

## **Animal Welfare Leaflet (Sept 2015)**

### **Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011**

Under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011 a person who is responsible for an animal must ensure that its needs are met, and it is an offence to fail to take reasonable steps to ensure its welfare. Causing an animal unnecessary suffering is also an offence and can be punished with a prison sentence of up to 2 years and an unlimited fine.

Three separate bodies are responsible for enforcement of the Act depending on the type of animals involved and, in some cases, the nature of the welfare issue.

Officers from the enforcement bodies will investigate complaints and can use their statutory powers to take a range of actions including giving advice, issuing legally binding Improvement Notices, taking animals into their possession and prosecution.

If you do become aware of an animal welfare case please **DO** report it to the appropriate enforcement body as set out below, providing as much information as possible.

Please **DO NOT**:

- Upload comments or photographs to social media sites or other media outlets as this may jeopardise potential court proceedings;
- interfere with evidence as this may affect any subsequent criminal investigation; or
- attempt to rescue an animal from another person or property as you may be found to be acting illegally.

### **NON-FARMED ANIMALS**

**District Councils** are responsible for enforcement of the Welfare of Animals (NI) Act 2011, as it applies to **Non-Farmed Animals**. This means domestic pets of any vertebrate species such as cats, dogs, horses and donkeys, etc.

The Council Animal Welfare Officers **do not** offer re-homing services for **unwanted** animals but will be able to refer you to other bodies that may be able to help.

If you need to report a **Non-Farmed Animal** welfare case during office hours **Monday – Friday 9am-5pm** you should contact the appropriate telephone number or email address relating to the region you live in, these are set out below.

*Please note that emails will only be responded to during office hours which are Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.*

For **emergency animal welfare cases only** between **9am and 5pm at weekends and over holiday periods** contact the same numbers and you will be directed to an out of hours service.

## **Belfast City Council**

Telephone: 028 9027 0431

**Email: [animalwelfare@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:animalwelfare@belfastcity.gov.uk)**

**Eastern Region** –Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Ards & North Down District Council

Telephone: 028 9049 4567

**Email: [animalwelfare@castlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:animalwelfare@castlereagh.gov.uk)**

**Northern Region**– Mid & East Antrim District Council, Causeway Coast & Glens District Council, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

Telephone: 028 2563 3134

**Email: [animalwelfare@midandeantrim.gov.uk](mailto:animalwelfare@midandeantrim.gov.uk)**

**Southern Region** – Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Newry Mourne & Down District Council

Telephone: 028 3751 5800

**Email: [animalwelfare@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:animalwelfare@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)**

**Western Area** – Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Derry City & Strabane District Council, Mid Ulster District Council.

Telephone: 028 8225 6226

**Email: [animalwelfare@fermanaghomagh.com](mailto:animalwelfare@fermanaghomagh.com)**

## **FARMED ANIMALS**

**The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)** is responsible for enforcement of the Welfare of Animals (NI) Act 2011, in relation to **Farmed Animals**. Welfare complaints in respect of **Farmed Animals** (that is animals bred or kept for the production of food, wool or skin or other farming purposes) should be referred to **DARD**.

During office hours which are **Monday to Friday 9am-5pm**, contact **DARD** by telephone: **0300 200 7840**.

**After 5pm and at weekends** if you have a complaint relating to a **Farmed Animal** contact a local Private Veterinary Practice.

## **WILDLIFE**

If you suspect **Wildlife Crime**, for example; Badger Baiting, illegal killing of birds of prey, destroying or disturbing bat roosts, release into the wild of non-native species, trapping wildlife illegally, trade in endangered species, deer poaching etc. then please contact the

Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). **If an animal is involved with other criminal related activity for example dog fighting** please telephone the local **PSNI** by dialling 101 or if very urgent please call 999. Information can also be given anonymously through the Crime Stoppers Charity on 0800 555 111. The PSNI are also responsible for animals wandering on roads under the Animals (NI) Order 1976.

Information on animal welfare and how to care for animals is available at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/animal-welfare](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/animal-welfare)