

SEAGULL DRAFT REPORT – INITIAL INVESTIGATIONS AND
SUGGESTED ACTIONS - LISKEARD TOWN COUNCIL SEAGULL
WORKING GROUP

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Overview

Following complaints about gulls from residents of Liskeard town, it was agreed at the facilities meeting on the 18th July 2017 to form a Liskeard Town Council, (LTC) seagull working group (SWG). The SWG would aim to investigate possible solutions to the complaints, advise about defensive nesting gulls and reduce the mess caused by gulls attacking rubbish placed out by residents.

Seagull Working Group Members

Councilors forming the SWG are:

Chair: Cllr D Ambler.

Members: Cllr C. Whitty, S.Pike, A.Clarke and Mr T Mission, (LTC Facilities Manager)
S.Pike resigned from the council in 2018 and is no longer a member.

Background, The Gull Nuisance

After reports in the local press, (with complaints to LTC), the Facilities committee organised a meeting attended by Liskeard residents and agreed to establish a SWG.

It is worth reviewing the comments made during the public meeting, to support councillors considerations of the recommendations in this report. These public comments are copied below.

Reference: FACILITIES COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday 18 JULY 2017.

'17/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of Public present were given the opportunity to raise their concerns and suggestions regarding the nuisance caused by urban seagulls. Although the problem was widespread it was also localised with some areas effected whilst nearby areas not. The main areas noted at the meeting, among others were Pengover, Lower Lux Street and Castle Park / Bodgara Way. The main topics raised were Issues of aggressive gulls, mess caused by scavenging gulls, noise from gull cry's, particularly in the evening / night. The request for free issue of Gull proof sacks. Complaints of households putting refuse out several days ahead of the collection day. The need for a separate food waste collection. The need to maintain weekly bin collection - not fortnightly. A more direct course of action to reduce the number of gulls. Greater policing and enforcement where households were not taking measures to control their bin waste. The frustration caused when you take all the right steps to protect your property but neighbouring properties do not. Better Seagull proof street furniture, bins etc. A variety of bin options as not all households have bin stores or the ability to manage items such as wheelie bins. That the problem would need to be tackled by everyone as local action would only move the problem to the next street. That the removal of the food source was key in tackling the problem.

In addition there was a common request to be kept informed, possibly via the local press, and for on-going public consultation on possible measures to tackle these

issues.’

Following this discussion, the Facilities committee agreed to:

181/17 SEAGULL NUISANCE

Having received numerous communications via email, press and social media, together with the personal presentations received in the public participation session of this meeting the Committee discussed and considered the measures and advice that the Town Council could offer to households and businesses in order to minimise the nuisance caused by nesting seagulls, ahead of the 2018 nesting season.

Councillor Hawken informed the Committee regarding the initial stages of specification setting currently underway for the Cornwall Council waste contract which is due for renewal in March 2020 and stated that feedback from the issues raised regarding the seagull nuisance should be communicated to Cornwall Council by the Town Council and any other interested parties.

It was agreed that action and advice should be split into three categories; Short, Medium and Long term and include items such as updates and advice on Social Media, Town Council Website and other publications. Public consultation and feedback. Supplies of the Seagull proof sacks to be made available to purchase from the Town Council office in West Street and the Tourist Information Centre in Pike Street. Surveying areas where waste sacks were congregating in larger numbers. Investigating and costing control measures such as de-fertilisation of seagull eggs. Greater consideration of future planning applications to ensure adequate amenity and bin space is provided and that building design reduces the opportunity for nesting sites. Communication with Cornwall Council regarding their waste strategy and the need for greater waste security – domestic bins – seagull bags, communal bins, collection frequency and recycling.

Armed with the information received, and to enable the Town Council to formulate a coherent strategy which could be costed and presented ahead of the Autumn budget setting Councillor Hawken proposed, Councillor Clarke seconded and the Committee **APPROVED** the setting up of a working group consisting of Councillors Ambler, Clarke, Pike and Whitty with a first meeting planned for Thursday August 3rd 2017.

Strategy Undertaken.

As the gull issue has continually resurfaced on the LTC agenda, (and previously CDC) over several years, with a corresponding amount of time taken by staff, the SWG has spent a lot of time researching the various suggested solutions to provide a substantial response that can be justified on cost and effectiveness. This report is as much about justifying why we are not taking a particular course of action, as much as justifying why we should consider taking a different particular course of action.

