



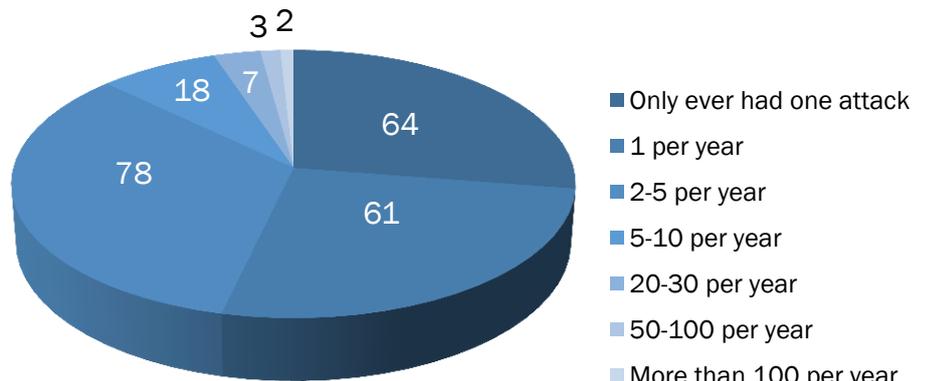
National Sheep Association

Sheep Worrying by Dogs Survey (April 2016)

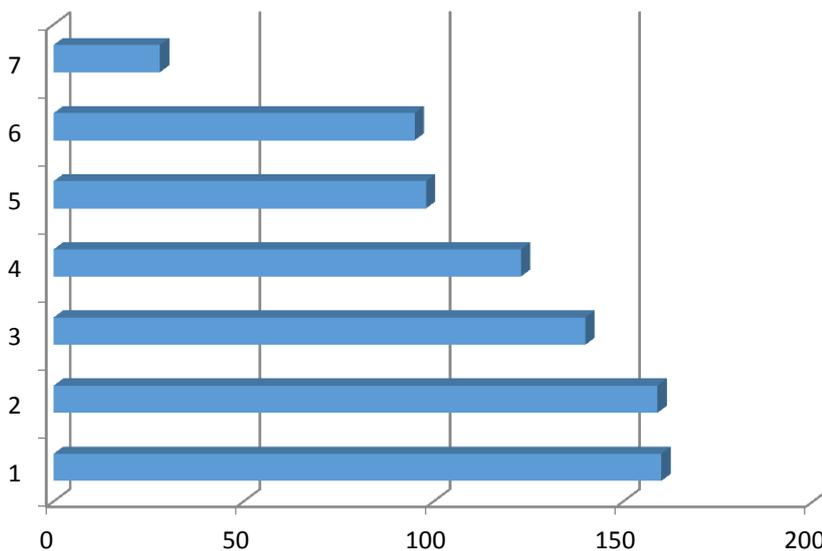
233 survey responses from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

On average, how many incidents of sheep worrying by dogs do you experience in a year?

The most common level of attacks (33%) is between two and five attacks each year, but three respondents said they experienced between 50-100 attacks per year and two said they have more than 100.



What do you consider to be the main causes of sheep worrying by dogs on your farm?



There were two main reasons for sheep worrying attacks given by those surveyed - dog owners not putting their dogs on a lead (72%) and dog owners assuming their pet wouldn't attack livestock or do damage if they did (71%).

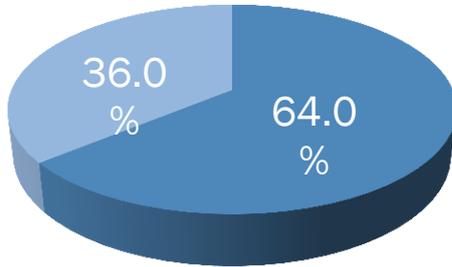
Dog owners' lack of regard or concern on the issue was also cited by 63% of respondents.

1 = Dog owners' not putting their dogs on a lead. 2 = Dog owners' assuming their pet won't attack livestock or won't do damage if they do. 3 = Dog owners' lack of regard or concern on the issue. 4 = Dog owners' assuming their pet will respond to commands off the lead. 5 = Dog owners allowing dogs to roam unaccompanied. 6 = Dogs escaping from gardens/straying. 7 = Worrying on purpose/ for sport/linked to poaching





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Do you display warning signs to public asking them to keep their dog on a lead around livestock?

64% said they do display warning signs.

On average, how many sheep have you had killed during a single attack?

18% of respondents had never had sheep killed in an attack but, of the 82% who had, the average number of sheep lost was four. The most common number of sheep lost was one or two (experienced by 53% of respondents) but 9% had 10 or more sheep killed – and two respondents reported 39 and 45 individuals killed.

