



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
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Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your email of 10 August on behalf of your constituents regarding existing UK microchip legislation. I apologise for the delay in responding. Defra is currently dealing with high volumes of correspondence due to COVID-19. Thank you for your understanding during this challenging time.

The Government wholly supports the microchipping of dogs and cats.

Since 6 April 2016, under The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 all dogs in England and Wales must be microchipped and registered on an approved database by the time they are eight weeks old. Since we made microchipping compulsory, the number of dogs microchipped has gone up from around 58% of all dogs in 2013 to over 90% of all dogs. This means that about 8 million dogs in the United Kingdom are microchipped.

The Government currently advises cat owners to get their cat microchipped. In October 2019 Defra published a call for evidence on compulsory microchipping for cats, which attracted over 3,000 responses. We will be publishing a summary of the responses alongside the launch of a public consultation shortly.

Several campaign groups have suggested making the scanning of dogs and cats for microchips compulsory in certain circumstances in order to check ownership/keepership against database records. This includes proposals for the compulsory scanning of dogs before euthanasia by vets to confirm the person presenting the animal is registered on the microchip and to check additional contact details for rescue or rehoming organisations that may maintain a legal interest in the animal.

We are, therefore, also seeking views in the forthcoming consultation exercise on whether the scanning of cats and dogs by vets and other bodies should be made compulsory in certain circumstances.

RT HON GEORGE EUSTICE MP