

Rabbit welfare needs matrix

Welfare need

RED

Action needed

AMBER

Room to improve

GREEN

Great job!



Environment

- Housing too small
- No exercise run
- Not cleaned often enough
- Never given extra protection from heat or cold

- Suitably sized housing
- Exercise run not permanently accessible or not big enough
- More cleaning required
- Sometimes given extra protection in heat or cold

- Suitably sized and secure housing
- Constant access to suitably sized run
- Ideal cleaning routine
- Always given extra protection from heat or cold



Diet

- BCS of 1 or 5 and weight incorrect
- Diet unsuitable
- Water not always available
- Inappropriate treats (type or amount)

- BCS of 2 or 4 and weight not quite correct
- Diet not well balanced between hay, nuggets and greens
- Fed muesli instead of nuggets
- Frequently given treats

- BCS and weight correct
- Fed a suitable, balanced diet of hay, nuggets and greens
- Water always available, changed daily
- Minimal and healthy treats



Behaviour

- Behaviour causing serious problem for owner
- Not sociable and difficult to handle
- No objects to encourage normal behaviours

- Some problem behaviour that owner would like to change
- Sociable but not happy being handled
- Not many objects to allow normal behaviours

- Sociable and relaxed when handled
- Objects given and rotated to allow normal behaviours



Company

- Kept on own with no regular interaction with trusted person
- Kept with other species e.g. guinea pigs
- No provisions made if owner away - left in house on own

- Kept on own but with regular interaction with trusted person
- Lives with another rabbit, but one or both unneutered

- Kept in pair/small neutered group of same species
- Good provisions made if owner away



Health

- **Untreated health problems**
- Not vaccinated or has lapsed
- Not neutered and kept in mixed group
- Infestation of parasites
- Teeth overgrown and causing problems
- Bottom unchecked

- Not neutered
- Evidence of parasites
- Teeth starting to become overgrown
- Vaccinations overdue by less than 6 months
- Bottom sometimes checked in warm weather

- **Overall health good**
- Neutered
- No evidence of parasites
- Healthy teeth
- Vaccinated
- Bottom checked daily in warm weather

BCS = Body Condition Score



Client's Name: _____ Rabbit's Name: _____

Vet/Vet Nurse Name: _____ Date of MOT: _____

Rabbits have **5 key welfare needs** that must be met to keep them happy and healthy:

 <p>Environment</p> <p>Living in a suitable place with space to exercise</p>	 <p>Diet</p> <p>Having the right amount of high fibre food</p>	 <p>Company</p> <p>Living with a suitable rabbit companion</p>	 <p>Behaviour</p> <p>Being allowed to show normal behaviour</p>	 <p>Health</p> <p>Protected from pain, injury and disease</p>
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Welfare need	Comments	Score
 Environment		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please tick as appropriate</i>
 Diet		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please tick as appropriate</i>
 Behaviour		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please tick as appropriate</i>
 Company		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please tick as appropriate</i>
 Health		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please tick as appropriate</i>

My top 3 actions are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Check up recommended: Date: _____