

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Regulations 2021

Guidance for Animal Rehoming Activities

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Section 1: Introduction

This guidance applies in Scotland only. It is issued by the Scottish Ministers under section 38 of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. The purpose of this guidance is to help applicants for or holders of an animal rehoming licence understand the requirements of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 (hereinafter referred to as “the Regulations”). You can find the Regulations here: [The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

This guidance is advisory only. If there are conflicts between the content of this guidance and the provisions of the Regulations or any other legislation, the statutory provisions should take priority. The interpretation of legislation is ultimately a matter for the courts.

The Regulations came into force on 1 September 2021. They replaced previous legislation covering pet sales and dog breeding and introduced new licensing requirements for cat and rabbit breeders, animal welfare establishments (such as animal sanctuaries and rehoming centres) and other pet rehoming activities, subject to operators meeting the licensing criteria for each activity.

On 10 October 2021 the Regulations were amended. One of the changes introduced affected schedule 4 of the Regulations which sets out the specific conditions of licence applicable to animal rehoming activities. Specifically, the change removed the prohibition on the supply of kittens - cats under 6 months old – as pets if they are not bred by the licence holder. This change permits persons who hold a licence to engage in animal rehoming activities - including foster carers working with animal welfare charities - to rehome kittens.

Section 2: Summary of criteria and thresholds for licensing

Note, that under the Regulations the activity of animal rehoming is separate to the activity of operating an animal welfare establishment defined in Part 3 of schedule 1 of the Regulations. An animal rehoming centre is likely to qualify as an animal welfare establishment. A licence for engaging in animal rehoming activities is not required in relation to the rehoming of animals from an animal welfare establishment.

Under the Regulations this means any person supplying an animal as a pet to a person in Scotland is required, subject to some exceptions, to be licenced if the following conditions are met:

- the person being supplied physically receives the animal in Scotland, and
- the supply takes place during a 12 month period in which at least 4 other animals are supplied by the operator as pets to persons in Scotland.

Rehoming will require a licence where 5 animals are supplied as pets in a single movement or where 5 animals are cumulatively supplied as pets over the course of any 12 month period. The supply of an animal as a pet to a person residing in Scotland only counts towards the 5 animal threshold if the handover of the animal occurs in Scotland. For example, if the individual being supplied with an animal

travels to England to collect it from the person supplying it then it does not count towards the threshold as the supply did not occur in Scotland.

The activity of animal rehoming relates to both the rehoming of animals originating within and outwith Scotland. An example would be a person, charity or other organisation that sources street or rescue dogs from eastern Europe for the purposes of rehoming them as pets with persons in Scotland, if the threshold number of animals is supplied within a 12 month period.

This activity does not relate to the supply of fish or animals bred by the operator and any such animals do not count towards the total number of animals supplied within a 12 month period. Additionally, horses and other equines are not normally considered to be pets as they are generally kept for riding or other sporting or recreational purposes.

In circumstances where a person licensed to rehome animals makes use of foster homes the foster carer may require to be licensed. A foster carer would require a licence where they assume responsibility for the supply (the handover) of 5 or more animals in any 12-month period as pets to persons in Scotland on behalf of the primary licence holder.

Section 3: The application process (new and renewal applications)

Under the Regulations local authorities are, with one exception, the licensing authority for animal rehoming activities. The exception applies in respect to any licence application made in connection with the activity of engaging in animal rehoming activities by persons that neither reside or have a place of business in Scotland. In such circumstances the licensing authority is the Scottish Ministers and such persons must apply directly to the Scottish Ministers by emailing animalrehominglicence@gov.scot. Where the applicant for an animal rehoming licence resides or has a place of business in Scotland, the licensing authority for the rehoming activity is the local authority in which there is such a residence or place of business. Any licence issued by the relevant licensing authority authorises the activity of rehoming animals in the whole of Scotland.

The Regulations include a provision that allows the licensing authority to charge a fee for the consideration and granting of a licence. Any fee payable will be confirmed by the licensing authority at the time of application.

Upon receipt of a valid application for a licence and payment of any fee the licensing authority has the power to arrange an inspection of any premises in Scotland on which the activity of animal rehoming is being, or is to be carried on, but is not required to do so. Circumstances where such an inspection would be warranted would, for example, be where a person carrying on the activity routinely keeps animals brought in for rehoming at a particular premises in Scotland prior to rehoming them with new keepers. Where, however, animals are brought into Scotland and delivered directly to new keepers there will be no premises to inspect and therefore the licensing authority may decide that no inspection is warranted.

A key requirement of the inspection, where one is undertaken, is to gather information about whether the applicant is meeting, or can demonstrate that they are ready to meet the conditions for holding a licence. The inspector's report is required to provide the licensing authority with information on:

- the applicant,
- the suitability of the premises for the proposed activity,
- any relevant records,
- the condition of any animals, and
- any other relevant matter the inspector considers relevant.

The other relevant matters referred to above would normally include:

- the staffing ratio,
- staff experience and, where applicable, staff qualifications,
- the quality of record keeping or the likelihood of the applicant keeping records that meet the record keeping requirements set out in the general and activity specific licence conditions in the Regulations.

In addition, the inspector's report must state whether in the inspector's opinion the applicant is likely or capable of meeting both the general licence conditions (set out in schedule 2 of the Regulations) and the activity specific licence conditions applicable to animal rehoming activities (schedule 4 of the Regulations).

If an inspection arising from an application is instructed, the licensing authority will consider the inspector's report to help it make an informed decision on whether or not to grant a licence to an applicant. An inspector is a person appointed by the licensing authority for the purposes of the Regulations. A person does not need to be employed by the licensing authority in order to be appointed as an inspector.

The licensing authority, having considered the application submitted, and, where relevant the report submitted by the inspector must either grant a licence or refuse it. Where the decision of the licensing authority is to refuse a licence it must notify the applicant accordingly, stating the reasons why and making clear the applicant's right to appeal the decision. The appeals process is covered in section 4 of this guidance.

Where the licensing authority decides to grant an animal rehoming licence it will attach the conditions that are set out in schedule 2 of the Regulations (the general conditions) and those at schedule 4 (animal rehoming specific conditions). The conditions of licence that must be complied with are set out in annexes A and B of this guidance. Guidance on the licence conditions is also provided to assist you in understanding your obligations as a licence holder. If you have any questions regarding particular conditions or have concerns about compliance with them you should seek further guidance from the relevant licensing authority.

Regulation 6(5) of the Regulations provides the licensing authority with flexibility to attach further licence conditions to any licence granted or renewed if considered necessary for the purposes of securing the welfare of animals for which any licence holder is or will be responsible. Where a licensing authority considers that the imposition of an additional condition or conditions is necessary, it must notify the applicant or licence holder of that decision by way of a notice under regulation 7. Any

such notice served will include information on the applicant's right to appeal the decision to impose additional conditions (under regulation 27) and the local authority's reason for the decision.

The licensing authority, having considered the application, any report submitted by an inspector and all other risk factors will issue a licence to engage in animal rehoming activities for a period of one, two or three years.

Note that a person subject to a disqualification order of a type listed in regulation 13 of the Regulations is not permitted to apply for a licence. An application made by such a person will be refused.

The Regulations require the licensing authority to publish and maintain a register of all those holding a licence under the regulations. The rationale for the register and for making it available to the public is to enable prospective owners of pet animals to quickly and easily check whether the person they are dealing with is indeed licenced by the licensing authority.

Section 4: Appeals process

The Regulations allow for licence holders or licence applicants who disagree with the decision of a licensing authority to appeal to the sheriff. Licence holders or applicants can appeal against a decision to:

- refuse to grant or renew a licence,
- attach a further condition or conditions (under regulation 6(5)) to any licence granted or renewed,
- revoke or vary a licence.

Any licence holder or applicant wishing to appeal to the sheriff must do so within 28 days beginning from the day after the notice is served by the licensing authority.

Upon receipt of any appeal made, a sheriff may, until such time as the appeal is determined or withdrawn, decide to:

- permit the licence holder to continue the licenced activity where the local authority has decided not to renew a licence,
- permit the licence holder to continue the licenced activity without having to comply with the additional condition or conditions attached to their licence (under regulation 6(5)) by the local authority, or
- suspend a revocation or variation.

A sheriff may, having considered any appeal made, either confirm or overturn a local authority's decision, with or without modification.

Section 5: Offences and penalties

The Regulations include the following offence provisions:

- The Regulations specify a number of general (welfare and animal husbandry) conditions that, regardless of which of the licensable activities is being carried out, apply to all licences issued by a licensing authority (the "general licence

conditions”). The regulations also set out conditions that are specific to engaging in animal rehoming activities. Subject to the exceptions detailed below, licence holders will commit a criminal offence if they fail to comply with the general or relevant specific licence conditions.

- Licence holders will not commit a criminal offence if they fail to comply with an additional licence condition attached to the licence by the licensing authority under regulation 6(5) of the Regulations. Whilst failing to comply with such a condition would not constitute a criminal offence, it would represent a breach of the licence and accordingly might result in suspension, variation or revocation of the licence.
- It is a criminal offence to undertake a licensable activity without an appropriate licence from the licensing authority.
- It is a criminal offence to provide to an inspector information required by or under the Regulations which the person knows, or ought reasonably to have known, is to a material extent false or misleading.
- It is a criminal offence to fail to comply with any reasonable request from an inspector to facilitate the identification and examination of an animal and the taking of samples (including restraint of any animal where requested by an inspector).
- It is a criminal offence to intentionally obstruct any inspector appointed to enforce the regulations in the exercise of any powers conferred on them.
- It is a criminal offence for the purpose of obtaining or holding a licence—
 - to make a statement required by or under the Regulations to a licensing authority (or someone acting on its behalf) which the person knows, or ought reasonably to have known, is to a material extent false or misleading, or
 - recklessly to make a statement required by or under the Regulations to the licensing authority (or somebody acting on its behalf) which is to a material extent false or misleading.

Penalties:

A person who breaches a licence condition (where this is a criminal offence) is liable, on summary conviction only, to a fine not exceeding £5,000.

A person who commits any other criminal offence under the Regulations is liable to a fine not exceeding £40,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months (or both).

Guidance on the General Conditions of licence

The general conditions set out in schedule 2 of the Regulations will be attached to any licence granted by a licensing authority.

1. Licence display

Condition: A copy of the licence must be clearly and prominently displayed on any premises used for the licensable activity.

Guidance: You must ensure that a copy of your licence is displayed in a location where it can be easily seen by visitors.

Condition: The name of the licence holder, the number of the licence and the name of the local authority that issued the licence must be clearly and prominently displayed on any website used in respect of the licensable activity.

Guidance: Any website includes, for the avoidance of doubt, paid for ad sites, social media platforms and any other website linked to or used in connection with your animal rehoming activities.

2. Records

Condition: The licence holder must ensure that all the records that the licence holder is required to keep as a condition of the licence are either—
(a) available for inspection by an inspector in a visible and legible form at any premises specified in the licence at which the licensable activity is carried on, or
(b) if not kept as such premises, are kept in a manner in which they can be readily made available to an inspector.

Condition: Where any records that the licence holder is required to keep as a condition of the licence are stored in electronic form they must be in a form from which they can readily be produced in a visible and legible form.

Condition: The licence holder must keep all such records for at least 3 years beginning with the date on which the record was created.

Condition: Where records are not kept at any premises specified in the licence at which the licensable activity is carried on, the licence holder must promptly make such records available (whether in electronic format or otherwise) for inspection upon request by an inspector.

3. Number of animals

Condition: The total number of animals kept for the licensable activity at any time must not exceed the maximum that is reasonable taking into account the facilities and numbers of employed staff and volunteers on any premises on which the licensable activity is carried on.

Guidance: As a holder of a rehoming licence you should ensure that the number of animals kept at premises linked to the licensable activity at any one time is appropriate for the facilities and staff ratio. Where the licensing authority has concerns that the numbers of animals kept has exceeded what is manageable or acceptable, it may take action to require the licence holder to reduce the number of animals on site or to arrange additional accommodation to reduce stocking density etc.

4. Staffing

Condition: Sufficient numbers of people who are competent for the purpose must be available to provide a level of care that ensures that the welfare needs of all the animals in the licenced premises are met.

Condition: The licence holder or a designated manager and any staff employed to care for the animals must be competent to identify the normal behaviour of the species for which they routinely care and to recognise signs of, and take appropriate measures to mitigate or prevent, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour.

Condition: Volunteers who assist in relation to the licensable activity must only undertake tasks for which they have been suitably trained.

Condition: The licence holder must provide and ensure the implementation of a written training policy for all staff members and volunteers who care for the animals.

Guidance: Suitable and sufficient training of staff must be demonstrated to have been carried out in the following areas:

- animal welfare, including recognising poor welfare,
- animal handling,
- animal behaviour,
- cleanliness and hygiene,
- feeding and food preparation,
- disease control,
- recognition and first aid action for sick animals,
- new information on disease and inherited disease, legislation and behaviour.

Staff should hold a relevant qualification and/or be able to clearly evidence knowledge through experience, for example through on the job in-house training.

The training policy for staff should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis and may include:

- annual appraisal,
- planned continued professional development,
- recognition of knowledge gaps,
- use of online courses and literature,
- if no staff are employed the licence holder must demonstrate their own knowledge development.

The training policy must be applicable to any members of staff and volunteers and can be evidenced by engagement with courses, written or online learning, keeping up to date with any research or developments for specific species and the documentation of the annual appraisal. Evidence of staff and volunteer attendance or completion of the training should be provided. Training records for individual staff and volunteers should be retained.

5. Suitable Environment

Condition: All areas, equipment and appliances to which the animals have access must present minimal risks of injury, illness and escape and must be constructed in materials that are robust, safe and durable, in a good state of repair and well maintained.

Guidance:

Non-domestic Environment

- Housing should be secure to prevent injuries and reduce risk of disease transmission. Structural integrity must be maintained, and housing designed to ensure dry, easily cleansed surfaces (including junctions) for non-aquatic species. Materials must be non-toxic and non-porous or be appropriately treated.
- Accommodation should be regularly inspected for damage and potential injury or escape points. Damaged accommodation must be repaired or, where an immediate repair isn't possible, made safe and secure until it can be repaired or replaced.
- For dogs, floors should be non-slip, impervious and easily capable of being cleaned and disinfected. Doors should be strong enough to resist impact, scratching and chewing and should be capable of being secured.
- Hazards must be minimised in accommodation. There should be no projections or rough edges liable to cause injury. No electrical cables must be within reach of any animal that could chew or damage them.
- All licence holders should be able to demonstrate that both environmental and biosecurity, including zoonotic disease, risks have been considered in the enclosure selection and use.
- Drainage in enclosures, activity areas, passageways and preparation areas should be adequate to reduce the risk of pathogens associated with standing water. Enclosures should be designed to minimise issues with standing or pooling liquids which may be hazardous to animals.
- Where new accommodation units are built, they should be built in compliance with relevant building regulations and ensure that any animals to be housed therein have sufficient space and are protected from the effects of weather.

Domestic (home) Environment

- The home should be well maintained and in good repair. There should not be any sharp edges, projections, rough edges or other hazards which may present risk of injury to an animal.
- Where pens are used in domestic properties, e.g. pens in the garden, they must meet the standards of the non-domestic dwelling.

- For dogs, all outdoor fencing should be strong and secure and kept in a good state of repair.

Condition: If the licensable activity is carried on from premises at which animals are kept, such premises must provide an environment suitable to their species and condition (including health status and age) with respect to—

- (a) their behavioural needs,
- (b) its situation, space, air quality, cleanliness and temperature,
- (c) the water quality (where relevant),
- (d) noise levels,
- (e) light levels,
- (f) ventilation.

Guidance:

- Animals must be able to exhibit normal behaviour in their environment e.g. move around freely climb, fly, swim or jump where appropriate.
- Accommodation must provide shelter from adverse environmental conditions and predators.
- Enclosure sizes should be appropriate to the species, and be adjusted to the animal's size as it grows (see Annex C for guidance on the acceptable minimum enclosure/cage sizes for all licensable activities).
- Where animals are kept communally they should be monitored to ensure none are disadvantaged. Any change in group dynamics may require separation or larger enclosures.

(a) Behavioural needs

- Where appropriate, animals should have separate areas for hiding, sleeping, toileting and exercising. Sleeping areas must be dry, draught-free, well ventilated and clean as well as large enough to allow all the animals housed to rest together fully outstretched where appropriate and turn around unimpeded. Any substrate used should be appropriate to the species concerned.

(b) Situation, space, air quality, cleanliness and temperature

- Licence holders must ensure that environmental conditions such as temperature, relative humidity, ventilation and lighting are carefully controlled at all times, are within the appropriate range for the species housed and monitored as appropriate, with any deviations recorded.
- Staff should be able to outline the remedial action taken when parameters deviate from the acceptable ranges for the species housed. Over-exposure to direct sunlight and other unintended heat sources must be avoided.
- Animals held or displayed outdoors must always have access to suitable protection from adverse weather conditions.
- Animals should not be exposed to draughts.

(c) Water quality (where relevant)

- For aquatic species appropriate water testing and recording must be undertaken as water quality and temperature is a major part of the life support

mechanism for aquatic species. The frequency of such testing should be appropriate to the scale and complexity of the system, but as a minimum water temperature should be checked once a day and water quality checked weekly. The results of these checks should be recorded along with any remedial action which has been undertaken to restore water quality to acceptable parameters.

(d) Noise levels

- Noise and vibration should only be at levels appropriate to the species, and enclosures must be situated away from sources causing stress or disturbance.

(e) Light levels

- Light should be provided in a suitable natural cycle for the species and where natural light is insufficient, suitable artificial lighting must be used.

(f) Ventilation

- Ventilation should be provided to all interior areas. Ventilation should be appropriate to the species and have no detrimental effect on temperature or humidity. Humidity must be appropriate for the species.

Condition: Animals must be kept clean and comfortable.

Guidance:

Local authorities should ensure that where accommodation is on a tiered system, it must be designed such that water, food or waste products must not be allowed to contaminate lower levels. All tiered accommodation should be secure to ensure that no animal can escape or fall out.

Condition: Where appropriate for the species—

- (a) opportunities for toileting must be provided, and
- (b) a toileting area must be provided if the licensable activity is carried on from premises at which animals are kept.

Guidance:

A toileting area that is appropriate for the animals or species concerned must be provided. Where a separate area is provided this must be thoroughly cleaned at regular intervals to maintain cleanliness and reduce the risk of illness or disease. For animals kept in pens or cages etc. procedures must be in place to ensure accommodation and any equipment within it is cleaned and disinfected as often as necessary to minimise the risk of disease and protect the health of the animals. Spot cleaning is acceptable if done frequently.

Condition: Procedures must be in place to ensure that—

- (a) accommodation in any premises from which the licensable activity is carried on and in which animals are kept is capable of being thoroughly cleansed and disinfected.

- (b) any equipment within the accommodation is cleaned as often as necessary, and
(c) good hygiene standards are maintained.

Guidance:

- All units, corridors, common areas, kitchens etc. should be capable of being kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust and must be kept in a condition which will reduce the risk of disease spread and possible accidents. Moveable items should be removed for cleaning at regular and appropriate intervals.
- Accommodation must be cleaned and disinfected with products effective against likely pathogens. At normal usage levels, disinfectants must be non-toxic to the species housed, used at an appropriate dilution factor and as per the manufacturer's instructions, with appropriate timed separation between disinfection and (re)introduction of animals observed
- Soiled bedding must be removed in a timely fashion and immediately replaced.
- Empty enclosures should be fully cleaned and, where appropriate, disinfected and allowed to dry when vacated and before new animals arrive. Substrate must be replaced as appropriate, and enclosure fixtures and fittings where they exist should be adequately disinfected.
- Enclosures should be cleaned at least daily and as necessary, unless such routine cleaning would cause stress or otherwise impact negatively on the welfare of the animals. Spot cleaning of enclosures is acceptable where appropriate.

Condition: The animals must be transported and handled in a manner (including, for example, in relation to housing, temperature, ventilation and frequency) that protects them from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

Guidance:

- Any vehicles used in connection with the licensable activity must be suitably equipped with appropriate ventilation, temperature control, security etc.
- Any animals received or consigned must be transported in accordance with current legislation.
- Where predator and prey animals are being transported in the same vehicle care should be taken to ensure that there is no visual contact.
- Vehicles or relevant carriers / compartments should be cleaned and disinfected after each collection / delivery of animals.
- Animals must be transported in suitable containers and/or be suitably restrained and must not be mixed with different species or unfamiliar animals. Where a number of animals are transported in the same container then it must be of an appropriate size and construction to minimise stress and avoid welfare issues.
- Animals should not be left in vehicles for unreasonable periods and must never be left unattended in a car or other vehicle when the temperature may pose a risk.
- On longer journeys, there must be planned stops to allow for toileting, access to water etc as appropriate, and to allow checks to be made on the welfare of all animals being transported.

- Injured, diseased or ill animals must not be transported unless being taken to a veterinarian, quarantine or isolation facility. In these situations, where applicable, there must be barriers between containers to reduce the transmission of disease or avoid further injury, where applicable, and the vehicle and equipment should be appropriately disinfected following transportation.
- Details of diseased or ill animals being transported should be recorded.

Condition: If the animals are kept in premises from which the licensable activity is carried on, all the animals must be easily accessible to staff and for inspection and there must be sufficient light for the staff to work effectively and observe the animals.

Guidance:

- The premises on which animals are kept, and the enclosures where they are housed should be so designed to allow for at least daily visual inspection, with minimal disturbance to the animal.
- Easy, safe access to animals is required to enable ready access to any animal in distress or is otherwise in need of assistance.
- Unless a particular animal or species requires to be kept in a low light environment, premises must have lighting that is adequate to allow for thorough inspection.

Condition: All resources must be provided in a way (for example as regards frequency, location and access points) that minimises competitive behaviour or the dominance of individual animals.

Guidance:

- Resources include, but are not limited to: food, water, enrichment items and resting/sleeping/toileting areas.
- There must be sufficient resources for each individual animal in any shared enclosure to minimise monopolisation of resources by dominant animals, and where this is identified, additional resources must be provided, or dominant animals removed where appropriate.
- Staff must be trained to recognise signs of group disruption (e.g. competition and aggression), which could compromise animal welfare.

Condition: The animals must not be left unattended in any situation or for any period likely to cause them distress.

Guidance:

- Licence holders should have appropriate procedures and sufficient staff in place to ensure that animals kept for the licensable activity are routinely checked and not subjected to situations that would impact negatively on the animal's welfare or lead to unnecessary stress. Examples would be keeping an animal that normally lives in social groups completely isolated from its own kind unnecessarily or without good reason, e.g. for reasons of disease or aggressive dominance.

6. Suitable Diet

Condition: The animals must be provided with a suitable diet in terms of quality, quantity and frequency and any new feeds must be introduced gradually to allow the animals to adjust to them.

Guidance:

- The quantity, frequency, delivery and type of food must be determined by what is appropriate for the species, its life stage and the individual animal's behavioural and nutritional needs. Staff should have knowledge of the feeding requirements for all the species held for which they are responsible.
- Fresh foods must be kept refrigerated where appropriate. Frozen foods intended for use should be stored in an appropriate deep freeze and defrosted thoroughly to room temperature before use.
- Live food intended for use must be housed in suitable escape proof containers.
- Live food, if uneaten in a short period, should be removed where it may pose a risk to the species housed e.g. crickets biting reptiles.

Condition: Feed and (where appropriate) water intake must be monitored, and any problems recorded and addressed.

Guidance:

- You should be able to demonstrate adequate procedures to record abnormalities in animals eating and/or drinking habits and the actions to be taken in such circumstances. Licence holders should know when to seek appropriate veterinary advice if necessary.
- Dogs must not remain inappetent (without appetite) for longer than 24 hours without veterinary advice being sought. Where there are specific concerns about the welfare of the dog veterinary advice must be sought earlier.
- If an animal is housed as part of a social group, the establishment should have the ability to isolate an individual to ascertain whether it is eating or not.
- For small mammals, guinea pigs, rabbits and birds, if there is no improvement in food intake within 12 hours following remedial action by a competent person or the condition of the individual deteriorates a veterinarian must be consulted without delay.
- Significant weight loss or gain in animals kept for the licensable activity must be assessed by a competent person. Where the underlying reason cannot be identified, and/or remedial measures have been unsuccessful, the animal must be assessed by a veterinarian.

Condition: Feed and drinking water provided to the animals must be unspoilt and free from contamination.

Guidance:

- Animals must have access to fresh, clean drinking water at all times, unless it is being restricted on veterinary advice.
- Any uneaten food should be removed within 24 hours of being supplied to an animal or sooner if spoilt.

- Refrigeration facilities for food storage should be provided. High risk foods (such as cooked or raw meat and fish, or dairy products) and the remains of opened tinned or pouched food must be stored in covered, non-metal, leak proof containers and refrigerated.
- Dried food should be stored in appropriately cool and dry places.
- Food must be protected against dampness, deterioration, mould or from contamination by other animals.

Condition: Feed and drinking receptacles must be capable of being cleaned and disinfected, or disposable.

Guidance:

- Receptacles should be non-porous, or disposable.
- Receptacles must be cleaned daily and disinfected at least once a week. If damaged they must be disposed of.
- Disposable receptacles should only be used once.
- Animals undergoing treatment for illness or disease must have separate food and water containers whilst treatment is ongoing to protect the health of other animals on the premises.

Condition: If the animals are kept in premises from which the licensable activity is carried on, constant access to fresh, clean drinking water must be provided in a suitable receptacle for species that require it.

Guidance:

- Fresh clean water must be available at all times, except when withdrawn on veterinary advice, and during the transitional period when water supplies are being changed e.g. when water bottles are removed for filling, cleaning etc.
- Water should be located away from the sleeping area to help prevent this becoming damp or waterlogged.
- There should be sufficient water receptacles for the number of animals kept on site.

Condition: Where feed is prepared on any premises from which the licensable activity is carried on, there must be hygienic facilities for its preparation, including a working surface, hot and cold running water and storage.

Guidance:

- Staff should conform to good hygiene practice in the preparation of food, having due regard to the risk of cross contamination between equipment, utensils and surfaces. There should be appropriate disinfectants available to clean the food preparation area immediately following its use.
- The food preparation area must be kept clean and vermin free.
- Human and animal food preparation should not take place in shared preparation areas at the same time or using shared utensils.
- In establishments where staff are employed, appropriate hand washing facilities with an adequate supply of hot and cold water must be provided for them to wash their hands.

7. Enrichment and training of animals

Condition: If the animals are kept in premises from which the licensable activity is carried on, active and effective environmental enrichment must be provided to the animals in inside and any outside environments.

Guidance:

- You should provide, where appropriate for the species, enrichment both inside and outside, including activities such as training, grooming, socialisation and play.
- Environmental enrichment accessories which stimulate natural behaviour must be provided as appropriate to the species maintained. These must not have the potential to cause injury, must be checked daily and replaced if damaged.
- As appropriate to the species, enrichment devices should be changed on a regular basis to introduce novelty and maintain interest. When adding new enrichment devices, staff should ensure that the animal is closely monitored for signs of distress.
- Accessories should be disposable or be disinfected between animals where there is an identified risk of disease spread if enrichment toys or other forms of enrichment are allowed to be shared.
- Where training is undertaken it must not involve methods that may cause pain, injury or suffering. Training should be reward based, i.e. it should reward desired behaviour and ignore unwanted behaviour.

8. Animal Handling and interactions

Condition: All people responsible for the care of the animals must be competent in the appropriate handling of each animal to protect it from suffering, injury or disease.

Guidance:

- All staff must be trained and competent in the handling of the animals for which they are responsible and be able to demonstrate that they understand the signs of an animal that is stressed or uncomfortable with being handled.
- Where a customer, visitor or potential adopter is handling an animal, a competent member of staff should be present to demonstrate how the animal should be handled and ensure the interaction is appropriate and is stopped if the animal shows sign of fear, suffering or fatigue.
- Visitors, especially children, handling animals must be supervised and offered facilities (and encouraged) to clean their hands before and afterwards (e.g. hand sanitisers). Hand washing facilities should be available.
- Appropriate handling equipment should be available and used when necessary. All equipment used should be safe and appropriate for the intended use.

Condition: If the animals are kept in premises from which the licensable activity is carried on, the animals must be kept separately or in suitable compatible social groups appropriate to the species and individual animals. No animals from a social species may be isolated or separated from others of their species for any longer than is necessary.

Guidance:

- Where appropriate, all animals should be housed in social groups of suitable size. Group-housed animals must be monitored for any signs of domination or wider group disruption and remedial action taken, and documented if necessary.
- Acceptable reasons for isolation/separation of social species if remedial action has not been successful include demonstrable risk of disease, injury, stress or behavioural issues such as persistent domination/aggression.
- Where practical and appropriate for the species, to help avoid unwanted litters, all animals should be sexed immediately on arrival to the premises and housed in single sex groups unless this would compromise welfare.
- Species that are not social or of limited sociability, e.g. cats, should be housed individually or in small groups with animals that they are sociable with. Individual animals must be monitored and separated if necessary, even if in small groups as some individuals that tolerated one another in a household may not be so tolerant in the confines of a pen or enclosure.

9. Protection from Pain, Suffering, Injury and Disease

Condition: Written procedures must—

(a) be in place and implemented covering—

- (i) feeding regimes,
- (ii) cleaning regimes,
- (iii) transportation,
- (iv) the prevention of, and control of the spread of, disease,
- (v) monitoring and ensuring the health and welfare of all the animals,
- (vi) the death or escape of an animal (including the storage of deceased animals);

(b) be in place covering the care of the animals—

- (i) following the suspension or revocation of the licence,
- (ii) during an emergency, and
- (iii) following an emergency.

Condition: All people responsible for the care of the animals must be made fully aware of these procedures.

Guidance:

- Written procedures should be in place that are proportional to the size and complexity of the licenced activity. Written procedures must be made available to inspectors when requested. The licence holder and any staff (including volunteers) must be fully aware of these procedures and be confident in their application.
- Procedures should demonstrate how the conditions outlined in this guidance are met.

Condition: If animals are kept in premises from which the licensable activity is carried on, appropriate isolation, in separate self-contained facilities, must be available for the care of sick, injured or potentially infectious animals.

Guidance:

- Provision must be made for the isolation of sick/injured/infectious animals and those that are potentially infected or otherwise a risk, e.g. a rescued animal that is clearly in a poor state of health.
- Adequate isolation facilities may be on site or at another location, such as a local veterinary practice or introduced through specific changes in management practices demonstrated by written procedures. If the isolation facility is at another location, such as a local veterinary practice, a letter must be provided by the practice stating that they are prepared to provide such facilities. Isolation facilities must be available 24 hours per day.
- Documented procedures must be in place, and understood by all staff, to prevent the spread of infectious disease, parasites etc between isolated animals and the other animals on the premises.
- Where infectious disease is present in premises, appropriate procedures to mitigate against further spread must be implemented. This includes use of protective clothing and footwear (where applicable) changed between enclosures; separate storage and use of equipment, thorough cleaning of utensils, and segregation of waste.
- Isolated animals must be kept in a secure, comfortable location where their condition and needs can be monitored and a record kept of their treatment.
- Sick, injured or infectious animals must not be handled by members of the public.

Condition: All reasonable precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread among the animals and people of infectious diseases, pathogens and parasites.

Guidance:

- Procedures should be in place so that signage, care information and/or staff inform visitors about the risks of infectious disease transmission.
- Any animal which is suffering from, or is reasonably suspected of having come into contact with any other animal suffering from, any infectious or contagious disease or which is clinically infested with parasites, must be quarantined from healthy animals.
- Where appropriate, any animals brought on to a facility that is suspected of having disease or parasitic infestation must be kept isolated until cleared by a veterinarian.

Condition: All excreta and soiled bedding for disposal must be stored and disposed of in a hygienic manner and in accordance with any relevant legislation.

Guidance:

- Licenced premises must have facilities for the appropriate storage, treatment and disposal of all classifications of waste produced as part of the licensable activity.
- Excreta and soiled bedding should be removed from the premises on a regular basis, at least weekly, disposed of to the satisfaction of the appropriate local

authority, and in accordance with current regulations and good waste management practice.

- All excreta and soiled bedding must be stored away from where food and animals are kept.

Condition: Sick or injured animals must receive prompt attention from a veterinary surgeon or, in the case of any sick or injured fish, an appropriately trained person and the advice of that veterinary surgeon or that trained person must be followed.

Guidance:

- Licence holders must have procedures in place to ensure that any sick or injured animal receives appropriate care and treatment without delay. Animals must only be treated by appropriately competent and trained staff or veterinarians. "Care and treatment" may include euthanasia. Where euthanasia is to be carried out it must only be done by a suitably qualified and trained person.
- With the exception of fish (where the usual practice is to treat all fish in a tank), any animal showing any sign of disease, injury or illness must be kept separate from other animals and veterinary advice, or that of a competent person in the case of fish, must be promptly sought. Any instructions for the treatment of an animal must be strictly followed, with appropriate records kept (see relevant specific guidance).

Condition: Where necessary, animals must receive preventative treatment by an appropriately competent person in consultation with a veterinary surgeon.

Guidance: See guidance notes directly above.

Condition: The licence holder must register with a veterinary surgeon and the contact details of that veterinarian must be readily available to all staff on any premises on which animals are kept and where the licensable activity is carried on.

Guidance:

- Licence holders must be able to provide the licensing authority with evidence of registration with a veterinary practice where requested to do so.
- The name, address and telephone contact number, including out of hours provision, of the veterinary practice used by the licenced premises must be easily available to all staff and included as part of overall emergency planning.

Condition: Prescribed medicines must be stored safely and securely to safeguard against unauthorised access, at the correct temperature, and used in accordance with the instructions of the veterinary surgeon.

Guidance:

- Licence holders must ensure safe and secure storage for prescribed medicines and appropriate procedures should be in place to ensure that only staff with sufficient knowledge or training have access to medicines on site.

- Appropriate procedures should be in place to record any use of prescribed medicines.

Condition: Medicines other than prescribed medicines must be stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the instructions of the manufacturer or veterinary surgeon.

Guidance: Licence holders must have appropriate storage, usage and disposal procedures in place which meets this condition of licence.

Condition: Cleaning products must be suitable, safe and effective against pathogens that pose a risk to the animals and must be used, stored and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and used in a way which prevents distress or suffering of the animals.

Guidance:

- Manufacturers' recommended guidelines for use, correct dilutions and contact time for use in cleaning and disinfection procedures must be followed.
- Any equipment that has been used on an infectious or suspected infectious animal must be cleaned and disinfected after use, or disposed of.
- Staff using cleaning products must be competent in the safe use of those cleaning products and understand the compatibility or otherwise of different bactericides, fungicides and virucides.

Condition: No person may euthanase an animal except a veterinary surgeon, a person acting under supervision of a veterinary surgeon, a person who has been authorised by a veterinary surgeon as competent for such purpose or—

(a) in the case of fish, a person who is competent for such purpose,

(b) in the case of equines, and species generally regarded as farmed livestock, a person who is competent, and who holds a licence or certificate which is relevant to the species, for such purpose,

except where the purpose of the euthanasia is to end suffering that has arisen suddenly and unexpectedly and to arrange for such a person to euthanase the animal would prolong the suffering.

Guidance:

- Euthanasia must be carried out using a humane and effective method in a manner compliant with current legislation, including, but not limited to, the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006.
- Under no circumstances may an animal be euthanized other than in a humane and effective manner. In case of doubt as to humane and effective methods of euthanasia, veterinary advice must be sought.
- Where a licence holder is breeding or purchasing live vertebrate animals that are to be euthanased for the purpose of feeding to other animals held on the premises, the method of euthanasia must be assessed by a veterinarian and signed off as to the satisfaction of the veterinarian that the method is humane

and effective and continues to be so. The method of euthanasia must be safe and humane for both the culled animal and the animal that is to be fed.

Condition: All animals must be checked at least once daily and more regularly as necessary for any signs of suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour and vulnerable animals must be checked more frequently.

Condition: Any signs of suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour must be recorded and if necessary the advice of a veterinary surgeon (or in the case of fish, of an appropriately competent person) must be sought and followed.

Guidance:

- Checks should not cause unnecessary stress or disturbance. Visual checks are acceptable.
- A system of recording abnormalities must be maintained and demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local authority.
- Where necessary for specific species, vulnerable animals, such as young, pregnant, sick or injured animals, must be checked more frequently than the minimum of once daily.
- Licence holders or any staff responsible for the care of animals should be competent in identifying signs of suffering or abnormal behaviour and know whom to contact for advice.

10. Emergencies

Condition: If animals are kept in premises, other than domestic premises, from which the licensable activity is carried on—

(a) a written emergency plan, acceptable to the licensing authority, must be in place, known and available to all the staff on the premises, and

(b) such a plan must be followed where necessary to ensure appropriate steps are taken to protect all animals on the premises (without risking human life) in case of fire, breakdowns of essential heating, ventilation and aeration or filtration systems or other emergencies.

Guidance:

- Licence holders must have an emergency plan in place that is appropriate for the size and complexity of the premises and facilities on which animals are kept.
- A copy of the emergency plan must be permanently available and displayed to allow staff to access it as and when required.
- Both the licence holder and, where applicable, all staff on site must be able to demonstrate that they are both aware of and conversant with the requirements of the emergency plan.
- Suitable emergency response plans must cover arrangements for emergency evacuation, housing, husbandry and loss of power/water. Emergency evacuation must detail how and by what means animals, staff and the public must evacuate the establishment, identify designated fire assembly points,

designated holding areas for animals and which animals can and cannot be evacuated (such as aquaria and ponds).

- Consideration must be given to using systems which would allow timely removal of the animals in the case of emergency. Where emergencies are potentially life threatening, humans must not be put at risk attempting to remove animals.
- Emergency drills should be regularly practised and practices recorded with any failings noted and addressed in the procedures. Drills should be undertaken at least annually, or as determined by fire risk assessments.
- All staff and volunteers should undergo regular training and records must be kept of such training. Sufficient nominated staff must be properly trained on the use of any emergency equipment provided.
- All emergency equipment must be maintained in a good state of repair and serviced according to manufacturer's guidelines.
- Entrances and fire exits must be clear of obstructions at all times.
- Suitable firefighting, prevention and detection equipment must be provided and maintained in good working order. Any buildings must have at least one working smoke detector (or other suitable fire detection system) installed in a suitable location on each separate level / floor of the property and there must be at least one carbon monoxide detector.

Condition: Any such emergency plan must include details of the emergency measures to be taken for the extrication of the animals should the premises become uninhabitable and an emergency telephone list that includes the fire service and police.

Guidance:

- The emergency plan should include a list of any species listed in the first column of the current schedule of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1973 held on site, where applicable, and a specific action plan for their safe removal and immediate appropriate rehoming in the case of emergency. Enclosures where such animals are housed must be secure and marked accordingly.
- There must be a plan for the relocation and accommodation of animals kept for the licensable activity should the premises become uninhabitable.
- There must be a documented policy in place for dealing with emergencies, including extremes of temperature and weather conditions (both hot and cold).

Condition: External doors and gates must be lockable.

Guidance:

- Licence holders should ensure that any areas where animals are kept for the purposes of the licensable activity have secure and lockable external doors and gates. This is to ensure that only authorised persons can access areas where animals are kept and keep animals on the premises from escaping.
- If any of the animals kept in the UK by the licence holder are classed as dangerous wild animals, then the licensing authority must ensure that the licence holder is complying with all relevant legislation regarding security and public safety.

Condition: If animals are kept in premises from which the licensable activity is undertaken, a designated key holder with access to all animal areas must at all times be within reasonable travel distance of the premises and available to attend in an emergency.

Guidance:

- A reasonable distance would, in normal conditions, be interpreted as no more than 30 minutes travelling time.
- On non-domestic premises an emergency contact name / number should be displayed on the outside of the premises.
- The designated key holder must be fully conversant with the emergency plan and know exactly what animals are on the premises and where they are located. They should be familiar with the layout of the licensed premises.
- Ideally, an on-call rota system should be in place.

Guidance on specific conditions – rehoming activities (other than in the course of operating an AWE)

1. Supply of animals

Condition: No animal of any of the following descriptions may be supplied as a pet by or on behalf of the licence holder—

- a) unweaned mammals,
- b) mammals weaned at an age at which they should not have been weaned,
- c) non-mammals that are incapable of feeding themselves,
- d) puppies, kittens, ferrets or kits, aged under 8 weeks, and
- e) puppies which were not bred by the licence holder.

Guidance:

Holders of a rehoming licence must not supply a puppy (a dog under 6 months old) as a pet unless they are the breeder of the animal being supplied. Evidence of such must be provided where requested by the licensing authority or an appointed inspector. Such evidence could include records of the mating(s), including the location of mating/fertilisation, the identity of the sire (where known), being shown where the animals were or will be born, reared and kept until old enough to be supplied as a pet and other documentary/photographic evidence.

2. Protection from suffering, injury and disease

Condition: All animals supplied as pets must be in good health.

Guidance:

Licence holders must not knowingly rehome any animal that is not fit, healthy or, where applicable, socialised. Where it is clear that an animal is not in good physical or mental health it must not be rehomed. The animal must be provided with appropriate care, including veterinary care where necessary, until it is fit for rehoming. In order to meet this licence obligation the licence holder and any staff employed must be adequately trained and experienced enough to identify when an animal is unsuitable for rehoming due to ill-health, injury or another form of suffering. Procedures must be in place to deal with ill and injured animals.

Condition: Any animal with a condition which is likely to affect its quality of life must not be moved, transferred or supplied as a pet but may be moved to an isolation facility or veterinary care facility if required until the animal has recovered.

Guidance:

Licence holders should have provision on the licensed premises or at another nearby suitable facility to isolate any animal with a condition that is likely to be affecting its quality of life, either short-term or long-term. If the animal is to remain on the premises, it should be located in a suitably quiet and safe part of the premises which is readily accessible to allow for regular monitoring of its condition. Veterinary opinion should be sought where necessary, and must be sought where it is clear that the animals condition is long-term or unlikely to improve. If the animal requires to be

transported to a veterinary facility then it should be done in a manner that minimises the stress on the animal.

Condition: When arranging for the receipt of animals, the licence holder must make reasonable efforts to ensure that they will be transported in a suitable manner.

Guidance:

In a suitable manner means, in a manner that ensures that animals are safe from harm, unable to escape and have both space and ventilation commensurate with the animal type and distance to be travelled. All reasonable steps should be taken to minimise the stress on animals during transportation.

Condition: When an animal is transported in or handed over in a container to the person to whom the licence holder is supplying the animal, the container must be suitable for the species and expected duration of the journey.

Guidance:

Licence holders must ensure, and demonstrate where asked to do so, that only appropriate containers, ideally designed for the purpose, are being used to transport an animal or when an animal is being transferred to its new owner or keeper. Containers used must meet the needs of the animal in terms of ventilation, temperature, light and security. Where an animal needs to stay in a container until reaching its new home consideration must be given to the animals water, food and toileting requirements where relevant.

3. Pet care and advice

Condition: Any equipment and accessories being supplied with an animal must be suitable for the animal.

Guidance:

Where applicable, licence holders must only supply new keepers of animals with equipment and accessories that are designed for and are suitable for the particular animal being supplied as a pet.

Condition: A person supplied with an animal as a pet by the licence holder must be provided with information on the appropriate care of the animal including in relation to—

- a) feeding,
- b) housing,
- c) handling,
- d) husbandry,
- e) the life expectancy of its species,
- f) the provision of suitable accessories, and
- g) veterinary care (including details of any vaccinations and disease testing that the licence holder has arranged for the animal).

Guidance:

The licence holder must, as a minimum, provide persons being supplied with an animal with the information set out in the box above. Only suitably qualified or experienced staff should provide such advice. Pet care advice may be in the form of pet care leaflets or other similar written or electronic instructions, given at the point of handover to the person being supplied with an animal.

Ideally, any advice given by licence holders should outline the 5 Welfare Needs of Animals and make reference to an owner's legal obligations under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. Advice on microchipping should also be covered where appropriate.

If the animal being rehomed is a dog or cat then licence holders should provide advice on: microchipping or updating the microchip database registration, vaccinations, routine worming, socialisation and neutering. A transitional feeding schedule must also be provided showing the day by day ratio if dietary changes are required.

Condition: A person supplied with an animal as a pet must be informed of the country of origin of the animal and the species, and where known, the age, sex and veterinary record of the animal.

Guidance:

In order to meet this condition of licence the licence holder should ensure that they are recording this information where it is known or can be determined. Licensing authorities may seek evidence from you that this information is being recorded to enable it to be supplied to persons supplied with an animal.

4. Return of animals

The licence holder must accept return of any live animal that the licence holder has supplied to a person in the course of the licensable activity, and arrange for the collection of the animal to facilitate the return if requested by the person supplied, if—

- a) the person supplied notifies the licence holder of the intention to return the animal within the 10 days following the date the animal was supplied, and
- b) the animal is in a fit state to be transported.

Guidance:

Licence holders must have appropriate return procedures in place to facilitate the return of any animal that they have supplied as a pet if requested to do so within 10 days of the date of handover. Licence holders should have robust contingency measures in place to ensure that any returned animal can be speedily and safely accommodated.

Where an animal cannot be returned within the 10 day window due to it not being fit for transport, but the licence holder has been requested to accept its return within the

10 days, the licence holder must arrange for the return of the animal once the animal is fit enough to travel.

To avoid a situation where an animal needs to be returned, licence holders should take all reasonable steps to rehome animals responsibly and only rehome an animal where they are satisfied that the animal is a suitable match for the new keeper and their home situation, particularly when there are children and/or vulnerable adults in the household.

Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, licence holders should not rehome any equine, dog or cat with anyone that has not met and interacted with the animal beforehand. Ideally such interaction should be supervised by the licence holder or where appropriate suitably experienced staff. Ideally, the licence holder as part of the rehoming process will ensure interaction with the animal to be rehomed takes place in the prospective new owners premises to allow for an assessment of the environment in which the animal will be rehomed. It is recognised however that this will not always be possible or practical.

Minimum cage/enclosure sizes (where used) applicable to all licensable activities

Dogs: Minimum enclosure/kennel size:

Dog weight	Minimum Kennel area (m ²) (per dog)	Kennel <u>example</u> dimensions (LxW) (m)	Minimum area per additional dog (m ²)	Minimum height of kennel (m)
<5kg (incl. puppies)	4	2 x 2	0.5	2
5 to 10kg	4	2 x 2	1.0	2
10 to 15kg	4	2 x 2	1.5	2
15 to 20kg	4	2 x 2	2	2
20 to 30kg	8	4 x 2	4	2
Over 30kg	Must be scaled up as appropriate	Must be scaled up as appropriate	Must be scaled up as appropriate	2

The kennel area should be large enough to allow separate sleeping and activity areas. The activity area must not be used (designated) as a sleeping area or part of the sleeping area. The kennel should allow each dog to be able to walk, turn around and wag its tail without touching the sides of the kennel. The dogs should have sufficient room to play, stand on their hind limbs and to lie down fully stretched out without touching another individual. The kennel size required will increase in relation to the size and number of dogs housed at any one time. Bitches with a litter of pups should have an enclosure size double that stated for its normal weight range.

The length and the width should be sufficient to allow all the dogs to lie outstretched without their noses or tails touching the walls or other individuals. Where the exercise area is physically separate from the dog's resting/sleeping area dogs must be given access to the exercise area at least four times a day. Part or all of the exercise area should be outdoors. Any separate exercise area should be fully cleaned and disinfected between its use by different batches of dogs to minimise the risk of disease transmission.

Cats: Minimum enclosure size for adult cats (older than 26 weeks old):

The size of a cat unit includes the sleeping area plus the exercise area. These sizes are outlined below.

The sleeping area may be full height or penthouse sleeping accommodation (an enclosed boxed sleeping area or pod raised off the ground). The pod needs to be high enough off the ground to be able to clean underneath but not too high as to make cleaning inside the box difficult. The height of the pod must be between 75cm and 1.5m and the total height of the sleep area must be a minimum of 1.8m whether full height or a pod. The area under the pod cannot be considered as part of the exercise area.

In some catteries that are completely indoors, it is not necessary to have completely separate sleeping and exercise areas. The floor area must be equal to the sum of the above sleeping and exercise areas and the cat needs a unit to sleep on.

Size	Min area for the sleeping area	Min area for the exercise area	Minimum total area if single indoor unit	Min height
One cat	0.85m ²	1.65m ²	2.5m ²	1.8m
Up to 2 cats	1.1m ²	2.2m ²	3.3m ²	1.8m
Up to 4 cats	1.7 m ²	2.8m ²	4.5m ²	1.8m

Minimum enclosure sizes for kittens up to 26 weeks old

Cats	Minimum floor area (m ²)	<u>Example</u> dimensions (m) W x L	Minimum cage height (m)	Additional space
4 Kittens <12-weeks old	1	1 x 1	0.6	0.25m ² / kitten
Single cat 12 – 26 weeks old	0.85	0.9 x 0.95	1.8	-
2 cats 12 – 26 weeks old	1.5	0.9 x 1.66	1.8	-
3 to 4 cats 12 – 26 weeks old	1.9	0.9 x 2.1	1.8	-

Kittens require adequate space to play together and to have space for a litter tray and bed. Where practical, varying floor heights to enable climbing should also be provided. There should be adequate space for feeding, drinking, sleeping and litter tray to be kept separate.

Rabbits: Minimum enclosure sizes (excluding exercise run/area)

Weight of rabbit	Maximum stocking density	Minimum floor area (m ²)	<u>Example</u> dimensions (m) W x L	Minimum cage height (m)	Additional floor area for each additional rabbit (m ²)
Up to 4kg	4	0.75	1.5 x 0.5 or 1.0 x 0.75	0.45	0.25
4 – 6kg	2	0.75	1.5 x 0.5 or 1.0 x 0.75	0.5	0.25
>6kg	2	1.08	1.8 x 0.6 or 1.5 x 0.72	0.8	0.54

Enclosures should be large enough for rabbits to be able to stand fully upright on their haunches without their ears touching the roof and lie fully outstretched (without

touching the sides of the enclosure or another rabbit). Slatted, grid or wire mesh floors must not be used in rabbit accommodation. Where exercise runs are attached to enclosures these must be of sufficient size to allow rabbits to hop, jump and generally enjoy total freedom of movement.

Ferrets: Minimum enclosure sizes

Age of ferret	Maximum stocking density	Minimum floor area (m ²)	Dimensions (m) W x L	Minimum dimensions (m)	Minimum cage height (m)	Additional floor area for each additional ferret (m ²)
<12 weeks old	1 – 4	1	1 x 1 or 1.66 x 0.6	0.6	0.6	0.25
>12 weeks old	1	0.6	1 x 0.6 or 0.77 x 0.77	0.6	0.6	0.6

Accommodation needs to be of sufficient size to allow all the ferrets housed to be able to lie fully outstretched in any direction, run, forage, explore or play, as well as to stand fully upright without touching the roof of the enclosure. Ferrets must be provided with constant access to places to hide. As a minimum, each hiding place must be large enough to allow one ferret to rest alone.

Guinea Pigs: Minimum enclosure sizes

Type	Stocking density	Minimum floor area (m ²)	Example dimensions (m) W x L	Minimum cage height (m)	Additional floor area for each additional animal (m ²)
Guinea pig	1-4	0.23	1 x 0.23 or 0.52 x 0.52	0.3	0.09

Accommodation needs to be of sufficient size to allow all the guinea pigs housed to be able to lie fully outstretched (without touching the sides of the enclosure or another guinea pig), run, play, tunnel and stand without touching the roof of the enclosure. Ramps within enclosures must be no steeper than 45° as guinea pigs are poor climbers.

Where guinea pigs are housed in hutches, provision must be made for regular exercise in a secure area outside of the hutch.

Guinea pigs must be provided with constant access to places to hide, which may include hay piles, in addition to their sleeping area. At a minimum each hiding place is to be large enough to allow one guinea pig to rest alone.

Small Rodents: Minimum enclosure sizes

No. of Animals	Area per number of animals (cm ²)							Minimum Cage Height (cm)	Minimum Cage Depth (cm)
	1 – 4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Mice and hamsters	680	790	900	1000	1113	1240	1350	25	25
Gerbils	680	790	900	1000	1113	1240	1350	30	25
Rats	1350	1570	1800	2020	2225	2470	2700	30	28
Degus	2250	2630	3000	3380	3750	4130	4500	30	30
Chinchillas	2500	3750	5000	6250	7500	8750	10000	45	45

Every animal should be able to lie fully outstretched, turn around unimpeded, stand fully upright without touching the cage roof, hide, dig, and play.

Sleeping areas need to be dry, draught-free, well ventilated and clean as well as large enough to allow all the small rodents housed to rest together fully outstretched, turn around unimpeded and move around comfortably.

Birds: Minimum enclosure/cage sizes

Species	Approx. length of bird (head to tip of tail) (cm)	Average length of flying wingspan (cm)	Minimum cage dimensions (cm) (L = 2 x wingspan, D = 1.5 x wingspan, H = 1.5 x wingspan)			Suggested % enclosure size increase per additional bird.
			L	D	H	
Budgerigar	18	30	60	45	45	5
Cockatiel	30	48	96	72	72	10
Love bird	15	28	56	42	42	10
Small parakeets and conures	20	35	70	52.5	52.5	10
Large parakeets, conures and small macaws	34	70	140	105	105	20
Amazon parrots	30	60	120	90	90	20
African grey	34	70	140	105	105	20
Cockatoo (small - medium)	35	75	150	112.5	112.5	20
Large cockatoos and macaws	85	110	220	165	165	20
Canary	10 -12	22	44	33	33	5
Zebra finch	10 -12	22	44	33	33	5
Pigeon	35	70	140	105	105	10

Turaco	40-50	50	100	75	75	20
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Care must be taken where aviaries or cages are constructed of newly galvanised mesh to prevent heavy metal poisoning, particularly in psittacines which will often chew the metal. If wire mesh is used in the construction of an enclosure the mesh hole size must be small enough that birds housed within cannot put their head or wing through it. The mesh gauge must be stout enough that the birds cannot break or bend it. The licence holder must be able to demonstrate the steps taken to minimise or prevent any poisoning.

Birds should not have to compete for drinkers/feeders and risk exclusion. Passerines should have food available at all times. Enrichment and feeding devices need to be provided for larger psittacids. For parrots, it is preferable to use swinging systems such that the keeper does not need to enter the cage in order to change food/water. Bowls should not be able to be removed from holders by the parrot.

There must be adequate perching space for all birds at the same time. Perches must be positioned so that birds do not defecate on each other and must be of appropriate size and shape for each species. Outdoor aviaries must include sufficient sheltered and non-sheltered space. Cage size must be adequate to allow birds to open their wings fully in all directions. Cages must include appropriate environmental enrichment.

Reptiles and amphibians: minimum acceptable enclosure sizes

SVL: Snout-to-vent length (distance from nose to cloaca).

STL: Snout-to-tail length (distance from nose to tip of tail).

SCL: Straight-carapace-length (straight length of the curved part of the shell of a tortoise). Carapace is the curved top part of the tortoise or terrapin shell, as opposed to the flat bottom part which is the plastron.

Group	Length	Width	Height	Water depth (where appropriate)
Frogs and toads	30cm or 3 x SVL (whichever is larger)	30cm or 3 x SVL (whichever is larger)	30cm or 3 x SVL (whichever is larger)	2 x SVL
Newts and salamanders	30cm or 3 x SVL (whichever is larger)	30cm or 2 x SVL (whichever is larger)	30cm or 3x SVL (whichever is larger)	2 x SVL
Snakes (currently subject to review by UK Animal Welfare Commission)	No less than 2/3 length STL	No less than 1/3 length STL	-	-
Lizards	4 x SVL	2.5 x SVL	-	-

Terrapins and turtles	90cm or 5 x SCL (whichever is larger)	3x SCL	-	4 x carapace height*
Tortoises	90cm or 5 x SCL (whichever is larger)	5 x SCL	2 x SCL	-

Height and Width of the enclosure must be appropriate to the species, with arboreal species requiring more height than terrestrial species. When considering vivarium size for arboreal species the licence holder should look to increase the heights outlined above. Where this is the case it is acceptable to reduce the length of the vivarium dimensions by a maximum of 30%. Any reduction in length must, at least, equal the additional height.

Most amphibians and reptiles are not social and may, therefore, be kept individually. Decisions to pair- or group-house amphibian or reptile species must be made by suitably trained and competent staff. Compatible species-specific sex ratios and suitable group sizes must be observed bearing in mind potential for persistent aggression.



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