

*Animal Welfare for a Better World*  
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*Updating Animal Welfare Thinking:*  
**Freedoms, Provisions, Aligned Animals Welfare Aims**  
**and Lives Worth Living**

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# Areas considered

- *Science-based* animal care began with *problem-solving*
- The '*Five Freedoms*' – strengths and weaknesses
- Updating animal welfare thinking
- The '*Five Provisions/Welfare Aims*' paradigm
- Lives '*Not Worth Living*', '*Worth Avoiding*', '*Worth Living*' and '*Good Lives*'
- **Conclusions**

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# *Science-based* animal care began with *problem solving*

- 80-100 years ago we really did not *understand*:
  - How to keep animals *alive* by meeting their *basic survival needs*
  - Nor how to keep them *healthily productive*
- Husbandry was mostly *traditional, opinion-based, subjective*
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- Huge *nutritional, environmental* and *health* problems existed
- Decades of *problem-focused* research made *huge contributions*
- Generally there were *three linked aims*:
  - *Identify* the problem
  - *Understand* the underlying body functions
  - *Manipulate* those body functions to solve the problem

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  - *Identify* the problem
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  - *Manipulate* those body functions to solve the problem
- **SURVIVAL and HEALTHY PRODUCTIVITY were the aims, NOT improved animal welfare – welfare was not considered then**
- **BUT these advances did improve welfare *incidentally***



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# The ‘*Five Freedoms*’ – strengths and weaknesses

<b>Freedoms</b>	<b>Provisions</b>
1. Freedom <i>from</i> thirst, hunger and malnutrition	By providing ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour
2. Freedom <i>from</i> discomfort and exposure	By providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. Freedom <i>from</i> pain, injury and disease	By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
4. Freedom <i>from</i> fear and distress	By ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering
5. Freedom <i>to</i> express normal behaviour	By providing sufficient space, proper facilities and the company of the animal’s own kind

# The '*Five Freedoms*' – strengths and weaknesses

## Strengths:

- A *paradigm* for considering *animal welfare and its management*
- Widely adopted since 1993/94 because it:
  - Scoped the wider dimensions of animal welfare
  - Specified areas of welfare concern
  - Identified five targets for welfare improvement – the *Freedoms*
  - Detailed practical ways to meet these targets – the *Provisions*
- **NOTE ALSO**, the *Five Freedoms* drew attention to the need to *understand, identify and minimise* negative welfare states.
- The major focus of the *last two decades* of animal welfare research
- **ALSO RECALL** the problem-solving ethos – being free of problems

# The '*Five Freedoms*' – strengths and weaknesses

## Weaknesses:

- Our current knowledge shows that the *Freedoms as stated* are *conceptually* and *biologically inaccurate* and *misleading*:
  - As *ideal or aspirational states* they are *impossible* to achieve
  - **THUS** as *principles* they are *unsound* and *illogical*
  - **AND** they do *not* provide a *convincing basis* for animal welfare assessment and management
- **ALSO**, expressed as '*freedom from*' they cannot be used to grade *AW compromise*
- The meaning of '*degrees of impaired freedom*' is *obscure* and lacks utility

# The ‘*Five Freedoms*’ – strengths and weaknesses

- **THUS**, the Freedoms are *problematic*
- **BUT**, the PROVISIONS are still *practically useful* in some ways

Domain/category	Provisions
1. Nutrition	Provide ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour
2. Environment	Provide an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. Health	Prevent or rapidly diagnose and treat injury and disease
4. Behaviour	Provide sufficient space, proper facilities and the company of the animal’s own kind
5. Mental experiences	Ensure conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

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# Updating animal welfare thinking

## How animal welfare is currently understood

- It is a *state within the animal* – it is *not* animal care
- It relates to subjective experiences [*feelings, emotions or affects*]
- Brain structure/function must be sophisticated enough to support these experiences

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- *The subjective experiences arise via brain processing of two main types of sensory inputs:*
  - Inputs that reflect the animal's internal functional state
  - Inputs from the *animal's environment* that contribute to the its perception of its external circumstances



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## Examples of *negative experiences* now include [> Five Freedoms list]:

- Internally focussed: **Breathlessness, thirst, hunger, pain, nausea, dizziness, debility, weakness and sickness**
- Externally focussed: **Anxiety, fear, panic, frustration, anger, helplessness, loneliness, boredom and depression**

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- *Sources of negative subjective experiences:*
  - **Internal physical/functional states - *disruptions or imbalances***
  - **External circumstance – *behavioural restrictions, challenge, isolation***

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  - External circumstance – *behavioural restrictions, challenge, isolation*
- *Types:*
  - *Internal focus:* Impeded breathing/breathlessness; dehydration/thirst; nutrient shortage/hunger; injury/pain; GI infection/nausea; other infections/sickness, weakness
  - *External focus:* Isolation/loneliness, depression; threat/anxiety, fear, panic; barren conditions/boredom, helplessness, frustration, anger

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  - ***Domain 3. Health: Comfort of good health & high functional capacity; vitality of physical fitness***
  - ***Domain 4. Behaviour: goal-directed exploration & foraging/hunting; affectionately bonded; maternally rewarded; excitedly playful; sexually gratified; calmness, in control; feeling safe; exercising choice***



# Updating animal welfare thinking

**How animal welfare is currently understood:**

*It is important to understand key interactions  
between negative and positive experiences*

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- *Science-based* animal care began with *problem-solving*
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- **The '*Five Provisions/Welfare Aims*' paradigm**
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# The '*Five Provisions/Welfare Aims*' paradigm

Three key issues regarding the '*Five Freedoms*':

1. The *Provisions* more influential than the '*Freedoms*' because they provide practical advice on animal welfare management
1. Most negative experiences listed in the '*Five Freedoms*' can only be minimised, NOT eliminated
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## Three steps are therefore recommended:

1. Avoid reference to the '*Five Freedoms*' to reduce misconceptions and confusion
1. Emphasise the '*Provisions*', BUT update them to give attention both to negative and positive experiences or states
1. Align each Provision with salient Animal Welfare Aims that emphasise animals' experiences that most affect their welfare'.

