

The aim of the Trading Standards Service is to monitor and influence the treatment of animals in general, and in particular the standards of animal health and welfare on farms, in transport, at markets and at slaughter, within the guidelines set by legislation and codes of practice, to ensure that all animals are protected against cruelty and avoidable pain.

## The welfare of farm animals, in these places should be considered in terms of five freedoms.

### These are:

- Freedom from hunger and thirst
- By access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour
- Freedom from pain, injury or disease
- By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
- Freedom from discomfort
- By providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area
- Freedom to express normal behaviour
- By providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals own kind
- Freedom from fear and distress
- By ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

### These freedoms will be better provided for if those who have care of livestock practice:

Caring and responsible planning and management

Skilled, knowledgeable and conscientious stockmanship

Appropriate environmental design

Considerate handling and transport

Humane slaughter

The Trading Standards service will look to these freedoms for guidance when exercising its **statutory powers** in relation to the health and welfare of farm animals.

The service will use its best endeavours to promote and improve the animal welfare standards by taking a **fair and balanced** account of animal welfare issues in the services day to day operations, its decision making process and through influence in association with district councils, voluntary welfare groups and government agencies.

Although the Trading Standards service role is primarily one of **enforcement** of its statutory powers, it supports the aim that animals should be treated humanely in all farming processes.

Our statutory powers are contained mainly in the **Animal Health Act 1981** which with associated legislation provides the council's officers with the necessary powers to **ensure the control of diseases and the protection of animals whilst in transit and at markets**. Whilst the proper welfare of animals is of increasing concern to the community the enforcement activity of the council is always constrained by the limits of its statutory powers ensuring the proper processes of law are followed.

The service **identifies** that it has the ability to influence the animal health and welfare debate and to lead by example through the way in which it conducts its day to day business, by supporting and encouraging where appropriate, other reasonable organisations with similar objectives.

The service will continue to **liaise** with the livestock and farming community in general, to seek to improve communication and education opportunities concerned with farm animal health and welfare whenever possible.

The service is committed to maintaining the highest possible standards of farm animal health and welfare in Europe and will **press** for action via the appropriate representation, to ensure that other European Countries match our standards.

**The Trading Standards Service will use in full, the statutory powers it has in respect of animal health and welfare.**

**The Trading Standards service will use its enforcement and advisory role to promote the best standards of animal health and welfare within its statutory responsibilities.**

### **We will:**

- Employ a core of trained and experienced personnel
- Maintain a 24 hour emergency call out procedure where there is a risk of disease or ill treatment of animals
- Assist the State Veterinary Service of DEFRA in dealing with outbreaks of notifiable diseases
- Arrange for officers to attend every livestock market in the county to ensure that proper attention is paid to the health and welfare of farm animals
- Apply a consistent set of enforcement principles described in the trading standards services enforcement policy
- Respond to emergency complaints immediately and other complaints within 5 working days
- Wherever possible, ensure that all infringement reports are completed within 6 months
- Monitor the movements of farm animals throughout the county by random checks at markets, farms and at occasional roadside checks carried out by the trading standards service
- Seek to encourage good practice by maximising publicity where prosecutions are brought
- Prepare and distribute guidance leaflets so as to promote a better understanding of the law
- Increase awareness of the existence of the DEFRA codes of practice which provide the basis for compliance with legal requirements
- Encourage and where possible provide appropriate training to persons working with farm animals in partnerships with local providers
- Liaise with the State Veterinary Service in the implementation of DEFRA policies for animal health and welfare
- Develop further links with organisations involved in the livestock trade with a view to improving welfare standards

**The Trading Standards service will use its best endeavours to promote improvements in animal health and welfare through its influencing role and in association with other organisations.**

## Our Liaison Role

We will use our influencing role by:

Publicising the charter throughout the county and at County Council and other public information points

Liaising with the State Veterinary Service, veterinary profession, representatives of the farming community and livestock industry and other organisations with an interest in animal health and welfare

Where possible working with government departments, and other influential organisations to promote improvements in animal health and welfare

Provide a forum for discussion of matters of common interest with:

Representatives of the farming community

Regional Trading Standards Groups (SETSA)

Defra Divisional Animal Welfare Groups

Livestock industry and other interested parties

Environmental Agencies

Working in partnership with Livestock keepers and Defra

## E Government

We will develop ways to access information about animal Health and welfare on-line, and encourage the use of electronic systems to enable compliance with legislative requirements.

## The Defra animal Health and Welfare Frame Agreement

We will work within this framework that enables all Local Authorities to maintain a consistent approach in the enforcement of legislation and clearly identifies standard levels of best practice for Local Authorities to attain.

## Enforcement policy

In carrying out our duties, our emphasis is on advice and education before formal action, by working with the livestock industry to encourage good practice. Any action we take is fair, proportionate and recognises the rights of the individual, balanced against the needs of the community and is fully in accordance with our enforcement policy.

