

Jane Hunt MP



House of Commons

15 April 2020

Dear local residents,

Thank you to those who have contacted me about animal sentience.

First and foremost, I fully believe that animals are sentient beings who can feel pain and suffering, and I would like to reassure you that strong action is being taken to reduce their risk of harm.

The Government is committed to making any necessary changes to UK law in a rigorous and comprehensive way to ensure animal sentience is legally recognised now that we have left the EU. This includes ensuring the UK has an effective means of making sure animal sentience is reflected in future policy decisions. I understand that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is currently engaging closely with relevant organisations and authorities to enhance its policies on this issue further.

In the meantime, encouraging action is already being taken to improve animal welfare at home and abroad by increasing maximum sentences for animal cruelty, banning third party sales of puppies, and introducing one of the world's toughest bans on ivory sales. These very welcome steps demonstrate exactly how seriously this Government takes animal welfare.

I hope that this information is reassuring. If I can be of further assistance, please do let me know.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane".

Jane Hunt MP