

# SEAGULL INFORMATION LEAFLET



Seagulls can be attracted to urban areas by the availability of discarded food. They are natural scavengers and will stay close to areas where they can find food, sometimes causing a nuisance and can be aggressive to humans. They can be more aggressive when they are protecting their young.

## YOU CAN HELP TO DISCOURAGE THEM FROM BEING A NUISANCE

### ROLE OF FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

The Council has no responsibility or statutory obligation to control gulls and cannot offer any practical assistance regarding gull deterrents or, in the case of the defined area of Balbriggan, the removal of nests or eggs.

This leaflet is for the general information of residents and property owners in the Fingal area.

### RESIDENTS:

- Think of your neighbours and don't attract gulls to your garden and vicinity by feeding them. It is not in the gull's best interest to be eating our food. Their natural diet is based on shellfish and other small sea creatures, bird's eggs, insects and earthworms. Too much human food is bad for them.
- When fed regularly by humans, gulls may develop a habit of harassing and stealing food from people (including children) who are eating outdoors.
- Do not discard litter or food scraps in public areas or outside food outlets – this is also an offence for which you can be fined by the Council.
- If you are using the beach, parks, playgrounds or other amenities, please ensure that you dispose of your waste in a bin or take it home with you if bins are full or unavailable.

### BUSINESSES/ SCHOOLS/ NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES:

- When leaving out bins please ensure that they are not overloaded, are properly closed and that there are no food scraps left around the bins or the vicinity.
- All waste food should be disposed of in your brown bin.
- Please do not leave any plastic bags out with binned waste. Gulls may rip the bags apart in search of food.
- If you have a food retail business please ensure that you have adequate litter bins available and that these are emptied regularly. Also, ensure that any outdoor seating area is cleaned regularly and that food scraps are not left lying around.
- Schools: If you are having a problem with gulls at break times, you could consider having the students eat their food indoors before they go out onto the yard to play.

### LEGAL STATUS OF GULLS

It is illegal to intentionally injure or kill a gull or take,

damage or destroy an active nest or its contents. All gulls and their active nests are protected in law by National and European Wildlife Legislation/Directives.

The most common gull in urban areas is the Herring Gull whose conservation status is red listed in Ireland due to a large decline in breeding numbers.

### EXCEPTION FOR BALBRIGGAN

The Minister for Housing Local Government and Heritage has made a Declaration for a defined area of Balbriggan which allows the taking of nests or eggs because of a "Threat to Public Safety". Further information is available at:-  
<https://www.npws.ie/legislation/eu-directives/birds-directive/eu-birds-directive-article-9-derogations>

### GULLS NESTING ON ROOFS

Gulls nesting on roofs can cause problems including noise, mess, fouling on roofs, damage to buildings etc.

Gulls usually return to the same territory each breeding season and a bonded pair will stay together for life.

If you wish to deter gulls from nesting on your roof, there are deterrent measures available from specialist contractors such as spikes, wire and netting systems.

### SAFETY FIRST

People should take advice from a specialist company before undertaking any deterrent measures on your property or if you are in the defined area of Balbriggan, removing nests or eggs.

**It is strongly recommended that any works are carried out by an experienced competent contractor who has the right equipment, training, and insurance for this work.**

Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall  
Fingal County  
Council

