

Community Spirit

What gameshooting means for Welsh people and the countryside

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PERSONAL TESTIMONIES FROM
A 2020 SURVEY CONDUCTED
BY THE GAME & WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION TRUST



Game & Wildlife
CONSERVATION TRUST
Cymru • Wales

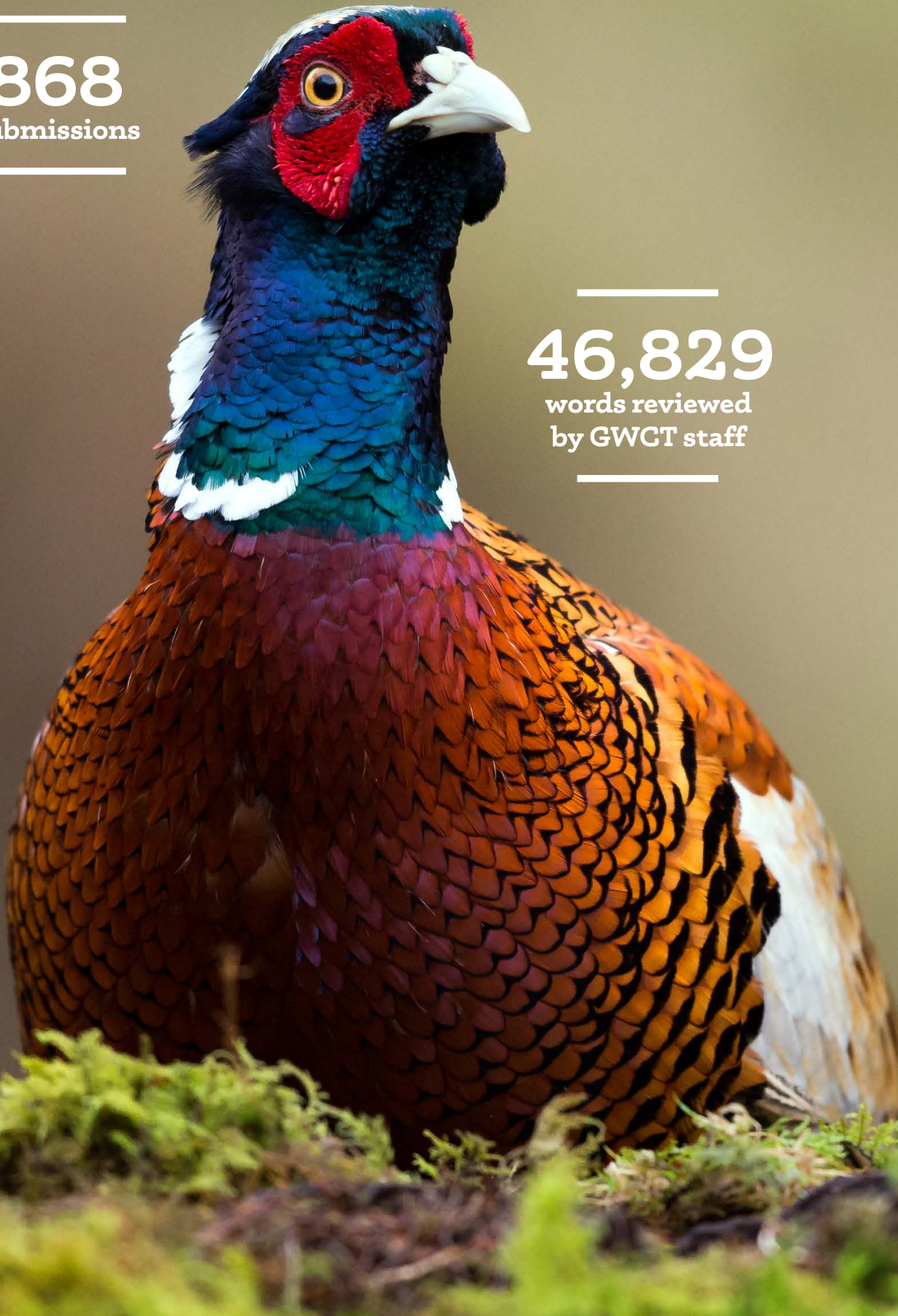
www.gwct.org.uk/wales

868

submissions

46,829

words reviewed
by GWCT staff





Left in charge, Ceredigion

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Out on the moors, Powys





Foreword

By Nick Williams

Cymru/Wales Chairman

Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust

I was extremely fortunate to grow up in New Quay, Ceredigion. My father was raised on a farm in Llangrannog, Cefn Cwrt, which was more rural, but I had the benefit of opening the curtains every morning and looking out on grass fields at the edge of the village.

I have lived and worked in Cardiff for over 50 years and went from teaching to a range of businesses, mostly in manufacturing. In that time, I have found that getting back into the countryside and my involvement with game shooting, has contributed greatly to my work/life balance. I believe my grounding as a teacher has allowed me to understand the great value of that balance in connection to numerous activities in life.

Much research has been done on the environmental benefits of gameshooting, but the important social impact is little understood. In an attempt to fill that knowledge gap the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust Cymru/Wales conducted a survey earlier this year the results of which are contained in this report. The number of responses and the strength of feeling they express is striking. I have always considered shooting to be part of my cultural heritage, but I hadn't quite realised the extent to which my passion was shared by so many across the country.

I look back fondly on seeing both my father and grandfather going out into the countryside with a gun under their arm when I was a child and feel the valuable balance that gave me should be accessible to future generations.

“

I have found that getting back into the countryside and my involvement with game shooting, has contributed greatly to my work/life balance.

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Welcome

By Sue Evans

Cymru/Wales Director

Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust

The submissions in the following pages provide insight into how important game shooting is to people from many different backgrounds. They demonstrate that, in Wales, it is not the preserve of a wealthy minority, but is activity enjoyed by ordinary people, which brings generations and communities together.

It is often hard for Ministers to get beyond the fog of misinformation about game shooting, but this document provides a clear bridge between people and policy makers, an opportunity to discover what it means to communities in their own words.

Many of the responses fall neatly under the seven principles of Wales' Well-being of Future Generations Act and a selection is grouped under each of those headings in this document. However, the comments often cover several themes and 868 submissions can be read in full in the Appendix.



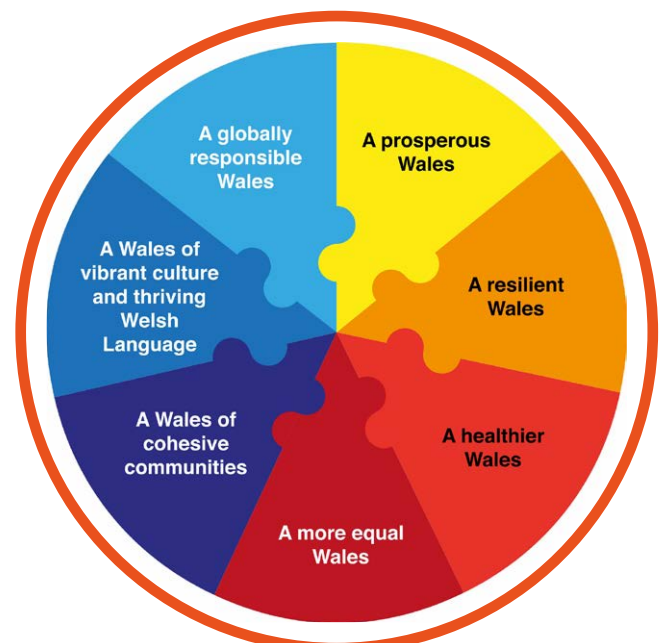
This report is structured around the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act - improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.



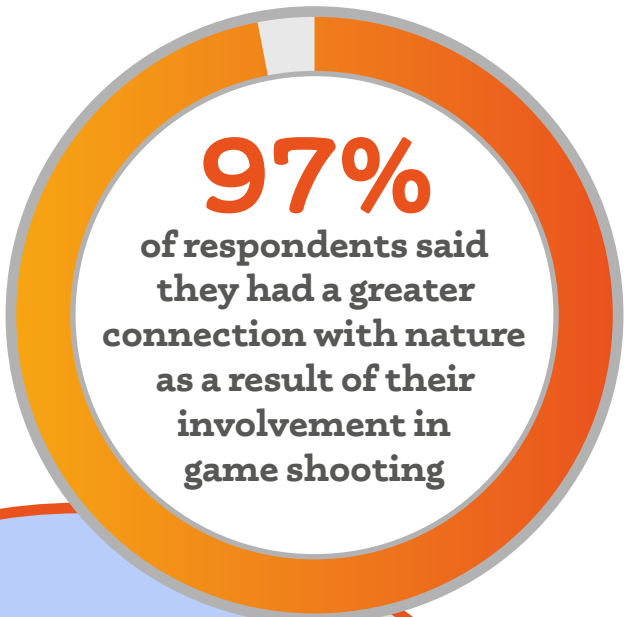
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Game shooting in Wales is activity enjoyed by ordinary people, which brings generations and communities together.

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Respondents came from across Wales, reflecting the passion for fieldsports not only in the Welsh countryside but also in our cities and towns.



Map data 2020 © Google

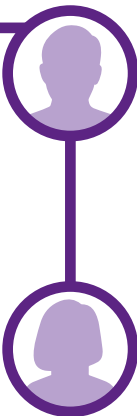
A PROSPEROUS WALES



An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

What you told us >>

Shooting provides a vital role in rural communities, not just for the individuals involved, but the network of businesses that support them. It provides direct employment, including casual work for the young and old, and is an important source of revenue for small local businesses.



“ This is an income generating activity that pays for wildlife and habitat management. ”

“

It would adversely affect jobs in the countryside. Also, **now especially is a time to be trying to create jobs and activities where people can meet and work outside with minimum risk of picking up the virus.**

If shooting were banned, personally I would be unemployed and living in a rural area with not much other employment. The area would be much poorer for it with not as many visitors in the winter.

The impact would be huge. I personally would be devastated. The end of a way of rural life. **Here in Mid Wales and the Welsh Border it is so important. Our local pub has had up to 6 different shoots in there in an evening.**

I would lose my job, home and income. The estate would suffer drastically in terms of the flora and fauna that benefit from the proactive management of the estate for game shooting that manages.

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As a farmer I am delighted to see wildlife flourish as a result of shoot management. The ecosystem improves and rural economies benefit.

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I am a farm owner and shoot only out of occasional necessity. However, I recognise the value of shooting to the economy and environment. **Moorland near my home has for three years been the subject of a conservation project to bring back ground-nesting birds such as curlew and lapwing. Grouse shooting on this moor generates significant income without which the project may not survive.**

Shooting in the Welsh borders is a lifeline for many, many people. The taking of game for eating is a small, but of course important element in the whole process. Shooting and the directly related conservation work has huge positive benefits to the natural ecosystem with shoot management the primary factor in farm biodiversity and predator control. **There are also many benefits to the local area increasing tourism, providing direct and indirect employment to include shops, hotels, pubs and many more examples.**

I think it would be damaging for the rural economy. I also think **it would create unemployment and social unrest and illegal behaviour** as people would poach etc.



Our local economy would take a big hit, from the local petrol station to the post office and local restaurants. The shooters who come through the shoot I beat on spend a fortune on accommodation and food, using local businesses this allows them to stay open and we can then benefit all year round instead of only during the tourist season.

The benefits shooting brings is not only the social interaction between different generations and mutual respect but also the massive increases in biodiversity and whilst you cannot put a price on the positives of this it does not burden the taxpayer in any way as shooting self-funds this.

I think the Welsh Minister should be very careful. **The economic and commercial advantages to Wales let alone the conservation ones are significant. Shooting brings money into Wales during the quieter winter months and following Covid-19 Wales should not put itself at a economic disadvantage just on a political whim!**

A ban would have huge impact on my state of mind, the local working population, our crop and household vegetable crop, the songbird population. It would destroy much of our community and their jobs.

”

A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.

What you told us >>

The natural environment needs to be managed to ensure that it is balanced and to ensure the long-term future of many species. Those involved in the countryside are not only more sympathetic to these needs, but also undertake and often pay for the important work that is done.



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All life (including nature) is a balance. Listen to those whose lives revolve around it.

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Unfortunately, us humans have created a countryside that needs to be managed. We do indeed get things wrong as well as right. Recent protection of certain species has led to the demise of others. Without management of any kind, nature will indeed thrive. However, the distribution of certain species, whether animal or vegetable will change. The extinction of certain species will occur. This may be 'natural', but will we look upon this world and find it pleasing? I fear not.

“

Sustainable wild produce, grown locally, natural and healthy with a story linked in. We now understand that managed land can deliver so much more wildlife and keep people fed.

”



I run a shoot which pays for my conservation work. My priorities are Welsh lapwing. I also have other red-listed species here breeding.

Irrespective of your personal views on the morality of shooting and eating healthy meat, there can be no doubt whatsoever of the benefits shooting brings to nature and the environment. The disappearance of the private funding and expertise invested by shooting in the Welsh countryside would have a devastating effect and would and should not be replaced from the public purse, especially during times of economic crisis.

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In a world where people spend less and less time outside **it's important that the natural wildlife is preserved for future generations to enjoy as much as past ones have.**

As a countryside manager I am satisfied that the shooting I take part in (and its associated habitat management) supports a great deal of biodiversity. **Many of the game and wildfowl habitats I am involved with, would otherwise be extremely vulnerable to degradation and land use change, if they weren't safe guarded by their main 'economic driver' - shooting.**

I work on a shooting estate so out in all weathers all year, I love my shooting but I'm as passionate about shooting with a camera as much as anything else. **If we didn't have shooting we probably wouldn't see half the wildlife that I see through the lens.**

It's a nature-connected lifestyle that **takes me closer to our natural environment which in turn enables me to protect, conserve,** maintain it, as well as personally benefitting my own health and providing food for the table.

As shooters we are one first groups to get to know what is happening in the countryside because we are deeply involved and spend a great deal of time there. **Without shooting sports there would be a lot less knowledge about the countryside and a lot fewer doing work to look after it,** mostly at no cost to the nation.

“

Out of season we undertake a great deal of wildlife conservation work for the most part helping farms control pests such as foxes and corvids, repairing hedges, fencing and trimming woodland trails.

”

Intimacy with nature. An awareness and deep investment in the whole ecosystem. I only shoot what I will eat and only sustainably.

We live on farmland on the edge of the Clwydian AONB. We observe daily the animals, birds and plants around us. **There are constant and numerous examples of these benefitting from the game-keeping activities on our small rough shoot.**

The (unpaid) conservation work that we carry out along with sympathetic management and pest-control that we exercise on farmland that we shoot would suffer greatly. The corvids take 2-3 chicks each day during the breeding season. rats, stoats, weasels, mink, foxes, corvids, and squirrels would devastate nesting birds, dormice shrews and voles would be almost non-existent all mammals would suffer. On the farmland, we shoot we have snipe, woodcock, duck, geese, wood pigeon, wild pheasants, plover, hares rabbits, kestrels, sparrowhawks, and goshawks also visit.

”

A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.



What you told us >>>

Game shooting and the activities associated with it has a highly positive effect on the mental and physical health of participants. Benefits to mental health come from the chance to socialise in often remote locations and during the difficult winter months. Community bonding and getting out into the countryside both also contribute to mental wellbeing. Shooting inspires regular exercise including walking in the countryside, dog handling and conservation work. Many expressed the devastating impact on their mental and physical health were shooting to be prohibited.



“
Shooting is crucial to our mental wellbeing during the long winter months.
”

“
I would say country sports are vital for my mental health. They have given me a purpose, in training my dog to the highest standard so he can compete in trials, and I have made so many friends through country sports. **I am more active, and more engaged with nature and conservation due to my involvement in country sports.**

Shooting and its associated activities have helped me both physically and mentally over the last 20 years or so. As a shooter autumn and winter hold so much to do with the husbandry of birds, the conservation work we do on our shooting grounds and the interaction with my fellow members.



“

I am more active, and more engaged with nature and conservation due to my involvement in country sports.

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“

I don't think many people understand perhaps the solitary lifestyle of many rural occupations especially through the winter. **The effect of banning yet another rural pastime will undoubtedly have a detrimental effect on mental health to some parts of the rural community.** The Welsh Government needs to understand that it represents everyone and not just those that make the most noise.

Living in a rural area I don't see lots of people all the time. The day out is a real boost to mental health and physical health as you have to be fairly fit to walk all day. Winter is long in the country and a day's shooting is something to look forward to. I love watching the dogs work and noticing wildlife I don't normally see!

It would change a huge part of my structures for mental health. Without shooting we wouldn't have the dogs. Social and exercise would both reduce.

In terms of my rough shooting, I would be completely lost without it. I also think my dogs would be lost as they love the day as much as I do.



Swapping notes between drives, Ceredigion

Being outside whether it be shooting or beating brings a great feeling of wellbeing and relaxation away from the hustle and bustle of everyday stresses. When you get to see wildlife you wouldn't normally see is amazing and **brings great happiness.**

Some of our team are retired and the local doctor told me how the shooting season keeps them going, both mentally and physically, **particularly those who are widowed or caring for partners with serious illnesses.**

The level of exercise that is taken during shooting activities **is very unlikely to be replaced** with other means throughout the year and specifically in winter.

Game shooting happens in the winter months when levels of sunlight are low and Season Affecting Disorder (SAD) impacts many people. Reasons for venturing outdoors are limited, so the routine of our weekly syndicate shoot gives me an incentive to get out whatever the weather. A ban on shooting would leave me searching for a way in which I could combine regular social interaction with over 30 people that offers **healthy exercise within five miles of my home and from which I can bring home healthy food for the table.**

”

A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic circumstances).

What you told us >>

Fieldsports bring together people of all backgrounds, all ages and all circumstances. As such, they are an important role, not just in binding together a community, but in providing an education about the Welsh countryside. The social skills and opportunity that fieldsports offers to young people, was seen as a great way of giving them a strong footing for future life.



Very few activities have the same degree of discipline, respect and responsibility for young people. That will inadvertently teach them about the countryside.

As a small game syndicate, up to 16 of us come together from different walks of life for 10+ days a season, from teenagers to the retired. We love the social aspect, the exercise and especially flushing the first woodcock of the season.

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Well managed shooting has created much of the Welsh countryside and still protects many of its most iconic wildlife species as well as being a sociable activity that brings all classes together.

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“
Beaters tend to be the older and younger members of society. A wonderful mix of personalities.
”

Siblings take a break, Ceredigion

“

Shooting encourages wildlife and helps sustain a strong sense of community. People from all walks of life together doing something they are passionate about. I know people who don't even shoot but only work their dogs, and youngsters who beat. And to be honest **in this day getting young people to do anything other than sit on their phones on social media must be a benefit for their mental wellbeing.**

My kids who are now 12 and 13 are passionate about shooting, hunting and beating. They rarely get the chance to shoot driven game only on beaters day when the syndicate take a gun for the youngsters and coach them, stood by their sides through the day. This is the highlight of the kids' year which they look forward to as much as they do Christmas. **I love the fact that all age groups mix together with the kids from the age of seven talking animatedly on the same subject with youngsters in their twenties up to retired folk in their seventies.** What else would get all these people out of the house walking miles on a winter's day in horizontal rain?

Our small shoot involves at least 30 people of all ages and backgrounds. **It gives everyone involved a sense of common purpose and being a part of the countryside. Most of them come from a socially deprived urban background** (as described by the Welsh assembly).

Shooting creates a unique way of bringing together people who probably wouldn't get to know or meet each other, in natural surroundings in our long and dark winters.

Born and reared on a rough council estate, ever since the age of 16 I've had an interest in shooting, fishing and conservation. On driven shooting days you are mixing with people from all walks of life and enjoying exercise at the same time.

I find shooting and other fieldsports are a great leveller i.e we are all the same on the field. Please don't regulate me out of what I love.

A whole community would also suffer, all ages and from all backgrounds would not interact and **it would be another nail in the coffin for the rural community.**

“

It is not a class thing, participants come from all walks of life. It is an enjoyable day out and not about the bag at the end of the day.

”

My son and daughter joined me on shoot days from the moment they could walk. They learnt their social skills by interacting with adults from varying backgrounds as a result and learnt discipline by being part of a shoot. **This has helped them enormously in their careers and been a significant factor in who they are.**

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A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES

Communities should be attractive, safe, viable and well-connected. People have skills, lived experience, energy and commitment and finding ways of unlocking these strengths is critical. Too often, communities face barriers when it comes to doing simple things for themselves, such as local community events. Remove barriers to enable them. Look to bring communities together through arts, cultural and sporting projects which deliver multiple benefits.

What you told us >>>

Shooting brings remote rural communities together and drives positive change in attitudes to the natural world, inspiring people to get involved in wildlife conservation and voluntary work.



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The life-long friendships and relationships that can grow and the opportunities to meet people from all walks of life.

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Walking up wild game has been a very long-standing traditional activity on our hill land and if it were to be prohibited it would be a great loss to the social fabric of this rural area.

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“

It is about being part of a community that cares, rolls up its sleeves and contributes in a unique way to Welsh life.

”





Young beating team, Ceredigion

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It's all about companionship, fresh air, community, a diversity of backgrounds and encouraging youngsters – all three syndicates involve the children of members as beaters.

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“

The social element is key to this, I don't often see many other people on a week-to-week basis and I have grown up in the community of people who don't get to meet up a lot in the rest of the year.

The time we can go beating allows us to catch up, get exercise, share in our country stories and then at the end of the day, go for a meal together.

Beaters are people of all ages, with vastly different backgrounds, income levels, and outlooks on life that come together, for maybe just one a day a week in the winter, around a common purpose. They strengthen the social fabric of many rural areas.

It doesn't get any better than working together to produce a great flush of birds. The work through the summer to look after the land, flora and fauna and then the teamwork and joint effort to achieve the outcome. And all the time surrounded by and looking after our beautiful countryside, the perfect antidote to modern life. Couldn't live without it.

Shooting in Wales binds together some very remote communities. It provides income that otherwise simply would not exist, which, in turn, helps so many families to survive.

It is a way of life. If these types of interest are stopped then there will be a loss of interest in the countryside. It will lose its management and would soon be abused by other people who would not have the same empathy for nature.

A true sense of comradeship and companionship. My wife and I try and beat twice a week to keep active in our retirement years.

”

70%

of respondents mentioned the importance of fieldsports in the community and the role it played in their social life.

A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING WELSH LANGUAGE

A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh Language and which encourages people to participate in the arts, sport and recreation. Using culture and the Welsh language as a driver for economic and environmental change. Enabling our citizens to access and engage with their own and other cultures.



Stopping for lunch, Powys

What you told us >>

Game shooting is a very important part of Welsh culture and heritage. It is considered a way of life by people from a range of social backgrounds. Harvesting game from the countryside and the traditions that go with it are part of Welsh history that future generations should not be denied. Game shooting is a traditional pastime that still has much to offer, encouraging young people to get out into the countryside and learn about and care for the landscape and the natural world. There is a growing disconnect between country life and modern urban culture. Those who seek to ban shooting will destroy highly valued elements of the rural culture out of prejudice and intolerance.



Mae saethu yn rhan o gefn gwlad Cymru, ei wreiddiau, ei ddiwylliant a'i hiaith. Hebdo, byddai fy iechyd yn cael ei effeithio'n aruthrol. Mae'n fy nghysylltu â'r tir a diwylliant Cymru. Trwy ymdrechion cadwraethol gennyf i a fy ffrindiau, mae hefyd yn cyfrannu at fioamrywiaeth ein hardal, dyma beth nad yw pobl mewn dinasoedd yn ei ddeall.



Shooting is not for everyone, but the social and environmental benefits are huge in rural areas. **Today we live in a world where most people do not know where their food comes from.**

Country life and traditions are not a thing of the past, they are here now, thriving, just, and have **much to contribute to the future of our community**, countryside and the wellbeing of thousands of people.



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Wild game has always been a regular part of my family's diet, and coming from a relatively poor mining community, rabbit was a regular addition to our weekly meals. As teenagers we used ferrets on rabbit hunts on local hill farmers' land. These farmers were part of our community and knew every child and miner using their land and our teachers and local bobbies were enthusiastic and interested in our trips out. I would add that I have no political affiliation. **I come from a community where the majority of people were miners or steel workers, who voted Labour and shot and hunted.**

Please listen to honest hard-working people who enjoy countryside activities.

Please act on science and not prejudice and treat the people interested in country pursuits fairly and with the respect they deserve.

Mae saethu wedi bod yn rhan enfawr o fy mywyd ers pan oeddwn i'n blentyn, byddai bywyd heb saethu yn annychmygol gan ei fod yn rhan o bwy ydw i. Mewn gwirionedd mae'n rhan o ble rydw i'n byw, fy nhreftadaeth, fy nhraddodiadau a fy iaith!

Mae hefyd bellach yn rhan o fy nheulu gan fod gen i blant ifanc sy'n awyddus i gymryd rhan. Ni allaf or-bwysleisio pwysigrwydd saethu yn fy nghymuned a'r ffaith bod pawb rwy'n saethu, curo a chiperio gyda nhw yn siarad Cymraeg iaith gyntaf ac yn teimlo'n mor angerddol â'r ydw i. Gobeithio y bydd gwleidyddion yn ceisio deall bod saethu yn rhan anatod o gefn gwlad Cymru, ei chymunedau a'i thraddodiadau ac felly wedi ymglymu ac yn hanfodol i'n lles, ein hiechyd a'n hiaith!

My father was a shooter, his father before that. I have three boys, 16, 14, and 10. All attend shoots, come out feeding, beating, and all three are polite well-mannered boys. **It teaches them how to behave and respect their elders.**

Please remember that we are not all wealthy aristocrats. The majority of us are ordinary people with a love for our countryside and a passion for the outdoors. Please don't indulge those people who think meat comes from a supermarket and everything in Disney is true. Their interest in the country and wildlife will soon wain when there is something else to demonstrate about. We will always be here.

It is important to carry on traditions that have been part of our countryside for centuries. **Who are [people] to suddenly turn around and intervene and stop things that are part of the countryside heritage?** They will be responsible for the declining wildlife, wellbeing and families being made unemployed.

Rwyf wedi bod yn ymwneud â saethu ar hyd fy oes ac mae'n rhan o fy DNA, mae'n darparu cymuned ac iechyd da (meddyliol a chorfforol) i mi ac yn fy nghysylltu â natur, hebdo byddwn yn colli'r cysylltiad hwnnw â chefn gwlad Cymru. Mae pawb yr ydw i saethu â nhw yn siarad Cymraeg iaith gyntaf, mae hyn yn arwyddocaol iawn gan ein bod ni i gyd yn gwerthfawrogi iaith ac yn teimlo ei bod yn rhan o bwy ydyn ni a beth yw pwrpas cefn gwlad Cymru. Pe bai saethu yn cael ei gymryd oddi wrthym fe fyddai'n dinistrio treftadaeth ac elfen hanfodol yn niwylliant Cymru.

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A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act looks out to Wales's wider global responsibilities aligning with the United Nations 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development. UN Goal Number 15 "Life on Earth" states that all countries must "reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss." The Welsh Act's goal of a Resilient Wales states that "Here in Wales, we are now among the most nature-depleted countries in the world, with 1 in 14 wildlife species facing extinction". It seeks to reverse this trend.

What you told us >>>

Game management provides an important driver for biodiversity net gain. A ban on shooting or further restrictions on legal predation management could lead to the widespread loss of highly valuable conservation efforts and further declines in Welsh wildlife and habitats. Where active shoot management has been carried out there is an abundance of wildlife and restored landscapes.



“
The environment is greatly enhanced by the time and effort myself and my family put into maintaining the habitat for many species of birds and mammals.

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Farmland bird feeder.
© Christopher Wills

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I am a syndicate member in two small self-kept shoots. I feel that the work I have done creating cover, planting trees, digging ponds and feeding game strips has had a **significant positive impact on wildlife.**

Beating with my Labrador takes us into the countryside. I can see that **land managed for shooting results in a greater biodiversity** than if it was unmanaged or used for agriculture.

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The shoot actively plants winter feed crop for wild birds. The hedges which are maintained for cover provide huge quantities of sloes, hips and haws which support fieldfares and redwings.

I shoot pest species including corvids that destroy the wild song birds on our own farm and those of family members and friends. **Since I have addressed this the increase in songbirds has been astonishing.** Wrens, green woodpeckers, great spotted woodpeckers, gold finches, bull finches, curlews, snipe, swift, blue tits, robins, reed warbler and numerous others I have not seen in years.

The change in the Welsh general licenses is already having a heavy impact on song bird populations. Shooting helps maintain a social group of enthusiasts, who actually understand ecology. **This is a whole group of knowledge that would be lost.** Land management should not be driven by emotion and ideology.

Bird surveys which I've conducted during the last three years show that **keepered moorland has particularly good bird populations** including several Red data book species including whinchat, curlew, cuckoo and linnnet.

