

# The regulation of urban gulls in the UK: a study of control measures

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Lesser Black-backed Gulls *Larus fuscus*

**Abstract** This article presents the results of research conducted into the measures adopted by local authorities across the UK to regulate gulls nesting in urban areas. These birds are associated with a range of problems in towns and cities, including noise, mess and aggression. The article examines how local authorities have adopted two categories of control measures to deal with these problems: measures against gulls and measures in relation to people. The implications of these measures for how we think about and live with urban-nesting gulls are explored.

## Introduction

This article addresses the regulation of urban-nesting gulls in the UK. Gulls are associated with numerous problems in towns and cities across the UK (Rock 2005), chiefly: the mess and disease risk from droppings and scavenging from bins; aggression (both when stealing food and when defending nests and chicks); and the noise of territorial birds early in the morning in residential areas. Every year between April and July, urban-nesting gulls become a fixture of the national

and local news media, being cast in terms such as ‘divebombers’, ‘attackers’, ‘terrorisers’, and ‘killers’ (fig. 1). In July 2015, the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, called for a ‘big conversation’ about the ‘seagull’ problem (*The Guardian*, <http://bit.ly/2SfBajK>); and in February 2017 this was further debated by MPs in the House of Commons. Meanwhile, local authorities implement control measures ranging from bird-proofing devices on buildings (such as bird-netting or roof spikes) to public information campaigns in an effort to



Fig. 1. Urban gulls in the news.

address the concerns of local residents and to enable a happier coexistence of gulls and people (fig. 2).

This article outlines the measures that have been adopted by local authorities across the UK. It begins by addressing the question of how gulls are represented in popular and political discourse. It is against this backdrop that calls are made for more action to be taken against urban-nesting gulls. The article then presents research carried out in 2017 into the control measures taken by local authorities. These fall into two categories: measures against gulls and measures in relation to people. Finally, the implications of these control measures for how we think about urban-nesting gulls are explored.

### The representation of urban gulls in popular and political discourse

Herring *Larus argentatus* and Lesser Black-backed Gulls *L. fuscus* began nesting at urban sites in the UK in the 1940s, but it was not until the 1970s that they were really

flourishing in towns and cities across the UK (Rock 2005). Common *L. canus* and Great Black-backed Gulls *L. marinus* were also reported at urban sites from the 1980s (Raven & Coulson 1997). As this behaviour increased, the treatment of gulls in the news media began to shift. Prior to the mid twentieth century, most references to gulls in national and regional newspapers appeared in affectionate poems about 'seagulls', but in July 1957 an article in *The Times* described the 'ominous precedent' of an 'attack' on a woman by a gull in Argyll. The reporter was clearly surprised by the event (see fig. 3) and concluded that after the 'Argyllshire incident it will be all too easy to read a threat in the bird's beady eye and a menace in the curve of his beak'.

Nowadays, this way of thinking about gulls has become pervasive, fuelled by the rise in the urban gull population and the apparent collapse in our collective capacity to live alongside these birds (see Moss 2016,

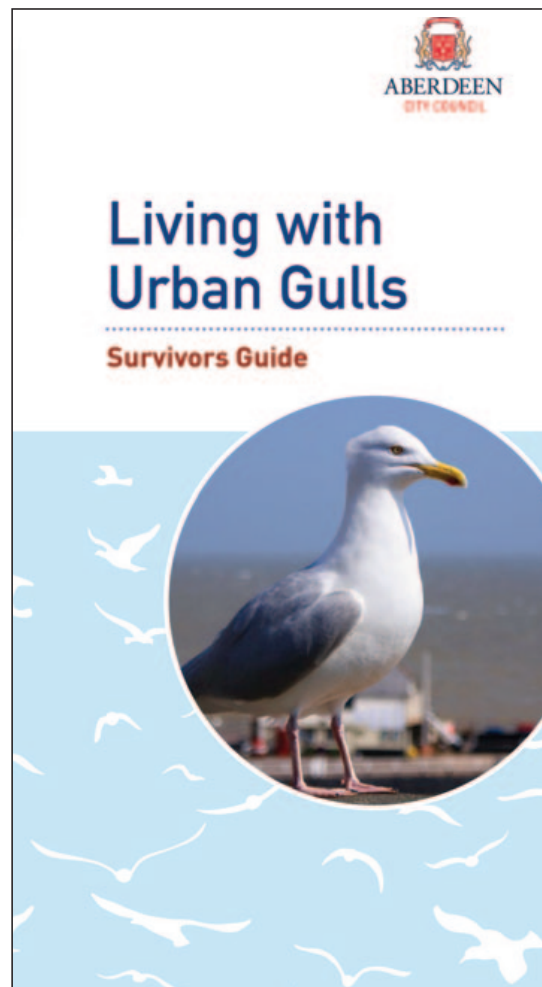


Fig. 2. The cover of an information leaflet produced by Aberdeen City Council.

