

GRANT OF A ZOO LICENCE

DEFINITION OF LICENCE

It is unlawful to operate a zoo without first obtaining a licence from the Local Authority.

LEGISLATION/GUIDANCE

Zoo Licences are granted in accordance with the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

A zoo is an establishment where wild animals are kept for public exhibition for more than seven days in any twelve-month period, regardless of whether or not an admission fee is charged. This does not include pet shops or circuses.

PROCEDURE

Stage 1

To apply for a Zoo Licence applicants must:

- Complete the form titled 'Notice of intention to apply for a Zoo Licence' and submit it to the Local Authority at least two months before making the application for the licence.
- Publish a notice of intention to make an application for a Zoo Licence in one local newspaper and one national newspaper.
- Display a copy of the notice on the premises.

The notice will be kept by the Local Authority and will be available for inspection by the public at any reasonable time.

Stage 2

The applicant must then supply the following to the Local Authority:

- A completed Zoo Licence application form
- Appropriate fee – see Environmental Health homepage

Stage 3

When determining the application the Local Authority will take into consideration any observations made by:

- Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
- Devon & Cornwall Fire Rescue Service
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

- National Federation of Zoological Gardens of Great Britain
- Members of the public



Stage 4

If there are objections to the application it may have to be determined by the relevant Council Committee.

The Local Authority may refuse to grant a licence if the applicant has been convicted of an offence under the:

- Zoo Licences Act 1981
- Protection of Animals Acts 1911 to 1963
- Pet Animals Act 1951
- Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963
- Riding Establishments Act 1964 and 1970
- Breeding of Dogs Act 1973



Stage 5

On successful completion of the application the Local Authority will grant a Zoo Licence for four years.

A copy of the licence must be displayed at every public entrance of the premises.



INSPECTIONS

- Secretary of State approved vets must be used to carry out periodic inspections of the premises. These vets must:
 - a) Have experience of animals kept in zoos
 - b) Be competent to inspect zoo premises from direct experience
- Not more than three inspectors appointed by the Local Authority are to visit the premises. At least one of these must be a qualified veterinary surgeon or practitioner and up to two can be nominated from the Secretary of State approved list, only one is necessary if they fulfil both of the requirements above.
- The Local Authority must give the zoo operator at least twenty-eight days notice of their intention to inspect the premises.
- In the case of an original licence (that has not previously been renewed) an inspection must be carried out in the first year of the licence and no later than six months before the end of the fourth year.
- The zoo operator will be informed of the names of the inspectors and can appeal against all or any of them.

- The zoo operator may allow three representatives to accompany the inspection team.
- The inspection team will submit a report to the Local Authority and a copy will be sent to the zoo operator within a month of its receipt.
- The Local Authority has the right to make special inspections in any circumstances, which in their opinion call for investigation. The zoo operator must be given notice of the purpose and scope of the investigation.
- A person deemed responsible by the Local Authority can carry out special inspections. If the investigation involves animal inspection, at least one inspector has to be qualified vet with experience of zoos and zoo animals.



- The Local Authority will give the licence holder at least nine months notice of the expiry date of the licence.
- The application to renew the licence should be made at least six months before the expiry of the existing licence.
- If a request is made at least six months before the licence expires the Local Authority can extend the licence without inspection for up to six years beginning at the expiry of the original licence.
- In the case of a renewed licence the inspections must be carried out in the third year and no later than six months before the end of the sixth year.



FURTHER INFORMATION

- If you have any further queries regarding this matter please contact The Licensing Team, Environmental Health, North Devon Council, Civic Centre, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 1EA, or telephone 01271 388870 or email: ehdirect@northdevon.gov.uk
- We welcome your comments on how we can improve the way we deliver our services. If you have any comments, compliments or feel you need to complain about our service delivery, please write to Mr Jeremy Mann, the Environmental Health Manager at North Devon Council, Civic Centre, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 1EA.
- Please note that the Council has a set procedure for dealing with complaints. You will be advised of the outcome of the investigation, together with what action the Council proposes to take.