

# Animal rights



## draft 50-point policy would make the UK rights'

for *The Many, Not The* include introducing animals for slaughter, *ng Act*, enshrining the *nce in law* and ending

ude the appointment *ommissioner* and a *at it calls* 'intensive

ecretary Sue Hayman *f animal welfare*. From *hunting to tightening* *of live animals*, Labour *it in our leadership* on

re no animal is made *n and we continue to* *actice in line with the* *understanding.*"

*Countryman's Weekly* *als.*

## Community strongly to rearms service

ide Alliance members *played their part in* *regarding the 'failing'* *l procedure.*

d by stakeholders, *April, 2016*, with the *sing service* and public *ty.*

ording to the Alliance, *ed a dreadful service*, *ations*, GPs submitting *applicants*, in some *ments*, and police actively *guidance.*

The Alliance is requesting *the Medical Evidence* *Working Group* that put *the procedure* together is *urgently reconvened* to avoid *any further unwarranted* *costs and delays* to the *system.*

The organisation launched *an 'eLobby'* to allow its *supporters* to join the *campaign* and more than *3,000 people* took part, *reaching over 500 MPs.*

ooting at the Alliance, said: *community* has been unfairly *ostcode lottery* system, the *l of clarification* and as a result *t the Home Office* listening to

ousands that have supported *who have contacted* the Home *stutents*. This battle is far from *g our supporters* up to date as *ise of our campaign* for fair and

movement, according to the head of the Countryside Alliance.

Tim Bonner's comments follow a number of increasingly nasty attacks against dairy farmers on social media.

Mr Bonner, Alliance chief executive, said: "Like other areas of the animal rights movement veganism has become an aggressive, cultish movement.

"The dairy industry in particular has recently come in for levels of abuse previously reserved for foxhunters and game shooters. Dairy farmers have been accused of 'rape, murder and slavery', attacked on social media and even subject to death threats.

"Worryingly many of the voices campaigning against dairy farming, although not those making the most extreme claims, are registered charities," said Mr Bonner.



"It is, apparently, a charitable activity to campaign to destroy the livelihood of family farms and as a logical consequence remove the necessity for dairy cows to even exist.

"Underlying this activity are a strange and hugely illogical set of beliefs ostensibly related to animal welfare but actually driven by anger and misanthropy. The anti-dairy movement has as little to do with the welfare of cows as the anti-hunting campaign has little to do with the welfare of foxes."

Dairy cows only existed because of the dairy industry, said Mr Bonner.

"The logical consequence of a successful outcome to their campaign is that there would be no cows, which is surely a problem for people who claim to believe that animals have rights, including presumably the right to exist," he said.

The animal rights movement was not driven by concerns about the welfare of animals but 'by a hatred of people' said Mr Bonner.

"Causing offence and exaggerated propaganda may fill the social media bubble but it does not convince the vast majority who are sane and rational," he said.

## British hare coursers convicted in Belgium

IN a legal first for Belgium, five British men have been convicted of hare coursing.

The men were arrested for illegally hunting hares in the Flanders area after local farmers and hunters joined forces with Belgian Police to catch them in the act.

The coursers fled after they were confronted by a Belgian hunter but crashed their car as they made their escape and were detained by police.

They were given a nine-month suspended prison sentence and fined €8,000 – around £7,125 – by a court in Gent.

"Uncontrolled hunting just for the pleasure of the kill and probably for profit is not just a crime against nature but also unethical conduct," said the judge. "No dead hares were found which would suggest that the hunters were only interested in fun and profit.



"Through their illegal hunting practices they have damaged nature. The number of hares has been falling in recent years."

Prosecutor Thomas Gillis said it was a 'groundbreaking verdict' which would hit home to those in the UK thinking of hare coursing in Belgium.

In recent years, an increasing number of Brits have travelled to hold illegal hare coursing events in north France, Holland and East and West Flanders. The problem has even been raised in the European Parliament.

Flanders' local hunting federation, Hubertus Vereniging Vlaanderen (HVV) is working closely with local farmers and police to tackle the illegal coursing.

The HVV's Geert Van den Bosch said: "These are illegal practices that can undermine years of work by hunters."

## Labour crime boss orders review into hunt policing



CHESHIRE'S Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has ordered a review into the way the local force upholds hunting laws.

David Keane, a Labour councillor, said the issue of illegal foxhunting had been raised with him by local MPs and members of the public.

Last month, Chris Matheson, the Labour MP

for Chester, claimed in the Commons that 'at least' four foxes had been illegally killed by trail hunts since Boxing Day.

Mr Matheson's Labour colleague Mike Amesbury, the MP for Weaver Vale, Cheshire, also asked Home Secretary Amber Rudd what assessment she had made of 'the extent of illegal foxhunting in Cheshire' and

what steps her department was taking to prevent it.

In reply, Home Office Minister Nick Hurd said enforcement of *The Hunting Act* was an operational matter for the police and 'it is for locally elected PCCs to hold their forces to account'.

Mr Keane said: "The issue of illegal foxhunting has been raised directly with my office by a number of Cheshire MPs and by members of the public.

"I am currently drawing up terms of reference for an in-depth review which will culminate in public scrutiny of how Cheshire Constabulary is meeting its obligations to uphold the laws around foxhunting."

## dead body' says Cabine Secretary

PREDATORY species such lynx would be reintroduce Scotland 'over my dead body' the SNP's Rural Economy Secretary has vowed.

Fergus Ewing told the I Scotland (NFUS) annual general meeting the reintroduction of any species that made farming more difficult 'won't happen in Scotland as long as I'm around'.

Mr Ewing told the conference: "This will happen over my dead body. I cannot and I will not support anything which creates further gratuitous challenges or difficulty for our farming sector."

"There are quite enough predators to be getting along with, some of which you are permitted to control. So, there will be no lynx in Scotland, there will be no wolves, and there will be no bears."



Mr Ewing also pledged to press UK Environment Secretary Michael Gove to permit the reintroduction of lynx in the Kielder Forest, Northumberland, arguing that the government did not know 'when they arrived at Hadrian's Wall'.

The conference warned that the reintroduction of beavers were a more imminent threat to the livelihoods.

Andrew McCornick, NFUS president, used his keynote speech to warn that the unauthorised release of beavers in Tayside was a 'bigger' problem than Brexit affected farmers.

He said the animals were threatening many farms by causing riverbanks to collapse, flood and soil erosion.

An estimated 200 beavers have been living in the area for several years after they escaped or were illegally released, in addition to an officially-sanctioned reintroduction programme at Knapdale in Argyll.

Mr Ewing said the public would not countenance a massive cull of beavers but pledged to go to Strathmore in Angus to see for himself the damage and discuss ways to mitigate it.