

## Different viewpoints

### Anti-hunting ban

#### *Controlling the fox population*

- Foxes are vermin and need controlling at a level acceptable to local farmers. Fox hunting causes less suffering than other methods of culling.
- Foxes are at the head of the food chain and do need controlling.
- The fox population benefits from being controlled otherwise it will be weakened by over breeding and sick and elderly animals often starve to death.



A fox  
(Copyright Paul Glendell/English Nature)

- People who hunt do not want to exterminate foxes. They want to control them at an acceptable level.
- Without fox hunting more foxes would be trapped, shot, poisoned or gassed.

- Hunts disperse as well as cull fox populations which reduces their levels of nuisance in the countryside.

#### *Impact on the economy*

- Hunting provides jobs and homes to many people.
- Hunting in Leicestershire contributes about £10 million per year to the rural economy.

## *Hunting as a sport*

- Drag hunting is a different sport, and farmers would not support it widely because it does not control foxes.



Sketch for the Quorn at Quenby, 1823, by John Ferneley  
(Copyright Leicestershire County Council)

- If hunting is cruel why aren't shooting and fishing considered to be as bad?
- Drag hunting is not an alternative, it is a different sport and farmers would not support it because it does not control foxes.
- Hunting is a part of rural life and many social and sporting events are run by the hunts.
- Hunting people enjoy the chase, not the kill.

## *The hounds*

- A foxhound is a working animal kept in a pack and is not suitable for domestication.
- A fox hound is exceptionally well cared for and is very happy in its life in the pack.
- To ban hunting may mean that 20,000 hounds would have to be put down and horses would also be vulnerable.

### *Hunting and the countryside*

- Hunting takes place with the full co-operation of farmers and land owners. They would not welcome the hunt if property or livestock were harmed.
- Hunts collect dead stock to feed to the hounds. Disposal of dead animals would otherwise be a problem for farmers.
- Hunting is a traditional part of English country life.
- Hunting conserves the countryside. Hedges and coverts, maintained for hunting, support other wildlife.

### *Civil liberties*

- Townsfolk don't understand the country way of life and want to impose their views on country people.



Real Countryside Alliance road sign

### *Government should focus on other issues*

- Shouldn't the government have more important things to deal with than hunting. Why do people care more about wild animals than they do about their fellow citizens?
- Intensive farming methods such as battery chicken farming should be banned instead but chickens, pigs and cows aren't felt to be as cute as foxes. Hunted foxes lead a better life than a chicken or pig that ended up in a chicken nugget or cheap pork sausage.

## Pro-hunting ban

### *Cruelty*

- It is unnecessarily cruel. Post mortem evidence shows foxes often die from disembowelling by hounds or suffer lots of injuries.
- Hunting is also cruel to the hounds, the terriers and the horses, which are often injured.
- British law defines animal cruelty as “the causing of unnecessary suffering”. As there are more humane methods of controlling foxes doesn’t that mean that the suffering of animals when hunted by dogs is unnecessary?
- Other cruel sports that involve animals being set upon each other, such as cock fighting and bear baiting, have been banned in the UK for many years.

### *Hunting is an ineffective method of controlling foxes*

- It isn’t necessary to control fox populations, they are self-regulating.
- Hunting is an inefficient means of control.
- Hunts claim they control foxes but also that they don’t kill many. They can’t have it both ways.
- A study of hunted deer showed they suffer great stress when chased. The foxes almost certainly suffer also.

### *Misconception*

- Foxes have a bad press – they probably do not kill lambs. Poultry killing can be prevented by proper security.
- Foxes help to control rabbits, rats etc. Therefore they are helpful to farmers.
- Hunting with a prolonged chase does not replicate what happens amongst predators in nature.

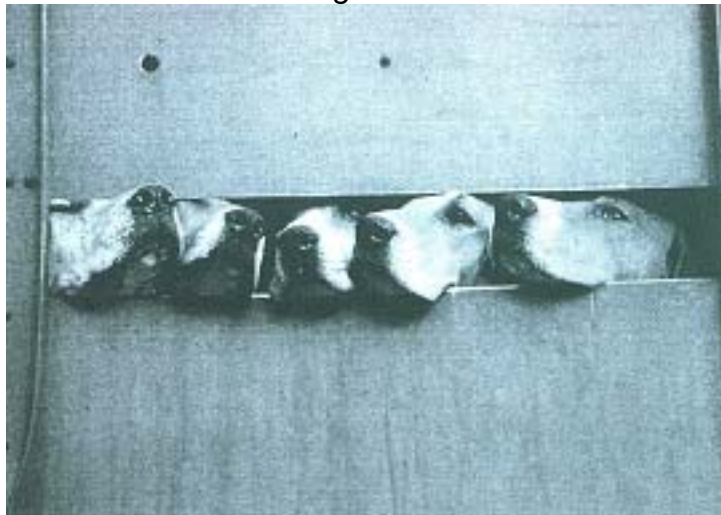
### *Economy*

- Hunts employ a very small proportion of the national workforce.

### *Alternative options*

- Drag hunting would allow enjoyable rides without killing anything.
- Many people would say fishing and shooting are also cruel.

### *Hunts can cause damage*



Hounds peering out at the scene before them

- Fox hunts damage private property, disturb livestock, and sometimes kill pets.

### *Britain and animal welfare*

- Hunting with dogs damages Britain's international reputation as a leading force in animal welfare. Britain promotes good animal welfare throughout the world but how does it look to other countries to allow hunting at home?
- *"Why the United Kingdom continues to permit fox hunting is a mystery to most politicians around the world. It creates a very bad impression of a country that allows something so cruel and out of place in a modern society."* William Swildens-Rozendaal, Member of Parliament, The Hague, Netherlands

### *Morals*

- To many people it is morally wrong to cause unnecessary suffering to an animal.
- People shouldn't enjoy inflicting pain.

### **The religious viewpoint**

The following points may be useful to stimulate debate in an RE lesson.

- The Book of Genesis (chapter 1, verse 28) grants human kind ‘dominion over the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, and every living thing that moves on the earth’. So even if animals have been given by God for human use, don’t the teachings of the Bible indicate God would have meant for man to act with justice and love towards all creatures?
- Some people would deny that animals are given for human use. Such a person may object to animals being made into pets or hunted.



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- Some people would claim that hunting and being hunted are part of the world that God created. All wild animals live in harsh conditions and suffer at times. Foxes have it no worse than lots of other creatures.
- In a democracy one part of society should not impose its beliefs on another.
- Why should hunting be banned when fishing, breeding animals for food or keeping animals in zoos are permitted?

### **The All Party Parliamentary Middle Way Group**

The Middle Way solution to the issue of hunting with dogs is a science-based route to improve welfare for all wild mammals.

It is based on two principles:

1. **The general protection of all wild mammals from undue suffering.** Such a law would make it an offence “to intentionally cause undue suffering to any wild mammal”.
2. **The licensing of all hunting with dogs.** Licensing of hunting, with appropriate penalties for breaches, would ensure standards are kept high and that best practice is upheld.