## Animal Welfare Enforcement Roles

The Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, (the 2011 Act), is enforced by DAERA (Livestock), Councils (domestic pets) and PSNI (wildlife and fighting offences). The 2011 Act sets out a range of welfare offences for which penalties may be imposed when a person has committed an offence set out in the legislation. The maximum penalty available in Northern Ireland for the most serious welfare offences is: five years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

The 2011 Act enshrines the five needs of an animal in law: the need for a suitable environment; the need for a suitable diet; the need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns; any need to be housed with or apart from, other animals; and the need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease. On occasions this can merit an improvement notice that the enforcement bodies can issue and follow up on.

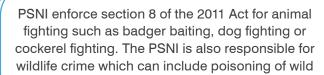
Enforcement bodies: (DAERA, Councils and PSNI) investigate all animal welfare related complaints and have statutory enforcement powers to take a range of actions when investigating a complaint. Action taken will be determined by the severity of the incident. Actions can include giving advice; issuing verbal warnings; issuing improvement notices (except PSNI); and, in extreme cases of suffering, taking animals into their possession and initiating prosecution action.

Enforcement bodies are unable to comment on any active or ongoing investigations.



The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is responsible for farmed animals (any animal bred or kept for the production of food, wool or skin or for other farming purposes).

Councils are responsible for enforcement in respect of non-farmed animals i.e. domestic pets and equines (e.g. horses and donkeys etc).

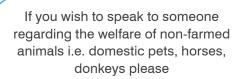


birds and illegal trapping of wildlife.



If you wish to speak to someone regarding the welfare of farmed animals please contact DAERA:

During office hours - Monday to Friday
9am-5pm telephone - 0300 200 7840
At weekends - contact a local Private Veterinary
Practice or a local Police Station who will, as
necessary, refer the welfare complaint to the
relevant DAERA "on call" officer.



contact your local Council.

At weekends and over holiday periods contact the same number and your call will be diverted to an answering service.

If you wish to make a complaint about animal fighting you should contact the PSNI on 101, or online at <a href="https://www.psni.police.uk">www.psni.police.uk</a> or anonymously using Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111.

PSNI can also investigate organised crime and economic crime involving animals and work with DAERA and Councils to do so.



# Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, (DAERA)

Farm animal welfare complaint received. Every complaint received is reviewed by DAERA.

Details of complaint are recorded on DAERA's Animal and Public Health Information System.

A complainant can choose to remain anonymous. If the complainant requests an acknowledgement of their complaint, a letter is issued.

**↓** 

In general, an on-farm inspection is completed within 24 hours. In exceptional circumstances, inspections may not be carried out e.g. if DAERA believes the complaint itself to be vexatious.

### Unsatisfactory

Outcome of inspection recorded on the Animal and Public Health Information System.
Follow up action will be taken that is deemed proportionate, based on the extent and severity of the breach that has taken place. There is a range of measures available to secure compliance and protect farm animal welfare including:

- Verbal advice:
- Issue of an Improvement Notice or Breach Cover Letter;
- Further inspections;
- · Euthanasia of animals:
- Financial penalty on any Area-based Scheme payments claimed;
- Prosecution. Any decision by DAERA to submit a prosecution file for consideration by the Public Prosecution Service is based on evidential tests and public interest factors, as detailed in DAERA's enforcement policy.
- Application for disqualification from keeping animals;

More than one of these actions may be taken over the course of an investigation into a complaint.

#### Satisfactory

Outcome of inspection recorded on the Animal and Public Health Information System.



Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

An Roin

Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Depairtment o

Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers

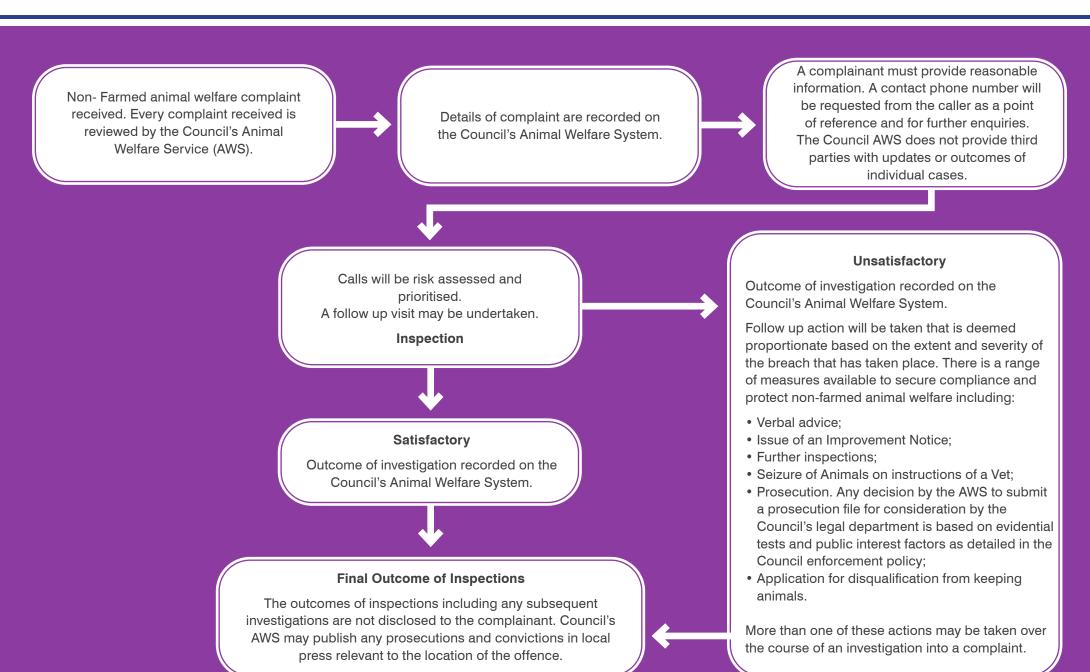
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

#### **Final Outcome of Inspections**

Inspection

The outcomes of inspections, including any subsequent investigations, are not disclosed to the complainant. DAERA publicises all prosecutions and convictions on its website, for a period of 30 days.

### NI Councils

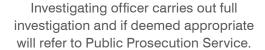


## Police Service of NI (PSNI) Central Wildlife/Animal Welfare Team

PSNI welfare/wildlife Crime complaint received by PSNI. Every complaint received is logged by PSNI and a reference provided. PSNI appointed officer is asked to obtain their impartial advice, support and guidance from PSNI central wildlife team.

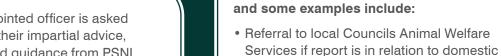


A complainant can choose to remain anonymous. Anonymous reports can be reported to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



#### **Final Outcome of Investigations**

The Outcome of investigations are not always disclosed to the complainant. PSNI may publish any prosecutions and convictions in the media.



• Referral to DAERA if report is in relation to livestock.

There are a range of measures available

· Seizure of Animals.

pets.

- Application for Disposal Order on any Animal seized.
- Prosecution. Any decision by the PSNI to ultimately submit a prosecution file is based on evidential tests and public interest factors.
- Application for disqualification from keeping animals.
- Further penalties may include; probation order, conditional discharge, monetary, prison, suspended sentence, prohibition for keeping animals.
- PSNI may seek an application for costs for PSNI's care/treatment of the animal against the owner/ defendant where appropriate.

More than one of these actions may be taken over the course of an investigation into a complaint.

