What to do if you find a lone seal pup...

A seal pup on its own may not necessarily mean it has been abandoned or is in distress. Pups are occasionally left by their mothers for short times and this is perfectly normal. The pup may also cry whilst it is left which may sound distressing to you but they are perfectly fine. **The most important thing to remember is to always keep your distance and not approach any seals as this can cause unnecessary stress.**

Here is some advice to help you decide if a seal needs help or should be left:

Up until the pups are three weeks of age they are covered in white downy fur. During this time they are not ready to swim so please do not try to encourage them into the water.

The pups naturally moult their white fur at around three weeks which can leave them looking a bit patchy - this is perfectly normal.

Sometimes pups will move or be born outside of the fenced areas and weaned pups will often be found resting along the Point. Please do not approach them.

**If a seal has a serious visible injury then please speak to a member of National Trust staff or call 01263 740241**

Please keep your distance and do not attempt to move any seal yourself.

Tides...

Our coastal sites are flooded twice daily by the tide causing some areas to become cut off. Please seek local advice before walking out to remote locations. For tide times please see tidetimes.org.uk

Help to look after the seals...

Visit Morston Quay to purchase a cuddly seal pup toy, pin badge or postcard with all proceeds going towards caring for the seal pups. Thank you.

Keep up to date with seal pup news...

To keep up to date with our regular seal pup counts and news from Blakeney Point please see: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/blakeney
**Blakeney National Nature Reserve...**

Blakeney Point is part of Blakeney National Nature Reserve and has been under the care of the National Trust since it was gifted in 1912. The iconic Lifeboat House was bought in 1922 and is now a visitor centre and accommodation for the rangers living on Blakeney Point (during the summer period only). A four-mile long shingle spit, Blakeney Point is recognised as internationally important for its breeding birds, and its seal colony.

The ranger team protect and monitor the seal colony. For the safety of seals and visitors, the westernmost mile of beach and dunes on the Point are fenced off during the breeding season, which runs from late October until late January. Pups are regularly counted and any found to be seriously ill or injured are taken to the RSPCA wildlife hospital.

**Grey seals on Blakeney Point...**

With lots of open space and no natural predators, Blakeney Point is a perfect breeding site for grey seals and pup survival rates are high with just a 3% mortality. In 2001 just 25 pups were born but we have seen numbers increase year on year and in 2014 Blakeney Point became the largest seal colony in England with over 2,500 pups born annually.

Grey seal pups are born on land, with white coats. They are fed on their mother’s rich milk for up to three weeks. In this time, they triple in size and shed their white fur. The mother then leaves the pup to fend for itself.

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Mating takes place soon after pupping. Male seals (bulls) fight for territories and the dominant ones will mate with several females. This makes the colony a dramatic, but dangerous place.

**Responsible viewing...**

Disturbance is a major issue for the seals and can lead to abandonment or crushing of the pups which can be fatal. Here’s how you can help to minimise disturbance:

- We recommend the best way to view the seal pups is by taking a boat from Morston Quay. During the pupping season there are two companies operating seal trips:
  - Beans Boat Trips - 01263 740505 or 01263 740038
  - Temples Seal Trips - 01263 740791
- If you wish to walk out to the colony then please follow the recommended walking route along Blakeney Point (3 miles one-way on loose shingle) as shown on the map - **there are no facilities available. Please respect fence lines and any advice given by the National Trust.**
- We would prefer dogs to be left at home but if you do wish to bring them then we ask that they are kept on short leads at all times.
- Please do not try to take your photo with any seals as mothers are protective and males are very territorial which could result in serious injury to you or the death of a pup.

*The no access area may change depending on the spread of the seal colony during the breeding season*