

Council leaves pigeons in peril under Russell Road bridge

Bird lovers have accused Edinburgh City Council of trapping pigeons in a metal mesh designed to stop them pooping on passers-by – leaving at least one bird dead inside.

Council contractors attached the mesh to the underside of a railway bridge on Russell Road, near Murrayfield Stadium, after pedestrians got in a flap about having to dodge droppings.

But feathers were ruffled after some pigeons appeared to have been trapped inside, with no means of escape to fly or feed.

Birders launched an “urgent” appeal for help on social media and it is understood a concerned member of the public attended with ladders and bolt cutters and prised away some of the mesh to allow the birds to escape.

The Scottish SPCA and council officials attended last week in response to the complaints and found that access holes had been made, but one bird was dead.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected.

One horrified bird lover, who posted an appeal for help on social media, said: “Numerous pigeons trapped inside and babies crying starving to death. Mothers desperate to get in...

"This is an emergency, does anyone have long ladders and wire cutters? This is inhumane, I am standing here listening to the babies crying for their mothers. If anyone can help please come urgently. Thank you."

Another posted: "They have a legal obligation to attend to this immediately. It's illegal to interfere with nests – all wild birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife Act."

A spokesperson for City of Edinburgh Council said: "Our specialist contractor installed this netting on our behalf, as we often do to protect pedestrian routes below bridges from pigeon guano."

"After becoming aware of the issues, council officers visited the site and witnessed that the mesh had been cut back."

"They will revisit this location with the contractor to make sure that the mesh is reinstated in a way which either fully prevents any access by pigeons, or allows for exit routes for pigeons which do make their way into the enclosed area."

A spokesperson for the Scottish SPCA said: "The inspector who attended found there were access points so the pigeons were able to come and go."

"One dead pigeon was found but it was impossible to confirm how it had died. From a welfare point of view the inspector was satisfied that the birds can get in and out."



19/3/2024

Picture Alan Simpson

Edinburgh Council contractor put up wire mesh at the bridge on Russell Road Edinburgh where some birds died.



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