It was during the research, for example reading the debate in the House of Commons, that it quickly became apparent that no clear and agreed on solution exists to deal with problem gulls. For example, the advice from the RSPCB about the use of Raptors would appear to be negative, yet according to Patricia Gibson (North Ayrshire and Arran) (SNP) Anglesey has experienced success with the use of hawks. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-02-07/debates/AE1CEE4F-5DF9-467C-9F36-657C51315D1C/Seagulls>

This conflicting advice can be seen with the studies into the use of false eggs, where some councils have stated some success, yet discussions between the SWG, the Facilities chair, (2017) and contractors raised questions over cost and effectiveness. The minutes with the meeting held with a local contractor can be requested as a Part II item.

As any deterrent method such as false eggs could require the commitment of LTC budget over several years, (for example Looe Town Council spent £3360.00 with their contractor during 2018 season, plus various adverts in The Cornish times, reference Seagull Control [Amenities Report to Tourism & Amenities Committee – 18 th July 2018]) it was decided by the SWG to engage with an urban gull expert Mr Peter Rock. This, it was hoped, would provide an evidence-based decision behind any budget and also allow an effective monitoring of any chosen solution.

The SWG reported to the Facilities committee with a recommendation to engage Mr P Rock, initially to support the gull project with advice on Liskeard Radio, at a cost of £50. Reference: FACILITIES COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday 21 November 2017

At the same meeting the aim of budgeting for a gull survey and report carried out by Mr P Rock was suggested. This budget item was allocated in the LTC budget process and agreed at council on January 2018. See below.

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Autumn Plants	714	1,000	1,000				
LTC Hanging Baskets & Plants	0	0	250				
Sub-total	1,289	6,100	3,100				
Community Support Projects							
Seagull Control Measures	0	0	1500				Presentation and survey
Dilapidations							
Dilapidations (main buildings)	15,504	15,500	0				Allocated to PH refurb
Rapsons	1,512	1,500	0				
Thorn Park	1,512	1,500	0				
Street Furniture	1,512	1,500	0				
Sub-total	20,040	20,000	0				
TOTAL	194,347	234,566	235,548				
Receipts							
Public Hall Receipts	-5,737	0	0				
Discounted Receipts	-18,026	-20,000	-20,000				
Standard Receipts	-6,696	0	0				
Cornwall Council Receipts	-3,355	0	0				
Foresters Hall Receipts	-302	0	0				

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Facilities Budget 2018-2019.

The report was received and forms the basis for the suggestions made in this report to council.

Summary of Recommendations

- 1) It is recommended that LTC promote on a regular basis good waste management and that CC are encouraged to share the promotion of this message.
- 2) It is recommended that LTC liaise with Looe and Polperro to develop a joint engagement programme for 2019 using local press and social media.
- 3) It is recommended that LTC ask CC to enforce persistent problem areas of waste management with due process.
- 4) It is recommended that LTC support the upgrading of public bins to be gull resistant where possible and required – suggested budget of £2000 for 2019 to replace 6 bins as requested assuming £300 per bin, (consider LTC logo).
- 5) It is recommended that the Facilities/LTC committee consider the provision of gull proof sacks for Liskeard as part of its budget process. The cost per sack is £3.50. The Support Service manager kindly supplied the current number of homes on the electoral roll, which is 5,217. Not everybody will have registered so in reality a few more, and new houses being occupied at a rapid rate at Trevethan Meadows and the end of Old Road. Total cost: £18259.5 for 5,217 houses at £3.5 per bag, (LTC maybe able to get bags at £3 each).
- 6) It is recommended that the Facilities committee considers the likely growth of the Liskeard gull population (against the growth of the town), and whether LTC should fund a programme of control. Assuming a minimum of 10 years for the programme at an average of £3000 per year, the cost would be £30,000+.
- 7) It is recommended that LTC provide false eggs through the Tourism Information Centre, but the advice provided in Mr Rock's report be included. Residents can then make an informed decision.
- 8) It is recommended that based on Mr Rock's report and advice that residents are encouraged to gull proof their buildings with safe netting and or spikes. It should be noted that the sensible use of spikes and netting can reduce nesting sites.
- 9) It is recommended that LTC encourage residents and businesses to clear old nest sites, with regular social and media press releases.
- 10) It is recommended that the Facilities committee ask Planning to consider gull issues while considering planning applications, especially in relation to the position of chimneys and the designs of roof tops.
- 11) It is recommended that LTC have suitable disclaimers for any advice given.
- 12) It is recommended that the Facilities team explore the options relating to night time lighting, whether for the whole town, or just certain areas. Advice from other councils who turn their lights off, police and CC should be sought. Further work on noise reduction should be considered.

