

## What is badger persecution?

Badger persecution comes in many forms from badger baiting, the practice of digging out a sett and then setting dogs on the badgers, to the careless operation of machinery engaged in otherwise legal activities such as development, forestry or agricultural operations.

The manner in which badgers are killed is often extremely cruel and can include being ripped apart by dogs or entombed in their underground homes when their setts are blocked. Other incidents have shown that they can be gassed, shot and even drowned when slurry is pumped into their setts.

## Why does badger persecution matter?

The manner in which badgers die is a matter we should all concern ourselves with and the cruelty involved in their persecution comes to light when badger deaths are reported. The badger that dies is irrelevant to the person who kills it but the effects can be far reaching. A mother badger will leave behind cubs which will also die at the time of year when they are still reliant on her for food. A dead boar badger will leave a void in the breeding cycle and can lead to no breeding taking place within a badger social group for a long period until such time as the gap is filled.

The dogs used in baiting usually suffer severe injuries and, as most vets will be able to tell how the dog was injured, they do not receive treatment from a qualified practitioner. Usually they are sewn back together in unhygienic circumstances by the baiters or worse, left to suffer from their injuries.

## What does the law say about badgers?

The law is quite clear. It is an offence:

- to kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill treat a badger or to attempt to do so
- interfere with a sett by damaging or destroying it
- obstruct access to, or any entrance of, a badger sett
- disturb a badger whilst it is occupying a sett
- cause a dog to enter a sett
- sell a live badger or offer one for sale or possess a live badger
- be in possession or control of a dead badger or anything derived from a dead badger

Often people take the law into their own hands when a badger becomes a nuisance but the law clearly allows for certain actions to be carried out under licence. In these instances the correct advice should be sought.

## What can I do?



Be aware of any badger setts within your area and keep an eye on them.

Let someone know you know where a badger sett is. [Scottish Badgers](#) will take a note of any data you can provide and register the sett or sighting on their database.

If you become suspicious of any activity at or near a badger sett contact your local police, report the incident as ongoing and ask for the police to attend.

Take a note of the registration numbers of vehicles you might see close to the incident.

Note a description of the number of persons present and how many dogs or other equipment they might have with them. Take a photograph if it is safe to do so.



**Don't**

Do not approach these people or let them know you are watching them. They are frequently of a violent nature and you should never place yourself in a position where you could become threatened or, worse, assaulted.