



# EVERY COUNCILLOR FOR EVERY KIND

## A LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Animals and humans are deeply connected. How we treat animals reflects the kind of society we want to be. Whether it's protecting pets, supporting farmers, or safeguarding wildlife, councils have the power to make lasting change - not just for animals, but also for the people who care about them.

**As a councillor, you're uniquely placed to lead the way. The decisions you make today will help build communities where every animal is respected and treated with kindness and compassion.**

**By taking action and pledging now, you can create a better world for every kind.**

## FIVE MISSIONS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

This manifesto outlines five practical missions to help you make a real difference:

- 1. PROTECT PETS AND PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE OWNERSHIP**
- 2. RAISE WELFARE STANDARDS FOR FARM ANIMALS**
- 3. SAFEGUARD WILDLIFE WELFARE AND NATURAL HABITATS**
- 4. ENFORCE ANIMAL WELFARE LAWS EFFECTIVELY**
- 5. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE LASTING IMPACT**

**Take the pledge today** and join councillors across the country who are stepping up for animals, creating kinder, safer, and more compassionate communities. Working together, we can make a lasting difference for every kind of animal and every kind of person. Let's act now - because animal welfare is everyone's welfare.

### FOREWORD

**Lee Gingell**, Public Affairs Manager (Local Government), RSPCA

*Councillors have a unique opportunity to shape kinder, safer communities – not just for people, but for the animals they care about too.*

*From protecting pets and safeguarding wildlife to raising welfare standards for farm animals, the decisions made in town halls can make a real and lasting difference.*

*This manifesto – Every Councillor for Every Kind – is both a celebration of what's already being done and a practical guide to what more is possible. It sets out five missions to help you lead the way on animal welfare.*

*At the RSPCA, we believe animal welfare is everyone's welfare. We're here to support councillors every step of the way. Together, we can build communities where every animal – and every person – is valued and respected.*



## 1: PROTECT PETS AND PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE OWNERSHIP

For every kind of pet. For every kind of owner. For every kind of community.

Pets enrich our lives with love and companionship, but too often, they're the first to suffer when times are tough. From stray dogs and cats struggling to find shelter to pet owners facing barriers to housing, pets need our help now.

Councils are uniquely placed to make a difference - for the animals we care about, and the people who care about them.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Pets are family. They bring joy, emotional support, and connection to millions of households. But when resources are stretched, it's pets who usually pay the price. Stray animals go without shelter, pet owners are forced to make impossible decisions, and poor enforcement leaves some pets at risk.

These issues aren't just about animals - they affect the well-being of communities, too.

By taking bold steps, councils can lead the way in protecting pets and promoting responsible ownership. Together we can ensure every pet has the good life they deserve.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Strengthen licensing compliance:** Ensure breeders, pet shops, and boarders meet high welfare standards by equipping officers to proactively identify and guide businesses, investigate non-compliance, and take enforcement action where necessary.
- **Enhance stray dog services:** Invest in stray dog provisions, promote responsible acquisition and ownership through community events, and use PSPOs thoughtfully to balance public safety with animal welfare.
- **Support pets in housing and emergencies:** Advocate for pet-friendly housing policies, ensure Adult Social Care teams comply with the Care Act 2014 to safeguard pets of hospitalised individuals and prioritise contingency planning to protect animals during emergencies.
- **Empower communities through education:** Lead engaging campaigns on microchipping, neutering, and affordable vet care, including how to stay safe around dogs, empowering owners and enabling others to recognise how to interact with dogs safely.



### YOUR IMPACT

Your leadership can create a community where pets are safe, cared for, and cherished. By acting now, you'll help families stay together, protect vulnerable animals, and set a gold standard for pet welfare.

**Together, we can build a future where pets thrive - bringing joy to homes and strengthening the kindness that binds us all.**

## 2: RAISE WELFARE STANDARDS FOR FARM ANIMALS

Every farm animal deserves compassion, respect, and a good life.

Farm animals are sentient beings with emotions, feelings, and needs. They enrich our communities and play a vital role in food production. Yet too often, they face living in unacceptable conditions which do not adequately safeguard their welfare.

Councils can take a stand for farm animal welfare, setting a powerful example of kindness and sustainability that benefits everyone.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Farm animals are more than commodities - they are living beings who deserve to live a good life.

From chickens and pigs to cows and sheep, millions of farm animals depend on robust welfare standards. Councils have the power to influence these by shaping procurement policies, collaborating with farmers, and ensuring compliance with welfare regulations.

By acting now, councils can support more ethical farming practices that prioritise welfare, improve public trust and more accurately reflect public expectations.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Lead by example in procurement:** Commit to serving higher welfare animal products - such as RSPCA Assured, organic or free-range - in schools, care homes, and council-run facilities.
- **Support farmers to adopt high welfare practices:** Collaborate with local farmers to promote more animal-friendly farming practices, encouraging them to adopt higher welfare standards (such as RSPCA Assured or organic) and explore funding or grant opportunities to improve accessibility.
- **End harmful practices:** Promote ending keeping animals in cages (e.g. laying hens in cages and pugs in farrowing crates), and end other inhumane activities on council-owned land and supported events.
- **Strengthen enforcement:** Work with trading standards and other agencies to uphold and effectively enforce animal welfare laws, ensuring farm animals are treated with dignity and respect.



### YOUR IMPACT

Your actions will create a kinder food system that benefits animals, farmers, and communities alike. By prioritising farm animal welfare, you'll inspire positive change and show that your council values compassion and integrity.

**Together, we can ensure every farm animal has the good life they deserve.**

## 3: SAFEGUARD WILDLIFE WELFARE AND NATURAL HABITATS

Wild animals deserve a safe habitat and a world where they can thrive.

Wild animals suffer pain and distress just like our pets - yet every day, they're harmed by development, infrastructure, and outdated control methods. From snares and strimmers to fencing and trail hunting, the threats are real.

Councils have the power - and responsibility - to act, putting welfare at the heart of decisions to protect wildlife from harm.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Wild animals are not just part of the scenery - they are sentient beings who suffer when we ignore their needs. Whether orphaned by habitat loss, injured by roads, maintenance tools or fishing litter, frightened by fireworks, or deliberately harmed through cruel practices like snaring and trail hunting, they deserve our protection.

Much of this harm is preventable - and councils are uniquely placed to lead that change. From planning and green space management to dog control, public events, and litter enforcement, your choices can create safer environments and set a standard for how communities coexist with wildlife.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Ban cruel wildlife control methods:** Prohibit the use of snares, glue traps, inappropriate bird deterrent netting, and other inhumane control practices on council-owned land and in wildlife management contracts, and promote humane, welfare-focused alternatives.
- **Prohibit trail hunting on council land:** Take a clear stand against cruelty by banning trail hunting and similar activities on council-owned land, preventing wildlife from being chased and killed under the guise of sport.
- **Prevent harm during maintenance work:** Adjust mowing, strimming, and vegetation clearance schedules to avoid nesting, breeding and hibernation seasons, and require checks for wildlife before works begin.
- **Support rescue and public awareness:** Support reputable local wildlife rescue centres to respond to injured or distressed animals, and lead public education efforts on protecting wild animals in everyday life.



### YOUR IMPACT

By prioritising welfare, you can save lives. Councils that act decisively on wildlife protection create greener, safer, and more compassionate communities - where no animal suffers needlessly, and nature has room to thrive.

Your leadership can inspire others, shift behaviours, and show that every animal - wild or domestic - deserves our respect and protection.

**Let your council be known not just for protecting habitats, but for standing up for the animals who live in them.**



## 4: ENFORCE ANIMAL WELFARE LAWS EFFECTIVELY

Good laws only work when they're effectively enforced.

Animal welfare laws are designed to protect animals from harm, but without proper enforcement, these protections can fall short.

Councils play a critical role in making sure these laws deliver real results - ensuring animals are safe, offenders are held accountable, and communities can trust that their concerns are taken seriously.

### WHY IT MATTERS

When animal welfare laws are enforced effectively, lives are saved, and suffering is prevented. Yet in too many areas, enforcement is undermined by a lack of resources, training, or coordination.

From tackling illegal puppy farms to addressing cases of hoarding or neglect, councils have a unique opportunity to lead the charge in protecting animals and supporting those responsible for their care.

Strong enforcement isn't just about animals - it also builds public confidence in local government and creates safer, kinder communities for everyone.



### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Invest in enforcement teams:** Advocate for animal welfare officers to receive specialist training, adequate funding, and the tools they need to act effectively.
- **Create clear reporting pathways:** Set up easy-to-access systems for residents to report welfare concerns, and ensure every report is followed up with action.
- **Tackle cases through collaboration:** Work with local police, the RSPCA and other welfare charities and rescue organisations to collaboratively address animal cruelty and neglect cases.
- **Adopt best practices:** Use RSPCA guidance to align enforcement with best practices, ensuring your council sets a strong example for others to follow.



### YOUR IMPACT

Your leadership can turn good laws into life-saving protections. By strengthening enforcement, you'll ensure animals are safe from harm, and that your community feels empowered to take action when they see animals in need.

**This is your chance to build a legacy of integrity, compassion and accountability - a future where animal welfare is more than a promise; it's a reality.**

## 5: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE LASTING IMPACT

Together, we can achieve more for animals and people.

Animal welfare is everyone's responsibility, and lasting change happens when we work together.

Councils have the power to unite communities, organisations, and individuals to create a kinder, more compassionate world.

By rallying humanity for animals, we can build a future where every animal is treated with respect and care - and every community benefits.

### WHY IT MATTERS

No council can achieve meaningful change alone. Collaboration between councils, enforcement agencies, welfare charities and rescue organisations, local community organisations and the wider public is key to tackling complex challenges and amplifying impact.

By leading partnerships that bring together schools, charities, businesses and community groups, you'll create a ripple effect of kindness that touches every part of your community.

From inspiring a shared commitment to animal welfare to empowering others to act, partnerships make a change stronger, faster, and more sustainable.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Adopt the Local Government Animal Welfare Charter:** Demonstrate your council's leadership and dedication to improving welfare standards.
- **Foster connections with other councillors:** Participate in networks and forums to exchange ideas, share successes, and build momentum for change.
- **Involve your community in welfare campaigns:** Support and amplify impactful initiatives and campaigns, such as #KindSparks and Pets as Prizes, to engage residents, raise awareness, and be agents of change.
- **Collaborate with schools, charities, and businesses:** Co-host projects and events that amplify welfare initiatives and inspire a shared sense of purpose.



### YOUR IMPACT

By building partnerships, you'll unlock the full potential of your community to create change. Together, we can achieve kinder policies, stronger networks, and better outcomes for animals and people alike.

**This is your chance to create a legacy of collaboration - a future where every council, every community, and every individual is united in their commitment to animal welfare.**

## YOUR ROLE IN CREATING A BETTER WORLD

Every animal deserves a good life, and every councillor has a unique role in making that a reality. The choices you make today can shape a future where all animals are respected, cared for, and treated with compassion.

By championing animal welfare in your community, you're helping to create a kinder, stronger society for both animals and people.

**At the RSPCA, we're here to support you every step of the way. We know the challenges councillors face, and we're committed to helping you take meaningful action that makes a difference.**



### HERE'S HOW WE'RE WORKING TO EMPOWER YOU:

- **Practical resources:** Best practice guides, policy templates, and specialist advice on animal welfare legislation, enforcement, and community campaigns.
- **Knowledge and confidence-building:** Training, networking, and tailored support to help councillors confidently address animal welfare issues.
- **Community engagement tools:** Campaign resources, partnership ideas, and public awareness tools to inspire local action.
- **Advocacy support:** A Local Government Animal Welfare Charter, collaborative lobbying efforts, and data-driven insights to influence policy change.
- **Recognition and celebration:** Our PawPrints Awards celebrate achievements and inspire continued progress.

## TAKE THE PLEDGE TODAY

Your role as a councillor is vital in creating a better world for every animal. With the RSPCA by your side, you're not alone. Whether you're enforcing laws, engaging your community, or advocating for change, we're here to provide the advice, resources, and encouragement you need to make an impact.

**Every councillor for every kind. Let's act now - because animal welfare is everyone's welfare. Ready to make an impact? Take the animal welfare pledge today.**