



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs

To all MPs in England

12 May 2021

ACTION PLAN FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Today the Government will launch our Action Plan for Animal Welfare ('Action Plan'). This landmark document, the first of its kind for animal welfare, will set out our ambitious reform programme and commitments to improve the lives of animals in the UK and abroad.

We have a proud history in this country on animal welfare. Indeed, the UK was the first country in the world to pass legislation to protect animals in 1822 with the Cruel Treatment of Cattle Act. But we know there is more we can do, and now we have left the EU and the Transition Period has ended, we have the opportunity to go further for animals.

Manifesto commitments such as cracking down on puppy smuggling, ending the export of live animals for fattening and slaughter and recognising and enshrining animal sentience in law will be brought to the fore of our agenda, but we will not stop there. The Action Plan contains upwards of forty valuable reforms, some in the early stages of development and some ready to be introduced in legislation in the upcoming Parliamentary session. All are vitally important to ensure animals are afforded the respect, protection and care they deserve. Combined, they represent the biggest shake up of animal welfare laws for generations.

The Action Plan groups our commitments and intentions around five key themes: sentience and enforcement, international advocacy and trade, farm animals, pets and sporting animals, and wild animals. A summary of the Action Plan which provides an overview of the five key themes and underlying policies has been included with this letter.

I look forward to working with colleagues to deliver the ambitious programme of work contained within the Action Plan, and to use the opportunities we have to introduce tangible, enduring change which raises the way we treat animals to the next level.

RT HON GEORGE EUSTICE MP