



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Government response to the Animal Sentience Committee report on the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill

December 2025

**Department for Environment, Food & Rural
Affairs**

**Government response
to the Animal Sentience
Committee report on
the Animal Welfare
(Import of Dogs, Cats
and Ferrets) Bill**

December 2025

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 3 of the **Animal
Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022**

We are responsible for improving and protecting the environment. We aim to grow a green economy and sustain thriving rural communities. We also support our world-leading food, farming and fishing industries.

Defra is a ministerial department, supported by 34 agencies and public bodies.



© Crown copyright 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/official-documents.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at cawsteam@defra.gov.uk

ISBN 978-1-5286-6096-9

E03494025 12/25

Printed on paper containing 40% recycled fibre content minimum

Printed in the UK by HH Associates Ltd. on behalf of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office

Government response to the Animal Sentience Committee report on the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill

This is the Government's formal response to the Animal Sentience Committee's report on the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill, published on 20 August 2025.

The Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill was a Private Members' Bill, sponsored by Dr Danny Chambers MP in the House of Commons and Lord Trees in the House of Lords. The Government is committed to ending puppy smuggling and was pleased to support the Bill's passage through Parliament. The Bill received Royal Assent on 2 December 2025.

We are pleased to note that the Committee considered that the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill should result in positive animal welfare outcomes once enacted and implemented. We also note the Committee's concerns around the potential welfare impacts of prolonged kennelling on pets that are detained for non-compliance with the new requirements. The Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Act 2025 contains powers which will allow regulations to be made with a view to minimising the time that seized dogs and cats spend in kennels, thereby reducing potential welfare impacts.

We would like to thank the Committee for its consideration of the Bill. The Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Act 2025 is an important milestone for the protection of dogs, cats and ferrets in the United Kingdom.

E03494025
978-1-5286-6096-9