Without sensible, and legal, pest and predator control a wide range of game and non-game species will become increasingly rare. Generalist predators such as corvids, foxes, mink and grey squirrels benefit from year round food sources associated with human activity. They do not suffer themselves from a reduction in prey species as they might in a completely wild environment.

European song thrush.
© Cliff Day

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We do make a real and positive difference to the wildlife and especially rare upland birds.

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Without running the syndicate, we wouldn't put down supplementary feed. It encourages wild game and supports our resident song birds of which there are lots, especially compared to neighbouring land. We feed right through to late spring and you can tell the difference it makes.

Trying to manage the countryside by solely relying on grants to farmers is bound to fail. You need committed gamekeepers and helpers who understand the countryside and its wildlife.

Ecosystems in Wales are complex so **radical policy changes such as banning shooting, although highly populist, carry significant risk of bring about serious unintended consequences.**

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About the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust

The Home of Working Conservation

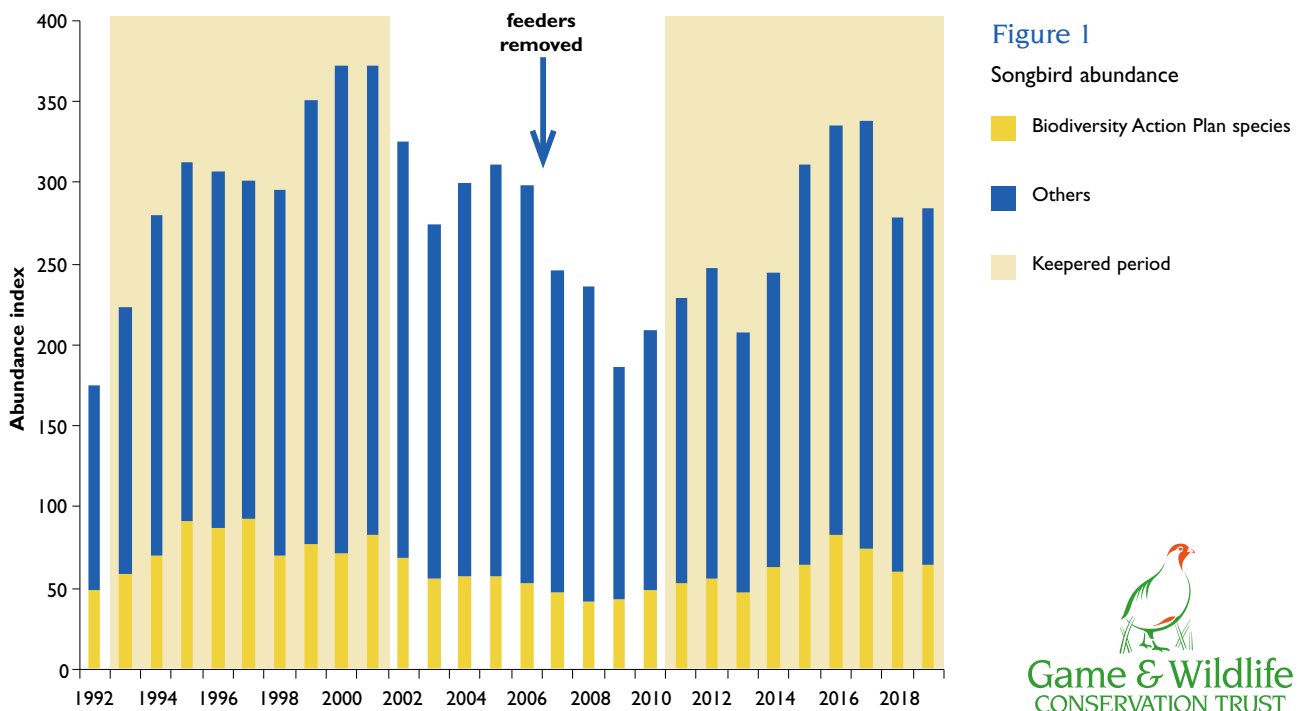
The GWCT believes that wildlife can thrive if we focus on integrating its conservation with other land uses. Demands on the Welsh countryside are increasing. Today as well as producing food and land for building it must help reduce CO² emissions, increase biodiversity, provide clean air and water and allow room for recreation. To balance these needs we must focus on finding solutions that deliver multiple outcomes.

Gamekeepers became the unexpected pioneers of a multiple outcomes approach as farming modernised to meet the post-war demand for food. The GWCT studied how they began to use their range of tools, from trapping to growing small strips of cover crops to maintain their gamebirds without hindering farm production. These game management techniques are vital to conservation because they support wildlife in a working countryside.

Today the Trust employs more than 60 scientists who conduct research into a wide range of species and

ecosystems from the life cycle of salmon and trout to the impact of pesticides on insect pollinators and the effect of different forms of cultivation on soil and water health. It runs some of the world's oldest long term wildlife monitoring studies and its many farm-based demonstration sites include The Allerton Project, which has studied the positive effect of game management on farmland birds and hares over decades (see Figure 1 graph below).

Evidence-based conservation is at the heart of the GWCT's approach. When it comes to the impact of game bird releasing on the environment it has analysed the negative as well as positive outcomes from potential damage to woodland flora due to overstocking pheasant release pens to beneficial increases in invertebrates in conservation headlands. This science helps develop best practice and ensure game management achieves its huge potential to deliver biodiversity net gain and help restore Wales' lost wildlife.



To find out more and support the Trust's research visit
gwct.org.uk

To support its campaign for farmer-led conservation sign the pledge at
www.workingforwildlife.co.uk





What we did

To get an understanding of what gameshooting meant to people in Wales, the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust promoted a survey to its members in Wales and the wider community via social media and in the press.

The 868 responses, totalling over 46,000 words, were reviewed and assessed by GWCT staff and related to the relevant sections of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

We have included all submissions below. These are listed verbatim, with no filtering of the contributors' comments.

What's your story?

1. What do I get out of shooting in Wales, well first off I get exercise for my body and my mind, I get to see wildlife in its natural environment, animal behaviours most people don't see like a peregrine falcon swooping over my duck decoys. A fox hunting for mice. Also there's the social side of shooting having a laugh with like minded people, making new friends, taking the mick out of each other. If it is raining or bad weather I wouldn't normally leave the house unless I was going out shooting or beating. I also get to work and bond with my dog while she does what comes naturally to her species as well as mine, its in my DNA to hunt, it's how my ancestors were able to survive!
2. I've been shooting and enjoying the countryside since I was a kid and I'm now in my fifty's and still enjoying it.
3. It's a way of life, from the conservation for wildlife to daily exercise in the fresh air, socializing with friends.
4. Being in country side, seeing wildlife, good group of friends and working my Labradors. Can't beat it.
5. Out in wonderful countryside. Contributing to conservation and predator control thus benefiting endangered and ground nesting birds. Exercise and being with likeminded friends. The bag is not important the day out is!
6. I was lucky to grow up in the country with a father who knew and loved birds and to accompany him shooting, learning about the countryside, meeting people from all walks of life and working hard to improve habitats, food sources and freedom from predation for game and other wildlife.
7. I shoot on a regular basis in Wales In all weather. We see wildlife and the benefits a managed shoot provides in terms of improving the land, hedgerows that are important In providing the habitat for wildlife to thrive. We walk to our pegs providing exercise, we socialise which is good

for well being. We eat the game that we shoot, much healthy than mass produced chicken. Shooting provides many benefits to the local communities... contact, employment, guests staying at Local hotels and eating supporting the local economy.

8. I shoot small numbers of wild and reared game in Wales. Mostly “walked-up” with skilled, observant, intelligent friends who all appreciate the land, mainly environmentally specially recognised, and have enormous respect for many species encountered, including those few we pursue with our guns and sporting breeds of dogs. The history of sympathetic management of these places for game has been, and still is, crucial to their abundance. I. E. Red Grouse in Wales only reach numbers above fluctuations around extinction where active sporting interests encourage management above and well beyond the rather pathetic efforts of public bodies and charities, also benefitting much other wildlife as science has shown. I shoot and beat also on days when reared pheasants and partridges are the quarry. It is obvious these shoots have a really significant financial impact in their localities, further enhancing landscape scale management privately.
9. The value I derive from beating is hard to capture effectively. The sense of ‘connectedness’ to a community and the experience of interacting with the natural world is intense. From this experience comes a very real understanding of the way the landscape breathes in time with the changing seasons and a deep understanding of nature, farming, and the countryside. Beaters are people of all ages, with vastly different backgrounds, income levels, and outlooks on life that come together, for maybe just one a day a week in the winter, around a common purpose. They strengthen the social fabric of many rural areas. Beating provides another strand to my social life, allows me the opportunity and privilege of working a trained dog to do the job for which it was bred, provides friendship, and importantly reinforces a deep sense of community.
10. Being out in the countryside seeing wildlife, watching working dogs do what they are bred to do and providing my family with healthy free rang food.
11. Social meeting with like minded people. Helping the environment and wild birds by controlling predators both 4legged and avian especially corvids
12. I've been shooting for over 40 year's, I love the countryside and it keeps me fit mentally and physically.
13. The positives of shooting: Fresh air, company, exercise, free-range low-fat meat and a connection with nature. I enjoy the conservation aspect: creating/protecting habitat, controlling predators and seeing the wildlife flourish as a result.
14. I like working my 6 springers
15. Shooting has many benefits in my view it encourages wildlife, and helps sustain a strong sense of community. People from all walks of life together doing something they are passionate about. I know people who don't even shoot but only work their dogs, and youngsters who beat. And to be honest in this day getting young people to do anything other than sit on they're phones on social media must be a benefit for their mental wellbeing.....
16. It's great to get out doors in the Welsh country
17. Don't shoot as often as I would like because of work. I only shoot for the table.
18. Keeping fit whilst out in the fresh air with nature and all its elements, all whilst having a positive mental attitude and well being. This not only controls the pest species but also allows me to have healthy animals by dispatching the unhealthy or lame, in order to stop any unnecessary suffering and prevent the spread of disease.
19. I am retired, and keeping, conservation and shooting (both clays and game) 1/ Keeps me fit and positively impacts on my health, 2/ Enables me to be engaged in the local rural community,

- 3/ Gives me the opportunity to contribute to conservation and the well being of wildlife, 4/ Provides me with social contact, and gives me purpose in life.
20. Exercise, enjoy talking/teaching a wide range of people about the wildlife on the shoot/estate. Working dogs. Social for meeting and enjoy a wide range of people/ages from 7-81
 21. My father helped my great uncle with his gamekeeping and it rubbed off on me at an early age. I shoot and fish both in the UK occasionally in Ireland and fairly regularly in the USA. It is seventy years since I had my first gun. I have enjoyed all kinds of shooting. More importantly I like to think my gamekeeping has benefited the environment. BASC thought so as I won the Stanley Duncan Award in the Centenary year. Without proper and meaningful management the countryside would revert to chaotic wildlife, following the already significant intrusions into the environment made by man. Sadly those tasked with the responsibility (NRW) fail in their duty on occasions e.g. Licences to control predators; failure to issue licences for Signal Crayfish; Failure to engage with the damage caused by seals, alien species invasion (collared doves). Why - is it a whim or science based? There are no listed scientists at NRW today, whilst at the former body in 1988 13 were "Fisheries scientists" were listed as being employed (Int. Conference @ Sherkin Island Report). The balance has been allowed to shift – without foundation. It needs GWCT to work towards re-establishing this balance, a proper balance – based on both science and mutual respect.
 22. I shoot for many reasons. Getting out into the countryside, seeing nature, exercise, quality free range food, pest control to reduce corvids and grey squirrels.
 23. I get relief from a stressful profession, the joy of being in beautiful surroundings and the camaraderie of good friends. I love working my dog. I enjoy shooting and that enjoyment is greatly enhanced by cooking the game produced for family and friends.
 24. As an amateur game keeper and gun in the syndicate my great pleasure is three fold firstly shooting with my son and my grandson beating, secondly the marvellous company of beaters, pickers guns and especially the ladies that provide our breakfast and lunch and thirdly the abundance of wildlife on the estate. We are so proud of our yellow hammers which increase year on year
 25. Social interaction. Great dog work. Sporting satisfaction. Closeness to nature. Fantastic scenery. Exercising my sporting shooting heritage .
 26. It is part of the Countryside. It has gone on for centuries and just because a few people do not agree it is up to people what they do on their own land. It also has great benefits the 'wider' countryside.
 27. As a head keeper my main benefit to my job is obviously my income and my home. Second to that is wildlife (particularly brown hares and hedgehogs) that I help conserve. Although I've always been an outside person if it wasn't for my job I wouldn't be so dedicated, though my wife would say obsessed!
 28. The shooting field is everything I need to do in life
 29. I shoot to feed my family and to care for my environment.
 30. Great to be out in the open trudging through the Welsh countryside with my good friends
 31. I am interested in the world around me, and spend a large proportion of my life monitoring and trying to improve our habitat for the benefit of wildlife. This endeavour keeps me in contact with a wide variety of people. It is also a major benefit to my both mental and physical health.
 32. Social engagement, training and bonding with dogs, exercise, great quality free range game meat, friendship, literally spend all year looking forward to the season

33. I have my dogs as purposeful company all year. We get to go places and meet people we would not otherwise go to / have access to or meet. See wildlife and plants and share experiences with like minded people. We are out in all weathers even if sometimes the day is curtailed it adds to the memories.
34. Fresh air, exercise, camaraderie, being at one with nature. Wider benefits: helping rural communities and conservation
35. its the wildlife i see its being out in the fresh air
36. My principal interest is in land and wildlife management. Routine, year round pest control is vitally important and provides the chance to take a modest harvest of wild game in season.
37. Combination of the above together with the continuation of. a very worthwhile tradition for future generations to. Partake in and enjoy.
38. Provides me with an income and a home for the family and myself. Being able to work outside doing a job I love.
39. The ability to enjoy the countryside
40. I manage a large area of uplands in SE Wales (circa 10,000 acres). Shooting and conservation go hand in hand and allows me to not only observe wildlife but to protect it and increase biodiversity. As a person over seventy years of age shooting preserves my fitness and mental well being whilst at the same time gives me a wonderful social life with a diverse age range of other people. Most of all it gives me a sense of satisfaction in that I am protecting the environment, leaving it in a better state than when I started.
41. I own an manage a family run farm with some forestry attached. We have a small shooting syndicate and a number of let days each year. The shooting provides an important source of diversified revenue and a real sense of community in our local area.
42. I grow catch and shoot most of our food
43. Speaking as an ex dairy farmer, but now I'm just a small landowner. I used to fish the smaller rivers of Carmarthenshire, and hunt on our farm. It's what some of us just did. When walking the land, I am seeing, feeling and smelling what's going on in the countryside. Those inaccessible spots are visited, and checked. Wildlife will be checked as the dogs will momentarily disturb them, for them to be seen and counted. Some farmers/ landowners today just check their boundaries from a quad once a year, or use a drone, and because animals are kept indoors many don't have to check the fence boundaries anymore. Anglers, game hunters, ornithologists, hikers are the only true eyes and ears of the countryside in respect of all wildlife! Harsh statement, but a reality in some places!
44. Shooting is crucial to our mental well being during the long winter months. It is my passion and I consider it a fantastic sport.
45. As a lover of the countryside & all things rural, shooting provides the opportunity to share this enjoyment with other like minded people, with the additional benefits of exercise, social interaction an land management.
46. Great exercise and good communication helps keep me sane. Whilst I understand that it may be morally unsound to shoot for sport I do believe we help protect other forms of wildlife by predator control and wild birdseed cover crops.
47. The working of my dogs is the most enjoyable part. But seeing the wildlife in the country that exists because of the management of game, the songbirds and ground nesting birds that have a better chance of survival in a managed shooting environment. Shooting estates are not stagnant of non game birds

48. It is a passion of mine and the whole day is a wonderful experience. It's a real boost for the rural economy and brings people and industry together.
49. Being a member of a shooting syndicate gives me an interest 12 months a year. In the spring we have a series of working parties each with a specific task focused on conservation work aimed at increasing bio-diversity across the farms we operate over. This year's projects include the clearing of silted up ponds, coppicing woodland to increase ground level vegetation and installing duck nesting tubes on ponds. Our 150 poults arrive in August and we have a rota to feed and water them until they are no longer using the pen. In the season we shoot 10 days with an average of 10 guns out each day with occasional guest and on Boxing Day we have a family day when there may be more than 20 people out including children who get to see what we get up to. In 2019 we had 21 guests over the season. Our average bag is a bird or two per gun per day and everything is eaten. We end our days with lunch in a local pub. At the end of the season we have a series of vermin days to keep on top of corvids and foxes in advance of the bird nesting season and we also provide a pest control service to our farmers who can call us out to deal with any influx of pests such as pigeon when the maize is sown. In 2019 we undertook 139 gun days of shooting, 70 person days of conservation work on top of all the keeping activity such as filling feeders out of season to feed wild birds.
50. Being out in the country side with great camaraderie from everyone involved in the day. Keeping a large amount of employment going in sometimes very rural environments, which would suffer with no shooting going on.
51. I am passionate about all the many aspects of shooting and conservation. I grew up in the countryside and shooting is a massive part of that - it's a way of life. My father also shoots as did my grandfather.
52. Very important for physical and mental health to get out amongst friends in our glorious countryside.
53. I go to feel at one with nature to see wildlife. To meet friends. To watch my dogs work and for the exercise
54. Being part of an activity that has conservation as its main driver. It is very social, allowing me to meet up with friends and find new ones. The environmental benefits are great, wildlife is seen through the year. On a personal level it gives me another form of exercise.
55. Enjoying the management of the countryside. Health & Welfare of the wildlife
56. I have a country person all my life and shooting has been part of that life
57. Enjoyment. Exercise, food, socialising. Fun, mental stimulation, friendships.
58. I beat pick up and rough shoot
59. I shoot animals for food, almost exclusively animals that need to be culled, I use every part of the animal I possibly can and see hunting as a sort of prayer or duty to the caveman in me.
60. understanding of the world around us our way of live and been like that for generations - it is our heritage social aspects are beneficial a shared enthusiasm with other people
61. Great to be outside working my dog. Also see a wide range of nature and wildlife otherwise unseen. Great social get together with friends and like to think that properly managed Shoot's will be benefiting wildlife
62. I'm supporting this because we now have a generation growing up that feel killing any animals or vermin for whatever reason is wrong.
63. My entire social and domestic life is arranged around my shooting. I have 3 working springers and take unpaid leave in the winter from my job to help on 5 shoots. I help plant game cover

and do the farmland bird count because I love the biodiversity the shoot creates.

64. I feel strongly that shooting must be allied to conservation wherever possible i.e. We must put something back.
65. A true sense of comradeship and companionship. My wife and I try and beat twice a week to keep active in our retirement years. Couldn't wish for a more enjoyable yet challenging so many hours, walking across fields, up banks and through woods. You see so much of nature and the countryside and feel privileged To have done so.
66. Social element but more importantly the exercise and health benefits it provides.
67. Intimacy with nature. An awareness and deep investment in the whole ecosystem. I only shoot what I will eat and only sustainably. The realisation that the meat I eat has a direct link to me and the land it lived in
68. The physical and mental benefits of being outdoors in the countryside with friends, participating in a social sport that is available to anyone. Observing the constant flow of new and returning people the sport attracts and enjoying with them their experiences. Valuing the important businesses that are associated with the sport and the knock on benefits to employment, tax revenue and health to name a few. Consuming the fresh, lean quality meat wild game provides, rather than volume processed alternative found in shops.
69. Shooting for me isn't just about the shooting for me it's so much more, it's a community of like minded folk, it's seeing dogs work, its spending time outside in nature and truly being able to see and be a part of this green and pleasant land, its the conversation and protection of vulnerable species, it's exercise in the winter when it's cold a miserable but you have a reason to go out because you know the rest of the team is counting on you and the banter and jokes that go along with that, its great for your mental well being not only to be outside but to feel like you are part of something and you are needed, it's meeting new people and at the end of the day it's food (often on shoots as many birds as you can carry) and a few quid on the table.
70. Business, conservation, food, exercise, employment
71. Exercise, conservation, social and encouragement for the young generations
72. Help the land owner by controlling numbers plus the exercise health and social.
73. Satisfaction from the farmers
74. Great camaraderie, exercise, fresh air, satisfaction in working as retired and seeing the dogs doing what they do.
75. I have been shooting over 60 years, firstly just walking around the farm shooting wild game. I was then persuaded to try driven game which I thoroughly enjoy. I have noticed a great increase in wildlife where land is properly kept. Predators are taken care of and the feeding is beneficial to the rest of wildlife. Someone is taking care of the more remote areas of the Countryside.
76. For me it not just about the shooting. It's family, social, fresh air, escape from pressures from work, conservation, and organic fresh meat. My father was a shooter, his father before that. I have 3 boys, 16, 14, and 10 - all attend shoots, come out feeding, beating, and all three are polite well mannered boys. It teaches them how to behave and respect their elders. All three have had shooting lessons and again it teaches them rules and safety. Being part of country sports and the shooting community is a massive part of my family's life. We trap non native species like the grey squirrel and mink. We have nesting boxes for small birds and continue to feed our pheasants even after the shooting season has finished. Providing food for not just the pheasant and partridge but 100's of other wild species. We are out in all weathers enjoying

parts of wales that we would normally never see. Being out in the fresh air walking and keeping fit. I also have Gundogs which I continue to train off season which also keeps me out and about and fit.

77. I've been shooting for the past 45 years. I enjoy the shooting and the conversation side of it and all the health benefits that come with it.
78. It's a form of Exercise and I get too see lot's of wildlife and be with like minded people who enjoy the country side.
79. wildlife exercise social element and support for the rural economy conservation
80. It gives me exercise and well being. I enjoy the wildlife and I know that I add greatly to this wildlife by carrying out pest control for farmers and help control predators which prey on species which are struggling. I feel it is part of my nature to be a hunter and it gives me a great insight of the natural world.
81. Wildlife, enjoying outdoors, physical and mental health benefits, social benefits, meeting different people, enjoy working with my dogs
82. Improving the uplands and moorlands of Wales provides a huge interest and enormous satisfaction whilst improving red grouse numbers and increasing biodiversity at the same time.
83. I go beating /shooting for the social element fitness and to work my dog
84. It helps.with my mental health as I am ex army
85. I run a shoot which pays for my conservation work. My priorities are Welsh Lapwings. I also have other redlisted species here breeding. Legal predator control is absolutely vital as well as the wealth of habitat that supports these species as well as the shoot. It is an oasis of life in a desert of destruction .
86. It gives me full time employment and brings money to the local area. Also gives me good exercise and social life
87. I go shooting 6-10 days per season. I enjoy the camaraderie with fellow guns, gamekeepers beaters, pickers up. I love the countryside shooting takes me into, the landscape in which has been influenced down the years by country sports. And the fresh air and exercise is highly beneficial to me.
88. Social Getting my dog education
89. Enjoyment of being in the countryside, seeing all different types of wildlife, a pleasure to show people the area that we live in
90. Been out in the country with friends and the banter and fun that goes with the days shooting. admiring and comparing the birds that were shown on the day and some fine shoots.
91. Have been involved in country sports since early childhood. Part of farming life and learning about nature As a child These sports form the mainstay of small communities' social lives. Particularly during the winter months when life Can be difficult in remote areas such as rural Wales.
92. Outside in the wild helps keep me active and fit
93. Killing makes me feel important, it boosts my self esteem which in turn improves my day.
94. What is there not to get. Companionship from dog's/ beaters/shooters. Exercise from. Training dog's/beating/walked up shooting/stalking. Socialising and meeting people especially beating, gives the old boys something to look forward to each weak and the comradery in the line would definitely help with depression. I could go on and I've not even mentioned the financial benefits or the best meat available

95. I enjoy it all the country side shooting working my dog and watching my kids enjoying and learning about all the country side has to offer
96. Conservation shooting. Creating habitats to be able to reap some wild stock of birds is rewarding but also being aware that you are creating/managing habitat to benefit biodiversity generally. Managing sustainable shooting helps educate anyone that visits.
97. Social element,health & exercise, seeing local wild life, out all weather
98. It's the only thing that gets me out of the house I love being outdoors and the preparations for the shoot that we spend hours on in the woods which benefits all wildlife is something that gives me great pleasure and something that I try and pass on to my grandsons.
99. if i wasn't shooting or fishing i would vegetating on the settee so it helps keep me fit in health and mind
100. I'm out in all weathers enjoying scenery,wildlife and camaraderie of like minded people who genuinely care about wildlife and the countryside.i exercise my 4 dogs twice daily and have encouraged my children and now my grandsons to enjoy nature and understand the connection of how food gets to their table
101. I would say countrysports are vital for my mental health.They have given me a purpose, in training my dog to the highest standard so he can compete in trials, and I have made so many friends through countrysports. I am more active, and more engaged with nature and conservation due to my involvement in countrysports.
102. A sense of putting something back in the countryside
103. Been shooting since I was 6 with my father, friends and paying days. Rural communities
104. Exercise, social, immersion in the countryside, supporting local supply businesses
105. As a small game syndicate up 16 of us come together from different walks of life, and from teenagers to the retired for 10 + days a season. We love the social aspect, the exercise and especially flushing the first woodcock of the season. We all learn a great deal about the pheasants we release and the song birds and other mammals that benefit from the rides we maintain in the woods to the supplementary feeding through out the winter. On a local note, we use the local pub as a meeting point, and for a meal after shooting. This puts employment and money into villages country wide, that would not see much trade especially through January. Another great benefit to a day out in the field is working our dogs, this gives real enjoyment and some inevitable leg pulling. I can't personally imagine any other pastime or passion replacing what game shooting provides to so many.
106. I run a small shoot Welsh Marches. We rent the shooting rights on seven farms, put down 800 pheasants and shoot 12 days. I and the thirty people involved in various ways, put in about 500 person days of work on that 1700 acres. Planting and managing he crops, woodland, po ds, stream banks and feeding. As a result the place is a wildlife oasis. We all love all of it but without the 12 days shooting and the camaraderie that engenders none of it would exist and our lives would be far poorer.
107. Shooting has given me a lifetime of enjoyment in the company of like minded people. I enjoy all aspects, from solitary observation of wildlife to picking up or beating and all that entails. I am passionate about wildlife and habitat conservation and give freely of my time throughout the year.
108. I manly do pest control ie Fox rabbit crows ect and i find it keeps me fit and reasonably healthy.
109. Walking in the countryside is a magical experience whether you are shooting or not. Walking with a gun in search of quarry means you are stealthy, and quiet enabling you to see far more wildlife than you normally would. It's also great exercise and fresh air.

- 110. The wildlife, song birds in particular, the flora, as well as the exercise, weather plays only a small part in the overall enjoyment and benefits
- 111. Exercise, fresh air, peace and quiet from everyday life.
- 112. shooting and working my dogs is fundamental to my lifestyle. It gives me exercise and social contact . Above all gamekeeping activities on my small rough shoot allows me to make a positive contribution to the environment
- 113. Knowing where your food comes from. Social aspect. Good exercise Working dogs Enjoy seeing nature
- 114. Personally improvement and well being outdoors in a social pressure free environment, whilst helping to improve habit and wildlife chances of survival in an increasingly industrial farming countryside.
- 115. As a countryside manager I am satisfied that the shooting I take part in (and its associated habitat management) supports a great deal of biodiversity. Many of the game and wildfowl habitats I am involved with, would otherwise be extremely vulnerable to degradation and land use change, if they weren't safe guarded by their main 'economic driver'..... shooting.
- 116. Wildlife conservation, exercise and health, social interaction
- 117. The friendship the exercises the enjoyment of working my dogs the wildlife conservation I do and the visual impact that it has
- 118. Rearing game on any land benefits the wildlife so much, Corvids and pests such as Magpies, rats and grey squirrel are kept under control, which helps protect our small birds while they are breeding.It provides me with Physical and mental wellbeing, We in the shooting community provide a service to the local farmers in several ways, by providing an extra income as we pay for the privilege of shooting on their land, we help to control the fox numbers which helps them during their lambing season, we help to reduce Rural Crime by our presence on the land. Game meat is the healthiest meat you can eat and by eating game meat promotes good health for my whole family. Many woodland and rough farmland have been saved from being turned into pasture because of shooting. During harsh winter the feed we provide to our birds is a life saver to a variety of birds and mammals who would have perished with ought this food. We buy clothing & equipment from our local store.Hotels -Restraunt's & shops benefit from shooting parties coming to stay during the Winter months this is what keeps some of these business afloat. On a personal level I have always enjoyed being outside with nature in all weathers.
- 119. Help in conservation and wild life is an essential part of rural living.
- 120. Very much appreciate nature, I try to help and not go against nature. I enjoy the challenge of releasing game birds and later try to harvest them as natural food for my family and friends. The health benefits of being involved in shooting is tremendous, and you get the opportunity to meet like minded people who respect their quarry and the countryside.
- 121. Relaxation from being outdoors. Maintaining fitness levels from walking. Eating fresh and organic produce.
- 122. I see the community It creates everyday. It brings money to places that have little. It's my career.
- 123. Currently I only shoot clays. Would love to try a proper shoot.
- 124. I work on a shooting estate so out in all weather all year, I love my shooting but I'm as passionate about shooting with a camera as much as anything else. If we didn't have shooting we probably wouldn't see half the wildlife that I see through the lens.
- 125. Properly managed shooting is a wonderful way of life. Good company.Super countryside.

Enhancement of birdlife in and around my woods through extended feed programme..
Production of good nutritious food.

126. I used to shoot but now do little but I have a dog which is used for picking up. There is a social aspect, there is exercise and the enjoyment of being outside doing my bit for the shoot and others who are employed. That is my take, but the dog has the same thoughts. We don't do it for the money. There are also Vet's bills and dog food so the economy benefits.
127. From an early age the fascination of wildlife has been a huge part of my life. From seeing the house sparrow nesting in the eaves of my house or the flight of the swallow to take residence on the gables of my home. This has transcended into fieldsports and the enjoyment of being in the countryside. The camaraderie of likeminded people who gather for work parties to improve habitat, the enjoyment of seeing conservation projects that produce surplus game for a sustainable harvest. The improved mental wellbeing of being out in the fresh air and with unlimited exercise for your physical well-being is the tonic for a happy life. Childhood obesity in the UK is at a high, and with the benefits which I have described above, surely it is beneficial to have these youngsters out in the field, enjoying the wildlife, assisting on shoot days and most importantly, learning how to contribute towards a healthier sustainable countryside. This is the most pleasing to see, as I have witnessed many times over the years on my shoot days. We cannot allow our children to be denied this route into the delights of the countryside.
128. Shooting supports a valuable way of life - shooting can be inexpensive or very costly but all people involved fit together common understanding and sympathy. It provides a massive economic boost to farming, offers a means to utilise land and raise revenue from areas that would otherwise be substantially less remunerative. Shooting controls predation which is of substantial economic value to a main Welsh industry - farming. Shooting controls deer which apart from being a splendid natural food, ensures more chance of protecting woodlands and allowing natural regeneration of woodlands. Shooting protects the environment by setting aside fields for winter feeding which would otherwise be monoculture. Collectively years have been and are spent making habitat better for wildlife generally and pheasants in particular feeding all wildlife in the barren winter days. Shooting means so much to the people of the countryside and its place in the countryside is assured in a symbiosis of benefits and finance and good wild food.
129. Outdoor exercise in good company in all weather and seeing the countryside and nature at its best
130. I Hunt and Shoot and Fish all in South West Wales. It provides me with exercise, relaxation and the enjoyment of the countryside. I have made many similarly minded friends and there is a social element that is important in a rural community.
131. Camaraderie and enjoyment of the countryside
132. Exercise.... companionship.. Knowledge of the countryside ..you learn something NEW all the time.. Management of the countryside is essential for its continued maintenance as a balanced environment
133. I came to University College Swansea as an undergraduate in 1974, spent seven years, and loved South Wales. I joined two local wildfowling clubs, and have remained a member ever since. I come to Gower and South West Wales several times every winter, to chase after ducks and wild game like snipe and woodcock. This means the world to me as it is proper wild shooting. It produces just a few shot birds, which I consider to be an entirely sustainable harvest with no damaging impact on overall populations. These birds provide some of the most anticipated meals of the year. These outings also bring the chance to catch up with my two best mates, including my locally born, Welsh speaking best man. These much anticipated visits are a highlight of my year, and get me out exercising in the wonderful Welsh countryside come rain

or shine. As a result of my visits, plus those in summer to fish on the Gower Coast, I clearly make a small contribution to the local economy through renting accommodation, buying food, and buying Welsh produce to take home to family and friends.

134. Physical and mental exercise Along with social element. I also enjoy being close to nature and the care of all elements of such.
135. Being outdoors in the countryside has been proven to promote mental wellbeing. I represent Team GB in International field trials and would not be able to do so if I wasn't involved with shoots. We have see huge increases in biodiversity on our shoot due to the woodland planting, feeding, pond making et cetera
136. Having been involved in shooting for over 20 years, it has taught me a huge amount about wildlife and the countryside. It also taught me as a child, how to interact with people from all walks of life and all ages, I feel that being involved with it has hugely helped my personal development. It has substantial health benefits for me, both physically and mentally. Most of the shooting that I do involves considerable amounts of walking in all weathers and keeps me very fit during the winter. Perhaps even more importantly, I find it enormously beneficial for my mental health, it is a time where I can be away from the pressures and concerns of day to day life. Because of the importance of safety, shooting always commands my full attention and this focus is very important to me. The wider benefits should not be underestimated, the areas where I shoot are carefully managed for that purpose and see not only an abundance of quarry species but also of many other species, many of which I only ever see when out shooting.
137. Shooting is a part of country and rural life
138. I help with the organising of a small family shoot in Clun, S.Shropshire, where we release a few pheasants and organise eight days shooting from November through to end of January. We have a part-time keeper who feeds the poults, and helps organise some of the vermin control to give the game and wild-life a chance to survive and prosper. The benefits of organising these days are that whilst pitting ones brain against the willness of the quarry, ones use of fieldcraft and keeper's knowledge, should lead to an enjoyable day out, for young and old.
139. The conservation that comes along with the Upkeep and preservation of the natural world. In a World where people spend less and less time outside it's important that the natural wildlife is preserved for future generations to enjoy as much as past ones have.
140. Excitement, space, time to think, visit beautiful areas, concervation, observe wildlife, quiet times, solitude, social times, working with dogs, frustrations, achievements, the list can go on.
141. Social side and exercise.
142. I used to have a gun about 8 times a year, mainly pheasant. Now too old and miss is very much. There is nothing like a day outside with good company and using old skills. I only shoot for the pot.
143. I love all the aspects of the countryside I was a shooting man for many years, bred spaniels ferrets kept all sorts of stock, I'm am a stick maker I just love it all, it's ours leave us alone
144. Beating with my Labrador takes us into the countryside for exercise and away from public places. I can see that land managed for shooting results in a greater biodiversity than if it was unmanaged or used for agriculture.
145. Well Being, stress relief, enhanced mental health, fitness fresh air. Meeting like mind people, spending time in the open at the same time as knowing being part of a wider conservation project
146. I live in an area where there is a lot of wildlife but you get to see much more on the days we

go beating and some of the shoots are quite challenging with steep banks and long drives so it keeps very fit and due to the social aspect you meet a lot of new friends

147. I shoot, hunt and fish. I have have done this since I was a child. It is part of me! without these activities my wellbeing would be severely affected.
148. Everything. It's essential to my mental well being
149. I enjoy countryside pursuits, seeing nature. Also help keep the balance pest control too
150. I train and work 4 dogs. Beat on two shoots and pick up also. I often go wild shooting. It's my life. Out of season I train the dogs help farmers with pest control and fish. I sleep eat and breath the country. I am very keen on conservation and understand the balance between that and hunting
151. Do 4 of the above as many times as I can. Something I love doing and great exercise
152. my grt grandfather was a gamekeeper a 150 years ago on a shooting estate in the Welsh above glyn ceiriog and from childhood I have be involved with gamekeepers shooting and hunting, beating is very much a social event in my life
153. My kids who are now 12 and 13 are passionate about shooting, hunting and beating. They rarely get the chance to shoot driven game only on beaters day when the syndicate take a gun for the youngsters and coach them, stood by their sides through the day. This is the highlight of the kids year which they look forward to as much as they do Christmas. I love the fact that all age groups mix together with the kids from the age of 7 talking animatedly on the same subject with youngsters in their twenties up to retired folk in their seventies. What else would get all these people out of the house walking miles on a winters day in horizontal rain? I enjoy the social element but also the time stood alone when I get the chance to stand and stare, being more connected to the landscape and nature around me. I don't shoot any more, like my kids I really enjoyed it in my earlier years but my focus now is on conservation and what I can do to reverse biodiversity decline.
154. The social side is fantastic.
155. great to socialise, exercise and relax in very healthy surroundings .and a joy to see pheasants rearing their own young in the wild who wouldn't normally be there
156. There are health and social benefits in shooting but the biggest "kick" is seeing the rich diversity of wildlife because of the conservation work done on shoots.
157. exercise every evening, I see hares, curlews etc on my little bit of land increase year by year because of vermin control.
158. Getting out in the country side and all the wildlife you see
159. Winter exercise Interest in the countryside Meeting those who live around me with a common interest Meeting New people from all walks of life and interests Understanding the relationship of game to food Understanding the relationship of all animals and birds to each other and how they interact Understanding the importance of trees and habitats to different species
160. I have been shooting for 40 years and only shoot what I can eat
161. I run my own small, micro-shoot. I encourage wild game and supplement this stock with a limited number of released pheasants to allow 4 or 5 days of shooting with a bag expectancy of 25 head for the Guns. I am a beater. In all my days of shooting, no matter where, a policy of "Never been known to cancel" has been followed even if the weather is thoroughly unpleasant. I always shoot in the company of friends and like minded people, and am a fan of women being in the field as Guns, pickers-up and beaters. It is hugely significant as a social gathering,

and there is always something to learn from somebody or other - such as how a Shoot has evolved to enhance the population of a particular non-quarry species, or other aspect of wildlife protection. Attached to the above is the nexus of people coming together to help you find, for example, the best source of breeder for your next dog, which Club to attend to help socialise and train one's dog. Who is offering good fishing for the forthcoming season. Have you de-boned a pheasant to cook 'Flat Pheasant on a Bed of Herbs with Cherry Tomatoes and Roast Garlic Baby Potatoes' - it transports you to the Mediterranean. It's all in a Days Shooting!

162. I used to run a modest size game shoot. Now I compete in field trial with spaniels.
163. Bad weather or good, great to be out. Social occasions with good friends. Great to see all species of wildlife and yes I really enjoy shooting. Good exercise and feeling of wellbeing
164. Great social day out with like minded people. Been doing this since I was 11 and provides me with a healthy hobby and being part of the countryside. Having a dog now is even better as I and the dog get a great day out rain or shine.
165. Going to Wales shooting is always a treat. We go as a group of friends to enjoy shooting amongst the spectacular Welsh countryside. As farmers we enjoy seeing a different farming and wildlife environment. We usually stay in a hotel for two nights and the length of the journey is long enough that cars need refueling for the journey home all resulting in income to the Welsh economy at a time of year we would probably not otherwise visit.
166. Love game shooting!
167. I have owned shooting land and shot in family syndicates all my life. I have shot on commercial days all over the Europe and the one thing in common is the comradery between guns and beaters keepers and everybody involved. I have enjoyed my days alone with a dog as much as formal days. I have gained knowledge that I could not of learned elsewhere. The game Conservancy teenage training made me think about the scientific side and as such I am a life long supporter.
168. Shooting from the age of 11 years old. Rough shooting plus clay shooting. Met some amazing people along the way. Being in the countryside is a great way of life. Just because you go shooting doesn't mean you bag anything in a day. It's just being out in the countryside
169. The mindfulness of being out in the countryside, enjoying the amazing views, social interaction and camaraderie, exercise, watching fantastic wildlife and watching dogs work.
170. Harvesting what we put down, and seeing the increase of all wildlife on farm's where shooting takes place. On my own farm we ceased shooting for several years, the result was a drastic decline in small birds. All wildlife seemed much less abundant without our feeders, cover crops and vermin controls.
171. Brother in law is a game keeper I have been beating for nearly 30 years
172. Love the outdoors
173. We aim to make a better habitat and environment in which all wildlife benefit. Most important environmental issues of the day is having a balance in the countryside. We can no longer blame disasters on farmers, eg lack of hedgehogs Badgers !!! Time for reality check
174. Connecting deeply with nature. Satisfaction of hunting my own 100% natural food. Watching a dog do what it is meant to do. Pushing myself physically. Maintaining and promoting traditional skills
175. I thoroughly enjoy hunting/shooting,the exercise,being with friends and eating game.
176. Where I shoot, mainly in North Wales, the communities are remote, often at the head of the valley. Shooting and all of the activity that comes from this, the income it brings to these

communities, the participation and camaraderie it brings is vital to the well being and future prosperity of these often remote places.

177. Prioritised for me would be Mental detox, being it with the dogs is a huge 'leveller' for me, shutting off from work issues and enjoying being in the fresh air. Exercise and socialisation are both important aspects.
178. now semi retired but still take an interest in the shoot which i set and ran for 35+years. i used surplus funds from this to plant and manage more than 180 acres of native broadleaves on my farm. I firmly beleive that a well run shoot is the key to genuine conservation, as well as benefiting the community.Only ignorance and bigotry would deny this.
179. Being outside in nature with good companions, exercise and eating game.
180. exercise in the open air and seeing nature as it should be seen
181. I run a small syndicate shoot. During the spring and summer I spend my free time preparing for the season ahead, repairing feeders, maintaining woodland, planting cover crops and rearing poults. In the autumn and winter I am out in all weathers ensuring the birds are protected and fed. Cold, wet and windy Saturday's are the highlight of the week when friends meet and new acquaintances are made. Young and old enjoying the countryside regardless of the weather. Without the shoot there would be no reason to venture into the area we shoot and there would be no cause to provide feed throughout the winter and into spring. The social element would be lost during what is usually a long wet time of the year as too would the exercise gained by walking for miles. If we didn't shoot perhaps some of us would go for a walk on a Saturday morning, even in the winter, but we wouldn't engage with our surroundings in the same way.
182. It is the importance of preserving wildlife. I shoot released game as well as count and monitor wild birds such as woodcock, snipe and red grouse. The exercise is a benefit of being out on the family farm doing the monitoring but mainly to work alongside my dogs. It helps mental wellbeing by having an escape from the busy everyday work life.
183. It doesnt get any better than working together to produce a great flush of birds..the work through the summer to look after the land, flora and fauna and then the teamwork and joint effort to achieve the outcome. And all the time surrounded by and looking after our beautiful countryside....the perfect antidote to modern life. Couldn't live without it.
184. I love being in truly wild places with spectacular views with other likeminded people whatever the weather to enjoy the camaraderie of the day
185. Full time employment, health benefits with exercise, significant wildlife benefit from managing a sporting estate for pheasant shooting.
186. Many years ago I was privileged to shoot on several large estates in Berkshire. At the time wood pigeon were in abundance as too were rabbits and rats. So my role was to keep vermin under control. I'm proud to say I never 'winged' a pigeon or inflicted suffering and distressed on the prey. This was 50 years ago but I'm sure today's game keepers struggle with the morality of what they do and use their guns and poisons responsibility and with reluctance.
187. Love been out in the countryside. With beating and picking up get to go onto some love private land which I wouldn't normally be allowed. Enjoy the social side of beating and forces me out whatever the weather.
188. The enjoyment of being out in the country side
189. I have been involved in field sports since the age of four. My father and both grandfathers shot. I was introduced to the head keeper of Tredegar Estate at roughly the same time. He was a

man of great countryside knowledge and I was in awe of him. I learnt a lot from him in the subsequent years until the estate broke up. From then on I practised that knowledge, much of which, despite modern interventions, is still relevant. I run a small shoot and insist on the old traditions of dress, behaviour and manners and apparently I am respected for it.

190. For me it's an extremely relaxing and useful way to get away from my day job. But as part of a self kept shoot it's very clear that the work we do looks after much more than just the birds we release but the wider ecosystem
191. Gets me out of the house, the exercise the wildlife I see and the social contact with like minded people
192. I go shooting because I enjoy being a part of nature not just observing it. The type of shooting I do mostly is walked up rough shooting and wildfowling. This means I need to know quite a bit about the quarry species if I am to have any success. I also really enjoy working my dogs and training them. Besides all of this I get good exercise as I will be walking for about 4 hours each time I go. I also do conservation work to improve the habitat.
193. Exercise in the countryside. An appreciation of nature which does wonders for my wellbeing
194. Wildlife, countryside, exercise and doing something i really enjoy.
195. You see all aspects of wild life. I love to see, the Muntjac or Roe deer when we beat through the woods, the coveys of partridge break out of a hedgerow and snipe get up like little helicopters from the boggy ground. All of these make me glad to be alive even when it is pouring with rain. There is nothing better than standing on a cold winters morning in the heart of Wales on a mountain side with snow on the ground and a blue clear sky seeing a pheasant break cover and glide over the top of you.
196. Shooting is my release from life-work and is essential for my mental health . Why lease would i be outside in the the rain snow and wind, I love every moment.
197. Being able to go out in the field, have exercise and meet new people. Seeing wildlife and some spectacular scenery all ads up to a fabulous day out.
198. shooting wildlife should be banned
199. I have worked in nature conservation for 45 years, and am presently involved with Sustainable Management Sche,ese, one of which is on kept shoot moorland. Bird surveys which I've conducted during the last 3 years show that kept shoot moorland has particularly good bird populations, including several Red data book species (Whinchat, Curlew, Cuckoo, Linnet) which I am personally interested in. Some people (including politicians) would be surprised to learn that these kept shoot moors are even among the best sites in mid Wales for raptor species such as) of raptors such as Merlin and Hobby. I am also keenly interested in what can be learned on good management of upland commons, since this has declined along with bird numbers in recent decades, and some of the best examples of well-managed moors are on kept shoot sites, equalling the standard of habitat management on an RSPB site I am monitoring. I have great pleasure working with upland birds, and knowing there are still some of these rarer species present in Wales.
200. its the joy of being out doors seeing wild life excising and meeting people as well as being healthy
201. I started beating on a small syndicate shoot in the Cyriogg Valley in North Wales as a small child. After many years of this I started shadowing my father and carried a gun for two seasons. I carried it empty and swung as if I would fire. I then started shooting at about 11 or 12. It is great exercise, very exciting and sociable and you meet people from all walks of life.

202. great to be out in all weathers, see the countryside well looked after through the input of shooting resulting in the wildlife being given habitats to live, eat
203. One of my grandfathers was a small farmer and the other a gamekeeper. I have been in the outdoors my whole life and my children are being introduced to its benefits too. I'm struggling to put down how important farmers/gamekeeper/shooters are for the British countryside and its wildlife. We are the people that have been managing the land for centuries. The ecological benefits of harvesting your own food cannot be emphasised enough and the benefits to mental and physical health are enormous too.
204. I enjoy being out in the fresh air. And it's a great time for socialising over a sport I love.
205. The interaction with the local environment, watching the seasons change and how nature adapts.
206. Every part of the shooting year is important to me. I grew up in rural mid Wales and was introduced to the well-mannered etiquette, treating any and all with respect, as expected of those involved in country sport as a young boy over 45 years ago. Since then, I have been lucky enough to be involved in every aspect of shooting, from helping keepers year-round, to occasional (very) shooting grouse on some of our top moors. I think that overall, I get as much pleasure picking up, or loading, as I do shooting - and I love shooting! The characters I've met, who end up being friends, seem far fewer in other walks of life. At this time of year I walk my dogs (8) near Keighley more and the pleasure I get from watching curlews, lapwings, grouse and oyster catchers bring up their broods is immense. It never ceases to amaze me how bad weather affects the number of dog walkers I see and how many of those who persevere are also shooters or beaters. I wonder where the others all go? I have often found that friends who would not wish to kill anything themselves, are able to enjoy the atmosphere and tradition of a day's shooting.
207. Shooting of any wild animals should be outlawed, police should uphold the law on the fox hunting ban. Better to see wild animals alive this is not conservation it's sick cruelty for the few.
208. Being outside whether it be shooting or beating brings a great feeling of wellbeing and relaxation away from the hustle and bustle of everyday stresses. When you get to see wildlife you wouldn't normally see is amazing and brings great happiness that all the hard work the shooting industry does to contribute to nature and the conservation of habitats to allow these animals to thrive
209. As well as benefitting from the exercise that I get it also increases my knowledge, appreciation and understanding of wildlife.
210. I have always enjoyed walking the mountains and the countryside with my daughter's black lab, at present I have plenty of space to roam and see the vast amount of wild life on the land that I walk on and it's all down to good management by the local farmers and genuine local country folk and shooting syndicates that there is plenty of healthy wild life around.
211. Control of imbalance in the local ecosystem
212. Exercise fresh air keeping up a Rural tradition.
213. Being out in the fresh air even in bad weather helps with my well-being and having friends and family with me enjoying the time is always a pleasure
214. Exercise Mental well-being Promoting ecological diversity Eating the produce Camaraderie
215. Pest control on farms to protect crops and livestock from COVID and pigeon damage, this also helps maintain a healthy songbird population.
216. Seeing more of the landscape, flora fauna, birdlife, keeping fit, mental health,

217. The shooting lifestyle enables a huge amount of exercise both on shoot days, and the months spent maintaining a safe and suitable environment for the birds. It isn't effected by weather, as we go out in all weathers and its a responsibility when caring for birds or keeping their environment to a high standard. The wildlife and scenery are magnificent, and the social element with the game keeper, beaters and other guns is first class. This isn't like any other sport !
218. the benefits are many from relaxation and well being, exercise, quality time with friends and family and being able to eat totally organic wild food
219. I'm currently a hobby gamekeeper in my spare time outside of work. I currently help run a small syndicate with like minded individuals, this is an unpaid job and I do it for my love of the countryside and wildlife. We release a number of Pheasants on our ground and harvest these over a number of days through the season. Everyone gets together for a safe and enjoyable day and gets to take some game home for the table after each day. No game is wasted on our syndicate! Outside of the season a group of us are there every week, usually multiple times a week Managing the site and woodlands and feeding our wild stock year round. This helps an enormous amount of other wildlife which I have a passion for helping and seeing.
220. the wildlife. social element. exercise health benefits
221. I get enjoyment by walking on the mountains, which also keeps me fit and healthy. I have met and befriended many people through shooting, going back over 40+ years.
222. It's all about being out in the countryside and all of the above
223. I have had a passion for fishing and shooting since I was a small child.
224. For me it's the conservation benefits of shooting that sits first and foremost at the top of the list. Shooting is the conduit which allows our conservation efforts to go ahead and at the end of the day pays for it. The number of birds we shoot on our shoot is minimal, it's about enjoying the day with great company and coming home with a couple of brace for the pot. But those 8 days or so a season pay for a year of conservation efforts. Without running the Syndicate we wouldn't put down supplementary feed which encourages wild game and supports our resident song birds, of which there are lots of, especially compared to neighbouring land. We feed right through to late spring and you can tell the difference it makes. Cover crops again wouldn't be there without the shoot and again they make a huge difference to the landscape and local birdlife. It's the shoot that rents this land from the farm and pays for it to go in. Without the shooting interest we couldn't afford to do it. Having the shoot encourages us to undertake the predator control we do. We not only support wild game but we still have breeding lapwing and it helps the songbirds too. Again you can tell the difference it makes compared to the surrounding land. Then there's the Community side of it. Like minded people getting together outside in the fresh air to enjoy the land and each others company. This isn't only in the season either, work parties through the year managing habitat is also important. We manage the woods and ponds and without the shoot this wouldn't happen.
225. Worked in agriculture and gamekeeping for 60 years all 3 of the above especially the social side as agriculture can be a lonely job
226. have worked in the shooting industry for 36 years, currently professional deer management being the main emphasis. Shooting provides me with, regular exercise, gives me a close link to, appreciation and understanding of wildlife and environmental stewardship. It also provides social opportunities to mix with all levels of society, from rich to poor. Being outside helps with mental health, enabling me to relax and forget work pressures, plus while out I am sourcing a healthy and sustainable source of food, whist also protecting the environment and leaving a genuine legacy for future generations to enjoy.
227. Rough shooting for past 60 years. Has maintained physical and mental health

228. Well I'm from burry port in south wales although struggling to find land to shoot on. Most of my shooting, beating picking up etc is on the isle of man
229. Wildlife conservation including keeping invasive plants under control, and providing food and shelter for small birds. Cutting rides provides pleasant walks in the off season. Seeing parts of the countryside not otherwise easily accesible.
230. A connection with nature, sporting accomplishment, meeting other country people and it helps keep mentally positive
231. Shooting links me to nature; in a time where technology and other things only draw man away. Natures bounty is so obvious for three of our seasons. Shooting helps me to over-winter - Winter. Decay may be all around; but there is still beauty in abundance. The arrival of wintering woodcock, pheasants riding the wind of a gale. Whose footprints are those in last nights snow? My spaniels at their happiest working hedgerows; and fording swollen streams.
232. I work and compete with Gwp's all over the uk
233. I've been shooting and beating since teenage years, and looking forward to passing my knowledge and experience on to my grandchildren
234. Exercise and health are a big part of the pluses. Mental well being from the interaction with people that would not take place without theses activities. The countryside can be a very lonely place. On bad wet days getting soaking wet and cold then coming home to a hot bath and a warm house and food gives one a feeling of incredible wellness. Without doubt it keeps one in touch with nature and much is seen and new things learnt about the countryside every day.
235. Nothing better than a beasting up the hills of Wales on a wet windy day. Good company and payment as well!
236. I've only started Shooting and beating about 7 years ago. In that time I have seen more wildlife than I've ever seen before Made some great friends and the exercise is great
237. I am a member of a family all keen on sporting game and conservation. Wales is one of the best regions in the UK to witness these two elements in harmony.
238. Having an opportunity to be outside and ultimately consuming a truly free range meat that has lived its life and been killed to eat, cleanly, ethically and with honour.
239. Born in the countryside, worked in farming and forestry all my life. Brought up with the importance of managing wildlife for the good of all, from predator control to keep live stock safe to deer control to ensure our forests can thrive. My family and I enjoy beating and picking up with our 2 springers to me joining the line and testing my ability with the gun. It gets us all out in weather normally only fit for ducks, the benefits both physically/mentally and financially to the rural way of life cannot be over stated.
240. Shooting motivates me to plant trees and look after the environment.
241. Good exercise for the dog's and I. Out in all weathers enjoying the outdoors.
242. I'm always out with the gun just miss my old girl she work the Bush and push the game to me
243. Shoot days mean an opportunity to put into practice all the training skills my dogs and I have practiced throughout the year. It's an opportunity to get out in the countryside I love and meet like minded people. It's also an opportunity to participate in a sport with a heritage which dates back centuries.
244. I love the wildlife I get to see, with like minded friends. It gets me out in all weather which I love I also really enjoy working my dog. Seeing how excited he gets looking for game.
245. Yes the weather would make no different it not just a hobbie part of your life I stated as a boy

- of 10 fishing for food and im now 71 and been shooting fishing most of my life and still love itb
246. Gets me out of the house on winter weekends.
 247. My own social and health benefits AND The way that gamekeeping practice benefits the environment.
 248. Healthy exercise and sustainable free range food combined with social interaction
 249. Social nice to eat what you kill. Execesise
 250. I get great pleasure from being outdoors, working my dogs, meeting a wide range of people, getting exercise, seeing a range of wildlife in various locations and getting the chance to eat fabulous game meat with my family.
 251. I've regularly shot game, beat & picked up, and also do a lot of vermin control for many farmers in my area, covering approximately 5000 acres
 252. carrying out the vermin control to help benefit the conservation of our more delicate species of bird life and small mammals, shooting with me is exceptionally exciting and a very enjoyable day out even tho we are a commercial shoot and my job is all weather regardless
 253. It makes me feel more connected to the place in which I live. I meet people from backgrounds I wouldn't normally come across and this helps me understand different viewpoints. I love the physicality of beating. I love seeing summer change to winter and being out in all weathers. And I love the natural surroundings.
 254. I love the out doors and sustainability of the food and enjoyment it gives
 255. Big supporter of the local wildlife and the economy of the area when i come over and stay.
 256. Keeps me fit and healthy and interacting with others. As a self keptered enhanced rough shoot (we release a few hundred birds a season), there is great satisfaction in conducting light touch environmental management to the benefit to a wide range of wildlife.
 257. I am 80 years of age and have shot al my life and reared game birds, it has kept me fit and healthy up till now, and I hope it will continue to do so
 258. Being with like minded people who enjoy our countryside and the wildlife in it. And filling the pot is a bonus
 259. I have enjoyed country sports since the age of 12. Wild game has always been a regular part of my families diet, and coming from a relatively poor mining community background, rabbit was a regular addition to our weekly meals, and pigeon considered a delicacy. As teenagers we would use ferrets on rabbit hunts on local hill farmers lands. These farmers were part of our community and knew every child and miner using their land, and our teachers and local bobbies were also supportive, enthusiastic and interested in our trips out. The harvest we returned always ended up on our tables, and nothing went to waste. The colliery (NCB) land and Forrestry Commission land was also free to roam, with the men working in those industries happy to allow us to use their land, without fees or restriction. We would walk for miles and as youngsters, building camp fires, throwing on old potatoes to bake on the fires to keep our bellies full. We never carried 'plastic water bottles' just drank from streams as we wandered the countryside. At the age of 17 I got my shot gun licence and shot on local family farms and friends and neighbouring farms, and extended freinds and family farms throughout S.Wales. In the late 1970's early 1980's I was introduced to pheasant shooting and wildfowling. Pheasant shooting on small friendly shoots and wildfowling at several estuaris. The social element of shooting has been extremely enjoytable and the friends I have made through shooting over the years has been fantastic. Exploring the countryside, has kept me fit and healthy, and I feel is great for a persons well being and mental health. To observe wildlife in their habitat has

provided me with some great memories, and I have been privileged to see things, that the majority of folk, sat in their arm chairs at home will never experience or enjoy in their lifetime. I feel that people and politicians need to be educated in the benefits of eating game. shooting and enjoying the countryside, as I feel society is becoming urbanised, and losing the connection with nature, and in a lot of cases has no respect or regard for country ways and pursuits. I wish you success with your actions, and would add that I have no political affiliation and am a floating voter. I originally come from a very strong labour community, the majority of people were miners or steel workers, who voted labour and shot and hunted. I would say that those people would not be able to understand how a Welsh Labour Government could be so opposed to shooting in Wales, as most of those people like myself hunted to put extra protein on their tables, to feed their families. I am not sure that the current Welsh Labour incumbent can truly identify with those previous mining and steel communities. Good luck.