Detailed Recommendations

These recommendations are broken into the principle points raised as gull nuisances and should be read in conjunction with the report from Mr P Rock.

Gull Mess and Waste

It should be noted that rubbish does not make gulls, instead parent gulls make gulls.

However, rubbish being torn open by gulls, cats and other animals is a frequent complaint to LTC and is a symptom of poor waste management by some residents of the town.

It should be noted that gulls will happily feed on fields, gardens and even other animals. An absence of waste may not reduce the desire of gulls to live in Liskeard. Mr Rock's report, page 27.

Enforcement of Waste Message

It is recommended that LTC promote on a regular basis good waste management and that CC are encouraged to share the promotion of this message.

During a meeting with Biffa, and Cornwall Housing a shared effort was considered.

The cost of this promotion message could be reduced if a collaborative effort with neighbouring councils was developed.

It is recommended that LTC liaise with Looe and Polperro to develop a joint engagement programme for 2019 using local press and social media.

It is recommended that LTC ask CC to enforce persistent problem areas of waste management with due process.

Following a meeting with Biffa in 2017, Biffa kindly upgraded some of the bins around Lux cross. Anecdotally this appears to have reduced mess in that area.

It is recommended that LTC support the upgrading of public bins to be gull resistant where possible and required.

Gull Proof Sacks

The SWG discussed the issue of gull proof sacks during 2017, but as Biffa and CC were due to carry out trials of gull proof sacks in various locations around Cornwall, (including Liskeard) and as there would be some cost to providing sacks, it was felt prudent to wait for the results of these trials.

The conclusion of these trials was made available during 2018 and is circulated as a reference. In summary the gull proof sacks appear to have been a benefit in reducing street litter and reduce the frequency of bags being ripped open.

It is recommended that the Facilities/LTC committee consider the provision of gull proof sacks for Liskeard as part of its budget process. The cost per sack is £3.50. The Support Service manager kindly supplied the current number of homes on the electoral roll, which is 5,217. Not everybody will have registered so in reality a few more, and new houses being occupied at a rapid rate at Trevethan Meadows and the end of Old Road. Total cost: £18259.5 for 5,217 houses at £3.5 per bag, (LTC maybe able to get bags at £3 each).

As some residents may have an issue with space for storing rubbish in their dwellings, the SWG considered the idea of having central storage areas for rubbish. However, this could mean that LTC becomes technically responsible for the storage of the rubbish until collection, and create difficulties if the rubbish was subject to arson et cetera.

Gull Population

As stated in Mr Rock's report, the gull population in Liskeard is likely to rise to between 215 and 319 breeding pairs – though this figure is a best guess at present. Page 14, Gull report. It should be noted that as Liskeard expands the gull population could increase. With the additional nesting sites, the density of gull locations could thin, but colonies will remain grouped around particular areas of the town.

Controlling gull populations can often involve legal process and negative reactions in the press and from local residents.

The impact of controlling population growth with methods such as false egg replacement is discussed in Mr Rock's report. It would appear that for every 100 eggs replaced, that only 15 birds would have returned to the Liskeard population if the eggs had been left alone.

Looe town council has carried out false egg replacement, and members may wish to consider their reports. The follow points have been taken from Looe Town Council's minutes. It should be noted we do not know the starting population for this work in Looe and the work relates to eggs replaced not population size. From conversations it appears the scheme has run for between 8-10 years.

Seagull Control (Amenities Report to Tourism & Amenities Committee – 18th July 2018)

Under our Seagull Control programme, our contractor visited 96 properties and replaced 256 eggs this year. This is a marked increase on last year and also compared with 2015 figures: 2017, 80 properties 222 eggs

2016, 92 properties 280 eggs

2015, 76 properties 196 eggs

We have also received a couple of complaints regarding the aggressive behaviour of gulls, particularly on the beach

(see under Correspondence).

