

Date	Time	From	To	Content	Attachments
21/12/2023	15:22	NWCU	Moorland Association, Others	<p>Good afternoon</p> <p>I am Detective Constable S.40(2) from the National Wildlife Crime Unit. I have been passed your details as either members of the Bird of Prey PDG, or because you are key representatives within your respective organisations.</p> <p>I am making contact today in an effort to try and arrange a face to face meeting with you all in the New year. Those of you who were present at the most recent bird of prey PDG this December will remember my DI S.40(2) talking about our new task force for dealing with crimes involving Hen Harriers and specifically birds that are satellite tagged. This meeting will be for my NWCU colleagues and I to formally present the model of the task force to you. Demonstrate how we are mapping these incidents, highlight what crimes are being committed and propose how we can all work together. Our objective is to gain your support to tackle these crimes.</p> <p>In order to try and make some progress, I am trying to arrange this meeting before the end of January 2024 and I am hopeful of finding a venue that would minimise travel for as many of you as possible. If everyone can attend I expect that we will have 10 persons present, so if anyone has access to a suitable venue then please get in touch.</p> <p>If I can give you a bit of background, over the past few months, the NWCU has been reviewing bird of prey incidents and associated crimes. S.31(1)</p>	

			<p>because there have been 65 incidents reported to us since 2021. We suspect or have confirmed crime in over half of these incidents and there have been large increases in incidents each year to date. The tags along with other information help us to track the birds and assess what could have happened to them. S.31(1)</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The NWCU have been able to map incidents where we suspect crime involving satellite tagged hen harriers. We have developed a process to review all of the available data and intelligence and identify those that have either gone off line in suspicious circumstances, or there has been confirmed criminality. Our new mapping capability means that we have identified hotspot repeat crime locations. We can identify who owns the land and what it is used for and we would like your support in addressing the criminal aspects identified.</p> <p>During the meeting we will explain how the tags work and how we can review the data to identify what offences we suspect are being committed. We will propose our idea for joint working and seek your feedback and hopefully your support. This is in line with the 4P plan (Pursue, Prepare, Protect, Prevent) that you have all agreed to as part of the bird of prey PDG. We want to work with you and share the analytical work that the NWCU has been carrying out so that we can stop these crimes occurring and protect people and the birds in these areas.</p> <p>There is a lot of political aspects, media and public interest relating to Hen Harriers. This may come up at the meeting but we will not be focusing on this. Our focus will be on the crime figures, the type and cost of crimes especially to land owners, users and communities and also crime prevention. Any positive action we can collectively take</p>	
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				<p>should drive these crime figures down and help with the public and media perception on this subject.</p> <p>I sincerely hope that you will support the Harrier Task Force going forward, and would be grateful if you could indicate if there are any specific days or times that I should keep away from in arranging a meeting. I would be looking to have either a morning session, or an afternoon session at your conveniences.</p> <p>If you would like more information on the above, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you in the coming weeks.</p> <p>Hope you all have a fabulous Christmas and best wishes for 2024.</p> <p>Kind regards S.40(2)</p>	
26/02/2024	16:49	NWCU	Moorland Association, Others	<p>Good afternoon,</p> <p>Following on from our meeting in S.31(1) I would now like to arrange a face to face meeting so that I can brief you all with the specifics of x 2 hotspot areas where crimes involving Hen Harriers are suspected to have occurred. This meeting will be just for NWCU, NGO, MA, CLA, BASC and possibly a representative from the local police. I will not be inviting the other PDG members. This is because I need the focus to stay on the crime data and how we can engage with the land owners to prevent crime and protect the people and wildlife in the area. I believe that the best way to communicate with these people is with your help, contacts and experience.</p> <p>We have identified a top 5 from the hotspot areas. I can't tell you about them all at this time due to on-going police investigations. We will get to these areas as soon as the police are satisfied that it will not affect their investigations.</p>	

				<p>At the meeting I will present you with the specific data that we have and ask you for ideas, including your help to fill any data gaps and to plan the best way forward.</p> <p>Please note that this will include planning for a joint visit to the area to speak to the relevant land owner or their representative in a few weeks' time so that we can try to work together. We can decide who attends this visit and how to make contact at our meeting.</p> <p>Before I meet you I will be meeting with the relevant police forces for the hotspot areas to present them with the data and to let them know that I plan to present to you. I will invite them along, but there is no need for them to be there because I will be able to pass on any outcome.</p> <p>I would like to meet face to face because of what we will be discussing.</p> <p>I was hoping that we could meet the week commencing the 11th March and if someone could host us then I would really appreciate it. I have attached a link for a doodle poll below for your availability, so if you wouldn't mind completing that as soon as possible I will select the most appropriate date and time and let you know.</p> <p>S.31(1) [REDACTED]</p> <p>If you can host us then please contact me directly.</p> <p>Regards S.40 [REDACTED]</p>	
22/05/2024	14:04	NWCU	Moorland Association, Others	<p>Good afternoon, I hope you are all well.</p> <p>Over the past few months, we have been developing the harrier task force into the operational phase which has meant that there have</p>	Attachment 1 – Hen Harrier Task Force Press Release