260. I love all kinds of wild life and scenery.the thought of someone shooting or beating a animal is absolutely ridiculous.its like BLM well wildlife matters and before long houses will be built everywhere so scenerys and wildlife won't be about for future generations.people are so greedy and it's all about money these days and governments people are as corrupt as they come.
261. I like shooting it keeps me fit and active
262. We love being out in the country side where we see the wildlife and an increase in the wild bird population. We meet lots of people with the same interests and it is great to see youngsters out in all weathers taking part and enjoying themselves. These are the people who will look after our country side in years to come
263. The social element is extremely important. I have suffered with mental health issues before and I find country pursuits such as shooting such a boost and it has always been something to take my mind away from any negativity.
264. I have shot since 1973 - I see no problem with rough shooting and a couple of kills for the pot. Game shooting is both bad for the environment, imports millions of non indigenous birds who then consume the natural food supplies f the UK's indigenous species. Also many game shooters just like killing, I don't. That's why millions of us shoot clays. All so called bloodsports are 19th century mentality and should be banned.
265. I get no pleasure at all from killing animals
266. Exersize and care of the country side
267. For me, it's all about the environment, the fresh air and the company. I live in a city so the days I spend that relate to shooting give me a great opportunity to relax my brain and simply enjoy the beauty, freshness and exercise that I experience. Whatever the weather, given the right clothing, it is an extremely rewarding experience. Fellow shooters and dog handlers tend to be very friendly and welcoming and there is usually plenty of good banter. In addition, I passionately believe that, as the late great David Bellamy once said, game shooting is good for conservation because the vast majority the woods that we see are there for the shoot and if shooting disappeared they would follow as the land would be turned back for other agricultural purposes.
268. Wildlife management. Reduction of bush fires.
269. The enjoyment of being out in the countryside with like minded people, enjoying a pastime / hobby that i / we enjoy enormously, together with the health and social benefit of being with friends and the banter we have. Also what we give back to the environment where i participate in a syndicate shoot we put down game crops that provide for the game birds and wild birds that we see around the shoot.

270. 80 days each Winter I am involved directly with Game Shooting in Wales. It gives me an income, but also great enjoyment of the wildlife associated with the countryside. For 60 years I have enjoyed it, it is my life. Every year I have seen children start to come beating and they still come for years after, loving the way of life, exercise and fun with like minded people. It brings massive revenue into areas where there is not a lot of spare cash.
271. It is being part of amazing traditions my grand dad my dad now me hopefully my boy will follow in our footsteps and carry on from us.
272. Exercise, appreciation of the countryside, stress relief, companionship with like minded people, conservation, satisfaction of a job well done and food on the table
273. Exercise, particularly in the winter when I wouldn't be outside if not for shooting. Getting to know a piece of land I wouldn't normally visit. Being out in nature all year round, seeing birds and animals. The camaraderie of the beating line when it's raining or sleeting with a 50 mph wind. Makes you feel alive.
274. I now do very little game shooting except for the occasional wild duck. Most of my shooting is crop and livestock protection - corvids, wood and feral pigeons. I feel that I am contributing something to the countryside, plus supporting farmers. I particularly love the solitude and excitement of sitting in a pigeon hide watching all wildlife, not just the quarry species.
275. I am a farm owner and shoot only out of occasional necessity. However, I recognise the value of shooting to the economy and environment. For example, moorland near my home has for three years been the subject of a conservation project to bring back ground nesting birds such as curlew and lapwing. Grouse shooting on this moor generates significant income without which the project may not survive.
276. I use to go beating once a week it is a tradition passed down from my father he was a gamekeeper for many years its a very friendly thing to do I loved it but since breaking my back in an accident I am unable to do it and I miss it terribly
277. I'd tell them the food I eat is of the highest quality and very healthy, I've seen it sometimes from the poult stage, to releasing, to preparing, to eating, that it's lived its life the way it was meant to and had every chance of getting away! I'd tell them that for me the most important part is working my dogs, whether that be in trials, training them for trials or out out having a walked up day over them, having fresh air and exercise and not just on dry days, good for my physical and mental health, especially as I suffered from depression in 2015. As shooting people we also see a lot of wildlife and nature that we otherwise wouldn't and are far greater conservationists than those that preach we shouldn't be doing it!
278. I just like being outdoors x routh shooting and wildfowling x mnothingbeats it x
279. There is a significant social element to driven game days which helps with the overall well being of the participants from a wide range of backgrounds. There is a large health benefit by way of outdoor excercise by those participating, some aspects can require significant physical exertion. When partaking in stalking and similar type activities there is a unmatched opportunity to see a wide range of wilddelife, much of which you would not otherwise see, and to see it in a largely undisturbed situation. For all aspects it gives younger generations a chance to learn about our enviroment and wildlife in a way that you cannot do from text books, many small nuggets of information from older generations that would otherwise be lost.
280. Enjoy the countryside, love working and training dogs . Like to see the wildlife thriving due to good land management
281. The social element is priceless
282. I like the physical exercise helps me to keep healthy like seeing all the wildlife I also like the

social elements when meeting like minded people and the special camaraderie that is enjoyed by all involved in a fantastic atmosphere

283. It is the company of friends in the countryside we all appreciate and care for together. It keeps us fit and it is a joy to work our dogs together in the field after we have trained them during the summer months. We care little about the weather, a day out shooting is what we do regardless of conditions.
284. It is a fantastic opportunity to be outside during mainly winter months and to enjoy the social interaction of like minded people who tend to be knowledgeable and caring of all aspects of wildlife.
285. Opportunity to be involved in practical conservation and wildlife management and social interaction with like minded individuals.
286. Lived in Wales for 10 years (until 2018) managing a 15,000 acre estate with incredible wild bird shooting over three beats. Own small shoot (woodcock/teal & few pheasants around our house keeper by family inc our teenage sons). I also take care of our hill ground in Scotland managing small herd of red deer
287. Misery. we are trapped in our home for three months because we can't leave our dogs we have a gang of selfish shooters that do not live local, do not give damn, they shoot over us we get falling shot and they are a pain.
288. I farm and let out the ground for shooting. Cover crops are planted that support the released game and also provide feed for song birds in winter.
289. Exercise relaxation socialisation protecting the environment
290. Exercise and an appreciation of unspoilt countryside, but most importantly because the land management is important to the shoot there is a great emphasis on conservation e.g. the finch population is steadily falling and as the seed bank disappears winter feed will decrease still futher. The shoot actively plants winter feed crop for wild birds apart from the obvious benefit of the game feed being also taken by wild birds. The hedges which are maintained for cover provide huge quantities of sloes, hips and haws which support fieldfares and redwings. The marshy woodland holds many woodcock which the shoot members nowadays preserve and do not shoot.
291. enjoying our countryside with like minded people.
292. Appreciation of the countryside, helping to preserve biodiversity as well as protecting both wildlife and domestic animals from predation and disease. Opportunity for exercise thereby improving personal health as well as meeting with other people living and working in the countryside. The privilege and satisfaction of introducing newcomers to the pastime.
293. I enjoy being out in the countryside with like minded people. Helping to manage and grow the wildlife population
294. Shooting is a very important social activity for all who take part in it. Outdoor social life is curtailed in winter so it is a very good opportunity for many people who may be working alone most of the time to meet others. The pleasure is certainly not all about killing, but in completing a patchwork of activities that enhance wild life in the countryside.
295. Takes places during mainly the winter months, enables folk to meet, socialise, enjoy the outside, excercises, and benefits local community with hospitality, shopping and accommodation as peripheral add one.
296. EMPLOYMENT, COMMUNITY, WILDLIFE
297. I was brought up with shooting, and providing fresh organic meat for the table

298. member of a diy shooting syndicate
299. It is easy for somebody who has never been on a shoot to believe that it is all about “killing for fun”. Significantly it is often the case that those who venture to come along for a day go home with a very different view. My personal experience having been involved with my local shoot, either beating, or picking up for over 20 years, is one of participating in a wholesome activity with a real community of over 30 people, male and female embracing a wide demographic and age profile. For many of the people who attend on a Saturday the shoot is their main social interaction of the week, this provides tangible benefits for their wellbeing and mental health. This is rural social cohesion in practice within a minority community whose wellbeing is often forgotten by policy makers. Many of our shoot members come from a farming background, these are people who have to face declining incomes leading to growing stress and uncertainty about the future of their businesses, so little wonder that ONS figures show that one farmer a week commits suicide. The debate on the future of shooting in Wales must be contextualised to consider the wide social, economic and environmental benefits it brings to our rural communities. There is ample science showing the biodiversity benefits derived from well managed woodland and the planting of cover crops for game on shoots throughout Wales. There is also plenty of evidence showing the benefit that local shoots bring to local rural businesses such as game food suppliers, agricultural machinery suppliers/engineers and local hospitality outlets where people meet after a day’s shooting. Sadly, little research has been conducted into the mental and physical health benefits of participating in local shoots, however every person involved across Wales - and there are many thousands, will confirm that there are real benefits that come from a day of exercise, fresh air and good companionship with the added bonus of taking a couple of brace of pheasants home for the table. Any policy making that fails to consider these benefits and instead favours the limited and heavily biased perspective of many who have never been near a shoot should be regarded as negligent.
300. It is all those things and much more.. Shooting among other rural pursuits has been part of my life since childhood, and my family enjoy a continuing interest. It is part of the complex fabric of human interaction with the natural environment, the proximity to nature and the countryside in all its forms and weathers, the flora and fauna, the diversity of habitats and their associated wildlife. In addition to important economic benefits it also provides vital social interaction, healthy exercise and community involvement through the winter months as well as a deeper understanding of the natural world and its responsible management for those who are interested to learn.
301. Exercise The wildlife Social enjoyment
302. I feel i am more in touch with nature and have a more realistic view of the countryside as a result of being part of the greater shooting community. It also gives a valuable social and physical outlet improvising both mental and physical wellbeing. I believe myself, the environment and the economy are all the better for the existence of shooting.
303. Friendship and a better understanding of the farming life, food for the table helping to keep the lambs safe from corvids and foxes
304. I'm a keen rough shooter and a novice wildfowler. I've been brought up to only take what I need, and everything I do take is treated with the upmost respect.
305. Real enjoyment from increased song Bird numbers by habitat improvements and associated pest and vermin control
306. walking up wild game provides an excellent and social way of exercising, particularly on days out with the family. It provides means of understanding the countryside and the wildlife as well as the flora.

307. I have a very time consuming and pressurised job so getting out to see our countryside at it's best to be involved in keeping the tradition going and to maintain work in woodlands that keeps our wildlife thriving. Also the social gathering of the tradition is special where people of all ages and backgrounds mix together as one.
308. I have enjoyed shooting and working with dogs for the last forty years. As my father and grand father brought me up in the sport. I am who i am today because of my up bringing and the understanding of the country side. I have also brought my children up in the same way. People should have the right to do as they wish in a legal way. Shooting and all sports brings much needed revenue to this country.
309. Ex game shooter now clay shooter
310. Born and reared on a rough council estate,ever since the age of 16 had interest in shooting, fishing and conservation. On driven shooting days you are mixing with people from all walks of life, and enjoying excercise the same time
311. I find the company is fantastic and the proven health benefits of open spaces.
312. I was brought up in the country shooting fishing some birds, rabbits, fish, were for the table but most were left to regenerate it was great to see the regeneration of the different animals birds fish and we knew all the different species by sight
313. Shooting is very beneficial and important to me as a way of life. I get to socialize with my friends and strangers alike. Shooting gives me plenty of exercise, in good weather, and in bad it keeps me in touch with new and old friends from a very diverse range of backgrounds. I go beating with my godsons this gives them confidence and opportunities to meet new friends and share new experiences. We meet many new people in doing so and we all have a great day out even if everyone gets soaked through. I get plenty of exercise in places many people could newer imagine. I go wildfowling and being out on the marshes before dawn breaks is a very uplifting experience. Watching the daybreak and experiencing the environment waking up accompanied by all the wildlife sights and sounds. If I don't let the gun off it doesn't matter one bit I am there to enjoy myself. I travel to game fairs and country events around the country and most people there are of the same mindset. I spend money on specialist clothing and footwear, we spend on food locally and all over the UK. My family is very supportive of what I do and we all eat the results of our labours. We spend money on food in cafes and other establishments whenever required. I love being outdoors. Sitting in the house or mooching about looking for something to do is very alien to me and the route to an early grave I fear.
314. I pick up at 2 shoots and shoot weekly in the season
315. Without the shooting locally the farmers would encroach even more onto the wild areas. We manage the wild landscape and tend it for the greatest variety of wildlife. Our shoot is wild birds only but we still feed and nurture the nature. It brings people together locally at a time of year when we'd otherwise not meet.
316. Taking part in shooting and other outdoor related activities are beneficial to good health and wildlife conservation, my own experiences have enabled me to experience the effects of wildlife managment and it's positive impact on endangered species, along with my own health being greatly improved
317. My social life and my exercise are both tied up in hunting and shooting
318. I have beat on a local shoot in Cheshire for the last 5 seasons. A small privately run shoot of 8-9 guns, every other week from Oct to Jan. The social of the day is fantastic with all guns, beaters, keepers, picker ups, dogs having a great time in the fresh air, accompanied by beautiful countryside and views.

319. The pleasure of seeing my dogs doing what they were bred for, at 70 yrs of age it keeps me fit, the company of other like minded people.
320. Always had an interest in countryside. Worked terriers long dogs, spaniels labs, ferrets, chickens game etc reared. Excellent for your wellbeing getting out into the countryside and caring for that environment. Also animal welfare gives me a lot of satisfaction. Comradarie and friendships built up over the years developed a wide ranging friendship over the British Isles.
321. well being exercise and comadarie
322. the wildlife i see
323. Been out in country side seeing the wildlife a good social environment with like minded people, good exercise and keeps you healthy! And it gives you a good reason to go out even if the weathers not great
324. I am 75 years old. Since the age of six I have been involved in shooting and other rural sports. For the last 25 years I have with others been running a syndicate pheasant shoot where in retirement I with another act as the gamekeepers, releasing 1200 pheasants per season. This responsibility takes me out in all weathers throughout the year and doubtless contributes hugely to my health through the exercise involved. The cover crops and feed we provide for our birds and the management of the habitat has proven beneficial to wild life in general and our landlord takes much pleasure in commenting on the superior number of songbirds populating his farm by comparison with those found on the adjoining land controlled by a wild life trust! Within the limits imposed by legislation we practice predator control and without doubt this enhances the breeding success of ground nesting and other birds. During the months of the game shooting season the shoot days bring together about 40 individuals (guns, beaters, pickers up, etc) who not only benefit from the contact with like minded people but also contribute to the local economy through supporting the local hospitality venue. Additionally, of course on a broader front the expenditure on equipment, clothing, etc all contribute to the wider economic well being. Our daily involvement also enables us to act as "eyes and ears" in the countryside which can act as a deterrent to those intent on rural crime which the over stretched police department is hard pressed to overcome.
325. A real sense of maintaining/improving the environment for the flora and fauna and the add benefit that those who just jump in their cars at the weekend and venture out also appreciate the vista for little or no input.
326. Connection with nature Activity - exercise and health benefits Levelling activity - all the same Social benefits Overall benefit of shooting to environment
327. Healthy outdoor fresh air and exercise in the natural world (although managed). Fun socialising with others on the shoot. Game birds to take home and cook into delicious dishes or my family. Satisfaction when I shoot well..
328. Shooting enables us to socialise, exercise and contribute to the sustainability of the of our wonderful rural landscape . It enhances both the physical and mental wellbeing of all those who participate.
329. I have working Labradors. They need to be worked, and working as a team of pickers up is rewarding. Going out in all weathers is great. My son shoots and my granddaughter. They also work dogs. Shooting has so many benefits, for conservation, control of predators and as a great day out bringing people together
330. I just love to kill things, I love the freedom I feel when plucking birds out of the air. I love to assert our human dominance over other animals.
331. Great social activity to meet friends great exercise and wildlife encounters bird watching out of

the shooting season

332. The pressure valve release of being outdoors, with like minded people, whether working or paying to take part. The weather is never a problem, but the sights and sounds of the countryside are always an added bonus.
333. I grown up with shooting and started using shotguns on our farm from the age of 12, it's nice to get out in the countryside for exercise and fresh air and taking notice of all the wildlife plus to have some fresh free range meat for the table.
334. I've grown up in the country side shooting fishing trying to keep a healthy balance
335. Exercise out in the country and the pleasure of working a well trained dog
336. The social side of country sports are the fabric of much of my community, but the real joy I get from shooting is working the dogs, the exercise and the pursuit of a skill that can be enjoyed with friends and put a meal on the table. You can't get that from golf
337. Relaxation in my retirement, the only exercise I get, shooting IS my social life.
338. A greater appreciation and respect of wildlife and our countryside
339. Helps to keep physically fit. Companionship
340. I have been shooting for 45 years and as I grew older I became very aware of the benefits to the general environment and in particular to shoot managed land where the prevalence of the number of bird species was greater and bio diversity was considerably better than land that was not managed for shooting
341. The reason behind my pursuits is for health and exercise also to enjoy nature and the outdoors. Also from a conservation point of view and wildlife management
342. Wild life you see is great and just getting out there in the countryside away from the hustle off the towns Etiquette off the sport is crucial
343. through shooting i am a conservationist, i now provide habitat and cover i have altered the landscape of my land to allow great for the diversity of wildlife to be sustained and this is very important to me. I also know that by rearing and releasing game birds other small birds also benefit, there is also the pleasure of being out with friends in the countryside come rain or shine for all walks of life.
344. I shoot and beat and gamekeeping
345. I run an estate in North Wales with a shoot. It allows us to keep the estate in much better condition than we could afford to without the shoot. It employs 2-3 keepers and numerous people 3 days a week in the shooting season for beating, picking up and catering. 2 hotels in the village would not survive without our shoot and other neighbouring ones as it brings them vital income during the winter months.
346. economic benefit to the local community and Wales is vast.
347. I'm a subsistence hunter whether it's shooting our small DIY syndicate or controlling grey squirrels; I either eat or feed to my ferrets everything I shoot and trap. Whilst confessing to not being the most knowledgeable I am also a keen observer of nature finding the most simple of things fascinating be it a bumble bee working a flower garden or a woodpecker doing its thing. So long as they are causing no harm I love seeing a fox with its cubs in the spring or a badger on a late evening forage. I also appreciate balance so am not involved in hunting and trapping to wipe out a species (unless it's an invasive species) but feel control in some cases is key. I gain very little pleasure from pulling the trigger, for me I get all my pleasure from the lifestyle and knowing where my food comes from. My days hunting starts with the preparation

and ends with cleaning the plate if I've been fortunate enough to catch or shoot something. If I can put a pest species on the plate then it's every bit as satisfying as the finest game, pigeon or pheasant, venison or rabbit it all deserves equal respect. So what do I benefit? Other than the obvious that whilst shooting I am getting some much needed out door time and exercise sharing an amazing time with like minded people; I also benefit from satisfying my desired lifestyle whilst being comfortable in the knowledge that my contribution as a game keeper and pest controller (non professional) is a positive conservational effort. This all takes my mind off my day job which I do appreciate but don't love and is certainly a positive for my mental and physical health. Would I be out in bad weather without shooting? Yes because I would be fishing or walking the dogs regardless but maybe not as often.

348. See more flora and fauna on shoots. My main social events of the year. Great exercise. Provides income for local businesses, creates employment. Helps keep me sane in a world of increasing madness
349. I enjoy seeing the curlews that are proliferating on kept moors and The grouse numbers that are recovering on kept moors. I enjoy the exercise and the camaraderie as well as the fact that we are contributing to the increasing diversity of wildlife
350. this hobby is detrimental to mental health and wellbeing and also fitness. This also teaches my son basic life skills and a wider appreciation of the environment
351. As a farmer I am delighted to see wildlife flourish as a result of shoot management. The ecosystem improves and rural economies benefit.
352. Exercise, awareness of the wildlife in the area, socializing with like minded people, helping to manage the environment.
353. I enjoy the social aspect meeting the guns, working my dogs the wonderful scenery, the exercise. The pleasure of seeing the birds fly over the guns after all the work and the wildlife that is on the estate from all the conservation work I do
354. These activities are vital to the local economy, social cohesion, mental health, physical welfare and esprit de corps. Without the community, exercise and mission provided by field sports, conservation work associated Ceredigion would be a much poorer place. The negative view demonstrated by the Welsh Assemblée Labour government and the NRW is incredibly damaging to rural areas and communities.
355. I shoot driven game and beat and pick up and that gets me out throughout the winter whatever the weather I also do a lot of rough shooting and work throughout the year to improve the wild game habitat on farms when I shoot eg digging ponds and wet habitat clearing patches in thickets etc etc all at my own expense which would otherwise not happen as the farms have no interest or expertise in doing things like that
356. It is about being part of a community that cares, rolls up it's sleeves and contributes in a unique way to the Welsh life that encompasses urban/rural people that enhances the environment, biodiversity and places the highest quality, affordable local food on the table if many including foodbanks, care homes and communities can Wales. The social cohesion of all ages, races and backgrounds cannot be ignored either. Our shoot's biodiversity is utterly inspiring.
357. Experiencing the pleasure of going into Wales to shoot a few very challenging pheasants amongst good local company and appreciating all the hard work that's involved in running a well organised shoot with people of all ages and walks of life,
358. From the start of the day to the end of the day, I am filled with total pleasure. The meeting of friends and family, the laughter and feeling of general well being, even if the weather is dreadful. The knowledge that what you are doing is a natural, and you are doing your part for the countryside.

359. Exercise and health, the varied amount of wildlife I see. Good to see money brought into the local rural community.
360. I only shoot clays but as well as the enjoyment from that is the friendship for me at 70 years of age that I enjoy.
361. I shoot pest species particularly, on our own farm, our vegetable plots and those of family members and friends who are farmers, small holders or simply grow their own food, out of choice and necessity, especially pertinent in this current time of lockdown where we cannot even travel to our nearest town, Welshpool, more than 10 miles away. Also corvids that avidly kill and destroy the wild song bird species. Since I have addressed this, albeit in a small way, the increase in songbirds has been astonishing. Wrens, green woodpeckers, great spotted woodpeckers, gold finches, bull finches, curlews, snipe, swift, blue tits, robins, reed warbler and numerous others I have not seen in years. I have on occasion been to a local pheasant shoot which employs numerous local people full time.
362. I enjoy being out in the countryside socialising with like minded friends and colleagues. I enjoy seeing the game on the land all year round. Seeing how other wildlife benefits from shooting habitat and feeding. Watching the dogs working is rewarding in itself, I get the same enjoyment whether I'm beating or shooting. The company and the sport plus being active.
363. Being lucky enough to experience the countryside and wild life. Also understand the benefits shooting brings to the rural economy and way of life
364. From the age of 7 - 8 I started snaring rabbits for the pot, as mam never had much money for meat. From there bought a jack Russel & a ferret. Learnt how to make my own rabbit nets, and learnt of a couple of older gents the art of rabbiting. Time went on got a whippet lurcher and lamp, carried out catching lots of rabbits at night. Bought a 410 at 17 years old, progressed upto a 12 bore and did quite a bit of rough shooting. Years years went by out in country side carrying on. Last 15 years started beating & training an ess for beating and the gun. Also nearly forgot had a few years learning about Harris Hawks & purchased my own (which was fantastic to watch the HH hunt) but it took too much of my hunting time away from other country sports. Joined a small syndicate stand I beat I, enjoyed that with the work parties as well. We lost a few drives to trees being felled so I left the shoot. Since then the last 9 years been beating on a private shoot with a lot of like-minded beaters, working my dogs then having a great beaters day at end of the season. I also still go ferreting on this estate, and night time shooting of vermin. With the occasional stalk for deer on the estate.
365. It provides an essential social activity and exercise over the winter, bringing together people from disparate backgrounds for a healthy and invigorating day in the fresh air. Additionally it provides welcome employment in an economically depressed area. The shot also promotes biodiversity by controlling predation allowing many species to thrive. It conserves areas of vital habitats such as wetlands, lakes, field margins and hedges, woodland and rough land
366. The best part is the morning flights on the marsh the sunrise and hearing all the different sounds and sights on the marsh the best therapy in the world if you feel stressed in work. And with you best friend your dog
367. A day in the countryside, with like minded people.
368. The shoot that I run has become a small community. We have had the same beaters and pickers up for the 6 years I have run it. we have out of season activities where they and the guns meet up and get a lot of help from them. They are all as keen as the guns to get the season started.
369. Ran a small shoot for 12 years now go beating to keep fit and work my dog

370. Shooting and its associated activities have helped me both physically and mentally over the last 20 years or so. Whilst never having been a mental ill-health sufferer I can reflect on the fact that the short days of late autumn and winter were never my favourites. As an angler I could look forward to April and then enjoy spring and summer out of doors as much as possible. As a shooter autumn and winter hold so much to do with the husbandry of birds, the conservation work we do on our shooting grounds and the interaction with my fellow members etc.
371. I have been involved with shooting since I was 7 years old
372. A great way of socialising in our wonderful countryside and being able to harvest good natural food.
373. Myself and my brother use ladder traps to reduce covid levels. Gamekeeping Reduces covid predation of other bird species
374. Now 70 years old, a country lad born and bred brought up rough shooting for the pot and pest control. Had a five year sabbatical as a full time gamekeeper in Northamptonshire, then moved to Wales in 2007. Now undertake predator control and year round feeding on neighbouring farms to encourage wild game birds and for conservation of song birds.
375. It is the huge amount of voluntary conservation work
376. shooting and country sports in general are a passion of mine. as a business owner, to be able to get out into the fresh air, whether in rain, sun or snow, is a massive part of my wellbeing and stress relief that would otherwise simply become too much to cope with. if us country sports people were unable to continue with our sport then I fear the countryside would suffer as we are probably the biggest conservationists that there are.
377. Conservation benefits of managing land for shooting, free-range food, being outside, exercise and health, social, mental health wellbeing.
378. I shoot and pick up with my dog on a local DIY shoot. I have done so for many years and enjoy the outing during the winter months on a Saturday morning. We shoot a max of about 100 on a good day and as few as 25. The shoot consists of people from all walks of life. We all have on thing in common enjoying being out and our shooting. We support local businesses in supplying us with the raw materials we use.
379. I put a lot of work in to my environment both personally and as a group. I fund and actively sow wild flower mixes and improve the land for these, bees and game, and for the pleasure of others. This effort contributes to my social wellbeing and meeting up with like minded people.
380. It takes me to wild and wonderful places where I can enjoy being in nature and benefiting from being in open spaces and exercise from the activity. I feel I am doing a service by controlling pest species in association with the shoots I am in association with and also try to promote wildfowl within the wildfowling clubs I am in. Being out and about on the marsh means we also keep an eye on potential issues such as poaching. Last of all I enjoy eating the game and wildfowl I have shot.
381. I get outside in the countryside and fresh air for whole days every week, no matter what the weather. This helps with exercise and my mental health from doing something I love with my gundog. The exercise has inspired me to lose weight and really improved my fitness levels. I've made new friends and the social aspect is important too.
382. Fresh air and exercise. Comradery with others who enjoy the same thing. Playing a part in supporting jobs for those who live in the countryside and look after the natural habitat for the benefit of all wildlife.
383. The ability to be out in the open air, surrounded by wildlife, scenery working my dogs with like

minded people and providing food for the table.

