

# The Changing Policy and Practice of Laboratory Animal Rehoming: is a life after the laboratory possible for experimental animals?



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#### Context

- Animal research is a highly controversial socio-ethical issue.
- Research facilities have moved toward instilling a culture of care and improving laboratory animal wellbeing.
- An area receiving an increasing amount of focus is the 'end-point' for research animals, which is typically humane euthanasia.
- As the UK is viewed as a leader in ensuring animal wellbeing, the question of why so many animals are killed post-experiment is increasingly important. This is especially true when the animal is

How are stakeholder relations changing with the emergence of laboratory

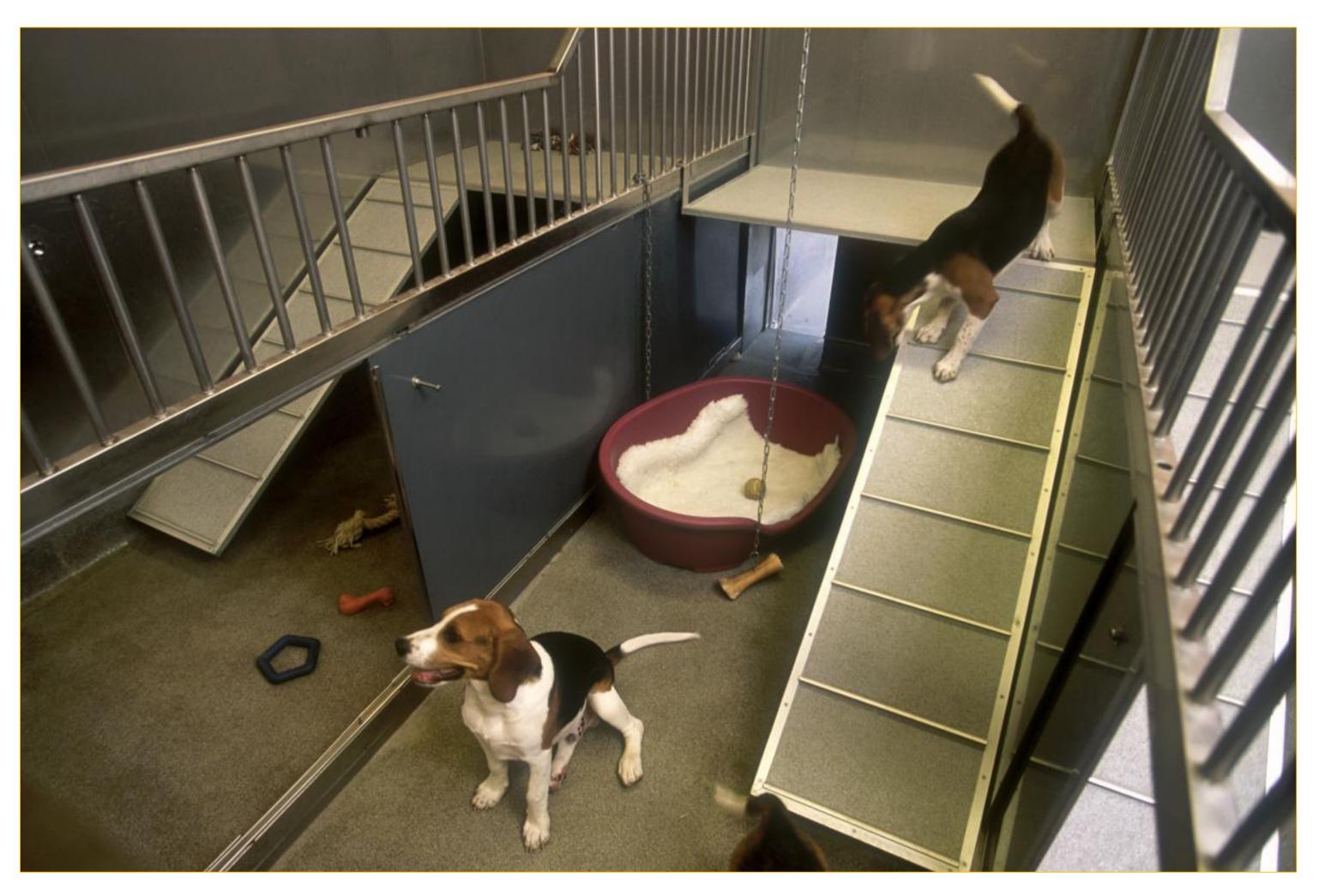
What new forms of human/animal relations are developing as practices

