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## Experts Dub Council Plans a Waste of Public Money

Kirklees Council is considering plans to control the town's pigeon population by feeding the birds alongside a ban on public feeding. The plan is, apparently, based on attempts to stop the public feeding pigeons in Trafalgar Square where Greater London Authority (GLA) officers fed pigeons on a daily basis after banning public feeding in the Square. Although the GLA plan was deemed a success by the council itself, it was in fact a humanitarian disaster with pigeon flock size in the Square being decimated as a result of death by starvation, rather than good management strategies.

PiCAS UK, the leading authority on pigeon control in the UK, condemns Kirklees' proposal out of hand as yet another huge waste of public money. In 2001 PiCAS UK advised Kirklees Council to implement a multi-faceted pigeon control programme based on the PiCAS model, a programme used all over Europe and scientifically proven to reduce pigeon flock size. This method of control effects a reduction in pigeon numbers by using a breeding control programme that involves the use of artificial breeding facilities combined with a public education programme designed to reduce public feeding. Kirklees completely failed to provide the programme as intended and failed to take advice on the correct infrastructure required. Instead of providing an artificial breeding facility based on plans provided by PiCAS UK, the council chose a facility based on financial considerations only. The result was a completely inappropriate structure which failed to be effective and was subsequently removed by the council.

Kirklees council has also failed to understand that standalone public feeding bans are **never** effective and PiCAS UK confirmed this to the council in 2001. Where deliberate and persistent feeding of pigeons is the root cause of the problem, as it is in Huddersfield, attempts to ban the public feeding of pigeons without providing a coordinated programme involving the provision of public feeding areas will always fail.

Probably the greatest failure on the part of Kirklees council is their failure to understand the very basic principle that pigeons breed according to the level of food available to them. The greater the food supply, the more they breed. If food is reduced however, the birds will breed less and if the food supply falls below a certain level the birds will stop breeding altogether. If the council goes ahead with its plans to feed the town's pigeon flocks twice a day, and if the general public continue to feed pigeons at existing levels, the incidence of breeding will skyrocket and pigeon flock size will rise dramatically.

Emma Haskell of PiCAS UK said: "We have tried to work with this council but they

have studiously and comprehensively ignored the advice provided to them and implemented strategies based on a watered-down interpretation of our proposals. The only means of controlling and reducing pigeon flock size in Huddersfield town centre is to implement a system based on the PiCAS model, a programme used all over Europe with massive success. If the council goes ahead with this proposal pigeon-related problems will simply entrench with inevitable cost implications for town centre property owners.”

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For more information on PiCAS UK visit the website at [www.picasuk.com](http://www.picasuk.com) or contact Emma Haskell on 02392 583540 or 07903 011715

Editors notes:

Copies of the technical drawing provided to Kirklees council in 2001 for an appropriate artificial breeding facility (dovecote) are available on request and can be emailed.

The PiCAS Group is recommended by national and international agencies worldwide for independent and expert advice on all matters relating to the non-lethal control of all bird species. In the UK the RSPB refers many of its bird control enquiries to PiCAS UK. The PiCAS Group is the only independent consultancy service of its type worldwide and although the group will design and provide holistic programmes for the control of any species of bird, it specialises in the control of feral pigeon populations.

PiCAS UK advises its client base throughout the UK and PiCAS International provides a global service for its client base worldwide. PiCAS bases its recommended controls on a mix of scientific research and over 30 years experience in the bird control sector. PiCAS's range of clients include Governments, Town and City Councils, Housing Associations, Property Management Companies, Town and City Centre Management Agencies, Hospitals, Train Operators, Architects, Demolition Contractors, Developers, Building Contractors, Airports and Port Authorities, The Mounted Police, The Aviation Industry and Water Authorities.