



## #BangOutOfOrder Toolkit



Welcome to the RSPCA #BangOutOfOrder toolkit. This toolkit is designed to provide evidence-based animal welfare-related advice to the public during firework season. This is the first year we have created this toolkit and it is our aim to build upon its contents so it continues to be a useful resource for local authorities and organisations working directly with the public, wanting to share animal welfare-related information, advice and links during the firework season.

### This kit contains for your information:

- Key facts, polling and stats to help you with local communications, should you wish to create your own.
- Suggested social media copy which can be personalised to your council area to raise awareness of the impact fireworks can have on animals.
- Video content from the RSPCA to encourage communication on fireworks between residents, suitable for distribution via the council and councillor social media channels.
- Downloadable designed cards for residents with pets to display in their windows to improve communication between residents. This will help ensure that neighbours are aware of nearby pets and animals before using fireworks. (can be printed internally and externally).
- Downloadable designed posters (can be printed internally and externally).
- Downloadable colouring sheets for children and young people.
- Suggested wording for a motion for change that can be adapted to satisfy the local need.

## Key polls, facts and stats

- Over the last five years, the RSPCA has **received over 1,621 calls about fireworks affecting animals**, not to mention the thousands of messages received via our social channels (preferred method of engagement for many) each year depicting how both animals and their owners suffer.
- The effects of **sudden loud noises on wild animals are difficult to assess**; the impacts will vary depending on the biology of each species, and physiological effects are often harder to measure than behavioural effects in animals in the wild. However, there is evidence that unpredictable loud noises do disturb wild animals both free and captive. For example, one study in the Netherlands showed that birds were disturbed by New Years Eve fireworks in three consecutive years, and thousands of birds were observed to take flight in response to the fireworks. Indeed fireworks are classed as highly disturbing to some bird species and have been associated with the abandonment of nests or even whole colonies.
- <sup>1</sup>In New Zealand, running was the most frequent response to fireworks reported, and 35% of respondents reported horses breaking through fences. 26% of respondents reported their **horses had received injuries due to fireworks**, ranging from lacerations, strains and sprains to most serious of all, broken limbs (7%), an injury that most usually results in euthanasia.<sup>2</sup>

## Poll results

- 1st-3rd October 2021 outcome: revealed 52% of UK adults in England and Wales will be having private displays at home or with family and friends.<sup>3</sup>
- October 2020 outcome: When watching firework displays, just half (49%) of UK adults say they think about the impact they can have on pets, horses and other animals in the surrounding area.<sup>4</sup>
- October 2020 outcome: seven in ten (71%) UK adults agree that the noise from fireworks can negatively impact the welfare of pets, horses and other animals.
- October 2019 outcome: Around 62% of dogs, 55% of horses and 54% of cats in the UK show signs of anxiety when they hear fireworks. Loud bangs and bright flashes of light are also known to cause fear and distress to lots of other animals including smaller pets like rabbits and guinea pigs, livestock and wildlife.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please see the RSPCA #BangOutOfOrder report 2018 for further information on studies.

<sup>2</sup> Please see the RSPCA #BangOutOfOrder report 2018 for further information on studies.

<sup>3</sup> Study was conducted in England and Wales via Savanta Comres. A sample of 2162 adults aged 16+ were interviewed online in October 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Study was conducted in England and Wales via Savanta Comres. A sample of 2,247 adults aged 16+ were interviewed online in October 2020.

<sup>5</sup> study was conducted in England and Wales via Kantar OnLineBus, an Internet omnibus survey. A sample of 1,137 adults aged 16+ were interviewed in October 2019.

- 2020 outcome: only two in five UK adults say they are confident that they could care for a pet, horse or another animal that was distressed due to fireworks.<sup>6</sup>

## What the BangOutOfOrder campaign is calling for

1. Raised awareness about the impact of fireworks on animals to encourage the general public to be more considerate of pets, horses and livestock as well as local wildlife.
2. The sale of fireworks for Bonfire Night should be limited to 29th October to 5th November. In addition, we believe that there should be restrictions introduced limiting the days that fireworks can be let off thereby restricting the period over which animals are exposed to them (similar to what is proposed in Scotland).
3. The maximum permitted noise level of fireworks for public sale was reduced from 120 dB to 90 dB and the introduction of a labelling system identifying the noise level of fireworks (e.g. 'loud' or 'low noise') to allow consumers to make an informed choice.
4. All public firework displays to be licensed by the relevant licensing authority, with information about the proposed display provided in the local area several weeks in advance (allowing mitigating measures to be put in place) and a process for residents to appeal against the granting of the licence. This process should also apply to people seeking to hold private displays at special events (such as weddings).

