

16 MAR 2016



Department
for Environment
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Richard Burden MP
House of Commons
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Our ref: MC398833/SC

10 March 2016

From George Eustice MP
Minister of State

Dear Mr Burden,

Thank you for your letter of 22 February on behalf of a number of your constituents about the use of wild animals in travelling circuses.

A ban on the use of wild animals in travelling circuses is a manifesto commitment and the Government is committed to introducing a bill when parliamentary time allows.

Currently, the ban stands to impact on a small number of travelling circuses that operate with wild animals in England. During the last circus touring season, which ended in November, two travelling circuses were licensed under Defra's interim Welfare of Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses (England) Regulations 2012 to use 18 wild animals. All circuses licensed by Defra are subject to regular announced and unannounced welfare inspections.

The licensing scheme will stay in place to ensure that any wild animals used in travelling circuses continue to be kept to a high welfare standard until a ban comes into force.

PP GEORGE EUSTICE MP

Approved by the Minister,
Signed in his absence.