



Consultation Response

FROM THE RSPCA IN WALES

Code of practice for species control provisions in Wales

April 2016

QUESTION 1: WHAT COMMENTS DO YOU HAVE ON THE DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE?

The codes are, in general, very clear and informative and much better than the current version produced by Defra. However we do have some specific points:

1. Under section 2.4, Scope, we feel that some reference should be made to the number of animals involved. For instance, there may be incidents when it would be preferable to take swift action to capture a pair of raccoon dogs, found living wild, and rehome them, rather than delaying action, that allows the animals to breed and resulting in lethal methods having to be used to control them. (The RSPCA removed two such raccoon dogs from the Welsh countryside in 2014). We feel therefore that the CoP should allow action to be taken in circumstances where only a pair of animals may be present, in order to prevent a much greater problem occurring.
2. Under 2.5 Animal Welfare Considerations, we feel that there should also be a paragraph stating that, where possible, non-lethal methods of resolving the problem should be evaluated, such as the raccoon dog example given above.
3. Under section 3.3 (para 41) the issue relating to numbers of animals, as discussed in 1 above, should also be addressed here.
4. Under same section, para 43, we are concerned as to whether these conditions will always be adhered to. We understand that there are reasons to conduct limited control of grey squirrels in certain areas of Wales where red squirrels are present, but as well as having concerns about the welfare implications of the methods used, we would not want species control agreements or orders to be seen as a mechanism to push for widespread grey squirrel control in Wales.

QUESTION 2: IS THE PROPOSED CODE OF PRACTICE CLEAR TO UNDERSTAND AND PRACTICAL TO IMPLEMENT?

Yes, the RSPCA believes it is.

QUESTION 3: WE HAVE ASKED A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC QUESTIONS. IF YOU HAVE ANY RELATED ISSUES WHICH WE HAVE NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED, PLEASE DETAIL

The RSPCA has nothing further to add.