384. I started shooting when I was 16 on a syndicate shoot I could walk to from my home. Later I took over running that shoot and did so for 25 years. Now semi-retired in Anglesey I am a member of three syndicates and pick up for my nephew who runs a 2,000 acre estate. It's all about companionship, fresh air, community, a diversity of backgrounds and encouraging youngsters - all three syndicates involve the children of members as beaters. I have met many of my closest friends through shooting
385. Grew up in the countryside
386. It's a nature-connected lifestyle that takes me closer to our natural environment which in turn enables me to protect, conserve, maintain it, as well as personally benefitting my own health and providing food for the table.
387. Exercise for myself and dogs, watching wildlife
388. Exercise and the joy of working my dog's
389. I first took part in shooting sports as a beater almost 70 years ago. I still occasionally beat, go Wildfowling, pick up and am a syndicate member in two small self kept shoots. I feel that the work I have done creating cover and planting trees, having ponds dug out and maintained, and in feeding game strips regularly has had a significant positive impact on wildlife.
390. I shoot because I enjoy closeness to nature, relief of stress, total involvement, lots of fresh air and healthy exercise, free range low fat healthy meat to eat, great companionship, general feeling of wellbeing through involvement with farming, countryside and wildlife.
391. There are an enormous variety of benefits for both individuals and groups that arise from being involved in shooting. ie getting to understand wildlife, being in the countryside, socialising etc
392. Out of season we undertake a great deal of wildlife conservation work for the most part helping farms control pests such as foxes and corvids, repairing hedges, fencing and trimming woodland trails. Other conservation work includes maintaining the balance of predators to help protect small bird species and controlling local grey squirrel numbers. This work helps all members immensely as a function of the social interaction with the local community and the exercise we all get as a function of that work. At any time we can be called by farmers we know, local golf courses etc to undertake background work in the control of vermin etc. This work all brings a great deal of focus and pleasure to our lives as we have dogs to train and keep fit, plus as I have an interest in falconry, looking out for the local raptors is particularly rewarding. When in the woods spotting a Goshawk passing through is a real privilege that few get to enjoy. This work has taught me how to create wild places all over my smallholding as a result we have skylarks nesting, snipe and woodcock visiting during the winter, deer often cross my land, Sparrowhawks and Merlin are common visitors around the bird feeders. This is what shooting and conservation is all about, not the rubbish spouted by certain TV presenters that have no idea how we support nature.
393. We are trying to resurrect grouse shooting in mid Wales
394. The wildlife you see and the health benefits from walking miles over hills and meadows .and as my father once said to be a good hunter you have to be a good conservation of the game you hunt and help them out of season
395. Conservation, sourcing organic food, exercise, practicing ancient country lore, rights & tradition, pest management injecting cash into rural communities, businesses & the farming community.
396. Shooting occupies my winter months and is my main leisure activity through this time of the year. I shoot game and wildfowl. I live on game all the year round as I finish the season with my

freezers full. My main hobby through the summer months is fishing. it does not matter what the winter days bring our days are booked early and we go come what may. i tend to shoot smaller days as i like to remember everything i hit or miss through the day and if unfortunate enough to wound anything want the time to properly pick it up with my cocker spaniel.

397. I own let farming land in Mid Wales and also am part of a family syndicate that has sporting rights over a mid Wales grouse moor. I have spent considerable sums trying to improve the grouse moor habitat the overall area having been severely impacted and damaged by ploughing and forestry plantations since the mid 1970's which is on going. Although we go over the moor every year we have not shot it for many years as the stock levels are too low as the moor is quite isolated after the wholesale destruction of moorland in the immediate area. I also pay to feed pheasants and organise 1/2 rough days shooting each year. The average bag is 1 brace ! which can hardly be regarded as intensive shooting. The work we do on habitat retention etc benefits wildlife generally and with annual bags of c 1 brace we only shoot for the pot and the pleasure of a day out. We do make a real and positive difference to the wildlife and especially rare upland birds.
398. Shooting provides the complete day. The exhilaration of an outdoor pursuit in all weathers and all terrains. Involvement with a larger group of people in an uplifting and challenging sport. The camaraderie and shared experience in the natural world and finally taking home wholesome food to eat.
399. Love being out doors, been in around the farming community nearly all my life. Shooting has taught me how to respect wildlife as a whole. Through keeping balance between pest/ predators, protecting crops, live stock or other wildlife in general. I sincerely believe that shooting has a strong connection with conservation with in the countryside. And if shooting is restricted by harsher regulations then the ones in place, then I fear the countryside will suffer considerably in the future.
400. I get year round enjoyment from training my dogs typically every day which keeps them and me fit and mentally well adjusted. I use them for retrieving shot game in season. I practice shooting clay targets and take part in shooting wild and reared game enjoying the sport for its discipline, sociability and tradition. My winter would be dull and miserable without it. Most important aspects of the sport are carried out outdoors away from multitudes of people, which I like.
401. Without keeping the natural history of the countryside would be much reduced. I am a countryman and country sport is a way of life
402. The social element is key to this, I dont often see many other people on a week-to-week basis and I have grown up in the community of people who dont get to meet up alot in the rest of the year, the time we can go beating allows us to catch up, get exercise, share in our country stories and then at the end of the day, go for a meal together. I like to see wildlife and I help out with the keeping in the summer months where possible and this is more of the time when I am looking at increasing other species, the shooting side is merely the way in which we can afford to get permission for the land and gives purpose and structure to the conservation efforts. I dont think I would be outside in the winter otherwise if it wasnt for beating and pigeon shooting/ ferreting.
403. Plenty of exercise good company and banter with good natured people of all ages. Also able to improve the habitat and diversity for all wildlife on the land I shoot.
404. It's the joy of being in the countryside watching wildlife also rearing my birds for my falcons to fly at
405. Shooting provides me with the opportunity to get outdoors in green space that I wouldn't normally experience because I work in an office, it allows me to enjoy the countryside. It is an

opportunity to socialise and network with other like minded colleagues. It is a chance to view nature and see wildlife. It provides local employment as well.

406. Countryside born and bred, farming all my life. Have integrated with nature since I was able to walk. Was fortunate to play sports at a decent level Summer and Winter and since bowing out 20 years ago am completely engrossed in gundogs, deerstalking and some game shooting, where the banter and camaraderie takes me back to the sporting days!
407. The reasons why I enjoy shooting and it's associated activities is because of the Following: a) I get plenty of exercise whilst shooting as we are walking for about 5 hours on every shoot day. b) I enjoy the company of my shooting companions and occasional quests. c) When shooting I do not feel that I observe nature and my surroundings but I become a part of them. d) Outside of the shooting season we carry out conservation work. we shoot for 4 months and work for the rest of the time. e) I train and work my own dogs. f) We shoot and work more or less what ever the weather so get very regular exercise.
408. Gets me out of the house, meet up with friends old and new, working my dogs, exercise in the fresh air, appreciate the wildlife around me and our magnificent countryside. Helps the local economy as I stay away several nights a year to shoot away from home, mainly in Wales. Although I live on the Welsh/English border almost all of the shoots I participate in are in Wales.
409. Like all the wildlife
410. I don't benefit at all
411. A great social occasion in the fresh air with like-minded people that is mentally uplifting
412. My son is a game farmer and runs a shoot. There are huge financial benefits put into the local economy.
413. A pleasure to be out in the countryside, meeting with friends, seeing all kinds of wildlife, healthy lifestyle.
414. I love being in the countryside, the benefits are a feeling of wellbeing, I love shoot day in the company of my friends, I carry out the pest control on the shoot which has tremendous benefits to the ground nesting birds, we plant wildflower game crops which benefits all songbirds, the local pub benefits from us meeting for breakfast and a meal at the end of the day, we shoot 10 days rain or shine, shooting is a way of life for me
415. Social interaction, health benefits from walking on rough terrain, wildlife sightings.
416. I look forward to the shooting season every year it keeps me fit in mind and body. Apart from the exercise it's the social side with the boys and girls. It makes me appreciate the surrounding countryside which I have the privilege to live in
417. To start with there is the goal. By this I mean the focus on the target of a days shooting. This may be in the form of organising my workload to accommodate the day or more likely work with vigor and enthusiasm to be able to pay for the day. This has a positive impact on my employees wage packet and serves as a reminder to me of why I go out and do all the things I do. The anticipation of the forthcoming day helps keep my mind active and usually means a few phone calls to others therefore encouraging social interaction. As the day approaches, I will no doubt purchase some cartridges, a 'reasonable' amount of alcohol, some nibbles such as pork pies etc. Many people will benefit in some small way financially from my day shooting. Multiply this by many days and many colleagues and a not inconsiderable impact can be seen. On the day of a shoot my friends and I quite often take breakfast in a local pub or cafe or are fed and watered by catering staff at the shoot venue. Everyone is polite and accommodating. All very pleasant and a far cry from the disturbing scenes recently displayed on the front pages

of newspapers. I'm sure you know what I refer to. After introductions to many hard working people, my friends, foes and I head out and appreciate what is usually a display of wonderful skill and mastery by all evolved. From the well positioned rustic style in the hedge, lovingly constructed during the closed season to enable doddering old farts that in a previous life thought nothing of leaping a fence, to be able to reach their peg unaided. To the beaming faces of youngsters, perhaps on their first day as a beater. The joy of seeing someone else's dog misbehaving, ahh the list goes on. Clearly we are there to shoot, why else would game shooting be so called? I am sure, as many others are, an onlooker may be mistaken in calling our efforts 'game missing', but there we are. Yet more employment for my shooting coach and psychiatrist. However well or however poorly my friends and I have performed, the picker up team gather the shot game, dispatch any wounded birds and hang them ready for distribution later. Hopefully the weather has been kind, but even if not we have enjoyed the wonderful scenery, fresh air and company of many others. Just about everything we see in the countryside is shaped by mankind whether nurtured or allowed to grow free. So when we stand back and marvel at the view, we should remember, it is that way because of those people that live in it, work in it, play in it and love it. Just a note on the weather. I have a friend who often quotes. 'There is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing.' I disagree! The day tends to end with a meal, a drink or several and a whole load of rubbish being spoken with claims of unimaginable shots and accusations of poaching and so on. What fun!

418. I love the interaction of people and dogs, the variety of species on kept land, the interaction of me and my dog working a hedgerow, I walk more which is good for my health I enjoy the rain when out shooting and the wind which makes the birds flight. Then there is lunch with sympathetic people, the walk home to tea with the black birds call ushering you on in the gloaming to the light on the hill.
419. All sorts of people come together to enjoy the outdoors. The connection between nature and people is much greater in a world where people have completely lost touch with where food in general comes from. Natural wild/free food at its best that is cheap and very healthy. Conservation also is a massive incentive. All the ponds, woods, cover crops, rough areas that all help wildlife that would not be there if shooting wasn't happening. It would all have been bulldozed for commercial agriculture.
420. Enjoyment of good company in the countryside. I also enjoy and need the exercise along with my Labrador who looks forward to each day out more than I do.
421. I'm part of a DIY syndicate and i started shooting when I was 8 years old.
422. Exercising and socialising in a place where you can see all sorts of wildlife. Especially important in rural communities like there are in Wales. Great food source.
423. I started shooting at the age of 10, as a result I have spent a life time learning about the natural world, both flora and fauna. I have passed that knowledge on to my children, and will one day pass it on to my grand children. Shooters understand the importance of conservation and have a much greater connection with the countryside and all that lives in it.
424. I do pest control for the my local farmers, I shoot foxes/pigeons etc, I think it's very beneficial for the farming industry. I love shooting, it's my only hobby, it's great for exercising walking across acres of land, and just being in the fresh open countryside, There's no better feeling! Also, I find it very knowledgeable, you learn about different kinds of wildlife, and you learn new skills every time.
425. I would not get anything out of killing wild life for fun.
426. Exercise in the country with good friendship, being close to nature and enjoying the wildlife
427. Shooting in the Welsh borders is a lifeline for many many people. The taking of game for

eating is a small, but of course important element in the whole process. Shooting and the directly related conservation work has huge positive benefits to the natural ecosystem with shoot management the primary factor in farm bio diversity (which is often not something taken into account in productive agriculture) and predator control. There are also many benefits to the local area increasing tourism, providing direct and indirect employment to include shops, hotels, pubs and many more examples.

428. A combination of comradeship with my shooting friends, many of whom I have met through shooting, fresh air & exercise, the challenge of the shooting itself & the enjoyment of the shot game which I always process and cook myself. I am a member of a local syndicate shoot which operates on farm land within a 5 minute drive of my house, the shoot has been established for well over 40 years, and is an important part of the local village and a definite boost to the village pub where all meet up for a pre shoot breakfast and a meal at the end of the day at a time of year when trade would otherwise be quite slow. During the summer occasion work parties help keep everyone in touch with one another and the ages of the shot members & guests varies from those in their 20's to those in their 80's.
429. Seeing the benefits of conservation in its broadest sense through wildlife and habitat being actively managed.
430. I beat with my rescue Springer spaniel with a group of people we have trained with on a small friendly shoot where I get to see my dog doing what he's bred for and loving every second of it which makes me proud of our partnership. I also get to spend time with like minded people in the countryside and weather that I wouldn't experience otherwise. Beating makes winter more bearable for me.
431. I am aged 73 and a retired senior police officer. Since the age of ten my passion has been the outdoors and especially shooting, as a young man enjoying rough shooting and latterly both rough shooting and organised syndicate shooting. Forty plus years ago I and four others formed a syndicate shoot of 1400 acres in the Vale of Glamorgan and the syndicate remains today as probably the longest continually running syndicate in the area with currently 20 members, I being the only remaining founder member. Throughout this period I have trained and used my gun dogs and remain one of the two formal shoot tenants whilst throughout I have usually held the positions of Secretary, Treasurer or both. The pastime has provided me with unlimited access to land quite rich in wildlife, contact with many like minded people, many of which are now long term friends, and a relaxing environment away from a demanding and at times stressful life experience. During this time I have been able to engender an above average understanding of the outdoors in a number of my children and grandchildren which has helped to mould their own lives and appreciation of nature. Our shoot is extremely conservation minded and where possible have influenced the development of areas friendly to biodiversity, including the construction and maintenance of a number of large pond and wet areas. My long period of involvement on this land has witnessed great changes in farming activity aimed at increased efficiency but having a detrimental effect on habitat mainly resulting from the removal of many trees and hedgerows. Forty years ago the area was dotted with small copses on the edges of fields and these in general do not exist. We do what we can as a syndicate to mitigate what we think are activities detrimental to local conservation but our influence is limited, and I have long had the feeling that detrimental farming activity is the greatest risk to the natural environment and the success of any significant conservation activity will depend on government support and pressure and ultimately, the provision of generous, easily administered grants to farmers and landowners aimed at conserving and improving the natural environment - without these it is a steep uphill journey!!
432. I am a conservationist & environmentalist who is passionate about the flora and fauna of our countryside who sees the benefit for mental and physical health reasons which, as a person

makes me feel better that the quarry i shoot are then eaten by myself and family. This also helps the local people and economy

433. That I get a sense of community and identity from takeing part in shooting and country sports on both the English and Welsh sides of the boarder. That I feel it is a common thread that can unite and lead pepole to friendships that would otherwise not come about. That a great deal of conservation is done as a result and to no burden of the public purse. That gameshooting in all its forms is part of a brach of culture that reaches back to the earliest know works of art and recorded history. That game shooting alone forms a rich and varied culture, complete with traditions, literature, art, food and language. That cheap, abundant and high quality food is a result of the activity. Finally, that hunting features heavily in the national mythology of Wales, and that to seek to remove one of the few remaining branches of that would be to commit cultural vandalism.
434. Food for the table, social, exercise and health.
435. I am a farmer who rears and shoots wild game. The environment is greatly enhanced by the time and effort myself and my family put into maintaining the habitat for many species of birds and mammals.
436. Leave wildlife alone
437. I am a rifle shooter who was also a pistol shooter. I support game shooting and think it is the best way to conserve wild life.
438. I have been involved in country sports:- ie hunting shooting and fishing since I was 4 years old, I am now 68. I have made lifelong friends through this and not all of them partake themselves. These people are now worldwide and still keep in touch. Without my involvement my fitness, my knowledge of the countryside and the flora and fauna within would be greatly reduced. I teach youth groups the facts not fiction about their world outside their front door and some of those have taken up employment in countryside matters in Europe as well as the UK
439. I love being out with my friends and family exercising in the fields and being surrounded by nature. I run my own business and this gives me a hobby and focus outside of work.
440. Fresh food for the table
441. Enjoying the countryside knowing that my sport benefits the environment through the care and attention that I put in at my own time and cost for the enhancement of wildlife as nd biodiversity.
442. My well being. Looking after the country side and the wildlife and foma of the countryside. Under standing nature.
443. I enjoy shooting mostly for the social element and being in the great outdoors.
444. As a farmer you work alone so shooting is a way of mixing with people socially who have similar interests along with preserving wildlife. I get great pleasure in seeing a hatch of pheasants running across the fields.
445. Exercise, social interaction, mental stimulation pleasure from seeing working dogs do what is natural to them
446. I would explain the conservation benefits first with the other examples you refer to as important but secondary. Habitat maintenance and vermin control are very important if wildlife as a whole is to survive modern farming, including game species.
447. It's getting the whole family out to get some proper exercise together and to get a better understanding of our countryside. We are blinkered living close to these areas but not embracing them. It's about meeting the other people there and to see the joy on their faces

as the day can swing through all weathers. You really feel exhausted and happy with your day. Achievement. You quite often go home with some food too. Sustainable wild produce, grown locally, natural and healthy with a story linked in. We now understand that managed land can deliver so much more wildlife and keep people fed.

448. Every year, can't wait for the start of the season, from work the parties, to rearing the birds, to working the dogs, for the sportsmanship, to the friendships and banter, to the plate. in all weathers for the love of the sport.
449. I am originally from the city and was lucky enough to marry a country girl and was introduced to shooting and fishing. I have been actively involved in shoots for most of my life and love being out in the countryside and knowing that I am helping to conserve our fantastic wildlife via cover crops and habitat management. I have a great social life thanks to shooting and I have also been able to maintain a good level of fitness despite some serious health problems. I have endeavoured to shoot only released game as I feel that is a truly balanced approach to my sport. However, now that I own a small woodland I have come to understand the necessity to manage the population of some wildlife species (e.g. deer, wild boar and squirrels). I ensure that any deer or boar shot in my woodland are eaten by family and friends. I am hoping to find a part time employment in an educational department of a game or conservation organisation.
450. It provides me with a positive connection to wildlife and nature it enables me to work my gundogs which is allowing them to fulfill the the purpose of wht they were bred to do. Both myself and my dogs and my 14year old son positively all benefit from being in the great outdoors.and.feel less sanitised for doing so.
451. used to help previous keeper in this area. I do not do this with the current keeper because the style has changed to one I do not agree with. I.E less concern for nature and the environment and plastic waste, tyres, oil drums and plastic drums etc left around for years - in an A.O.N.B
452. It's a combination of several factors. There's the social aspects of gathering with friends and family, the health benefits of being in the fresh open air whilst also exercising. There's the fact that my actions and that of the other members of the team in carrying out extensive, all year round, care and maintenance of the shooting area is the the only reason why we see an ever increasing diversity of wildlife that simply wouldn't have a suitable habitat without our efforts. We also have seen a encouraging increase in youngsters helping out and learning about the wildlife around them. They learn about crops, habitat management etc etc as they go. This younger generation gain an interest that may well stay with them for life. Yes we shoot some of the birds that we rear but the 100's of other animals that benefit from our management of the land simply wouldn't stay and breed without the input that the Shoot community inputs.
453. What I get is that I am taking part in natural healthy pass time. That benefits the countryside through the conservation work linked to shooting. I am a wildlife ranger in work and I feel blessed to be able to manage our wildlife and conserve it for future generations
454. I am a member of a local 'self-help' shoot. The members manage the land and the birds etc. I enjoy the outdoor exercise in real country. I enjoy the sport and the camaraderie of the eclectic membership. I eat what I shoot and do not shoot what I would not eat. I believe the birds have genuine free range opportunities, are well looked after and c50% survive the season. I enjoy looking after the poults and managing the woodland, which is well maintained and we fit in with the local farm community. It is a well organised, safe and enjoyable country pastime.
455. I don't get pleasure out of shooting, i do it to keep the wild rabbit population from destroying our sports field.
456. Maintaining habitat woodland etc.
457. Exercise, social mixing, watching dogs working

458. Wellbeing - one of very few winter activity outdoors. Sociable, physical, almost regardless of the weather. Involves interaction between all levels of social standing as the sport has unique appeal to all those taking part regardless of background to income. I am now retired but have been involved in country pursuits since the age of five. I value it extremely highly.

Tell us your views

1. This is something that has gone on in the countryside for centuries and as a result the countryside benefits from being managed sympathetically. Vermin is kept at bay so allowing other species to thrive. If it was banned then I would have my Winter weekends ruined and my daughter comes along now and has given her confidence around others and something we can share together. There is little else like this that is available
2. if the Welsh Minister banned shooting the impact would be huge all the money that could be spent in Wales will be spent in England
3. the various places would become overgrown thickets with much less wildlife and no one going there and the farms would no doubt clear them and turn them back into grass or other crops or grow thick conifers it would be a disaster and I would have to go elsewhere to carry out my interests meaning much less revenue to the Welsh economy I personally probably spend over £10,000 a year in Wales alone
4. If shooting was banned there would be a considerable void in my life. Particularly in the winter when it is the only opportunity I get to mix with others and gain exercise and stimulation from the outdoors. Mixing isn't just the shooting it is also the getting together with friends and the social life ie the lunches the drinks, and the dinners. In the countryside, unlike the town or city, there are few opportunities to meet with those in the community in the fresh air for an extended period and shooting is the main one in the winter.
5. The result on farmers not being able to control vermin on their land would be really bad as for all the people who work on shoots and part of the back room staff would be put out of work
6. I'd have dogs sat in kennels missing what they do best I'd be without a lot of exercise and fresh air which I'm sure wouldn't be healthy
7. if he did so it would be an infringement on my rights as a sporting right and landowner it would impact longer term on our use and enjoyment of the property and would reduce the incentive to invest in habitat and wildlife protection and in the area generally I would also like woodpigeon to be made a quarry species so that one can enjoy eating pigeon pie. Unfortunately despite the general license one is no longer allowed to shoot pigeons unless it is to protect crops.
8. Wildlife is looked after and protected by shooters who look after the countryside
9. The large area we manage, including woodland would become overgrown and wildlife would decline. Quite considerably I believe.
10. Wildlife life will suffer, habitats will suffer and diversity lost. Just some simple things such as making water available boosts the diversity of an area. The winters will be grey and a natural harvest lost along with a country pursuit that joins communities together. I was involved in raising money for the GWCT through shoots. 20% was passed back to the shoots to give to local good causes. One gave a computer projector to the local school. I went with the shoot manager when the projector was given to the school. When we stood at the school gate in the morning waiting for the headmaster, the shoot host said hello to every mother dropping their child to the school as they were all connected to the shoot in some way, catering, accommodation, dogs, beaters etc. A real community in Wales.
11. people who, try to ban, hunting, shooting and fishing really don't understand it at all, it's not about killing things, it provides extra food, habitat and conservation to the countryside
12. Whilst not living in Wales I am a regular visitor and greatly enjoy the wonderful landscape and shooting not only gives access to some very special locations but also enables them to remain sustainable.

13. i would be stuck in and not go anywhere
14. Pest species eg fox, grey squirrels, rabbits, rats, and some corvids would multiply rapidly. Ground nesting birds eg curlew woodcock as well as hares would suffer badly and their numbers would plummet.
15. It would be bad for the environment. Song bird numbers would decrease Village pubs would have a loss of revenue Local shops would suffer I would lose an ethically produced food source
16. More arable crops will be destroyed by local wildlife)
17. Less conservation, leading to an impact on wildlife, less winter exercise outdoors, less social interaction, an impact on health and well being.
18. I would see an increase of predators with all the pit falls that would bring many of our ground nesting birds would be impacted without management many species of wildlife would be under pressure. As someone that enjoys the countryside it would affect my health keeping fit and interaction with like minded people
19. If shooting stops other wildlife will suffer because there would be no feeding throughout the winter months and nesting birds would be predated by corvids. My health would also suffer due to lack of exercise and social interaction
20. If shooting were to be banned my life would be significantly poorer and so would our rural community. The conservation work I do on a voluntary basis would come to an end and the habitats I cherish would be at risk.
21. I would personally ignore such a ban!!! work very hard to be able to enjoy my hobbies and would not take lying down prejudice brought about by ignorance. I've seen such downright ignorance and prejudice with the hunting act and hope people would fight any attempt by the one party state in Wales
22. This would be a negative move and harm wildlife shooting is a way to support conservation
23. Wildlife would decline. Lack of employment in rural areas My exercise would go down & I would meet so many fewer people
24. I would simply ask the minister to look at our Welsh moorlands where no wildlife management is being undertaken and look at the Yorkshire and Scottish where they are managed for game and look at the difference in wildlife numbers
25. Jobs would be lost, rural income reduced and biodiversity and rare habitats would suffer
26. You would anybody want to ban hunting for your food? Surely that's a choice everyone should have?
27. Apart from personal disappointment the countryside would miss out on the management that goes on behind the scenes in looking after a shoot territory.
28. The impact on wildlife in our area if shooting was stopped would decline significantly The control of grey squirrels would cease along with fox control which would put a strain on the wild bird population. It would also mean that I could go for two to three weeks without having any social interaction with others.
29. Shooting adds significantly to the local economies where it takes place.
30. I would object as it is nothing to do with them
31. It would be very disappointing for me and the whole membership. I believe it would be felt by many others in the area which has many such Clubs, many of which provide employment opportunities. I would be sad to give it up for health reasons as do not have the same capacity to walk the hills the way I have in the past and the shooting and land management provide an

incentive to walk (about 4-5 miles on an average shooting day). I would certainly see less of the members who come from a wide radius whilst I am local to the shoot which is in glorious countryside.

32. This would destroy a “farmers syndicate” that has been running for over 40 years. It would affect people from all walks of life, not all of them wealthy, having a huge impact on their social life. It will reduce stewardship of the countryside. It will adversely effect thee viability of our village pub which we use for post shoot meals on a weekly basis from end of October to February, a time when the pub’s trade tends to be reduced.
33. There is no doubt that personal health and social interaction would be immensely damaged by a ban. The wildlife would definitely suffer as many habitats that support, wildlife such as snipe, woodcock and small birds would be impacted. The birds that we breed each year as part of our activities support the whole local wildlife spectrum. For example we only shoot around 50% of the pheasants we rear the remainder support local predators and raptors, in addition the work we undertake to provide good habitats for these birds benefits all creatures indirectly as the whole local food chain is supported by this input as well as the habit improvement that is undertaken. People do not realise that the scenes they enjoy in the countryside are created over many years by ourselves working in teamwork with farmers and country land owners. The financial damage to to countryside would also be huge as people visiting for any type of field sport bring money to the area in all sorts of ways from the purchase of food to rental of accommodation, which goes a long way to support the hospitality industry and local community in the area
34. I feel we benefit wildlife in general through habitat and predator control. Without this wider wildlife will in no doubt loose out. It is difficult to explain what motivates us to get involved in field sports, especially to non shooters. But for me it's not just about the harvesting of game, but the whole life style benefit it gives from experience with nature/wildlife which never fails to amaze me, to the local and social scene that the camaraderie of a day in the field gives to all involved. for me personally a ban would impact on our whole family, both physically and mentally. Because as a syndicate we all interact on many different levels, make friends for life and learn so much from each other.
35. Unfortunately us humans have created a countryside that needs to be managed. We do indeed get things wrong as well as right. Recent protection of certain species has led to the demise of others. Without management of any kind, nature will indeed thrive . However the distribution of certain species, whether animal or vegetable will change. The extinction of certain species will occur. This may be ‘natural’, but will we look upon this world and find it pleasing? I fear not. I do not relish the thought of mourning that which we have lost. We have the countryside that was shaped and handed down to us by our forefathers. I would like to see that passed on once again to the next generation. Farming, conservation money and willpower can achieve this. Shooting is an extremely important part of this, it is self financing and has a common goal, with environmental sustainability as part of its very fabric. The physical and mental effect of being part of this community, to me, is invaluable.
36. Regulate it not ban it
37. I think any decisions regarding banning shooting should be evidence driven. It should not be influenced by ideological or political opinions.
38. Shooting with friends brings a camaraderie that I have never really experienced in any other walk of life. This brings an enhanced level of well being for all involved. Also, many species of wildlife that are just clinging on in Wales are found almost exclusively on land managed for shooting. This is no co-incidence; the habitat management and predation control carried out by game managers is what these species need. Curlew and black grouse come to mind in this

regard, but there are many other species of wildlife that benefit too. Even the wildfowling groups to which I belong carry out beneficial habitat works to encourage breeding birds, despite the fact that most of their harvest is from winter migrants that do not breed in Wales.

