

Animal Welfare & Control (including the draft Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law 202-) Review

Submission: Anonymous 1

Dated: 6th January 2026

Thoughts on Animal Welfare laws

It is not clear to me whether the proposed updating of the law includes treatment of wild animals as well as those in the care and control of humans, but in either case, I feel that a one problem is the lack of desire to apply and enforce the laws that exist at present.

For example, there are laws protecting birds and other wild animals from disturbance while they are feeding, resting, and in fact in most other circumstances. However, members of the Ornithology Section of the Société Jersiaise have, on multiple occasions, reported that fishermen and swimmers have knowingly disturbed birds that rest on the rocks at Petit Port, and have taken photos of the offenders and their vehicles, but have been told there is “no appetite for prosecution”, so despite the presence of a notice telling people not to go onto the rocks to the south of the bay, fishermen are often seen there, and are flouting the law with no apparent penalties.

I suggest that when people are consistently found to be ignoring the law, despite having been informed of their legal obligations, countryside rangers be given the powers to impose spot fines, or give the equivalent of a “parking ticket” which must be paid at a later date.

Another enforcement matter relates to the States Vet. Over the last couple of years, many members of Durrell expressed concerns about the “enclosure” in which the sloths were being kept, which was in effect a stairwell which previous Zoo Directors had decided was unsuitable for keeping mammals. The very noisy stairwell failed to meet the Sloths’ behavioural needs for peace and quiet during the day when they are mainly sleeping, and plenty of natural branching on which to climb, but the States Vets found nothing amiss with the enclosure, apparently having been concerned only that the animals had food and water, and veterinary help on hand. Despite the States Vet having no complaints, the Zoo management did make changes to the enclosure to allow the Sloths more peace and privacy, but this was only after a visit from BIAZA (the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums). Sadly, this was too little, too late, as both adult sloths have since died.

So, I would ask that the States Vet be tasked with taking into account all the behavioural needs including requirements for space, the appropriate temperature and humidity, access to daylight, and environmental enrichment, of the particular species of animal concerned when making any pronouncements on whether that animal is being appropriately cared for. Jersey should be aiming for high welfare standards for all animals in our care, at all times – not the bare minimum of food,

water and medical treatment. If the States Vet does not have the necessary expertise to decide such matters for exotic animals, they should consult with veterinary colleagues who do. The Durrell “halo” is not so bright that it should blind a professional vet to every failing.

Another matter which I would like the panel to consider is that of the slaughter of decapod molluscs and octopi. A report from the London School of Economics (LSE), investigating sentience in cephalopod molluscs and decapod crustaceans, found strong and diverse evidence of sentience in both, and said that “invertebrates should be treated in the same way as vertebrates” and called for an end to the asphyxiating of octopuses, boiling of lobsters and dismembering of crabs. Their report, which reviewed over 300 scientific studies, led to the UK Government’s decision to legally recognise these animals as sentient beings.

I put it to you that humane slaughter methods must be used if these animals are caught for consumption. It is common knowledge that crabs and lobsters are commonly boiled and sometimes baked while still alive. This is completely unacceptable. I do not know what methods of slaughter would be humane, but if people are going to continue to eat them, such a method must be devised. Some recommend the use of electrical stunning. Having kept Amano shrimp in an aquarium – some of whom are at least 15 years old – and watched their behaviours, I am convinced that shrimp, prawns, and all other decapods, are also sentient, and should also be subject to humane slaughter regulations if they are to be eaten.

<https://bradleysfinediner.com/fresh-meat/crustaceans/shrimp/how-are-shrimp-killed-for-food/>

There is currently no humane slaughter method for octopi, but one must be sought, if people are to continue to kill and eat them.

Other matters related to marine life: dredging causes untold damage to the environment, as well as pain and suffering to the millions of animals caught up in this indiscriminate slaughter, and should be banned.

Most methods of killing fish caught for human or animal food are inhumane, with fish taking an hour or more to die. Percussive or electrical stunning appears to be the most humane method, but to be humane, this must be done by competent persons.

The poisoning of rats and mice still appears to be legal, with the result not only that the mice and rats themselves suffer painful deaths, but also their predators such as owls and other birds of prey or scavengers may also be poisoned. This should stop. If people are troubled by rodents, they should store potential food supplies more securely, thus reducing the animals’ ability to reproduce so frequently.

Moles are inoffensive creatures who eat grubs and aerate the soil. Many humane deterrent methods exist, and yet I frequently see mole killing devices and mole killing operatives about the island. I would like to see a ban on the use of lethal methods to

remove moles from areas where people do not want them. They are wild animals who have their part to play in the ecosystem - they should be free to fulfill their role.

Fireworks are a welfare issue, for vulnerable humans and other animals – both in the wild and in captivity. If an outright ban is not possible – the Netherlands seems to have manged it, so it should not be beyond our wit – the sale of fireworks to the general public should be prevented, and firework displays limited to one or two nights per year. Firework displays could be replaced displays using drones – which have the advantage of being reusable, and not causing litter.

Aversive collars – shock collars and prong collars – should be illegal to buy or use. There should be a legal requirement that dog owners exercise their dogs out of doors. Incredible though this seems, I know of at least one owner of a husky who rarely takes it out of the house.

Cows and their calves should not be separated so soon after birth. The separation of cows from their calves causes long-lasting distress. There is an organic farm in Jersey where cows and calves are treated humanely and left together. This should be the norm and not the exception. If the consequence is an increase in prices of dairy, it is no less than we owe these animals.

I often see horses standing alone in fields, with no company. This is very bad for the welfare of the horse, which is a herd animal. Owners of single horses should be encouraged to keep their horse near others of its species, or other equines.

Collisions with glass cause death and injury to millions of birds every year. When new buildings are in the planning stage, builders should be incentivised to use bird-friendly glass on all glass balconies or windows.

<https://www.guardianglass.com/us/en/why-glass/build-with-glass/applications-of-glass/glass-for-facades/bird-friendly-glass>