



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Code of Best Practice for Animal Welfare Establishments

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Cyngor y Sector ar gyfer Anifeiliaid | Sector Council for Animals

ANIMAL WELFARE NETWORK WALES

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Preface

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (“the Act”), if you own or are responsible for an animal you have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to ensure its welfare needs are met. An Animal Welfare Establishment (“AWE”) is responsible for the animals in its care and as such is also liable for prosecution.

The Code explains what AWEs need to do to meet the standard of care the law requires. An AWE should not cause any unnecessary suffering to the animals in its care; this could constitute a serious offence under the Act. AWEs should look to their veterinary surgeon (vet) for advice on the health of any animals in its care. Specialist advice on welfare can be sought from behaviourists and others listed in Appendix 4.

For further sources of information, including the Animal Welfare Act 2006, its regulations and codes, and other relevant legislation, see the Appendices at the end of this Code. You should be aware that the legislation cited in the Code and its Appendices is correct at the date of issue but may be subject to subsequent change.

The Code of Practice is intended to encourage those responsible for looking after animals in the care of AWEs to adopt the highest standards of husbandry. It outlines the framework for delivering exemplary levels of care that should also be demonstrated. These should be universally recognised as the benchmark for all individuals and organisations charged with the care of animals. This Code also provides an outline of the various administrative aspects of operating an AWE.

Given that the vast majority of animals taken in for rescue and rehabilitation can already be considered vulnerable, the paramount aim of any AWE must be high standards of welfare for the animals in their care.

Starting a New Charity

Any successful rescue organisation should aspire to achieving a proper legal structure, however it is recognised that in the case of small organisations that are first setting up, this may not be achieved immediately. This is particularly important if donations are involved. For those considering starting a new rescue charity that will care for animals, this Code clearly demonstrates the required obligations and responsibilities. Additionally the following points should be considered:

- a) Is there a need for such a charity? What assessment has been done to ensure there is truly a need? If local or national charities already exist, consider volunteering or working with them. It may be better to develop relationships with other AWEs to ensure their long term success, rather than starting a new organisation.
- b) Do the nominated Trustees and the staff/volunteers have sufficient expertise, resources and knowledge to be able to provide full time care for the animals?
- c) Can sufficient funds be found to sustain the charity?

Definition and context

The definition of an AWE has evolved over time and through various forums and initiatives, to address the challenges and issues such establishments face. This definition aims to reflect the function of AWEs and provide an umbrella for what can be a diverse sector of activity covering many species. For the purposes of this Code therefore, an AWE is any establishment which holds itself out to take in and to care (temporarily, permanently, or both) for vulnerable animals. This could include establishments known commonly as: animal homes, sanctuaries, shelters, rehoming centres, rest homes, animal hospitals,

rehabilitation centres, rescue centres, and stray animal facilities (local authority or contractor). The function of these establishments could include: taking in unwanted animals, rehoming animals, keeping animals for duration of their lives, dealing with lost animals, treatment (on a small or large scale) of sick or injured animals, taking in retired animals, or rehabilitation of animals. It would not be possible to create a definition of AWEs based on numbers of vulnerable animals taken in or by severe limitations on species, but rather it must be defined by what it does.

An AWE shall be defined henceforth as:

A person, organisation or establishment who holds themselves out to receive vulnerable animals on a regular basis, whether companion, farmed, wild, protected or other animals, with a view to rehabilitating and either rehoming or releasing (back to the wild), or providing long-term care.

Animal Welfare Act 2006

Section 9 of the Act contains details of the duty of care which requires people responsible for animals to take reasonable steps to ensure that the welfare needs of these animals are met. The Five Welfare Needs are:

(a) its need for a suitable environment:

An environment consistent with species requirements should be provided. This should include shade and shelter from rain, heat and cold as appropriate. Suitable substrates, perches and three-dimensional environments should be provided where appropriate with places to hide from people or other animals as appropriate. A balance should be struck between medical treatment, hygiene and the species' biological requirements, with initial care in a hospital-type environment being generally more spartan and free of enrichment,

and rehabilitation environments having a more naturalistic and enriched environment.

(b) its need for a suitable diet:

Both food and water are basic needs. The method of food presentation, the frequency of feeds and the nutritional balance should be taken into account. Food should be presented in a manner and frequency commensurate with the natural behaviour of the species, as well as its nutritional requirements, which may vary according to season and life-stage.

(c) its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns:

Animals should be allowed the opportunity to express most normal behaviours, taking into account current enrichment and husbandry guidelines, with emphasis on maintaining and developing behaviours appropriate to future rehoming or release.

(d) any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals:

The need to be with the same or other species will differ for each animal and this requires expert knowledge to address. For some animals isolation will be crucial to their rehabilitation whereas others may show little or no progress without the company of others. Other factors such as past experiences, age and general health, amongst others, should be carefully considered.

(e) its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease:

A complex range of factors will need to be considered in order to ensure an animal – already vulnerable and potentially suffering – does not suffer further throughout its rescue, rehabilitation and rehoming/release. A comprehensive veterinary policy is essential for most aspects of this welfare need.

Part 1: Governance & Management

1.1 Governance

Sound governance and an accompanying staff/volunteer management structure is envisaged to be the single most important factor in determining the long term success and sustainability of an AWE. For this reason governance and minimum animal welfare standards are entirely interdependent and cannot be considered separately. The governing body of any AWE should seek to recruit and retain a committed group of trustees who have the skills, expertise and time to dedicate to the organisation.

AWEs are generally 'not-for-profit' organisations, small charities, charitable incorporated organisations or registered charities. For those operating or hoping to operate a charitable organisation please see www.charitycommission.gov.uk and for those who do not seek charitable status, guidance on governance and all that entails, should be sought from www.wcva.wales. In addition, information on legal practices and best practice regarding fundraising should be gathered from www.smallcharities.org.uk and www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk.

Registered charities must have a 'governing document'; this is the constitution of the charity and could be a Deed of Trust, the Memorandum and Articles of Association of a company limited by guarantee or the rules of a membership association. These will have to be approved, as appropriate, by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Advice on the appropriate form of governing document can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-write-your-charitys-governing-document.

Irrespective of whether the AWE is a charity or not, it should have a proper legal structure, which might be a company limited by guarantee, an unincorporated association or a Trust. A formal legal structure should also

include a constitution, charitable status and appointed Trustees. The Charity Commission state that Trustees should act in 'Good Faith' which is defined as genuine, honest intention or motives; trying to do the right thing, in the interests of the charity. Once legal status has been achieved, full accounts, properly audited or certified, become a legal requirement and such accounts must be filed correctly.

Trustees and Managers of organisations to which this Code of Practice refers must be aware of their responsibilities. Organisations must comply with a raft of legislation ranging from Health and Safety and Employment legislation through to more specific species related legislation such as animal welfare laws (see Appendices 1 to 3). It is important to note that the Animal Welfare Act recognises offences by corporate bodies. An AWE would fall into the definition of a corporate body. Where an offence is detected and a prosecution taken forward, this can apply to an individual and/or any director, manager, secretary or similar officer of the corporate body, or any person who has purported to act in any such capacity who shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly where guilt is proven in court.

Many AWEs have governance structures that encompass a wider geographical area beyond Wales, i.e. GB or UK organisations working across more than one constituent nation. In these instances, as animal welfare policy is devolved, any AWE with a presence in Wales is expected to comply with this Code in addition to the animal welfare (and other relevant) legislation which may differ in Wales to that of other UK nations.

AWEs should demonstrate transparency in their operations and decision-making processes. Clear policies should be developed and agreed before being made readily available at the premises and/or on the relevant website.

a) Policies

AWEs are required to have readily accessible policies in the following areas:

Governance & staff/volunteer management:

1. A “Governing Document” detailing:
 - a) its charitable purposes (‘objects’)
 - b) what it can do to carry out its purposes (‘powers’), such as borrowing money
 - c) who runs it/who is accountable (‘trustees’, ‘director’, ‘committee members’ etc) and who can be a member
 - d) how meetings will be held and trustees appointed
 - e) any rules about paying trustees, investments and holding land
 - f) whether the trustees can change the governing document, including its charitable objects (‘amendment provisions’)
 - g) how to close the charity/organisation (‘dissolution provisions’).
2. Record keeping & auditing of such records – this includes all records of financials, medicines, staff, volunteers, supporters and donors, etc. For additional records concerning the animals at the AWE see relevant section below.
3. Equal Opportunities – the animal welfare organisation must adhere to Equal Opportunities requirements and provide the statutory level of staff and volunteer care. All members of staff and volunteers should be treated fairly, regardless of gender, age, racial origin, religious persuasion, sexual orientation or disability.
4. Health & Safety – this should include provisions for staff, volunteers and visitors. A risk management policy and programme, including a register and a record of regular assessments, are also essential.

5. Information and Communications Technology – this includes policies on the use of the internet, email, social media and software licensing etc.

6. Staffing levels – AWEs should have a designated and responsible person available at all times whenever animals are on site. They should be trained and have access to animal first aid materials.

7. HR and general employment policies.

8. Safeguarding – covering volunteers, staff and interactions with the public.

9. Whistleblowing.

Animal Health & Welfare:

1. Entry Criteria – this should be outlined in the AWE’s governing documents. Entry criteria should cover how the AWE applies its governing principles in a practical way on a daily basis. Entry criteria should be linked to the capacity of the AWE to meet each intake’s specific and general needs whether animals are under their care on a temporary or permanent basis. Criteria should take account of the AWE’s resources (finances, people and facilities) and the changing needs of the animal e.g. during quarantine or high dependency veterinary cases.

2. Veterinary Policy & contracts – a veterinary practice should be appointed for the establishment, with the contact details and a 24 hour emergency contact number of the appointed practice prominently displayed.

3. Quality of life – see Part 2 (k).

4. Euthanasia (see Appendix 6 for an example in wildlife establishments).

5. Ownership – It is vital that organisations are clear on what legal basis they admit animals into their care (e.g. transfer of ownership, boarding on behalf of another body or authority; or temporary custody on behalf of an owner). This should always be made very explicit to the person transferring ownership prior to the exchange.

6. Rehoming – The organisation should be committed to a high standard of responsible Rehoming practices (see Appendix 7 for example).

7. Release (see Appendix 5 for example).

8. Purchase – rescuing animals by purchase is strongly discouraged, as this encourages and rewards those who may be responsible for neglect.

9. Resources – it is unacceptable for an organisation to take in more than the resources will allow for the proper care and attention of the animals.

10. Importing animals – this is also strongly discouraged. Where a legitimate importation is deemed necessary this must also include a recognition for the strict legislation governing the importation of animals.

11. Public access/display – [Mobile Animal Exhibits¹].

b) Legislation

For a list of related welfare legislation that all AWEs must comply with, please see Appendices 1-3. This list should not be considered exhaustive and it is the responsibility of the managers/trustees of an AWE to also be familiar with the developments and requirements of new legislation concerning animal health & welfare for all species cared

for via their AWE. AWE's must comply fully with legislation which covers the way in which animals are treated. This is subject to appropriate national and local legislation. As good practice, animal welfare must always be of overriding importance in the activities of any organisation.

AWEs are asked to note the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 came into force on 1/12/19. It implements requirements contained in the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation (1143/2014), including setting out the penalties for breach of the restrictions in the Regulation, defences and other enforcement-related provisions. Further information on the Order is contained in Appendix 2. Please bear this information in mind when reading this Code of Practice

Licensing

There may be circumstances when the AWE is subject to certain forms of licensing whether those activities of the AWE are its primary purpose or not. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014.
2. Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.
3. Riding Establishments Act 1964.
4. Zoos Licensing Act 1981.
5. The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Animal Exhibits) (Wales) Regulations 2020 (pending).
6. The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019.

¹ In December 2017 the Welsh Government announced their intention to regulate Mobile Animal Exhibits. Once passed into law this section will need updating to include the new regulations that would need to be complied with.

In addition to legislation regarding the keeping and care of animals, contained within Appendix 1-3, there are other laws and regulations which AWEs must be mindful of. Many of these are signposted in this Code, but it is the responsibility of the AWE to be aware of all relevant legislation.

c) Financial Management

Accounts

Bank accounts should be in the name of the organisation and accounts maintained and filed where applicable.

Trustees/Managers should ensure the financial records of the AWE are audited on a regular basis.

Fundraising

AWE's should fundraise ethically and responsibly, in line with rules set out by the Charity Commission and Fundraising Regulator. All AWEs (with or without charitable status) should comply with the Code of Fundraising Practice².

Planning

All AWEs should have a business strategy that has the finances and projected income/expenditure for the organisation clearly detailed for the short to medium term (long term plans are also desirable). All such plans should include contingency details in the event the organisation ceases to operate. Appropriate funds to meet the costs of closure, including plans for both the ongoing care of the animals and redundancy packages for staff, should be integral to such plans.

d) Health & Safety

AWEs must comply with current Health & Safety legislation. Advice and guidance on Health and Safety is available from the local authority Environmental Health department or from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

AWEs can be run either entirely by volunteers or by employees or a combination of both. Health & Safety legislation, in general, applies to employees and those affected by an organisation's activities, which includes volunteers but also includes visitors to the AWE as well as members of the public. It is therefore important to have a written Health and Safety policy and appropriate procedures and guidelines in place to reduce the risk of causing harm to the health and safety of others.

Staff, volunteers and visitors to its premises must be made aware of the organisation's health and safety policy. It is the responsibility of all parties to ensure a safe environment by adhering to health and safety procedures and safe working practices. In addition to ensuring all work equipment is suitable, fit for purpose and well-maintained, organisations must have in place safe systems of work and ensure that these are followed by all.

Consideration must be given to employing measures designed to protect staff, volunteers and members of the public from injury and disease by animals in the care of the organisation (see zoonotic diseases section of this Code). Injury can be caused by the physical environment or the animals kept by the AWE – either as a result of an accident or because the animal attacks. If an animal known to be aggressive injures a member of staff, a volunteer or a member of the public, then that organisation will run a serious risk of having breached Health and Safety legislation and/or could be liable in any civil action.

² www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/code-of-fundraising-practice-v1-4-310717-docx/

Managing Risk

Organisations should have a written Risk Management policy, which should include relevant and regular Risk Assessments, some of which have a statutory requirement. Records of such assessments should be kept in a register. In addition to responsibilities indicated in the Health and Safety policy, consideration should be given to the consequences arising from, for example, theft, vandalism and disease, in addition to matters such as loss of income or premises.

Emergency Action & Contingency Planning

Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of staff, volunteers and animals in the case of emergencies such as fire or flood. Where practicable a responsible person shall at all times be on the premises or in close proximity for the purpose of giving warning and taking other necessary steps.

An emergency evacuation plan for staff, volunteers and the animals must be prepared based on advice and approved by a Fire Prevention Officer. Advice from a Fire Prevention Officer must also be sought in relation to the appropriate location and operation of electrical and heating installations. Firefighting equipment must be provided in accordance with advice given by the Fire Safety Officer and all electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition. Written procedures should be displayed and must be disseminated as appropriate so that all staff, volunteers and visitors are aware of the action to be taken. Evacuation procedures must be practised regularly and records kept of these practices.

A contingency for housing a large number of animals if the premises is unusable [or requires evacuation at short notice] should be prepared. Consider the costs of a) such temporary housing and b) the funds needed to rebuild.

Also consider developing partnerships with other AWEs who may be able to assist with housing animals in emergency situations.

A qualified first aider should be appointed and first aid kit must be available.

There should be evidence of other appropriate health and safety implementation for staff in relation to diseases, for example ongoing evidence of TB vaccination, tetanus vaccination and rabies vaccination where appropriate. Individual medical practitioner advice should be sought as necessary.

Insurance

The organisation should be fully insured for employee and public liability and should have trustee liability insurance. Adequate insurance cover should be maintained in relation to the AWE's activities and against any liability in respect of any loss, damage or injury to or caused by, or attributable to, the animals or staff. All relevant certificates of insurance should be displayed publicly as evidence of such cover.

Particular care needs to be taken to reduce the risk of injury from animals in animal welfare organisations. The question of liability in relation to injuries caused by animals to employees, volunteers or members of the public can be complex and organisations must have adequate public liability insurance in place and, if they employ staff, employer's liability insurance (this must be extended to cover volunteers if necessary).

Liabilities may arise through the pursuance of legal action by a third party or an employee, whose claim may be made against the Centre as a corporate body (regardless of its legal status), against the proprietors in person or, if a charity, against the Trustees. It is therefore important that specialist advice is sought from a qualified insurance professional to ensure the most appropriate cover is obtained.

1.2 Staff and Volunteer Management

All references to 'staff' below include volunteers.

Assistance provided by volunteers can prove to be both valuable and effective, but the employment of full-time, paid staff is likely to provide the necessary supervision and continuity of care. As is the case with paid members of staff, a formal written agreement between the organisation and volunteers will set out clearly the responsibilities of both parties, whilst providing a sound basis for resolving misunderstandings or disputes that may arise.

a) Staffing levels

The total number of animal care staff employed, and the number on duty at any given time during working hours at an AWE shall be such that sufficient attention can be given to each of the animals in occupancy including allowing for the provisions of all aspects of their care and any relevant legislation.

Sufficient numbers of competent staff should be provided at all times to ensure proper, regular and timely attention to all animals held. When calculating staff requirements and rotas it is necessary to make allowance for absences due to training, holiday, sickness, maternity and unforeseen circumstances. It is also important that the organisation maintains sufficient funds to meet its legal responsibilities as an employer.

The cost of paid staff is a contractual responsibility, and is likely to be the organisation's single greatest expense. Supporting volunteers also requires resourcing. It is therefore imperative that sufficient funds are always available to meet all commitments as an employer.

b) Training Provisions

A written training policy should be provided and all training should be recorded.

AWEs should endeavour to have the correct training programmes so as to enable its staff to be kept up to date with all aspects of animal care, hygiene, welfare, training and behaviour issues. All staff should be trained in the organisations' policies and standard operating procedures and there should always be supervision and induction training for new staff; particularly those not experienced in animal handling.

Systematic training of staff should be demonstrated to have been carried out, and there should be a schedule for refresher training, particularly in health and safety and manual handling; each staff member should have a personal development plan for their ongoing development. All staff should be suitably competent and appropriately trained to recognise welfare and signs of illness, injury and disease, in the animals under their care. Depending on the function of the AWE topics could include: animal handling; ecology; animal husbandry; animal welfare; biosecurity and hygiene; administration of medication; care of neonates; health and safety and first aid; action in emergencies; emergency euthanasia; basic sampling for health monitoring and diagnosis; release criteria and techniques; educational techniques.

c) Competence and Qualifications

Persons having responsibility for the safety and care of animals should demonstrate competence in animal care, training and management either by recognised professional qualifications and/or extensive practical experience. AWEs involved in investigations arising from allegations of animal cruelty or neglect by third parties must be competent in understanding the legal framework within which welfare concerns can be investigated,

together with the correct procedures for evidence gathering and recording. This includes carrying out any work involving the provision of advice, or removal of animals from situations of cruelty or neglect and subsequently caring for them; it applies in all cases, whether operating as enforcers of animal welfare legislation or alongside enforcement bodies such as Local Authorities and Police.

A list should be maintained of all staff and volunteers authorised to work with the animals (including any species-specific limitations), together with lines of responsibility, levels of expertise, training, qualifications and the duties they are both trained and legally able to carry out.

Part 2: Animal Management

a) Record Keeping

A record should be kept containing a description of all animals received into the establishment, noting the date of arrival and departure, and the name and address of the new owner (and/or the name and address of the existing owner where it is returned or the new AWE the animal is transferred to). Records of veterinary treatment should also be kept. Records should be kept available for inspection at all times by an authorised person. All records kept need to be compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations.

The keeping of accurate records is essential to ensure traceability of animals, ownership, health status, medicine usage, disease, birth and death of all animals. Record keeping is compulsory for Schedule 4 species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA), but is also considered essential for all animals to provide a complete audit trail and especially to provide proof of provenance for wildlife (for later release for example) and ownership³. As such records should include documented proof of current ownership, including transfer of ownership for example to the Animal Welfare Establishment.

Records should be kept and maintained for each individual animal⁴. Where animals are kept in groups, each animal should be individually identifiable. These records should preferably be kept on a computerised database (and appropriately backed up), for ease and speed of reference, or alternatively in a paper or card filing system.

Records should be updated daily (or more frequently as required) by designated members of staff.

Animal records should be retained for a minimum period of three years and kept available for inspection at all times by any authorised person. Records of veterinary treatment and non-veterinary assessments should also be kept. Provision should be made for long-term archiving in a secure format.

The following information should be recorded for each animal:

- Individual animal identification. For many species there is a legal requirement for each animal to be identified using specific methods. This may include microchip/leg ring/ear tag or passport numbers/freeze brand or tattoo details/or other identifiable markings, in addition to a unique AWE database reference assigned to that animal.
- Description of animal, to include:
 - species
 - breed if known
 - age or approximate age if unknown
 - colour, markings and any distinguishing features
 - male or female
 - neutered or unneutered.
- Current location of animal within the AWE (e.g. building and kennel number).
- Date of admission to AWE.
- Release or rehoming date.

³ There is also a legal requirement to register some birds of prey when in care – Section 7 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, as it pertains to Schedule 4 birds.

⁴ There may be rare circumstances where the AWE may have to keep group records for instance with a flock of birds. Evidence of justification of group records should be provided

- Case history including point of origin (where and how the animal was obtained), previous ownership, any relevant details of acquisition. For animals covered by the provisions of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 and which are considered to be companion animals this should also include evidence that the animal was acquired by an owner before the species was included on the EU Invasive Alien Species list.
 - Any known previous or current health issues or veterinary history.
 - Reason for admission to AWE.
 - Verified details of previous owner/person bringing in for admission.
 - Documented proof of any temporary or permanent transfer of ownership or responsibility in the case of wildlife.
 - Details of veterinary surgeon/practice assigned to animal (if not the AWE's nominated practice).
 - Weight and Body Condition Score at admission and at regular intervals as appropriate:
 - Specific needs to include: Nutrition: record of type/quantity/frequency of feed required;
 - Any specific dietary needs;
 - Any specific environmental, companionship, isolation, regular medication needs.
 - Health:
 - Record of any abnormal clinical observations or parameters, for example faecal consistency, drinking behaviour, presence of itching or coughing behaviour;
 - Details of any veterinary examinations or interventions;
 - Record of veterinary treatments including medicines administered;
 - Record of any diagnostic test results.
 - Record of the animal's full behavioural assessment and ongoing behavioural observations.
 - Record of training, rehabilitation and behavioural modification plan.
 - The date of and reason for euthanasia or death, including record of any post mortem findings.
 - Records that may be required as part of any legal obligations for animals that may be subject to any formal investigation. Certain species may be subject to additional legislation, including recording requirements, for example wild animals and food production animals.
- b) Admissions Procedure and Veterinary Checks**
- On, or prior to arrival at the AWE, a demonstrably competent (where possible suitably qualified) member of staff should perform an assessment of suitability of the animal for entering the AWE.
 - The suitability assessment should include reviewing the animal's history, current and future needs and the eventual intended outcomes for the animal, and using this information to decide whether the animal is suited to the type of AWE, and whether the AWE is the best place to fulfil the welfare needs of that animal.
 - New admissions should be kept apart from other animals until assessed as disease-free as stated within the AWE's agreed health plan (see biosecurity section in Part 3).
 - The suitability assessment should include a physical examination observing the health, welfare and behaviour of the animal, for signs of injury or disease, and distressed or concerning behaviour. The following checks should be performed:

- Observation of behaviour and body language, initially from a distance, and then by handling the animal if it is safe or appropriate to do so.
 - Assessment of signs of good health or disease. For example, does the animal have any signs of external wounds or injuries/skin disease/nasal discharge/abnormal breathing, panting, coughing or sneezing/vomiting or diarrhoea/abnormal appearance of ears or eyes/lameness or abnormal limbs or feet?
 - If any signs of disease or distress are apparent, the animal should be made comfortable in a quiet environment, and assessed by a veterinary surgeon as soon as possible.
 - Measure the weight and body condition score of the animal and record them.
 - When animals are first encountered or received they should be thoroughly checked for a form of identification linked to that species. In some species there is a legal requirement for a specific form of identification to be present. The AWE must be familiar with these requirements and should have the knowledge and possess (or be able to gain access to) the equipment needed to check each animal for relevant identification. In many species in the UK, this form of identification will be a microchip implanted into a specific location on the animal. Scanning for a microchip should be performed using an ISO-compliant scanner. Scanning several times increases the chance of finding a microchip. Where a microchip is found then reasonable attempts must be made to trace the registered owner or keeper of any lost animal. In the case of some species, in light of increased international animal travel, this should include reference to databases for animals originating from outside the UK. The AWE's policy should include procedures to cover the discovery of non UK microchips. Best practice dictates that if a microchip or other form of identification is found and the animal is not registered to the person who brought in the animal, then attempts must be made to contact the registered keeper. In certain circumstances there is a legal procedure to follow when a form of permanent identification is found and this must be followed by the AWE, cooperating with the relevant authorities. The AWE must be familiar with the reporting requirements.
- If the animal is deemed suitable for entry to the AWE, then it should have a unique database number assigned to it and all the information in the section above (Record Keeping) should be recorded on the AWE database.
 - If the animal is not suitable for entry to the AWE, a decision should be made by the appropriate persons as to whether it should:
 - be euthanised by a vet on welfare grounds;
 - be transported to a veterinary clinic for examination and treatment;
 - be moved to a more appropriate AWE or into a home fostering arrangement.
 - Appropriate biosecurity measures should be taken by all those dealing with the new admission, to prevent cross-contamination with staff and other animals.
 - Carry out sampling and tests for health and disease status in accordance with a quarantine procedure established in conjunction with the AWE's nominated veterinary surgeon.
 - Take a photographic record of the animal at the point of entry.
 - New animals entering the AWE should be assessed to establish their needs within the AWE.

- New animals entering the AWE should receive an examination by a veterinary surgeon as soon as possible after arrival.
- New animals entering the AWE should have a specific member of staff made responsible for overseeing their introduction and care, to ensure continuity of care.

c) Animal behaviour and assessment

Domestic Animals

Animals should be assessed on admission, and on an ongoing basis, by an appropriately qualified or suitably competent individual. This ensures robust evaluation and implementation of behavioural programmes to enhance opportunities for rehoming and to ensure animals are correctly supported during their residence at the establishment. A number of factors should be considered when assessing domestic animals including: the temperament of the animal; its age; its health; how it reacts towards people and other animals; its response to sounds and smells within the environment; and its reaction to physical contact/grooming.

Wild Animals

The behaviour of a wild-bred animal needs to be commensurate for that species, including the ability to recognise its own species e.g. mate selection and the ability to recognise natural food resources without dependency on supplementary feeding post release. It must exhibit natural fear instinct/stress response such as predator awareness (which includes people). Mal-imprinted animals i.e. animals that have lost the fear of people and/or cannot recognise their own species, or habituated animals, preclude successful rehabilitation and are a danger to themselves and the

public. Behavioural assessment begins on admission to avoid mal-imprinted animals entering into a rehabilitation programme. The assessment of neonatal and dependent juveniles during the rearing process in captivity is ongoing up until the decision to release but may also be required post release to assess the rehabilitation process.

d) Housing and Environment

Accommodation, whether indoors in a purpose-made enclosure or outdoors in a built enclosure or field, should take account of the requirements of the species and be suitable to meet the physiological and psychological needs of the animal. Best practice is laid out in various species specific Codes of Practice and the AWE must ensure that their housing and environment arrangements follow these to meet all the animals' needs at all times. Accommodation should, at all times, have sufficient space as to allow for natural behaviours.

Accommodation

Accommodation requirements are different for each species, but in each case must be maintained in a clean, fit for purpose and safe condition at all times. Each accommodation facility must be cleaned (and where appropriate) disinfected with an appropriate animal safe disinfectant⁵ between animals, and checked for cleanliness and safety before the introduction of each new animal to that accommodation.

Bedding/Flooring

A suitable, clean bedding or flooring material must be provided, which is adequate for the animal to be free from discomfort and encourages natural behaviour such as lying down, hiding, or resting away from light.

⁵ Defra list disinfectants for farm animals.

All flooring/bedding materials should either be disposable (e.g. straw, wood, paper) or machine washable on a hot wash (e.g. dog blankets) or disinfectable (e.g. rubber matting and concrete) to allow good hygiene and biosecurity practice.

Temperature

All accommodation must be maintained within the correct temperature range for the housed species. This may require the use of heating and/or fans. Animals must be able to move away from sources of potential thermal discomfort or injury e.g. heat sources. For temperature-sensitive species, temperature in the housing or area where the animal is kept should be closely monitored and a record of this maintained.

Lighting

All accommodation must receive appropriate natural lighting during daylight hours, except for species which have differing specific lighting requirements for which the specific needs must be provided for. All accommodation should have an electricity supply and adequate artificial lighting available for interacting with the housed animals outside of daylight hours.

Ventilation and Humidity

The individual ventilation and humidity requirements for each species must be met by the accommodation.

Enclosures

Each enclosure or housing unit must be fit for the intended species and purpose e.g. quarantine or general living; ensuring that each individual animal has its needs met and where these are restricted, e.g. normal behaviours or diet during quarantine or vet treatment; are only restricted on the advice of a veterinary surgeon and for the minimum period necessary to ensure the health and welfare of the individual. Specific details are in the species Code of Practices where these exist

but the following needs to be considered in setting up and running an AWE:

1. Buildings

- Areas for animal housing/isolation/feed storage and preparation/veterinary care/grooming and washing/staff room and eating/washing and toilet facilities/public-animal introduction area/reception.
- Electricity/water/sewerage/heating system/ventilation or air conditioning.
- Materials, durability, disinfection, animal safety.
- Security, alarm systems (fire and security), panic button, escape-proofing.

2. Indoor enclosures (including containers)

- Types of stables/field shelters/kennels/cages/vivariums multi-animal areas.
- Design and layout of enclosure.
- Natural and artificial lighting.
- Window type/material/safety/security.
- Door type/materials/safety/security.
- Temperature control (for both heating and cooling).
- Dimensions/size of enclosure.
- Wall/ceiling materials and surfaces.
- Floor materials.
- Internal divisions, platforms or perches within enclosure.
- Drainage and cleaning.
- Water provision.
- Feeding provision.
- Bedding materials.
- Environmental enrichment.
- Visual and audible proximity or separation to others of same species.
- Proximity or separation from staff.
- Separation from other species if appropriate.
- Noise control.

3. Outdoor enclosures

- Types indoor-outdoor runs/separate exercise areas/paddocks/aviaries/pools.
- Dimensions and internal divisions.
- Gates/doors type, number, position, materials, safety, security.
- Provision of shelter.
- Fencing type, materials and height.
- Roofing material and height if required.
- Floor surface materials.
- Drainage and cleaning.
- Water provision.
- Feeding provision.
- Environmental enrichment visual, audible and olfactory proximity or separation to others of same species.
- Proximity or separation from staff.
- Separation from other species as appropriate.
- Consideration of biosecurity in relation to access by local wildlife.

e) Cleaning and hygiene

All units, corridors, common areas, kitchens etc. should be kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust and should be kept in a condition which will reduce the risk of disease spread.

Each occupied unit should be cleaned daily unless the individual or species requirements dictate another care programme e.g. wildlife.

For domestic species, moveable items should be removed for cleaning at least weekly and for the accommodation of each new animal. All excreta and soiled material should be removed from all areas used by the animals at least daily and more often if necessary, as should food and water containers.

Although maintaining a hygienic environment is important, consideration to the comfort and mental welfare of the animals should also be made. Cleaning and husbandry practices need to ensure that the accommodation meets the animals' needs and take into consideration the psychological distress that may be caused by, for example, the daily removal of familiar smells and bedding through the use of large amounts of water and animal-safe disinfectant – diluted and used correctly per species. Animals can be adversely affected by strong chemical smells, or a constantly damp and wet environment. The use of a disinfectant-led spot cleaning approach satisfies the demands of both welfare and hygiene once the animal has gone through the quarantine period. If animals are suspected of carrying an infectious disease, more thorough cleaning and disinfection is necessary.

All bedding areas should be kept clean and dry and stored securely, and animals should have access to a dry area whilst their housing is being cleaned. Animals must be removed during high pressure or steam cleaning or other cleaning methods which are likely to be frightening or stressful.

Each unit must be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected (where appropriate) and dried at a change of occupancy. This should be adequate to protect the new occupant from the disease or parasites of its predecessor. If certain diseases have been present, e.g. parvovirus in dogs, further actions and precautions may be needed. All bedding, water and feeding utensils must be changed and disinfected or disposed of, where relevant). All fittings should also be thoroughly cleansed (and disinfected) at that time.

AWE's must comply with relevant waste handling legislation. Facilities must be provided for the appropriate storage, treatment and disposal of all classifications of waste and

particularly ‘controlled wastes’ generated by the AWE. Controlled wastes such as hazardous waste arising from the treatment and handling of animals with infectious disease require particular care. Guidance on waste legislation and regulations can be obtained from relevant regulatory bodies such as HSE, Defra, Department of Health and Natural Resources Wales.

Collection, handling, treatment and disposal of faecal matter and wash-down water contaminated by faecal matter require careful management. Organisations must recognise the duty of care they owe to all persons and outside agencies such as private water companies and waste companies involved in the safe management of all types of waste generated at AWE’s.

Measures should be taken to minimise the risks of wild animals contaminating or taking foodstuffs, bedding or other materials, within the establishment. These measures can include the use of sealed storage bins for food stuffs, secure disposal of uneaten food and ensuring external walls and doors are constructed to ensure animals like rodents cannot gain access.

Care must be taken with cleaning routines to protect animals from disinfectant poisoning or injury, e.g. caustic burns to the skin. Phenolic disinfectants are toxic to some species.

Any chemicals used must be handled, stored and disposed of strictly in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. A list of disinfectants approved for use in Wales can be found here: www.disinfectants.defra.gov.uk/DisinfectantsExternal/Default.aspx?Module=ApprovalsList_SI.

Cleanliness

The accommodation and ancillary establishment, kitchen, corridors, runs etc. should be maintained in a state of cleanliness conducive to maintenance of disease control and animal comfort. All excreta and soiled material should be removed at least once daily or as necessary for the species, from all living and exercise compartments, and disposed of in an appropriate manner. The floors of the living compartment should be clean and dry. Care must be taken to protect animals from disinfectant poisoning associated with cleaning routines.

Pooling of liquids must not be permitted in accommodation for domesticated species in order to prevent infection.

Feeding Equipment and Storage

Feeding utensils should be satisfactorily cleaned or disposed of after each feed. A food preparation area should be provided and be separate from staff facilities. It should be kept clean and managed at all times to ensure that there are no food sources available for wild animals. Refrigeration facilities⁶ should be provided where fresh foods are used. All supplies of food should be kept in sealed containers that cannot be accessed by wild animals.

In the case of aquatic species there should be regular monitoring of water quality parameters, including ammonia, nitrite, nitrate, and PH levels.

⁶ This includes freezers, because, for instance, some species require fish which are not always in season, and also day-old frozen chicks (and other foodstuffs) need to be kept frozen for raptors.

f) Companionship

Some animals are social species and have an inherent desire to be with their own kind. They need, and value the company of their own species (which could potentially require transfer to another facility that has another of the same species). Consideration must therefore be given as to whether it is appropriate to house them with or apart from other animals on a temporary or long term basis.

Enriching⁷ the living environment where animals are housed is very important to ensure that their mental and behavioural needs are met. This is particularly important where the animals are likely to spend lengthy periods in the AWE or fostering environment. Longer term residents will require consequently more exercise opportunities.

Animals housed in social isolation must be provided with alternative means of enrichment. Enrichment must be meaningful to the species and individual and the AWE must be mindful that some forms of enrichment for one species might be distressing to another.

Contact with People

Animals should generally not be forced to interact with people, and must have the facility to avoid people should they wish, i.e. a hiding place or a high vertical resting place, or no contact with people for wildlife. However socialisation with people is essential for some species and as such time should be set aside for appropriate contact with staff and volunteers.

Individual animals should be groomed when necessary and steps taken to ensure animals are free of parasitic infestation and their coats are free of mats. Regular grooming, if introduced gradually and in a positive way,

will also allow the animals to get used to human handling where this is necessary and desired for that species and individual.

Contact with other Animals

New owners should be advised if an animal cannot or should not live around other species (or others of its own species) and no animals should be placed to live with other animals if it is not ready or able to do so safely.

As a basic principle AWEs should not exist to breed animals. Unneutered post pubescent animals of different sexes should not be housed or mixed together unless it is a highly unusual situation, i.e. that the AWE is also a licensed zoo and active in a breeding programme necessary for the protection of a species or breed/type.

Wildlife Environment and Companionship

- Accommodation should take account of the natural habitat of the species and seek to meet the physiological and psychological needs of the animal.
- As there are significant gaps in knowledge for many species regarding their husbandry and care it is not considered good practice to mix species in wildlife rehabilitation centres.
- If a centre is not able to provide accommodation which fulfils those needs for a particular animal, then they should not accept such species, or provide only the most immediate accommodation and arrange transport to a more suitable facility as soon as possible.
- The temperature, ventilation, lighting and noise levels of hospital rooms, pens and enclosures should be suitable for the comfort and well-being of the particular species of animal at all times. In particular:

⁷ It has been noted by Animal Welfare Network Wales ('AWNW') members that enrichment may need further explanation and also embedding in other sections of the Code. This is work the AWWN is willing to do at a later point if that is helpful.

- Consideration should be given to the special needs of pregnant and newly-born animals.
- Newly-arrived animals should be allowed to become fully acclimatised into their new environment. Most animals will be housed separately for initial monitoring and treatment and many cases, particularly territorial adult animals, will be housed individually for the whole of their time in captivity. In most cases, movement from initial isolation areas, into hospitalisation pens and eventually to a larger enclosure may be a gradual process.
- Tanks for aquatic species⁸ need to be adequately oxygenated according to the number kept in each pool, and should be heated or cooled according to the needs of the species. Environmental parameters (e.g. salinity, water quality, chlorine and/or ozone content) should be suitable for the species.
- Indoor housing should protect against extremes of sunlight, heat, draughts and cold, and provide appropriate humidity.
- Outside housing should offer protection against extremes of weather.
- Natural day/night cycles of light should be maintained, with an opportunity to avoid light as necessary. Natural unfiltered, rather than electric based, light should be used wherever possible, to provide appropriate UV spectrum and intensity for normal development and behaviour. Artificial lighting should be of the appropriate intensity, spectral distribution and flicker fusion frequency e.g. high frequency (HF) light fittings.

g) Feeding and water

All animals must be supplied with an adequate and nutritionally balanced diet suitable for the species concerned and correct for their health, activity and stage in their life cycle. The quantity, frequency, delivery and type of food should be determined by what is appropriate to the individual's behavioural and nutritional needs. Clean, potable (fit for human consumption) water must be available for animals at all times and changed regularly at least once daily.

Some species and some individuals will have very specific and often diverse dietary and feeding needs and the AWE should ensure that they are knowledgeable and competent at delivering the right diet and feeding regime for those species and individuals; and that they are able to recognise the success or failure of their feeding programme. Advice should be sought from a vet or other suitably qualified person on how to manage animals with non-standard dietary needs.

The following advice is mainly applicable to domestic and farm species but the underlying principles should be translated for any wildlife or exotic species brought into the care of an AWE.

Where animals are being fed together, care should be taken to ensure that all animals are receiving sufficient food and that no animal is receiving more or less food than it requires. In communal animal areas there should be at least one feeding and water bowl for each animal except perhaps for certain farm animal species which may be fed/watered via communal feeders or drinkers such as troughs.

Eating vessels, which should be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected, should be cleansed normally after each

⁸ Ornamental fish also have filtration requirements. Chlorine is toxic to fish and **must** be removed and tanks **should** be 'matured' before fish are added.

meal and uneaten food disposed of carefully. Drinking vessels should be cleaned at least once a day. Disposable eating dishes may be used and disposed of as appropriate. Feeding utensils should be satisfactorily cleaned or disposed of after each feed.

A food preparation area should be provided and be separate from staff and volunteer facilities and animal accommodation. It should be kept clean at all times. All bulk supplies of food should be kept in animal proof containers and refrigeration facilities should be provided where fresh foods are used. It is important to note that it is illegal to feed kitchen scraps to farm animals unless from a completely vegan kitchen.

Wildlife

- Neonates and orphans can be challenging to rear due to seasonal increased numbers and high frequency of feeding. Each centre should set capacity limits for admissions of neonates of each species. A wide range of dietary ingredients may be needed to cover the species anticipated. Written charts to ensure that feeds are not missed are helpful.
- Care should be taken to limit human contact to a minimum at feeding times to prevent malprinting.
- The natural behaviour of the animals, particularly social aspects, should be considered when offering food and drink. Feeding and drinking receptacles, when used, should be of appropriate design and placed so as to be accessible and available to every animal kept in an enclosure. In the later stages of rehabilitation feeding should be as 'natural' as possible (e.g. scatter feeding) to encourage and develop normal foraging behaviour.
- Enclosure design should be such that human contact does not become associated with feeding.

- Feeding methods should be safe for animals and staff, and species appropriate.
- Food and drink, and feeding and drinking receptacles when used, should be placed in positions which minimise the risks of contamination from soiling by the animals, wild birds, rodents or other pests.

h) Supervision

Whilst animals are at the establishment there should, whenever practical, be a competent person in close proximity to the premises to check on their health, safety and welfare, taking care not to disturb them when sleeping. A suitable interval is taken to be not more than 4 hours between 8am and 6pm. Animals requiring veterinary supervision should be visited more frequently.

Whilst animals are at the establishment there should always be a competent person available to make decisions on their welfare, based on the evidence provided. Animals must be visited at suitable intervals for their health, safety and welfare. Supervision arrangements should be made and documented for each species, type or where appropriate, groups or individuals.

Special arrangements must also be made to attend to sick animals during the day and night as necessitated by their individual veterinary care plan.

i) Grooming

Grooming for certain domestic species (e.g. dog, cat and horses) is part of a routine care programme that also forms part of the examination of the health of the animal, specifically the skin and hair coat/covering. Grooming also gives an opportunity for the provision of positive human contact.

Where appropriate for the species, all animals should be groomed when necessary and steps taken to ensure animals are free of parasitic infestation and their coats are free of mats/tangles/thorns etc.

Some species may need to be sheared at certain periods during the year. Arrangements should be made to ensure this is carried out in a timely manner by a competent individual.

For any animals with access to the outdoors, care should be taken to ensure their coats do not become caked with debris.

j) Exercise

All animals must have the opportunity to exercise on a daily basis to replicate as far as is practical, the natural exercise and behaviours for that species. The duration of the exercise period should be long enough and of the right type to be adequate for the maintenance of and opportunity to display normal behaviour for that species.

In addition to taking account of the species and type of animal, the AWE should also arrange exercise according to the age, fitness and state of health of each animal. During these periods it is advisable to monitor the animals for signs of lameness, ill health or abnormal behaviour.

Exercise should be supervised if necessary. Staff should be encouraged to interact with the domestic animals as appropriate. Because exercise is often done in communal areas, the AWE should be mindful and take reasonable precautions to minimise the risk of disease spread.

The opportunity for exercise should be provided for wild animals during rehabilitation prior to release (see Part 4).

k) Quality of Life

Before acceptance, careful consideration should be given to the future welfare and quality of life of the animal, and the organisation's ability to provide it.

Wild animals, in most instances, should only be held and treated in hospitals and rescue centres where it is believed that there is a good chance that they will be successfully rehabilitated back into the wild. Where an animal is expected not to survive, or to remain permanently disabled or otherwise unfit for life in the wild, then the AWE should consider that it is very difficult to meet that animal's needs and euthanasia needs to be considered as the most likely treatment option.

For wild animals that have been displaced from their natural habitat, the impacts of short term captivity, particularly in relation to stress-associated behaviours and physiological response can have a severe negative effect on the health of the animal in question. Therefore, in relation to wildlife rehabilitation where little is known about the long term effects of permanent captivity on already disabled and diseased individuals, there should be no alternative course other than euthanasia.

For domesticated animals, the AWE should assess whether it can care for the animal's needs and whether the correct provisions are in place. Euthanasia should be considered on a case by case basis, taking into account the individual animal. In most cases, except for adult feral cats, this decision should only be made after rehabilitation has been explored and a full and thorough examination carried out to determine the facts. Euthanasia should only be carried out by or under the direction of a veterinary surgeon using an approved humane method and, where appropriate, using pre-euthanasia sedation.

1) Correct Keeping Levels

AWEs will, as a matter of their own (internal) policy, establish optimum and maximum animal numbers and density (stocking) levels based on the specific needs of the types of animals they intend to take into their care. Animal numbers and density should be calculated by taking into account the AWE's resources (finances, competent carers, facilities and accommodation {environment}) to ensure the AWE can meet its ongoing obligation to all animals in its care.

AWEs are encouraged to refuse to accept animals that would exceed their capacity to properly care on an on-going basis for that number of animals. In such circumstances the organisation should be prepared to work with other bodies to find alternative arrangements. It must be borne in mind that at all times there remains a legal duty of care that places responsibilities upon owners and keepers to ensure a proper level of care on behalf of all animals in their charge. This should be considered when determining whether to accept animals in excess of the normal capacity.

Specific factors for each species are available in the relevant Codes of Practice but should include:

- Appropriate spatial requirements of individuals of each species.
- Level of care required by each individual.
- Need for animals of different species or sex to be kept apart and out of sight/smell from others.
- Risk of disease.

Part 3: Animal Health and Disease

a) Animal Disease

Veterinary Care

All diagnosis and treatment of animals must be carried out in accordance with the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. Each organisation should nominate one or more veterinary practices or veterinary surgeons who can advise on the health of and provide veterinary services to the range and type of animals entering and resident within the organisation. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons maintains a list of veterinary surgeons with specialist qualifications to assist AWEs needing veterinary services for e.g. exotic or wild species.

Where an AWE uses a combination of local veterinary cover and specialist veterinary services, adequate advance arrangements should be made to allow timely contact and discussion between all parties whenever necessary, and particularly for emergency cases, to ensure adequate and continuous veterinary cover for the animals in the care of the AWE.

The AWE should establish, document and implement a procedure for obtaining 'out-of-hours' facilities and services for animals requiring veterinary care, this should include full contact details for 24 hour veterinary help. For practical reasons the veterinary practice should be located within a reasonable travelling time of the AWE.

All veterinary products must be stored, used and disposed of as required by the product datasheet and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) legislation, or relevant local legislation.

Veterinary treatment facilities should be provided that are appropriate for each species kept by the AWE and should be consistent with the welfare needs of the specific animals and appropriate to the range of animals the AWE plans to admit. Veterinary care facilities should be developed and maintained in conjunction with the nominated veterinary provider/s.

Animal Health Planning

A written health plan should be agreed with nominated veterinary provider/s for the AWE. This should ensure for the animals kept at the AWE that the five welfare needs are met and should include details of environment, behaviour, diet, parasite control, vaccination, and other routine procedures. This should be supported by accurate and up-to-date records of all relevant interventions.

a) Daily Inspection

Methodical and thorough daily inspections must be carried out to ensure each animal's health and welfare. These will include checking the environment in which they are being kept. The animals should be checked daily for signs of ill-health, disease or changes in their physical appearance or behaviour.

b) Euthanasia and Death

AWEs have a legal duty of care to ensure that animals under their care do not suffer unnecessarily. Euthanasia is an essential treatment option where the condition and behaviour of the animal, supported by veterinary advice, indicate that it is no longer possible to ensure that an animal does not suffer.

c) **Disease Prevention**

This will include steps to prevent and control the spread of infectious disease and parasites amongst the animals, staff, volunteers and visitors. Particular care should be given to the precautions taken to minimise the risk of outbreak of disease in all communal animal areas.

i) Biosecurity:

New admissions and animals showing signs of disease should be placed in a designated isolation facility whilst awaiting assessment, and a tailored monitoring and testing programme should be carried out before their being housed with the other animals if appropriate.

ii) Notifiable diseases:

Both wild and domestic species are known reservoirs of important diseases, some of which are notifiable (see Appendix 8). These species must be screened for the presence of the relevant disease and all individuals testing positive for the disease in question must follow the protocols in question for this disease.

iii) Translocation:

Translocation (before and after rescue) poses an inherent risk for both exotic and endemic diseases.

An AWE should ensure their practices minimise the risk, and adhere to relevant protocols and codes of practice.

iv) Vaccination:

Animals should be vaccinated, as appropriate for the species, to offer protection against infectious diseases. A programme tailored to the species and types of animals cared for by the AWE should be developed and implemented upon veterinary advice.

Animals accepted with an unknown vaccination history, for example, stray dogs, must be kept separate, away from any vaccinated boarding animals.

v) Parasite management:

Internal and external parasites should be actively managed in accordance with the AWE's veterinary provider. Emerging resistance to available products is a serious threat to animal health, and programmes should place emphasis on appropriate husbandry measures and control methods that are evidence based. As with the overall health plan, a parasite control programme should be agreed with veterinary advisors.

vi) Post Mortem Examinations and Carcass Disposal:

Having to deal with animals that require euthanasia or occasionally die unexpectedly is a sad reality of operating an AWE. Dead animals should be handled in a way that minimises the risk of transmission of infection. Animals that die at the centre or en-route to it, particularly if this is unexpected, should be examined post-mortem in accordance with veterinary advice. Where appropriate, samples for diagnosis or health monitoring should be taken for laboratory examination. Adequate facilities should be available either at the centre or within a reasonable distance for the post-mortem examination of all species held. Normally animal carcasses should be quickly and safely removed. Organisations that look after animals should be familiar with local carcass removal and disposal services. The disposal of carcasses is subject to legal restrictions.

Biosecurity

- Where any animal shows any sign of a potentially contagious disease, veterinary advice must be sought immediately and suitable isolation facilities made available if the veterinary advice includes keeping the diseased animal/s separate from the other animals.
- Adequate isolation facilities for animals with infectious diseases must be provided that are separate from those for new admissions. This may be on site or at another location, such as a local veterinary practice.
- Staff and volunteers should be trained on hygiene practices including barrier nursing, washing and disinfecting hands between animals, the use of protective clothing and other suitable measures to prevent cross-infection. When performing routine checks on animals, staff should work with the youngest animals first, and interact with healthy animals before sick animals to avoid the spread of disease.
- The quarantine programme and facilities should be designed in conjunction with the AWE's veterinary provider. It should be effective at detecting and preventing the spread of the main infectious diseases that pose a threat to animals and people as a result of working with the species of animals that the AWE becomes involved in. The accommodation arrangements and hygiene facilities and procedures should be adequate to control the specific range of diseases that the quarantine programme is intending to prevent. The AWE should ensure the facilities, care and interventions during quarantine are compatible with meeting all the needs of each animal as far as it is possible to do so; and must not cause any animal to suffer unnecessarily. By its very nature, quarantine can fail to meet some of the needs of each animal and these compromises should be made on direct veterinary advice only and

mitigated as far as possible e.g. by limiting the period of isolation that is necessary for an effective bio security protection, and offering enrichment within the environment.

- Biosecurity measures should achieve effective separation from other animals not in the same isolation programme (all resident animals at the AWE and any animals on a completely separate quarantine programme).
- Testing for specific diseases should be considered and carried out on veterinary advice or where there is a specific threat of a relevant disease being a risk to the AWE.
- The proximity of animals to other species should be considered, e.g. avoid housing waterfowl next to poultry due to the risk of avian influenza.

Zoonotic Diseases

A zoonotic disease is one that can be transmitted between humans and animals. Examples include bacterial, viral, fungal and protozoan infections, as well as many other parasitic diseases. The prevention of zoonotic disease transmission is achieved through good hygiene and biosecurity practices, in the same way as we prevent animal to animal transmission of diseases.

The common routes of exposure to zoonotic diseases include:

- Skin contact.
- Penetration injuries e.g. from bites, scratches, needlestick injuries.
- Air borne transmission.
- Exposure to disease vectors e.g. bats, ticks or mosquitoes.
- Orofaecal route.

Sources of infection include contact with raw meat, fomites, and live or dead animals or material from them such as faeces, urine, vomit or pus.

AWEs should have a biosecurity plan in place, which includes measures to prevent the transmission of zoonotic diseases and should include:

- Staff should receive training on which zoonotic diseases they may risk exposure to and how to minimise risk.
- Particular risks should be identified e.g. pregnant or immunosuppressed people may be at higher risk from exposure.
- Zoonotic disease risks should be assessed for each species and for individual animals.
- High risk animals should be placed in isolation and only handled by designated staff members, using barrier nursing methods. This may include animals undertaking their quarantine period, sick animals under veterinary care, or other in-contact animals.
- Staff should seek medical advice for any illness, bite, or skin lesion.
- Eating or drinking should not be allowed in animal handling and accommodation areas.
- Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as gloves, overalls and masks, should be provided and used.
- Hand washing is the most important measure for exposure prevention. Training should be provided, and facilities should be available throughout the AWE. Contaminated surfaces and equipment should be disinfected after use with an approved disinfectant.
- Kennel waste, clinical waste and carcasses should be disposed of promptly in the correct manner.

- High risk situations such as cleaning of sick animal accommodation, taking samples or performing of Post Mortem examinations, should be identified and managed accordingly.

b) Neutering and breeding

As a principle, AWEs should not exist to breed animals. It is recognised that pregnant animals may come into an AWE and a decision should be made on an individual case by case basis in conjunction with a vet as to whether to allow a pregnancy to continue. Unneutered animals of breeding age should not be kept with unneutered animals of the opposite sex. In accordance with specific veterinary advice on an individual basis, the AWE should have animals neutered, as appropriate for the species.

Where it has not been possible to neuter an animal before it has been rehomed, a system for ensuring the animal is neutered should be put in place. This could be an arrangement for the animal to be returned to the organisation for the procedure to be undertaken or for an arrangement made with a veterinary surgeon. If a voucher is issued for the procedure to be undertaken by a local veterinary surgeon, it is important that a robust follow-up system is in place.

The organisation should aim to promote and encourage neutering, and advice on the benefits and reasons for neutering should be given to the new owners/keepers.

Part 4: Rehabilitation and/or Rehoming and/or Release

a) Euthanasia

All AWEs should have a written policy on euthanasia which is explained to and followed by all members within the organisation.

Euthanasia can be a response to circumstances where health and/or welfare are irreversibly and severely compromised and when it is not possible to meet an animal's needs. However, no decision to euthanise an animal should be taken without serious consideration and only carried out if it is judged to be absolutely necessary.

The key factors in deciding whether euthanasia should be considered are as follows:

- a) To prevent pain or suffering (including mental and emotional);
- b) If an animal poses an unacceptable risk to people, itself or to other animals;
- c) If quality of life for the animal is compromised to an unacceptable degree, with no realistic prospect of improvement;

Additionally for wildlife, the main reasons for euthanasia are as follows:

- d) There is a lack of reasonable expectation that the animal will have an equivalent realistic chance of survival upon release to that of its wild counterparts. This decision may be made at admission, or at any stage up to the point of release. Where it is deemed necessary, euthanasia should be carried out as early in the rehabilitation process as possible, ideally within the first 24-48 hours, or as soon as it becomes evident that a casualty or orphan is unsuitable for release;

- e) The animal is a non-native species, as defined by Section 14 of the WCA, including being listed on schedule 9, or is covered by the provisions of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 and a licence cannot be obtained for its release;
- f) Factors other than animal health (e.g. provision of sufficient numbers of suitable release sites, mal-imprinting, likely duration of recovery/rehabilitation, legal requirements, other behavioural concerns) may also be grounds for euthanasia, assuming all practical options are explored.

Euthanasia of animals should only be carried out by or under the direction of a veterinary surgeon using an approved humane method and, where appropriate, using pre-euthanasia sedation. All legislation that protects wild animals includes a defence that allows anyone to kill a protected animal **'if he shows that the (animal) had been so seriously disabled otherwise than by his own unlawful act that there was no reasonable chance of it recovering'**. Consequently any individual, regardless of qualifications, is able to kill a protected wild animal to relieve immediate suffering where no 'veterinary diagnosis' is strictly necessary. A Wild Animal Welfare Establishment (WAVE) should have written veterinary protocols covering such eventualities which should be discussed and agreed with the consulting veterinary surgeon. Only trained and competent individuals should carry out euthanasia.

b) Rehabilitation

Any training or behaviour modification of animals including the rehabilitation of wildlife should only be carried out by appropriately trained and competent staff or volunteers. These staff and volunteers should have a good understanding of the ethology, and for wildlife, the ecology of the species they are working with. They need to understand learning theory and its practical application, and have knowledge of other influences of behaviour such as health, nutrition, cognition. Additionally for wildlife species, staff and volunteers should have knowledge of developmental psychology with respect to the needs of neonatal and dependant juveniles. This is also important for domestic species as without appropriate and adequate socialisation and habituation during the critical periods, animals are at risk of developing abnormal behaviour. Aversive training techniques i.e. those which inhibit unwanted behaviour through the use of an unpleasant stimulus should not be undertaken under any circumstances. Staff and volunteers should only work within their limits and knowledge.

Each organisation should provide an individual responsible for the evaluation and implementation of behavioural and rehabilitation programmes to support the behavioural needs of each species and enhance the opportunity for adoption/ rehabilitation and release of species.

The species taken in by wildlife AWEs will depend heavily on the rehabilitation facilities available. Rehabilitation enclosures vary greatly in size and design to cater for anything from a large marine mammal to a small passerine. After an initial period of indoor assessment, care or treatment, all rehabilitation will take place in outdoor enclosures to allow for diurnal or nocturnal behaviour, and provide exposure to natural weather conditions to allow for acclimation. Rehabilitation enclosures will be appropriately designed for each species to

emulate their natural environment to allow for a level of fitness and stamina comparable to wild counterparts. The use of closed circuit television should be used to aid the assessment of animals in rehabilitation enclosures while minimising human contact.

Release of Wildlife

Prior to release, animals should be considered fully fit and able to fend for themselves in the wild. Fitness assessment should consider clinical, behavioural, and physical assessments. Written procedures for assessment prior to release should be produced and updated according to new published literature and scientific evidence. Release should not be carried out if animals are deemed significantly less likely to thrive in the wild than a member of the same species or are unlikely to enter into a breeding population due to physical or psychological impairment. Written protocols detailing the assessment and decision-making process should be developed by the centre, particularly with regard to conditions which may preclude release being identified early on in care, and euthanasia carried out as early as possible.

Release should be carried out as soon as is practical following the animal being deemed fit for release, depending on a range of other factors, including suitable release sites, current weather conditions, seasonal effects on location (e.g. hibernation, migration), but not be unduly delayed. The aim of wildlife rehabilitation is to release the animal back into its original environment, or another suitable area. Release into the original area is ideal, as the animal is familiar with it, may hold territory, or the habitat supports a population of that species etc. If animals are to be translocated to new areas there are risks to the existing host population of animals of this and other species, due to a) novel diseases being introduced, b) displacement of resident animals, c) increased competition for resources such as food and nesting habitat etc. all of

which need to be addressed. The potential ramifications of an unplanned release could be disastrous for the local ecosystem and for species of conservation and of agricultural concern. Therefore the translocation of wildlife is strongly discouraged. However, if there is no record of the origin of the animal, appropriate selection and surveying of potential release sites should be carried out. Ideally this should involve staff members and local ecologists and conservation managers and wildlife workers with local knowledge, and with the involvement and agreement of the landowner.

Under Section 14 of the WCA, wildlife centres must not deliberately release or permit to escape into the wild any non-native species (and some native species), other than under licence from the appropriate authority. Similar restrictions apply regarding release and escape to species covered by the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019.

c) Rehoming

The organisation should be committed to a strict and responsible rehoming policy for appropriate animals and only to appropriate homes.

AWEs should obtain all relevant information to ensure that the potential new owner has adequate facilities and their circumstances fit with caring for the individual they have applied to rehome. It is good practice to interview the prospective new keeper and complete a re-homing application form. This should include a request for information about previous experience of animal ownership, the lifestyle of the family, and the facilities which would be on offer at the new home. Proof of address should always be obtained. Visits to the prospective new home are not always necessary but they may be required if the animal has specific needs, and are advisable if the rehomer has doubts over suitable boundary fencing or

the local environment and is unable to take appropriate photographs. It is also good practice to obtain written references for prospective new owners from another AWE or veterinary practice demonstrating previous experience of keeping animals. The prospective new owners should also be offered the opportunity to interact with the animal, and both the AWE and the potential rehomer able to decline the match at that stage for any reason.

Animals should not normally be given to a new owner or keeper without that new owner or keeper making a financial contribution to the organisation, as research suggests that even a relatively nominal fee has the useful consequence of making the rehomer assess whether they are serious about rehoming. The size of the financial contribution needs to be sufficient to deter the “impulse buyer”. Caring for an animal is a long term financial commitment and the organisation would be correct to have concern where a prospective new owner states that they are unable to make a financial contribution.

All prospective owners should be given written information on how to care for that species and expected costs involved when they have indicated that they wish to offer a home to an animal. This information should include advice on an appropriate diet for the animal which includes; hygiene, toileting, health and parasite control, sleeping arrangements, exercise, grooming, socialisation with people and other animals, how to identify signs of stress or illness, and the benefits and risks of neutering certain domestic species. There should also be clear advice on how to introduce the animal into the new environment. The prospective new owner should be given specific advice and relevant details about their particular new pet and its future care, both behavioural and veterinary. Any previous or ongoing health issues should always be disclosed to the prospective owner.

The new animal should be vaccinated and treated for parasites, where advised by a veterinary surgeon. For many companion animals, unless against veterinary advice, it is best practice to neuter the pet prior to rehoming. Where relevant, animals should be correctly identified and registered on an appropriate database. All animals should be fully examined before departure, if not by a veterinary surgeon then by a suitably skilled and competent person. The health certificate, if given, is complementary rather than an alternative, to the veterinary examination. A vaccination record should be given to the new owner.

Any previous or ongoing health and/or behavioural issues should always be disclosed to any new owners. It should be made clear to the new owner that they are welcome to contact the organisation if they need advice or information on any issue with their new pet. The organisation should contact the new owner within a few weeks of the re-homing to check that there are no problems or difficulties.

The organisation should offer support to the new owner should any difficulties arise and be prepared to take the animal back if the rehoming is unsuccessful. If the rehoming centre has no vacancies then priority should be given to that animal on any waiting list.

Information about rehoming a companion animal which is of a species covered by the provisions of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 can be found in Appendix 2.

“Ownership of wildlife casualties”

Wildlife is not owned in the traditional meaning of the word. However if an individual picks up an injured wildlife casualty it may be legally considered to be protected under section 2 (b) and (c) of the Act and the individual will be

responsible for that animal under section 3 (1). If the casualty is subsequently presented to a Wild Animal Welfare Establishment (WAW) or veterinary surgery it is important to ensure a transfer of responsibility from the finder to the wildlife AWE or veterinary practice.

Permanent Identification

All animals held by the organisation should be given permanent identification in accordance with legislation; records should be held and updated by the organisation.

d) Fostering

A number of rehoming organisations use “foster” homes to care for animals on a temporary basis until a permanent new home can be found. This can be in addition to traditional kennel and cattery units or can be the only way the organisation arranges to home and care for the animals. These foster homes are normally provided by volunteers where rescue animals are cared for in the volunteers’ own homes or in small animal housing units.

Home fostering can be an acceptable way to care for rescue or unwanted animals, but care needs to be taken to ensure that the standard of care provided in the foster home is satisfactory. It is therefore important that each home which is used to provide foster care is visited, assessed and approved by a suitably knowledgeable member of the organisation’s staff or volunteers before it is used for boarding animals. Any assessment should investigate the capabilities of the individuals, the appropriateness of the premises and the accommodation provided. Additionally, fosterers should also be adequately trained, including any training arising out of a risk assessment. An assessment should be made, and agreement reached, with the fosterer on the maximum number of animals to be boarded at any one time.

Equine AWEs that utilise a system of loan agreements for semi-permanent borrowing situations should refer to the National Equine Welfare Council (NEWC) code of practice. www.newc.co.uk/law/equine-code-of-practice/.

e) Identification and Traceability

Before any non-wildlife species is rehomed it should be permanently identified in a way appropriate to its species and in accordance with the law. The implantation of any chip should be completed by a suitably qualified person in accordance with any applicable regulation. AWEs should possess (or have access to) the relevant equipment (usually an ISO-compliant scanner) to check each animal. Where an existing chip is located reasonable attempts should be made to trace the registered owner or keeper. In light of increasing international travel, this should include reference to databases for animals originating outside of the UK.

Wildlife

Post-release monitoring of wildlife is a vital part of the rehabilitation process. Whilst it can be expensive and time consuming, basic monitoring is important to ensure the welfare of animals rehabilitated is not compromised post release. Passive tagging and recording of all released animals should ideally be carried out (e.g. a bird ringing scheme, registered with the British Trust for Ornithology and carried out by an appropriately trained ringer, and microchip Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) implants in mammals). Other methods should be used where appropriate (e.g. ear tags, tattoos, radio tags), although a licence is required for some species from Natural Resources Wales and possibly the Home Office. Any form of ringing, tagging or micro-chipping should not compromise the behaviour or the welfare of the animal being monitored. Rehabilitators and their veterinary surgeons should seek appropriate advice prior to embarking on such methods of post-release monitoring and refer to up to date literature.

Part 5: Transport of Animals

The EU Regulation on welfare of animals during transport applies to the transport of all live vertebrate animals for the purposes of economic activity (i.e. a business or trade) and is implemented in Wales by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007. Some AWEs may be required to obtain vehicle authorisation or training and certificates of competence under the relevant Orders. Local enquiries should therefore be made as to the AWE's responsibilities under the Order. There are specific provisions for the transportation of some livestock species, including the requirement for movement licenses. Licences may be required to transport animals covered by the provisions of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 unless they are being transported for the purposes of rehoming as a companion animal. AWEs should check that they comply with these provisions before transport.

All animals transported between or into EU Member States for the purpose of rehoming, including the Republic of Ireland and those transiting Northern Ireland, are regarded as a "commercial movement" and must comply with the requirements of the Balai Directive (92/65/EEC).

All AWEs which take animals on a journey, whatever the length, should always apply good transport practice and follow the requirements whether authorisation is required under the Orders or not.

- The principles apply to any vehicle, or livestock trailer, used for the transportation of animals, and include vehicles owned/leased by the AWE, professional animal courier vehicles and personal vehicles owned by staff members or volunteers if authorised by the AWE for transportation use.
- All animals should be deemed fit for transportation prior to being transported. Sick, injured or lame animals may only be transported for the purpose of seeking veterinary treatment.
- Vehicles should be suitable for transportation of the animals in question, ensuring the safety of animals and human passengers in transit as well as ensuring suitable restraint and comfort.
- The interior of vehicles and trailers must be kept in a clean condition with strict attention to disease control.
- Vehicles and trailers should be maintained to high standards and regularly serviced.
- Animals must be transported suitably and appropriately for the individual species, including spatial requirements. Containers should provide for a means of inspection during the journey and provide suitable ventilation, humidity and appropriate bedding. The animal should be able to stand and, depending on species, turn and lie down, although adjustments may need to be made for injured animals. Trailers should have non-slip flooring and ramps suitable to the species being transported.
- Containers holding animals should be labelled with information on species, departure point, destination and contact details, in case of an emergency (e.g. accident). This is especially important if transporting potentially difficult animals in containers where the animal cannot be seen from outside.
- Animals should not be transported in sight, smell or sound of a predator.
- Journey times should be kept as short as possible.

- Animals should be fed and watered at suitable intervals according to species and duration of journey. For dogs who have been house-trained, opportunities for toileting should be provided.
- Animals should not be transported during periods of extreme weather if the vehicle or trailer is not fitted with the means to control the internal temperature.
- Animals should not be left unattended in vehicles or trailers.
- Facilities suitable for catching, carrying/ lifting, crating and transportation of all the types of animals kept within the AWE should be readily available. This should include suitable equipment for the capture of casualty animals as well as their transportation within and outside of the AWE or other premises.
- Catching and transportation techniques should take into account the animal's temperament and escape behaviour in order to minimise injury, damage and distress. Allowing the escape, even accidental, of certain animals (e.g.: invasive alien species) is an offence. AWEs should be able to demonstrate they took all reasonable steps and exercised all due diligence to avoid committing the offence.
- Any animal in transit on behalf of the AWE should only be handled by an appropriately trained staff member or volunteer, or a competent person(s) acting on their behalf. Adequate provision should be made for both the animals and the public's safety and well-being. The AWE's Health and Safety policy should be observed at all times.
- Animals should be kept away from direct contact with persons other than the staff member, volunteer or competent persons acting on their behalf, unless the handler is satisfied that the animal is not likely, when under control, to suffer distress or cause injury or to transmit or contract disease. The handler should be aware that the animal's behaviour may become less predictable when away from their usual environment and take appropriate caution.
- If the journey involves the transfer of animals between different vehicles or trailers, then the designated handover location should be safe, secure and appropriate for the species.
- Wild animals should only be passed on to responsible persons who have the appropriate facilities, resources and expertise to ensure the welfare of the animals; these requirements will be species specific. Where necessary, the appropriate licences for the keeping and management of the species should be held. Such persons may include those carrying out the final stages of rehabilitation and release.
- There should be contingency plans in place that would come into effect in such circumstances as the journey becomes prolonged by significant delays. For example, if the vehicle suffered a mechanical breakdown or was involved in a road traffic accident.

Appendix 1: Legislation concerning animal health & welfare

All legislation was correct at the time of publication.

- Animal Welfare Act 2006.
- Animal Welfare Act 2006 (Commencement No. 2 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) (Wales) Order 2007.
- Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014.
- Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.
- Animal Health Act 1981 (Particularly Section 13).
- Animal Health Act 1981.
- Animals Act 1971.
- Animals (Cruel Poisons) Act 1962.
- Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.
- Breeding of Dogs Act 1973.
- Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999.
- Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937.
- Charities Act 2011.
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (Part 6).
- Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cats (2019).
- Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs (2018).
- Code of Practice for the Welfare of Equines (2018).
- Code of Practice for the Welfare of Game Birds Reared for Sporting Purposes 2010 (into force 2011, currently under review).
- Code of Practice for the Welfare of Livestock: Cattle 2010.
- Code of Practice for the Welfare of Livestock: Sheep 2010.
- Code of Practice for the Welfare of Rabbits (2009, currently under review).
- Code of recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Laying Hens 2002.
- Code of recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Pigs 2004.
- Commission Regulation 2015/262 laying down the rules as regards the methods for the identification of equines.
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- Conservation of Seals Act 1970.
- Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997 (COTES).
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations.
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1989.
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.
- Dangerous Dogs Compensation and Exemption Schemes Order 1991.
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act, 1976.
- Deer Act, 1991.
- Destructive Imported Animals Act 1932.
- Dogs Act 1871.
- Dogs Act 1906.
- Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996.
- Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953.
- EC Council Regulation 1/2005 on the Protection of Animals during transport.
- Environment Act 1995.
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Sections 149-151).
- Environmental Protection Dogs (Fouling of Land) Regulations 1996.

- Environmental Protection (Stray Dogs) Regulations 1992.
- EU Regulation (1143/2014) on invasive alien (non-native) species/EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation/Regulation (EU) No. 1143/2014.
- Guard Dogs Act 1975 (Section 1).
- Local Government Act 1988 (Sections 37-39).
- Medicines Act 1968.
- Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2015.
- Performing Animals (Regulations) Act 1925.
- Performing Animals Rules 1925 (will be repealed after implementation of The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Animal Exhibits) (Wales) Regulations 2020).
- Performing Animals Rules 1968 (will be repealed after implementation of The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Animal Exhibits) (Wales) Regulations 2020).
- Pet Animals Act 1951 (Licensing of pet shops).
- Protection of Animals (Anaesthetics) Acts 1954 & 1964.
- Protection of Badgers Act, 1992.
- Riding Establishments Act 1964.
- Sale of Goods Act 1979 (Re-homing for a fee).
- Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005.
- The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Wales) Regulations 2014.
- The Animal Welfare (Electronic Collars) (Wales) Regulations 2010.
- The Farriers (Registration) Act 2017.
- The Grey Squirrels (Prohibition of Importation and Keeping) Order 1937.
- The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019.
- The Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations (HWR), 2005.
- The Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2010.
- The Veterinary Medicines Regulations, 2013.
- The Welfare of Animals at Markets Order 1990.
- The Welfare of Animals at Markets (Amendment) Order 1993.
- The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014.
- The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Consequential Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2014.
- The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007.
- The Welfare of Horses at Markets (and Other Places of Sale) Order 1990.
- The Weeds Act 1959.
- Veterinary Cascade (Veterinary Medicines Directorate).
- Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (Schedule 3 Amendment) Order 2002.
- Veterinary Surgery (Blood Sampling) Order 1983.
- Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007.
- Wild Mammals Protection Act, 1996.
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Part 1).
- Zoo Licensing Act, 1981.

Appendix 2: Legislation pertinent to Wildlife Rehabilitation

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (“the WCA”)

This is the primary piece of legislation in England and Wales for protecting wildlife. All birds and a variety of other plant and animal species are protected under the WCA. The WCA also includes sections relating to Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Parks and countryside access and rights of way. The WCA has been amended on a number of occasions, most notably by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), Natural Environments and Rural Communities Act (2006) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017). However, not all these pieces of legislation will be discussed here. This legislation makes it an offence to intentionally take, kill or injure a protected wild animal, or to intentionally, or recklessly, disturb such an animal in its place of shelter, or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to its place of shelter. It is also an offence to be in possession of a protected animal, live or dead. However, the WCA also includes various defences. Some are discussed below under Schedules, but the important ones, as they relate to wildlife rehabilitation is Part 1, Section 4 (2) a and b for birds and Part 1, Section 10, (3) a, b and c for other animals, as listed on Schedule 5 of the Act.

Wildlife and Countryside Act, Part 1, Section 4:

(2) Notwithstanding anything in the provisions of section 1 or any order made under section 3, a person shall not be guilty of an offence by reason of –

- (a) the taking of any wild bird if he shows that the bird had been disabled otherwise than by his unlawful act and was taken solely for the purpose of tending it and releasing it when no longer disabled;

- (b) the killing of any wild bird if he shows that the bird had been so seriously disabled otherwise than by his unlawful act that there was no reasonable chance of its recovering.

Wildlife and Countryside Act, Part 1, Section 10:

(3) Notwithstanding anything in section 9, a person shall not be guilty of an offence by reason of –

- (a) the taking of any such animal if he shows that the animal had been disabled otherwise than by his unlawful act and was taken solely for the purpose of tending it and releasing it when no longer disabled;
- (b) the killing of any such animal if he shows that the animal had been so seriously disabled otherwise than by his unlawful act that there was no reasonable chance of its recovering;

These defences allow anybody to pick up and treat a protected wild animal for the purposes of tending and releasing it, or, to euthanise it to prevent further suffering. Similar defences can be found in the Protection of Badgers Act (1992); Deer Act (1991); Conservation of Seals Act (1970) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (“Habitat Regs”).

Another important section for rehabilitators to be aware of is Section 14, which prohibits the release of certain animals into the wild.

Wildlife and Countryside Act, Part 1, Section 14.

Introduction of new species etc.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Part, if any person releases or allows to escape into the wild any animal which –

- (a) is of a kind which is not ordinarily resident in and is not a regular visitor to Great Britain in a wild state; or
- (b) is included in Part I, Part IA or IB of Schedule 9, a hybrid of any animal of that kind, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Schedules

The WCA contains a number of Schedules, relating to particular sections of the WCA. The following are of direct interest to the rehabilitator.

- Schedule 4 lists species of birds that must be registered and ringed if kept in captivity – this includes rehabilitation. There are General Licences that allow certain people to keep these birds for a certain period of time, e.g. a veterinary surgeon may keep such a bird for six weeks, before he or she is required to register it.
- Schedule 5 lists the species of animals, other than birds, that are protected by the WCA e.g. all bats, otter and red squirrel etc.
- Schedule 9 lists animals that are thought to be living in the UK, but whose release would be an offence under Section 14, unless the AWE has a licence to do so*.

* The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 amends Schedule 9 of the WCA to omit the animal species also listed on the EU Invasive Alien Species list. It is an offence, under the 2019 Order to release these species in to the environment unless the AWE has obtained licence to do so.

Licences

Licences may be issued under Section 16 of the WCA for a variety of purposes including scientific, ringing or marking of a wild bird or conserving flora and fauna. Previously it has been possible to apply for a licence under Section 16 (4) to release rehabilitated animals e.g. grey squirrel, depending on where the AWE is located etc. There is no longer an exemption for release of animals listed under the EU

Invasive Alien Species Regulation (e.g. grey squirrel, muntjac deer, Egyptian goose) for the purposes of rehabilitation.

Licences come with specified conditions; any breach of these conditions is an offence, so if the AWE should obtain a licence for an activity, it should ensure that all the conditions attached to it are complied with.

General Licences

General Licences allow certain activities to be undertaken that would otherwise be unlawful and rehabilitation is one example. They cover a variety of activities that are considered to be low risk and where the likelihood is that any application for a licence would be granted. This therefore reduces the bureaucratic workload. No application is required for a General Licence; they can just be downloaded from the appropriate website. General Licences also come with conditions which must be strictly adhered to. They are reissued every year, and are subject to revision, it is recommend that the AWE checks the Natural Resources Wales species licensing webpages to see if a licence has been updated, before the AWE undertakes any activity covered by such a licence. www.naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/species-licensing/?lang=en.

Examples of General Licenses for the rehabilitator issued by Natural Resources Wales are:

- General Licence 007 – Licence to keep wild birds of species listed on schedule 4 for rehabilitation.
- General Licence 009 – Licence to release wild-bred schedule 9 birds*.

* The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 amends Schedule 9 of the WCA to omit the animal species also listed on the EU Invasive Alien Species list. It is an offence, under the 2019 Order to release these species in to the environment unless the AWE has obtained a licence to do so – this include Egyptian goose.

Summary

Wildlife and Countryside Act, Part 1, Section 4 Exceptions:

The WCA provides that it is permissible to take from the wild a sick or injured bird or other protected creature for the purpose of tending it until it is fit for release. If it is injured or diseased beyond hope of recovery it may be euthanised. The right to keep a disabled protected species lasts only until it is no longer disabled. It should not be kept in a manner that would inhibit its capacity to return to the wild e.g. unsuitable accommodation causing damage to physical or psychological condition (damage to feathers and integument or mal-imprinting).

Wildlife and Countryside Act, Part 1, Section 7 and Schedule 4

Section 7 of the WCA states that if any person keeps or has in their possession or under their control any bird included in Schedule 4 which has not been registered and ringed or marked in accordance with regulations made by the Welsh Ministers, they shall be guilty of an offence. Examples of species that may be presented to rescue centres included in Schedule 4 are – Peregrine falcon, Goshawk, Red Kite, Merlin, Red Wing etc. There are 62 species of bird listed under this schedule in Wales. AWE's should apply to the 'Animal and Plant Health Agency' (APHA) to register a schedule 4 bird.

Wildlife and Countryside Act, part 1, Section 14 and Schedule 9

In the main, Schedule 9 lists non-native species that are already established in the wild, but which continue to pose a conservation threat to native biodiversity and habitats, such that further releases should be regulated. The Schedule also includes some native species (e.g. the barn owl) in order to provide a level of control to ensure that releases, in particular re-introduction Programmes, are carried out in an appropriate manner and biodiversity is properly safeguarded*.

* The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 amends Schedule 9 of the WCA to omit the animal species also listed on the EU Invasive Alien Species list. It is an offence, under the 2019 Order to release these species in to the environment unless the AWE has obtained a licence to do so.

The EU Invasive Alien Species EU Regulation (No. 1143/2014) and The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019

The EU Regulation came into force on 1 January 2015. It imposes strict restrictions on a list of species known as 'Invasive Alien Species of Union concern'. These are species whose potential adverse impacts across the EU are such that concerted action across Europe is required. The restrictions mean that (subject to certain defences, or exemptions through permits or licences) these species cannot be imported into the EU, kept, bred, transported, placed on the market, used or exchanged, allowed to reproduce, grown or cultivated, or released into the environment. There are currently 66 species on the Union list.

The 2019 Order came in to force on 1 December 2019. It implements requirements contained in the EU Regulation, including setting out the penalties for breach of the restrictions in the EU Regulation, defences and other enforcement-related provisions. The offences contained in the 2019 Order do not apply to anything done under, and in accordance with a permit or a licence. Natural Resources Wales is the licensing body in Wales.

Article 16 of the 2019 Order contains a defence to the prohibitions of keeping and transporting animals listed as species of Union concern. Under this exception, companion animals can be kept for the remainder of their natural lives without a permit or a licence where the following conditions can be met; the animal is kept as a companion animal, not for commercial purposes; the animal was kept before the species' inclusion on the Union list; and the animal is kept in a contained holding

and all appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that reproduction or escape are not possible.

AWEs may be able to keep species of Union concern with or without a licence depending on circumstances. AWEs may not require a licence from Natural Resources Wales where an animal, which is a companion animal, is being kept on a temporary basis before suitable rehoming as long as; it can continue to be kept as a companion animal; it can be rehomed with a private individual to kept as a companion animal; it can be given to another AWE to rehome, in limited circumstances to keep temporarily as a companion animal before rehoming. Animals kept in reliance on the companion animal exception must be kept in contained holding and appropriate measures must be taken to prevent them from escaping or reproducing.

AWEs will require a licence from Natural Resources Wales in the following circumstances; keeping an animal which has been taken in from the wild and is to be kept in captivity for the rest of its natural life; keeping an animal which is believed to have been a companion animal but its owner cannot be found and it is to be kept in captivity for the rest of its natural life, keeping a companion animal which is no longer wanted but is not suitable for rehoming. There must be no commercial aspect to the keeping of animals kept under licence.

Destructive Imported Animals Act 1932 and The Grey Squirrels (Prohibition of Importation and Keeping) Order 1937

Various Orders are made under this Act to control non-native animals living in this country. The Grey Squirrels Order 1937 creates an offence for keeping grey squirrels in captivity without a licence. The Coypu and Mink Order 1972 creates an offence for keeping these species without a licence. It may be difficult to acquire such licences because

the purpose of these Orders is to eradicate these species. The Non-indigenous Rabbits (Prohibition of Importation and Keeping) Order 1954 also creates an offence of keeping non-indigenous rabbits.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

This legislation translates into UK legislation, the EEC Council Directive 92/43/EEC, The Conservation of Natural Habitats and of wild fauna and flora, known as the Habitats Directive.

