THE FUTURE FOR ANIMAL WELFARE IN SCOTLAND

Our beliefs and ambitions

#SSPCAFuture
The Scottish SPCA, Scotland’s animal welfare charity, has been helping animals in need for over 175 years. We rescue animals and nurse them back to health before finding them loving new homes or releasing them back into the wild.

As both an enforcement agency and a charity, the assumption should be made that the Scottish SPCA supports and endorses current Scottish law relating to animal welfare and principally the Animal Health & Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. Therefore the policies detailed in this document do not relate to current laws which we support and enforce. Instead, these policies relate to the aspirations, principles and beliefs of the Scottish SPCA, initiatives we support and current practices we seek to change.

Animal welfare standards must continue to be measured and improved and these policies are intended to promote best practice. No document such as this can be completely comprehensive and we will take a separate view on any matter outside the areas covered. The Scottish SPCA is an animal welfare charity, not an animal rights or a conservation organisation. It is important to understand the distinctions.

Animal rights organisations sometimes take the view that animals should have the same rights as humans and, for example, that it is wrong to eat animals or use them for any sport or entertainment. The Scottish SPCA accepts that some animals will be bred for human consumption, that some animals can be used for educational purposes and that some animals can be used in sport provided the right regulatory regimes are in place.

A conservation organisation is generally focused on ecological matters and the conservation of endangered species, but not necessarily focused on the welfare of an individual animal. The Scottish SPCA is focused on helping individual animals irrespective of whether the species is endangered.

The primary activity of the Scottish SPCA is to ensure that animals in Scotland enjoy high standards of animal welfare, as defined by the five freedoms irrespective of whether that animal has been bred to be part of the food chain, as a companion animal, lives within a zoo environment or in the wild.

The Scottish SPCA therefore focuses on all aspects of animal welfare within Scotland.

Our primary activities include:

### Enforcement

Scottish SPCA inspectors are authorised by the Scottish Minister to enforce the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. Together with Scottish SPCA animal rescue officers they are responsible for enforcing animal welfare legislation, investigating and acting on allegations of cruelty, rescuing animals in distress, providing advice and guidance to those in charge of animals and playing a lead role in our educational activities by visiting Scottish schools and other groups to encourage children to be kind to animals and treat them with the care and respect they deserve.

### Rehoming and rehabilitation

Our nine animal rescue and rehoming centres across Scotland care for abused, abandoned and injured pets and farm animals until they find a new home. While our National Wildlife Rescue Centre offers refuge for injured wild animals where they are rehabilitated before being released back to the wild. Every animal we rescue receives the necessary veterinary treatment, expert care and attention they need to fully recover from our dedicated centre staff and vets.

### Prevention

While a great deal of the Scottish SPCA’s work is dealing with the aftermath of cruelty to animals, prevention through education is at the heart of our work. This includes educational activities in schools and other youth groups, public and political campaigns and marketing activities.

These three key areas of activity are underpinned by cost-effective fundraising activities in which Scottish SPCA volunteers and supporter groups play a vital part both by raising funds and increasing the profile of the Society across Scotland.

Demand for our services is at an all-time high. On average we now receive almost a quarter of a million calls via our animal helpline. Our inspectorate attend over 85,000 incidents each year and we care for more than 19,000 animals. Many of the issues that we tackle in Scotland are due to the irresponsible purchasing of pets, general lack of knowledge of pet care and a lack of awareness when it comes to farm animal welfare and the impact humans can have on wildlife. We are committed to the following objectives and we need to ensure we have the legislation to support these:

- Rescue animals in need and enforce the Animal Health & Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006
- Never put an animal that is physically and mentally healthy to sleep
- Be at the forefront of ending cruelty to animals, for example tackling the illegal puppy trade
- Care for and rehabilitate animals, find loving homes and release back into the wild
- Provide expert advice to the public on all matters of animal welfare
- Champion Prevention through Education.
Our ambitions for animal welfare in Scotland

Five year sentencing

The Scottish SPCA welcomes the Scottish Government’s proposal to increase the current maximum jail sentence for animal cruelty offences from 12 months to 5 years. As a reporting agency to the Crown Office (COPFS) we are proud of the accomplishments we have made bringing successful convictions against those who commit animal cruelty. However, whilst we have seen 70 successful cases in 2017, the sentences being handed out are hugely inconsistent. From receiving small three year bans from owning animals, to £180 fines and community service, it is our belief that these sentences should act as a deterrent to potential criminals.

