

[Press release: Animal welfare enhanced by new code for laying hens and pullets](#)

The welfare code for laying hens has today been updated as part of a programme of reforms to safeguard and enhance the welfare of animals.

Strengthened statutory guidance is now in place for keepers and owners of laying hens and pullets on how to meet the needs of their birds and enhance their welfare.

This welfare code has been 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 in a number of areas, including our plans to raise maximum sentences for animal cruelty to five years and making CCTV mandatory in abattoirs.

This code was carefully consulted on with industry experts, and uses 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.

Animal keepers are now expected to provide a more enriched environment for all laying hens 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.

The full code is available to [read online](#).