

**A CHARTER FOR
ANIMAL RIGHTS AND WELFARE
PROPOSALS FOR THE
COUNTY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**



Nottinghamshire County Council

A CHARTER FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS

PROPOSALS FOR THE COUNTY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

INTRODUCTION

This Charter is arguing, essentially, for nothing more eccentric or extreme than the outlawing of cruelty, abuse and gross exploitation of the animal species.

As animals have no voice of their own, they must depend on civilized human beings for protection from abuse, exploitation, and cruelty. That protection depends mainly on the various charitable welfare organisations and voluntary workers, but they have only limited powers at their disposal to help enforce protection.

There are indications that the majority of people in this country care - many very deeply - about animal welfare and about cruelty and abuse. Few issues arouse more anger than the publicity of individual cases of cruelty and neglect. A National Opinion Poll (1983) showed that 81% of those questioned wished to see legislation introduced to reduce animal experiments; 76% think that special clinics for spaying and neutering should be established to reduce the number of unwanted domestic pets; 90% wish to see the law changed to ensure that farm animals have enough freedom of movement to be able to turn around, stretch their limbs and groom themselves; and 65% disapproved of fox hunting.

The public are becoming more aware of wide-scale institutional and commercial abuse of animals. In our society that abuse takes a number of forms, which include:

- unnecessary and cruel animal experiments;
- intensive battery and factory farming, treating animals as machines and commodities;
- the slaughter of fur-bearing animals for vanity;
- the continuation of blood sports, such as fox and stag hunts for pleasure.

These abuses are allowed to continue by the inadequacies of what are mainly archaic laws on animal protection.

We can claim to be a civilized and compassionate society only when we provide animals with specific rights and the full protection of laws which outlaw abuse, gross exploitation and cruelty.

A CHARTER FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS PROPOSALS FOR THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

PREAMBLE

It is the policy of the County of Montgomery to protect the health, safety and general welfare of its citizens and to ensure that the highest standards of animal care are maintained.

Animals have the right to live free from pain, suffering, exploitation, and cruelty. The protection of animals is a responsibility shared by all citizens and the County of Montgomery. It is the duty of the County to ensure that all animals are treated with the highest standards of care and that the needs of all animals are met.

The County of Montgomery is committed to the highest standards of animal care and to the protection of animals from pain, suffering, exploitation, and cruelty. It is the duty of the County to ensure that all animals are treated with the highest standards of care and that the needs of all animals are met. The County of Montgomery is committed to the highest standards of animal care and to the protection of animals from pain, suffering, exploitation, and cruelty. It is the duty of the County to ensure that all animals are treated with the highest standards of care and that the needs of all animals are met.

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A CHARTER FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS

SPECIFIC AREAS

COMPANION ANIMALS

- 1.1 Despite the illusion that companion animals are well protected and cared for in this country, there still remain large areas of suffering, neglect and exploitation. The size of the problem is partly indicated by the following national statistics from the RSPCA. In 1984 there were 47,362 complaints investigated by the RSPCA. Their inspectors issued 4,532 cautions and there were 1,889 convictions for cruelty.
- 1.2 These figures relate only to recorded complaints and therefore cover only part of the problem. The animal welfare organisations are constantly dealing with numerous cases of abandoned animals, and cruelty and neglect where owners cannot be traced. These cases, possibly the great bulk of the welfare organisations' work, do not get classified as recorded complaints.
- 1.3 This Council supports steps to give greater control and protection to companion animals in the community.

1.31 To Protect and Control Dogs:

This Council recognises the importance of animal warden schemes which liaise closely with animal rescue and welfare centres and which can also work within the field of education. This programme has the full support of the animal rights/welfare groups.

1.32 To Protect and Control Feral Cats

There are now feral cat colonies established in urban areas. These present practical problems of care and welfare on a scale which can no longer be dealt with by voluntary groups alone.

Where such colonies exist the Council are of the opinion that feral cats should not be destroyed except where

a veterinary surgeon advises such action is necessary due to injury or disease; or

the Environmental Health Officer considers there to be a public health risk; or

the relevant voluntary organisations are unable to ensure that the cats are adequately fed.

1.33 To Control the sale of Companion Animals in Pet Shops:

It is likely that the majority of animals offered for sale in pet shops are kept in unsatisfactory conditions which, if not imposing actual suffering, place the animals under stress.

There are no longer compelling arguments for the sale of animals through pet shops. These shops are no longer a necessary source of supply to those seeking companion animals. There are now, in the case of both cats and dogs at least, usually many healthy rescued animals seeking new homes available from the welfare organisations.

This Council will support the use of statutory powers to impose licensing conditions to restrict severely pet shops in keeping and offering animals for sale.

This Council will consider ways in which it can assist animal welfare/rights organisations in publicizing rescued animals waiting to be found homes by making facilities available at selected County Establishments for the display of appropriate posters and literature.

1.34 To Control Animal Boarding and Breeding Establishments:

This Council considers that all boarding and breeding establishments should be thoroughly inspected and achieve high standards before licences are granted or renewed.

1.35 To establish Clinics, Boarding Kennels and Catteries jointly operated by the Council and Welfare Organisations:

This Council supports the view that, in the long term, the proper control and welfare of companion animals and domestic pets depends on Government funded clinics. There is a particular need for this in urban areas where spaying, neutering, worming and treatment will help to improve the health and minimise the danger of unwanted and abandoned animals.

A further reason for the need for Government or Council funded clinics is the very high cost of veterinary treatment, including spaying and neutering. The majority of pet owners will make sacrifices in order to

pay for proper veterinary care. However there is no doubt that the cost of spaying and neutering can act as a deterrent, yet these are key means of control.

This Council will give consideration to the establishment of clinics specifically to deal with animal welfare problems, pending the long term provision of Government funded clinics.

This Council will also give consideration to the establishment of kennels and catteries, jointly operated with the welfare organisations, to assist in the temporary care and treatment of abandoned animals until they can be found homes. These kennels and catteries would also be of service to the Social Services in looking after animals belonging to those taken into care or hospital.

1.36 To Dissuade People from giving Animals as Prizes or Gifts:

This Council is opposed to animals being given as prizes. It does not believe that companion animals should be acquired by this method. The decision to have a companion animal should not be impulsive or as a result of chance. This Council will require assurances when letting Council property for fairs or other events that animals (including goldfish) will not be given as prizes.

1.37 Importing of Companion Animals:

This Council would encourage Government measures to stop all importation of companion 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. There is also a risk of infection being brought into this country by this practice.

This Council will support the courts in giving the maximum penalties to 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 is a threat to pets, farm animals and wildlife in this country. Everyone must be made aware of the danger of smuggling animals through Customs.

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SPECIFIC AREAS

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS

2.1 It is only in the light of discussion about the proposals outlined in the Government's White Paper (Ref. 1) that the general public has become aware of the extent to which experiments are conducted on living animals. In accordance with Clause 8 of the 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act it is the responsibility of the Secretary of State at the Home Office to issue licences to persons whom he may believe to be qualified to hold a licence to perform experiments on living animals. The Home Office report on the statistics of experiments on living animals in Great Britain (Ref. 2) for 1984 reveals amongst other things:

that during 1984 almost 3.5 million experiments were conducted on animals, 2.7 million without anaesthetic;

that 53% of these experiments were conducted by commercial firms;

that there were 17,512 experiments concerned with cosmetics and 2,166 concerned with tobacco and its substitutes.

This Council objects to all experiments on living animals except, until viable alternatives exist, those necessary for medical research and believes that the Government must introduce meaningful legislation to replace the present Act.

2.2 This Council supports the Animal Rights/Welfare Movement which calls for new legislation on animal experiments to meet the following minimum requirements:

an immediate ban on the use of animals where an alternative non-animal method exists;

phasing out of the LD50 (Lethal Dose 50%) test and the Draize Test within two years of the Charter's adoption;

to support all developments leading to valid alternative tests where toxic substances are concerned;

to phase out animal experiments where the outcome is already known or which are unlikely to provide any new insight;

to phase out all experiments involving animals threatened with extinction;

to phase out all procedures concerned with cosmetics, tobacco and alcohol research;

to reconstitute the Home Secretary's Advisory Committee on Animal Experimentation to include 1/3 laypeople, 1/3 scientists/medics and 1/3 people qualified scientifically but whose primary concern is for Animal Rights/Welfare.