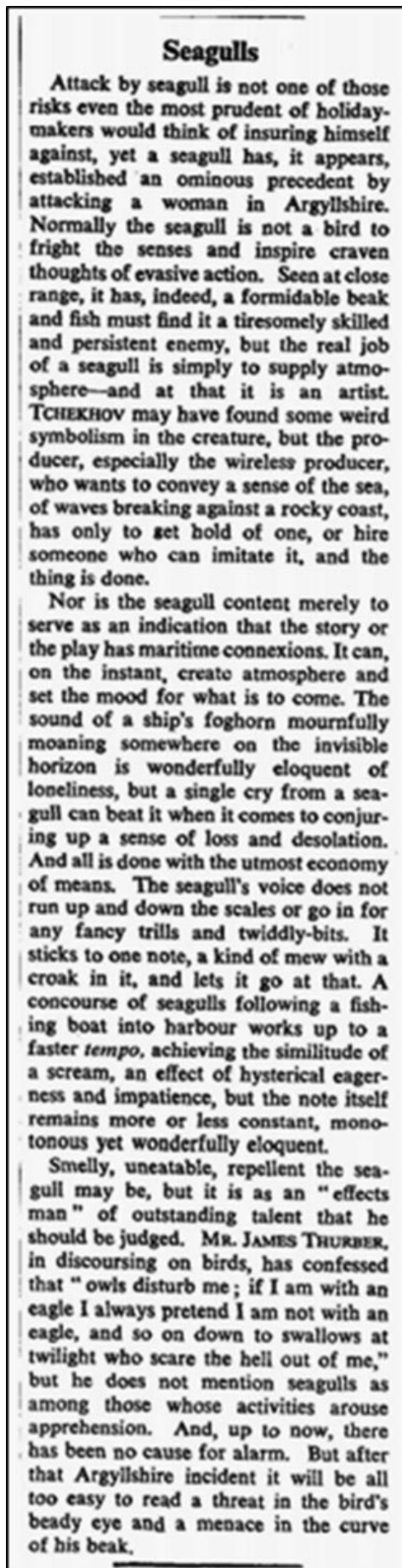


Fig. 3. 'Seagulls' (*The Times*, 12th July 1957).

Nicolson 2017). Local authorities now expend significant resources trying to come to grips with gull-related problems, with measures adopted ranging from control (both direct control and measures to deter birds from settling to breed) through to public information campaigns and the deployment of antisocial behaviour measures against individuals who like feeding the gulls.

A YouGov poll in 2015 indicated that 44% of the public supported the idea of a 'gull cull' (YouGov 2015); 36% of respondents were opposed to a cull and 20% answered 'don't know'. In July that year, in the midst of a flurry of newspaper articles about urban gulls, and following what a House of Commons briefing described as a 'spate of seagull attacks across the country' (House of Commons Library 2017), came David Cameron's interview with BBC Radio Cornwall (referred to above), just a few weeks after his Chancellor, George Osborne, had axed Government funding for a £250,000 research project into urban gulls. Cameron's intervention nevertheless succeeded in drawing attention to what other politicians had already identified as a significant problem.

In February 2017, there was a House of Commons debate on the subject of 'Seagulls'. The debate was introduced by Oliver Colvile, then MP for Plymouth Sutton and Devonport, who relished the 'opportunity to talk about an issue that has plagued many people' not only in his constituency but also 'throughout the UK'. MPs went on to express a number of common concerns, such as the effect of 'increasingly aggressive seagulls' on tourism in their constituencies; the health and safety risks posed by urban gulls to people and pets; the general nuisance – the 'noise and filth' – caused by gulls; the effect of gulls on the quality of life of constituents; and the importance of 'shoppers, residents and tourists [feeling] safe when they are outdoors'. Then there were the more constituency-specific references: in Aberdeen, the sheer size of the gull ('the Aberdeen seagull is the size of a large dog'); in Cornwall, these 'flying rats' scavenge and steal 'whenever they can'; in Largs (Ayrshire), 'nothing can really be safely eaten on the shorefront without risking life and limb at the hands, or... beak, of a vicious seagull'; in Maryport (Cumbria), gulls have in the past caused delays to postal

deliveries; while in Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland), there was ‘a risk that people are having to take the law into their own hands to deal with these difficult and aggressive birds’, meaning that ‘there are people wandering the streets of Berwick with firearms who really should not be doing so’.

