



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Lord Benyon
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Dear Iain,

Thank you for your email of 27 September on behalf of your constituents about animal welfare. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

As outlined in our 2021 Action Plan for Animal Welfare, the Government has an ambitious agenda for animal welfare and conservation reforms, which we plan to take forward during the current Parliamentary session and beyond. We will continue to introduce and support legislative and non-legislative reforms where possible.

The UK has some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world. Since the publication of the Action Plan, we have delivered on key manifesto commitments: we have increased the penalties for those convicted of animal cruelty; passed the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022; and launched the Animal Sentience Committee. We have made cat microchipping compulsory and have announced the extension of the Ivory Act (2018) to cover five endangered species: hippopotamus; narwhal; killer whale; sperm whale; and walrus.

In addition, we have provided for penalty notices to apply to animal welfare offences, introduced new police powers to tackle hare coursing, banned glue traps, and supported the Private Members' Bill to ban the trade in detached shark fins. We are also supporting two further animal welfare-related Private Members' Bills.

I hope this reassures you that the Government is working hard to take steps in further improving our already high standards of animal welfare.

Yours sincerely, *ever*

Richard

THE RT HON LORD BENYON