

April 2008

Dear ALAW SUPPORTER

Thank you for your support for ALAW over the past year. Your support has enabled ALAW to continue to thrive. We continue to:

- 1 create a dynamic network of lawyers from every field of practice, who are keen to use their time and skills to promote animal welfare.
- 2 produce regular editions of *The Journal of Animal Welfare Law* which is distributed not only to our members, but also to university law libraries across the UK;
- 3 develop our website (www.alaw.org.uk), which has already drawn many visitors and is gradually being expanded into an online legal resource of animal law;
- 4 hold successful seminars and training for our members and supporters, including many animal welfare groups;
- 5 offer advice and support from a legal perspective to animal welfare groups and members of the public
- 6 maintain a link with the All-Party Parliamentary Animal Welfare Group, through which we have offered MPs a free drafting and advice service with regard to animal welfare legislation;

It is no exaggeration to say that it is because of *your* support that we have been able to achieve all that we have. We have a tiny membership base in comparison to the work that we do and every membership subscription makes a big difference to what we are able to achieve, as well as to our ability to make our collective voice heard within and outside the legal profession.

While we have achieved a great deal during our short existence to-date, there is a lot more that we could do. We have ambitious and exciting plans for new projects, including an audit of UK animal welfare legislation, starting with farm animal welfare legislation. The audit would identify legislation which is deficient by its own terms; legislation that would be adequate only if it was interpreted properly; and legislation that has been properly interpreted but is not adequately enforced. Such a project would be invaluable in identifying the most effective ways in which lawyers and animal welfare groups could, by working together, secure real improvements in animal welfare conditions 'on the ground'.

We are also planning an energetic educational campaign to ensure that lawyers, the public and local authority officers have access to information about the new protections for animals provided for in the new Animal Welfare Act, which received Royal Assent in November 2006. While the Act is far from perfect, we believe that it nevertheless represents a significant step forward for animal welfare law – and a step which demonstrates how timely the founding of ALAW has been.

That is why we are writing to ask you to renew your membership of ALAW. As an ALAW member, not only will you continue to receive our journal free of charge, and invitations to our seminars and other events, but you will also continue to be part of a network of lawyers and other supporters who, together, are making a significant impact in improving animal protection laws. ALAW's ability to continue to grow – and even to exist – is critically dependent on the continued support of our members. We would therefore urge you to return the enclosed renewal form. While ALAW is not, of course, the only deserving animal welfare charity, we remain the only UK organisation dedicated to using *legal skills* to promote and protect the welfare of animals.

With thanks, and very best wishes,

Paula Sparks (Barrister)
Executive chairperson, ALAW