

ANIMAL WELFARE IN SCOTLAND

A guide for funders

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INTRODUCTION

Setting the scene

Animals are an important part of life in Scotland, whether in homes, on farms or in the wild. Four in ten households own a pet¹, and Scottish farms look after 13 million chickens, 6.5 million sheep and 2 million cows².

Animals in Scotland face a range of challenges, including a lack of understanding of the needs of pets, welfare issues caused by intensive farming methods, and harmful ways used to control the numbers and locations of wild animals.

Despite some stories of abuse and cruelty, most people in Scotland value animals and care about their health and welfare. Animal welfare is consistently one of the most popular charitable causes in the UK, and last year animal charities received almost a tenth of all charitable donations in the UK³. Funders can choose between several promising interventions that improve the welfare of animals in Scotland, from educating potential pet owners to campaigning for legal change on behalf of farmed animals or animals in the wild.

In this report, we focus on domestic animals, farm animals and wild animals. We outline their needs and examine the sorts of interventions that charities are providing to meet these needs and to tackle key issues.

The purpose of this report

This report is a guide for funders who want to improve the welfare of animals in Scotland, helping them choose between the many different charities and approaches that are out there. It has the following aims:

- to explain the context of the work of charities and funders that promote animal welfare in Scotland;
- to outline the needs and issues of different types of animals in Scotland; and
- to identify the sorts of intervention that are particularly effective at improving the welfare of animals in Scotland.

This report is a result of desk research and interviews with charities, funders, academics and professionals working on animal welfare issues in Scotland. We hope that the frameworks presented here will help funders think through how they can have the greatest impact in this field.

THE LANDSCAPE OF ANIMAL WELFARE IN SCOTLAND

Definitions

Defining animal welfare

Animal welfare is *'the quality of an animal's life as it is experienced by an individual animal'*.⁴ This is determined by:⁵

- an animal's physical health and its environment (physical well-being);
- its emotional state (mental well-being); and
- whether it can live and behave as it would in the wild ('naturalness' or 'natural living'⁶).

The term 'animal welfare' is often applied to domestic animals, while references to 'animal welfare and health' are more commonly found in discussions of farmed animals.

'Animal welfare means how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well-nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress.'

World Organisation for Animal Health⁷

The Farm Animal Welfare Committee (formerly Farm Animal Welfare Council) describes five 'freedoms' that animals under human control should have:⁸

- **Freedom from hunger and thirst** by ready access to fresh water and an appropriate diet.
- **Freedom from discomfort** by an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- **Freedom from pain, injury or disease** by prevention or rapid treatment.
- **Freedom to express normal behaviour** in sufficient space and company of the animal's own kind.
- **Freedom from fear and distress** in conditions that avoid suffering.

In this report, we limit our discussion to matters of animal welfare, but it is possible to go a step further and advocate animal rights.⁹ According to animal rights campaigners, animals have a set of rights that prohibit, for instance, humans breeding them or using them for food. The animal welfare perspective that we adopt in this report is not so limiting, but does consider that people have a duty to promote the welfare of animals when interacting with them.

Defining animal abuse and animal rights

Animal abuse and cruelty are human practices. Abuse is often thought of as deliberate harm, while cruelty can sometimes be accidental (for example, underfeeding an animal due to a lack of understanding rather than malice).

Context

Numbers of animals in Scotland

Around 40% of households in Scotland own a pet, including 640,000 dogs.^{10, 11}

Figure 1: Percentage of households in Scotland with each type of pet

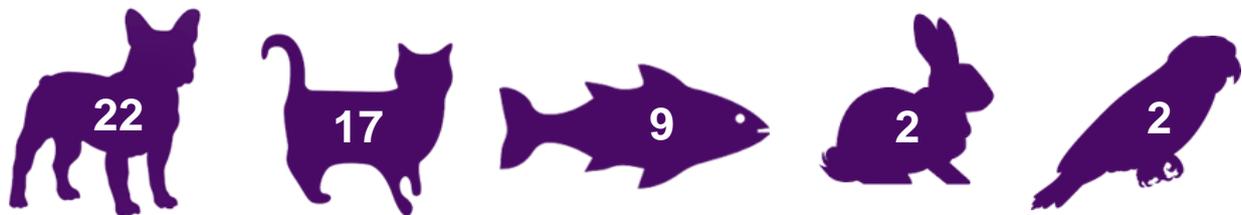


Figure 1 shows the percentage of households that have dogs, cats, fish, rabbits and birds as pets. As many households own multiple pets, there is considerable overlap between the categories. Local authorities in Scotland also handled 4,945 stray dogs between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015.¹²

According to the annual Scottish Agricultural Census, the number of commercially-bred birds fell by more than a million between 2014 and 2015, while the numbers of cattle, sheep and pigs all rose.¹³ Figure 2 shows the numbers of the four main types of farmed animals.

Figure 2: Numbers of farm animals in Scotland¹⁴



Scotland's agricultural sector employs around 65,000 people.¹⁵

Although numbers of wild animals are difficult to estimate, wildlife tourism (including bird and whale watching) is a significant part of Scotland's tourism economy, valued at £127m per year.¹⁶

The state and legislation

Animal welfare is a devolved issue, with responsibility for providing legislation, regulation and resources to protect animals in Scotland falling to the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government.* The legal frameworks described in the following paragraphs are enforced by the government, Police Scotland, the Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Scottish SPCA), officers of the Animal and Plant Health Agency, and local authority animal health and welfare officers employed in Trading Standards and Environmental Health Departments.†

Domestic animals

In this report we use the term 'domestic animals' to refer to people's pets. (In a veterinary context the term sometimes applies to farm animals as well.) The main legislation covering the welfare of domestic animals in

* The exception to this is the regulation of animals used in scientific research, which is overseen by the UK Home Office.

† See OneKind (2013) *Animal welfare in Scotland: A review of legislation, enforcement and delivery* for a fuller account of the legislative context of animal welfare.

Scotland is the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, which introduced a legal ‘duty of care’ for all pet owners.[‡] This was split into five areas:¹⁷

- the need for a suitable **environment**;
- the need for a suitable **diet**;
- the need to express normal **behaviour**;
- the need for **companionship** and to live with, or apart from, other animals; and
- the need for **health** and protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

Awareness of these five welfare needs is low in Scotland: more than two thirds of pet owners do not know about them.¹⁸ Two newer legislations—the Licensing of Animal Dealers (Young Cats and Young Dogs (Scotland)) 2009 and the Microchipping of Dogs (Scotland) Regulations 2016—have tightened regulation of cats and dogs, Scotland’s most common domestic animals.

In relation to animal protection, inspectors and constables are able to take animals away from their owners if they are suffering or likely to suffer. The maximum penalties for offences involving cruelty or fighting are up to 12 months’ imprisonment, a £20,000 fine, or both. Abandonment of an animal without making adequate provision for its welfare is a specific offence under the Act.

Farm animals

Farm animals are protected by the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Regulations 2010 and the Animal Health Act 1981, amended in 2006. Because there are so many farmed animals in Scotland, local authority and government enforcement activity is concentrated on farm animals, and within this there is a focus on health and controlling disease.¹⁹ Focusing on this one aspect of welfare means that other regulations—such as the law requiring pigs to be provided with effective enrichment materials—may receive insufficient attention. Local authorities take a risk-based approach to enforcement, with risk scored on categories such as previous compliance and stocking levels.

Wild animals

Wild animals are not protected under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, except where they have come under human control (for instance, if their population is being controlled to protect farming). There are other welfare protections for wild animals. For example:

- Trapping and snaring are regulated by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. If an animal caught in a trap or snare, the person who set the trap is responsible for the welfare of that animal.
- Wild mammals are protected from cruelty by the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996.
- Activities such as foxhunting and hare coursing are banned under the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002.
- Poisoning mammals and birds is an offence, although anti-coagulant poisons (which kill rodents over the course of a few days due to diffuse internal bleeding) may legally be used against mice and rats.
- The management of invasive and non-native species—along with a number of aspects of land management that may affect wildlife conservation—is regulated by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011.

[‡] The animals protected under the Act are vertebrates that are commonly domesticated in the British Isles, or are under the control of people on a permanent or temporary basis, or are not living in a wild state.

Key trends

Increasing owner expectations

Over the past 20 years, pet owners increasingly expect their pets to live long and healthy lives. On one hand, this is a welcome trend, because it means that owners are generally more willing to spend time, money and effort to promote and protect the welfare of their pets. On the other hand, owners can sometimes push for an extended life for their pets at the expense of quality of life.

‘There is a worry in the [veterinary] profession already that increased owner expectations of lifespan can raise questions around quality of life for animals.’

An interviewee who preferred to remain anonymous

State withdrawal

‘Cuts to local authority services have indirectly affected our work, creating strains rather than opportunity.’

Mike Flynn, Chief Superintendent, Scottish SPCA

Although the effect of state retrenchment has not been felt as keenly in the animal welfare sector as in other sectors, austerity has had some negative effects. For instance, a reduction in local authority capacity to control stray dogs has led to some responsibilities being transferred to charities such as the Scottish SPCA, although there has not always been a corresponding transfer of funds. This puts strains on local authority and third sector staff capacity, with unpredictable knock-on effects. In general, state retrenchment has led to lower expectations of government action in all sectors.

‘There’s less of an expectation that the government will provide basic services for animals.’

Harry Huyton, Director, OneKind

The rise of ethical food consumption

The past 15 years have seen a significant rise in consumer concern about the origins of food, with the UK ethical food and drink market worth £8.6bn in 2014.²⁰ Organic food and assured produce schemes promote animal welfare by guaranteeing certain minimum conditions of treatment. These schemes provide quality food at a cost to the consumer—but it is a cost that not all can easily afford. In Scotland, demand for animal-friendly products is more sensitive to price changes in the most deprived areas compared with more affluent areas.²¹

PRIORITY NEEDS

Priority needs for improving animal welfare in Scotland

‘There is no single need that requires addressing before all others in Scotland today—instead there are a number of different issues.’

An interviewee who preferred to remain anonymous

Within the field of animal welfare, different groups of animals face different sorts of challenges. Table 1 summarises some of these needs, which were highlighted by the experts we interviewed.

Table 1: Needs of animals in Scotland

Animal type	Problems	Comments
Domestic animals	Lack of understanding of pet needs	It is possible that domestic animals suffer from overfamiliarity on part of public. Exotic animals are an important sub-group that has attracted attention recently. ²² Lack of understanding of needs of pets is seen as clustered within population, and is a possible lever for reducing cruelty and abuse.
Farm animals	Varies depending on type of livestock	Different sectors face different problems. There is currently lots of attention, funding and legislation (although there are far more farm animals than pets).
Wild animals	Cruel control practices	This area receives less attention than domestic or farm animals; one interviewee described wild animals as ‘ignored’.
Animals used in scientific testing	Issues are primarily ethical—around animal testing—rather than practical issues of welfare	Generally seen to be a well regulated sector—interviewees did not prioritise it as an area for concern.
Animals in zoos	Mainly ethical issues around keeping animals in captivity rather than practical issues of welfare	Generally seen by interviewees to be well regulated sector, who did not prioritise it—although concerns were raised over the welfare of animals in more informal sanctuaries.
Working animals	No specific issues raised	Generally seen by interviewees to be a well regulated sector, although they raised concerns about the welfare of animals in more informal sanctuaries.

An important finding from our expert interviews was that animals used in scientific testing, zoo animals and working animals in Scotland are not considered to have priority needs. Our experts believe that animals used for scientific testing and those kept in zoos have appropriate levels of protection, ethical issues notwithstanding.

Interviewees also think that the enforcement of regulation in these two areas is generally high.[§] There are far fewer scientific animals, zoo animals and working animals in Scotland than domestic animals, farm animals and wild animals.

Key issues for domestic, farm and wild animals

Our interviewees told us that farm animals face the widest range of welfare issues, with different livestock facing different challenges. The main issues for domestic animals concern education, licensing, support and prosecution of owners, while the main issue for wild animals is cruel control practices.

Domestic animals

‘Good owner education is key: sometimes people who are trying to be kind to their pet end up being cruel—for instance, if the animal becomes overweight from overfeeding.’

An interviewee who preferred to remain anonymous

Education for pet owners

The experts we interviewed agree that one of the greatest problems in the domestic animal sector is that many people are not fully prepared or able to take on the responsibility of pet ownership. In 2015, a quarter of owners reported that owning a pet was harder work than they thought, while a fifth did no research at all before they took on their pet.²³ This is despite the Scottish SPCA’s *Prevention through Education* programme, which reached more than 320,000 children in 2014/2015.²⁴ At worst, as one interviewee put it, we have a situation of *‘thoughtless pet possession’*. It is easy to buy pets online, with up to 50,000 adverts for animals for sale on one classified site at any one time.²⁵ This includes exotic animals, some of which are unsuitable as pets without extensive owner preparation.²⁶ Owners who are unprepared for the expense or time commitment of having a pet can end up harming their animals through inappropriate caring practices, abandonment or abuse. These animals can then end up stray or in a home.

Time delays in the court system around prosecutions for animal cruelty

Currently, the slow action of the court system in prosecuting perpetrators of animal abuse can mean that young animals seized away from their owners and held by the Scottish SPCA until trial can be adults by the time perpetrators appear in court. There is no consideration of animal welfare during this period and, as one interviewee put it, *‘our legal response to animal cruelty does not seem to be in the best interests of animals’*.

Diseases in traded puppies

Growing numbers of puppies from Irish farms are being taken to Scotland by criminals who are attracted by the large potential profits and switch from importing drugs to dogs. Regrettably, the conditions of travel and sale mean that these puppies can carry diseases that may spread through the country.

Support for pet owners

A key issue in the domestic animal sector is how charities can support pet owners. One interviewee worried that owners in need of support might be scared to take their pet to the vet on account of the high fees, unaware that the People’s Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA)—the UK’s leading veterinary charity—could help. Some owners might also be afraid to go to the Scottish SPCA as they believe they might get in trouble.

[§] Note that a rights-based approach would argue there are no justifiable grounds under which humans could experiment on animals or keep them in zoos.

‘Too many companion animals are neglected and abandoned, despite educational messages.’

Professor Natalie Waran, Jeanne Marchig Professor of Animal Welfare Education, University of Edinburgh

Farm animals

‘As much as we need individual animal welfare reforms, we also need to change the nature of modern farming.’

Peter Stevenson, Chief Policy Advisor, Compassion in World Farming

Harmful farming practices

Many dairy farms are moving to ‘zero graze’ farming, in which cattle are kept indoors all year round. This causes an increased incidence of lameness, mastitis (inflammation of the udder) and infertility.²⁷

In the egg industry, around half of the hens in the UK are kept in so-called ‘enriched cages’, which offer hens limited opportunities to perform natural behaviours, such as nesting, scratching and stretching.²⁸ Some parts of Europe are moving away from enriched cages, with a ban coming into force in Germany in 2025 and all major UK supermarkets aiming to stop selling eggs from caged hens.

In the pig sector, sow stalls (highly restrictive cages for pregnant sows) are banned in the UK. But a major issue is the widespread use of farrowing crates, which restrict the movement of sows from the week before giving birth until the piglets are three or four weeks old. Farrowing crates are so narrow that the sow cannot even turn around, and they are used for 60% of sows.²⁹

Harmful breeding practices

Traditional selective breeding aims to produce high yield animals and/or animals that grow as quickly as possible to as high a weight as possible. For instance, meat chickens are bred to reach a slaughter weight (of approximately 2kg) in 38–39 days, rather than the natural period of around 84 days. As a result, as many as a quarter of meat chickens may be suffering from painful leg disorders as their legs cannot support their rapidly growing body.³⁰ Some also suffer from heart problems as the heart and lungs cannot keep pace with the overgrown body.³¹

Newer methods of breeding, such as cloning, genetic engineering and gene editing, may be rare but they pose the potential of new and high-tech threats to farm animals. With both newer methods of breeding and traditional selective breeding practices, there are significant health and welfare issues for animals. For instance, cows bred for maximum possible milk yields can face welfare issues as a result of lactating too frequently, and can suffer from mastitis.³² It is not clear how newer methods of breeding might impact on the welfare of animals in Scotland in the future.

Wild animals

‘Wildlife tends to get ignored—the welfare of wild animals can suffer as a result.’

An interviewee who preferred to remain anonymous

Scotland is rich in wildlife. Its landscapes, flora and fauna play an important cultural and economic role, particularly through outdoor tourism. However, Scotland’s rural and coastal areas are heavily managed for food production and country sports, such as angling and hunting. This leads to conflict that often results in welfare issues for the wild animal populations. The priority welfare issues include controlling wildlife on grouse estates

(particularly using snares and other traps), hunting with dogs, and seal shooting by fish farms, netting stations and angling groups.

The welfare of wild animals in Scotland is more closely connected to wider questions of conservation than the welfare of farmed or domestic animals. There are a number of endangered species in Scotland, such as golden eagles, Scottish wildcats and red squirrels. Since wild animals are only protected under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 where they have come under human control, legislation does not recognise the needs of sentient wild animals in the same way that it does for domestic animals. Wild animals might therefore be more vulnerable and their welfare may suffer as a result.

Improving control practices

Alongside general concerns about the conservation of suitable habitats for wild animals, there are specific worries about the practices, such as hunting with dogs, used to control the numbers and location of wild animals in Scotland. Chief among these is the use of snares for fox control.³³ Legislation limits who can set snares and states that snares are supposed to be restraining rather than killing traps, yet many animals suffer and die as a result of snaring.

Ending shooting seals under licence

In 2014, 205 seals were legally shot dead under licence, which is less than half the number killed in 2011 when the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced a general prohibition on shooting seals, except under licence.³⁴ This reduction suggests that non-lethal methods have been effective at controlling seals in fish farms, netting stations and river fisheries, and that shooting is no longer defensible from a welfare point of view. One serious deficiency of the current licensing scheme is that it permits the shooting of seals all year round, so that seals may be killed when pregnant or lactating, with welfare consequences for their offspring.

Expanding wildlife rescue and rehabilitation facilities

Wildlife rescue and rehabilitation facilities in Scotland are extremely limited. There are only two dedicated wildlife centres of significant size (Scottish SPCA Alloa and Hessilhead) and both are located in the middle of the country. Demand is high, with both centres seeing around 3,000 patients each year. Provision is much better in England and Wales: the RSPCA has four large wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centres and several other large charities (such as Secret World Wildlife Rescue) operate independent facilities. Although Scotland has a considerably smaller human population, demand for wildlife rescue is high compared with England and Wales due to the larger land and marine wildlife populations.

Wildlife rescue is difficult for charities to fund, particularly compared with pet rescue where rehoming provides an income stream. There are also conflicts between animal and human use of the natural environment, which lead to injuries, deaths and other welfare issues. Wildlife conservation (the protection of endangered species and their habitats) often touches on wider issues of environmental protection.

PRIORITY SOLUTIONS

Mapping solutions

There is a wide range of interventions that improve the welfare of animals. Charities can work directly with animals, or they can work with owners or professionals. They can support the state by carrying out enforcement processes on its behalf. Charities can also change public opinion to create systemic change by arguing for improved welfare or animal rights, promoting the awareness of key issues, campaigning for legal change, or funding research. Table 2 maps the sorts of interventions that the animal welfare sector provides in Scotland.

Table 2: Interventions that improve the welfare of animals in Scotland

Working with animals	Working with owners	Working with professionals	Supporting the state	Systems change **
<p>Caring for animals directly (such as abandoned or stray animals) or rescuing and rehoming animals</p> <p>Providing interventions that raise the welfare of animals and humans simultaneously (for instance the domestic abuse veterinary initiative)</p>	<p>Supporting owners (for example, with vet bills, micro-chipping or neutering)</p> <p>Educating potential owners</p>	<p>Training and supporting veterinarians</p>	<p>Supporting statutory functions or processes, especially around prosecutions for abuse</p>	<p>Promoting improved welfare or animal rights</p> <p>Raising awareness of key issues, for instance through assured produce schemes</p> <p>Campaigning for market regulation, licensing or legal change</p> <p>Funding scientific research into animal welfare</p>

The impact of any intervention varies according to a number of factors, including the efficiency of the organisation delivering the intervention and its design. In the animal welfare sector, the impact of interventions also varies according to which type of animal they are targeting, because of the various priority needs of animals in Scotland. In the previous chapter, we saw how the experts we interviewed highlighted the needs of domestic animals, farm animals and wild animals. Here, we outline some priority solutions for these three groups.

** 'Systems change aims to bring about lasting change by altering underlying structures and supporting mechanisms which make the system operate in a particular way. These can include policies, routines, relationships, resources, power structures and values.' Definition from Abercrombie, R., Harries, E. and Wharton, R (2015) *Systems change: A guide to what it is and how to do it*. New Philanthropy Capital.

Priority solutions for domestic, farm and wild animals

Interventions that improve animal welfare can be divided according to the stage at which they hope to make an impact, as Figure 3 shows.

Figure 3: Priority solutions for domestic, farm and wild animals



Within the four categories shown in Figure 3, different sorts of organisation engage in different activities. For instance, hands-on rescue work is often undertaken by small, local charities, while larger charities tend to have more staff capacity and expertise to engage in campaigning and awareness-raising work. The different stages are not in competition with each other, as they have a common aim to improve the welfare of animals. It is important that there is funding for interventions at different stages: rescue operations can be complemented by a preventative, education-focused approach.

Priority solution for domestic animals

Educating potential owners

The experts interviewed for this report agree that educating potential owners about pets' needs could significantly improve the welfare of domestic animals. Having highlighted problems of public overfamiliarity (particularly with cats, dogs and rabbits), ease of acquisition and generally poor knowledge of the needs of pets, they consider this to be the intervention with the most potential to improve animal welfare in Scotland.

However, there are challenges. One interviewee told us that the difficulty with pet owner education is that it only reaches owners who are already looking for it. In other words, some potential owners are underprepared for the challenges of having a pet, and they are difficult for education programmes to reach as they are less motivated and proactive. Special attention could be paid to education about exotic animals—there is no national exotic pet charity, so this is a particular gap in animal welfare education.

A range of potential education interventions are available, including online learning platforms such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). These courses can educate current and potential owners. One area for development is the integration of the latest scientific research into education programmes, and the delivery of research-informed information programmes. Work also needs to be done to pilot and evaluate education initiatives to find out what works and how to reach potential and current owners.

‘Educational materials need to be accessible, relevant and engaging—and we need more educational material that is properly researched.’

Professor Natalie Waran, Jeanne Marchig Professor of Animal Welfare Education, University of Edinburgh

As well as improving pet care, education can prevent cruelty and abuse. According to one interviewee, the prevailing approach to pet cruelty in Scotland is overly punitive: it focuses on prosecuting offenders rather than supporting them as owners, and the time that court systems take to prosecute seems to disadvantage animals themselves. As one interviewee put it, *‘We shouldn’t just wave a big stick—there needs to be an education rollout as well.’* In particular, more attention could be paid to underlying problems (such as poor mental health, poverty or substance abuse) that cause some owners to neglect or mistreat their pets.

‘We should focus more on an educational and supportive approach to welfare issues rather than only using the prosecution route, as many such cases occur through simple ignorance or involve human welfare problems as well as the animal.’

An interviewee who preferred to remain anonymous

Priority solution for farm animals

Raising awareness of key issues through assured farming schemes and campaigning for legal change

As discussed in the previous chapter, farm animals face several key issues, including ‘zero graze’ cattle farming, enriched cages for hens, farrowing crates for sows, and harmful breeding practices. There are two main routes to tackling these issues:

1. **Market influence:** Consumer pressure, often coupled with an assured meat or produce scheme, can incentivise farmers to adopt new, more humane practices.
2. **Legislation:** This is preferable to relying on market influence where there is no assured produce scheme (unless establishing a new scheme is a plausible alternative).

For instance, since milk, cheese and butter are not labelled in the same way as eggs (with the exception of organic milk), if we want to prevent the movement of cattle from pastures to year-round indoor grazing, campaigning for legal change is more likely to be effective than relying on the market influence of consumers. Assured farming schemes must be sufficiently demanding to protect the welfare of farmed animals. If a scheme is not strong enough, then campaigners must raise awareness of the need for stronger assurance schemes and more demanding legislation.

Priority solution for wild animals

Campaigning for legal change

Since consumer mechanisms do not apply to wild animals in the same way as farmed or domestic animals, campaigning for legal change is necessary. OneKind’s *Manifesto for Scotland’s animals*³⁵ argues that wild animals should be afforded the same respect and protection that other animals are given. Key changes proposed in the manifesto include an outright ban on snares, new legislation to make the ban on hunting with dogs effective and enforceable, and a ban on shooting seals in Scottish waters. Although measuring the impact of campaigns can be a challenge,³⁶ interviewees were clear that campaigning is a key tool in promoting the welfare of wild animals in Scotland.

Cross-cutting interventions that raise the welfare of animals and humans simultaneously

Some interventions raise the welfare of animals and humans simultaneously, often working with vulnerable people or animals. These interventions vary widely. Some draw on the significance of the human-animal relationship to teach empathy or behaviour management, for example, pairing young offenders with dogs at risk of being put down or helping young people with behavioural issues to work with horses. To take another example, vets can be trained to spot domestic abuse in homes where non-accidental animal injuries have occurred, thereby tackling both animal and domestic abuse.³⁷

THE ROLE OF CHARITIES AND FUNDERS

There are already voluntary sector organisations working to promote the welfare of animals in Scotland, as well as several ways that charities and funders can further this work.

Charities promoting animal welfare in Scotland

There is a large and well-funded animal welfare sector in the UK. A search of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) for charities whose purposes include the advancement of animal welfare reveals 703 charities registered in Scotland (although 57 of these charities did not register income in 2015 and 19 registered an income of £0). These charities include charitable trusts and foundations as well as operational charities.

Table 3: Charities in Scotland that advance animal welfare

Income	Number of registered charities	Notes
£1m and above	30	Includes many UK-wide charities as well as some very large charities based in Scotland
£100,000–£999,999	129	Mostly larger regional organisations or those focusing on the interests of a number of animals, including some campaigning groups
£99,999 and below	468	A wide variety of organisations, including many location- or breed-specific charities

Of the 30 charities that have an income of £1m or above, 12 (40%) have an income of above £10m. Having a small number of very large charities in the sector raises questions about the concentration of resources (including public goodwill), particularly given the significance of donations to the sector (as we examine below). Many of the largest charities are headquartered outside of Scotland and carry out activities throughout the UK. Of the charities registered in Scotland, three had an income above £10m in their most recent accounts: the Moredun Foundation, the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, and the Scottish SPCA.

An analysis of the income of ten of the largest charities reveals a high dependency on legacies and donations, particularly among the charities that command a high degree of brand recognition among older people. For instance, the largest charity listed by OSCR is the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA), whose income was almost £100m in 2013/2014.³⁸ Of this, 70% was from legacies (£44.2m) and donations (£24.3m). High levels of legacy income can lead to lower reporting requirements and pressures, as well as worries about the reliability of the income. PDSA's long-term aim is to reduce reliance on these income streams by shifting to trading and veterinary activities.

Given the absence of public sector contracts and grants, donations to the animal welfare sector are crucial. The Scottish SPCA, for example, receives no government funding despite its enforcement role. Animal charities are popular throughout the UK. In 2015, animal welfare was the third most popular cause behind children and young people and medical research, attracting 22% of donors and 8% of total donations.³⁹ Women are more likely to

give to animal charities than men (28% compared with 16%) and people aged 45–64 are the most likely to give to animal charities (29% compared with 22% overall).⁴⁰

The role of charities

Charities play an important role in promoting the welfare of animals in Scotland. They tend to avoid the suspicion that can exist around government services, and they attract a high level of public sympathy.

‘The best charities often put forward balanced views, listen to others and try to persuade rather than preach.’

An interviewee who preferred to remain anonymous

Charities are well placed to raise public awareness of farming practices through campaigning and promoting assured produce schemes, particularly as people are becoming more conscious of where their food comes from and more careful about what they buy. Charities can also lobby to strengthen legislation or to influence public procurement practices. As one interviewee pointed out, procurement for institutions such as hospitals and prisons is usually focused on buying the cheapest food (which is usually the poorest quality food), rather than food produced with the best interests of animals in mind. But it is a challenge for charities to convince people to change their behaviour without coming across as judgemental—how can they *‘persuade rather than preach’*? One interviewee told us that *‘sometimes the consultative approach is missing.’* However, another noted that *‘it can be difficult to assess the work of the third sector’* as some of the traditional measures of success, such as user satisfaction with services, are not present. It is also difficult for charities to incorporate beneficiary voices into their activities, unless they are representing the interests of owners or professionals rather than animals themselves.

‘Evaluating effectiveness, or how we know which animal welfare charities are doing a good job, is a difficult question.’

Maureen McGinn, advisor to the RS Macdonald Charitable Trust

The role of independent funders

Funders promoting animal welfare in Scotland

There are 40 funders providing some support to the animal welfare sector (of which 34 have open funds).⁴¹ Most are foundations that support a wide range of projects including animal welfare programmes, three trusts focus exclusively on animal welfare, and two fund animal welfare and conservation projects. These funders have a wide range of charitable objectives. For example, the Marchig Animal Welfare Trust aims to *‘protect animals and to promote and encourage practical work in preventing animal cruelty and the relief of animal suffering’*. The Jean Sainsbury Animal Welfare Trust focuses more specifically on funding organisations that *‘demonstrate an active rehoming and rehabilitation policy for animals taken into their care’*.⁴²

CONCLUSION

Domestic animals, farm animals and wildlife all play a role in the lives of people in Scotland. In 2015, animal welfare was the third most popular charitable cause in the UK and attracted 8% of total charitable donations. The third sector is therefore significant in advancing the welfare of animals in Scotland.

Key findings

In this report, we have explored the needs of animals in Scotland, given an overview of the available interventions, and examined the role of charities and funders in promoting animal welfare. The main findings of this report are:

- There are reasons to prioritise the needs of domestic animals, farm animals and wild animals over the needs of animals used in scientific research, animals in zoos, and working animals. One reason is the relatively large numbers of animals in the first three groups.
- Domestic animals, farm animals and wild animals face different sets of issues:
 - For domestic animals the education and support of owners is key, but time delays in the court system around prosecutions for animal cruelty offences are also an issue.
 - Farm animals have the widest variety of issues, with different types of livestock experiencing different problems. The movement of dairy cattle to year-round indoor housing is also a problem.
 - Wild animals face some cruel control practices—snaring and seal shooting are key issues.
- For domestic animals an important intervention is working with owners—specifically educating potential pet owners. This is also a way of preventing cruelty to animals and animal abuse. For farmed animals, a priority solution is to change systems through market mechanisms (raising awareness of assured farming schemes), and legal change is crucial where a market mechanism is absent. In the case of wild animals, direct legal change is a priority solution.
- The animal welfare sector is made up of a large number of charities, and most of Scotland's large animal charities work throughout the UK. There are 40 charitable trusts and foundations that give to animal welfare causes in Scotland, but only a handful focus exclusively on animal welfare. Public donations are a key source of income in the sector and animal welfare charities are popular, notably in the 45–64 age group.

Recommendations

We have three priority recommendations:

- Most of the experts we interviewed agree that educating potential pet owners is crucial, so funders should consider supporting programmes in this area.
- Funders interested in the welfare of farmed animals need to bear in mind the wide range of issues these animals face. Although interventions that try to achieve systems change have a less certain impact than other interventions, bans on sow stalls, battery cages and veal crates attest to the possibilities of success in campaigning for greater welfare and health of farm animals.
- Funders concerned about the welfare of wild animals should investigate programmes that campaign for legal change, for example, an outright ban on snares.

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TRANSFORMING THE CHARITY SECTOR

NPC is a charity think tank and consultancy which occupies a unique position at the nexus between charities and funders, helping them achieve the greatest impact. We are driven by the values and mission of the charity sector, to which we bring the rigour, clarity and analysis needed to better achieve the outcomes we all seek. We also share the motivations and passion of funders, to which we bring our expertise, experience and track record of success.

Increasing the impact of charities: NPC exists to make charities and social enterprises more successful in achieving their missions. Through rigorous analysis, practical advice and innovative thinking, we make charities' money and energy go further, and help them to achieve the greatest impact.

Increasing the impact of funders: NPC's role is to make funders more successful too. We share the passion funders have for helping charities and changing people's lives. We understand their motivations and their objectives, and we know that giving is more rewarding if it achieves the greatest impact it can.

Strengthening the partnership between charities and funders: NPC's mission is also to bring the two sides of the funding equation together, improving understanding and enhancing their combined impact. We can help funders and those they fund to connect and transform the way they work together to achieve their vision.

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