

# **GLOUCESTERSHIRE BADGER GROUP**

## **supports petition launch, marking the end of another terrible and needless badger cull season**

**Badger Trust's petition to end the cull in 2024 launches alongside an Executive Summary of its report on the way forward for bovine TB control.**

As January 31st marks the end of another horrific badger culling season, Badger Trust launches a petition to make January 2024 the last cull season and calls for no more cull licences to be issued.

In Gloucestershire, 2,352 more badgers are expected to have been killed in the 2023 cull period, bringing the total number of badgers killed in the county up to 15,402.

The government has targeted 260,000 badgers for death since 2013, representing well over half the badger population. With nature in crisis and the farming industry struggling with effective disease control, the cull has become a costly distraction from the cattle measures needed to deal more quickly with bovine TB (bTB), measures that the government has been slow to implement in England.

Badger Trust also publishes an executive summary of its new report, *'Tackling Bovine TB Together: Towards Sustainable, Scientific and Effective bTB Solutions'*. The report is a significant attempt to get a collaborative way forward in dealing with the damaging disease of bovine TB in the most effective way possible. The report's approach is rooted in looking at the evidence to develop a policy framework and measures that reduce the impact of bovine TB on cattle and other animals throughout Great Britain. It contains clear and evidence-based recommendations for the best way forward in tackling the disease and protecting our natural world.

The report brings together evidence around bTB spread and attempted control over the last fifty years and points to a more effective approach for Great Britain, especially England, focusing on cattle, cattle testing and vaccination and enhanced cattle biosecurity (including cattle movement). This approach would

lean on the more effective methods used in Wales and Scotland, where badgers are not culled, leading to a faster reduction in bTB rates throughout Great Britain and the suffering this causes. With cattle-to-cattle transmission the proven primary method of bTB spread, the report also calls for an immediate end to the distracting, destructive, and costly badger cull that does not address the spread of bTB in cattle.

**Gloucestershire Badger Group is urging the local community to sign Badger Trust's petition to stop any further badgers being killed in Gloucestershire.**

“Help us show that the public wants to protect nature and the environment, and to stop the destructive wiping out of a critical native species in our area.”

Gloucestershire Badger Group is very concerned that DEFRA is now considering intensifying the cull rather than phasing it out. We understand plans to introduce epi-culling zones are on the cards, with farmers being licensed to kill 100% of badgers across a wide area of herd breakdowns (ie one or more animals failing a TB test – GOV.UK)

We hope that Badger Trust's initiative in calling for a collaborative approach to controlling bTB and ending the cull is successful.

**The petition and executive report are both available at the [www.badgertrust.org.uk](http://www.badgertrust.org.uk) home page.**

For more information, media should contact [secretary@gloucestershirebadgergroup.org](mailto:secretary@gloucestershirebadgergroup.org)

