

Definition

This procedure applies to rescues who run entirely with a network of foster homes ('foster-based'), and also for the use of indoor foster carers by rescues who also use their own premises.

Foster homes which have external cat pens or kennels have almost the same applicability as standards which apply to owned or leased centres. The differences lie in how the rescue overall ensures that the qualities and procedures are followed by their fosterers, and the monitoring that takes place. The below guidance may therefore still be useful.

How to carry out the assessment

- When filling out the assessment form, the assessing person should select that they use foster homes, either indoor or outdoor:
 - Where the rescue runs with indoor foster homes only, this will ensure that any Standards that only relate to animal rescue centres, kennels, pens and/or commercial boarding facilities are not shown, and not scoreable. The remaining standards should all be assessed against
 - Where the rescue runs with outdoor foster homes (e.g. kennels and cat pens on domestic premises), there will be some additional standards to the below which apply, relating to those facilities. The below guidance will still be helpful in determining how to apply standards to the foster network rescue.
- The person completing the self-assessment should be able to consider the rescue's operations against all relevant Minimum Welfare and Operational Standards, with help from colleagues where needed.
- If the lead person informing the external assessor about the rescue's operations is also a fosterer, it is important that they consider the support provided to other fosterers who aren't so involved in the core of the rescue's day to day running.
- It is useful to speak with another fosterer or two and use the opportunity to check that the rescue's own procedures for fosterers, especially where geographical distance is a consideration, are working well.
- Additional guidance on how to assess against ADCH standards, which were originally written for centres, is available below.
- Assessors should consider:
 - What the rescue provides for the foster carers, and what they are expected to provide themselves (e.g. food, equipment, etc).
 - How is quality assured of any self-supplied food or equipment?
 - How are vets appointed, where additional vets are needed due to geographical spread?
 - How are facilities within the foster carer's home agreed and assessed by the rescue? This may include a pen, a room, or the whole house. Consideration needs to be given of infectious disease risk and how to minimise risk; to the foster carer and whoever shares their home, to their own animals, between foster cats. Whole house fostering is a higher risk for admissions animals, as it is harder to clean thoroughly. It's more suitable for animals that have started somewhere else first and have had a health check.
 - Do the foster carers have the relevant knowledge/ training they need to be a foster carer and how does the rescue document this?
 - If animals are fostered because they are deemed to require additional or different care (physically, behaviourally or mentally), beyond what can be provided in a shelter environment, then are the foster carers suitably qualified/experienced/trained to provide this additional or different level of care?

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- The number of assessor visits to foster homes should fall in line with the size of the rescue, as below. These could be carried out as part of the main assessment (e.g. meeting to carry out the main assessment at a foster home). The number of foster homes is calculated by the number of active fosterers, i.e. those that have had a foster animal for the rescue within the last 6 months:
 - 1-15 – One fosterer to be visited
 - 16-30 – Two foster homes to be visited
 - 31 and over – Two foster homes to be visited, and a third visited or contacted by video call
 - Additional visits or video calls may be included at the discretion of the assessor who can seek advice from ADCH staff in relation to large (31 and over) foster networks.

The purpose of these visits is to understand:

- how the quality assurance procedures, that should be put in place by the rescue, are controlled and monitored. These should give the rescue's management confidence that foster procedures are being followed
- how those caring for the animals in the rescue's care are supported by the rescue, and
- the real working of the rescue – much as a rescue centre would be assessed.

Additional guidance on how to assess against ADCH standards, which were primarily written for centres, is available below.

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
1	Cat / Dog	When animals are received, they shall be thoroughly scanned for a microchip using an ISO-compliant scanner or if the animal has other ID suitable checks shall be carried out. When a microchip, tag or tattoo is found then reasonable attempts shall be made to trace the registered owner or keeper of any lost animal in line with section 149 of the Environmental Protection Act 199	This can be done with the rescue's own microchip reader if owned, or by a vet. Microchip readers should be regularly checked to ensure they are functioning correctly. Previous owner information is not a suitable alternative to scanning.
2	Cat / Dog	Where no microchip is found, unless against veterinary advice ^(glossary 6) , all domestic animals shall be microchipped and registered with an appropriate UK or Irish database as soon as possible, with the organisation listed as keeper until the point of rehoming, and especially prior to being walked off site or placed on foster.	Rescues using foster homes should microchip as soon as possible, rather than just prior to rehoming. For foster carers, the key point for microchip registration is to be able to establish keepership. Best practice may vary between cats and dogs and the rescue's setup (e.g. whether the rescue has a centre address or not). For dogs it may be best practice to put the microchip in the foster carer's name, and the rescue as the second name. This will ensure prompter reunification if required, as dogs are going to be out in the community for exercise as part of their foster placement. For cats you could also consider placing the chip in the rescue's name as they should not be leaving the foster premises, in order to establish keepership whilst the cat is under the care of the rescue.

