

Harry and the wild boars

Interpreting the Hunting Act 2004

In June 2008, Harry graduated from university with a degree in events management. He decided to put his knowledge to the test and set up his own business running corporate entertainment days.

Harry lives in the Forest of Dean and is hoping to develop alternatives to the usual paint-balling and laser-tag activities offered by rival firms. From conversations in the pub, Harry is aware that wild boar are a serious problem in the area. The animals are descended from a group of boar which escaped from Farmer Giles's herd, originally brought to the forest to produce wild boar sausages. They trample on farmers' fields and dig up crops. They also scare walkers and cyclists and terrify children at the outdoor adventure centre, where bookings have fallen.

Harry has decided to offer 'Severn Boar Days' at which participants will hunt and shoot wild boar and finish with a barbeque of any boar they have caught. Local farmers, who have been so annoyed at the damage caused by the boars, have given permission for Harry and his clients to enter their land (so there are no trespass implications) and several have even offered to lend Harry their trained sheepdogs to round up the boar.

Harry contacts you to ask whether his proposal is permitted by the Hunting Act 2004 and, if not, what offences would be committed, and by whom. How will you advise him?