This legislation protects habitats and species across Europe and so includes species found in the UK. These species are known as European Protected Species (EPS) and these regulations are the primary regulations protecting these species, NOT the WCA. These species include the otter, common dormouse and all bats.

Section 42 provides protection for these European Protected Species (EPS) which are listed on Schedule 2. Like the Wildlife and Countryside Act, it has similarly worded defences for rehabilitation of any species protected under Section 42. These Regulations require all those who are keeping either a; a wild animal of an EPS species or b; part of, or anything derived of, a wild animal of an EPS species, to have a licence. Although rehabilitation is permitted under the Regulations, the various Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations are considering time limits for holding different species in care before a licence is required. For instance, an AWE does not need a licence to rehabilitate a bat unless intending to keep it for longer than six months.

Protection of Badgers Act, 1992

Section 6, General exceptions: A person is not guilty of an offence under this Act by reason only of –

- (a) taking or attempting to take a badger which has been disabled otherwise than by his unlawful act and is taken or to be taken solely for the purpose of tending it and releasing it when no longer disabled;
- (b) killing or attempting to kill a badger which appears to be so seriously injured or in such a condition that to kill it would be an act of mercy has been so seriously disabled otherwise than by his unlawful act that there was no reasonable chance of it recovering.

Section 5(1) a person is guilty of an offence if, except as authorised by a licence under section 10 of the Act, he marks, or attaches any ring, tag or other marking device to a badger other than one which is lawfully in his possession by virtue of such a licence.

Deer Act, 1991

The Deer Act provides for the hunting of deer and so regulates how, and in what manner, deer may be taken. As such it also includes provisions for rehabilitation and/or euthanasia.

Section 6, General exceptions: (2) a person shall not be guilty of an offence under section 2 or section 3 above by reason of any act done for the purpose of preventing the suffering of an injured or diseased deer.

The Conservation of Seals Act, 1970

The Conservation of Seals Act was enabled to protect the British seal population, but it does give allowances for the control of seals in some circumstances. It also has the following provisions for rehabilitation:

The Conservation of Seals Act, 1970, Section 9, General Exceptions:

- (1) a person shall not be guilty of an offence under section 2 or 3 of this Act by reason only of –
 - (a) the taking or attempted taking of any seal which had been disabled

otherwise than by his act and was taken or to be taken solely for the purpose of tending it and releasing it when no longer disabled.

- (2) a person shall not be guilty of an offence under section 1, 2 or 3 of this Act by reason only of the killing of any seal which had been so seriously disabled otherwise than by his act that there was no reasonable chance of it recovering.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act, 1996

This Act makes it an offence to use a variety of methods to intentionally cause suffering to a wild mammal. It also has exemptions related to euthanasia.

Section 2, Exceptions from offence under the Act:

- (2) A person shall not be guilty of an offence under this Act by reason of –
 - (a) the attempted killing of any such wild mammal as an act of mercy if they show that the mammal had been so seriously disabled otherwise than by their unlawful act that there was no reasonable chance of its recovering.

Zoo Licensing Act, 1981

Some Wild Animal Welfare Establishments (WAWWE) with captive wild animals may need to be registered and inspected as a Zoo under the Zoo Licensing Act (ZLA).

For the purposes of licensing, a zoo is defined as an establishment:

- Where wild animals (as defined by section 21 of the ZLA) are kept for exhibition to the public (excludes circuses and pet shops);
- To which members of the public have admission for seven days or more within a 12 month period (with or without being charged).

Wild Animal Welfare Establishments (WAWE) may open for up to a maximum of 6 days per year, under the above legislation without needing to become licensed under the ZLA. They should, however, be aware of the extra liabilities and responsibilities that opening to the public for any period of time may expose them to.

Dangerous Wild Animals Act, 1976

Where a Wild Animal Welfare Establishment (WAWE) is not registered and inspected as a Zoo under the ZLA licence, a local authority licence may be required to keep those species listed in the Dangerous Wild Animals Act, 1976. These species include the adder (*Vipera berus*) and the wild cat (*Felis silvestris*). Keepers of animals undergoing veterinary treatment are normally exempt.

Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986

The use of animals in experiments and testing is regulated under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA). And although ASPA mainly covers animals in research which may involve the removal of animals from the wild for study, the activity of post release monitoring and the marking and attachment of tags may fall under ASPA.

The Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations (HWR), 2005

AWEs must register premises in Wales where they produce or hold (for example collect or remove) hazardous waste. Hazardous waste is waste that can be harmful to human health or the environment and includes anatomical waste, medicines, sharps and clinical waste. The HWR state that all hazardous waste must be collected by either a registered carrier or exempt carrier. If not, the premises must be notified. There are other environmental regulations that require anyone who carries waste to be registered with Natural Resources Wales before they can do so.

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations, 2013

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations (VMR) set out the UK controls on veterinary medicines, including their manufacture, advertising, marketing, supply and administration. It is the responsibility of anyone engaged in these activities to comply with the VMR.

Veterinary Cascade

Wildlife rescue centres and veterinary surgeons engaging with such centres should be aware that legislation in the UK stipulates that only veterinary medicines are to be used for the treatment of specific conditions in animals, as specified in the product data sheet.

Most veterinary medicines are not authorised for the treatment of wildlife. If there is no suitable veterinary medicine authorised in the UK to treat a condition in a particular species, a veterinary surgeon can treat an animal under their care in accordance with the Cascade.

The Cascade is a risk based decision tree that allows for clinical judgement to treat an animal by deciding which product to use when there is no authorised veterinary medicine available in the UK. It is good practice to have written details and a record of all medicines used and for what species under the cascade for inspection by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

Appendix 3: Non-animal related legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, for more information see www.hse.gov.uk
- Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014, see www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/4/contents/enacted
- Data Protection www.ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-reform/overview-of-the-gdpr

Appendix 4: Additional Sources of Information

- Charity Commission www.charitycommission.gov.uk
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action www.wcva.wales
- Small Charities Coalition www.smallcharities.org.uk
- Institute of Fundraising www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk
- UK Government advice www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-write-your-charitys-governing-document
- Animal Welfare Network Wales www.awnwales.org
- Association of Dog and Cat Homes www.adch.org.uk
- ADCH Minimum Welfare and Operation Standards: www.adch.org.uk/about-adch/minimum-welfare-operational-standards/
- National Equine Welfare Council www.newc.co.uk
- British Veterinary Zoological Society www.bvzs.org
- Jersey Statutory Regulations and Code www.jerseylaw.je/laws/revised/Pages/02.050.aspx
- Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors (APBC) www.apbc.org.uk
- Animal Reporting and Movement Service www.arams.co.uk/Movements.aspx
- British Cattle Movement Service www.secure.services.defra.gov.uk/wps/portal/ctso
- Electronic pig movement licensing www.eaml2.org.uk/ami/home.eb
- A list of disinfectants approved for use in Wales www.disinfectants.defra.gov.uk/DisinfectantsExternal/Default.aspx?Module=ApprovalsList_SI
- GB Non-native Species Secretariat www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=7

Appendix 5: Example of a Release Policy

- The AWE is responsible for ensuring the release of any species is legally permissible.
- Prior to release animals should be considered fully fit and able to fend for themselves in the wild. Fitness assessment should consider clinical, behavioural, and physical assessments (weight, body condition score, ability to fly/run etc.). Written procedures for assessment prior to release should be produced and updated according to new published literature and scientific evidence.
- Release should not be carried out if animals are deemed significantly less likely to thrive in the wild than a conspecific.
- Written protocols detailing the assessment and decision-making process should be developed by the centre, particularly with regard to conditions which may preclude release being identified early on in care, and euthanasia carried out as early as possible.
- Release should be carried out as soon as practical following the animal being deemed fit for release, depending on a range of other factors, including suitable release sites, current weather conditions, seasonal effects on location (e.g. hibernation, migration), but not being unduly delayed.
- The aim of wildlife rehabilitation is to release the animal back into its original environment, or another suitable area. For adult animals release into its original area is ideal, as the animal is familiar with it, may hold territory, etc. Release to another suitable area is another option, but with potential issues arising for the animal (lack of familiarity with the area, an existing occupant or social group, and the likelihood of sustaining injury attempting to return to familiar areas).
- Appropriate selection and surveying of release sites should be carried out. Ideally this should involve staff members and local ecologists and conservation managers, wildlife workers with local knowledge, and be with the involvement and agreement of the landowner.
- If animals are to be translocated to new areas there are risks to the existing population of animals of this and other species, due to novel diseases being introduced into an area and these should be addressed. The International Union for Conservation of Nature translocation guidelines should be referred to and adhered to unless there are over-riding sound grounds to depart from them.
- Under Section 14 of the WCA Wild Animal Welfare Establishments (WAWWE) must not deliberately release or permit to escape into the wild any non-native species (and some native species), other than under licence from the appropriate authority. Licence conditions may include geographical restrictions of the release of the animal (e.g. for Grey squirrels). Similar restrictions apply regarding release and escape to species covered by the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019.

Appendix 6: Example of a Euthanasia Policy (in this instance, for wildlife)

- In practice, the main reason for euthanasia is a lack of reasonable expectation that the animal will have as reasonable a chance of survival upon release as that of its wild counterparts. This decision may be made at admission, or at any stage up to the point of release. Where it is deemed necessary, euthanasia should be carried out as early in the rehabilitation process as possible, ideally within the first 24-48 hours, or as soon as it becomes evident that a casualty or orphan is unsuitable for release.
- Most euthanasia decisions will be based upon:
 - The immediate welfare of the animal e.g. severe injuries or chronic disease
 - The medium term welfare – will the animal require major veterinary intervention which may involve intensive nursing that will expose the animal to unacceptable levels of stress and/or leave the animal with a permanent disability
 - The long-term welfare – is the animal a suitable candidate for rehabilitation? Will it have the necessary physical and mental attributes after veterinary intervention and/or subsequent rehabilitation to survive and enter into a breeding population after release?
 - The animal is listed on schedule 9 of the WCA and a licence cannot be obtained for its release
 - Factors other than animal health (e.g. provision of sufficient numbers of suitable release sites, mal-imprinting, likely duration of recovery/rehabilitation, legal requirements, other behavioural concerns) may also be grounds for euthanasia, assuming all practical options are explored
- The animal is non-native as defined by Section 14 of the WCA, or listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA, or is covered by the provisions of the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019, and a licence cannot be obtained for its release.
- Long-term captivity of wild animals is rarely, if ever, an acceptable alternative to euthanasia. Long-term captivity should only be considered if an animal cannot be released and can be provided with lifelong captive conditions, which meet all of the 'Five Needs'; this will rarely be achievable. Breeding for conservation purposes is only a suitable alternative to release for certain rare species (e.g. red squirrels), and requires both suitable release sites for the offspring, and suitable accommodation for the parents.
- A member of staff should be readily available at all times to take decisions regarding the euthanasia of sick animals on veterinary advice. Effective humane method of euthanasia and standard written protocols should be set down.
- Facilities and suitably trained and competent staff should be available to ensure that emergency euthanasia can be provided at all times, without the need for diagnosis by a veterinary surgeon.
- Staff should be aware of, and trained to deal with, the public-relations issue that might surround the killing of animals.

Appendix 7: Example of a Rehoming Policy (in this instance, for dogs)

Visit: www.hoperescue.org.uk/dogs/adopting-a-hope-rescue-dog

Appendix 8: Notifiable diseases

For more info on Notifiable diseases, visit: www.gov.uk/government/collections/notifiable-diseases-in-animals

Appendix 9: Codes used within this Code

- ADCH: www.adch.org.uk/about-adch/minimum-welfare-operational-standards/
- BVZS: www.bvzs.org/images/uploads/BVZS_Good_Practice_Guidelines_for_Wildlife_Centres_011016_.pdf
- Jersey Statutory Regulations and Code: www.jerseylaw.je/laws/revised/Pages/02.050.aspx
- NEWC: www.newc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/CoP-FINAL-WEB-VERSION.pdf