

The Gazette



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

Welcome to the 23rd edition of the ABTC Gazette!

This edition brings what is probably the most significant news to report since ABTC was formed 15 years ago (see the UKAS article below). The work putting together the infrastructure to support and create a formal profession out of the unorganised collection of organisations that have appeared over the last three decades continues but this achievement clearly signals real progress.

Apart from the work on UKAS accreditation the trustees are kept busy with a range of activities such as attending the regular round of conferences, training assessors, fundraising and much more, there is a constant stream of items requiring attention.



Significant milestone achieved

We have just had the news from UKAS that their review of the ABTC Assessing Organisations Certification Scheme is confirmed as compliant with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17067:2013.

This standard describes the fundamentals of certification and provides guidelines for understanding, developing, operating or maintaining certification schemes for products, processes and services.

UKAS is the National Accreditation Body for the United Kingdom. They are appointed by government, to assess and accredit organisations that provide services including certification, testing, inspection, calibration, validation and verification. ABTC is often asked why we want to achieve UKAS

accreditation and there are two reasons: Firstly it provides independent confirmation that our processes are efficient and valid, assessments are accurate and we are competent to deliver our service. Secondly it was recommended by Defra as UKAS accreditation is a prerequisite to government recognition.

Full accreditation requires further assessments by UKAS against ISO/IEC 17065 which ensures that certification bodies operate in a competent, consistent and impartial manner. The ABTC council voted overwhelmingly to continue towards full accreditation in October and the process should get under way before the end of the year.

One thing this whole process has brought into clear focus is that it is highly unlikely the level of quality management required by UKAS is going to be matched anywhere else in the animal behaviour and training sector.

Special points of interest:

- > UKAS milestone achieved
- > Shock collar debate



The shock collar debate has reopened in Scotland and ABTC are involved along with other high profile animal welfare charities and stakeholders.

Banning shock collars was a manifesto pledge of the SNP at the last election but so far it has not progressed beyond a code of practice.

In March 2023 the Scottish Animal Welfare Commission published a report that recommended they should be banned and now there is to be another consultation on the subject.



The ABTC was at the BVNA Congress in October sponsoring the behaviour lectures and providing speakers. This event has become a regular feature each year and provides a valuable point of contact with RVNs all over the country.

'Promoting excellence in Animal Behaviour' and Training'

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.

Advisory Organisation

Advisory organisations are those that are animal welfare related stakeholders but do not directly represent practitioners.

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.

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

For more information go to: <https://abtc.org.uk/organisations/>

ABTC Shop

Welcome to the ABTC shop! Show your support for ABTC with a product from the range of goods available at <https://shop.abtc.org.uk/>

"From comfortable, durable apparel to practical accessories, each item is made with ethically sourced materials, ensuring a low environmental impact while supporting ABTC's charitable aims." Fiona Cooke ABTC Chair

Every movement needs visibility. Ethical animal training and behaviour therapy is no different. By launching a dedicated shop, we're giving our practitioner and supporter community a chance to wear their values, spread awareness, and directly support our cause.



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 **£1200** has been raised to contribute to our work for improved animal welfare.

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Fees

After several years of unchanged fees we are having to bow to general financial pressures and review the table of fees quoted in this edition.

The new table of fees will be published on the website and in the next edition of the Gazette. They will reflect the true costs of running a professional regulatory body but as far as possible increases will be in line with inflation since they were last increased.

As a charity ABTC does not aim to make a profit and does take various measures to lower the impact of its costs on the members. Every pound raised through donations, our online shop or easyfundraising contributes to keeping our financial overheads as low as possible. Much of the work that goes into the running of ABTC is undertaken voluntarily, all of the trustees for instance give their time freely.

Such is the demand for some of our services some activities are carried out by paid individuals and certain fees cover these costs.



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BSI Membership

Because we're committed to the highest standards

The Equality Register
Member

Social Media

ABTC is now active on Bluesky at abtcouncil.bsky.social

Check out our feed and see our video shorts explaining what we are about.

