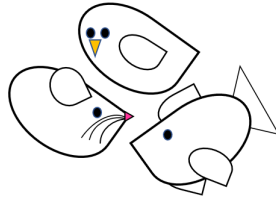


**ANIMAL CONCERN**



**LEGISLATE TO LIBERATE**

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**Established in 1988 as Animal Concern (Scotland) Ltd.**

**It incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which was founded in 1876**

**Dear Supporter,**

It's me again. Afraid I'm doing more final appearances than many 1960s rock bands. At least I'm not charging you £200 a ticket and £50 for a sweat-shop tee shirt.

Not much different about this email. Animals need your help again. Put your cheque book down, this is not another of the trillion begging letters you get every week.

We need you to again add your support to the many voices seeking a ban on the use, not just misuse but all use, of fireworks. It is Guy Fawkes day in the U.K.. 416 years ago Guy and some chums tried and failed to blow-up the Westminster Parliament buildings. Tonight we will be hearing more bangs than the gunpowder plotters did. Indeed I've been hearing them for over a week and will likely be hearing them for another week. Fireworks don't bother me personally. My late doggy and moggy weren't upset by them either and would watch and listen to the neighbour's fireworks displays from the safety of the bedroom window.

My friend had a black Labrador who wasn't so keen. Like tens of thousands of dogs and cats she was terrified and had to be carried out into the garden to do her toilet from hearing her first firework in late October until they stopped around the weekend after the 5<sup>th</sup> November. New Year became the same as sales people decided that was a good time to offload stock left over from November 5<sup>th</sup>. Fireworks have caused whole aviaries full of pet birds to die of shock. They frighten and can kill wild birds. Farm animals and birds can be terrified by fireworks as can any creature in the vicinity when these explosives are detonated.

Fireworks, especially when misused or deliberately used as weapons or tools for vandalism, can destroy property and terrify people, especially those suffering from Post Traumatic

Stress Disorder. Every year people are hurt by fireworks. Some receive life changing injuries. Some die.

Police and firefighters come under attack just for doing their job trying to extinguish out of control bonfires and protect people from fireworks wielding thugs.

Up until last year our policy on fireworks was to restrict their use to licensed public shows, run by licenced and trained pyrotechnic experts, at New Year and 5<sup>th</sup> November and the weekend nearest to that. We also wanted personal ownership and use of fireworks made a criminal offence. While that would be a good first step, especially if only low noise or no noise fireworks were allowed, there are now new alternatives which also do not add to the climate crises causing chemicals in our atmosphere. Electrically powered drones, covered in coloured light chips and flown in computer co-ordinated formation, have been used at major events including the Olympics and national New Year celebrations. Accompanied by music streamed to your mobile phone, these displays don't just replace fireworks they outshine them in every way.

A global ban on fireworks would be a small but politically significant step in the war against climate change. Accompanied with a ban on releasing balloons and Chinese Lanterns (both of which cause pollution and animal casualties) this would be a very worthwhile example of how legislation can liberate animals and our shared planet from the negative impact of human activity. Like many global initiatives it starts with the small bit you can do to get things started. Here's what I'd like you to do:

If you witness fireworks misuse this weekend dial 999, report it to the police and ask for an incident number. That way it is recorded as an incident.

Over the next week look out for reports of negative incidents involving fireworks, especially in your local media. Send me links to those reports and we will build up a library of them to use in our campaign for a fireworks ban.

At the end of next week, when you send me any links, send them also to your politicians asking them to join our call for a total ban on the use and ownership of fireworks and a total ban on balloon and Chinese Lantern releases. Suggest that fireworks can successfully be replaced at public events by electrically powered drones, covered in coloured light chips and flown in computer co-ordinated formation, as shown at recent major events including the Olympics and national New Year celebrations. Of course even if you don't find any reports of fireworks misuse you should still write to your politicians asking them what they are going to do to help achieve the ban we seek.

Cheers4now,

John

PS Thanks for all your very kind messages on my recent email concerning my imminent retirement. More about that, and about recent ridiculous replies on salmon farming from Scot Gov on behalf of our new Green Ministers, coming to you shortly.