

# Three men sentenced for hare coursing in Gifford area



Three men have been sentenced for hare coursing crimes in East Lothian.

Anthony Bassford, now 32, Jason Ellis, now 27, and John Wilson, 23, were charged with hare coursing in the Gifford area on 6th April.

Bassford, from Stoke-on-Trent, Ellis, from Stoke, and Wilson, of Bedlington, were found guilty at Jedburgh Sheriff Court on 14th July.

Ellis was fined £300 and Wilson was given a 70 hour community payback order.

Yesterday (Monday 8 August), Bassford was disqualified from keeping dogs for a period of time and fined, the length and value of which will be determined at a later date.

PC Jamie Hood, Wildlife Liaison Officer for the Lothian's & Scottish Borders Division, said: "This is a cruel activity which sees hares pursued and killed under the guise of 'sport'.

"It is unwelcome in our communities, especially as these criminals also tend to damage the land, worry livestock and intimidate residents.

"I would urge rural residents to continue being vigilant and reporting suspicious behaviour to us, so we can bring perpetrators of this barbaric act before the courts."

Anyone with information can contact Police Scotland on 101 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.