
Tackling Hare Coursing in Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, in partnership with independent charity Crimestoppers, are raising awareness of Hare Coursing in and across rural areas of Northamptonshire.

Hare Coursing is where dogs are used to chase, catch and kill hares, often for the purposes of betting. It takes place on areas of flat, open land where the dogs can easily and visibly pursue the hare. It is typically carried out by large groups of people who travel long distances. Those that are involved will also do so as a part of high stakes unlawful gambling.

Under the **Hunting Act** 2004, hunting wild mammals with dogs is illegal and can incur a fine of up to £5,000. Those taking part may also have their vehicles and dogs seized by the Police.

There are many impacts of Hare Coursing. For example, fences and gates can be damaged by vehicles forcibly trying to gain access to land. Once in a field, it is common practise to film the chase from a moving vehicle, which can inflict significant damage to the field and any crops within it. Fear, intimidation and violence are also real concerns inflicted on land owners, farmers and any one who may question the activity by those who are taking part.



Hare coursing often takes place from August, when crops have been harvested, leaving large areas of land clear of standing crops. It often takes place either at dusk or dawn.

You can help us to fight Hare Coursing by making the independent charity Crimestoppers, or the Police, aware if you see any of the following activity:

Hare Coursing E-Newsletter

- Groups of vehicles parked in a rural area, perhaps by a gateway to farmland, on a grass verge, on a farm track or bridle path. This is often the most obvious sign.
- There are often estate cars, four-wheel drives or vans. It will be obvious looking inside whether there is evidence of dogs or not.
- They often travel in convoy, with vans at the front and rear containing minders.
- They will often use binoculars to spot hares.
- Coursers will often walk along the edge of a field to frighten a hare into the open.

If possible, when you report information about Hare Coursing that looks to be in progress or potentially due to take place, try to record and report the date, time and location of the activity along with a description of any vehicles, people, dogs and direction of travel. The description of the vehicle should include the make, model and colour along with any unique features, as well as the registration number (which could be fake).

If you have any concerns about someone who may be involved in Hare Coursing, contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or go online at crimestoppers-uk.org, to give information to our charity 100% anonymously about this or any other crime. Alternatively, you can contact Northamptonshire Police.

Join us in our fight against Hare Coursing, encourage and empower your friends, family and community to report any information about crime and help make your home a safer place to live.