



Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

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 Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is registered in
England and Wales, company number 715675
and is registered charity number 222212

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Dear Secretary of State,

We are writing to ask you to stop any cull of badgers coming to Derbyshire this autumn. We believe there are very strong grounds for not allowing a cull in this county and that the ongoing vaccination programme led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust should continue and indeed be expanded.

If a cull came to Derbyshire all the good work from many people working incredibly hard on our vaccination programme could be put in jeopardy. It is quite possible that badgers that we have vaccinated could get shot. Given the amount of money your Government has provided, supporting our programme, there is a great risk that taxpayers' money may be wasted through a cull arriving in the county.

The Derbyshire Wildlife Trust badger vaccination programme is the largest volunteer led vaccination programme in the UK. It is supported by multiple partners including the National Trust, the NFU, Derbyshire County Council, the Badger Trust and all the local badger groups, British Mountaineering Council, RSPB and the Derbyshire Police. The Police Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire is also a strong supporter of the programme

Since the vaccination programme began in 2015 it has:

- Been supported by over 100 volunteers who have spent many hours out in the field helping with badger vaccination
- Resulted in 647 badgers being vaccinated so far with more badgers to be vaccinated during this vaccination season
- Been awarded £280,506.76 of funding from your Government through the Badger Edge Vaccination Scheme (BEVS 1 and 2) over the past 5 years
- Been working with 47 landowners and partners, including farmers, the National Trust, Derbyshire County Council, the Badger Trust and county Badger Groups over nearly 110km²
- Been working closely with APHA within DEFRA to help set up and run the only current national training programme for vaccinators which is now recognised as a centre of excellence for badger vaccination.



In addition in September we will be vaccinating badgers on National Nature Reserves owned by Natural England. These are the only National Nature Reserves in the country where vaccination will be taking place.

Recent research carried out on badgers killed on roads within Derbyshire by Professor Malcolm Bennett from Nottingham University School of Veterinary Medicine showed that out of 104 badgers analysed only 4 were found to be infected with bovine TB. This is a very low incidence and rather than culling, vaccination would bring benefits by establishing a population of badgers that would be resistant to bovine TB should it be introduced by cattle.

It is important that one county like Derbyshire is supported where badger vaccination can continue and expand without the threat of a cull disrupting the positive benefits of an increasing population of badgers resistant to bovine TB, plus potentially undoing all the hard work and good will we have generated through this programme. The Godfray report, which your Government has yet to respond to, specifically highlights the need to test the impact of vaccination of badgers on the disease risk in cattle. Our vaccination programme in Derbyshire provides the ideal opportunity to undertake this work. However a cull in the county would make such work untenable.

We look forward to your response as a matter of urgency. We would also welcome the opportunity to meet you and give you more information about our programme which has shown badger vaccination to be a practical, viable option in bovine TB control. We also invite you to come and visit our programme and see our badger vaccination team in action in Derbyshire.

We urge you not to allow all this hard work to be compromised by allowing a cull to come to Derbyshire.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Birch, Head of Living Landscapes, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Dominic Dyer, CEO, Badger Trust

Chris Packham

Bill Oddie

Simon King

