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March 2020



### Hen Harrier Action: March newsletter



Dear Subscriber,

Thank you for signing up for our newsletter. Here's the very first. By reading this and future newsletters, you'll be able to keep up to date with what we're doing to support Hen Harrier Days and with news of the events themselves as they develop. We'll also include some topical material related to raptor persecution and the other ills of our uplands, and progress in tackling these. There's more on our website [News](#) page but we won't cover everything in detail, as others do that brilliantly well. (Check out the beginnings of a [Resources](#) page on our website.)

#### **About us**

Most of you receiving this first newsletter will be familiar with Hen Harrier Days, with many having attended one or more and a few probably having helped organise one. Hen Harrier Action will be new to most and that's because we are new! We're a registered

charity (and also a company limited by guarantee) set up to support Hen Harrier Days over the coming years. This job was done by Birders Against Wildlife Crime in the early years, and last year Wild Justice ran a brilliant one-off national event. Hen Harrier Action will provide the stable organisation to continue to broaden and develop the tradition, reaching new audiences and having an even greater impact. Our aim is simple. We want Hen Harrier Days to become days entirely of celebration: of the return of the hen harrier to its rightful places, of birds and other animals flourishing where they should, and of a natural balance for all to enjoy when visiting our hills and moors.

Hen Harrier Action won't itself organise events (though several of its trustees are doing so) but will support local groups and organisations who do. We'll provide national-level marketing and a single 'shop window' for all events (via the website, this newsletter and social media) and help with advice and resources for event organisers. One of our key aims is to broaden the range of events available and to make them attractive to everyone in the community who cares about our uplands. Want to discuss a new idea for an event? Please do!

### **Hen Harrier Day 2020**

Despite Covid-19 (see below) we're planning for 2020 to be the best year yet for Hen Harrier Day. So far, there are seven events on the website map from which you can click to more details for each. They range from events in the heart of Snowdonia (the first in Wales) and the Cairngorms National Park to city-based ones in Sheffield and Aberdeen, from a small private gallery on the edge of the infamous Angus Glens to RSPB reserves at Rainham Marshes and Arne, the latter in beautiful Purbeck, soon to be the centrepiece of a new 'super reserve' of Dorset heathland. Others are still at an early planning stage, but we hope to be able to let you know shortly of events in Northern Ireland, the central belt of Scotland and the North of England. And of more, we hope, over the coming months. As much as anything, we're now looking for smaller, more community-based events, which are easier to set up and perhaps better suited to these uncertain times.

### **Coronavirus**

Obviously, the situation with the virus is fast-changing and the future is hard to predict. At present, we are planning that all Hen Harrier Day events will go ahead. This is based on a belief, following the science and experience in China and elsewhere, that the epidemic will peak in the UK in the next month or two and then decline. Some relaxation of the current lock-down will then follow, determined by the rate at which new cases slow and the need to avoid a 'second wave' of infections. Exactly when that happens, and the extent of relaxation permitted, will of course be decided some months from now. For the moment,

we remain optimistic that most or all of our events will go ahead as planned, but if they have to be cancelled we will give good notice of that.

Meanwhile, given the uncertainties, we are getting on with planning a virtual Hen Harrier Day which we can all share in our homes in August. It's rather exciting actually, because it fits so well with our ambition of broadening our reach. Over the coming weeks we'll be talking to lots of people: artists, teachers, film-makers, children and celebrities, about how they might engage with this. We'd really welcome your suggestions and offers of help too.

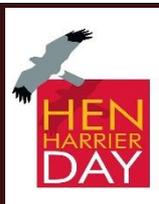
### Other news

Recent weeks have seen:

- the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and others condemning moorland burning after yet another 'controlled' fire got out of hand, damaging deep peat moorland and wasting the time of up to 20 fire-crews with better things to do to serve the public in these difficult times. When will the government take the action it has promised on this?
- Mark Avery and the RSPB back in court to appeal against the continuation of the brood meddling scheme which is Natural England's apology of a strategy for restoring the hen harrier's fortunes in England. Surely movement restrictions related to Coronavirus will now bring this ridiculous 'experiment' to an end?
- Two arrests in north Yorkshire for two separate shootings of hen harriers, one in the Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the other in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Well done the members of the public who reported these crimes and the North Yorkshire Police for getting the cases to this point.

### Get in touch

Please let us know what you think of this newsletter and what you'd like to see included in future editions, via the [Contact](#) page on the website.



Visit the Hen Harrier Action [website](#)

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