			<p>been a few meetings with selected partners only, due to some sensitive data that we needed to discuss.</p> <p>We are now at the stage where we have started to do visits to landowners and users where the crime hot spots occur. These have started well and the people we have met have been surprised that we have police data that shows a hotspot area for crime on their land, but they have been supportive and state that they want to make change, but each location has different complexities, so we need to adapt for each one.</p> <p>This is a sensitive issue because we are highlighting hotspot areas for crime and potential risks to all people and Hen Harriers who use the land. We are doing our best to engage with all stakeholders and this involves giving everyone a voice and taking what they say into consideration, whilst being resilient to the fact that the crime must stop.</p> <p>During all the visits so far, S.31(1)</p> <p>The second scenario possess a far greater risk not just to the wildlife but also to those people that live and work there. Including members of the public. So, for obvious reasons I expect everyone to support and work with us and to date they are.</p> <p>As you can expect, these can be tricky conversations to have, and no-one wants the label of a crime hotspot. There is a lot of work to do to build working relationships and trust and any negative attention at this time towards these locations could jeopardise the work that we are trying to do. I accept that each organisation, partner, stakeholder, and member of the public that we engage with about this issue has their own agenda, opinions, and objectives, but we are working hard to</p>	
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			<p>show that we (NWCU and the wider police) are being neutral with regard to all of the issues except crime. We are keeping the focus on the crime figures, and we have a zero tolerance for crime involving wildlife. It is not acceptable to allow crime to continue whilst we talk about wider issues. The priority for all involved should be to stop the crimes. If the crimes stop and we know who all the players and stakeholders are then we can all be honest about the situation and start real conversations and establish legal long-term solutions. We need to give the “stop crime” element its` best chance to achieve our objectives without added complications. To that end we have decided that we will not be releasing details of the hotspot locations at this time.</p> <p>The tags show us that there are issues in specific locations and if these crimes continue, we will have to review this decision with regard to all of the associated risks, including public interest and confidence.</p> <p>Please remember that if there was an ongoing investigation or evidence relating to who had committed an offence then that would be the priority and all our focus would be on that.</p> <p>What we are now doing is adding an engagement element focusing on police data and prevention in high-risk areas, instead of just reacting after an incident.</p> <p>The work we are doing will help us demonstrate that we have tried/ are trying a wide range of conventional methods. If this fails and the crimes continue, we will consider other enforcement action S.31(1)</p> <p>[REDACTED] The work we are attempting now and the wider range of offences and risks that we are now able to consider S.31(1)</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The HTF objectives fit in with the 4Ps from the PDG. The objectives also comply with the Hen Harrier action plan that was agreed and</p>	
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				<p>signed by Defra, GWCT, Moorland Association, National Gamekeepers Organisation, National Parks UK, Natural England, and the RSPB. Particularly the following paragraph from action 1: Monitoring of populations - <i>These additional data will help to determine the frequency, circumstances, and nature of persecution incidents, as well as enabling the collection of evidence to support enforcement actions. Where appropriate, data will support the use of targeted protection measures at key sites.</i></p> <p>and Action 3: <i>Work with Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group (RPPDG) to analyse monitoring information and build intelligence picture.</i></p> <p>The objectives are also compatible with the IUCN principles and good working practice guidelines. Particularly principle 1 “Do no harm”.</p> <p>We have now publicly launched the HTF.</p> <p>Last week we used our police media team to circulate the attached media release. Please feel free to use it and circulate it amongst your own organisations and various media sources. All the pictures were taken by S.40(2) from my team, and he is happy for them to be used.</p> <p>Also see:</p> <p>Cumbria Police supports task force shielding rare hen harriers Whitehaven News</p> <p>CandoFM</p> <p>Geltsdale hen harrier flying squad - BBC Sounds</p> <p>In addition to the visits and warrants that we have done, S.31(1) [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] Everyone has been really impressed with them.</p>	
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				<p>S.31(1)</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The mutual aid side between the police forces has been agreed and we are creating a comms network ready for when we need them. To date we have not had to call on this resource, but we will be ready for when the time comes.</p> <p>S.31(1)</p> <p>[REDACTED] but</p> <p>there is a cost, and we have a limited budget. If anyone can suggest any funding streams to support this, I would greatly appreciate it.</p> <p>Please get in touch if you need anything further.</p> <p>Thanks S.40</p>	
23/05/2024	12:19	Moorland Association	NWCU	<p>Dear S.40,</p> <p>Thank you for the update. May I ask if you have had the chance to read the IUCN guidelines yet?</p> <p>I ask because the tone and language of the communications being used by the police appear to be remarkably similar to that used by activists (the guidelines explain at Chapter 2 why conservation groups are rarely able to act as neutral actors). The 'do no harm' principle (Chapter 3&4) is about not making things worse, and we fear that is what is now happening.</p> <p>I have attached previous attempts to flag this issue about language up with the Durham Constabulary. No action appears to have been taken.</p>	<p>Attachment 2 – Letter to Durham Constabulary 9 Feb</p> <p>Attachment 3 – Letter to Durham Constabulary 16 Nov</p>

