

PE1671/F

Scottish SPCA submission of 23 November 2017

Thank you for your letter dated 27 October 2017 requesting more information from the Scottish SPCA regarding the above petition lodged by Lisa Harvey and Andrea Goddard.

Whilst the Scottish SPCA has responded to many individuals regarding the use of glue traps, the Scottish SPCA has not been involved in any other formal campaigns to ban the sale and use of glue traps. The Scottish SPCA is aware of action previously taken by the group PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) but we do not know the outcome.

The Scottish SPCA would support a ban on the sale and use of glue boards entirely but if that is not possible that their use is restricted to registered pest controllers who are fully aware of the welfare implications involved and the requirement to check such traps appropriately and humanely dispatch any pest species caught.

The Scottish SPCA would like to reiterate that these traps are totally indiscriminate and will entrap anything that comes into contact with them, only powerful animals would have a realistic chance of escape.

If their sale and use is to continue, there should be a legal requirement for written guidance to be supplied at time of purchase which explains the legal way to operate, check and dispatch trapped animals.

I have provided two papers.

The first is the opinion of the BVA and the second is an opinion of the RSPCA

British Veterinary Association

https://www.bva.co.uk/uploadedFiles/Content/News_campaigns_and_policies/Policies/Ethics_and_welfare/rodent-glue-traps-policy.pdf

RSPCA paper:

The problems with Glue Traps



Glue traps, often called “glue boards”, “sticky boards” or “sticky traps” are essentially just boards or trays of plastic, wood or cardboard coated in a strong immediate-holding glue and have sadly been used to trap rodents for many years. Many people use these traps without realising **the many inherent welfare problems that come with them.**

We're opposed to the manufacture, sale and use of all glue traps because they cause unacceptable suffering and are totally indiscriminate in what they catch, often ensnaring wild animals like birds and even pets!

Glue traps may seem like an effective way to catch rodents without killing them, but **they come with very serious welfare issues and subject those animals unfortunate enough to get caught to horrific suffering.** Even the way they're designed to catch animals – by sticking their limbs to the board as they cross it – inflicts pain and distress.

Once the poor animal is stuck, they begin to struggle to free themselves, and in doing so, more and more parts of their body become trapped in the glue. In their increasing panic and desperation to escape, rats and mice have been found to tear patches of their fur out, break bones, and even gnaw their own limbs off in a bid to be free!

After only three to five hours, trapped animals have been found exhausted and covered in their own faeces and urine. **Many animals die within the first 24 hours from starvation, dehydration, exhaustion, or even suffocation** – caused by the glue blocking their nasal passages. But many continue to suffer for long after that. If the animal is found whilst still alive- they're often left for days at a time without being checked – many people may then try to kill them, perhaps by drowning or some other method that then causes further suffering. Other people may just dump the live animal and the trap in a rubbish bin, or they might not even check on the trap at all. So the animal is left to suffer even more before dying.

Glue traps and the law



Glue traps are currently legal to use for rats and mice and are openly available to everyone, although a YouGov poll carried out on behalf of the Humane Society International UK in June, 2015 found **68 percent of those questioned felt that the use of glue traps should be banned.**

A number of years ago the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) and the National Pest Technicians Association (NPTA) put together a “**Code of Practice Humane for the Use of Rodent Glue Boards**”. This listed a number of requirements including frequent trap checks, protection of non-target species, humane dispatch of captured rodents and, perhaps most importantly, that distributors should not supply these traps to persons who are not trained or competent. Despite this code however, glue traps have remained available to anyone though hardware stores, garden centres and online retailers. This lack of regulation means no one knows who’s buying these traps and what they’re using them for!

Despite the lack of any legal restriction on who can purchase these traps, any animal caught in a glue trap is considered “under the control of man” and as such becomes a ‘protected animal’ under the **Animal Welfare Act 2006**. This means that if an animal suffers unnecessarily as a result of inappropriate or poor use of the trap, or through a failure to release or kill the animal in an appropriate way, an offence may have been committed.

What are the RSPCA doing and how can I help?

For the past year, we’ve been running our “**Wild Animals and Glue Traps**” project. We agree that, as outlined in the **Code of Practice Humane for the Use of Rodent Glue Boards**, if these traps have to be used, they should only be used by, trained professionals. As part of this project, we’re asking that anyone who sees glue traps on sale to the general public to write to us at **wildlife@rspca.org.uk** with:

- **Name and address** of the store where the traps are being sold (include postcode where possible).
- The **manager or owner** of the store concerned (if known) and the address if different to above.
- The **date** you saw the traps on sale.

We'll then write to the retailer and ask them to consider stopping the sale of glue traps at their store, remove all glue traps from their stock and not to re-stocking them in the future – to prevent the problem reoccurring. The project has been very successful and many stockists have taken these traps off their shelves. Among our success stories, **we made Amazon UK aware of the sale of rodent glue traps on their site and, in line with their pre-existing policy against such traps; they then promptly had the items removed.**