



POST CAMPAIGN REPORT

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW:

The Litter Free Coast and Sea "Don't Feed the Locals" campaign, started on 27 May 2017 and ran for one month. The goal was to reduce the number of people feeding seagulls. This was done by educating holiday makers visiting Weymouth and locals on why they should not feed seagulls when visiting the seafront using these messages;

- Large populations of seagulls will affect bathing water quality as their droppings contain high levels of bacteria
- Feeding seagulls causes them to dive and become dangerous
- Feeding seagulls increases their numbers
- Rubbish needs to be disposed of properly in order to discourage seagulls from ripping open rubbish bags and littering the streets
- Restaurants & cafes to clear away unwanted food quickly from outside tables and have rubbish bins available near where people are eating

The campaign materials were developed by the Litter Free Coast and Sea's sister campaign (Litter Free Coast and Sea Somerset) who developed and ran the campaign for one month over the summer of 2016. The campaign was very successful and as a result Weymouth Borough Council we interested in Litter Free Coast and Sea running the campaign in Weymouth town centre, seafront and harbour areas.

The first week of the campaign in Weymouth coincided with the May Half Term holiday. This meant the campaign was able to engage with a large amount of visitors to the area. Seagull eggs are laid from the beginning of May and after three weeks the eggs begin to hatch therefore this was a great time to launch the campaign.

The campaign was applied in the following ways:

- Business engagement: Approached local cafes, restaurants and take away shops on the seafront, around the harbour and in the town to join the 'Don't Feed the Seagulls' campaign, asking them to encourage people to 'not feed the seagulls' because it affects bathing water quality and is nuisance to people enjoying the seafront while eating. We also asked clear away unwanted food quickly from outside tables and have rubbish bins available near where people are eating if possible
- Events: Two events were held during the month. The first was along Weymouth Seafront on 31st May 2017 and the other was on 1st June 2017 along Weymouth Harbour edge. Both events included a manned gazebo stand where attendees played our magnetic seagull game and we also collected seagull stories (positive and negative). For the Weymouth seafront event we arranged for two actors in giant seagull costumes to attend. These were fantastic at interacting with the public and were very media worthy. For the Weymouth harbour event the Harris Hawks and handlers which are employed by the Harbourmaster had a gazebo too. This was not as popular as the giant seagulls but the weather was not a good on this day.



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Figure 1 A flavour of the events

We were also given the opportunity to have a stand on the Sunday at the Weymouth Seafood Festival. At this event we just had the gazebo, seagull stories and seagull game.

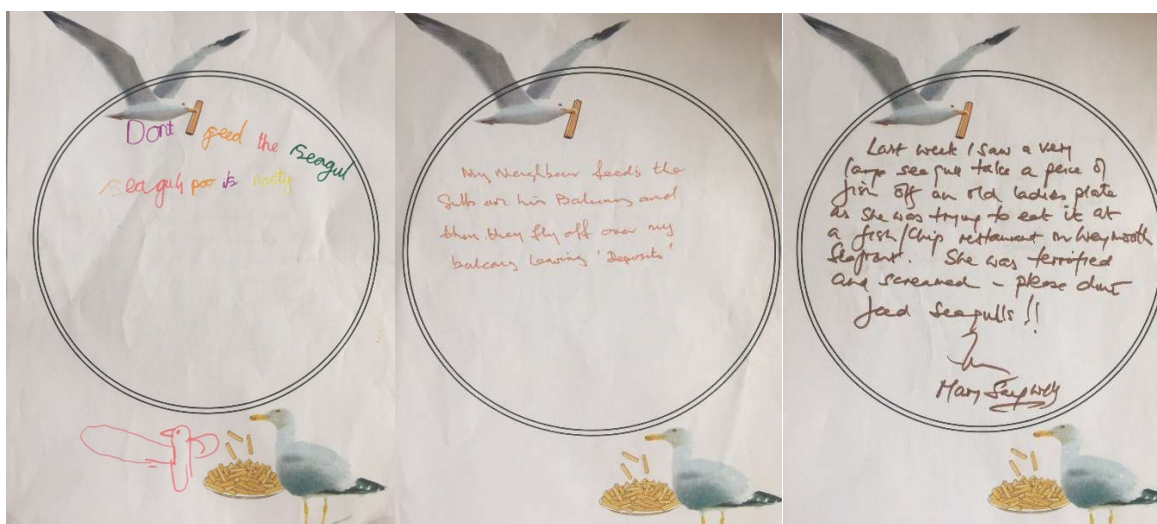


Figure 2 A selection of Seagull stories

- Branded printed materials: Used the previously developed engaging branding for posters (A5 and A3 size), window stickers and smaller (50 mm) takeaway food packaging stickers



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Figure 3 Don't Feed the Locals Printed materials

- Website: Webpage created on <https://www.litterfreecoastandsea.co.uk/current-projects-and-campaigns/dont-feed-the-locals/>
- Traditional media engagement: Press releases and interviews
- Social media campaigning: Devised following hashtags #dontfeedthelocals #seagullstories #seagullselfie and other methods of gaining interaction on the campaign. Posted at strategic times such as during Dorset Hour.