MPs did suggest some solutions to this apparent urban gull problem, and called for a coordinated approach and the sharing of good practice. But what was mainly presented was a narrative that emphasised the need to make people feel safe and to end the ‘gull wars’ apparently raging across the country. Gulls were portrayed quite clearly as an urban problem.

### Research questions and methodology

At the end of the House of Commons debate, in response to MPs’ demands for amendments to existing wildlife legislation and more resources for local authorities to tackle the issue of urban-nesting gulls, Thérèse Coffey (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) stated that the ‘current legislation provides sufficient powers to take appropriate action to tackle the problems caused by gulls’, allowing ‘a range of methods that those authorised can use to manage birds humanely, and it permits population control, nest clearance and egg control.’ She pointed out that gulls can also be controlled under general or individual licences, and made it quite clear that problems with urban-nesting gulls are primarily for the local authority in question to resolve.

But to what extent do local authorities perceive there to be a problem with urban gulls in their area? And what measures (if any) do they take in response to this? To address these questions, I examined the measures that local authorities across the UK have adopted in relation to urban-nesting gulls.

The websites and publicly available documents of all 418 principal councils across the UK were examined. Where there were references to gulls in both council material and in local news reports (accessed through online searches), or where there were more than two references in either (and pertaining specifically to gulls within that local area), I sent a

freedom of information (FOI) request to the council in question. In that request, I asked for information on the following: the number of complaints about gulls received by the council during 2010–16; measures taken by the council against gulls since 2010 (such as egg or nest removal) and the cost of such measures; measures taken directly against members of the public since 2010 (such as fixed penalty notices) or to deter them from feeding gulls (such as street signage) and the cost of such measures; and whether the council was using, or had considered using, antisocial behaviour measures in relation to bird feeding (of gulls and more generally).

In August–September 2017, I identified and sent FOI requests to 75 local councils: 49 (out of a possible 353) in England, 16 (32) in Scotland, 9 (22) in Wales and 1 (11) in Northern Ireland; 74 full replies were received (fig. 4).

### Complaints about urban gulls

The number of complaints about gulls received by each of the local authorities in question during 2010–16 are given in Appendix 1. These figures give some idea of the perception of the ‘urban gull problem’ in



**Fig. 4.** All but one of the 75 councils contacted responded fully to my FOI request (the map shows the geographical spread of councils involved).

**Table 1.** Measures against gulls and the number of councils reported using these measures.

	description	no. councils
Bird-proofing of buildings	Measures such as the installation of spikes, bird netting, and the use of repellent gels are used to prevent nesting on rooftops.	19
Egg and nest removal	Eggs and nests are removed from selected buildings repeatedly throughout the breeding process. Dumfries & Galloway Urban Gull Task Force (2017) reported using this measure quite extensively.	16
Egg replacement	Real eggs are replaced with imitation eggs, the aim being to stop aggressive behaviour caused by gulls defending their young. Replacement rather than removal also prevents gulls from relaying a new clutch.	6
Egg oiling	Egg oiling is used to prevent hatching. Some councils consider this to be less effective than egg/nest removal, since young gulls exploring future breeding sites are attracted to places where other gulls are sitting undisturbed. As with egg replacement, oiling may be more effective than removal because birds that lose their eggs early on may relay.	4
Chick removal	Chick removal is the most controversial measure taken against urban-nesting gulls, with chicks removed from nests and euthanized. It was used by Anglesey, Dumfries & Galloway and East Lothian councils. Dumfries & Galloway Urban Gull Task Force (2017) reported the most extensive use of this measure, removing a max. 240 chicks in 2016.	3
Deployment of birds of prey	Birds of prey such as falcons or hawks are flown over nesting sites to disrupt breeding gulls.	8
Shooting of birds	Dundee Council reported that one measure against urban-nesting gulls is the 'shooting of aggressive birds'.	1
Gull-proof bin bags	Three councils reported distributing or making gull-proof bin bags available to householders but, in practice, the measure is far more widespread.	3
Gull scarers	Cardiff Council (2013) described measures including: loud bangs, screaming noises, waving streamers, plastic Eagle Owls, balloons resembling threatening eyes and gull distress calls.	2

