

# Research for CTC2

## How we arrived at our conclusions

1. After publishing Counting the Crimes in September 2020, AAF monitored the **responses from 34 rural police forces.**
  - We held meetings with 13 forces.
  - We had email exchanges with 9 more forces.
  - 6 forces sent us a single email only.
  - We had no response from 6 forces.
  - In addition to this, we met with DCC Paul Netherton. (Now retired, DCC Netherton was responsible for the national portfolio for hunting).
  - We also held phone conversations with two of the forces who responded by email.
2. We continued to collect “**hit reports**” (reports from FWGs, usually on Facebook) that mentioned the police, and **media reports** for the 2020-2021 season.
3. We conducted a survey among FWGs asking them to report on their experiences with the police. This survey generated 109 responses. We have not published the results of the survey as this would reveal personal information.
4. We conducted a survey amongst members of the public called “The Effect that Foxhunting has on People Living in Rural Areas.” This survey generated 609 responses. Here is a link to the results

<https://www.actionagainstfoxhunting.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-Effect-that-Hunting-has-on-people-living-in-rural-areas.-.pdf>

5. We sent **34 Freedom of Information** requests to police forces. These were the questions:

*Dear xxx Police Force*

*My questions relate to your organisational structure concerning the policing of the Hunting Act, in particular illegal foxhunting.*

*1. While I understand that any officer can answer a 999 or 101 call relating to illegal hunting, which section or department has the responsibility for investigating any breaches of the Hunting Act?*

*2. How many officers in the force have received training on illegal foxhunting and the Hunting Act?*

*3. Does the force have a policy relating to illegal foxhunting? May we have a copy of it?*

4. Does the force have any Wildlife Crime Officers and if so, how many active Wildlife Crime officers are there and where are they based?

5. Does the force have an "Aide Memoire", any other document, or access to an app, for officers to use when involved in a call for illegal foxhunting? If so, may we see a copy of it?

6. How many police officers are there in total in the force?

Yours faithfully,

Pip Donovan

All the replies can be found here:

[https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/user/pip\\_donovan/requests](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/user/pip_donovan/requests)

6. We synthesised the research and responses from the police to write CTC2.
7. We included links and references to our research at relevant points. However, including all of it would overwhelm the report.
8. To rate the forces and write the **reports on individual police forces**, we used these sources of information:
  - Emails from the forces, responding to Counting the Crimes
  - Written records of our meetings with the forces (agreed with the police)
  - Police force websites
  - Hit reports on Social Media from FWG groups, where police are mentioned
  - Media reports concerning hunting and the police
  - Discussions between AAF and FWG groups (to find out what FWGs thought of their local police)
  - The AAF survey for FWGs
  - Discussions with members of the public who reported hunting incidents on Social Media (AAF contacted them privately).
  - Replies to the FOIs.
  - Exchanges between AAF and individual police forces following a high-profile incident.
9. When rating individual police forces, we considered all of the following questions for each force:
  - *How did the force respond to Counting the Crimes?*
  - *For email response - was the response detailed?*
  - *How do you rate the email response? (marked out of 5 stars)*
  - *Why have you given this rating?*
  - *Were there follow up emails and did the force reply?*
  - *For the forces who did not respond, how do you rate the response? (marked out of 5 stars)*
  - *For the forces who met with us, how do you rate this response? (marked out of 5 stars)*
  - *Why have you given this response?*

- *For the forces who met with us, how open were they? (marked out of 5 stars)*
- *For the forces who met with us, how useful was the meeting? (marked out of 5 stars)*
- *Why have you given this response?*
- *For all forces: how willing was THIS force to take on board what we said? (marked out of 5 stars)*
- *Why have you given this response?*
- *FOR ALL FORCES - Has THIS force taken any actual steps to improve their relationship with FWGs?*
- *What steps have they taken?*
- *Does this force have an aide memoire or any guide to policing illegal hunting?*
- *What do you think of the guide/aide memoire? (marked out of 5 stars)*
- *Why have you given this response?*
- *How well trained are the police in this force? (marked out of 5 stars)*
- *Why have you given this response?*
- *FOR ALL FORCES - how do you rate THIS force's behaviour in the field with regard to illegal foxhunting and incidents involving FWGs?*

- Ø *Always appear biased*
- Ø *Usually appear biased*
- Ø *Sometimes appear biased*
- Ø *Rarely appear biased*
- Ø *Never appear biased*

- *Why have you given this response?*
- *Looking at the response to our FOI\* asking about police systems and organisation with regard to foxhunting, how do you rate their ability to take action on illegal foxhunting? (marked out of 5 stars)*
- *Why have you given this rating?*
- *Do you think the force focuses too heavily on public order as opposed to dealing with illegal foxhunting?*
- *Why have you given this response?*
- *Overall, how do you rate this force? (marked out of 5 stars)*
- *Any other comments?*
- *In the opinion of AAF, how can this police force improve?*

## **PART ONE OF CTC 2 contains these sections:**

### **THE HUNTING ACT**

1. What the police said about the Hunting Act
2. AAF's comments and recommendations

### **EVIDENCE, INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE**

1. What the police said about evidence gathering for illegal fox hunting
2. Suggestions from the police about how to improve the quality of evidence
3. What the police said about information and intelligence

4. AAF's comments and recommendations

## POLICE BIAS

1. What the police said about bias
2. AAF's comments and recommendations

## LOOKING FORWARDS

1. Acknowledging hunt crimes
2. Enforcing the Hunting Act in the field
3. Police websites
4. Training and aide memoires
5. Improving the relationship between police and FWGs
6. Police responsibility to the general public
7. The effect fox hunting has on the general public
8. Hunt violence on the increase
9. Date for future review of CTC2, in the light of police actions in the 2021/2022 season.

**PART TWO OF CTC2 contains reports on individual police forces.**