

Raise the Game Survey 2019 – 2020

Introduction

The Raise the Game Survey was launched online in February 2019 and closed in April 2020. It was designed to reflect the 2018 Farmers Weekly Wellbeing Research, capturing comparative information where possible. The overall aim of the survey was to gather information to support GWT in identifying, assessing and responding to need within the gamekeeping community.

Methodology

The online survey was hosted by Survey Hero and was promoted on social media:

- GWT Twitter account @GWelfare
- GWT Facebook Page @GamekeepersWelfareTrust
- A range of relevant Facebook Groups for members of the gamekeeping community

The paper survey was taken to shows attended by GWT and GWT training events in 2019 e.g. STAG Training. 61 were returned; not all questions were answered.

366 people were recorded as having participated in the survey, though this includes entirely 'empty' online surveys (a look at individual online surveys found more than 20 were entirely unanswered). Responses to each question varied from 195 to 304. The responses were compiled in March and April 2020.

Summary

A basic overview of the results would give an avatar along the lines of a single-handed gamekeeper, approximately 50 years old, working full-time on an estate. They probably work with more than one species (pheasants, partridges and deer is a possible likely combination). Living in a tied house with no plans, or no finance in place, to buy a home to retire to. The 'keeper takes less than two weeks holiday a year (less than half the usual UK entitlement) and is very focussed on their job, rarely participating in regular non-work activity and working between 60 and 70 hours in an average week. They rate their health (physical and mental) as fairly good, despite not exercising regularly away from work. The keeper drinks alcohol, but is within the recommended weekly intake of units for men and women in the UK and is unlikely to smoke.

Survey Results

Each question is listed, with a number of respondents to that question (the number of respondents to each question varies). The % given is the % of respondents who

gave that answer, followed by the number of respondents. %s have been rounded up where appropriate.

Where questions were open to multiple responses, the number of respondents choosing answers is given.

Key points which might be useful for advocacy are given throughout the results.

You and Your Role

1 Which best describes your involvement in the shooting community? 329 respondents

32% Single-handed Keeper 105	27% Head Gamekeeper 90
13% Beat Keeper 44	12% Stalker 38
8% Under Keeper 25	4% Apprentice Keeper 13
4% Ghillie 14	

Key point: with over 100 respondents being single-handed, and potentially some stalkers and ghillies being in similar circumstances, that's c1/3 of respondents working alone.

2 Which best describes your employment status? 328 respondents

72% Employed full-time 237	4% Employed part-time 12
2% Employed seasonally 7	9% Self-employed full-time 29
5% Self-employed part-time 15	8% Casual employment 28

3 Which species do you work with? 328 respondents. Of the 61 paper respondents, 46 (75%) worked with more than one species.

Pheasants 234	Partridges 182	Grouse 99
Deer 188	Fish 48	

Key point: Based on looking at c150 of the online surveys and all of the paper surveys, many respondents were working with more than one species. Pheasants, partridges and deer is a common combination.

8 In an average week, how many hours would you estimate you work? 270 respondents; reported as a % and as a number. Where respondents gave a range, the lowest number was noted.

0.74% 0 – 10	4% 10+	2.5% 20+
2% 30+	14% 40+	22% 50+
27% 60+	16% 70+	6% 80+
2% 90+	4% 100+	
2 0 – 10	10 10+	7 20+
6 30+	38 40+	59 50+
73 60+	44 70+	16 80+
16 90+	10 100+	

Key point: the highest number of hours was 160 a week; the lowest 8. Several participants pointed out hours vary across the year.

9 How often do you take a regular day off as holiday (i.e. as a matter of course and not a holiday)? 305 respondents

17% within the last week	52
21% More than a week ago, less than a month	65
19% More than a month ago, less than 3 months	57
14% 3 – 6 months ago	44
10% 7 – 11 months ago	31
4% 12 – 17 months ago	12
3% More than 18 months ago	8
12% Never	36

Key point: over 70% of respondents had taken a day off in the last 6 months

10 How many days holiday do you take on average through the course of the year? 300 respondents

37% 1 – 10 days	112	26% 11 – 15 days	78
18% 16 – 20 days	55	10% 21 – 25 days	32
6% 26 – 30 days	18	3% 30+ days	9

Key point: less than 20% of respondents take the general U.K. annual leave allowance of 28 days (inc BH) a year.