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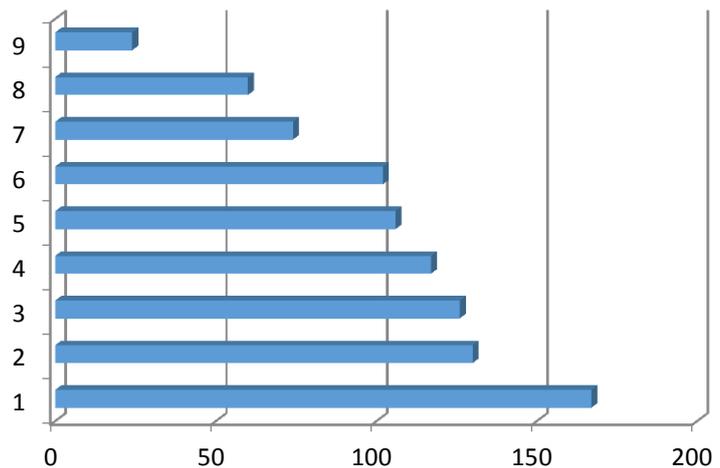
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On average, how many sheep have you had injured during a single attack?

10% of respondents had never had sheep physically injured in an attack but, of the 90% who had, the average number of sheep hurt was five. The most common number of sheep injured was between one and three (experienced by 49% of respondents) but 14% had 10 or more sheep damaged – and three respondents gave figures higher than 20.

What impacts have dog attacks had on your flock?

81% said dog attacks resulted in injuries to their sheep. This was the most common impact, followed by death from dog bites (63%) and reduced production in ewes, such as lambs being miscarried (61%). More than half had euthanised sheep after an attack (57%) and seen animal welfare in their flock affected (51%).



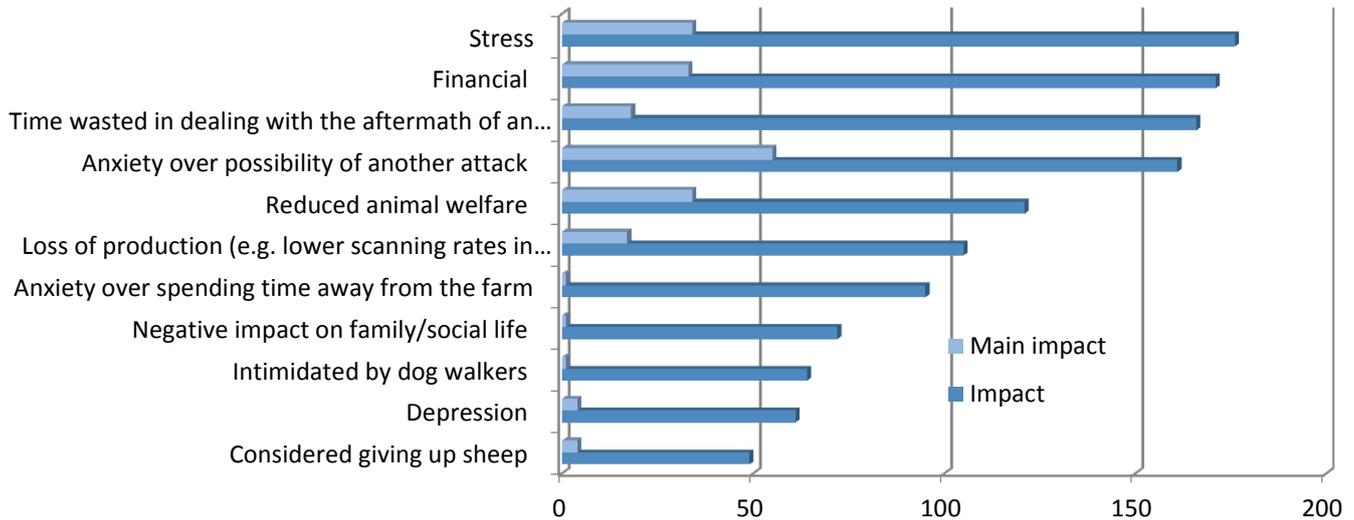
1 = Injury from dog bite. 2 = Death from dog bite. 3 = Loss of production in ewes, including abortion. 4 = Sheep put down after an attack. 5 = Reduced animal welfare. 6 = Injury from fleeing. 7 = Loss of production in lambs, including mis-mothering and inability to thrive. 8 = Death from fleeing. 9 = Death from suffocation.





