

# ISLINGTON Gazettec1

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# HOSPITAL PLAGUED BY PESTS

**BART'S and the London NHS trust has had to call out pest control officers on 801 occasions since January 2006 – the sixth highest of any NHS trust in the country.**

by **KATHERINE FAULKNER**  
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More than 160 of the call-outs – prompted by concerns over rats, mice, ants, wasps and fleas – were made to areas where patients are treated in the trust's hospitals – which include Bart's, the Royal London and the London Chest Hospital.

And evidence of rats and cockroaches were found on wards at Bart's.

The revelations come just months after environmental health officers uncovered rat faeces, mouse droppings and serious levels of dirt at St Bartholomew's Hospital, in West Smithfield.

A hospital spokesman said the number of call-outs reflected the size of the trust and the fact that demolition and construction work has been underway.

"The trust incorporates a large number of clinical, outpatient, residential and office buildings," said a spokesman.

"The trust's aim is to remain pest free at all times and therefore acts with the highest level of vigilance when dealing with any potential pest issue."

"Call-out statistics held by the trust may include multiple reports on the same issue. It is also worth noting that major demolition and construction work has been underway at two of the trust's three hospital sites since April 2006 which has increased the need for pest control monitoring and action."

But the number of call-outs to the trust is more than five times that of The Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, while Whittington Hospital NHS trust called pest controllers on just seven occasions in the same period. A report from Moorfields Eye Hospital is due to be released on August 19.

Former Bart's Hospital patient Tony Fernandes said: "This number of infestations is very bad. It is a sign that there is debris being left behind."

"A lot of residents of the area will be shocked by this because

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## Having a splashing time!

**LESSONS** are going swimmingly this summer at Ironmonger Row Baths, Finsbury, as youngsters are being taught to swim in their school holidays.

Aquaterra, the company which runs Islington's leisure centres, say 350 Islington children are learning to swim this summer.

This is more than over double the number of children who enrolled last year.

School-aged children who couldn't swim 25metres were offered the opportunity to have 10 free, intensive swimming lessons at Ironmonger Row

and other Islington Council pools in the borough.

Most learners are between five and seven years old and have been developing water confidence, buoyancy skills and the fundamentals of swimming in a fun, supportive environment.

One of the swimming instructors, Matt Lambert, said: "The children are so enthusiastic each day and are really enjoying the water."

For further details, please contact: Tara McNicholas, Marketing Department, Aquaterra Leisure, telephone 020 7689 9838.

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