

PE1662/G

Scottish Land and Estates submission of 24 October 2017

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to improve testing and treatment for Lyme Disease and associated tick-borne diseases by ensuring that medical professionals in Scotland are fully equipped to deal with the complexity of tick-borne infections, addressing the lack of reliability of tests, the full variety of species in Scotland, the presence of 'persister' bacteria which are difficult to eradicate, and the complexities caused by the presence of possibly multiple co-infections, and to complement this with a public awareness campaign.

Moorland managers are supporting the petition to the Scottish Parliament urging a change in health policy to help fight tick-borne infections and limit the spread of Lyme disease. They are at the forefront of combating the number of ticks in the countryside primarily by sheep dipping and bracken spraying as part of wider moorland management practice. This not only benefits grouse and bird species but reduces risk to members of the public enjoying the countryside, and also to people working in the countryside such as farmers, keepers and stalkers. Moorland groups around Scotland fully support his petition as anyone who contracts Lyme disease can be severely affected.”

The careful management of deer and hare numbers on Scottish moorland is another technique used to control tick numbers and the spread of disease. Reducing the number of host animals to stop adult ticks having their ‘big-blood’ feed in turn reduces the population size of the next generation and will minimise the spread of tick-related diseases.”

Under Scotland’s Moorland Forum, a new Tick Control guidance manual is to be developed. This new initiative, once complete, will form part of the Principles of Moorland Management (PoMM) programme which underpins best practice efforts of grouse moors. These aim to deliver the most pragmatic and sustainable outcomes for the future management of moorland.

I hope that these remarks are useful.