

27<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Dear All,

Many of you will already be aware that an announcement has now been made regarding the broad location of the areas in which the pilot trials will be held. The Badger Trust is keen to gather as much information as it can about the areas and the progress of culling if and when it begins. However, please bear in mind the Badger Trust's policy of taking particular care not to trespass or undertake any other activity which could be regarded as illegal. These trials are designed to test the efficacy, humaneness and safety of the controlled (free shooting) of badgers. If the trials proceed, shooting will commence in the autumn and will continue for six weeks. As badgers are nocturnal the killing will take place at night, and will be carried out by trained marksmen using high-powered rifles. Their remit will be to kill at least 70% of the badgers in each of the trial areas. The killing will be non-selective, but the majority of those killed will be healthy. Of the small percentage of badgers which may be carrying bovine TB, very few will be infectious and therefore capable of transmitting the disease.

Each of the trial areas must be at least 150 sq.km., that is c. 8 miles by 8 miles, but could be larger. At least 70% of the land in the area must be covered. The precise areas and boundaries where the shooting will take place will not be revealed but are stated to be in WEST GLOUCESTERSHIRE and WEST SOMERSET.

Licence applications from groups of landowners who propose to cull badgers will be considered by Natural England. At the same time, interested parties living within and immediately adjacent to the proposed licence areas are invited to comment in order to draw Natural England's attention to any material impacts that may be relevant to their determination of the licence applications.

Details can be found on Natural England's webpage

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

The Opportunity to Comment will be open for 28 days (24 January 2012 - 20th February 2012). It can be done by completing an online survey (which opens in a new window on their website) or by writing to:

Natural England,  
BM 6283  
London, WC1N 3XX

E-mail: [BTB@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:BTB@naturalengland.org.uk)

If you live in or immediately adjacent to either WEST GLOUCESTERSHIRE or WEST SOMERSET please ensure you respond within the stated timescale. If you live outside those areas but know of people who are entitled to respond, please forward this message to them. The shooting of badgers will affect everybody living and working in, or adjacent to, the two pilot trial areas. They are both popular destinations for tourists who may decide they do not want to visit areas where badgers are being shot at night. Businesses in the area, e.g. those offering accommodation or food, may see a drop in their income. Do not make the mistake of thinking that because you live in a town or village, this will not affect you - if you run a business, your business may suffer and you should take the opportunity to draw Natural England's attention to this. Others who live in rural areas perhaps offering accommodation with badger watching as an attraction also need to consider the impact on their income. The "Opportunity to Comment" is not a consultation - the decision to trial the shooting of badgers has been taken - this is purely and simply an opportunity for you to state the impact it will have upon you, your home, land and business.

If you visit our website [www.badgertrust.org.uk](http://www.badgertrust.org.uk) you will find much information together with press releases which we hope will prove helpful. Badger Trust is a single species charity, dedicated to the conservation, welfare and protection of badgers, their setts and habitats. We need your help to do so as we are committed to fulfilling our aims in any legal way open to us. If you would like to become a supporter of either Badger Trust itself, or one of our local badger groups or assist us in any other way, details can be found on our website. Thank you in anticipation of your help.

Best wishes,

Pat Hayden,  
Vice Chairman

Badger Trust is the only charity dedicated to the conservation of badgers throughout England, Wales and all Ireland.

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