BUSINESSES INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK:

45 pubs, cafes and fast food establishments supported the campaign. They put up the posters, stickers in windows and used the stickers on their takeaway food. Each establishment was offered the range of media and took the materials they needed and best suited their establishment. Some establishments got their staff to wear the stickers as badges. All of the businesses we very welcoming and enthusiastic about the campaign. Some joined in with the social media side of the campaign too and posted messages on their websites.



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Figure 4. Some of the businesses proudly showing their support

The businesses were asked for feedback via a survey at the end of the campaign. 22 of the 45 businesses gave feedback. The results indicated the following:

- The campaign was too short (figure 5)
- The campaign should have been carried out later in the season or be extended to include the summer months (figure 6)
- 70% of respondents felt the campaign was good or higher (figure 7)





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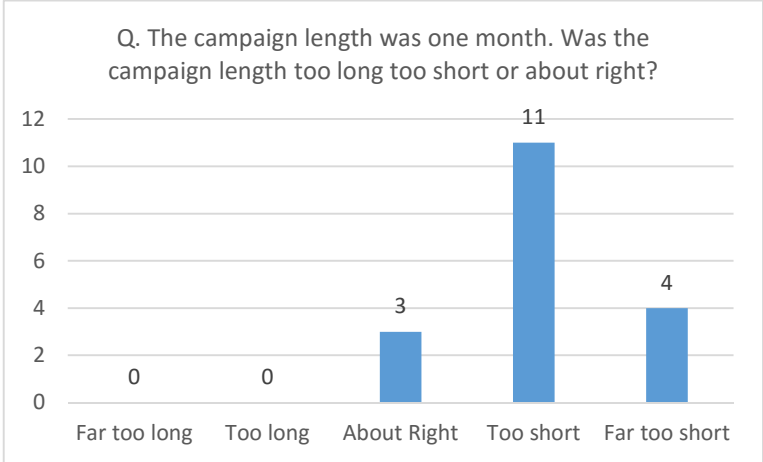


