

## **Cluster Flies**



The Council does offer a service to treat Cluster flies at a cost, but the following provides some advice.

### **What are cluster flies?**

Sometimes called “attic flies”, they are a little larger than the common housefly and move sluggishly. They can be recognised by the short, golden coloured hairs on the thorax (the part of the body to which the legs and wings are attached). They usually appear in late autumn or early winter and again on warm, sunny days in early spring. They buzz around the home and gather in large numbers at windows, often in rooms that are not regularly used.

### **Where can they be found?**

The larvae, or maggots, of cluster flies develop as parasites in the bodies of earthworms. The adult flies emerge in late summer and early autumn and seek protected places to spend the winter. In many cases, this is within the walls, attics and basements of homes.

### **Are cluster flies harmful?**

Whilst the flies can be a great nuisance, they do not normally represent any health risk, although they may produce a rather sickly smell when clustered in large numbers and can be most upsetting or unnerving if disturbed during hibernation. Therefore, their presence is not desirable.

### **How to get rid of cluster flies**

Control methods are often ineffective. It is normally not possible to prevent flies from entering buildings. However, control of the flies inside a loft or attic is relatively simple, using a range of insecticidal sprays or smoke formulations. Sometimes a vacuum cleaner is all that is needed to collect the flies. Where the same building is used year after year a thorough cleansing of the affected area may help deter the flies from returning the following year. Make sure that you use any insecticide safely. Read the label and follow any instructions carefully.