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
3	Cat / Dog	The health and welfare of all animals shall be assessed on intake and monitored at least daily . Animals shall be examined by a veterinary professional or a suitably competent ^(glossary 3) lay person as soon as possible. Animals with perceived health problems must be seen by a veterinary surgeon as soon as possible and monitored as advised by the veterinary surgeon .	This should be the rescue's own nominated vet, or in the case of wider geographical spread in a foster network, the arrangement made for individual fosterers and their local availability.
4	Cat / Dog	Animals shall be vaccinated on or shortly after arrival into the centre under the direction of the veterinary surgeon	For 'centre', read admittance to the rescue
5	Cat / Dog	All animals shall be supplied with an appropriate diet, suitable for species, age, life stage and condition. Clean, potable (fit for human consumption) water shall be available for both cats and dogs at all times and changed daily. Feed and drinking water provided to the animals must be unspoilt and free from contamination	Fosterers should be made aware of the dietary needs of the animal they are taking in. The rescue must ensure that the fosterer has access to the correct type of food, by whatever arrangement the rescue has. Any changes in food should be made gradually, and the new food type a suitable replacement for the animal
6	Cat / Dog	Feed and water intake must be monitored, and any problems recorded and addressed.	Fosterers should be made aware of the need to monitor their foster animal's intake, provided with monitoring resources if needed (e.g. charts), and be aware of how to address any concerns
7	Cat	Cats shall be offered at least two separate meals a day approximately 8 hours apart during the daytime	
8	Cat / Dog	Where animals are being fed together, care shall be taken to ensure that all animals are receiving sufficient food and that no animal is receiving more food than it requires. In communal animal areas, there shall be at least one feeding and water bowl for each animal	Cats should only be fed in proximity of each other if they are being fostered together, as a bonded pair, from the same household, and supervised throughout. They should not be fed with any resident pets. Dogs should only be fed in the vicinity of resident dogs where this is deemed positive for their wellbeing and supervised throughout (e.g. a dog who has come into rescue solo, but requires the company of another dog).
9	Cat / Dog	Eating vessels, which shall be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected, shall be cleansed or disposed of after each meal and drinking vessels shall be cleaned at least once a day. Disposable eating dishes may be used.	

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10	Cat / Dog	Where feed is prepared on any premises, there must be hygienic facilities for its preparation, including a working surface, hot and cold running water and storage. Where pre-prepared animal food is served the area shall be kept clean and rodent and insect free at all times. Suitable precautions shall be taken to minimise risk of contamination.	Consider where, in the domestic property, food preparation and storage is to take place. Actively look at the area.
11	Cat / Dog	Precautions, as advised by the veterinary surgeon, shall be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious disease and parasites amongst the animals, staff, volunteers and visitors. Particular care shall be given to the precautions taken to minimise the risk of outbreak of disease in all communal animal areas.	
12	Cat / Dog	Where an animal shows signs of infectious disease or illness advice must be sought from a veterinary surgeon and isolation measures or barrier nursing put in place, as appropriate to the specific disease protocol. Where an animal has suffered an injury veterinary advice (glossary 6) must be sought. A documented procedure should be held covering the organisation's plans for infectious and potentially infectious animals.	<p>This should be the rescue's own nominated vet, or in the case of wider geographical spread in a foster network, the arrangement made for individual fosterers and their local availability.</p> <p>The foster carer should have basic pet care knowledge as to when to seek medical advice, including training on signs of illness</p> <p>Access to appropriate PPE should be made available where needed.</p> <p>In the event of injury and non-infectious illness, this can be easier in a foster environment than centre environment, and the animal to human ratio is at an advantage.</p> <p>In the event of infectious illness that may contaminate the environment, the foster carer ought to have a procedure, drawn up with the rescue, to put in place to allow suitable barrier nursing. If appropriate, isolation facilities at the veterinary practice could be used. Resident animals [if any] should not be put at risk of cross contamination.</p>
13	Cat / Dog	Adequate isolation facilities for animals with infectious diseases shall be available. This can be at the organisation's own centre, or a formal documented arrangement with a local provider such as a veterinary practice. It should be clear to all personnel with overall responsibility for any animals' welfare how to contact a local external provider.	For foster homes, with more than one animal in the home, a plan should be put in place in the event that an infectious disease is present in either the foster or resident animal (e.g. a foster or resident dog).

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
14	Dog	An animal first aid kit shall be available for use at any animal welfare (rescue) centre or premises with more than 5 pens. The degree of first aid is to keep the animal safe and avoid further harm, while veterinary advice (glossary 6) is sought.	This revised standards clarify that this is only for sites with 5 or more animals. It should not apply for the indoor foster environment. Foster carers should be prepared to deal with an emergency with their foster animal, like any pet owner – but should not provide any medical care they are not competent in carrying out.
22	Cat	In cat units, suitably sited and sized litter trays, which are easy to clean and impermeable, shall be provided at all times. They shall be placed as far away as possible from the resting and feeding areas	For 'cat units', this applies to whatever environment the cat is staying in. Other principles around size and placement remain.
23	Cat	Litter trays shall be large enough to allow the cat to move around, dig and cover faeces and urine without feeling restricted. A suitable absorbent material for litter shall be provided and shall be deep enough to absorb the urine and allow the cat to dig and cover	
24	Cat	Litter trays shall be scooped at least once a day and at any time during the day if found to be unduly soiled. Cleaning shall take place away from food preparation areas or at least at separate times. In multiple cat units one litter tray shall be provided for each cat	For 'units' read – any environment that the foster cat is staying in
25	Cat / Dog	All animals shall have the opportunity to exercise daily	Fosterers should be encouraged to play and interact with the dogs and cats, taking care to ensure that this contact does not cause the animals, particularly cats, undue stress, and is appropriate for each individual animal. Enriching the living environment where cats and dogs are housed is very important to ensure that their mental and behavioural needs are met. This is particularly important where the animals are likely to spend lengthy periods in the fostering environment.
26	Cat / Dog	All cats and dogs shall have toys and/or feeding enrichment to provide opportunities to perform natural behaviour such as hunting or play	Individually housed dogs should be given something to chew unless contrary veterinary advice is given. Where a resident dog is considered beneficial, and lives in the foster home, care should be taken around the sharing of toys. Feeding enrichment can be provided by scatter feeding of dried food or biscuits or food filled play balls or other items can be provided to supplement the normal feeding regime.

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
27	Cat / Dog	The items provided shall be the correct size and type for the individual animal and its behaviour	The animal should be monitored closely when the object is first introduced. Changing the toys or feeding devices on a regular basis will introduce novelty and maintain interest. When adding new enrichment devices, fosterers should ensure that they do not cause stress to the animal or any resident animals. The items should be durable, clean and safe and capable of being easily cleaned and disinfected, or disposable. They should be cleaned and dried regularly and disinfected before being given to later foster animals. They should be checked daily to ensure they are safe and replaced when necessary.
28	Cat / Dog	Both cats and dogs shall have human contact and interaction on a daily basis	For dogs and cats which are not fearful, beneficial and positive contact can include grooming, exercise, playing, petting and training as appropriate for the individual animal. Dogs and cats which appear fearful of people should be introduced to handling gradually and in a positive manner to habituate them to human contact as appropriate for the individual animal. Appropriate placement of animals into foster care is essential (taking into consideration other residents in the home, and location of the house)
29	Cat / Dog	All puppies and kittens shall be adequately and appropriately socialised and habituated to prevent fear behaviour towards animals, situations, environments and people. A daily socialisation programme ensuring this shall be followed	Kittens and puppies should have positive interactions with a range of people. They should be gently introduced to handling, grooming, being lifted and touched all over. Kittens and puppies should be positively exposed to as many sights, sounds, tastes, textures and smells as possible in their time in foster, to help familiarise them to their future domestic homes
30	Cat / Dog	Animals shall never be forced to interact with people, and shall have the facility to avoid people should they wish, i.e. a hiding place or a high vertical resting place	This is particularly important for cats, whose foster environments may consist of a single room. Ensure that a hiding space is provided, preferably a high resting place such as a shelf.
31	Dog	Dogs shall be protected from animal company which causes them fear, frustration or distress, but provided with enjoyable animal company where possible	Amicable pairs of dogs are likely to engage in behaviours which they find fulfilling and enjoyable such as play and this can be achieved through pair or group exercise.

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
32	Dog	In kennels where dogs are housed separately and in the vicinity of other dogs, each dog shall be able to control their view of other dogs. <i>This may be by temporary or permanent means.</i>	
33	Dog	Dogs shall be introduced to one another slowly and in a positive way.	Giving due consideration to human safety and animal welfare implications. In the foster-based rescue, fosterers should be supported in introducing any resident dogs to foster dogs by a competent person to reduce risks to the dogs and people.
34	Dog	Decisions to pair dogs shall be made by competent ^(glossary 3) persons. They shall not be housed with each other if either tries to avoid the other or appears fearful of them.	Pair-housed dogs should have sufficient space and adequate resources to minimise anxiety/stress and to be able to move away from one another if they choose.
35	Dog	Pregnant, whelping, nursing bitches and puppies under seven weeks of age shall be accommodated somewhere safe and quiet	Bitches with puppies should be placed in a quiet foster home with experience of bitches and puppies, or under supervision from another experienced volunteer or staff member. Where the rescue has a policy of not taking in pregnant bitches/bitches with puppies, this is scored as compliant, as it ensures that they are not cared for if suitable facilities are not available within the rescue.
36	Dog	Puppies shall not be housed away from the bitch or rehomed until they are at least eight weeks of age, unless this is under veterinary guidance. Bitches need to be able to spend time away from the puppies as they wean	A bench or sanctuary table that she can jump on would be ideal. Weaned puppies should be housed with littermates or with other puppies of a similar age and size. Whilst pups should not be kept as singletons, mixing should be done under veterinary and/or behaviour expert supervision, taking into account the disease status and/or behaviour of the individuals. Puppies should remain as a group until their behaviour dictates otherwise and if their needs can be met, e.g. housing of a suitable size for all dogs can be provided.
37	Cat	In addition to toys and feeding enrichment, cats shall be given facilities for scratching	Cats prefer vertical surfaces with vertical grain for scratching and suitable materials include corrugated cardboard, bark, hessian-backed carpet or scratching posts. Scratching posts which are provided should be tall enough for the cat to use fully stretched. Scratching posts should be disposable or capable of being disinfected. Soothing background music can be beneficial and may be provided but loud music may be stressful and should be avoided. Odours can be used to increase and encourage natural behaviour. For example, scent trails can be laid around exercise areas and treats can be hidden

