

What is PAW NI?

The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime NI (PAW NI) brings together statutory agencies, non-statutory agencies and interested parties with the common goal of combating wildlife crime through publicity, education and campaigning. PAW NI partners include key government Departments, PSNI and other enforcement agencies, environmental organisations, animal welfare groups and country sports associations.



Reporting a wildlife crime



Any information about wildlife crime should be passed immediately to the PSNI*. Call 101.

Describe your call as a potential Wildlife Crime and try and relay the following if known:

- Give details of the (potential) crime.
- Location and time.
- Description of the person(s) involved.
- Vehicle registrations, makes & colours.
- Detail any use of firearms, tools & dogs etc.
- Ask for & retain an incident reference number.

Criminal activity can be intentional, reckless or opportunistic. Reporting suspicious activities may not immediately lead to an arrest, but can help build a picture that later leads to successful enforcement action. Reporting even the smallest pieces of information can be useful in protecting NI's wildlife.

Further information is available in the NIEA's booklet "Wildlife Law and You (2016)" or visit www.wildlifecrimeni.org

*Information can also be given anonymously via Crimestoppers.

WATCH OUT FOR WILDLIFE CRIME



J Doherty

BADGERS



This leaflet's production was kindly funded by DoJ's Assets Recovery Community Scheme (ARCS).



www.wildlifecrimeni.org



Badger Persecution is one of the UK Wildlife Crime Priorities and comes in many forms ranging from the horrific practice of badger baiting to avoidable sett disturbance/ destruction which can occur when people carry out otherwise legal operations on land such as forestry or agricultural tasks.

Legal Protection - Badgers have been historically persecuted for sporting, pest control and disease control reasons. The control methods were deemed extremely cruel and badgers gained full protected status in Northern Ireland in 1985 under the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985. This was updated in 2011 adding extra offences and powers of enforcement.



What Does This Mean? That it is an offence to **intentionally** or **recklessly**:

- Kill.
- Injure.
- Take a badger (capture).
- Possess or control any part of a badger, live or dead.

Are Badger Setts Protected? Yes, it is an offence under the Wildlife Order to:

- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett.
- Damage or destroy anything which conceals or protects a sett.
- Disturb a badger whilst occupying a sett.

Badger Sett Disturbance - Most recorded incidents are reported as interference with badger setts; often involving forestry or agricultural operations or the disturbance of land for development purposes. Many incidents could have been avoided if the persons involved had sought appropriate advice from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) or an ecological consultant at the planning stage.

Will Badgers Stop Development? Badgers and their setts will need to be considered within a proposed development. A developer will often enlist the services of an ecological consultant to advise on potential impact. A developer may seek a derogation from the NIEA to permit closure of a badger sett. If NIEA is satisfied that there is overriding public interest and that badgers can still be accommodated despite closure of a specific sett, then it may license closure of a sett under strict conditions.

Illegal Interference With Setts can cause delays to works, generate negative publicity and can be expensive to resolve.



You may also end up with a criminal record, a fine and or a jail sentence. Early identification of where a sett might come into conflict with your planned operations can save you time and ultimately money.

If you have identified a potential problem with a sett on site you can seek initial advice from the NIEA publication, 'Badgers and Development'.



Can Someone Remove Badgers From Their Land? No. Removal of badgers would constitute an offence. Advice on dealing with problem badgers can be sought from the NIEA Wildlife Team; or the NI Badger Group has advice at: www.badgersni.org.uk

Badger Baiting involves the digging out and killing of badgers. Dogs often wearing radio collars are sent below ground into a sett. Once the dog has located a badger, the offenders dig down until they reach the dog and badger. The badger is then pulled from the sett, often disabled and thrown to the dogs which are allowed to kill it. Both dogs and badgers suffer severe injuries, often proving fatal. Evidence of badger baiting should be reported immediately to the PSNI Tel:101. *Do not approach the suspects yourself.* Badgers are also killed illegally in many other ways, such as snaring, gassing, poisoning or shooting.

