

## Grouse Shooting and Flooding GWCT's Letter to The Telegraph

Dear Sir,

The claim by Natalie Bennett the Green Party leader (Telegraph 16th Jan) that grouse shooting somehow caused the recent floods is as wrong as it is bizarre. In the 1960s and 70s, successive governments offered upland farmers and landowners huge grants for draining, fencing, and to construct roads and tracks. These grants were designed to increase agricultural productivity, not grouse.

It has long been the view of the GWCT that upland drainage does nothing to enhance grouse numbers and it is sad to see the very people who refused the drainage grants now being attacked for something they didn't do. This injustice is made worse by the fact that many existing grouse moor managers have for years been busily blocking the government-funded drains in order to re-wet damaged moors.

Her claim that heather moorland is an 'industrial landscape' is simply ridiculous. It is one of the rarest landscapes in the world and for many people one of the most beautiful. If it is so dreadful, why do millions of people flock to these areas in every season of the year?

Nor are grouse moors a one species 'monoculture'. There are very many species which thrive on grouse moors, including some which find it difficult to survive elsewhere such as, curlew, golden plover, lapwing, black grouse and mountain hare.



That Britain has custodianship of 75% of the world's heather moorland is in part due to the fact that grouse shooting has perpetuated the ancient manage techniques which created it in the first place. It is a rich and beautiful landscape, beloved by millions and about as industrial as a wildflower meadow, and it does not cause floods.

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Chairman of Trustees  
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