INGHAMS

SANTA'S LAPLAND

ANIMAL PROTECTION POLICY

2026

Our vision

Putting animal welfare and nature protection at the heart of responsible tourism

Inghams and Santa's Lapland want to offer authentic, enriching experiences, which benefit our customers, local and Indigenous communities, the natural environment and its wildlife. Animal experiences sit at the heart of many of our holidays, therefore it is our responsibility to have an animal protection policy that is robust, clear and well communicated, ensuring that all experiences are responsible, evidence-based, safeguard animal welfare and respect the rights, cultures and wellbeing of local communities. We are committed to protecting animals and natural environments, and to promoting high standards of animal welfare for all animals involved in our tourism products and experiences.

Purpose of the policy

This policy sets out Inghams and Santa's Lapland's commitment to safeguarding animal welfare and protecting nature across our tourism products and supply chains. It provides a framework for staff and suppliers to identify, assess and manage animal welfare risks, support informed decision-making and promote continual improvement in animal welfare standards and practices.

Scope

This policy applies to all animal-related experiences, excursions, attractions, accommodation-based activities, supplier-led activities and customer-facing content offered, promoted or sold by Inghams and Santa's Lapland. It applies to owned, contracted and third-party suppliers, destination teams, seasonal staff, product teams and any staff involved in selecting, describing, selling, monitoring or responding to animal-related activities.

It applies to domestic animals, working animals, captive wild animals, wildlife viewing, animal-derived products and customer-facing communications about animal experiences.

Governance and ownership

Responsibility for this policy sits with the animal welfare team, with support from risk and safety, overseas operations and the destinations teams. Relevant teams are expected to use this policy when developing, contracting, reviewing or removing animal-related experiences, and to escalate concerns where animal welfare, conservation, community rights or customer safety may be affected.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and updated where new evidence, guidance, supplier information, audit findings, operational learning, customer or staff feedback, or expert advice indicates that changes are needed.

The animal welfare team is responsible for maintaining the policy, recording key decisions, and ensuring relevant teams understand any changes that affect product selection, supplier management or customer information. Our risk & safety team are responsible for all face to face audits.

History of this policy

We first created our animal protection policy in 2023, working alongside charity partner Wild Welfare and responsible animal tourism consultants ANIMONDIAL.

Our approach

What is animal welfare and protection?

Animal welfare describes an animal's physical and mental state, reflecting how it experiences the conditions in which it lives. Inghams and Santa's Lapland follows the internationally recognised Five Domains model as an evidence-based framework for assessing animal welfare. This includes nutrition, environment, physical health and behaviour which together influence the mental state of the animal.

Inghams and Santa's Lapland understands that the welfare of an animal is paramount, irrespective of where they are, and how they are used. Different animal species have evolved to live in different environments and have unique physical, behavioural and psychological needs. As a result, their ability to cope with tourism activities, management practices and human interactions varies considerably. We therefore apply an evidence-based, species-specific approach to animal welfare, ensuring that our experiences are designed and managed to safeguard both animal welfare and species conservation outcomes. We have an animal protection policy that seeks to protect both the welfare of animals and their natural environment as a whole.

Domestic animals

Domestic animals have been selectively bred and genetically adapted over generations to live alongside humans. They are genetically distinct from their wild ancestors or cousins. Animal domestication falls into three main groupings: domestication for companionship (dogs and cats), animals farmed for food (livestock such as sheep, cows, pigs etc.), and working or draught animals (equids, such as horses and donkeys and camelids).

Domesticated animals can often be handled by humans more easily than wild or working animals, although their welfare and protection is of equal importance. Any domesticated animal on our holidays which you may choose to hold, have a photo taken with, ride, or simply stroke must be with the permission of and under the constant supervision of their owner or keeper.

Wild animals and wildlife

At Inghams and Santa's Lapland, we are committed to offering responsible experiences that respect the natural behaviour, ecological role and welfare of wild animals while minimising disturbance to wildlife and their habitats. We recognise that tourism activities can affect animal welfare even where impacts are not immediately visible. Repeated disturbance, inappropriate interactions or habitat disruption may compromise animal welfare, behaviour and long-term survival.

