



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-852
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05267/19

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales

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13 February 2019

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 1 February, regarding Petition P-05-852 - Introduce a Licence to Manage Land for Game Bird Shooting in an Attempt to End Raptor Persecution.

In response to the points raised by the petitioner, officials have looked closely at the figures recorded for raptor fatalities as part of the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS) for the years highlighted in the Raptor Persecution Maps.

Year	Number of incidents	Number & species of dead raptors (confirmed pesticide poisoning)	Total birds
2012	4	3 red kites, 1 peregrine, 2 buzzards	6
2013	2	6 red kites, 8 buzzards	14
2014	1	1 red kite, 1 buzzard	2
2015	0	N/A	0
2016	1	1 buzzard	1
2017	0	N/A	0

Figures differ slightly from the Raptor Persecution Maps as those maps include poison baits and also other mammals and birds. The figures above are confirmed raptor poisonings in Wales for the years 2012-2017 inclusive. Of the 8 incidents above, 6 of them occurred on land either managed by shoots or very close to the land. On two occasions, joint action between police and the Welsh Government led to searches of property and the questioning of individuals. No cases proceeded to court.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

No specific legislation regulates the breeding and rearing of birds for sporting purposes, however, all gamebird breeders and rearers must comply with the relevant laws relating to their operation. The Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes (2011) was produced in consultation with the shooting industry and welfare organisations. The purpose of the Code is to provide practical guidance in relation to Section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, by which the welfare of gamebirds is protected. Work to review and update the Code of Practice is underway. It is important the Code continues to reflect the latest husbandry and management techniques, and standards of care the law requires.

My officials continue to play an active role in the re-launched Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group. Raptor persecution is a priority in Wales as well as the UK as a whole. One of the shared aims of both the Welsh and UK Groups is 'to protect raptors from persecution by developing and sharing best practice methodologies to safeguard birds, their eggs and their nests'.

Please also find attached (as requested) the Review of the Prevention and Investigation of Wildlife Crime in Wales 2017 produced by the National Wildlife Crime Unit on behalf of Welsh Government. Appendix D has not been included as approval has not been given to release personal information. This Review was originally commissioned to inform and aid a workshop of enforcement officers and as such the resultant document and appendices were for internal use only. Therefore, I ask the Petitions Committee not to share it more widely at this time. However, in light of increased interest in wildlife crime, I am now considering publishing a suitably redacted copy of the review document and appendices on the Welsh Government website.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs