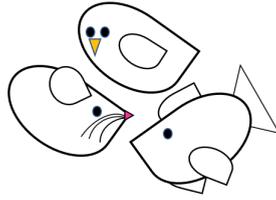


ANIMAL CONCERN



LEGISLATE TO LIBERATE

**John F. Robins, Campaigns Consultant,
Animal Concern Ltd, Post Office Box 5178, Dumbarton G82 5YJ.
Tel. 01389-841-639, Mobile: 07721-605521.**

E-mail: info@animalconcern.org website: <http://www.animalconcern.org/>

Animal Concern Ltd is a Registered Scottish Charity (No. SC050422) and a registered non-profit making Limited Company (Co. No. SC109126)

Established in 1988 as Animal Concern (Scotland) Limited we changed our name to Animal Concern in 1992 as several of our campaigns were international.

It incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which was founded in 1876.

Dear Douglas, Jeremy and Douglas,

I hope you don't mind my joint reply to your emails which all appeared to be based on a Party line response to correspondence on the Hunting With Dogs Bill.

When I started working with what is now Animal Concern our Vice-Chairperson was a Conservative Councillor on Glasgow City Council. She introduced me to other Conservative Councillors, some of whom went on to become MSPs, who were genuinely interested in animal welfare, an issue which in many respects should be above Party politics.

I was dismayed that you all seem to believe the line taken by the Conservative Party on the issue of fox hunting. Most of the assertions in your email are addressed in my original email to you.

The one other thing I would like to challenge is the statement that the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002 "has been an effective piece of legislation". That simply is not true.

About eighteen months after that law came into force the Master of Hounds at one of the biggest fox hunts in Scotland said that since the law was introduced his hunt had never had it so good. They were no longer pestered by Hunt Saboteurs and without the presence of the Saboteurs there was no reason for the police to attend hunts. It wasn't just business as usual, it was better than before. He made these remarks at a private function to a fellow guest whom, given the nature of the function, he did not even suspect was a member of Animal Concern.

Where undercover investigators from the League Against Cruel Sports and Hunt Saboteur monitors have observed hunts in Scotland they have obtained video evidence of the law being broken. By chance I came across a fox hunt in Dumfries and Galloway and watched as hounds chased a fox from cover. The hunt made no attempt to call the hounds off and I neither saw nor heard any sign of the guns that were supposed to be there to shoot any fox flushed from cover. The fox escaped as did a hare which some of the hounds went after as well.

You are, I hope, aware that last October, in Westminster Magistrates' Court, a senior official of the Masters of Foxhounds Association was found guilty, under the Serious Crimes Act 2007, of the criminal charge of encouraging other hunters to deliberately use Trail Hunting as a cover for continuing to hunt foxes illegally, breaking the English law banning hunting with hounds.

The case stemmed from the leak in November 2020 of a series of training webinars which showed senior figures from the Masters of Foxhounds Association and the Countryside Alliance caught on camera, seeming to admit that trail hunting is a "smokescreen" for the chasing and killing of foxes.

The Masters of Foxhounds Association is also the governing body of Fox Hunts in Scotland.

I urge you to consider this issue with an open mind and to avoid being guided by misinformation on the effectiveness of a piece of legislation which is only being reviewed because it has proved to be totally ineffective.

Kind regards,

John F. Robins,
For Animal Concern