



Opportunity to Comment 2017: Summary of Responses

As part of the badger control licence application process, members of the public were invited to provide information regarding issues that may be relevant to the determination of the licence application.

Opportunity to Comment Period

The opportunity to comment (OTC) ran from 19th July 2017 to 2nd August 2017, covering the counties of Somerset, Gloucestershire and adjoining parts of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Notices were placed in the local press and advertised on the GOV.UK website. A total of 348 responses were received for this period.

County Breakdown of Responses

The table to the right shows a summary of the responses received broken down by county. Of these a total of 348 responses expressed disagreement with the Governments Policy.

County	Total
Gloucestershire	114
Somerset	139
Herefordshire	37
Worcestershire	58

General Themes

A number of general themes were raised by respondents. These were public safety, tourism and business, recreation, ecological concerns, perturbation and vaccination. Specifically:

- 31 responses raised concerns for public safety; an additional 12 responses expressed similar concerns regarding recreational activities. Respondents expressed concerns about their safety when walking in the countryside and on public footpaths, dog walking at night and wildlife watching whilst shooting was taking place.
- 30 responses raised general concerns about tourism and business. The majority believed that a licence could have negative impacts on visitor numbers and local services such as wildlife research and rescue centres.
- 20 responses raised concerns surrounding ecological impacts such as increased fox numbers and impacts on the habitat of ground nesting birds and other wildlife.
- 10 responses raised concerns about an increase in perturbation, with some concerned that their livestock may become infected in future.
- 28 responses relate to the possibility of using vaccination as an alternative.

Material Issues

The OTC process identified a total of 19 material impacts raised on businesses/persons in the four counties involved. The relevant companies will be notified of these responses, which relate to their area. The potential material issues will need to be considered and addressed by the applicants as part of their licence application.