

# Applying for a new Zoo Licence

## Status of this Leaflet

This is not statutory guidance and does not form any part of the *Enforcement Policy* (which is available separately). The leaflet does not replace the Act or any statutory guidance or conditions issued under it, so reference should always be made to that before submitting applications.

## What is a Zoo?

A zoo is a place where wild animals are kept and the public can visit for more than 7 days in a 12 month period. Wild animals are those that are not normally domesticated in Great Britain. It would include animals that have come from abroad and animals/birds/reptiles that are wild in this country.

## What do I do if I want to run a Zoo?

### Step One: Need to notify of your intent to apply for a zoo licence

Two months before you make a licence application a notice of intent should be published in one local and one national newspaper, at the site and sent to the local authority where it will be made available for public inspection.

It must state:

- The location of the zoo
- The kinds of animals to be kept, in taxonomic category of order
- The arrangements made for the animals' accommodation, maintenance and well being
- The approximate number and categories of staff employed or to be employed at the zoo
- The approximate number of visitors and motor vehicle accommodation is provided for
- The approximate number and position of the means of access provided or to be provided to the premises

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council can provide forms.

### Step Two: You need to formally apply for a licence

The application form can be completed online, downloaded from this website or you can contact Environmental Health on 0161 770 2244 and a copy can be sent out via the post. You will need to bring, post or email your application form to the address listed below. Once we receive your application it will be checked to ensure that it is complete.

### Proof that the required fee has been paid (see fees list)

Your licence fee can be paid, online by credit or debit card or by cheque made payable to Oldham MBC. This fee does not cover veterinary charges which will be charged at a later date.

All licence applications will be considered within 28 days of receipt by the LA of the completed application form and payment of the appropriate fee. All applicants will be contacted within that time in order to discuss the application and arrange the inspection.

### **Step Three: Determination of licence**

(a) Oldham Council shall take into account representations made by:

- Applicant
- Chief Officer of Police
- Fire Officer
- Governing Body of any national institution concerned with the operations of zoos
- Planning authority if not local authority
- Any person alleging establishment or continuance of a zoo would injuriously affect health and safety of persons living in the neighbourhood of the zoo

(b) Oldham Council will consider any reports made by an inspector who has inspected the zoo. If there has been no inspection (which might be the case for a new zoo), the authority will consult such persons as the Secretary of State nominates.

### **Step Four: The authority may approve or refuse the application**

#### **1. Approval of the licence**

If the licence is approved:

- The licence will be sent in the post.
- The licence must be publicly displayed at the entrance to the zoo.

#### **2. Refusal of the licence**

Oldham Council **shall refuse** if:

- The authority is satisfied establishment or continuance of zoo would injuriously affect the health and safety of persons living in the neighbourhood of the zoo, or seriously affect the preservation of law and order

Oldham Council **may refuse** if:

- Standards of accommodation, staffing or management are not adequate for proper care and well being of the animals
- Applicant, director/manager secretary (of a body corporate), keeper of zoo has been convicted for ill treatment of animals
- Planning permission for the zoo has not been granted the authority can refuse or defer the decision

Oldham Council will send written statement of refusal to the applicant by post.

### **Step Five: Conditions that may be attached to the licence in addition to the model conditions applied by the Secretary of State**

They **may state**:

- The precautions to be taken against escape of animals and steps to be taken in the event of any escape or unauthorised release
- The records to be kept of numbers of different animals acquisitions, births, deaths, disposals or escapes and the cause of any such death and of the health of animals
- Insurance against liability for damage caused by animals
- Any other matter that the Secretary of State may decide
- The condition shall not relate primarily to health, safety or welfare of persons working in the zoo

### **Step Six: How long will the licence last?**

- A new licence will be granted for 4 years from the date on the licence.
- If the licence is a renewal it will be 6 years from the end of existing licence.

## What inspections will be undertaken?

There are 3 types of inspection: Periodic, Special and Informal

### 1. Periodic Inspections

These are undertaken when a licence is in existence.

The authority will discuss with the operator about the inspection and give 28 days notice of the inspection.

Inspections will be undertaken:

- For a new licence. Once during the first year and the second not later than 6 months before the end of year 4
- For a renewed licence or fresh licence granted to the holder of an existing licence. Once during the third year and the second not later than 6 months before the end of year 6

### Who will carry out the inspections?

Three (3) inspectors appointed by the local authority who appear competent, including 1 vet and 2 inspectors nominated after consultation with the Secretary of State. (A zoo operator may ask for this number to be reduced.)

The zoo operator is notified of the names of the inspectors. The zoo operator can object to the local authority about any of the inspections. This objection may be upheld by the authority or the Secretary of State.

The zoo operator can have up to 3 representatives present, one of these might have to be the zoo's vet.

The inspectors will look at:

Health, welfare and safety of public and animals including measures for prevention of escape, and the records kept under any site condition.

The report will be sent to the local authority who will notify the zoo operator of any recommendations within one month. The operator will be allowed to comment on the recommendations.

### 2. Special Inspections

These may be undertaken by the local authority if it considers it necessary to do so because of:

- A periodical report
- Any representations made to local authority or on behalf of a properly constituted body concerned with any aspect of the zoo management or its animal welfare
- An informal inspection
- Any other circumstances which will call for an investigation

### Who will carry out the inspections?

The inspections will be carried out by a person or persons who appear to the local authority to be competent and who are authorised by the local authority to do so. If it relates to the health of animals it must be a vet with experience of animals kept in a zoo. The local authority must communicate to the inspector and the operator the purpose and scope of the inspection.

### 3. Informal Inspections

These are carried out once in any calendar year where **no** other inspection has been made and by an appointed person from this Council.

## Dispensations

1. A local authority can request the Secretary of State that due to the small size of the zoo or the small number of animal types kept there, to direct that the Act does not apply or that it is not necessary for periodical and special inspections to be carried out.

The Secretary of State may, after consulting such persons as he thinks fit, determine if these dispensations may be allowed.

2. The operator of the zoo may request the Secretary of State to reduce the number of inspectors for periodical inspections having regard to the size of the zoo or the small number of animals kept there.

The Secretary of State may nominate the persons to inspect the zoo, if so the operator's right to object shall not apply. This may be reviewed by the Secretary of State.

## Renewal of a licence

An application for renewal must be made not later than six months before the end of the period of the licence, accompanied by the set fee.

The local authority may:

- Extend the time period of the existing licence
- Direct the applicant to apply for a fresh licence

## Transfer of a licence

Transfer of the licence to another person is possible, subject to certain conditions.

## Enforcement

The local authority has various powers to alter or revoke a zoo licence.

## Appeal

The applicant has a right to appeal within 21 days.

## Planning Restrictions

If you do not have the correct planning permissions in order to carry out your business, you may not be granted a licence.

It is therefore suggested that you contact the Council's Planning Office should you fall within this situation to discuss your options with them. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken against you for not complying with your planning conditions.

For further information or advice please contact:

**In person or in writing:** Economy, Place and Skills Directorate  
Environmental Health & Registrars  
Chadderton Town Hall  
Middleton Road  
Chadderton  
Oldham  
OL9 6PP

**By Phone:** 0161 770 2244

**By Fax:** 0161 770 4500

**Email:** [environmentalhealth@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealth@oldham.gov.uk)