We accept that any sentence is always at the discretion of the sheriff, however, increasing the maximum jail sentence from 12 months to five years will give sheriffs far greater options. Jail time is not always the answer and we understand the benefit of bans and community service. However, the potential of a five year custodial sentence will act as a larger deterrent than the current 12 month maximum.

It is also a concern that many cases which involve live animals take a considerable amount of time to go through the court system. This may mean that some animals will remain in our care for around two years before the case is heard. Being kept in an enclosed environment for this period of time is detrimental to the wellbeing of that animal and this needs to be changed.

Registration of licensing of animal sanctuaries and rehoming activities in Scotland

It is our belief that all animal sanctuaries and rehoming activities regardless of the type of animals being housed should be licensed and recent court cases show that the need for this is more prevalent than ever before. We therefore welcome the Scottish Government’s commitment to licencing of animal sanctuaries and rehoming activities in Scotland and are willing to assist with regards to enforcement.

Whilst we recognise that there are a number of successful and conscientious rescue shelters in Scotland, there are also a number that do not meet the minimum welfare requirements of the animals in their care. Whether this is due to taking on more than they are able, or out of deliberate cruelty, we have to investigate and pick up the pieces when they go wrong.

We believe that a robust licensing scheme would help prevent horror stories as it can be difficult to discern legitimate rescue shelters from ones that are not focussed on animal welfare. It would also provide the public with extra confidence when supporting independent and larger shelters alike.

All Scottish charities are required to publish their annual accounts and abide by certain fundraising standards. A number of smaller rescues do not have charitable status and whilst a majority of them spend every penny directly on helping the animals in their care, a number of them do not.

We are looking for:

- More consistent and tougher penalties for those who commit horrendous acts of animal cruelty
- An increase in the number of lifetime bans being given as we believe owning animals should be a privilege and not a right
- Cases involving live animals to be processed quicker
- All animal welfare offences should be a recordable offence and appear on the Police National Computer (PNC). Failing this there should be a National Animal Offenders Register across the UK to help combat the breach of bans and link between animal cruelty, domestic and child abuse and violent crime

We are looking for:

- A centralised system including vetting process for all licence applications
- A definition of a ‘fit and proper’ person clearly defined in legislation
- Clearly defined and consistent criteria that must be adhered to regarding licence inspections regardless of who is inspecting the premises
Tackling the illegal puppy trade

There has been a significant increase in the number of puppies entering the UK in recent years, due to consumer demand and changes in legislation that make it easier to transport pets.

Our Special Investigations Unit spearhead a multi-agency taskforce which works tirelessly to bring puppy traders to justice through Operation Delphin, including support from Dumfries and Galloway Council, ISPCA, USPCA, DSPCA, RSPCA, HMRC Trading Standards, Stenaline, Police Scotland Port unit and APHA.

Alongside this vital investigatory work, we’re also running an online campaign #SayNoToPuppyDealers to help spread awareness about the horrific puppy trade.

Shutting down individuals in this cruel trade helps hundreds of puppies and dogs who are exposed to unsanitary living conditions. As a result of the breeding regimen and the conditions the pups are kept in before being sold, a large number suffer from diseases and infections such as giardia and parvo virus. Not only does this result in high vet bills for unsuspecting new owners, but it causes a great deal of unnecessary suffering to the dogs and in some circumstances can result in death.

Whilst Operation Delphin helps identify and disrupt traders and sellers, we want to continue building on its success and bring the entire trade to an end.

We believe multi-agency input is essential to bringing an end to the suffering of hundreds and thousands of dogs. On 9 November 2017 we brought together experts from across the UK at our K9 Conference in partnership with the University of Edinburgh’s Clinical and Health Psychology department. The aim of this conference was to help produce a strategy to combat the puppy trade and the illegal import of dogs.

At the conference we also released the findings of our research project “Research on the Effects of Puppy Farming on Dog Behaviour”. Our research has now proven that dogs from puppy farms have more behavioural issues and are more likely to have medical conditions impacting their long-term health compared to dogs from other breeding backgrounds.

Electronic training collars

We welcome the Scottish Governments intention to effectively ban the use of certain electronic training aids for dogs in Scotland.

On average 3,500 - 4,000 dogs are cared for in our animal rescue and rehoming centres each year; these consist of practically every breed of dog with the entire range of temperaments. We do not use electric collars on any dog, and instead rehabilitate them through positive reward based training.

