



**LEAGUE**  
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS

# PROTECT

No23

JULY 2019

## **END SHOOTING** 10

---

Discover how we are achieving change for animals in Scotland through collaboration.

## **END ANIMAL FIGHTING** 12

---

A two-year investigation by the League Against Cruel Sports has uncovered an international network of dog fighters.

## **END HUNTING** 6

---

Hare Today, Gone Tomorrow?  
The truth about hare hunting.

---





# WELCOME

Andy Knott, CEO

Welcome to Protect. I am pleased to say that, together, we are doing just that - protecting animals. The tide of public opinion continues to turn in our favour. But with intelligence and reports from the public to our Animal Crimewatch line doubling in the last year and a half, the incidents of animal cruelty seems higher than ever. We are bringing these to the attention of the authorities, as well as our ever-expanding network of MPs in Parliament, and on almost a daily basis, to the public on TV, radio, through the newspapers, and in our various campaigns and on social media.

How we treat animals defines us. I am always moved by the kindness and generosity of our supporters. I want to raise just one up to you; young Amy Chalk. Protecting animals from cruel 'sports' is a tough business. Amy is going to run two marathons back to back - in the Sahara Desert. Her toughness and determination is an inspiration.

There are so many animal charities doing their bit; but for Amy at least, we are top of the League! Stopping cruel animal 'sports' is a marathon, but together we will finish it no matter the conditions we face.

To sponsor Amy please visit:  
[www.justgiving.com/fundraising/AmysAfricaChallenge](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/AmysAfricaChallenge)

**Andy Knott MBE**  
 Chief Executive Officer

## CONTENTS

### Features

Wild Haven	3
Hare Today, Gone Tomorrow?	6
Reviving Scotland's Grouse Moors Together	10
Not Born to Fight	12
Picture Perfect	14

### Regulars

Myth Buster	8
Our Community	9
League in Action	17
League on Tour	20
Animal Advocates	22



PROTECTING  
ANIMALS

# WILD HAVEN

*In her own words, League Against Cruel Sports supporter Simone Stanbrook-Byrne shares her passion for our wildlife sanctuaries.*

There are moments in life that stay with you forever.

Early summer, sunlight entwines itself with birdsong, trickling through the oak leaves above to dapple lush grass at my feet. A bee bumbles past. The afternoon is mellow; the countryside steeped in serene idleness.

Way across the field, heads up, ears pricked, a herd of red deer keeps a wary eye on me. I hope they sense I'm no threat, for at my feet lies one of their offspring: a calf, just a few hours old, hidden and immobile in the long grass, awaiting mum's return. It is utterly enchanting.



I first came to the woodlands of Baronsdown Wildlife Sanctuary, high above the Exe Valley, around 30 years ago, working with a group of volunteers on this flagship site that has belonged to the League Against Cruel Sports since the late 1950s. It is a stunningly lovely place.

Since the initial purchase more parcels of land have been added, creating a wildlife-rich whole that has evolved to become a haven for fauna and flora of all kinds. Baronsdown is just one of five such sanctuaries in Somerset, totalling around 550 acres and augmented by the ownership of 'sporting' rights on more than 20 other land parcels, as well as sanctuaries in other counties. Paul Tillsley is the Head of Conservation and Education. Along with his wife, Michelle, Baronsdown has been his home and workplace for nineteen years, giving him an extensive knowledge of the land and the wildlife that chooses to live here.

**"Yet," he tells me, "I am still learning, and it can still turn up surprises."**

Paul's job, inevitably, carries challenges.

**"Keeping on top of everything is quite a task," he says. "It involves improving the sanctuaries for wildlife, whilst protecting them from trespass and making sure that all the legal aspects of land ownership are covered."**

For Paul the hard grind is balanced by the pleasure of writing about and photographing the wildlife, spreading the word about the work carried out here.

