

Heroic British pilot killed after helicopter fired on by machine gun-wielding elephant poachers in Tanzania

19:05, 30 JAN 2016 | **UPDATED** 19:19, 30 JAN 2016 | **BY** SAM WEBB

Englishman Roger Gower was helping authorities in Tanzania track the criminals when they fired on his aircraft, the Friedkin Conservation Fund said

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Loss: Captain Roger Gower, who was was shot in his helicopter by poachers

A British helicopter pilot has been shot dead by elephant poachers in Tanzania, a conservation charity has said.

Englishman Roger Gower was helping authorities in Tanzania track the criminals when they fired on his aircraft, the Friedkin Conservation Fund said.

In a message posted on its website, founder Dan Friedkin said the organisation was "profoundly saddened by the loss of our dear friend".

He said: "Roger was killed while piloting a helicopter during a co-ordinated effort with the Tanzanian wildlife authorities to track down and arrest active elephant poachers. In the course of this action the poachers fired upon the helicopter and Roger was fatally wounded.



Gunned down: The helicopter crash in Maswa Game Reserve in Tanzania



Shooting: The seat of the helicopter

"We are committed to honouring Roger and his work. We are also committed to ensuring that those responsible for this attack are found and brought to justice. We believe that Roger can best be honoured by redoubling our commitment to protect elephants and our priceless wildlife heritage.

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"This tragic event again highlights the appalling risk and cost of protecting Tanzania's wildlife."

Lazaro Nyalandu, Tanzania's former Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, said: "Capt Roger, a British national, was shot mid air by poachers AK47, managed to land his chopper but sadly died before his rescue last night."

Read more: [Countdown to big cat extinction prompts clockwork lion statue in Trafalgar Square](#)



Assault: Poachers opened fire on the aircraft with an AK47, it was reported



Pascal Shelutete

Heroic: Mr Gower was helping protect wildlife in Tanzania

"Those poachers who killed Capt Roger are coward, evil, and sad people. A fine hearted individual gone too soon, and our hearts are broken.


"Capt Roger's body was flown into Arusha early today, as those who killed him are still at large

"Everything must done to bring them to justice."



Brave: Roger Gower managed to land but died soon afterwards



Lazaro Nyalandu 
@LazaroNyalandu

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CaptRoger's body was flown into Arusha early today, as those who killed him are still at large. Everything must done to bring them to justice

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Mr Gower is reported to be a former accountant who qualified as a pilot in 2004.

A Foreign Office spokesman said: "We can confirm the death of a British national in Tanzania and are providing assistance to the family at this difficult time."

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Yeah, so now what are you gonna do about it?! There should be a dedicated army in every area where endangered animals are at risk to track relentlessly ALL poachers with a shoot to kill policy, also weed out those corrupt politicians/officials who turn a blind eye to the problem.

Tories to spend MORE appealing Bedroom Tax decision than it would cost to abide by ruling

19:04, 30 JAN 2016 | **UPDATED** 19:05, 30 JAN 2016 | BY **KEIR MUDIE**

Tory Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith will spend taxpayers' money fighting the humiliating legal defeat in the Supreme Court

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Wasting money: Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Iain Duncan Smith

Ministers will spend more appealing a judgment against the **Bedroom Tax** than obeying the judges would cost.

The Appeal Court decided that women who have panic rooms in their homes should be exempt.

But Tory Work and Pensions Secretary **Iain Duncan Smith** will spend taxpayers' money fighting the decision in the Supreme Court.

He also wants to overturn the Appeal Court's ruling that disabled children's parents should not pay.

The tax sees social housing tenants charged for each room the **Tory Government** decides is "spare".

Exempting abuse victims who have a room where they can escape a violent partner would cost £200,000.

Labour's **Owen Smith**, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, said: "Just the Supreme Court session itself will cost the Government more in legal fees than the £200,000 needed to exempt domestic abuse victims affected.

"If the Tories had an ounce of decency they could have stood by the decision and exempted the two groups.

"Instead they are instructing expensive lawyers to fight in the Supreme Court for the right to drive people further into poverty."



D Legakis Photography/Athena

Court victory: Paul and Sue Rutherford with their disabled grandson Warren

Paul Rutherford, of Clunderwen, Pembrokeshire, who needs a spare room to care for disabled grandson Warren, 13, said: “I’m mad angry they’re appealing.

“I would like **David Cameron** or Iain Duncan Smith to explain why they are spending taxpayers’ cash on an appeal.”

The **Sunday People** has led the fight against the tax, which costs hundreds of thousands of families about £14 a week.

Ministers were forced to exempt foster carers and some Forces families after its introduction in 2013.

And they backtracked on plans to tax the families of the most severely disabled children.

Read more: Cowardly IDS ducks MPs' furious questions on "rotten" Bedroom Tax

Richard Kramer of deaf-blind charity Sense said: “Parents need extra space to store disability-related equipment or accommodate carers. This is not ‘under-occupying’. It is a necessity.”

The tax has driven many to despair. Stephanie Bottrill, 53, took her life after being forced to give up her home in Solihull.

Mr Smith added: “The Sunday People has been brilliant in showing just how nasty the tax is.

“The court didn’t just say it was illegal to hit disabled children’s families with the tax. They said the same about victims of domestic violence.”

The MP called an emergency debate – which Mr

Duncan Smith left to his junior Justin Tomlinson.

Mr Smith said: “Instead of wasting money on lawyers, what they should do is find a conscience, listen to the public and scrap the tax today.”

Voice of the Sunday People: IDS is wrong, wrong and wrong again

Little by little, brick by brick, the Bedroom Tax is being dismantled.

And for three years the Sunday People has been doing the heavy lifting as we campaigned against it.

It should have not taken a court ruling to exempt families with disabled children needing constant care, and women in fear of their lives.

That should have been a matter of plain common sense and basic compassion. But Iain Duncan Smith has neither.

The Work and Pensions Secretary persists with a policy which was so badly thought out he never realised taxing foster parents would mean they could

not foster children.

The Sunday People soon put him right on that one.

He did not understand that taxing parents because their sons and daughters were risking their lives in the hell of Helmand would be unacceptable.

We put him right on that, too.

Yet now the Secretary of State for Stubbornness intends to appeal against this latest decision. Only a complete prat would do that.



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