



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Justice Bill

Notice of Amendments tabled on
1 May 2026 for Consideration Stage

New Clause

After clause 26 insert—

‘Domestic abuse involving threats or harm to animals

Domestic abuse involving threats or harm to animals: amendment of Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998

26A.—(1) The Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 is amended as follows.

(2) In Article 2 (interpretation)—

(a) in paragraph (2) at the appropriate place insert—

““animal” means, for the purposes of this Order, a vertebrate other than man that—

(a) is under the control of man whether on a permanent or temporary basis, or

(b) is not living in a wild state;”

(b) after paragraph (5) insert—

“(5A) for the purposes of Articles 11(6)(c), 13(6)(c), 14(6)(c) and 20(1)(c), an animal is cared for by a person if that person participates or has participated in meeting any of the animal’s needs as set out in section 9(2) of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, whether on a permanent or temporary basis.”.

(3) In Article 11(6)(c) (occupation orders where applicant has estate, etc or has home rights)—

(a) after “parties” omit “and”;

(b) after “relevant child” insert “, and of any animal owned or cared for by the applicant or by a relevant child”.

(4) In Article 13(6)(c) (one former spouse or former civil partner with no existing right to occupy)—

- (a) after “parties” omit “and”;
 - (b) after “relevant child” insert “, and of any animal owned or cared for by the applicant or by a relevant child”.
- (5) In Article 14(6)(c) (one cohabitee or former cohabitee with no existing right to occupy)—
- (a) after “parties” omit “and”;
 - (b) after “relevant child” insert “, and of any animal owned or cared for by the applicant or by a relevant child”.
- (6) In Article 20(1) (non-molestation orders)—
- (a) for “either or both” substitute “one or more”;
 - (b) after paragraph (b) insert—
 - “(c) provision prohibiting the respondent from harming, threatening or interfering with any animal that is owned or cared for by the applicant, a relevant child or, in a case falling within paragraph (2)(b), the person for whose benefit the order would be made.”.

Mr Paul Frew

Mr Maurice Bradley

New Clause

After clause 26 insert—

‘Domestic abuse involving threats or harm to animals: amendment of Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021

26B.—(1) The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 is amended as follows.

(2) In Section 2 (behaviour amounting to domestic abuse)—

(a) after subsection (2)(c) insert—

“(d) behaviour directed at or in relation to an animal owned or cared for by B, or by a child of B, that—

(i) has as its purpose (or among its purposes) one or more of the relevant effects, or

(ii) would be considered by a reasonable person to be likely to have one or more of the relevant effects”;

(b) after subsection (4)(b) insert—

“(c) in paragraph (d), “animal” means a vertebrate other than man that—

(i) is under the control of man whether on a permanent or temporary basis, or

(ii) is not living in a wild state,

(d) for the purposes of paragraph (d), an animal is cared for by a person if that person participates or has participated in meeting any of the animal’s needs as set out in section 9(2) of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, whether on a permanent or temporary basis.”.

(3) In Section 27(6)(d) (domestic abuse protection notices and orders)—

(a) after the first “given” insert “—(i)”;

(b) at end insert—

“and,

(ii) any animal owned or cared for by the person for whose protection a notice is given or any child of that person.”.

(4) In Section 27, after subsection (14) insert—

“(14A) For the purposes of subsection (6)(d)(ii)—

(a) “animal” has the meaning given by section 2(4)(c);

(b) an animal is cared for by a person if that person participates or has participated in meeting any of the animal’s needs as set out in section 9(2) of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, whether on a permanent or temporary basis.”.

Mr Paul Frew

Mr Maurice Bradley