoagulants and permitted pack sizes (removed).
    - Anticoagulant rodenticide resistance in rats and mice (removed).

- Timeline is as follows:

    - 2025: Last year for users to join CPD schemes or re-certify ahead of 2026 deadline. Trial POS audits in preparation for 2026 deadline. CRRU UK produced updated material to support CPD.

    - 2026: All users to hold either a training certificate from 2021 onwards (within the last 5 years) or an older certificate with CPD proof. POS audits to include these checks, as a requirement, for the first time.

Table 3. Certification allowing purchase and use professional rodenticides labelled under stewardship requirements from 1st January 2026

Current certification	**Certificate 'valid from' year, for 1st January 2026 requirements (unless CRRU UK CPD in place)**
RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Award in Pest Management (2010 onwards)	2021
RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Certificate in Pest Management (2010 onwards)	2021
City & Guilds NPTC Level 2 Award in the Safe Use of Pesticides for Vertebrate Pest Control for Rats and Mice (QCF) (PA-R&M) (2013 onwards)	2021
Lantra Awards Level 2 Award in Rodent Management (2022-onwards)	2021
Open Awards Level 2 Award in the Principles of Rodent Control (2023-onwards)	2021
RSPH Level 2 Award in the safe use of rodenticides (2015 onwards)	2021
BPCA Using Rodenticides Safely (Exam through Lantra) (2023-onwards)	2021
Open Awards Level 2 Award in Rodent Control for Gamekeepers and Rural Environments (2023-onwards)	2021

Grandfather certification	**Certificate 'valid from' year, for 1st January 2026 requirements (unless CRRU UK CPD in place)**
Killgerm Principles of Rodent Control (2016 – January 2023, through BASIS)	2021
Rat Control for Gamekeepers (2015 – January 2023, through BASIS)	2021
BPCA Using Rodenticides Safely (2015 – January 2023, through BASIS)	2021
RSPH Level 3 Diploma in Pest Management (2010 – 2016)	CPD
RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Certificate in Pest Control (2004 – 2010*)	CPD
RSPH Level 2 Certificate in Pest Control (2000 – 2004*)	CPD
RSH Certificate in Pest Control (pre-2000 inclusive*)	CPD
BPCA Diploma in Pest Control Part 1 (Previously 'BPC Diploma Part 1', 'RSH/BPC Certificate in pest control', 'BPC Diploma', 'Operators certificate of proficiency', 'British Pest Control Association Certificate in general pest control' and 'Certificate pre-1988') (pre-2004 inclusive)	CPD

NPTC Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Vertebrate Pest Control (assessed in the context of rats and mice) (2002 – 2014)	CPD
Lantra: Rodent Control (previously Rat and Mouse Control) (2009 – 2015)	2021
Lantra: Rodent Control on Livestock Units (2013 – 2015)	2021
Lantra: Rodent Control on Farms (2015 – 28th February 2018 inclusive) Note: This entry refers only to the customised training provision version of 'rodent control on farms'. Certificates are identified by the text 'customised provision'.	CPD
Lantra: Rodent Control on Farms (2015 -2022) Online: elearning.lantra.co.uk	2021
Lantra: Responsible and Effective Control of Commensal Rodents (2015-2022) Online: elearning.lantra.co.uk	2021
Killgerm Principles of Rodent Control (previously Killgerm Rodent Biology and Control) (2004 – 2015)	CPD
*RSH / RSPH certificates may bear a date up to two years after the end date stated above. These are still acceptable at the point-of-sale. Note 1: The 'BPC Certificate of Proficiency (1989 – 1994)', 'BPCA Diploma Part II (1995 – 2008)' and 'BPCA Accredited Technician in Pest Control (2008 onwards) which became the BPCA Advanced Technician in Pest Management from 2016 and BPCA Certificated Advanced Technician in 2020 are all accepted at the point-of-sale because other approved certification is a prerequisite for these.	

2.3.6 Future Work

CRRU UK will release further CPD training resources each year to allow for a variation of content. The T&CWG will also consider any further strengthening measures put forward as part of the Government Oversight Group recommendations.

2.4 Regulatory Work Group Activities 2025 (Leader, Sarah Bull, BASF plc)

The HSE conducted two public consultations relevant to CRRU UK stakeholders in 2025 where the Regulatory Work Group developed or contributed to the CRRU UK response.

- HSE Chemicals Legislative Reform

CRRU UK fully supports the HSE's objective to explore reforms to streamline and improve the flexibility of the existing regulatory regime, enabling it to function much more effectively in GB. Each of the proposed areas of BPR reform have merit although, following in-depth discussion, the WG identified several potential issues and/or unintended consequences which were explained in the detailed response submitted.

- Alternatives for Anticoagulant Rodenticide Products

CRRU UK developed the existing UK rodenticide stewardship regime and consequently is invested in ensuring safe use of anticoagulant rodenticide products, including reduction in use and/or substitution in accordance with an integrated pest management approaches as detailed in the CRRU UK Code of Best Practice.

The Regulatory Work Group obtained access to a detailed analysis of alternatives (previously conducted for the EU) and provided input into CRRU UKs response to the consultation.

2.4.1 Future work in 2026 and beyond

The Regulatory Work Group look forward to receiving additional information on the HSE's proposals for regulatory reform and to actively contributing to further consultation as the plans evolve. Similarly, we welcome involvement in any further discussion on alternatives to anticoagulant rodenticides.

Improving the user friendliness of labels continues an aim of the Work Group although this issue may be resolved following regulatory reform.
The CRRU UK Regulatory Work Group will keep a watching brief on any changes impacting SGAR authorisations/use following the ongoing active substance and product renewals and identify any areas where communication of changes to end users will be needed.

2.5 Point-of-Sale Work Group (Leader, Rupert Broome, Killgerm Chemicals Ltd.)

The projects implemented by the Point-of-Sale Work Group within the stewardship regime are focused on "*governance of the supply chain*".

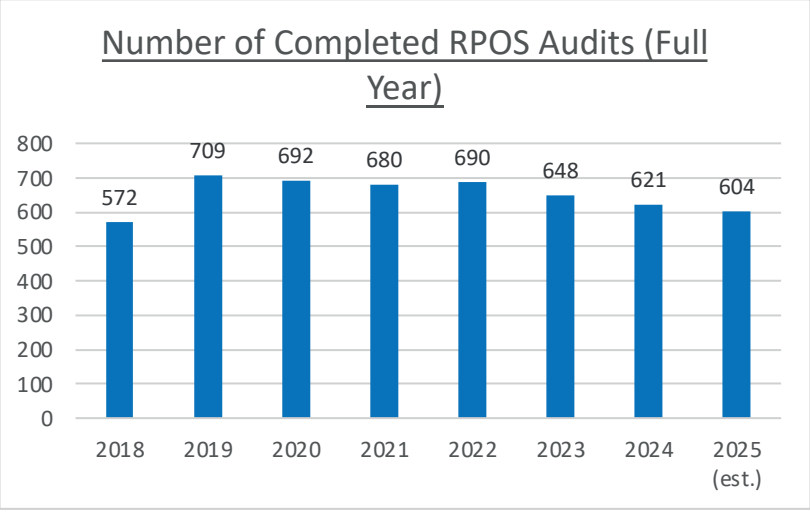
2.5.1 Independent Audit Process for Point-of-Sale Compliance

