

Gunning for Children:



How the gun lobby recruits young blood

Campaign objectives:

- ③ Magazines that encourage the killing of animals for 'sport' to be consigned to 'top shelf' positions in newsagents, out of sight and reach of young people, on whom the pro-violence content could have a corrosive, long-lasting effect
- ③ A restriction on the sale of these publications to persons under the age of 18, thereby bringing them in line with tobacco products and magazines with an explicit sexual content
- ③ The Secretary of State for Education to ensure that the promotion of gun use is prohibited on all school premises

**ANIMAL
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...it also strikes me as appropriate that organisations committed to the shooting of live animals for 'sport' and 'fun' should not be offered opportunities to promote their activities in schools or (more generally) with youth organisations. Above all, fostering healthy and environmentally-conscious attitudes to nature and wildlife conservation is fundamentally inconsistent with deriving pleasure and enjoyment from shooting animals for fun.

Peter Squires, Professor of Criminology and Public Policy, at the University of Brighton



Sporting Gun – November 2009

SPORTING Gun PIGEON WATCH

WHERE THEY WERE SHOT

1 **NAME: SHANE SANDERS & BEN JOHNSON**
LOCATION: FELIXSTOWE

Two huge bags of 327 birds was taken by Suffolk shooters Shane Sanders (right) and Ben Johnson. The shooting pairs had set up a single hide in a field of pea stubble just outside Felixstowe and enjoyed a hectic six-hour session.

"We had a very strong head wind blowing directly into our faces, which muffled the sound of our shots and the birds were vocal," said Shane. "We were both grateful to Ben's girlfriend, Gail, for bringing us more cartridges when we were running low!"

2 **NAME: HUGH O'CONNOR**
LOCATION: CASTLEWELLAN, COUNTY DOW

THIS BAG OF 75 birds was shot by Northern Ireland reader.

3 **NAME: RUSS & TREVOR EDWARDS**
LOCATION: HULL

YORKSHIRE BROTHERS, Russ and Trevor Edwards, together with Russ's dog Maddie, are pictured with a bag of 124 birds, shot in a hectic afternoon session. The pair had set up a pattern of 20 'divided' decoys and a pigeon magnet in a field of rape near their home in Hull. And, according to Russ, the bag would have been...

NORTHERN NOTES ROE BUCKS



ABOVE: Steve and Jonny with their well deserved cul bucks.

GUIDE

JOBS FOR JUNE:
This is the month when cover really starts to thicken

Sporting Gun – June 2012



Shooting Sports – July 2012

Young Shots

News and views from the next generation

break

WIN

Rivers West Bucket hat

EVERY MONTH WE AWARD RIVERS WEST BUCKET HATS FOR OUR FAVOURITE PHOTOS SENT IN BY UNDER-18 READERS

RIVERS WEST WINNER

he said, "What a fantastic backdrop Bredon School made. Thank you very much to Bredon School for allowing us to shoot from the Headmaster's lawn, and to Sir Malcolm Guthrie and John Hewitt for presenting the awards."

Thanks also went to the event's many sponsors – all of whom can be found on the website, www.thisschoolchallenge.co.uk

RIVERS WEST WINNER

Sporting Shooter – August 2012

SPORTING Gun

GOT AN OPINION? SP

Rabbit for a rookie

► Could you please print this picture of my daughter as it would certainly make her day.

■■■■■ is holding her first rabbit which she shot with her Lincoln 20 bore. ■■■■■ is 12 years old and has been out shooting with me a number of times, mainly on the pigeons.

The other afternoon we enjoyed a fine walk with the gun around a friend's farm near Hemingby, Lincolnshire. We had a few shots at pigeon without touching a feather but when this rabbit bolted it was duly despatched with one shot. A fine meal it made too!

■■■■■
Horncastle, Lincolnshire



Sporting Gun – November 2009

All I wanted for Xmas

► I hope you like the picture taken on the Blythe Shoot near Coleshill, Warwickshire showing my 11 year-old son ■■■■■. His Christmas wish-list present was to take my place on the annual 'Dean's Day' shoot in the hope of bagging his first partridge.

On the second drive he managed to shoot a lovely brace and by the end of the day he added a further four birds in extremely windy conditions. With ■■■■■ in the photo is headkeeper, Simon. ■■■■■ Atherstone.



Sporting Gun – March 2012





Summary

Magazines that encourage and even celebrate the killing of animals for sport are on sale in high street newsagents and on supermarket shelves across the country.

