



LEAGUE
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS

PROTECT

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END SHOOTING

The shooting industry's days are numbered; learn more about our landmark campaigns against Reading University and Yorkshire Water.

END FIGHTING

Find out how our two-year dog fighting investigation has kept vulnerable dogs out of the hands of a known criminal.

END HUNTING

Take a tour of our 2019 general election campaign. Did we achieve our goal to see an anti-hunt majority return to parliament?



WELCOME

*A letter from
Andy Knott,
CEO*



2019 was cracking. It delivered us shooting bans on several very well-known estates, a landmark Conservative Party manifesto pledge to not repeal the Hunting Act 2004 - the reverse of previous years - and the first guilty plea in over 370 cases prosecuted under it.

We brought together the best charities in the sector to bring forward the long-awaited Animal (Sentencing) Bill, soon to be passed. Supporters rallied around, one even running a desert marathon to raise funds for us, and many more including some of the country's most loved figures lent us their names in our relentless drive to stop cruel 'sports'.

It was a year in which we saw our regional supporter groups grow and flourish, our sanctuaries improved, our reach extended, and new hearts and minds won over. There was barely a week, and sometimes a day, where the work we do alerting the public to the extent of animal cruelty wasn't front and centre in the national press.

We are now entering a new decade. Together, let's determine to make it the best ever for animals. Let's stop the hunting, the shooting, the animal fighting, together with other cruelty associated with them. Let's give animals a voice. Let's bring change.

Andy Knott MBE
Chief Executive Officer

CONTENTS

Features

United Against Hunting	3
Yorkshire Water Win	8
Pheasant Shooting Win	10
Daily Quest for Life	12
Justice for Man's Best Friend	14
Hunts on Trial	15

Regulars

Myth Busters	7
Our Community	16
League in Action	18
League on Tour	20
Animal Advocates	22



 **END**
HUNTING



UNITED AGAINST HUNTING

The announcement of a general election in November 2019 heralded not only the opportunity for the human voices of Britain to be heard, but the voices of animals too. Read on to find out more about the impact of our election campaign.



As we have demonstrated in the past, general elections provide the perfect platform for us to shape the debate, challenge what is acceptable and seek support to end hunting with dogs from the general public and politicians alike.

We are the leading charity that stands up and says "no" to the persecution of animals in the name of 'sport'. We have proved our credibility time after time to parliament and the press, and we headed once more into the fray to focus on one single, powerful objective; ensuring a parliamentary majority of anti-hunt MPs.

We mobilised supporters to contact their candidates and drive a commitment to securing, and strengthening, the Hunting Act 2004. We launched an Election Roadshow and toured the country with Vinny, our fox campaign figure-head, spreading our election objectives.

We drove our message out to the press, over social media, and via our impressive celebrity supporters Bill Oddie, Chris Packham, Ricky Gervais, Megan McCubbin, Maxine Peake, Gemma Collins, Gemma Atkinson and Lucy Watson.



We campaigned around the clock to ensure the greatest impact for animals in the short six week lead up to polling day. And we were only able to do this thanks to the commitment, engagement and dedication of you, our supporters.

Let's take a look of what we achieved, together:

45,000 emails sent to candidates	4 campaign films produced
7 UK election roadshows	Appeared in more than 150 media stories
962 responses from election candidates	Gained 1,128 new followers on Vinny's Twitter feed
481,049 video views and rising	We have raised over £35,000 to fund our Election Campaign





And on 13th December, the results were in and WE DID IT. Another anti-hunting parliament has been returned to Westminster and for the first time since the Hunting Act passed in 2004, the Conservative Party dropped its pledge to repeal the ban.

Does this mean hunting has stopped? Sadly, no. However, it is important to acknowledge the power we have to influence public policy, and bring us one step closer to ending hunting for good.

Our focus now will be to ensure the Conservative Party stands by the animal welfare and animal sentencing promises it made in its manifesto, including ensuring the Hunting Act 2004 is not overturned. More than that, we'll be insisting the party scrutinises the act with a view to strengthening it, to finally put a stop to hunting for 'sport'.

This campaign has shown the power of the League and supporters when we stand together. Once again we made hunting a key issue.

This is the power of what we can do together. We will continue to campaign to strengthen the ban, and lobby land owners, such as the National Trust, to deny hunts access to their land.

Together we are United Against Hunting.



