

Guidance on the Licensing and Inspection of Zoos in England under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981

With the aim of helping local authorities, zoo inspectors and zoos in England to comply with the licensing and inspection of zoos, we have put together a number of links to relevant legislation and guidance. If you think we should include other information, please let us know by sending an email to Defra at the following address: zoos.branch@defra.gsi.gov.uk

(Please note that the Zoo Licensing Act applies across Great Britain but is a devolved matter. Issues relating to zoos in Scotland and Wales are matters for the Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly Government respectively).

Legislation

[Government Circular 02/2003](#) which contains an interpretation and consolidated text of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 (amended)

[Update to Circular guidance - llama and alpaca](#)

[The Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice](#)

The zoo licensing process

Guidance and forms to help with the zoo licensing process can be found on the following page of the Defra website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/zoos/guidance.htm>

1. Flowcharts produced by Animal Health* for guidance on the licensing process.
2. Zoo licence template and guidance.
3. Informal guidance notes that provide suggested formats for local authorities to use in administering the Act for various types of application and notices required under the Act:
 - Section 1 - Application form for a renewal of a zoo licence (existing zoos)
 - Section 2 - Form for notice of intention to apply for a zoo licence (notice to the press)
 - Section 3 - Form for notice of intention to apply for a zoo licence (notice to the local authority)
 - Section 4 - Application form for a zoo licence (new zoos)

- Annex A - Mandatory conditions that must be attached to Zoo Licences (see section 1A of the Act).
- Annex B - Suggested model condition
- Annex C - Discretionary conditions commonly attached to licences

- Feedback form on Zoo Inspectorate performance

4. The following suggested model directions have been produced by the [Zoos Forum](#). Local authorities should also consider obtaining their own legal advice when making directions.

- Model direction to comply with zoo licence conditions
- Model direction to close a licensed zoo
- Model direction to close an unlicensed zoo
- Model direction to ensure the welfare of animals following the closure of a zoo

Guidance and advice

[The Zoos Forum Handbook](#)

The paper [kept for exhibition to the public](#) considers interpretation of that term and provides guidance intended to assist with decisions on whether establishments fall within the Act.

The Zoos Forum has put together a [document](#) that gives advice and recommendations on the use of hazardous (Category 1) animals in public demonstrations outwith zoo premises.

Zoo Licensing Training Seminars

Animal Health's Zoos Inspectorate holds biennial training seminars for licensing officers and inspectors. A variety of issues are looked at including, for example, conservation and education activities in zoos, as well as the more obvious issues such as the roles and responsibilities of zoo inspectors. The outcome of any outstanding issues raised at the seminars are recorded in the [minutes of Zoos Forum meetings](#).

The report of the last seminar held in Cheltenham in March 2009 can be seen on Animal Health's website at the link below.

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If you have any queries on any aspect of the zoo licensing and inspection processes that are not answered by the above, please get in touch with Tom Adams, Animal Health, Zoo Licensing Inspectorate, Room 1/15, Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB, telephone 0117 372 8209, E-mail: tom.adams@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk.

Useful websites

[Animal Health Zoos Inspectorate](#)

[Welsh Assembly Government - zoos](#)

[Scottish Government Wildlife and Habitats](#)

*Animal Health is a Defra Executive Agency. Its Zoos Inspectorate manages and maintains a list of Secretary of State Zoo Inspectors, who are qualified to inspect zoos in England, and gives advice on zoo licensing matters.