each area but have some limitations. For example, not all councils record complaints about gulls, while some do not record this information in a searchable format (for example if gull-related complaints are subsumed within general categories of animal or noise nuisance). And of course not every individual perceiving or experiencing a problem will report it to the council. Complaint figures can also be affected by greater publicity about urban gulls; for example, the Dumfries & Galloway Urban Gull Task Force (2017) noted that complaints about gulls spiked at the time of an Urban Gull Summit in 2008, which attracted high levels of publicity. Nonetheless, we can hypothesise that those councils which are taking the most gull-related measures are likely to be in areas where there are high (or

increasing) numbers of gull-related complaints and where there are sufficient resources to respond effectively.

### Measures adopted to control urban gull populations

The data supplied in response to questions about the control of urban gull populations indicated that two broad categories of measures are commonly employed: (1) direct and deterrent measures to control and manage gulls, and (2) direct and deterrent measures adopted in relation to people.

#### 1. Measures against gulls

Measures taken directly against gulls fall into two broad categories: *preventive measures*, which are oriented towards protecting buildings and preventing nesting; and *disruptive*

**Table 2.** Measures in relation to people.

	description	no. councils
Information	Chiefly to discourage people from feeding gulls.	41
For local businesses	Advisory measures (e.g. management of food waste, bird-proofing) and distribution of anti-bird-feeding posters and stickers for local businesses to display.	10
General advisory letters	Pre-emptive advice to households.	10
Direct contact with bird-feeding individuals	Sending warning or informal letters to individuals caught feeding gulls.	11
Tenancy Agreement Notices	Highland Council reported occasional use of Tenancy Agreement Notices.	1
Community Protection Notices	Under Section 43(1) of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, local authorities in England and Wales have the power to issue Community Protection Notices (CPNs) to individuals [or businesses] if (a) the conduct of the individual or body is having a detrimental effect... on the quality of life of those in the locality, and (b) the conduct is unreasonable. Twelve councils reported using CPNs (or warning notices, which precede a CPN) in relation to bird feeding (not necessarily gull feeding specifically).	12
Public Spaces Protection Orders	Under Section 59 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, local authorities can make a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) if satisfied that 'activities carried on in a public place... have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. The Order identifies a public space and stipulates requirements or prohibitions for that area. It can have effect for up to three years. At the time of writing, East Devon District Council and West Dorset District Council have introduced PSPOs that prohibit gull feeding in defined areas. Another four local authorities reported considering this measure in relation to bird feeding in general.	2

*measures*, which are aimed at disrupting nesting and breeding (table 1). Preventive measures include spikes and bird-netting to prevent nesting on rooftops; the use of heavy-duty 'gull-proof' bin bags to prevent gulls from accessing waste; and gull 'scarers' (such as plastic owls) that are aimed at scaring away gulls. Disruptive measures include the flying of birds of prey (to deter gulls from nesting), egg and nest removal, egg oiling (to prevent hatching), egg replacement (replacing real eggs with imitation eggs) and chick removal.

All these measures aim to remove, or decrease the numbers of, gulls from urban spaces; and a number of councils reported committing significant resources to this end, particularly in the first year of any control programme. Yet it is clear that many councils

have not been successful. In Cardiff, which has a large urban gull colony (see Rock 2011), the council considers that gulls are quite simply 'unlike all of the other "problem species"' (Cardiff Council 2013). There are two reasons: 'First, gulls are not confined to a single centre of activity. They move widely and are perfectly capable of making a round trip of 100 km in search of food in only a few hours. Second, they are considerably more intelligent than most birds and despite the best efforts of pest control agencies to deter or remove them, colonies have continued to expand' (ibid.). Denbighshire County Council (2017a) concluded that there 'is a risk that the proposed actions will have very little impact, but the actions are in part about the Council seeking to do what it can and in part about educating the general public.'