There is not an easy solution to this and would need to be in conjunction with ELTT who owns the beach.

Budget: £3360.00 + various adverts in Cornish times – reference Transaction Detail by account, June 2018.

Seagull Control 2017

This year, (2017) there were 80 properties visited with 222 eggs replaced. This compares with 92 properties and 280 eggs in 2016 and 76 properties and 196 in 2015 - Amenities Manager Report, 17th July 2017

Seagull Control 2016

Gull Control – £3024.00, (contractor) advert for service, £167.04 (Cornish Times). May 2017
Transaction control

Budget 2016 - Gull Control – June 2016 £3,264.00

It should also be noted that gulls can live for 25 -30 years and migrate for the first five years of their lives.

It is recommended that the Facilities committee considers the likely growth of the Liskeard gull population (against the growth of the town), and whether LTC should fund a programme of control. Assuming a minimum of 10 years for the programme at an average of £3000 per year, the cost would be £30,000+.

It is recommended that LTC provide false eggs through the Tourism Information Centre, but the advice provided in Mr Rock's report be included. Residents can then make an informed decision.

Gull Proofing buildings.

It is recommended that based on Mr Rock's report and advice that residents are encouraged to gull proof their buildings with safe netting and or spikes. It should be noted that the sensible use of spikes and netting can reduce nesting sites.

It is recommended that LTC encourage residents and businesses to clear old nest sites, with regular social and media press releases.

It is recommended that the Facilities committee ask Planning to consider gull issues while considering planning applications, especially in relation to the position of chimneys and the designs of roof tops.

It is recommended that LTC have suitable disclaimers for any advice given.

Gull Noise

For those living under gull nests the noise can be a drain on the quality of their lives, especially during night time hours. For those working early hours, this can be particularly problematic.

One point of discussion is whether night time lighting allows gulls to see available food sources, and hence encourages night time noise.

Some town councils turn off their street lights after midnight, with the possible benefits of cost saving, sleep and health improvements, dark skies and reduced noise. Crime risk, resident safety needs to be balanced with these discussions. Smart phones have a torch built in, which could reduce the risks of walking home at night time. A number of local villages have no street lighting.

It is recommended that the Facilities team explore the options relating to night time lighting, whether for the whole town, or just certain areas. Advice from other councils who turn their lights off, police and CC should be sought. Further work on noise reduction should be considered.

Gull Message

A number of press releases and social media updates were made during 2017 and early 2018. This is by far the most cost-effective method of reducing gull complaints and supporting residents to live with gulls effectively.

Discussions have already been undertaken with partner agencies such as CC, Biffa, Cornwall Housing and neighbouring towns.

It is recommended that LTC develop a strong social media and communication strategy of living with gulls. Cost savings could be made by working with partner agencies and neighbouring councils, such as Looe and Polperro.

A message on how to behave around swooping gulls, (waving hand and stick above head) should be promoted.

Gull Conclusion

The SWG has worked to identify cost effective, measurable solutions to the gull nuisance.

LTC should be prepared for continued complaints relating to gulls. A strong communication approach to improve the way residents live with gulls will help to reduce the number of complaints and reduce the nuisance caused by noise, waste and swooping.

A programme to manage or reduce the gull population would require a long-term commitment, with a predicted starting cost of £3000 per year, based on neighbouring towns.

Reducing night time noise should be investigated further.

Indices

References and Supporting Councils

LTC has been supported by a number of external agencies, individuals and bodies these are referenced with a thanks for their support below.

- Cornwall Council, CC
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, RSPCB
- Cornwall Housing Association
- Looe Town Council
- Swansea City Council
- Torpoint Town Council
- Padstow Town Council
- Biffa
- Defra
- Mr Peter Rock.
- Parliamentary debate - <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-02-07/debates/AE1CEE4F-5DF9-467C-9F36-657C51315D1C/Seagulls>

In addition, a number of contractors have been contacted, but as this may result in a commercial relationship, their names are withheld from this report.

Gulls – A definition

There are many types of gulls that reside in the UK, and it is important to understand the differences as various breeds can be covered differently by law, and following the debate in the House of Commons, the legal status of particular gulls may come up for review. The gulls most likely to be of concern to LTC is the Common Gull and Herring Gull; gull types have not been confirmed as yet, as the SWG are still gathering data on the problem gull sites within the LTC area.

