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The **IAPWA** Animal Welfare charter was produced in March 2010 to document our code of conduct and to confirm our requirements for other charities that we work with, now and in the future.

In adopting this charter, we aim to provide guidance to other organizations and individuals to prevent the unnecessary suffering of animals. Supporting this document is a positive move towards providing hope and protection for animals in need by preventing cruelty and promoting animal welfare.

This document will be revised where necessary to take into account changes in legislation.

Nicky Stevens and Lynsey Gill

Founders

IAPWA

**IAPWA** supports the view that all animals have a right to life free from cruelty and unnecessary suffering. It recognizes that animals are capable of feeling, enjoying a state of well-being and of suffering. All of these factors have been taken into account when formulating the charter.

**IAPWA** believes that people have a duty of care towards animals in their charge and that such animals have the right to enjoy the five basic freedoms.

- **Freedom from hunger and thirst** - By providing ready access to fresh water and a balanced diet that maintains health and vigor
- **Freedom from pain, disease and injury** - By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
- **Freedom from fear and distress** - By ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering
- **Freedom from discomfort** - By providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting and sleeping area
- **Freedom to express normal behavior** - By providing sufficient space, proper facilities and appropriate company of the animals' own kind

The charity will take these five freedoms into account when dealing with all matters relating to animal health and welfare as well as when developing future policy.

**Our Vision** - To create a world where animal cruelty becomes our history and compassion for animals becomes our future.

**Our Mission** - To provide hope and protection for animals in need by preventing cruelty and promoting animal welfare. This will be achieved in the following ways:

- Addressing the overpopulation problem facing companion animals through implementing Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) programmes
- Establishing veterinary clinics as part of the TNR projects to provide veterinary treatment to those in need
- Working with the local municipality on animal welfare issues
- Creating solutions for those animals that require long term care and are unable to cope on the streets
- Creating a compassionate society through working with and providing an education programme to the local community
- Discouraging the sale of animals by unlicensed pet breeders
- Encouraging responsible pet ownership
- Campaigning for change to prevent cruelty and end inhumane practices
- Operating a membership scheme to create a network of supporters worldwide
- Creating partnerships with other welfare organizations to unite in a shared goal of ending animal cruelty

This charter does not cover every aspect of animal welfare but aims to cover those areas where the charity can have a direct influence. Through lawful means, IAPWA will promote improvements in animal welfare by taking into account issues in its 'day to day' operations, its decision making process and through influence in association with other authorities, voluntary welfare groups and government agencies.

Every year, millions of animals around the world are killed in an effort to deal with the overpopulation issues. This has proven to be ineffective as a method of control as the vacuum left is soon filled by other animals that move in to utilize the resources available, or by the existing animals in the area to raise more offspring. In order to address this problem, we will be working on a Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) programme which has been proven to be the only method of successful population control. For more information about our objectives for this project and how we intend to achieve them, please read our '**Population Control Management**' document. As part of this project we will practice the following guidelines:

### **1.1. TRAP - Procedures for catching animals**

- a) Capture will be achieved with the minimum force required and will be carried out in a humane manner
- b) All equipment used will be chosen for its ability to support humane handling
- c) All personnel involved in the handling of animals will receive adequate training to ensure that they are able to carry out their role in accordance with these guidelines

Once the animals have been caught, they will be transported in a humane manner to the **IAPWA** clinic. This area will provide suitable housing for all animals in our care and will include the following provisions:

- a) Kennel size, design and occupancy will adhere to best practice standards
- b) Disease control measures will be implemented including isolation facilities
- c) Access to drainage, water and electricity will be provided
- d) Environmental factors such as noise and pollution will be taken into account

On a day to day basis, our management team and all staff will ensure:

- a) Adequate fresh water and nutritious food for all animals in our care
- b) Regular hygiene and cleaning in all areas
- c) Routine inspection of all animals
- d) Monitoring of health and the provision of required veterinary treatments
- e) Best practice procedures for rehoming (adoption), neutering and euthanasia will be adhered to
- f) Training of staff will be designed to ensure safe and appropriate handling of animals
- g) Record keeping and reporting will be conducted to highlight the success of the project

## 1.2 NEUTER – Reproductive Control

This is a crucial part of our TNR programme and will involve neutering the companion animals to prevent the birth of unwanted offspring.

- a) Our chosen method of neutering will be through surgical sterilization
- b) All neutering operations will be carried out by a qualified veterinarian
- c) All procedures will include appropriate anesthesia and pain management
- d) Any drugs used will be shown to have appropriate safety, quality and efficacy for the function required and will be used according to the manufacturer's regulations.
- e) Best practice neutering will be adhered to for both pre and post operative care

## 1.3 RELEASE/REHOMING

Prior to any animal in our care being rehomed we will ensure:

- a) They have been neutered, vaccinated, treated for worms/fleas/disease where applicable and given a full check up by a veterinarian affiliated to the organization
- b) They have been given a behavioral assessment to establish if they are suitable to be rehomed.
- c) The suitability of new owners is considered to ensure that the owner is matched to the animal they wish to adopt
- d) New owners are asked to ensure any dog they adopt is licensed according to local guidelines

Should it transpire that any animal in our care has an owner and is not a stray, they will be, where possible and in the best interests of the animals welfare, reunited with the owner and advice will be provided on responsible animal ownership.

Animals that are removed from an area with no owner and cannot be rehomed may be released to their local community at or near the place of capture. This method is considered acceptable in the situation where the presence of stray dogs is tolerated by the local community in that region. If this method is adopted, the team will strive to raise the awareness of the programme within this community to ensure understanding and support.

In this situation we will also ensure

- a) The animal is permanently marked in some way to indicate that the animal has been neutered
- b) Ensure individual identification which allows for tracking of vaccination status, treatment history and identification of a level of 'ownership'.
- c) The animal will be returned to a place that is as near as possible to the place of capture
- d) The welfare of animals after release will be monitored and action taken if required.

Steps will also be taken to develop rubbish control initiatives in conjunction with the local authorities as part of the many steps required to deal with the overpopulation problem.

## 2. Veterinary care

All veterinary surgeons working on any projects for or funded by **IAPWA** will be asked to adhere to the following guidelines in addition to the regulations set by the country where they are registered. These are as follows:

- 2.1** Treat all patients of whatever species, humanely, with respect, and with welfare as the primary consideration.
- 2.2** Take steps to provide 24-hour emergency cover for the care of animals of those species treated during normal working hours. Emergency cover means, at least, immediate first aid and pain relief. 24-hour emergency cover may be provided by, or in conjunction with, one or more other veterinary practices
- 2.3** The vet should not unreasonably refuse to provide first aid and pain relief for any animal of a species treated by the practice
- 2.4** All vets working on any project should take into account the needs of the animal and the relevant health and safety issues
- 2.5** Following a diagnosis taking into account the animal's age, the extent of any injuries or disease and the likely quality of life after treatment, all vets should make a full and realistic assessment of the prognosis and the options for treatment or euthanasia based on welfare considerations
- 2.6** Proper standards in practice premises and equipment should be maintained in relation to patient care and supervision
- 2.7** All medicinal products should be prescribed responsibly
- 2.8** A veterinary surgeon must not cause any patient to suffer
  - a) by carrying out any unnecessary procedures
  - b) by excessive restraint or discipline
  - c) by failing to maintain adequate pain control and relief of suffering
  - d) by neglect

### **3. Euthanasia**

As an animal welfare organization it is our obligation to ensure that when the decision to euthanize is taken, the methods used are humane and administered by responsible and appropriately trained individuals.

- 3.1** We believe that the wellbeing of an animal is the responsibility of the owner. In the event of a companion animal not having an owner, this responsibility will lie with the individual or organization that has assumed care of the animal.
- 3.2** The decision whether to euthanize an animal cannot be made without considering what other options are available. The solution to a particular situation will depend on many factors including the welfare outcomes for each available option. Identical animals may benefit from different treatment decisions depending on the environmental situation of each animal.
- 3.3** An ill animal is considered to be harmed by death if it could receive treatment that would improve its quality of life; but would benefit from euthanasia if after treatment it would continue to suffer.
- 3.4** Euthanasia is justified where there are no better options for the animal. It could be described as being contextually justified when there is at least one better option available but the circumstances are such that it could not be taken, therefore euthanasia is the best available option. If there are alternatives to euthanasia that would give the animal a good quality of life and these were not undertaken, the reason for euthanasia would be described as non-justified and would not be supported within this charter.
- 3.5** The following categories of animals should be euthanized immediately upon entry or as needed to ensure the welfare of the animal and safety of staff and the community:
  - a. Those that are terminally ill
  - b. Those that are seriously disabled or injured beyond the point at which treatment will improve the welfare of the animal
  - c. Those with contagious or zoonotic diseases where they are unable to be separated from other animals during treatment and risk spreading the disease
  - d. Those animals that are deemed to be too aggressive to humans or other animals

This list is not exhaustive and each case will be reviewed on an individual basis taking all factors into account to ensure the wellbeing of the animal in question.

### **3.6 Method of euthanasia**

- a) The most humane method of euthanasia is by Intravenous (IV) injection of 20% Pentobarbitone solution
- b) Only sterile and sharp needles should be used with suitable bore size and length. Needles should then be disposed of after use in accordance with our health and safety protocols.
- c) A tranquilizer or anesthetic should be given in the first instance to animals showing signs of stress or aggression
- d) Accepted routes are:
- e) Intravenous (IV) route
- f) Intraperitoneal route is considered acceptable when collapsed or poor venous access precludes IV injection
- g) Intracardiac route, only after the animal is unconscious or deeply anaesthetized

### **3.7 Process of euthanasia**

- a. Euthanasia should always be carried out in an enclosed and quiet environment whilst taking all steps to minimize the stress on the animal.
- b. Pre-euthanasia drugs (such as tranquilizers and sedatives) should ideally be used to facilitate safe and humane handling of animals prior to euthanasia in all cases but must be used if they are showing signs of stress.
- c. Once calm, the following steps should be taken:
  - i. Gentle restraint should be provided to ensure that the euthanasia is carried out smoothly
  - ii. The situation should be monitored to ensure the animal remains calm at each stage of the process
  - iii. The euthanasia solution should be administered in a slow infusion so as to bring about a state of anesthesia before death
  - iv. The death of the animal should be verified
  - v. Only when death has been verified should the animal be disposed of in line with current guidelines.
  - vi. The area should be disinfected accordingly following the procedure
  - vii. Personnel protective clothing should be worn to prevent the spread of potential infectious/zoonotic disease

**3.8 IAPWA** does not condone the mass destruction of dogs and cats as a population control measure

**3.9** We reluctantly accept that there are circumstances where the euthanasia of healthy animals may need to be undertaken by the organizations that we work with. An example of this may be to avoid overcrowding in a shelter that would compromise the welfare of animals being held there. We believe, however, that prior to any measures being taken, every other option should have been considered and that all shelters we provide assistance to should have an appropriate rehoming strategy in place to minimize the risk of this outcome.

#### **4. Education and Legislation for Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO)**

**IAPWA** believes that by encouraging owners to be more responsible, this will reduce the number of animals that are allowed to roam, improve their health and welfare and minimize the risk posed to the community. The promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership through legislation and education is a necessary part of a population control programme.

**4.1** Our programmes will be devised in collaboration with the relevant authorities and in conjunction with local animal welfare groups.

**4.2** Education on RPO issues (for the currently owned animal and any offspring it produces) will address the following elements:

- a) The importance of neutering to ensure that the animal does not contribute to the current overpopulation problem
- b) Raising the profile of the 5 freedoms and ensuring that owners are able to meet them for the animals they keep
- c) Appropriate pet selection and care to ensure the welfare of the animal
- d) Discouraging the use of dogs and cats for human consumption
- e) Registration and identification of dogs
- f) Disease prevention e.g. through regular vaccination worming and flea control
- g) Preventing negative impacts of dogs on the community such as risks to human health through biting, traffic accidents or zoonotic disease
- h) Positive promotion of dogs and cats in Society
- i) The introduction of programmes such as Dr Dog which has been shown to be highly successful in areas of Asia
- j) Improvement and enforcement of the current legislation to protect animals and promote better welfare standards in conjunction with a team of inspectors

In order to achieve a shift towards responsible ownership, a combination of legislation, public awareness, education, and promotion of these elements will be required. It may also be necessary to improve access to resources supporting responsible ownership, such as veterinary care, identification and registration services and measures for control of diseases.

## 5. Dog and Cat Breeding

**5.1 IAPWA** will discourage the sale of animals through unlicensed breeders.

**5.2** Companion animal breeders will be encouraged to form or join an appropriate association that encourage a commitment to the raising and selling of physically and psychologically healthy dogs. Unhealthy dogs are more likely to be abandoned to become part of the stray population.

**5.3** Advice will be given to breeders so that they can educate new owners on how to provide proper care in order to strive for appropriate standards in animal welfare.

**5.4** Regulations covering commercial breeders should include specific requirements for accommodation, provision of suitable food, drink and bedding, adequate exercise, veterinary care and disease control

**5.5 IAPWA** aims to employ staff locally to allow for regular inspection of these facilities

These guidelines will form our code of conduct for our day to day operations and each stage of the decision making process. It will also be taken into account when dealing with other welfare organizations to ensure that any charity affiliated with **IAPWA** offers best practice standards of care.

