



Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Trust (NASAT)

Animal Welfare Policy

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Date Approved: 07.05.2026

Next Review Due: 07.05.2026

1. Purpose

Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Trust (NASAT) is committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of all dogs in our care. We recognise our responsibility to ensure that every dog is treated with kindness, compassion, and respect, and that their physical, emotional, and behavioural needs are always met.

This policy outlines the standards and principles NASAT follows to protect animal welfare and ensure compliance with relevant animal welfare legislation and recognised good practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All trustees, staff, volunteers, and foster carers acting on behalf of NASAT
 - All dogs in the care of NASAT, including those in foster homes, transport, veterinary care, or temporary boarding
 - All activities relating to rescue, rehabilitation, fostering, transport, assessment, and rehoming
-

3. Welfare Principles

NASAT is committed to upholding the principles of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the internationally recognised “Five Welfare Needs” of animals:

- The need for a suitable environment
- The need for a suitable diet
- The need to exhibit normal behaviour patterns

- The need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals as appropriate
- The need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury, and disease

All decisions made by NASAT will place the welfare of the dog as the primary consideration.

4. Standards of Care

4.1 Veterinary Care

All dogs entering NASAT care will receive appropriate veterinary attention as soon as reasonably practicable. This may include:

- Health assessments
- Vaccinations
- Microchipping
- Parasite treatment
- Neutering where appropriate
- Emergency or ongoing medical treatment

Dogs requiring urgent or specialist treatment will be prioritised accordingly. Accurate veterinary and medical records will be maintained for each dog.

4.2 Nutrition and Hydration

All dogs will always have access to fresh drinking water and will receive a nutritionally appropriate diet suited to their age, size, health condition, and individual needs.

4.3 Suitable Environment

NASAT will ensure dogs are kept in safe, clean, secure, and comfortable environments that protect them from distress, injury, and disease. Foster homes and temporary accommodation arrangements will be assessed to ensure they meet appropriate welfare standards.

4.4 Behaviour and Enrichment

Dogs will be given appropriate exercise, mental stimulation, social interaction, rest, and enrichment opportunities. NASAT recognises the importance of supporting positive behavioural wellbeing and using reward-based, force-free handling and training methods wherever possible.

4.5 Handling and Transport

Dogs will be transported safely and humanely. Handling must minimise stress and avoid unnecessary fear or discomfort. Under no circumstances will abusive, cruel, or punitive treatment be tolerated.

5. Assessment and Rehoming

NASAT aims to match dogs with suitable adopters based on the needs of the dog and the circumstances of the adopter.

Prior to rehoming:

- Dogs will undergo behavioural and welfare assessments where possible
- Potential adopters may be subject to checks, discussions and home assessments
- Adopters will be provided with relevant information regarding the dog's health, behaviour, and ongoing needs

NASAT reserves the right to refuse any adoption where concerns exist regarding the future welfare of the dog.

6. Safeguarding Animal Welfare Concerns

Any concerns regarding the treatment, welfare, or safety of dogs in NASAT's care must be reported immediately to the trustee team.

NASAT will investigate all welfare concerns promptly and take appropriate action where necessary, including:

- Seeking veterinary intervention
- Removing a dog from an unsuitable environment
- Suspending foster or adoption arrangements

7. Training and Responsibilities

All trustees, staff, volunteers, and foster carers are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of animal welfare always
- Follow NASAT policies and procedures
- Handle dogs safely, responsibly, and compassionately
- Raise concerns if welfare standards may be compromised

Where appropriate, NASAT will provide guidance, support, or training relating to dog welfare, behaviour, safeguarding, and handling.

8. Euthanasia

NASAT recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, euthanasia may be considered where a dog is suffering, has an untreatable medical condition, or poses a significant and unmanageable risk to welfare or public safety.

Such decisions will only be made following appropriate veterinary advice and careful consideration of the dog's quality of life and welfare needs.

9. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

NASAT will maintain appropriate welfare, veterinary, and adoption records in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR where personal data is involved.

Records relating to welfare concerns or incidents will be stored securely and only accessed by authorised individuals.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Trustees will monitor the implementation of this policy and review it annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, operational needs, or recognised animal welfare best practice.

11. Contact Information

For questions regarding this policy or to report an animal welfare concern, please contact:

Trustee Team

Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Trust

Email: nasattrusteeteam@hotmail.com