

White-tailed Eagle Project - Reporting procedure for farming, fishing and shooting interests

Farmer/land manager contacts project team to report problem by phone or email and to obtain advice. The relevant contact number and email address will be publicised on the project's web pages.

Member of the project team visits site as soon as possible to assess the case, and consider whether there is evidence that livestock or poultry have been predated by White-tailed Eagles, or that significant detrimental impacts through disturbance are occurring. Data from satellite tags will show how much time eagles are spending in particular areas – project to monitor this data to determine if it ties in with reported problems and undertake further monitoring to establish the exact situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved this can be escalated to the Steering Group for them to agree an appropriate course of action. If this can still not be resolved then this can be referred to Natural England for further investigation and decision.

If confirmed, project team to offer advice and provide practical on the ground support and management to avoid problem e.g. visual and auditory scaring or diversionary feeding. If agreement on appropriate mitigation cannot be agreed this can be escalated to the steering group.

Project team inform Natural England (within 10 days) and report to steering group and monitoring and evaluation group, any evidence confirming damage caused to livestock or businesses.

Project Officer reports to Steering Group and Natural England to review reports of damage and study the effectiveness of different methods of solving problems.

Where the evidence supports the conclusion that predation has occurred, mitigation has been ineffective and predation is continuing then further action would be considered by Natural England. This could include re-capture of birds.

As a last resort Natural England could terminate the project at any time by invoking the exit strategy based on the triggers outlined overleaf. The exit strategy could be implemented in full (i.e. stop all further releases and recapture all birds already released) or in part (e.g. stop all further releases but do not recapture birds already in the wild). The decision on this would be made by Natural England in consultation with the Steering Group.

Exit Strategy Triggers

A key role of the project Steering Group will be to objectively assess the project against the exit strategy triggers on an annual basis on receipt of the annual monitoring and evaluation report in April of each year. The exit strategy would be implemented in the event that:

- Unsustainable and detrimental effects arise as a result of the re-introduction of White-tailed Eagles;
- Any significant change occurs to the required funding or management structure of the project that threatens the project viability;
- There is unacceptable risk to human health, livestock or other wildlife;
- There is an unsupportable level of mortality in released animals as a result of persecution, human intervention, or natural mortality attributable to the project;

The project Steering Group may also be required to meet on an extraordinary basis if exit is triggered by a significant event, or combination of events, outside of the planned meeting schedule.