

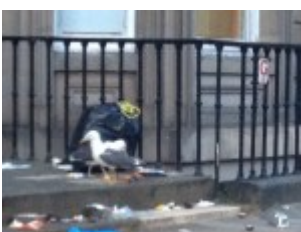
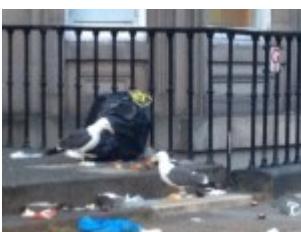
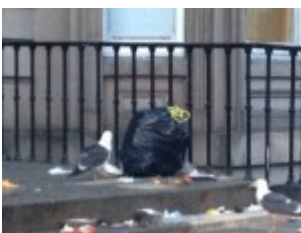
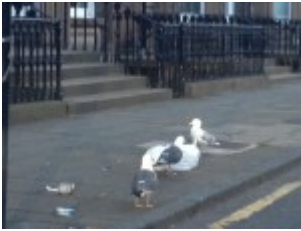
A squabble of seagulls at the West End



The Edinburgh Reporter was driving along Drumsheugh Gardens yesterday evening and could hardly believe the mess. Residents had left their rubbish out for collection on the pavements or hanging from the railings.

Food and plastic bags were strewn over the pavements, something which is fast becoming a normal sight in Edinburgh. But this became even more incredible as I progressed around the triangular gardens, when I realised that the seagulls were systematically making their way from one set of black bags to the next, filching what they could from the rubbish bags which were no deterrent to their huge beaks. So it was not just one or two bags which were emptied onto the pavements. The seagulls were working their way across the entire area.







The council discussed seagulls and the proposal from Merchiston Community Council to start up a de-nesting scheme across the city earlier this year. Councillors decided then that the scheme would be offered on a paid for basis to any areas who wanted to be rid of the menace. The council had carried out a pilot project in Merchiston last year to evaluate the measure. Of course it is too late this year for the scheme to be effective, as it has to be carried out before the chicks hatch.

At the March meeting of the Transport and Environment Committee the council reported on the pilot:-“Based on the actual cost of the project in 2012, the cost for continuing the pilot project for a further 4 years would be £36,000 (£9000 per annum). This service can also be provided by the Council’s Pest Control Service to individual residents on a commercial basis. The cost per visit to a resident for removal of nests from their property is £70.50; it is likely that at least three visits will be required during the nesting season to ensure a property remains nest-free. It should also be noted that residents can purchase a gulls de-nesting service from commercial pest control organisations.”

The council discussed the introduction of gull proof bags almost two years ago now. That was in the last administration, but we understand steps may be made soon to solve the issue.

Transport Convenor Councillor Lesley Hinds said:-“At this time of year there is a problem with gulls ripping open bags and rubbish being spilled all over the streets. The Council want to have no black bags out in the streets in Edinburgh and we are rolling out a programme of either containers or gull proof bags in both the Old Town and New Town.”

Perhaps there is still a business opportunity for pest companies to offer a gull de-nesting service to residents? Surely no-one across the city enjoys the squabble of seagulls fighting on their doorstep every evening their rubbish is collected?

The Edinburgh Reporter was too scared to even get out of the car...