



Leicestershire Constabulary

Hunting of Wild Mammals under the Hunting Act 2004 Policy

Owner:	Chief Inspector
Department Responsible:	Tasking
Chief Officer Approval:	ACC Operations
Date of Next Review:	Feb 2028

This document has been produced in conjunction with the Leicestershire Constabulary Legislative Compliance Pack

Review log

Date	Minor / Major No change	Section	Author
Jan 2010	Live		Bob Scott
April 2011	Minor		PC246 Darryl Cunningham
Oct 2018			Sgt 608 Nick Woodrow
July 2018	Minor	Policy - Legal/monitoring	Sgt 608 Nick Woodrow
Aug 2020	Minor	Policy - Scope	PS 549 Mannion & PS 1421 Gamble
Jul 22	No change		Sgt Paul Archer
Feb 2024	Minor	Policy - Scope/Monitoring	Insp 2194 Shaun Wilson
Jan 2026	Minor	Legal basis,	Insp 2194 Shaun Wilson

Policy

Introduction

The Hunting Act 2004 makes it an offence to hunt a wild mammal with a dog, unless the hunting is exempt. Section 4 of the Act provides a defence where a person reasonably believed that the hunting was exempt. The Act applies in England and Wales. A wild mammal includes animals bred or tamed, those in captivity or confinement, animals that have escaped or been released from captivity or confinement, and any mammal living wild. Section 5 creates offences in relation to hare coursing.

Statement

Leicestershire Police recognises strongly held views across rural communities about hunting and animal welfare. We will treat all parties fairly and impartially, we will protect life and property, and we will maintain the peace. We will enforce the Hunting Act 2004 and associated legislation upon complaint or where information indicates an offence, doing so in a fair and proportionate manner, taking into account competing demands and policing priorities.

Aims

To ensure a structured and consistent approach to enforcement of the Hunting Act 2004 and related legislation across Leicestershire and Rutland.

Scope

This Policy and Procedure apply to allegations of offences under the Hunting Act 2004 and incidents associated with such offences, including public order and road safety concerns linked to hunt activity and protest.

Legal Basis

This document takes account of applicable legislation, including the Hunting Act 2004, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, the Public Order Act 2023, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, the Freedom of

Information Act 2000, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and the Equality Act 2010.

It aligns with national guidance from the National Police Chiefs' Council and the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice.

It also aligns with the NPCC Wildlife and Rural Crime Strategy 2025 to 2028.

Monitoring

The Local Policing Directorate holds the portfolio for hunt policy. Operational issues are led by Neighbourhood Policing, the Force Intelligence Bureau, Operations and the Contact Management Department. Corporate Services will monitor this Policy annually, including feedback from victims and witnesses and consideration of community impact assessments.