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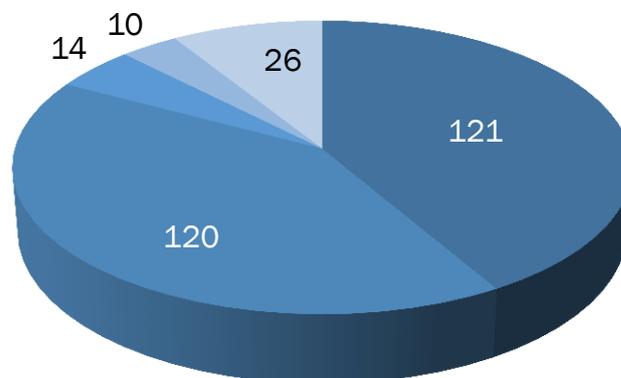
What impacts have dog attacks had on you?



85% of respondents said dog attacks were a cause of stress to them as individuals, with 78% also citing anxiety over the possibility of future attacks. This anxiety was also the top response when respondents were asked what the single main impact on them was.

46% experienced feelings of anxiety about taking any time away from the farm while 24% (49 individual respondents) had gone as far as considering giving up sheep. Although 83% people replying to the survey gave financial losses as a concern, only 16% gave this as the main impact. Financial loss was the fourth highest main impact given, behind personal anxiety (27%), persona stress (17%) and reduced animal welfare (17%).

- Private, enclosed fields with no public footpath or right of way
- Private, enclosed fields with a public footpath or right of way
- Common grazing, on public footpaths
- Common grazing, away from public footpaths
- Open access land



Where have attacks on your farm most commonly occurred?

The majority of attacks (83%) were reported as occurring on private, enclosed fields, with 42% not having any footpath or public right of way.

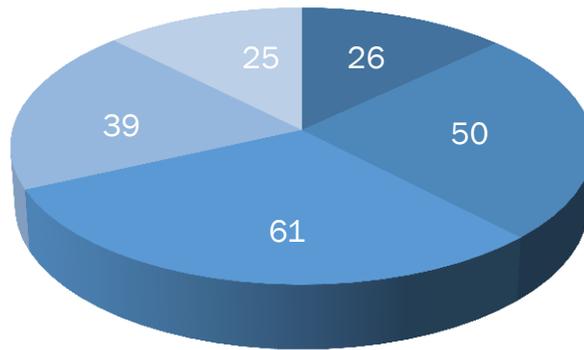




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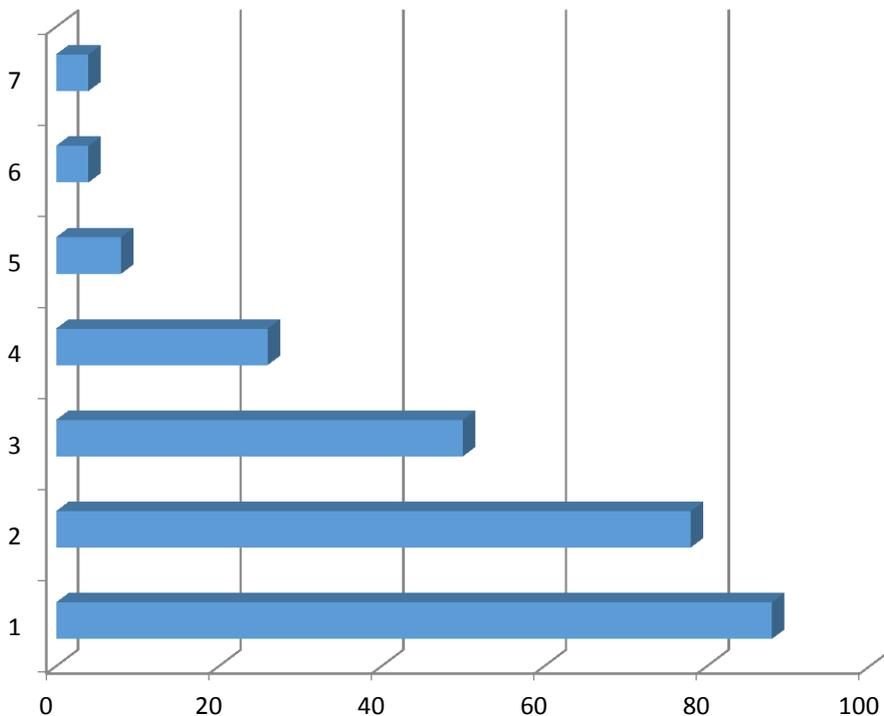
What kind of response have you had when approaching dog owners to ask them to put their dog on a lead?

Survey respondents reported that dog owners were not always receptive when asked to respond to their legal requirement to keep dogs under control around livestock, with 30% reporting a mix of positive and negative responses and 25% only ever receiving negative responses.



- Mostly positive responses
- Mostly negative responses
- Similar number of positive and negative responses
- Dog walker is rarely present/dogs are often found unattended
- I've never approached by a dog walker

If the response has been negative, what forms has this taken?



Of the 69% of survey respondents who had received negative responses, the most common was verbal abuse (34%), followed by polite refusal to use a lead (30%), intimidation by the dog (19%) and vandalism or some other form of retribution (10%).

- 1 = Verbal abuse as a result of being asked to use a lead.
- 2 = Polite refusal to use lead.
- 3 = Intimidation by the dog walker.
- 4 = Retribution e.g. vandalism.
- 5 = Intimidation by the dog.
- 6 = Physical abuse as a result of being asked to use a lead.
- 7 = Bitten by the dog.

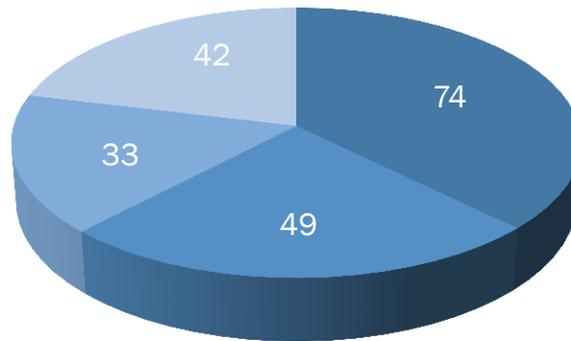




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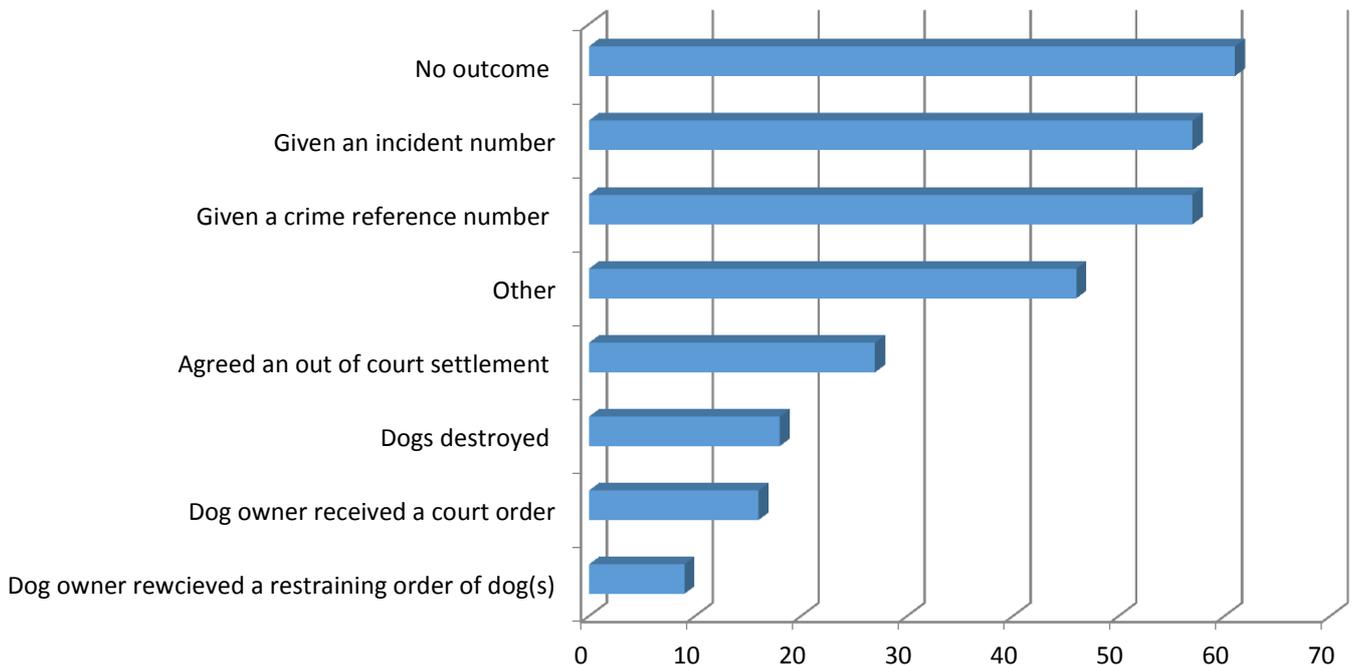
Do you report incidents of sheep worrying to the police?

The survey showed that dog worrying incidents are under-reported, with only 37% of respondents contacting the police every time they have an attack



- I report every incident
- I only report incidents I consider to be more serious
- I have reported incidents to the police in the past, but don't anymore
- I've never reported an incident to the police

If you have reported an incident, how would you describe the outcome?



Of the 78% of respondents who had reported an incident, the most commonly described result was 'no outcome' (21%). It was unusual for incidents to proceed as far as the police issuing the dog owners with a restraining order (3%), a court order (6%) or having the dogs destroyed (6%). Out of court settlements were slightly more common at 9%.

