

Animal Licensing – Changes on the Horizon

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DEFRA Action Plan for Animal Welfare

- Action Plan for Animal Welfare sets out Government plans, aims and ambitions across 5 key areas:
- Sentience and enforcement
- International trade and advocacy
- Farm animals
- Pets and sporting animals
- Wild animals

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Kept Animals Bill

- Kept animals bill introduces Primate licensing still awaiting confirmation of the date it moves on to the Commons Report stage / 3rd Reading
- Government has introduced some minor and technical amendments regarding primates which should increase the flexibility of Local Authorities to effectively manage any directions they issue to non compliant primate owners once the legislation comes in
- No substantive changes to the legislation itself
- The Animal Welfare Consultancy are developing a set of recommendations for the updated primate standards which will underpin the new licence, hopefully they will consult

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Kept Animals Bill – Puppy Smuggling

The Government will introduce new powers to tackle the unethical trade of puppy smuggling by reducing the number of pets (dogs, cats and ferrets) that can travel under pet travel rules. It will also include powers for the Government to bring in further restrictions on the movement of pets on welfare grounds, for example by increasing the minimum age of imported puppies and restricting the import of pregnant dogs and dogs with mutilations such as cropped ears and tails.

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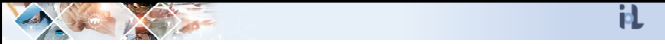




Kept Animals Bill – Live Exports

Live animals can endure excessively long journeys during export, causing distress and injury. EU rules prevented any changes to these journeys, but the UK Government is now free to pursue plans which would see a ban on the export of live animals for slaughter and fattening. We will become the first European country to end this practice.

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Kept Animals Bill – Livestock worrying

The Bill will give new powers to the police to provide greater protection to livestock from dangerous and out of control dogs. The Bill will also extend this protection to other species such as llamas, ostriches and game birds

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Kept Animals Bill – Zoo Licensing

Defra, via the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill are proposing several changes to the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

These include:

- Increasing the maximum penalties in the 1981 Act
- Moving appeals against local authority decisions to the First Tier Tribunal
- Introducing a new mandatory licensing condition that each zoo must meet the standards contained in the Standards of Modern Zoo Practice.
- Providing a power for conservation standards to be included in the Standards of Modern Zoo Practice

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Kept Animals Bill – Animal Sanctuaries

As part of the Action Plan for Animal Welfare Defra are pursuing the licensing of animal welfare establishments. This means animal sanctuaries, and rescue and rehoming organisations.

This includes:


- Cats
- Dogs
- Horses

Already law in Scotland



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Kept Animals Bill – Primate Licensing



Primates are highly intelligent animals with complex needs and require specialist care. The Government will deliver on its manifesto commitment to introduce a ban on keeping them as pets, ensuring that all primates being kept privately in England are being kept at zoo-level standards and that those unable to meet the standards are phased out.

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Specialist Private Primate Licence

Under the new legislation introduced in the Kept Animals Bill, private keepers will only be able to keep primates if they have a "specialist private primate keeper's licence" or have the appropriate licence under or if they already hold a relevant licence under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 or Animals Scientific Procedures Act 1986

The licence will be available for those keepers who can keep primates to high standards of welfare, developed in secondary legislation by Defra alongside key stakeholders

Licences will be issued/monitored/reviewed by local authorities in England and Wales

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Specialist Private Primate Licence

Defra will be developing these licensing standards with the help of experts

They will give keepers a detailed understanding of what is expected of them, and they will give local authorities a clear platform from which they can implement the legislation

The standards will be developed with input from experts in primate care, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including local authorities

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Specialist Private Primate Licence

An individual who keeps or proposes to keep a primate may apply for a primate licence through their local authority

The licence lasts six years; inspections to occur approx. every 2 years.

Local authorities will have powers to remove licences from keepers who are not meeting the conditions of their licence

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Specialist Private Primate Licence

Transitional Register

The Bill enables keepers to keep their existing animals for a limited period under the transitional measure, subject to conditions

Conditions will include registering the primate with their local authority within the initial 12 month period, and providing for their basic needs


During this transitional period, these keepers will be able to work to meet the new licensing standards or will have to find a suitable alternative home for their primate(s)

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Specialist Private Primate Licence

If a keeper does not obtain a licence prior to the end of the registration period, they will need to rehome their primate or they would be subject to a penalty

Local authorities will have the option to put primates kept illegally "under directions".



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Specialist Private Primate Licence


The licensing regime will involve regular inspections and will be enforced by local authorities

Initial, and renewal, inspections will be undertaken by a veterinary surgeon

A minimum of 2 further inspections will take place during a licence period

Failure to comply with the licence condition holds a maximum penalty of £2,500

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Specialist Private Primate Licence

Licence inspection
Initial and renewal inspections by a vet to determine if the licence standards are being met
Min. two additional inspections by local authorities over the course of the licence

Registration inspection
Initial inspection by a vet to determine if basic welfare needs of the primate will be met
Local authorities may carry out additional inspections
The primate must be microchipped

Directions inspection
Initial and subsequent inspection by a vet to determine if basic welfare needs of the primate will be met, prior to being rehomed


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Animal Welfare Sentience Act 2022

- The Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022 recognises in law that animals are living, feeling beings with complex thoughts and emotions.
- Now, policymakers will need to take into account the unique needs of animals (the scope of this legislation includes all vertebrate *animals* and some invertebrate *animals such as octopuses and lobsters*) when creating laws.
- It also requires that the government establish an Animal Sentience Committee to scrutinise and report on whether the government is taking into account the adverse effect of any policy "on the welfare of animals as sentient beings".

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 Other things under consideration

- Further protection for hares
- Penalty notice system for those being cruel to animals
- Ban import and export of detached shark fins
- Ban advertising of unacceptable practices abroad – i.e. elephant riding
- Further rules on fur importation
- Ban import and sale of foie gras
- Ivory act – bans dealing in elephant ivory of any age

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 Other things under consideration

- Ban importation of hunting trophies from endangered species
- End export of animals for fattening or slaughter
- Welfare in transport – cutting length of time animals can be transported
- Improve farm animal health and welfare
- Improve food labelling
- Improve welfare at animal slaughter
- Tighter controls on livestock worrying

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 Other things under consideration

- Reduce the number of pet dogs, cats and ferrets that can be moved under the pet travel rules which apply to non-commercial movements, in order to prevent unscrupulous traders from exploiting pet travel rules
- Increase the minimum age that dogs can be non-commercially moved or commercially imported into Great Britain
- Restrict the ability of unscrupulous traders to move heavily pregnant dogs into Great Britain both commercially and noncommercially
- Prohibit importation of dogs with ear cropping – tail docking

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Other things under consideration

- Set up a taskforce to investigate pet theft
- Compulsory cat microchipping
- Tuks Law – tightening up date held on microchipped animals - law that no healthy animal can be destroyed by a vet without first scanning the pet's microchip to confirm the person requesting euthanasia has the authority to do
- Ban remote controlled electronic training collars
- Racing greyhounds – further protection
- Horse racing address fatality levels
- Dangerous dogs legislation updating
- Higher standards for animal testing in scientific or educational purposes
- Restrict use of glue traps used in pest control
- Tackle wildlife crime

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All Parliamentary Group Report Animal Welfare

- Improving the Effectiveness of Animal Welfare Enforcement (Part 1)
- Recommendations
- LA's to have dedicated animal welfare officers
- Would it be better to have other local authorities issuing licences
- Setting up of regional groups with police RSPCA etc
- Setting up of a stand-alone National Animal Welfare Board
- Central funding pot for large scale cases
- Requirement for dedicated officers to be trained and do refresher training

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And talking about training

- Update on LAIA guidance wording for inspector training
- All officers that are operational must have completed their training by 1st April 2023.



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