



The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Seacole Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London, SW1P 4DF

14 May 2019

Dear Secretary of State,

General Licences for Bird Control

It is apparent that Natural England's reaction to the application for judicial review by Wild Justice was disproportionate, inappropriate, and damaging to the environment and countryside. As representative organisations for the countryside and shooting, we are therefore writing to thank you for taking control of the current chaotic situation for avian pest control, and to make constructive suggestions for a way forward.

All the organisations who are signatories to this letter have submitted evidence detailing the damage done by the revocation of the three General Licences, and demonstrating that those licences issued since the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April are not fit for purpose.

We would therefore recommend to you the following course of action:

- The issuing of replacement General Licences that cover all the former species and licensing purposes.
- That these new licences are as simple and easy to understand as possible.
- That the burden of being satisfied that legal control is necessary reverts back to the issuing authority and is not placed on the user. There should therefore be no need for the user to demonstrate that alternative methods have been used, continue to use them, or be asked to demonstrate why such alternatives won't work, because the issuing authority has already determined the necessity for lethal control.

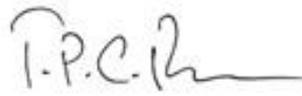
- That because the licences exist to prevent serious damage to crops and livestock it must not be required that such damage should have already occurred before action can be taken.
- Other issues covered in other legislation, such as what may or may not be done on specially designated land, should not be repeated in the terms of the general licence.

Every day lost to the ongoing crisis sees more gamebirds, wildlife, crops and livestock damaged by these very common problematic birds. We trust and hope that the evidence review will reverse the gold plating and mission creep that has led to the current chaos, and produce simple, workable licences covering all species and purposes previously included.

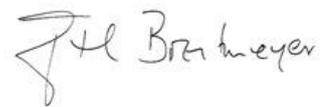
Yours sincerely



Peter Glenser QC  
Chairman  
BASC



Tim Bonner  
Chief Executive  
Countryside Alliance



Tim Breitmeyer  
President  
CLA



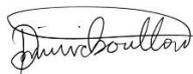
Sir Jim Paice  
Chairman  
GWCT



Liam Bell  
Chairman  
NGO



Amanda Anderson  
Director  
Moorland Association



Dominic Boulton  
Chairman  
Game Farmers Association



Tom Adams  
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