

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

4th April 2017

New Constituent,
RE: ANIMAL CRUELTY SENTENCING.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of sentencing for offences of animal cruelty.

We have a robust legal framework to tackle this vicious behaviour in the *Animal Welfare Act 2006*, which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any animal.

The courts must decide what the penalty should be for each individual case, taking into account its circumstances and the guidelines laid down by the Sentencing Council. Currently, in addition to the maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine, the courts can also disqualify offenders from keeping animals for as long as they consider appropriate.

I understand that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is in regular contact with the Ministry of Justice in relation to sentencing policy for animal welfare offences, but I would note that current sentencing practice does not suggest that the courts are finding current sentencing powers inadequate.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

with best wishes,

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE