

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 March 2025 15:03  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Inverness Gulls

Sounds good to me.

[REDACTED] | **Head of Operations, Central Highland**

NatureScot | Achantoul, Grampian Road, Aviemore, PH22 1QD | DD: [REDACTED]; M: [REDACTED]

nature.scot | @nature\_scot | *Scotland's Nature Agency* | *Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba*

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**From:** [REDACTED]@nature.scot>

**Sent:** 26 March 2025 13:33

**To:** [REDACTED]@nature.scot>; [REDACTED]@nature.scot>; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]@nature.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Inverness Gulls

Hi [REDACTED], my suggestion is around assessment of H&S risk and where this is high we may licence.

[REDACTED] | **Head of Wildlife Management**

NatureScot | Great Glen House | Inverness | IV3 8NW | [REDACTED]  
nature.scot | @nature\_scot | *Scotland's Nature Agency* | *Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba*

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**From:** [REDACTED]@nature.scot>

**Sent:** 26 March 2025 13:28

**To:** [REDACTED]@nature.scot>; [REDACTED]@nature.scot>; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]@nature.scot>

**Subject:** FW: Inverness Gulls

Further to our discussion this morning, I have just received this from [REDACTED]

I will reply to say that nest and egg removal can happen in the same breeding season where other preventative measures have not worked in reducing the health and safety issue or if the property is identified as having a ~~clear~~ **high** health and safety risk by our licencing team.

Let me know if this wording is OK, please make some suggestions for improvement.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | **Head of Operations, Central Highland**

NatureScot | Achantoul, Grampian Road, Aviemore, PH22 1QD | DD: [REDACTED]; M: [REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]@highland.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 26 March 2025 12:50

To: [REDACTED]@nature.scot>

Subject: Inverness Gulls

Caution! This message was sent from outside NatureScot.

Hi [REDACTED]

Excuse me for contacting you, but I am concerned that the Inverness City Committee has authorised payment for various preventative measures designed to address the issue of gulls stealing food from people in Inverness, and also for an egg removal programme.

My concern is that we need to run the various preventative measures, which are currently taking place, for a year to see if they are effective, before we can safely say that they have not been effective and the egg removal programme should be reconsidered. I am hopeful that no licenses for egg removal should be issued until we have firm evidence that alternative methods of control have been tried and failed. If we do both in the same year we will have proved nothing.

I would be interested in your views on this?

I must add that this is a private and personal email, and doesn't represent the views of the City Committee, which although it has agreed potential funding for both approaches, have never discussed this particular issue – the need for trial and proof.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Mura h-eil na beachdan a tha air an cur an cèill sa phost-d seo a' buntainn ri gnothachas Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd, 's ann leis an neach fhèin a chuir air falbh e a tha iad, is chan eil iad an-còmhnaidh a' riochdachadh beachdan na Comhairle, no buidhnean buntainneach, agus chan eil am post-d seo na phàirt de chunnradh sam bith mura h-eil sin air innse.

**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 21 May 2025 15:13  
**To:** Nick Halfhide; Fergus.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot;  
Ariane.Burgess.msp@parliament.scot; tim.eagle.msp@parliament.scot;  
Rhoda.Grant.msp@parliament.scot; Jamie.HalcroJohnston.msp@parliament.scot;  
edward.mountain.msp@parliament.scot; Emma.Roddick.msp@parliament.scot;  
Douglas.Ross.msp@parliament.scot; Laurie Fraser (Councillor); Michael Green  
(Councillor); Barbara Jarvie (Councillor); Paul Oldham (Councillor);  
envhealth@highland.gov.uk  
**Subject:** In defence of gulls

Caution! This message was sent from outside NatureScot.

Dear MSPs, councillors, Environmental Health Dept. and NatureScot,

I wish to voice my dismay at the recent granting of licences to remove gull nests and eggs from Nairn High Street, and my opposition to future moves to cull seagulls in the town. As a local resident, I am frankly disappointed that we are not doing any better than this by now.

Contrary to the anti-seagull rhetoric that floods social media around this time of year, there are local people who do not consider gulls a menace. It is imperative that those in power proactively investigate the true balance of opinion before issuing more licences in the future. Those of us capable of peacefully coexisting with these birds tend not to speak out, because we don't see a real problem, but after the recent granting of licences I feel compelled to do so.

Are we as a species now incapable of coexisting with anything non-human? Whilst I accept there may be isolated incidents of negative gull-human interactions, I would hazard a guess that most of these have human causes underlying them. The focus should be on prevention first, and use of effective non-lethal methods, the most effective of such methods being education.

People have been moaning about the gulls in Nairn for as long as I can remember, yet one need only walk down the High Street to see ignorant people still feeding them directly, or dropping litter, thus contributing to the problem, and that's without even getting into the thorny subject of overfishing. It seems nothing has changed in terms of human behaviour, yet we continue to persecute gulls for their mere existence.

We do far more damage to gulls as a species than they do to us by mildly inconveniencing our high impact, carbon intensive lives during a relatively short period of the year. If people can't enjoy their chips and ice cream responsibly, without leaving a trail of destruction behind them, I would suggest that they are the problem, not the gulls.

There is an extremely vocal lobby in Nairn that seems bent on eradicating gulls from our streets. Gulls are part of the fabric of our seaside town. Issuing licences may be an easy win for some, but I urge you to tackle the real root causes of negative gull-human incidents, which is that through our own behaviour we have created an attractive environment for these beautiful birds.

With limited time, political energy and money available, I urge you to please focus on issues that matter. For example, does anyone care about the increased amount of dead wildlife and litter along

our country roads as a result of inappropriate and irresponsible use of backroads by people trying to avoid the roadworks? Or is dead wildlife and litter in rural areas not a concern because it's not as attractive or popular a topic as the gulls?

Please, before issuing more licences, can you seek some perspective rather than appeasing a vocal and self-serving minority. Thank goodness for the gulls - thank goodness there is something to listen to other than the sounds of endless development and ever-increasing car numbers clogging up our roads.

May I suggest that seagull education become mandatory in all schools in the town, in order to raise awareness not only of the plight of gulls as a species but of the impact we have on the environment, and our role in causing the problems that people complain about year on year. Nairn has an opportunity to take the lead, do things differently and facilitate a positive coexistence between humans and gulls. For example, why not train seasonal gull rangers? They could have a physical presence at key locations in the town, to enthuse and educate locals and visitors alike about these beautiful birds, and crucially, about how not to create problems. What is needed is a mindset shift and a change in human behaviour. This to me seems like a far more sustainable and innovative way forward than being just another seaside town that moans about the presence of wildlife in its urban areas. We should be doing better than this by now, celebrating our nature and seeking ways to coexist peacefully.

I would be delighted to discuss this with you further, and I look forward to your responses to the specific points I have raised.

Best,

