

*These notes refer to the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (c.45)
which received Royal Assent on 8 November 2006*

ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 2006

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Prevention of harm

Section 7: Administration of poisons etc.

35. This provision, which replaces section 1(1)(d) of the 1911 Act, creates offences relating to the administration to a protected animal of any poisonous substance or drug where the person has no lawful authority or reasonable excuse.
36. Under *subsection (2)*, when a person is responsible for an animal, he must not permit another person to administer a poisonous or injurious substance or drug to the animal, unless that person has a lawful authority or reasonable excuse. Furthermore, a person responsible for an animal must take reasonable steps to prevent any other person from administering any drug or substance that he knows to be poisonous or injurious to the animal.
37. Under this section it is not necessary to show that the animal did in fact suffer as a result of the prohibited action in order to establish liability. It is, however, necessary to show that the person accused of the offence knew the poisonous nature of the substance administered to the animal. While this mental element relates to the nature of the substance administered, the term “administer” should be understood as indicating a deliberate action. Accidental poisoning will not be caught by section 7.
38. *Subsection (3)* provides for the offences in *subsections (1) and (2)* to apply in cases where substances that are otherwise harmless have been administered in a harmful quantity or way.