

Pigeons



Description

- An adult pigeon is about 30 centimetres long and weighs about 300 grams.
- They can live for as long as 13 years. A pigeons plumage can vary considerably in colour and there are no visible differences between the sexes.



Lifestyle

- Wild pigeons normally feed in flocks and for most of the year rely mainly on spillages at food premises and on scraps, including bread given to them by members of the public.
- Pigeons are capable of breeding throughout the year, however, most breeding occurs between March and July.

Significance

- Wild pigeons **are** a potential source of disease, so public health must be considered.
- Mites and fleas on pigeons or in their droppings and nests, can bite humans or infest and spoil food products.
- Fouling of buildings, structures and monuments can occur at places where the birds nest or roost
- The acidic droppings can erode the surface of stonework and droppings and dead birds can block gutters and rainwater pipes causing dampness to the building. Pigeon droppings can make walkways slippery for pedestrians, particularly in wet weather.

Control

The Council has no powers to cull the pigeon population, but would recommend you discourage them using the following methods:

- **Do not feed pigeons** – they will naturally find their own food. Leaving food may attract rats and mice to an area.
- **Do not drop litter** – especially from takeaway food. Litter is the major food source. Most pigeons, please place all litter into a bin.
- **Make sure that refuse is disposed of** properly – ensure your refuse is stored in a covered bin and regularly collected.
- **Report fly-tipping** – if you see anybody fly-tipping, please advise the Local Council
- **Protect buildings where possible** – the use of polythene netting, spring trip cords and bird repellent gel are all effective ways to prevent and protect buildings from roosting pigeons. There are a number of bird control techniques which can be carried out by pest control contractors. Spelthorne Borough Council **does not** provide a pest control service to deal with pigeons.