

Urban Foxes...



Bolton Council

What do they look like?

A fully grown fox is slightly larger than a male cat. It weighs about 6kgs and is about 60cms long excluding the bushy tail. All have pointed faces, red brown fur with long black hairs, a white throat and chest, and black legs.

Where do they live?

Due to suburban development of their natural habitats, foxes are born and raised in built up areas, and would struggle to survive in open country.

Foxes dens, called earths, have one entrance and one exit (bolt hole), and these are to be found under garden sheds, in dense undergrowth, or in banks of earth.

What damage do they cause?

- **To buildings;** Foxes will make an earth under a house if they can gain access through an airbrick, or by any other means.
- **Within gardens;** although fouling and urinating is the main method of marking their territory, this should not cause a great problem in our gardens, as foxes only shed a few drops of urine at a time. However, foxes will tunnel under sheds or among shrubs, making large piles of earth or sand. Occasionally they will, at certain times of the year (mainly Autumn), dig shallow holes in the lawn when they hunt for earthworms or grubs.

Control

- **Proofing;** To protect chickens, rabbits and other domestic pets, or prevent access to a garden, a barrier of at least 2 metres high with a 30cm overhang should be erected and buried into the ground to a depth of 30cms. Cages and runs for animals should be constructed of galvanised mesh rather than chicken wire.
- **Repellents;** Chemical repellents, approved for use against foxes, are often the most effective way of keeping them away from your property. These products contain pungent chemicals which, although not harmful to animals, will make treated areas less attractive to foxes. Products of this nature can be purchased at most garden centres.
- **Deterrents;** Other methods of keeping foxes at bay are ultra sonic devices and automatic water jet adapters, which connect to hose pipes.
- **Remove food sources;**
 - Keep all domestic waste in refuse bins or closed containers.
 - Protect all animals and livestock.
 - Only put refuse out on the morning of collection.
 - Do not leave food out for other animals e.g. cats, dogs, rabbits. Be careful where you put food to feed birds, this should be in proper bird feed containers.

