



PO Box 129, Banbury, Oxon OX17 2HX

Telefax: 01295 712719

Website: www.ucsw.org Email: office@ucsw.org

A round up of News and Events – January 2007

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1. HUGH THOMAS

It is with great sadness that we announce the death on 16th October 2006 of committee member Hugh Thomas.

Hugh had served on the committee of the UCSW since 2000 and was Chairman of the South West region since 1998. He was our representative on various committees, including the Deer Initiative and the Independent Working Group on Snares and Traps. He also helped put together many submissions to the Government on shooting and deer related topics. His dedication and knowledge has been of great value to the Union and he will be sadly missed.

Hugh was a Co-signatory with Brian Friend on the legal challenge to overturn the hunting ban in England and Wales and he helped Brian with his Scottish Appeal in the House of Lords. During the week before his death, Hugh went with Brian to the House of Lords to hand in the papers for the Scottish court case to Black Rod's office.

2. LEGAL CHALLENGES – HUNTING ACT 2004 & WILD MAMMALS (SCOTLAND) PROTECTION ACT 2002 & FIGHTING FUND

UCSW member Brian Friend has taken his Scottish Hunting Act case to the House of Lords after fighting off a legal challenge by the Scottish Ministers to stop him. With the help of the late Hugh Thomas he lodged the first tranche of his case papers (all 139 volumes) in the Lords Judicial Office on Tuesday 10 October, 2006.

In the English courts Brian Friend's and Hugh Thomas's application for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal was refused so now, following Hugh's sad death, Brian's next step is to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. His application to the ECHR will be lodged on or before 22nd December 2006. Hugh would want the fight to go on and go on it will.

The Union of Country Sports Workers launched a **major fund raising initiative** at the CLA Game Fair 2006 to raise £100,000 to support Brian with his travel, court, research and administration expenses. There are no fees for lawyers or barristers in these cases as Brian continues to represent himself. If you would like to contribute to the fund, please send your donation, payable to the "UCSW Fighting Fund" to: UCSW, PO Box 129, Banbury, OX17 2HX.

Anyone who wishes to speak with Brian Friend can call him on 01404 881357 or contact him by email: bkldfc@aol.com

3. ADVICE

Every week UCSW helps someone employed in country sports with an employment, housing or some other job related problem. If you need help, please call the office on: Tel: 01295 712719.

4. UCSW FUND RAISING – RACE DAY AT HEREFORD RACECOURSE

The UCSW would like to thank all those who contributed to the UCSW Race Day at Hereford Racecourse on Sunday 5th November, 2006. We had a very successful Charity Race with the 12 riders raising over £11,000 and the Silent Auction raising over £4,000. More details and photographs will be published in the next issue of *Living Country*.

A donation of £1,000 has been made to both the Air Ambulance and Hunt Staff Benefit Society.

5. UCSW MERCHANDISEsome new items...

- A fun mouse mat that every countryman should have – a single fox walking with a pack of hounds - £5 each
- Small red enamelled lapel badges with gold letters “B2B” – suitable for the office, the field or in the Houses of Parliament – when you visit to lobby your MP to repeal the Hunting Act - £2 each. These are also now available in black and silver.
- Battle of Westminster dvd – a documentary about rural Britain’s struggle to preserve its wildlife, environments and traditions directed by Kevin Keating. £14 each plus donation to p&p.

These and all other items can be purchased from the office: UCSW enamel badges £2, UCSW ties £8, navy baseball caps £7, sweatshirts £17, polo shirts £13.50 all with Union logo.

We also have the following car stickers and badges: “More than a Job, a Way of Life” membership car sticker – 50p; Red “B*ll*cks to Blair” car stickers - £2; Green “A Hunting We Will Go!” – badge & car sticker £1 each; Maroon “Full Cry for Hunting – Fighting the Ban” badge £1. Other stock includes B*ll*cks to Blair dog collars £8.95 and leads £9.95, Peacock hand warmers – Giant £26.96, Standard £19.95 (p&p £2.95).

Please send your cheque, made payable to “UCSW”, with a note of which item/s you require, to the UCSW office including a donation for p&p or enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for all orders. Thank you. Most of the merchandise can be viewed on our website: www.ucsw.org

6. CONSULTATIONS

The UCSW has been invited to comment on the following consultations:

1. Consultation on the draft mutilations (permitted procedures) (England) Regulations 2007 and the draft Docking of Working Dogs’ Tails (England) Regulations. Due in by 16.01.07.
2. Consultation on an animal welfare delivery strategy. Due in by 20.02.07.
3. Consultation on snaring in Scotland. Due in by 28.02.07.

If you have any information that you would like to be considered for inclusion in our comments, please contact the office at least two weeks prior to the due dates shown above.

7. TRADE MEMBERSHIP

We are now able to offer all Trade Members a web-link from our website. Please make sure you take up this offer. If you are interested in upgrading to a Trade Member, please contact the office for more details – subscriptions per annum are only £40.

8. YOUTUBE

UCSW Press Officer, Ian Summerell has set up a channel showing video clips on Youtube. So far these cover topics such as: hornblowing, the UCSW Charity Race at Hereford Racecourse, bumble bees and badgers, falconry, a short history on gun making and horse shoe making. To access the videos go to www.ucsw.org → news & press → shows and information, where you will find the links.

We would like to wish all our members a very Happy New Year.