To aid the reader, the various breeds natural to the UK include:

- 1) Black Headed Gull - Not really a black-headed bird, more chocolate-brown - in fact, for much of the year, it has a white head. It is most definitely not a 'seagull' and is found commonly almost anywhere inland. Black-headed gulls are sociable, quarrelsome, noisy birds, usually seen in small groups or flocks, often gathering into larger parties where there is plenty of food, or when they are roosting. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/b/blackheadedgull/#jSslsp5OlXCLVPUi.99>
- 2) Common Gull - It looks like a small, gentler version of the herring gull, with greenish legs and a yellow bill. Despite its name, it is not at all common in some inland areas, though often abundant on the coast and in some eastern counties. They are now seen more often in towns

and on housing estates in winter. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/c/commongull/#o5hXOSf1LPO2vzOc.99>

- 3) Glaucous Gull - A large pale gull with white wing tips. Younger birds are creamy white or more biscuit coloured, depending on age. All have pale wingtips. It is bigger than a herring gull and bulkier, with a fiercer expression, larger beak and squarer head than the smaller but virtually identically-plumaged Iceland gull. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/g/glaucousgull/#hylwPkmBVvpOphHc.99>
- 4) Great Black Backed Gull - A very large, thick-set black-backed gull, with a powerful beak. Adults are blacker than the smaller lesser black-backed gull. It has a heavy flight and can look quite hunched when perched. It will fight off other gulls and chase them to snatch food. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/g/greatblackbackedgull/#wBWWumDZoOTmyG0u.99>
- 5) Herring Gulls - Herring gulls are large, noisy gulls found throughout the year around our coasts and inland around rubbish tips, fields, large reservoirs and lakes, especially during winter. Adults have light grey backs, white under parts, and black wing tips with white 'mirrors'. Their legs are pink, with webbed feet and they have heavy, slightly hooked bills marked with a red spot. Young birds are mottled brown. They have suffered moderate declines over the past 25 years and over half of their UK breeding population is confined to fewer than ten sites. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/h/herringgull/#PeV97d8o4jXihPkG.99>
- 6) Iceland Gull - A medium-size gull, smaller than most herring gulls. It has a rounded head and smallish beak, giving it a dove-like expression. It has very pale plumage and white wing tips, and, like the glaucous gull, it is sometimes referred to as a 'white-winged' gull. It is a winter visitor, with small numbers of birds, usually seen singly. It breeds in the Arctic and winters as far south as New York and Britain. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/i/icelandgull/#qQUHGAs2YapciVsS.99>
- 7) KittyWake - A gentle looking, medium-sized gull with a small yellow bill and a dark eye. It has a grey back and is white underneath. Its legs are short and black. In flight the black wing-tips show no white, unlike other gulls, and look as if they have been 'dipped in ink'. The population is declining in some areas, perhaps due to a shortage of sandeels. After breeding birds move out into the Atlantic where they spend the winter. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/k/kittiwake/#PLzcltsyjG1Z4aQw.99>
- 8) Lesser Black Backed Gull - Slightly smaller than a herring gull, the lesser black-backed gull has a dark grey to black back and wings, yellow bill and yellow legs. Their world population is found entirely in Europe. After declines in the 19th century due to persecution they increased their range and numbers. This expansion has now halted and there is serious concern about declines in many parts of its range. The species is on the Amber List because the UK is home to 40% of the European population and more than half of these are found at fewer than ten sites.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/l/lesserblackbackedgull/#dVf8lrJO3vgXYITp.99>

