

DANIEL KAWCZYNSKI MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

3 April 2023

Dear Constituent

### **Caged Farm Animals**

Thank you for contacting me about the use of cages for farm animals.

I would like to assure you that my ministerial colleagues and I take the welfare of all animals very seriously. Ministers are delivering a series of ambitious reforms, as outlined in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare.

The Government is committed to strengthening animal welfare standards and is currently examining the use of cages for laying hens and the use of farrowing crates for pigs. Ministers recognise the need to work carefully and sensitively with the pig and poultry industries, which are both currently facing significant challenges. Decisions on a future public consultation on this issue would need to be carefully considered due to these wider challenges.

Around 60 per cent of our hens are now kept in free-range systems, and a number of with major supermarkets have pledged to stop selling eggs from the remaining 40 per cent of hens in colony cages by 2025. Regarding pig farrowing crates, 40 per cent of our pigs are kept outdoors and outdoor farrowing systems are used for those sows. Ministers will continue to work with the poultry industry on improving feather cover and keel bone health, as well as reducing the amount of beak trimming.

Further, the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway will prioritise areas for additional improvement in the health and welfare for pigs, cattle, sheep and poultry. On pigs specifically, the Government will continue to improve biosecurity in order to control endemic diseases. On meat chickens, through the Pathway, producers are being encouraged to implement the Better Chicken commitment which would require the use of slower growing breeds and lower stocking densities.

More broadly, Ministers are taking action to improve the health and wellbeing of farm animals through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, which will ban exports of livestock and equines for slaughter and fattening.

if you have specific concerns about the welfare of an animal, I would recommend reporting it to the local policing teams or to the RSPCA.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'DK', followed by a horizontal line.

Daniel Kawczynski MP  
Member of Parliament for Shrewsbury & Atcham