On my most recent visit to Baronsdown I discovered the newly refurbished education centre, housed, somewhat ironically, in a building that, in the early nineteenth century, was the kennels of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds. Paul explains the building's new role:

**"Education is a key aspect of the League's sanctuaries. At a local level the sanctuaries show an alternative way of looking at nature, but more than that they provide an opportunity for people to engage with wildlife."**



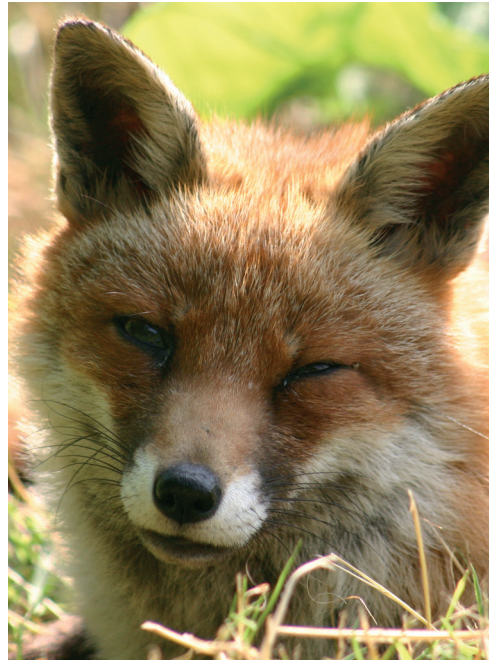
Now that we have renovated the old kennels building on Baronsdown to create a meeting room, we plan to develop the educational side and encourage more groups to visit. We are also working with an educational partner on the production of an education programme to run in schools.”

This all sound very encouraging: teaching younger generations about the importance of wildlife as part of the ecosystem on which we all depend, as well as respecting the natural world for its own intrinsic worth, has been a good thing. But the task is often far from easy. I ask Paul if there is local support for what he and the sanctuaries team work so hard to achieve.



“We do get a lot of support,” he replies, “but it’s often ‘on the quiet’ as it’s very difficult for people living in rural communities to openly support us.” Living in a rural community myself, I can understand this; it’s a well-aired and oft-divisive debate.

And the debate continues. But so do Paul and the team, tirelessly working in these wild and wonderful places to redress the balance and to conserve these oases for the legions of wild creatures that call them home.



## TAKE ACTION

If you would like to meet like-minded individuals, why not join one of our supporter groups? For more information, visit: [www.league.org.uk/supporter-groups](http://www.league.org.uk/supporter-groups)



# HARE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW?

Despite being banned fourteen years ago, sadly hunts are still targeting and chasing hares. Together we can change this.

According to the Association of Masters of Harriers and Beagles own website, there are still 71 hunts in existence which were set up to target hares – 55 Beagle foot packs, eight Basset foot packs and eight harrier horseback packs are listed.

Brown hare numbers have declined by 80 per cent during the last century according to The Hare Preservation Trust, and they have all but disappeared from some areas of the UK.

## **'Trail or rabbit' hunting? Our professional Investigators say no!**

An activity not in existence prior to the Hunting Act 2004 coming in, hunts claiming to be 'trail' hunting say they lay a pre-laid trail for their hounds to follow through the countryside. Some hunts also claim they are targeting rabbits, which is legal as rabbits are exempt from the Act.



Under surveillance, our professional Investigators didn't see any trails being laid when out monitoring hare hunts this season. As a result, we have prepared case files for the police against two hare hunts and hope that this time the evidence results in a successful prosecution unlike previous years.

### **The truth about what is happening**

The hare hunts are normally very small, and their hunts are not well attended, letting them go under the radar with their activities. The police in the UK rightly put a lot of time, energy and resources into tackling hare coursing including Operation Galileo which targets hare coursing in the East of England. However, the hare hunts appear to be getting away with the killing of hares and there is virtually no police activity to combat it. A recent prosecution failed and historically there has only been one police caution of a hare hunt.

Martin Sims our Director of Investigations, said:

**“Police forces across the UK need to devote more time and resources to successfully investigate and prosecute hunts whose hounds are still chasing, killing and literally tearing apart hares.**

**We welcome the success of British police in tackling hare coursing but there needs to be a sustained campaign to clamp down on the hare hunts...**

**We need to strengthen the Act and remove the exemptions which are enabling the hunts to kill hares and get away with it.”**

We are determined to champion the strengthening of the Act. We will use our collective voices to lead the call for the reversal of 'exempt hunting' cases. This would mean that in the case of hare hunting, suspects would become responsible for proving that they were hunting rabbits, rather than the prosecution having to show that the animal being persecuted was in fact a hare.

## **TAKE ACTION**

We're calling on the 90 per cent of people who oppose hare hunting and hare coursing to sign our petition in support of strengthening the ban and ensuring better protection for vulnerable animals. To show your support, please sign today: [www.league.org.uk/huntingkills](http://www.league.org.uk/huntingkills)



LEAGUE  
MYTHBUSTERS

# AS CUNNING AS A FOX



Illegal under the Hunting Act 2004, the hidden horror of cub hunting is hardly ever spoken about.



## The hidden truth about cub hunting

Contrary to what the hunters say, hunting a live animal does not come naturally to a fox hound. Cub hunting is used as a training method for young hounds, where over a small area fox cubs are pushed into the pack rather than involving a long chase.



## The tell-tale signs of cub hunting

Cub hunting normally takes place in August, September and October. The activity is very static, contrary to normal hunting. Small woods are surrounded by key hunt followers to ensure that if any foxes try to escape, they are scared back in towards the pack of hounds. The hounds are put in at one side of the wood, and the Huntsman will call them through as a means of flushing out any foxes inside the area.



## The key players behind this brutality

Hunt staff, including Huntsman, Whipper-In(s) and Hunt Masters will be present, along with hunt followers which are often referred to as 'the field'. Sadly it is not uncommon to see children riding with the hunt even during this early part of the season. Terrier men will also be present, often moving around on quad bikes which will have a terrier carried with them in a box attached to the back. Their role is to dig out a cub if it does manage to go to ground.

**How you can help:** Cub hunting is illegal, so please report it to the police on 101 and always insist upon receiving an incident number. You can also fill out our confidential online form which can be found at: [www.league.org.uk/animal-crimewatch](http://www.league.org.uk/animal-crimewatch) or call: 01483 361 108





# OUR COMMUNITY

We would not be able to protect animals if it wasn't for you. Our supporters make our voice that much stronger and this was the case on the 6<sup>th</sup> May.



We, along with our supporters joined forces with Bedfordshire Against Trophy Hunting to demonstrate peacefully in Woburn against the trophy hunting that takes place at the Deer Park.

## Since when was trophy hunting considered a holiday and not a cruel 'sport'?

In November last year, Europe Hunts were exposed for offering holidays at Woburn Deer Park where hunters shoot animals on an attached deer farm. This follows on from Woburn Deer Park previously hitting the headlines when it was revealed that Danish travel company Limpopo and Diana tours were also offering trophy hunting packages.

## Together, standing proud

The protest involved over 50 people, including residents, and drew a great deal of support from visitors to the Woburn Estate who were shocked to hear about the killings at a venue that presents itself as a family-friendly destination.

Placards were waved and leaflets handed out. Just like every other time we have leafleted in Woburn, we were met with support and gratitude from locals and the public for being there. After talking to us, many were shocked about what was going on at Woburn Deer Park. Our efforts continue to apply pressure onto Woburn Deer Park; challenging them to change their ways in order to meet the compassion of our society.

## THANK YOU

A big thank you to Bedfordshire Against Trophy Hunting and to all of our supporters who attended the protest. Your continued loyalty takes us one step closer to ending trophy hunting on Woburn Park.



# REVIVING SCOTLAND'S GROUSE MOORS TOGETHER

We know that it is only by being united that we can truly effect change and make cruel 'sports' a thing of the past. Our collaborative mindset, which puts animals at the heart of everything we do, extends to working in partnership with like minded charities and organisations to create a kinder society for animals. And the Revive project is an example of just that.

## **A united front**

A three-year programme, Revive, is a unique coalition of influential organisations and individuals working together to reform the way Scotland's grouse moors are currently used. Working alongside OneKind, Friends of the Earth Scotland, Common Weal and more, we aim to protect the hundreds of thousands of animals affected by the grouse shooting industry.

## **The urgent need for Revive**

The killing of wildlife on driven grouse moors is relentless all year round, but especially so during the shooting season. The land is kept barren for the sole purpose of maximising red grouse population, only for these birds to be shot for 'sport'.

## **But the cruelty doesn't stop there.**

Every year an average of 26,000 mountain hares are being killed across Scotland and as a result face extinction in parts of the Highlands. The shooting industry is one of the largest perpetrators of snaring and trapping. Countless corvids and small mammals are killed each year.

## **Uneven terrain ahead**

Aiming to implement new legislation surrounding grouse moor management is no easy task, as Scotland's shooting industry is highly resourced and influential. The estates are owned by a small number of wealthy individuals and specific ownership is difficult to identify as there is no register of land ownership requirements in Scotland.

Until recently, there has been very little appetite for the Scottish Government to take on the shooting industry.

Together, we are increasing political pressure through raising awareness of this cruelty, as well as continuously presenting evidence that reveals the negative impact driven grouse moors have on wildlife and the environment. Revive's 'Back to Life' report assessed the potential alternative uses for grouse moor land and how these alternatives are more beneficial for the environment. The findings exposed that grouse shooting is not only the least moral by far, but it is also the least economically effective. The Scottish Government recently agreed to review the environmental impact of grouse moor management.

Max Wiszniewski, Senior Campaigner for the League in Scotland, shares the progress we are making:

**“After just half a year, Revive has already made an impact on the Scottish political scene. The launch was covered by all serious print media and broadcast news and the campaign has been successful in setting the agenda around issues like mass-mountain hare culls, land use for cruel ‘sports’ and environmental/biodiversity damage from muirburn. Meetings at party conferences have been very well attended, generating a buzz amongst Scotland’s grassroots, and have achieved vast media coverage due to the interest in the campaign.”**

**In partnership, we will revive Scotland’s grouse moors.**





NOT BORN  
TO FIGHT



# NOT BORN TO FIGHT

A two-year investigation by the League has uncovered an international network which breeds, transports and organises dog fights around the world – including the UK.

Our investigation, carried out by professional intelligence staff and specialist external contractors, into this global network began when we received a tip-off to our supporter funded Animal Crimewatch reporting service about possible dog fighting in the Midlands area. This led us to an Eastern European national who was at the centre of a network breeding, transporting and fighting dogs all over the world.

We shared our investigation with the BBC who supplemented our work with their own investigation which featured across BBC news programmes in February.





## Global dog fighting network

At the centre of this network is a Bulgarian national, Ivo Nikolov. The network includes a dog kennel named Tony Flyman and a pet transportation organisation named Pettransport Bulgaria. Behind these apparently innocuous names we found a business dealing in the breeding, transportation and fighting of dogs.

## Suffering at the brutal hands of dog fighters

Dog fighters want dogs that have the strength and stamina to fight well. To increase the chances of a dog being a good fighter, they value highly trained dogs that are bred from successful fighting dogs. This process creates 'bloodlines' - the better the bloodline, the higher the price.

The ruthless reality of dog fighting is that however these dogs are bred, and wherever they are taken to, they will be forced into a 'pit' to fight another dog.

