

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 9th DECEMBER 2014**

Question

Will the Minister advise how many complaints/inquiries, if any, have been received by the Department and recorded in the last 3 years concerning seagulls being fed and any related nuisance and what political options exist to minimize the nuisance caused by the feeding of seagulls in residential areas?

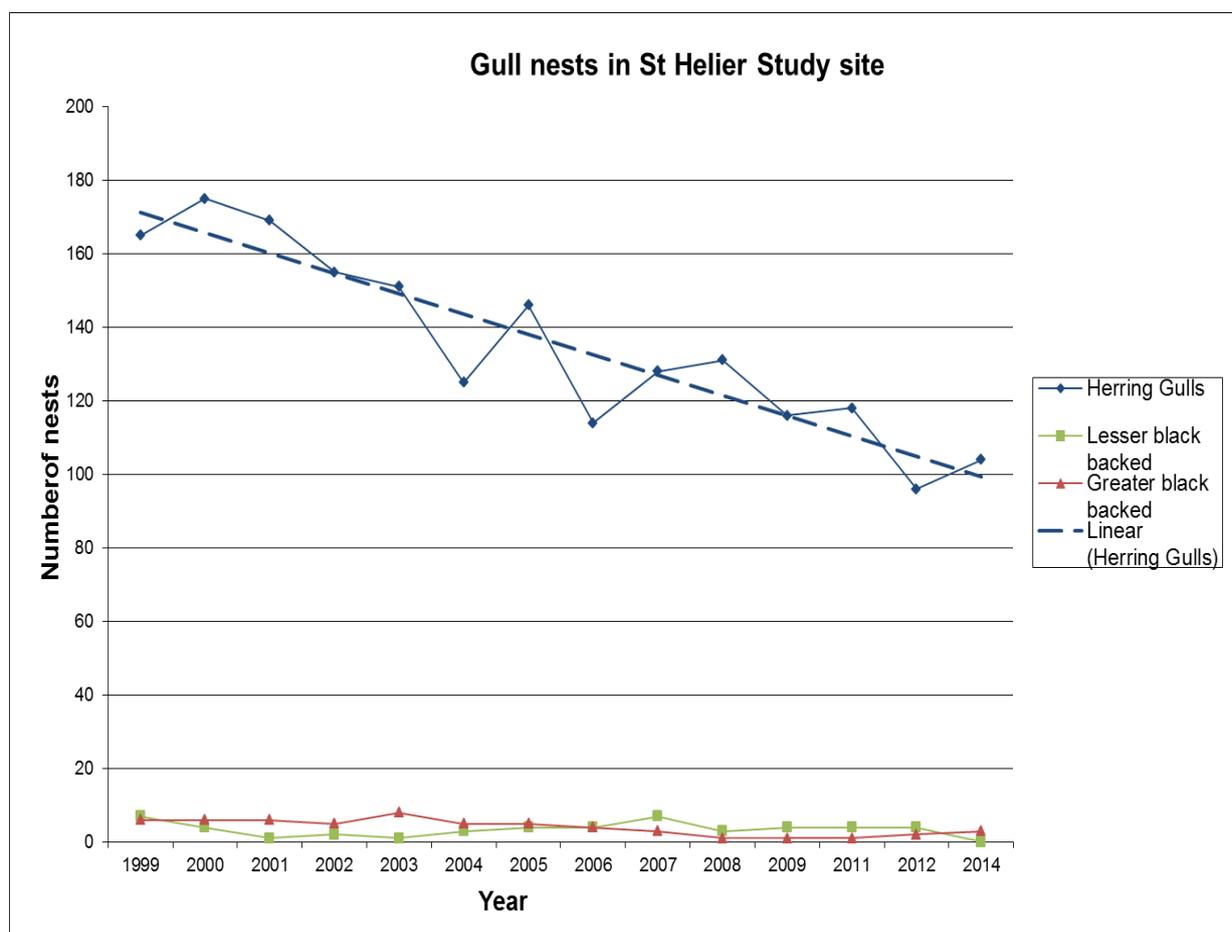
Answer

Records of complaints/inquiries concerning seagulls being fed are not held by the Department of the Environment. The feeding of gulls can cause a nuisance and manifest into a neighbourly dispute and inquiries received about feeding gulls are directed to the Environmental Health Department, as a nuisance issue under the Statutory Nuisances (Jersey) Law 1999.

Feeding gulls is not illegal under any current legislation and is not considered a wildlife issue. The Department along with other agencies receive many inquiries regarding seagulls, usually at the height of the breeding season in July and usually about gulls nesting on roofs. A very few inquiries yearly are from individuals about feeding gulls.

The Natural Environment Team within the Department of the Environment administers the Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000, and under the provisions of this legislation, qualified pest controllers are issued with annual licences which permit them to deal with nuisance gulls.

The Department have been monitoring urban gulls in St Helier for 16 years, and the data shows a slight downward trend in the number of nests over this time.



Data which is held by the Department on gulls includes;

- the licensed activities of pest controllers and;
- the distribution and number of nests in a defined area in St Helier.

Advice on dealing with gulls, their nests and avoidance measures is provided by the Department through the pest controllers and on the States of Jersey website.

A gull information sheet is emailed to Parishes yearly containing details of licenced pest controllers along with frequently asked questions and answers and the department also issues information via the local media on an annual basis advising the public to look out for nesting gulls and not to feed gulls. The department also makes available 'STOP - DON'T FEED THE GULLS' signs for use by the public.

Background information:

Jersey has 3 species of gull that are found in urban environment, the herring gull, the greater and the lesser black-backed gulls with the herring gull being the most abundant.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) affords herring gulls a conservation status of red due to 'moderate declines over the past 25 years and over half of their UK breeding population is confined to fewer than ten sites'.

Jersey gull survey data from St Helier shows a reduction of urban nests of 42% since 2000

It is possible that continual feeding may contribute to the amount of gulls nesting in a location and that a high population of gulls may deter other garden bird species.