Figure 5 Business opinion on length of campaign

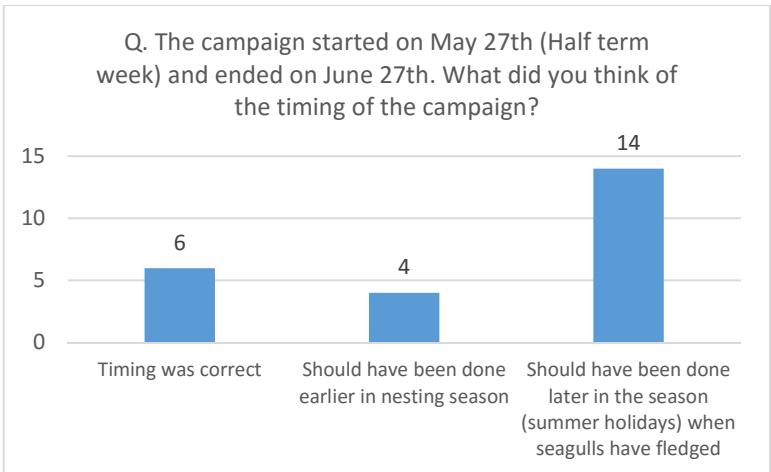


Figure 6 Business opinion on timing of campaign

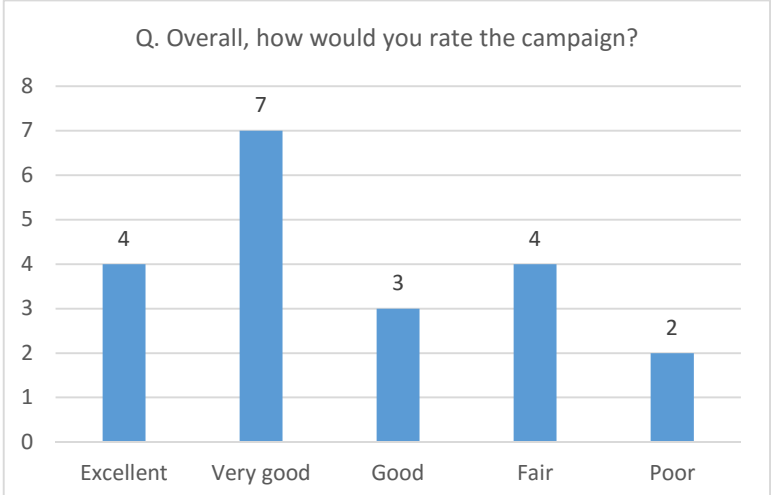


Figure 7 Overall business opinion on campaign



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- The businesses were asked what they liked and disliked about the campaign and how they felt it could be improved. The general tone of the response was that they liked the campaign (including materials and giant seagulls) but would like it to go on for longer and be rolled out on a much bigger scale. There were a number of comments about wanting bigger posters on boards rather than smaller paper ones and there were also comments about the need for enforcement. The following comments stood out:
 - *"Simple clear message, appeared effective immediate response by gulls seemed to be more aggression! Hopefully they will get used to the idea. Maybe awareness of pigeon and crow feeding also?"*
 - *"People [running the campaign] very friendly and organised"*
 - *"Nowhere to put posters, paper gets damaged"*
 - *"Any input from org helps. Needs actual management. Loved giant seagulls"*
 - *"Like it. Raised awareness, but could have done more"*
 - *"Didn't dislike anything - should go on through summer" and similarly "just needs to be longer and more people"*
 - *"Liked that there is a campaign. Needs to be larger and more visual. Big boards, not small posters"*
 - *"2 or 3 repeats during the year, to drive home the message."*
 - *"Carry on longer, all through holidays"*
 - *"No leaflets, big signs and fines. Need enforcement. Enforcement Officer - like cigarettes."*
 - *"Longer, bigger events and publicity"*
 - *"Needs to be constant, not big enough. Would need to talk to every single person who comes to Weymouth. Need other methods not just behaviour change"*
 - *"Posters should be laminated. Enforcement. Needs to be all year round. A good start. Stop reproduction"*
- The businesses were asked whether they felt they had been any improvement with regard to seagull feeding during or since the campaign. Four businesses felt there had been and 14 felt there had not. The following comment stood out:
 - *"Not seen anyone feeding but have seen gulls take out of bins"*
 - *"Seagulls getting worse. Attacking people"*
 - *"fewer around the harbour"*
 - *"Don't see people feeding - not seen seagulls waiting over shops"*

EVALUATION OF EVENTS:

A count of the number of people engaged at the events was not carried out. The seafront event was more successful than the harbour event due to the weather and location of the gazebo being in a higher footfall area. The additional event carried out at the Weymouth Seafood Festival engaged with a much larger audience. A food festival is the perfect place to be talking to people about feeding seagulls too! It would be advised to carry out any future engagement events for a seagull campaign in conjunction with another larger organised event rather than as an isolated event.





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The conversations we had with people at the Seafood Festival (8th and 9th July) were different to the conversations we had at the events we held in late May. There were more people with fledging seagulls on their drives that they had started feeding so the conversations were very different.

A surprisingly large number of people we spoke to at the events had neighbours who were feeding seagulls in their garden or balcony. They took leaflets to pass on to neighbours and went away feeling more informed and confident about discussing not feeding the seagulls with their neighbours.

Business response from the events was good (figure 8). A couple of the businesses said they didn't notice the events happening though.

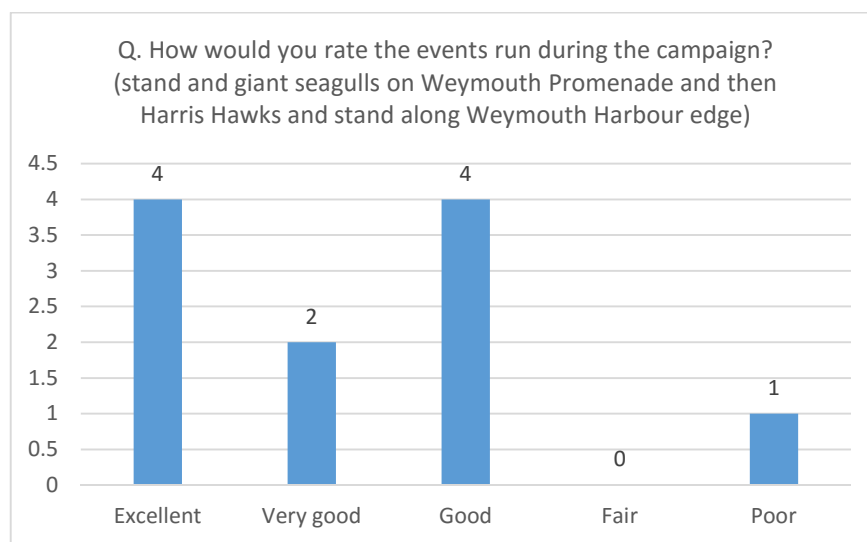


Figure 8 Business response to events

RESPONSE TO PRINTED MATERIALS:

The printed materials were popular:

- 336 of the 375 A5 posters were handed out
- 8640 of 9000 little stickers were handed out
- 32 of 52 A3 posters were handed out
- 71 of 100 window stickers were handed out

The businesses liked the printed materials. 75% of the businesses that fed back rated the materials good or above (figure 9). In the text statements made by businesses about the printed materials echoed that they liked the materials but suggested improvements to the size and durability of the posters. The main suggestion was to have big boards of the posters rather than little posters made of paper. In addition, if still using little posters, they should be laminated.





