

Animal Aid's Compassionate Charter

**Eight Achievable Steps to Help Animals, People
and the Planet**



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I Toiletries and Cleaning Products

'Household' products include bleaches, toilet blocks, washing-up liquids, soap powders and liquids, fabric conditioners, window, oven, floor, bathroom, kitchen and carpet cleaners, dishwasher detergents and rinse aids, water-softening agents, descalers, stain removers, polishes, paints, paint removers, glues, solvents, varnishes, air fresheners, moth balls and insecticides. Contrary to popular belief, animals continue to be used in the toxicity testing of these products and/or their ingredients all over the world, Britain included.

Toxicity Tests

Toxicity testing ranks as one of the most extreme forms of deliberately-inflicted animal suffering because death is often the endpoint of the experiment. Animals who do not die in the course of the experiment will be killed anyway in order to study their tissues. Aside from the physical pain, animals suffer in the unnatural, stressful and often cramped laboratory environment.

It doesn't have to be this way!

There are hundreds of products available that are not tested on animals. Some can be bought on the high street; others can be bought by mail order.

Some are produced by small companies, while others are well known mainstream brands.

Examples

- Astonish sell a wide range of competitively priced products that are available in high street shops or by ordering online. Their products – which include liquid hand wash, disinfectants, mould remover, bleach tablets, polish, brass and silver cleaner, window cleaner, upholstery shampoo and oven cleaner – are not animal-tested and, according to the company, do not have adverse effects on the environment.

- Earth Friendly Products produce eco-friendly, non-animal tested products including laundry liquid, stain remover, washing up liquid, multi-surface cleaner, floor cleaner, drain cleaner, toilet cleaner and carpet shampoo.

Both companies, plus many others, can supply products wholesale. For more information about companies that supply non-animal tested cleaning products and toiletries, contact Animal Aid or the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV), whose leaping bunny logo is the symbol of non-animal tested products (details of all organisations mentioned can be found at the end of this document).



2 Circuses

More than 200 local authorities across the UK have now banned circuses with animals from their land. If your council has not yet taken this step, please consider doing so. The arguments against training and touring with animals are compelling.

The welfare of animals kept by circuses is always compromised. The constant travelling, being housed in temporary accommodation, often kept alone, or tethered and forced to undergo 'training' is an unnatural existence. Animals are deprived of their ability to move, feed and socialise naturally. They are unable to express their normal behaviour. Even when trainers are kind, this life is inappropriate for any animal. But undercover research conducted over many years has



revealed that, for many animals in circuses, there is little kindness. Theirs is a world of confinement and deprivation punctuated by violence. Stereotypical (obsessive repetitive) behaviour has been identified in many animals, including elephants, horses, llamas, lions and tigers.

Training can be brutal. One undercover investigation filmed the treatment of animals between 1996 and 1998. A man was subsequently jailed because of his sustained attacks on elephants. Using iron bars and pitchforks he rained down as many as 30 frenzied blows on the faces of the chained animals. The circus owner thrashed and kicked an infant chimpanzee – Trudy – using a riding crop. BBC News described her life as one of 'captive misery'.

When Trudy arrived at a rescue centre, she was said to be 'lifeless' and 'limp' and was found to have the tips of some of her fingers missing. Her tormentor in court said: 'I don't regret anything'.

Animal circuses are a relic of a bygone age. Polls show that most people oppose the use of all animals in circuses.

And while so many human circuses thrill audiences with their acrobatics and breathtaking skills, animal circuses are obsolete. For additional information about the lives of animals in circuses, please contact the Captive Animals' Protection Society or Animal Defenders International (details at end).

3 Pets as Prizes

Some councils, including Colchester, have taken the humane decision to stop animals being offered as prizes. This usually refers to goldfish being given away as fairground prizes. Under the 2006 Animal Welfare Act, it was expected that this practice would be banned. But a change of heart meant that fish can still be given away to adults, or to children, if accompanied by someone over the age of 16. Councils are free, however, to ban live animal gifts on their land.

Children – and sadly, many over 16s – do not take their responsibility to a live creature seriously. They probably left their home with no thought of returning with an animal who has specific and complex needs. The government's own official welfare advisory body, the Farmed Animal Welfare Council, has stated that scientific evidence makes it clear that fish, like mammals, are capable of experiencing pain and stress. They need large tanks with a filter and air pump; water at the correct temperature and pH; and the tank in a quiet location and filled with plants and toys. They also need companionship.

In reality, someone taking fish home on a whim is likely to put them into a bowl of water and leave them. Many others are simply flushed down the toilet.

At Animal Aid, we hear regular complaints of children who have won fish simply emptying the water-filled pouches onto the ground, leaving the fish to suffocate.

Stopping the sale of fish is a simple step to take, and we would urge all councils to formulate a policy that will save such unnecessary suffering.

For more information, contact Animal Aid or the RSPCA.

4 Spaying and Neutering

The charity, Dogs Trust, states that although there has been a dramatic reduction in the number of stray dogs in the last ten years, progress seems to have peaked and the UK's stray population has remained at a consistent level for the last four years, despite a year on year increase of re-homing figures.

A report conducted by GfK NOP on behalf of Dogs Trust shows that 105,068 stray dogs were picked up in the UK in 2006, and 7,892 were destroyed unnecessarily. Many more – the figures are not known – were euthanased by vets or sanctuaries as no homes could be found for them. Others spend their lives in unsuitable homes or are abandoned to sanctuaries where they may, or may not, get the chance of a happy life.

While healthy dogs continue to be put to sleep because no homes can be found for them, we believe it is unethical to allow more to be bred. Spaying and neutering are simple procedures and ones that all responsible dog and cat owners



should undertake as a matter of course. For some people, however, the cost is prohibitive, while others mistakenly feel that it is 'kind' or 'natural' to allow their animals to have a litter. And some less scrupulous people allow their animals to breed so that they can sell the offspring and make a little cash.

Clearly, education plus financial resources are needed to help reduce the number of animals killed. Many councils already run or promote low-cost spay and neuter schemes. If yours does not, please consider introducing one. Contact Dogs Trust for more information.

5 Foie Gras and Veal

York City Council was the first in the UK to pass a motion condemning the sale of foie gras and banning the sale of the pâté from its premises. Other councils soon followed suit. To produce this 'delicacy', ducks and geese are kept in tiny wire cages or packed into sheds. Pipes are repeatedly pushed down their throats, and up to four pounds of grain and fat are pumped into their stomachs, two or three times every day. The pipes puncture many birds' throats, sometimes causing the animals to bleed to death. This cruel procedure causes the birds' livers to become diseased and swell to up to 10 times their normal size. Many birds become too sick to stand. The birds who do survive the force-feeding are killed, and their livers are sold for foie gras. Its production is so cruel that it is banned in the UK.

Veal crates were banned across Europe at the end of 2006 but continental veal farms continue to keep calves on slatted floors with no comfortable resting area. They are fed largely on a liquid diet. Any roughage provided may not be of an appropriate type to allow normal rumen development. This feeding regime predisposes the calves to anaemia but helps to keep their flesh desirably pale. Britain continues to send unwanted male dairy calves overseas to European veal farms, despite calves being notoriously bad travellers and frequently succumbing to scours (diarrhoea) and other infectious diseases during the journey.

While councils are not able to ban the sale of foie gras and veal from shops and restaurants, they can ban their sale from or use in council premises, and they can also make a strong statement condemning their production methods.

For more information about the production of foie gras and veal, please contact Animal Aid.

6 Fur

Fur farming is so cruel that it has been banned in the UK since 2003 but the importation of fur and goods made from it continues. It is estimated that more than 50 million animals – including millions of dogs and cats – are killed for their fur every year. Both the trapping and farming of fur-bearing animals cause immense suffering.

Lynx, bobcats, wolves, foxes, possums and many other wild species are caught by leghold traps, body grip traps and wire snares. The leghold trap has been banned in England and Wales since 1958 because of its cruelty. Victims caught by this type of trap may suffer broken bones but will be held fast until starvation, thirst or predation kill them, or the trapper returns to club the animal to death. In the struggle to escape, some bite through their own flesh, and even gnaw off their limbs. Charles Darwin said of leghold traps: 'It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the suffering thus endured from fear, from acute pain, maddened by thirst, and by vain attempts to escape.'

The majority of animals raised in fur farms across the world are mink. These solitary creatures are imprisoned in rows of barren metal cages alongside one another. Unsurprisingly, such deprivation and stress cause them to display unnatural patterns of behaviour, such as pointless repetitive movements. Other animals imprisoned inside fur farms include rabbits, foxes, raccoon dogs and chinchillas. They may be killed by gassing, neck-breaking or electrocution.

An 18-month investigation into farming cats and dogs for fur in China, Thailand and the Philippines found that animals were hanged by their necks while water was poured down their throats until they drowned. Others were skinned alive. Their fur is made into coats or other items (notably fur trim) that are virtually indistinguishable from items made from mink or fox. Cat and dog fur has been traded in the UK, and, despite an EU ban, it is likely that such a trade continues.

Councils are not able to ban the sale of fur from their towns or cities but they can make a strong anti-fur statement and encourage shops and other businesses to go fur-free. They can also lead by example and ensure that any mayoral robes and other ceremonial garb are made from fake furs. Some councils – including Surrey Heath, Bracknell and Chorley – have already made their mayoral robes fur-free.

For more information about fur farming and the trapping of wild animals, contact Animal Aid.

7 Humane Wildlife Management

Councils are often under pressure to 'do something' about pigeons, gulls or other wildlife who live in town or city centres. Members of the public may complain of bird droppings, aggressive behaviour or damage to property. Often 'doing something' means killing the animals or birds but there are many non-lethal options available and experts in the field are willing and able to be consulted on these methods.

Aside from the inhumanity, lethal bird control does not work and often increases the number of birds within weeks of a cull, because others take the place of those who are killed.

Not all 'non-lethal' methods of controlling pigeons, for example, are harmless. Many – like gels and birds of prey – maim, and cause pain and suffering. But there are measures available which are humane, effective and cost-effective and the outcome of using these can be satisfactory to all. For example, education or information initiatives and the provision of artificial breeding facilities, along with designated feeding areas and deterrents such as anti-perching devices (not netting), can work extremely well.

Small mammals such as mice, squirrels and rats can also be 'managed' humanely. With human developments encroaching on wild spaces, we should preserve and help wild species instead of adding poisons to the environment or – as in the case of squirrels – bashing them to death.

For more information and advice on where to find humane wildlife consultants, contact Animal Aid.

8 Plastic Bags

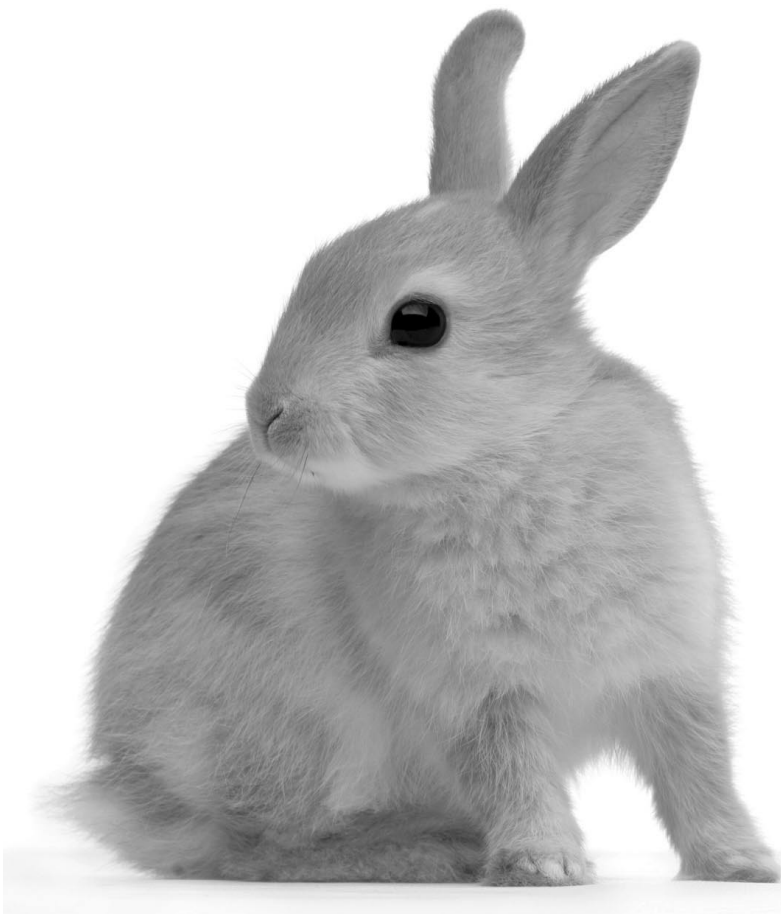
Disposable plastic bags use up valuable resources and their production causes pollution. Once discarded, they end up all over the globe where animals and birds can ingest them. BBC camerawoman Rebecca Hosking filmed albatrosses, turtles and dolphins choking to death on plastic bags. Other animals at risk include whales, seals, pelicans, platypuses and all other marine life, as well as farmed animals and pets.

Several towns and cities have either banned the use of plastic bags already, or are taking steps to do so. Please add your town to this growing list.

Adopting The Compassionate Charter

The eight items on the Compassionate Charter are positive and practical measures that can be introduced by councils right across the country. Some – like the decision to ban giving animals as prizes – require very little work. Others – such as switching to using only non-animal tested products – require a little more planning. But all are achievable and have the potential to make a meaningful difference.

Animal Aid is pleased to support and advise you wherever we can, and put you in touch with relevant experts, as well as individuals and councils who have already undertaken some of these measures. Please schedule time to discuss adopting the Compassionate Charter at your next council meeting.



Organisations' Details

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Animal Defenders International

Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP
020 7630 3340
www.ad-international.org

BUAV (British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection)

16a Crane Grove
London
N7 8NN
info@buav.org
020 7700 4888
The BUAV's Little Book of Cruelty Free can be viewed here:
<http://www.gocrueltyfree.org/companies.php>

Captive Animals' Protection Society

PO Box 4186
Manchester
M60 3ZA
info@captiveanimals.org
0845 330 3911
www.captiveanimals.org

Dogs Trust

17 Wakley Street
London
EC1V 7RQ
customerservices@dogstrust.org.uk
020 7837 0006
www.dogstrust.org.uk

RSPCA

Wilberforce Way
Southwater
Horsham
West Sussex
RH13 9RS
0300 1234 555
www.rspca.org.uk

**Animal Aid exposes and campaigns
peacefully against all animal abuse,
and promotes a cruelty-free lifestyle**



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