YOUR TEAM IS GOING TO RESEARCH

Support for vulnerable pet owners
and speak for and against it being introduced

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.

- Although the National Health Service (NHS) and other social services exist to support those in need, there is little or no State support for vulnerable people who need help with their pets.
- People who own pets can face unforeseen circumstances which threatens the wellbeing of their beloved pet - such as an accident or ill health (for the pet or the owner), as well as other tragic circumstances such as domestic abuse where the animal can also be threatened or harmed and even where the owner escapes the abuse, there may be difficulties in finding safe places that will also take pets.
- Currently pet owners are able to access support from an animal welfare charity, they either have to pay the full cost of treatment and/or accommodation (which can rise to many thousands) or pay for annual or monthly pet insurance which may cover some of the costs.
- Some people think vet and accommodation costs are unaffordable, especially if they have to pay upfront or the vet practice doesn’t let the owner pay over a long period of time.
Information you may want to find out

- How many people have pet insurance?
- What other arrangements can pet owners make for their animals should they be unable to look after them?
- How much does vet treatment cost – how much money would a State support service need?
- How many people have pets and does that justify a State support system? Are there organisations that already exist to help owners with the veterinary and accommodation costs for their animals?

Potential sources of information

- RSPCA website: [www.rspca.cymru](http://www.rspca.cymru)
- RSPCA facts and figures: [http://media.rspca.org.uk/media/facts](http://media.rspca.org.uk/media/facts)
- PDSA: [www.pdsa.org.uk](http://www.pdsa.org.uk)