

Tuesday 20<sup>h</sup> January 2026

## Animal Welfare Legislation Passed Since 2012

### Primary Legislation

- Changed the law about the offence of livestock worrying, including changes to what constitutes an offence and increased powers for investigation of suspected offences.
  - *Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025.*
- Restricted the importation and non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets to tighten up loop-holes.
  - *Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Act 2025.*
- Banned the export of certain livestock from Great Britain for fattening or slaughter.
  - *Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Act 2024.*
- Banned the sale and advertising of activities abroad which involve low standards of animal welfare.
  - *Animals (Low Welfare Activities Abroad) Act 2023, Implemented November 2023.*
- Banned the import and export of shark fins and make provisions relating to the removal of fins from sharks.
  - *Shark Fins Act 2023, Implemented August 2023.*
- Tougher sentences and improved powers to tackle hare coursing.
  - *Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, Implemented June 2022*
- Banned the use of glue traps.
  - *Glue Traps (Offences) Act 2022, Implemented April 2024.*
- Inclusion of cephalopods and decapod crustaceans as recognised as sentient beings.
  - *Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022, Implemented April 2022.*
- Increased sanctions for offences related to animals and animal products.
  - *Animals (Penalty Notices) Act 2022, Implemented June 2022.*

### Secondary Legislation

- Made a step towards banning the private keeping of primates in the UK by enforcing primate licencing.
  - *Animal Welfare (Primate License) Regulations 2024, Implementation date April 2026.*
- Increased sanctions regarding elephant ivory trade and extended ivory bans to include 5 other species (hippopotamus, walrus, narwhal, orca whale and sperm whale).
  - *Ivory Act 2018 Regulations 2022, Implemented June 2022.*
- Increased maximum sentences for animal cruelty offences from 6 months to 5 years imprisonment.
  - *Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021 (Amended section 32 of Animal Welfare Act 2006), Implemented June 2021.*
- Banned wild animals in travelling circuses
  - *Wild Animals in Circuses Act 2019, Implemented January 2020.*
- Protection of the unnecessary suffering of service animals.
  - *Animal Welfare (Service Animals) Act 2019 (Amended section 4 and 61 of Animal Welfare Act 2006), Implemented June 2019.*
- Prevention of fly-grazing and abandonment of horses.

- *Control of Horses Act 2015, Implemented May 2015.*
- Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 - 2013 amendment to protect “*all living vertebrates (other than man) and living cephalopods*”
- Mandatory microchipping for dogs and cats.
  - *The Microchipping of Cats and Dogs (England) Regulations 2023, Implemented 2015 (dog), and due to be implemented April 2024 (cat)*
- Banned third-party puppy and kitten sales and other measures...
  - *Licensing of Activities Involving Animals (England) Regulations 2018*
- Minimum standards for meat chickens:
  - *Updated Broiler (meat) chicken Code of Recommendations and Guidance, March 2018*
- Mandatory CCTV in Slaughterhouses in England
  - *The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (England) Regulations 2018, Implemented November 2018*
- Banned the use of conventional battery cages for chickens
  - *EU directive 1999/74/EC, January 2012*