				<p>This month's police press activity continues to use the word 'persecution'. At our last meeting I flagged up why we feel it is inappropriate and inflammatory for the police to adopt activist language (doing so is also a breach of the IUCN guidelines, see the 'poisoning of relationships' in Chapter 1).</p> <p>May I ask who we should now take this matter up with within the police?</p> <p>Best wishes</p> <p>S.40(2)</p>	
06/06/2024	11:17	Moorland Association	NWCU	<p>Dear S.40(2)</p> <p>One of our members has just received the attached letter. Could I ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What advice the police has for estates receiving letters like this? 2) What is the police's view on this type of confirmed unlawful activity? 3) How do we ensure these types of incidents are formally recorded? <p>I look forward to hearing from you.</p> <p>Best wishes</p> <p>S.40(2)</p>	S.31(1)
06/06/2024	17:27	NWCU	Moorland Association	<p>Good afternoon, S.40(2)</p> <p>Sorry for the late reply, but I have been on leave and then busy operationally.</p>	

				<p>Yes, I have looked at the IUCN guidelines and I have engaged with the HWC group. I have found them to be useful and it's a shame they were not in print when I started the HTF, but I had already researched some successful cases of HWC during the planning of the HTF and I had found cases like the case studies within the guidelines.</p> <p>As I was using that research during my planning, I don't think I was too far off. I will be staying in touch with the group, and I know you and other members are also in communication with them so that is good. I hope that in the future we can get to a position where we can find long lasting solutions.</p> <p>Regarding the word persecution and your comments about tone, language and activists not being able to act as neutral actors, I do understand this issue. But you and I, the MA, the RSPB, the wider police, the NGO, in fact all the priority delivery group cannot act as neutral actors either. We are all participants; we all have with our personal and organisational training, experiences, aims and objectives. We can try to be neutral, but we should accept that we will be influenced by our biases.</p> <p>That said everyone involved with the PDG except the police, NE and DEFRA is reliant on and answerable to paid members and their vested interests.</p> <p>This is why, when we are all working together to prevent crime, protecting the people and wildlife in the relevant areas, pursuing those who commit crime, I will be suggesting that we all seek funding for a truly independent professional facilitator and mediator with HWC experience to come into the Hen Harrier HWC issue to help us all accept our own positionality, build trust, and to develop and implement solutions. I will be asking the IUCN to help us with this.</p>	
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				<p>I accept that mistakes could be made by all those involved by using the wrong language and the aim should be to work together to prevent, acknowledge and work through any misunderstandings.</p> <p>I would argue that the ongoing crimes involving wildlife, including Hen Harriers is inflammatory. Not the police's use of a commonly used and accepted word whilst they are appealing for information or informing the public during a press release. But we are all entitled to our opinions.</p> <p>Regarding the use of the word persecution. I disagree with you; and I think that this is wasting time and distracting from the real work that is required whilst we are debating it. If it helps you should look at hwctf.org where the IUCN provide the following definition of human wildlife conflict:</p> <p>Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) occurs when animals pose a direct and recurring threat to the livelihood or safety of people, leading to the <u>persecution</u> of that species.</p> <p>Please note the use of the word persecution. It features in the IUCN's own guidelines five times, so the use of this word is not just activist language or in breach of the IUCN guidelines.</p> <p>Before my time in the NWCUC I believe that the common vernacular used by the stake holders involved with this issue was Raptor Persecution. This was widely accepted and used globally across the whole spectrum including wildlife and human conflict.</p> <p>As far as I know it was only changed to assist the public in their understanding of the word Raptor.</p> <p>You have stated that you believe Illegal killing should be used. But this is inappropriate as the crimes involving wildlife can be committed by a wide array of criminal conduct, not just killing. Acts can include taking</p>	
