

Green Party To Oppose Scunthorpe Petting Zoo



Plans to create a petting zoo and exotic animal enclosure at Grange Park Aquatics in Messingham are to be heavily opposed by North Lincolnshire Green Party. The owners of the business state that the aim is to educate the public about the care and husbandry of the exotic animals. North Lincolnshire Council have received a planning application and will be making their decision later this month but the ethics and morality of the proposed petting zoo will not affect their decision to grant a permit.

The North Lincolnshire Green Party believes that the exotic animals planned to be kept at the new facility, such as meerkats, racoons, squirrel monkeys, skunks, kinkajous, porcupines, wallabies and coatis should not be kept and bred in captivity, and their domestic ownership should not be encouraged. North Lincolnshire Green Party also believes that endangered animals should be protected at all costs and commends anyone who attempts to do so, but not if taking an animal out of its natural habitat and into one completely alien to it can be avoided. There is also a petition online set up by PETA aiming to discourage the council from granting a permit.

North Lincolnshire Green Party Communications Coordinator Rick Taylor says: "The rise in popularity of meerkats and racoons, due to television adverts and feature films, only increases the desire to own one without knowing the immense care that these animals need. The level of care needed just isn't possible in a small domestic environment like a family home. A petting zoo such as this which isn't taking in abandoned or abused animals only serves to take these creatures out of the wild in the name of profit."

North Lincolnshire Green Party Coordinator Cllr Laura Atkin adds: "Currently North Lincolnshire Council do not have an Animal Welfare Charter which would cover the care of domestic animals and a code of conduct for the owners of domestic animals. I am currently working on an Animal Welfare Charter to petition and introduce to the Council in the near future in the hope that they bring this into effect. This will regulate the care and conditions for all animals, including domestic animals. It will also put in place tighter conditions for owning exotic animals."

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Useful Links:

Link to article in Scunthorpe Telegraph: <http://www.scunthorpetelegraph.co.uk/Couple-reveal-plans-Scunthorpe-petting-zoo/story-26907801-detail/story.html>

Information about the needs of meerkats in the wild: <http://www.meerkats.net/info.htm>

Link to the PETA petition: <http://action.peta.org.uk/ea-action/action?ea.campaign.id=40210&ea.client.id=5>

Contact Details

Rick Taylor – rick.taylor@greenparty.org.uk. Tel: 07841 844749

