

Council vows to pay to remove squirrel squatters driving OAPs nuts in Exmouth sheltered accommodation

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Marcus Duran points out where he thinks the nuisance squirrels are getting into his roof space.

Concerns have been raised by residents of an Exmouth sheltered accommodation after asbestos replacement work allowed squirrels to set up home in their roof space.

Council chiefs have vowed to rid sheltered accommodation in Exmouth of nuisance squirrels living in the roof - after elderly residents raised concerns the rodents could pose a danger.

Fears were expressed for the safety of pensioners living in Burnside after the creatures moved in following works to the loft space.

Earlier this year, East Devon District Council (EDDC) removed old asbestos facias and guttering in favour of plastic replacements.

According to resident Marcus Duran, 83, this has given squirrels access to the roof space. He said the council asked residents to fork out £36 to assess the problem. EDDC told the Journal this week it will pay to remove the critters.



Former policeman Mr Duran, who has lived at Burnside since 2006, says that the elderly population cannot risk climbing into the roof space themselves.

He said: “It was the alterations to the building that they made that is causing the problem. The consequences are that the loft has now become available to squirrels. When they put this plastic in, it became a squirrel hallway.

“They [EDDC] say we have got to pay a pest controller to check our loft. To me, it’s a bit out of order.”

Mr Duran is worried that the squirrels could chew their way through electricity wires, causing a fire risk for residents.

He added: “The problem is that they also installed new central heating which comes through the ceiling, rather than under the floor.

“So we have now got squirrels up there and they will chew through the cables.

“What I am worried about, with all the old people who live here, is that if there is a fire, there’s going to be a lot of problems.”

After being approached by the Journal on the matter, EDDC said it will pay for the removal of the squirrels.

An EDDC spokesperson said: “We were aware of the squirrel problem and the contractors did their best to keep the squirrels away from the roof. However, we have been approached by a resident who is angry that they had squirrels in the loft. We can understand his concerns and the council will pay for the removal of the squirrels.”