

**KEITH TAYLOR MEP**  
**Green Party**  
**for the South East of England**



Rt Hon. Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State  
Defra  
Seacole Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

20 February 2019

Dear Michael,

**Re: Recognising animal sentience and requiring that animal welfare has full regard in law.**

Thank you for your reply dated 16th January (Ref: PO2019/00202/MP) regarding the postponement on laws to protect animal welfare. I welcome the regulations that have been implemented on CCTV in slaughterhouses, the licencing of animal activities and the commitment to strengthen the sentencing of animal abusers. Such steps, are an important step forward better protect the welfare of animals.

The EU is a body which has raised animal welfare standards in many ways, as set out in the accompanying 'Animals and Brexit' report. As we prepare to leave the union, animals need greater protection to ensure new policies and trade deals don't compromise their needs. Therefore, I am pleased to see that since my letter last month, animal protection groups have come together to echo the call for a law that legally recognises the sentience of animals, and their capacity to experience and recognise their feelings and emotions. I would like to share my support for the #BetterDealForAnimals that goes further than Article 13 of the Lisbon Treaty.

The campaign is calling for animal sentience to be explicitly enshrined in UK law, as it is in the EU; creating a duty for all Ministers in the UK to fully regard animal welfare when creating any future legislation or Government policy. Without this, the current planned legislation will weaken protection for animals across the country.

I urge you to ensure animal welfare will not be compromised as part of the process to leave the EU and ensure previous Government promises to change laws to improve welfare protections are not quietly abandoned or indefinitely postponed.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**KEITH TAYLOR**  
MEP for South East England