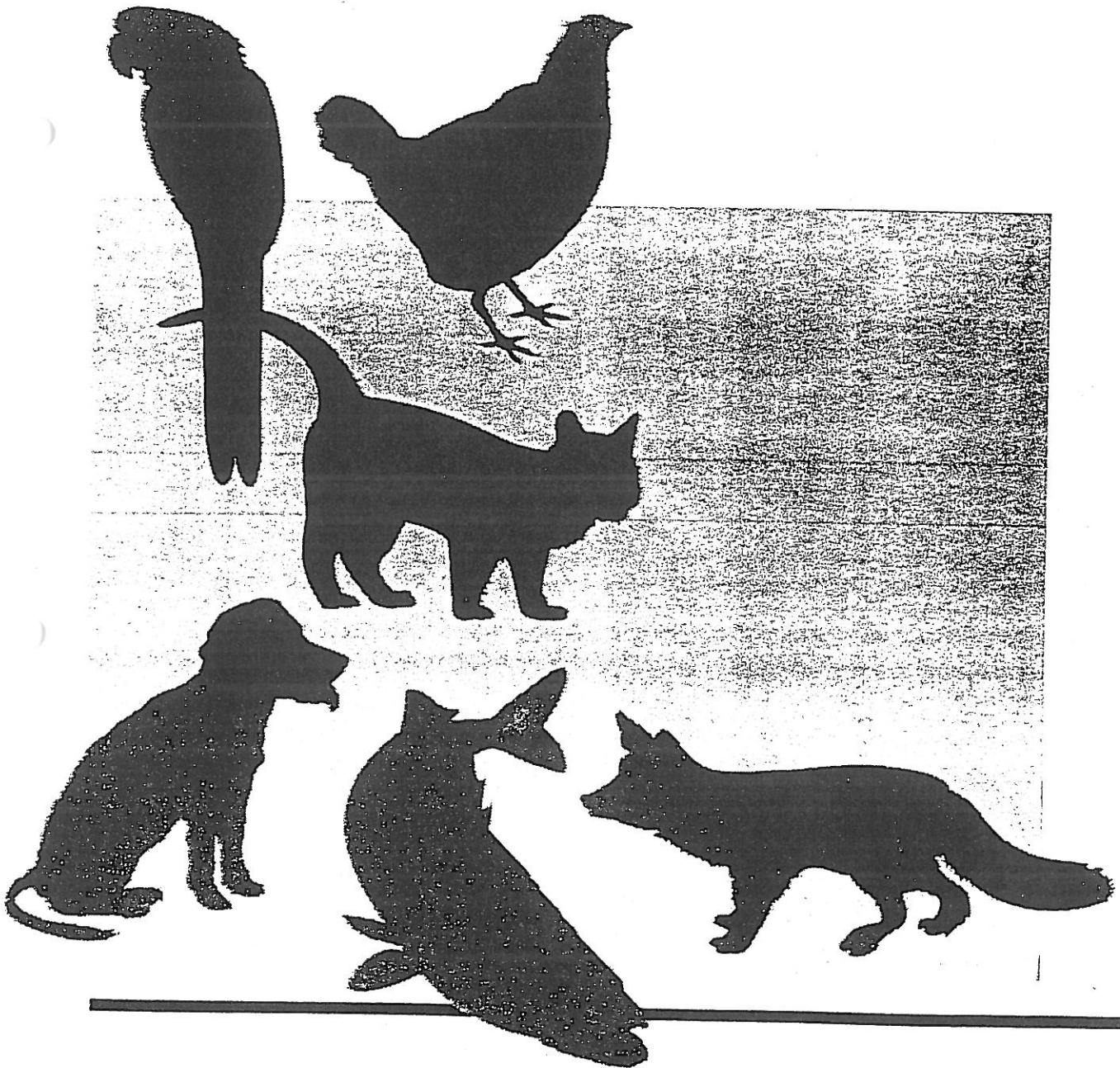




City of

NOTTINGHAM



Introduction

Nottingham City Council is concerned for the welfare of animals and has produced the Charter for Animal Welfare as an expression of that concern. The Charter was adopted by Council Committees during May and June 1993.

1.1 This Council recognises that animals and the use of animals in the areas of science or sport, food production and commercial profit are justified in the activities of human existence.

1.2 The Council also recognises that in each of the above areas there is a limit beyond which such activities cannot be justified and that animals are almost totally dependent on humans to ensure that exploitation, oppression and suffering are reduced to a minimum.

1.3 This Council therefore believes that the wanton exploitation or needless infliction of suffering on animals is wrong and unjustified by the sole fact of difference in species and calls on those agencies that have statutory powers to limit such suffering to exercise those powers with vigour.

