

## Bodger and Badger are Back! TV Favourites Return For a One-Off Anti-Badger Cull Special

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Kids TV favourites Bodger and Badger have returned to the screen for a special episode in which Badger unwittingly gets involved in the Somerset badger cull.

Bodger and Badger, masterminded by Andy Cunningham, were a massive hit on the BBC, running throughout the 1990s. Other than occasional guest appearances, the duo haven't been seen on screen since then until now.

Saddened by news of the real-life badger cull due to take place in Somerset and Gloucestershire, the pair have filmed a one-off YouTube special in conjunction with wildlife charity Care for the Wild.

Andy Cunningham said: "For a long time Badger and I didn't think the cull would really happen. The idea of people roaming around at night shooting at, and whatever they say, very likely wounding badgers, just seemed too barbaric to be true.

"But when we heard this cull was really going to go ahead, Badger and I thought we ought to do something, because the case for culling just doesn't add up."

After Andy contacted Care for the Wild, part of the Team Badger coalition fighting the cull, the charity came up with the idea for a new Bodger and Badger special.

"The idea is that while Badger and I are having a holiday in Somerset, Badger gets an invitation from the British government to take part in a local all-night shooting adventure, which we assume must mean paintballing," said Andy.

"Badger decides to use something else, and I'll give you a clue....It's not mashed banana. And guess what? Bodger gets a load of it in the face. Now there's a surprise!"

While the episode features the much-loved Bodger and Badger lunacy, it has a serious message. And as Andy says, the cull is not only cruel, it may make the situation worse:

"Badger reckons that if he'd been out partying all night, far away from home, and he got back next morning to find all his friends and family dead, then he wouldn't stick around. He'd bung off as far as he could as quick as he could, so if he was carrying TB he could well be taking it to herds of cattle as yet unaffected.

"Culling badgers would be inhumane and ineffective. It's not too late. Let's vaccinate."

Philip Mansbridge, CEO of Care for the Wild, added:

"When Andy called us and said he wanted to help, we jumped at the chance. A whole generation of children grew up loving Badger, and you only have to look at Twitter and you'll see people still talking about the programme. So we're really calling in the big guns to help us fight the cull!

"The episode Andy came up with is fantastic – it's typical Bodger and Badger with all the slapstick you'd expect, but the satirical edge to the comedy is very strong. And you certainly have a lump in your throat when you wonder what's going to happen at the end..."

"The video ends with the message that the badger cull is not a joke, and it's not – farmers lives are being destroyed by bovine TB, cattle are being killed in their thousands, and now the plan is to kill 100,000 badgers. But Care for the Wild is following the science on this, which says that a cull will not work. We need people to realise that vaccination is a viable alternative, and we need people who don't know what's about to happen to find out about it."

Bodger and Badger go to Somerset can be found on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/zVa9Fg6UGno>. To find out more, go to <http://www.careforthewild.com/badger>

Care for the Wild is a charity based in Sussex dedicated to the protection of wildlife in the UK and abroad.

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