

Number: WG33753



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government

Consultation – Summary of Responses

Mobile Animal Exhibits

December 2017

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Executive Summary

- There is concern the welfare needs of some animals kept by Mobile Animal Exhibits (MAEs) and in circuses cannot be met in a travelling environment.
- MAEs are diverse and there is no standard licensing regime or requirement for routine inspection. We must decide whether or not a change of policy and/or the law is required in Wales to protect the welfare of animals in MAEs.
- The consultation sought views on the introduction of a licensing or registration scheme for MAEs in Wales.
- The consultation also asked for views on banning the use of wild animals in circuses.
- There were 70 comprehensive responses to the consultation. A further 892 similar responses were received which only answered Question 8 (on banning the use of wild animals in circuses).
- The majority of respondents generally agreed with the following definition of an MAE: *'Individuals, groups or commercial enterprises that travel to exhibit domestic and/or wild animals, for entertainment, therapy, educational and/or other purposes'*. Some thought it too broad and others were of the view that certain classes of animal, depending on their use, should be explicitly excluded.
- 42 respondents were of the view that the display of animals in MAEs has a negative impact on the attitudes of children and young people towards animals. Others pointed out what they believe to be the educational benefits of high quality, well run MAEs.
- The majority of respondents felt that a mandatory requirement to undertake conservation measures would be difficult for MAEs to achieve.
- Most respondents agreed there should be a licensing or registration regime for MAEs. The majority favoured licensing over registration.
- Most respondents felt there should be exemptions, for certain MAEs, in any agreed licensing or registration scheme.
- The majority of respondents believe the use of wild animals in circuses should be banned and that wild animals cannot be cared for appropriately whilst in a travelling environment.
- Respondents did not think the introduction of a licensing or registration scheme for MAEs would negatively impact the Welsh language.
- The responses to this public consultation, the first on this subject, will be used to inform next steps.

1 The Consultation Exercise

1.1 Background Information

Animal welfare is a priority of the Welsh Government. The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework sets out our plan for continuing and lasting improvements in standards of animal health and welfare for kept animals.

There is concern that the welfare needs of some animals kept by Mobile Animal Exhibits (MAEs) and in circuses cannot be met in a travelling environment. We must decide, whether or not, a change of policy and/or the law is required in Wales to protect the welfare of animals used in MAEs.

In December 2015 we commissioned an independent review into the use of wild animals in circuses. The review, by Harris *et al*¹, considered evidence on the welfare, both physical and mental, of wild and/or non-domesticated animals as well as animal behaviour and environmental enrichment. The review concluded that the welfare needs of wild animals in travelling environments cannot be satisfied to the same extent as within static environments.

On 15 December 2016 the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, issued a Written Statement announcing her wish for a registration or licensing scheme for all MAEs to be introduced in Wales, and for a joint approach to be adopted with the UK Government. Such a scheme could potentially be introduced to replace the outdated Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925 and allow for checks to be made to ensure good welfare standards are maintained.

1.2 Current Position in Wales

MAEs are diverse and there is no standard licensing regime or requirement for routine inspection. Some MAEs are registered under The Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925. This is a lifetime registration with no specific inspection requirements. As such, it is unlikely that the welfare standards of many of Wales' performing animals are regularly assessed.

Some exhibits may be licensed under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 if they own or keep a species listed under that Act. However, an inspection by enforcers may not necessarily consider the welfare standards of other animals included in an MAE if not covered by the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.

Licensing: When someone applies for approval and commits to certain conditions and limitations. The licensee may have to pay a fee and prove capability in some way in order to gain the licence.

Registration: A way of informing authorities that you intend to do something. A fee is normally required. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, registrations can be issued from one to three years.

¹ <http://gov.wales/docs/drah/publications/160715-performing-animals-en.pdf>

1.3 Current Position Elsewhere

The Republic of Ireland, via its 'Irish Standards of Modern Zoo Practice (2016)', now includes MAEs (defined as 'Hawk Walks, Mobile Zoos and other similar operations') under its definition of a 'zoo' and has inspected them as such from 2017. The aim of this inclusion is to improve welfare and ensure adequate checks are in place. The Republic of Ireland's Circuses (Prohibition on Use of Wild Animals) Regulations 2017 come in to force on 1 January 2018 and introduce a ban on using wild animals in circuses.

Following a public consultation, the Scottish Government announced, on 11 May 2017, its intention to introduce a Circus Bill banning the use (performance, exhibition and display) of any wild animal in a travelling circus in Scotland. The Bill is currently being considered by the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee. The Committee agreed to the general principles of the Bill at Stage 1 and it has now passed to Stage 2 of the scrutiny process.

In England, The Welfare of Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses (England) Regulations 2012 require the licensing of all circuses with wild animals that perform in England. Currently, only two circuses are licensed. The regulations do not, however, cover circuses with domesticated animals such as horses or dogs, nor do they require inspectors to consider the welfare needs of the domesticated species also used by licensed enterprises. Defra has referred to working closely with devolved Governments in 'Next steps – The review of animal establishments licensing in England'², published in February 2017.

1.4 Purpose of the Consultation

Concern has been voiced that the Performing Animals (Regulations) Act 1925 is out of date, is too restrictive and is not appropriate for modern MAEs. We are still exploring the options available to us and will use this first public consultation to help plan a way forward. Some of the main issues we asked respondents to the consultation to consider were:

Definition: We have proposed that MAEs should be defined as: '*Individuals, groups or commercial enterprises that travel to exhibit domestic and/or wild animals, for entertainment, therapy, educational and/or other purposes*'. We would like you to consider if this is a strong enough definition. Should there be any exemptions or additional requirements, taking into account the species kept, the size of the collection, nature of the activity undertaken etc.?

Conservation and Education: A range of animals are used in MAEs, including many exotic species. MAEs may attend school/educational establishments, care facilities, parties, corporate bookings, fêtes and other external events. We would like to explore the evidence that MAEs contribute to conservation and would welcome your thoughts on whether you would consider this be an essential requirement of any licensing or registration scheme. Zoos already have a conservation and education commitment/obligation under the Zoo Licensing system.

Disease Control: Some MAEs use animals that are capable of causing harm to humans or other animals. This may not only be through physical harm but some animals may carry bacteria or other pathogens that can be passed to humans or other animals. We would welcome your thoughts on how a licensing or registration scheme could ensure such risks are kept to a minimum.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/animal-welfare-reviewing-animal-establishments-licensing-in-england>

1.5 Wild Animals in Circuses

The Welsh Government has received calls from the general public and third sector organisations to introduce a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses. There are no circuses based in Wales, although they do visit. These circuses have mainly grazing species such as llama, alpaca, reindeer, cattle, zebra etc. They also have other domesticated animals such as horses and dogs.

The UK Government has for many years considered banning the use of wild animals in circuses on ethical grounds, but has not yet brought forward legislation. In her Written Statement of 15 December 2016 the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs did not dismiss the possibility of Wales considering the banning of wild animals in circuses and/or working with the UK Government on legislation.

We are also interested in your views on this issue. Therefore, in addition to the questions on MAEs, we asked respondents to provide us with any additional information, comments or evidence they may consider helpful.

1.6 The Consultation Questions

Respondents were asked to consider the following questions.

General:

1. We have proposed the following definition of a MAEs: '*Individuals, groups or commercial enterprises that travel to exhibit domestic and/or wild animals, for entertainment, therapy, educational and/or other purposes*'. Do you agree with this definition? If no, please explain why.
2. Do you consider that the display of animals in MAEs has a positive or negative impact on the development of respectful and responsible attitudes towards animals in children and young people?
3. It is a mandatory requirement of licensed zoos to undertake conservation measures, including promoting public education and awareness in relation to conservation. Should MAEs be required to undertake similar activities?
4. The health and safety of the people who interact with MAEs, and the animals involved, is of concern to us. If you own or work for an MAE, what measures do you take to minimise the risk of injury or disease, both to humans and the animals?

Licensing/Registration:

5. Do you consider that any MAEs, circuses with animals, or both, which are based in or exhibit their animals in Wales, should be licensed or registered? (*See note on page 5 for definitions*)
Licensed? Yes/No
Registered? Yes/No
6. If you consider that MAEs and/or circuses should be licenced or registered, do you think that they should pay a fee for the licence or registration? If yes, please explain why.

7. The proposed definition of an MAE is very broad. Do you consider that there should be any exemptions included in any licensing or registration scheme?

Wild animals in circuses:

8. At present there are no circuses based in Wales but they do visit. The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs has not dismissed the possibility of Wales banning the use of wild animals in circuses. Do you consider that such a ban should be considered? Yes/No

Please give your reasons for this.

Welsh Language:

9. We would like to know your views on the effects that licensing or registering MAEs would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- a. opportunities for people to use Welsh; and
- b. on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

10. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

11. Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- a. positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and
- b. no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Respondents were also given an opportunity to comment on related issues which may not have been specifically addressed in the consultation document:

12. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

2 Responses to the Consultation

There were 70 comprehensive responses to the consultation and a further 892 similar responses which only answered Question 8 (on banning the use of wild animals in circuses). The organisations which responded are listed at Annex A. Some respondents asked that their personal details not be published and this has been respected.

Not all respondents directly answered the consultation questions. Where this was the case, and for the purpose of this document, the responses have been allocated to the questions where they best fit. In addition, where respondents did answer the specific questions, parts of those answers may have been reallocated to another question where they best fit.

Question 1: We have proposed the following definition of a MAE: 'Individuals, groups or commercial enterprises that travel to exhibit domestic and/or wild animals, for entertainment, therapy, educational and/or other purposes'. Do you agree with this definition? If no, please explain why.

The majority of respondents generally agreed with the proposed definition. In doing so, some, including RSPCA Cymru, suggested it be amended: *"The RSPCA largely agrees with this definition, except for the inclusion of 'travel'. The RSPCA would like to see better regulation of all exhibited animals (including film, TV, theatre etc) and we urge the Welsh Government to replace the outdated and ineffective Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925 with a licensing system that adequately protects all animals used in this industry. Removing 'travel' from the definition would capture the activities that concern the RSPCA, and also dispense with the need to define how often or far animals/the collection have to be transported before being classed as an MAE"*.

Some respondents suggested that some MAEs, depending on their use, should be explicitly excluded. This included the use of animals by charitable organisations and not-for-profit use. Others were of the view that MAEs that kept certain species, such as livestock for example, should be excluded.

The Countryside Alliance believes the proposed definition is too broad and risks any licensing or registration system becoming unworkable and disproportionate: *"We would also like to see an exemption for those training and exhibiting animals for "bona fide military, police, agricultural or sporting purposes", as is the case under the 1925 Act. Unless such an exemption is included any regime applying to MAEs would include agricultural shows, field trials, sheep dog trialling, etc."*

The Kennel Club also feel the definition is too generalised: *"No, It is the view of the Kennel Club that this definition is too broad and too vague. For example, we would be unsure, based on this definition, if people travelling to dog shows (including family fun days in parks and so forth), would fall within this definition. They would be individuals travelling with a domestic pet. This could be for entertainment e.g. for fun, as a hobby or for sport if taking part in agility for example. Given that there are over 180 Kennel Club registered dog shows alone in Wales, each attracting approximately 350 dogs, with 2-3 people per dog, this would, we believe, create an unnecessary burden placed on them. We are hoping this is not the intention of the regulations"*.

Question 2: Do you consider that the display of animals in MAEs has a positive or negative impact on the development of respectful and responsible attitudes towards animals in children and young people?

Most respondents are of the view that the display of animals in MAEs has a negative impact on the attitudes of children and young people towards animals. Out of the 70 responses, 42 felt that there was a negative impact. 20 respondents believe it has a positive effect. The remaining responses did not have an opinion relating to this question.

Four Paws UK strongly agree that MAEs have a negative impact on children and young people: *“Several studies have highlighted the negative educational consequences of wild animal shows. Using wild animals for demonstrations and rides may portray wild animals as pets, thereby nullifying conservation messages and encouraging the public to exploit wild animals for personal benefit. Circuses and other MAEs are not conducive to promoting conservation messages because they typically justify their use of animals by asserting that captivity is preferable to the wild”.*

Other respondents also share this view. RSPCA Cymru recommends that MAEs should have a role in communicating positive care messages to their audiences: *“The recognition and appreciation of animals as sentient beings is essential in the promotion and development of empathy towards them in young people. On balance, the RSPCA believes that MAEs are more likely to have a negative impact on the development of respectful and responsible attitudes towards animals in children and young people unless a five welfare needs assessment is undertaken in a comprehensive manner that ensures positive care messages are communicated to the audience, these messages are explicit in the exhibition (display) or demonstration of the MAE, and they are clearly demonstrated in practice.”*

Blue Cross express similar views and feel MAEs should have clear educational purposes: *“There is evidence that the use of animals in performances negatively affects attitudes and may in fact compromise educational and/or conversation messages. We would like any mobile animal exhibit displaying non-domesticated species to have a clear educational purpose relevant to the species used in the activity. We would like any mobile animal exhibit displaying non-domesticated species to have a clear educational purpose relevant to the species used in the activity.”*

Some respondents, from within the MAE industry, highlight the benefits of high quality MAEs. Anonymous believes this is dependent upon the specific exhibit: *“Where the MAE is of high quality the results are very positive indeed. MAEs can provide people, not merely children and young people, the opportunity to observe the animal with no technical mediation. Seeing first hand and often at close quarters, a creature one may not otherwise be able to, is when managed correctly, invaluable. It is both educational and entertaining (indeed separating the two can be problematic).”*

The Kennel Club feel there are a number of benefits for young children if learning takes place within a controlled environment: *“We believe it is important that children learn to be respectful and responsible to animals. This does not necessarily mean having to take the animals into schools.”*

Question 3: It is a mandatory requirement of licensed zoos to undertake conservation measures, including promoting public education and awareness in relation to conservation. Should MAEs be required to undertake similar activities?

A number of respondents, including the British Veterinary Association, feel that a mandatory requirement to undertake conservation measures would be difficult for MAEs to achieve: *“Whilst we support the mandatory requirement for licensed zoos to undertake conservation measures, we do not believe that this will always be a reasonable expectation of MAEs. The focus of the majority of MAEs will be education, and conservation activities such as long term sustainable breeding and reintroduction are not likely to be realistic, or even desirable.”*

The Farmers’ Union of Wales (FUW) express a similar view: *“The FUW believes that the broad definition of MAEs may mean that conservation activities are highly unsuitable for some groups or organisations. Several Union members suggested that conservation should not be a crucial element of the proposals provided that educational commitments are met. The Union would also suggest that conservation should not be a crucial element of the proposals where livestock are shown for business purposes, such as selling, judging and the like”.*

Some respondents feel that conservation should be a mandatory requirement and this is a view expressed by Dr Michael Kenneth Nicholls: *“YES, but also required that they demonstrate that they themselves understand what ‘conservation’ is and how public attitudes can be positively influenced. Merely displaying a barn owl to the public isn’t per-se ‘conservation’ nor ‘education’”.*

This view is shared by Mr Chris Biggs: *“Yes, MAEs should be required to undertake conservation measures. Mobile zoos, bird of prey shows and other similar businesses carry out exactly the same activity as zoos (exhibition of animals to the public) but are held to none of the same legal obligations. I therefore suggest that the use of wild animals in MAEs is subject to regulation under the Zoo Licensing Act (a position recently adopted in the Republic of Ireland). Suggesting that these companies should be ‘required’ to carry out conservation and educational activities pre-supposes that all MAEs have the potential to deliver such a role, and it is hard to see how meaningful conservation and education can be carried out when the primary use and displays of these animals is for entertainment and, in the many cases driven by a desire for financial gain. Indeed many question the validity of the claims that even static zoos make to meaningful conservation and education”.*

Question 4: The health and safety of the people who interact with MAEs, and the animals involved, is of concern to us. If you own or work for an MAE, what measures do you take to minimise the risk of injury or disease, both to humans and the animals?

Only a small number of respondents answered this question. Of those who responded from the MAE industry, most have health and safety policies in place.

Mid Wales Falconry ensures risk assessments are produced before each show: *“Birds of prey, humans always wish to handle a bird of prey, which is fine as long as it is under supervision and the correct glove etc is in place, The harm to the birds and a potential disease risk is when humans stroke the bird, yet on my travels this seems to be common practise and one which should be avoided. Otherwise due to the strict regulations that shows operate within, risk assessments have to be conducted and acted upon. In addition usually but not always great attention is paid to the insurance cover of the business. For*

professional businesses this is usually sufficient, this should be standard for all owner of birds of prey.”

However there are some concerns surrounding health and safety, including the following from, RSPCA Cymru: *“The RSPCA has concerns about the risk of injury and disease in MAEs. Particularly when direct handling takes place, species listed on the Schedule to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (DWA) are involved and where there is a lack of staff competency in the animals being used (including spotting subtle signs of stress and anxiety) or insufficient numbers of competent staff”.*

The Pet Industry Federation highlighted the knowledge requirements within MAE businesses: *“MAE presenters should be able to demonstrate a level of knowledge regarding zoonotic disease and the safe management of this risk as well as having available for inspection all risk assessments, policy statements and method statements relating to their work.”*

Question 5: Do you consider that any MAEs, circuses with animals, or both, which are based in or exhibit their animals in Wales, should be licensed or registered?

52 respondents agree there should be a licensing system in place for MAEs. Some are of the view that circuses should be banned and MAEs should be licensed.

The RSPCA agree with this: *“The RSPCA believes that circuses should not be permitted to use animals..... MAEs that use animals should be licensed, subject to strict licensing conditions, and unannounced inspections, at the home site and at events. Standards required for wild animals used in MAEs should be the same as that required for wild animals kept in licensed zoos, under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981. Of vital importance, are safeguards to ensure animals are exposed to minimal transport and given proper rest periods between use. Licensing officers need to be sufficiently trained, and penalties for unlicensed activities and breaches of conditions set at a level that will encourage compliance. Registration is not helpful and will not fulfil the aim of better protecting the welfare of animals used in MAEs. The registration scheme under the Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925 is widely recognised, including by those in the industry, as being wholly inadequate.”*

Some respondents believe MAEs should be both licensed and registered. 38 feel there should be a registration scheme for MAEs while 15 disagreed. The remainder did not answer this question.

The Animal Protection Agency feel a registration scheme would be of no benefit: *“We believe that a registration scheme for MAEs with wild animals would not bring about any meaningful improvement to the current system under the Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925. Our view, therefore, is that MAEs should be subject to licensing. In order to have a realistic expectation of meeting the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, limits should be imposed on the types of animals that could be used, as well as the duration and frequency of the events. Such a licensing scheme should also include prescriptive guidelines on transportation; temporary enclosures; handling; and hygiene protocols. There should be a straightforward process in place for local authorities to revoke licences when these conditions are not met.”*

Question 6: If you consider that MAEs and/or circuses should be licenced or registered, do you think that they should pay a fee for the licence or registration? If yes, please explain why.

Most respondents generally agree that MAEs and circuses should be licensed or registered. Dogs Trust *“strongly believes that anyone being licensed or being required to register should pay a fee for this service. These fees should be set by local authorities to allow them full cost recovery for their work. Included within this fee should be the ability for spot checks to be conducted by the authority to ensure compliance. We would recommend that charities should not be exempt from these fees; rather it may be appropriate for local authorities to offer a concession on the fees.”*

RSPCA Cymru feel that there should be a fee associated with a licensing system: *“Fees should be paid on a cost-recovery basis, covering all reasonable costs associated with administration, inspections and anticipated costs of enforcement. For example, the one-off exhibition of a single animal would likely carry lower fees than long-term, frequent exhibition of a large number of animals, as it would likely be cheaper to administer due to, for example, less frequent and shorter inspections.”*

Some respondents feel there needs to be further clarity on how a licensing system would work, and whether there would be any exemptions, for example, for the use of therapy dogs. This was raised by Canine Concern Scotland Trust: *“If an animal activity charges a fee for their service then it would be reasonable to charge a licence fee. Where, as in Therapet, we carry out a volunteer service without charge there should be no licence fee.”*

The Circus Guild of Great Britain is of the opinion that another fee for licensing circuses/MAEs in Wales would be a further financial burden: *“Obviously a fee to cover costs has to be found and recovered from somewhere. With the regulations in England the circuses pay for all the inspections and their license, this is a very considerable amount of money so it would be financially hard on them if they had to pay again to operate in Wales or another devolved UK country. The same would apply with the devolved countries of the UK if other sectors/MAEs were to move across the country. For instance camel racing, reindeer for Christmas and many other MAEs crossing borders. So this needs more discussion and clarity.”*

Question 7: The proposed definition of an MAE is very broad. Do you consider that there should be any exemptions included in any licensing or registration scheme?

Most respondents feel there should be some form of exemption in any agreed licensing or registration scheme. The consensus is that the definition was too broad. This is reflected in the response from RSPCA Cymru: *“Anything lawfully done under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 could be considered for exemption. Zoos licensed under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 should not be exempt. This is similar to the current situation where all trainers and persons responsible for public educational demonstrations are required to register under the Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925. Permanent housing of animals in licensed zoos are part of requisite zoo inspections, but the exhibition is generally not, particularly for those that occur outside the zoo premises.”*

Some respondents believe charitable organisations, including therapy pets, should be exempt. The Animal Consultants and Trainers Association consider the definition too broad: *“Private individuals or charitable organisations acting at a very local level for philanthropic purposes, such as those exemplified in Point 1, should be excluded. The emphasis should be on commercial activities and that is not clear under the current definition.”*

Question 8: At present there are no circuses based in Wales but they do visit. The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs has not dismissed the possibility of Wales banning the use of wild animals in circuses. Do you consider that such a ban should be considered? Yes/No

Most respondents believe the use of wild animals in circuses should be banned and that wild animals cannot be cared for appropriately whilst in a travelling environment. This was the view of a respondent who wished to remain anonymous: *“Circuses by their very nature are completely unsuitable for any live animal, as their needs cannot be met and restricting animals to cages is cruel and shows no respect for their natural needs by confining them and constantly transporting the animals from place to place is unnatural for them and can be seen by the animals behaviour when forced to live in this way.”*

PETA are of a similar view: *“Yes, a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses must be brought forward as a matter of urgency. Extreme confinement and stress during transport – in combination with the use of psychologically and physically abusive training methods – inevitably compromise their welfare. Tigers are apex predators with home ranges of hundreds of square miles in the wild, yet circuses force them to spend most of their lives in transport cages that are barely bigger than their own bodies. In nature, grazing animals, such as zebras and camels, spend a large part of their day eating. Circuses cannot provide permanent outdoor paddocks for grazing, so these animals spend much of their time confined to indoor stalls or tied to transport vehicles. In addition, social species, such as elephants, are often kept in isolation, while those who are naturally solitary, such as tigers, are commonly kept in groups. In 2009, Animal Defenders International released undercover footage documenting that elephants in a circus exhibited a pattern of disturbed, abnormal types of behaviour such as rocking, swaying, and head-bobbing. Animal behaviourists believe these movements to be signs that an animal is suffering and unable to cope with his or her situation. This suffering is not specific to one circus but endemic to the industry. This view was echoed by a report commissioned by the Welsh Government, which concluded that “Life for wild animals in travelling circuses ... does not appear to constitute either a ‘good life’ or a ‘life worth living’”.*

However, some respondents, the Animal Consultants and Trainers Association for example, are opposed to a ban: *“ACTA holds no specific brief for animals in circuses. However, as an organisation, we oppose a ban in principle believing that there is sufficient legislative control for circuses to be appropriately regulated. Two reports (Worthington and Radford) failed to find scientific justification for a ban on wild animals in (travelling) circuses and we remain unconvinced of the impartiality of the Harris report.”*

An anonymous respondent would be disappointed in seeing circuses banned in Wales and expressed this in their response: *“We are a touring circus that loves coming to Wales every year for about 3 months. Welsh public love live entertainment and it would be sad of the Welsh Government to give in to the likes of animal rights groups. All our animals are fit and healthy and enjoy their life on tour with the circus”.*

Question 9: We would like to know your views on the effects that licensing or registering MAEs would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- a. Opportunities for people to use Welsh; and
- b. on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

No respondents answered part a. Few respondents answered part b. Those that did feel there would be no impact.

Question 10: What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

One respondent, who wished to remain anonymous, answered this question and thinks it would have a positive effect: *“Any effect would be positive, as licensing or registration would provide a further opportunity for bilingual literature and communication, thus promoting the use of the Welsh language”.*

Question 11: Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- a. positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language,
- b. No adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language

Few respondents answered this question. Those that did said that there should be no negative impact on the Welsh language and no reason for the Welsh language to be treated any less favourably than English.

Question 12: We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Four Paws provided the following response: *“Four Paws strongly argues for the use of animals for entertainment to be banned. The complex needs of animals cannot be met by MAEs, and this is particularly the case for wild animals. Four Paws suggests that the first step in the right direction would be for Wales to enact a ban on the keeping of wild animals in all MAEs. In the short-term, a ban on the breeding, trade and replacement of wild MAE animals should be implemented..”*

One respondent, who wished to remain anonymous, provided the following response: *“The proposed licensing of mobile businesses which use animals in Wales is a positive step which would permit the scrutiny of the businesses, and more importantly, the assessment and monitoring of the treatment and welfare of the animals involved. (Robust procedures should be put in place to ensure that this scrutiny is continuous and effective.) However the exploitation of animals for commercial purposes should be phased out”.*

Mid Wales Falconry think it will be a positive move to ensure less professional displays are licensed/registered: *“In my experience with Falconry displays on the whole the professional displays are very good and on the whole educational. However I have seen on many occasions so called charities turning up and using the birds in handling situations with inappropriate methods and misinformation passing birds from person to person for a fee.*

And allowing inappropriate stroking this should not be so. Livestock are a very important aspect to country shows and should be maintained by using the Legislation currently in place”.

3. Next Steps

The responses to this public consultation, the first on this subject, will be used to inform next steps.

Most respondents agreed there should be a licensing or registration regime for MAEs. The majority favoured licensing over registration. We will now work with enforcement agencies and stakeholders to develop a licensing regime for MAEs. This will be done taking into account the responses to this consultation, particular on matters of definition and exemption of certain MAEs, depending on their purpose.

The development of a licensing regime will be subject to a Regulatory Impact Assessment and full public consultation.

The strong feeling amongst respondents regarding a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses in Wales must be acknowledged. Officials will continue to work with Defra and the Devolved Administrations to consider cross-border issues.

List of organisations which responded

Animal Consultants and Trainers Association
Animal Defenders International
Animal Protection Agency
Blue Cross
British Veterinary Association
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Canine Concern Scotland Trust
Captive Animals' Protection Society
Circus Guild of Great Britain
Countryside Alliance Wales
Dogs Trust
Four Paws UK
Farmers' Union of Wales
Into The Wild Animal Encounters
Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Mid wales falconry
Producers Alliance for Cinema and TV (PACT)
Pet Industry Federation
PETA
Professional Animal Encounters Association
RSPCA Cymru
The Hawk Board
The Kennel Club