

**Manor Kilbride Deer Management Project**

**Mutually Accepted Code of Practice for Landowners & Hunters: Guidelines Sept 2016**

1. Wild Deer form an essential part of the country’s wildlife but numbers must be controlled to sustainable levels in order to minimise adverse effects on grassland, crops, growing trees, farm fences and TB disease spread among bovines and deer.
2. The primary responsibility for deer management rests with landowners/farmers
3. Deer control becomes an essential element of farm management where deer numbers are negatively affecting farming
4. Recreational deer hunting is an established sport and contributes to controlling deer numbers and is best practised by properly trained and certified hunters including HCAP-Certified hunters.
5. There is a need to continue recreational deer hunting but also to begun effective culling to reduce excess numbers
6. Trust, openness and genuine partnership must exist between hunters and landowners to reduce numbers
7. Constant two way communication is vital to this
8. Improved co-ordination, consolidation, pooling of hunting lands and grouping S42 applications where appropriate will benefit landowners and hunters for targeted shooting
9. Remuneration for this is a matter for mutual agreement

**Code of Practice for Hunters**

1. Respect that landowners own the land and therefore need to give permission to hunt
2. Annually show Firearms Certificate and provide copy of insurance to landowner
3. Provide evidence of training and competence in best-practice management and culling of wild deer through HCAP or equivalent
4. Abide by good hunting practices including gralloching, disease examination, reporting findings and gralloch disposal
5. Communicate with landowners to avoid wasted journeys when other hunters also permitted
6. Commit to hunt regularly and to provide evidence of pre-agreed numbers shot
7. Inform farmer by text before entering and at departure
8. Inform landowner after each visit on numbers shot and abnormalities found
9. Have clear respect for landowners situation and concern on TB risk by responsible offal and blood disposal
10. Use regular texting/calling for communicating
11. Give feedback to landowners on deer impact, damage
12. Advise landowner early to enable earlier application for post season Section 42s.
13. Demonstrate numbers of deer culled with evidence e.g. Pair of ears, lower jaw etc.

**Code of Practice for Landowners**

1. Acknowledge that a good hunter is a worthwhile partner
2. Have zero tolerance for unlicensed hunters or bad practices
3. Avoid permission for multiple hunters as this is counterproductive
4. Allow fewer but better hunters on the land, including hunters trained and certified to HCAP standard or equivalent
5. Reduce number of casual hunters
6. Agree hunting plan, target numbers and regular reporting procedure with hunter and help the hunter with information on deer activity, damage and sightings
7. Demand feedback from hunters and agree numbers to be removed in advance
8. Refuse renewal permit to hunters not meeting performance targets
9. Focus on removing hinds preferably in a ratio of 4-5 hinds to 1 stag
10. Support co-ordination and grouping of neighbouring lands into hunting units

**It is our intention in good faith to abide by these standards for a period of one year minimum from date of signing**

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**Landowner Hunter**

**Date:**