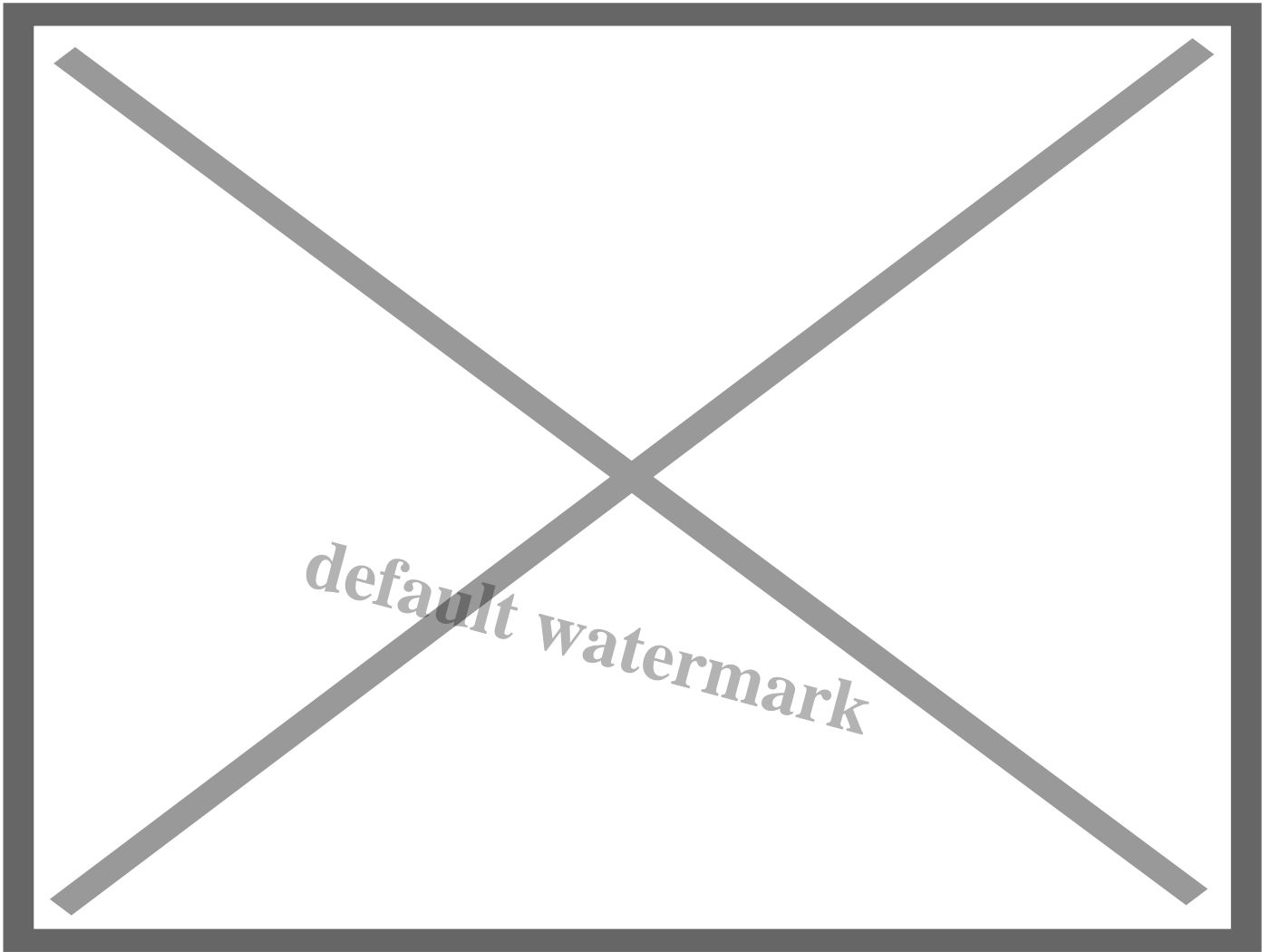




A fox is running in Makerfield by-election to challenge Hunting Act loopholes

Description

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A brave animal advocate has announced he will throw his hat into the ring for the upcoming [Makerfield by-election](#). But there's a catch. He's going to be running dressed as a giant fox.

Robert Pownall aims to directly defy Labour and its failure to [strengthen the Hunting Act](#). This stunt is a direct message to Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham, as he attempts to re-enter Westminster.

Chasing accountability with tail held high

Pownall is the founder of wildlife protection organisation [Protect the Wild](#) and confirmed his bid for parliament on Friday 22 May 2026. His campaign will see him scurrying around the constituency totally kitted out in a full fox costume. His aim is to encourage people to respond to the [government's hunting consultation](#) and to support stronger legislation against fox hunting.

Pownall dressed in a full fox outfit outside of the houses of parliament
This fox would get my vote

This symbolic protest lands in the middle of a political battleground. The by-election was triggered by the sudden resignation of Labour MP [Josh Simons](#). But Burnham is facing a challenge from Reform, after Labour lost all of its [22 seats in Wigan](#) just a few miles away.

Pownall previously stood in the May 2026 Scottish parliament elections [dressed as a giant gannet](#). For those of you who aren't sure what a [gannet](#) is, it's a stunning seabird and Pownall pulled that stunt to bring attention to the controversial [guga hunt](#) in the north of Scotland.

Now, he is turning his focus [and his tail](#) to the loopholes that allow illegal fox hunting to continue in England.

Beyond party politics

It was over 20 years ago that the Hunting Act banned chasing and killing of foxes with hounds. But it hasn't stopped the hunt at all, and I have seen it with my own eyes.

Currently, huntsmen can [scent trails](#) and that they're merely following these through the woods with hounds. It's bullshit and nothing more than a smokescreen to allow them to go out and murder wildlife.

Pownall stated:

For over 20 years, hunts across the country have continued chasing and killing foxes, deer and hare because of loopholes, exemptions and weak enforcement of the hunting ban. Labour supporters were promised stronger protection for wildlife. We intend to make sure that they don't quietly wriggle out of delivering them.

Protecting the wild

Protect the Wild is absolutely fierce in what it does, exposing instances of wildlife persecution regularly. Its campaigns have managed to get [several major landowners](#) to totally ban trail hunting on their properties.

The group was the first in recent times to expose a hunt [mercilessly killing a hound](#) purely because it wasn't quite up to standard. It's disgusting, the way these people can see sentient life, a living and breathing creature, like it's nothing but a tool.

Pownall in his full fox outfit, stood outside of parliament holding up a sign saying 'For Fox Sake' I would trust this fox more than most MPs

This new campaign focuses heavily on ending legal loopholes. Pownall wants to increase police enforcement powers [something that I personally believe needs to happen](#), as I have been there during illegal hunts and witnessed the police refusing to even attend.

Vitaly, Pownall also wants to drive public participation in the current government consultation. Most people in the UK are [entirely against](#) fox hunting. I mean, come on. Who actually thinks it is okay to

murder a defenceless, fluffy little fox? Especially when itâ??s done by jumped-up rich parasites on horses. The political delay on the matter doesnâ??t match public opinion. At all.

This isnâ??t about left versus right; this is about saving lives. The public settled this debate years ago. The problem is that politicians are dragging their feet. So, if these politicians wonâ??t speak for foxes, then maybe foxes need to start standing for parliament themselves.

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