11 When was the last time you had a short break or holiday? 304 respondents

8% in the last week 24

17% more than a week, less than a month 53

17% More than a month, less than three months 51

16% 3 – 6 months ago 48

15% 7 – 11 months ago 46

11% 12 – 17 months ago 33

16% more than 18 months ago 49

12 How long was your last holiday or short break? 305 respondents

40% Less than 3 nights

31% 4 – 6 nights

15% 7 nights

8% 8 – 10 nights

5% 11 – 14 nights

1% 14+ nights

Key point: 42% of respondents hadn't had a short break/holiday for 6 or more months (Q 11). 71% of respondents said their last holiday or short break was less than a week long.

13 How regularly do you participate in non-shooting/fishing/stalking activities off the shoot/estate? 307 respondents

5% Several times a week

10% Once or twice a week

10% Several times a month

12% Once a month

20% Every couple of months

42% Less than six times a year

14 Do you belong to any of the following? Tick all that apply

170 Shooting/stalking/fishing discussion group

102 Other shooting/stalking/fishing network

22 Local gym

2 Cricket club

22 Rugby club

7 Football

22 Other sport club

27 Other

Key point: respondents are more likely to be involved in activity/discussion related to their job than to purely recreational activities.

Health and Wellbeing

15 How would you rate your physical health? 302 respondents

25% Very good 44% Fairly good 27% About average
3% Not very good Less than 1% Not good at all

16 How would you rate your mental health? 299 respondents

34% Very good 33% Fairly good 27% About average
5% Not very good 1% Not good at all

17 Is your daily activity or work limited by long-term illness, health problem or disability? 297 respondents

11% Yes 89% No

18 In the last 12 months, have you had a general check-up with any of the following? 201 people responded online and 61 people had the opportunity to respond on paper; in total 262 potential respondents **Multiple options**

160 Dentist 132 GP 86 Optician
51 Hospital 17 Other (e.g. chiropractor)

Key point: dental check-ups are usually recommended as twice a year; that's a lot of respondents missing regular check-ups. They can't all have false teeth.

19 In the last 12 months, have you been personally involved in a work accident? 239 respondents

85% No, I have not been involved in an accident
8% Yes, I had an accident
7% There was an accident but I wasn't hurt

20 How frequently do you exercise outside work? 296 respondents

20% Several times a week 16% Once or twice a week
9% Several times a month 4% About once a month
6% Every couple of months 45% Less than 6 times a year

Key point: while a lot of our respondents will be physically fit and healthy as a result of their job, exercising outside work can contribute to positive mental health. 64% of respondents exercise less than once a week outside of work.

21 If you drink alcohol on a regular basis, how many units a week do you drink?

(1 standard 175ml glass of wine = approx. 2.3 units. 1 pint of ordinary strength beer/lager/cider = 2.3 units)

164 respondents noted a number; others commented ranging from ‘tee-total’ and ‘0’ to ‘too much’. NB recommended weekly intake for men and women is 14 units.

2% Less than 2 units	16% 2+ units	17% 4+ units
10% 6+ units	4% 8+ units	16% 10+ units
5% 12+ units	9% 14+ units	1% 16+ units
15% 20+ units	4% 30+ units	<1% 40+ units
<1% 60+ units	<1% 90+ units	

Key point: 70% of respondents who drink are drinking below the recommended weekly intake for men and women (14 units)

22 If you smoke on a regular basis, how many cigarettes do you smoke a week?.

Based on 110 total respondents to the question and taking 329 respondents in total across the survey, that’s 33% who smoke. This includes 2 people who gave the g of tobacco they use weekly (this was converted using the calculation of 25g of tobacco = 50 cigarettes) and 2 people who vape (they gave no indication of regularity so weren’t included).

2% <10 cigarettes	12% 10+ cigarettes	5% 20+ cigarettes
5% 30+ cigarettes	5% 40+ cigarettes	7% 50+ cigarettes
7% 70+ cigarettes	5% 80+ cigarettes	2% 90+ cigarettes
15% 100+	5% 110+	5% 120 cigarettes
10% 140 cigarettes	5% 160	5% 175
5% 200 cigarettes		

Key point: 33% of respondents smoke; of these, more than half smoke over 100 cigarettes a week (c15 a day).

