

[News story: Animal welfare strengthened by new codes for pigs and poultry](#)

Strengthened statutory guidance will be available for pig and poultry keepers on how to meet the needs of their animals and enhance their welfare.

Welfare codes for pigs, laying hens, and meat chickens are being updated to reflect the very latest advice from vets and animal husbandry developments, as part of a programme of reforms to safeguard and enhance the welfare of animals, the Minister for animal welfare, Lord Gardiner announced today.

Minister for Animal welfare, Lord Gardiner, said:

We have some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world and are going further, including raising maximum sentences for animal cruelty to five years and introducing mandatory CCTV in abattoirs.

We are carefully consulting with industry experts, and using the most recent scientific and veterinary advice to ensure this clear guidance provides the best advice to owners and keepers to help ensure the high welfare standards of their animals.

Under the proposals, animal keepers will be expected to provide a more enriched environment for all pigs, laying hens, and meat chickens to enable them to display more of their natural behaviours such as foraging, helping to ensure more fulfilled and healthier animals. The user-friendly codes also provide detailed guidance to animal keepers on how to assess the welfare of their animals, as well as on contingency planning to help ensure the welfare of their animals during any emergencies.

The codes will be used by enforcement bodies including Animal and Plant Health Agency inspectors and local authorities when investigating allegations of poor welfare to look at whether animal welfare standards are being met.

A six week consultation begins today (29 January) where government is seeking views from industry and stakeholders. The new guidance is expected to be available later this year.

1. View the consultations on the [pigs](#) and [laying hens](#) codes
2. View the [meat chicken draft codes](#)
3. The [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#) covers all animals in England, and details their five welfare needs.
4. For further media queries, please contact Defra press office on 020 8225 7318 or 020 8026 3005.