

# The Gazette

# ABTC<sup>®</sup> ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR & TRAINING COUNCIL

A periodic round up of news and developments in the Animal Behaviour and Training sector

Welcome to the 21st edition of the ABTC Gazette! Our team of 15 trustees has been hard at work, growing the Council's profile, building membership, and enhancing our influence in the animal behaviour and training sector. As the Council continues to develop, so does the administrative workload. To keep pace, we're moving forward with plans to bring on additional paid staff to help manage essential functions alongside our secretariat duties.

A major highlight of our work is the progress towards UKAS accreditation. This milestone is an important step towards our vision of becoming the recognised regulator for the sector. We're excited to share that the first critical stage is now ready for submission and assessment—a significant moment for us all. Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to keeping you updated on this.



## CONGRESS 2024

### BVNA Congress 2024

ABTC sponsored the behaviour lectures at the annual BVNA Congress this year and the stand was there again.



It was particularly well attended by delegates who were keen to know more about the work of the Council and follow up on the lectures our trustees delivered and our contribution to the BVNA podcast. It was fantastic to hear from so many delegates and very satisfying that visitors to the stand were well acquainted with the work of ABTC.



### BIAZA Workshop

Jane Williams, Marianne Freeman and Val Harvey attended a two-day workshop with presentations, practical sessions, training demonstrations and social activities. The focus on positive reinforcement training was brilliant, along with many examples of ways to provide enrichment for a wide range of species in captivity. We heard about training and enrichment for green macaws, Przewalski's horse, capuchins, bears, giraffes, big cats, marmosets, elephants to name but few. We were fascinated by the reptile training for Komodo dragons and large pythons, and blown away by the station training for 150kg stingrays carried out in an aquarium (training in treacle) with sharks and sawfish overhead! The presentation from Jim Mackie (ZSL) covered the BIAZA Animal Behaviour and Training Working Group's activities, which was massively supportive of the ABTC and the Animal Trainer and Animal Training Instructor roles. BIAZA now has on our registers 38 Animal Trainers and 10 Animal Training Instructors across 40 BIAZA Institutions.



*'Promoting excellence in Animal Behaviour' and Training'*

Special points of interest:

- > BVNA Congress 2024
- > UKAS process
- > LIFE model presentation



### DATR Visit

The apprenticeships for Dog Trainer and Dog Training Instructor have been revised over the last couple of years, and they are now aligned with the ABTC standards. The Army (who played a big part in the revision) are now using these new apprenticeships; so Jane Williams (Trustee) went up to the Canine Training Squadron at the **Defence Animal Training Regiment** to see how it well it is progressing. The visit was very useful in forging mutually beneficial links with the Army (and MOD).

### UKAS Accreditation



The UKAS accreditation process continues and the first stage of our application is ready to be submitted for evaluation. It has been a very lengthy and detailed process which has required significant development of policies and procedures in order to make ABTC compliant with all the requirements.

The purpose behind becoming accredited is to:

- Assure the efficiency and validity of processes
- Confirm accuracy of assessments
- Demonstrate competence
- Prove impartiality
- Deliver confidence

## Membership Categories

There are a number of different categories of membership of the ABTC.

### Practitioner Organisation

Practitioner organisations are those that directly represent practitioners of animal training and behaviour therapy. Membership fee £250 annually.

### Advisory Organisation

Advisory organisations are those that are animal welfare related stakeholders but do not directly represent practitioners. Membership fee £200 annually.

### Individual

Individuals can only be members by invitation of the ABTC and they must have a particular skill or specialist knowledge that will benefit the work of the Council.

### Supporting Organisation

Supporting organisations are similar to Advisory organisations although they have a much reduced membership fee. They may take part in discussions and consultations but they do not have any voting rights. Membership fee £75 annually.

Applications are always welcome and the necessary forms can be found on the website

Individual practitioner registration fees are £15 annually.



In September ABTC trustees and Council members were treated to an online lecture by Dr Eduardo Fernandez, a senior lecturer at the School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, University of Adelaide. He presented a new framework for force-free animal training based on ethical principles, first he discussed the origins and limitations of the LIMA model. He then discussed the LIFE model, its applications, and its implications for animal training,

with a focus on the importance of identifying function for behaviour change procedures and the need for a more effective approach than punishment.

The LIFE model was first presented in his paper published in the Journal of Veterinary Behavior in January 2024.

Following the presentation trustees decided to adopt this model as a positive step forward from the LIMA model that was introduced in 2005.

A webinar on the subject can be found at <https://youtu.be/T8Or9VjknK0>



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Thank you to everyone for raising donations for Animal Behaviour and Training Council with #easyfundraising! Thank you also to those who have recently signed up. If you haven't signed up yet, it's easy and completely FREE. 7,300 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to do your everyday online shopping - at no extra cost to you!

Every donation you raise makes a difference to us so please sign up & share today.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/abtc/?>

So far very nearly **£1000** has been raised to assist our work for improved animal welfare.



## DEI update



In keeping with the ABTC policy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity our website has been updated to make it more accessible.

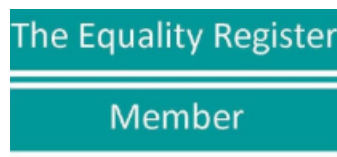
In addition to a tidying of the general appearance a number of accessibility tools are available by clicking on the DEI logo that can be found on the right of the screen. The reader is then able to change font, contrast, font size and several other functions to improve their user experience.

Did you know ABTC practitioners can also access **British Sign Language (BSL) support**? If you have a client who's a BSL user, you can access an interpreter for your virtual or in-person sessions using our service provider, Interpreters Live with Sign Solutions. See the Practitioner page for more, including how to set up a call, and pricing for BSL minute bundles. We encourage practitioners to consider advertising this support is available to the public, by including the sign language logos on your socials/ website. <https://abtc.org.uk/bsl-practitioners/>



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**BSI Membership**  
Because we're committed to  
the highest standards



## Donations

Following a recent call for additional financial support we want to thank TCBS for their generous donation.

