

## **Respect for Animals**

**Consultation Question 1** Do you believe that the exhibitions and performances required of wild animals in travelling circuses compromise respect for the animals

concerned? Why?

No

Comments

**There is no direct evidence to support this and the welfare of the animal is very dependent upon the management and care arrangements which the circus has in place. Notwithstanding this, the transportation of animals is another factor to be taken into consideration as it is difficult to understand how the "exhibiting natural behaviour" criteria (one of the Five Freedoms) can be adequately met in a travelling operation**

**Consultation question 2** Do you believe that the exhibitions and performances required of wild animals in travelling circuses have an adverse impact on the development of respectful and responsible attitudes towards animals in children and young people? Why?

Don't know

Comments. **There are benefits and disadvantages, and the exhibition/performance is only one element which may affect young persons attitudes. This can be further addressed through the provision of information, educational materials etc, which equally have a role in affecting attitudes. It is worth considering and contrasting the situation of zoos which are required (by the amended ZLA) to identify their contribution to education and environmental values. This is an explicit requirement.**

**Consultation Question 3** Do you consider that concerns relating to respect for animals could be resolved without banning the use of wild animals in travelling circuses. If so, how?

Yes

Comments. **The concerns are not evidenced, as this paper recognises, and it is difficult to comment, given that there are no circuses in Scotland exhibiting wild animals. A precautionary approach could be taken in that there are clear risks and the ban would address these, as opposed to assessing each circus on its own merits. The Council does NOT support the ban, and believe there are adequate existing controls under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 1981/2006 and the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 to regulate standards of animal health and welfare of any animals used in circuses.**

**Travelling environment**

**Consultation Question 4** Do you believe that the ability of none, some, or all wild animals to undertake natural behaviours are compromised within the travelling circus environment? Which species? Which needs? Why?

Some

**Comments.** It is difficult to envisage how transportation of animals does not inhibit the animals "natural behaviour". To make an assessment of this would require detailed scientific opinion and would probably be very complex. Different species have widely different needs and an anthropomorphic assessment is inherently flawed. For example, there is an increasing belief among animal behavioural scientists that polar bears cannot be kept in captivity in any way which does not inflict unnecessary suffering on them due to the climatic environment they habitually inhabit and the extensive nature of their normal territorial exploration.

**Consultation Question 5** Do you consider that it is possible to facilitate the natural behaviour of none, some or all wild animals within the travelling circus environment? Which species? How?

Some

**Comments.** The same position could be made for zoos as this paper does for travelling circuses, albeit that the animals are subjected to more regular transportation. There are many related factors (standard of care, type of animal, conditions of transportation, nature of the exhibition etc) which can impact on the animal's welfare. A ban would address these, as would the application of standards and enforcement under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act. It is also noted that there is a licensing regime for circuses as well as zoos.

**Consultation 6** Do you consider that the concerns raised surrounding the travelling environment could be resolved without banning the use of wild animals in travelling circuses? How?

Yes

**Comments** YES, through the application of standards and enforcement under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act. It is also noted that there is a licensing regime for circuses as well as zoos. It is almost certain that any and all of these concerns COULD be addressed.

**Ethical costs and benefits**

**Consultation Question 7** Do you consider that there are any benefits to be gained from having wild animals in travelling circuses? What are they?

Don't know

**Comments.** It could be argued that there may be educational benefits to children and the opportunity to see such animals in person. Without having access to any statistically significant research data this cannot be answered.

**Consultation Question 8** Do you believe that there are sufficient benefits to justify the potential compromise to the wider well-being of wild animals kept in a travelling circus ? Why?

No

**Comments.** There are subjective and ethical reasons to support the proposed ban but any decision should be based on a scientific determination which is not available.

**Consultation Question 9** Do you consider that the potential conflict between compromising the well-being of wild animals and obtaining any benefit could be resolved without banning the use of wild animals in travelling circuses. If so, how?

Yes

**Comments** Possibly through the coordinated approach to enforcement of animal health and welfare and a national licensing regime where all parties (LA, AHVLA, SG, police etc) assess the suitability of the arrangements, prior to being allowed to travel in Scotland. This could be supported by on-site enforcement. This could also be achieved by specifying which species could NOT be kept in this environment. This would be a very defensible position. E.g. a zebra can be tamed and trained to act in many ways very similar to domestic equines. Exercising such an animal does not present great difficulties. The same is not true for the large cats.

#### Financial impacts of a ban

**Consultation Question 10** As far as you are aware, how often have travelling circuses that use wild animals in performances or for exhibition visited Scotland in the last 5 years and in the last 12 months?

No. in last 5 yrs.	Number	No. in last 12 mths	Number	Don't know	

**Comments.** Unaware of any in Argyll and Bute in this period. *Only circus visiting does not have wild animals in the acts.*

**Consultation question 11** What effect do you think a ban on the use and exhibition of wild animals would have on the revenue of such circuses? Why?

Don't know

**Comments** a question better asked of the operators and determined by polling the views of attendees at the circus shows.

**Consultation Question 12** If a ban on the use and exhibition of wild animals was imposed, do you think that such circuses would still visit Scotland without the wild animals? Why?

Don't know

**Comments.;** The number of travelling circuses has reduced significantly in recent years.

**Consultation question 13** What effect do you think a ban on the use and exhibition of wild animals in travelling circuses would have on the revenue of other types of circus (e.g. static or those travelling without wild animals)? Why?

Don't know

**Comments impossible to assess. It seems unlikely that there would be much impact as the different businesses play to different audiences.**

**Consultation question 14** What effect do you think a ban on the use and exhibition of wild animals in travelling circuses would have on the revenue of circus venues? Why?

Don't know

**Wider film and television industry**

**Consultation Question 15** Do you consider that a ban on wild animals in travelling circuses could have an impact on other industries? If so, which industries, what would be the effect and why?

	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Don't know
Film				x
TV - drama				x
TV - documentary				x
TV - childrens				x
Advertising – TV				x
Advertising - other				x
Other				
Other				
Other				

Comments

**Should Scotland ban the use of wild animals in travelling circuses?**

**Consultation Question 16** Do you agree that the use of wild animals for performance in travelling circuses should be banned in Scotland? Why?

NO

**Comments: Argyll and Bute Council do NOT support the ban as there is no scientific evidence to support this action, and there are sufficient legislative controls in place to address the animal health and welfare concerns. This decision was made by the PPSL Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**Consultation Question 17** Do you agree that the use of wild animals for exhibition in travelling circuses should be banned in Scotland? Why?

NO

**Argyll and Bute Council do NOT support the ban as there is no scientific evidence to support this action, and there are sufficient legislative controls in place to address the animal health and welfare concerns. This decision was made by the PPSL Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**Consultation Question 18** Do you consider that any ban should be a blanket ban on all wild animals in travelling circuses? Why?

No

**Comments. Argyll and Bute Council do NOT support the ban as there is no scientific evidence to support this action, and there are sufficient legislative controls in place to address the animal health and welfare concerns. This decision was made by the PPSL Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014. There should be an ability to assess their suitability as there is no evidence to support the ban.**

**Consultation Question 19** Do you consider that any specific species of animal not commonly domesticated in the British Islands should be permitted to be used in travelling circuses in Scotland? If so, which species and why?

Don't know

**Consultation Question 20** Do you consider that there are key species that should be covered by a ban in the event that a blanket ban could not be achieved? If so, which species and why?

Don't know

**Comments** *Science-based decisions are the only ones which bear examination in this sort of determination. It is an emotive subject and emotion is a poor base for legislative decision.*

**Any other Comments**

**Consultation Question 21.** Do you have any other comments on whether/how the use of wild animals in travelling circuses should be banned in Scotland?

Yes

**Comments.** Argyll and Bute Council do NOT support the ban as there is no scientific evidence to support this action, and there are sufficient legislative controls in place to address the animal health and welfare concerns. This decision was made by the PPSL Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014

**Consultation Question 22.** Do you consider that the consultation paper explained the key issues sufficiently for you to properly consider your responses?

Yes

Comments

**Consultation Question 23.** Do you consider that you had sufficient time to respond to the consultation?

Yes

Comments

**Consultation Question 24.** Do you have any other comments on the way this consultation has been conducted?

No

Comments