

Seagull Advice

Frequently asked questions

Is it illegal to feed seagulls?

There are no bye-laws to say you cannot feed seagulls, however, we have asked all our food businesses to display 'Please Don't Feed the Seagulls' posters, and we have put up advisory metal signs in these areas to discourage people from feeding seagulls. The key message is not to feed seagulls, for the following reasons:

- It affects their health
- It encourages them to steal food and waste
- It makes them aggressive towards humans
- It causes nuisance

What can be done about seagulls ripping open refuse sacks?

Seagulls have discovered that plastic refuse sacks often contain an easy source of food. We are aware of this problem and encouraged all residents to act responsibly and make sure that their own refuse is put out for collection in a suitable container for collection.

Wheeled bins with lids have been provided across the district and every household either has a suitable bin or special 'seagull proof' sack which helps to eliminate this problem.

What can be done about the noise?

Unfortunately, there is nothing that can be done specifically about the noise. However, you should also see the advice below about seagulls nesting on your property. It may be appropriate to consider bird proofing works to your own roof and other suitable nesting sites and if the seagulls are on someone else's property, you may wish to speak to the owner or occupier of that property and ask them to consider proofing their property too. Any commercial pest control contractor would usually be happy to advise you in this respect.

What can be done about fouling?

Unfortunately, there is nothing that can be done specifically about fouling. However, you should also see the advice about seagulls nesting on your property below. It may be appropriate to consider bird proofing works to your own roof and other suitable nesting sites and if the seagulls are on someone else's property, you may wish to speak to the owner or occupier of that property and ask them to consider proofing their property too. Any commercial pest control contractor would usually be happy to advise you in this respect.

What can be done about aggressive gulls dive-bombing and attacking people?

This behaviour is almost always because the adult gulls are protecting their chicks. However, often the best solution is to simply try to avoid the birds and wait until the chick is big enough to fly. In circumstances where gulls are clearly physically attacking people to the extent that they can be shown to present a danger to public safety or health, it is possible to operate under a licence from **Natural England** to take action. In doing so the person must take care that they comply with all the conditions in the licence.

What can I do about seagulls nesting on my property?

Herring gulls are protected under the [Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981](#). However if there are public health or public safety concerns, it is possible to operate under a licence from [Natural England](#) to allow control measures to be taken. This is explained in more detail in the [information for property owners' leaflet](#).

What can I do about injured birds?

It is common to find a chick on the ground, having fallen from its rooftop nest. If the chick is not injured, it must be left where it is - the parents will continue to look after it. If it is in danger it can be moved a short distance to a safer place. If it is injured you may wish to report an animal in distress (sick, injured or trapped animal) to the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.

What can I do if I see cruelty to birds?

If you witness an act of cruelty you may wish to report the matter to the RSPCA National Cruelty and Advice line on 0300 1234 999.