39. A ban on shooting would greatly impact on my physical activity and social life, shooting and hunting having played a major part in my life for the past 45 years
40. There would be a negative impact all around. Vulnerable species would suffer from a lack of predator control, supplementary feeding and habitat maintenance. Personally, my mental health would suffer, as well as my social life, and the amount of exercise my dogs and I get on a regular basis.
41. I feel that shooting and the countryside are intertwined. If people do not have the incentive to interact in the countryside particularly during the colder/darker winter months the countryside becomes devoid of life. There are obvious benefits to habitat improvement which wildlife benefits from.
42. I feel that many parts of the rural life of the countryside would be lost along with a large amount of revenue and employment. Personally I would be lost as nothing else would interest me quite the same.
43. I would be disappointed as this will not only have a massive effect on me but also to the local economy
44. I'd be very disappointed if shooting was banned in Wales. As a visitor rather than resident I'm sure that my visits to Wales would become a once in ten year event rather than almost annual. Clearly all the local people involved in producing a day's shooting would lose the opportunity to socialise in a very convivial atmosphere and in many cases their employment.
45. It would be a devastation of all the hard work as keepers do to improve the countryside environment and leave all vermin run ragged until there is nothing left, protecting apex predators is not the way forward
46. If shooting was banned, biodiversity would decline as it has e.g. on the Long Mynd in Shropshire where there used to be grouse, curlew and merlin and now there is little except carrion crows. I would have less chance to visit the beautiful country or to meet the countrymen and women who make it what it is.
47. It is my view that shooting is a legal and respectable pastime that has wider reaching benefits than just shooting birds. It teaches people to respect the environment and to nurture our countryside and the animals living in it. Shooting needs healthy areas of countryside and so the activity preserves areas for wildlife that would otherwise be unproductive. We must remember that our country has no wilderness left and without the shooting community managing ground for game and thus also for wildlife, there would be much less ground suitable for our wildlife.
48. I have a spinal disability and the exercise I get through shooting and associated conservation work enables me to remain fit for work. Before I was involved with shoots I struggled especially during the Winter and very nearly lost the ability to work and pay my way. The positives, both mental and physical, shooting brings to me I could not get elsewhere and without it I would go under, not be able to pay my way in the world and I would become a burden on the taxpayer and NHS as I would not be able to effectively manage my disability
49. No other interaction unless it is shoot related. The management of vermin also benefits threatened species
50. Less money would be coming into the moorland so it wouldn't be managed so well to protect it. I would suffer mentally if shooting was banned as autumn can be when I get depression, and the exercise and being in nature prevents that. If shooting was banned, I would have no other

way of being connected to my wider community.

51. The science shows that biodiversity would decline and that makes me feel wretched. I would also lose my huge circle of shooting friends and my fitness would seriously fall. I can average 8-10 miles on a shoot day. I had a well woman check this year and I was told I have the heart of a 35 year old and I'm 52 ! And my dogs are bred and trained for this life.
52. The countryside has evolved over many generations due to human input. The same level of input is required to maintain the diversity on the ground and if left to itself the habitat will overtime become barren of some of our most endangered wildlife
53. On our shoot we do a lot of conservation work like Gray squirrel eradication and create habitat for nature. We are on the shoot all year and that means we are socialising and active.
54. wildlife would be less. I would be shocked and dismayed less social gathering less exercise in winter
55. Please refer to my previous paragraph
56. The beautiful landscapes of Wales owe their existence, in the main, to the endeavours of people. There is however no single, sensible, coherency to the narrative that has given rise to their existence. History allows us the freedom of hindsight and the ability to join dots with connections that might never have been, but the reality is we have a landscape that reflects the truly intimate and often complicated relationships between people and place. The coppiced woodlands, heather moorlands, willow clad river banks, villages and churches might stare us in the face but it's the stories that underpin their existence that really bring them to life. Without an understanding of the story behind the landscape I can enjoy the view, but appreciate very little. Many of our most treasured landscapes owe their special qualities to historical management associated with shooting. Sweeping woodland drives, the patchwork of heather moorland, isolated copses, or the seed rich cover crops dotted across upland grasslands are all products of game management. Shooting providers in Wales spend millions pounds a year on conservation work and have management responsibilities over thousands of hectares. This is a significant opportunity to get things right. Of more than 6,000 species that have been assessed using modern Red List criteria, more than one in ten are thought to be under threat of extinction in the UK. The added value of shooting to wider land management, and conservation in particular, is significant and has greater potential still. We need a mature discussion that moves us on from often polarised debates to an agreement over the landscapes we want, the landscapes we need to survive, and the drivers and levers we have to collectively ensure we get there. One of those levers is our approach to shooting; an activity that has an important place in the rural economy and a role to play in helping nature recover. The impact of large scale pheasant release on the Welsh countryside is a subject worth investigating. As an unregulated industry the risk of poor practice is significantly high, especially as rural estates struggle to develop a viable business model in a post EU Britain. However, the appetite for developing sustainable business models for rural estates, aligned with environmental principles, is high. The opportunities therefore are manifold to support an industry that has the potential to produce high quality, free range food, in a way that not only supports local rural business but also helps people connect to nature, gives them an opportunity to exercise in the open air for no cost, promotes social cohesion, and importantly provides an opportunity for the private sector to actively support the regeneration of natural systems. If shooting was banned, the impact on rural communities and the environment would be profoundly negative. That is not to say that poor shooting practices shouldn't be outlawed, or the incentives for managing shoots badly removed. The opportunities that clearly exist for shooting to make a meaningful contribution to the nation and its environment would be lost.
57. All I can say is that I enjoy being out and about in Wales but if shooting were banned I would

not be in Wales very often. The rural community in Wales would thus be poorer from a commercial aspect as I would not be bringing funds into the countryside which is already short of business.

58. the wildlife would be lost
59. A ban on shooting would not benefit wildlife in my or any other area, in fact, I believe the opposite to be the case. I have always held the view that education is the key to understanding. People must be persuaded to understand the wider benefits to health and well being that shooting and conservation provides for man and beast alike.
60. There would be an increase in predators detrimental to wildlife. I would not have the incentive to get out year round and keep active, and would miss the opportunity of social interaction. I am actively involved with the GWCT.
61. Devastating it is our right and all ways has been. The country side would be worse off
62. I think it would be damaging for the rural economy, I also think it would create unemployment and social unrest and illegal behaviour as people would poach etc.
63. I believe the banning of shooting in Wales would be an absolute disaster for the country. A major loss of revenue from visitors, loss of employment, reduction in livestock productivity and degradation of natural habitat.
64. If shooting was banned I feel there would be an increase in predator numbers, both ground and air borne, with a knock on effect of reduction in wildlife diversity. There would likely be a significant decline in the health and wellbeing of those living in the countryside and also those that are involved who live in urban locations. The level of exercise that is taken during shooting activities is very unlikely to be replaced with other means throughout the year and specifically in winter. There are minimal other opportunities for the diversity of people that come together on a shooting day to meet up and interact. There would also be the economic aspects that are impacted with the rural accommodation, country and farm supply stores. There would be a significant number of jobs lost for people working in the sector as well.
65. It's a disgrace to the rural people. It's often their bread and butter, their social life and exercise all in one. It's creating laws to please folk in urban areas who feel like they're disgruntling toffs when in reality they're taking away livelihood and opportunity from working class people.
66. The countryside would not be managed which would be both detrimental for both people and wildlife
67. I would be delighted that wildlife is being protected.
68. For one the wildlife population would be over run. I've been shooting for most of my life, it's a normal everyday activity for me, if that was taken away it would cause a drastic effect on me. It's taking me out of my routine, it's a way of life. The winter is my favourite time to be out with shooting, set up with the shotgun flask of tea of side, walking around the fields it's a feeling listening to the wildlife, that a feeling that none shooters wouldn't understand. And it's not always about the shooting it's the social side of it, even if you don't go shooting with a club or groups (like me) I have become very close to the farmers I shoot for and have that interaction with them is great! I learn new things off them all the time! And it gives me great pleasure to know that I'm helping them and their livestock out!
69. Proper management of the countryside for the benefit of all is a complex matter. Shooting is as much a part of this balance as farming or forestry and should not be dismissed as cruel without a full and considered examination of the facts including conservation, employment and welfare of birds and animals.

70. My main passion is the countryside and all it's beautiful wildlife and colours. When out shooting I feel so much more aware of the sights and sounds around me. I enjoy meeting friends sometimes, this is the only time I see them from year to year.
71. The issues on mental health may not be good (for all of the shooting community). Winter exercise would fall Would not have pets that are part of the hobby The need to manage wildlife and promote areas of flora and fauna would decline. Wildlife watching benefits would reduce
72. There are parts of our countryside that are not suitable for tourism .with the decline in agricultural incomes many farmers have developed an portfolio income, subsidising the agriculture with working as beaters, pickers up and loaders, as well as letting shooting rights. Added to this is the social and emotional wellbeing of taking part in the shoots in what can be a very isolating time of year.
73. the impact would be serious and destroy a tradition of Gamekeepers who have looked after wildlife on the land that they are guardians of. Shooting and conservation do go hand in hand and it would be a loss to countryside if their was a Ban.
74. Wild life would inevitably suffer Social interaction, which is difficult in bad weather, would diminish Physical and emotional health would suffer and a weekly 5 mile walk over rough ground would disappear
75. I ran a shoot myself for 10 years and it wasn't just the shooting it was building new pens catching up cutting new rides which involved not just myself but the beaters and the picking up team,as for wildlife the farm where we were based said that they had not seen so many different species of birds in years mainly due to the rides we had cut and the feeders we had down.
76. On a personal level it would be a huge loss - both from an exercise and social point of view. It would have an even bigger effect on the land, as so much time is spent clearing thorn and brambles to all UK trees like oak/elm/etc to flourish, and this support extents to all the wildlife that live across the shoot area eg hares, birds of prey, etc
77. Unwarranted restriction of my social life and lifestyle
78. a KEY PART OF THE WINTER CALENDER
79. I would be devastated, The shooting season is the only thing that keeps me going through the winter months
80. My personal life would suffer through lack of exercise and above all reduction in social contact. More important would be reduction in environmental quality and loss of species in this area
81. my mental health would suffer badly if they ban we bread the game we shoot
82. if abolished it would be ridiculously bad for Wales, Welsh Heritage, Conservation and the local rural economy. it would be a great shame to lose such a fantastic sport
83. If the Welsh Government continues with its passion to stop shooting and hunting in Wales, i would be most disappointed. I do not feel that decisions are being made on the science, but more on bias, prejudice and an anti-shooting fraternity who have infiltrated the Welsh Government to help bring about the demise of shooting and hunting causing 'Death By A Thousand Cuts'. I do not feel that some of these Welsh Labour Politicians are true Labour people, and are unlike the true people from the communities they are supposed to represent. If shooting were banned I would be devastated as I feel I have always been a hard working individual, who has always contributed taxes and income to the UK and Welsh economies, I have never been unemployed or claimed dole, un-yet I do feel that my small voice is not being

listened to by Welsh Labour, and I guess a classic example of what I mean by this is how the majority of Welsh constituencies voted to leave the EU, un-yet their Welsh Labour politicians failed to listen to them, thought they knew better and carried on with their own agendas. As a result, Labour were crushed in the UK elections. I appreciate that the aforementioned comment on the EU is irrelevant to shooting, but is an example of how Labour and Welsh Labour have become arrogant and are out of step and touch with honest hard working, law abiding shooting folk. If Welsh Government continues on the path it currently seems to be taking it will ultimately destroy shooting and country pursuits in Wales. This will have damaging effects on the rural economy, and social wellbeing of all associated with country sport activities. We will have less diversity and long-standing traditions will be killed off. I and all of my shooting colleagues and friends will be extremely sad should the Welsh Government continue to harm shooting as it is currently doing. As a taxpayer I should be entitled to use public land for shooting which I through my taxes have helped to pay for. I hope that your lobbying of Welsh Government does have some small effects on influencing and educating ministers to act on scientific evidence and not emotion, bias and prejudice.

84. It would be like cutting off my arms and legs. Shooting is not all about killing something, it reaches out far more than that. I really would not have anything else to do.
85. It's my way of life!
86. If there was a shooting ban enforced in Wales, it would be devastating for wildlife .Prey animals would suffer from predators i.e ground nesting birds, song birds from corvids, rats and other predators, disease from over populations .The other side of a ban would be the affects on my general health and wellbeing, apart from work mates I have very few friends other than people I go shooting with.
87. It would be a huge loss to the rural economy, it would have a hugely detrimental effect on the bird life and wildlife in general and it's habitats. On a personal level it would take away my main source of exercise and social activities.
88. I think it would have a massive effect on not only my social life but the ecology of the areas that I shoot. My main exercise through winter is walking on shoot days, be that beating or picking up. I think the knock on effect on the pub industry, game dealers and country stores would be profound
89. The first thing to go with shooting would be the management of productive and un-productive agricultural land with a view to bio diversity. The reality of farming is it has to be sustainable and make money, therefore it is unlikely wildlife would be put at the heart of their objectives as it is with shooting as there are both economic and environmental rewards with shooting, but not so much with farming (financial reward comes with increased production...). It would also create huge loss to the income of rural communities, game keepers, farmers, shops, hotels, pubs.
90. The exercise I get threw shooting and training and working my dogs all year round there would be no motion to go out the friendship of like minded people
91. By shooting i keep the predators ie foxes, carrion etc numbers under control, this benefits wildlife to thrive, also it keeps my fitness and emotional levels up. This could not be achieved espessially to local wildlife, if shooting was to stop.
92. All things mentioned above are really important. I don't think many people understand perhaps the solitary life style of many rural occupations especially through the winter. The effect of banning yet another rural pastime will undoubtably have a detrimental effect on mental health to some parts of the rural community. The Welsh Government needs to understand that it represents every one and not just those that make the most noise.
93. Personally, due to health issues, I would be greatly affected in an adverse way if shooting was

banned. I am a heart patient and thoroughly enjoy working my spaniels, in fact if I had to choose I would rather work the dogs than shoot. Also a large proportion of my opportunities to socialise with friends would be diminished. As someone who originally came from a city I know that most city dwellers would have no idea of the importance of the opportunity for rural folk to gather and chat and enjoy each other's company whilst pursuing their chosen sport. Quite frankly, excepting the social media keyboard warriors and other self-proclaimed Guardians of the Galaxy who peddle lies and fake news, I truly believe most city dwellers do not view shooting or fishing as a priority for change in their lives.

94. It's been apart of country life and don't think the country side would be the same without it! It's a get away for some people who other wise wouldn't have anything to do, time to relax, socialise, different types of shooting have different impact on the country side and some are needed to help maintain it.
95. If shooting were banned there would be a dramatic loss of habitat improvement and maintenance provided by the shooting fraternity at no cost to the public purse. In remote rural areas the economic impact on livelihoods and businesses would be enormous. The loss of the benefits in health terms of participating in active sports in the fresh air across all social classes would be irreplaceable.
96. I have worked in conservation for half of my life and feel that the conservation organisations have failed the wider countryside concentrating on managing reserves. Natural diversity on shooting areas is greater than on the wider countryside.
97. I would loose my job, farmers would lose some income, local businesses would also make a loss
98. the impact of the social isolation due to corona virus has caused many people to suffer from menatal health problems - banning shooting would have a similar impact on rural communities the exercise and enjoyment from being outside would be lost it is also our way of life - it would be banning a very large part of who we are
99. I can vividly remember the last Saturday before the hunting act came into force and trying to imagine how I would feel if shooting was banned, it would mean so many different things.the first thing to suffer would be the small bird population we put out over 20 ton of wheat and 4 ton of maize continuing right through till the end of April combine that with no wild bird mixes planted over six acres and you can see the affect it will have on wild life.obviously I would miss the company of friends some of over 50 years of shooting, beating and picking up
100. In terms of my rough shooting, I would be completely lost. I also think my dogs would be lost as they love the day as much as I do. I think you would lose more woodland, and the amazing habitats we have for the visiting woodcocks would be lost. In terms of the fowling, the conservation work that goes in to maintain the habitats, and the knowledge that the older generation have and are now passing on to me would be lost. We're it not for my interest in fowling I'd have no knowledge of other amazing birds such as the curlews and the lap wings.
101. Due to management of ecosystems for shooting huge increase in wild song bird and management of pests
102. Banning shooting would be catastrophic to wildlife, 90% of the environmental schemes used on farms and estates we shoot are to provide suitable habitat for game. Without shooting, this habitat would be lost, resulting in a reduction of biodiversity and increase in predation of all animals. Commercial farming is not environmentally friendly, the extra income generated by shooting enables landowners to participate in environmental stewardship. The biggest problem we see is the lack of ecological awareness. There has not been "the balance of nature" in the UK since man started farming, nothing in the UK is "natural", our whole environment has been created by human intervention and requires human input to flourish. Take farmland birds,

the highest numbers were when there were more gamekeepers and less destructive farming methods. A ban on shooting will see the immediate decline of many species. The change in the Welsh general licenses are already having a heavy impact on song bird populations. Shooting helps maintain a social group of enthusiasts, who actually understand ecology. This is a whole group of knowledge that would be lost. Land management should not be driven by emotion and ideology,

103. Cartridges are very expensive and generally only targets something in its sight, whereas poison is relatively cheap but indiscriminate.
104. As I have retired and my friends and social circle are still in work. An end to shooting would deprive me of any social interaction over the winter months. I control goose infestation on farmland and should this cease the damage to crops will be substantial.
105. My initial reaction is unprintable, God help wildlife. What they cannot seem to understand is that it is those who fish and shoot are the most effective guardians of our rivers and countryside.
106. The impact of Coronavirus has adversely affected the balance of nature. Predation has increased as the control of vermin stalled for many weeks. There is no good reason to stop shooting other than the blinkered bias of anti-shooting politicians who do not understand the countryside and its needs. My health would suffer as there would be no drivers in my life to get outdoors.
107. Wildlife in general declining, huge loss to the rural economy not just to shoot but all sectors of hospitality, hotel, food outlets, clothing, fuel. Employment in rural areas decreasing.
108. Game shooting/imported game shooting/Grouse shooting/ purely for profit and indifferent of the effects of these shoots on indigenous wildlife should be banned.
109. My passion is my dog's spaniels and retrievers and through them I get to meet such a broad spectrum of people so I would lose out massively.
110. I would strongly object. We have lived on our farm for many generations and have always done shooting for both pleasure and pest control. Shooting helps the rural economy as well as getting us all to exercise.
111. Shooting, beating and picking up are a way of life and a living.
112. I would say that more than ever the divide between town and country has never been so vast, and interaction with nature is at its lowest, a walk in the woods with a dog and a gun beats anything a screen can offer, to ban it would be a breach of human rights but more importantly a huge blow to our wellbeing.
113. Do even want to think of the consequences of such an absurd idea the countryside needs to be managed.
114. Wildlife diversity would disappear as the food chain would diminish and the top end of the food chain would dominate. I would lose the place where I relax and find enjoyment as well as challenge...it is a place where I meet new friends and exchange views on a number of wide-ranging subjects.
115. It would make my life more isolated as we live in a rural community.
116. It would be really depressing particularly the devastating effect on people's livelihoods and the rural economy. I would say it as a completely witless proposal with no regard whatsoever for unintended consequences especially the detriment to conservation of wildlife and the landscape.
117. I am horrified to even think a ban would be contemplated. It would be a naive, myopic move by an urban-centric mindset pandering to a section of the community that has no real understanding of the countryside or conservation. It would be arrogant, ill-informed, prejudiced and harmful.

118. The wildlife would suffer and I would lose my passion in life and not get to gather together with our friends doing what we love
119. There would be no winners, economies would suffer wild life would be dominated by predators and in a few years the public would want to know why
120. It would be a great loss to my way of life and impact on my physical health
121. It's always been known that hunting is a part of Welsh heritage as I was shown as a small boy it's not just about the hunt as most times nothing is caught but the exercise is great and I'm a great believer that true huntsmen only shoot things that they can put on the table for their family's to eat such as rabbit pheasant and deer if you hold the correct licence for and all huntsmen help the farmers out when they are in time of need such as hay and silage which this connection with the land and nature would be lost if hunting was ever to stop
122. If shooting is banned it will have a massive effect on wildlife
123. The shoot provides a centre of gravity for all our lives. I see more like minded people on Saturday than I do in church or the village pub. They are seen as essential attributes of a community but the local shoot that attracts more people and a wider range of ages is somehow unnecessary, it doesn't make sense.
124. We must protect our sporting shooting heritage! A ban on shooting would adversely affect many rural communities and individuals alike. The end product of our activities is actually consumed. There is a need to further promote the eating of game
125. I am disabled, I live alone, shooting is my only hobby, my only form of exercise, I have very little social life other than when shooting with friends. I would be devastated if things were to prevent all this.
126. I think the Welsh Minister should be very careful. The economic and commercial advantages to Wales let alone the conservation ones are significant. I am afraid shooting brings money into Wales during the quieter winter months and following Covid 19 Wales should not put itself at a economic disadvantage just on a political whim! we run a holiday complex with a six bed and four bed holiday lets and shooting parties were part of our business plan for the much quieter winter months.
127. If shooting was banned I believe that it would have a negative impact on the rural community and local rural economies. Shooting supports many jobs on a local basis including accommodation and catering industries, it also serves to draw people to visit parts of rural Mid Wales. If shooting were banned this would result in removing a very important part of rural Welsh tradition and culture, something that I believe is very important to maintaining our identity as a nation. Habitat and wildlife is maintained and encouraged as a result of shooting activities. For example because of predator control more herbivorous species can be seen on the land.
128. as I said in my earlier statement, this would have an absolutely massive impact on my wellbeing as I would have no real form of stress relief that comes with my line of work.
129. I think that the impact it would have on wild birds the local pubs and hotel that rely on shooting to help them through the winter the pleasure and exercise our beaters and pickers up get
130. It's a country side tradition. only people from the town's moving into the country side are against it.
131. If shooting would get banned who would manage the land and keep the population of vermin down and there will be a lot of people out of a job and a lot more marriages in my eyes would end in fail
132. If the rabbit population was left unchecked, damage to the fields would increase dramatically.

133. At present I can go to various farms to communicate with the farmers and get plenty of information regarding the country side and what's happening in the local communities,if the consultations findings go against Welsh game shooting I will loose all my connection with the country side and wild life.
134. Beaters tend to be the older and younger members of society. A wonderful mix of personalities.
135. Never mind what I would lose, The countryside would lose as the cost of what we do voluntarily to support our sport could not be afforded by the government and the usual story [budget cuts]etc would be rolled out to justify funding withdrawal.
136. It would be deviating to my health it get me out walking
137. A ban on shooting would be catastrophic for businesses and for wildlife. I have already given the example of the moorland near my home. In addition to grouse shooting to provide income there is a vital need to control predators in order to protect ground nesting birds.
138. It would be a very sad day. "Walking up wild game (woodcock, pheasant etc) has been a very long standing traditional activity on our hill land and if it were to be prohibited it would be a great loss to the fabric of this rural area. It would also have an adverse impact on the management of the woodland.
139. I feel the amount of varied wildlife would decrease significantly. From a social and health perspective I would be sat at home on a wet miserable winters morning, so from a mental and physical point of view its inevitably very positive. As being from a very rural mid Wales there are not alot if anything for outdoor and social events, that brings extra well needed money into the local economy .
140. shooting is my life, I was brought up on a farm and without being able to do it I can't imagine.....
141. I'd say; why do you want to stop the people who are truly at one with nature? Who help conservationists and who know what real nature is
142. It would ruin my life; cause environmental catastrophe, mental health illness, negative impact to people in rural communities
143. The impact would be huge. I personally would be devastated. The end of a way of rural life. Here in Mid Wales and the Welsh Border it is so important. Our local pub has had up to 6 different shoots in there in an evening!!!
144. Would be terrible for social interaction, local economy's and health benefits.
145. Vermin would overrun, and cause the weaker wildlife to either die o'r be pushed out of their habitat, as well as increased damage/loss to farm stock and crops. It would be a huge blow to my health and happiness not to be able to partake in a sport that i love.
146. There remains in some of us the genes of the hunter. It is not right for anyone to snatch away the heritage of thousands of years just for someone's own bias. Many of us deride value for our well-being by being at one with nature; at a time when many suffer from SAD. As one with heart problems, shooting helps to keep me both physically and mentally healthy during the short days of winter.
147. Loss of exercise, freedom to act as normal being compromised
148. The thought of a ban on shooting fills me with dread.It would take away a great part of my life and not only me but the majority of my family and friends.The countryside would be the poorer without the work that the shooting community puts in.The flora and fauna would loose out considerably.The industries which support the shooting community would also miss out.I fear that the national government would have little input into the life of shooting in Wales. As the

devolved government has handed over all responsibility for shooting to NRW which on past history has very little knowledge of shooting in Wales or is in any way helpful.

149. The wildlife of today is not ours to dispose of as we wish. We have it in trust for those who follow us. The Rural and fieldsports communities are best equipped to progress these famous words of King George, after all we've been doing it for nearly two centuries.
150. For many of us it's a way of life, being out in the fresh air in all weathers throughout the year, it keeps us fit is of great interest to most youngsters. If shooting stops the their will be a major change in countryside ie woodland and land management management many jobs will go and the hospitality industry will be affected. There is a good social atmosphere and lots of business is done on the shooting field
151. The wildlife habitat would undoubtedly be lost Probably to some building enterprise who would look to utilise any green space not seen to be utilised for some housing development which is happening all around us as building seems to be constantly eroding into our last remaining bit of greens pace.
152. The impact would be devastating. There would be a sharp increase in the vermin and a corresponding decrease in the amount of wildlife. The economic impact would be severe with a loss of income for the local pubs and hospitality industry. In addition the mental heal of locals who look forward to the social interaction which shooting brings would be significantly harmed.
153. It is a major part of my life in the winter months. Gets me out to meet with friends and do a good job for my dinner
154. It would have a huge impact on my well being, especially over the winter by reducing my social interacting and exercise. I would cause redundancies and reduce biodiversity and conservation of vital habitats.
155. It's not only the exercising and social gathering it's what we enjoy in our natural countryside .
156. I would miss the companionship the healthy exercise.
157. A marked negative impact on land management as well as natural flora and fauna, coupled with adverse effects on rural life and employment.
158. In particular without the vermin control there would be a decrease in biodiversity as ground nesting birds are decreasing alarmingly.
159. the benefit of social gathering in these isolated communities can never be over-estimated. Hotels, pubs and guest houses may well have to close in the winter months.
160. It would be devastating to many rural community's not only on a practical level from a jobs point of view, the local game dealer, butcher, gun shop, hotel, fuel stations, local mechanic and of course the loss of all jobs of people directly employed by shoots which has a knock on of kids being taken out of rural schools and as a result being shut down because there are no rural jobs left. I also think it would have a big effect on people's physical and mental health. Let's be honest the more people we can get out for a walk the better. Winter is a hard time of year particularly for anyone with mental health issues (I speak from experience) and it's great to have something to look forward to wether it's just finding time to train the dogs or beating or on occasion getting to shoot myself... it's what keeps me getting up in the morning. As far a Wildlife is concerned With no one managing the vermin population there are large numbers of birds particularly waders and any other ground nesting birds that would suffer spectacularly this would also include the handful of grouse. Now hunting is band and if you band shooting to who's going to control the fox population? The Shepard's? They are having a hard enough time as it is. There is also the the fact that if you are feeding game birds you are also feeding many other birds also and this continues through the winter which is a life line for many. To be honest

I could go on for some time.

