

Background information on kittiwakes and herring gulls

Scarborough Borough Council is undertaking a review of the issues around the public nuisance caused by herring gulls and kittiwakes in the borough. The objective of the review is to identify some practical, effective, affordable and sustainable measures to help reduce this nuisance.

We would like to know what your experiences are of the different kinds of problems caused by these two species of seabirds, and what actions you think could be taken to help alleviate them by the Council, residents, tourists and local businesses, subject to the necessary legal and financial constraints.

Constraints

- Legal – lethal control can only be used where there is a proven risk to public health and safety and it will not adversely affect the conservation status of the species
- Financial – we are seeking to identify cost-effective interventions



What you need to know about kittiwakes

A gentle looking, medium-sized gull with a small yellow bill and a dark eye. It has a grey back and is white underneath. Its legs are short and black. In flight the black wing-tips show no white, unlike other gulls, and look as if they have been 'dipped in ink'. The population is declining in some areas, perhaps due to a shortage of sand eels. Kittiwakes nest on ledges in certain parts of

Scarborough town centre during the summer breeding season, and feed out at sea. After breeding birds move out into the Atlantic where they spend the winter.



What you need to know about herring gulls

Herring gulls are large, noisy gulls found throughout the year around our coasts and inland around rubbish tips, fields, large reservoirs and lakes, especially during winter. Adults have light grey backs, white under parts, and black wing tips with white 'mirrors'. Their legs are pink, with webbed feet and they have heavy, slightly hooked bills marked with a red spot. Young birds are mottled brown.

They have suffered moderate declines over the past 25 years and over half of their UK breeding population is confined to fewer than ten sites. They are now listed as being of conservation concern.