2.3 Pending new Legislation from Central Government, this Council will:

call on the Regional Health Authority and the District Health Authority to implement the minimum requirements listed above;

call on all traders in the County selling cosmetics, toiletries and household products to stock and prominently advertise products which have not involved the use of animal products or experiments on animals;

help to promote and advertise cruelty-free products;

welcome laboratories which undertake alternative research to live animal experiments.

Ref. 1: Scientific Procedures on Living Animals (Cmnd 8883)

Ref. 2: HMSO Publication (Cmnd 9574)

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FACTORY FARMING

3.1 Many methods of intensive husbandry conflict with the recent recommendations of the House of Commons Select Committee on Agriculture Report (1981) and do not satisfy the 'five freedoms' of the Brambell Report (1965), which are:

'sufficient freedom of movement to enable an animal without difficulty to turn around, groom itself, get up, lie down and stretch its limbs'.

3.2 A report of the detailed investigations by an All Party House of Commons Select Committee on Animal Welfare (Agriculture Committee) debated in the House on 19th November, 1982 called for an end to factory farming.

3.3 To honour our ratification of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes (1976) we are bound to provide housing and care appropriate to their physiological and ethological needs. The following measures are the minimum required:

the phasing out of the battery cage in a period of 5 years, to be replaced by humane alternatives;

the maximum stocking density on floor systems of 4 laying hens per square metre and 10 broilers per square metre;

a ban on the use of veal crates with immediate effect, with the provision of a complete food to calves, with palatable roughage, after 2 weeks;

an end to the practice of weaning piglets under 21 days of age and of rearing them in cages;

an end to the use of tethers and gestation stalls for dry sows;

a restriction on the use of farrowing crates for sows for 72 hours after giving birth;

the provision of continuous access to fresh drinking water for all housed livestock with a dry bedded area and no rearing in darkness;

a restriction on the mutilation of farm animals.

- 3.4 This Council calls on all traders to make clear whether the goods they sell are the products of factory farming. This Council will, through its officers, prosecute any trader who displays advertisements or descriptions which mislead the public on the origin and methods of production of such goods.
- 3.5 Where possible, this Council will not purchase foods produced by intensive farming methods.
- 3.6 This Council will allow to be served on its premises only foods which are produced by humane methods and are not derived from endangered species.

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SPECIFIC AREAS

WILDLIFE

4.1 This Charter for Animal Rights draws no distinction between the urban and rural environment. Wildlife, whether it is in the city or the countryside, deserves protection. Local Authorities must work to support measures aimed at the conservation of wildlife and, in particular, the establishment of local wildlife parks, nature reserves, trails and conservation areas within the urban area.

4.2 Hunting and Coursing with Dogs

The hunting of foxes, stags and mink, and the coursing of hares, for recreation, is opposed by the majority of the population, and cannot be tolerated in a humane society.

This Council will not permit fox hunting across land in its ownership or administration and congratulates those Local Authorities who already operate a ban. (See Appendix 1).

This Council will not permit the parade of any pack of hunting dogs or any auxiliary Hunt activities to meet on its land.

4.3 Angling

This Council will support the proposals in the RSPCA on Animal Welfare (Ref. 1) concerning angling, and believes that the adoption of these proposals will reduce suffering in fish. The Council will encourage the issuing of guidelines based on the RSPCA Policy, with regard to licences and permits.

4.4 Snares and Traps

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

4.5 Poisons

This Council opposes the use of poisons and is also concerned about the widespread agricultural and commercial use of chemical substances which are potentially lethal to wild and companion animals.

This Council recognises however that there is a need to use poison in a controlled manner for killing vermin.

4.6 **Shooting**

This Council will oppose any shooting for sport on its land. It is also concerned about the easy availability of guns, especially air guns.

4.7 **Importation**

This Council is opposed to the importation of animals from the wild or the importation of products derived from such animals. In particular it calls for a ban on the imports of all products derived from animals that have been killed in inhumane ways not acceptable in Great Britain such as steel leghold (gin) traps and snares.

4.8 **Legal Protection**

This Council supports the proposal that all animals (including marine animals) are brought within the scope of the Protection of Animals Act 1911 (1912 in Scotland). The Act will ensure that in those exceptions where an animal can be taken or killed, methods used are strictly controlled and humane.

