



ST IVES TOWN COUNCIL

Animal Charter

St Ives Town Council Animal Welfare Charter

The Council supports the view that animals have a right to life free from cruel treatment and unnecessary suffering. It recognises that animals are capable of feeling, capable of enjoying a state of well-being and equally capable of suffering and therefore supports the internationally adopted five animal freedoms set out in the animal welfare act 2006:

- Freedom from fear and distress.
- Freedom from hunger and thirst.
- Freedom from pain, disease and injury.
- Freedom from unnecessary constraint.
- Freedom from physical discomfort.

As a local Council, St Ives Town Council does not have specific statutory duties in relation to animal welfare, these are held by Cornwall Council as a unitary authority. However, it has powers in relation to

- Procurement -how it buys goods and services
- Leading by example – as a responsible public body
- As a land owner - determining what can take place on its land
- Influencing – changing the hearts and minds of partners and local people through setting out the facts and information
- Lobbying – through the local and national political systems for any policy changes
- Reporting – ensuring any potential breaches in regulation or law resulting in cruelty, neglect or ill treatment are reported to the regulatory authorities

Given the Council has limited statutory powers and duties, this charter does not cover every aspect of animal welfare but it does aim to detail those areas that the Council considers important and where it feels it has powers to act, as set out above.

Council Policies

Blood Sports

The Council does not allow hunting on Council owned land and seeks to encourage local land owners to adopt the same stance.

Circuses, Performances, Exhibitions and Displays of Animals

On the Council's own land, it will consider any application for events or entertainments involving live animals on a case by case basis and the decision to grant or refuse such applications will be based on a wide range of considerations, including animal welfare.

In particular where there is any reasonable doubt that all of the five freedoms set out in Section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006¹ will be met, no circus or travelling show using animals will be allowed on land owned by the Council. In addition, the Council will use its powers to positively promote animal welfare and will not be a partner to any act that could unreasonably jeopardise an animal's welfare.

Animals as Prizes

The conditions for hiring or letting any of the Council's facilities, premises or land, shall include a clause specifically banning the provision of live creatures, animals or fish, as prizes. The Council supports other private premises or landowners following this lead. In addition, the Council's terms and conditions of hire for weddings and blessings will permit pet dogs but not the use of other live animals including doves and goldfish.

Domestic and Captive Animals

Dogs

The Council will work with Cornwall Council and other local organisations to promote responsible dog ownership by:

- Encouraging the use of dogs faeces bins.
- Commissioning multi skilled enforcement of the dog control orders, including to ensure dogs are safe on beaches

¹ For the purposes of the Act, an animal's needs shall include its need for a suitable environment, its need for a suitable diet, need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, and its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

- Promoting animal welfare by distributing responsible dog ownership material
- Working with the environment service to take appropriate action against irresponsible dog owners or to ensure that lost dogs are re-united with their owners and strays are re-homed.

Responsible Pet Ownership / Animal Hoarding

The Council fully supports responsible pet ownership and will actively report any evidence or incidences of neglect or cruel treatment of any animal including domestic and farm animals and incidences of pet hoarding to the RSPCA and relevant authorities.

Wildlife

The council supports measures to conserve wildlife and to protect the special nature of the local coastline and marine environment, and in particular

Traps and Snares

The Council is opposed to the use of snares. Where traps and snares are employed, the Council encourages the government to strengthen legislation so as to reduce the suffering of the target species and the capture of non-target species.

If trapping is required, live catch traps should be used allowing for animals to be released elsewhere and if absolutely necessary animals should be humanely euthanized.

Bats

The Council supports legislation that protects bats and their roosts. No work will be carried out to Council buildings until the necessary bat surveys and recommended measures have been undertaken.

Seagulls

Whilst the Council recognise that local gull populations can cause a nuisance, it fully acknowledges the protected status of local herring gull populations and will actively report any evidence or incidences of gull taunting or cruelty. It will provide advice and guidance to visitors on not feeding gulls and promote humane methods of gull management.

It will not carry out works to its buildings during the nesting season and use only humane methods of gull control to prevent nesting including netting.

Fishing and Angling

The Council recommends that any anglers follow the code of practice based on the recommendations of the Medway¹ report:

1. The use of double and treble hooks should be kept to a minimum.
2. Fish intended for food should be killed humanely.
3. Unhooking a fish humanely and safely is one of the most important skills for an angler to learn. All anglers should be equipped with disgorgers and unhooking mats and be properly trained in their use.
4. Employment of the pike-gag should take fully into account the size of the fish for which it is used.
5. Barbless hooks should be favoured.
6. Holding periods in keep-nets should be as brief as possible.

The Council considers it essential that fishing tackle is safely disposed of to prevent injury to both domestic and wild animals and that undersized fish should be returned to the water as quickly as possible. Discarded fishing tackle is considered to be litter for the purposes of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 with attendant penalties for depositing this.

All anglers are encouraged to ensure that they comply with national and local byelaws relating to fishing angling. Details of these byelaws can be found by visiting the Environment Agency website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk. Rules in relation to activities within the Harbour are under the jurisdiction of the Harbours Board and the Harbour Master.

The Marine environment

The Council will work closely with the harbour authority and Cornwall Council to promote the importance of protecting and enhancing the quality of the local marine environment and the impact of climate change. It will jointly lobby for legislation and new harbour byelaws to promote responsible use of the harbour by all vessels including to protect wildlife within the marine environment. It will provide information to visitors on local wildlife, including not feeding seals in the harbour.

Pest control

The Council promotes and supports the use of safe and humane methods of pest control only and will always employ reputable and skilled contractors across its properties to deal with infestations.

¹ The Medway Report, an enquiry sponsored by the RSPCA into angling and shooting (1979),

Planning

In commenting on planning applications, the Council is committed to applying policies which ensure that animals, plants and their habitats are afforded the appropriate level of protection in accordance with their protected status. It will review its Neighbourhood Development Plan policies to reflect climate change, bio-diversity and habitat loss.

Parks/Open Spaces

The Council will make minimum use of pesticides in all Council controlled public open spaces and encourages the introduction of wildlife and fauna into these areas by sympathetic management. It will use the devolution process to improve and develop the number of open spaces in the parish and their bio-diversity.

Procurement

The Council will take into account environmental considerations in its future procurement decisions and will develop an environmental policy which reflects this. This includes seeking to source the least harmful chemicals and substances, minimising single use plastics and seeking to procure locally sourced and sustainably produced products.

Civic Events**Food and Refreshments**

The Council will aim to purchase only cruelty-free, animal-friendly produce and where practicable, locally sourced. For weddings and catered events, it will promote this policy and ask suppliers to confirm their support.

Civic Robes

The Council does not condone the use of animal fur for clothing and will always use alternatives in the purchase or use of any civic robes.

Fireworks

The Council supports the introduction and enforcement of legislation such as the licensing of shops selling fireworks, the limit of hours that fireworks are permitted to be used and limiting the permitted noise level to 95dB to minimise the distress caused to animals by the use of such fireworks. The Council will continue to urge local hotels and businesses to increase their use of alternatives, such as silent fireworks and light shows.