

Title: Proposal to ban specific aversive training devices for cats and dogs in Northern Ireland.	Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)
	Date: April 2026
	Type of measure: Secondary Legislation
Lead department or agency: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA/the Department)	Stage: Initial
	Source of intervention: Domestic NI
Other departments or agencies: N/A	Contact details: Animal Welfare and Dog Control Policy Branch
	Animal Welfare and Dog Control Policy Branch DAERA Jubilee House 111 Ballykelly Road Limavady BT49 9HP
	animalwelfarepolicy@daera-ni.gov.uk

Summary Intervention and Options

What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary? (7 lines maximum) Aversive training devices such as handheld electronic shock collars, choke collars and prong collars are currently lawful in Northern Ireland, however scientific evidence demonstrates that handheld electronic collars, choke collars and prong collars present significant risks to animal welfare without providing training benefits beyond those achieved through positive reinforcement methods. These devices pose the greatest risk of intentional misuse and direct harm to animal welfare. Section nine of the Welfare of Animals Act places responsibility on the responsible person to ensure the animals welfare. Allowing continued use of electric shock collars, prong collars and chock collars is inconsistent with this, given the scientific evidence. Government intervention therefore required to prevent unnecessary suffering and align Northern Ireland with emerging welfare standards adopted in other jurisdictions.	
What are the policy objectives and the intended effects? (7 lines maximum) The objective of the policy is to improve the welfare of cats and dogs by prohibiting the use of aversive training devices that present the highest risk of harm and misuse. The intended effect is to reduce pain, stress and behavioural harm, promote reward-based training methods and strengthen owner accountability.	
What policy options have been considered, including any alternatives to regulation? Please justify preferred option (further details in Evidence Base) (10 lines maximum) The following options were considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 – Do nothing and rely on existing animal welfare legislation • Option 2 – Issue guidance discouraging aversive devices • Option 3A – Ban handheld e-collars and containment fence systems • Option 3B – Ban handheld e-collars, choke collars and prong collars (<i>preferred option</i>) • Option 4 – Comprehensive ban on all aversive devices <p>Option 3B is the preferred option as it targets devices with the highest welfare risk, aligns with emerging EU standards and maintains proportionate flexibility for responsible pet ownership.</p>	
Will the policy be reviewed? It will be reviewed	If applicable, set review date: March 2031

Cost of Preferred (or more likely) Option
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Total outlay cost for business £m	Total net cost to business per year £m	Annual cost for implementation by Regulator £m

Does Implementation go beyond minimum EU requirements?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
Is this measure likely to impact on trade and investment?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Are any of these organisations in scope?	Micro Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Small Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Large Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

The final RIA supporting legislation must be attached to the Explanatory Memorandum and published with it.

Approved by: Date:

Summary: Analysis and Evidence

Policy Option 1

Description: Do nothing and rely on existing animal welfare legislation

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT (Option 1 – Do nothing)

Costs (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy) (constant price)	Years	Average Annual (recurring) (excl. transitional) (constant price)	Total Cost (Present Value)
Low	0		0	0
High	0		0	0
Best Estimate	0		0	0

Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines

This option would result in no additional monetised costs. There are no new administrative, regulatory, or enforcement expenditures for government, councils, owners, trainers, manufacturers, or retailers.

Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines

- Continued welfare harm to animals due to the ongoing use and potential misuse of aversive training devices.
- Persistent misuse of devices where existing legislation does not sufficiently deter harmful practices.
- Reputational risk to the Department from perceived inaction, given stated policy intent and ongoing consultation activity in England, and announced regulatory proposals in the Republic of Ireland, following Wales's initial legislative change in 2010.
- Growing divergence from evolving European welfare standards, potentially undermining regional credibility and alignment with best practice.

Benefits (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy) (constant price)	Years	Average Annual (recurring) (excl. transitional) (constant price)	Total Benefit (Present Value)
Low	0		0	0
High	0		0	0
Best Estimate	0		0	0

Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines

No quantifiable benefits as no intervention occurs.

Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines

Doing nothing maintains the existing legal and operational status quo and does not address the welfare concerns.

Key Assumptions, Sensitivities, Risks Maximum 5 lines

This option assumes that existing legislation and guidance are sufficiently robust to manage welfare risks without further intervention. However, there is a high risk of increased public criticism, declining confidence in animal welfare protections and perception that the Department is failing to respond to emerging evidence of harm. The approach is highly sensitive to external scrutiny, welfare advocacy pressure, and international policy developments.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option)

Direct Impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m		
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Costs:	Benefits:	Net:		
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Cross Border Issues (Option)

How does this option compare to other UK regions and to other EU Member States (particularly Republic of Ireland) Maximum 3 lines

Other UK regions, Republic of Ireland and EU Member States are progressing towards bans or restrictions on aversive training devices. Maintaining the status quo would place Northern Ireland out of step with developing welfare standards. This option represents the least alignment with UK, ROI and EU policy

Summary: Analysis and Evidence

Policy Option 2

Description: Issue guidance discouraging aversive devices

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT (Option 2)

Costs (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring) (excl. transitional) (constant price)	Total Cost (Present Value)
	(constant price)	Years		
Low	Optional		Optional	Optional
High	Optional		Optional	Optional
Best Estimate				

Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines
No cost monetised

Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines

This option carries minimal costs, primarily low administrative expenditure required to update, publish and disseminate revised training guidance.

There may be non-monetised costs associated with the continued availability and use of aversive training devices, as guidance alone does not restrict their use. Animal welfare organisations and pet owners may experience ongoing negative welfare outcomes where harmful devices remain in use due to non-compliance with voluntary guidance.

Benefits (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring) (excl. transitional) (constant price)	Total Benefit (Present Value)
	(constant price)	Years		
Low	0		0	0
High	0		0	0
Best Estimate	0		0	0

Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines

N/A

Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines

- Increased awareness of welfare risks associated with aversive training devices.
- Promotion of best practice and humane, positive reinforcement training methods.
- Potential, though not guaranteed, behaviour change among some pet owners and trainers who choose to follow the guidance.

Key Assumptions, Sensitivities, Risks Maximum 5 lines

The option assumes that voluntary guidance will meaningfully influence behaviour. However, evidence from comparable policy areas suggests guidance without enforcement is often insufficient to change practices. The lack of enforcement powers means it may be ignored by key user groups, limiting the expected welfare impact. Overall, while low-cost, the option is unlikely to produce substantial or consistent improvements in animal welfare.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option)

Direct Impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m			
Costs:	Benefits:	Net:	

Cross Border Issues (Option)

How does this option compare to other UK regions and to other EU Member States (particularly Republic of Ireland) Maximum 3 lines

Issuing updated guidance would broadly mirror Scotland's advisory approach but fall well below the statutory direction being taken in Wales, England and the Republic of Ireland (ROI). It would not reflect the stronger regulatory moves in ROI or the EU's forthcoming restrictions. Overall, NI would remain misaligned with emerging legislative norms.

Summary: Analysis and Evidence

Policy Option 3a

Description: Ban handheld e-collars and containment fence systems

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT (Option 3a)

Costs (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring)	Total Cost
	(constant price)	Years	(excl. transitional) (constant price)	(Present Value)
Low	Optional		Optional	Optional
High	Optional		Optional	Optional
Best Estimate				
Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines				
No costs monetised				
Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines				
Non-monetised costs would include:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced access to containment systems considered by many owners, especially in large rural properties, to be safe, practical, and humane where physical fencing is costly or impractical. Potential increased risk of dogs straying, livestock worrying, or traffic incidents where alternative containment solutions are less effective. Loss of a behavioural management tool for some owners and trainers, even when used responsibly. Manufacturers and retailers would experience loss of sales due to the removal of these products from the market. Pet owners, particularly those relying on electronic containment systems, may face transition costs, including purchasing alternative fencing or training solutions. Local councils and enforcement bodies would incur ongoing enforcement costs, including monitoring, responding to reports, and potential legal action where non-compliance occurs. 				
Benefits (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring)	Total Benefit
	(constant price)	Years	(excl. transitional) (constant price)	(Present Value)
Low	Optional		Optional	Optional
High	Optional		Optional	Optional
Best Estimate				
Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines				
N/A				
Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete removal of devices associated with painful stimuli and misuse, thereby improving overall animal welfare. Clarity and simplicity in messaging, as the policy bans all electric stimulus devices rather than differentiating between types. Alignment with certain European jurisdictions, strengthening the UK's position on welfare standards. Reduction in potential misuse or inappropriate application of shock-based training tools. Encourages humane, positive reinforcement-based training, supporting better behavioural outcomes 				

Key Assumptions, Sensitivities, Risks Maximum 5 lines

The option assumes that handheld shock collars and containment systems pose comparable welfare risks, though evidence suggests misuse risk is significantly higher with handheld remote-controlled devices than with automated containment systems. There is a high risk of opposition from rural stakeholders, landowners, and farmers who rely on containment fencing to prevent straying and protect livestock. The proportionality of the ban is highly sensitive to the availability, practicality, and cost of alternative containment methods. This option is not recommended.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option)

Direct Impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m				
Costs:	Benefits:	Net:		

Cross Border Issues (Option)

How does this option compare to other UK regions and to other EU Member States (particularly Republic of Ireland) Maximum 3 lines

This option aligns most closely with Wales, the only UK jurisdiction banning both handheld devices and containment systems. However, it would go further than England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland (ROI), all of which permit containment fences. Northern Ireland would therefore match the strictest UK model but exceed ROI and EU regulatory expectations.

Summary: Analysis and Evidence

Policy Option 3b

Description: Ban handheld e-collars, choke collars and prong collars (preferred option)

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT (Option 3b)

Costs (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring) (excl. transitional) (constant price)	Total Cost (Present Value)
	(constant price)	Years		
Low	Optional		Optional	Optional
High	Optional		Optional	Optional
Best Estimate				
Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines				
No costs monetised				
Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some owners or trainers who currently rely on these devices may need to adapt their training approaches, which could involve time and effort rather than direct financial costs. Potential confusion may occur in distinguishing prohibited devices from visually similar but lawful alternatives, creating minor practical challenges for enforcement and compliance. Limited resistance may arise from specific user groups who believe these tools are necessary for certain behavioural issues. Owners and trainers may face adjustment costs as they transition to alternative training tools and methods. Manufacturers and retailers of the banned devices would experience reduced sales and potential loss of product lines. Local councils would incur enforcement-related operational costs, including investigation, monitoring, and responding to reports of non-compliance. 				
Benefits (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring) (excl. transitional) (constant price)	Total Benefit (Present Value)
	(constant price)	Years		
Low	Optional		Optional	Optional
High	Optional		Optional	Optional
Best Estimate				
Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines				
N/A				
Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant improvements in animal welfare, as the devices banned have the strongest evidence base for pain, fear, misuse, and behavioural harm. Reduction in avoidable suffering, including pain, anxiety, and injury caused by aversive collar types. Encourages humane, positive reinforcement-based training, supporting better behavioural outcomes. Helps reinforce public trust in the robustness of animal welfare protections. 				

Key Assumptions, Sensitivities, Risks Maximum 5 lines

The option assumes a clear distinction can be made between banned collars and permitted alternatives, though visual similarity between devices may pose enforcement challenges. Some opposition is expected from certain stakeholder groups who favour these devices for specific behavioural situations. The effectiveness of the ban will depend on the ability of enforcement bodies to identify and respond to breaches promptly and consistently.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option)

Direct Impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m				
Costs:	Benefits:	Net:		

Cross Border Issues (Option)

How does this option compare to other UK regions and to other EU Member States (particularly Republic of Ireland) Maximum 3 lines

This option closely aligns with the direction of travel in England and mirrors the Republic of Ireland's upcoming ban on remote-controlled shock collars while retaining containment fences. It also reflects the scope of the forthcoming EU-wide prohibition on shock, prong and choke collars. Overall, it provides the strongest policy alignment across neighbouring jurisdictions.

