

POWICK: Terriers succeed where cats and poison failed

Farm vermin are no match for the rat-catcher dogs

BY KATHY DON

01905 742250
kd@thisisworcester.co.uk

RAT catchers using dogs killed 30 of the rodents in one morning on a farm in Powick, near Worcester, after being called in by a farmer to deal with an infestation.

Neighbours complained after spotting rats in their gardens and parish councillor Lyn Derrrett found them swarming over a muck heap next to a public footpath at Lucies Farm.

She also saw dead rats in an adjoining field.

Parish footpaths officer Peter Harris, who visited the site after Mrs Derrett reported the complaints to Powick Parish Council, saw two dead rats in the field, but no live ones.

"The farmer has been digging into the heap and probably disturbed the rats, which burrow into the middle of things like that for warmth," he said.

Farmer Craig Walsh, who called in the rat catchers, said there were no rats in the heap and any seen running over it were probably heading for a nearby stream.

"It has been a wet period and streams are like the M5 to rats," he said.

"We seem to have had a rat explosion and we are doing all we can to control them.

"We have changed to another pest control company, because the methods used by the one we have employed for 15 years didn't seem to be working.

"They were putting down poison bait at feeding points and the rats are supposed to eat it and then go away to die. The new approach is to put poison down the rat holes."

Mr Walsh said he had also tried using cats to catch the rats, after consulting Cats Protection experts last November.

"The cats live out in the barn



A Jack Russell terrier with one of the 30 rats killed on Lucies Farm, Powick, after its owner called in the dogs. Picture by Craig W Walsh.

and have caught two rats so far, so that hasn't been hugely successful," he said.

"Then I was put in touch with a group of rat catchers, who came by on Sunday morning with Jack Russell terriers. They caught and killed about 30 of them."

Mr Walsh said the rats, attracted by chicken feed stored in a wooden barn, terrorised the chickens and greatly increased the feed bill.

He is now building a rat-proof room-within-a-room to use as a feed store.

CMYK