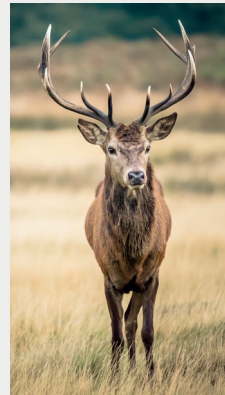
THE ROAD TO ENDING HUNTING

The general election is over, but what does the result mean for animals hunted for 'sport'?



Myth: The general election result has no positive outcome for animal welfare

Busted: For the first time since 2004, the 2019 election saw the threat of the repeal, or weakening, of the Hunting Act withdrawn. We must be vigilant, and we need to focus on the strengthening of the Act, but for the first time in sixteen years, we do not have to fight against the possibility of its abolition. This is a positive result.



Myth: Hunting won't stop until the Hunting Act 2004 is strengthened

Busted: It is true that the chasing and killing of animals is still taking place on a mass scale. However, this could be stopped if landowners prevented the hunts from gaining access to their property. Our campaign focus for 2020 is to deny hunts access to public and private land including the National Trust, one of the country's largest landowners, local authorities and private landowners.

No land means no hunting. While strengthening of the Hunting Act 2004 is essential, in the mean time we can minimise the cruelty inflicted to animals in the name of 'sport'.



Myth: Hunters go unpunished

Busted: Fox hunting takes place over 10,000 times a year and while it would be impossible to prosecute every one, illegal hunters are held to account when sufficient evidence is found. In the recent example of the Meynell and Staffordshire Hunt trial (see page 15 for further details), huntsmen were held accountable for their illegal actions. We believe it was a pitiful punishment, but remains as proof that the Hunting Act 2004 can result in successful prosecutions when properly enforced.

How you can help:

Visit www.league.org.uk to sign up to receive campaign news by email. Simply scroll to the bottom of the page, enter your email address and we will keep you posted on all campaign events throughout the year.

YORKSHIRE WATER CAMPAIGN WIN



Our biggest campaign win of 2019 paves the way for grouse shooting to end on Yorkshire Water land.

Yorkshire Water is one of the largest landowners leasing moorland for grouse shooting. Eleven moors across the county were leased out, with permits issued allowing shooting parties to meet on water catchment areas to kill 'game' birds for entertainment.

Wild animals including foxes, stoats, weasels and hare were being killed by trap, snare and guns on the company's land to ensure large numbers of 'game' birds were available for shooting.

Our aim is to end shooting, and thanks to our 18-month high-profile campaign alongside Ban Bloodsports on Yorkshire's Moors (BBYM), we are proud to announce the beginning of the end for grouse shooting.

Rather than automatically renewing shooting licences – as had been the case – Yorkshire Water has committed to stringently reviewing every lease as it runs out. Based on the grounds the company has set out, it is our view that no more leases will be renewed.



Gamekeepers burning blanket bog on Stanbury Moor.

This is a landmark decision and paves the way for grouse shooting to end on Yorkshire Water land, which prior to our campaign was not an option.

Thousands of you made your voice heard by taking action with us. You contacted Yorkshire Water to urge them to ban shooting on its land, you visited our campaigning booths around Yorkshire, you joined our rally in Bradford, tuned into our Lush podcast, handed out campaign postcards and shared our messages on social media. Thank you.

There is still plenty of work to do, but let's take pride in the fact that the shooting industry's days are numbered.

We commend Yorkshire Water for taking this big step and listening to its customers and those that care about animals and the environment. Our next steps will involve working with them to ensure their land is no longer used for blood 'sports'.



WE MAKE A GREAT TEAM.

Together, we have significantly improved the horizon for birds on Yorkshire Water land. Our expertise, coupled with your donations and dedication, is a force to be reckoned with. We really couldn't do our work without you and we hope you are as proud of this achievement for grouse as we are.



END
SHOOTING

UNIVERSITY OF READING ENDS PHEASANT SHOOTING ON ITS LAND

*One more win for us, one giant leap for
persecuted pheasants.*

Thanks to your actions, the University of Reading has taken the decision to ban shooting on its land. Current licences are up for renewal in February and are being terminated as you read this.

As well as supporting our direct action outside the university gates during the popular two-day Freshers' Fayre, more than 8,000 of you wrote to the Vice Chancellor calling on the university to commit to scrapping 'game' bird shooting rights.

Following a full consultation that included both the League and the pheasant shoot, as well as other stakeholders, this is exactly what has happened.

This is just another nail in the shooting industry's coffin. Following on from our campaigns, again supported by you, both the University of Wales and Natural Resources Wales have decided they will ban shooting on their land.

