

Gloucester City Council

Factsheet

Public Health: Seagulls



Background

An increasing trend in seagull populations to nest inland is of particular concern to owners and occupiers of buildings in Gloucester, particularly during the spring to late summer breeding season. The move inland appears to correspond to changing fishing practices at sea, the plentiful nesting sites provided in modern urban areas and the availability of food from landfill sites.

Gulls are large, aggressive and noisy birds and can spread disease organisms picked up whilst scavenging in rubbish tips and sewage works. Damage can be caused from nesting material blocking gutters, drains, gas and ventilation ducts. Gull excrement (Guano) is unsightly and its corrosive nature can cause structural damage. Physical damage can also be caused by the birds nest building and pecking activities.

The Solution

Culling can only be carried out under licence where there is an issue of public health and in a method that causes the minimum distress to birds. Herring, Lesser and Greater Black Backed are the only gulls that can be treated in this manner. Proofing is the only really effective way to keep gulls off a building though keep in mind they will often move to a neighbouring site.

First consider the "pressure" the birds are exerting on the building, i.e.; heavy pressure, where the birds are nesting and roosting at night, medium pressure in areas where birds are resting and feeding during the day and light pressure in areas of occasional daily use.

Egg Oiling Service

Within the city centre the City Council does currently run a free egg sterilising service. This will not stop the birds from nesting but will ensure they sit (relatively quietly) on the nest for longer and produce no noisy offspring - the cause of most of the disturbance. For more information phone Ivan Hughes 01452 396327.



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Gloucester City Council Tel 01452 396396 Fax 01452 396340
Herbert Warehouse Email enviro@gloucester.gov.uk
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HEAVY PRESSURE

Netting

50mm mesh net can be used on vertical surfaces but a larger mesh size (100mm) is more successful on horizontal surfaces to prevent gulls walking on the net. Horizontal nets should be suspended 400-600mm above the surface to be protected to prevent gulls from building up nests by dropping nesting material through the net.

Gull Grid Wires

This is still in the early stages of development and is a system using parallel rows of wires to prevent gulls folding their wings and preventing them from landing. It has some limited success when properly installed.

Point Systems

The Chimney spike was developed by Scarborough Council and used successfully by them for over ten years, this method is a system of vertical stainless steel needles for use on chimneys and flat roofs. Gutterpoints are now also available which are fixed to the leading edge of the gutter preventing nest building. Gullpoints can be brought pre-assembled consisting of strips with two or three 150mm vertical points which can be glued into position. These may be more effective in medium pressure areas.

MEDIUM PRESSURE

Consider point systems or standard pigeon bird wire for use on roof ridges, window cills and other appropriate locations.

LIGHT PRESSURE

The "Ecopic" Point System

The system for pigeons can be used against gulls, consisting of strips of 150mm length wires which can be fixed to perching platforms.

The "Tippler" System

A pre-assembled, plastic strip of architectural style spikes resembling fancy ridge tiles, which, when fixed to the ridge, move about and discourage gulls from perching.

The "Daddi - Long Legs" System

A circular, pre-assembled, rotating system with long wires which move about and discourage birds from landing. They are particularly useful on silo tops, ventilation plants and other structures requiring routine maintenance as they can easily be detached and re-fixed.

SUPPLIERS AND INSTALLERS

The advice of specialist pest control companies should be taken when dealing with this problem, the following is a list of some of the companies that may help. However, the council does not recommend or endorse their products or services.

Killgerm Chemicals Ltd

Denholme Drive, Ossett, West Yorkshire WF5 9NB
TEL: 01924 268400 FAX: 01924 264757
WEBSITE: www.killgerm.com

Network Pest Control Systems

Unit 9B Bankhall Park, Wharf Street, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 2DG
TEL: 01925 411823 FAX: 01925 414994
EMAIL: info@network-pest.co.uk
WEBSITE: <http://www.network-pest.co.uk>

Industrial Pesticides

7 - 29 Brasenose Road, Liverpool L20 8HL
TEL: 0151 9337292 FAX: 0151 9223733
WEBSITE: www.industrialpesticides.co.uk

Barrettine Environmental Health

St. Ivel Way, Warmley, Bristol BS30 8TY
TEL: 0117 9600060 FAX: 0117 9614122
WEBSITE: www.barrettine.co.uk

Rentokil Initial Pest Control (Installation only)

11 Court Road, Frampton Cotterell, Bristol BS17 2DE
TEL: 01454 774686 FAX: 01454 250203
WEBSITE: www.rentokilpestcontrol.co.uk

This is by no means an exhaustive list and there are many other companies offering similar products and services.

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