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A Dublin couple fear they will have to fork out thousands to repair their car after it was destroyed by rats at a city centre flat complex.

The couple's 2017 car had only just passed its NCT when it was destroyed by the rodents, who chewed through the electronics, sending the motor haywire at the Vincent Street Flats in Dublin 8. The woman told Dublin Live: "We were out in the car on Sunday and everything was grand.

"We didn't go out on Sunday but when we went out on Monday, my husband turned on the engine and all the engine management lights all started flashing and beeping and saying the tyres were down and other things were wrong.

"He got out and checked the tyres and they were all fine but then when he was parking he realised the parking sensor wasn't working either."

The worried couple took the car to their mechanic who immediately spotted that the damage had been done by rats who have been plaguing the area for a number of years.

The couple are now waiting anxiously to find out how much it is going to cost to carry out the extensive repairs.

The woman said she sees "hundreds" of rats running around the complex and has urged Dublin City Council to take action to deal with the problem.

"Without the pandemic there was always a rat problem in Dublin anyway but not to the same extent where you're seeing them every time you look out your window," she said.

Similar incidents have taken place at other flat complexes across the city.

In one cases, a woman's car was so badly damaged by the critters at Cuffe Street that it was written off.

Local TD Chris Andrews has written to DCC city manager Owen Keegan calling for a dedicated rat squad to be set up and a "Rat Tzar" appointed to deal with the growing rodent problem in the city.

He told Dublin Live: "The level of complaints from tenants, mostly in flat complexes is off the scales.

"This is probably because the bin storage areas are mostly uncovered and poorly kept and in poor conditions.

"The seagulls pulling food out of bins and dropping it is not helping at all. The bins need to be covered in and maintained properly.

"Many parents are unwilling to let their kids out in the play areas because they are afraid they will catch something from the rats.

"Tenants have had to be moved out because of the damage rats have done internally. Cars written off because rats have destroyed the electrics.

"Now is the time the council responded to this issue with the energy it deserves."

A rat recently ran through Deputy Andrews' legs while he was talking to a resident in the inner city.

He added: "The council need to appoint a go to person who can have the power and resources to tackle this issue once and for all.

"People know there is always going to be rats around generally. However the levels of rats in and around flat complexes is completely unacceptable.

"I am calling on the council to appoint a squad of staff and a senior person to tackle the rats in Dublin and be accountable to councillors and directly to the Housing Manager."

Dublin Live has contacted Dublin City Council for comment.