Summary: Analysis and Evidence

Policy Option 4

Description: Comprehensive ban on all aversive devices

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT (Option 4)

Costs (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring)	Total Cost
	(constant price)	Years		
Low	Optional		Optional	Optional
High	Optional		Optional	Optional
Best Estimate				
Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines No costs monetised				
Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of all aversive devices, including those considered lower-risk (e.g. spray collars, containment fences), may disproportionately affect responsible owners who use such devices safely and effectively. Potential increases in dog straying, livestock worrying, or safety risks where containment fences are removed without viable alternatives. Manufacturers and retailers would face significant loss of sales across multiple product categories. Pet owners, particularly those relying on containment systems, would incur costs to replace widely used tools with physical fencing or other alternatives. 				
Benefits (£m)	Total Transitional (Policy)		Average Annual (recurring)	Total Benefit
	(constant price)	Years		
Low	Optional		Optional	Optional
High	Optional		Optional	Optional
Best Estimate				
Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines N/A				
Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups' Maximum 5 lines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides maximum welfare protection, eliminating all devices that rely on discomfort, pain, or fear. Offers clear, simplified enforcement, as all aversive devices are treated consistently, reducing ambiguity for regulators and the public. May strengthen public perception of strong welfare standards and ethical training practices. 				

Key Assumptions, Sensitivities, Risks Maximum 5 lines

This option assumes that all aversive training devices carry equal risk to animal welfare, though evidence suggests that specific devices carry lower misuse risks and can deliver positive welfare outcomes when used responsibly. There is a high risk of strong stakeholder resistance, particularly from rural communities, trainers, and landowners who value containment systems. The policy is highly sensitive to perceptions of over-regulation and may face challenges in public acceptability and political deliverability.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option)

Direct Impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m		
Costs:	Benefits:	Net:

Cross Border Issues (Option)

How does this option compare to other UK regions and to other EU Member States (particularly Republic of Ireland) Maximum 3 lines

A full ban, including containment fences and spray collars, would exceed all UK, ROI and EU approaches. It would be stricter than Wales, which does not prohibit spray collars, and significantly stricter than ROI, which continues to allow containment systems. NI would therefore be the most restrictive of all jurisdictions.

Evidence Base

Problem under consideration

Aversive training devices are designed to stop or control unwanted behaviours in animals by applying unpleasant stimuli such as electric shock, physical pressure or sudden sensory triggers. Devices commonly used for this purpose include handheld remote-controlled electronic collars, choke collars and prong collars. The use of these devices is not currently prohibited in Northern Ireland, although animals remain protected by the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering. Scientific evidence indicates that such devices can cause pain, fear, stress and anxiety, and may damage the relationship between animals and their owners. There is also no substantial evidence that aversive training methods are more effective than positive, reward-based techniques. Government intervention is therefore necessary to address the welfare risks associated with these devices and to provide greater clarity on acceptable training practices.

Rationale for intervention

While the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 provides general protections against unnecessary suffering, it does not specifically regulate the use of devices designed to control behaviour through aversive stimuli. Scientific evidence indicates that specific devices, particularly handheld remote-controlled electronic collars, choke collars and prong collars, can cause pain, fear, stress and anxiety and may result in both physical and psychological harm. Risks associated with these devices include injury to the neck or trachea, increased aggression or anxiety and behavioural deterioration. These devices are also open to misuse or incorrect application, and enforcement of appropriate use can be difficult in practice. Veterinary and animal welfare organisations have called for stronger regulation. In addition, several jurisdictions are moving towards restricting or prohibiting such devices. Government intervention is therefore considered necessary to address the welfare risks associated with these devices and ensure clearer protections for companion animals.

The Department's Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs and its Cat version, already recommends positive reward-based training and discourages the use of painful or frightening methods, but this guidance is non-binding. Legislative intervention provides greater certainty for pet owners, trainers and enforcement authorities, while ensuring consistent welfare protections.

Policy objective

The primary objective is to improve the welfare of cats and dogs in Northern Ireland by addressing the risks associated with aversive training devices. This will be achieved by prohibiting the use of aversive training devices that present the highest risk of harm and misuse.

The policy seeks to:

- Reduce pain, fear, stress and injury associated with aversive devices
- Promote humane, evidence-based training methods
- Strengthen owner accountability
- Maintain a proportionate regulatory approach

Description of options considered

Option 1 – Do Nothing

This option would retain the current position, relying solely on the general protections under the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and existing non-statutory guidance. This would avoid new legislative burdens but would allow continued use and misuse of aversive devices known to harm animal welfare. It would not address stakeholder concerns or align with emerging standards.

Option 2 – Guidance Only

This option would involve issuing updated guidance discouraging the use of aversive training devices and promoting positive reinforcement methods. While low cost and non-legislative, guidance would be non-binding

and could be ignored. It would not provide enforceable protections or sufficient deterrence against harmful practices.

Option 3A – Ban handheld electronic collars and electronic containment fence systems

This option would prohibit all devices delivering electric stimuli, including remote-controlled collars and perimeter fence systems. This would simplify messaging and align with some European approaches but would remove containment systems that many owners, particularly in rural areas, view as a practical and humane solution where physical fencing is not feasible. This option was assessed as likely to generate strong opposition and was assessed as disproportionate.

Option 3B – Ban handheld electronic collars, choke collars and prong collars (Preferred Option)

This option targets the devices with the strongest evidence of welfare harm and misuse while retaining containment fence systems and spray collars, which present lower risks.

This approach:

- Focuses on greatest welfare impact
- Maintains proportionate flexibility
- Balances welfare protection with practical considerations

Option 4 – Comprehensive ban on all aversive devices

This option would prohibit all devices relying on aversive stimuli, including spray collars and containment systems.

