

Hunting with Dogs (Scotland Bill)

Short survey – suggested answers

For each question you can answer:

- Yes
- No
- Neutral
- Don't know

1. Will the bill make the law easier to understand and enforce the offence to hunt a wild mammal using a dog in Scotland?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: While we agree with the intention of the Bill, and recognise a number of positive elements within it, we are worried that it has the potential to create unintended loopholes.

2. Section 3 would allow hunting with dogs to manage wild mammals above ground for the purpose of preventing serious damage to livestock, woodland or crops, preventing the spread of disease and protecting human health. Do you agree with section 3?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: We are concerned that this may create a loophole to allow traditional hunting.

3. Do you agree with the limit on two dogs to manage wild mammals above ground?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: We don't agree with using dogs to hunt wild mammals, but if it has to happen two dogs is preferable to a full pack.

4. Section 4 would allow people to apply for a licence to use more than two dogs to manage wild mammals above ground. Do you agree with section 4?

Our suggested answer: No

Reason: We are very concerned that this is a loophole that will allow traditional hunting.

5. Section 5 would allow hunting with dogs to manage foxes or mink below ground for the purpose of preventing serious damage to livestock, woodland or crops, preventing the spread of disease and protecting human health or for ending the suffering of an injured or dependent fox or mink. Do you agree with section 5?

Our suggested answer: No

Reason: We believe that putting dogs underground - whether it's one or multiple - is encouraging a fight between a fox and a dog or dogs.

6. Do you agree with the limit on one dog being allowed to flush a fox from cover to one below ground?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: We believe that putting dogs underground - whether it's one or multiple - is encouraging a fight between a fox and a dog or dogs.

7. Section 6 would allow hunting with dogs to search for, stalk or flush from cover a wild mammal with the intention of providing quarry for falconry, game shooting or deer stalking. Do you agree with section 6?

Our suggested answer: No

Reason: There is no reason to include falconry in this section.

8. Do you agree with the limit on two dogs to search for, stalk or flush from cover a wild mammal with the intention of providing quarry for falconry, game shooting or deer stalking?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: The Bill is intended to strengthen the existing legislation and should not allow wild mammals to be provided as quarry for any activity.

9. Section 7 would allow hunting with dogs for environmental benefit for the purpose of preserving, protecting or restoring a particular species, the diversity of animal or plant life, or eradicating an invasive non-native species. Do you agree with section 7?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: We are concerned that this may create a loophole for traditional hunting.

10. Do you agree with the limit on two dogs for the purpose of preserving, protecting or restoring a particular species, the diversity of animal or plant life, or eradicating an invasive non-native species?

Our suggested answer: Yes

Reason: Where there is robust evidence to support the action, then yes we would agree with a limit of two dogs.

11. Section 8 would allow people to apply for a licence to use more than two dogs to manage wild mammals for environmental benefit. Do you agree with section 8?

Our suggested answer: No

Reason: We are very concerned that this is a loophole that will allow traditional hunting.

12. Do you agree with the section 11 proposed ban on trail hunting?

Our suggested answer: Yes

Reason: Trail hunting has been shown to be a smokescreen for traditional hunting.

13. Section 12 would allow trail hunting for the purpose of training a dog to follow an animal-based scent. Do you agree with section 12?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: Trail hunting has been shown to be a smokescreen for traditional hunting.

14. Do you agree with the definition of 'wild mammal' in section 1(3) of the bill?

Our suggested answer: Yes

Reason: We agree this is a workable definition, and is an improvement on the previous definition.

15. Do you agree that rats and mice should be included in the definition of a wild animal?

Our suggested answer: Neutral

Reason: While we don't agree with using dogs to hunt mice and rats sadly some of the alternatives are even more inhumane.

16. Do you agree that the court may disqualify a person from owning, keeping, or managing a dog for a given length of time, or deprive them of the dog or horse used in the offence, if convicted of an offence under this Bill?

Our suggested answer: Yes

Reason: This is a suitable punishment for this type of crime.

17. Do you support the Bill?

Our suggested answer: Yes

Reason: We support the intention behind the Bill although we firmly believe it needs tight amendments to ensure it really bans hunting.

18. Please provide any comments in the box below. When responding, it would be helpful if you could indicate which section of the bill your comments relate to.

Our suggested answer: This Bill is critical to ending the cruelty of hunting with dogs. The Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act failed to do this but this Bill provides an opportunity to rectify the problems with the 2002 Act and really ban hunting in Scotland. The intention behind is correct but amendments are needed to ensure it is not simply another law full of loopholes.