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				<p>a wild bird, damaging the nest whilst in use, taking/ destroying the egg, possession of a wild bird, possession of eggs, disturbance of a schedule 1 bird, positioning an article to kill a wild bird etc.</p> <p>Please see the Wildlife and countryside act for sections relating to how a crime can be committed. There is further legislation available that involves CITES species, habitats, and welfare where HWC could be the motive.</p> <p>Regarding the IUCN do no harm principal; as I have stated above, I do not agree that the use of the word persecution is making things worse. Again, I believe that the ongoing crime is what is making things worse. As with all the IUCN principles we need to take a holistic approach, we need to treat the cause of this issue, not just the symptoms. The cause is the ongoing crime. If that stops, one side of the debate will have been removed, and we can all work together to identify long-term workable solutions that are legal and will benefit all. But there will have to be compromise. The “do no harm” covers all involved from wildlife and biodiversity to people and communities. So, the priority must be to remove the risks to them all.</p> <p>The IUCN guidelines are just that, they are not rules. The IUCN HWC group will also tell you that. They consist of good principles and a toolkit that help, but in the police, we also use other models and tools. The well-known decision-making model is the most discussed and is very applicable to this complex situation. The Clear Hold Build model is another useful tool that the police use to deal with serious and organised crime, and I have incorporated those principles into the HTF from the very beginning. I suppose what I am saying is that the IUCN is just one of the tools that we can use, some tools are better suited to certain jobs, it is the people using the tools, their intentions and how they use them that matter.</p>	
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				<p>I am not able to respond regarding the tone and language used by Durham police because I haven't seen the comments that you are referring to and I don't know the context. It would appear from the last letter that the Chief Constable has replied stating that they will be looking into the matter. So, it would be inappropriate for me to comment.</p> <p>You appear to have escalated your concerns to the police in the appropriate manner and the second letter infers that you have had a reply. If you look on either police.uk or IOPC websites, you will see how you can escalate things further if you think that is required.</p> <p>Please get in touch if you require anything further.</p> <p>Regards S.40(</p>	
06/06/2024	18:44	NWCU	Moorland Association	<p>Evening S.40(2)</p> <p>I would recommend that the member speaks to their local police in the first instance to report this and any suspicious or criminal incidents. This can be via 999 in emergencies, 101 or online for other matters. It would also be good for the member to invite the local officers and or PCSO round to discuss this and any other concerns that they have. It is also a great opportunity for them to get to know each other and build a relationship.</p> <p>The local police will be best placed to offer crime prevention advice because they will be aware local policies and what resources might be available.</p> <p>My advice in this situation would be to consider the preservation of evidence once they find something of concern.</p>	

				<p>Think simply and don't panic but try to wear gloves and don't handle the object if possible.</p> <p>S.31(1)</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Other advice would be to keep a diary of all related incidents including date time and details and to keep the police informed. Depending on circumstances there may be a variety of offences including Malicious communications and harassment.</p> <p>The police will record all reports as an incident number or log. A lot of forces have different names for these records, but they all do the same thing, and the informant will be provided with a reference number. If a crime is reported, then it will be allocated a crime record reference number, and this will be provided to the informant/ victim.</p> <p>Hope this helps. S.40 (a)</p>	
10/06/2024	10:44	Moorland Association	NWCU	<p>Dear S.40 (a)</p> <p>Thank you for this helpful summary. We will share it with all members.</p> <p>Best</p> <p>S.40(2)</p>	
10/06/2024	12:59	Moorland Association	NWCU	<p>Dear S.40 (a)</p> <p>I agree with most of this. However, when it comes to police language, I am afraid members of the Moorland Association see the police's use of</p>	

			<p>language at polarizing. That is in breach of IUCN guidelines (see chapter 1) and hence why we feel change is required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘persecution’ is only used by the police in reference to raptors – as encouraged by activists, including the RSPB and Raptor Groups. The word could equally be used by the police to describe other wildlife crimes, but it is not. • I also feel the police is being highly selective about which part of the IUCN guidelines it wishes to quote. If the police wish to rely on the general use of the word – the police should also do so generally too. When will the wildlife crime unit begin talking about ‘bat persecution’ and ‘hare persecution’ etc? <p>The fact that the police use of language is quite so inconsistent illustrates why we feel that its vocabulary has been captured by activists. The central point in the IUCN guidelines is that wildlife conflict exists where two groups of people disagree. Right now, police language is fuelling that tension. Police decision making models require it to be consistent and we do not feel that is happening in relation to raptors.</p> <p>Kind regards</p> <p>S.40(2)</p>	
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