While maximising welfare protection, it would remove tools that some owners and trainers regard as low risk when used appropriately and was assessed as disproportionate at this stage.

Monetised and non-monetised costs and benefits

Option 1 – Do Nothing

This option carries no additional financial or administrative costs. However, it results in continued welfare harm to animals, does not address misuse of aversive devices and risks reputational damage to the department. It also leads to increasing divergence from emerging UK, Republic of Ireland and EU welfare standards.

Option 2 – Guidance only

The option would involve minimal administrative costs associated with updating and distributing guidance. While it may increase awareness and encourage some voluntary behaviour change, it does not provide enforceable protections and is unlikely to deliver consistent or meaningful welfare improvements. Welfare issues would therefore be likely to persist.

Option 3A - Ban handheld e-collars and containment fence systems

This option would deliver significant welfare benefits through the removal of all electric stimulus devices. However, it introduces notable non-monetised costs, particularly for rural stakeholders who rely on containment systems as a practical alternative to physical fencing. There is a risk of unintended consequences, including increased dog straying and livestock worrying. This option is considered disproportionate given the lower misuse risk associated with containment systems.

Option 3B – Ban handheld e-collars, choke collars and prong collars

This option would deliver significant welfare benefits by targeting devices with the strongest evidence of harm and misuse. Non-monetised costs are expected to be limited and primarily relate to behavioural adjustments by owners and trainers, potential impacts on retailers and some enforcement activity. The option maintains flexibility by allowing lower-risk devices such as containment systems to remain in use, therefore reducing impacts on rural stakeholders.

Option 4 – Comprehensive ban on all aversive devices

This option provides the highest level of welfare protection. However, it introduces significant non-monetised costs, including impacts on responsible owners using lower-risk devices, increased costs for alternative containment measures and likely strong stakeholder opposition. It is considered overly restrictive and disproportionate at this stage.

Preferred Option - 3B

Based on the comparative assessment of costs and benefits set out above, Option 3B is identified as the preferred option.

This option provides the most proportionate balance between improving animal welfare and minimising adverse impacts on owners, businesses and rural stakeholders. It targets the devices with the strongest evidence of harm and misuse, while avoiding the unintended consequences associated with banning lower-risk devices such as containment systems.

Option 3B also aligns closely with the direction of travel in other UK jurisdictions and the Republic of Ireland, supporting policy coherence while maintaining flexibility for responsible pet ownership. Overall, this option is considered to provide the best balance improving animal welfare and being practical to implement.

Proportionality and level of analysis

Given the limited availability of quantitative cost data and the policy's primary focus on welfare outcomes, a qualitative proportionality approach has been adopted for this stage. Public consultation will seek further evidence on costs, benefits and practical impacts to inform any future full regulatory impact assessment.

Risks and assumptions

Key risks include:

- Resistance from some rural stakeholders, trainers and manufacturers
- Enforcement challenges where devices appear similar
- User non-compliance during transition

Key assumptions include:

- Legislative clarity will improve compliance
- Most owners will transition to humane training methods
- Welfare benefits will outweigh implementation costs

Direct costs and benefits to business

Businesses involved in the manufacture, sale and use of prohibited devices may experience reduced sales or service demand. Likewise, Dog Trainers who currently use these devices during their training may also experience loss of business. Conversely, positive training providers may experience increased demand. Further evidence will be sought through consultation.

Wider impacts

The policy is expected to:

- Strengthen Northern Ireland's animal welfare framework
- Support long-term improvements in responsible pet ownership
- Enhance public trust in welfare standards

Overall impact

The proposed policy is expected to deliver a positive overall impact by improving the welfare of cats and dogs through the prohibition of the aversive training devices most strongly associated with pain, stress and misuse. While there will be some transition costs for owners, trainers and businesses that currently rely on these devices, these impacts are expected to be limited and proportionate, with opportunities for growth in

positive-reinforcement training services. Enforcement costs are anticipated to be modest and largely integrated within existing animal welfare frameworks. The approach strengthens clarity for owners and enforcement bodies and supports responsible pet ownership. Overall, the welfare gains and improved public confidence are expected to outweigh the associated costs.

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (The Department)

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Developing regulations under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011 to introduce a ban on specific aversive training devices for companion animals in Northern Ireland.

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Development of regulations to prohibit the use of specific aversive training devices for companion animals in Northern Ireland.

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The aim of this policy is to introduce a ban on the use of specific aversive training devices, namely handheld e-collars, choke chains and prong collars in Northern Ireland. This policy will help improve animal welfare in Northern Ireland.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The proposed policy is to prohibit the use of specific aversive dog training devices, specifically remote-controlled e-collars, choke collars, and prong collars, is expected to have a range of implications for individuals residing in rural areas.

Training practices – Rural dog owners, particularly those managing working breeds for herding, or pest control, may currently rely on aversive devices for behavioural control. The policy will require a shift toward positive reinforcement-based training methods.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

This policy will promote animal welfare across all Northern Ireland, both in urban and rural areas. However, the proposed ban may affect rural communities slightly differently from urban populations due to the distinct roles dogs play and the environments in which they are kept and trained.

In rural areas, dogs can be used for working purposes, such as herding livestock, whereas in urban settings, dogs are primarily kept as companion animals. As a result, it is possible that dog owners may have relied more heavily on aversive training tools to manage working behaviours in demanding environments.

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text"/>

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

DAERA Officials have engaged with the Kennel Club to discuss the pros and cons of a potential ban, taking the needs of people in rural areas into consideration.

