

SAVE THE BADGER



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PRESS RELEASE – JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Welsh Assembly Government has declared war on nature.

The Badger Trust made this legal challenge to try to protect Welsh badgers.

It cost a lot of money, and a large number of the Welsh public who believe in protecting badgers made donations out of their own pocket to enable them to do this.

The Judge's decision is disappointing, but...

It never was a case of winning or losing. Serious issues emerged in these proceedings, which should now mean the Welsh Assembly Government needs to reconsider it's policy before they begin slaughtering badgers.

In her statement to the Assembly on 13 January the Minister confidently announced that the proposed cull would yield a 9% overall reduction in cattle TB two years after the last cull took place. However, what emerged in evidence painted quite a different picture. In fact, the Minister conceded that:

- Bovine TB will increase dramatically on lands adjoining culled land;
- The best case scenario of a 9% 'overall reduction' in bovine TB in reality only amounts to a 6% decline in the rate of increase over all cattle herd breakdowns;
- Any benefits observed in the first years post-culling will dissipate as badger numbers increase;
- The longer term prognosis (that is, 30 months post-cull), is that there is in fact no ongoing benefit from culling

The important thing to remember is this only means that the Judge decided, in purely legal terms, the Welsh Assembly Government aren't acting unlawfully in culling badgers...

They were a protected species, but apparently in Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion WAG have now removed that status and now intend killing every single one of them...

However, it is still the case that the overwhelming amount of scientific research and opinion has said that WAG's policy of slaughtering badgers to combat bovine TB will not work...

- Dr Chris Cheesman, former head of wildlife diseases research at the the Central Science Laboratory, and ex senior scientific adviser to the UK government, said he thought the WAG decision to cull flies in the face of the science.”
- The Independent Scientific Group (ISG) on bovine TB was asked by the UK government to undertake specific research on the effects of badger-culling on TB in cattle. The work took nearly ten years, cost the lives of over 11,000 badgers and cost taxpayers £34 million, and in the end, the ISG concluded that, "badger culling can make no meaningful contribution to cattle TB control in Britain.”
- A study by Imperial College London into the effectiveness of badger culling in controlling bovine found that any “beneficial effects are not sustained, disappearing four years post-cull.", and "this is not a cost-effective contribution to preventing bTB infections in cattle”

It is also the case that all animal welfare and wildlife organisations are opposed to their policy – such as RSPCA, RSPB, South & West Wales Wildlife Trust, Badger Trust, Save The Badger, and Viva.

And importantly a majority of the Welsh public opinion are also against the slaughter of badgers.

WAG are going to use peanuts to lure badgers into cages so they can shoot them all. We are sure the Welsh public would prefer to see those badgers which are trapped being given an injection and released rather than blasted with shotguns and killed.

The campaign to protect and save the lives of badgers continues.