We will continue to urge all private landowners to follow these good examples and ban shooting for 'sport' on their land.

Together, we can end commercial shooting in the UK.



CELEBRATING SUCCESS.

These success stories prove our campaigns work. You are part of a credible movement that is courageous enough to challenge what is considered acceptable by our society. Thank you for your solidarity, your donations, your feet on the ground and your voice.

DAILY QUEST FOR LIFE

While the country has been in a political fervour, for the animals who roam free on our wildlife sanctuaries, it has been business as usual. Our Head of Conservation & Education, Paul Tillsley, reports on the state of the sanctuaries over the autumn period.

Unconcerned by human political machinations, the animals that live on the League's wildlife sanctuaries continue their daily quest for life.

The annual red deer rut on Baronsdown has died down and stags that had been arch-rivals just a few months ago are now friends again. Several different stags came and went throughout the rut and took their place as master over a harem of hinds, only to be usurped a few days later by another stag. This was an unusual rut and it could be that a reduction in the total number of mature stags in the area and changes in the climate are both having an effect.



League supporters were able to get a grandstand view of the action during the 'rutting weekend' in mid-October when the rut was at its peak.

Hazel dormice have again done well in the League's sanctuaries, bucking the national trend. We monitor the populations of these endearing mammals at Baronsdown, Cowley Wood and Cove Down and this year there were dormice breeding on all three sites. Our Cove Down wilding project also featured in the December issue of Birdwatching magazine.

We have had a large influx of birds arriving from continental Europe this autumn, with big flocks of chaffinch, wood pigeon, redwing and starlings appearing on the sanctuaries, together with the mysterious woodcock, whose appearance tends to coincide with the November full moon.

There has been a bonanza of berries, seeds, fruit and nuts for birds and mammals alike to fill up their reserves on and help them through the long winter ahead.



We had an early taste of winter in the middle of November, when a few inches of snow fell over a period of five hours bringing down some trees and snapping the tops off others.

Hunting and shooting continue apace around all the League's sanctuaries and the disturbance and death that goes with these cruel pastimes makes the sanctuaries even more vital as refuges for wild animals. A few of the hunts have tested the boundaries of the League's land and 'sporting' rights this season and they have been rewarded with advisory letters from our solicitor. The League will take further action if the hunts persist.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER AT OUR SANCTUARIES?

Learn more about conservation, meet like-minded people and spend time in the outdoors surrounded by an abundance of wildlife living free from persecution. Please visit www.league.org.uk/animal-charity-jobs for further information.



JUSTICE FOR MAN'S BEST FRIEND

As a direct result of our two-year investigation, which uncovered an international network of dog fighters, UK dog fighter Liam Patterson has been banned from keeping dogs for fifteen years. Patterson is also subject to a community payback order, which means he will remain under supervision for two years, placed under a home curfew, and will be required to fulfil 300 hours of unpaid work.

How it unfolded

Our investigation led us to an Eastern European network of cruelty who bred, transported and helped organise dog fights here in the UK. Sharing our findings with the BBC, the network was exposed on the BBC TV News and BBC Radio 4 PM programme.

Upon further investigation, we discovered that Patterson, who lives in Dumfries Scotland, was connected to this group and we identified indicators including weighted collars, training equipment, such as a treadmill and

jaw strengthening apparatus, as well as online profiles that outlined his dogs' fighting bloodlines.

Presenting our intelligence to the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA), together we achieved a search warrant for Patterson's home address. Working with SSPCA, we provided analytical support that ensured Patterson was convicted. Our investigation has also identified further possible law breakers and we will continue to lead the charge to end dog fighting.



UNITED, WE ARE STRONGER.

We do not receive government funding, so it is only thanks to generous people like you that we are able to investigate dog fighters like Patterson. On behalf of man's best friend, thank you.



HUNTS ON TRIAL

On 2nd October 2018, in Spath Covert near Sutton on the Hill in Derbyshire, a heinous act of animal cruelty was committed. Two members of the Meynell and South Staffordshire Hunt were hunting fox cubs, an act for which they pleaded guilty at Nottingham Magistrates Court in November 2019.

The trial followed an investigation by Derbyshire Police, which was based on video evidence obtained by our very own team of professional investigators.

Sam Staniland, former huntsman of the Meynell and South Staffordshire Hunt, and William Tatler, joint master of the hunt, were each fined £350 and ordered to pay £150 costs.