**Fig. 5.** A poster used by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.

## 2. Measures in relation to people

These are geared towards regulating interactions between people and gulls (table 2). They include general measures, such as signage (see fig. 5), public awareness campaigns and the distribution of advice and information to local businesses and households in areas where there are particular problems. There are also more targeted and disciplinary measures, such as warning letters sent to individuals caught feeding the birds, and antisocial behaviour measures (which in extreme circumstances regard bird feeding as antisocial behaviour to be punished accordingly). Targeted measures pose various challenges in terms of enforcement. For example, Moray Council has an online complaint mechanism which enables individuals to report ‘feeding activity’ that they have witnessed; a complaint leads to the reported individual being visited by the Community Warden. The Council admitted, however, that ‘few individuals have been willing to be named [as] witnesses’, meaning that the warden has to witness deliberate feeding of gulls (Moray Council 2016). In some cases this leads to the application of antisocial behaviour legislation, which also (inevitably)

carries its own enforcement challenges. The practical difficulties in enforcing antisocial behaviour law in this context are sometimes considered to be outweighed by the symbolic benefits of having such a law prohibiting bird feeding, and sending ‘a strong message... that the practice [of feeding gulls] would not be welcomed or tolerated’ (Denbighshire County Council 2017b).

## The implications of these control measures

Many councils reported significant expenditure on control measures, often running to tens of thousands of pounds per year. The figures supplied were not directly comparable (some councils offered estimates only and others no figures at all), but the following examples give some indication: Dumfries & Galloway Council spent £25,700 on gull management in 2016, down from a peak of £42,000 in 2012; Aberdeen City Council spent £26,724 in 2015/16, down from £87,489 in 2010/11; and Swansea Council spent £5,571 in 2016/17, down from £9,842 in 2014/15. Despite this, many councils reported that they have not managed to crack the gull ‘problem’.

But even if there is a big question mark over the effectiveness of the control measures (e.g. Rock 2005, 2013, Calladine *et al.* 2006), the implications for how we think about urban gulls are much clearer. Control measures reinforce the idea that it is undesirable for human and gull populations to share urban environments. Urban gulls are portrayed in the literature of local councils, as well as the media, as urban pests.

It is interesting that while urban Feral Pigeons *Columba livia* are often presented as similarly problematic (e.g. Jerolmack 2008, 2013, Escobar 2014), urban gulls are portrayed as having an added edge: their capacity to attack. The rhetoric around urban gulls is often quite focused on this aspect. Scarborough Borough Council, for example, encourages residents to report ‘gull attacks’ by completing an online ‘seagull mugging and nuisance report form’. Between March and August 2016, 22 such ‘gull muggings’ were reported to the council (Scarborough Borough Council 2016).

Not only are urban-nesting gulls

portrayed as a nuisance but so are the people who like feeding them. Bird feeding is portrayed as something that not only exacerbates the ‘bad behaviour’ of the birds, but is also bad behaviour in its own right, antithetical to cooperation in the community. This is reflected in the use of antisocial behaviour legislation but also measures such as the strongly worded warning letters sent to individuals. A sample warning letter that I received from Barrow Borough Council outlined various hazards posed to neighbours as a consequence of feeding gulls (see fig. 6).

It seems that there is only a narrow space in local authority discourse for the possibility that urban gulls and people might coexist peacefully in urban spaces, the notion being that gulls are part of a particular ‘place’ – the seaside. For example, in March 2017 Denbighshire County Council (2017a) recognised ‘that many people like “seagulls”, they are a traditional part of our seaside environment, and in their own right are impressive birds’. This was put even more firmly by the Council’s Head of Planning and Public Protection the same day: ‘Many seagulls are protected and we need to be mindful that many see them as being an integral and traditional part of our coastal communities. What we want to see is a change in people’s behaviour so that gulls are not fed from food and refuse left on our streets.’ Indeed, further research on the whole range of attitudes towards gulls in our towns, both positive and negative, would be valuable, since the positive aspects are so often glossed over.

Beyond local authority discourse, there are some areas of public support for urban-nesting gulls. Public support for the colony of Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla* on and around the Tyne Bridge in Newcastle is an excellent example. The Tyne birds are the furthest-inland-

nesting Kittiwakes in the world. In 2016, a hotel chain submitted a planning application for bird-proofing measures – netting and an electric-shock system – to be fitted on one of the Tyne Bridge’s towers used by the nesting Kittiwakes. One thousand objections to the application were received, and it was later withdrawn amidst a row over who had installed anti-bird spikes that were subsequently seen on the bridge tower. In 2018, anti-bird netting was installed around the Quayside. Once again, there was public uproar, which only increased as photographs of young Kittiwakes trapped and dying in the netting circulated on social media. Public support for the Tyne Kittiwakes is, however, an exceptional case (and perhaps related to the more ‘gentle’ nature of this smaller and more marine member of the gull family); and if it represents a challenge to the measures adopted in relation to these birds, it does not do anything to challenge the dominant conceptualisation of urban-nesting gulls as pests.

### Conclusions

Urban-nesting gulls are not the most popular residents of towns and cities across the UK, and the data gathered from local authorities and presented here show that authorities take

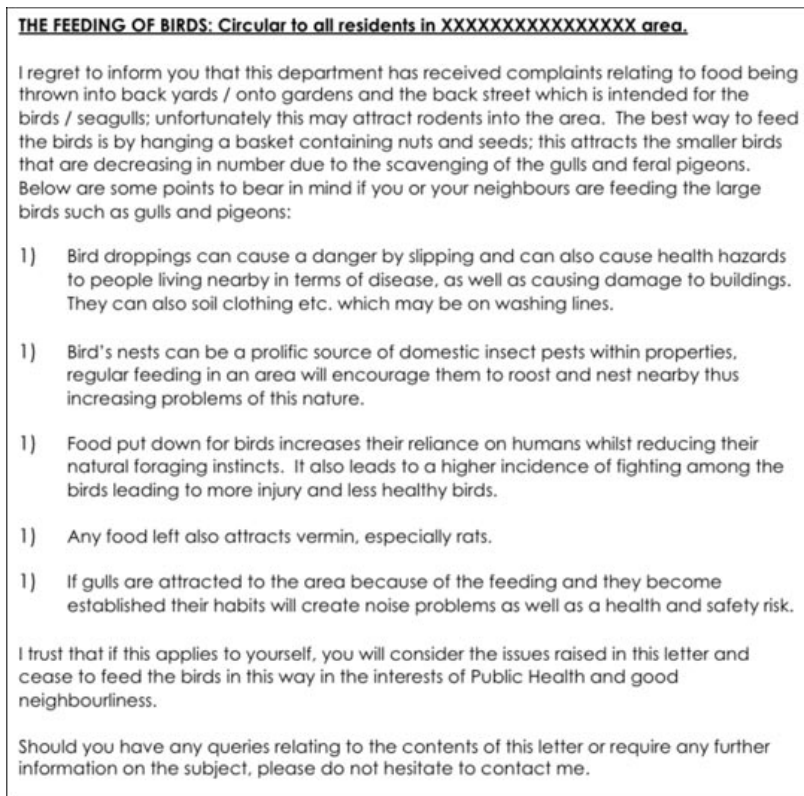


Fig. 6. A sample warning letter from Barrow Borough Council.





**162.** Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* at café table at Sennen, Cornwall, May 2013.

a range of measures to regulate them. There is quite clearly a vicious circle that we need to consider here: a certain way of thinking about gulls underpins the measures that local authorities currently take to regulate them (and to regulate people in the name of regulating gulls); and this way of thinking is then reinforced by these measures adopted, which depict gulls as urban pests. In a context in which gulls are pushed out of urban spaces, the possibility of coexisting with gulls – of sharing our urban environments with them and thinking differently about them – becomes ever-slimmer. Rather, and to return to the 1957 newspaper article in fig. 3, it becomes ‘all too easy to read a threat in the bird’s beady eye and a menace in the curve of his beak’.

#### Acknowledgments

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Sarah Trotter teaches law and is especially interested in how law constructs particular categories (like 'the child' and 'public space'). She became interested in the question of how urban-nesting gulls are represented in the popular imagination following a spate of news reports both at the national level and in the local newspaper of her home town, Aberystwyth, about the problems of coexisting with gulls in urban spaces.

