

Animal Concern

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Animal Concern is a pressure group registered as a non-profit making Limited Company (Co. No. SC109126) Incorporated in 1988 as Animal Concern (Scotland) Ltd. Animal Concern incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which was founded in 1876.

Animal Concern would like to see all political parties in Scotland making manifesto commitments to increase the protection given to animals in Scotland after the Scottish Parliamentary election on 5th May 2016. We will encourage our supporters and the supporters of other animal welfare and conservation groups to vote for those parties and candidates committed to making positive changes in animal welfare and conservation legislation.

The manifesto commitments we would like to see include:

To establish a Government Department for Animal Welfare and Conservation headed by a Minister whose duties do not conflict with the purpose of the Department. Over the last ten years Scotland has been in the embarrassing situation of having its Secretaries and Ministers for the Environment act as international fishmongers flogging factory farmed fish from Norwegian owned farms which cause great damage to the Scottish marine environment and the native species of fish and other wildlife inhabiting that environment. It is also ludicrous to see our Secretaries and Ministers for the Environment fighting to gain increased catch quotas for our fishing industry, an industry which all but wiped out North Sea stocks of some commercially valuable fish species in a series of prolonged and complex fraudulent criminal schemes which broke conservation laws and killed millions of tonnes of over-quota fish.

A commitment to have the licensing and inspection of premises and procedures governed by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 devolved from the Home Office to the Scottish Government. It is unacceptable to conduct potentially very dangerous animal experiments in Scotland without local health and emergency services being aware of them.

A commitment to ban the breeding and keeping of genetically modified animals (including fish) in Scotland.

A commitment to ban the use of animals in circus shows in Scotland. Political action to ban "wild animals" from circuses was promised after lions and tigers were overwintered on an Aberdeenshire croft in 2014/15. Nothing has been done about this. We need legislation banning more than the use of exotic species alone. A few years ago I watched as a troupe of six large Husky type dogs were taken from a big top in Perth and placed in cages inside a windowless box van where they were kept between performances. Using animals in circus shows is outdated, outmoded and out of step with a modern, progressive country.

A commitment to bring in legislation to properly ban hunting with dogs in Scotland by making only drag hunting using muzzled dogs legal.

A commitment to ban the use of all snares in Scotland. Snares are a cruel and indiscriminate way of killing animals and are mostly used by gamekeepers to kill native wildlife which may predate on the eggs and chicks of “game” birds such as pheasant, an exotic introduced species whose numbers are kept artificially high to make more of them available to be shot for sport.

A commitment to ban the use of polluting and poisonous lead shot in cartridges in Scotland.

A commitment to scrap the general license system by which anyone, by simply reading an on-line document, can obtain legal permission to cull an unlimited number of circa 22 species of native birds without having to give a reason to justify the killing. This system should be replaced by one where cullers have to physically apply for a license and give a reason to justify their culling operations. Where a license is granted that permission should specify the species and numbers of birds to be killed and the permitted humane method(s) of killing to be used. Acceptable reasons for culling should not include killing native species in a bid to artificially increase the number of birds available to sporting guns.

A commitment to strengthen and better resource the Police Scotland Wildlife Crime Department.

A commitment to improve the welfare of sheep farmed in Scotland to include making the Clements 5 point plan to reduce or eradicate foot rot in sheep a legal requirement for farmers whose flocks present persistent problems with lameness.

A commitment to make a standardised CCTV surveillance system mandatory in all intensive livestock farms, animal marts and abattoirs in Scotland to monitor animal welfare. Such systems would increase welfare standards and, by allowing them live on-line access, aid local authority animal health and meat hygiene officers in their duties.

A commitment to establish abattoirs on the Scottish islands, reduce the distance animals are transported from farm to mart or slaughter and a ban on live export of animals for slaughter.

A commitment to bring in legislation making it compulsory for all animals killed for food to be stunned to insentience before being slaughtered in Scotland.

A commitment to bring in legislation making it compulsory for all marine fish fin farms in Scotland to install and properly maintain high-strength, high-tension predator exclusion nets to keep seals well away from the cage nets holding the salmon. This is the **only** way to ensure that any shooting of seals is truly carried out as a last resort and it is also the **only** way marine fish farmers can fully meet their legal duty to protect the welfare of their stock under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006.

A commitment to ban the commercial netting of wild salmon and to remove the right of angling bodies to shoot seals and other wild animals and birds.

A commitment to license and inspect all animal rescue and sanctuary establishments to ensure a minimum high standard of care for all animals within such premises.

A commitment to license, control and eventually phase out the importation, breeding, sale and keeping of all exotic species of animals as pets.

A commitment to restrict and control the breeding, importation, dealing, sale and ownership of dogs, cats and other domestic pets to effectively ban puppy/kitten farming in Scotland, ban the import of animals from such farms and to provide a framework to ensure that all pets are treated humanely and kept responsibly.

A commitment to introduce legislation extending the requirement for drivers to report accidents involving dogs to cover accidents involving cats as well.

A commitment to extend the compulsory micro chipping of dogs to include cats and to make it compulsory for cleansing operatives to scan for microchips the bodies of dogs and cats killed in road traffic accidents and to inform owners of the fate of their pets.

A commitment to ban the use of the whip in horse racing in Scotland.