1.4 The Council also recognises that in some cases the law does not cover areas of animal exploitation and will therefore both pursue any action within its powers that will reduce such exploitation and will press for amendment in the law to render such exploitation illegal.

1.5 The Council recognises the increasing keeping of livestock for educational and tourism purposes and calls attention to the Codes of Recommendations for Animal Welfare produced by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food for Goats, Pigs, Domestic Fowls, Ducks, Farmed Deer, Cattle and Rabbits.

1.6 This Council commits itself to support the work of all organisations that seek to improve animal welfare by non-violent means.

Nottingham City Council has few statutory powers to enforce the declarations contained within this Charter. Implementing the Charter will therefore depend on close co-operation with bodies such as Nottinghamshire County Council, the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Foods and the RSPCA.

For information on specific areas of animal welfare please contact:

Service Manager - Public Health
Environmental Services Department
Nottingham City Council, Lawrence House
Clarendon Street, Nottingham NG1 5NT
Tel 0602-483500

or:

Leisure and Community Services Department
51, Castlegate, Nottingham NG1 6AF
Tel 0602-483504

Specific Areas

The following areas are by no means exhaustive but cover a range of topics appropriate to the City

COMPANION ANIMALS

DOGS

2.1 To control and protect dogs in the community Nottingham City Council will give the dog warden scheme full publicity and will stress the advisory and social welfare role of the service.

2.2 Nottingham City Council will encourage national government to utilise the powers contained in the Local Government Act 1988 (Section 37) to set up a National Dog Registration Scheme, including an identification scheme.

2.3 The Council supports the reintroduction of a dog licensing scheme and considers that it should embrace the following:

i) a national licence fee (the fee to be waived for registered blind, deaf, elderly, disabled and unemployed persons and those in receipt of income support),

ii) the licence to be bought before the dog is purchased,

iii) that licences not be granted to persons under 16 years of age,

2.4 At the meeting of the Environment Committee on 22 April 1993, the City Council decided to consult widely over three months on a voluntary dog registration scheme based either on a microchip scheme (as recommended by the RSPCA), an ear stud or an identification tag issued for the dog to wear. In addition, there is a City-wide scheme whereby the Council will subsidise the neutering or spaying of dogs (when their owners are in receipt of benefit). Details of this scheme are available from the Department of Environmental Services. Reports are made twice yearly to the Environment Committee on:

- the number of dogs picked up;
- the number returned to owner;
- the number of animals destroyed;
- the number of animals neutered or spayed.

CATS

2.5 Where the City Council is involved in the trapping of feral (wild) cats, such cats should not be destroyed except:-

- (i) where a veterinary surgeon advises such a course is necessary because of disease or injury,
- (ii) the Environmental Health Officer considers there is a public health risk,
- (iii) where the relevant organisations are unable to re-house and feed them.

2.6 While it is possible to "home" feral kittens and re-domesticate cats which have previously lived in domestic households, i.e. abandoned or stray cats, long-established feral cats do not respond to attempts to domesticate them. At present, however, feral cats are not a significant problem in Nottingham.

PET SHOPS

2.7 Nottingham City Council will use its statutory powers to ensure that the standard Licensing Conditions for pet shops, which the Department of Environmental Services issued in 1993, are strictly adhered to. It will be necessary for respective pet shop proprietors to prove to the Council that they are able to provide a satisfactory standard of care for animals offered for sale before the Council will approve a licence.

2.8 In the case of a pet shop located in Council owned property, the tenant will be required to comply with the RSPCA's policy against the import and sale of exotic pets and the "voluntary code of practice" for pet shops, and the manager or owner will be required to hold a formal qualification.

2.9 Nottingham City Council will consider ways in which it can assist local animal welfare organisations to publicise rescued animals requiring to be re-homed.

EXOTIC ANIMALS AND IMPORTATION OF DOMESTIC ANIMALS

2.10 Very few people have the facilities and expertise to provide the correct diet, environment and care required for the well-being of exotic animals and Nottingham City Council will therefore do all in its power to discourage the sale and ownership of exotic animals.

2.11 The Council opposes all importation of domestic animals for resale in this country. Thousands of animals die in transit in wholly unsatisfactory conditions and only a small percentage survive to be sold.

2.12 The Council supports the maximum penalty being imposed on those convicted of bringing animals into the country without adhering to the quarantine regulations. The risk of rabies entering the British Isles is ever increasing and the dangers of smuggling animals through Customs must be effectively publicised.

ANIMALS AS PRIZES

2.13 Nottingham City Council supports the animal welfare organisations in their opposition to the giving of animals as prizes.

2.14 Nottingham City Council forbids the giving of animals as prizes in any event over which it has direct control and will require assurances when letting Council land/property for fairs, fetes and other similar events that animals, including fish, birds and reptiles, will not be given as prizes.

CONTROL OF ANIMAL BOARDING AND BREEDING ESTABLISHMENTS

2.15 All Boarding and Breeding Establishments are required by the HORSE BREEDING ACT 1958 and AMENDMENT RULES 1975, the ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT 1963, the RIDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT 1967 and 1970, and the BREEDING OF DOGS ACT 1973 to be licensed by the local authority. Nottingham City Council will ensure that these establishments are all thoroughly inspected and achieve satisfactory standards before a licence is granted.

PERFORMING ANIMALS

3.1 Nottingham City Council believes that there is no educational value from performing animals and that the tradition has been superseded by easier access to wildlife both in reserves and through wildlife programmes.

3.2 Following a report to the Leisure Services Committee in January 1991 and public consultation, Nottingham City Council has banned, on all Council-owned and Council-administered land, circuses which include performing animals and will use such powers as it has to prevent performing animal acts at the Royal Centre and Nottingham Playhouse.

3.3 Nottingham City Council calls for amendments to the PERFORMING ANIMALS (REGULATIONS) ACT 1925 to extend the present powers of local authorities. The Council fully supports non-animal circuses and welcomes them to the city.

WILDLIFE

4.1 Nottingham City Council will work to support measures aimed at the conservation of wildlife and, in particular, establishment of local wildlife parks, nature reserves, trails and conservation areas within the urban area. The Council will emphasise good management and continued monitoring of such facilities.

BLOOD SPORTS

4.2 Pending the introduction of parliamentary legislation to

prohibit blood sports, Nottingham City Council will ban blood sports across land owned or administered by the Council, and the Council calls on all local authorities with open land which could be used for blood sports to impose similar bans. The Council calls on other public agencies, for example, the Ministry of Defence, the Nationalised Industries, the Church, the National Trust and the Forestry Commission to implement similar bans on blood sports as a matter of policy.

4.3 Nottingham City Council will press national government for legislation to prohibit blood sports and will not provide financial contributions or support for any organisation involved in blood sports.

ANGLING

4.4 The Council does not include angling in its view on blood sports but does support a ban of the use of lead shot by anglers because of the damage it can cause to all wildlife and the environment. A separate Code of Practice for anglers has been adopted.

SNARES AND TRAPS

4.5 This Council is opposed to the manufacture and use of all snares and traps which cause suffering.

POISONS

4.6 This Council is concerned about the widespread agricultural and commercial use of chemical substances which are potentially lethal to animals. However, it appreciates that poisons must be used in its Pest Control function and strictly controls the use only of approved preparations.

EDUCATION

4.7 Nottingham City Council supports wholeheartedly Nottinghamshire County Council's policy on animal welfare in Education. In addition, the educational exhibits of taxidermy at the Wollaton Hall Natural History Museum are all derived from animals who have died naturally or by accident and are not killed for the purpose.

FACTORY FARMING

4.8 The Council is opposed to all forms of factory farming, including the intensive rearing of fur animals for their skins. This Council therefore calls on all traders to make clear whether the goods they sell are the products of factory farming and will prosecute any traders who display advertisements or descriptions which mislead the public on the origin and methods of production of such goods.

4.9 Where possible, the Council will not purchase foods produced by intensive farming methods and would prefer to be served on its premises only foods which are produced by humane methods. It will not serve foods derived from endangered species.

SLAUGHTERING

4.10 The slaughtering of animals and poultry for human consumption should be carried out in the most humane way possible and recommendations have been made by the Farm Animal Welfare Council as to the best ways. These recommend among others:

that the slaughter of animals should take place as near to their rearing sites as possible, to reduce transit stress,

that the training, payment and inspection of slaughterhouse workers should be changed or improved,

that where any holder of a slaughtering licence is convicted of a cruelty offence, the licence should be automatically revoked.

The City Council supports these proposals and calls for their implementation.

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS

5.1 Objections to the use of living animals in scientific research have increased as more information becomes available on the methods of research involved. The Council agrees with these objections and, recognising that its powers are limited and that it is the province of central government to improve the situation, it recommends the following:

that this government introduces legislation to restrict and, if possible, phase out experiments on living animals as a matter of priority,

that manufacturers and retailers help the public by clearly labelling those substances which have been manufactured without recourse to experimentation on living animals.