

Seagulls – an attractive feature of the seaside, or a problem?

We realise seagulls, whilst a defining feature of any seaside town, do cause problems.

The law makes it difficult to cull them, as they're a protected species. It is illegal to remove nests and eggs or to kill birds because they are disliked, considered noisy or thought to be damaging to property. Applications to cull are normally refused.

One major thing the community can do to help is to eliminate the birds' food sources. **Don't feed them and don't drop food outside. Placing extra waste beside your wheelie bin can also attract them.**

We'd also ask anyone who can, to come and ask for a wheeled bin rather than bags. They are much more effective at keeping the gulls out and where practical we will accommodate bins.

As responsible property owners we try to make sure gulls do not nest on our buildings – and we would urge other property owners to do this too.

Removing nests before eggs are laid or after the young have flown can help. Our staff can also advise building owners how to stop birds nesting there in the future. Spikes, mesh and other low-cost measures can be effective. Seagull-proof bags are expensive, time-consuming and untested, and we are not using them at this time - though we are always happy to consider new solutions.

We continue to survey and monitor breeding pair numbers and hope that, with a combination of the methods above, we can as a community control the problem.