



A strong voice for vets

The **British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA)**, which exists to promote excellence in small animal practice through education and science and is the largest specialist division of BVA representing over 10,000 members.

The **British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA)** is the national representative body for the veterinary nursing profession and exists

6. As a One Health<sup>14</sup> focussed profession, we also recognise there are concerns regarding the use of fireworks on human and environmental health, including preventable injuries<sup>15</sup>, negative impact on those suffering from respiratory disease, potential distress from loud noise levels for those with noise sensitivity, and air pollution/emissions. <sup>16</sup>
7. We consider that current controls on the use, sale and purchase of fireworks, as well as controls to mitigate noise levels, do not go far enough to adequately safeguard the health and welfare of animals in the UK. We are calling for:

Tighter restrictions on the private use, sale and purchase of fireworks (including restricting the use and sale of fireworks around agreed traditional dates);  
Licensing of all public displays and organised events;  
A reduction in the noise limit of fireworks for public use in order to adequately safeguard animal health and welfare. We would support setting the maximum noise levels of fireworks intended for public use and sale to 97 dBAI at 15 meters, in line with <sup>17</sup>. Without noise reduction, even with the introduction of

---

<sup>1</sup> Broucek, Jan. (2014). Effect of Noise on Performance, Stress, and Behaviour of Animals Introduction. 47. 111-123.

<sup>2</sup> Blackwell, E., Casey, R., & Bradshaw, J. (2005). Firework Fears and Phobias in the Domestic Dog. Scientific Report for the RSPCA, University of Bristol, UK

<sup>3</sup> Shamoun-Baranes, Judy & Dokter, Adriaan & van Gasteren, Hans & Emiel van Loon, E & Leijnse, Hidde & Bouten, W. (2011). Birds flee en mass from New Year's Eve fireworks. Behavioral ecology : official journal of the International Society for Behavioral Ecology. 22. 1173-1177. 10.1093/beheco/arr102.

<sup>4</sup> Gronqvist, G., Rogers, C., & Gee, E. (2016). The Management of Horses during Fireworks in New Zealand. Animals : an open access journal from MDPI, 6(3), 20. doi:10.3390/ani6030020

<sup>5</sup> The British Horse Society. Advice on Horse and Fireworks. Available at: [https://www.bhs.org.uk/~/\\_media/bhs/files/pdf-documents/safety-leaflets/horses-and-fireworks.ashx](https://www.bhs.org.uk/~/_media/bhs/files/pdf-documents/safety-leaflets/horses-and-fireworks.ashx)

<sup>6</sup> Dale, A.R.; Walker, J.K.; Farnworth, M.J.; Morrissey, S.V.; Waran, N.K. A survey of owners' perceptions of fear of fireworks in a sample of dogs and cats in New Zealand. N. Z. Vet. J. 2010, 58, 286-291. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00480169.2010.69403?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

<sup>7</sup> Overall, K.L.; Dunham, A.E.; Frank, D. Frequency of nonspecific clinical signs in dogs with separation anxiety, thunderstorm phobia, and noise phobia, alone or in combination. J. Am. Vet. Med. Assoc. 2001, 219, 467-473. Available at: [https://www.avma.org/News/Journals/Collections/Documents/javma\\_219\\_4\\_467.pdf](https://www.avma.org/News/Journals/Collections/Documents/javma_219_4_467.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Kelly C. Ballantyne, 2018. Separation, Confinement, or Noises: What Is Scaring That Dog?, Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice, Volume 48, Issue 3, Pages 367-386, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cvsm.2017.12.005>.

<sup>9</sup> Linn Mari Storengen, Frode Lingaas, 2015. Noise sensitivity in 17 dog breeds: Prevalence, breed risk and correlation with fear in other situations, Applied Animal Behaviour Science, Volume 171, Pages 152-160, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2015.08.020>.

<sup>10</sup> Emily J. Blackwell, John W.S. Bradshaw, Rachel A. Casey, 2013. Fear responses to noises in domestic dogs: Prevalence, risk factors and co-occurrence with other fear related behaviour, Applied Animal Behaviour Science, Volume 145, Issues 1-2, 2013, Pages 15-25, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.applanim.2012.12.004>.

<sup>11</sup> Sulser, C.E. Steck, B.I & Baur, B (2008) Effects of construction noise on behaviour of and exhibit use of Snow leopards *Uncia uncia* at Basel zoo. International Zoo Yearbook, 42, pp. 199-205

<sup>12</sup> Weeks C.A. (2008) A review of welfare in cattle, sheep and pig lairages, with emphasis on stocking rates, ventilation and noise. Animal Welfare 17: 275-284

<sup>13</sup> Weeks, CA., Brown, SN., Warriss, PD., Lane, S., Heasman, L., Benson, T.. (2009) Noise levels in lairages for cattle, sheep and pigs in abattoirs in England and Wales. Veterinary Record 165, 308-314.

<sup>14</sup> One Health is the collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment. Read the BVA One Health in Action report:

[https://www.bva.co.uk/media/3145/bva\\_one\\_health\\_in\\_action\\_report\\_nov\\_2019.pdf](https://www.bva.co.uk/media/3145/bva_one_health_in_action_report_nov_2019.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Nizamoglu, M., Frew, Q., Tan, A., Band, H., Band, B., Barnes, D., El-

year experience of firework injuries treated at a uk regional burns & plastic surgery unit. Annals of burns and fire disasters, 31(1), 13-16. Available at:

other measures such as limiting days and periods of sale, there will likely continue to be a negative impact on animal welfare.

Clear labelling of fireworks at point of sale to indicate their noise level to the consumer  
risk to animal welfare and

Opportunities to work collaboratively with the relevant authorities and government departments to raise awareness of the potential negative animal health and welfare impacts of firework displays, both in terms of increasing public and event organiser awareness and helping pet owners and animal keepers prepare their animals to prevent or manage distress during firework displays.

8. Pyrotechnic devices

It is important to emphasise that the misuse of pyrotechnic devices has the potential to harm animal health and welfare, as well as public health and safety. For example, at large public or sporting events misuse of these devices can cause injury and distress to working police horses and dogs, assistance animals, and competing animals such as racehorses and greyhounds. Therefore, we would support the introduction of additional measures to tackle the illegal use of pyrotechnic devices.

## Section 1: Fireworks

*Setting the limit at 97decibels will encourage manufacturers to design and produce quieter fireworks.*

*It is important to note that the proposed noise limit of 97decibels is not based on research*

Requiring licence holders pay due regard to how their firework display may impact on companion animals, wildlife, horses and livestock in the local area, as well as how they are going to dispose of debris and remnants of fireworks.

**Question 3: Do you agree that a fee to obtain a fireworks licence in Scotland should be introduced?**

**20.** Yes. We agree that a fee to obtain a fireworks licence in Scotland should be introduced in order to cover the costs incurred to set up, run and implement continuous improvements to the licensing system.

**Question 4: Do you have any views on how much the licence fee should be?**

**21.** The licence fee should be sufficient to cover delivery and enforcement costs of the licensing system.

**Question 5: Do you agree that successful completion of an online safety course to obtain a fireworks licence in Scotland should be introduced?**

**22.** Yes.



35. Guidance for local authorities setting out how no-firework areas should be implemented, managed and reviewed should specify that due consideration must be given to potential negative impact of fireworks on animal health and welfare in the local area.

## **Part 4: Proxy purchasing offences**

**Question 16: Do you agree with the introduction of a 'proxy purchasing' offence in relation to fireworks to criminalise the supply of fireworks to young people under the age of 18?**

36.