

**From:** [Claire Armet](#)  
**To:** [2002 Act Review](#)  
**Subject:** Review of Foxhunting  
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Dear Sirs

My partner's family are sheep farmers and I can therefore attest to the need for effective fox control. There are also a number of both commercial and small private shoots around where I stay. They also require to limit fox numbers. The country fox is a beautiful and amazingly smart animal that is fascinating to watch but whose numbers need to be held in check. Foxhunting under the current legislation allows for the fox to be flushed from cover by a pack of hounds to guns and if wounded to be dispatched by the hounds. This is far more humane than the other alternative methods of control as it ensures that the fox is either dead or escapes uninjured.

I understand that this review is considering whether to limit the number of hounds as is the situation in England and Wales. By limiting the number of hounds, the flushing process would be less effective and indeed could prolong the harrying of the fox in thick cover. There would be occasions where the fox would not feel under sufficient pressure to break cover and so would not be visible to the guns rendering the process useless.

There is no swell of opinion for a change in the law regarding foxhunting. The majority of the population have no interest in this matter and very few have an informed opinion. There are a huge number of animal welfare issues in this country which deserve attention. The foxhunting issue is an easy target as the hunts can be portrayed as the baddies, particularly posh baddies. The fact that the majority of hunt supporters are just ordinary working people is not acknowledged by the anti hunting campaigners. The time spent on this issue could be far better engaged in dealing with live animal transportation, distance from abattoirs, poor farming practice, poisoning of wild animals, puppy farming and so it goes on.

If it is accepted that fox numbers need to be controlled then we need to consider an effective humane method. Hunting with hounds as carried out under the current legislation fits this description. The fact that people can have a sociable and enjoyable day while doing this should not matter but does seem to be the reason for the anti campaign.

Foxhunting does bring both social and economic benefits to the Borders. Since the implementation of the current act hunts have been found to have been acting within the law and have good communications with the police to ensure that their operations are clear.

I do hope that no further action is taken over this law and that time is devoted to more pressing issues.

Claire Armet

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