161. Squirrel population would explode having a devastating affect on the song bird population, plus there would be less food about in winter for song birds as there would be no one put tonnes of wheat all over the countryside
162. A wide spectrum of wonderful birds have significantly increased in numbers in recent years (and this is very much appreciated and positively remarked upon by many locals) since I have been controlling the numbers of predatory and invasive species such as magpies, foxes and grey squirrels. Further fewer lambs are lost to foxes, and I have not lost any hens in the last two years.
163. A ban on shooting would financially devastating for the local economy. It would be bad for people's health encouraging a sedentary lifestyle. It keeps me in the country and interested in nature.
164. Such action would have a clear detrimental impact on wildlife and on my personal wellbeing and general health
165. Without the protection the shoot staff provide there would be a substantial loss to a high number of species otherwise having their young protected. There would be no reason for our members to meet up, have an excuse to both exercise and socialise This is especially important for older members living alone.
166. More than a million people gathered in London to support fox hunting, in banning it, killed more foxes to the rifle and shotgun. I never shot foxes before, but do now, I marched on two occasion. The NRW refused to renew our lease on the ground of our shoot, I think there is less wildlife around on the ground and car crime has risen in the carpark. our old ground holds the woodcock shot record in Britain, used to have 5 full time keepers, the NRW has no respect for tradition. shoot rules my calendar in the season.
167. Shooting has been a way of life for many many years and my whole family and friend circle follow this we cause no harm we all appreciate the country side
168. if i wasn't in the countryside looking at all the wildlife i go mad
169. It would completely wreck the countryside. Pest species would take over and decimate crops. Pubs would lose significantly with no group meals after a shoot
170. This has been going on for many many years its a tradition that should go on
171. It would be detrimental to the local wildlife. It would have a effect on many peoples mental health . A lot of people involved in a days shooting would not get any sort of exercise or social interaction.
172. Loss of protection of our wildlife. Local loss of employment. Damage to health mentally and physically.
173. Devastating for most people in this community
174. I could not control vermin, songbirds and hare would decline to the negligible numbers here when we took over
175. A shooting ban would mean no funds for conservation here .
176. The financial spin off from shooting to the local community is immense
177. Typical, without country sports, real understanding and care for environment will be lost. A good sporting countryside, means a good Environment
178. Banning shooting is a city dwellers kneejerk reaction to appealing to the vegans...the politicians should be more in touch with those who live and farm in the countryside

179. Social interaction and wellbeing will decline drastically. Unemployment will increase. Family life will be disrupted. Biodiversity will decline to the point where avian and mammalian species will disappear. This is a way of life we are talking about!
180. It would take away my hobby, my connection with other people and wildlife. People would suffer from mental health issues, loss of "community" feeling with syndicate shoots disbanding. Loss of income for local businesses, hotels etc. Wildlife and habitats would suffer as pest control and habitat provision would not be maintained.
181. If my shooting were taken away from me I would be devastated. everything I hold dear would be gone. No more social gatherings and meeting interesting people no reason to keep fit and healthy my godsons would suffer also. Not being able to go out on the marsh pre-dawn in the slim hope that your weeks of observations and fieldcraft would put you in a position that may possibly lead to a duck to take home. The (unpaid) conservation work that we carry out along with sympathetic management and pest-control that we exercise on farmland that we shoot would suffer greatly. The corvids, take 2-3 chicks each day during the breeding season. rats, stoats, weasels, mink, foxes, corvids, and squirrels would devastate nesting birds, dormice shrews and voles would be almost non-existent all mammals would suffer. This is a big UK problem as it is and would be dire if no management were in place. We have tawny, little and barn owls on our ground, no pest control would be very bad for the owls that rely on these mammals for food. I would be less inclined to get out and about and would most definitely not be living a fulfilling meaningful life. Becoming a couch potato does not appeal to me one bit and my mental health would be dire. I shot zero duck or geese last season and in a really good season I take maybe 5 maximum and that's from a marsh approx 5/6miles long. I see many many hundreds and have often seen thousands in a day. On most trips, I am out and have seen no decline in the 38 years I have shot the marsh. On the farmland, we shoot we have snipe, woodcock, duck, geese, wood pigeon, wild pheasants, plover, hares rabbits, kestrels, sparrowhawks, and goshawks also visit.
182. if shooting was banned there would be a massive decline in wild life such as song birds.
183. It's free or in our case we get £30 each which is brilliant. It's on our doorstep and it makes us better connected to our home. We have moved here so the opportunity to beat gives us such a better idea of what is involved in the countryside. All things needs to be in balance and that does involve killing. It's not a chocolate box in our countryside but we have to give nature a helping hand which is what humans have always done. We need to be fed and banning shooting will limit our choice from natural input sustainable food production.
184. I do feel its a way of life
185. The country side needs it to keep the balance right and the industry is to big. Fishing is no different
186. Really difficult to understand why such a well disciplined and beneficial sport would be banned.
187. As a farmer I think there would be a huge increase in the vermin population resulting in a huge decline in other wildlife. Our small shoot involves at least 30 people of all ages and backgrounds it gives everyone involved a sense of common purpose and being a part of the countryside. Most of them come from a socially deprived urban background as descibed by the welsh assembly
188. Balance and tradition in the countryside. Normal countryside lovers don't go out to destroy it.
189. I get plenty of excercise in the winter,beating, picking up and wild hunting,ministers who think up these laws can't have any experience in such matters,there is very little to do in the winter time in the countryside, no cinemas, rest miles apart, etc why can't we be left alone, instead of listen to a few nasty protesters illegally sometimes

190. A ban or restriction on shooting could only ever occur as a result of populist politics pandering to those who have knee-jerk objection to shooting and no understanding of its wider role. Personally, I would find any ban/restriction deeply troubling as it is a central part of mines and my friends' social lives and helps protect the habitats of the creatures we all love to see.
191. I would ask where has he had evidence to say that our pastime / hobby is damaging the environment and why is he giving in to the anti brigade who mostly dwell in the cities and have no idea of how the countryside works and jump on the word of privileged television presenters who have their own views and and only their views count.
192. I love solitary shooting, and stalking,i only take game and vermin which I can eat.
193. Apart from my family shooting is my life. Not only do I partake in shooting but in the work undertaken on the shoots to enhance the environment and the biodiversity. My involvement in shooting boosts my health and mental well-being.
194. Banning shooting would dramatically decrease employment in rural areas. Not just gamekeepers etc and those directly involved but the hospitality industry, local shops etc. Social interaction would be reduced, rural areas have high levels of problems with mental health a lack of Social interaction would exacerbate this. I don't think anyone can underestimate the feel good factor that gathering with like minded people can provide. Shoots are beneficial to wildlife no shooting would be harmful to it due to a reduction in diversity.
195. The conservation that comes with shooting wouldn't be upheld as it is now. This would lead to an increase in certain species and a decrease in species which are already endangered. It's important that for people who live in urban environments understand that the natural world was here long before us and all we are doing is preserving what they are destroying when endless amounts of non permeable surfaces are placed for roads and skyscrapers.
196. As a personal level I would be hugely sad if shooting was banned. It is a great part of my winter social life, exercise and enjoyment. However, I think there are two much greater things that would be loss. First, a large number of jobs and livelihoods depend upon it and second, and most important of all, the shooting community as a whole maintains an environment which conserves and protects nature whilst offering real hope for the future of many of Britain's endangered birds and mammals. Banning it would remove this vital asset.
197. My dog would be distraught. Seriously, I would miss the other shoot servants and guns with the interaction and repartee. The season gets me out of the house and gives me plenty of exercise. As being in my eighth decade I am fit enough to join the shoot and hope this continues. I would dearly love another dog.
198. The shooting fraternity put a lot of time and effort into maintaining and improving the countryside.
199. The areas and habitats wouldn't be preserved if shooting wasn't the main focus
200. Wild life would decline, woodlands and marshes would be unattended and Would overgrow leaving no fresh and new growth would be there for different species. Because game birds are fed regularly there is always food out that all birds, squirrels mice etc can benefit from. People will become unemployed. Local business would decline. It will effect a lot of people's state of mind and health.
201. Game shooting happens in the winter months when levels of sunlight are low and Season Affected Disorder (SAD) impact many people. Reasons for venturing outdoors are limited, so the routine of our weekly syndicate shoot gives me an incentive to get out whatever the weather. A ban on shooting would leave me searching for a way in which I could combine regular social interaction with over 30 people that offers healthy exercise within five miles of

my home and from which I can bring home healthy food for the table. Rural areas don't have the social clubs/pubs, sports venues, theatres, and cinemas that urban people depend upon for their wellbeing - this is despite paying the same level of taxes into the economy. Because we are a political minority we get very little attention from our politicians - unless it is to curtail the few activities such as shooting that many of us we rely upon for our wellbeing.

202. It would change a huge part of my structures for mental health. Without shooting we wouldn't have the dogs. Social and exercise would both reduce. The wildlife aspect is an odd one, releasing pheasant in high number can be detrimental to localised wildlife with the amount of space/natural feed they consume, the disturbance/competition to native species. Predator control and additional feed are an obvious plus but isn't the 'be-all' of the argument.
203. Banning shooting would remove far more from our environment than if it remained. Maintenance of the land and habitats would deteriorate and you'd deprive the environment of the footfall from the very people who care about it and do most for it. Most of our rural habitats today are a product of a managed landscape where shooting and conservation have worked hand in hand. Preservation of that landscape need that relationship to continue.
204. Anecdotally I believe 90% of shoots contribute hugely to the quantity and range of wildlife and the variety habitat to be found where they operate when compared to farmland and woodland where there is no shoot. Historically estates and farms where there have been shoots have been positively managed so as to provide good habitat and woodland of mixed ages, something that in most cases would not happen in the absence of a shoot (where would be the motive?) As a life-long land agent I have seen this first hand and have experienced observed the attitude of land owners and farmers when deciding where to invest the time and resources for the benefit of the shoot, and therefore also directly the landscape and other wildlife. Where humans have caused an imbalance in wildlife, either through protective legislation or the physical extinction of predators, we have a duty to step in and maintain a sustainable 'balance' of all species. It must be understood that this includes the control (not extinction) of dominant species and vermin so that preyed species can survive/thrive. UK legislation has been to prescriptive to permit man's ability to maintain a proper balance, often due to ill-considered responses to single-issue pressure groups.
205. It's an excellent means of getting out and exercising, and improving my health and well being. Traditionally it's been a way of life, with many more now against it. However, it's also been a way of conserving wildlife and rivers. Many will not be aware of this fact, sitting in their lounges watching wildlife programmes on TV and gaining an opinion from there.
206. Very detrimental effect on the economy and rural communities. Lost connection with many friends.
207. I would say it was a politically-expedient measure, not supported by nature conservation science. There would undoubtedly be a loss of heather habitat, and upland areas where people could walk and watch more nature than they can find on typical heavily-grazed uplands.
208. It would make it difficult to protect farm stock they banded control of the badger that has not worked and much of the wildlife in this country is supported many ways by the man with a gun, grouse moors etc
209. Banning shooting would seriously impact biodiversity and there would almost certainly be a very serious effect on many red listed birds which breed successfully on land properly managed for wildlife.
210. Shooting brings money into the countryside which helps to sustain woodland which in turn can help wildlife. Personally I would miss the outdoor activity (in all weathers), the social interaction and the exercise. It is an activity that I can do which frees me from the worries of

everyday life and gives me great pleasure to see all the work that we have done to enhance the wildlife habitats on the farm.

211. Farmers would loose a lot of livestock to fox/crows. Songbirds would decrease due to magpies. Pests such as rats/squirrels would multiply drastically
212. It's not just the days shooting it's the whole years preparation been out in the country every day and seeing the wonders of nature.
213. great for the body and mind
214. Game shooting provides a common purpose that draws people together from a broad spectrum of walks of life. As I am semi-retired I have few other opportunities for this type of social interaction.
215. I would be devistated as it makes up such a large part of my life and what I do, it could not be replaced with clay pigeon shooting not by a long way
216. Firstly it would show a complete lack of understanding on the part of the Welsh Govt and prove that their motives behind such policies are purely political ones. The effect in small local communities would be devastating in terms of social life and mental wellbeing. The economic consequences would be dire both fir those directly involved ie keepers to those indirectly involved eg catering industry Wildlife would lose valuable guardians in the form of game keepers and farmers and landowners who commit to dedicating land use to conservation. Commercial farming factors or apathy in places where farming is not viable would take over with no consideration fir habitat preservation. Tradition would be lost. The Welsh govt are so keen to prompt welsh speaking when Less than 10% of the population understand it so why seek to ban pastimes which have been enjoyed socially by thousands of people for hundreds of years? I personally feel country sports be they hunting shooting or fishing are part of my culture and heritage. I feel that any move to ban them would be discriminatory on the Traditional rural minority. There is huge misunderstanding on the part of urban people moving into rural areas about the natural order and way of things. These people have been brought up watching zWalt Disney Reversion s of talking animals with human personalities rather seeing wildlife as wild in their own habits and also as an important resource in terms of natural pure food. So called BBC experts such as Chris Packham hold huge sway with the general public via media when in fact they have extremist animal rights activist motivations behind them.
217. I believe the local wildlife would decline and certain areas would become unmanaged. It would also have an impact on the local economy
218. If shooting was banned the wildlife in our countryside would just fall apart, as well as the wildlife habitats which managed very professionally by shooting estates. The social interaction is crucial in these times of increased mental health issues. It gives rural communities a huge income boost during the low tourist season.
219. Without sensible, and legal, pest and predator control a wide range of game and non-game species will become increasingly rare. Generalist predators such as corvids, foxes, mink and grey squirrels benefit from year round food sources associated with human activity. They do not suffer themselves from a reduction in prey species as they might in a completely wild environment. This means that predator numbers can increase year on year without the necessary controls from mainly shooting interests. Added to that there is additional predation from protected species such as Badgers, Buzzards, Ravens and others. Cessation of active conservation through predator control will be a disaster for many species which are already on conservation red lists.
220. without shooting the countryside would be a very different the woods wouldn't be managed .the wildlife would be poorer without managing vermin We are quite remote here with out

shooting we would have a depressing winter

221. if it was to be banned it would be detrimental to the rural communities and the economy as a whole shooting benefits the countryside in so many ways not to mention the conservation work that goes into it
222. I understand the need to have balance in the country side the rural economy is important, as far as I am concerned shooting is part and parcel of country life and should continue
223. If shooting was banned there would be more wildlife (because it wasn't being shot obviously). However, I'm not bothered about that, if shooting was banned my mental health would suffer and myself esteem would lower. In all honestly, it's the only thing that makes me feel good about myself.
224. You would see a dramatic drop in wildlife country side management. Lots of older people go beating and the exercise and socialising is very important to them .
225. It's my life,I've been connected to game hunting all my life,and what a life it's been.Was head gamekeeper for 35 years,now a consultant,shooting instructor and sell game rearing equipment to the industry
226. Today, the Scottish parliament stated that the ban on unlicensed shooting of mountain hares is a triumph for the voice of the public. Has it never occurred to the Minister that emotional and ill-informed public have been led by anti-rural organisations to influence the vote at the expense of the hares welfare and in the face of scientific evidence. Populations of non-quarry species will suffer and decline at the hands of predators. A shooting ban will lead to a general decline of the health of the countryside from a naturalist's point of view. Public money will never replace the enormous input of private funding. Shooting participants will no longer be able to go out to beat or shoot and will not take that exercise, meet other people in the area whom they would not otherwise meet, this having a health impact. The Welsh Minister might learn from listening to the science, the minority voice of the rural pro-shoot participants and so realise that the populist anti-shoot bodies are proponents of a depleted countryside.
227. There would be a marked decrease in the variety of wildlife and there would be even less rural employment
228. less wildlife . would have effect on social and well being especially health and interaction
229. It's a great way to learn country life
230. Vermin overload
231. Due to the reduction in covid predation I now have yellowhammers, siskin, goldfinch, chaffinch and blackbird numbers in my immediate area.
232. I understand the anti argument, i shoot for sport not to put food on my table. But I do take all that we shoot and eat it myself or share with friends and family. I train my dogs which is hugely rewarding and if we didn't have organised shooting there would be a lot more poaching and illegal hunting. We also look after footpath access and help to keep roadways and tracks clear for farmers to do their job
233. Not only will will this have a massive impact on small businesses but it will encourage and increase the unnecessary suffering of sick and injured animals, over populated increase of Birds and Animals all competing the food and nesting sources.
234. I believe that wildlife would suffer as there would not be the range of management or additional food available as it is when game birds are fed, vermin would increase and there would be no benefit to endangered species. The camaraderie of the beating or shooting team would be lost and would not be replaced by watching local sport or other activities, there would be a loss of

stimulation and things seen and done to talk about with toes involved with shooting and others. Another connection with food would be lost as there would be no local pheasants to take home or buy and no pigeons or rabbits yo your own or the keepers gun. One would not be motivated to go for walks in the same way and 10 000 steps are accomplished almost without realising. You try to get fit for winter and definitely feel more energised after a few days beating. Local pubs would suffer as many pop in at the end of the day or have organised meals while there you hear of pub and other community events which you would not engage with in the same way if seem on a notice board or social media, while there may be a few social benefits from just going to the pub being there to much as there is nothing else to do is not healthy and many would not go either because they prefer to go for a reason or because there is no point in bothering.

235. If there was a ban on shooting, It would have a catastrophic effect on our wildlife, and our interaction with the social side of fieldsports would diminish. The lack of management would lead to an increase in predation, resulting in putting our red listed species further in decline along with our countryside and most importantly our wildlife. The well-being of both physical and mental health would certainly plummet resulting in more pressure and demand on our NHS, something we as a nation, cannot afford. The ban on shooting would impact hugely on all the byproducts I have mentioned and the countryside would be all the poorer.
236. There would be a great reduction in song birds, I don't like being round towns I prefer the country side as I have for the last 55 years
237. The songbird and ground nesting birds would be hit especially hard on the farms and areas I shoot.
238. Don't see anybody Don't go walking Less wildlife
239. Negative impact on the rural economy
240. Living in a rural area I don't see lots of people all the time. The day out is a real boost to mental health and physical health as you have to be fairly fit to walk all day. Winter is long in the country and a days shooting is something to look forward to. I love watching the dogs work and noticing wildlife I don't normally see.
241. Our local economy would take a big hit, from the local petrol station to the post office and local restaurants. The shooters who come through the shoot I beat on spend a fortune on accomodation and food, using local businesses this allows them to stay open and we can then benefit all year round instead of only during the tourist season.
242. We would fight, tooth and nail to ensure the future of our sport, communities and conservation. Such a move would be disastrous for any politician who attempted to snuff out this vital part of countryside life, on some woke whimsy.
243. We need this in our area because we are out in the country side and away from towns. winter is terrible so we go out shooting to get together from Nov to january otherwise we get no exercise just work we look forward to our days shooting
244. Paying a subscription to a syndicate means that all of the conservation work is achieved by people who are paying to do it, not being paid. If there was no shoot, this work would stop as there would no longer be any access to the land. People would also be less likely to travel the distances (Average 40 miles each way) to undertake conservation work, if they did it at all it would be local to them. The members would also miss out on a significant amount of exercise. We have used step counters and GPS trackers and on an average Saturday we each walk seven miles. With no shooting we would not have a reason to use the pub for lunch, so there takings would be down by £200 each shoot day and £500 when we have out AGM/Dinner, these are the sort of activities that make the difference to a rural pub between managing to stay open and closing.

245. Pheasant population would drop which I'm sure road users would love but we would miss something not seeing pheasants around the countryside. It would be harder to control nuisance populations like fox, badger etc as well, they would overrun the countryside
246. It would affect the wildlife were I live dramatically as there would be no proper custodians of the flora and fauna and things like ground nesting birds would suffer massive losses due to no predator control
247. Any party that introduced or had a policy to ban shooting would never receive a vote from me.
248. I'd tell him how predators would overtake as they have in some areas, corvids for example and no songbirds! It would effect my mental and physical health as I'm out every day training my dogs with whom I have a great relationship, I'm single and my kids are grown up and married, shooting allows me to meet up with friends with whom I have nothing else in common, meaning I wouldn't really see anyone, my clubbing days are long gone! On winter days when people are in with the central heating on fullblast, I'll either be out training the dogs, shooting over them or running them in trials, probably why I never get colds and flu!
249. We live on farmland on the edge of the Clwydian AONB. We observe daily the animals, birds and plants around us. There are constant and numerous examples of these benefitting from the game-keeping activities on our small rough shoot. In winter contacts with our roving syndicate enhances my social life and again I see environmental benefits of properly managed shooting on the estates we visit
250. Negative impact on the country side. It will lead to poaching on a wide scale
251. This is an income generating activity that pays for wildlife and habitat management.
252. No substitute for me you might as well put me in a padded cell and throw away the key. I hope the question is a joke?
253. Without shooting (and therefore conservation) activities my access to the countryside would be drastically reduced. My family and I wouldn't be able to provide food for ourselves and others. My chances of meeting like minded people would disappear. Many vulnerable animals would decline due to predators not being managed. Songbird and door mouse numbers would decline due to land not being managed properly. Local shops wouldn't have local game meat for the public to buy. The list of negatives resulting from a shooting ban are endless. Why would such a thing be considered? People from all walks of like enjoy field sports, and these activities benefit wildlife of all types.
254. Firstly my wife and I would lose our home and main source of income, I don't know what other job I could do. I'd be stuck in a town house which would drive me silly. All the wildlife conservation would have been for nothing.
255. All that would be left would be crows and fox.
256. As I do mainly pest control it would have a major impact on wildlife from nest raiding by corvids and grey squirrels and a lot of our small song birds would be at risk. Plus I wouldn't exercise as much trough the winter months as I do whilst shooting as an average days shooting I would walk around 7 miles but if I couldn't go shooting I probably wouldn't exercise as no where near as much.
257. the effect would be devastating to wildlife and the rural community and its economy. Urban dwellers would not notice anything,as they get their wildlife viewing off tv etc. BBC pundits would carry on blaming farmers for loss of wildlife
258. Take everything in my previous reply and reverse it ! Having been badly impacted by the hunting ban in the past, it would just serve to reinforce my conviction that we are governed

by a rural elite with no understanding of rural affairs and no interest in developing such an understanding.

259. I grew up near a famous shooting estate where, in the late 1950s the owners wife persuaded her husband to stop the game shooting and make the keepers redundant. Within a few years the estate was over run with foxes, grey squirrels etc as well as two legged predators who took every opportunity to twalk and shoot anything that took their fancy. The pheasants and partridge quickly disappeared of course as did hares later on. Town people very often do not realise that the countryside is a man made environment and the wildlife has to be managed to maintain balance.
260. It would be devastating for wildlife. That's the only fact. Shooting helps wildlife. Banning it would make the woods/ponds etc completely useless and would be felled/ filled in etc. Exactly as we'll see on unmanaged moors, no wildlife, ground nesting birds, Waders etc at all. A whole community would also suffer, all ages and from all backgrounds would not interact and it would be another nail in the coffin for the rural community.
261. I do not to out meat on the plate like my great grandfather and my dad now its my turn come rain or shain
262. It keeps the local community together. Some of our team are retired and the local doctor told me how the shooting season keeps them going - both mentally & physically - particularly those who are widowed or caring for partners with serious illnesses. The loss of shooting would seriously undermine the community.
263. Living in the Welsh valleys if the welsh first minister proposed banning shooting, the people of Wales would just roll over and thank him as they are brainwashed labour supporters
264. All forms of wild life would suffer and some becomes extinct. I would miss the lifestyle,excerise and social gathering but that could be replaced by other activities. The landscape and what lives in it would disappear
265. Absolutely awful impact on song birds if we stop shooting. There will be no vermin control leading to song bird predation. Working dogs will not be able to do what they enjoy and like minded people will not meet up or exersize as much
266. Being taking a sledgehammer to the countryside and unforgivable
267. There would be more songbird nests predated in the nests during the breeding period.
268. We must keep a balance with wildlife,predators would take over.songbirds thrive on shoots
269. Exercise in winter months would deteriorate massively, social interaction would reduce massively, social gathering would reduce, up,eep of woodland would reduce
270. In my opinion, a ban on shooting game would be devastating for wildlife, would destroy my income, reduce farming income as well as that of game breeders, feed merchants, clothing and equipment sellers.
271. The connection with nature & it's impact on well-being has been publicly & vocally reinforced during lockdown. Those involved in fieldsports but particularly land & wildlife & game management have a deep & caring knowledge & passion for their habitats & wildlife.
272. If shooting were to be banned it would have a serious effect on my mental state. Running my own business can be very demanding and stressful and shooting, being out in the field and close to nature gives me a release. Also it would massively impact the amount of time I get to spend with my family outdoors. And the impact on wild birds in particular that benefit from the food we provide throughout winter would be detrimental.
273. The minister must see through the emotional media promoted by the ill-informed so-called

environmentalist whose real agenda is hatred of field sports. The rural community find their recreation in field sports and without their interest, the countryside would be a far worse place for wildlife.

274. People that shoot and fish look after their sport if you took this away then all the work for shooting fishing would stop them all the conservation would stop and the crime would go through the roof the health of many people would go down as getting out side it so important to the well being of all shooting fishing people as were not in to sport or football and the like
275. The people in this sport are conservationists. The environment and looking after nature is very important to us. My health, both physical and mental health would definitely deteriorate as I am too old for intense sport. Taking the Corona virus into consideration, it is something that can and usually is done, with plenty of social distancing. Rural living means there are less available opportunities for exercise, often it involves a long drive. Gyms are not for everyone, even if there is one within a reasonable distance, not common in rural Wales.
276. To ban is a mistake. There are 1000's of small to medium shoots groups that would simply disband. 1000's and 1000's of people will be denied doing what they prefer and they would be denied a freedom of choice that probably have every right to continue to do so. By its very nature we are away from built up areas and are not invasive to others. It's naive to think that those that don't live in country should be given opportunity to meddle in a way of life that they choose not to like. To ban is not a good thing for a community where shooting and hunting has always been a sport for hundreds of years. These shoots are where we gather and interact, for many of our older crew this is their total social circle. They love it, they enjoy being with likeminded souls and bringing the grandkids along. There's an economical fallout to consider, wiser men than me will quote you the exact figures but it's millions and millions of pounds worth of investment each and every year that is spent on labour and machinery. Jobs would be lost-unemployment rises, the likely outcome is basic economics!
277. Without game keepers that manage habitats the countryside would be worse off. They assist with the local ecosystem, keeping it in check. The game crops that are planted offer a variety of additional food sources for wild animals
278. Can't find the words
279. It would be an overwhelmingly sad day in the countryside. Personally I couldn't afford to continue all that we do currently without the financial aid of the shoot meaning that cover crops wouldn't be planted and supplementary feed couldn't be bought and put out. The habitat management would cease without the syndicate shoot on site. Predator control would cease, we would lose our lapwings as well as many other species on the brink. Undoubtedly the Wildlife would suffer and the land would end up like neighbouring farmland which clearly doesn't support the same wildlife quantities. The community would be disbanded and it would be another nail in the coffin to the local rural community. With the documented severe declines in wildlife in Wales, many species' future is already in doubt, with areas managed for shooting buffering this decline. Without shooting, my children's future would most certainly be poorer as they would not see the countryside rich in wildlife as I have done. The work I'm involved in is all privately funded and doing a brilliant job of holding onto the wildlife which has been lost elsewhere. There is no realistic way of replacing this private funding with public funding and I am certain that without shooting as the financial driver, our demise to a country devoid of wildlife would be accelerated beyond measure.
280. I think without areas that are professionally looked after and well managed it would be really bad for the wildlife and countryside
281. I think game shooting gives a great boost to any rural area. For the individual it is part of being

human that some form of hunting gives a satisfaction that is deep, within us. Finally killing vermin and culling has a huge benefit to all wildlife.

282. I would definitely get out a lot less in the winter, probably resulting in far less social interaction with like minded people.
283. Impact on wildlife - well we feed our raised pheasants on wheat through the season. Having food out in woodlands etc feeds song birds and other wild birds. As a club we continue to feed our pheasant in the closed season meaning we are still feeding wild birds. We also manage our woodlands coppicing trees to allow light in for ground growth, we leave logs to rot providing ideal homes for insects etc. We have grey squirrel control trying our best to reintroduce the red squirrel. We have mink traps on outlet waterways not only helping ground beating birds but the local fish numbers too. If shooting was to be banned it would be awful for my family. It's a massive part of our lives as said before not just the shooting part but everything that is involved. Shooting gets me and my children out the house and exercising even in the most awful weather! I'm not a drinker so don't go to pubs etc so don't have that social side to my life like others do. Meeting at our club for clay shooting once a month, meeting at our work parties on the shoot ground, dog training days, then the days we attend our shoot days are the time I'm sociable. What people from towns and cities don't understand is shooting is our way of life in the country. As I've said before not just the shooting. It's helping the farmers collect their hay, collect the wool at shearing time, help muck out sheds, harvesting crops and fruits. Manage the woodlands, conservation, putting nesting boxes up. Game meat is organic, natural, low fat, protein rich and sustainable! We go through the whole process from wild to plate. Most urban children don't even know where chicken nuggets come from! My children can prepare a game bird and cook it! Knowing where the bird has come from and what it has eaten. People are so distanced from reality when they go to the supermarket and buy pre packed meat. Years gone by butchers would have game hanging outside their shops in fur and feather. It would be an awful thing for rural communities if shooting was banned in Wales, not only for the things I've mentioned but financially too!
284. I would be terribly sad and would put enormous efforts into getting the politician removed from office and the ban revoked.
285. It would have a great impact on the wildlife as things which do damage to wildlife I enjoy being out it's a social interaction for me it's exercise for me if ban the rural areas would be no more it gives risk people job which help the economy I know rural living is different to urban lifestyles hope this helps as I am not too good with this kind of thing.
286. I don't shoot now but there doesn't seem to be much game to shoot now days only vermin like fox and rats
287. As shooters we are one first groups to get to know what is happening in the country side because we are deeply involved and spend a great deal of time there. Without shooting sports there would be a lot less knowledge about the country side and a lot fewer doing work to look after it mostly at not cost to the nation. If I could not go shooting I would be very much less fulfilled. And lonely. Whilst trying to benefit all of the country side I really find that I enjoy eating the healthy food that shooting provides me and my family.
288. Huge financial loss to the area.
289. If shooting were banned I am of the opinion that there would be a very marked decline in the wildlife in my area, moreover, it would have a very deleterious personal effect particularly on my wellbeing. Additionally, I am certain I would not be alone. It is blatantly obvious that those from an urban background have some difficulty with understanding the so-called rural way of life and I am of the opinion that proposals to interfere with rural pursuits are usually the result of

ignorance or politically motivated, and are influenced by pressure groups of doubtful motivation.