Wild animals may choose to approach people. Where this occurs, interactions should remain passive and animals must never be encouraged through feeding, baiting or other inducements. Animals should always be free to move away without obstruction or pursuit.

We do not promote activities that involve the capture, trade, exploitation or inappropriate use of wild animals, including wildlife markets or performances where animal welfare is compromised or animals are required to perform behaviours inconsistent with their species-specific needs.

Working animals

Working animals may play an important role in tourism, local livelihoods and cultural traditions. Where working animals are involved in our experiences and excursions, we are committed to ensuring their welfare is safeguarded through evidence-based management, appropriate husbandry and responsible working practices.

Inghams and Santa's Lapland recognise that various animals can be used as working animals, however we will only refer to domesticated equine (horses, donkeys, mules), camelids (camels, llamas, alpacas and vicuna), huskies and reindeer as those acceptable to be used within tourism. We believe working animals should experience positive welfare throughout their lives, including during work, transport, housing, rest and retirement where applicable. We expect suppliers to ensure working animals receive appropriate nutrition, housing, veterinary care, equipment, training, workload management, rest and opportunities to express natural behaviours, consistent with recognised animal welfare standards.

In Lapland, we recognise the important cultural role of semi-domesticated reindeer managed by Indigenous and local communities. We are committed to ensuring these experiences respect both cultural traditions and the welfare needs of the animals.

Please see the "ABTA Animal Welfare Guidelines for Working Animals" for more details.

On our holidays, guests only have the opportunity to interact with the following animals in a working capacity:

Riding animals: We only offer riding experiences involving domestic horses, donkeys, mules and dromedary camels assessed as suitable for the activity. It will never be acceptable to ride wild animals on any of our holidays.

Draught animals: We do use draught animals on some holidays; animals which use a harness attached to a cart or sled. The animals we can use include horses, donkeys/mules, huskies and reindeer.

Pack animals: These are defined as animals which carry weight on their back, excluding humans. Examples include the transportation of luggage or equipment to support treks. The animals we can use include horses, donkeys/mules and camels.

Animals used for work must be healthy, physically fit, appropriately conditioned for the activity, behaviourally suitable, and not pregnant, nursing, injured or below appropriate working age (three years old (equids) and four years old camelids)).

Guests should only interact with working animals where this forms part of a managed activity and is supervised by trained handlers. Interactions should not compromise animal welfare or interfere with the animals' work, rest or normal behaviour. We acknowledge that any handling of working animals should be conducted by a trained professional and any interaction with guests should only take place where professionals are present. This extends to reindeer and huskies. We recognise that the working animals on our excursions are primarily bred and trained to work and their behaviour around humans may be unpredictable.

Because husky and reindeer experiences are important parts of some Lapland holidays, we recognise that they require additional supplier-specific guidance and checks. This may include reviewing animal health and fitness, workload, rest periods, housing, nutrition, veterinary care, equipment, handler competence, transport, retirement or end-of-working-life arrangements, and how customer interactions are managed. For reindeer experiences, we also consider cultural context, local and Indigenous community perspectives and the welfare needs of semi-domesticated reindeer.

Where expectations, evidence or good practice evolve, we will update our supplier guidance and product requirements accordingly.

Commercialisation of animals

Inghams and Santa's Lapland seek to ensure that any use, display, sale or promotion of animals, animal-derived products or animal-related souvenirs connected to our holidays is responsible, evidence-based, legal, and does not compromise animal welfare, biodiversity, conservation outcomes, or the rights and livelihoods of local and Indigenous communities.

We do not promote or encourage the purchase of souvenirs or products derived from wild animals unless they can be demonstrated to be legally sourced, sustainably produced, compliant with CITES (where applicable), and obtained without compromising animal welfare or conservation outcomes, for example, naturally shed reindeer antlers collected after seasonal casting, or from pelts (skins) as a by-product. We ask our customers to only purchase souvenirs that are naturally sourced.

Inghams and Santa's Lapland believe endangered and vulnerable species should be protected and we do not offer or promote the consumption of these animals, regardless of local laws and customs.

We do not offer any animal hunting experiences on any of our holidays, this includes fishing.

We recognise that you may encounter taxidermy in our accommodations and on excursions, especially in Alpine regions, however this is not something that we directly encourage.

Indigenous communities

Tourism businesses have a responsibility to ensure that animals involved in tourism are well treated, their welfare needs are met, and their management supports the long-term resilience of the communities that depend on them. At Inghams and Santa's Lapland, we want to support and enrich the lives of local and Indigenous communities, sharing their stories and ensuring they benefit from tourism activities. We work with many local suppliers who are from or work closely alongside, local communities. It is fundamental that we respect and safeguard Indigenous communities everywhere that we visit. We have chosen to identify three paths to obtain feedback on our animal protection policy for our Lappish holidays; from our suppliers, from academia specialising on this subject and lastly from the Indigenous community itself.

Biodiversity and nature

We do not condone picking flowers, removing seeds, collecting shells or touching coral.

Supplier expectations

Suppliers offering animal-related experiences must comply with all applicable animal welfare, conservation and wildlife protection laws in the destination where they operate and are expected to follow recognised animal welfare guidance, including the ABTA Animal Welfare Guidelines. They must ensure that staff or handlers are also appropriately trained.

Our suppliers must provide accurate information about the animals involved, how they are managed and any risks or welfare concerns linked to the activity. They must be willing to cooperate with reasonable checks, site visits, audits or requests for further information.

Any animal welfare concerns should be raised promptly and we ask our partners to commit to work with us on agreed improvements where needed.

How we classify experiences

All animal interactions included in an Inghams or Santa's Lapland holiday are included in a database and reviewed annually by our animal welfare team. This database has been audited by ANIMONDIAL to independently assess our impact. Inghams and Santa's Lapland staff also audit the suppliers in person wherever any risks or concerns are raised.

Staff training
Staff involved in selecting, contracting, selling or supporting animal-related experiences must understand this policy and how to apply it in practice. Staff must know how to identify common animal welfare concerns and how to escalate them quickly through the reporting process.

Evidence used to make decisions
Decisions should be based on documented evidence wherever possible which may include supplier information, staff or customer reports, site visits, audit findings, photographs, expert advice, veterinary or handler information and relevant animal welfare or conservation guidance. Where evidence is incomplete or a concern is serious, the activity should be escalated for further review before being promoted or continued.

The level of evidence required should be proportionate to the level of risk. Lower-risk activities may be assessed through supplier information and periodic review, while higher-risk activities may require additional checks such as site visits.

Where there is uncertainty, conflicting evidence or a serious welfare concern, the activity should be treated as higher risk until sufficient evidence is available.

Traffic Light System

	Conditions attached?	Conditions	Examples
Green Animal Interaction	NO	Provided we adhere to strict guidelines for wildlife viewed in the wild* relating to proximity to animals, length of stay and the means by which to access them, we will presume they are an appropriate interaction. *ABTA Wildlife Viewing Guidelines	Animal viewing by vehicle, boat, on foot or snorkelling/scuba whereby the animals are not enclosed or limited in their behaviour. National Parks Reserves or Conservancies Natural Wilderness
Amber Animal Interaction	YES	Annual independent audit of all captive animal interactions. Annual check with suppliers about our use of working animals. If standards are not met the suppliers will be asked to improve through training and collaboration. If we are not satisfied changes have been sufficient, we will change suppliers or remove the interaction	Captive wild animal facilities Working animals; riding, draught and pack Animal markets; farmers markets, fish markets (NB: not wildlife markets) Controlled reindeer feeding by suppliers Direct contact with wild animals; not human-initiated Bird of Prey demonstrations
Red Animal Interaction	NO	Inghams and Santa's Lapland does not support any activity we feel could endanger, disrespect or in any way harm animals and biodiversity	Do not feed, hold, ride or hunt any wild animal in a wild or captive environment Do not visit wildlife performances or shows, wildlife markets, or buy bushmeat Fishing

Product and customer information

Product and customer-facing information about animal-related experiences must be accurate, balanced and evidence-based. Descriptions should not encourage unsafe, intrusive or inappropriate behaviour, including touching, feeding, chasing, crowding, baiting or taking close-contact photographs with animals.

Our process for reporting and investigating concerns

We actively encourage our customers and staff to report any instance where animal welfare or protection may have been compromised.

For customers:

If you have concerns about a supplier we use or an included activity, please advise your Destination Expert and provide details in the feedback survey sent to you at the end of your holiday.
Alternatively email animalwelfare@inghams.co.uk

Wild Welfare also run a welfare concerns page and your concerns can be raised here also; https://wildwelfare.org/report-a-concern/

For staff and suppliers:

If you have concerns please speak to your operations manager or email animalwelfare@inghams.co.uk
If you would like to know more about specific interactions, facilities or decisions in these guidelines, please email animalwelfare@inghams.co.uk

Wild Welfare also run a welfare concerns page and your concerns can be raised here also: https://wildwelfare.org/report-a-concern/

Our process is as follows:

1. We will investigate the complaint immediately, initially internally with our supply chain and, if required, by seeking advice from animal protection experts.

2. We will work with our suppliers to make any necessary changes, educating and learning from each other on how we can make improvements.

3. If there is not significant improvement, or if improvement isn't possible, we will change suppliers for that interaction or remove it altogether. Everyone must be given a chance to improve so that collectively, across the industry, we can improve welfare, protection and understanding.

4. We will continually review our product selection criteria as and when new evidence comes to light and aim to independently audit all our animal interactions. Effective animal and nature protection is a journey, and we will always endeavour to act quickly and make balanced decisions.

Corrective action
Where an issue is identified, we will agree proportionate corrective actions with the supplier where appropriate. Corrective actions should include clear expectations, responsibilities and timescales. Serious welfare concerns, lack of cooperation, repeated issues or failure to improve may result in suspension or removal of the activity or supplier. Any concerns raised by staff, guests or through our auditing process will always be investigated and improvements continually sought before changing suppliers.

Our definitions

To ensure consistent application of this policy we use the following definitions

Animal: Inghams and Santa's Lapland will use "animal" to refer to any living creature; vertebrate or invertebrate, land or sea dwelling. The only exception to this is humans.

Animal experience: Refers to any planned activity or observation, where the animal was the sole purpose of visit. It does not imply physical contact with an animal and does not differentiate between wild or domestic animals.

Bushmeat: Refers to meat from any wild animal not kept in a captive environment. We do not classify fish or livestock as bushmeat.

Community animals: Feral/stray and companion animals (or pets). Many countries don't have pets confined in homes or gardens and they are free to roam.

Culture: The way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time.

Domestic animals: have been selectively bred and genetically adapted over generations to live alongside humans. Animal domestication falls into three main groupings: domestication for companionship (dogs and cats), animals farmed for food (livestock such as sheep, cows, pigs etc.), and working or draught animals (equids, such as horses and donkeys and camelids).

Farmer's markets: This has been separated from wildlife market and refers to markets where there might be livestock trading (farmers markets), fish markets, vegetable markets or produce markets.

Five Domains model: A concept which considers nutrition, environment, physical health and behaviour which together influence the mental state of the animal. Examples include access to clean water, appropriate nutritious food, opportunities to carry out natural behaviours in a natural environment, and where an animal is under human care, to provide veterinary care. All animals have these needs, regardless of their living environment.

Husky: A generic term for a dog trained to pull a sled. We recognise they are an ever changing cross of different dog breeds known for their cold-weather tolerance, overall hardiness and racing potential.

Livestock: A category of domestic animals which are farmed for food. Examples include cows, goats, sheep, pigs and buffalo.

Living environment: This term encompasses where the animal lives. It may refer to a captive environment where the animal is reliant on humans, or a wild environment where the animal is free.

Natural environment: We use the term natural environment to refer to nature or natural landscapes, specifically including all of its non-human characteristics and processes. It is used as a broad term to talk about the interrelationships between different animal and plant species (their habitats and ecosystems) and our want to cause as little disruption as possible to these natural systems.

Wild: Refers to an animal or plant, not domesticated or cultivated. It may be in a natural environment or a captive environment.

Wildlife: Refers to all animal and plant species that naturally live in the wild.

Wildlife markets: Refers to markets that sell wild animals, their parts or products. This includes for food and their sale as pets. The markets themselves may be legal but may sometimes illegally offer threatened species alongside other species.

Resources
ABTA Animal Welfare Guidelines
Animondial website
Wild Welfare website

Date updated: August 2026