Development of this policy required significant desk research including research papers and analysis of policy and guidance in other jurisdictions:

- The use of shock collars and their impact on the welfare of dogs: A review of the current literature - *Emily Blackwell and Rachel Casey Department of Clinical Veterinary Science University of Bristol, 2006*
- Report on the use of handheld remote-controlled training devices (e-collars) in dog training - *Scottish Animal Welfare Commission, April 2023*
- BVA and BSAVA policy position on the use of aversive training devices in dogs and cats
- Proposal on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability – *EU Parliament*
- Welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability – *Legislative Observatory, EU Parliament*
- A review of recent evidence in relation to the welfare implications for cats and dogs arising from the use of electronic collars – *Author: Ruth Lysons, Reviewed by: Nick Coulson, 2015*

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

This policy will promote animal welfare across all Northern Ireland, both in urban and rural areas.

However, rural dog owners may have less access to resources and support, such as training facilities, qualified trainers and educational materials, than people in Urban populations. Rural communities may require additional support, training resources, and engagement to ensure a smooth and effective transition that maintains both welfare standards and working dog functionality.

The Department will seek further evidence on these needs through a public consultation, which is expected to take place in summer 2026.

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

N/A

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

This policy will promote animal welfare across all Northern Ireland, both in urban and rural areas.

However, rural dog owners may have less access to resources and support, such as training facilities, qualified trainers and educational materials, than people in Urban populations. Rural communities may require additional support, training resources, and engagement to ensure a smooth and effective transition that maintains both welfare standards and working dog functionality.

A communication approach will be developed alongside the policy to ensure that information on the proposed changes, including guidance on alternative training methods, is accessible to both rural and urban dog owners. This will include stakeholder engagement and the use of online and offline channels where appropriate.

The forthcoming public consultation will also provide an opportunity to gather views from rural stakeholders and ensure that their specific needs and circumstances are fully considered in the final policy design.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes No If the response is **NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

The development of this policy has taken account of the needs of people in rural areas, particularly in relation to the use of working dogs and access to training support.

In order to mitigate potential impacts, the policy has been designed to take a proportionate approach by targeting only those devices with the strongest evidence of welfare harm, while not extending to other devices which may be considered more practical in certain rural contexts, such as containment fences.

The Department also recognises the need to support all dog owners, including those in rural areas, in transitioning of alternative training methods. This will be supported through the provision of clear guidance and stakeholder engagement.

The public consultation will actively seek views from the rural stakeholders to identify any further mitigation measures that may be required.

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES GO TO Section 6A.**


5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

No rural needs have been identified. The Department will take account of any needs that might be identified during public consultation.

SECTION 6 – Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Colin Stewart
Position/Grade:	Staff Officer
Division/Branch	Animal Identification & Welfare Branch
Signature:	Colin Stewart
Date:	13/03/26
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Catherine Goligher
Position/Grade:	Grade 7
Division/Branch:	Animal Welfare and Dog Control Policy Branch
Signature:	
Date:	14 April 2026

Equality & Disability Duties Screening Template

December 2023 version



Screening flowchart and template (taken from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - A Guide for public authorities April 2010 (Appendix 1)).

Introduction

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues. This section also includes two questions related to the Disability Duties.

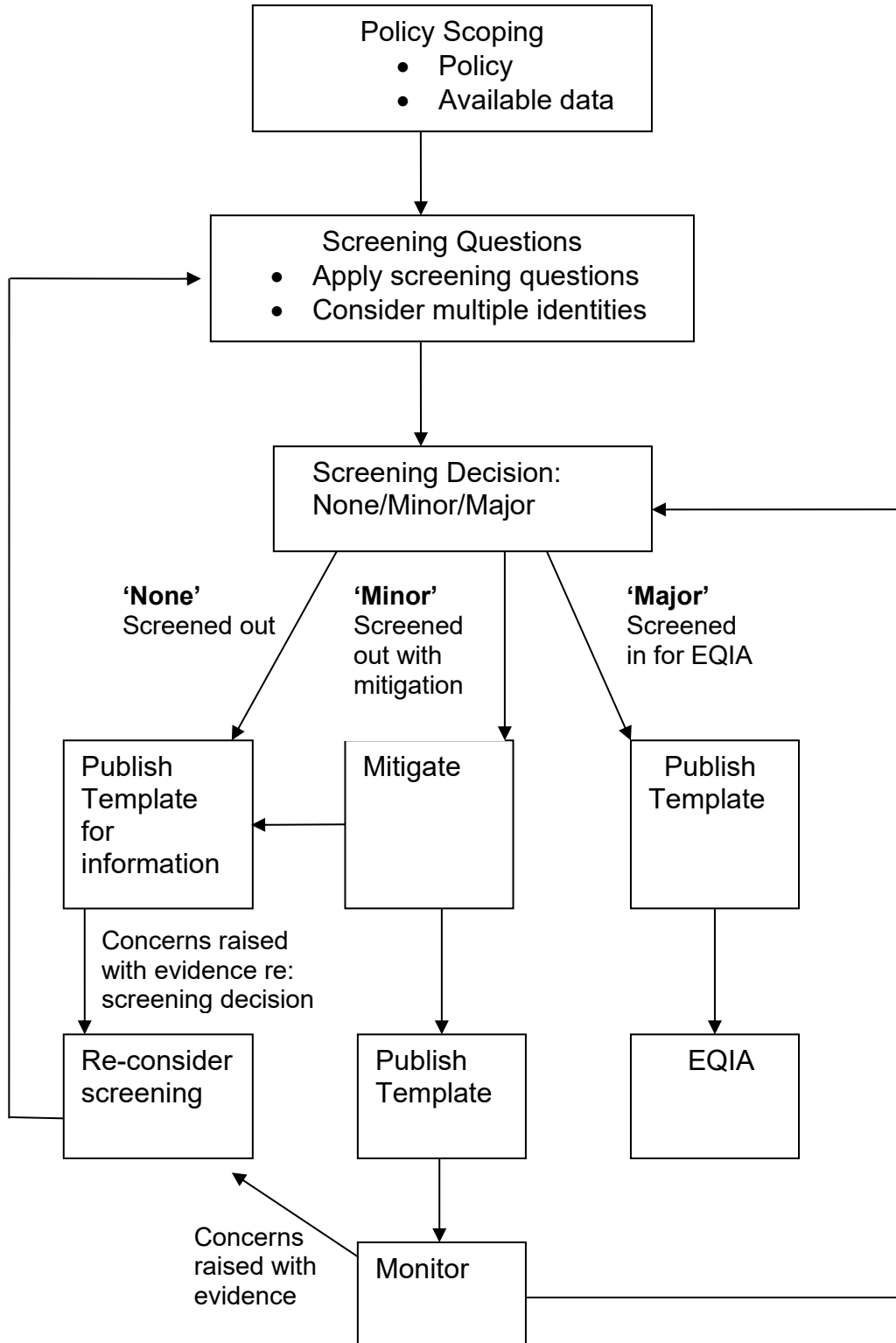
Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights – please note this is not a Human Rights Screening form but rather a prompt that impacts on Human Rights should be considered.

Part 6. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority’s approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

A screening flowchart is provided below.



Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

A proposal to introduce a ban on specific aversive training devices

Is this an existing, revised or new policy?

New policy

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

Aversive training devices are designed to use discomfort, pain or fear to train pets, on the principle of applying an unpleasant stimulus to stop or prevent unwanted behaviour. These devices have the potential to cause both physical and psychological suffering.

In Northern Ireland, the use and sale of e-collars is currently legal but subject to the general provisions of The Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which places a duty on people to ensure they take reasonable steps to meet the welfare needs of animals for which they are responsible. This includes

protecting animals from unnecessary suffering, pain and injury. Therefore, if an e-collar is used in a manner that causes pain, fear or distress to an animal, the user could be liable for prosecution under the 2011 Act.

The overall aim of this policy is to introduce a ban on the use of specific aversive training devices, namely handheld e-collars, choke chains and prong collars in Northern Ireland. This policy will help improve animal welfare in Northern Ireland.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If so, explain how.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If yes, are they (please select as appropriate)

Financial

Legislative

other, please specify:

The policy will be laid through the powers in the Animal Welfare (Northern Ireland) Act 2011. The policy is included in Minister Muirs Animal Welfare Pathway 2025-27.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please select as appropriate)

Staff

Service users

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other, please specify

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they?

N/A

Who owns them?

N/A

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Please ensure all data used is the most current and up to date available. You should verify this by contacting the Departmental Statisticians.

Religious belief evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Northern Ireland's 2021 Census shows Catholics as the largest religious group (42.31%), followed by Presbyterians (16.61%), Church of Ireland (11.55%) and Methodists (2.35%), with others identifying as other Christians (6.85%), other religions (1.34%), no religion (17.39%), or not stating a religion (1.60%).

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No religious belief was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025 received 6,512 responses, including 2% from Northern Ireland. Respondents were predominantly aged 45–74, female, White British, homeowners, and living in two-adult households; 19% included children. No data on religious belief was collected.

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to religious beliefs that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Political Opinion evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

The 2024 NI Life & Times survey shows the political outlook in Northern Ireland, with 30% identifying as unionist, 30% as nationalist, and the largest share (35%) identifying as neither, while small minorities selected another answer (2%) or said they did not know (3%).

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No political opinion was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025 received 6,512 responses, including 2% from Northern Ireland. Respondents were predominantly aged 45–74, female, White British, homeowners, and living in two-adult households; 19% included children. No data on political opinion was collected.

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to political opinion that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Racial Group evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Northern Ireland's 2021 Census shows a population of approximately 97% identifying as White, while minority ethnic groups together account for about 3% of the population; the largest of these are Indian and Chinese communities (around 0.5% each), Mixed ethnicities (0.8%), and Black ethnic groups (around 0.6%).

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No racial information was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025 received 6,512 responses, including 2% from Northern Ireland. Respondents predominantly identified as White British.

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining racial group that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Age evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Based on Northern Ireland's Census 2021, the population age profile can be summarised as follows: 25.14% of the population are aged 0–19 years, 25.28% are 20–39 years, 26.48% are 40–59 years, 18.73% are 60–79 years,

and 4.37% are aged 80 years and over, illustrating a broadly even distribution across the working-age groups with a smaller proportion in the oldest age category.

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No age group data was surveyed in the gathering of statistics. The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025 received 6,512 responses, including 2% from Northern Ireland. Respondents were predominantly aged 45–74 (64% of respondents).

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to age that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Marital Status evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Northern Ireland's Census 2021 shows that 45.59% of the population are married, while 38.07% are single (never married or never in a civil partnership); smaller proportions are divorced (6.02%), widowed or surviving a civil partner (6.36%), separated (3.78%), and in a civil partnership (0.18%).

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive

training device. No marital status data was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025¹ indicates that 6,512 people from Northern Ireland responded to its survey about dogs. The survey did not include information about marital status.

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to marital status that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Sexual Orientation evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Northern Ireland's Census 2021 shows that the vast majority of the population identify as straight or heterosexual (90.04%), while 2.09% identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or another sexual orientation, and 7.87% either preferred not to say or did not state their sexual orientation.

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No sexual orientation data was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025² indicates that 6,512 people from Northern Ireland responded to its survey about dogs. The survey did not include information about sexual orientation.

¹ [NDS 2025 State of the nation report desktop version.pdf](#)

² [NDS 2025 State of the nation report desktop version.pdf](#)

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to sexual orientation that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Men & Women generally evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Northern Ireland's Census 2021 shows that the population is almost evenly split by sex, with females accounting for 50.81% of the population and males 49.19%.

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No gender data was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025³ indicates that 6,512 people from Northern Ireland responded to its survey about dogs. The survey indicates: responses were received from participants across all four nations of the UK, 2% of whom were from Northern Ireland, broadly reflecting the UK population distribution, and the majority identified as female (80%).

