



[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Our ref: RFI 6614
Date: 08 July 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: guidance to Natural England

Thank you for your request for information about Defra advice to Natural England on badger control, which we received on 27 May. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

We sincerely apologise for the delay in responding to your request.

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We have answered your questions below:

- 1. what Defra has decided after considering “amending or tightening the requirements in the Best Practice Guidance or training”; and**

Best Practice Guidance, amended in light of the recommendations of the Independent Expert Panel (IEP), will be published in advance of the second year of culling in Gloucestershire and Somerset commencing.

- 2. Whether Defra has yet provided advice to “Natural England that the licence conditions for the pilot areas should be amended to permit only cage-trapping and shooting” and has carried out a “review [of] whether controlled shooting should continue to be an approved culling method”; and,**

As confirmed by the Secretary of State on 3rd April, the second of four years' of

culling in the two existing areas will continue in 2014. Both cage-trapping and shooting and controlled shooting will continue to be permitted control methods, as set out in the licence issued to each area:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/species/badger/b.aspx>

3. if so, what advice has been given and the outcome of the review, and on what date(s); or

As set out above, this was set out in the Secretary of State's announcement of 3rd April and Defra's response to the report of the IEP.

4. if this advice and review are still under consideration by Defra, when they are expected to be concluded; and

Please refer to the answer above.

5. how members of the public will be informed, and when or how soon before the start of culling in W. Somerset & W. Gloucestershire?

If you are referring to when this decision was taken, this was announced on 3rd April.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs, and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours,

Defra TB Programme

Ccu.correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF