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DYFED-POWYS  
POLICE AND CRIME  
COMMISSIONER

# Animal Welfare Lay Visiting Scheme

## Handbook

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<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
1.0	March 2016	Hannah Hyde	
2:0	February 2020	Caryl Bond	Handbook updated to include further information on the scheme.

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## **1. Volunteer Policy**

The Volunteer Policy is an overarching policy covering the broad principles of volunteering for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). All Animal Welfare Visitors will be provided with a copy of the Policy. It is also available on the PCC's [website](#) or by request to the PCC's office.

The Policy provides further information on the following aspects of volunteering:

- 1) Management of the Volunteer Schemes;
- 2) Eligibility criteria;
- 3) Recruitment, application and vetting;
- 4) Training;
- 5) Probationary period and tenure;
- 6) Volunteer roles and responsibilities;
- 7) Expenses and insurance;
- 8) Termination of appointment; confidentiality and disposing documentation;
- 9) Publicity guidelines; and
- 10) Settling difference and complaints against the Police.

## **2. Animal Welfare Scheme Handbook**

This Handbook provides detailed guidance on the Animal Welfare visiting arrangements within Dyfed-Powys.

## **3. Introduction to the Animal Welfare Scheme**

The death of a police dog 'Acer' whilst in training in Essex in 1997, and the subsequent prosecution of police officers resulted in a considerable loss of public confidence in police dog training methods, generated adverse comment in the media and caused animal welfare organisations such as the RSPCA and the Dogs Trust to stop donating dogs to the police service. In response to these issues, the ACPO Police Dog Sub-Committee embarked upon a thorough review of police dog training resulting in the development of a strategy aimed at restoring public confidence by ensuring that police dog training methods are humane, ethical and transparent.

The training and welfare of animals engaged on police work must be open and, as importantly, be seen to be open. To this end, an Animal Welfare Lay Visitors Scheme was introduced.

The purpose of these visiting arrangements is to enable appointed members of the local community and professionals from animal welfare organisations to observe, comment and report upon the welfare of animals engaged in police work and the condition under which police dogs are housed, trained, transported and deployed with a view to securing greater understanding and confidence in these matters. These arrangements also provide a mechanism for an

independent check on the way police dog handlers carry out their responsibilities with regard to animals in their care.

The former Dyfed-Powys Police Authority established an Animal Welfare Lay Visiting Scheme in consultation with the Chief Constable in 2002. In November 2012, the PCC for Dyfed-Powys was elected, and following consideration of the benefits of the Scheme, decided to continue with its administration.

#### **4. Management of the Scheme**

The scheme is co-ordinated in-house, with one single point of contact for Animal Welfare Visitors. Visitors will be informed of direct contact details on joining the scheme, and will be kept updated of any changes.

#### **5. Eligibility**

The eligibility criteria to become an ICV are detailed in the Role Specification in [Appendix A](#). Each application will be treated on its merits, but the over-riding factor will be to prevent possible conflicts of interest for individuals and to maintain the independence and integrity of the scheme as a whole.

#### **6. Training**

All Animal Welfare Visitors will be invited to attend an initial one-day induction training session organised by the PCC's office and will also be expected to undertake refresher training annually in order to maintain levels of knowledge and ensure best practice. Training will be provided by the PCC's office, Dyfed-Powys Police's Dog Section, and representatives from the Dogs Trust. The training day will provide Visitors with the basic knowledge and skills they will need to make visits.

Animal Welfare Visitors are expected to attend a training visit to the Dog Section in Dyfed-Powys Police (DPP) Headquarters prior to taking up their duties. They will then need to complete a minimum of two visits in the company of experienced Animal Welfare Visitors as part of their training, prior to taking up their role.

#### **7. Visiting Arrangements and Procedures**

##### **7.1 Number of Animal Welfare Visitors**

The PCC's office will appoint sufficient Animal Welfare Visitors to ensure that appropriate numbers of random visits are made to all Dog Handlers across Dyfed-Powys.

## **7.2 Frequency and Timing of Visits**

It is an expectation of the Scheme that all dog handlers receive at least one visit in any six month period. Visitors are provided with a rota every six months, which lists the Dog Handlers they are expected to visit.

Visitors are provided with the contact details for the Dog Handlers they are to visit. Visitors will contact the Dog Handler directly to arrange the visit.

Visitors should arrive at police headquarters / police station / agreed location, giving no more than 24 hour notice, or preferably without prior notice, and should try to avoid making visits at regular or predictable times. The frequency of visits may be reviewed from time to time.

## **7.3 Authorised Visitors**

Animal welfare visits can only be made individually or when accompanied by another accredited Animal Welfare Visitor. No more than two Visitors should visit together, as larger parties could constitute an additional burden on police staff. Under no circumstances may Visitors be accompanied by any unauthorised persons.

## **7.4 Visiting Procedures at the Dog Section, Headquarters**

On arrival at the Dog Section, Police Headquarters, Carmarthen, Visitors should request to see the Duty Officer and present their identity card. They should then be given immediate access to the following areas:

- Kennels;
- Food preparation room for the animals; and
- Dog vans (if they are on site).

## **7.5 Visiting Procedures at Stations**

On arrival at the station, Visitors should request to see the Dog Handler and present their identity card. The dog should be presented for checking by the Visitor. Additionally, kennels and dog vans should be inspected if on site.

## **7.6 Access to areas where animals are held, trained and transported**

Visitors should satisfy themselves that the areas are clean, tidy, in a reasonable state of repair and that bedding is clean and adequate. It is not necessary to inspect stores but visitors should establish that suitable arrangements exist for adequate stocks of equipment and food.

Inspections should also be undertaken of empty kennels to check they are in an acceptable condition to house the animals.

### **7.7 Police initiated visits**

Circumstances may arise where DPP will wish to initiate a visit by an Animal Welfare Visitor (including at a dog handler's home address). A special visit could help allay public fears / concern about the treatment and well-being of police dogs.

The Officer in Charge of the Dog Section will be responsible on these occasions for contacting the PCC's office to arrange a visit.

Equally, if a specific complaint is received by DPP pertaining to animal welfare, the officer tasked with investigating the initial complaint should consider involving Animal Welfare Visitors qualified in animal welfare.

### **7.8 Security and Safety of Animal Welfare Visitors**

In the interests of security and the safety of Visitors, they **must** be accompanied by a member of staff during the visits. Visitors must adhere to advice given by dog handlers and other staff with regard to any health and safety issues.

### **7.9 Medical Conditions of Animals**

Visitors will wish to pay particular attention to any animal suffering from illness, injury or disability. They should satisfy themselves that, if appropriate, a veterinarian has been informed and establish what instructions for medical treatment have been given and whether they have been carried out.

### **7.10 Physical checks of animals**

Visitors should ensure that the welfare and physical condition of the animal is satisfactory. Any concerns should be noted on the report form accordingly and raised with the handler at the time of the visit. In all circumstances, the visitor **must** seek the permission of the Handler prior to making any cursory physical examination. The Visitor must adhere to the advice given by the Handler as to whether the physical examination may be carried out by the Visitor or not. If a physical examination is refused by the Handler, the visitor may request that the Handler do so whilst being observed by them.

## **8. Completion of Reports and Follow Up Action**

### **8.1 Completion of report forms**

At the conclusion of each visit, the visitor will complete a report form. Both copies of the form will be forwarded to the PCC's office. Following which, one copy will be sent to the Inspector in command of the Dog Section. Animal Welfare Visitors should not retain any copies of the report form for their own

records. Please see Appendix B for a list of recommended checks in which Visitors use as a basis to complete their visit report forms.

### **8.2 Reports on unsatisfactory treatment and conditions**

If a visit discloses any aspect of the treatment of dogs or conditions at the station which are unsatisfactory, they should be included on the report and raised with the Dog Handler at the time. Any action which s/he takes should also be recorded on the report form. Should a Visitor have concerns regarding the identity of a particular dog, they may request that the dog's electronic tag is scanned. This must be done in the presence of the Visitor.

### **8.3 Reports on issues arising out of visits**

Issues arising out of visits will be submitted to the PCC's office who will consider the most suitable action. Feedback of actions taken to resolve matters arising from visits will be provided.

## **9. Confidentiality**

During the course of their duties, Animal Welfare Visitors may acquire confidential information about police issues. Visitors will therefore be asked to sign an undertaking of confidentiality.