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to gender that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Disability evidence/information:

³ [NDS 2025 State of the nation report desktop version.pdf](#)

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Northern Ireland's Census 2021 shows that 55.14% of households have no residents with a limiting long-term health problem or disability, while 33.63% have one resident with a limiting condition and 11.23% have two or more residents.

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No disability data was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025⁴ indicates that 6,512 people from Northern Ireland responded to its survey about dogs. The survey did not include information about sexual orientation.

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to disability that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated and potential mitigations considered and included in final policy as necessary when determining the final policy proposal.

Dependants evidence/information:

There is no evidence to suggest that the revised policy will impact negatively on people in this category.

Northern Ireland's Census 2021 shows that just over half of households (53.15%) have no children, with a further 16.17% having no dependent children, meaning around seven in ten households do not include dependent

⁴ [NDS 2025 State of the nation report desktop version.pdf](#)

children, while around 30% do; among those with dependent children, households most commonly have one or two children, and larger families are relatively rare, with around 6–7% of households having three or more dependent children.

The PDSA PAW Report 2022 surveyed 5,768 pet owners. They used the information to estimate a total of 10.2 million dogs and 11.1 million cats in the UK. The majority of owners (86%) confirmed they had made use of a training device on their dog, with 20% of dog owners admitted to using an aversive training device. No dependants data was surveyed in the gathering of statistics.

The Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey 2025⁵ indicates that 6,512 people from Northern Ireland responded to its survey about dogs. The survey indicates: responses were received from participants across all four nations of the UK, 2% of whom were from Northern Ireland, broadly reflecting the UK population distribution; most households consisted of two adults, and 19% included children.

The upcoming public consultation will allow both individuals and organisations to share their perspectives. Any matters pertaining to dependants that arise during the consultation will be thoroughly evaluated when determining the final policy proposal.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

⁵ [NDS 2025 State of the nation report desktop version.pdf](#)

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between religious belief and use of aversive training devices

Political Opinion

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between political opinion and use of aversive training devices

Racial Group

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between race and use of aversive training devices

Age

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between age and use of aversive training devices

Marital status

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between marital status and use of aversive training devices

Sexual orientation

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between sexual orientation and use of aversive training devices

Men and Women Generally

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between gender and use of aversive training devices

Disability

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between disability and use of aversive training devices

Dependants

None - There is no evidence that's shows a link between having dependants and use of aversive training devices

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- 1) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- 2) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. **What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?** Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Religious belief*:

None – All dog owners regardless of religion will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Political Opinion*:

None – All dog owners regardless of political opinion will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Racial Group*:

None – All dog owners regardless of race will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

Equality & Disability Duties – Screening Template

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on Age:

None – All dog owners regardless of age will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Marital Status*:

None – All dog owners regardless of marital status will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Sexual Orientation*:

None – All dog owners regardless of sexual orientation will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Men and Women*:

None – All dog owners regardless of gender will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Disability*:

None – All dog owners regardless of disability status will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Dependants*:

None – All dog owners regardless of having dependants or not will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Major None

(select as appropriate)

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Yes No (select as appropriate)

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of

Equality & Disability Duties – Screening Template

opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed

Equality & Disability Duties – Screening Template

reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Age - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed

Equality & Disability Duties – Screening Template

reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Disability - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed

reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Religious belief*:

None - All dog owners regardless of religious belief will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any religious group uses these devices more than any other or that it is linked to religious beliefs.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Political Opinion*:

None - All dog owners regardless of political opinion will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any political group uses these devices more than any other or that it is linked to political opinions.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Racial Group*:

None - All dog owners regardless of race will be impacted equally with a ban on specific aversive training devices as no evidence suggests any racial group uses these devices more than any other.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

***Religious Belief* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The Department has not identified any evidence to indicate such opportunities. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

***Political Opinion* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The Department has not identified any evidence to indicate such opportunities. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

The Department has not identified any evidence to indicate such opportunities. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities? If so, please detail below.

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

There is no available evidence to indicate potential impacts on people with multiple identities. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

DAERA also has legislative obligations to meet under the **Disability Discrimination Order**. Questions 5 - 6 relate to these.

Consideration of Disability Duties

- 5. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity for DAERA to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?**

The proposed policy would apply equally to all stakeholders. It is not anticipated that it will provide an opportunity to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

- 6. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?**

The proposed policy does not provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Part 3. Screening decision (Please delete as appropriate)

“Screened out” without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The policy will apply to all persons who keep companion pets, equally. An Equality and Human Rights Screening Exercise has been undertaken, which assessed evidence relating to s75 considerations, including equality of opportunity and good relations, and Disability Duties and Human Rights. The exercise has concluded that the policy would apply equally to all stakeholders.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

N/A. No mitigations or alternatives are needed. The policy will apply to all companion pet owners equally. A public consultation will however invite comments on the proposals, and on this Equality and Human Rights Screening Exercise, and responses will be monitored to further inform the position.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or

proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: [A Practical Guide to Equality Impact Assessment](#)

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If so, give the reasons to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	N/A
Social need	N/A
Effect on people’s daily lives	N/A
Relevance to a public authority’s functions	N/A
Total score	N/A

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Equality & Disability Duties – Screening Template

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If yes, please provide details.

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Section 75 places a requirement on DAERA to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity. Please note the following excerpt from The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in relation to monitoring:

A system must be established to monitor the impact of the policy in order to find out its effect on relevant groups. The results of ongoing monitoring must be reviewed on an annual basis. The public authority is required to publish the results of this monitoring. And they must be included in the public authorities' annual review on progress to the Equality Commission. The Equality Scheme must specify how and where such monitoring information will be published. It is therefore essential that monitoring is carried out in a systematic manner and that the results are widely and openly published.

If the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the public authority must ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.

Further advice on monitoring can be found at: [ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities](#)

Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy or decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

Equality:

The Department will monitor feedback through the public consultation, including any evidence relating to equality impacts and will consider and evaluate prior to finalising the policy. If, or when, legislation is introduced, the Department will monitor impacts through engagement with councils during implementation.

