

# **BADGER GROUP SLAMS ASSEMBLY DEFENCE OF “POINTLESS AND CRUEL” CULL**

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Pembrokeshire Against The Cull have today (10th February) added their voice to calls for an immediate halt to the Welsh Assembly's badger cull. The group points to the publication of an expert scientific report by Imperial College, London, that says badger culling is neither effective nor economical.

The researchers found that even culling over huge areas only produces small falls in cattle TB incidence, which vanish shortly after the programme ends. The cost of such culling far outweighs any savings delivered. The study also shows that culling increases TB in surviving badgers, and could therefore put herds at even higher risk than before the cull began.

Celia Thomas, PAC chairperson, stated: "This report confirms what we have been saying all along - that any paltry gains in TB control from culling are vastly expensive and temporary. Further, it suggests that such transient reductions in cattle disease would require an extermination of badgers in an area double the size of the one currently planned for Pembrokeshire. WAG say that badgers will naturally repopulate the area. The bad news, for both badgers and cattle, is that they will carry more TB than before, directly as a result of interference. Wales would be even further away from bTB eradication than it is now".

The Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, Christianne Glossop, claimed today that the study could not be applied to Wales, as the Assembly was introducing strict cattle control measures alongside a cull.

"Perhaps the Chief Vet could explain the twisted logic of expecting culling to work just because it is combined with other measures, when it could just as easily make things worse? Her stance is now completely at odds with both scientific advice and common sense. The public are under no illusions that killing badgers is a pointless, uneconomic and cruel way to proceed. It is disgraceful for WAG to continue claiming that a cull will lead to TB savings, when all evidence points to the contrary.

"We are seeing a massive surge of Pembrokeshire people pledging to oppose this barbarity - PAC now has hundreds of active supporters, many of them landowners willing to speak out against the violation of their basic rights to privacy and property. We are also, sadly, hearing of small scale tourist operators - the backbone of our county's economy - facing loss of revenue from wildlife loving tourists. For the benefit of all, WAG must call off this folly immediately" urged Ms Thomas.