

Jonathan Carr on behalf of the Green Party

The Council Notes that:-

1. The gull population in Bath has increased substantially over the past decade to over 2,000. While current actions have reduced the rate at which the population is increasing, the population continues to increase and will not decrease to more tolerable levels without further action.
2. Studies of bird culls (Murton et al. 1972, Haag 1984, Kautz 1985, 1990, Kautz & Malecki 1990, Sol & Senar 1995, Schnitzler 1999) which have found that bird populations quickly return to or exceed previous levels after a cull, as culled birds are replaced by younger, healthier birds. Studies of use of egg removal (Rösener 1999) and chemical contraceptives (Elder 1964, Neubauer 1994) have shown these measures alone to be ineffective at causing substantial decreases in bird populations.
3. Reducing the food available to gulls was the first recommendation of the Planning, Transport and Environment PDS report on Urban Gulls in November 2013.
4. Waste is a major source of food for gulls in Bath, and that gulls tear open bags and strew waste across streets while trying to extract edible waste.
5. The Current waste collection contracts must be renewed by October 2017.
6. This renewal presents a key opportunity to create a permanent decrease in the gull population by renegotiating waste collection to reduce the amount of food available to the gulls from waste.
7. The council notes that separation of waste into different categories and minimising the amount of general waste will reduce the food available to gulls.
8. The council accepts the above scientific findings and that bird populations are controlled most effectively by limiting the availability of food.

The Council resolves to:

9. Use humane methods of population controls and to avoid culling.
10. Undertake what measures are available to it within the scope of existing contracts to reduce the food available to gulls through waste.
11. Give priority when renegotiating waste collection contracts to;
 - Reducing the quantity of edible waste accessible by gulls and other scavengers.
 - Maximising the proportion of waste that is recycled, reused or composted and minimising the proportion of waste, particularly food waste, that is sent to landfill.
 - Minimising the impact of waste collection arrangements on the neighbourhood environment
12. The council will work with neighbouring authorities to reduce gulls' access to food in the region outside BANES.