



Media Release

Date: April 19th 2023

Public asked to report dead seabirds as Bird Flu testing resumes

States Veterinary Officers have resumed bird flu testing and have asked Alderney residents and visitors to report any dead seabirds they find.

They have stressed the need to be watchful after thousands of gannets in Alderney's two colonies died last summer as a result of the H5N1 Avian Influenza virus last year.

It is understood that between 20 to 25% of the adult population died in the outbreak but is hopeful the colonies are rebuilding this year.

However, as a precaution, States Vets and the Alderney Wildlife Trust are urging the public to avoid close contact with any dead seabirds found on the island's beaches.

The Trust has installed cameras to monitor breeding birds including puffins, storm petrels and gulls on Burhou and Gannets on the Les Etacs stacks.

While the risk of humans catching bird flu are low, people are advised to avoid close contact with sick or dead seabirds as even dead birds may still carry the virus.

Dog owners are also urged to ensure their dogs avoid contact with dead or sick birds. They are also warned to be on the lookout for palm oil deposits on beaches. The white, oily substance can kill a dog if ingested.

Although bird flu restrictions involving poultry flocks were lifted last year, and only this month in the UK, the European Food Safety Authority has warned that poultry infection risks could increase this Spring.

Anyone finding a dead or sick seabird is asked to report the incident to the States of Alderney by calling **Public Works on 01481 820080** and the bird will be dealt with in an appropriate and safe manner.

Ends