

# English foxes safe for now as Cameron backs down

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A person dressed as a Fox sails past The Houses of Parliament as part of an anti-hunting protest in London

English foxes won a temporary respite after Prime Minister David Cameron's promise to repeal a ban on hunting them failed to make it into his programme outlined in the Queen's Speech on Wednesday.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals voiced

satisfaction in a statement, calling the traditional English countryside horseback hunt with packs of hounds "barbaric".

"Such a move would have been a backward step for a civilised society and something that would appal the vast majority of the British public," said David Bowles, the RSPCA's assistant director of campaigns.

But Cameron's spokesman said the [prime minister](#) was still committed to overturning the ban, as outlined in his Conservative Party manifesto.

This will happen "as soon as parliamentary time allows", the spokesman told reporters.

The League Against Cruel Sports, another campaign group, wrote in a tweet: "Has the threat to the Hunting Act gone? Not on your Nellie".

Fox [hunting](#) was banned under former prime minister Tony Blair, despite furious protests by advocates of the centuries-old tradition who had argued that it accounted for some 8,000 jobs in the countryside.

The Hunting Act makes it an offence to hunt a wild mammal with a dog. Under the previous practice, cornered foxes were torn apart by dogs.

Drag hunting, in which dogs follow a scent instead of a live fox, is now the custom instead.

Scotland has its own [ban](#) on fox hunting in place, while Northern Ireland still allows it.

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