Titles such as *Shooting Times* and *Sporting Gun* routinely feature 'guns' posing boastfully beside animals they have just slaughtered. Grinning young children are also shown holding up or standing over shot pheasants, rabbits, ducks and pigeons. *Sporting Gun* is especially keen to celebrate the mass killing of pigeons (dozens or even more than a hundred at a time), in which children have taken part.

It is no coincidence that such magazines are keen to recruit new young blood. Government figures show that the number of people in England and Wales holding shotgun certificates has been declining at a significant rate for more than 20 years¹. The gun lobby's own research shows that, if people don't learn to shoot by the age of 14, the chances of them subsequently getting involved rapidly diminish².

To counter this downward trend, politically well-connected gun lobby groups, such as the Countryside Alliance and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, direct considerable resources towards the recruitment of children.

They organise shooting lessons for youngsters, produce educational materials for schools, and even encourage sympathetic parents to become school governors in order to 'educate the educators'³. The lesson these groups want to impart is that breeding millions of pheasants and partridges every year so that they can be used as feathered targets is personally, economically and environmentally enriching. Their companion message is: any animal who interferes with their 'sport' is a pest or vermin and needs to be controlled, i.e. killed.

Among the great political triumphs of the gun lobby is its success in resisting moves to restrict the age at which children can pick up a shotgun and use it to kill animals for sport. A child of any age can legally do so. In fact, there is no minimum age to acquire a shotgun certificate.



I find the whole idea of encouraging young people to shoot animals for pleasure completely insane and, believe me, I rarely use the word insane.



Jeffrey Masson – bestselling author of nine books on the emotional lives of animals, including *When Elephants Weep*, which has been translated into 20 languages. Masson trained as a Freudian analyst and was the Project Director of the Sigmund Freud Archives.



© HUGH THRELFALL/ALAMY

Action

Implementation of the three key objectives (see cover) requires action on the part of politicians, educators and magazine retailers. Animal Aid has written to the following, setting out the case for reform:

- The leaders of the main political parties;
- The chief executives of WH Smith and Martin McColl, the Professional Publishers Association, the National Federation of Retail Newsagents and the leading supermarket chains.

Animal Aid's lobbying on the issue of children and guns will be stepped up in the weeks and months to come.



is baffled and revolted by their atavistic tastes, and so carefully rehearsed justifications for the bloodshed are offered.

'Reasons' to Kill

Deer are killed, it is said, because there are too many of them and they have no natural animal predators. Rabbits, Canada geese and pigeons must be shot because they damage crops. Mink are targeted because they kill water voles, whereas rats are dirty and carry disease.

Cormorants eat fish that anglers want, and seals take fish that are meant for people's dinner plates.

Numerous species of wildfowl are shot because killing them is an outdoorsy tradition, and it keeps those bird populations in check.

'Foreign' grey squirrels are slaughtered because, it is claimed, they persecute the cherished 'native' red squirrel, while the equally 'alien' ruddy duck cross breeds with another species of duck, and so creates an intolerably 'impure' hybrid. Boars are killed because they are allegedly dangerous. Foxes, stoats, weasels, crows and magpies must be 'controlled' because they take the eggs or the young or the food left out for pheasants. And pheasants themselves are shot – along with partridges – because some 50 million of them are bred every year especially for that purpose. Rearing and killing 'game' is doubly good – so the argument goes – because it results in an environmentally rich habitat that benefits ground nesting birds such as lapwing and curlew.

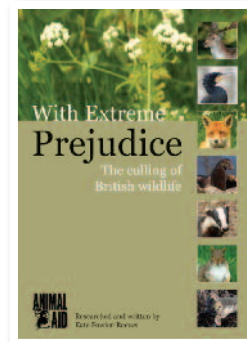
Of course, the killing doesn't end there. We can add gulls, moles and hedgehogs to the list of legally killed animals, as well as raptors and badgers who are killed illegally. The means of despatch might be traps or poison, as well as guns.

This report isn't the place to deconstruct the flimsy arguments advanced for making perpetual war on such a long list of indigenous or habituated species (see Animal Aid's report, *With Extreme Prejudice*). But the common theme is clear to see: Any species that breeds prolifically, such as boar and deer, is fair game. The same goes for animals interfering with the commercial or leisure pursuits of powerful sectional interests, including the 'game bird' industry, forestry, agribusiness or fisheries.

Such animals are labelled as pests or vermin and thereby considered fit for destruction. Conversely, those species that provide commercial or leisure-related benefits (from pheasants to farmed salmon) are subjected to industrial scale production.

People who reject this approach to the natural world as cruel and ecologically destructive, are said by the sectional interests to be ignorant of the ways of the countryside.

But more important than the name-calling is the process of transmitting such a violent world view to political policy makers as well as to children. The result is that the damage is perpetuated, and an already-stressed living landscape is put under further pressure.



Gunning for children

Look through magazines such as *Shooting Times*, *Sporting Gun*, *Shooting Sports* and *Sporting Rifle* and you will find, in graphic photographs of slain animals, evidence of the relish those responsible take in their kills.

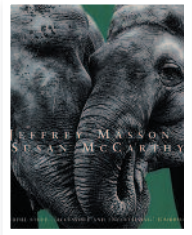
There is a ritual associated with these images. Pigeons – who are often shot by the dozen – are laid out in geometrically meticulous rows. Stags, their antlers prominently on show, are propped up so that their dead eyes stare into the camera. Smaller animals, such as rabbits and squirrels, are pictured with the weapon that despatched them laid tidily over their corpses; whereas pheasants are held by their necks, two or three dangling from each hand.

The pleasure in the kill is plainly evident. But the magazine editors, and the wider shooting community, know that much of the outside world

Impact on the child

What of the individual child? What impact do the pro-killing messages have on his or her personal development?

Best-selling author and trained psychotherapist Jeffrey Masson told Animal Aid:



I find the whole idea of encouraging young people to shoot animals for pleasure completely insane and, believe me, I rarely use the word insane. But how can anyone believe that there is no link between cruelty to animals in childhood and cruelty to others later in life? The link has been proven over and over. True, some children later realize that they were duped into thinking it is 'fun' to kill animals, but most just accept that this must be what society expects of them. It is like training youngsters to become soldiers; you make killing seem like a harmless pastime. (That is why I am opposed to first-person shooter video games.) The fact that adults sanction these events makes it harder for the child to see through the act to the harm created on the body of the animal. He or she thinks it is merely harmless. But an actual, feeling being is the target and that being feels the pain. The child is shielded from seeing this. It becomes invisible. The worst harms are the ones that are (and remain) invisible.

In fact, there is evidence to suggest that the gun lobby, in its promotion of killing for pleasure, is travelling unerringly in the opposite direction to the general public. The number of shotgun users in England and Wales has been declining at a steady rate for more than 20 years⁴. Between 1989 and 2011 the number of certificate holders dropped by 35 per cent – from 865,100 to 564,269⁵.

Another warning signal for the industry is the 2012 Countryside Alliance (CA) survey showing that, unless people learn to shoot by the age of 14, their chances of doing so start dramatically diminishing².

* Against that, the average certificate holder now owns more guns than in the past: currently 2.4 weapons per person, according to government figures⁵.

Foxes are persecuted as 'pests'



Very shootable: the trophy buck



Sporting Rifle – November 2009

Pheasants are bred to be shot for 'sport'



Giant spur-winged geese



Sporting Shooter – August 2012



Sporting Gun – June 2012

Midlands | Foxes

Happy shooters: the bag of 20 foxes with the land rover and its custom rig on top



Sporting Rifle – November 2009



The CA poll of more than 3,000 people from 400 gun clubs, groups and syndicates found that 31 per cent of adult respondents learnt to shoot before they were 12 years old, with a further 28 per cent being taught over the next two years. Just 16 per cent got involved after the age of 25.

‘The ideal,’ noted the CA, ‘is that every young person is trained by a family member in the old fashioned way. But for various reasons in today’s society, it appears there are not enough young

people coming through this route. If we relied purely on the children of shooting people, every gun would have to bring a child into the sport just to keep the numbers static. Without young people, fewer inherit the sport and shooting will face a demographic time bomb⁶.’ Given this background, gun lobbyists are determined to continue resisting moves that would restrict the age at which children can use a shotgun. It is still the case that a child of any age can acquire a shotgun certificate, and use that licensed weapon to kill animals.**

The CA survey also found that, as with adults, targeting ‘game’ (typically pheasants and partridges) is the most popular type of shooting undertaken by children. The CA’s Shooting Campaign Manager, David Taylor, hailed this finding as ‘good news’. It means that ‘youngsters are not exclusively spending their formative years shooting targets and clays before progressing to game’.

Taylor was less cheered by the 76 per cent of the survey’s young respondents who said that ‘public opinion’ was the biggest barrier to children taking up guns.

It is the cluster of trends and statistics set out above that explain why shooting interests are anxious about their future. A dramatic slump in shotgun licence holders can be reversed only by avid recruitment of young children, but those children are discouraged from taking up guns by the negative public attitudes towards shooting that they sense all around them.

**** Ten shotgun certificates were issued to nine-year-olds between 2008 and 2010. Two forces – West Mercia and Cumbria – each approved a licence application for an eight-year-old. In 2008, Gloucestershire police granted a licence to a seven-year-old child. Between 2008 and 2010, there were 7,071 licences issued to under-18s. (BBC 18 January 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-16604554>)**

Under the age of 15, a shotgun certificate holder must be ‘supervised’, when out shooting, by a person aged 21 years or more. The supervisor need have no experience of guns.



This partridge, used for breeding, died in her metal battery cage



The gun lobby



Airgun Shooter – Summer 2012



The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC)

BASC's 'mission' is to 'promote and protect sporting shooting and the well-being of the countryside'. Through its Young Shots programme, it 'invests a huge amount of time, money and expertise to deliver a passionate and balanced view about the countryside to thousands of urban children from a diverse range of ages and cultures'. A recent example was the part it played in an October 2011 event in East London's Lee Valley Park, which was attended by more than 3,000 city children of primary school age⁸. BASC's presentation was 'on the importance of shooting to the countryside, conservation, the food chain and airgun safety'.

BASC also produces school resources 'written by teachers'. It claims that 'shooting can be part of any curriculum from history to science to PSHE or religious education'⁹.

Conscious of the anti-gun sentiment to be found among many mainstream educators, BASC produces a briefing sheet on 'how to challenge anti shooting prejudice in schools'. Tips include: arranging a Young Shots day; providing a class talk on how 'shooting sports contribute to habitat creation'; joining the parent-teacher association; and becoming a school governor³.

BASC is not without high-level support. Its patron is Prince Philip. Its President is the 15th Earl of Home, David Douglas-Home, who is chairman of Coutts bank and son of a former Prime Minister.

Other groups

Two other groups that encourage gun use by children, and which have top-drawer backing, are the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, and Countryside Learning. Prince Philip is patron of the first, as is Nicholas Soames MP. The Duke of Bedford is patron of Countryside Learning.



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Prince Philip – a keen supporter of shooting



The Countryside Alliance

The Countryside Alliance – together with its rival gun lobby group, the British Association for Shooting and Conservation

– is eager to demonstrate to its ageing supporters how much it is doing to attract new young blood. The CA's principal initiative is National Shooting Week, through which it claims to have 'introduced thousands of newcomers to the sport...'

'People get very scared – especially when you talk about children and guns,' the CA told the *Independent* newspaper. 'But there's a big difference between people waltzing around the streets shooting people illegally and what we are doing here. We're trying to target people who wouldn't normally go shooting. The idea is to open it out to everyone because sometimes people think it's a posh sport.'⁷



The magazines

Shooting Times

Shooting Times regularly features letters in which children are pictured with freshly killed animals, often accompanied by the comments of gratified relatives.

'Please accept this picture from two very proud grandparents.' (The image is of a nine-year-old who 'bagged a pheasant with one shot'.) **8 February, 2012**

I proudly enclose a photo of my eight-year-old daughter... a true ambassador for shooting and fieldsports.' (She is shown with the rabbit she has killed. Her father says he takes her rabbit shooting at night and also deer stalking.) **29 February, 2012**

'My name is xxxx. I am six-years-old and from Essex. I go shooting on the weekends with my father. We took our hide last weekend and my father let me have a go with his .410. We shot two rabbits.' **18 April, 2012**

'I am proud to send you this picture of my son xxxx. He is 10-years-old and has accompanied his father at shoots since he was four. He was kindly invited to join the line for the whole day's pheasant and partridge shoot in xxxx Cumbria, where he bagged five birds in total. The overall bag was 236 with eight Guns.' **1 February, 2012**

Sporting Gun and Sporting Shooter also court children

'I have attached a photo of my very proud ten-year-old son with his first birds of the wildfowling season. He shot three [ducks] and dad only got one.' **November 2009 Sporting Gun**

The August 2012 issue of *Sporting Shooter* featured a 12-year-old holding up four pheasants, killed on his first ever day out shooting.

But it is photos of mass bird killings that are *Sporting Gun's* distinguishing feature. In the July 2012 issue, an 11-year-old 'beams with delight' as he is pictured with 14 dead rooks, a pigeon and two crows.

Another 11-year-old is pictured with 157 slaughtered pigeons – a feat accomplished with his father.



YOUNG [redacted] poses pro... rooks and crows he shared w... to Somerset. The Salisbury... field of laid wheat at a farm... time," said dad Mark, "And I...

Sporting Gun – November 2009



Sporting Gun – November 2009

Starting young

My name is [redacted] I am six years old and from Essex. I go shooting on the weekends with my father in [redacted] Essex. We took our hide last weekend and my father let me have a go with his .410. We shot two rabbits – I shot the smaller one. I had a great day, and my father said if I'm good he will let me use at The



Shooting Times – 18 April 2012



I have attached a photo of my very proud ten-year-old son [redacted] with his first birds of the wildfowling season, [redacted] three, and dad only got one [redacted] via email

Sporting Gun – November 2009



Sporting Gun – February 2012

Encouraging young shooters

Here is a photo of [redacted] aged 11, taken on the last shoot before Christmas. [redacted] has been an enthusiastic part of the beaters' team for some years. He was given a stand on the last drive and at his first attempt managed to shoot a cock and two hen pheasants, an impressive achievement as he was shooting with a 28-bore. This was witnessed by his father and uncle, who run the beaters and shoot respectively.

By email



Shooting Times – 18 January 2012

Sporting Rifle – Summer 2012



Dangerous game: William survived a charge to take his dream quarry

Sporting Rifle – Summer 2012



Perfect placement: But the bullet choice meant a difficult track into the bush

Macho posturing

The gun magazines, inevitably, come with a strong whiff of macho posturing. Small animals are hunted by individuals in often absurdly elaborate camouflage gear. After the kill they pose beside the corpse, with an expression of deep satisfaction. Killing two birds with one shot is rated an achievement, and there is an obsession with the size of stags' antlers. Medals are awarded, based on span, length and 'beauty points', such as pearling and symmetry¹⁰.

The armed forces are invoked approvingly. Letter of the Week in the December 21, 2011 issue of *Shooting Times* was from a Lance Corporal stationed in Afghanistan, who longed 'to get the rifle out to catch up on a few does and muntjac deer during my R&R during January. I can't wait.'

And for 'guns' who have become jaded by the live targets available in Britain, hunting trips are organised to Poland, East Germany, Canada, Zambia, South Africa and elsewhere.

The Summer 2012 issue of *Sporting Rifle* (see above) featured the triumphant tale, lavishly illustrated, of a man who had already bagged 'two of the Big Five' difficult quarry (African elephant, black rhino, Cape buffalo, lion and leopard) and was desperate to increase his tally. In South Africa, aided by specialist commercial hunters, he lured a male lion with bait and shot him twice through the lungs and once through the heart. His hunting companion went on to kill a second lion. The author was full of praise for the professional hunter who made the kills possible. 'For those that dream of taking a lion, [he] is the real deal who can and will fulfil that dream.'

The freshly shot corpses of a leopard, water buffalo and kudu were also on display in that same *Sporting Rifle* issue.

Trophy hunters who cross continents to slaughter large 'game' seem to make no pretence at 'population control' or the other grand motives for killing that are recited by British gun lobby groups. Some of the gun magazines themselves take a stab at arguing for reasoned slaughter but they invariably forget themselves.

The July 2012 issue of *Sporting Gun*, for instance, carried a three-page feature on pigeon killing, in which the author lamented that, in his part of Essex, he could find no birds to shoot. The reason always offered for killing pigeons is that they damage crops. But the birds couldn't be seen on the author's home patch, which left him deeply disappointed. '...he's raring to go,' read the headline, 'but where are all the pigeons?'

Air weapons

While the summer 2012 issue of *Sporting Rifle* was glorying in the killing of lions, *Airgun Shooter* magazine was describing, in a three-page illustrated feature, how one man with an air rifle managed to track and destroy a grey squirrel that had caused 'serious damage' at a builder's yard. The tale came in two parts: 'The Brief' and 'The Job'. 'With a square hit to the head, the grey vandal slipped down and off the roof, stone dead before it hit the deck. I actually let out a shout of joy. "Yeah! Got him!"'



Airgun Shooter



Airgun Shooter

There are few restrictions on young children using air rifles. Youngsters under the age of 14 can use them on private premises if someone over the age of 21 is 'supervising'. Those aged 14 to 17 don't need supervising and, after 18, there are no restrictions on buying an air rifle or ammunition.

Air weapons are the particular concern of Peter Squires, Professor of Criminology and Public Policy, at the University of Brighton.

// *'I first began researching the criminal use of firearms during a project on bullying and victimisation on a local housing estate. Some people told us how their domestic pets – cats and dogs – had been shot and injured by air weapons. In other people's homes we found air rifles propped casually against kitchen units.*

The more I studied the problem the more it became clear that air weapon misuse was just the tip of a whole iceberg of under-reported firearm-involved crime. In fact, air weapon misuse was the most common form of firearm misuse in Britain. It all suggested that this was an area of activity that needed much tighter control, not only because of the very direct harms and cruelties it inflicted but also because of the cavalier attitudes towards public firearm safety that it frequently exposed.

A parliamentary Home Affairs Select Committee report of 2000 got it right when it referred to such activities as forms of 'vandalism and casual cruelty' (HASC 2000 para 2-3). With this in mind it seems imperative that shooting magazines celebrating the very same 'casual cruelty' of shooting wild animals – a kind of 'shooting porn' – should not be on sale to children and young people (u-18) and that shops and retail outlets selling such magazines should position them both out of reach and sight of children and young people.

Furthermore, with this in mind it also strikes me as appropriate that organisations committed to the shooting of live animals for 'sport' and 'fun' should be not be offered opportunities to promote their activities in schools or (more generally) with youth organisations. Above all, fostering healthy and environmentally conscious attitudes to nature and wildlife conservation is fundamentally inconsistent with deriving pleasure and enjoyment from shooting animals for fun.

//



Conclusion

Children who kill animals for sport in urban areas are pilloried as wicked and dysfunctional. They are considered a social menace, whose actions outrage their communities. By contrast, Britain has an active gun lobby, composed of well-connected groups such as the British Association for Shooting and Conservation and the Countryside Alliance, that devotes considerable resources towards encouraging children to take up guns at a young age. The children are urged to use those weapons to kill, for 'sport', indigenous wildlife, as well as purpose-bred 'game' such as pheasants and partridges.



The gun lobby's front-line advocates are magazines, including *Sporting Gun* and *Shooting Times*, which carry lurid pictures of triumphant 'guns' posing alongside the animals they have just slain. There could hardly be a more corrosive message to send to young people than the one embodied in these images: namely, that wildlife is there to be vanquished and that doing so is pleasurable and enriching.

With its core constituency slipping away, the gun lobby is desperate for young recruits. It knows that if prospective shooters are not captured young, the chances of them picking up a weapon in later years rapidly diminish. For that reason, Animal Aid calls for gun magazines to be consigned to newsagents' top shelves and for their sale to be restricted to persons over the age of 18. We also call on the government to prohibit the promotion of gun use on school premises.

A typical newsagent magazine shelf

WHSmith



Gun magazines in high street newsagents

A snapshot survey of 16 towns and cities across England and Wales showed that among magazine retailers, WH Smith sold the widest variety of shooting publications and that most were easily accessible by children and even, in some cases, by toddlers. Just one of the WH Smiths in the survey positioned the magazines on the top shelf. At randomly selected towns, we found that newsagent Martin McColl also stocked a range of shooting magazines, which were out of reach of children at some locations but not at others. Of the supermarkets, Tesco, Asda and Waitrose were found to sell pro-shooting publications, whereas only one surveyed Sainsbury's store had just one shooting publication on sale. None of the Co-op supermarkets we visited had any such periodicals.

Gun control network

'Shooting organisations claim that when children are introduced to guns at an early age they can be taught properly how to handle weapons, learning discipline, respect for guns, and the importance of gun safety. Gun Control Network is not aware of any research in support of that claim. The majority of firearms offences are committed with weapons, including airguns and BB guns which are likely to be legally-owned.'



Shooting Times – 21 December 2011

Chris Williamson MP:

// *Regrettably, there are some in our society who still believe there is a place for guns to be kept for what they deem as 'sport'. They argue that it is acceptable to kill animals for fun and then try to convince the rest of us that they are providing a valuable rural pest control service or, more galling still, insist that it is part of countryside culture. The truth is that the vast majority of people living in rural areas are as sickened as I am by killing animals for fun. The despicable fabrications of the gun-toting minority simply do not stand up to scrutiny.*

Everyone who opposes wanton violence must do all they can to stop this destructive activity from spreading any further. One important way we can do this is to demand that newsagents stop the sale to children of magazines that promote the killing of animals for sport. In fact, such magazines should be consigned to the top shelf out of reach of young people. **//**

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peacefully against all animal abuse
and promotes a cruelty-free lifestyle**



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