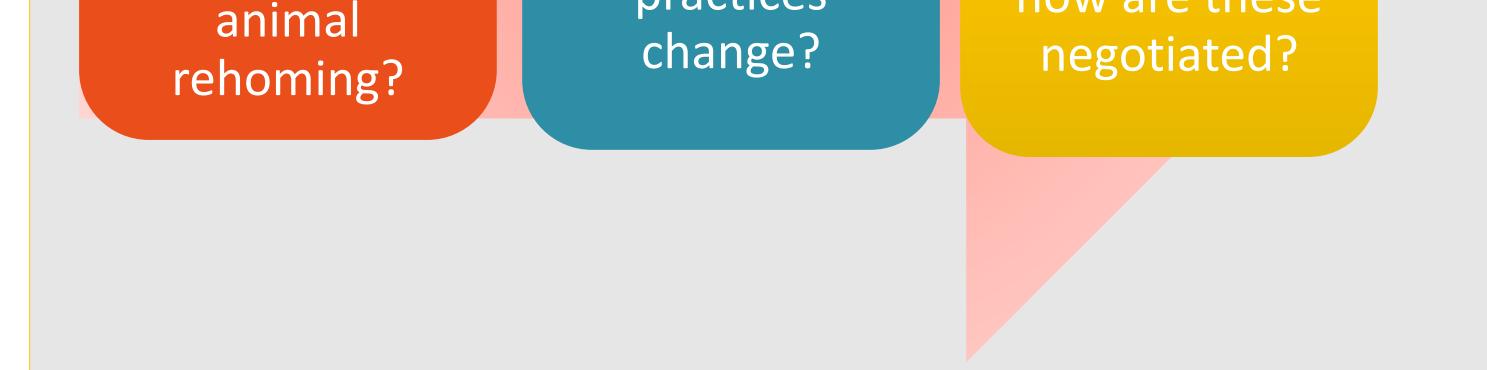
What new spaces of care emerge as practices change, and how are these

### **Research questions**

increasingly important. This is especially true when the animal is healthy and thus has the capacity for 'life after the laboratory'.

- There is consequently increasing consideration toward rehoming these animals.
- Laboratory animals can be rehomed to a variety of settings, including sanctuaries, zoos, private homes, farms, aquariums and slaughterhouses.





Methods

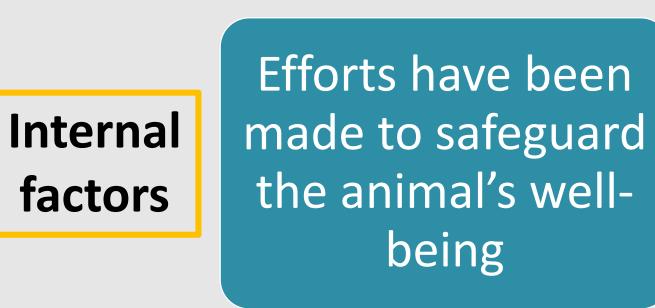
#### The methodology is 2-fold:

- A questionnaire to UK research institutions to gather baseline data regarding how many animals are rehomed, rehoming policies and processes, and associated facility level benefits and obstacles.
- 2) Approximately 20 stakeholder interviews amongst 4 primary groups:
  O Research facility staff

## **Rehoming research animals: Policy**

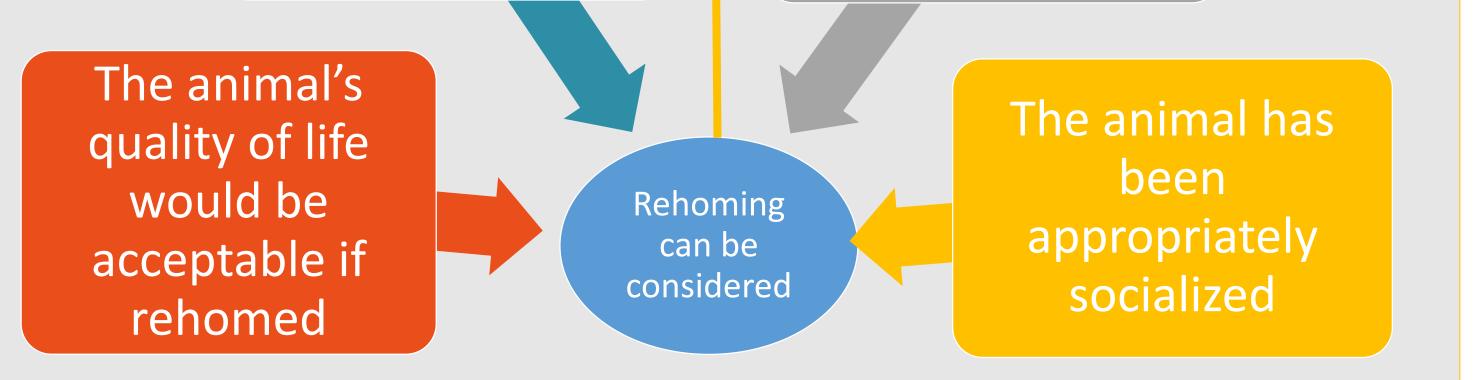
Rehoming in the UK is currently offered as an option, but is not a requirement as it is in countries such as India.

Consent to rehome can only be legally approved if the following requirements are met:



Rehoming would not harm other animals, the environment or humans Veterinary professionals
 Rehoming organisation staff
 Members of the public who have rehomed laboratory animals





## **Research aims**

Provide information to support research facilities in rehoming animals, thus improving laboratory animal well-being, raising the morale of facility staff, and facilitating positive stakeholder collaborations.

## **Questions for you**

1.What do you feel are the main barriers to rehoming laboratory animals within the research community?

2. What implications may rehoming have on promoting the ethical profile of a research facility, fostering a culture of care, and on staff morale?

3. Where do anti-vivisectionist concerns sit in relation to laboratory animal rehoming?