Name & address of MP

August 2023

Dear xxxxx,

**Re: Animal Welfare Legislation in the England and banning of electronic collar training devices**

I’m writing to you regarding the DEFRA Action Plan for Animal Welfare1 which has recently been published following ongoing discussions and lobbying to recognise sentience and widen the scope of existing animal welfare legislation. This report sets out important and ambitious plans and is a momentous piece of work which aims to improve the welfare of farm, companion and wild animals in the UK. I hope that the actions are put in place in a short time frame and am writing to you specifically regarding the section on page 16 which states:

*Ban remote controlled electronic training collars (‘e-collars’), given their scope to harm cats and dogs.*

I am a certificated clinical animal behaviourist and have worked within the companion animal training and behaviour sector for the past 15 years. I’m continually dismayed about the lack of regulation and recognition of animal training and behaviour as a professional field. There are hundreds if not thousands of businesses profiting from what can only be described as animal abuse and they are currently trading within the law. The use of electric training collars by so-called professionals is not only barbaric and outdated, recent research has shown that positive reinforcement training methods are not only more effective in achieving training goals, they also have positive effects on the individual animal by improving their mental, emotional and physical well-being. Electronic training collars use aversion, pain, fear, threats, panic which have no place in modern day-dog training and pose a serious threat to animal welfare.

I would like to invite you to read some of the supporting evidence and literature that provide a clear picture on the detrimental effects that electronic training collars have on our companion animals. The Response: Commentary: Remote Electronic Training Aids; Efficacy at Deterring Predatory Behavior in Dogs and Implications for Training and Policy2 is a useful starting point. If you have any questions about the research or would like some further reading, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The dog training and companion animal behaviour and training community that are educated, accredited and experienced fully support the Action Plan for Animal Welfare and the ban of electric training collars in England. I hope that the information included in this letter provides you with the evidence required to vote for such a ban so that England can follow in the footsteps of Wales and Scotland and move towards an outright ban of this barbaric and cruel equipment. Supporters of electronic collar training devices will tell you that experts such as myself only work with low drive, pet dogs, however I can tell you that this is not the case. All dogs learn in the same way and whether a dog has a high prey drive or bite history, positive reinforcement, an understanding of ethology, providing the dog with species-specific needs are in my opinion the only way to successfully work with dogs to ensure they have a happy life. Without exception, electronic training devices have no place in companion animal training.

Please support the proposals in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare and vote to support the ban of electronic collar training devices when you are given the opportunity in the House of Commons. The professional and accredited companion animal training and behaviour sector is relying on you to make a real difference for animal welfare and we hope that you will take up the challenge.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Yours sincerely,

YOUR NAME
YOUR ADDRESS

1. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/985332/Action_Plan_for_Animal_Welfare.pdf>
2. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2021.675005/full?fbclid=IwAR0e1rAWL2XHLzplycNBTzOHa4Oiz1o7_eMe0KSM3sVzAHir2kiP7T_XgXU>