There are many reputable trainers/behaviourists who are willing to take the time to train or advise an owner appropriately however there are no enforceable national standards for such individuals and in effect, anyone could advertise themselves as an animal behaviourist. There are also some who still advocate the use of electric collars that inflict an electric shock, or noxious substance, these people should not be recommended to the public.

Even when these collars are used in accordance with any guidelines, there is no guarantee that the dog will associate the shock with the behaviour that the owner/trainer desires to modify.

We are committed to tackling the illegal puppy trade by:

- Continuing to disrupt the illegal trade through Operation Delphin and legislative change
- Quantifying the legitimate supply in Scotland
- Pilot work in addressing the demand for puppies in Scotland and measure success
- Developing a ‘trusted trader’ type database and website with partners
- Raising awareness amongst all local authorities in Scotland
- Developing consumer campaigns that drive awareness of the issue and lead people to a collaborative website for reliable information and advice

We believe that:

- Any electronic collars that induce a shock should effectively be banned
- Any collars that squirt any noxious oil or chemical should effectively be banned
- Any dual function collars that have both electric shock and vibration modes should effectively be banned as it would be impossible to prove which setting the device was set when a complaint was made
- The UK Government should consider fully banning the advertisement, sale and use of all such devices
Rescuing and rehabilitating Scotland’s wildlife

Every year the Scottish SPCA rescues thousands of sick, injured and orphaned wild animals. We help every kind of wild animal in Scotland and are the only national animal welfare charity which rescues birds. Most of the wild animals we rescue are cared for by our dedicated wildlife team at our National Wildlife Rescue Centre in Clackmannanshire, which has veterinary facilities, seal pools, aviarries, wild mammal enclosures, a stable block for deer casualties and can care for up to 1,000 oiled birds at a time. We will only treat and rehabilitate wildlife where there is a realistic probability of the animal being returned to, and thriving in, its natural habitat.

Wild animals

We are opposed to the unnecessary taking or killing of wild animals, or the infliction of any suffering upon them and believes all wild animals should be afforded protection from unnecessary suffering.

We deplore changes to the environment which may jeopardise the welfare of wildlife living in the area.

Such changes include:
- Interference with or the unnecessary destruction of habitats, e.g. the removal of hedgerows and the destruction of wetland.
- Pollution of land, air or water by chemical substances, common waste products causing either direct suffering to wildlife or having a more indirect effect through damage to the environment itself.

We believe:
- No territorial animal should be moved from its home territory unless the relocation is carried out in compliance with International Union for Conservation (IUCN) guidelines.
- Any scientific trial involving the capture, movement and release of any wild mammal or bird in Scotland should involve and be monitored by the Scottish SPCA.

Killing, culling and trapping

- No indiscriminate methods of killing wild animals should be used as this leads to non-target species suffering.
- We are opposed to the manufacture and use of all snares and any trap which causes suffering.
- We are opposed to the use of poisons which cause suffering as a method to kill wild animals and are concerned about the widespread agricultural and commercial use of chemical substances which are potentially lethal to wild, farm and domestic animals.
- No illegal substances such as strychnine and hydrogen cyanide (Cymag) should be used in any form of lethal control.
- Culls should only take place for public safety or animal welfare reasons. They should be a last resort, be humane and be periodically reviewed.
- The practice of allowing sea fish to die in air without any humane intervention falls far short of the welfare requirement of any other species. We regret that this anomaly will continue for as long as large numbers of fish continue to be taken by traditional methods. However, the Society calls upon fishermen to minimise the suffering of fish as much as possible.
- Inhumane methods should not be used for killing lobsters, crabs and crayfish.
- Wild animals should never be transported unless it is for their own benefit such as to receive veterinary treatment or under strict welfare conditions.
- Any person attempting to transport an animal for treatment should consider whether the likely outcome of treatment will be of sufficient benefit to outweigh the cost in stress to the animal.
- No wild animals or products derived from wild animals should be imported.

Deer

- The killing of wild deer, including culling for management purposes, must be carried out humanely and respect the instincts and behaviour of the animals.
- Consideration must always be given to the welfare of pregnant hinds or hinds with dependent young.
- Fencing policies must contain contingency measures to ensure the welfare of deer is not compromised if the fence is crossed in an attempt to access traditional feeding areas.
- Best practice must be observed during any cull and should include:
  - Strict limits on the duration of shooting operations.
  - The minimum possible use of vehicles in the vicinity of deer.
  - No use of helicopters or other vehicles to drive or hold deer.
  - Priority attention to despatching wounded animals.
Rescuing and rehoming Scotland’s pets

The Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 places a duty of care on all pet owners and others responsible for animals to ensure that the welfare needs of these animals are met. All pets (such as cats, dogs, rabbits, rodents, birds, horses, ponies, fish, snakes and other reptiles) are protected by the Act.