## Objectives

- Encourage the **public to consider and alert their neighbours** before making their firework display plans.
- Bring **greater public awareness** of the impact of fireworks on pets, horses, livestock and wild animals.
- Share with local authorities our suggested **motion for change** - can be amended to suit localities.
- Share with the public our [incident reporting survey](#) to ascertain from the public problematic areas, hotspots and gather case studies.

## We can achieve this by

- Sharing the assets provided amongst your local networks and across social media platforms and websites.

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<sup>6</sup> Study was conducted in England and Wales via Savanta Comres. A sample of 2247 adults aged 16+ were interviewed online in October 2020

- Utilising key messages and suggested post copy that outlines the implications of and dangers associated with fireworks, across social media platforms and websites. A collaborative approach maximises reach for our messages and campaign assets.

## Key messages

- Fireworks cause stress and anxiety in animals that in severe cases can result in loss of life.
- Fireworks pose a fire risk to buildings, barns storing hay and can result in loss of life to horses and livestock.
- Fireworks can cause harm to animals by the litter they produce. Firework casings and debris can be ingested, causing suffering.
- Firework noise can cause frightened animals to abandon habitats.
- To encourage the public to attend organised public displays wherever possible.
- Alert neighbours if you are having a display at home.
- Adjust your plans if you reside near where livestock and horses are kept.

## Timeline

Key calendar dates 2021/2022:

- Halloween 31st October
- Diwali 4th November
- Bonfire Night 5th November
- New Year's Celebrations (31<sup>st</sup> December- 3<sup>rd</sup> January)
- Chinese New Year (1<sup>st</sup> February)

## Social media

### Suggested hashtags

- #BangOutOfOrder
- #Bonfirenight
- #Fireworks

### Social media assets

Drafted social media assets which can be shared with personalised post copy to your council/organisation area to raise awareness. Each of the images is based on real-life people, events and stories. Our aim is to help the general public understand the true impact of firework season on households, pets and families.

**Social share images:**

[Facebook, Instagram, Twitter](#)

**Video links:**

[RSPCA Video content sharing how fireworks affect Harley \(YouTube\)](#)

[RSPCA Video content encouraging communication on fireworks between residents \(YouTube\)](#)

**Social post copy:**

[Suggested social post copy and links \(PDF\)](#)

## **Posters and postcards**

Downloadable designed cards and posters with and without crop marks to allow printing internally and externally. Ideal for residents with pets to display in their windows, improve communication between residents and ensure neighbours become aware of nearby pets and animals before using fireworks.

[Posters and postcards download](#)

## **Colouring Sheets**

Downloadable colouring sheets with and without crop marks to allow internal and external printing. The colouring is ideal for children and young people and to use at outreach events, in schools and to share with residents to download and print.

[Colouring sheets download](#)

## **Incident Reporting Survey**

For 2021, we are trialling an incident reporting survey for all animals, we aim to gather information on fireworks incidents involving animals across England and Wales, gather stories and identify hotspots. The data we collect could provide intelligence for your locality upon completion of a data-sharing agreement.

Please be advised this incident reporting survey is not intended to replace our cruelty line function and an officer will not be tasked upon completion of this survey. Should members of the public need to report incidents of animal cruelty, abuse and neglect, they should call our National Call Centre on 0300 1234999.

Please support us by sharing our incident reporting survey amongst your local networks.

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TKWMJJC>

## Suggested wording for a motion

The RSPCA supports measures that will help ensure people can enjoy fireworks responsibly while mitigating potentially significant animal welfare problems for pets, horses, farm animals and wildlife.

Please, wherever possible, work with us to help make fireworks less frightening for animals. Specifically for councils who are able to affect change at a local level, we have also included in this toolkit some suggested text for a motion. This motion can be amended based upon local need and could form the basis of a proposal to the local authority to take more action on this issue.

- [English Version](#)
- [Welsh Version](#)
- [Welsh Language Version](#)

## Did you find this useful?

We hope you find this pack useful and would welcome your feedback on its usability and contents, including hearing any suggestions your council or organisation may have for additional content.

[Tell us what you think](#)

## Working collaboratively with others

Each year the RSPCA works with a variety of organisations on campaigns and campaign messaging and whilst your council or organisation may have received this toolkit from the [OPSS](#) directly, please also see it included here for information.