



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-933
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/07501/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

3 December 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 22 November regarding Petition P-05-933 Ban Goldfish from being given away at funfairs.

Animal welfare and the responsible ownership of animals are priorities for the Welsh Government and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group (WAHWFG). We are committed to maintaining high standards of welfare for all animals kept in Wales at all stages of their lives.

I am aware of concern among the general public about the giving of animals as prizes. The Animal Welfare Act 2006 does already require owners and keepers of animals, whether permanent or temporary, to meet the needs of the animals. This includes prize givers and receivers. Further, it does not permit the giving of animals as prizes to anybody under the age of 16 unless accompanied by an adult.

My officials have for some months been gathering information about this practise. Two Local Authorities in Wales – Caerphilly and Newport – have implemented voluntary bans on the giving of animals as prizes on Council-owned land and I understand the RSPCA is lobbying others to follow suit. Ordinarily, I am advised Local Authorities would only inspect businesses that were giving away goldfish as prizes *if* a welfare complaint was received.

I recently wrote to the Showmen's Guild, an umbrella body whose members include fairs, to find out more about their efforts to self-regulate and the prevalence of this activity. Whilst a positive discussion has already taken place between the Guild and a policy official, I am waiting for a formal response, following which I will be better placed to offer advice on any safeguarding systems they have in place and how widespread the activity is in Wales.

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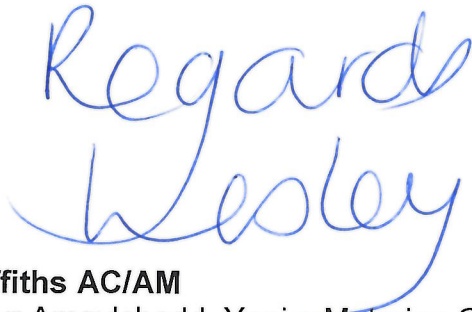
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I recently consulted on draft Regulations to introduce a proposed licensing scheme for Animal Exhibits. If the licensing scheme is introduced, Local Authorities will be encouraged to take a pragmatic approach to ascertain whether an activity is licensable. Dependent on the final licensing criteria and individual circumstances, this may include the exhibiting of goldfish for the purpose of prize giving. I will be publishing a summary report of the responses received, and issuing a statement outlining next steps before the end of the year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Regards" on the top line and "Lesley" on the bottom line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs