



Licence Conditions and Guidance for Pet Shop Licences

The Pet Animals Act 1951

Last updated November 2016

Introduction

Local authorities in England issue licences to proprietors of pet shops and other pet vendors under the provisions of the Pet Animals Act (1951). Before granting a licence the local authority must be satisfied that the animals are kept in accommodation that is suitable; that they are supplied with appropriate food and drink; and are adequately protected from disease and fire. The local authority may attach conditions to the licence, may inspect the licensed premises at all reasonable times and may refuse a licence if the standards at the premises are unsatisfactory or if the terms of the licence are not being complied with.

Under the Animal Welfare Act (2006) those responsible for animals, including pet vendors, have a responsibility towards the welfare of the animals in their care. Under the Act it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to a protected animal, whether by an act or omission. Vendors also have a legal 'duty of care' towards the animals in their care. Vendors must therefore take such steps as are reasonable in all the circumstances to meet the welfare needs of the animals, to the extent required by good practice. The Acts define an animal's needs as including:

- Its need for a suitable environment
- Its need for a suitable diet
- Its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- Any need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals
- Its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

Definition of terms

Batch: a group of animals arriving from the same supplier, at the same time

m²: a measurement of area. One m² measures one metre by one metre. Consequently two m² measures 2 metres by 1 metre. (4m² measures 2 metres by 2 metres).

The licence or a copy of the licence must be suitably displayed to the public in a prominent position.

Licence Conditions

1. Licence Display

1.1 The licence or a copy of the licence must be suitably displayed to the public in a prominent position.

2. Accommodation

2.1 Animals must at all times be kept in accommodation designed to prevent escape and an environment suitable to their species and condition with respect to behavioural needs, situation, size, temperature, ventilation, and cleanliness. All accommodation must avoid drafts and overexposure to direct sunlight and must be kept in good repair.

2.2 Ventilation must be provided to all interior areas without the creation of excessive, localised draughts. Ventilation is important as an aid to disease control and aims to decrease smell accumulation and prevent excessive humidity of the atmosphere.

2.3 If animals are displayed outdoors, they must have protection appropriate to their species.

2.4 In order to control the spread of disease, and to prevent injury, housing must be constructed of non-porous materials or be appropriately treated. Junctions between all sections need to be fully cleanable.

2.5 Animals must be kept in housing which minimises stress from other animals or the public. Signage must be in place to deter public interference.

2.6 All animals for sale must be readily accessible and easy to inspect by staff.

2.7 Accommodation must be cleaned as often as necessary to maintain good hygiene standards.

2.8 Where accommodation is on a tiered system, water, food or droppings must not be allowed to enter the lower housing.

2.9 All accessories provided for environmental enrichment in the accommodation must be appropriate for the species.

3. Exercise Facilities

3.1 Suitable and sufficient facilities must be available where appropriate.

4. Register of Animals

4.1 A purchase register must be maintained for all animals detailing their source and identification where appropriate.

4.2 A sales register must be maintained for:

- Dogs
- Cats
- Psittacines
- Species contained in the Schedule to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

4.3 Animals under veterinary treatment must be identifiable.

5. Stocking Numbers & Densities

5.1 No animals other than those specified in the licence, may be stocked. The licence conditions should clearly state the numbers for each species or species group that may be kept on the premise. Animals are defined as any vertebrate animals; invertebrates are exempted from the regulations.

5.2 Where appropriate, all animals must be housed in social groups of suitable size.

6. Health, Disease & Acclimatisation

6.1 All animals for sale must be in good health

6.2 Any sick or injured animal must receive appropriate care and treatment without delay. These must only be treated by appropriately competent staff or veterinary surgeons.

6.3 Provision must be made for the isolation of sick/injured/infectious animals and those that might reasonably be expected to be carrying serious infectious diseases.

6.4 Any animal with an abnormality which would materially affect its quality of life, must not be offered for sale. When in doubt, veterinary advice should be sought.

6.5 All reasonable precautions must be taken to prevent the outbreak and spread of disease. No animal which is suffering from, or could reasonably be suspected of having come into contact with any other animal suffering from any infectious or contagious disease or which is infested with parasites, shall be brought into or kept on the premises unless effectively isolated.

6.6 All necessary precautions must be taken to prevent harbourage, or the introduction to the premises, of rodents, insects and other pests.

7. Food & Drink

7.1 Animals must be supplied with adequate amounts of food and drink, appropriate to their needs at suitable intervals, all food must be suitable for the species concerned.

7.2 Food and Drink receptacles must be appropriate to the species, constructed and positioned to minimise faecal and urine contamination and spillage. Receptacles must be cleaned out at regular intervals.

8. Food Storage

- 8.1 All food, excluding live foods intended for feeding to animals on the premises, must be stored in impervious closed containers.
- 8.2 The containers and equipment used for feeding must be kept in a clean and sound condition.

9. Observation

- 9.1 All animals must be attended to at regular intervals, except where defined in the specific animal section of these conditions, at least once daily, and appropriate to the individual animal.

10. Disposal of Waste

- 10.1 All excreta and soiled bedding for disposal must be kept in a hygienic manner and stored in impervious containers with close fitting lids - away from direct sunlight.

11. Transportation to the Premises

- 11.1 When receiving animals, the licensee must make reasonable effort to ensure that they are transported in a suitable manner.
- 11.2 Any animals received or consigned shall be transported according to the regulations laid down in current legislation.
- 11.3 Animals must be transported or handed to purchasers in suitable containers.

