

GUIDANCE FOR EVENT ORGANISERS

WILL DOGS BE AT THE EVENTS YOU ORGANISE THIS SUMMER?

If the public are bringing dogs to event/s you are organising it is important to protect the welfare of these dogs in warmer weather.

Think about anticipated weather conditions on the day of the event, including the likely humidity, precipitation and wind. It is not possible to give definitive temperatures which put dogs at risk of heatstroke as it depends on the individual dog; some are more prone to heatstroke, like very old or young dogs, dogs with thick, heavy coats or those in fancy dress, and dogs with very short flat faces like pugs and bulldogs. Dogs with certain diseases or on some types of medication are also more at risk. All decisions regarding events in relation to dogs should be made in conjunction with a vet.

There are three key planning stages to protect the welfare of dogs at events:

1. Consider these at the event planning stage

- Have and publicise a zero tolerance policy on dogs being left in cars – make sure all staff who are working in the car park area know this.
- Have a constant supply of fresh drinking water for all dogs in multiple locations, which is checked and replenished throughout the event (ideally a bowser or similar).
- Provide ample shade; trees, ventilated gazebos for dogs. Have splash zones/paddling pools to help dogs cool down.
- How many dogs do you expect on site? Ticketing can provide more accurate numbers. Do you need to limit the number of dogs? How will you do this?
- Consider patrolling car parks and report dogs in distress left in cars to the police by calling 999.
- Provide welfare advice to event visitors and stall holders on caring for their dogs in hot weather, e.g. via local media, the show guide, social media, your website, and e-newsletters to those who have booked.
- Have a vet or vet nurse on site – make all stall holders and event staff aware of how to contact them, ideally by phone or radio, if needed.
- Make it clear to those planning on attending with dogs that, dependent on weather on the day, dogs may be prevented from attending for their own safety.

2. Week before the event

Once you have a better idea of what the weather conditions will be on the day(s) of the event, assess whether it is safe for dogs to attend. Ensure you have a process in place to allow these decisions to be made at short notice. Consider getting event cancellation insurance for if the temperature reaches a certain point making it unsafe for dogs to attend your event – speak to your event insurer.

If hot weather is likely to pose a risk to dog welfare:

- Consider preventing dogs being allowed on site if you are concerned you cannot sufficiently provide appropriate safety measures. See the guidance above.
- Advertise warnings via social media etc to ensure that visitors are aware.
- Have a zero tolerance policy to prevent owners bringing their dogs – be prepared to turn these owners away.

3. On the day of the event

If, given the temperature, you believe it is OK for dogs to be brought on site on the day you need to:

- Ensure drinking stations and splash zones are kept topped up around the site.
- Patrol car parks to ensure no dogs are being left in vehicles.
- Make sure any pools and drinking bowls are emptied overnight and refilled the following day to prevent any wildlife getting stuck in them overnight and for hygiene reasons.
- Make sure all stewards are briefed on what action to take should they come across a dog in distress – contact the onsite vet/vet nurse or, if the dog is in a vehicle, call 999.

If you are concerned for the welfare of any animal please call the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999 or the Scottish SPCA on 03000 999 999.

