

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-743
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00245/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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Cardiff Bay
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February 2017

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter of 31 January regarding Petition P-05-743 – End the Exotic Pet Trade in Wales.

Animals currently kept in captivity are subject to the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and particularly the duty of care set out in section 9 of this Act. It is the owner's responsibility to exercise a duty of care and to be responsible. Severe penalties can be imposed by the courts for not fulfilling such obligations, although I recognise it is better to avoid problems than to deal with them.

In addition, (with some exceptions), a licence has to be obtained under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (DWAA) to keep certain species. This involves an assessment being undertaken by the Local Authority to ensure the suitability of the owner and his/her premises for keeping the species. The DWAA can be found at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/38>

As you are aware the RSPCA Cymru issued a briefing document on 21st October 2016 calling for a ban on keeping primates as pets in Wales

Arrangements are in place for my officials to discuss the RSPCA campaign in greater detail over the coming months.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I am aware of a review being undertaken in Scotland regarding the way in which exotic pets are traded. In England, proposals to overhaul the licensing of animal establishments, including pet shops, are being actioned. We await the review in Scotland with interest as there will be similarities across the UK.

A paper has been presented to the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group for consideration on the trade of exotic pets. The Group, which was set up to support the implementation of the Framework and advise the Welsh Government on animal health & welfare issues and the paper will be discussed at a future meeting.

Within the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Implementation Plan for 2016-17, a commitment exists to review the Welsh Government's Codes of Practice as published under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. This includes considering whether additional Codes of Practice are required for other species, for example exotic animals. Breach of a provision of a Code is not an offence in itself, however, the Codes can be used as evidence in court proceedings for animal welfare offences.

Regards
Lesley

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