

FOX DUMPING CONCERNS

UCSW Committee member Lindsay Hill found herself on the BBC's Radio Four Today Programme on 19 March 2011 debating the question of fox dumping.

Her radio appearance came after Roger Williams, MP for Brecon and Radnorshire, raised the issue of fox health during Oral Questions in the House of Commons.

He said: "The Minister might be aware that there is a belief in the countryside that urban foxes are trapped alive, put in lorries, taken out into the countryside and released, at great detriment to their welfare and great inconvenience to their country cousins. Will the Minister deprecate that activity and make every effort to resist it?"

Replying, Agriculture Minister Jim Paice said: "My Hon Friend makes a relevant point. There is a lot of evidence, albeit anecdotal evidence, that people trap urban foxes and release them in the countryside. I suggest that that is very cruel, because those foxes are not accustomed to living on their own or to hunting for their prey, because it is all there for them in the refuse bags in urban areas. Farmers and others will bear witness to the fact that many of them wander round the countryside in a somewhat dazed state."

Lindsay began research into the subject in 2003 on behalf of UCSW and made the point that: "if foxes looked like rats there wouldn't be a problem!" She recalled one report from her findings in which a Pest Controller commented: "residents prefer to see a fox relocated - that's what we do."

Urban foxes have become more and more controversial recently and so we have decided to re-open the research. We plan on publishing our findings at a later date.

The UCSW display at this year's CLA Game Fair and the other shows it attends will consider 'Fox Dumping – Is it Fact or Fiction.' We are asking our members, and the public, to let us have any evidence (preferably photographic) they may have on this issue. Please bring it to our Stand or send it to the UCSW.