

Warwickshire Police

[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 Warwickshire Police 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?

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

For Email response - was the response detailed?

- ✓ Yes
- No

How useful was the response?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

Why have you given this rating?

While it did not answer all of the questions posed in CTC, it did give a very clear overview of what was going on in Warwickshire. It also gave details about the steps the force had already taken to improve its response to hunt related incidents, and the steps it plans to take in the future.

Were there follow up emails and did the force reply?

- ✓ Yes
- No

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

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	-	✓

Why have you given this response?

Warwickshire's Rural Crime Team was set up in 2019. Because it is relatively new, they have already been examining how they go about things and set about improving. They were also very keen to share their plans with us. In particular, this force was making organisational improvements. They have developed the post of "Rural crime co-ordinator" - to record and cross-reference all wildlife and rural offences. In our opinion, this is an essential first step to tackling illegal foxhunting, which is non-recordable, so records are not generally kept.

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

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	-	✓

Why have you given this response?

The Inspector for Rural Crime was very keen to talk to AAF. She is eager to build bridges between Warwickshire Police and FWGs as she is aware that it is FWGs that hold primary evidence, without which investigations will not take place.

She said on several occasions that they are keen to continue to improve the policing of wildlife crime including fox hunting. Following points raised in CTC, they had already set up a system "where any offences under the Hunting Act can be recorded on our crime recording system as non-notifiable incident, which allows for an auditable trail and a secure location to record the investigations to them".

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

- ✓ Yes
- No
- Other

What steps have they taken?

Warwickshire Police met with AAF in the hope that we will be able to encourage other anti-hunting groups to open and maintain a relationship with them.

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

- ✓ Yes
- No

What do you think of the guide/aide memoire?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	-	✓	-

Why have you given this response?

Warwickshire officers have access to an app which they have on their phones. This app gives information and advice about illegal foxhunting. We didn't see the app though, so can't comment on how good it is. That said, if an FWG is talking to a Warwickshire officer about illegal foxhunting, they could ask the officer to look at the app.

How well trained are the police in this force?

1	2	3	4	5
-	-	✓	-	-

Why have you given this response?

21 Officers are trained on wildlife crime. Also, new student officers are receiving training.

FOR ALL FORCES - how do you rate THIS forces 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?

Up until recently there has been criticism. It doesn't help that the PCC is known to be pro hunt and that an ex Chief Superintendent is a supporter of the Warwickshire hunt. Also this is a quote from a not particularly radical FWG "My personal opinion is that the police have been told from somewhere 'high up' to leave illegal hunting alone. They will, as you know, if they can get away with it let these truly awful hunt supporters get away with almost any bad behaviour finding every excuse not to do". Despite this the force has made radical changes since October 2019, the new Inspector for Rural Crime has transferred from a city post and has no rural links at all. Not being able to get hold of credible evidence often makes it impossible to go forward with investigations/prosecutions. Not being able to prosecute creates the impression of being biased. It's a vicious circle.

There are only a few hit reports that mention the police. One local anti-hunting group reports "every single incident" to the police, but they believe that "It's so corrupt, but we keep on trying".

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?

Warwickshire Police do appear capable of taking action, given their procedures, organisation, training and willingness. However, they need the support of the FWGs to take it forward effectively.

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

- Yes
- No
- ✓ Other

Why have you given this response?

In the past this appears to have been the case. Time will tell with the new set up.

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
-	-	-	✓	-

Promising. Have done more than any other force with systems etc. Mention of hunting with dogs on website.

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?

New team, new training, new systems all have the potential to improve matters.

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

Warwickshire Police need to improve relationships with FWGs. The best way of doing this is some proactive, visible policing of the hunts. If they did this, they would be tackling the problem at its source (widespread illegal hunting), rather than dealing with the fallout.

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 concerning Warwickshire Police and hunting

<https://www.facebook.com/WestMidsHuntSabs/posts/2233533906791671>

<https://stratfordobserver.co.uk/news/police-investigate-fox-death-in-warwickshire-after-footage-released-by-west-midlands-hunt-saboteurs-24900/>

<https://www.banburyguardian.co.uk/news/people/hunt-saboteurs-release-video-fox-being-torn-apart-banburyshire-field-arlescote-police-appeal-film-footage-3022276>
28/10/20. Warwickshire hunt kill at Arlescote.

<https://www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/your-pcc/>

May 2021. Philip Seccombe, who allegedly has close links with the Warwickshire hunt, is re-elected Warwickshire PCC. (The police have no control over this but it potentially exacerbates trust issues)

<https://www.facebook.com/243223759156039/posts/2509597582518634/>

August 2021. Officers attend a Pony Club event, presumably unaware of the close links the Pony Club have to the hunt.