

Hertfordshire Constabulary

[Counting the Crimes 2](#) (CTC2) was written by Action Against Foxhunting in Autumn 2021.

CTC2 is a follow up to our first report [Counting the Crimes: Police Response to Hunt-Related Calls](#).

CTC2 consists of the main body of the report and reports on 34 English police forces.

The report on for Hertfordshire Constabulary is set out below.

All the reports on other forces can be found [here](#)

The report is based on a large amount of [research](#). Some of the research is included in the report, and the rest is available on request. To the best of our knowledge, everything is correct.

[The conviction of Mark Hankinson](#) occurred as we were writing this report. We know that the public will be looking to the police to take action against those who hunt foxes illegally and we hope that this report will be of use as it includes practical advice. The report is intended to be helpful and honest, rather than critical.

For the Facebook links, we are aware that posts on social media are not always completely accurate. We have tried to verify the contents, and have contacted many of the posters for further information. Some have replied, and some have not. We are always interested in hearing different views of the same incidents, and if police are able to provide further insight, we would be happy to include this.

FWG – Frontline Wildlife Guardian. The term includes both saboteurs and monitors.

If any force wishes to discuss the report, please contact us info@actionagainstfoxhunting.org. We are happy to meet on line.



How did the force respond to CTC? You can select multiple options.

- One email
- Exchange of emails
- Meeting
- No response at all

For email response - was the response detailed?

- Yes
- No

How do you rate the response?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

Why have you given this rating?

Detailed response, answering all our questions. There were also points where the force was hoping to improve.

Were there follow up emails and did the force reply?

- Yes
- No

How willing was this force to take on board what we said?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	✓	-	-

Why have you given this response?

In the response to CTC 1, the officer said that they would be happy to work with AAF to improve. However, they have not asked us for anything and we haven't offered. We need to follow this up.

Has the force taken any steps to improve its relationship with FWGs?

- Yes
- No
- ✓ They said they would, but we don't know what they have done. We haven't yet asked them.

Does this force have an aide memoire or any guide to policing illegal hunting?

- No
- ✓ Yes

Why have you given this response?

They are working on an app for it. They also have an app.

How well trained are the police in this force?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

Why have you given this response?

There is a Rural Support Unit and all of the constables in it will become WCOs. This is unusual - even having the WCOs in the Rural Crime Unit is surprisingly unusual.

How do you rate this force's behaviour in the field with regard to illegal foxhunting and incidents involving FWGs?

- Always appear biased
- Usually appear biased
- ✓ Sometimes appear biased
- Rarely appear biased
- Never appear biased

Why have you given this response?

We don't have much information about this to be confident with our answer. However a recent incident (see below) suggests that some officers appear to be biased.

How do you rate their ability to take action on illegal foxhunting?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

Why have you given this rating?

The Rural Support Unit seems well trained and willing to offer help to any officer who is landed with a foxhunting investigation.

Do you think the force focuses too heavily on public order as opposed to dealing with illegal foxhunting?

- Yes
- No
- ✓ Other – a recent incident (see below) is damaging.

Why have you given this response?

FWGs did not complain this until recently.

Overall, how do you rate this force?

Take into account willingness to engage with AAF, willingness to engage with FWGs, actions in the field etc.

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	✓	-	-

Any other comments?

It seems that the force is fairly well set up to deal with illegal hunting. A recent incident has, however, let them down badly (see Hit Reports, below)

Regardless of the outcome of any court cases relating to the Hunting Office webinars which were exposed November 2020, what was stated in the recordings cannot be unsaid. The Hunting Office made it clear that trail hunting IS fox hunting and there was much talk about ways to create a “smokescreen” to cover up illegal hunting. Disrespectful comments were made about the police. The Hunting Office represents all registered hunts in England and Wales therefore the discussions were relevant to all police forces.

In the opinion of AAF, how can this police force improve?

There isn't a huge amount of hunting in Hertfordshire which means that officers may be faced with a scenario they haven't come across before if called out to a hunting incident (or they stumble across one). This is important in that the two hunts they are most likely to come across are the Kimblewick or the Puckeridge.

All officers would benefit from a much greater understanding of the issues surrounding illegal hunting and the motivations of FWGs. We have created three helpful documents:

[Practical Advice for All Officers](#) – this includes training advice

[A Field Guide for Officers](#) – to use if they are called to a hunt

[A Study - Why sabs and monitors are not protesters.](#) – an insight FWG organisations.

Hit reports mentioning Herts Police and hunting

<https://www.facebook.com/SCoastHuntSabs/posts/1712090562331702>
11/10/21. Kimblewick hunt. Police delay FWGs but friendly with hunt

<https://www.facebook.com/NorthLondonHuntSaboteurs/posts/396179452206338>
13/11/21. Puckeridge hunt. Police effectively act as the hunt's security.