



Media Release

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Public advice concerning Bird Flu – now affecting seabirds in the English Channel

An unprecedented outbreak of Avian Influenza or Bird Flu is currently affecting wild birds across Europe, notably waterfowl and seabirds in the north of the United Kingdom.

Many thousands of seabirds, including Northern Gannets, have already died at their colonies and reports of dead birds show the outbreak is increasingly spreading southwards and is now in colonies in the English Channel. This week, over 1,000 Sandwich Terns died in a breeding colony in northern France near Calais, representing 10% of the French breeding population.

David Chamberlain, States of Guernsey Veterinary Officer, said: “It is possible there will be large numbers of dead birds washing up on the beaches and these may be carrying the virus. The risk to the public is low when those in close contact with the birds take appropriate precautions. The general public and dogs must avoid contact with any dead birds that are washed up on the beaches.”

As a precaution members of the public should avoid handling any sick or dead seabirds that may come ashore. If found, please report the incident to the States of Alderney by calling Alderney Animal Welfare Society on 07966 503694 and the bird will be dealt with in an appropriate and safe manner.

Ends