Dog fighting can take place anywhere - on the street, in parks - but at an organised level, fights usually take place in an arena called a 'pit'. These structures can be made up of a range of materials, such as wooden planks or used tyres, or even in the back of a van. Dogs that are forced to fight frequently suffer significant injuries. Many will die in the ring or in the days that follow from their injuries. To avoid suspicion, dog fighters often treat their dogs at home, using home-made veterinary kits. These include staple guns and superglue to seal wounds.



## THANK YOU

Since the launch, our Not Born to Fight video has reached over **100,000** people on Facebook; with over **15,000** people liking, sharing and commenting to show their support.

This exposure has led to an increase in calls to our confidential supporter funded Animal Crimewatch hotline.

If you suspect dog fighting is happening, please report this crime by using our confidential form which can be found by visiting: [www.league.org.uk/animal-crimewatch](http://www.league.org.uk/animal-crimewatch) or call: **01483 361 108**

Help us to bring an end to dog fighting by signing our online petition: [www.change.org/p/defra-not-born-to-fight](http://www.change.org/p/defra-not-born-to-fight)



# PICTURE

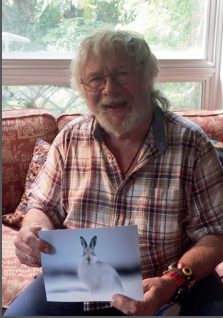
---

# PERFECT

It is with great excitement that we announce the winners of our first photography competition. It has been heart-warming to see animal lovers from across the nation come together to share a passion for the wildlife we all know is so crucial to protect.



**"Ducklings being led back to water from the quad in Jesus College in Oxford"**  
Photographed in Oxford High Street, Oxford. Submitted by Mrs Dodds.



### A message from judge Bill Oddie:

“Thank you from me, from the other judges, from everyone at the League Against Cruel Sports and probably quite a lot of animals and birds were they to have a look at them. I want to thank you for providing a terrific selection of photos.”



1<sup>ST</sup>



### **“Mountain hare in perfect winter white”**

Photographed in Cairngorms, Scotland. Submitted by Ms Roterman.



**"Common blue damselflies at rest"**

Photographed in Hampton Court Park. Submitted by Mr Page.



**PEOPLES  
CHOICE**

**1<sup>ST</sup>**

**"A beautiful wild and free urban vixen Faith"**

Photographed in Worthing, West Sussex.  
Submitted by Ms Nightingale.

## Thank You

Whether you entered the competition, shared it on social media or voted for your favourite photo, you helped raise awareness of the beauty of the natural world around us. You also helped further the conversation about protecting animals in the name of so called 'sport'.



# LEAGUE IN ACTION

## THEIR LAST SHOT

Despite what those that kill for fun like to say, shooting is not popular in Wales and is not synonymous with Welsh culture. In 2018 YouGov polling commissioned by us showed that 74 per cent of Welsh adults think that shooting birds for ‘sport’ should be made illegal and 76 per cent thought it should be banned on public land.

### Freeing Welsh land for nature

In the opening months of 2019, the League and our campaign partners, Animal Aid, were celebrating a recent decision by the courts to uphold a ban on shooting birds on public land in Wales, despite a legal challenge by shooting lobby groups.

**We are now pleased to announce that we have won another significant victory - the end of shooting at the University of Wales.**

A Freedom of Information request revealed that 57,000 captively-bred pheasants have been released for shooting at Gregynog Hall since 2013, and about 160 native wild animals - including foxes and corvids - had been killed by gamekeepers over the same period to preserve the land for shooting parties. Over 11,000 League supporters contacted the University demanding they bring an end to shooting for ‘sport’ on their land.

And the University has. Although an ongoing review regarding the Gregynog estate is yet to finalise this decision, **the University has allowed its leases to lapse, bringing an end to shooting on its land.**

## Thank You

On 22<sup>nd</sup> May we were in Cardiff to thank Natural Resources Wales and the University of Wales for ending shooting on their land. These are major victories and would not be possible without the action of the League’s supporters. Supporting these milestones and those that help us achieve them is a vital part of any campaign, reminding those that make change that they are making our society a better place for animals.