Visitors should be aware that the improper disclosure of information acquired during a visit may attract civil or criminal proceedings. It is stressed that confidential information must not be included in the written reports to the PCC's office of the results of visits.

Should a Visitor receive information or a complaint in confidence regarding the welfare of a particular dog, this information should be forwarded immediately to the PCC's office who will take appropriate actions to the concerns raised.

Visitors' and Dog Handlers' contact details are given to Visitors in the strictest confidence and are given purely for convenience in making personal contact. Such details should not be divulged to any other person.

When a Visitor leaves the scheme, they must ensure that all documentation relating to their role is returned to the PCC's office.

## **10. Monitoring the Scheme**

To achieve the objectives of the scheme, reports of trends emerging from visits undertaken are presented to the PCC, who monitors all aspects of the scheme across Dyfed-Powys.

## **11. Termination of appointment**

Although this role is entirely voluntary, the PCC has the right to terminate a Visitor's appointment if their conduct is not felt to be of the expected standard. Visitors will sign a Code of Conduct on joining the Scheme, and will be expected to abide by the standards set out in that document. If conduct falls below that standard, the PCC will consider whether that person should continue in the role.

Where a visitor fails to make a visit within six months, or fails to attend training without having notified the PCC's office, they will be contacted in order to establish if it is simply an oversight, or to seek an explanation. The PCC's office may need to consider the Visitor's position on the Scheme.

Visitors should notify the PCC's office if they are arrested and charged with a criminal offence, or if they are under investigation for any animal welfare issues, and will be suspended from the Scheme pending the outcome of any proceedings.

## Appendix A

<b>Animal Welfare Lay Visitor – Role Specification</b>	
<b>The criteria contained within this Role Specification will form the basis for short-listing suitable applicants to become Animal Welfare Lay Visitors. These criteria are the necessary requirements to enable an effective performance within the role.</b>	
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Competency</b>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be 18 years of age or over;</li> <li>• Will ideally live, work or study in the Dyfed-Powys area;</li> <li>• Must have been resident in the UK for at least 3 years before applying;</li> <li>• Must be willing to undertake regular visits to Dyfed-Powys Police Dog Handlers, as stipulated by the relevant rota;</li> <li>• Must be willing to attend annual training sessions;</li> <li>• Must not be a serving member of a police force or Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and have no conflicting involvement in the criminal justice system;</li> <li>• Have an understanding of the importance of equality and fairness of all;</li> <li>• Be able to communicate with different people both orally and in writing;</li> <li>• Must exercise independence and impartiality;</li> <li>• Must be able to report on findings in a constructive manner;</li> <li>• Must be able to maintain confidentiality;</li> <li>• Must be willing to undergo vetting and provide references;</li> <li>• Must be able to demonstrate a sound knowledge of animal welfare issues or have demonstrable experience of the same.</li> </ul>
Working with people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to demonstrate the ability to work as part of a team;</li> <li>• The ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with a wide range of people.</li> </ul>
Effective communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing;</li> <li>• Able to demonstrate the ability to manage commitments and make a reliable contribution to the Scheme.</li> </ul>
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to demonstrate enthusiasm for the role.</li> </ul>
Respect for people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity to treat all people fairly and with respect, to value diversity and respond sensitively to difference;</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to be open to new ideas and methods of working.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B



### REPORT FORM GUIDANCE Recommended checks

Does the dog have ready access to water?

Does the dog look like it is getting a nutritionally adequate diet to stay healthy?

Is the dog contained within a suitable environment?

Is the environment clean?

Can the environment be maintained in a clean condition?

Is the dog's shelter free from hazards, such as sharp objects?  
(*Shelter refers to either (a) the transport or (b) the kennel.*)

Is the dog's shelter free from extremes of weather?

Is there a comfortable resting area?

Is the dog free of any sign of pain, injury or disease?

If no, has the condition been diagnosed?

Is the condition being treated properly?

Does the dog have enough space to express its normal behaviour?

If it is working or in transit, does the dog get enough opportunity to express its normal behaviour?

Is the dog free of any obvious signs of fear and distress?

If it is showing fear, distress or mental suffering, has the cause been identified?