Every year the Scottish SPCA helps many pet animals that through no fault of their own have been abandoned, mistreated or neglected. The Scottish SPCA strives to put an end to the animal cruelty that many pets face through educating the public on responsible ownership and duty of care and giving rescued pets a second chance by finding them their forever home.

We believe that:

- Animals should not be kept by those who do not have the time, facilities, financial means or level of interest necessary to ensure a satisfactory standard of care
- Dogs should not be allowed to roam unsupervised
- Cats, dogs and other companion animals should be neutered, subject to veterinary advice
- Identification schemes should be used to allow the return of stray dogs to their owners
- Microchipping is currently the most reliable permanent means of identification for dogs, cats, horses and other companion animals
- The issue of irresponsible breeding of puppies and kittens, for example in unlicensed puppy or kitten farms, and of other mammals or exotic animals in either commercial or domestic settings needs to be addressed
- Exotic animals should not be kept as companion animals where they cannot be provided with an environment appropriate for their physical and behavioural needs
- The selling of exotic animals as pets in remote areas is of great concern. Access to specialised pet food in these areas can prove difficult which in turn can lead to major animal welfare problems
- Primates should not be kept as pets

Transport and movement

There is always a risk when transporting any animals and common sense and compliance with legal requirements needs to be applied when undertaking any journey. This section is deliberately non-prescriptive but three key points should be borne in mind:

- Leaving an animal in a vehicle unattended is potentially lethal as animals can dehydrate and die rapidly on days that are warm as well as hot.
- The longer the journey, the more stress an animal is likely to experience. Owners must consider what is best for their companion animal when considering a long journey and if a trip abroad is being contemplated then pet passports, potential disease and quarantine issues should be considered well in advance.
- The trade in young companion animals is governed by the Licensing of Animal Dealers (Young Cats and Young Dogs) (Scotland) Regulations 2009. We are opposed to any trade in young companion animals which involves extended travel, with or without their mothers. For the purpose of this document, ‘young cats and dogs’ means puppies or kittens of less than eight weeks old.
Sale and resale

- Puppies and kittens should not be sold in pet shops. All puppies and kittens should be acquired from the place where they were born, or from a reputable animal rescue and rehoming centre.
- All pet shops selling exotic animals should have at least one member of staff who has attended a training course in the care of the specific species being sold.
- Young companion animals should not be sold by third parties prior to resale to the permanent owner. Any young companion animal sold from a place other than its place of birth or a pet shop should have been resident in that place for at least one week prior to sale, unless inimical to the welfare of the animal. The animal should be vaccinated, health checked by a veterinary surgeon, microchipped and should be accompanied by documents confirming its origins.

Euthanasia

- No companion animal should be euthanised without being rendered insensible to pain and distress until death supervenes. We recommend that euthanasia of companion animals should only be carried out by a veterinary surgeon or other certified competent person.
- Where possible, privately-owned equines should be put down on site to avoid the stress of transport.

Feral cats

- Feral cats are wild mammals that should be protected from cruelty and left unmolested unless creating a genuine health and/or hygiene problem. Where problems do occur, the Society accepts that other organisations may neuter and return feral cats to colonies.

Feeding of vertebrates as live prey

- We condemn the feeding of live vertebrates as prey for snakes and other exotic animals. This practice is clearly in breach of the five freedoms.
Our work with the farming community

The Scottish SPCA strives to educate consumers to make informed animal welfare decisions regarding the products they buy and encourages members of the public to be aware of the source of any animal product that they purchase.

We recommend that members of the public purchase produce that is supplied through a recognised, independently monitored, quality assurance scheme. Produce should not be purchased from countries which do not have the equivalent UK welfare standards. The Scottish SPCA already works closely with QMS (Quality Meat Scotland) and Acoura by carrying out joint inspections with QMS approved livestock farms and supports their assurance schemes in particular with regards to the pig industry.

We believe that:

- Good stockmanship is essential and all employers involved in caring for agricultural animals have a responsibility to ensure that their employees have a sound knowledge and understanding of animal welfare
- All farmers and stockmen must adhere to statutory codes for animal welfare and employers must ensure that their employees are familiar with and understand the codes
- Scottish producers should not supply any livestock for further rearing to countries or organisations which do not comply with Scottish or UK welfare standards
- All buildings should be constructed to meet animal welfare requirements and accommodation should always be appropriate to the size, number and type of animals it contains
- The farmer, stockman or other responsible person should be living on site and be immediately available
- Appropriate alarm systems and fire and emergency precautions should be in place, especially those relating to equipment failure that could compromise animal welfare
- Proper insulation, bedding and ventilation should be in place
- Slatted floors can be unsuitable for cloven hoofed animals but where such floors are in use they should be designed, constructed and maintained to minimise discomfort, distress or injury and should be fitted with rubber mats.
- Every effort must be made by farmers and livestock keepers to eradicate endemic disease, which causes immense suffering and affects the value of livestock
- Any mutilation and procedure that has a negative impact on the animals’ welfare such as beak-trimming of birds, desnooding of turkeys and injection of enzymes (for tenderising meat) into cattle prior to slaughter for example should be banned
Pigs

- Bedding should be provided and lighting must be adequate. Straw or similar material should be used to meet natural rooting and foraging instincts, thereby reducing injury and eliminating some behavioural abnormalities.
- Close tethering should not take place except on a temporary basis, for example to allow veterinary examination.
- Piglets should not be weaned at less than three weeks of age.
- Stalls for dry or pregnant sows in which they are unable to turn around should not be used.
- Tail docking of pigs should never be a matter of routine and should be avoided by herd management and provision of enrichment materials such as straw and earth.
- Piglets destined to be killed before the age of sexual maturity should not be castrated.

Veal calves

- Veal calves should not be exported where the use of veal crates is still permitted.
- Loose-housed systems where more natural and instinctive behaviour if possible should be used.

Dairy cattle

- Dairy farmers and the dairy industry must continue to seek ways to control mastitis and chronic lameness.
- Zero grazing systems are only acceptable when there is a high level of stockperson competency, with extra attention given to the potential welfare problems associated with these systems.

Sheep

- All sheep should be regularly inspected, given supplementary feed where appropriate, including over winter and at lambing time, and treated promptly for any health problems or injuries.
- Sheep kept in fields must have access to a dry lying area.
- Early weaning and intensive rearing of lambs should not take place, except as required by multiple births.
- Tail docking in lambs should be carried out only if failure to do so would lead to subsequent welfare problems because of dirty tails and potential fly strike.
- Castration of lambs should not be undertaken routinely and only when it can be justified on the basis that it is essential for the welfare of the animal.

Poultry

The Scottish SPCA appreciates the needs of mass production modern farming and that the UK industry is one of the best regulated in the world, being covered by stringent laws. However, the Society is concerned that animals are selectively bred to put on weight to the extent that they can collapse under their own weight if not culled within weeks of birth. Such breeding practices can severely compromise animal welfare.

- We are opposed to all intensive rearing systems for poultry on the basis that these systems can severely compromise animal welfare.
- We are also opposed in principle to continuous egg production in modern intensive systems which can potentially bring about osteoporosis and painful bone fractures.
- Systems in which the welfare of the bird is fully protected should be used, in which a nest, scratching and/or dust bathing areas and a perch are provided, with a stocking density and colony size appropriate to the needs of the hens, according to the best scientific evidence available.
- Forced moulting should not be used to increase egg production.
- Further research should be undertaken into caged systems for laying hens that looks at ways to improve bone strength and vigour and also into the provision of dust-bathing material in such systems, which can result in severe respiratory problems.
- The welfare of broiler chickens (chickens kept for meat production) can be severely compromised in intensive rearing systems leading to cardiovascular problems, serious leg weakness and joint problems. Greater attention should be given by the industry to the health and fitness of broiler chickens, with the target of eliminating or dramatically reducing leg and other problems associated with fast growth and intensive production. This may be achieved through the use of slower growing strains.
- We are opposed to the intensive rearing of chickens for meat production but whilst this remains legal the Scottish SPCA urges producers to invest in lower stocking densities, excellent management, suitable perches, pop-holes and nest boxes. In many cases, such steps can and do provide better welfare conditions.
- Further research should be undertaken into alternative humane methods to address the issue of feather-pecking in turkeys.
Ducks and geese

- Intensive rearing systems for ducks deprive them of their aquatic lifestyle and the opportunity to perform natural behaviours. This is a gross infringement of animal welfare.
- Ducks and geese reared for meat production must have access to water as part of their environment.
- The force feeding of geese and ducks for the production of foie gras is illegal in the UK. Consumers should refrain from buying imported foie gras because of the severe welfare problems it causes.

Farmed fish

- As fish are sentient creatures, fish farming is an intensive rearing system and should be subject to the same level of welfare regulation and scrutiny as other livestock farming.
- All involved in fish farming should make use of the welfare codes linked to assurance schemes and the statutory requirements that are in place for stocking densities and environmental protection.
- When being transported, fish should be loaded and unloaded without being exposed to air. Fish should also be provided with high oxygen availability in the water and maintained at a stocking density which allows their needs to be met.
- Inspections of fish should be regular and immediate upon arrival at destination, with prompt removal of any dead fish.
- We support the development of technologies that allow for swift despatch of farmed salmon and trout, using hydraulic stunners (salmon) and electric stunning in water (trout), both of which effectively stun or kill the fish instantly.
- The practice of allowing trout to die in air is not acceptable.
Sale and resale

Animals intended for transport to slaughter should be transported directly to the place of slaughter rather than via livestock markets as this creates unnecessary distress.

Wherever possible, all animals should travel direct from farm to farm, or from farm to slaughter.

We discourage the sale of orphan lambs at markets, preferring the use of off-farm sales.

Markets have the potential to be sources of disease and are places where significant stress can be caused to the animals present. We welcome the statutory licensing of such markets backed up by routine monitoring.

Transport of agricultural animals

There should be no extended transport of live food animals for slaughter. Animals should be slaughtered as close as possible to the point of rearing.

There should be a ‘carcass-only’ trade over long distances.

Animals travelling to slaughter should be transported for one planned journey of no more than eight hours or 500 kilometres, unless it is impossible to reach the abattoir or staging point within that time.

In certain cases, journeys should be extended by the amount of time that is reasonable to allow arrival at the destination. The benefit to the animal of reaching its destination in a single journey may outweigh the cost of having to be unloaded and reloaded prior to a comparatively short completion journey.

No live animals should be imported or exported for slaughter.

We acknowledge the need to move young animals for further fattening but this should be conducted under humane conditions and kept to a minimum.

We welcome the establishment of a formal independent certification procedure for the drivers of vehicles involved in long distance road transportation of animals. Such certification should be based on the possession by drivers of an adequate knowledge of the types, species and handling methods of animals in their care.

Slaughter and killing

No animal should be slaughtered without being rendered insensible to pain and distress until death supervenes.

We would like to see an end to non-stunned slaughter which is currently used by some religious faiths.

The meat from any non-stunned animal should be clearly labelled as such at the point of sale.

Non-domesticated species such as ostrich and deer are not suited to slaughter in a conventional slaughterhouse. As long as such species are farmed, they should be slaughtered on farm by a trained and equipped specialist operative.

Farmed deer are not temperamentally suited to transportation or to handling within slaughterhouse systems. They should be humanely shot on farm by persons possessing the appropriate marksmanship skills.

Farm animals that have to be slaughtered due to serious physical injury or disease must be immediately and humanely slaughtered on site by a person possessing the appropriate knowledge and expertise.

Where an animal becomes ill or injured on farm it must receive veterinary treatment on site or be certified as fit to travel by a veterinary surgeon for immediate veterinary treatment or slaughter.

Where an animal becomes ill or injured during transport it must be immediately taken to the nearest place for veterinary treatment or slaughter.

All slaughtermen must be properly trained and licensed to practise following the successful completion of a course of instruction, together with the necessary practical experience.

Abattoir workers should not be employed on a piece-work basis.
Ongoing research with the University of Edinburgh shows that the programme is having a positive impact on knowledge of animals and their needs, positive attitudes towards animals and influences children’s beliefs that animals have feelings. Together with the University we have also carried out research that demonstrated that children are highly attached to their pets which is important because attachment to pets has a positive impact on children’s mental health and wellbeing. By encouraging children to take an active caring role for pets within families we can promote pet attachment, child wellbeing and animal welfare.

In addition we have recently launched our Animal Guardians programme which aims to break the cycle of cruelty and harm towards animals and people through promoting positive human-animal interactions with children. Animal Guardians will be offered as an additional resource to primary school aged children who have been flagged as having the potential to commit animal cruelty, or have already been involved in an animal cruelty incident. The links between animal cruelty and violent crimes is well documented and its important to us that this programme is based on research and support from other stakeholders involved in the welfare of children. The effectiveness of the programme will be evaluated by the University of Edinburgh and will be a great tool for assisting vulnerable children and young people at the same time as promoting animal welfare.