**From left to right:** Fiona Pereira (Animal Aid), Bethan Sayed (Assembly Member) and Bethan Collins (League Against Cruel Sports)



## LEAGUE IN ACTION



### GOING UNDERGROUND

The shooting industry imports and releases millions of non-native birds into the UK from mainland Europe. Bred exclusively for the gun, these chicks are shoved into cramped boxes, stacked into the back of a van, transported 40 metres below the sea only to be shot out of the sky as a living target.

In April, the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA) exposed, via a story published in *The Times*, that day-old chicks were being transported via train under the English Channel.

In a co-ordinated effort between the League and the HSA, members of the public have phoned in their masses and more than 2,500 have tweeted at @leshuttle to end this cruelty. Yet there has been no reply.

The League has also sent two formal letters calling for the transportation to stop. Yet no reply.

### Full steam ahead

The Eurotunnel Le Shuttle is the last cross-channel transport company to carry pheasant chicks. Back in 2015, a League exposé influenced ferry companies P&O, Brittany and DFDS to ban the shipping of ‘game’ birds on their ships. In short, the ferry companies have decided not to prop up the shooting industry, and it’s within Eurotunnel’s power to do the same.

There is no light at the end of the tunnel for these birds. They are destined to die at the hands of those who seek to shoot them down for fun. Unless, together, we do something about it.

### TAKE ACTION

Although the Eurotunnel is going underground with no response, please continue to tweet @leshuttle with your disagreement with the transportation of chicks for the shooting industry.



## LEAGUE IN ACTION

### ANIMALS DESERVE PERMANENT PEACE



Since the last issue of Protect, where we shared the news that Surrey Union Hunt's licence at Polesdon Lacey was cancelled, we are overjoyed to confirm that the licences of two other hunts have been suspended.

#### Suspensions to date

The Portman Hunt had its 'trail' hunting licence for Kingston Lacy suspended by the National Trust in March 2019, after it was witnessed killing a fox near Fifehead St Quintin in early January.

The South Shropshire Hunt had its 'trail' hunting licence suspended by the National Trust in December 2018, after it was witnessed chasing foxes on the Long Mynd estate and was accompanied by terrier men who use terriers to flush out foxes that have fled underground.

#### From suspension to permanent

Hunting with dogs was banned in England and Wales fourteen years ago with the introduction of the Hunting Act 2004. 'Trail' hunting was invented by the hunts after the ban to mask and cover up their continued, illegal killing of wildlife. The National Trust currently issues 'trail' hunting licenses to fox hunts.

As a result of this, we say suspension isn't enough and these bans need to be permanent.

Chris Luffingham, Director of Campaigns explains why:

**"We call on the National Trust to stop issuing 'trail' hunting licences – 'trail' hunting is simply a cover for illegal hunting, designed to deceive the authorities and make the prosecution of illegal hunting very difficult."**

## Thank You

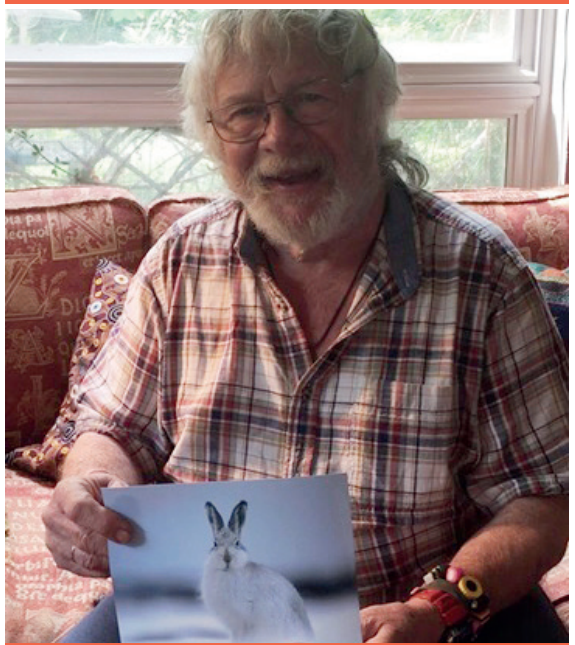
We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you for your endless support. This campaign requires endurance, but our efforts are finally seeing results. We will continue campaigning until hunting is prohibited on all National Trust land across the country.



