



**Chris Heaton-Harris**  
Member of Parliament for Daventry  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 7048

February 2024

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about animal cruelty and your suggestion for an Animal Offenders Register.

There is no place in this country for animal cruelty, and we must ensure that those who abuse animals are met with the full force of the law. Animals are protected under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which makes it an offence to cause any animal unnecessary suffering. The Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021 increased the sentences available for the most serious cases of animal cruelty, with a new maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment, an unlimited fine, or both. Any case of cruelty is completely unacceptable, and I would fully welcome prosecutions being brought against anyone who is found to have caused unnecessary suffering to an animal.

Regarding the specific issue you raise, I am not aware of any current plans in Parliament to introduce an Animal Offenders Register. However, I understand that the Police National Computer already records convictions for animal cruelty offences. Certain organisations have access to this information where appropriate to fulfil their public function. This allows this important information to be securely protected from misuse, but also for it to be available for organisations with a justified need to access this information.

If anyone, including animal welfare charities or pet breeders, has concerns about whether someone is keeping animals in contravention of a disqualification order, they should report it to the police who can investigate.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**