**Appendix I. Complaints about urban gulls.** Councils were asked how many complaints were received about seagulls in each year during 2010–2016. Note that '–' in a cell may denote any of the following: that the council does not have records for the year in question, that it does not record these data at all, that it does not record the information in a searchable format, or that compliance with the request would exceed the appropriate cost limits under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Council	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Aberdeen <sup>i</sup>	254	234	250	171	176	240	215
Aberdeenshire	17	36	55	54	72	114	113
Anglesey	8	5	5	3	2	5	6
Angus <sup>ii</sup>	419	409	408	495	544	560	516
Argyll & Bute <sup>iii</sup>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Barrow	13	14	63	93	67	60	58
Bath & North East Somerset <sup>iv</sup>	–	–	–	–	–	–	53
Belfast	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Birmingham	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Blackpool <sup>v</sup>	136/x	2/x	1/15	11/31	79/41	27/45	7/34
Bournemouth	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Brighton & Hove	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Bristol	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Cardiff	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Carlisle	–	13	36	52	48	42	16
Ceredigion	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Cheltenham	42	47	40	47	50	29	40
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	0	3	2	–	1	2	2
Conwy	1	2	4	40	32	25	12
Cornwall	–	46	44	80	88	73	95
Denbighshire	–	–	30	81	19	11	15
Dover	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dumfries & Galloway	106	51	48	67	63	53	38
Dundee City	31	86	33	43	76	83	114
East Ayrshire	77	105	102	110	135	84	65
East Devon	25	40	27	32	59	64	52
East Lothian <sup>vi</sup>	22	12	31	44	32	59	11
East Riding <sup>vii</sup>	–	4	16	5	25	17	19
East Suffolk	5	10	16	14	14	18	18
Eastbourne (joint response with Lewes)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Edinburgh	173	33	49	28	46	34	32

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Fenland	–	–	–	–	–	2	1
Gloucester	–	17	26	62	31	73	50
Great Yarmouth	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Gwynedd	15	9	4	9	8	2	6
Hartlepool	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Hastings	–	2	8	10	10	7	11
Havant <sup>viii</sup>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Herefordshire	1	2	37	70	54	21	23
Highland Council	0	5	2	12	13	4	19
Inverclyde	–	–	–	–	15	17	20
Ipswich	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lewes (joint response with Eastbourne)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Liverpool	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Moray	0	0	9	21	23	37	59
North Devon	2	1	2	2	14	18	29
North Tyneside	–	–	–	–	7	6	3
Northumberland	2	4	8	16	11	9	7
Norwich	7	6	3	5	2	7	4
Pembrokeshire	4	2	2	6	4	4	0
Perth and Kinross	4	1	14	17	15	18	13
Plymouth	–	–	–	–	11	24	6
Poole	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Portsmouth	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Scarborough <sup>ix</sup>	7	8	10	33	13	44	100
Shepway	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Ayrshire	14	15	15	28	35	29	26
South Lakeland	0	1	6	2	6	9	10
South Somerset	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Tyneside	–	–	–	–	6	20	17
Southampton	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Southend-on-Sea	–	–	–	3	1	3	3
Sunderland	–	73	82	83	54	33	25
Swansea	0	1	1	3	3	0	1
Tendring	10	9	7	10	13	10	9
Torbay	15	13	23	2	0	0	0
Vale of Glamorgan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Warrington	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
West Dorset	6	5	5	17	15	19	10
West Dunbartonshire	22	40	47	17	49	50	58
Weymouth & Portland	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Wiltshire	–	–	–	–	3	2	2
Worcester	0	0	0	1	6	6	27
Wyre	–	–	–	7	29	19	26

### Notes

- i These figures represent the number of ‘contacts’ that Aberdeen City Council had with members of the public regarding seagulls.
- ii Angus Council included egg and nest removal treatments as complaints, hence the particularly high numbers.
- iii Argyll and Bute Council did not record seagull incidents separately from other types of bird complaints; during 2012–16, the Pest Control teams received four reports of incidents involving birds.
- iv Bath and North East Somerset Council noted 53 complaints/service requests in relation to gulls since April 2016. Prior to this, complaints were not recorded in a manner that is reportable.
- v Blackpool: the first figure represents ‘generic bird incidents’ and the second figure represents ‘complaints about feeding pigeons/seagulls’ received by the Environmental Protection office.
- vi East Lothian: These figures relate to ‘a general category of complaints relating to birds’.
- vii East Riding: These figures represent ‘service requests’ received by the council and relating to seagulls.
- viii Havant Borough Council: ‘Answer less than 5 although actual number not recorded.’
- ix These figures relate to all ‘service requests’ received by Scarborough Borough Council in relation to each specific year.