

From: [Onslow, Richard](#)
To: [2002 Act Review](#)
Subject: Review of Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002 - Submission
Date: 31 March 2016 11:04:23

Dear Lord Bonomy

I am lucky enough to be able to ride across the beautiful Borders countryside. I am able to go to places I wouldn't be allowed to go as a result of the pest control activity that the Buccleuch Foxhounds undertake.

I have little or no involvement in the fox control, although from time to time, I am asked to line along a road or track to try to turn the fox towards the line of guns.

Riding out allows me to school my horse – indeed there is a possibility that my horse may go to the Olympics in Rio. This will be in no small part to the schooling and jumping I have been able to do across rough unkempt ground that I ride across when going out with the hounds.

I pay for this privilege, but the money collected allows the pest control to be carried out at no cost to the farmers. In return, they allow us to ride across their farms.

Going out allows me to meet my friends who have similar interests. Horses are part of the DNA of the Borders and have been for centuries. Mass gatherings on horses are an important part of Borders social life.

This aside, flushing foxes from woods and coverts to guns is a vital form of fox control. This is most efficiently done by a large number of dogs. This large number allows the foxes to be quickly pushed towards the guns and to be dispatched by the guns humanely and efficiently. Using one or two dogs would not flush the foxes out as quickly to the guns which could cause additional stress.

Flushing foxes now bears no resemblance to what went on before the 2002 Act was passed. Everyone seemed to be happy with the Act, including the politicians, SSPCA, LACS and IFAW. Indeed they all recognised that flushing is an important part of fox control. The activities are open, public and accountable. There is close cooperation with the police in the Borders.

However this is about politics and calls for a review only began following the attempt to review the English Hunting Act in Westminster. This is not about animal welfare. And we are caught in the middle of the politics.

I would therefore submit that the Act should remain unchanged as it provides a free, invaluable pest control service to farmers so their livestock can be protected. It also allows me, and many like me, to be able to ride out with my friends in places that I would not have access to normally. There is no public demand for change and certainly none in the Borders. Please do not let the politics interfere.

Yours sincerely

Richard Onslow

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