



Badger Persecution PDG Newsletter

Issue 2: January 2020

Kevin Kelly – Chair BPPDG @NYAnimalCop



Hello and happy new year from the Badger Persecution Priority Delivery Group. I would like to wish you all a positive

and healthy 2020 and I hope you can join me in the campaign to raise awareness and reduce badger persecution nationally.

Having now been chair for over six months, I would like to thank my members, partners and supporters for 2019 and reflect on some of the work we have achieved recently.

The BPPDG recently held our AGM in December 2019, at the 31st Wildlife Crime Enforcers conference. Here we discussed how getting it right first time at persecution crime scenes is key to delivering justice and also how forensic evidence is paramount to success.

At this meeting we had a special guest, Senior CSI Mike Crockford @RSSS_SCSImikeC who

explained how he investigated a recent badger dig at Hovingham in North Yorkshire. The importance of CSI attending the crime scene shaped the outcome of this case, with the suspects pleading guilty on first appearance. Forensics are playing a vital role in Wildlife crime and we need an increased emphasis on working together.

We reflected on recent successes from our enforcement leads who are working on a national badger crime tool kit, this includes investigative and interview assistance for officers on the ground. The BPPDG are also pleased to announce that we have profiled the top 10 badger crime offenders nationally and are working with their respective local forces to maximise enforcement opportunities so watch this space.

I look forward to the challenges of 2020, firstly working with the Badger Trust to produce a promotion / awareness video and then onto the BPPDG meeting in March.

Until then, take care and remain vigilant.

High Honours for BPPDG Members

WWF Lifetime Achievement Award - Geoff Edmond



RSPCA Inspector Geoff Edmond was awarded the WWF Lifetime Achievement Award in December at the Wildlife Crime Enforcers Conference. This is the first time that a member of the RSPCA has taken the top spot. Geoff has been recognised for continuously going above and beyond in a life dedicated to the welfare of animals. Well done Geoff!

Queen’s Police Medal - PC Claire Dinsdale

Our very own PC Claire Dinsdale has been awarded the Queen’s Police Medal. This is one of the highest honours in policing and very well deserved. Claire has taken rural and wildlife crime in Dorset and truly put it on the map. She is known and loved both locally and nationally and is a mainstay in the wildlife crime enforcement arena. The BPPDG wishes you all the best on this prestigious award and looks forward to your input in the future..... Ma’am.



Caroline Newsome - West Yorkshire Police



Welcome to the newest member of the BPPDG!

Hi, I'm Caroline and I've recently joined the Badger Persecution Priority Delivery

Group. I feel honoured to be sharing the role of enforcement lead with the RSPCA's Geoff Edmond.

I have 20 years' service in West Yorkshire Police, and feel that I have finally found my 'place' in the world of policing by taking on the role of Wildlife Crime Officer. I currently serve the areas of Huddersfield and Dewsbury, which covers some of the Peak District, and I'm based in the rural area of Holmfirth.

Whilst I may be relatively new to the role, I have always had a keen interest in wildlife, and in particular, badgers. I always remember the first time I watched a sett at dusk and saw that iconic striped face appear in the sett entrance - a magical moment I shall never forget! I still monitor this fabulous sett and its wonderful occupants.

Badgers, sadly, are so regularly persecuted whether through sett digging/blocking, getting caught in traps and snares, poisoning, development and sett destruction and the most abhorrent - baiting with dogs. Some of these poor animals will have suffered the most horrific deaths and I want to play a part in bringing the individuals that cause such misery and suffering, to both their dogs and our wonderful badgers, to justice.

I believe that partnership working makes us stronger. I have recently had success with a case investigated alongside the RSPCA that resulted in a number of Patterdale Terriers being seized and the owner being convicted of causing unnecessary suffering to the dogs.

Locally I work closely with the Kirklees Badger Protection Group. I hold regular meetings, trips

out in the field, liaise with the local authority regarding development projects where there is a badger sett on site and also act as their direct contact should there be a crime to report.

