

# Area Board Project

## 1. What is the project?

**The Area Board is asked to contribute approximately £3,200 of revenue funding towards a project to prevent gull problems in the Devizes Area.**

**“Preventing Problems due to Gulls”**

Over the past few years, an increasing number of herring Gulls have been nesting at the Garden Trading Estate in Devizes. The estate is adjacent to residential housing with the result that the occupiers have experienced extreme noise and bird fouling. The situation has now become so bad that a petition was submitted to the Area Board asking if we could help address the problem.

Whilst this issue is not the responsibility of Wiltshire Council or any other organisation, it is severe and needs to be tackled. The Area Board set up a working group at its November Meeting consisting of representatives of the Area Board, Public Health, Roundway Parish Council and Devizes Town Council.

Following expert advice, Wiltshire Council’s Public Health department approached ‘NBC Bird and Pest Solutions’, in order to put together a proposal. A full site survey was carried out and in order to disrupt the established gull behaviour a 3 year programme of live bird of prey flying and nest removal has been agreed. A section of this survey reads:

*During the inspection it has been noted there is a high volume of Herring Gulls within the area. These gulls appear to be habituated to the area and return each year to nest on the numerous high roofs on the two trading estates which offer a good vantage point to observe potential food sources within the area. The high roof areas constructed of Asbestos offer gulls a perfect habitat to lay and incubate their eggs as the heat from the sun will heat the roof areas. These pest birds are fouling the buildings, courtyards, buildings and pedestrian walkways within the area which is causing an unsightly appearance and requires constant cleaning attention in order to avoid any potential slip hazard which could result in possible litigation action being taken should a member of the public or a customer suffers an injury from slipping on fouling build-up. Fouling build-up on the many roof areas can result in building structure damage from water ingress due to rain water gullies and gutters becoming block. These areas need constant gutter clearances in order to avoid potential damage which can result in costly repairs. Due to the high number of gulls within the area landing on and around the many roofs on the two trading estates and nearby residents homes causing a general noise nuisance, there are numerous complaints being constantly recorded by Wiltshire Council. This problem will increase further during the gull season as the gulls compete with each other in order to feed their offspring. This could lead to possible loss of revenue to the local businesses. Once the gulls have built their nests and had young they will become increasingly very aggressive in order to feed and protect their offspring and nesting sites, this is a health and safety concern for the general public with a risk of possible litigation action being taken from gull attack injuries.*

These birds are now protected with the result that if nothing is done, numbers are likely to increase substantially and the associated problems becoming worse.

**2. Where is the project taking place?**

Garden Trading Estate, Devizes

**3. When will the project take place?**

February 2015 onwards

**4. What are the Community benefits/evidence of need/desired outcomes?**

If the project is successful, it will prevent the gulls nesting at the site and causing problems for residents, it will also make it more pleasant for the wider community and help protect Devizes from the spread of Gulls into the centre.

**5. Who will manage/be responsible for this project?**

The Member champion will be Cllr Mayes  
The Community Area Manager in close liaison with the working group will manage the project

**6. Costs/quotes/ match funding?**

The total cost for the 3 years is as outlined below:

<b>Bird of prey management program – Option 1</b>	
Live bird of prey intensive flying program over area using Harris Hawks and Falcons to educate gulls to a bird of prey predator presence. Each flight will consist of a daily visit with Harris Hawks and a specialist qualified Falconer for 3 hours over a 10 day period @£192.00 per flight x 10 flights	£1,920.00
Regular live Harris Hawk/Falcon flights to maintain presence and protect area over a 12 month period @ £192.00 per flight – 3 hours per flight x <b>26 flights</b> per annum	£4,992.00
Regular Gull egg and nest removal program from all accessible roof areas as identified during April, May and June 2015. Each visit consists of a qualified 2 man team for 1 day per visit @ cost of £800.00 per team per day x <b>4 visits</b> (Birds will be flown during program)	£3,200.00
Access – To be arrange by Wiltshire Council in partnership with NBC Bird & Pest Solutions Ltd during the above period to ensure all access is suitable for the program	Client
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,112.00</b>

Roundway Parish Council have committed to paying approximately £5,000 for three years.

The Area Board is asked to contribute its remaining revenue funding for the project, approximately £3,200.

Some minor savings may be possible on the above quote. We will look to find the remaining funding from Devizes Town Council and the Public Health Team who are considering whether they have any funding that can be assigned to this.

Businesses and residents will be approached in order to brief them on what will be carried out and gain their permission. At this time they will also be asked if they are able to contribute, particularly for year 2 and 3.