



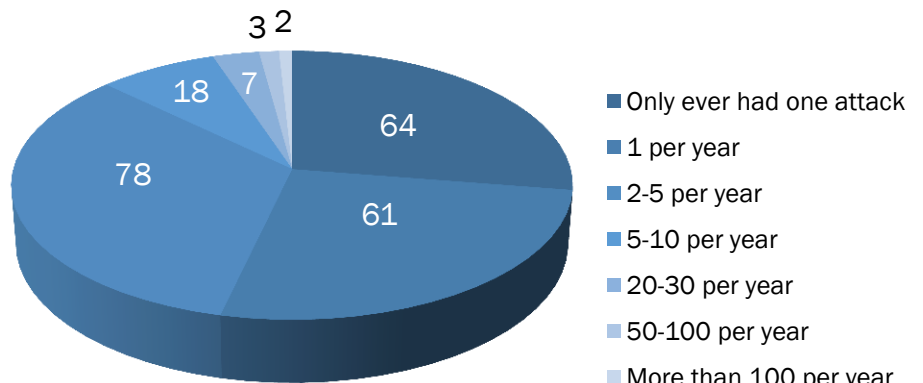
**National Sheep Association**

**Sheep Worrying by Dogs Survey  
(April 2016)**

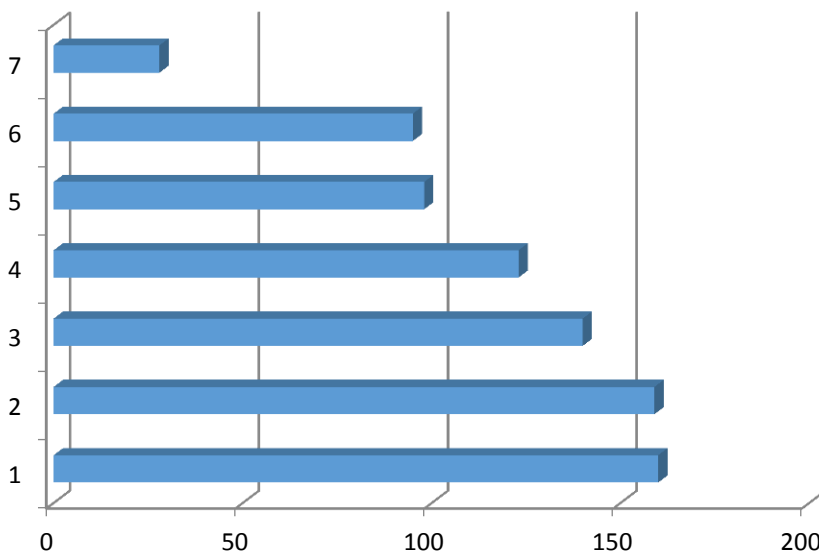
233 survey responses from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

**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%).

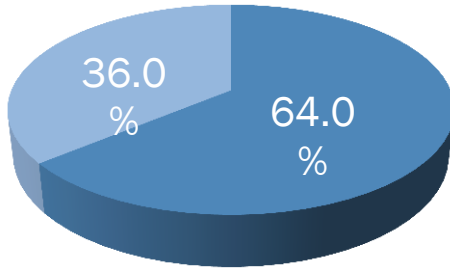
Dog owners' lack of regard or concern on the issue was also cited by 63% of respondents.

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.

# 4

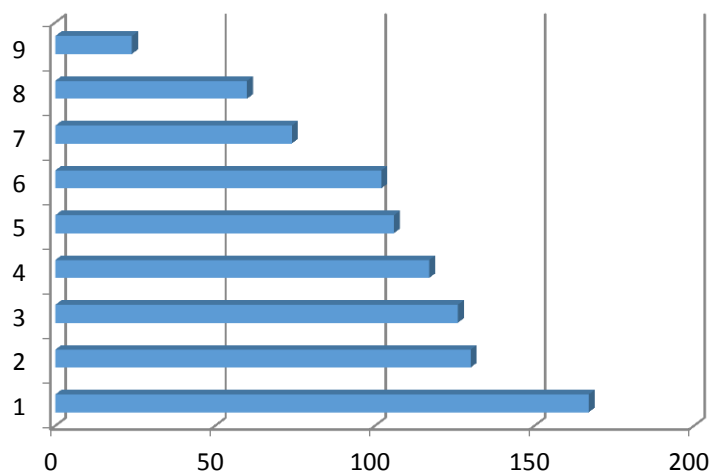
# 5

### 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%).



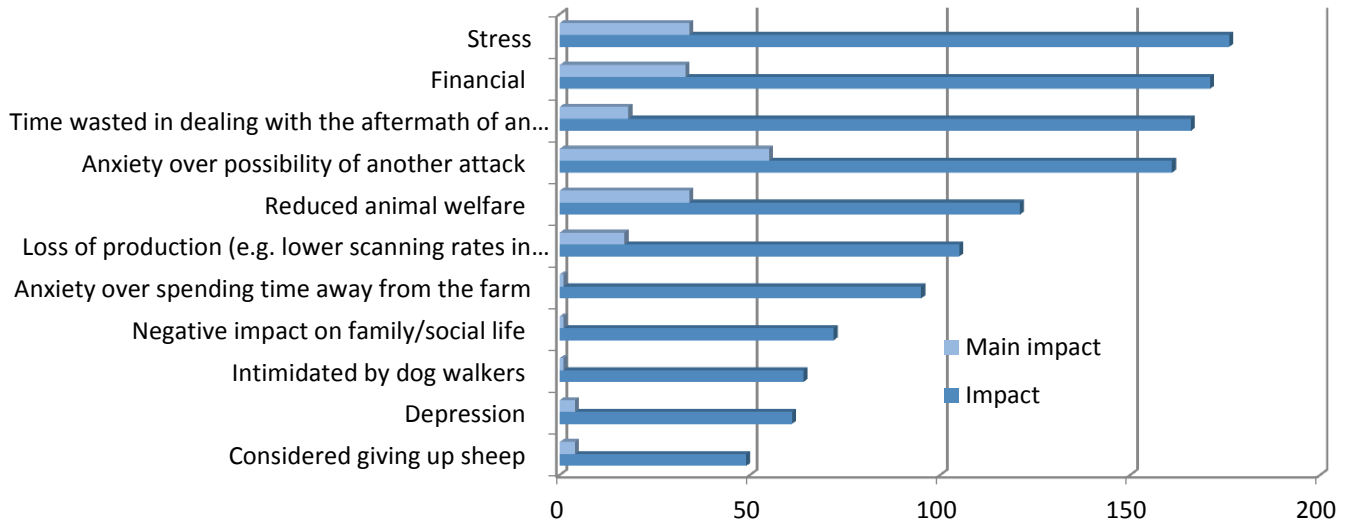
1 = Injury from dog bite. 2 = Death from dog bite. 3 = Loss of production in ewes, including abortion. 4 = Sheep put down after an attack. 5 = Reduced animal welfare. 6 = Injury from fleeing. 7 = Loss of production in lambs, including mis-mothering and inability to thrive. 8 = Death from fleeing. 9 =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





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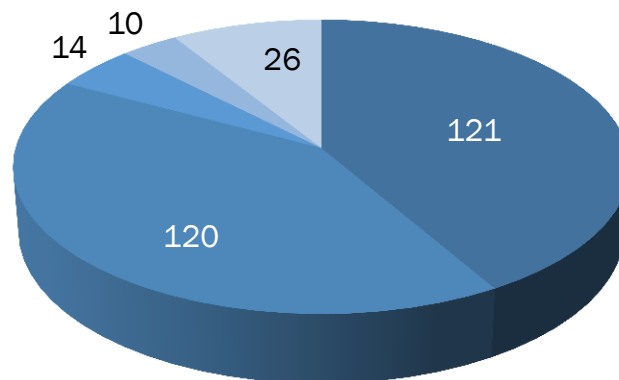
### What impacts have dog attacks had on you?



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.

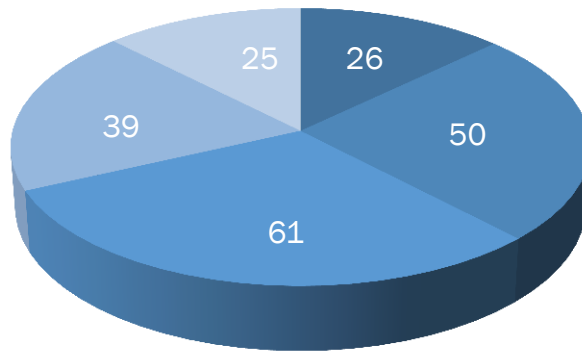




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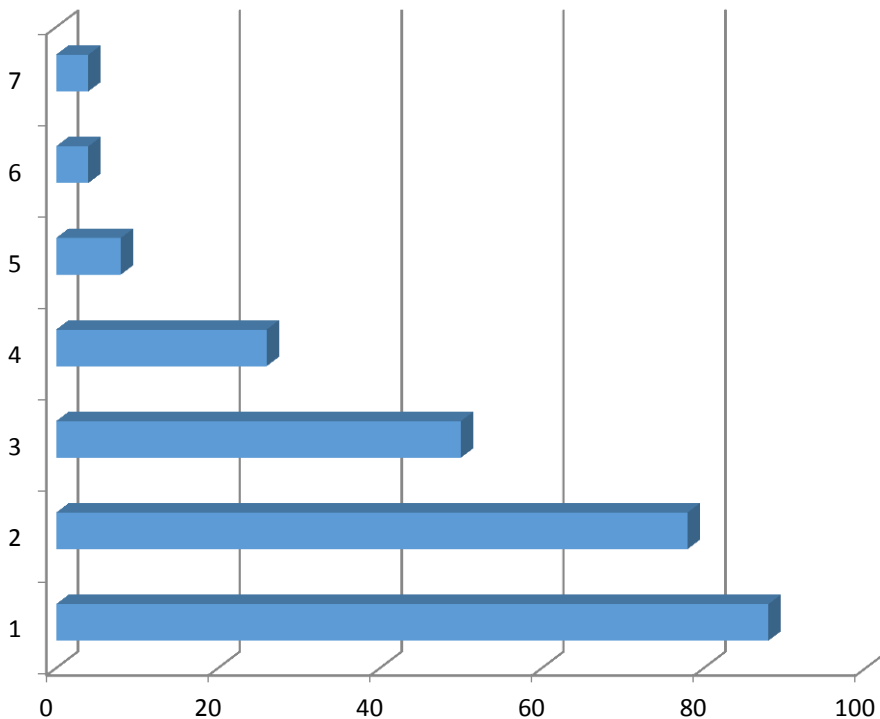
### What kind of response have you had when approaching dog owners to ask them to put their dog on a lead?

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.

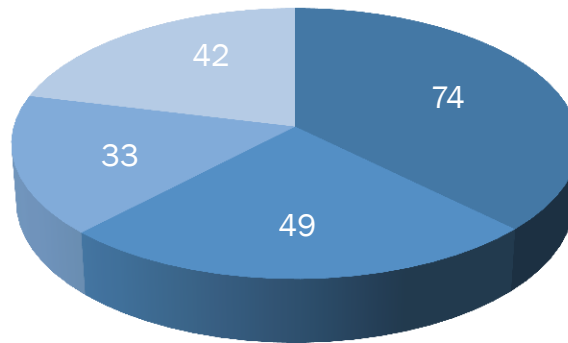




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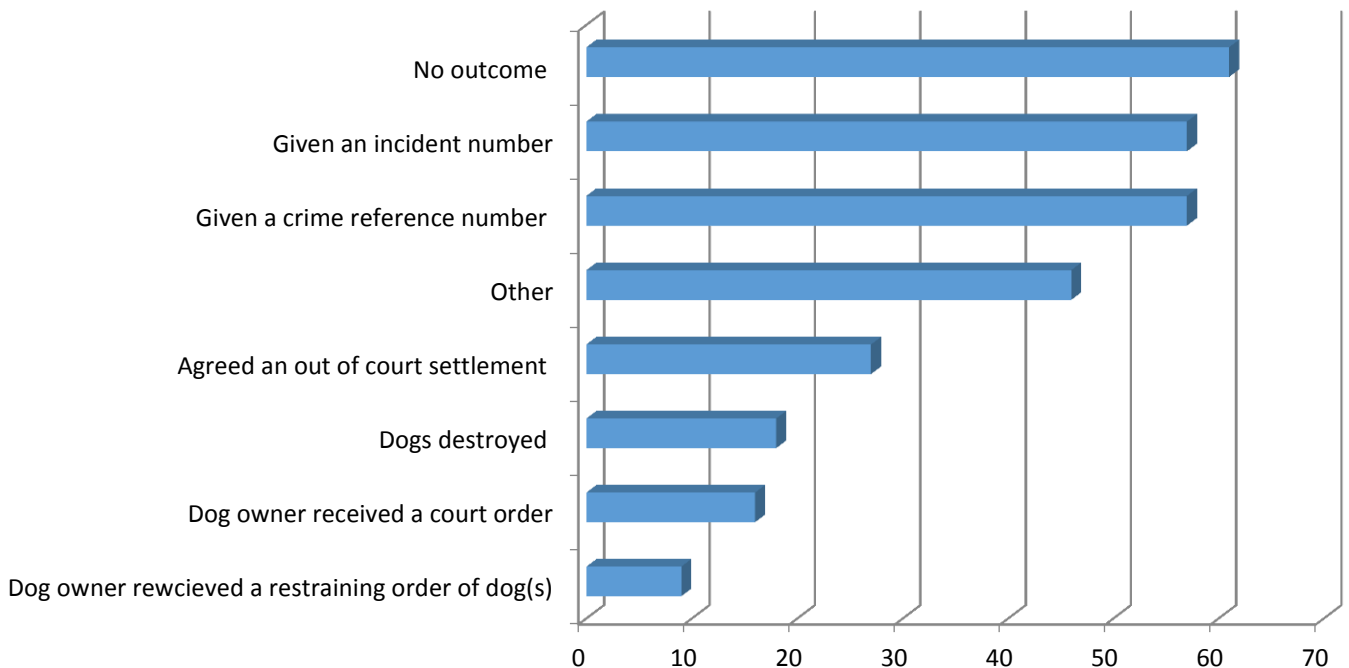
### Do you report incidents of sheep worrying to the police?

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%.