Ref. 1: Policies on Animal Welfare. November 1984: RSPCA, Causeway, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1HG.

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PERFORMING ANIMALS

- 5.1 As in other areas of animal abuse it is only recently that the practice and tradition of animals performing in circuses and theatres has been seriously questioned from the point of view of the animal.
- 5.2 This Council is of the opinion that all circuses should maintain the highest standard of care of animals under their control and commends the compulsory veterinary scheme operated by the Association of Circus Proprietors of Great Britain. It also feels that sites should be let only to circuses who can show proof of current membership of the Association.
- 5.3 This Council is concerned about the use of performing animals in advertising.

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SPECIFIC AREAS

EDUCATION

- 6.1 The education process has a vital part to play in enhancing our knowledge, compassion and responsibility towards animals — domestic and wild.
- 6.2 There are an increasing number of films, TV programmes and videos being produced about animal welfare and conservation such as 'The Animals Film' and 'Rabbits Don't Cry'. Such programmes are ideal methods of informing and educating young people. We urge that they be included in the curricula of all secondary schools.
- 6.3 This Council will take the necessary steps to ensure that:
all schools curricula include coverage of wildlife issues and animal behaviour;
all schools include lessons on the care of companion animals and moral duty to animals.
- 6.4 **A Ban on Dissection in Schools**
This Council will inform pupils and students fully of their right to refuse to take part in dissection.
This Council will adopt the examination boards which do not require compulsory animal dissection in 'O' and 'A' level syllabi, encourage the use of alternatives to dissection in schools, and lobby those examination boards still insisting on dissection to accept alternatives.
- 6.5 **Animals in Schools**
This Council accepts that keeping animals in schools may be required for educational purposes. However, animals kept in schools must be kept in situations which are appropriate to their species. They should receive veterinary care as required and should not be killed except on veterinary grounds. This does not preclude schools and colleges from keeping farms from which animals may be marketed in accordance with the principles laid down elsewhere in this Charter.
- 6.6 **Meals in Schools**
This Council will provide a daily vegetarian alternative on all school menus and have vegan food available on request.

A CHARTER FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS

ARTICLE I

SECTION 1

6.1 The Council shall have the right to... in order to...
knowledge, resources and facilities...
and staff.

6.2 There are an increasing number of films, TV programmes and videos
being produced about animal welfare and conservation such as 'The
Elephant Film' and 'Whisper from the Field'. Such programmes are ideal
for the use of teachers and educating young people. We urge that they
be included in the curricula of all secondary schools.

6.3 The Council will take the necessary steps to ensure that
all schools continue to take measures of wildlife conservation and animal
behaviour.

All schools should be encouraged to support animal welfare and animal
behaviour.

6.4 A plan on education in schools
The Council will support pupils and teachers in their right to have
to take part in education.

The Council will ensure that the curriculum should be as broad as
possible and should include the study of the environment, the history of
the world and the study of the human condition. The Council will also
encourage the study of the history of the world and the study of the
human condition.

6.5 Animals in Schools
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6.6 Meat in Schools
This Council will ensure that a daily vegetarian alternative to all school
meals and extra-curricular food is available on request.

Appendix

COUNCIL HUNT BANS

Avon	Islwyn
Barnsley	Kettering
Basingstoke and Deane	Lancashire
Bedfordshire	Langbaurgh
Berkshire	Leeds
Bradford	Lewisham
Brighton	Llanelli
Broxbourne	Lliw Valley
Cheshire	Lothian Region
Cleveland	Merthyr Tydfil
Congleton	Middlesborough
Corby	Neath
Crawley	Northamptonshire
Darlington	Renfrew
Derbyshire	Rhondda
Doncaster	Rochford
Eastbourne	Rotherham
Enfield	Sedgefield
Glamorgan, Mid.	Sheffield
Glamorgan, South	Staffordshire
Gwent	Sussex, East
Haringey	Thurrock
Hartlepool	Warwickshire
Humberside	Wigan
Hyndburn	Wrexham
Islington	

OTHER HUNTING BANS:

Co-operative Wholesale Society
Peak Park Planning Board
Central Electricity Generating Board

