# Private Eye withdraws Wild Justice adverts amid pheasant release controversy



Last month, the satirical magazine Private Eye published a full-page advertisement from the conservation organisation Wild Justice, drawing attention to the annual release of 50 million non-native pheasants into the UK countryside. This advert was part of a planned series, with Wild Justice having paid for three advertisements in total.

However, following the publication of the first advert, Private Eye abruptly withdrew the remaining two adverts without providing an explanation. The magazine refunded Wild Justice for these cancelled postings. This unexpected decision sparked considerable online discussion and a notable increase in public attention towards the issue, a phenomenon often called the "Streisand Effect."

In the subsequent edition of Private Eye in early April, the publication included three letters from readers. Among these was a letter from the deputy director of communications and public affairs for the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC). These letters primarily criticised Wild Justice and its directors but did not engage directly with the environmental concerns highlighted by the organisation, namely the release of large numbers of non-native pheasants. Observers noted that these responses appeared to be immediate reactions, possibly stemming from the discomfort caused by the advert’s message. Notably, Private Eye did not publish letters presenting alternative views on the subject in that edition.

This week, the latest edition of Private Eye features further letters from supporters of Wild Justice responding to the controversy surrounding the adverts. Additionally, the editor of Private Eye provided a partial explanation for the withdrawal of the remaining two advertisements. According to the editor, the decision was made because "we felt the advertisement blurred the line between advertising and editorial. And we did not want to continue with this…"

This rationale, however, has been questioned given that the first advert was accepted and published without issue, with the decision to pull the rest coming only after reactions from some pro-gamebird shooting organisations became vocal.

In spite of this, the topic of mass releases of pheasants has now been prominently featured across three editions of a widely read publication, raising awareness of the practice widely in a relatively short time frame.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://wildjustice.org.uk/general/private-eye-is-blind-to-the-facts-about-pheasants/> - This URL supports the claim that Wild Justice had planned multiple adverts in Private Eye, but was surprised when two were pulled without explanation. It also highlights Wild Justice's perspective on the situation.
2. <https://wildjustice.org.uk/gamebird-releases/private-eye-and-unpleasant-pheasant-facts-2/> - This article explains how one of the banned adverts was later published in The Big Issue magazine and invites supporters to engage with the issue. It also touches on the public's reaction to the Private Eye decision.
3. <https://raptorpersecutionuk.org/2025/04/04/private-eye-pulls-wild-justice-adverts-causing-streisand-effect/> - This article reports on the initial publication of the Wild Justice advert in Private Eye, its impact, and the subsequent decision to pull the remaining ads, which led to a Streisand Effect and increased public awareness.
4. <https://raptorpersecutionuk.org/2025/04/27/private-eye-explains-sort-of-its-reasons-for-pulling-wild-justice-adverts/> - The article provides insight into Private Eye's partial explanation for pulling the adverts and suggests the decision was influenced by reactions from pro-gamebird shooting groups. It also discusses the publication of supportive letters in later editions.
5. <https://bsky.app/profile/arjundevamar.bsky.social/post/3lkslaigkqk2a> - This post mentions Arjun Amar's observation about Wild Justice's strategy to raise awareness through advertising in Private Eye, highlighting the impact and interest generated by the campaign.
6. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiuAFBVV95cUxOb1EzVEZPTTJCY2dla0dWRnozcTF1ZW5iRXFrR1ZnbnBvOHcyaTZnUXRSWmNTdG9OcDZLaFBhNzh2dk4wQWhtTXZ2U3ZILXNlNzFHT2NKNXlXLUViOUFRV2w5WFIwbmxLN1pmYUZKZlVfT0NSQTlBU3I3RDh6eXV6dnExWVhuRWRjeUoxcTdxM01hM2ROX3BicFY3Zk1aZ1FtWmF1dVlaSWJTa1l1b3dreVNxYl83ODds?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data