290. I would lose my income and probably the family home. The chance of gaining similar employment at my age would become a challenge.
291. Pest control allows game and birdlife to prosper
292. I feel that wildlife would increase if shooting of the type which now takes place was banned in this area. The previous keeper planted trees and created wildlife areas around ponds etc, which I have assisted with. The current style involves larger scale commercial style shooting. Game feeding ceases on 1st Feb leaving birds to find their own food which creates less feed for the wild birds. Also Buzzards in our area have been poisoned and shot - fact.
293. Clearly has not witnessed the work not to mention pleasure derived by many involved in rural sports and their pride in the benefits that active wildlife management and conservation provide. The community, interaction and social aspects of rural persists cannot be underestimated nor the health, mental and physical, benefits. The approach demonstrates the lack of understanding between urban and rural communities.
294. I wouldn't like it at all x unnecessary ban i would say x
295. I would point out that the work we do to improve and maintain the woodland, coupled with the feeding of grain through the winter & the strategic placing of squirrel proof nesting boxes in trees on the shoot, means we have a large and assorted population of native song birds plus snipe & other waders in the marsh areas. By way of contrast a nearby golf course is a chemically sterilised mono culture of grass with minimal cover & is a virtually a wildlife desert in comparison with the ground controlled by the shoot. The cost of joining the shoot as a full gun is less than the cost of a season ticket for many premier league football clubs and we have half guns available (shooting alternate Saturdays) to ensure that the chance to join the shoot is open to as many people as possible, subject to availability on numbers, and is not limited by cost/ income. For some older widowed / single members it is the high point of their week and provides them with a level of social interaction they would otherwise not enjoy, in addition to a network of local people who can be called on to help them in times of need. In addition to the guns we have a team of very enthusiastic beaters/pickers up who are members of local gun dog training clubs & compete both locally and nationally in gun dog field trials. Personally I believe the dogs enjoy the day most of all!
296. I think it is important to educate people on the good work and benefits that people involved in shooting bring to rural living compared to urban lifestyle. If shooting was banned I think that wildlife would suffer, areas would be more extensively farmed, cover crops provide a source of food for wildlife as well as game birds in the winter months. Shooting is a great passion, I see my friends, it makes me exercise, important for my well being and gives me my time.
297. With the ban lots of countryside will not be looked / managed, lots of habitat lost A huge amount of businesses will go out of business and many thousands losing their jobs and livelihood. The countryside will never be the same.
298. The banning of field sports would have a catastrophic effect on the local bird population around our shoot, from the lack of habitat management and winter feeding which is carried out. The local economy would suffer as shooting is what keeps the pubs etc going out of season
299. I would be a very sad and unhappy person if I couldn't take part in shooting activities. I have always been an outdoors person and look forward to my days out shooting, Not for the sake of killing wildlife but enjoy working my dogs.
300. To follow a minority view against proven scientific advice is simply not democratic
301. Important for rural economy

302. Having dual nationality I might consider retiring to either my other country or somewhere which respects the rural way of life!
303. My kids would be heartbroken if shooting were banned and they would never get the chance to grow that experience which led to my passion for conservation. Over the years I have been involved in many debates over Payment for Ecosystem Services and I have always thought that shooting is one of the best examples of money being pumped into conservation on farms from private funds through actions such as the planting of coppices, food being put down over winter for birds and through the predator control which helps to protect the ground nesting birds. If shooting were to stop the habitat creation undertaken to produce a sustainable shoot would not take place. The winter feeding of birds would not be paid for out of the private purse and predator control would only happen if paid for by schemes to stop the extinction of species such as the curlew at vast cost to the taxpayer. Nature and the conservation work associated with shoots would suffer. There is a disconnect between urban and rural populations which has resulted in the larger urban population no longer being connected to nature. In other countries the indigenous rural populations cultures are protected yet regardless of the great conservation outcomes that shooting can produce here in Wales there seems to be an intent on applying urban philosophy to rural dwellers. In a rural area the shoot can be the most important social contact for some and without it their mental and physical health would be adversely affected. Rather than ban shooting let's strive to make it better.
304. Goodbye Welsh economy.
305. Totally against a ban. Shooting helps farmers, supplies good quality food, provides local employment, benefits community's
306. Shooting often takes place on land that is not intensively farmed, the uplands, steep sided valleys and the last few remaining wetlands. Banning shooting may lead to land managers taking the land into more intensive farming which would have a detrimental impact on biodiversity. A ban would lead to depression from loss of friends and obesity from lack of exercise. Would become house bound and lazy. However, may help liver function as less time spend in the Pub. For those slightly older than YFC there is little leisure activities in the countryside which helps the rural economy. Let's face it a ramble brings his own sandwiches and a can of coke and goes home. Does not create and employment. Game shooting has a long rural tradition going back to muzzle loading guns much improved in the early 1850's with the invention of the breach loading shotgun. Sustaining land for shooting, managing predators has a beneficial impact on many species. I can see little will improve by banning it. Banning things that indigenous people do by an urban majority for no good purpose is immoral.
307. Without the work undertaken to control predators the numbers of ground nesting birds and song birds will reduce. The loss of game crops and feeding through the winter months will also hit many species. Many elderly people involved in beating will lose a rare social gathering which does not cost them money and the friendship that comes with it.
308. If shooting was banned, wildlife generally would decrease due to a significant amount of land we set aside for cover crops separate from traditional arable farming activities which greatly suits and sustains all local song birds, ground mammals and game birds. On a number of occasions throughout the shooting season, all aspects of the local community spanning all generations come together to share in outdoor social and sporting activities due to the existence of game shooting. Removing these social events reduces social interaction and would serve to breakdown relationships between groups of people from differing socio-economic backgrounds which would be detrimental to the health of local social structure/cohesion and relations and would only serve to segregate communities.
309. I don't think the wildlife would do very well at all.

310. Significant losses of rare habitat and species allied to game would occur rapidly. Shooting is already extremely well regulated and can hold itself justly proud of its place in rural infrastructure. Constantly examining ways to improve habitats and benefitting broad wildlife rich environments with private funding. People benefit from access to greater species abundance from this huge private funding and engagement from those outside Wales as well as local input. It is really important to me and my family to continue to act as guardians of our heritage in this respect. We eat all that I shoot. It is a significant part of our diet in winter and spring and delicious. Our appreciation of all these things is deeper because our interest is sporting and not just a fleeting tick on a birdwatcher list.
311. If that decision was made the effect would be immensely detrimental to wildlife conservation and by preventing positive wildlife management involved in shooting it would only lead to a rapid demise of the countryside, the personal effects to myself would also be immeasurable as it would curtail any form of exercise, activity, and social interaction,
312. Nanny state again caving into pressure from the Urban majority. Many of our members come from the valleys. We enhance the wildlife on the farm by controlling pests leading to an increase in songbirds. We help the landowners maintain their infrastructure. We also provide a social opportunity for the host landowners who like seeing us on their land and a friendly face. It also gives members who lead a sedentary life to take exercise during the worst of the winter months.
313. Difficult to answer because it's only clays I shoot.
314. A ban on shooting would be devastating for me, my family and all involved in our small shoot. It provides a chance for us all to get out and enjoy the benefits of rural life, whilst taking the opportunity to exercise and socially inter-mingle.
315. Would be bad for all aspects of wildlife escalation of predators impacting all song birds and country side returning to wild barren places
316. There would be less wildlife especially song birds as I control the amount of forbes. In the shooting season it's a great sense of comradery and keeps me active
317. This will have a considerable detrimental effect on wildlife and the environment. Shooting funds farmers and estates to develop wildlife habitats, walk and other outdoor pursuits do not do this.
318. Obvious to see that songbirds numbers are higher on kept ground with increased protection from predators and due to feeding game birds and use of cover or feed groups which otherwise wouldn't exist.
319. It would be disastrous for wild life if there was a ban on shooting game. There would be nobody and no reason to protect it. Also it would increase unemployment in rural areas.
320. Is the Welsh Government aware of the cost of maintaining the uplands of SE Wales that would fall upon them if shooting was banned? The effect on wildlife without proper moorland management would be catastrophic.
321. Good news, barbaric and unnecessary nature will balance itself
322. To ban shooting, would take away freedoms that could never be replaced
323. It would be an act of ignorance, contrary to a well informed and balanced assessment of the science, the knowledge and pragmatic experience of those who live and work in, and are devoted to the management and restoration of the countryside, that points unequivocally to the benefits of shooting to wildlife. It would also cripple a large part of the rural economy as well families and peoples' 'well-being'. It would also be seen as a deliberate affront to common sense and to country people whose livelihoods depend on it.

324. It would be tragic. I have been shooting for over 50 years. The activity has given me a great deal of pleasure. Though I no longer shoot driven game (mainly down to finance) I have am fully supportive of the benefits, both to the countryside generally and to my and my fellow guns' wellbeing. As for my pest control activities, that would have a detrimental effect on songbird species, crop damage and animal welfare
325. The Welsh government may not really understand and realise about how much input the running of both commercial and farm /syndicate shoots goes into these areas that involves a lot of employment . The hotels would suffer particularly in the cold winter months when holidaymakers desert the countryside but the hotels and guest houses are kept busy entertaining and housing winter visitors. People, otherwise employed, would be made redundant and would have to sign up on the dole. Many of the Welsh farmers have set up shoots to keep their employees active during the dead winter months.
 1. Wildlife variety would decline. 2. Social interaction for myself and friends would decline considerably, probably to zero. 3. Winter exercise would go from 100 to 10 on a 1-100 scale. 4. Other opportunities for similar social gathering in my area, the closest would be fox hunting, but unfortunately this has the same issues as game shooting, brought about by those that do not have an understanding and are not tolerant of country pursuits. 5. It is vitally important to help people understand what motivates those involved and why rural living is different to an urban lifestyle.
326. Wildlife would reduce as cover crop areas would be left as just grass in the winter that would mean less winter feed for song birds. As a farmer it can be hard to see people, shooting provides a good opportunity to meet up and therefore it being banned would have a big effect on my mental health and wellbeing. Shooting supports 4 jobs in our small village and therefore it would also have an economic hit.
327. I fervently believe that banning shooting would have a detrimental effect on wildlife. For example the corvid population, left unchecked, would mean a reduction in the number of songbirds. Personally, I would feel depressed that the sport I love had been outlawed. It would deprive me of social interaction with friends and colleagues. As I am retired, it would also reduce the amount of exercise I take in the winter. There would also be little point in me keeping my 3 dogs. Having retired to the countryside to participate in countryside sports, if they were banned, I would probably move from the area to a town or city.
328. This would be a dictatorial assault on a basic human freedom - and would be disastrous for wildlife.
329. Things would be better
330. Without doubt the Welsh countryside cannot look after itself and without farming the pageant so enjoyed in the form of the traditional landscape would be lost. Those from an urban background perhaps understandably do not appreciate how nature can soon revert to a wilderness scenario where unfortunately the dominant species whether flora or fauna soon take over. The provision and management of suitable habitat to support game shooting also enhances the environment in which small mammals and birds thrive as is evidenced by research carried out by the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust. Should shooting be banned it would impoverish the prospects of present levels of wild life being sustained. Speaking personally should I be denied the opportunity of continued participation I would lose the motivation to turn out in all winds and weathers, my vigorous exercise would go as a gymnasium confinement would drive me mad, even if one were readily accessible in our vicinity, not being a heavily populated urban locale. The loss of social contact with folk sharing my interests would also be forfeited leading to loneliness. Involvement with nature and the countryside does allow an escape from the hustle and bustle of today's gadget orientated world and for many of us proves a saviour.

331. It would be the end of a way of life. The countryside with no management of rodents foxes ect would be a great loss to song birds breeding and all other wild life.
332. If he was to ban shooting it would deeply upset me and my dogs. I believe the management that we do on the shooting grounds helps song birds and ground nesting birds thrive. It would also alienate the older generation that shooting and beat with us. For some this is the only social and physical interaction they have.
333. Personal effects would be negative from both a physical but more importantly a mental health perspective. In one day shooting (not beating) I can accumulate almost 25k steps, this is not something I could replace. This is not to mention all the effort throughout the year working on our DIY shoot. I also feel I benefit from eating wild meat and it brings a whole different level of appreciation and respect for what I am cooking knowing I provided it myself. I spend as much time preparing and cooking wild meat and foraged food as I do hunting so a ban on shooting would leave a huge void not only on shoot day but also in life in general. Who knows, maybe the internet or tv could replace that void but I don't like what these things do to others so can't see that happening.
334. Decrease in physical activity Less countryside management Rural economy hit hard - leisure and those directly involved in shooting
335. If it was not for the shooting I don't think that I would move out of the house as it is the work we do in the woodlands plus walking my training my dogs keeps me fit and not at the doctor's surgery and that applies to about twelve of us.
336. Whilst the shooting is the so called end product, in my case It is just one part of the many outdoor activities which remain a central part of my life. These include the many preparation and maintenance activities connected with the shoot throughout at least ten months of the year, also unlimited exercise with my dog and family, and woodcutting to maintain my home fires. Over the years I have met and in many cases maintained friendships with hundreds of people and to remove shooting would inevitably mean the loss of all this - and I can't imagine the prospect. At the age of 73 I remain pretty mobile and this without doubt is due to these activities and my constant inter- relationships with many people benefitting from the same freedoms. My passion is observing wild bird life and I have witnessed ups and downs in populations of certain species affecting wildlife in general and in particular corvids the numbers of which have massively increased and if not controlled by the syndicate on our land would have a catastrophic effect on both farming activity and general wildlife.
337. The diversity of wildlife would definitely decrease. The opportunity to see and appreciate the wildlife would significantly diminish. I've no doubt rural communities would suffer financially, socially and emotionally.
338. It has already happened. Our control of corvids is no longer allowed as such we used to host circa 30% of Wales' ENTIRE lapwing population for nigh on 15 years. They have since left, some killed by predators but their sanctuary no longer exists....and we have no idea if they survived. Thus us the outcome of bad policy, ignorance of species and a law based on ideology. The loss of those waders is down to The Welsh Government ALONE.
339. It would be a huge blow to conservation in the country,
340. It is a way of life, my social Interaction my motivation to work hard. If these types of interest are stopped then there will be a loss of interest in the countryside. It will lose its management and would soon be abused by other people who would not have the same empathy for nature. Predators would increase wildlife including ground nesting birds would suffer. People who actively pursue country sports are also a watchful eye. This would be lost. I couldn't think of anything that could replace my involvement in the country.

341. It would be a total disaster for the people of Wales, and the countryside in general
342. Total devastation of our Red and Amber listed birds, a decline in Green listed birds, loss of habitat, loss of hares due to increase of poaching as well an increase of rural crime, loss of rural community/income. Tourism will be affected as a large number of shooting people come back in summer season to see beautiful Wales at a different time of year
343. Truly retrograde step that would deprive the countryside of passionate custodians. The balance would be upset and the countryside would suffer as a consequence.
344. Shooting is about the social side meeting new people friends getting out and getting exercise the shooting part is a very small part of the day.
345. It would be a major backward step reducing conservation and employment. It would affect endangered species and habitat. The Minister does not understand the countryside and would be pampering to a vociferous minority and causing further economic hardship in an area already under pressure.
346. Why ban shooting?? The farmers don't have time to cover all the farms and areas
347. I would lose my job, home and income. The estate would suffer drastically in terms of the flora and fauna that benefit from the proactive management of the estate for game shooting that manages and improves woodland habitat
348. First of all it would be the small birds, ground nesting birds and mammals who would suffer by an increased number of predators, there food we put out to the game birds would not be available during the winter months. We in the shooting community are not barbaric as the press make us out. We don't shoot everything in sight, the shooting community plays a huge part in conservation which is unseen by the the rest of the population especially the Urban community. Shooting for me has been a way of life for over 40 years. I get called to help out with a fox problem during lambing or someone with a small holding loosing their prized chicken -ducks - geese, There are Millions of pigeons, Geese & crows etc that are shot each year to limit crop damage.
349. I would leave Wales. Given the positive benefits of shooting including health and economy there can be no justification for terminating it and it would clearly demonstrate to me that dogma not pragmatism runs Welsh politics and I have no wish to be dictated to by someone who regards created public virtues more important than something which supports the rural Welsh way of life. Ban shooting and many communities will die back, some permanently and wildlife will lose its diversity and complexity since farming alone will fix priorities for the environment. I could not be happy in such an environment.
350. To ban game shooting would lead to a significant decrease in activity and social interaction during the winter. In rural areas, I feel special consideration should be given to the latter.
351. If you were to ban shooting the impact would be catastrophic for wildlife, you only need to look at scientific studies which shows land which has gamekeepers on site produces better varieties of wildlife and the reduced predator control means wildlife flourishes. Currently I'm out exercising on my ground multiple times a week, take that away and I have to be honest I don't know what I would do to get that same level of exercise back. The amount of meals I get back from my activities would also take a massive negative impact. I mostly only eat meat I have harvested and rarely buy any supermarket meat. This I find gives my a healthier well balanced diet and a ban on shooting would push my diet in the wrong direction! These rural social gatherings help economy's during the season, on our syndicate we use a local pub for meals after our days which is trade they wouldn't have in already a very quiet time of the year.
352. All of those would suffer. There is good access to the countryside locally, so there would be

opportunities for exercise, but the community spirit and interaction with a cross section of people would suffer. Summer time social activity includes fishing, sailing and golf, but there would be a void in my wintertime.

353. Wild life would suffer with the lack of food, habitat left to go wild. Some bird species would reduce. Emotionally it would affect all of us particularly those that shoot or beat. I would miss the social interaction and the many friends i have made over the years.
354. It would be great if he banned shooting
355. The land would be cleared of a host of wildlife, pheasant, duck, partridge, and all ground nesting birds. A way of life would be destroyed which is not causing the state any cost whatsoever.
356. A loss to wildlife a loss to wales and a huge loss to the local economy.
357. The loss of shooting would be not only be disastrous for rural communities and the social interaction, but the benefits to wildlife in general that management of land for game vices would be lost. The evidence back up by GWCT clearly show the positive impact on wider wildlife from positive game management.
358. If shooting was to be banned it would cause me great distress to watch as wildlife was adversely affected and biodiversity reduced through a lack of private investment and management. Both my physical and mental health might deteriorate through lack of exercise and social interaction. I suspect that I would lack the motivation to exercise as much as I presently do.
359. It would be an environmental disaster in rural Wales. It would destroy much of the social fabric. I would leave Wales.
360. it's very much a part of my rural upbringing, and the understanding of how shooting benefits both the human and natural community
361. It is particularly good for interacting with new people and getting together with friends who you don't see often enough from all over the country. Fortunately I have the opportunity to walk on my local mountain.
362. There are many benefits from organised shooting. Firstly it provides employment, not only for keepers, beaters etc but also the hospitality industry. Its a great social occasion with like minded people gathering together, people from all walks of life. Its an opportunity for taking exercise through the winter period and a great inter-action through all age groups.
363. It would be appalling as predators would get out of control it's bad enough with Badger protection decimating the ground nesting birds and hedgehogs
364. I would be very disappointed that a lifelong passion and sport has been taken away from me because of the views of people who are not connected as strongly to the countryside
365. Less habitat, less predator control, less wildlife, 3 less jobs
366. Were I live there are many large commercial shoots if they stopped shooting it would have a big impact on the local area. I would lose something that I've enjoyed for many years not just the shooting but the working of my gundogs.
367. It would be disastrous to the local economy, not to mention the impact it would have to all the local farmers with loss of livestock. This last winter alone I've shot 137 foxes over approximately 300 acres, I've also been out at lambing time to sort out some more. It would impact my life too as shooting and vermin control is what I've grown up with, a lot was taught by grandfather and I'd hate to lose that connection I had with him.
368. If shooting were banned personally I would be unemployed and living in a rural area with not much other employment. The area would be much poorer for it with not as many visitors in

the winter. A ban on shooting would have a terrible affect on local wildlife as no pest control would take place and thousands of acres of habitat would be lost because if shooting goes so does the money to provide the habitat

369. Shooting is an economic driver to support wildlife habitats that is not funded by the state. It is also the focus of many rural communities that it supports. The passion and skills that many owners of working dogs have, would be lost and that on its own would be a tragedy....
370. Devastation to local wild birds due to no predator control. Lack of contact with local people could be an issue.
371. A ban would have a significant economic effect in rural Wales, not only on the direct employment of those involved in the running of shoots, but many ancillary businesses, including hotels, B&Bs,
372. I would vote him and his supporters out of office for responding to an ignorant minority vocal minority view
373. I'd say he should be sent to a lunatic asylum
374. There would potentially be a significantly negative impact on wildlife and their habitats as a result of banning shooting.
375. I would be bitterly disappointed because: a) wild life would suffer terribly since a great deal on predator control would stop. b) also a huge amount of informal conservation work would stop. c) I would not get the exercise that I do at present. d)A huge part of my life would stop. e)I would not be able to enjoy my interest with like minded People. e)I would no longer be able to work my dogs in the manner for which they were bred.
376. For wild vermin management or some sorts of predator control, I personally would carry on regardless as long as I believed I was doing the right thing, laws can be swayed by different lobbies and varying false reports at any given time to satisfy minority groups or public opinion fuelled by misinformation, if there was a ban which I believed was resulting in the depletion of biodiversity or destruction of species in my area I would be prepared to face the consequences of the system as I wouldn't want to lose out on generations of work because of a misinformed political movement. With regards to reared game though I would not shoot them or release them, I would campaign to overturn the ban. I view game rearing as an enabler but not an essential to the other work which can be carried out to benefit wildlife. social interaction would be changed but I am sure we could find other ways to fill that by things which we currently do, such as foraging or hedge planting at different times of the year. In winter though it would have to be a few pints in the pub, which is not the same and is not as inclusive of everyones backgrounds as beating is.
377. The stopping of shooting/ hunting for me could never end because it is natural for the human race to hunt. There are hunters all over the world and we are the greatest input into wildlife conservation. You only have to look at the area where I live with very little game shooting. There is less wildlife than areas where I shoot with game shooting. The only area with red grouse near to where I live are only there because the area was managed for grouse shooting. The local authorities are now trying to take over this area. Which I know will mean the loss of the grouse and other species. Because the authorities will lead by an animal rights agenda and not for the well being of wildlife. The amount of exercise is greatly increased for me because I shoot and hunt and it is an all round year thing as I have dogs which need me to exercise them. I also carry out habitat management / predator control to benefit other species.
378. It would adversely affect jobs in the countryside. Also, now especially is a time to be trying to create jobs and activities where people can meet and work outside with minimum risk of picking up the virus.

379. Apart from geology, shooting is what has made the countryside look like it has. Who would do the ground level stewardship?
380. Wildlife will definitely be at a loss if shooting gets band
381. Wildlife would definately decrease because we release birds but also feed both them and other wildlife. You get exercise in the fresh air and control vermin which helps farmers and their animals.
382. Shooting and game management are integral to country life. Without shooting in my locality it would have a detrimental affect on the local economy and and wellbeing.
383. If he was to ban shooting it would have a massive effect on 10s of thousands of peoples mental health and well being as they would be more than likely stuck at home during the winter months. It would also have detrimental consequences for rare species if birds mammals and plants as no one will be managing the ground these different species depend on to survive.
384. The countryside would take a massive hit, not only economically but also environmentally and socially which is of course huge for mental health.
385. It is important to keep our way of life going.
386. it would reduce my well being not meeting friends and taking less exercise
387. A ban would have huge impact on my state of mind, the local working population, our crop and household vegetable crop, the song bird population. It would destroy much of our community and their jobs. Also, extremely important to me and my family is the source of food that pigeons and rabbits provide for the table. We have extremely limited financial resources, especially now and eat game and fish several times a week out of necessity and with pleasure. It is MUCH more environmentally friendly to eat this naturally occurring food source than trek miles to a shop to buy meat in plastic packaging that may have traveled hundreds of miles and been raised in a manner that is questionable.. Just look at the American chlorinated chicken fiasco..
388. Any ban on shooting would have a massive detrimental effect on biodiversity.
389. If shooting was banned, I would be devastated, my whole life revolves around my shoot and gundogs. All my friends shoot and my son, who will maintain the balance of the predators, who will maintain the woodland? Who will plant wildlife-friendly game crops, Who will support village pubs in the winter? Who will offer free crop protection to the farmers and fox control during the lambing season? If shooting is banned I would just vegetate and die.
390. I enjoy being out in the fresh air and watching my dogs work and seeing people enjoying them selfs and there dogs working I am not able to go sea fishing from the shore as I can no longer climb the cliff safely after two knee replacements
391. shooting and fishing is everything to me
392. The wildlife and flora/fauna would suffer as a result of the land not being managed. I would not interact with people on a leisure basis or get out as much which would affect my mental health greatly and I would miss my friends.
393. Much of the current infrastructure carried out to support shooting would be lost, with significant loss tp habitat, maintenance of woods, considerable loss of employment.
394. If shooting was banned I would see an increase in corvid and grey squirrel numbers which would reduce song bird and red squirrel numbers. Increased pigeon and rabbit numbers would decimate arable crops. The amount of excercise I take would be reduced and my physical and mental health would suffer

395. I would be devastated, as I know many others would be if shooting were to be banned in Wales. Please do everything you can to prevent this !!
396. It would be a travesty for the conservation of wildlife & mammals in the countryside, we operate, practices in conservation & wildlife management that have been developed over a thousand years, it would be an ecological disaster to stop shooting & reverse a 1000 years of careful management. I say this from the perspective of before firearms there was crossbows & hunting bows.
397. 70% less wildlife, no winter or hungry gap feeding, no incentive to do so. I've been involved since a toddler (64 years ago) so I would be rather braced off. No other social activities of this sort are in the area. People need to be educated in the countryside management and leave their phones at home, get out into the countryside and look and listen.
398. There is no reason for restrictions or the banning of shooting. The result would be the removal of one of the most active groups of conservation people in the country.
399. If shooting became illegal then this would be a pastime that would be sorely missed by many people. Most shooting people I know seem to be very passionate about their sport and would probably say it's more of a way of life than a hobby. Shooting revolves around the seasons, weather, tides etc and there is so much to it than just pulling the trigger. A blank day shooting is never considered a bad day as there is just so much else to it that we consider integral to the day's sport, and all this would go if we didn't shoot. I also feel that our link with nature would diminish much as it has with people who do not shoot and our link to the Welsh countryside would become even more removed. I could honestly say that if shooting was banned in Wales I would consider moving to another part of UK to live. Game meat is a very healthy and sustainably gathered product compared with intensively farmed meat and dairy which I see as having much greater impacts on our countryside as I see it myself when I am out shooting whereas I guess most people who rarely visit the countryside can't understand this.
400. Huge, no vermin control would take place, no woodland management for wildlife, all sorts of wildlife would suffer. I would take less outdoor exercise in the winter, I would see less of my friends and rural businesses would suffer, gunsmiths, pubs, hotels etc. Social life would suffer too. Diet would suffer as we eat a lot of game in season which is a healthy diet without additives.
401. A ban on shooting would have a huge negative effect on my interaction with others in the area. Other than sport I have not found it easy to integrate with others around my home as this is not now in the area of my birth or upbringing. Through shooting I have been accepted wholeheartedly into several groups and this has become a main pleasure in my life.
402. Without shooting the countryside can't be managed as effectively and it would cause a loss in habitats and a depleted ecology. Without shooting it would be greatly detrimental to the many other rural businesses and services that rely on it. It is people's livelihoods and way of life and it is very prejudiced of those who simply disagree with or don't understand shooting to ban it.
403. The countryside would no longer be managed and soon revert to a "barren area" void of wildlife in many parts. Bowhere to go to meet with friends and "conservationists".
404. For many elderly rural people, fieldsports is one of very few activities they are able to take part in especially in the winter months. This would no doubt lead to more loneliness for many people. Many shoots in my local area have a rich history and bring people from all over the county together and there is a fantastic shooting community here which would be destroyed. No doubt there would be a downturn in wildlife populations due to a ban on shooting in Wales.
405. No shooting means less wildlife songbirds etc no managed countryside to benefit wildlife no work for my dogs therefore no gigs no exercising

406. Huge effect on mental well being
407. Wildlife in any area has to be managed and the shooting community do this to the benefit of the local flora and fauna. If shooting is banned, wildlife will suffer and rural communities will lose an important source of income.
408. If shooting were to be banned it would make me very annoyed and depressed, and a lot of other people too. The sport gives the many people involved a great deal of fulfilment and comradeship. It benefits enormously local and general wildlife, human health fitness and wellbeing, and it gets in the way of no-one who does not wish to take part. It generates business in the supply and hospitality sector, which keeps those people happy and paying taxes.
409. The loss of management for game would severely reduce the chances of many non prey species by removing predator control, habitat management and supplementary feeding. In addition a host of important social interactions for often senior participants would be lost.
410. The chance to meet with people who are knowledgeable of the countryside, and appreciate the positives and benefits of game management

Contact us

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