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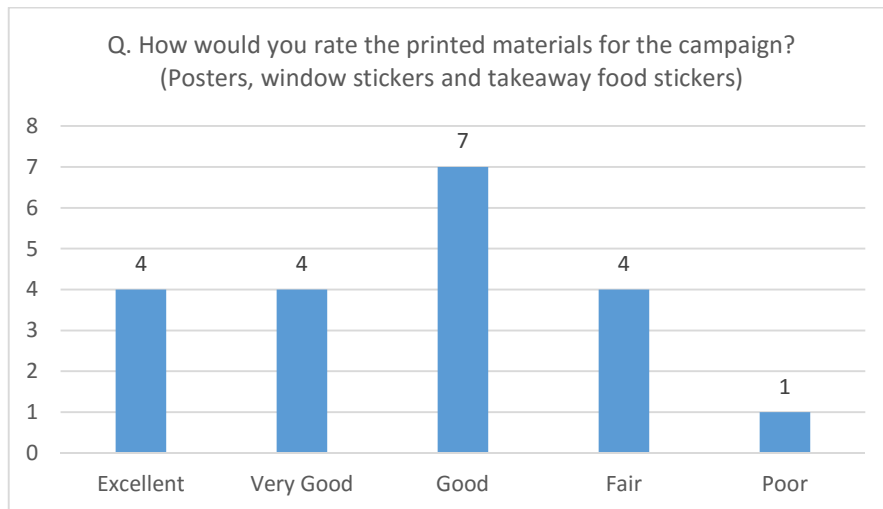


Figure 9 Business rating of printed materials

TRADITIONAL MEDIA RESPONSE:

Litter Free Coast and Sea actively sent out press releases and carried out press interviews for the campaign. The campaign was covered by Wessex Fm, generated three long articles in the Dorset Echo and achieved front cover of The View from Weymouth. The events helped generate a lot of the media interest around the campaign. There are a few links to articles below. The articles in the echo generated a number of comments. The number of comments can be seen below in brackets after hyperlink.

- <https://www.wessexfm.com/news/dorset-news/2296136/dont-feed-the-locals/>
- http://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/15325485.Nuisance_gulls_are_being_reminded_who_s_boss/ (13 comments)
- http://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/15319683.PICTURES_Gulls_just_want_to_have_fun_as_visitors_warned_don_t_feed_the_locals_/ (7 comments)
- http://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/15310232.STOP_THE_CHIP_THIEVES_Campaign_to_tackle_seagull_menace_in_Weymouth/ (44 comments)

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT:

Twitter – Litter Free Coast and Sea posted 101 tweets for the campaign which generated 48,691 impressions, 184 retweets and 330 likes.

Facebook – 20 posts were put on Facebook by Litter Free Coast and Sea for the campaign. These posts reached 16,610 people, generated 894 clicks and 190 likes, shares and comments.

Instagram – Nine posts were put on Instagram by Litter Free Coast and Sea relating to the campaign. This generated 187 likes, 146 views and 13 comments. The Metro Newspaper posted an Instagram post about the campaign – it was great to get national coverage.

Use of the Hashtag – The hashtag #dontfeedthelocals was created to use alongside the campaign. This was used on Twitter by others 11 times and on Facebook by others 24 times.





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CONCLUSION:

The main goal of the campaign was to increase awareness in Weymouth about 'why' people should not feed the seagulls and to try and reduce seagull feeding.

The campaign achieved a large reach though a high number of businesses participating, an impressive social media impact and number of times the campaign was picked up in the local press.

It is hard to assess whether the campaign has been successful in reducing seagull feeding. No baseline was gathered for this and it would be hard to establish a true measure of this. However, some of the businesses felt that improvement had been made. In addition, we did have some very positive conversations with people at the events which influenced behaviour.

The businesses gave some very constructive feedback to take forward:

- Overall they liked the campaign materials but they would like the posters to be either laminated or much bigger
- Overall they like the campaign (especially the giant seagulls) but they wanted it to be bigger and be carried out for longer and later in the season

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

- Run the campaign again next year for a longer period of time and on a bigger scale
- Use the posters to create larger signage for the seafront and harbour areas
- Have stands at large events going on along the seafront or harbour next year (such as seafood festival again) rather than standalone events
- Continue to get business buy in and support but print posters on waterproof paper or laminate

This report was prepared by Matilda Manley, Litter Free Coast and Sea Coordinator.