# LEAGUE ON TOUR



League CEO, Andy Knott attends a meeting at Number 10 to discuss strengthening the Hunting Act 2004.



Bill Oddie selecting one of this year's photography winners.

Bill was joined by three other judges: Simon King OBE, Paul Tillsley and Simone Stanbrook-Byrne.



Keeping in touch with our supporters at this year's Baronsdown event.



League supporters joined up with Devon Against Hunting for a march through Exeter city centre to call for a strengthening of the Hunting Act 2004.



Author Ronnie Goodyer and League Regional Campaign Manager, Emily Lawrence, at the launch of 'For the Silent', an anthology of poems. You can also order a copy of 'For the Silent' at the following link: [www.indigodreams.co.uk/for-the-silent](http://www.indigodreams.co.uk/for-the-silent)

The League will receive £2 from every book sold.

# ANIMAL ADVOCATES

Thanks to your continuous support, we are able to protect animals in the name of 'sport'. This section is dedicated to all the ways you can become further involved in our work. We appreciate every action you take.

## Get Involved

[www.league.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.league.org.uk/get-involved)

We ask for your feet on the ground at our protests, your signatures on our petitions and campaigns, and of course your generous donations that fund the considerable ambition to make this world a compassionate place for animals. Please visit our 'Get Involved' page to discover the main ways to help.



## Your signature is priceless

[www.league.org.uk/huntingkills](http://www.league.org.uk/huntingkills)

With over 100,000 petition signatures calling for the government to end hunting, League CEO alongside our Patron, Bill Oddie, visit Number 10 to present our 'Stop the killing of animals by Hunts in the UK' petition. Every signature takes us one step closer to achieving change, your actions make our voice louder in Parliament.

Help us end hunting by signing our online petition. Please share it on social media to encourage your friends and family to sign it too, and be a voice for animals.



## Inspired by Amy's back-to-back marathons?

[fundraising@league.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@league.org.uk)

Whether you are running two marathons like Amy, hosting a bake sale or organising a book club in aid of animals, get in touch with our fundraising team who will provide you with all the support and motivation you will need.



## 'Like' us on social media

'Follow' us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to keep up to date on all the work we have achieved together, news about future campaigns and appeals, as well as helping us increase awareness of cruel 'sports'. Social media is a powerful tool to educate others. Thanks to your shares, our dog fighting campaign reached over 100,000 people – with 15,000 liking, sharing and commenting to show their support. Thank you.



## Join the lotto



[www.league.org.uk/league-lotto](http://www.league.org.uk/league-lotto)

League Lotto is a monthly lottery draw that helps us raise crucial funds to protect animals. With three prizes of up to £50 each month, you receive one chance for every £1 you spend. But you can have as many chances as you like. Good luck and thank you for your support.

## A massive thank you

Your generosity continues to amaze us daily. We would like to take this opportunity to say a thank you to the kind person who donated a box of beautiful handmade fox decorations. We are pleased to say that these have been a great fundraising gift for the League. Thank you.



# GET IN TOUCH

## League Against Cruel Sports

New Sparling House

Godalming

GU7 1QZ

01483 524 250

[supportercare@league.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@league.org.uk)

[www.league.org.uk](http://www.league.org.uk)

League Against Cruel Sports is a registered charity in England and Wales (no. 1095234) and Scotland (no. SC045533)



**LEAGUE**  
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS