



Animal Care and Management Policy

Rationale

Bale's Farm is an established provider of animal-assisted wellbeing activities and integrates the use of animals for therapeutic intervention. The service provided forms support within education, health or social care and may incorporate supervised interaction or activities involving animals to achieve specific outcomes.

Within this provision, Bale's Farm recognises the animals in its care as sentient beings and commits to the highest standards of animal care and management. It is recognised that the care and management of animals is a continually evolving process, and whilst this document sets out the key principles, there will be supporting documentation to cover specific activities, circumstances and situations, which will be added to and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Animal Welfare

The key legislation underpinning this policy and procedure is the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Other relevant legislation;

- Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) Regulations 2018 with updated statutory guidance issued 1st February 2022.
- The Agricultural (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968
- The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2000
- Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006
- Disease Control (England) Order 2003
- Specific Identification & Movement legislation

Bale's Farm will ensure that the welfare needs of each animal are met through the provision of;

- A suitable environment (the place in which an animal is kept)
- A suitable diet
- The opportunity to exhibit normal patterns of behaviour
- To be housed with or apart from other animals (whichever is applicable)
- To be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease

The Society for Companion Animal Studies (SCAS) Code of Practice

The Society for Companion Animal Studies is the lead UK body for all types of Human: Animal Interaction organisations and has produced a Code of Practice to inform all types of Animal Assisted Activities (AAA), Animal Assisted Therapies (AAT) and Animal Assisted Interactions (AAI). The Code was developed following extensive consultation within the sector and drawn together with a multi-disciplinary team in response to a perceived lack of guidance for providers of AAA, AAT and AAI. This included representatives from scientific and veterinary backgrounds, national charities, established providers, representatives from the educational, health and social care sector, animal behaviourists and allied disciplines.

This is a voluntary code intended to offer guidance on good practice for delivering services effectively and safely, ensuring that the welfare needs of both humans and animals are met. The Code of Practice is organised in seven main sections:

- Participants
- Animals
- Programme Planning and Implementation
- Qualifications and training within the AAI delivery team
- Health and Safety
- Risk Assessments
- Ethical considerations

Bale's Farm remains committed to adhering to the principles of the Code of Practice and its implementation.

A copy of the SCAS Code of Practice can be viewed on the SCAS website;
<https://www.scas.org.uk/animal-assisted-interventions/code-of-practice/>

Record Keeping

Records pertaining to Bale's Farm animals are held on a master spreadsheet (All Animal Information). A daily diary of animal interactions and weekly routine health observations are used as working documents and to flag any issues with the Director to action.

There is a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy folder, Policies and Procedures, Fire Safety and Risk Assessment file held in a filing cabinet on the premises. These documents are accessible to all staff via Basecamp, an online project management system.

Staffing

Bale's Farm will ensure that all staff who have a designated responsibility to look after or work with animals in the course of their role will be competent to do so, and they will adhere to the principles of The Animal Welfare Act. Staff are also required to complete the necessary training before working independently with the animals.

Visitors and Clients

Any visitor or client who has contact or interactions with Bale's Farm animals will be under the supervision of a teaching assistant or wellbeing practitioner, and such interactions will be in accordance with the Risk Assessment procedures (examples of which are provided and will be updated annually as a minimum). Such interactions or activities will be recorded in the Community Project Diary or End of Day document.

Appropriate signage will be displayed around the site. Signs will include images to promote inclusivity, reinforce key messages and facilitate understanding where people may have additional communication requirements.

Risk assessment protocols are in place to promote safe working practices and to maintain the health and wellbeing of people and animals on the Bale's Farm premises, across all interactions and activities that take place.

- All visitors to the site will be in accordance with the risk assessment and visitor protocol.
- Pre-booked sessions or children and young people attending activities as part of a programme of study will be in accordance with the risk assessment.
- Anyone involved in any interaction with Bale's Farm animals will be required to adhere to generic risk assessment protocols and activity-specific risk assessments.

Visitors Animals on Bale's Farm Premises

Animals belonging to visitors will not usually be brought onto Bale's Farm premises with the exception of recognised assistance/therapy animals.

Insurance

Bale's Farm:

Activity Business Cover (Authorised Insurer)

Public Liability Insurance; Policy Number: ABC-0001691/1

NPA Insurance (Authorised Insurer)

Employers Liability Insurance; Policy Number: ABC-0001691/1

HISCOX (Authorised Insurer)

Professional Indemnity Insurance; Policy Number: PL-PSC10003331133/00

Bale's Farm Community Outreach:

PetPlan Sanctuary (Authorised Insurer)

Public Liability Insurance; Employers Liability Insurance; Professional Indemnity Insurance; Care Custody and Control of Animals.

Policy Number: IS51246306

Fire Safety

A Fire Safety Risk Assessment has been completed a copy of which is available in the Fire Safety Risk Assessment file. A copy is located at each premises in the main filing cabinet.

Fire alarm testing is carried out on a weekly basis, a record is kept in the Fire Safety Risk Assessment file, also containing copies of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans.

Site Maintenance and Cleaning Protocols for Service Areas and Equipment

At the start of each day staff will do a visual check of all fencing, enclosures and structures and any damage will be reported to the daily manager for allocation to maintenance team and assessed for immediate repair or make good until a suitable repair can be carried out. If the damage poses risk to escape or injury of an animal the animal must be rehoused or removed to a secure area until the repair has been carried out.

Routine maintenance tasks will be allocated and carried out on a rolling basis (eg timber

treatment of animal housing and structures).

A daily cleaning regime is displayed in the farm shelter to promote good hygiene and implement infection prevention and control. Hand washing facilities and hand sanitizer are located in the hut, bathroom in the main building and the top and bottom stables.

Regular supplies of cleaning materials, detergents and disinfectants are subject to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) and are stored in the COSHH cupboard, which is kept locked.

The use of substances which are potentially hazardous to health are controlled within the limits of the COSHH regulations in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for use and may include:

- Detergents, washing powders, washing up liquids or other cleaning agents
- Antiseptics, disinfectants, other germicidal and biocidal agents
- Oven cleaners, scouring powders, other kitchen cleaning agents
- Drain cleaners, wood preservatives, herbicides
- Drugs and prescription medications

- Prior to use of any substance staff must check the manufacturer's instructions and contraindications for use to assess the risk to human and animal health and its suitability for the task involved.

- When using any potentially hazardous cleaning agents or substances the manufacturer's instructions must be followed, control measures must be in place to prevent or adequately control exposure – including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and all staff will be instructed and trained about the risks and precautions to be taken and the effectiveness of these control measures.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Bale's Farm will provide PPE in line with risk assessments and promote effective infection prevention and control measures. PPE will also be made available for routine tasks and animal related activities for staff and participants to promote good hygiene.

Stocks of PPE are stored in the cleaning cupboard with a PPE box for daily use in all key work areas including the top and bottom stables and field shelter.

Staff are trained in effective use of PPE alongside Infection Prevention and Control training.

Bale's Farm will:

- Incorporate use of PPE within all risk assessments
- Determine if the proposed PPE is suitable and fit for use
- Take into account personal physical characteristics of the user
- Ensure where two or more items of PPE are used simultaneously they

are compatible and are as effective when used they are used separately

- Ensure that soiled or potentially contaminated PPE is double bagged
- Remind all users of PPE that it must be disposed of in the designated PPE bins and extra care taken that it is not dropped or left in any animal enclosure

Waste Disposal

Bale's Farm is committed to ensuring that the health, safety and welfare of staff, animals, visitors and service users is not adversely affected by waste materials which arise as a result of its usual activities. Where possible non contaminated waste will be recycled or repurposed or disposed of in a manner which has minimal environmental impact.

Animal bedding and non-food waste will be composted where possible.

All other waste is collected by a Commercial Waste collection service with Biffa.

<https://www.biffa.co.uk>

Deceased animals are collected for cremation which will be arranged via the animals allocated veterinary practice (please see 'All Animal Information' Spreadsheet).

Animal Care and Management Routines

For individual animal routine care and diet plans refer to the animal feed sheets.

Routine Daily Work Plan for All Animals

First thing a.m when the site is unlocked;

- Walk round of all animal areas – small animal room and large animal paddocks with a visual check that all animals are active and showing signs of usual behaviour, visual check of all fencing and enclosures for any obvious signs of damage. Any concerns to be escalated – report to Daily Manager / Director for action. In event of an emergency follow usual procedures as on the Emergency Plan. Any routine maintenance or work tasks to be discussed with the Director and to be allocated for attention as required.

Daily Task List for All Animals

- Visual health check of all animals including observation of their behaviour, interaction with others in the group, eating and drinking normally, usual output and consistency of urine and faeces
- Ensure that all spaces that animals have access to are clean, safe and secure
- Ensure that all animals have access to ample clean water, appropriate diet and forage and that feeding and watering equipment is clean and in good order (large animals feeding equipment includes hayballs, haynets and feeding trugs)
- Ensure that all animal accommodation is cleaned or skipped out as required and replenished with the appropriate type and amount of bedding material presented in a way that is usual for that animal. Large animal paddocks to be cleared of faeces in toilet areas. All cleaning equipment to be disinfected and washed down after use (small and large animals) including small animal holding containers and pet carriers
- Ensure that all animals are able to express their natural behaviour (on their own or

in bonded pairs or groups age, species and character appropriate) and have regular enrichment and mental stimulation eg;

Horses to have slow feed hayballs, let out into additional grazing areas where appropriate (see feed sheet).

Rabbits and Guinea Pigs high quality meadow hay ad lib, fresh vegetables according to seasonal availability, treats and scatter feeding (see feed sheet), access to exercise areas and run / play area.

Chickens and Ducks scatter feeding (see feed sheet), have access to water, secure exercise area, and shut away at night.

Dogs are to be fed by their owners according to their size and breed (see manufacturer's guidelines). Treats are to be given under staff supervision. Staff to ensure the number of treats given are per the manufacturer's daily recommendation. Enrichment games and breed-specific outlets are to be implemented into each day. Rest periods are to be factored into each day, ensuring each dog has enough rest for their age, size and breed. Access to fresh water throughout the day.

- Administration of any routine medication
- Ensure that all animals are able to interact with others of the same species unless separation is necessary for specific medical reasons or not recommended for the species / status of the animal (eg mature animals that may fight)
- Inform the relevant members of staff (Duty Manager / Director) of any concerns with animals or any changes to daily care routine and record on individual care plans
- Ensure that trained / experienced members of staff are involved in the routine care of Bale's Farm animals. Animal interactions with clients / groups during sessions will be supervised by a teacher, teaching assistant or wellbeing practitioners, and this will be appropriate to the level of training or professional experience of the staff member. Non-contact walk around visits can be conducted by other staff under direction from the daily manager or Director.

Weekly Task List

- Carry out routine maintenance of accommodation, fixtures, enclosures and fencing as necessary. Thorough safety check of all small animal housing, hutches and runs including latches and fixings forward any concerns for maintenance
- Thorough clean of animal care and session equipment to include: Grooming equipment (small and large animals), headcollars, lead ropes, exercise equipment, behavioural enrichment toys and equipment including treat toys, temporary accommodation or occasional use equipment / pet carriers
- Wash and scrub out small animal feeding bowls and water bottles (sterilize and thoroughly rinse out with water before re use with different animals or if particularly dirty)
- Large animal water butts and tanks to be emptied, scrubbed out and refilled
- Large animal hayracks to be brushed out thoroughly, washed out if dirty and allowed to dry before re use

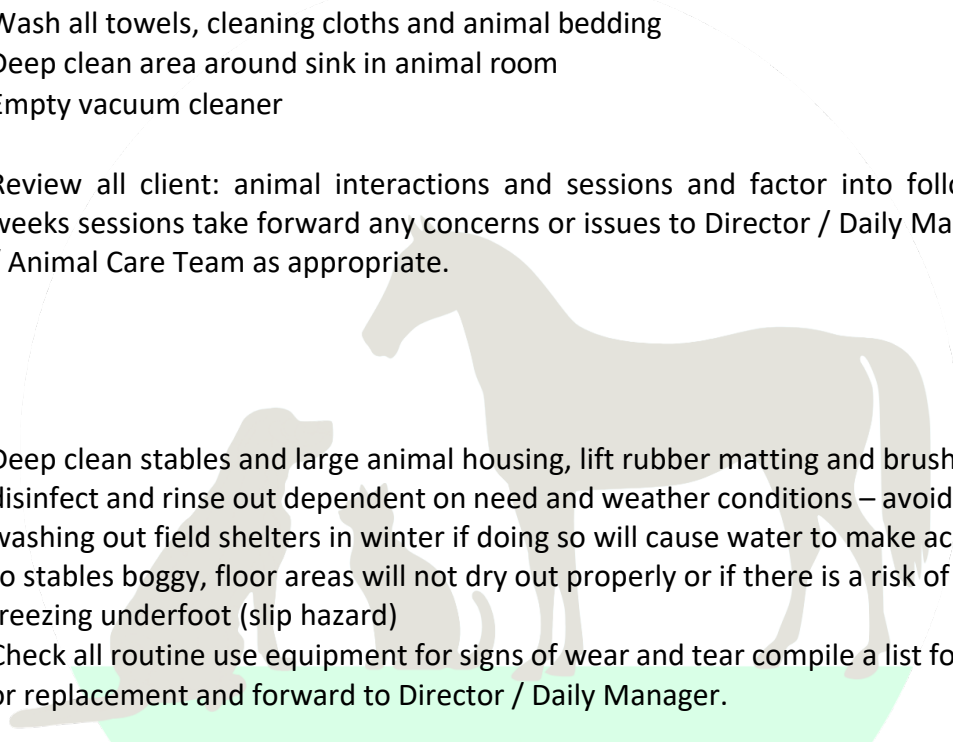
- Brush out cobwebs and sweep clean all ledges in stables and housing
- Thorough clean of the snack shack, including feed bins, food prep area
- Thorough recorded health check of all animals (use weekly health checklists)
- Check stocks of regular use medications and forward order requirements to Director / Daily Manager for ordering from vets
- Check stocks of feed, supplements and bedding and forward order requirements to Director / Daily Manager for ordering
- Check stocks of cleaning materials and equipment and forward order requirements to Director / daily Manager for ordering
- Check stocks of PPE and First Aid equipment replenish from stock as needed and report any shortages to Director / Daily Manager
- Wash all towels, cleaning cloths and animal bedding
- Deep clean area around sink in animal room
- Empty vacuum cleaner
- Review all client: animal interactions and sessions and factor into following weeks sessions take forward any concerns or issues to Director / Daily Manager / Animal Care Team as appropriate.

Monthly

- Deep clean stables and large animal housing, lift rubber matting and brush out, disinfect and rinse out dependent on need and weather conditions – avoid washing out field shelters in winter if doing so will cause water to make access to stables boggy, floor areas will not dry out properly or if there is a risk of freezing underfoot (slip hazard)
- Check all routine use equipment for signs of wear and tear compile a list for repair or replacement and forward to Director / Daily Manager.

Ongoing

- Monitor all animals for general health and wellbeing – plan in routine checks for medication, veterinary care, farrier visits and foot care, shearing, faecal egg counts for parasite control, small animal bathing and preventative health care requirements update notes and animal care plans as necessary
- Animal enrichment activities are developed and implemented to ensure positive wellbeing for all animals.
- Management of paddocks, check for poisonous weeds, overhanging brambles, burrows or holes from rabbits and badgers causing trip hazards, electric fencing charger is working and effectiveness is not inhibited by herbage, extend or reduce grazing areas controlled by electric fencing, hedges are not overgrown or damaged by animals, all gates are secure when closed and fixings are working correctly.
- Hand sanitizer points and handwash units areas are clean, working correctly



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and replenished as required

- Risk assessment of each animal regarding its suitability and compatibility for interactions and activities in sessions, both for the safety of the person(s) involved but also the safety and welfare of the animals

If there are any immediate concerns about any animals health beyond what the team can deal with as routine for that animal it is expected that veterinary assistance will be sought immediately which may involve an emergency call out.

Additional attention or any change in care routine for an animal such as change in feed, bedding, enrichment and exercise requirements or health conditions must be recorded and other staff informed to ensure continuity of care.

Any concerns about an animal's behaviour or its suitability for interaction in activities or sessions with clients must be recorded and shared with the Director or Daily Manager.

It is important to note that these time frames are the general guide for which these tasks would be addressed and would be attended to sooner if required.

Last reviewed: 05/03/2025
Next review due: 05/03/2026



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