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
37	Cat	If an adult cat is feral, no attempt shall be made to habituate or tame it – it shall be neutered quickly and rehomed to a suitable environment, i.e. one where it can live outside and is not confined	This involves either returning it to where it came from (if appropriate) or placing it in a suitable other environment where it can live outside and is not confined. Feral cats should not be confined to pens but if there is no alternative, it is better to keep feral cats in a large enclosure, e.g. 80 sq m per cat for a short period of time, while suitable accommodation is found rather than confining in a traditional pen. They should not be kept permanently in this type of accommodation. A feral cat is a wild cat, poorly socialised
38	Cat	Only compatible cats shall be housed together. Decisions to home cats together shall be made by a competent (glossary 3) person.	Cats from the same household may be compatible and may benefit from each other's company. However, even cats from the same household may be incompatible and should be monitored for signs of fear, stress or persistent aggression. In these instances the cats should be separated either into individual housing, or into amicable groups, dependent on the individual case. Groups of feral cats may come together naturally and by choice around a source of food. This is different to the way we make cats live together in our homes. Putting together unrelated or incompatible cats can put pet cats under pressure and cause stress. Single housing is the best choice for cats unless they have been living together harmoniously in a home previously.
39	Cat	Pair housed or group-housed cats shall have sufficient space and adequate resources to minimise competition and to be able to avoid each other and hide away separately from one another if they choose. This includes provision of a separate bed and hiding place for each cat	
40	Cat	Cats shall not be housed in the same enclosure as other species even if they have come from the same household	
41	Cat	Where cats are housed in the vicinity of other cats, each cat shall be able to hide from every other cat. They must not be visible by, or be able to view, other animals in the care of the organisation.	Cats in the foster environment should not be in the view of other cats, unless they are being fostered as a bonded pair, as this is likely to cause stress to cats. Stress will lower the cat's immune response and make illness more likely. The possibility for disease transfer can be higher in a foster home due to the nature of the environment.

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
42	Cat	Kittens shall not be housed away from the queen or rehomed until they are at least eight weeks of age, unless this is under veterinary guidance. Queens need to be able to spend time away from kittens as they wean	A high platform for her to jump on to would be ideal
43	Cat	Pregnant, queening or nursing queens and suckling kittens shall be accommodated away from the main cattery units and instead somewhere safe and quiet, ideally in a foster home or a separate maternity unit	A quiet foster home with experience of queens and kittens, or under supervision from another experienced volunteer or staff member, is ideal. The foster home should be capable of thorough cleaning, as these cats will be vulnerable to infection. Where the rescue has a policy of not taking in pregnant queens/queens with kittens, this is scored as compliant, as it ensures that they are not cared for if suitable facilities are not available within the rescue.
44	Cat	Weaned kittens shall be housed with their littermates	
45	Cat / Dog	All animals shall be groomed when necessary and steps taken to ensure dogs and cats coats are free of mats	Regular grooming, if introduced gradually and in a positive way, will also allow the animals to get used to human handling.
48	Cat / Dog	Sufficient ^(glossary 1) numbers of people ^(glossary 2) who are competent ^(glossary 3) for the purpose must be available to provide a level of care that ensures that the welfare needs ^(glossary 4) of all the animals in the organisation are met. In foster homes, the foster carer must be trained and given guidance by the organisation, relevant to the animals they are caring for.	
49	Cat	Feral ^(glossary 9) (unsocialised, unowned) cats are not suitable to be kept as companion animals and therefore there shall be no attempt to socialise them to humans. For socialisation to be most effective, it must occur for the whole duration of a cat's sensitive period (i.e. starting from the age of 2 weeks, up until at least 7/8 weeks of age). No attempt should be made to socialise an adult cat or kitten that is consistently (i.e. longer than a few days) fearful or distressed in the presence of humans, even if they are under 8 weeks of age.	See glossary point 9. The welfare of the individual cat should not be compromised by attempts to socialise them, even if this is for a short or fixed duration of time such as prior to being homed.

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
50	Cat	<p>Adult feral ^(glossary 9) cats must not be kept in confinement any longer than necessary. They must be provided with any necessary immediate care, neutered and ear-tipped, and then released into a suitable environment as soon as possible. A suitable environment means ideally back to original site where the animal was caught, where possible. An animal that has been under the care of the organisation must only be released, neutered and ear-tipped, in an area that is suitable for its species. It must only be released if it is able to feed and fend for itself.</p>	<p>See glossary point 9.</p> <p>Ear tipping should enable identification of neutering from a distance to avoid recapture, unlike microchipping. True feral ^(glossary 9) cats (as opposed to stray cats that have previously lived, and are comfortable, around humans), over the socialisation period, are highly unlikely to ever become socialised to humans and being kept in an enclosed shelter environment is likely to cause significant stress and it will be difficult or impossible to meet the animals' welfare needs ^(glossary 4). Feral cats over the socialisation period should not be kept captive except for veterinary treatment, up to 48 hours maximum. For chronic conditions, euthanasia should be considered.</p> <p>Relocation of cats to another site should only be considered as an absolute last resort when all other options to enable the cats to stay in their original site are exhausted and the cats are no longer safe to remain where they are. The organisation should take into account the availability of shelter, available territory, food and water at the proposed site, weather conditions at time of release, landowner's permission and relevant wildlife legislation.</p> <p>Organisations in Scotland should refer to Nature Scotland regarding the release of feral cats: https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/licensing/species-licensing-z-guide/wildcats-and-licensing</p>
51	Cat / Dog	<p>Each member organisation shall nominate one or more veterinary practices or veterinary surgeons who can advise on the health of animals entering and resident within the organisation</p>	<p>For foster networks spanning a wider area, veterinary practices local to the individuals in the foster network will need to be appointed.</p>

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
52	Cat / Dog	<p>All veterinary products shall be stored, used and disposed of as required by the product datasheet and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) legislation, or relevant local legislation.</p> <p>If an organisation has a veterinary clinic on site where drugs are stored before being prescribed, the clinic must be legally registered as a Registered Practice Premises with the RCVS.</p> <p>Unnecessary access to medicines should be prevented by storing medicines in a lockable location.</p>	<p>Fosterers should ensure that they follow all safety guidelines with regards to storage and disposal of any veterinary products in their home environments – particularly where there are vulnerable members of the household. They should have COSHH data sheet for any medication they have in the home</p>

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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
52	Dog	<p>With regard to transportation of dogs, steps shall be taken to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dogs are suitably restrained (using a seat belt harness, dog cage or dog guard) • Cages are of adequate size, designed to provide good ventilation and firmly secured, out of direct sunlight and away from heating vents. The dog must be able to stand, move around and lie down with a form of absorbent material in the carrier to prevent urine/faeces/vomit soaking the animal • Not transported when the temperature poses risk to the animal. • On long journeys dogs shall be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - offered food at regular intervals of not more than 8 hours and given water at intervals of not more than 4 hours or as frequently as individual needs require - given the opportunity to relieve themselves • Not left unattended in vehicles for unreasonable periods • Not left in a vehicle where the temperature may pose a risk. No dogs should be moved in a red level heatwave, even with the presence of air-conditioning. • Journeys over 6 hours should not be undertaken unless by exception. A 1 hour stop to enable toileting and water should be taken. After this a further 6 more hours with an 11-hour rest period before transport can commence again for a maximum of 2 days. • The dog should be assessed as fit to travel for over 6 hours with a vet check being undertaken before the decision to make the journey. Pregnant bitches should not be transported unless for veterinary purposes/advice or to move them to accommodation better suited for their welfare. 	<p>The use of a dog cage is recommended and care taken to avoid escape.</p> <p>The EU Regulation on welfare of animals during transport applies to the transport of all live vertebrate animals for the purposes of economic activity (i.e. a business or trade) and is implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 and by parallel legislation in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland transporters must comply with the Guidelines on animal welfare (non-farming) during transport. Some organisations may be required to obtain vehicle authorisation or training and certificates of competence under the relevant Orders but others may not – local enquiries should therefore be made. All dogs and cats transported from the Republic of Ireland to the UK, including those transiting Northern Ireland, are regarded as a “commercial movement” and must comply with the requirements of Balai Directive (92/65/EEC).</p>

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54	Cat	<p>With regard to transportation of cats, steps shall be taken to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carriers are of adequate size, designed to provide good ventilation and firmly secured, out of direct sunlight and away from heating vents. The cat must be able to stand, move around and lie down • Not transported when the temperature poses risk to the animal. • On long journeys cats shall be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - offered food at regular intervals of not more than 8 hours and given water at intervals of not more than 4 hours or as frequently as individual needs require. - Provided with a litter tray, or absorbent material included • Not left unattended in vehicles for unreasonable periods • Not left in a vehicle where the temperature may pose a risk. No dogs should be moved in a red level heatwave, even with the presence of air-conditioning. • Journeys over 6 hours should not be undertaken unless by exception. A 1 hour stop to enable toileting and water should be taken. After this a further 6 more hours with an 11-hour rest period before transport can commence again for a maximum of 2 days. • The cat should be assessed as fit to travel for over 6 hours with a vet check being undertaken before the decision to make the journey. Pregnant queens in their last trimester of pregnancy should not be transported unless for veterinary purposes or to move them to accommodation better suited for their welfare • Cats should always be transported singly, unless it is a mother and her kittens or a litter of kittens under 12 weeks. These journeys should be minimal to allow for additional food and toileting. • Litters of kittens aged less than eight weeks should be transported together. The transport of unweaned litters should only be undertaken when essential for welfare reasons and then must be transported with the mother. • Cats should have their view protected from other cats, e.g. a cover provided. • Additional vigilance should be given to cleanliness and risk of infection when transporting feral ^(glossary 9) cats • All vehicles and equipment must be regularly cleaned and disinfected. 	<p>Generally there should be one cat per carrier except for a litter of kittens. Ideally a queen and her kittens less than 8 weeks of age should be transported carefully together.</p> <p>The EU Regulation on welfare of animals during transport applies to the transport of all live vertebrate animals for the purposes of economic activity (i.e. a business or trade) and is implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 and by parallel legislation in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland transporters must comply with the Guidelines on animal welfare (non-farming) during transport. Some organisations may be required to obtain vehicle authorisation or training and certificates of competence under the relevant Orders but others may not – local enquiries should therefore be made. All dogs and cats transported from the Republic of Ireland to the UK, including those transiting Northern Ireland, are regarded as a “commercial movement” and must comply with the requirements of Balai Directive (92/65/EEC).</p>
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Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
55	Cat / Dog	Each organisation shall be able to seek the assistance of a suitably trained and experienced individual (internally or externally) who can evaluate and recommend appropriate positive behavioural modification programmes for dogs and cats that exhibit unwanted behaviour or rehabilitation requirements.	<p>The individual can be an employee, a volunteer or an external consultant. They should either hold a recognised qualification (glossary 5) in training and behaviour, or be able to demonstrate through recommendation that they have sufficient experience and knowledge to provide advice and can demonstrate ongoing professional development. All behaviour modification programmes should be based on positive reinforcement and tailored to the individual requirements of the animal.</p> <p>Suitable training and experience could be evidenced through full assessed membership of a Practitioner Organisation which is itself a member of the Animal Behaviour and Training Council. The ABTC website lists accredited practitioners (animal trainers through to veterinary behaviourists) https://abtc.org.uk/</p>
56	Cat / Dog	All training and behaviour modification shall be done through positive reinforcement methods without the use of coercive or punitive techniques and/or equipment	This precludes the use of intimidation, physical punishment and fear as well as the use of any equipment that may cause pain and fear which will compromise the welfare of the animal.
57	Cat / Dog	The characteristics of each particular animal shall be assessed in order to identify the most suitable type of home. When matching an animal to an adopter, consideration shall be given the animal's health and meeting its welfare and behavioural needs	A number of factors should be considered including: the temperament of the animal; its age; how it reacts with people and other animals; how it reacts to physical contact and grooming; the location of the home available; exercise opportunities and the experience of the potential adopter
58	Dog	Particular care shall be taken when considering rehoming a dog in a new home with young children	Before such an arrangement is agreed the rehoming organisation should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog has the temperament required to live safely with young children and that members of the family understand how to interact safely with the dog. However, members are encouraged to consider rehoming suitable pets with families where possible
59	Cat / Dog	Where the animals are kept in animal housing units by foster carers these units shall meet the housing conditions specified in Annex 1a for dogs and/or 1b for cats.	

