

# **Living with Nature: A Report about the Residential Survey on the Management of Wildlife in the Borough of Whitehall**



by

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Members of the Research Subcommittee

of the Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee

June 30, 2018

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## **2018 Members of the Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee**

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## **Report Availability**

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**Availability of this report will be announced in the Whitehall Borough Bulletin.  
The report will be made available via the following venues:**

Linda Book, President  
Whitehall Borough Council

Keith Henderson, Chief  
Whitehall Borough Police Department

Information Area & Website  
Whitehall Borough Building

Mayor James Nowalk, Facilitator  
Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee

Wildlife Management Special Collection & Website  
Whitehall Public Library

Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee Information Booth  
2018 Whitehall Community Day

Mark Zeoli, Code Enforcement Officer  
Whitehall Borough Building

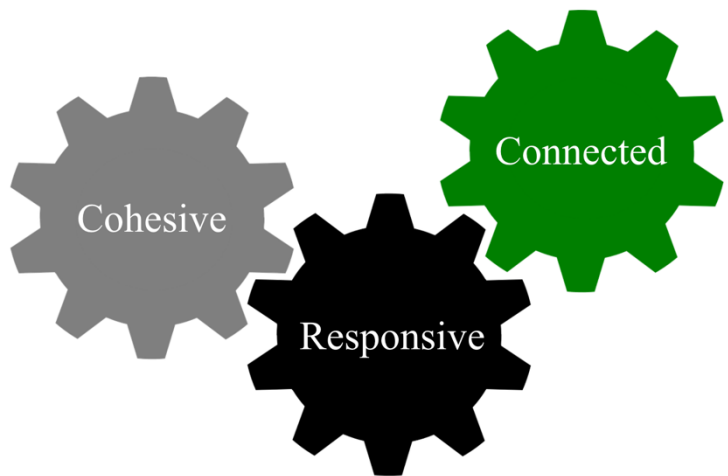
## Introduction

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To be successful and meaningful, a community must be cohesive, responsive, and connected with the current needs of its members. In meeting these ideals, a community's leaders must take an active role in identifying and addressing those needs. This is true whether that community is a service with patrons, a business with customers, or a local borough with residents as its primary stakeholders.

Founded in 1948, the Borough of Whitehall prides itself on the community programs, initiatives, and services it provides to its close-knit community. In keeping with this virtue of collaborative public service, the Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee (WWMC or the Committee) was formed to provide a collaborative problem-solving process. According to the University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development, this strategic process will:

1. Enhance the Borough's ability to solve problems and make decisions by making the process more manageable;
2. Increase group efficiency and productivity;
3. Increase the group's participation; more people tend to be involved, and, as a result;
4. Increase group satisfaction.



We believe that the Borough of Whitehall can be in the vanguard of spearheading wildlife management through a controlled approach based on credible data, geography, and municipal code. The WWMC is earnest in finding a long-term studied solution with seasonal byproducts and activities that enhance living with wildlife in our community. The Committee also intends to continue to monitor the situation and recommend adjustments as changing needs dictate.

## **Mission and Objectives**

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The mission of the Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee is to study the ongoing wildlife impact on the Borough of Whitehall in order to advise the Mayor and Borough Council in matters relating to this subject.

To that end, a committee of twelve Whitehall residents was formed in December 2015. Borough Mayor James Nowalk acts as facilitator for the group and Borough Council Member Robert McKown acts as liaison between the Wildlife Committee and Whitehall Borough Council. Open meetings are held, usually at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, in the lecture room at the Borough building. Residents are welcome to attend. Each committee member has the responsibility of serving on one of the following subcommittees: research, management by non-lethal means, and management by lethal means. Thus, each subcommittee is comprised of four committee members.

The Research Subcommittee – Paul Hoffman, Kathleen Kappel, Robert Xides, and chair Sarah Scholl – developed and distributed a survey to Whitehall residents related to the subject of wildlife, particularly the deer population, as it affects residents, safety, and property.

The intent of this report is to accomplish the following:

1. Provide a communication channel through which residents of Whitehall can share specific questions and concerns related to wildlife impact in the Borough of Whitehall;
2. Establish a starting point from which the ongoing impact of wildlife can be studied;
3. Assess the magnitude of the wildlife population with associated issues and related transitions over time;
4. Launch a mechanism to gather scientific and anecdotal data on an ongoing basis;
5. Integrate the priority of wildlife management into Borough Council;
6. And rally, challenge, and support Borough Council in dedicating resources toward constructive initiatives that have been researched and recommended by the Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee.

This report is intended as the first in a series of ongoing assessments intended to improve the livability of Whitehall and unite its community through communication, engagement, education, and collaboration.

## **Whitehall Residential Survey Methodology**

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We believe that the Borough of Whitehall can be in the vanguard of spearheading wildlife management through a controlled approach based on credible data, geography, and municipal code. The WWMC is earnest in finding a long-term studied solution with seasonal byproducts and activities that enhance living with wildlife in our community. The Committee also intends to continue to monitor the situation and recommend adjustments as changing needs dictate.

To this end, the WWMC's Research Subcommittee undertook the project of randomly surveying residents of 14 voting districts about wildlife issues in our community. This report is the result of that project. (The vast majority of residents in districts 6 and 7 live in apartment complexes, such as Canongate and Maiden Bridge Apartments, were not included in this random residential survey. The Wildlife Management Committee decided not to include those districts due to issues surrounding the logistics of volunteers' entry and random apartment determination. Instead, the Committee planned to hold collaborative activities with appropriate staff at those sites and staff of the Whitehall Public Library. Some events would be held at the library, others on-site at the residential facilities. Suggestions for topics and speakers were discussed. The Committee approved the participation of the Whitehall Code Enforcement Officer in such presentations.)

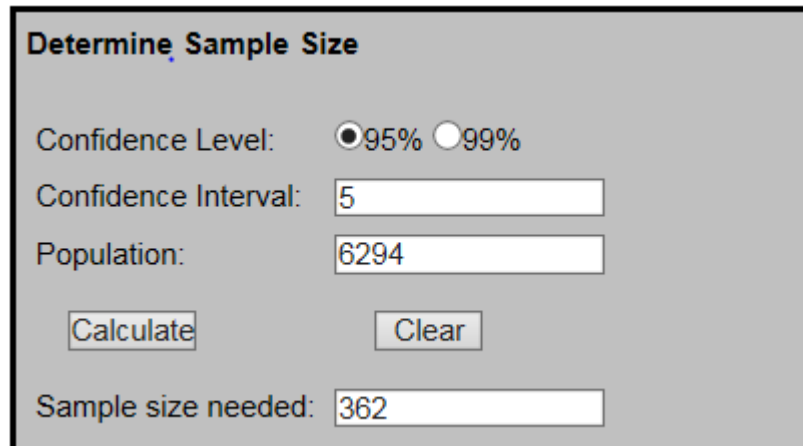
The purpose of the municipal-wide survey was to ascertain opinions about deer among residents living throughout the Borough of Whitehall. This was the "target population." In 2015, Mayor Nowalk had distributed a brief survey to Whitehall residents via the Borough's Spring/Summer Bulletin. Those interested in sharing opinions needed to complete the survey and return it to the borough building on their own. This type of expedient survey provided residents the opportunity to voice their views and actually served as the catalyst for the study of the issue in Whitehall.

However, with such a survey the majority of responders with the strongest opinions – for or against – tend to overpopulate the results. This tendency is common no matter the survey topic. Thus, residents who feel neutral about deer or believe that deer on a minor issue may be disinclined to take the time to complete and return the survey. This "self-selection bias" presents a problem in that it often does not truly reflect the opinions of the community as a whole but, rather, of those who have the strongest opinions.

Since it is not logistically possible to ask every single resident's opinion individually, we used scientific surveying principles to select a sample of households from within the voting districts across the borough. Voting districts were used simply due to their geographical boundaries – that is, each district comprises approximately the same number of households, which are in close physical proximity to one another.

The decision on how many collected surveys in total would most accurately represent the community's opinions was based on a "sample size calculator." To obtain a representative sample, a researcher needs to set what is called a "confidence level" and a "confidence interval" (also commonly referred to as the "margin of error"). We determined the number of potential survey households by using the total number of Borough households (6,294) based on the 2010

Census, the most recent available. We followed this procedure to gather enough responses to reflect the opinions of the larger population. (See <https://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>.) In determining that number, we used what is regarded as standard scientific survey practice – a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5 (so in other words, with the margin of error of plus or minus 5%). The result was that we would need at least 362 surveys to be completed from across the borough, as shown below:



The image shows a web-based calculator titled "Determine Sample Size". It has a light gray background with a black border. The interface includes the following elements:

- Confidence Level:** Two radio buttons are present, with "95%" selected and "99%" unselected.
- Confidence Interval:** A text input field containing the number "5".
- Population:** A text input field containing the number "6294".
- Buttons:** Two buttons labeled "Calculate" and "Clear" are positioned below the input fields.
- Result:** A label "Sample size needed:" followed by a text input field containing the number "362".

For the results to be representative, however, a researcher needs to choose respondents using a random sampling technique, and not survey people who “pick themselves” or who are chosen based on some other factor of convenience for examples. Because a goal was to obtain opinions from residents across the borough using the 14 voting districts, we calculated that obtaining 26 surveys from within each would give us a total of 364 and thus meet our objective. To choose the specific target households within each district, we obtained from the Allegheny County Administrative Services a database listing the household addresses within each geographical district in the borough. The addresses within each district were then sorted alphabetically by street name and, further, numerically by house number, in ascending order. The total number of households in any one district was then divided by 26 (the target number to obtain from within each district) in order to define “blocks” of households from within which one would be selected for surveying.

The procedure was as follows:

- In a district with 260 households, in order to obtain 26 surveys every 10<sup>th</sup> house would need to be surveyed. Thus, 26 “blocks” were created, each containing 10 addresses. The surveyor was then given a “walk list,” where every 10<sup>th</sup> house was highlighted as the “primary” house to target. The surveyor would then approach the home and, using a defined script, identify as a volunteer and describe the survey. Thus, each respondent heard the same survey explanation and instructions, helping to avoid creating bias that might affect the representativeness of the survey results.
- If the surveyor was unable to procure responses from that address (door unanswered, responder declined, or no one 18 or older was available), the surveyor was instructed to go directly to the next household within that “block” and attempt to obtain a survey there. As soon as the surveyor obtained a completed survey in a given household block, instructions were to begin again in the next address “block” – approaching the primary household and then repeating the process until all 26 surveys in their given district were obtained.



## **Whitehall Residential Survey Findings: The Overview**

### **Response Demographics**

A total of 364 respondents were surveyed across 14 voting districts, with 26 respondents randomly selected per district. Survey respondents skewed slightly male, with 43% male respondents and 35% female respondents. However, 22% of respondents did not indicate gender. Age demographics was rather evenly distributed according to a bell curve with the majority of respondents ranging in age from 30 – 79, making up 83% of total respondents.

### **Overall Opinion of Deer Population and Public Funds**

In general, deer were viewed favorably by a slight majority of the Whitehall resident respondents, with 51% enjoying the deer to any degree. However, it is observed that an equivalent percentage of respondents (51%) believe the deer population is an issue that should be addressed by Whitehall Borough. When asked if public funds should be allocated to address this issue, a slight majority of 52% favored that public funds should *not* be used.

### **Management Methods: Non-Feeding, Education, Green Spaces, and Signage**

The methods of managing deer population through means that did not directly interact with the deer were all supported, with at least a 12% more favorable opinion when compared to direct-interaction methods (discussed below). Adding and improving warnings and road signage where deer cross was the most widely supported method, with 81% of respondents in support to any degree. The plan to implement an education campaign to encourage deer-resistant planting and gardens was the next most popular choice, with 77% of respondents in support to any degree. The other methods, enforcing the Borough's non-feeding ordinance and implementing a community-wide initiative to transition green spaces to deer-resistant gardens, received the support of 63% and 65% of respondents, respectively. Neutrality on these four methods ranged from 13% to 24%.

### **Management Methods: Contraception, Sterilization, Archery, and Sharpshooting**

Of the four methods that directly interact with the deer population, the most supported option was contraception with a slight majority of 51% support to any degree. The three other methods—sterilization, archery, and sharpshooting—did not receive any majority support and the majority of respondents were opposed to sterilization (55%) and sharpshooting (63%). Archery was supported (45%) more than opposed (40%), which makes it among the next most supported method after contraception. Neutrality on these four methods was lower than on the previous four methods, ranging from 9% to 18%.

### **Summarizing the Issue**

For those respondents that viewed deer population as an issue (33% of all respondents), the most cited issues were 1) damage to plants/property, 2) traffic concerns, and 3) that there are too many deer in general. Sixty-seven respondents cited specific, identifiable locations throughout Whitehall where they noted the issue. All districts were identified with anywhere from 4 to 8 identified locations per district.

## Whitehall Residential Survey Findings: Comprehensive Results

### **Respondent Characteristics**

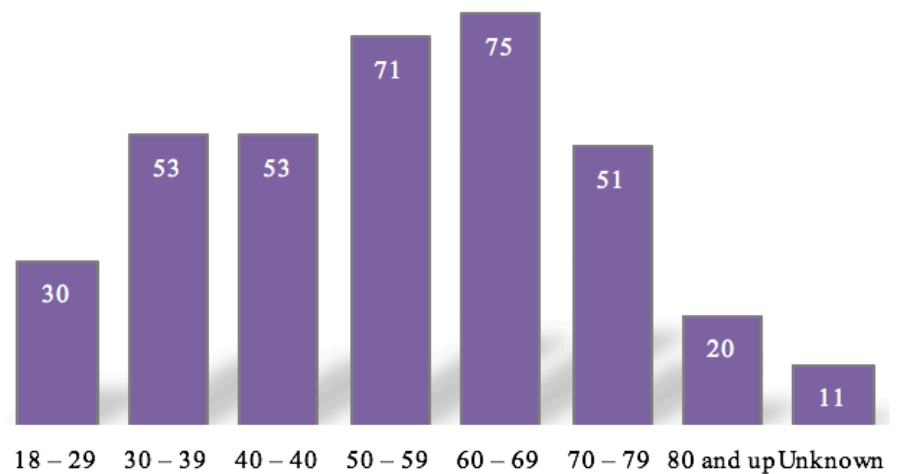
Total respondents surveyed: **364**

Total voting districts: **14**

Respondents randomly selected per district: **26**

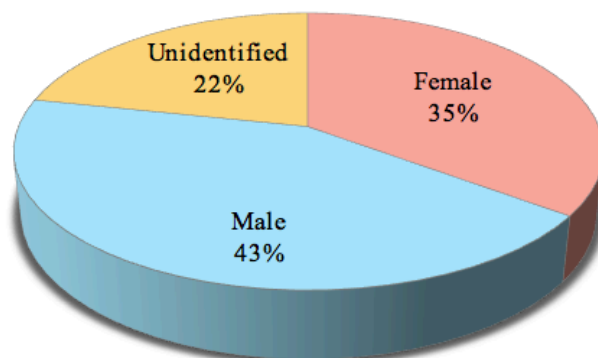
### **Age Demographics**

18 – 29	30	8%
30 – 39	53	14.5%
40 – 40	53	14.5%
50 – 59	71	19.5%
60 – 69	75	20.5%
70 – 79	51	14%
80 and up	20	6%
Unidentified	11	3%
Total	364	100%



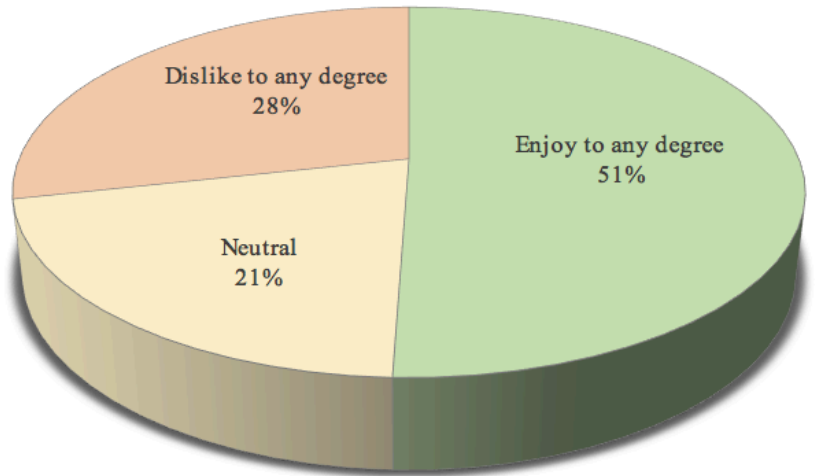
### **Gender Demographics**

Female	128	35%
Male	157	43%
Unidentified	79	22%
Total	364	100%



1. How do you feel about the deer in our community?

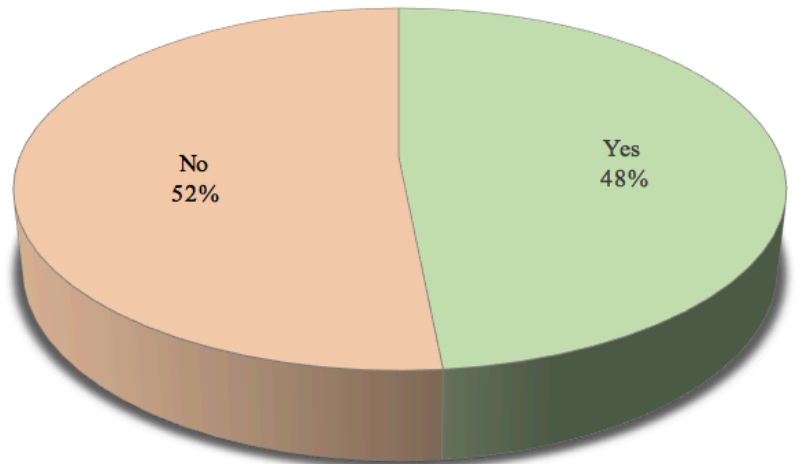
Strongly enjoy	64	18%
Somewhat enjoy	119	33%
Neither / no opinion	76	21%
Somewhat dislike	60	16%
Strongly dislike	43	12%
Total responses	362	--



Enjoy to any degree	183	51%
Neutral	76	21%
Dislike to any degree	103	28%
Total responses	362	--

2. Do you think the borough should spend public funds on methods to address the number of deer in the borough?

Yes	175	48%
No	186	52%
Total responses	361	--

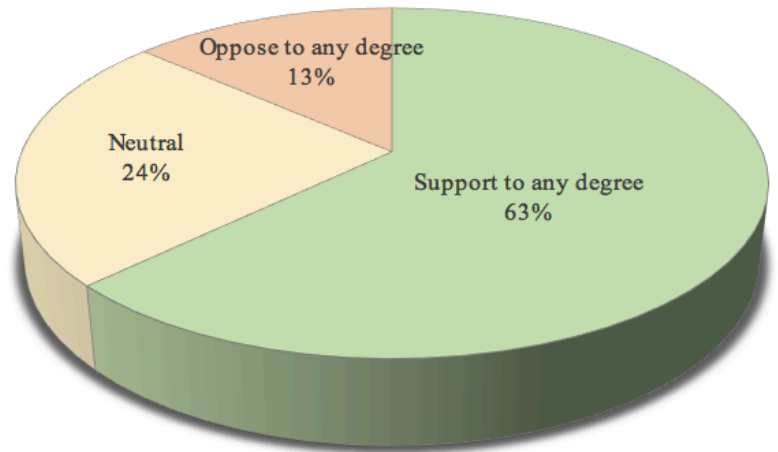


**If the borough decided to employ methods for managing the deer population in Whitehall, how much would you support each of the following strategies?**

**3. Enforcing the borough's non-feeding ordinance:**

Strongly support	165	45%
Somewhat support	63	17%
Neutral / no opinion	86	24%
Somewhat oppose	26	7%
Strongly oppose	23	6%
Total responses	363	--

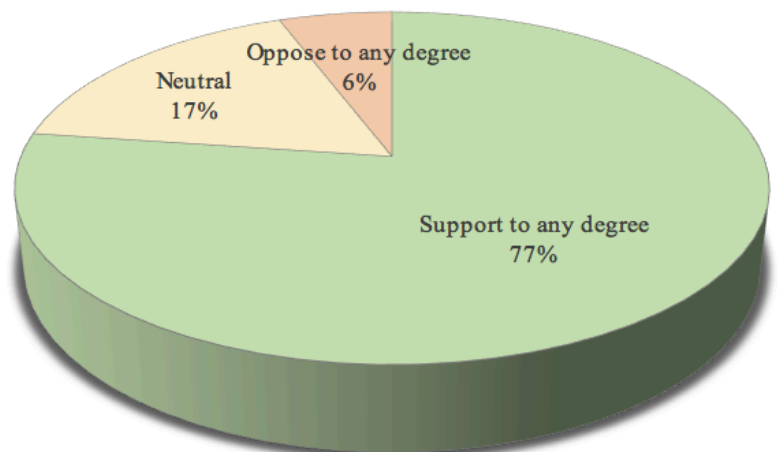
Support to any degree	228	63%
Neutral	86	24%
Oppose to any degree	49	13%
Total responses	360	--



**4. Implementing an education campaign to encourage deer-resistant plantings in yards and gardens:**

Strongly support	166	46%
Somewhat support	115	32%
Neutral / no opinion	62	17%
Somewhat oppose	9	2%
Strongly oppose	12	3%
Total responses	364	--

Support to any degree	281	77%
Neutral	62	17%
Oppose to any degree	21	6%
Total responses	364	--

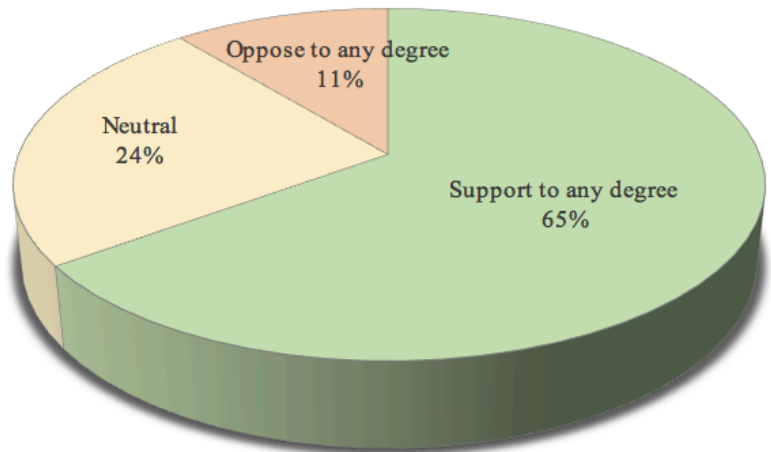


**If the borough decided to employ methods for managing the deer population in Whitehall, how much would you support each of the following strategies?**

**5. Implementing a community-wide initiative to transition green spaces to deer-resistant gardens:**

Strongly support	137	38%
Somewhat support	101	28%
Neutral / no opinion	86	24%
Somewhat oppose	26	7%
Strongly oppose	14	4%
Total responses	364	--

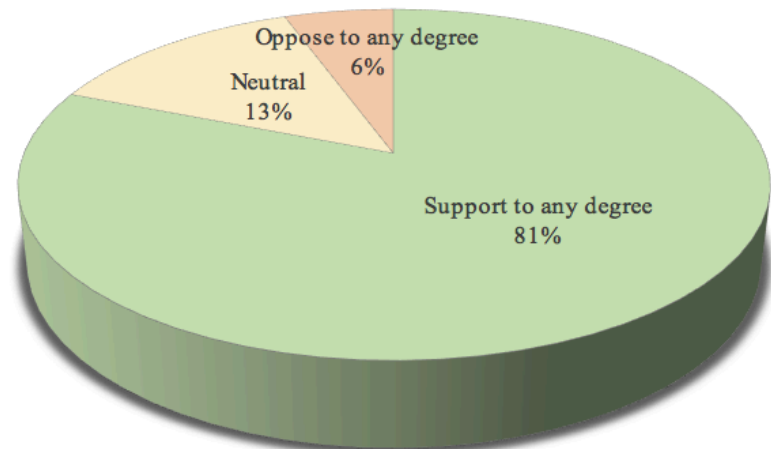
Support to any degree	238	65%
Neutral	86	24%
Oppose to any degree	40	11%
Total responses	364	--



**6. Adding and improving warning / road signage in areas where deer cross:**

Strongly support	209	58%
Somewhat support	81	23%
Neutral / no opinion	48	13%
Somewhat oppose	13	4%
Strongly oppose	7	2%
Total responses	358	--

Support to any degree	290	81%
Neutral	48	13%
Oppose to any degree	20	6%
Total responses	358	--

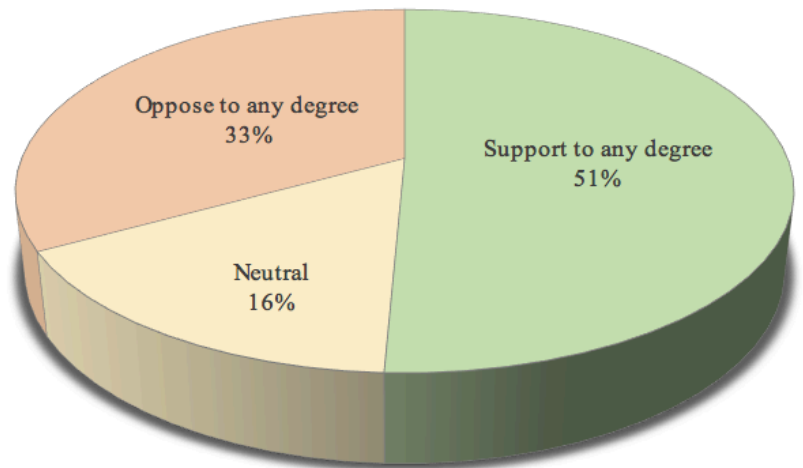


**If the borough decided to employ methods for managing the deer population in Whitehall, how much would you support each of the following strategies?**

7. Contraception – this involves using hormones in food that prevent deer from being able to reproduce:

Strongly support	86	24%
Somewhat support	95	27%
Neutral / no opinion	58	16%
Somewhat oppose	64	18%
Strongly oppose	54	15%
Total responses	357	--

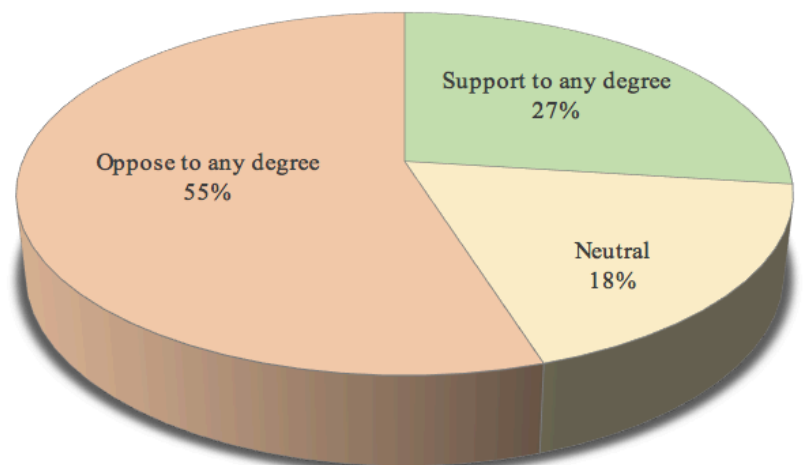
Support to any degree	181	51%
Neutral	58	16%
Oppose to any degree	118	33%
Total responses	357	--



8. Sterilization – this involves catching deer and removing their reproductive organs:

Strongly support	48	13%
Somewhat support	49	14%
Neutral / no opinion	65	18%
Somewhat oppose	82	23%
Strongly oppose	115	32%
Total responses	359	--

Support to any degree	97	27%
Neutral	65	18%
Oppose to any degree	197	55%
Total responses	359	--

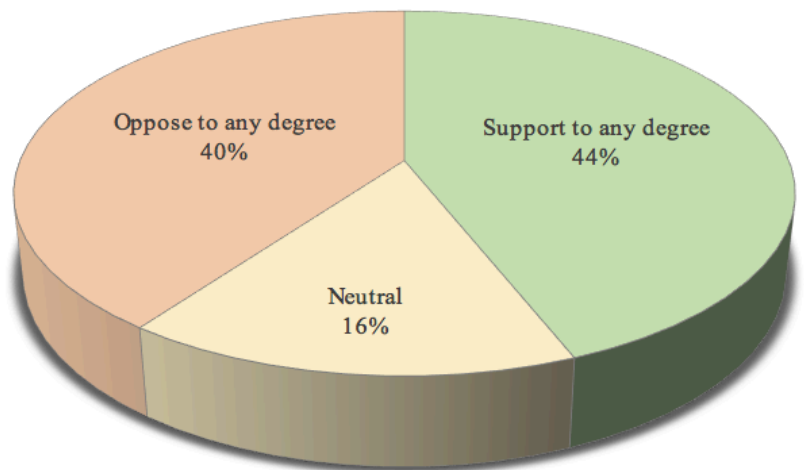


**If the borough decided to employ methods for managing the deer population in Whitehall, how much would you support each of the following strategies?**

**9. Archery – this involves hunting using bows and arrows:**

Strongly support	95	26%
Somewhat support	66	18%
Neutral / no opinion	56	16%
Somewhat oppose	35	10%
Strongly oppose	107	30%
Total responses	359	--

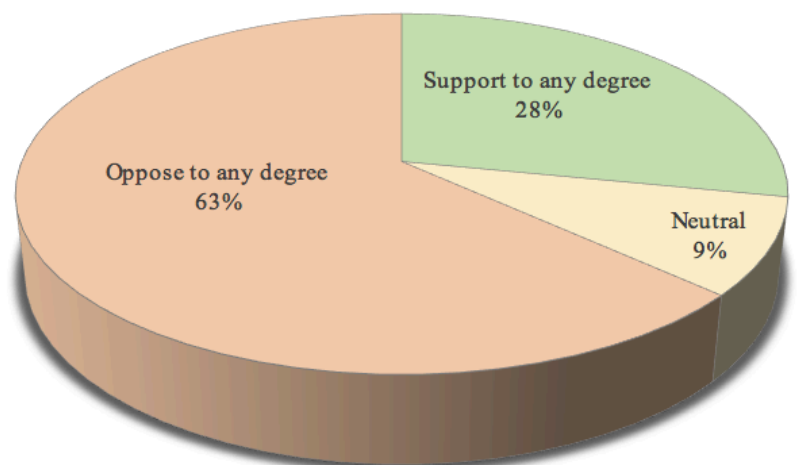
Support to any degree	161	44%
Neutral	56	16%
Oppose to any degree	142	40%
Total responses	359	--



**10. Sharpshooting – this involves hunting using guns:**

Strongly support	53	15%
Somewhat support	48	13%
Neutral / no opinion	31	9%
Somewhat oppose	54	15%
Strongly oppose	173	48%
Total responses	359	--

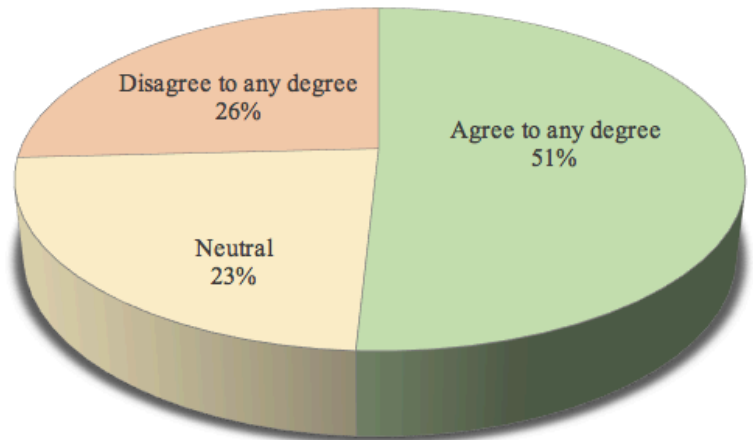
Support to any degree	101	28%
Neutral	31	9%
Oppose to any degree	227	63%
Total responses	359	--





11A. How strongly do you agree or disagree that the population of deer in Whitehall is an issue requiring action by the borough?

Strongly agree	94	26%
Somewhat agree	89	25%
Neither / no opinion	84	23%
Somewhat disagree	61	17%
Strongly disagree	32	9%
Total responses	360	--



Agree to any degree	183	51%
Neutral	84	23%
Disagree to any degree	93	26%
Total responses	360	--

11B. Since you answered that you believe the population of deer in Whitehall is an issue requiring action by the borough, can you please briefly (in a sentence or two) summarize **what is the issue** and where it is occurring?

Description	No. of reports	% of respondents who identified an issue	% of total respondents	Examples
Plants/property damage	36	27%	10%	"Eating vegetation." "The deer eat my plants."
Traffic concern	32	24%	9%	"Safety for vehicles. Need signs." "Nuisance on the roads."
"Too many" in general	29	21%	8%	"Too many deer that don't spook and run."
Lyme disease concern	12	9%	3%	"Fearful of Lyme disease." "Carrying Lyme and other disease."
Concern about pets or children	6	4%	2%	"Dogs want to chase them." "Hang out in backyard and scare pets."
Neighbors feeding	5	4%	1%	"Residents feeding deer."
Deer droppings	5	4%	1%	"Deer droppings in my backyard."
Specified they like deer/ don't think there's a problem	15	11%	4%	"Do not believe we have an issue." "Leave the damn deer alone!"
Specified they are pro-hunt	6	4%	2%	"Open it up to hunting." "Shoot them."
No classification or specified issue	25	19%	7%	"Coyotes!" "Address the issue with no harm to the deer." "The cause is building on every foot of land in the borough thereby taking away deer's natural environment." "Habitat being reduced."



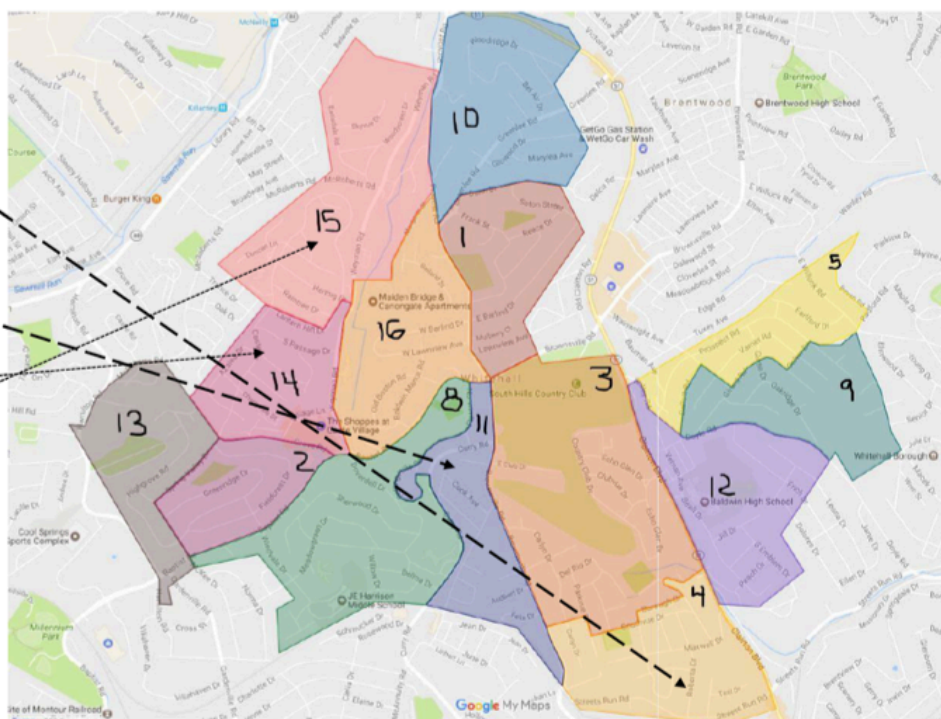
11C. Since you answered that you believe the population of deer in Whitehall is an issue requiring action by the borough, can you please briefly (in a sentence or two) summarize what is the issue and **where it is occurring**?

Number of respondents who gave a response about location	116
Total number of respondents surveyed	364
% of all surveyed who gave a response about location	32%

Of 116 respondents who gave a response about location:

Location Description	No. of reports	Example Responses
Specified an identifiable location	67	See map below for details.
Off-topic response	28	“We’re destroying their habitat.” “n/a”
General Whitehall description	14	“Throughout the borough.”
Unidentifiable location description	7	“My backyard.”

District	Number of reports	% of reports from all districts (n=67)	% of district respondents (n=26/district)
1	4	6%	15%
2	4	6%	15%
3	4	6%	15%
4	7	10%	27%
5	4	6%	15%
8	4	6%	15%
9	4	6%	15%
10	4	6%	15%
11	8	12%	31%
12	4	6%	15%
13	4	6%	15%
14	6	9%	23%
15	6	9%	23%
16	4	6%	15%



## **Neighboring Municipality Questionnaire Methodology**

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The Borough of Whitehall, of its own volition, can make regulations, allow or not allow various behaviors with the local wildlife, and communicate with residents accordingly. However, deer and other wildlife obviously travel so whatever Whitehall decides and implements, the actions of other communities in the South Hills also impact our borough.

To that end, the Research Committee decided to examine the communities surrounding the Borough of Whitehall. We developed a seven-question questionnaire and completed it by telephone. The municipalities contacted included: Baldwin Borough, Baldwin Township, the Municipality of Bethel Park, Brentwood Borough, Castle Shannon Borough, and the City of Pittsburgh – Overbrook. (See Appendix D for the survey design.)

This survey took place in June 2016. There were several attempts to collect all of the information. (See Appendix E for the completed surveys.)

## **Neighboring Municipality Questionnaire Findings**

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Of the six neighboring municipalities contacted, four responded: Bethel Park (6/3/16), Brentwood (6/10/16), Castle Shannon (6/2/16), and the City of Pittsburgh – Overbrook (6/6/16). Below is a summary of each questionnaire's findings.

### **Bethel Park**

Respondent: Police Chief Timothy O'Connor

For the past 20 years, the Municipality of Bethel Park has utilized a program of bow-and-arrow culling during the late fall and early winter. The organizer is a Bethel Park resident. According to Chief O'Connor, the program is described as "somewhat effective" and "seems to work." Last season, 61 deer were taken. Bethel Park has discussed other methods such as sterilization and prevention and talked with the game commissioner and a biologist.

The decision to implement the program was made before Chief O'Connor's tenure, so he did not collect baseline data nor does he know the timeline for implementing the project. The Bethel Park community is kept up to date on the progress of the program via updates to municipality management / officials and community meeting discussions. Statistics are gathered as needed and evaluation of the program is as needed.

### **Brentwood**

Respondent: Robert Mackewich, Public Works Superintendent

Brentwood Borough has not yet considered deer to be an issue for two reasons: there have not been any calls from residents and local archery hunters keep the deer in check. Borough officials consulted the PA Game Commission who advised against instituting any local hunting ordinance. Hunters must follow the Commission's game laws, which supersede the Borough's laws. The community does experience collisions with cars that result in deer deaths. Usually a local resident will collect the carcass for the meat; if not, their Department of Public Works will dispose of it. "I doubt you can remove all of the deer, so you have to live with them...Fences work, and there are other methods found to discourage their presence."

### **Castle Shannon**

Respondent: Borough Manager Thomas Hartswick

Castle Shannon Borough has not considered deer to be an issue requiring removal action for the following reasons: the small size of the borough, the close proximity of houses within the community, possible harm to residents and pets, and cost consideration. Described as a "sliver" between other boroughs, Castle Shannon seems to be a space that the deer just "run through" to get to other communities. Borough officials have discussed management methods with insurance representatives and the police department. Currently, management involves identifying and encouraging residents to plant deer resistant plants.

**City of Pittsburgh – Overbrook** Respondent: Chief of Animal Care& Control David Madden

The City of Pittsburgh has considered deer to be an issue requiring action due to the volume of calls the Bureau of Animal Care & Control receives, particularly calls related to finding fawns. This issue is managed by educating callers about deer behavior and what to do if a resident finds fawns as well as inspiring de-sensitivity to feeding deer.

This method was chosen based on deer behavior and deemed effective based on the number of calls the office receives. The community is not updated on this issue and the City has yet to solicit community input. However, if the problem increases, soliciting community input would be considered.

*Baldwin Borough and Baldwin Township did not respond.*

## Sources

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*The following sources were reviewed as part of the Committee's ongoing work to understand the many aspects of wildlife management prior to making official recommendations. To that end, this report includes a list of sources specific to the residential survey as well as related wildlife management issues that are within the scope of the Committee's mission and purpose.*

Adams, Lowell W., and Daniel L. Leedy. "Integrating Man and Nature in the Metropolitan Environment." National Institute for Urban Wildlife, 1987, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261794878\\_Integrating\\_man\\_and\\_nature\\_in\\_the\\_metropolitan\\_environment](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261794878_Integrating_man_and_nature_in_the_metropolitan_environment).

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## **Appendix A: Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee Random Survey**

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Participant number: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee Random Survey – Spring 2017*

For each question, please circle the letter next to the statement that best fits your opinion.

1. How do you feel about the deer in our community?
  - a. Strongly enjoy
  - b. Somewhat enjoy
  - c. Neither enjoy nor dislike (no opinion)
  - d. Somewhat dislike
  - e. Strongly dislike
2. Do you think the borough should spend tax money on methods to address the number of deer in the borough?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

If the borough decided to employ methods toward managing the deer population in Whitehall, how much would you support each of the following strategies?

3. Enforcing the borough's non-feeding ordinance:
  - a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed
4. Implementing an education campaign to encourage deer-resistant plantings in yards and gardens:
  - a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed
5. Implementing a community-wide initiative to transition green spaces to deer-resistant gardens:
  - a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed

6. Adding and improving warning and road signage in areas where deer may cross:
- a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed

How supportive would you be of Whitehall Borough spending public funds to adopt any or all of the following methods to control the deer population?

7. Use of contraception – this involves using hormones in food that prevent deer from being able to reproduce:
- a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed
8. Sterilization – this involves catching deer and removing their reproductive organs:
- a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed
9. Archery – this involves hunting using bows and arrows:
- a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed
10. Sharpshooting – this involves hunting using guns:
- a. Strongly support
  - b. Somewhat support
  - c. Neutral / no opinion
  - d. Somewhat opposed
  - e. Strongly opposed

## **Appendix B: Surveyor Script and Verbal Questions**

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### *Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee Random Survey: Spring 2017*

#### Surveyor Script and Verbal Questions

So that the survey is unbiased, it is important that the survey be read the same way each time. Please read the text, questions, and answer options verbatim.

“Hello. My name is XXXXX (first & last name). I am volunteering to help Danny McGervey to complete his Eagle Scout requirements.

Today I represent the Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee. We are doing a 10-question survey to find out how Whitehall residents view the deer population.

Your household was chosen randomly and only one person in the household may take the survey. Residents’ participation is very valuable. Would you be willing to complete the survey?”

If NO: See instructions below.

If YES: “Great, thank you! I have a just few questions here on this sheet that you can read and then circle the letter that best fits your opinion.”

HAND PERSON THE QUESTION SHEET.

[IF PERSON HAS TROUBLE READING, YOU MAY READ THE QUESTIONS ALOUD AND RECORD THEIR ANSWERS.]

Participant number: \_\_\_\_\_

“How strongly do you agree or disagree that the population of deer in Whitehall is an issue requiring action by the borough?” (Q11)

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

IF THE PERSON SAYS “STRONGLY AGREE” OR “AGREE” ASK:

“Since you answered that you believe the population of deer in Whitehall is an issue requiring action by the borough, can you please briefly (in a sentence or two) summarize what is the issue and where it is occurring?”

ISSUE:

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---

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LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

ASK ALL PARTICIPANTS:

“Do you have any comments about topics not covered in the survey?” (10 words or less)

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☐

Refused to be surveyed.

☐

Asked for someone to return (date & time)\_\_\_\_\_.

“Mayor Jim Nowalk and the Wildlife Management Committee appreciate your willingness to take the survey. Here is some information from the committee, and thanks again for your time!”

LEAVE A COPY OF THE EXPLANATION SHEET WITH THE PARTICIPANT.

## **Appendix C: Deer Survey Information Sheet for Participants**

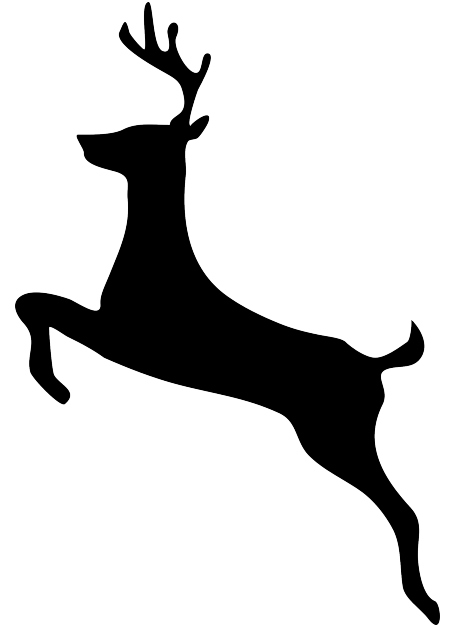
---

*Hello from the Whitehall Wildlife Management Committee!*

Thank you for participating in this random survey in an effort to gauge how the residents of Whitehall view the deer population in our community.

To learn more, please visit the:

- Whitehall Borough website at <http://www.whitehallboro.org/> and click on “**Wildlife Management Committee**” under “**The Borough**”
- Whitehall Public Library website at [www.whitehallpubliclibrary.org/get-answers/my-community-links/wildlife-management-whitehall/](http://www.whitehallpubliclibrary.org/get-answers/my-community-links/wildlife-management-whitehall/)
- Whitehall Public Library for a collection of materials related to wildlife and its management, with tips on deer-resistant plants and more.



**We express our gratitude to Danny McGerver from Boy Scout Troop 323  
and his volunteers for collecting survey responses!**

## **Appendix D: Neighboring Municipality Wildlife Questionnaire**

MUNICIPALITY / CONTACT / DATE

1. Has your municipality consider deer to be an issue requiring action? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, what did you use to determine that? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What methods of “management” did you use? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Why did you choose those? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How did you determine effectiveness of each method? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you collect baseline data? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you solicit community input? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was your timeline on the entire project, initial phase? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Did you keep your community up-to-date on the progress? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
If so, how and how often? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Which was the most effective method of communication? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Neighboring Municipality Wildlife Questionnaire Responses

BETHEL PARK / TIMOTHY O'CONNOR, POLICE CHIEF / 6/3/16

1. Has your municipality considered deer to be an issue requiring action? Yes.  
If so, what did you use to determine that? Long before he came to the position, have a 20-year program in place.
2. What methods of "management" did you use? Hunting with bow & arrow, seems to work.  
Why did you choose those? In place for years.
3. How did you determine effectiveness of each method? Before his time but bow-and-arrow seem somewhat effective.
4. Did you collect baseline data? Did not, but the program will be evaluated as needed, have discussed other methods such as sterilization & prevention, talked to the game commissioner and a biologist. 61 deer were taken last season.
5. Did you solicit community input? Do not know.
6. What was your timeline on the entire project, initial phase? Too long ago to know.
7. Did you keep your community up-to-date on the progress? Still do keep community up-to-date.  
If so, how and how often? Municipality management & officials are updated, community meeting discussions, statistics are gathered as needed (Amy will call 6/6/16 to give more info about statistics on crashes with vehicles & other).  
Which was the most effective method of communication? Bow-and-arrow culling during the late fall, early winter, use Whitehall Management Company, hunters are from several areas, but the organizer (owner?) is a Bethel Park resident.



1. Has your municipality consider deer to be an issue requiring action? No, not yet.  
If so, what did you use to determine that? I think local archery hunters do a good job of keeping them in check.
2. What methods of “management” did you use? I think local archery hunters do a good job of keeping them in check.  
  
Why did you choose those? They must follow the game laws. After posting the “hollow” per councilman, I called the PA Game Commission. They strongly advised against any hunting ordinance. Their laws supersede the boroughs. We do have collisions with cars, which result in the deer’s deaths, and a local resident will pick them up for the meat. If not, the Department of Public Works will dispose of them.
3. How did you determine effectiveness of each method? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you collect baseline data? No.  
If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you solicit community input? No.  
If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was your timeline on the entire project, initial phase? N/A
7. Did you keep your community up-to-date on the progress? N/A  
If so, how and how often? \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Which was the most effective method of communication? I have not received any calls about deer being a problem. I doubt you can remove all of the deer, so you have to live with them. Recently they have come into my backyard and are eating some of our plants and I just live with it. Fences work and there are other methods found to discourage their presence.

1. Has your municipality consider deer to be an issue requiring action? Probably but because of financial, logistical, and geographical considerations, actions have been primarily participatory. Borough officials met with insurance representatives and the police department.

If so, what did you use to determine that? Phone calls, one outspoken resident in particular made several calls.

2. What methods of “management” did you use? Encouraging the use of deer-resistant plants. The borough does have an ordinance against feeding.

Why did you choose those? Mr. Hartswick indicated that he and the community leaders did, and continue to, undertake careful deliberation. They determined that any action to remove deer would have to be a collaborative effort with other small municipalities. Houses are very compactly placed, and there is very little space for safe use of weaponry. There is deep concern for harm to residents & pets.

3. How did you determine effectiveness of each method? Very few complaint calls. People don’t seem to be bothered by the deer.

4. Did you collect baseline data? Yes, by participation.

If so, how? Attended meetings with the SHAOG, the commission headed by Kelly Fraasch from Mt. Lebanon, the game commission, and the Allegheny League of Municipalities, plus others.

5. Did you solicit community input? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

What was your timeline on the entire project, initial phase? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Did you keep your community up-to-date on the progress? Borough newsletter, currently revamping their website so that will be used, community events.

If so, how and how often? \_\_\_\_\_

Which was the most effective method of communication? \_\_\_\_\_

- \* Original survey responder was Borough Manager Pat D’Amico (6/3/16), who suggested contacting then Planning & Codes Director Tom Hartswick as well. Ms. D’Amico was no longer employed by Castle Shannon Borough when requests for permission to publish her name were made. In 2016, Ms. D’Amico did relate that, in her own yard, the deer eat the fallen apples, which she then wasn’t required to clean up herself!

1. Has your municipality considered deer to be an issue requiring action? Yes

If so, what did you use to determine that? Based on the number of calls the office receives, today alone there were 7 calls about fawns. When they call, we try to educate them about deer behavior & what to do when you find a fawn. Sometimes the people even pick up the fawn & bring it to their office, difficult sometimes because they cannot determine the location from which the fawns were taken.

2. What methods of “management” did you use? Education / inspire de-sensitivity to feeding deer.

Why did you choose those? Based on deer behavior.

3. How did you determine effectiveness of each method? By the number of calls received by the office.

4. Did you collect baseline data? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Did you solicit community input? Not so far, just the callers, but would think about how to do it if the problems increase.

If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What was your timeline on the entire project, initial phase? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did you keep your community up-to-date on the progress? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, how and how often? \_\_\_\_\_

Which was the most effective method of communication? \_\_\_\_\_

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Chief, Borough of Bethel Park Police Department

Laura Simon  
Wildlife Ecologist, Humane Society of the United States

Samara Trusso  
Wildlife Management Supervisor, Southwest Region, Pennsylvania Game Commission

Courtney M. Wertz  
Assistant Borough Manager, Borough of Whitehall

Vince Yevins  
Finance Director, Borough of Whitehall

Marc Zeoli  
Code Enforcement Officer, Borough of Whitehall

and

Borough of Whitehall residents who participated in the survey and offered testimonials.