23 On how many days a week, do you estimate you eat at least five portions of fruit and/or vegetables? 293 respondents

22% Every day	5% 6 days	15% 5 days
15% 4 days	20% 3 days	12% 2 days
10% 1 day		

Key point: just under half of respondents eat the recommended 5 portions of fruit and veg for half the week.

24 How often do you feel you get enough sleep? 293 respondents

2% All of the time	41% Most of the time
44% Occasionally	13% Never

25 How often do you have trouble sleeping (i.e. you find it hard to sleep, or wake up in the night and can't get back to sleep, or wake several times during the night)? 298 respondents

11% All of the time	26% Most of the time
51% Occasionally	12% Never

26 On average, how many hours sleep do you get a night?

Based on 231 online responses:

18% 5 hours	38% 6 hours	23% 7 hours
10% 8 hours		

Key point: the lowest number was 3 hours and the highest 10.

27 And how many hours do you need for a good night's sleep?

Based on 221 online responses:

4% 5 hours	15% 6 hours	23% 7 hours
51% 8 hours		

Key point: the lowest number of hours sleep noted was 4, the highest 12.

cHalf respondents need 8 hours sleep; around 10% of respondents get 8 hours sleep.

28 Have you ever taken or used any of the following to help you sleep? 143 respondents **Multiple options**

62 Listening to music	11 Meditation
48 Alcohol	70 A hot drink
9 Prescribed medication	19 Over the counter medication
22 Other	

How else can the Gamekeepers' Welfare Trust help you?

29 Which of the following topics would you be interested in knowing more about? 214 people responded to this online; in total 272 respondents had the opportunity to respond. **Multiple options**

91 Balancing work and home life, and getting more time away from the shoot/estate

89 How to manage tiredness and fatigue

36 Business planning

95 Financial planning

74 How to manage stress

97 Techniques to stop worrying about work

77 Understanding legislation related to my job

40 Time management/how to use time most efficiently

49 How to get the most out of people working for me

17 Succession planning (identifying and/or developing people who will move up when someone leaves)

26 Techniques for solving problems

115 How to plan for retirement

38 How to resolve conflict

32 How to use computers, tablets, smartphones

82 How to plan for housing in retirement

69 Understanding my rights as an employee

4 Other

Key point: particular issues for people in the sector are: planning for retirement; housing in retirement; finances; work-life balance; stress; work-related legislation; and employee rights.

30 If you have any other comments, suggestions or observations, please leave them here.

Estate/employer should give more priority to staff health

I know dozens of lads who have no home to retire to, same as me and the thought of a council house in a town is daunting, and is more and more in the mind as time goes on

Been tired so long wouldn't have it any other way

Thanks Helen you're doing a good job

All my recent stress have been caused by Natural England due to the fact I work within a SSSI

Just to say keep up the fantastic work you all do for all of us and a massive thank you that you do it

Somebody has to worry, if nobody did then nobody would care enough to make a good job, however, lack of sleep is my biggest downfall and will no doubt finish me

This is a great idea as gamekeeping is a tough job and people need emotional support

Some of the questions were difficult to answer as my job is a way of life and home life is just incorporated into my days

59 years old semi retired slowed down a lot after having cancer in 2008 and just having a full knee replacement beginning of Feb 2019

Luckily I came to keeping professionally after a different career so we have our own home and I learnt to work in a factory environment so the quiet and solitude is a blessing. Having our own home is good from a point of view of how the laird cannot put us out but it also restricts movement job wise if it was necessary, which it isn't at the moment. I now live where I used to go on holiday which is why holidays are not

an issue with me, but I've never been told I'm doing too much either, being single handed the work just has to be done.

This time of year is quiet for me but after August work at least 10 hours a day

The nature of the job is quite stressful but the biggest issue is the public's perception of what we actually do. For me much more positive media coverage is required and for sure people in our trade could and should be employed, funded by the wealthy landowners who are it seems slow to come forward with funds and ideas to do this, to promote the outdoor life we lead

It would be great to have proper legal contact [contract?] to protect employment of keepers, working hours and conditions etc

Big problem with poaching.. that keeps me awake and chance of reprisals. Need more police support