Procedure and additional guidance for external assessments of foster-based rescues, and other rescues using fosterers

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
60	Cat / Dog	Each home which is used to provide foster care shall be visited in person or virtually (glossary 7), assessed and approved by a suitably knowledgeable member of the organisation's staff or volunteers, or another ADCH member, before it is used for fostering animals. This assessment needs to ensure home environment, including other residents, is suitable and foster carer is competent (glossary 3) and capable of meeting the animals' needs and required standards. The organisation must be able to stipulate any needs for follow up visits.	Members should risk assess whether a virtual (glossary 7) assessment is sufficient, but if there are concerns a physical assessment should be made.
60	Cat / Dog	An assessment shall be made, steps in place to avoid the risk of overcrowding and hoarding and agreement reached with the foster carer	
61	Dog	For dogs, an assessment shall be made, and steps in place to avoid the risk of over-crowding and hoarding and agreement reached with the foster carer. The foster home should provide a suitable environment based on each dog's assessment and individual needs and should take into consideration the dog's ability to cope with other animals in the home (owned and fostered). Any resident or foster animals' welfare should also be taken into consideration.	In the UK no dog registered under Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 can be fostered in domestic premises. Knowingly keeping a banned breed may be illegal.
62	Cat	For cats, an assessment shall be made, and steps in place to avoid the risk of over-crowding and hoarding both owned and foster cats, and agreement reached with the foster carer. Extreme care shall be taken when fostering cats together from the same household, as close confinement with each other may be stressful. Cats from different sources shall not be mixed. Cats shall also not be mixed with resident cats, or other foster cats.	If indoors, there should be a room to which the cat is confined, which should be easily cleanable, e.g. if the cat had ringworm and had free access to a whole house with soft furnishings, this could be quite problematic. The only allowed exception is for orphan kittens and lactating queens, when socialising as an important part of their welfare and development. A vet must be consulted to consider the benefits and disadvantages in each particular case.
63	Dog	Dogs shall not be fostered in homes where they are likely to be left on their own long enough for them to become distressed	The time any dog can be left shall be appropriate for the age and breed of dog, and appropriate for the individual dog's welfare needs (glossary 4)
64	Dog	Assurances shall be given that the foster homes will make arrangements for dogs to be given exercise sufficient for the size and breed of the dog and to meet its welfare needs (glossary 4).	

Procedure and additional guidance for external assessments of foster-based rescues, and other rescues using fosterers

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
65	Dog	<p>The organisation shall have all cats neutered, unless this is against veterinary advice ^(glossary 6). Where deemed appropriate but it has not been possible to neuter before it has been rehomed, a system for ensuring the animal is neutered shall be put in place.</p> <p>For dogs routine neutering should be assessed on a case by case basis which includes physical factors such as breed, size and age, along with behavioural health of the dog. Where it has not been possible to neuter before rehoming, or it is recommended to delay neutering, a system for ensuring the animal is neutered at a later date shall be put in place, unless this is against a veterinary or competent ^(glossary 3) Behaviourist's advice.</p>	<p>This could be an arrangement for the animal to be returned to the organisation for the procedure to be undertaken or for an arrangement made with a veterinary surgeon. If a voucher is issued for the procedure to be undertaken by a local veterinary surgeon, it is important that a robust follow-up system is in place.</p>
66	Cat	<p>Healthy kittens shall be neutered before they become sexually mature (by 4 months) where the organisation has access to a vet carrying these out, and shall be neutered before they are rehomed wherever possible.</p>	<p>Members shall make every effort to locate and use a vet who will provide neutering before 4 months. To ensure they understand the benefits of carrying this out, it may be helpful to share the information at www.cat-kind.org.uk</p>
67	Cat / Dog	<p>Any decision to euthanise an animal shall be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the individual animal. In most cases, except for feral ^(glossary 9) cats, this decision shall only be made after rehabilitation has been explored and a full and thorough examination carried out to determine the facts surrounding each individual case.</p>	<p>However, no decision to euthanise an animal should be taken without serious consideration and only if it is judged to be absolutely necessary. Before a decision is made to euthanise an animal a consultation should take place with the individual or individuals who have full knowledge of the animal concerned. This will include the fosterer who has been caring for them, and the vet that has been caring for the animal. A fosterer cannot make this decision independently as ultimately it must be the decision of the charity not the fosterer. If a Charity deems the animal in need of euthanise on quality of life grounds the fosterer should not be able to "adopt" it to save its life.</p>

Procedure and additional guidance for external assessments of foster-based rescues, and other rescues using fosterers

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
68	Cat / Dog	The key factors in deciding whether euthanasia shall be considered are as follows: (a) To prevent pain or suffering (including mental and emotional). (b) If an animal poses an unacceptable risk to people or to other animals. (c) If quality of life for the animal is compromised to an unacceptable degree, with no realistic prospect of improvement. (d) Any other good reason under organisation's operational procedures (e.g. space and resources) and/or its euthanasia policy	
69	Cat / Dog	Euthanasia shall only be carried out by or under the direction of a veterinary surgeon using an approved humane method and, where appropriate, using pre-euthanasia sedation	Intravenous injection is the recommended method.
70	Cat / Dog	Each member organisation shall have a written policy on euthanasia	
71	Cat / Dog	Information about the prospective new owner/keeper and their family shall be obtained to ensure their circumstances and facilities fit the requirements of the particular animal they wish to rehome. Proof of address shall always be obtained	It is good practice to interview the prospective new keeper and complete a rehoming application form which should request information about previous experience of animal ownership, the lifestyle of the family and the facilities which would be on offer at the new home.

Procedure and additional guidance for external assessments of foster-based rescues, and other rescues using fosterers

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
72	Cat / Dog	Prospective adopters and any dogs they have shall meet the dog they are considering adopting. Cats shall also meet their prospective adopters	<p>This meeting should be under supervision of the organisation's staff or volunteers. The prospective new owners should be offered the opportunity to interact with the animal. This could include taking the dog for a short walk.</p> <p>Visits to the prospective new home are not always necessary but they may be required if the animal has specific needs or at the rescue's discretion.</p> <p>Animals should not normally be given to a new owner or keeper without that new owner or keeper making a financial contribution to the organisation. The size of the financial contribution should be sufficient to deter the "impulse buyer". Caring for a dog or a cat is a long-term financial commitment and the organisation would be correct to have concern where a prospective new owner states that they are unable to make a financial contribution.</p> <p>The health certificate, if given, is complementary rather than an alternative, to the veterinary examination</p>
73	Cat / Dog	<p>The prospective new owner shall be given specific advice and relevant details about their particular new pet covering its future care, diet, behavioural and welfare needs (glossary 4), veterinary history (physical and mental health) and ongoing requirements.</p> <p>All animals must be assessed as fit to home, either as part of their health check they should have on admission to the organisation, or following any treatment that delays rehoming. If the health check shows any other medical issues, these must be communicated to the prospective owner.</p> <p>Where an animal is to be rehomed with an ongoing health issue, then this should be made clear to the new owner and discussion with a suitably qualified person (staff, volunteer or the organisation's vet), should take place prior to adoption about the implications.</p>	<p>Insurers will have specific rules about pre-existing conditions, which may require a vet check to diagnose. Members should ensure that they are not in breach of these conditions when providing insurance cover, or limiting the availability of insurance for the new owners.</p>

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
74	Cat / Dog	<p>On being adopted by their new owner, every animal shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have been vaccinated and treated for parasites (see disease control and vaccination above). Where it has not been possible to complete the second part of the vaccination course, a system should be put in place with the new owner to ensure this is carried out by them Have a matt free coat and be groomed if appropriate for the breed. A transitional feeding schedule should be provided, if required. Have been fully examined before departure, if not by a veterinary surgeon then by a suitably skilled and competent ^(glossary 3) person. Have a record of the animal's health, breed (if applicable), believed age, and vaccinations which shall be given to the new owner. Any previous or ongoing health issues shall always be disclosed to the new owner, as in Standard 72. A supply of any required medication and relevant data sheet should be given to the new owners with a written record of their health record. Any appropriate equipment and accessories being supplied with an animal must be suitable for the animal. Staff or volunteers must explain how to use it 	<p>Copies of manufacturer instructions could be provided with any provided equipment. Also see standard 56 on training</p>
75	Cat / Dog	<p>A suitably trained ^(glossary 3) person should provide details to the new owners of the type of animal, and specific individual, that they wish to adopt. It shall be made clear to the new owner that they are welcome to contact the organisation if they wish advice or information on any issue with their new pet. The organisation should assist in returning any animal at the request of the new owner, either directly back into the original organisation, or by arrangement with another organisation where capacity prevents a return to the original organisation.</p>	

