

Natural England Consultation on General Licences

Please use this form to reply to the General Licence consultation. This document also includes a general feedback form.

Responses may be returned by email to: wildlifeconsultation@naturalengland.org.uk

We would prefer responses to be submitted electronically but if you prefer to respond in writing, please submit your response to: Natural England General Licences Consultation, c/o Dr Edel McGurk, Natural England, Government Buildings, Otley Road, Lawnswood, Leeds. LS16 5QT.

Organisation	Federation of Bath Residents' Associations
Respondee Name	Henry Brown, Chairman

The following table lists all of the questions posed in the consultation document. For each question, please indicate whether you support the proposal using the tick boxes, and provide an explanation and evidence in support of your view in the space provided. Where you do not have a view on a particular proposal, please tick 'No Comment'.

The form is designed to be completed on screen; free text boxes will expand as you type.

Confidentiality

We will respect requests for confidentiality. If you wish the information you provide to be treated as confidential, please record your request below; it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances.

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Responses to Proposals

THEME: Obligations to Protected Sites

Question 1: Do you agree with Natural England's proposal to address this concern by drawing attention to the existing obligations on Statutory Undertakers?

Yes No No Comment

THEME: Non-Native Species

Question 2: Do you agree with our proposal to use regulatory measures to facilitate the control or invasive non-native species?

Yes No No Comment

Question 3.1: Do you agree with our proposal to add Ring-necked and Monk Parakeets to the general licence issued for the purpose of conserving wild birds (s.16(1)(c) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981)?

Yes No No Comment

Question 3.2: Do you agree with our proposal to add Canada Geese and Egyptian Geese to the general licence issued for the purpose of conserving wild birds (s.16(1)(c) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981)?

Yes No No Comment

Question 4.1: Do you agree with our proposal to permit the killing/taking of Ring-necked and Monk Parakeet species for the purpose of preventing serious damage to crops, etc (s.16(1)(k) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981)?

Yes No No Comment

Question 4.2: Do you agree with our proposal to issue a separate licence for this purpose for invasive non-native species?

Yes No No Comment

Question 5.1: Do you agree with our proposal to permit the killing/taking of Monk Parakeet species under a general licence for the purpose of preserving public health or public or air safety (s.16(1)(i) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981)?

Yes No No Comment

Question 5.2: Do you agreed with our proposal to issue a separate licence for this purpose for invasive, non-native species?

Yes No No Comment

THEME – Review of species listed

Question 6.1: Do you agree that Great Black-backed Gull should only be listed on the general licence permitting take/kill birds for the purpose of preserving air safety? Please provide evidence in support of your view.

Yes No No Comment

Question 6.2: Do you agree that the Herring Gull should only be listed on the general licences permitting

a. the killing/taking of birds for the purpose of preserving air safety?

Yes No No Comment

b. the destruction of eggs and nests for the purpose of preserving public health and public safety? Please provide evidence in support of your view.

Yes No No Comment

We are in favour of maintaining all current means of control of this species.

The herring gull causes a serious health and safety problem in urban areas such as Bath and, we believe, many other towns and cities around the Severn Estuary. The seriousness of this problem does not seem to be fully appreciated by other commentators. Our concerns are:

- It is a fact that most people live, work and recreate in urban areas. Their interests and concerns should be given full weight in any consideration about this species.

- There is a long-term increase in the breeding populations of gulls in Bath and other towns and cities in the area. For the most recent full year, the number of breeding pairs in Bath has increased by 6%, which is considered by the Council to be a relatively low figure. In other years it has gone up much more. We are concerned that extra measures of protection will make the problem worse for us.
- These birds can exhibit extremely aggressive behaviour, especially during the breeding season. Residents and visitors to Bath have been attacked by gulls. They are large and alarming birds. This is a serious health and safety issue.
- Widescale fouling with gull faeces of tables, chairs, benches and other furniture outside catering establishments, not to mention in private gardens. This is a serious health hazard in any location dependent on large numbers of visitors, such as Bath (5 million visitors per annum) and other towns and cities around the Severn Estuary, where people expect to be able to sit outside to eat and drink.
- Widespread fouling with gull faeces of pavements and steps in the city. This renders the surfaces slippery, with consequent safety hazard for pedestrians.

We are therefore in favour of permitting general licences for herring gulls under the circumstances in questions 6.2 (a) and (b) above. Ideally, we should prefer to see no change at all in the permitted methods for control of this species.

Question 7.1 Do you agree with our proposal to issue a limited general licence permitting the taking/killing of House sparrow, Starling, Robin and Blackbird in food production/handling premises for the purpose of preserving public health or public safety (s.16(1)(i) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981)?

Yes No No Comment

Question 7.2 If such a licence is issued, do you agree that it is appropriate to require users of the licence to register their first use of the licence with Natural England and to keep written records of action taken under the licence?

Yes No No Comment

THEME – Sales of birds

Question 8.1: Do you agree with the proposal to consolidate the sales licences?

Yes No No Comment

Question 8.2: Do you agree with the proposal to continue to allow the birds listed on the appendix (and their eggs) to be sold without a ring?

Yes No No Comment

Question 8.3: Is the list of species that are exempt from ringing correct (see draft licence for list)?
If you disagree, please state why and provide evidence.

Yes No No Comment

Question 9.1: Do you agree with our proposal that no species be excluded from sale under the general licence on the grounds of risks to their conservation status from illegal take from the wild? If you disagree, please provide grounds and evidence for your position? If you do disagree, please provide grounds and evidence for your position.

Yes No No Comment

Question 9.2: Do you agree that Ruddy Duck and Egyptian Goose should continue to be excluded from the general licence permitting sales on the grounds of potential risks to native species, and that Canada Goose should be added to the list of exclusions?

Yes No No Comment

Question 9.3: Do you agree that sales of Eagle Owls under the general licence should be subject to a registration scheme on the grounds of potential risks to native species?

Yes No No Comment

Question 9.4: Do you believe that other bird species should be added to this list of exclusions on the grounds of potential risks to native species? Please consider the possible candidates suggested above; you may suggest other species and explain why, providing evidence.

Yes No No Comment

Question 10: Do you agree with our proposal that sales of dead Barnacle Goose and White-fronted Goose (Greenland race) be permitted under the general licence?

Yes No No Comment

Question 11.1: Do you agree that Natural England should provide guidance on what might constitute suitable documentary evidence?

Yes No No Comment

Question 11.2: Do you agree that the wording we propose is appropriate? If not, please provide alternative wording.

Yes No No Comment

THEME – Understanding and awareness of the general licences & their conditions

Question 12.1 Do you believe that there is sufficient widespread understanding of the General Licences, the circumstances in which they may be used and the conditions that apply. Please provide evidence in support of your answer where possible.

Yes No No Comment

Most control appears to be in the hands of professional contractors, who are familiar with the requirements of the legislation.

Question 12.2 Do you have any suggestions as to how we could raise the level of awareness?

Please scroll down to the next part of this form if you wish to provide us with general feedback on this consultation package and exercise.