This is a pitiful fine. We are calling for political parties to commit to strengthening the law on hunting and people who illegally hunt foxes to be given prison sentences.



Martin Sims, our Director of Investigations, told the press:

“We welcome this conviction for fox cub hunting, a callous crime which the vast majority of the public will regard with horror. To receive just a fine for this barbaric activity shows the need to strengthen the Hunting Act 2004, including the introduction of prison sentences. This is the second time members of the Meynell and South Staffordshire Hunt have been convicted of hunting fox cubs in the same patch of woodland, which indicates the hunt are showing a blatant disregard for the law.”

14 years after hunting with dogs was banned in England and Wales with the introduction of the Hunting Act 2004, this case is a stark reminder as to why the ban needs to be strengthened to include custodial sentences, as well as closing the loopholes that enable more hunts to avoid being prosecuted for killing wild animals for 'sport'.



OUR COMMUNITY

AMY'S AFRICA CHALLENGE

On the 10th of October 2019, Amy, a true animal advocate, took on the Saharan Challenge to raise money for the League. Amy trekked across a swathe of the African desert, covering the distance of two marathons in only two days, and raised an incredible £1,389.

“My trek was the hardest thing I’ve ever done but it was an incredible experience and for an incredible cause. I’m so overwhelmed by the support I’ve had from the League along the way!”



MARTIN'S MIGHTY MARATHON

Martin, who had not run in decades, raised £463 for us by completing the Oxford half marathon in an impressive two and a half hours.

“... anyone can do it, you just have to decide and get on with it! It would be good next year to see more League supporters running here and elsewhere.”

A huge thank you to Amy, Martin and all our community fundraisers for their ongoing and inspirational efforts. Every penny will go towards ending cruelty in the name of 'sport'.

YOU ARE AN INSPIRATION

You are not just supporters; you are passionate animal advocates who go above and beyond to give animals a voice and we are proud to showcase your achievements. If you are inspired by Amy and Martin and would like to take on a challenge or fundraise for us, please contact fundraising@league.org.uk



BARONSDOWN GETS BENDY

In September 2019 we held a yoga weekend at our Baronsdown sanctuary in Somerset. We were joined by 14 supporters and members of staff and were greeted with the sight of a huge herd of beautiful wild deer, and five stags getting ready for rutting season.

Our qualified yoga teacher gave her time for free and planned three different styles of yoga classes to experience.

We thank everybody who attended. What better way to get healthy, and get in touch with nature! 100 percent of the money raised goes towards protecting animals.

“It feels good to be part of an organisation that has a positive outlook and a kind-hearted approach to animal welfare”. – Roisin, yoga instructor.



Would you like to volunteer your skills and create another supporter event at Baronsdown? Keep an eye on our website events page or join a local supporter group by emailing campaigns@league.org.uk

POET IN RESIDENCE



Ronnie Goodyer and his partner Dawn are not only established and recognised poets, but also ardent animal advocates. To help raise funds for, and awareness of, the suffering of animals abused in cruel 'sports, they published a poetry anthology entitled For the Silent.

We are pleased to announce that the anthology was named in the 21st Century Poetry; Best of 2019 Poetry article in the Morning Star. Congratulations on this personal achievement Ronnie, and for everything you are helping us achieve for animals.

We are incredibly grateful to Ronnie for the £2 donated from each book sale and so far the anthology has raised £720. Visit indigodreams.co.uk/for-the-silent to buy your copy.



LEAGUE IN ACTION

PROVIDING INSPIRATION OVERSEAS

French charity One Voice invited our Head of Campaigns, Nick Weston, to travel to Paris and address an audience of approximately 1,000 anti-hunt supporters. England and Wales were the first countries to ban hunting with dogs and the opportunity to inspire another nation was truly enriching.

It was an impressive event that saw more than 1,000 people march through the French capital to the sound of a brass band and chants of “enough bloodshed, enough animals killed” and “stop hunting/hunting kills!” At the end of the march, Nick addressed the crowd in French (despite not speaking a word) and we wish the campaign every success.



INTERNATIONAL ANTI-BULLFIGHTING NETWORK

Public opinion is now firmly opposed to what is perhaps the most famous of spectator cruel ‘sports’. Bull fighting continues in nine countries; although the movement to ban it is very strong in all of them.

Nick Weston once again took to Paris to represent the League at the International Anti-bullfighting Network. While our work is UK-based, we continue to highlight the cruelty of bullfighting and are involved in attempting to ban the bloodsport for good.