- 9) Little Gull - A small, dainty gull. Adults in summer have black heads, while young birds have a black mark on each wing which forms a 'W' pattern. In flight adults show a pale grey upperwing, with no black wingtips, and a very dark grey underwing. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/l/littlegull/#Dd8H4jClS56rjI10.99>
- 10) Mediterranean Gull - Slightly larger than a black-headed gull, with an all-black head in the breeding season. Adults have white wing-tips and underwings, younger birds have more wing markings. It has a large, slightly drooped beak, bright red when adult. A very rare UK bird until the 1950s, it is widespread in winter and breeding in ever increasing numbers. Its present UK breeding population makes it an Amber List species. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/m/mediterraneangull/#S5hpOTGXycwPyCVH.99>
- 11) Yellow-Legged Gull - The yellow-legged gull has only recently been recognised as a species in its own right, having previously been considered to be a race of herring gull. Adults have darker grey backs and wings than herring gulls, but are paler than lesser black-backed gulls. They have more black in the wing tips than herring gulls and smaller white 'mirrors'. The legs are bright yellow, there is a red ring around the eye and the bill is yellow with a large red spot. In non-breeding plumage, the head is less streaked and whiter than herring gulls. Juvenile yellow-legged gulls are very similar to juvenile lesser black-backed gulls, but tend to be whiter-headed and start to gain a grey 'saddle' on their backs quickly as they moult to first winter plumage. Immature birds gain adult-like characteristics as they mature over the course of five years with the legs turning yellow and dark grey feathers replacing the brown and black immature feathers. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/y/yellowleggedgull/#sy29vpxOH879vBjk.99>

Illustrations and a full guide to identifying gulls can be found here: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/browse-bird-families/gulls.aspx> and <http://www.arkive.org/c/british-seagulls>

Legal Status of Gulls.

It should be noted a recent debate in the House of Commons: 7th February 2017, Seagulls, has suggested altering the legal protection around gulls. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-02-07/debates/AE1CEE4F-5DF9-467C-9F36-657C51315D1C/Seagulls>

All species of gulls are currently protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

This makes it illegal in England, to intentionally injure or kill any gull or damage or destroy an active nest or its contents. In addition, the Mediterranean gull is protected under Schedule 1 of both acts making it

illegal to intentionally or recklessly disturb the birds at or close to their nest or to disturb their dependent young.

Under certain circumstances control measures may be necessary and lawful. Simple nuisance or minor damage to property are not legally sanctioned reasons to kill gulls. The UK administrations can issue licences, permitting nests to be destroyed or even birds to be killed if there is no non-lethal solution and if it is done to prevent serious damage to agriculture, the spread of disease, to preserve public health and safety and air safety, or to conserve other wild birds.

Read more at

<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/gardening-for-wildlife/animal-deterrents/gulls/urban-gulls-and-the-law/#T8ylaWefZbqVbLCm.99>

<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/our-work/our-positions-and-casework/our-positions/wild-birds-and-the-law/wildlife-law/wildlife-and-countryside-act/>

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-02-07/debates/AE1CEE4F-5DF9-467C-9F36-657C51315D1C/Seagulls>

Gull Map

To fully understand the gull problem within the LTC area it was important to get some statistics on the number of gulls.

The SWG have established a map and reporting sheet at the LTC office, and publicized this through the local press and social media.

It is expected that as the 2017 nesting season has nearly finished that not all nesting sites have been recorded, and it is likely more data will be made available in 2018.

It is hoped the map and recording sheet will be continued into the future, so the success of any programme to reduce gull numbers can be studied.

A copy of the 2017 map is attached.

It should be noted that LTC responded to a roofing/nesting urban gull investigation carried out by the RSPCB in 2015; it is believed no numerical data was provided. The RSPCB provided a copy of their report with a list of possible solutions, for reference these included:

- Don't put rubbish out until the day of collection.
- Put waste, especially all food-related waste, out in gull-proof containers.
- Don't litter and ensure any litter, especially edible litter from fast food outlets, is promptly removed.
- Reduce the amount of food waste sent to landfill.

- Reduce the amount of `edible litter' ending up on streets, particularly arising from fast food outlets.
- Provide `gull-proof' public litter bins.
- Discourage people from feeding gulls – either intentionally or accidentally (gulls in urban areas come to associate people with food and they can't distinguish between that offered to them and that which some birds try to snatch from people). Some town councils have imposed the ability to fine people who disregard notices against deliberately feeding gulls in some areas.

References

- 1) <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-2887>
- 2) <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-02-07/debates/AE1CEE4F-5DF9-467C-9F36-657C51315D1C/Seagulls>
- 3) <http://www.arkive.org/c/british-seagulls>
- 4) <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/browse-bird-families/gulls.aspx>
- 5) <https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/our-work/our-positions-and-casework/our-positions/wild-birds-and-the-law/wildlife-law/wildlife-and-countryside-act/>