Good Relations:

The Department will monitor feedback through the public consultation, including any evidence relating to equality impacts and will consider and evaluate prior to finalising the policy. If, or when, legislation is introduced, the Department will monitor impacts through engagement with councils during implementation.

Disability Duties:

The Department will monitor feedback through the public consultation, including any evidence relating to equality impacts and will consider and evaluate prior to finalising the policy. If, or when, legislation is introduced, the Department will monitor impacts through engagement with councils during implementation.

Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights

- 7. The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Indicate below by deleting Yes/No as appropriate, any potential adverse impacts that the policy or decision may have in relation to human rights issues.**

See Annex A for brief synopsis on each of the Human Rights Articles & Protocols.

Right to Life	Article 2	Yes/No
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	Article 3	Yes/No
Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	Article 4	Yes/No
Right to liberty and security	Article 5	Yes/No
Right to a fair and public trial	Article 6	Yes/No
Right to no punishment without law	Article 7	Yes/No
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	Article 8	Yes/No
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Article 9	Yes/No
Right to freedom of expression	Article 10	Yes/No
Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	Article 11	Yes/No
Right to marry and to found a family	Article 12	Yes/No
The prohibition of discrimination	Article 14	Yes/No
Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	Protocol 1 Article 1	Yes/No

Equality & Disability Duties – Screening Template

Right to education	Protocol 1 Article 2	Yes/No
Right to free and secret elections	Protocol 1 Article 3	Yes/No

8. Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.

No adverse impact on human rights has been identified.

9. Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.

No ways to positively promote human rights have been identified.

Part 6 - Approval and authorisation

Before signing off this screening template please confirm that you have completed all the actions listed below.

I can confirm that all the actions listed below have been completed -

- I have explained any technical issues in plain English (easily understood by a 12 year old)
- I have used the most relevant, current & up to date data available
- I have added evidence and explained my assessments in full
- I have provided a brief note to justify my decision to 'Screen In' or 'Screen Out'
- A copy of this screening template and the final decision has been sent to the Equality Unit for their consideration before it has been forwarded for sign-off

Screening assessment completed by (Staff Officer level or above) -

Name: Chris Wade

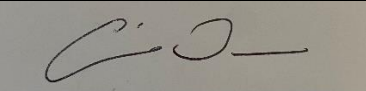
Grade: DP

Branch: Animal Welfare and Dog

Date: 12 March 2026

Control Policy Branch

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature.

A rectangular box containing a scanned image of a signature in black ink on a light grey background.

Screening decision approved by (must be Grade 3/Deputy Secretary or above) -

Name: Brian Dooher

Grade: 3

Branch: VSAHG

Date: 16/4/26

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature.

A rectangular box containing a scanned image of a signature in blue ink.

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

Please save the final signed version of the completed screening form in the CM container (AE2-19-11940) below as soon as possible after completion and forward the CM link to Equality Branch at equality@daera-ni.gov.uk. The screening template must be saved to the container in **HTML format** (not PDF) in order to comply with accessibility requirements. The screening form will be placed on the DAERA website and a link provided to the Department's Section 75 consultees.



Strategic
Management DAERA

For more information about equality screening, contact:

DAERA Equality Unit

Capacity, Capability, Equality & Diversity Branch

Jubilee House

111 Ballykelly Road

LIMAVADY

BT49 9HP

Email: equality@daera-ni.gov.uk

Tel: 028 7744 2027

Annex A

Synopsis of Human Rights Act Articles & Protocols

ARTICLE 2

Right to life

1. Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.
2. Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this Article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:
 - a. In defense of any person from unlawful violence;
 - b. In order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;
 - c. In action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

ARTICLE 3

Prohibition of torture

No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 4

Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.
3. For the purpose of this Article the term “forced or compulsory labour” shall not include:
 - a. Any work required to be done in the ordinary course of detention imposed according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Convention or during conditional release from such detention;
 - b. Any service of a military character or, in case of conscientious objectors in countries where they are recognised, service exacted instead of compulsory military service;
 - c. Any service exacted in case of an emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
 - d. Any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations.

ARTICLE 5

Right to liberty and security

1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law:
 - a. The lawful detention of a person after conviction by a competent court;
 - b. The lawful arrest or detention of a person for non-compliance with the lawful order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation prescribed by law;
 - c. the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority on reasonable

- suspicion of having committed an offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent his committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;
- d. the detention of a minor by lawful order for the purpose of educational supervision or his lawful detention for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority;
 - e. The lawful detention of persons for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, of persons of unsound mind, alcoholics or drug addicts or vagrants;
 - f. The lawful arrest or detention of a person to prevent his effecting an unauthorised entry into the country or of a person against whom action is being taken with a view to deportation or extradition.
2. Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him.
 3. Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1(c) of this Article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. Release may be conditioned by guarantees to appear for trial.
 4. Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.
 5. Everyone who has been the victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this Article shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

ARTICLE 6

Right to a fair trial

1. In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgment shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.
2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.
3. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
 - a. To be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
 - b. To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense;
 - c. To defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;
 - d. To examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
 - e. To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.

ARTICLE 7

No punishment without law

1. No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the criminal offence was committed.
2. This Article shall not prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according to the general principles of law recognised by civilised nations.

ARTICLE 8

Right to respect for private and family life

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 9

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 10

Freedom of expression

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

ARTICLE 11

Freedom of assembly and association

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This Article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.

ARTICLE 12

Right to marry

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

ARTICLE 14

Prohibition of discrimination

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 1

Protection of property

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.

The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 2

Right to education

No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 3

Right to free elections

The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature.

For further information:

Equality Unit,
Equality & Diversity Branch
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
Jubilee House
111 Ballykelly Road
Ballykelly
Limavady
BT49 9HP

Tel: 028 7744 2027

Email: equality@daera-ni.gov.uk