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date 24 August 2012

Dear Resident

Environmental Protection Act 1990, Section 79 – nuisance fly investigation

I am writing to you because you are one of many residents in Ditchling and Westmeston that have contacted Environmental Health to report an elevated fly population within the area. Many residents believe a poultry farm at Dumbrells Court Road, The Macs' Farm (Fourfields), is responsible.

I have now completed my investigation into the origin of these flies and my report is enclosed. I have concluded that they are a natural phenomenon that has appeared on a significant scale this year as a result of favourable environmental conditions. Similar conditions in 2011 resulted in an increased population of the same species currently affecting residents and businesses. This species is *Fannia canicularis* (the Lesser House Fly). No evidence has been found to link any specific business premises, including the Macs' Farm, with the proliferation of this insect.

I am acutely aware that warm, humid, wet weather in the future (i.e similar climatic conditions) may result in increases in fly numbers. I appreciate this is a difficult problem to resolve. However there are a number of steps which can be taken to provide limited relief. Many residents have been using permethrin-based or similar insect sprays. Permethrin is an effective and persistent chemical, but it is indiscriminate and will kill or harm many small animals as well as insects. Other measures include the use of fly screens, sticky fly papers, 'red-top'-type liquid traps, and electric zappers. You are probably familiar with most or all of these products.

I would like to reassure you that we will continue to explore any possible measures that may help to make the fly problem more bearable. I will contact you again if I can offer any further advice. It is not possible for Environmental Health Officers to take direct action against the flies. I appreciate you will be receiving this letter over a bank holiday weekend but thought you would like to know the outcome of our investigations as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Steven Teale, Senior Environmental Health Technician, Public Health Team



Director
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