

Trowbridge Gull Project 2017

Introduction

Following a report taken to the Trowbridge Area Board on the 15th September 2016 by Cllr Blakemore a decision was made to carry out a gull project in the area of Canal Road Industrial Estate in Trowbridge. The project included 4 visits involving 2 officers for a day at a time, in April, May, June and July together with removing all accessible eggs and nests.

Gulls will always return to the area where they fledged to nest themselves when they reach 3 years old. Reducing the young that hatch over a period of time can result in a reduction in numbers and prevent a future increase in gulls in the area.

The pest control team approached all the businesses in the area shortly after funding was agreed to survey buildings and also to seek written permission for access to roofs to remove the gull eggs and nests. Permission was gained from most businesses although some refused on the basis that they already had a gull control contract in place.

Method



On the first visit in April a cherry picker was used to check as many roofs in the area as possible. It was noted that the gulls were nesting later than usual and this was also supported by feedback from the Devizes Gull project.

Roofs were access by a platform with two operators using a pole system to reach as many nests as possible.

Where possible nest material was removed and nests damaged to prevent them being re-built and to disturb the breeding programme.

Records were kept of all nests removed and eggs destroyed.

Results 2017

| Location | 25 th April | 19 th May | 13 th June | 18 th July | Total |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Consortium | 4 eggs(16nests) | 100 eggs | 88 eggs | 3 eggs | 195 eggs |
| Smithpack | (1 nest) | 3 eggs | 3 eggs | | 6 eggs |
| Kew Electrical | (1 nest) | (1 nest) | 3 eggs | 2 eggs | 5 eggs |
| Virgin Media | (2 nests) | 7 eggs | 4 eggs | 2 eggs | 13 eggs |
| Total | 4 eggs | 112 eggs | 99 eggs | 7 eggs | 219 eggs |

Conclusion

Gull eggs have a high hatch rate and therefore we can assume that each of the eggs that were removed would have become successful fledglings. Based on the total eggs removed during the project a reduction in gull fledglings has been achieved together with a resultant reduction in the adults gulls' aggressive behaviour while protecting their young is likely to have been reduced.

It would be helpful to hear the Area boards comments and thoughts on repeating the project in future years. The cost to continue this project for 2018 including access equipment will be £4000 including VAT.