# The '*Five Provisions/Welfare Aims*' paradigm

Provision	Animal Welfare Aims
<i>1. Good nutrition: Provide ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour</i>	<u>Minimise</u> thirst and hunger and <u>enable</u> eating to be a pleasurable experience

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<b>4. Appropriate behaviour:</b> Provide sufficient space, proper facilities, congenial company and appropriately varied conditions	<u>Minimise</u> threats and unpleasant restrictions on behaviour and <u>promote</u> engagement in rewarding activities
<b>5. Positive mental experiences:</b> Provide safe, congenial and species-appropriate opportunities to have pleasurable experiences	<u>Promote</u> various forms of comfort, pleasure, interest, confidence and a sense of control

# The '*Five Provisions/Welfare Aims*' paradigm

Integrated elements of other Conceptual Frameworks:

1. The names of the Five Provisions parallel those of the Five Domains – 'nutrition', 'environment', 'health', 'behaviour' and 'mental state' – 1994-2015.
1. The first four names are the same as the four European Welfare Quality (WQ<sup>®</sup>) principles – 'good nutrition', 'good environment', 'good health' and 'appropriate behaviour' – 2007-2011.

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1. Both frameworks note that negative experiences and states must be minimised and ALSO that positive experiences and states must be promoted.
1. Provision No. 5 is directed at the now accepted objective of giving greater attention to the promotion of positive welfare states.

# The '*Five Provisions/Welfare Aims*' paradigm – Implications

- *Key animal care strategies:*
  - *Implement the Five Provisions in order to:*
    - *Minimise internally generated negative experiences*
    - *Minimise externally generated negative experiences AND/OR  
Replace them with positive experiences*
  - *Monitor the welfare state using well-validated functional and behavioural indicators*

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Replace them with positive experiences
  - Monitor the welfare state using well-validated functional and behavioural indicators
- **Properly train animal care staff to ensure that they possess:**
  - Good welfare-related knowledge, skills and attitudes towards animals
  - Behave empathetically and, as appropriate, bond with the animals
  - The ability to recognise when welfare problems arise
  - The ability to implement remedies when required, if necessary with advice.

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# Lives '*Not Worth Living*', '*Worth Avoiding*', '*Worth Living*' and '*Good Lives*'

Making QoL assessment is difficult:

Nevertheless, this QoL progression acknowledges that:

- Animal care should be directed at more than mere survival
- THUS, it should aim at animals thriving
- Animals can and, given the opportunity, do have positive experiences
- An overall positive balance is possible and should be promoted
- Minimum code standards should therefore be reviewed and should aim to include validated enrichments

# Lives ‘*Not Worth Living*’, ‘*Worth Avoiding*’, ‘*Worth Living*’ and ‘*Good Lives*’

Quality of Life – *the balance between negative and positive affects:*

- *Notional Quality of Life Scale*
- Green & Mellor (2011) plus FAWC (2009) and Yeates (2011)

Category	Description
A good life	<i>Balance is strongly positive: full compliance with best practice recommendations well above minimum standards</i>
A life worth living	<i>Balance is positive, but less so: full compliance with minimum standards that <u>include significant enrichments</u></i>
Point of balance	<i>Neutral positive-negative affective balance</i>
A life worth avoiding	<i>Balance is negative: can be remedied rapidly by veterinary treatment or change in husbandry practice</i>
A life not worth living	<i>Balance is strongly negative: cannot be remedied rapidly so that euthanasia is the only humane alternative</i>



# Lives '*Not Worth Living*', '*Worth Avoiding*', '*Worth Living*' and '*Good Lives*'

Questions that may assist this process [FAWC 2009; Green & Mellor 2011]:

- **Overall: What opportunities are provided for the animals' comfort, pleasure, interest, confidence and sense of being in control?**

# Lives '*Not Worth Living*', '*Worth Avoiding*', '*Worth Living*' and '*Good Lives*'

Questions that may assist this process [FAWC 2009; Green & Mellor 2011]:

- **Overall:** What opportunities are provided for the animals' comfort, pleasure, interest, confidence and sense of being in control?
- **More specifically:**
  - What provisions have been made to ensure that eating the food provided will be an enjoyable experience?
  - How will expressions of normal behaviour be encouraged and harmless wants met?

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- **More specifically:**
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  - How will expressions of normal behaviour be encouraged and harmless wants met?
  - What environmental choices will be available that will encourage exploratory and food acquisition activities which are rewarding?
  - What provisions have been made to enable social species to engage in bonding and bond affirming activities, and, as appropriate, other affiliative interactions such as maternal, paternal or group care of young, play behaviour and sexual activity?

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# Conclusions

- There is a clear need to *update the characterisation of animal welfare* to accommodate recent developments in understanding
- *Animal care needs to aim higher than mere survival via negative-to-neutral nutritional, environmental and health management*
- *Acceptable animal welfare management* should focus on **BOTH** the minimisation to negative experiences and the provision of opportunities to have positive experiences
- *Minimum code standards* should include greater provision for *validated enrichments – this is beginning to happen*
- My purpose here has been to *stimulate discussion and action*

*Thank you*