Having a presence in this network provides the League with a key insight into what is going on in the campaign to end bullfighting, as well as being able to offer support to other organisations.



LEAGUE IN ACTION

INTELLIGENCE TEAM WINS ‘BIGGEST INFLUENCER’ AWARD

Thanks to our Animal Crimewatch confidential reporting service, funded by our supporters, we collect multiple reports of animal cruelty in the name of ‘sport’ every day. Intelligence-led investigations are the ones that stand the best chance of success and we were proud to have the efficiencies we have achieved recognised by the company that provides our intelligence software, CLUE. The ‘Biggest Influencer’ award is a huge testament to the team and how they tackle animal cruelty and wildlife crime.



ANIMAL CRIMEWATCH



LEAGUE’S COMMUNICATIONS TEAM FINALISTS FOR CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS (CIPR) AWARD

At the end of 2019, we were shortlisted in the Not For Profit category of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations’ PRide Awards (Southern England and Channel Islands). We entered our Boxing Day campaign from 2018, which saw us significantly change the national narrative from being all about the traditional imagery of red coats on horseback to being one about Labour’s new commitment to animal welfare, influenced by the League, and polling showing public support for keeping the ban in place.

To be shortlisted is a real honour and we hope you feel as proud as we do of our Policy Campaigns & Communications team who are few in number, yet secure a seat at the top table of professional recognition.



LEAGUE ON TOUR



Vinny on tour for the Election Roadshow 2019. He travelled to Cardiff, Crewe, Wolverhampton, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, Reading and Bristol drawing the attention of supporters, the general public, journalists and local MP candidates.



Staff members from across the League came together to deliver our election campaign message to the masses. As a direct result of this campaign, over 45,000 emails soliciting support from candidates were sent and we appeared in more than 150 media stories.



Megan McCubbin – League Youth Ambassador, zoologist, wildlife TV presenter, conservationist and photographer – joins us on the election campaign trail.



Bill Oddie recording our new wave of radio adverts, inviting the public to give a voice to animals by making a donation



Supporters came together at our Baronsdown Wildlife Sanctuary in Somerset to receive training on how to campaign on the street and get letters featured by local papers as well as photography training.

Supporters and staff enjoy a reflective day of yoga and wellbeing at our peaceful Baronsdown Wildlife Sanctuary.



ANIMAL ADVOCATES

There are many ways you can become an animal advocate and help us protect animals; donate, fundraise, get involved at a grass roots level or sign our petitions and make your voice heard. This section is dedicated to highlighting the ways you can make a real impact; your League, your way!

Shopping with benefits

www.easyfundraising.org.uk

Did you know you can raise a free donation for the League every time you shop online? Simply register at easyfundraising.org.uk and select your cause as the League Against Cruel Sports. Then any time you shop at one of their renowned retailers, such as Amazon, a percentage of what you spend is given to the League.

Sign up today and you could start raising hundreds of pounds, without spending an extra penny yourself!



Sell raffle tickets

Do you have friends, family or colleagues who would be interested in winning £1,000 and helping animals at the same time? If you would like to sell raffle tickets on our behalf, simply email supportercare@league.org.uk and give us your name and address. Don't forget to tell us how many booklets of 12 tickets you would like us to send.

Thank you to all who entered the Autumn raffle. We are delighted to announce that the £1,000 winning ticket number is: 255878

SPRING RAFFLE 2020
OVER £2,000
TO BE WON

To enter or order more tickets visit www.league.org.uk/springaffle or call us on 01483 524 250

You must be a resident of mainland Great Britain (Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands not included) and over 16 years old to buy or sell tickets.

Meet like-minded individuals

www.league.org.uk/supportergroups

Are you interested in actively campaigning in your region to help us bring an end to cruelty inflicted on animals in the name of 'sport'? Join one of our Supporter Groups and we can take action together! To find out how you can get started, simply email campaigns@league.org.uk or call 01483 524 250.



Like us

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to keep up to date on all the work you have helped us do for animals. It's also a great place to get the news about our future campaigns and appeals. Don't forget that sharing our posts takes seconds, but can have a lasting impact on the people they reach.



Get Involved

www.league.org.uk/get-involved

There are numerous ways for you to boost the considerable ambition to make this world a compassionate place for animals. You can donate, fundraise in the community, join a supporter group, host an event or attend an event. Please visit our Get Involved web page to find out more.



GET IN TOUCH

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