Being part of the BPPDG is about raising awareness and encouraging members of the public to report all wildlife crime matters. Much of this I do through social media, particularly twitter @WYP_CNewsome – so please do give me a follow!

I also give talks to various groups and as of 2020 I will be delivering the Naturewatch Foundation presentation to secondary schools with the intention of educating young people about badger persecution and wildlife crime.

The way I see it is that there is no reason why we cannot live peacefully alongside badgers who at the end of the day were here long before us.

There is no place for those that wish them harm and together I hope we can make a difference to these creatures that have no voice.

Social Media Accounts to Follow

@NYAnimalCop - Inspector Kevin Kelly, North Yorkshire Police

@ukwildlifecrime - UK National Wildlife Crime Unit

@RSPCA_Frontline - RSPCA animal collection officers, animal welfare officers and inspectors

@RuralCrimeTeam - Dorset Police Rural Crime Team

@Naturewatch_org - Naturewatch Foundation

@LeagueACS - League Against Cruel Sports

@RSSS_SCSImikeC - Senior CSI, Mike Crockford

@WYP_CNewsome - PC Caroline Newsome

@BadgerTrust - The Badger Trust

@Craig_wildlife - Craig Fellowes, The Badger Trust

The Persecution of Badgers: A Guide for Investigators in England & Wales

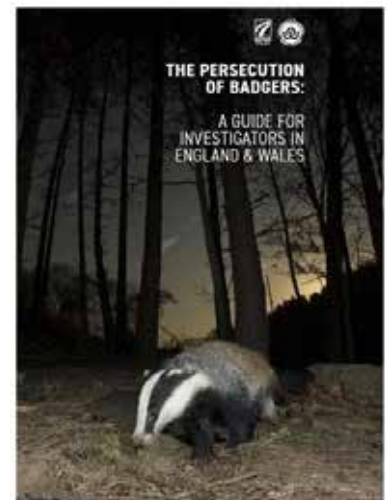
By Craig Fellowes. Wildlife Crime Officer & Trainer. The Badger Trust

Badgers have a long history of cruelty and persecution in the UK spanning hundreds of years. Today we still see badgers being persecuted despite stronger legislation and with a number of challenges to carrying out effective investigations. To assist those involved in the prosecution process this guide has been developed to help the process and give easily accessible reference material.



The Badger Trust and Naturewatch Foundation have now produced a publication, 'The Persecution of Badgers: A Guide for Investigators in England and Wales.'

This guide aims to outline the legislation currently in place to protect badgers in England and Wales. It provides guidance to police forces regarding best practice in the investigation of crimes against badgers and the enforcement of the law. It will enhance the police Badger Crime Awareness course delivered to all forces in England and Wales, and copies of the guide will be distributed on these courses as well as on the National Wildlife Crime Course. It was launched at the 31st UK Wildlife Crime Enforcers Conference in November 2019 by Badger Trust Wildlife Crime Officer, Craig Fellowes, and Naturewatch Foundation Animal Crime Manager, Andrew Swinburne.



The Badger Trust is the primary agency looking at badger persecution and is continuously exploring ways to tackle the issues. The role as the Wildlife Crime Officer and trainer is working and has seen an impact in a variety of key areas.

Objectives:

- The introduction of information sharing agreements for all police forces and key NGO's covering a number of the wildlife priorities including badgers. This is being explored and currently work is ongoing with the NPCC.
- Encourage police forces to submit incident returns to the NWCUC.
- Further work to establish crimes against Badgers as recordable offences.
- Improve the quality of evidence and dealing with the issues of 'current use' with both enforcement and partner agencies, and experts. This will include the introduction of further training for police wildlife crime officers to expand their knowledge and develop 'Crime Scene Recorders'
- Expand the training programme to all involved, in particular badger groups across the country.
- Encourage groups and individuals to report all suspected criminal activity to the police, in addition to reporting all incidents via the Badger Trust website, and promoting alternatives such as crime stoppers.

If anyone would like any further information, advice on any issue or to enquire about training please do get in touch: craig@badgertrust.org.uk or on Twitter [@Craig_wildlife](https://twitter.com/Craig_wildlife)