

Jane Hunt MP



House of Commons

15 April 2020

Dear local residents,

Thank you to those who have contacted me about the welfare of farm animals.

I am proud that the UK has some of the highest standards of animal welfare in the world and the Government has made it clear that it places great importance on the welfare of farmed animals. The recent 'End the Cage Age' petition calls for a ban on the use of barren and enriched cages for farmed animals, and I am aware that Ministers are keen to explore the issue while continuing to focus on maintaining world-leading farm animal welfare standards through both regulatory requirements and statutory codes.

In the UK, there is comprehensive legislation to uphold farm animal welfare standards, as well as guidance on how best to protect the welfare of specific animals living on farms, such as hens, pigs and cattle. The Government has already banned cages or close confinement systems where there is clear scientific evidence that they are detrimental to animal health and welfare.

The new statutory [\*Code of Practice for the Welfare of Laying Hens and Pullets\*](#) came into force in August 2018. The Code provides improved guidance on welfare legislation and reflects the latest scientific and veterinary advice. The Government is currently examining the future use of cages for all laying hens and all major supermarkets have said they will stop selling eggs from hens kept in enriched cages by 2025.

On pig welfare, the Government has made it clear that it remains completely committed to the ambition that farrowing crates should no longer be used for sows. It is important that progress is made as quickly as possible towards a system that both works commercially and safeguards the welfare of the sow and her piglets. The UK is already ahead of most pig-producing countries on this issue, with about 40% of our pigs living and farrowing outside. It is clear that good progress has been made, but there is more to do.

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