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
76	Cat / Dog	The organisation shall keep records for all animals for which it is responsible in line with its own policy (and a minimum three years in Scotland) including a description of all animals received into the establishment, noting date of arrival and departure, believed age , vet history, behavioural assessments, the name and address of the new owner/keeper and a record of what details the organisation passed onto the new owner. The organisation shall ensure new keepers' details are recorded on the microchip database. It is acceptable for details of the organisation to be recorded as well where the database allows for this	
77	Cat / Dog	Personal data should be held in accordance with GDPR and the organisation's own data protection and retention policies.	The organisation should be able to evidence that they follow their data protection and retention policies https://www.gov.uk/data-protection
78	Cat / Dog	The organisation should have written procedures, followed by all who are responsible for animal care and available to all staff and volunteers , for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding • Cleaning • Transportation • Prevention and control of disease spread • Animal monitoring • Death of an animal • Escape of an animal (on and off premises) • In an emergency 	If animals are kept in premises: <p>(a) a written emergency plan must be in place, known and available to everyone on the premises, and</p> <p>(b) such a plan must be followed where necessary to ensure appropriate steps are taken to protect all animals on the premises (without risking human life) in case of fire, flooding, breakdowns of essential heating, ventilation and aeration or filtration systems or other emergencies.</p> <p>(c) The site should be lockable</p> <p>Any such emergency plan must include details of the emergency measures to be taken for the extrication of the animals should the premises become uninhabitable and an emergency telephone list that includes the fire service and police. The emergency plan includes emergency drills, testing emergency equipment and ensuring that staff know how to use it, electrical safety and testing, back up facilities and accommodation and extremes of weather and temperature.</p>

Procedure and additional guidance for external assessments of foster-based rescues, and other rescues using fosterers

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
79	Cat / Dog	Where members of the public can view or come into contact with animals, suitable measures must be taken for the safety and welfare of the animals including staff supervision, signage and locked doors.	If animals are on public display, signs must be displayed on enclosures to deter members of the public from, for example, tapping on glass or poking fingers into cages. Clear signage must be in place at all times outlining health and safety risk to customers and appropriate behaviour around animals on the premises relevant to the specific species. In addition to signs, other measures may be required, such as limiting access to some animal enclosures. Organisations must ensure that no animal is accessed or handled by the public without supervision or direction of a suitable staff member or volunteer with knowledge of the animal. The animal must be able to decide not to be handled. Signs should inform the public that they should not enter an enclosure or handle an animal without first speaking to a member of staff or volunteer. Hand washing facilities are to be available for the public handling animals.
80	Cat / Dog	Where organisations use third party facilities (such as commercial boarding) to routinely (glossary 8) house their animals, they must physically inspect the premises. This must occur prior to the agreement, when self-assessments are requested by ADCH and at any other time they see fit. A formal record of the inspection must be kept. A formal agreement must be held on the care provision given by the premises' staff, and staff and volunteers from the organisation. Premises must be licenced with the local authority. Including the accommodation used by the rescue, if eligible. Units housing rescue or private boarding animals must be separated by a solid door or in a different building. Extra precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of disease. Copies of the organisation's own procedures and ADCH Minimum Welfare and Operational Standards must be provided to the boarding establishment.	Further welfare visits should take place more frequently, depending on the number and need of animals under the organisations legal responsibility. The organisation must be able to raise any concerns about the care of their animals, or the facilities, with a named individual (such as the owner or manager) at the premises.
A15	Dog	Where raised beds are provided, they shall be appropriate to the age of the dog regards size and height, and materials used shall not be toxic to dogs	

Procedure and additional guidance for external assessments of foster-based rescues, and other rescues using fosterers

Standard	Species	Standard	Guidance
A15	Dog	The type of bedding used shall be safe, soft and easily cleaned or disposed of after use.	
A16	Dog	Crating shall not be used to house dogs permanently and shall not be used as a long-term alternative to providing suitable kennel accommodation.	Crating can be useful to aid recovery following an injury or operation, during transportation or for habituating puppies at an appropriate stage of growth and development to be left alone.
A17	Dog	Crates shall be large enough to allow the dog to stand, turn around normally while standing up, sit erect and lie down in a natural position. The dog shall have regular opportunities to toilet and shall not be left inside so long that he or she becomes distressed, or generally for more than four hours at a time.	
B9	Cat	Cats need separate sleeping accommodation which provide somewhere for the cats to hide. All cats shall be provided with a bedding area or bench, large and suitable enough to allow the animal to lie comfortably	The foster environment should be no smaller than a cat pen (e.g. 2.5 m ² for single cats; 3.3 m ² for two cats and 4.5 m ² for up to 4 cats) and have a sleeping area included within this.
B10	Cat	Shelves or raised areas shall be provided to allow cats to rest high up	The height of cat sleeping areas should be between 75cm and 1.5m. The raised areas should be easily accessible and ramps or steps may need to be used for elderly, ill, very young or disabled cats.
B15	Cat	Suitable bedding shall be provided which allows the animal to be comfortable and which is capable of being easily and adequately cleaned and disinfected. Bedding shall be sited out of draughts and shall be checked daily and maintained in a clean, parasite free and dry condition	
B16	Cat	A cat shall have space for safe play and exercise	The foster environment should be no smaller than a cat pen (e.g. 2.5 m ² for single cats; 3.3 m ² for two cats and 4.5 m ² for up to 4 cats). This should include a place to sleep, and shelves or raised areas should be provided and steps or a ramp should be provided to allow easy and safe access for elderly, ill, very young or disabled cats.
B17	Cat	Cats shall be provided with a place to hide which shall be large enough to provide concealment	Suitable structures include cardboard boxes or igloo type beds. Even a curtain, blanket or towel can be used if it can be used to shield the cat. In foster environments where multiple, bonded cats from the same household are present, there should be a separate hiding place for each cat