

## Gravetye Estate Deer Management Policy

### 1. Introduction

Deer are a valuable component of woodland ecosystems. However, without natural predators their impact upon the natural capital of the landscapes can be significant. WRGC must manage both the density and distribution of deer to make sure that their impacts are acceptable. We need to make sure that densities are not allowed to build to levels which adversely impact on biodiversity of the woodland or affect public safety and deer welfare.

### 2. Health and safety

WRGC manages wild deer within the estate, and we have a duty to make sure all forest users are safe while we carry out our deer management operations. Health and safety legislation requires WRGC to safeguard the health and safety of:

- Employees
- Public
- Contractors

The implementation of health and safety requirements is an integral part of deer management. Risk assessments must be carried out for all operations.

### 3. Deer management policy

- WRGC aims to manage deer safely, humanely and in an efficient manner to a level which is consistent with acceptable impacts on land uses.
- Deliver a high standard of deer management.
- Work closely with neighbours to support integrated deer management.
- Take practicable steps to slow the expansion of non-native deer species.
- Be guided by and contribute to Government policy on deer management.
- Use of non-lead ammunition will be encouraged where appropriate.
- Detailed records of kills by date location, sex and species will be kept.

### 4. Out of season shooting. (Section 6 (1) and 7 Deer Act, Section 4 SI 2183)

We observe the close seasons contained in the Deer Act and will only consider an exception to these where deer are causing serious damage to woodland under Section 7(3) of the Act.

### 5. Night shooting (Section 3 and 6 (1) and 7 Deer Act, Section 4 SI 2183)

It is illegal to take or intentionally kill a deer at night (between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise). Due to extensive public access it is recognised that a night licence can be an effective means of achieving management objectives alongside routine stalking activity.

### 6. Deer management qualifications

Deer Management Qualifications have been developed to raise the level of expertise amongst those involved in the sector. WRGC will ensure that all contractors and licence holders will have Deer Stalking Certificates 1 and 2 or equivalent.

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