12. Sale of Animals

- 12.1 No mammal shall be sold un-weaned or, if weaned, at an age at which it should not have been weaned.
- 12.2 In the case of non-mammals, they must be capable of feeding themselves.

13. Dangerous Wild Animals - as defined by the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

- 13.1 When dangerous wild animals are kept, the cages must be of a secure construction appropriate to the species and kept locked.
- 13.2 The local authority must be notified in the event that the pet shop wishes to offer for sale any animal on the Schedule to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act.

14. Pet Care Advice, Staff Training & Knowledge

- 14.1 For new applicants (not renewals) at least one member of staff working at the licenced premises must have, or be working towards, a qualification or be registered with a recognized body such as City & Guilds. If they are working towards a qualification they must have suitably progressed in 12 months and have completed the qualification within 2 years.
- 14.2 The licensee must ensure that the purchaser is informed of the correct care of the animal covering feeding, housing, handling, husbandry, accessories and veterinary care.
- 14.3 Appropriate reference materials on the care of each species must always be available for use by staff.
- 14.4 Staff members must be able to provide suitable advice to purchasers and answer questions as required by them. No animal should be stocked or sold unless the staff, or at least one member of staff on call, is familiar with the care and welfare of the animals stocked and has a recognised qualification and/or suitable experience/ training.
- 14.5 The licensee must be able to demonstrate appropriate staff training is carried out and that that staff are competent in pet shop management and animal handling.

15. Fire & Other Emergency Precautions

- 15.1 Suitable emergency precautions and written procedures must exist and be made known to all staff, including arrangements for evacuation of animals.
- 15.2 Entrances and exits must be clear of obstructions at all times.
- 15.3 Suitable firefighting, prevention and detection equipment must be provided, maintained, regularly serviced and sited as advised by the local fire protection/prevention officer and approved by the local authority.
- 15.4 The licensee, or a designated key holder, must at all times be within reasonable travelling distance of the premises and available to attend in case of emergency.
- 15.5 A list of key holders must be logged with the local police and local authority.
- 15.6 In the interests of animal welfare, the following notice must be displayed prominently at the front of the premises: "In case of an emergency dial 999".
- 15.7 When pet shops are sited within other premises, the licensee or key holders must have access at all times to the premises containing the animals.
- 15.8 All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition.
- 15.9 There must be an effective contingency plan for essential heating, ventilation and aeration/ filtration systems, as appropriate.

Dogs

16. Dogs

16.1 Puppies must be weaned before leaving the mother.

16.2 The minimum kennel size must be:

- For a batch of small breed puppies – max 6 pups – 1.5m² for sleeping, plus 2m² for exercise
- For a batch of medium breed puppies – max 4 pups – 2m² for sleeping, plus 2m² for exercise
- For a batch of large breed puppies – max 2 pups – 2m² for sleeping, plus 2m² for exercise

These are minimum requirements, for larger batches the size of the pens should be adjusted pro-rata accordingly. Ideally the puppies should have free access to the exercise area at all times. Any covered pens should have a minimum height of 1.8m or removable covers to allow adequate access by staff for cleaning. These are minimum standards and meeting the correct size of pens alone is not a defence if the welfare of the animals is in question.

16.3 Suitable and sufficient exercise facilities must be available and accessible where appropriate.

16.4 Extreme temperatures must be avoided.

16.5 General bedding must include an adequate amount of absorbent material.

16.6 Any soiled material must be removed at least four times a day or as required to ensure the puppy does not have to lie in a soiled area.

16.7 A specific lying place must be provided lined with soft material.

16.8 Puppies must be fed at least four times daily, at appropriate intervals.

16.9 Puppies must have frequent, quality contact time with staff.

16.10 Batches of puppies must not be mixed until they have been on the premises for seven days or have shown no sign of infectious disease for seven days.

16.11 Ideally, single puppies must not be left alone in a kennel, but where they are, special attention should be paid to specific human interaction. When they are mixed they should be of similar size, age and temperament and there should be good supervision of mixing.

16.12 There must be environmental enrichment in all kennels.

Cats

17. Cats

- 17.1 Kittens must be weaned before leaving the mother.
- 17.2 The minimum pen floor area for a batch of up to 4 kittens, up to 12 weeks of age, must be 1 m², with a minimum height of 0.6m (for example, 0.6m x 1 x 1). No dimension must be less than 0.6m. Any shelving or platforms must be in addition to the minimum floor area. Each additional kitten must have 0.25m² additional floor space.
- 17.3 Extreme temperatures must be avoided.
- 17.4 Disposable or washable bedding must be provided and kept clean.
- 17.5 A litter tray and appropriate litter must be available at all times and cleaned and disinfected at least once daily with an appropriate disinfectant which is safe for use with cats and cleaned as appropriate. The disinfectant should be anti-viral and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions, as some disinfectants are toxic to cats.
- 17.6 Kittens must be fed at least four times daily, at appropriate intervals.
- 17.7 Batches must not be mixed and if several batches are kept in one area then the pen must have solid sides.
- 17.8 Kittens must have frequent, quality contact time with staff.
- 17.9 There must be environmental enrichment in all cages such as toys, climbing frames and platforms.

Rabbits

18. Rabbits

- 18.1 Rabbits must be correctly sexed and housed in same sex groups.
- 18.2 The minimum enclosure size must be: 0.4m² for up to 4 standard juvenile rabbits and a height of 0.4m. 0.5m² for up to 2 giant breed juvenile rabbits and a height of 0.5m. These are minimum requirements, for larger batches, larger breeds or adult rabbits the size of the pens should be adjusted pro-rata accordingly.
- 18.3 There must be environmental enrichment in all enclosures. A hiding place must be provided.
- 18.4 Extreme temperatures must be avoided.
- 18.5 Rabbits must be provided with a suitable substrate and bedding material in sufficient amounts.
- 18.6 Visibly soiled substrate and bedding must be removed daily. The pen should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before introducing a new animal.
- 18.7 If batches are mixed all animals must be free from obvious parasitic infection.
- 18.8 Rabbits must have a constant supply of fresh hay and water, and be offered an appropriate amount of dry food for the breed and age. Feed dishes should be suitable to ensure feed does not get contaminated by urine or faeces.
- 18.9 Animals must be provided with an appropriate diet and any new feeds must be introduced slowly.

Other Small Mammals

19. Other Small Mammals

- 19.1 All small mammals must be correctly sexed and housed in single sex groups unless a solitary species (or sold as a breeding pair).
- 19.2 Animals must at all times be kept in suitably sized accommodation.
- 19.3 Animals must be provided with a suitable substrate in sufficient amounts.
- 19.4 Animals must be provided with a suitable bedding material in sufficient amounts.
- 19.5 Animals must be provided with places to hide. Accessories and enrichment should be provided, suitable to the species.
- 19.6 Suitable food and drink receptacles must be provided and positioned to avoid faecal contamination.
- 19.7 All rodents must be fed a suitable diet, ad lib and have free access to hay where required.
- 19.8 All rodents must be fully weaned on admission.

Minimum Accommodation Requirements – Small Rodents

Area in square metres

No. of Animals	1-4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Minimum Cage Height (m)	Minimum Cage Depth (m)
Mice, Hamsters, Gerbils	0.068	0.079	0.09	0.100	0.113	0.124	0.135	0.30	0.25
Rats	0.135	0.157	0.18	0.202	0.225	0.247	0.27	0.30	0.28
Guinea Pigs, Degus	0.225	0.263	0.3	0.338	0.375	0.413	0.45	0.30	0.30
Chinchillas	0.25	0.375	0.5	0.625	0.75	0.875	1.0	0.45	0.45
Chipmunk	0.25	0.375	0.5	0.625	0.75	0.875	1.0	0.90	0.45

Ferrets

20. Ferrets

20.1 Ferrets must be at least eight weeks old

20.2 Ferrets must be housed with batch companions

20.3 Ferrets must be housed in groups or pairs of either sex. Adult hobs (males) require individual accommodation.

20.4 Batches of ferrets must not be mixed.

20.5 The minimum pen floor area for a litter of up to 4 ferrets, up to 12 weeks of age, must be 1 m², with a minimum height of 0.6m. No dimension must be less than 0.6m. Any shelving or platforms must be in addition to the minimum floor area. Each additional ferret must have 0.25m² additional floor space.

20.6 Sleeping quarters must be draught free and dark.

20.7 Ferrets must have suitable bedding.

20.8 Extreme temperatures must be avoided.

20.9 Ferret kibble must be provided at appropriate intervals.

20.10 Water must be supplied in both a heavy based bowl and a water bottle attached to the side of the enclosure.

Birds

21. Birds

- 21.1 There must be adequate perching space for all birds at the same time. Outdoor aviaries must include sufficient sheltered and non-sheltered space. Cage size must be adequate to allow birds to open their wings fully in all directions. Cages must include appropriate environmental enrichment.
- 21.2 Perches must be positioned so that birds do not defecate on each other and must be of appropriate size and shape for each species
- 21.3 Ambient temperature must be appropriate for the species. Extremes of temperatures must be avoided.
- 21.4 There must be adequate drinkers/feeders commensurate with the number of birds and these must be cleaned regularly. Bowls etc. must be positioned so that birds do not defecate in food/water
- 21.5 Cages must be constructed from materials suitable to the type and size of birds. Materials must be safe to birds and in good repair.
- 21.6 Windproof nest boxes must be provided in all outside housing and inside where appropriate.
- 21.7 Flooring must be drop-through or easily washed/hosed.

Stocking Densities for Birds in Cages

Type	Length of Bird (cm)	Floor Area (m ²) housing up to 4 birds	Linear cms per additional bird on either cage length or depth ^{*3}
Budgerigar		0.15	5
Canary		0.15	5
Cockatiel		0.48	7.5
Finches	Less than 12.5	0.113	5
	12.5 – 17.5	0.15	5
	more than 17.5	0.225	7.5
Parakeets and Lovebirds ^{*1}	less than 25	0.42	7.5
	25-30*1	0.48	7.5
	more than 30*1	0.675	7.5
Parrots	less than 30	0.225	10
	30 – 35*2	0.4050	15
	more than 35*2	0.4725	20
Chickens		1.6	
Bantams		1.6	
Quail		16	

- *1. It is recommended that, wherever possible, these species are displayed for sale in aviaries or flights rather than cages per se.
- *2. It is recommended that, wherever possible, these species are displayed for sale in aviaries or flights if more than two birds are housed together.
- *3. The extra-linear centimetre per additional bird, is intended to refer to an increase in either width or length or a combination of the two i.e., a 20cm increase could refer to 20cm width, 20cm length or say 10cm width combined with 10cm length.

Stocking Densities for Birds in Aviaries & Flights

Type	Length of Bird (cm)	Number of Birds per 'Standard' Aviary (1.8 x 0.9 x 1.8 m)
Budgerigar		18
Canary		18
Cockatiel		8
Finches	Less than 12.5	24
	12.5 – 17.5	18
	more than 17.5	12
Parakeets and Lovebirds *1	less than 25	10
	25-35	6
	more than 35	4
Parrots	less than 30	10
	30 – 35	6
	more than 35	4
Chickens		4 (min height 0.9m)
Bantams		6 (min height 0.9m)
Quail		8 (min height 0.9m)

Reptiles & Amphibians

22. Reptiles & Amphibians

- 22.1 Stocking and density must be appropriate to the species.
- 22.2 The enclosure size must be appropriate to the species and adjusted according to its size.
- 22.3 Temperature, humidity, lighting and ventilation must be appropriate to the species.
- 22.4 Lighting must be appropriate to the species.
- 22.5 Substrate appropriate to the species must be present.
- 22.6 Enrichment must be provided appropriate to the species.
- 22.7 Food and water must be provided in the appropriate manner for the species.
- 22.8 Enclosures must be cleaned appropriately.
- 22.9 Handling must be kept to a minimum at all times.

Fish

23. Fish

23.1 Water quality is a key determinant of fish welfare. To assess it, levels of ammonia and nitrite must be checked first. Only if such measurements exceed the recommended standards below, or there is an unexplained problem, is there any need to proceed further. Minimum water standards must be:

- **Cold Water Species**
Free Ammonia max 0.02mg/l
Nitrite max 0.2mg/l
Dissolved Oxygen min 6mg/l
Nitrate max 50mg/l above ambient tap water

- **Tropical Freshwater Species**
Free Ammonia max 0.02mg/l
Nitrite max 0.2mg/l
Dissolved Oxygen min 6mg/l
Nitrate max 50mg/l above ambient tap water

- **Tropical Marine Species**
Free Ammonia max 0.01mg/l
Nitrite max 0.125mg/l
Nitrate max 100mg/l pH min 8.1
Dissolved Oxygen min 4.0 mg/l

23.2 Water quality must be checked regularly and records kept of all tests. Centralised systems must be tested weekly. 10% of individually filtered tanks or vat must be tested weekly. In aquaria or vats in which visual inspection indicates unusual behaviour or deaths, water quality inspections should be undertaken.

23.3 Holding systems must be cleaned and checked regularly.

23.4 No aquatic organisms should be exposed to excessive light or heat, or lack of adequate warmth.

Guidance on Conditions

This guidance correlates to the specific numbered conditions. It is aimed at all those who are tasked with inspecting, advising and licensing pet shops under the Pet Animals Act 1951 (“the Act”). It may also be useful to owners and managers of pet shops who wish to better understand what their legal requirements are under both the 1951 Act and the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (‘the 2006 Act’) as well as other related legislation.

2. Accommodation

- 2.1 Animals should be able to move around freely, climb, fly, swim and jump where appropriate, and be comfortable in their environment. Definitions of appropriate sizes and materials are in the appropriate animal sections of the conditions. Regular maintenance and repair will prevent injury from damaged housing. Temperature monitoring devices should be provided. It is important to avoid draughts.
- 2.2 The spread of airborne infections can be a significant risk. Excessive or inadequate humidity can cause other health problems.
- 2.3 This should include shelter from wind, rain or snow and/or the sun and predators if appropriate.
- 2.4 Appropriate housing will prevent direct transmission of disease and injuries. This will maintain structural integrity and ensure dry, easily cleansed surfaces. In general, untreated wood is not an appropriate material as it cannot be thoroughly cleaned.
- 2.5 An area to hide away, if needed, will help to reduce stress levels for the animals. In addition to signs, other measures may be required, such as limiting access to some sides of animal enclosures. Care should be taken to avoid sensory contact between prey and predator species
- 2.6 This should help to ensure that the cage is kept clean and hygienic and animals can be easily observed for illness or injury
- 2.7 To maintain a clean environment, a cleaning Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) should be provided and should detail the routine daily cleaning regime and the procedure for cleaning between periods of occupation. Soiled bedding should be removed frequently to ensure animals do not have to lie in it.
- 2.8 This will prevent contamination of the lower cages. This does not apply to centrifuged fish systems or aviaries where perching and ground birds are housed together.
- 2.9 To stimulate the performance of natural behaviours

3. Exercise Facilities

3.1 Animals must be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns and this may require the provision of suitable space for exercise.

4. Register of Animals

4.1 This can be by cross referenced to an invoice file. The purpose of the register is to ascertain the source of the animals.

4.3 The purpose of the register is for emergency contact of purchasers. The name, address and telephone number of the purchaser should be obtained. This is not required for other species.

5. Stocking Numbers & Densities

5.2 Details can be found in the relevant animal type sections of the conditions.

6. Health, Disease & Acclimatisation

6.1 Vendors and staff are responsible for providing the animals' needs including good health care. Illness and obvious parasitic infection should be addressed before the animal is sold. Veterinary advice should be sought in any case of doubt. Transport and the introduction to a novel environment are stressful and animals should be allowed to acclimatise before being further stressed by being offered for sale. Where animals are obtained for sale to a specific client it may be acceptable for the animal to be sold immediately. All animals should receive appropriate vaccination where required for the species, as advised by the retailer's veterinary surgeon. Veterinary advice must be sought whenever necessary. A Record of Treatment should be provided to the purchaser. Vaccination courses should begin at the appropriate age for each species.

