

**P-05-715 A ban on the manufacture, sale and use of snares in Wales –
Additional correspondence from the Countryside Alliance, 26.09.16**

To whom it may concern,

Ahead of the debate on the above petition, we have reviewed the papers submitted to the Petitions Committee. These include the aforementioned correspondence from the Petitioner, which makes repeated reference to a “letter from the Countryside Alliance”. We would like to make a number of comments regarding this correspondence.

Firstly, it is important to emphasise that the “letter from the Countryside Alliance” highlighting the statistical errors in the original petition was in fact from the National Gamekeepers’ Organisation (NGO) and the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) as well as the Countryside Alliance, and as such reflects tremendous depth and breadth of experience in countryside management.

Secondly, the response demonstrates the petitioners do not understand the 2012 DEFRA report that they are quoting. The two field studies from which they claim to have derived their capture rate data are precisely the humaneness testing work carried out by a single operator that we refer to in our letter. Neither the Countryside Alliance, nor our co-signatories at the NGO and GWCT, are in fact “incorrect” on this point. Extrapolating from this data is invalid for all the reasons we laid out in our original letter.

Thirdly and most tellingly, the response fails to address the key statistical error highlighted by the Countryside Alliance, NGO and GWCT. The letter from these three organisations pointed out the absurdity of the petition’s central claim– that more mammals are snared in wales every year than in fact exist in Wales. The petitioner’s response is silent on this point, perhaps because it so obviously invalidates their data. We have never questioned that it is possible to generate such extraordinary statistics by manipulating the DEFRA data, we have simply asserted that such manipulations are clearly invalid, as demonstrated by the clearly false conclusion that is now being used to promote this petition. We are not surprised that DEFRA officials have not queried this misinterpretation when shown these figures, but suspect some amusement may have been quietly expressed afterwards. To suggest that more mammals are snared in wales every year than in fact exist in Wales is clearly ludicrous, and the fact this point is not refuted in the petitioner’s response suggests they are unable to do so.

I hope this is helpful in further demonstrating the paucity of evidence supporting this petition.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Evans