

Animal Behaviour and Training Council Supports Proposed Ban on Electronic Shock Collars for Dogs

The Animal Behaviour and Training Council (ABTC) wholeheartedly supports the proposed legislation to ban the use of electronic shock collars on dogs. This ban is a crucial step towards ensuring the welfare and humane treatment of our canine companions.

Why the Ban is Crucial:

Physiological Impact: Electronic shock collars can cause physical harm to dogs, including burns, cardiac fibrillations, and long-term damage to the nervous system (Schalke et al., 2007; Schilder and van der Borg, 2004). These devices can lead to chronic pain and suffering, affecting the overall well-being of the animal.

Psychological Impact: The use of shock collars can lead to severe behavioral problems, including anxiety, fear, and aggression (Polsky, 1994; Herron et al., 2009). These negative emotional states can persist long after the use of the collar, affecting the dog's ability to learn, socialise, and bond with humans.

Ethical Considerations: The ABTC believes that training methods should be based on understanding, compassion, and positive reinforcement. The use of pain and fear to control behaviour is not only ineffective but goes against our ethical responsibility to treat animals with respect and dignity.

Alternative Methods: There are proven, humane alternatives to shock collars that are based on scientific principles of animal learning and behaviour. These methods are not only more ethical but often more effective in achieving desired behaviours (Ziv, 2017).

Fallout of Such Training Methods:

The continued use of shock collars undermines the relationship between dogs and their owners, leading to mistrust and a breakdown in communication. It also perpetuates a culture that accepts cruelty and violence as acceptable means of control.

The ABTC urges the government to pass this legislation and calls on all dog owners, trainers, behaviourists, and veterinarians to support this ban. Together, we can create a future where our pets are treated with the compassion, understanding, and respect they deserve.

For more information, please contact the Animal Behaviour and Training Council at info@abtc.org.

References:

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Promoting Excellence in Animal Behaviour and Training

Registered in 2015, the ABTC (Animal Behaviour and Training Council) is the only UK charity dedicated to ensuring that the approaches used in the field of training and behaviour optimise animal wellbeing. The council sets the standards of knowledge and practical skills needed to be an animal trainer, instructor, behaviourist and other specialist practitioner roles.

As an umbrella organisation, ABTC membership is open to all stakeholder organisations in the training and behaviour sector. Engaging with organisations focused on companion animals as well as those that work with and care for a diverse variety of other species, the ABTC has over forty member organisations.

For more information visit www.abtc.org.uk