6.2 "Care and treatment" may include euthanasia but under no circumstances may an animal be euthanised other than in a humane and effective manner. In case of doubt, veterinary advice must be sought.

6.3 Isolated animals should be kept in a secure, comfortable location where their condition and needs can be met, also detailing treatment. For ornamental fish, in-line UV treatment or other sterilising devices effectively provide a means of isolating individual tanks in multiple tank systems. They must be of a proper size and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.

6.4 Information on any known conditions should be provided to the new owner.

6.5 Precautions should include regular cleaning and good personal hygiene of staff in addition to effective quarantine of incoming groups of animals except for fish. Staff handling animals should wash or disinfect, and rinse if appropriate, their hands between groups. The shop should be registered with a veterinary practice and there should be veterinary

input to SOPs where appropriate. It is important that the supplying breeders should have a policy for inherited and infectious disease control agreed. Staff should be aware of zoonotic transmission.

6.6 “Rodent” and “Insect” excludes animals for sale or feeding

7. Food & Drink

7.1 Water should be available at all times except for those species where it may be harmful. An SOP should be produced for basic nutritional needs for each species or species group, and age group if appropriate. The owner should be advised to continue feeding consistent with the diet given by the pet shop.

7.2 Faecal and urine contamination is a risk to health. Maintaining a clean environment may require regular cleaning of receptacles. Receptacles should be thoroughly cleaned before being moved between batches/groups

8. Food Storage

8.1 Such containers prevent spoilage of the food or attraction of rodents or pests to the premises.

8.2 There must be suitable facilities for cleaning of receptacles and equipment which should be separate from staff facilities.

9. Observation

9.1 Regular checks and observation records aid in early detection of illness, injury or behavioural problems and should be considered very important for all animals. A system of recording observation should be maintained.

10. Disposal of Waste

10.1 This is important for biosecurity and odour reduction. Excreta and soiled bedding should be removed from the premises on a regular basis, at least weekly, disposed of to the satisfaction of the appropriate local authority, and in accordance with current regulations and good waste management practice. Premises should maintain a contract for removal with an appropriate company and adhere to local authority regulations. There should be appropriate arrangements in place for removal of dead animals.

11. Transportation to the Premises

11.3 Buyers should be advised how to transport animals home so as to minimise stress.

12. Sale of Animals

12.1 Young mammals require nutritional and behavioural support from their mothers.

13. Dangerous Wild Animals

- 13.1 Safety of staff and the general public should be of utmost importance and safety barriers may aid in this, as well as prevention of escape.
- 13.2 The primary requirements of the Act are to protect the public but there are also welfare implications. Although it is acknowledged that there is an exemption contained within the Act in relation to pet shops, it is recommended that consideration should be given to complying with any special requirement(s) specified in the Act for the safe accommodation and care of the animal. Licensees selling animals on the Schedule to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act should inspect the purchaser's licence to keep such an animal, and inform the issuing authority of the details of the purchase. Licensees should take note of the latest guidance from Defra.

14. Pet Care, Staff Training & Knowledge

- 14.1 Qualifications should be City & Guilds or Level 3 equivalent and appropriate to the species kept.
- 14.2 Pet care leaflets or other similar written instructions suitable for the species (or group of species) in question should be made available to customers free of charge at the time of purchase, in addition to any offer to purchase pet care books or leaflets. Information can be in the form of Codes of Practice issued by governments. In addition, information may also be made available electronically.
- 14.4 Further advice, guidance and training can be obtained from the organisations listed in the Useful Contacts section.

15. Fire and Other Emergencies

- 15.1 Staff should be aware of these procedures and a copy should be displayed for staff to refer to as and when needed. Evacuation should be regularly practised and practices recorded. All staff should undergo regular training and records should be kept of such training.
- 15.2 To facilitate risk free evacuation if needed, when designing accommodation, consideration should be given to using systems which would allow timely removal of the animals in the case of emergency. This provision would not usually apply to aquaria and ponds.
- 15.3 This will ensure that, if needed, the equipment will function correctly. Staff should be properly trained on the use of equipment provided.
- 15.4 A reasonable distance would, in normal conditions, be interpreted as no more than 20 minutes travelling time.
- 15.5 For contact in cases of emergency.

15.6 For information of the public in cases of emergency, when a staff member is not on site.

15.7 This is vital for access to the animals at all times to ensure correct care is provided

15.8 For health and safety of staff and animals.

15.9 Some species are very sensitive to temperature fluctuation.

16. Dogs

16.1 To ensure puppies can eat the food provided.

16.2 Puppies must be 8 weeks old or over. Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations prohibits the transport of puppies without their mother before this age.

16.3 The kennel area should be large enough to allow separate sleeping and activity areas. The kennel should allow each puppy to be able to walk, turn around and wag its tail without touching the sides of the kennel. The puppies should have sufficient room to play, stand on their hind limbs and to lie down without touching another individual. The kennel size required will increase in relation to the size and number of puppies housed at any one time. The length and the width should be sufficient to allow all the puppies to lie outstretched without their noses or tails touching the walls or other individuals. In certain circumstances it is permissible to have separate exercise areas to sleeping areas but in such cases puppies must be given access to the exercise area at least four times a day. Any separate exercise area should be fully cleaned and disinfected between its use by different batches of puppies.