We believe that:

- Animal welfare should be a compulsory part of the Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland

The Scottish SPCA is working hard within the education sphere to combat animal cruelty and increase awareness of animal welfare across Scotland. It is our belief that animal welfare should be included as a compulsory part of the Curriculum for Excellence.

Our ‘Prevention through Education’ programme is offered free of charge to primary schools across Scotland and reaches around 300,000 children and 75% of primary schools annually.

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The future for animal welfare in Scotland
Animals in education

• Animal welfare can be taught in schools without the need to keep animals through encouraging the observation of animals in their natural environment. We have an extensive educational programme whereby officers attend schools to teach pupils about animal welfare.

• Animals should not be kept in schools, nurseries or playgroups, unless proper provision is made for their physical and mental well being. Where animals are kept it is essential to safeguard their welfare by ensuring that:
  - A nominated member of staff is responsible for the welfare and husbandry of the animals.
  - A suitable environment is provided, including adequate space, environmental enrichment and, where appropriate, companionship.
  - Provision is made for the care of the animals in suitable surroundings at all times, including term time, weekends and holidays.
  - Provision is made for veterinary care at all times.
  - Contact between pupils and animals is supervised and controlled.
  - Pupils are not permitted to disturb the animals, for example by banging on cages.
  - Animals are given adequate rest periods away from disturbance.
  - Animals are protected from indiscriminate breeding.
  - We are opposed to the dissection of dead vertebrate and invertebrate animals in schools.
  - No pupil should be compelled to perform or watch animal dissection.
  - Animal experimentation should not be practised in schools in any form.
  - Animals should not be used in any educational or training course which either causes suffering or for which appropriate alternatives are available.
  - In zoos and aquaria, educators and other personnel working with animals for educational purposes must have sufficient knowledge of the species involved, observe best practice in exposing the animals to pupils and ensure sufficient respite is allowed between handling sessions.
  - All animal handling sessions in zoos and aquaria must be fully supervised at all times by staff with appropriate experience.
  - We are opposed to travelling schemes which may require the frequent transportation of animals, improper housing, poor husbandry practices and the over-handling of animals.

Animals in exhibitions, entertainment and sport

• No pain, unnecessary suffering or distress should be inflicted upon any animal in the name of exhibition, entertainment or sport.

• Persons responsible for the care of animals in the name of exhibition, entertainment or sport must be aware that some animal welfare problems, such as stress, are peripheral to the main activity, or occur when the activity is taken to extremes, misdirected, abused, or unregulated.

• Animals should only be used for exhibition, entertainment or sport within an institution or industry that is highly regulated and subject to rigorous welfare standards.

• No animals presented in captivity should be sourced from the wild.

• We are opposed to the exhibition and presentation of animals in circuses and travelling menageries or in any temporary setting that creates distress. In particular animals with sensitive hearing should not be exposed to high noise levels.

• Any use of animals in films, television programmes, advertisements, photographic shoots or the theatre must be accompanied by proper provisions to ensure that the animals are not caused any suffering or distress.

• No training methods should be used based on fear or punishment which causes either physical or mental distress. Training should instead be based on reward and positive association.

• No ‘entertainment’ that has no purpose other than the infliction of suffering or death on an animal should take place.

• Scottish SPCA inspectors should be allowed access to all areas at events or at any facility where animals are being used for exhibition, entertainment or sport.
**Animal issues**

The Scottish SPCA supports the importance of the five freedoms, believes that each animal is an individual, is focused on the welfare of individual animals, irrespective of group wellbeing or species endangerment and is committed to improving animal welfare. We believe that every owner or keeper of an animal has a duty of care and difficult financial circumstances are never an acceptable excuse for animal welfare to be compromised.

This document summarises the Scottish SPCA’s view on a number of animal welfare related issues. The principal policies detailed below apply to all animals across Scotland and together with the five freedoms represents the Society’s broad approach to animal welfare:

- We aim to ensure that every dog and cat rescued is neutered before being rehomed, age and circumstances permitting.
- We are opposed to all forms of activity which cause unnecessary distress or suffering or deprive animals of the opportunity to perform their natural behaviour.
- We are opposed to all methods of keeping animals which may inflict unnecessary suffering or compromise animal welfare.
- We are opposed to the breeding of any animals which produces changes in bodily form or function which are detrimental to the animal’s health or welfare or quality of life; breeding programmes which cause or are likely to cause suffering or damage to either parent or offspring; and to the hybridisation of species for the purpose of creating new types of companion animals.
- The achievement of good welfare should be of paramount importance in breeding any species of animal.
- We are opposed to all procedures that compromise animal welfare and are carried out for cosmetic reasons or purely to suit the convenience of humans.
- We are opposed to the tail docking or any other mutilation of any animal except on the grounds of veterinary need.
- With regards to transportation the following principles should protect the welfare of all animals in transit:
  - Animals should be in good health.
  - No animals should be transported in a way which is likely to cause suffering.
  - Animals should not be transported for commercial purposes in the last third of pregnancy. We accept the need to move animals late in pregnancy for management purposes.
- All animals should be transported in suitable containers.
- All journeys should be as short as possible in terms of time and distance travelled.
- Advance transit planning and proper labelling of livestock vehicles and containers are essential.
- All animal carrying crates, compartments and transportation tanks must be regularly maintained.
- Any vehicle carrying animals should be equipped with appropriate fire extinguishers.
- All vehicles should carry essential supplies at all times and food and water where appropriate.
- No animal should be confined in a way which is likely to cause distress or suffering, such as confinement in small cages or barren tanks that do not provide sufficient space or opportunity to perform natural behaviours.
- Live vertebrate prey should not be fed to captive animals.
- No animal should be close tethered other than on a very short temporary basis. This is especially important where large animals such as horses are concerned and where there is no shelter for the animal.
- No device that can inflict pain on an animal, from which it has no means of escape, should be used as a means of training or control or offered for sale.
- Training aids must be part of a structured training programme and this should be made clear on accompanying literature and at the point of sale.
- Electric shock collars and invisible fencing should not be used.
- The filming, or possession of any footage of animal cruelty should be considered an offence.
- We are opposed to the indiscriminate and illegal use of airguns and supports the newly introduced licensing system for these weapons.
- All animals should be protected from unnecessary suffering.
Animals used in Experiments

We are opposed to all experiments or procedures which cause pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm and believes that governments and the scientific community should aspire to eradicate the use of animals in experiments as soon as possible.

We accept that this is highly regulated in the UK by the Home Office. We believe that animal experimentation should only be allowed to find treatments for life threatening or debilitating diseases or conditions in humans or animals.

- Animal experiments which involve unnecessary repetitions, are for scientifically trivial ends, or which involve techniques for which satisfactory humane alternatives have already been developed should not be undertaken.
- Animals should not be used in the testing of inessential substances, such as cosmetics and toiletries, non-medical products such as garden chemicals, DIY products, pesticides, household products and food additives.
- Animals used in experiments must be accorded the best possible living conditions, including sufficient space, ability to express natural behaviour, food and water, environmental enrichment and, wherever possible, exercise and companionship.
- One or more persons in a scientific procedures establishment must be nominated to have overall responsibility for day-to-day care of the animals. In addition a veterinary surgeon must be appointed to monitor the health and welfare status of the animals and appropriate and rigorous training must be provided for prospective licensees and animal technicians.
- All new experimental and testing protocols should be the subject of extensive ethical review before licences are applied for.
- Laboratory animals should not be imported or exported, particularly non-human primates.
- Wild-caught animals of any species should not be used in animal experimentation.
- We encourage the appropriate rehoming of laboratory animals.
- We believe that breeding and supplying establishments designated under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 should be open as a matter of course to inspection by Scottish SPCA inspectors.

Genetic engineering

We are opposed to the manipulation of the genetic constitution of animals which may cause pain, suffering or distress. We are also opposed to cloning by somatic cell nuclear transfer, which currently poses significant welfare risks to both parent and offspring.

Regulation of genetic engineering must include the following:

- All projects in which research into genetically modified organisms is being conducted must be constructed to ensure against accidental release and have been submitted for ethical evaluation before being permitted.
- Before any genetically modified organism is released into the environment there must be an evaluation of the animal welfare implications of that release and, where there is the likelihood of an adverse effect, that release must be prohibited.
- The circumstances under which genetically modified animals are released into the environment must be fully assessed so the welfare of those animals can be ensured during their lifetime. This assessment must include the welfare of their offspring.
- All regulations concerning genetic engineering should be cross-referenced to the regulations concerning animal experimentation and animal welfare.
- Products resulting from genetic engineering techniques must be clearly identified.
- Genetic engineering likely to produce animals especially prone to disease, injury or other suffering should be prohibited.