

Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust Policies and Procedures

Title	Deal Marine Mammals Policy
Policy/Procedure	Policy
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Dead marine mammals (usually seals) are frequently washed up on beaches and rocky shores around the islands, however, all calls relate to St Mary's and it appears the off-islands deal with the issue themselves. There is an assumption amongst many that the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust is responsible for disposing of dead mammals. Therefore it has become necessary for the Trust to develop a policy for dealing with dead marine mammals.

The Trust believes that dead marine mammals should only be disposed of when they pose a risk to human health. Dead animals provide a vital source of food for others and are an integral component of the food chain. Collecting dead mammals from inaccessible places such as rocks can also be dangerous and as such, any dead marine mammals reported away from beaches (ie on rocks) will be left to decompose naturally.

In the first instance the person reporting the dead mammal should be told to call the Cornwall Wildlife Trust Marine Strandings Network hotline:
0345 201 2626 <http://www.cwtstrandings.org/index.html>

The Trust is only able to contend with dead mammals on beaches within its tenancy. Wildlife Trust staff can advise on this

1st May-30th September: Any dead marine mammals reported on beaches within the Trust's tenancy during this period will be investigated by Trust staff/volunteers. If the dead mammal poses a health risk to humans (i.e. is on a busy beach in high season), is accessible and can be disposed of safely by burial, this will be undertaken. If not, the Trust will call on colleagues in the Council and Duchy to assess the best course of action. This may mean that the dead mammal is unable to be disposed of safely and is left to decompose naturally as part of the food chain.

1st October – 30th April: Any dead marine mammals found on beaches within the Trust's tenancy during this period will be left to decompose naturally as part of the food chain unless a serious risk to public health is shown. In this instance, the Trust will call on colleagues in the Council and Duchy to assess the best course of action.