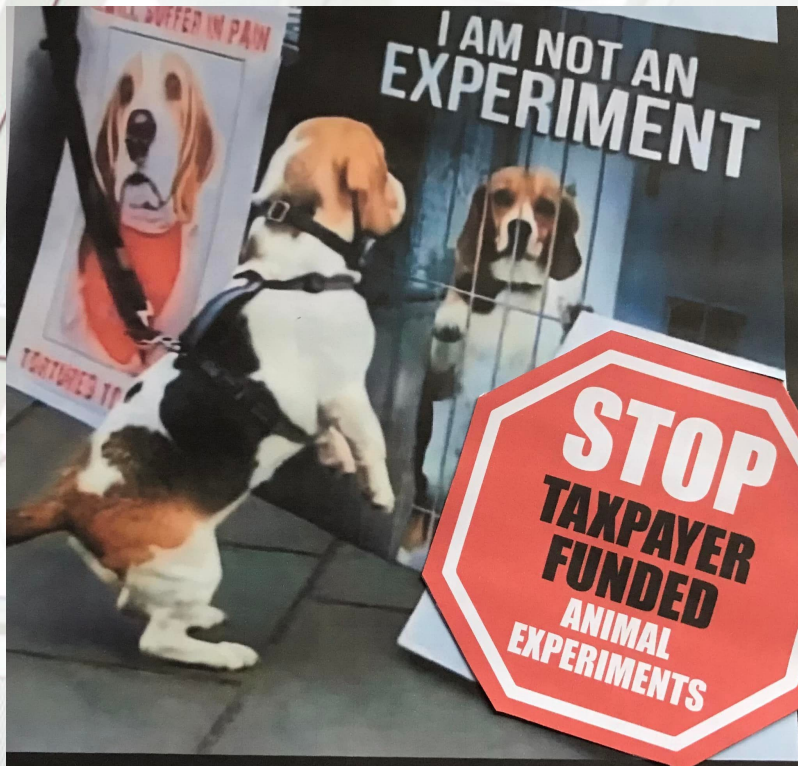


OCTOBER 2024



REHOMING ?

THE FAILURE OF THE ASPA



CBUK Occasional Report

COMMENTARY ON THE ADVICE NOTE 03/2015
ANIMALS (SCIENTIFIC PROCEDURES) ACT 1986
**RE-HOMING AND SETTING FREE OF ANIMALS
ANIMALS IN SCIENCE REGULATION UNIT
OCTOBER 2015**

RE-HOMING -THE WHOLE STORY?

Advice Note -
Published 2015
..... and lacking.

Rehoming

Definition of 're-home

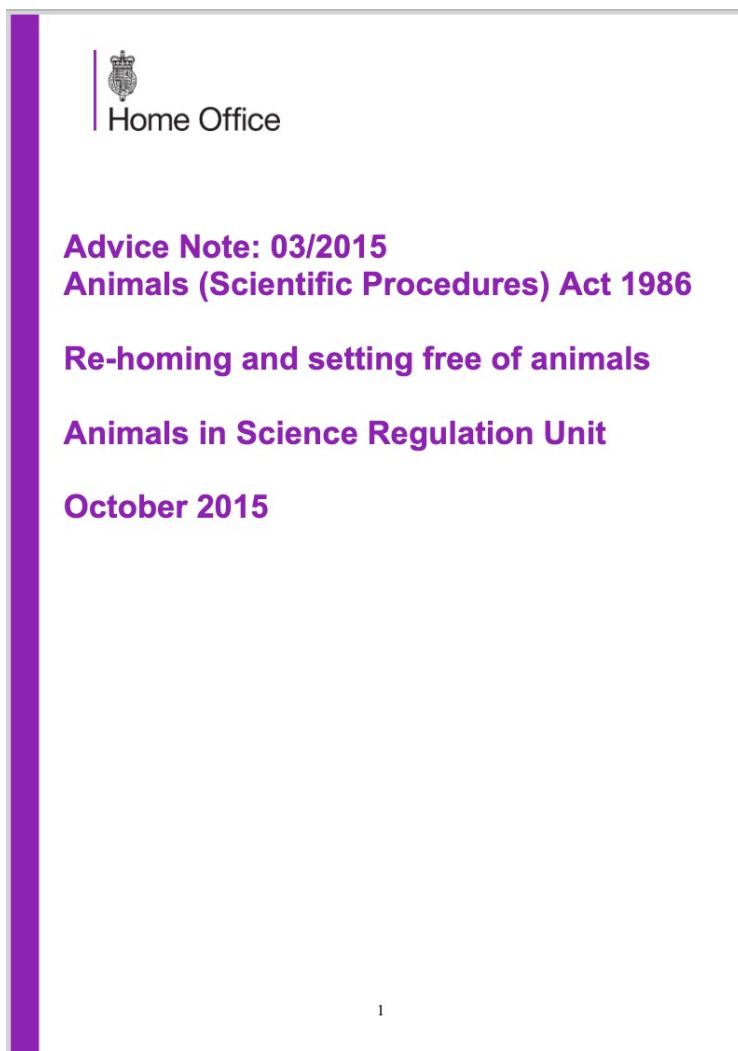
VERB (*transitive*)

to give (an animal, such as one that has been [abandoned](#) or is a [stray](#),) a new home and owners

Kittens and puppies are always easier to re-home

Collins English Dictionary. Copyright © HarperCollins Publishers

Introduction



We are requesting Members of Parliament review the above document with this report, which outlines our concerns about the implementation of the re-homing policy included in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

The Re-homing and Setting Free of Animals Advice Note lacks clarity, feasibility, and has not facilitated re-homing animals in laboratories in any numbers.

Given these issues, it is unclear why the Animals in Science Committee would consider implementing this policy instead of re-homing animals to loving families or sanctuaries.

Alongside our petition, we want to deliver a strong message to those who have left this policy unchanged and unreviewed. The public demands that this policy be updated to reflect a kinder and more ethical perspective.

https://www.change.org/p/urge-labs-mbr-to-rehome-rather-than-kill-unwanted-beagles?source_location=search

Many animals suffer horribly in laboratories and should not be re-used or serve as sentinels.¹ This practice is both obscene and cruel. This is certainly not re-homing.

We are also asking that funds from pharmaceutical and chemical companies be set aside to ensure that the re-homing of these animals does not fall upon the public purse.

Taxpayers should not be funding this in any way, especially when these companies make billions annually.

The government should ensure that re-homing agencies are involved in this process and do not suffer financially as a result.

While we do not have a preference for which organisations re-home the animals, we strongly advocate for the principle of mandatory rehoming as a suitable endpoint with proper provisions in place.

Science has marched on in the nine years since the publication of this Advice Note. Yet the replacement of animals in research is notoriously slow by the regulators and the pharmaceutical industry.

According to the US Food and Drug Administration, out of ten drugs that successfully pass animal tests, nine will fail during clinical trials, either as a result of adverse reactions not seen in the animals or else due to lack of efficacy in humans.

No other comparable industry would tolerate such a failure rate and yet the Government and the MHRA continue to accept animal testing as the 'gold standard' despite the availability of modern technologies that far surpass animal tests in terms of reliability and relevance to human health.

As one example, the human 'liver on a chip'² is far more reliable than animal tests at detecting drug induced liver injury (DILI for short). This is hugely significant because the 'liver on a chip' will prevent dangerous drugs from ever reaching clinical trials, whereas animal testing is notoriously unreliable at detecting and predicting DILI. Not only is DILI the leading cause of prescription drug withdrawal from the market, but such liver damage can even result in a patient requiring a liver transplant.

One single liver transplant costs the NHS around £ 121,000.

The use of Non-Animal Methods in research is tied to the UK having a process that is humane and workable for the re-homing of animals in research. The current Advice Note is not fit for purpose with regard to Re-Homing and Setting Free animals in research.

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/immunology-and-microbiology/sentinel-species>

² <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17460441.2023.2255127#abstract>

The following information in this document is about the RE-HOMING Policy here in the UK, from the time when in 1986 THE ANIMALS IN SCIENTIFIC PROCEDURES ACT WAS PUBLISHED.

- *It gave legitimacy to research and testing on animals in the UK by endorsing it into law.*
- *It gave rise to the words 'protected animals'.*

There is no protection to be truthful- virtually all of them die and most of them horribly.

It is important to understand at this point, that the process of animal testing has never been scientifically validated.

We confirmed this in a series of Freedom of Information requests with the following departments and government agencies:

The Home office FOI 74577

Medical Research Council FOI2023/00205

Health and Safety Executive

UKRI FOI2023/00205)

Why is this significant?

This is significant because of the following:

- The Secretary of State for the Home Office is the **named responsible minister for the full enactment of the Act,**
- The Medical Research Council supports research across the biomedical spectrum, from fundamental lab-based science to clinical trials, and in all major disease areas,
- The **Health and Safety Executive is the 'competent authority'** for the registration and implementation of chemicals and all associated testing.

Yet not one of these departments and agencies could explain or say how they are implementing an unvalidated process which is widely accepted without any scientific justification as a 'gold standard'.

Evidence 1 Safer Medicines Trust

Although it is widely accepted that medicine should be *evidence based*, animal experimentation as a means of informing human health has generally not been held, in practice, to this standard. This fact makes it surprising that animal experimentation is typically viewed as the default and gold standard of preclinical testing and is generally supported without critical examination of its validity. A survey published in 2008 of anecdotal cases and statements given in support of animal experimentation demonstrates how it has not and could not be validated as a necessary step in biomedical research, and the survey casts doubt on its predictive value.³ I show that animal experimentation is poorly predictive of human outcomes,⁴ that it is unreliable across a wide category of disease areas,⁵ and that existing literature demonstrates the unreliability of animal experimentation, thereby undermining scientific arguments in its favor. I further show that the collective harms that result from an unreliable practice tip the ethical scale of harms and benefits against continuation in much, if not all, of experimentation involving animals.⁶

Evidence 2: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4594046/

14. Why do we look for validation of replacements - the animal tests were themselves never validated?

[collapsed]In the past, testing on animals was the best available and most reliable way of carrying out risk assessments in many industrial sectors. In fact, testing on animals was the only way of carrying out some forms of risk assessment.

While the animal test methods have not undergone the same type of validation that would be expected today, long standing experience with the use of animal methods has been attained and they have been included in a number of legal provisions.

In many circumstances this means they are required by law.

There are of course limitations with animal testing, which means development and validation of alternative methods is important from a number of perspectives. There is the ethical standpoint but it is important to continue to provide a better safety assessment framework for the protection of human health and the environment.[/collapse]

Evidence 3

In contrast, animal experiments have never been subjected to the same level of scrutiny and validation. Despite these challenges, many scientists are increasingly committed to developing and using non-animal methods.



 Humane Society of the United States
<https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/animals-us...>
[Animal testing and experiments FAQ](#)

Evidence 4 FOI 74577

FOI 75156 Response.pdf

Home Tools FOI 75156 Respo... × assessment?

2. *Where and when was the validity of the process of animal testing scientifically judged and validated? Not the individual tests, but the process, and by whom?*

3. *Where is this validated process of animal testing information published for the public and the scientific community to see?*

For questions 1, your question does not fall under the Freedom of Information Act (2000). The FOIA covers requests for recorded information held by public authorities. A public authority is not required to provide opinion or to answer questions that do not seek recorded information.

In response to questions 2 and 3, the Home Office do not hold the information requested. The Home Office are responsible for delivering the regulatory framework for the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA) in Great Britain. It is for the applicant to provide a project licence application that details the specifics of the programme of work and the procedures to be performed with a justification as to the requirement for the proposed animal testing. The Home Office assess each project licence application and will not consider it unless it is for a permissible purpose as provided in the published Guidance. This is in addition to all other requirements of ASPA being met.

Given the regulatory roles the Government and government agencies, this is terrifying and bizarre for the public to be made aware of.

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

1. The annual returns are presented in **dense word based documents** to Parliament, as Non Technical Summaries, and they have never been converted into searchable databases for potential licence holders to check that animal experiments are not repeated needlessly.
2. More than half of the use of animals is in Universities, where young undergraduates are supposed to be developing life long skills. Yet these students are immediately placed into an arena where they cannot easily search for information, to help them check that the use of animals is not necessary as the experiment or experiments have already been carried out before.

The question must be asked: why?

3. In 2020 there were 2,883,310 regulated procedures of which 1,439,993 were for breeding of genetically altered animals. 59,075 of these regulated procedures were classified as severe which means there is a major departure from the animal's usual state of health and well-being. **For what purpose were these severe regulated procedures allowed and what was the harm-benefit analysis that was applied to allow so many to take place?**
4. In 2017, 1.81 million non-genetically altered (non-GA) animals were bred for scientific procedures but were killed or died without being used in regulated procedures. This figure to collect additional data on breeding of animals for scientific procedures is only required, every 5 years, from 2017. It's not part of the ASPA, it's a political decision. **Given the government repeatedly assures the public that the ASPA protects animals, where is the public statement that explains this industrial scale killing of animals for no purpose?**
5. Nearly **half the key actions** in the 1986 ASPA have never been reported on statistically and a **third not at all** in any document and there are no records. **This lack of reporting includes re-homing.**

Evidence 5 Freedom of Information Request 77513

The focus of your request for an internal review is that you believe that the information requested is not accessible at the link provided in the original response. You also ask the Home Office 'So for 11 years, which body has been checking the data and conducting assessments? This is not in the guidance notes.'

I have carefully considered your comments and consulted with the responding unit. I consider that the link provided in the Home Office's original response did not fully provide the information to meet your request. I apologise for this.

What about the cost of this to the animals?

Annual statistics never tell you the numbers of animals used accurately only the number of experiments.

Where is the promised replacement of animals promised in the 1986 ASPA – not just the re-use of an animal to prevent others being used- the actual replacement of animals?

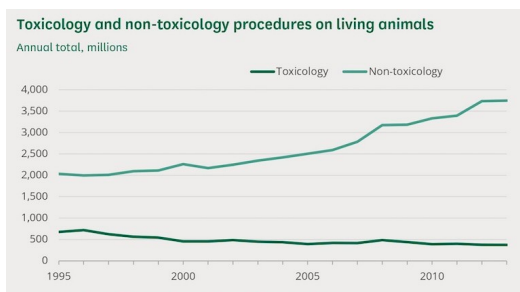
The numbers of animals used in the laboratories are not changing significantly but the use of them is.

This brings us to the 3R's. This is a theory that was used to explain away how animals can be used in research and testing and give it a justification.

The Act even uses the words protection.

“I can think of many words to describe regulation that allows factory-farmed puppies to be daily force-fed chemicals directly into their stomachs for up to 90 days with no pain relief or anaesthetic, but robust certainly is not one of them

Martin Day SNP – Oct 202



Source: Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals Great Britain 2013, Time Series Tables: Table 24

1. Introduction

This user guide accompanies the Home Office collection 'Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain'. The statistics in the collection relate to regulated scientific procedures performed using living animals under the [Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986 \(ASPA\)](#).

Protected animals that are not covered by the three-level licensing system and are not recorded in the annual statistics include any "genetically normal wild-type" animals that were bred and either died or were killed without being used in experimental procedures (3). These may be animals that are "surplus" in the supply and demand chain of laboratory animals so they are euthanised, or animals killed to provide tissues for *in vitro* and *ex vivo* experiments.

The fact is, we don't know how many animals were killed in the name of science in the last year, because of the limitations of what is covered in the annual statistics and regulated by ASPA. Until recently there was no requirement for these numbers to ever be published. There is however now a new EU requirement that annual numbers of all animals bred and killed for scientific purposes are published every 5 years (3) and the first one in the UK was published in 2017.

<https://frame.org.uk/latest/limitations-of-animal-research-regulations/>

In this occasional report, we address the re-homing of animals in laboratories.

1. We include the sections from the ASPA which directly refer to the re-homing of animals in laboratories.
2. It is important to understand that everything else - the responses to the Freedom of Information requests and the Advice Note are NOT part of the 1986 ASPA or its amendments.
3. Both sets of supporting information i.e the FOI's and the Advice Note, are either the public searching for information which is not openly published, or guidance which is not legally binding.
4. The guidance of course, could be updated to take into account changes in Science that we call 'the Rise of the NAM's' (Non Animal Methods) and include policy bans like the Cosmetics ban (finally in 2023) and the Household Product Ban (2015). This has not been done at all.
5. You will see from the work we have done in creating this report the following:
 - In 2015 after 29 years of the ASPA being implemented an Advice Note was produced.
 - It has not been updated once even though the original Advice Note still says it will be after two years.
 - That was 9 years ago.
 - The Secretary of States in successive governments from 1986 have opted to **NOT be involved** in any way, to change the re-homing outcomes of the animals used in laboratories even though we now have the Genome project which knows a human to the nano molecular level.
 - The inconsistency in the Advice Note. As an example, the lack of connecting the decision trees from a range of them produced across a number of advice and guidance documents. This is unmanaged.
 - It is easier to kill than re-home and remove the potential for a licence holder to use re-homing as a real option rather than death as the de facto endpoint. **The public are not aware of this fact.**
 - **There is no evidence that the implementation of the ASPA regarding re-homing has ever been audited by an outside body or even internally.**
 - The use of animals should decrease dramatically as the non animal methods become available. The concern is that animals are still being bred for science and there will be a massive cull of these animals as this Advice Note does not help sort out the re-homing issue nor does it link properly with normal practices for re-homing.
 - **There is no link up to the Statistics Authority to provide information on re-homing to the public.**
 - **We have asked and we have checked under Freedom of Information requests, nothing from the Home Office either about re-homing.**

This Act has been in place since 1986, so why are there no re-homing reports?

WHAT DOES THE ASPA SAY ABOUT REHOMING?

The Animals in Scientific Procedures Act (ASPA) includes the following:

17A Setting free and re-homing protected animals

(1) A person who holds a licence under this Act must not set free a relevant protected animal, or permit any person acting on their behalf to do so, unless—

(a) the Secretary of State has consented to the setting free of the animal; or

(b) the animal is set free during the course of a series of regulated procedures.

(2) A person who holds a licence under this Act must not re-home a relevant protected animal, or permit any person acting on their behalf to do so, unless the Secretary of State has consented to the re-homing of the animal.

(3) The Secretary of State must not consent to the setting free or re-homing of a relevant protected animal unless satisfied—

(a) that the animal's state of health allows it to be set free or re-homed;

(b) that the setting free or re-homing of the animal poses no danger to public health, animal health or the environment

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(c) that there is an adequate scheme in place for ensuring the socialisation of the animal upon being set free or re-homed; and

(d) that other appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the animal's wellbeing upon being set free or re-homed.

(4) The Secretary of State must not consent to the setting free of a relevant protected animal which has been taken from the wild unless the Secretary of State is also satisfied that the animal has undergone a programme of rehabilitation or that it would be inappropriate for the animal to be required to undergo such a programme.

(5) For the purposes of this section

(c) an animal is not to be treated as being “re-homed” if it is moved to live in a place which is for the time being specified in a section 2C licence.

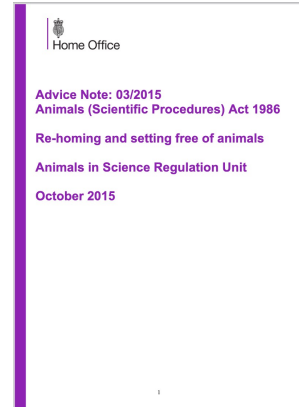
The Home Office does not make Re-homing MANDATORY as an endpoint even under the 3R's rule in the ASPA for suitable animals.

Advice Note 03/2015 Animals in Scientific Procedures Act 1986

Re-homing and setting free of animals

Animals in Science Regulation Unit – October 2015

This document should have been reviewed after 2 years (page 9 of the document) and has never been updated as declared.



Evidence : Page 9 from 2015 still being used by the Animals in Science Regulation Unit

How will this Advice Note be reviewed and updated?

The Secretary of State intends to review the advice contained in this Advice Note two years after publication. The intention is that this Advice Note will eventually be incorporated into the Guidance.

NEVER HAPPENED

DECS Reference: TRO/1133683/24

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 24 April 2024 regarding the re-homing and setting free of animals under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (ASPA).

This follows your email of 3 April 2024 (TRO/1120829/24) and the response sent to you on 23 April 2024.

The Rehoming Advice Note remains relevant and current. The Animals in Science Regulation Unit's guidance on gov.uk is currently being reviewed, this will include updating review dates of published guidance and advice notes.

The licensed establishment is responsible for the rehoming of animals. The Home Office expects that every opportunity will be taken to re-home animals where it is appropriate to do so. The Home Office do not collect data on the number of animals that are rehomed.

The response sent to you (TRO/1120829/24) set out that the re-homing of animals under the ASPA is not mandatory, however, the Home Office expects that every opportunity will be taken to re-home animals used for scientific research, where it is appropriate to do so. It also directed you to the guidance which sets out the criteria required for the Secretary of State to consent for the re-homing or setting free at the end of procedures of relevant protected animals that have been bred, supplied, kept or used in regulated procedures.

Further information on the requirements for re-homing wild animals under ASPA is available in a published advice note (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-research-technical-advice#working-with-animals-taken-from-the-wild>).

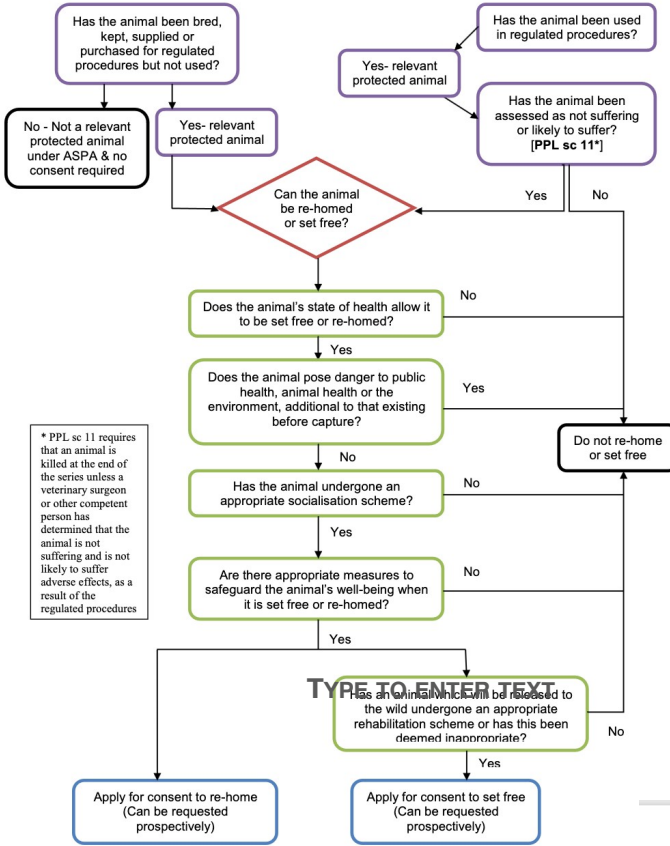
Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Animals in Science Regulation Policy Unit
Email: Public.Enquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk

How can this be current and relevant if the 3R's are implemented and there are 2 specific testing bans and thousands of replacements?

October 2015

Re-homing and setting free decision tree



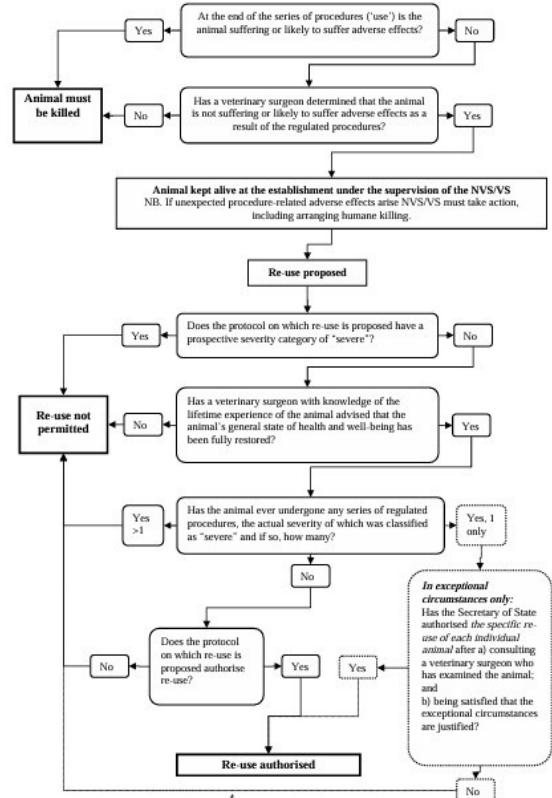
Two sets of decision trees - two advice notes and neither works with the other. Nobody has ever checked this.

Why not?

7

October 2015

Figure 1: Decisions for keeping animals alive and for prospective re-use



Version 1.0

4

The Re-homing and Setting Free Decision Tree

The Personal Project Licence (PPL) sc 11 requires that an animal is killed at the end of the series of experiments unless a veterinary surgeon or other competent person has determined that the animal is not suffering and is not likely to suffer adverse effects, as a result of these regulated procedures.

This is regardless of the severity of the procedures.

The decision tree is incomplete as all the eventualities stated are not followed through to the conclusion of the actions required.

Companion Animals

What is the criteria for a companion animal? This is not stated.

Rabbits, rodents and fish -
How do you socialise each of these animals?

Farm animals - No link to DEFRA who would be interested in how this works as they have departmental responsibilities.

Commercial slaughter - Why would it be considered re-homing when the animal goes to a slaughterhouse?

Research institutions - in the UK and abroad.
This is not re-homing this is re-use.

Sent to be killed as a sentinel . How is this justified as re-homing?

Introduction (page 8)

The introduction states that this is just an Advice Note, and good practice.

RE-HOMING OR SETTING FREE IS NOT JUST ADVICE IT IS PART OF THE ASPA.

Why is re-homing included in the 1986 Animals in Scientific Procedures Act yet not as mandatory to re-home as many animals as possible as a suitable endpoint. Killing is a mandatory endpoint.

The Advice Note states that re-homing and setting animals free can be very positive with establishment's culture of care and the morale of scientists and care staff yet has NO links to re-homing organisations. The Advice Note places the responsibility on vets who only visit an establishment, and if not on site makes carrying out this good practice impossible.

It should be compulsory for establishments to link to re-homing organisations.

How is this Advice Note Structured?

It sets out a legal framework for consent – yet that is where the legality ends, its just for consent, not setting out which re-homing bodies must be used and how they are to contact them.

Who are the approved re-homing organisations for this LEGAL part of the framework? Section 2 (page 21)of the Advice Note, is just advice and recommendations for the AWERB, it does not have any consequences at all, if re-homing isn't taken into account.

This section also describes the role of the AWERB in re-homing, but does not cover the re-homing to slaughter, or re-homing abroad or to other institutions, which are being interpreted as re-homing and are used as endpoints in licensed procedures.

The AWERB just has recommendations to establish a policy, it does not legally require that this is done, hence no link up to re-homing organisations that have the infrastructure to carry this out.

An example could be that a beagle breeding establishment in the UK licensed to breed for the UK research industry does not use a registered organisation for re-homing, they are doing this themselves through staff members with under a handful of beagle dogs.

The section on page 21 sets out how the AWERB can contribute, with provisions for the animal socialisation, yet receives minimal and often no comment in inspection reports and is certainly not recorded in statistical returns.

Section 1 : Legal requirements for re-homing and setting free (page 10)

The re-homing definition in this section is not the definition used outside of the confines of ASPA1986.

So why has the description re-home been used, as sending to slaughter is not mentioned in any re-home definition we can find?

This does not reflect the true meaning of re-homing.

Has the ACT set up successive Secretary of States' to use the wording to fool the public?

A home is never a laboratory.

The Home OFFice does not make Re-homing MANDATORY even under the 3R's rule in the ASPA for suitable animals as an endpoint.

There are legal requirements, but it appears that this is just seeking justification from the Secretary of State and nothing else.

None of the information after page 10 of the advice note is a legal requirement.

We asked under Freedom of Information request if the Government intended to update the Advice note.

NINE years after publication.

The UK has gone through Covid -19

The rise of 'on the chip' technology is pervasive in 2024 and even used in pre-clinical and clinical trials as well as replacing animal tests wholesale.

Reply - no intention to update this grossly out of date and inadequate advice note as shown below.

Reference : TRO/1168640/24

DECS Reference: TRO/1168640/24

Thank you for your email of 13 July 2024 regarding the re-homing of animals.

The licensed establishment is responsible for the rehoming of animals. The Home Office expects that every opportunity will be taken to re-home animals where it is appropriate to do so.

The Home Office has a published detailed Advice Note to explain the requirements for the re-homing of animals under ASPA, and to facilitate re-homing when appropriate. The Advice Note provides information on the legal requirements and guidance on current best practice for re-homing and setting free. The Advice Note also explains the criteria required for the Secretary of State to consent for the re-homing or setting free at the end of procedures of relevant protected animals that have been bred, supplied, kept or used in regulated procedures and who is responsible for providing assurances to the Secretary of State that the animal's state of health and well-being allows it to be set free. Inspectors in the Animals in Science Regulation Unit are responsible for providing advice to the Secretary of State on the rehoming of animals. All inspectors are veterinary or medical professionals.

The published Advice Note can be read here (www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-research-technical-advice#re-homing-and-setting-free), which you may find helpful.

Key Points on the main body of the Advice Note

3. *Assessing Suffering and adverse effects*

- There is no reference to anything other than keeping alive and re-use in this section.
- If the animal has completed a series of regulated procedures for a particular purpose, as defined in ASPA section 2, then why add this information in the re-homing document that they must kill this animal immediately. The information is then contradicted by stating the animal may be kept alive?
- The explanation in “Practical Terms” is confusing to say the least.
- This section has nothing to do with re-homing.

3.1. *Use of an ‘other competent person’*

- This section has nothing to do with re-homing as it is about suffering, not re-homing.
- Is this a ‘cut and paste’ error from another document?

3.2. *Restorative surgery*

- The animals under this heading are at a real disadvantage.
- This section states that where an animal is unfit for re-homing or setting free from ASPA condition's as a consequence of earlier surgery or other regulated procedures, further restorative surgery to improve its health status to a level where it may be re-homed or set free is **not allowed** under the ASPA.
- The Secretary of State has decided it is not a permissible scientific purpose and cannot be legally authorised under the ASPA. Yet that is an opinion not a fact and not something the Act specifies.

How cruel is that, that an animal may just need a contraption removing, but this won't be done as it is corrective.

Disgraceful.

4. *Responsibility for the animal*

This section states that animals that are alive at a licensed establishment at the end of use in regulated procedures and suddenly or unexpectedly experiences adverse effects as a result of the previous regulated procedure, should be immediately killed, which does not give the animal time to recover.

4.1. *Definition of a suitably qualified person*

- In section 1 which is all about the ASPA and how to operate it legally, there is nothing defining what a 'suitably qualified person' is.
- This section of the Advice Note refers to the responsibilities of a Veterinary Surgeon and does not make sense as the definition starts as a 'suitably qualified person' and then states 'however' that is not the law.
- It makes the Advice Note look unedited and unchecked and confusing.

5. *Criteria for consent to re-home or set free*

- This paragraph covers ASPA section 17A section (3) to ensure that the Secretary of State is satisfied that the criteria has been met.
- As part of the Law, ASPA Section 17A (3) requires that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the animals well-being when re-homed or set free, but the responsibility is given to a (NACWO) named animals care and welfare officer, and the role of this officer does not include home visits for assessments.
- They are not competent or knowledgeable in home visits.
- The laying of responsibility here on the NACWO is totally unfair.
- ASPA Section 17A (4) requires that the animal has undergone a period of rehabilitation, yet earlier in the Advice Note it is stated:
 - this is not carried out as any procedure to make the animal well,
 - is not allowed as it is not a regulated procedure and according to the Secretary of State, the animal should be killed.

This is not satisfactory and confusing.

- Further confusion in the Criteria shows that the re-homing consent may be given in the Establishment Licence or within the protocols of the Project licence, or in a letter for the release. There appears to be too many options and no control.
- Again, assurances on the animals health should be based on a clinical state, yet **who is actually responsible ranges from a Vet to a Competent Person.**
- There is no description of what a competent person is in the Glossary of Terms on page 5 onwards.
- Even more confusing, is the 1.4.1 (page 13) Definition of a suitable qualified person, and the offer of an alternative when no suitable Vet is available. Yet in the same sentence, it states that the ASPA refers specifically to a 'Veterinary Surgeon' and cannot be undertaken by a suitably qualified person??

Which is it?

2. Assurance on the danger posed to the public health, animal health & the environment

ASPA Section 17A (3) (b)

- One of the examples given in the Advice Note is an animal inadvertently entering the human food chain and this includes an animal with an implanted device.

How can this possibly happen?

- The paragraph goes on to discuss mitigating any risk to enable the animal to be re-homed, but if that is the case, other medicines, chemicals and implants should be clearly stated in the Project Licence before the animal is used in the first place and they are not, as a matter of process.

1.5.2.1 Genetically Altered Animals and Animals Containing Human Material

- The details of the criteria for the release of any of these animals comes under the ASPA by law, but the requirements are not given in this report only a referral to an assigned inspector. As they come under this Law, this information should have been included.

This is a serious omission.

3. *Socialisation schemes (page 15)*

- ASPA section 17A (3) (c) requires that there is an effective socialisation scheme in place.
- Most animals used in scientific procedures are to be contaminate free, so the animals natural behaviour in this scheme cannot possibly happen.
- The scheme must be fully documented, yet there are no templates for this documentation.

It is again easier to slaughter the animal than to create the documentation for socialising and preparing a risk assessment.

1.5.3.1 Socialisation schemes for animals at the end of regulated procedures at a place other than a licensed establishment (POLE)

- If the place is other than a licensed establishment, a socialisation scheme may not be required, but under the Act section 17(a) (3) (c) it has to be deemed to be met by some sort of criteria.

The paragraph in this section of the Advice Note does not make sense and appears to be someone's notes which have not been checked or corrected from over NINE years of publication.

- The examples are so few and far between in the Advice Note as to render them virtually useless as advice.

Why would examples of best practice not be included in an advice note about the use of animals in scientific procedures given the ASPA is 'supposed' to provide protection ?

4. *Other appropriate measures on re-homing and setting free*

- This paragraph does not make sense at all.
- It calls for assurances, but does not state who from, it states additional measures, but does not describe those measures.
- The paragraph states 'Could' but the criteria should be clear for the measures.

As the ASPA has been in force since 1986, there should be criteria and measures set out for the animals and this would help with the clarity of the re-homing process.

5. *Rehabilitation programme*

- The Secretary of State cannot consent to the setting free of a relevant protected animal which has been taken from the wild, unless she is also satisfied that the animal has undergone a programme of rehabilitation.
- It is easier to kill the animal than go through the 2 stage criteria process to release as the time limit allowed is too short.
- This paragraph also only discusses birds, no fish mentioned yet the description to start the paragraph is an animal?

6. *Records required for re-homing or setting free*

- Records of Animals released from the ASPA control must be kept for 5 years by the establishment.
- This section misses out completely the stipulation that they need to keep a record of the animal's death as stated previously.

This is an omission

- It only states the name and address of the new owner.

6.1 *Additional records for special species kept at an establishment*

- How does the Secretary of State or their representatives check that PEL Standard Condition 9(4) is adhered to?

Not answered or explained.

- What evidence of the animals individual history file is provided to the new owner, how is this checked, does the Secretary of State or their representatives audit this and if so, how often?

Not answered or explained.

Conclusion

- From the onset, this advice note highlights the significant challenges imposed by Home Office representatives on re-homing animals to family homes or sanctuaries.
- According to Section 11 of the personal project licence, animals must be euthanised unless extensive paperwork, including the information and direction in the Re-homing Advice Note, is completed and information used.
- The Advice Note ‘Re-homing and Setting Free of Animals’ published by the Animals in Science Regulation Unit in October 2015 spans 50 pages, creates confusing and contrary statements and requires considerable time to navigate.
- It appears easier to euthanise animals than to re-home them.
- There is NO evidence that the re-homing section of the 1986 ASPA and its amendments have been audited by an external or internal body. This situation seems incorrect and borders on cruel.
- As non-animal methods become available, the use of animals in research should decrease dramatically.
- There is concern that animals are still being bred without any specific scientific purposes, leading to a potential massive cull.
- The Rehoming Advice Note does not effectively address the re-homing issue nor align with standard re-homing practices.
- There is no connection to the Statistics Authority to provide public information on re-homing, nor are there any reports from the Home Office on this matter.
- It does seem misleading if the policy title suggests re-homing but the actual process makes it extremely difficult and in some circumstances impossible not because of the condition of the animal but because of the lack of will by the humans involved.
- The public likely expects re-homing to be a straightforward and compassionate process, not one bogged down by extensive paperwork and regulations.
- This discrepancy between the policy’s title and its practical implications could indeed lead to misunderstanding and frustration.

What are we asking you to do?

Members of Parliament (MPs) can take several actions to address this issue:

- **Raise Awareness:** MP's can bring attention to the issue of re-homing animals in laboratories by discussing it in parliamentary sessions, ensuring it gets the visibility it needs.
- **Propose Legislation:** MP's can introduce or support new laws that prioritise humane treatment and re-homing of animals over euthanasia.
- **Conduct Audits:** MPs can call for audits of current policies and practices to identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- **Engage with Stakeholders:** MP's can work with animal welfare organisations, scientists, and the public to develop more effective and humane policies.
- **Public Reporting:** MP's can ensure transparency by requiring regular reports on re-homing statistics and practices, making this information accessible to the public.

Organisations concerned with Animal Welfare can:

- Use this document to support their own work in highlighting and improving the welfare of animals in laboratories.
- Work with their MP's and allies to change the outcomes of animals in research by promoting a re-homing policy that benefits the animals first.

A CBUG report for The Alliance for Cruelty Free Science

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