

# Norfolk 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 for Norfolk 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](mailto:info@actionagainstfoxhunting.org). We are happy to meet on line.



**How did the force respond to CTC?**

- ✓ 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?**

The response was well-researched and thorough. It also showed a willingness for Norfolk Police to engage with us, and other FWGs

**Were there follow up emails and did the force reply?**

- ✓ Yes
- No

**For the forces who met with us, how do you rate this response?**

---

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

---

**Why have you given this response?**

The meeting was attended by the Chief Inspector, the inspector responsible for the Rural Crime Teams, a WCO and a Beat Manager. The range of officers who attended made the meeting useful. We appreciated the time spent with us. However, the force has some issues with hunting.

**For the forces who met with us, how open were they?**

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

**For the forces who met with us, how useful was the meeting?**

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	✓	-	-

**Why have you given this response?**

The Norfolk officers were open to discussions. We were happy with the force's willingness to talk to FWGs. We would also like to see an intention to improve the response to illegal hunting. Norfolk does have problems with (possibly unconscious) bias among its officers. FWG groups feel targeted, particularly with road traffic issues. Norfolk police rarely challenge any of the hunts.

The meeting was useful although the police were arguably more feeding back their views rather than openly taking on board what AAF and the FWG present were saying

**How willing was this force to take on board what we were saying?**

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

**Why have you given this response?**

Norfolk Police were keen to talk. The unconscious bias among their officers must be addressed. They have included illegal hunting in their online Rural Policing Strategy.

**Has this force taken any actual steps to improve their relationship with FWGs?**

- ✓ Yes
- No
- Other

**What steps have they taken?**

An FWG attended the meeting with us and the force hopes to continue engaging with him.

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

- Yes
- ✓ No

**How well trained are the police in this force?**

1	2	3	4	5
-	✓	-	-	-

**Why have you given this response?**

All student Norfolk officers have some training on wildlife crime. However, there are only 10 WCOs in this large rural area and their expertise must be stretched very thinly. Hare hunting is a particular issue in the county with three harrier packs to consider.

Norfolk police say training is important but did not acknowledge that any more training was needed. This is despite the force as a whole apparently not taking on board that illegal foxing is the norm (as opposed to trail hunting). Also various other incidents of what appear to be a lack of knowledge in detailed logs provided by FGWs (not recognising that a 'trail 'being laid involved a cloth not touching the ground. Not realising that holding up FWGs and allowing the hunt to continue was giving them a head start to hunt etc).

**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?**

FWGs have provided detailed accounts of police stopping and questioning them and their vehicles but allowing the hunt to continue in vehicles untaxed/uninsured/no MOT at that moment in time. In a case where a monitor's vehicle was hit by an uninsured horse box, police bungling led to the case being time expired. An ex-Norfolk police officer is master of the Dunstan Harriers.

**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?**

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	✓	-	-

**Why have you given this rating?**

Operation Randal (the police operation relating to rural crime) is high-profile and appears to be well-organised. However, the size of the county and the evasiveness of the hunts indicate that without proactive policing (for example using a drone), the chance of the police being able to take action is slim.

The police should realise that holding up FWGs and allowing the hunt to continue is giving them a head start to hunt. Officers should at least ask the hunt for alleged trail maps/layers/scent (as in NPCC guidelines). They rely heavily on individual officers not showing unconscious bias even if they shoot or hunt. They say that it is for the officer to decide whether there is a conflict.

**Do you think the force focuses too heavily on public order as opposed to**

## dealing with illegal foxhunting?

- No
- ✓ Norfolk Police stop FWGs vehicles rather than questioning the hunt about their activities.

## 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?

After the leaked webinars and the conviction of Mark Hankinson, Norfolk Police must know that hunts are breaking the law on a regular basis. The hunts do not, and never have, consented to the Hunting Act. The force engages with the hunt, but it is not clear to what end. There is no apparent change in the hunts' behaviour, despite the engagement. The force need to recognise the scale of the law-breaking and take action proactively.

## In the opinion of AAF, how can the force improve?

FWGs are a potential resource for police and should be viewed as such.

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 and Media Reports mentioning Norfolk Police and Hunting

<https://www.facebook.com/nshuntsabs/posts/3529784860375554>

10/10/20. West Norfolk foxhounds. Hunt vehicle not MOT'd – Sabs report to police. Illegal hunting.

<https://www.facebook.com/nshuntsabs/posts/3543793675641339>

17/10/21. West Norfolk foxhounds. 3 police cars attend hunt – FWGs threatened with aggravated trespass. generally given attention by the police who allegedly admitted they know little about the Hunting Act.

<https://www.facebook.com/nshuntsabs/posts/3589316071089099>

29/11/20 & 30/11/20 police attend in force. Dunstan Harriers not foxhounds - but illustrates policing of FWGs

<https://www.facebook.com/nshuntsabs/posts/3691896104164428>

12/12/20 West Norfolk foxhounds. Police attended – No sign of trail layers – hounds all over roads. See Jon Evans' comments on post.