16.4 Puppies are relatively sensitive to high/ low temperatures. Temperatures should not normally go below 12°C or exceed 26°C.

16.5 The use of enough absorbent material allows urine and faeces to be contained and reduce contamination of the puppies.

16.6 Puppies do not discriminate in where they toilet and this maintains a clean environment. A cleaning schedule or SOP should be provided.

16.7 The use of soft material will prevent skin lesions being caused by soiling or pressure sores.

16.8 The diet should be appropriate for puppies.

16.9 "Suitable intervals" for puppies to be visited are frequent, as they require to be socialised. It is recommended that this should be a minimum of 4 times per day with 20 minutes of interaction per batch. There should be an SOP.

16.10 Puppies are particularly susceptible to disease as they have immature immune systems. The new owner should be advised to register the puppy with a vet.

16.11 Isolating healthy puppies does not allow them to exhibit natural behaviour patterns.

16.12 To allow puppies to exhibit normal behaviour patterns. Toys should only be given under supervision and should be easily cleaned or replaced between batches.

17. Cats

17.1 To ensure kittens can eat the food provided. Kittens must be 8 weeks old or over. Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related legislation prohibits the transport of kittens without their mother before this age.

17.2 Kittens require adequate space to play together and to have space for a litter tray and bed. Varying heights to enable climbing should each also be provided. There should be adequate space for feeding, drinking, sleeping and litter tray to be kept separate.

17.3 Kittens are relatively sensitive to low temperatures owing to their small body weight. Temperatures should not normally go below 15 C or exceed 26 C.

17.4 Kittens need a warm sleeping, soft area, away from the litter tray and food.

17.6 The diet should be appropriate for kittens.

17.7 Diseases spread very easily between litters, both by direct contact or by sneezing. Kittens are particularly susceptible to disease as they have immature immune systems. The new owner should be advised to register the kitten with a vet.

17.8 It is recommended that this should be a minimum of 4 times per day with 20 minutes of specific interaction per batch. Kittens should be protected from over-handling by staff or the public as they require time to rest.

17.9 To allow kittens to exhibit normal behaviours, particularly climbing. Toys should be easily cleaned or replaced between batches.

18. Rabbits

18.1 Rabbits are easier to sex at 8 weeks than any earlier, which will help prevent mis-sexing and unwanted litters.

18.2 Dwarf Lops/Dutch rabbits are the most commonly available in pet shops and weigh up to 4kgs. The height should allow the rabbit to rear up to perform natural behaviour. Rabbits should be kept in store in groups. Rabbits need to be able to move freely and to be able to perform vital behaviours such as caecotrophy and rearing.

18.3 To allow rabbits to exhibit normal behaviours, indestructible toys; cardboard boxes; chewing substrates should be provided. Toys should be easily cleaned or replaced between batches. Rabbits are prey animals and should have the opportunity to hide if scared or stressed.

- 18.4 Ambient temperature should not normally go lower than 12°C or exceed 26°C. Providing cool water, cool packs in their bedding, air movement and air conditioning may each help to avoid the stress caused to rabbits by high environmental temperatures.
- 18.5 Rabbits need a warm, softly-bedded sleeping area away from the litter and food/water.
- 18.6 The disinfectant should be effective against both viral, bacterial and parasitic infection and safe for use on rabbits. Check with a vet or manufacturer if unsure. Diseases such as E-cuniculi can be spread via urine, so thorough cleaning is required between new occupants. Rabbits often choose to toilet in the sleeping area of a hutch and a litter tray could be placed here.
- 18.7 Diseases spread very easily between litters. Rabbits should be housed with batch mates where possible.
- 18.8 Rabbits teeth are open rooted and therefore constant access to good quality hay is essential, for dental health, gastrointestinal health (without a constant supply of fibrous food, rabbit GI tracts slow down) and behavioural reasons (to relieve boredom). It is vital that hay is available throughout the day and sufficient provided for them at closing time to last them until the next business day. Dry food should be provided for youngsters to assist growth, see manufacturer's instructions, but should not be fed ad-lib.
- 18.9 Due to the delicate digestive system, particularly under stress, if diets are to be changed then a slow transition between diets is advisable.

19. Other Small Mammals

- 19.1 To help avoid unwanted litters, all animals should be sexed immediately on arrival to the premises and housed in single sex groups. Animals from different sources should not be mixed.
- 19.2 Animals should be able to freely move around the accommodation and be able to perform natural behaviours. See table in section 19 of the conditions for accommodation sizings.
- 19.3 Providing sufficient and appropriate substrate keeps the accommodation clean and dry and allows digging where appropriate. There are a number of substrates available and the type used will depend on the animal kept.
- 19.4 Bedding provides a place to sleep and rest, the type used will depend on the animal kept. It should be provided in sufficient quantities to enable the animal to feel secure and warm.
- 19.5 Animals must be given the opportunity to hide as a natural instinct and be given suitable accessories to allow for stimulation and to reduce stress. Chinchillas and Degus should be given the opportunity to use a sand bath by offering one on a regular basis, e.g. 10 minutes daily. Rodents need to express natural behaviour such as

running and chewing/ gnawing. Toys such as hides, tunnels, paper bags filled with hay and fruit twigs are ideal for expressing natural foraging behaviour. Animals should be able to move away from direct lighting. Cool hides should be provided to prevent overheating.

19.7 Water for small animals is usually provided in clean gravity fill drinking bottles, (which should be of a suitable size for the species) or automatic or semi – automatic drinking systems. Fresh water should be available at all times, or as appropriate to the species; some desert-dwelling species such as jerboas [family Dipodidae] should not be given water ad- lib. Bottles should be kept clean and free from algae.

19.8 The diet should be appropriate for the breed, life stage and species. Food should be refreshed regularly. Guinea pigs should have sufficient vitamin C in their diet. Guinea pigs are unable to synthesise Vitamin C.

20. Ferrets

20.1 Ferret kits can find separation from their mother very stressful and the stress response in a ferret often results in diarrhoea which can prove fatal.

20.2 Ferrets are naturally social animals that depend on the companionship of their own kind. Lone ferrets often suffer depression including poor appetite and lack of enthusiasm to move or play.

20.3 Ferret kits can be easily be sexed at 8 weeks of age. Adult, un-neutered hobs (males) may exhibit dominant behaviour and fight, so requiring individual accommodation. House the Jill (female) kits at a reasonable distance to prevent aggression between the hobs as they mature at around 20 weeks. Adult jills (females) should be prevented from having repeated seasons. Jills (females) left in season are prone to estrogen induced anaemia, a factor in shortening their normal lifespan. Veterinary advice should be sought.

20.4 Not mixing will reduce the risk of disease spreading. Mixing can be stressful for ferrets.

20.5 Enclosures should be placed on a hard surface and anchored to the ground. Ferrets require space for their toilet area removed from their sleeping or eating areas. Ferrets require space to exhibit their normal active behaviour – running backwards, forwards and sideways and to climb, explore and play. Ferrets are naturally clean and will usually select one corner as their toilet.

20.6 Ideally sleeping quarters should be raised. Ferrets seek dark areas for sleeping and sleep for long hours, up to twenty a day in the winter. Their natural instinct is to hide whilst sleeping.

20.7 Suggested bedding includes fabric items that can be laundered, straw and dust extracted wood shavings.

20.8 Temperatures should not normally go below 12°C or exceed 26°C. Ferrets tolerate cold better than heat. Provide plenty of warm bedding for when it is cold. Be aware heat prostration is likely at 32°C.

20.9 Feed a recognised and branded ferret kibble / biscuit. Small, frequent meals or ad lib feeding are recommended as ferrets have a rapid rate of digestion.

20.10 Ferrets are renowned for tipping bowls

21. Birds

21.1 Stocking densities will depend on the type of bird as well as cage dimensions and number of perches. Access to rain can be beneficial for plumage. Some species will need adequate space to fly. Chickens require an appropriate area and substrate to perch.

21.3 Birds are more sensitive to high temperatures.

21.4 Birds should not have to compete for drinkers/ feeders and risk exclusion. Passerines should have food available at all times. Enrichment and feeding devices need to be provided for larger psittacids. For parrots, it is preferable to use swinging systems such that the keeper does not need to enter the cage in order to change food/ water. Bowls should not be able to be removed from holders by the parrot.

21.5 Enclosures should be placed on a hard surface. Some species require more robust materials. Materials such as loose zinc coating can be toxic to birds.

21.6 Many birds find sleeping or sheltering in nest boxes an essential form of security or for sheltering from inclement weather but it is recognised that some species, such as canaries, will rarely if ever voluntarily enter nest boxes.

21.7 If ground living birds are kept with perching birds then attention should be paid to flooring such that bumblefoot issues are addressed - i.e. no concrete/rough stone. Where natural turf flooring is used, parasite status of the birds should be checked on a regular basis every few weeks.

22. Reptiles & Amphibians

22.1 Most reptiles and amphibians are not social and may, therefore, be kept individually. Communal enclosures should not be stocked as to appear overcrowded, common sense should be observed. Mixing of species, although possible, should be undertaken with caution. Some species may require or seek seclusion or privacy either sporadically or permanently and provision for this should be made.

Snakes: may be housed individually or in small groups, of the same species. Snakes known to be cannibalistic, e.g. king snakes (*Lampropeltis* sp), should be housed individually.

Lizards: only species of similar size and from similar habitat and geographical areas should be kept communally. Lizards known to be cannibalistic, e.g. *Gambelia* sp,

should be housed individually. Generally adult male lizards in breeding condition should not be housed together and groups of lizards housed communally should be regularly observed for signs of aggression.

Tortoises and Terrapins: only terrapins of similar size and habit and from the similar geographical area should be kept communally. Tortoises of different species should be housed individually. Also, adult males in breeding condition should be housed individually.

Frogs and Toads: only species of similar size, and from similar habitats and geographical areas, should be kept communally. Mixing of taxa (e.g. frog & toad) is not generally recommended. Cannibalistic species, such as horned frogs (*Ceratophrys* sp.) and African bull frogs (*Pyxicephalus* sp.) should be housed individually.

Newts and Salamanders: only species of similar size and from similar geographical areas should be kept together. Generally mixed taxa [e.g. lizards and tortoises] are not recommended, although paludaria which combine fish with small reptiles and/ or amphibians of appropriate species are acceptable.

22.2 **Snakes:** the length of the enclosure should be no less than two-thirds the overall length of the snake.

Lizards: the length of the enclosure should be three times the full length of the lizard, or larger.

Tortoises and Terrapins: the length of the enclosure should be a minimum of 90cms, or four times the length of the animal, or larger. For aquatic species [turtles, terrapins] the enclosure should allow the animal to swim adequately, i.e. have water depth at least 4 times that of the animal, although some terrapins (e.g. *Cuora* sp., *Terrapene* sp. and *Glyptemys* sp.) do not require such deep water. Terrapins must also have an adequate land basking area.

Frogs and Toads: the length of the enclosure should be minimum 30cm x 30 cm x 30cm, or at least three times the length of the animal, or larger. For sedentary species, such as horned frogs (*Ceratophrys* sp.) and African bull frogs (*Pyxicephalus* sp.) the enclosure can be smaller. Fully aquatic species should be able to swim adequately, i.e. water depth should be at least 4 times the depth of the animal.

Newts and Salamanders: the length of the enclosure should be minimum 30cm x 30 cm x 30cm, or at least three times the full length of the amphibian, or larger. Aquatic species should be able to swim adequately, i.e. water depth should be at least 4 times the depth of the animal.

Height and Width: of the enclosure should be appropriate to the species, with arboreal species requiring more height than terrestrial species.

22.3 Ambient and basking temperatures should be appropriate to the species concerned. Individual species should be researched as requirements for some species will vary. Vendors and staff must have access to relevant reference material (books, internet etc.). Basking spots may be provided by convection or radiant heat sources (e.g. light bulb, or heat mat), as appropriate to the species. Ventilation should be appropriate to the species and should allow sufficient change of air without jeopardising the temperature or humidity in the enclosure.

22.4 An appropriate light period should be observed. Species requiring UVB lighting, e.g. diurnal lizards and tortoises, should have appropriate UVB emitting lamps. These should be replaced according to manufacturer's recommendations. Mercury Vapour or Metal Halide UVB emitting lamps may also be used to provide a daytime heat source.

UV light sources must not be screened by non UV transmitting glass or plastic. Animals should have areas of shade so that they can escape from the light if desired.

- 22.5 Substrate should be appropriate to the species concerned and may include, but not be limited to: newspaper, paper towel, bark chip, wood chip, terrarium humus, moss, gravel, calcium carbonate, terrarium sand etc. Measures should be taken to ensure that substrate is not ingested.
- 22.6 Décor should be appropriate to the species and should not be harmful, e.g. sharp rocks, toxic or injurious plants. Décor should be secure and not able to fall and cause injury. Enclosure should be furnished in such a fashion as to allow inhabitants to exhibit natural behaviour, e.g. climb or hide where appropriate.
- 22.7 Feeding habits vary between species and between individuals. Staff should have knowledge of the requirements for all the species held. Food should be presented in a form or pattern that is acceptable to the species concerned. Food supplements [vitamin and minerals] should be provided as appropriate to the species concerned. Live food intended for use should be housed in suitable escape proof containers, and fed appropriately. Fresh foods [salads] should be kept refrigerated where appropriate. Frozen foods intended for use must be stored in an appropriate deep freeze and defrosted thoroughly before use. Feeding records for hatchling snakes should be kept and made available to purchasers. Fresh water should be available at all times, with the exception of certain desert species, such as *Uromastyx* sp. which should be offered water periodically. Certain species, such as chameleons, do not drink from standing water and should be offered water appropriately, e.g. by a dripper system or sprayer.
- 22.8 Spoiled food stuffs should be removed at appropriate time periods, at least daily. Substrates should be replaced as appropriate, and spot cleaned daily. Décor should be sanitised as appropriate. Enclosures should be disinfected with appropriate disinfectant as necessary and always between different batches of animals. Disinfectant should be appropriate for the contaminants likely to be encountered. Disinfectant hand gels should be available for staff to use between animals, to prevent the external environment being contaminated. Water bowls should be cleaned as appropriate and disinfected at least weekly. Slough [shed skins] should be removed daily.
- 22.9 Handling must be kept to a minimum at all times. Staff should receive training on how to handle animals and animals which may be aggressive should only be handled by competent staff. Staff and customers should wash hands after handling specimens, and any equipment used should also be disinfected. Customers handling animals prior to purchase should be supervised and offered facilities to wash their hands afterwards.

23. Fish

- 23.1 It is virtually impossible to determine the quantity of aquatic organisms to be kept in a system purely on a weight or number of aquatic organisms per unit, volume, or water surface area. The variation in holding system used, the quality of husbandry and the types of aquatic organisms stocked vary so greatly that it would render any such system too complicated to be practical or too simple to be useful. The maintenance of water quality standards can be used to determine working stocking densities. The water quality standards should not be met at the expense of a correct feeding regime.

Exceptions to these standards might occur e.g. when aquatic organisms are diseased, after transport or other stress. However in these cases appropriate remedial actions e.g. treatment, acclimatisation or isolation should be undertaken. Sea water holds less oxygen than fresh water. The recommended level is 5.5 mg/l so extra care is needed to ensure that levels do not routinely fall below this.

- 23.2 One test is representative of all the water in the system of centralised systems. Standalone systems must each be tested. Poor water quality is often the underlying cause of problems presenting as disease or mortalities.
- 23.3 Aquaria must be checked daily and cleaned as often as is necessary to maintain good hygiene standards, consistent with the rate of stock turnover and consequent stocking densities.
- 23.4 No fish or other aquatic organism should be subject to rapid fluctuation in light (lights should be on dimmers if automated), temperature and chemical composition of their water, other than for the controlled treatment of disease or as part of a controlled breeding programme. There are in excess of 4000 fish species in trade and thus the acceptable conditions may vary substantially and often counter intuitively. In case of doubt expert advice should always be sought.