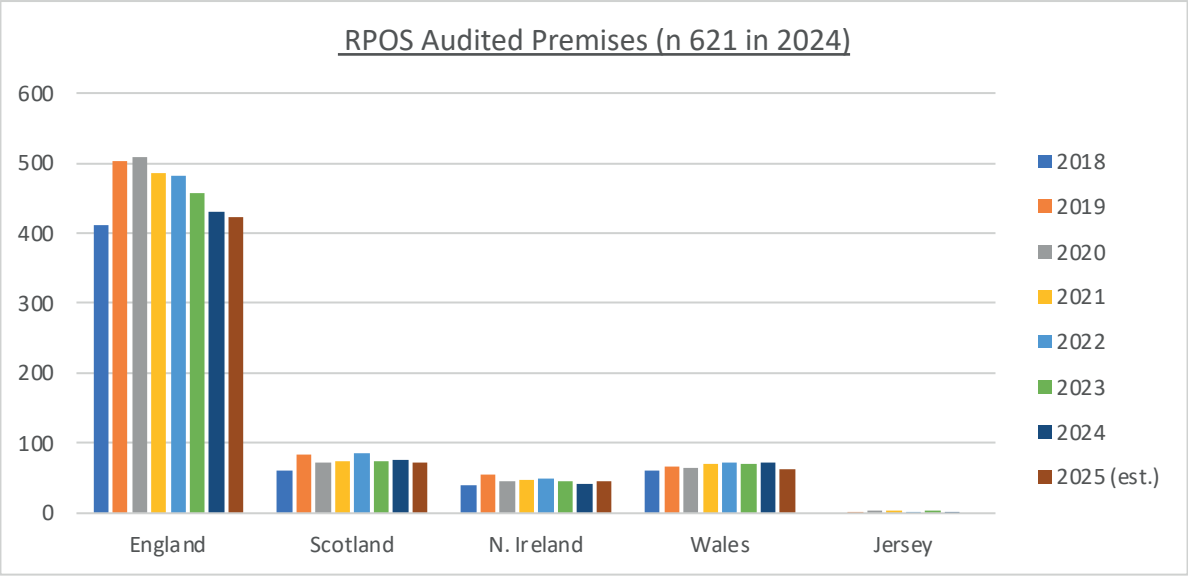
A cornerstone of the stewardship regime is the imposition of competence checks at the point-of-sale. As well as "*supply chain governance*", these checks drive the "*competent workforce*" benefit because only appropriately competent personnel can purchase professional rodenticides. The importance of this measure within the regime overall made necessary a procedure to audit its application.

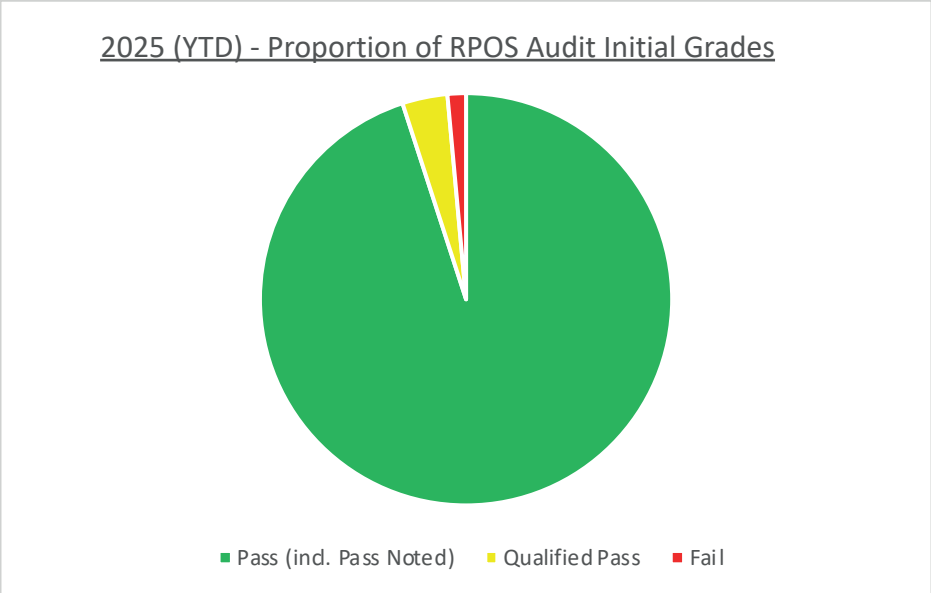
Throughout 2025 the Rodenticide Point of Sale (RPOS) audit process has continued to be conducted by an independent agency, BASIS (Registration) Ltd. It is the responsibility of all product authorisation holders to ensure that their products are placed on the market only through outlets which are registered with the new Rodenticide Point of Sale (RPOS) audit scheme run by BASIS and have passed an audit.

The primary highlights of the RPOS audit outcomes year to date to September 2025 are as follows :

- A decrease of 2.9% in the total numbers of premises registered to undergo the RPOS audit. (603 scheduled or completed year to date to end September 2025 versus 621 completed audits throughout full year 2024.)
- YTD in 2025 the regional split of premises registered to undergo the RPOS audit has continued to remain broadly stable at:
    - England 70%
    - Scotland 12%
    - Northern Ireland 8%
    - Wales 10%
- Of the premises audited as of 30th September 2025, the proportion of outright passes at the point of the initial audit now stands at 94.3% YTD 2025. This would suggest that sales outlets continue to demonstrate their adherence to Point of Sale controls as determined by CRRU UK. It is probably reasonable to suggest that the high number of outright passes reflects the fact that these controls at the point of sale have now been in place for several years and sales outlets are familiar with their compliance requirements.
- The proportion of premises obtaining a qualified pass with their initial audit has remained broadly stable at 5.5% YTD in 2025.
- Each of these premises will be required to demonstrate to BASIS after their initial audit that improvements have been made to their Point-of-Sale controls before BASIS grant them certification for 2026.
- The number of premises which have so far failed to pass the audit (including premises for which an audit visit failed to occur) remains very low at the initial audit stage, being only 0.2%.
- In addition, YTD in 2025 there have been 33 deletions from the RPOS audit. This represents outlets which had previously been participating in the RPOS audit scheme, however they have decided not to continue in 2025. These deletions represent 5% of overall outlets audited YTD in 2025. At this stage, CRRU UK do not attach any concern over this level of deletions in 2025, however it will be prudent to keep this under review in future years in order to ensure a robust element of choice in sales outlets for professional use rodenticides in the UK. It is also possible that some of the deletions may have arisen in advance of the tightening of CRRU UK point of sale controls from 1st January 2026 onwards.
- It is worth noting that so far in 2025 one sales outlet on the island of Jersey is scheduled to undertake an RPOS audit register. The UK rodenticide stewardship scheme was extended to the Bailiwick of Jersey since 2019.







2.5.2 Forthcoming Changes to Point of Sale Controls from 1st January 2026

In line with the decisions taken by the CRRU UK Directors, the Point of Sale controls will change from 1st January 2026 to ensure all purchasers of professional use rodenticides are recently qualified (within the past 5 years) to CRRU UK standards of training, or are enrolled in a current CRRU UK recognised Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme and have also passed CRRU UK recognised training more than 5 years ago.

These changes have been widely communicated throughout 2025 to BASIS auditors, to the whole rodenticides supply chain and also to end users in all sectors (professional pest control service companies, farmers, gamekeepers).

2.5.3 Government Oversight Group – Sales & Usage Work Group

During 2025, all authorisation holders for rodenticides in the UK have been required to declare in confidence to the regulator, HSE, their respective volumes of rodenticide active substance which have been sold in the UK since 2016.

HSE has anonymised this data and summarised it. At this point in time no decisions have been made by HSE regarding the publication of any of this data. At a macro level, the data does show a significant and sustained reduction in volumes of anticoagulant active substance volumes being sold in the UK since 2016.

Looking forward, HSE has stated an intention to routinely ask authorisation holders to declare annual sales of rodenticide active substance.

2.6 Monitoring Work Group (Leader, Richard Moseley, Syngenta)

2.6.1 Purpose

The Monitoring Work Group (MWG) provides oversight of and reports studies from independent contracted agencies on the progress of the stewardship regime to meet the HSE/GOG key benefit "monitoring compliance". Furthermore, the MWG supply anticoagulant resistance information to practitioners, to allow them to make informed choices about the use of active substances, the MWG also supports the key benefit of a "competent workforce".

2.6.2 Anticoagulant residues in barn owls (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

2.6.2.1 Current Rodenticide Use in the UK

The disposition of anticoagulant residues in UK barn owls is related to the quantities of products used containing the different anticoagulants and their use patterns. Five second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) are currently authorised for use in the United Kingdom – brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, difethialone and flocoumafen. Only difenacoum and bromadiolone were historically authorised for use both in and around buildings and in open areas and waste dumps in the United Kingdom. The other three compounds were restricted to indoor use as a mitigation measure to reduce unintentional primary and secondary exposure and poisoning of non-target species. All five SGARs are currently eligible for broadly similar authorisations that include in and around buildings.

2.6.2.2 Barn owl as sentinel species and SGAR liver residue analysis

The barn owl (*Tyto alba*) is used for SGAR exposure monitoring as it is considered a sentinel for wildlife species that are generalist predators of small mammals in rural area [4].

The specific work reported is conducted under contract for CRRU UK by UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and forms part of the wider Predatory Bird Monitoring Scheme (PBMS), of which CRRU UK is a co-funder (see https://pbms.ceh.ac.uk/). Every year the aim is to test 100 barn owls for liver SGAR residues. Carcasses are submitted to the PBMS by members of the public throughout the year from across the whole of the UK, although predominantly England and Wales. All barn owls received by the PBMS are autopsied and are found to have died from various causes, but mainly from road traffic collisions and starvation. Usually more than 100 barn owl carcasses are submitted to the PBMS and all undergo autopsy. The sample for liver residue analysis is selected to hold constant at about 30% the percentage of first year birds and those that are older. The annual residue data are compared with those from 395 barn owls that died between 2006 and 2012 (hereafter termed baseline years), prior to changes in anticoagulant rodenticide (AR) authorisations and onset of stewardship.[5]

2.6.2.3 Barn Owl Carcass Availability and Impact on Residue Reporting

Due to avian influenza and the pause in public submissions to the predatory bird monitoring scheme impacting the collection of Barn Owl carcasses, the sample size of barn owls for the 2023 analysis was only 35 birds. This number is far below the 100-bird annual target and would not give a statistically sound result if tested, potentially containing a skewed age range of birds collected in a limited time period. These results would not be comparable with previous years data. As per the advice given by UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology it was decided not to carry out residue testing on these samples. These restrictions in bird collection has impacted barn owl residue data collection for 2023 and 2024.

The outlook for collecting birds in 2025 and reporting on this in 2026 looks more promising. Submission strategies are in place from PBMS to allow the collection of barn owls that have died, but the process does cause a lag and there may be birds within the system. Up to 01/10/2025, 53 carcasses have been collected. Of the 53 collected only one carcass has tested positive for HPAI and

4 HSE, 2015. UK Anticoagulant Rodenticide Product Authorisation and the CRRU Stewardship Scheme. Information document, January 2015. Health and Safety Executive. 12 pp.

5 Shore, R.F., Henrys, P.A. & Walker, L.A. 2014. Power analysis of liver second generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGAR) residue data in barn owls from Britain: a Predatory Bird Monitoring Scheme (PBMS) report. CEH contract report to the Health & Safety Executive. 45pp. https://wiki.ceh.ac.uk/x/DAIDC.

been disposed of, and 2 are still to be tested for HPAI. This means that 49 carcasses are currently available, with 52 the potential total.

The agreed minimal sample level with UKCEH is 50 birds, so we have crossed the threshold to carry out statistically meaningful testing in 2026 – we hope more birds will also be collected in Q4 to push us closer to the 100 birds' target.

2.6.3 The Barn Owl Monitoring Scheme (BOMS)

CRRU UK took the decision that the 2022 Barn Owl Monitoring Scheme survey will be the final BOMs report. The BOMs has now provided 7 years of data sets that have provided us with a detailed benchmark of the key factors that impact the nesting and fledging behaviour of Barn Owls in the survey areas. It is clear from the data that successful nesting numbers go up and down depending on several factors, including weather characteristics and prey availability. Contamination by SGAR's has never appeared to be a factor in the relative success or failure of nesting and egg laying amongst monitored owls. All previous BOMs studies have shown that the eggs and barn owls (both young and adult) studied reveal no unusual growth characteristics or physical deformities (such as abnormal feather development or pattern of moult), that might suggest any sub-lethal effects of exposure to anticoagulant rodenticides.

Should further BOMs studies be deemed necessary in the future, CRRU UK will investigate the possibility of re-instating the survey. Detailed annual results are available from the Barn Owl Trust 'State of the UK Barn Owl Population Report' which reported 'A good year for Barn Owls with significantly more nesting pairs than usual' in 2024 - https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SOUKBOP-2024.pdf

2.6.4 Resistance in UK Rats and Mice (University of Reading)

2.6.4.1 Background

An annual report of the status of resistance monitoring in UK, and elsewhere in EU, is a requirement for monitoring the delivery of the stewardship regime set by the GOG. Resistance to anticoagulant rodenticides is widespread in the UK among both house mice and Norway rats. At least five resistance mutations occur in Norway rats that are known to have detrimental effects on the efficacy of some active substances, and at least two in house mice. [6] Therefore, the provision of information to practitioners on the geographical distribution of resistance mutations in UK rodent populations will have significant benefits for the outcome of the stewardship regime. The use of only fully effective substances in areas where resistance is present will ensure that control is achieved using the smallest quantity of active substance and, thereby, minimise emissions to the environment. It will also ensure that resistant infestations are removed efficiently to prevent selection that will result in the spread of resistance and increased severity. More potent and persistent anticoagulant substances are required in resistance foci and effective rodent control within foci means that less severe substances maintain their efficacy, once again conferring benefits for the environment.

To provide resistance information for practitioners, permitting informed choices to be made about product use for resistance management, CRRU UK has conducted annual surveys of resistance using the DNA sequencing technique. Annual reports are published which give maps showing the scope of existing resistant Norway rat foci. [7] However, although limited information is available for house mice what is available shows the wide distribution and high prevalence of resistance in that species. CRRU UK resistance data is provided to the international Rodenticide Resistance Action Committee and this organisation maintains interactive maps wherein users can search to find the status of resistance in their locality and obtain information about effective interventions (see: https://guide.rrac.info/resistance-maps.html).

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6 Buckle, A. P. 2013. Anticoagulant resistance in the UK and a new guideline for the management of resistant infestations of Norway rats (*Rattus norvegicus* Berk.) *Pest Management Science* **69**(3):334-341.

7 Buckle, A., Jones, C., Talavera, M. and Prescott, C. 2020. Anticoagulant Resistance in Rats and Mice in the UK – Summary Report with new data for 2019-20. University of Reading. Report Series VPU 20/002. 19 pp. Available at: https://www.thinkwildlife.org/downloads/. Date accessed: 26.02.21.

2.6.4.2 Resistance Results 2024 – 2025

The 2024 – 2025 results period will be the first time that Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA) carried out DNA extraction on CRRU UKs behalf. The change in testing provider was unplanned and due to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) no longer having capacity to test CRRU UK DNA samples and the contract ending in August 2024. The process of finding a new testing partner, the logistics of locating existing test packaging and amending their details, and uncertainty about how long existing tails would be stored had a negative impact on publicising the tail testing programme across the key winter period 2024/2025.

However, CRRU UK was able to support and benefit from a direct DNA collection process that has been carried out over a similar period by SASA. This is a one-off collection programme by SASA that offered access to under-represented areas of resistance testing which has improved our wider knowledge of rodenticide resistance throughout the UK. In total, 140 rodent tissue samples were tested by SASA. Of these samples, 122 Norway Rat samples yielded DNA material that could be sequenced. Of the remaining samples, only 4 yielded mouse DNA, due to a lack of information with the sample, or the mistaken submission of Wood Mouse samples.

At PestTech in November 2025, an event run for the pest control industry in the UK, CRRU UK renewed the message to increase efforts to collect more DNA samples, and direct appeals were made to the professional users present during two CRRU UK talks delivered at the event. We were pleased to see that all tail testing kits were collected from the CRRU UK stand and we will continue this process in 2026. We have also improved the format of the testing kits to allow the easier collection of details to provide better and clearer results.

Table 5: The main VKORC1 mutations in Norway rats (NR) and House mouse (HM) in UK mentioned in this report.

Species	**Mutation**	**Abbreviations**	**Where present**
NR	**Leu**cine128**Glu**tamine	L128Q†	Central Southern Scotland, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and elsewhere
NR	**Tyr**osine139**Ser**ine	Y139S†	Anglo-Welsh border, North Yorkshire
NR	**Leu**cine120**Glu**tamine	L120Q†	Hampshire, Berkshire, Essex, Norfolk and elsewhere
NR	**Tyr**osine139**Cys**teine	Y139C†	Gloucestershire, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, SW Scotland and elsewhere
NR	**Tyr**osine139**Phe**nylalanine	Y139F†	Kent, Sussex, Norfolk, Suffolk and elsewhere
HM	**Tyr**osine139**Cys**teine	Y139C†	
HM	**Leu**cine128**Ser**ine	L128S†	

† Known either from field experiments and/or field experience to have a significant practical effect on anticoagulant efficacy

Brown rats: Strongest = L120Q > Y139S > Y139F > Y139C > L128Q = Weakest

House Mouse: Strongest = L128S Y139C > L128S > Y139C = Weakest

Norway rats – historical records

This study has operated at the University of Reading, and later at the laboratories of the Animal and Plant Health Agency and Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture, during the period 2009 to July 2025. In that time a total of 753 Norway rat tissue samples from around the UK have been analysed using the DNA sequencing technique. Their geographical locations are shown in Figure 2. Of these, 580 (77.0%) were found to possess one or more of the resistance mutations that are known to have a significant effect on anticoagulant rodenticide efficacy (Table 4). The remaining 173 animals (23.0%) carried the wild type (i.e. anticoagulant susceptible) genome.

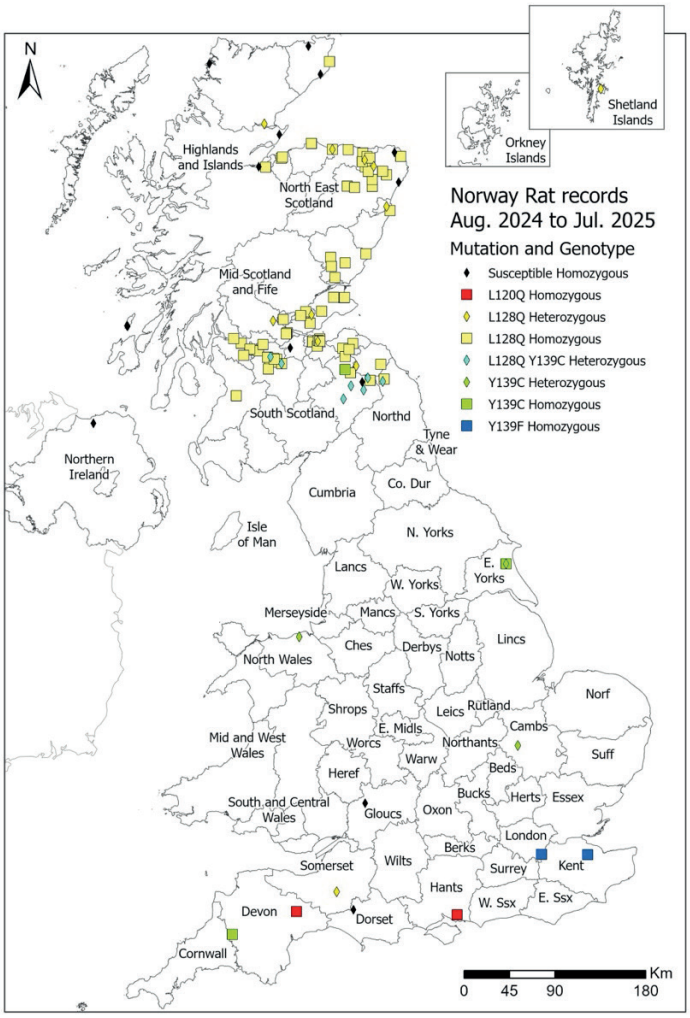
2.6.4.3 Norway rats – records for 2024-2025 and frequency of resistance

Among the 122 samples (Table 5) that were capable of being sequenced in the period August 2024 to July 2025, a total of 106 (86.9%) were found to carry one of the five main Norway rat anticoagulant resistance mutations (Table 4). The remaining 16 animals (13.1%) carried the wild type genome. The proportion of resistant Norway rats in the sample was higher than that found in previous surveys (see Buckle et al., 2024). The apparent reason for this is the high proportion of the rats sampled in 2024-25 came from Scotland where there is a very high prevalence of the L128Q SNP among rat populations of rats.

Table 6: The numbers of Norway rats tissue samples received and analysed in 2024/25, and their status of resistance or susceptibility. (See Table 5 for further explanations of the different resistance mutations.)

Resistance status	Genotype		Totals
	Homozygous	Heterozygous	
L120Q	3	0	3
L128Q	75	11	86
Y139C	5	3	8
Y139F	2	0	2
L128Q and Y139C*	0	7	7
Total resistant	85	21	106
Susceptible	16	-	16
Total animals tested			122

Figure 2: Geographical locations of all new Norway rat records for the period August 2024 to July 2025



The sample provides a more comprehensive understanding of the status of anticoagulant

resistance in Scotland than available before (Fig. 2). It is apparent that the L128Q Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP), previously called 'Scottish resistance' is exceedingly prevalent in the Central Belt, which is where about 70% of the Scottish population lives, and more widely across all the eastern parts of the Country. It was also found in the single sample obtained from Mainland Shetland. Despite these new records, much of Scotland remains poorly sampled and it is therefore impossible to say if this situation occurs more widely across the country.

Also, of interest in the samples obtained from Scotland was the occurrence of seven animals that possessed both the L128Q and Y139C SNPs, each in heterozygous form. The majority of these was from the Borders region (Figs. 3 and 4). The source of this Scottish focus of Y139C is uncertain but it is interesting to note that the nearest area where this resistance is prevalent is more than 150 km away in North Yorkshire. Transport links between these areas are, of course, frequent and abundant.

Among the samples received from other parts of the country, the Y139C SNP was the most common, as has also been the case in recent years. Records from East Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire are close to previous foci of this SNP, and so not surprising, but its appearance in this sample on the Devon-Cornwall border extends the occurrence of this severe resistance considerably to the west. Similarly, findings of Y139F in Kent and L120Q in Hampshire were to be expected but the record of a homozygous L120Q individual in Devon supports previous findings from that area that the UK's most severe resistance is now well established in the West Country (Figs. 2 and 3). If resistance development there follows the pattern seen some years ago in central southern England, it will quickly become the case that most Norway rats in the south-west will carry the most severe form of anticoagulant resistance.

A single sample was received from Langport in Somerset and found to carry the L128Q SNP. This is by a very wide margin the most southerly occurrence of this resistance type (Fig. 2.).

It is reassuring that the only sample received from Northern Ireland was fully susceptible, as was the case for a larger sample tested in the last sampling period (Buckle et al., 2024).

Figure 3: Consolidated map showing all Norway rats found to carry an anticoagulant resistance SNP, both in homozygous and heterozygous form, for any of the five main resistance mutations found in that species, and for combinations of them (i.e. hybrid resistance). Data on susceptible individuals are also included. Records for 2009-2025.

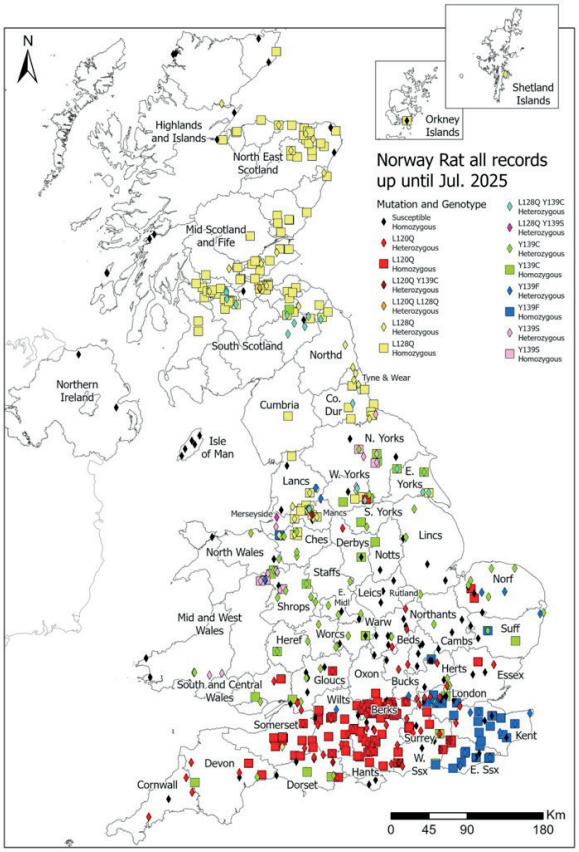
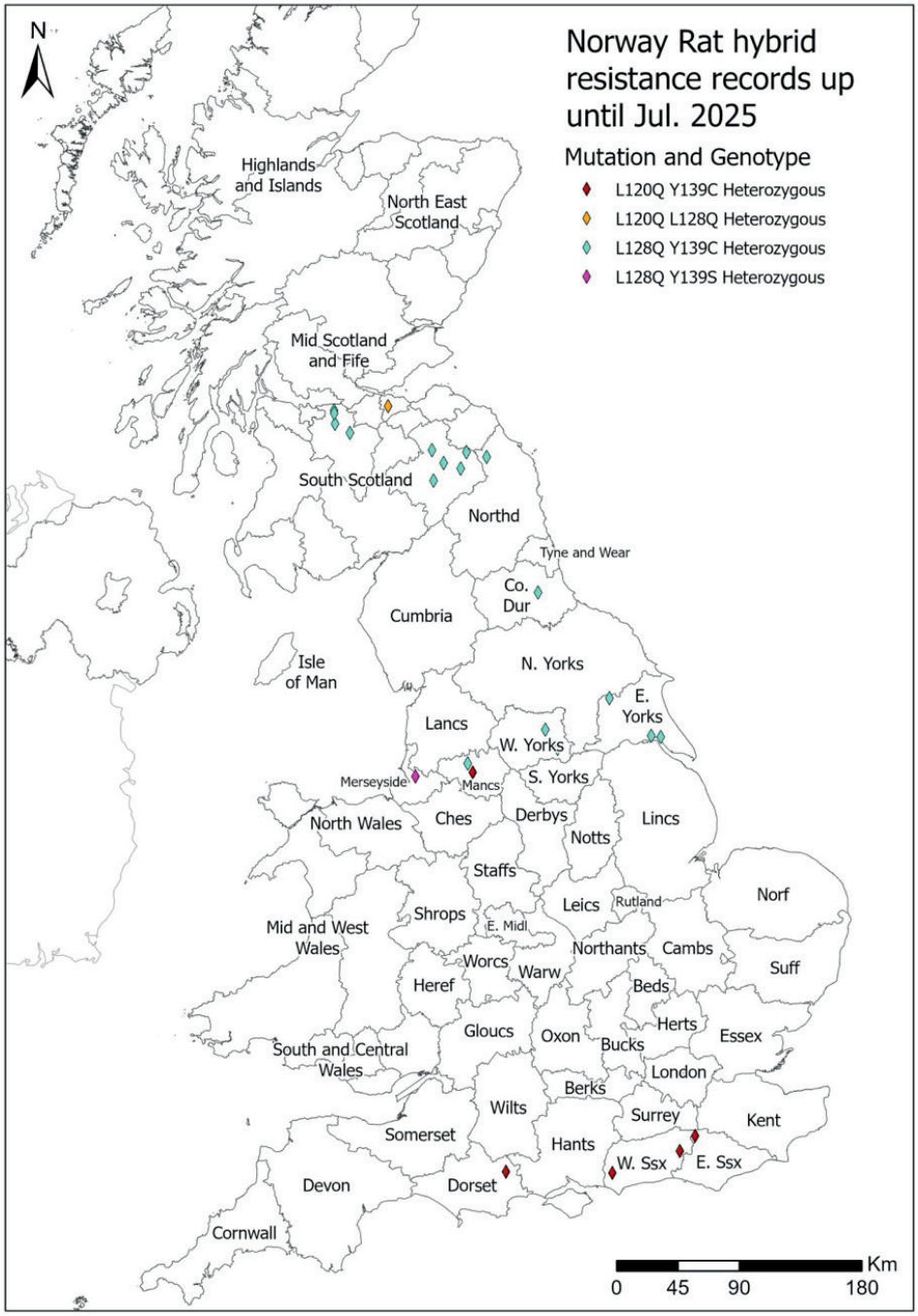


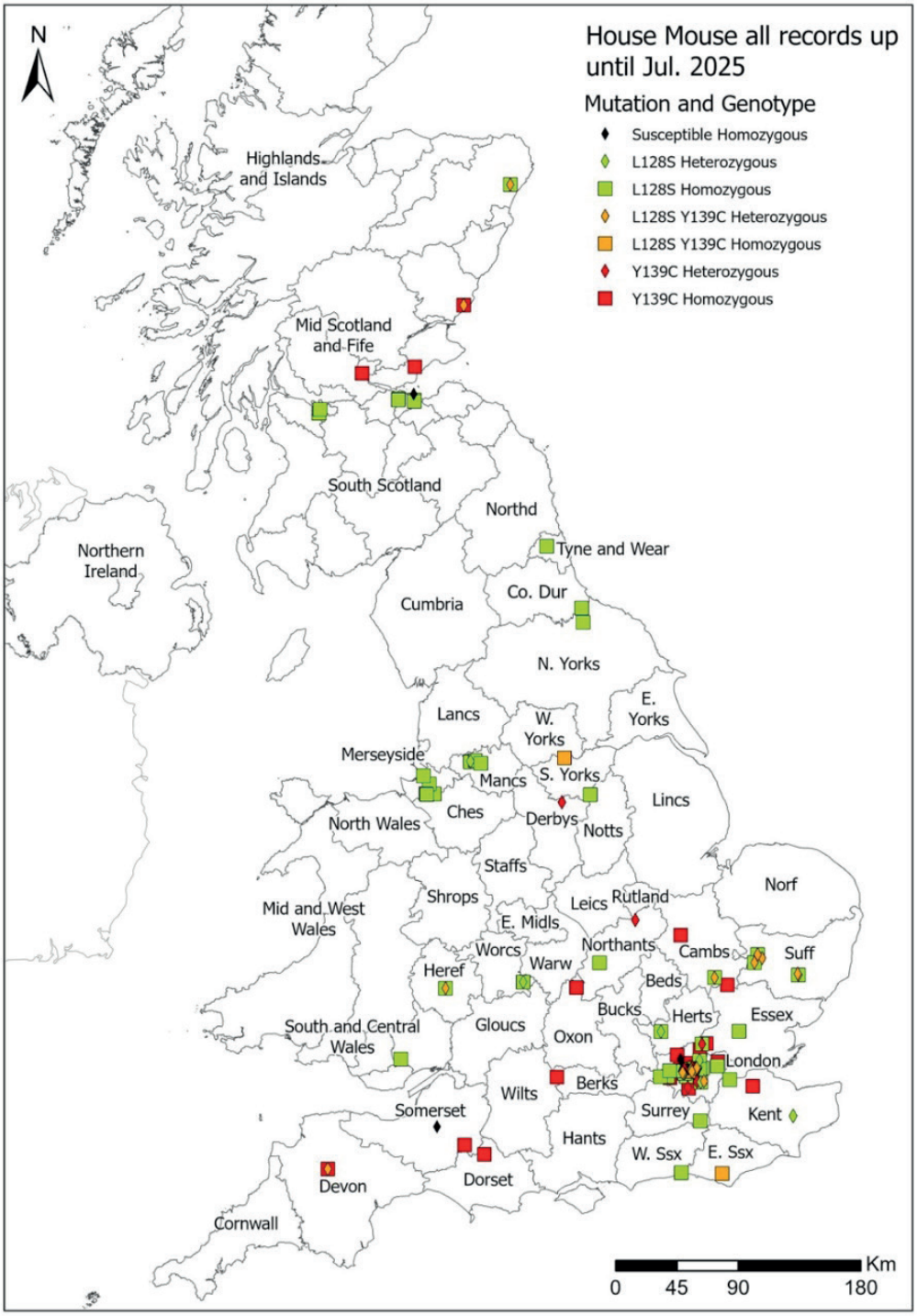
Figure 4: Map showing all Norway rats found to carry two different anticoagulant resistance SNPs (i.e. hybrid resistance). Records for 2009 to 2025.



2.6.4.4 House mice - Records for 2024-2025 and frequency of resistance

Once again, only a small number of house mouse tissue samples were received and only four of them provided DNA that could be extracted and sequenced. All were resistant. Among three samples received from the Elon area of Aberdeenshire, two animals were hybrid resistant, carrying the L128S and Y139C SNPs, while the third was homozygous L128S resistant. The single other house mouse received was from Liverpool and homozygous L128S resistant. When these samples are added to those previously recorded, they bring the total of house mouse tissue samples sequenced to 144; the frequency of resistance among them is 94.4%. These new records are shown in Figure 5 together with all previous house mouse records.

Figure 5: Consolidated map showing all house mice found to carry an anticoagulant resistance SNP, both in homozygous and heterozygous form, for any of the three resistance mutations found in that species, and for combinations of them (i.e. hybrid resistance). Records for 2009 to 2025. (The Hertfordshire focus of the spretus introgression is obscured by other overlaying resistance records at the same site.)



2.6.5 Conclusions

The sample of Norway rats acquired by SASA scientists, and processed through the CRRU UK monitoring scheme, has increased our understanding of the occurrence of anticoagulant resistance in Scotland. It is apparent (Fig. 3) in the areas sampled that L128Q resistance is prevalent, with few susceptible rats found. Indeed, what is more, most of the rats found to carry L128Q, approximately 87% of the total, were homozygous for the SNP. This is indicative of a long-established resistance focus that has undergone prolonged selection for the resistance mutation and demonstrates a higher frequency of anticoagulant

resistance in Scotland than in the rest of the UK. This is hardly surprising since the very first incidence of anticoagulant resistance discovered was found in Scotland in 1959. Boyle (1960) reported that rats taken on a farm in the 'west of Scotland' were found to be resistant to warfarin and diphacinone, first in the field and later when tested in the laboratory. When DNA resistance testing became available it was found that this resistance was conferred by the L128Q SNP (Pelz et al., 2007). Further testing in the surrounding areas in the years following 1960 showed an extensive resistance focus across much of the Central Belt of Scotland (Greaves and Rennison, 1973).

The new data on the L128Q resistance focus presented here permits the observation that, in Scotland, a very high proportion of Norway rat infestations down the entire the east side of the country and in the Central Belt would be expected to contain mostly resistant individuals (Figs. 2 and 3).

The L128Q mutation confers a relatively low level of resistance to animals that possess it compared to other SNPs, such as L120Q, Y139F and Y139C (Buckle, 2013). Consequently, the UK RRAG states that all five authorised second-generation anticoagulants may be expected to be effective against it (Buckle et al., 2021b), as well as, of course, the non-anticoagulant active substances. The very high current prevalence of the mutation among rats in Scotland, across much of northern England, appears to show that the use of these substances over a period of almost 50 years has done little to curtail the incidence and spread of L128Q.

Recent surveys have found the increasing occurrence of the severe Y139C genotype in many areas of the UK (Buckle et al., 2024); with a strong focus apparently developing in Yorkshire (Fig. 2). The coexistence of Y139C and L128Q in that area would lead to an expectation of hybridisation and, indeed, many L128Q/Y139C hybrid-resistant rats have now been found across northern England, with an individual furthest north in County Durham (Fig. 2). The English counties of Northumberland and Cumbria are very sparsely sampled and the situation in them remains largely unknown. However, the occurrence of a single homozygous resistant Y139C individual among the 2024-25 samples found near to Galashiels indicates that this SNP may be established in the Scottish borders. The occurrence of several L128Q/Y139C hybrids in the sample indicates that the Y139C SNP may be more common in Scotland than our current distribution data indicates. The occurrence of L128Q/Y139C hybrid-resistant rats in Scotland, and elsewhere, is a cause for concern because we have no definitive information, either from the laboratory or field, about the efficacy of anticoagulants against hybrid-resistant rats. It may therefore be prudent only to use the most potent anticoagulants and non-anticoagulant substances against them.

It is valuable to reiterate here, once again, that the continued use of anticoagulants against rodent populations that are resistant to them has important adverse consequences: 1) the speed of removal of treated infestations is reduced, with consequent risks to human and animal health, 2) resistance is both further spread and its severity increased when susceptible rodents are removed from infestations but resistant ones are left, and 3) resistant rodents survive for long periods after unsuccessful treatments carrying high body burdens of persistent anticoagulants until their natural deaths. These may be taken subsequently by non-target predators and scavengers (Buckle et al., 2020). It therefore continues to be important to publicise the resistance distribution maps in this report, and the interactive versions found at the RRAC website (https://guide.rrac.info/resistance-maps.html), and to disseminate resistance management advice to avoid the sale and use of resisted substances in areas where resistant rodents are now known predominantly to occur.

2.6.6 Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) Survey

2026 will see the undertaking of the 5th KAP survey carried out by CRRU UK. The objectives of the CRRU UK KAP survey are as follows:

1. Measure awareness of rodent control strategies and control approaches used.
2. Define rodenticide products used, situation, frequency, quantities applied, and methods used.
3. Assess knowledge and attitudes regarding potential adverse impacts on humans, non-target animals, and the environment to determine different ways of controlling rodents.
4. Quantify knowledge and degree of implementation of risk mitigation measures.
5. Define awareness, understanding, and attitudes to codes of practice, (in particular the CRRU UK 7-point code of practice and in 2017 the CRRU UK Best Practice) and impact on use practices.

6. Identify influencers and influences and their impact on attitudes and behaviours, including, advice sources, training programmes, and communications.
7. Compare and contrast knowledge, attitudes, and practices between different types of users (farmers, gamekeepers, professional pest controllers) across the duration of the regime.

Organisations are currently being contacted to plan the KAP, and a small workgroup has been created to plan the implementation in 2026.

2.7 Communications Work Group (Leader, Alan Morris, Envu)

2.71 Purpose

CRRU UKs communication Work Group (CWG) promotes all aspects of Stewardship in all user groups; farmers, game-keepers and professional pest controllers. The team produces both CRRU UK specific and sector specific content and works with key publications and stakeholder groups to disseminate the message amongst all professional rodenticide user groups.

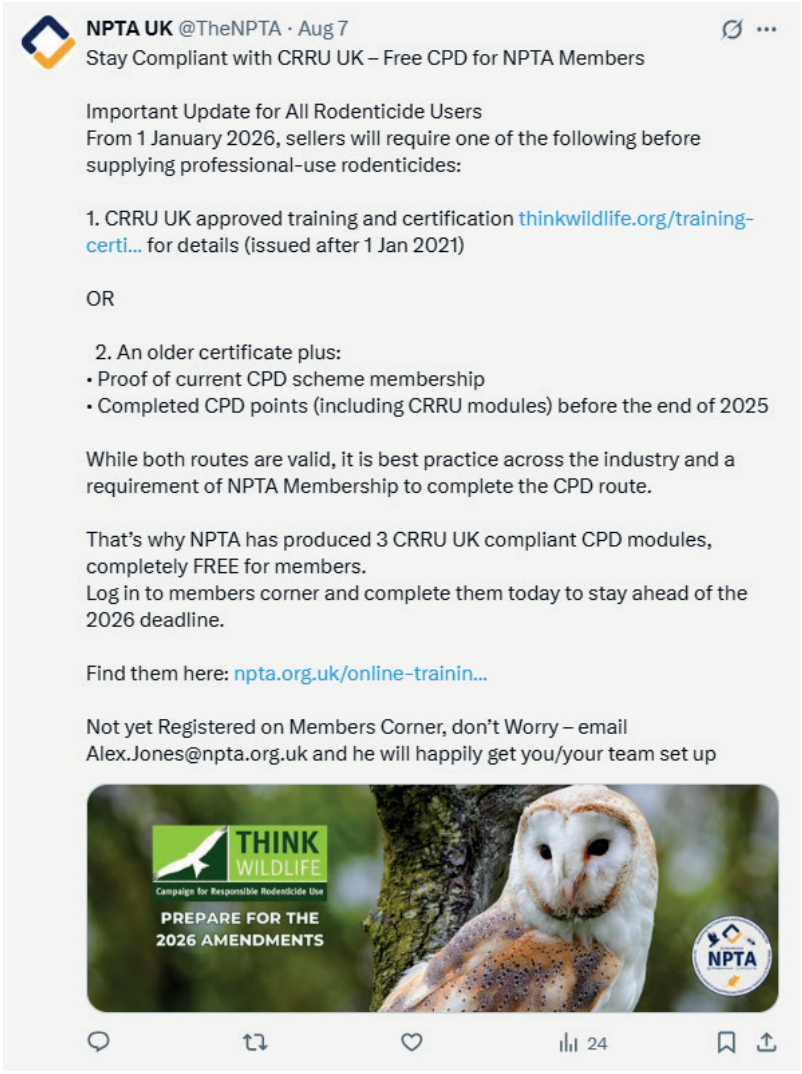
2.7.2 Key focus areas

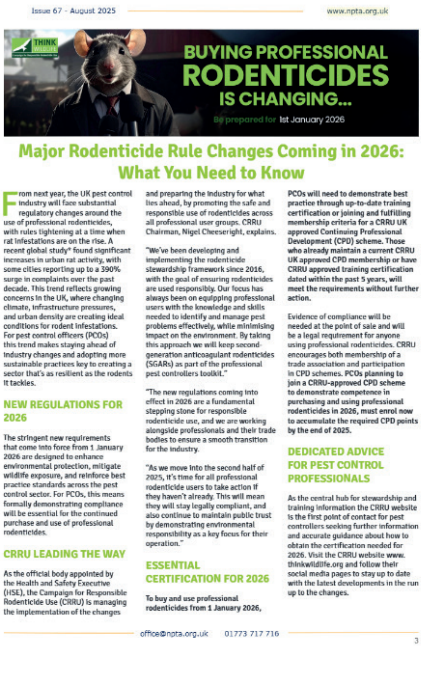
- Engage with key stakeholders in the professional pest control, farming and gamekeeping sectors to promote the 1st January 2026 Training & Certification Changes
- Re-establish the who, what and why of CRRU UK
- Increase reach and engagement through modern day medians including social media and other digital means
- Drive traffic to the website to encourage uptake of CRRU UK approved training courses

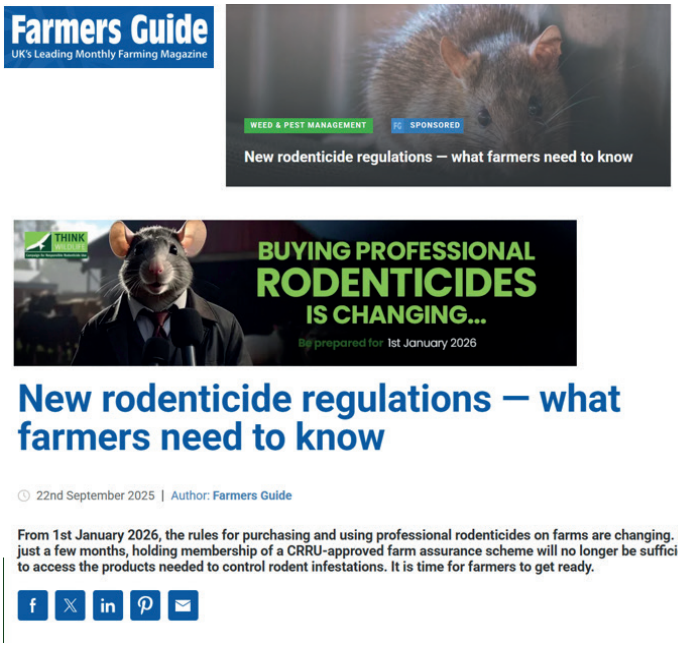
2.7.3 Achievements in 2024-2025

2.7.3.1 Creative campaign

- The CWG has created a range of digital banners and an Open Letter to professional rodenticide users to promote the 1st January 2026 Training & Certification Changes and engage key stakeholders in the campaign.
  The open letter and digital banners were promoted via social media, paid farming media and a google display ad campaign.
- The Open Letter was hosted on the CRRU UK website (https://www.thinkwildlife.org/certification-changes-affecting-rodenticide-buyers/) and achieved 8,750 views. We saw particular success with the Google Display ad campaign which was accountable for driving 39% of total traffic to this page.
- The Open Letter was shared with all working groups and as a result, the key messages achieved good coverage across the press and social media.

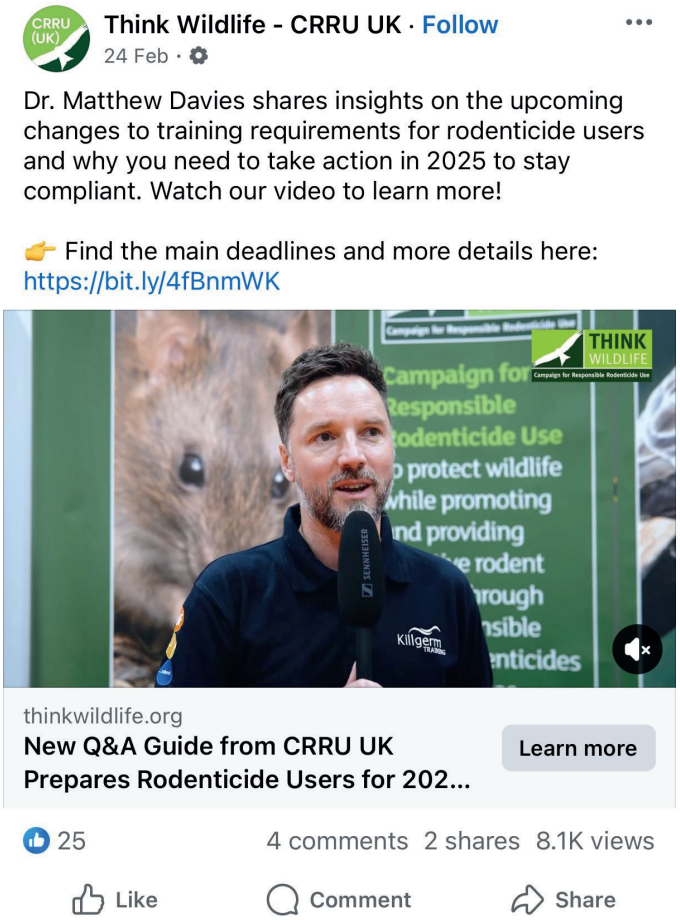




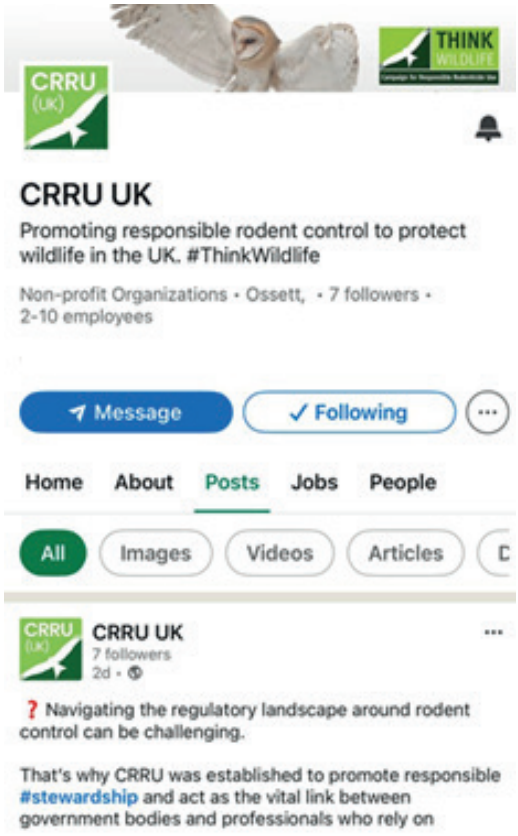


2.7.3.2 Social Media

- The key goal for social media was to drive engagement across X and Facebook.
- Through regularly posting and paid promotion, we have seen a significant increase in follower numbers – rising from 18 Facebook followers as of December 2024, to 652 in October 2025. Engagement on Facebook posts has also significantly increased with a total of 833 interactions in January-October 2025, vs 17 interactions in 2024. We have also achieved over 6,000 clicks to the website from Facebook alone.



- We have not seen the same level of engagement on X, though as X is still a popular channel within the agricultural sector in particular, we will continue to use and test the channel with paid promotion of posts, targeted to the audience.
- Throughout the campaign, we witnessed a lot of mentions of CRRU UK on LinkedIn regarding the 1st January 2026 changes in particular. We have therefore set up a LinkedIn page for CRRU UK and developing the audience and engagement on this channel will become a key focus for communications in 2026. Follow us @CRRU-UK to keep up to date with latest information.



2.7.3.3 Website

- Total number of users increased by 38% to 32,562 users in Jan-Oct 2025 vs. 12 months in 2024, achieved through a combination of social media promotion, google advertising and paid media coverage.
- The number of visits to the training-certification page has increased by 103% to 17,237 views in 2025 vs. 8,485 views in 2024, with paid search, paid social and referral channels being a key driver of this traffic in 2025 vs. 2024, suggesting that comms change in strategy has been successful during the last 12 months.

With the recent changes to the training requirements and the increase in engagement and activity across all channels, has led to an increase in training course uptake by approx 73% across all sectors Q3 2025 vs the same period last year (Jul 1st to Sept 30th).

3. Conclusions and Closing Remarks

The primary focus for CRRU UK during 2025 has been the implementation of the two major strengthening measures, which were first announced at the end of 2023, namely the removal of second generation anticoagulants for open area and waste dump use and the change in proof of professional use training requirements at the point of sale, which come into force from January 1st 2026.

The first of these changes was fully implemented from 1st Jan 2025 and preparation for the training changes is in progress.

We can see that both training course uptake and CPD scheme membership during 2025 are trending very positively towards further enhancing the competence of the professional pest control workforce in Pest Control, Farming and Gamekeeping.

Additionally, 2025 saw CRRU UK and our partners working on the reinstatement of two key monitoring programmes. The residue monitoring we undertake with the UK Centre of ecology and Hydrology will recommence in 2026, testing birds collected in 2025, following new collection procedures being put in place to overcome the recent challenge of avian influenza.

We also welcome SASA as our new DNA sequencing partner. Collaboration with SASA in 2025 has allowed us to test and report well over the 100 rat and mouse tail samples we normally target. This was especially welcome in a transition year as we moved away from APHA to SASA to provide this sequencing capability.

The sample of Norway rats acquired by SASA scientists, and processed through the CRRU UK monitoring scheme, has increased our understanding of the occurrence of anticoagulant resistance in Scotland and demonstrates a higher frequency of anticoagulant resistance in Scotland than in the rest of the UK. CRRU UK continues to promote tail collection in order that we can expand our knowledge of anticoagulant resistance in rodents across the UK, especially in areas for which we have few data points.

As we move into 2026 we plan to continue with the investment we make in communications and engagement with users, using new channels of communication where necessary to get the core message of stewardship across to all professional users.

The success we have had in this regard will be measured in 2026 as we conduct another KAP survey. This is especially timely given the changes we are implementing through 2025 and 2026 and will be a critical piece of data to inform our future work activities.

As a final point we plan to engage with the Government Oversight Group (GOG) early in 2026 to discuss the outcome and recommendations of the four GOG work groups. These work groups have been reported on in previous annual reports and they have looked at a range of stewardship activities to identify areas where further strengthening might be beneficial. We look forward to seeing the final report, discussing the recommendations and working through the details of potential implementation plans. with the GOG.