

Are shotgun users moving away from lead? GWCT survey aims to find out

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Two years since a group of rural organisations called for a voluntary move away from using lead shot, the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) is asking those who shoot to share their views on the alternatives.

Building on a similar exercise launched last year, the GWCT is running a short, anonymous survey at www.gwct.org.uk/leadsurvey asking about whether you are still using lead, have tried the alternatives or have already made a permanent switch. They are also hoping to understand more about your experiences and any barriers you have found to using non-lead ammunition.

More than 1,000 people have already completed the survey and James Swyer, press and publication manager of the GWCT, is hoping many more gun users will share their views. He said: "We are keen to understand the intentions of those who have the real power to make a change – those buying the ammunition. By taking less than a minute to answer a simple question, you will be helping to inform this hotly debated topic".

Last year, the GWCT received over 2,500 responses to its lead survey, with four per cent having made the switch away from lead, one in five had started testing alternatives, and a further 28% were planning to do so in the coming season.

"Covid caused a big disruption to the 2020/21 season", says James, "so we're hoping that this season has allowed more people to try the alternatives and share their findings. We want everyone involved to understand how the community feels about this important issue. This year will see the halfway point of the five-year move away from lead shot, so please take a minute to share your views so that we can understand what progress has been made."

If you would like to read more on the topic, you can visit the GWCT lead ammunition hub at www.gwct.org.uk/lead. The hub includes a Q&A guide about moving away from lead shot, advice from the Gun Trade Association on the use of lead-alternative ammunition for live quarry shooting with shotguns and all GWCT blogs on the issue.

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