

YOUR TEAM IS GOING TO RESEARCH

Primates as pets

and speak **for and against** banning the keeping of them as pets

This brief has been produced as part of the RSPCA's Animal Welfare: The Great Debate and is a starting point for the research you will need to do into the subject in order to ensure a successful debate. The points for or against a subject may not be RSPCA policy and represent some of the wider thinking around the subject.

- Primates is the overarching term for a range of species including monkeys, apes and lemurs.
- In the UK if you want to keep certain types of primates you have to have a licence under the Dangerous Wild Animals (DWA) Act 1976. However, there are primates that can be kept and bred without a licence.
- In England, primates are currently protected by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Code of Practice for the Welfare of Privately Kept Non-Human Primates.

FOR

Here are some points **in favour of a ban** – what other points can you find?

- Primates are wild animals and have complex needs that cannot be met in a home.
- Primates' welfare cannot be met as they suffer from social isolation and poor diet.
- As primates are wild animals, local vets may not be able to treat them for their specialist needs.

AGAINST

Here are some reasons why **a ban is not needed** – can you find any more?

- The Animal Welfare Act prevents owners causing suffering, so a ban is unnecessary.
- Primates can be kept extremely well by trained owners with the correct facilities.
- As is the case with all animals kept as pets, it is the duty of the owner to find out what their animal needs.

Information you may want to find out

- How many primates are there being kept as pets? Where do people buy primates from?
- Where can primates owners go to get advice and is there a vets near you that could treat a primate?
- What are the needs of a wild animal, how do they differ to dogs and cats, and how could primates suffer if their needs are not met?

Potential sources of information

- RSPCA website: www.rspca.org.uk
- Political Animal website: www.politicalanimal.org.uk
- RSPCA facts and figures: <http://media.rspca.org.uk/media/facts>
- Wild Futures: www.wildfutures.org

