# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE**  | **Mobile Animal Exhibits** |
| **DATE**  | **14th February 2018** |
| **BY** | **Lesley Griffiths, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs** |

In December I issued a Written Statement to inform you the Welsh Government will introduce a licensing scheme for mobile animal exhibits (MAEs) in Wales.

Wales prides itself on having excellent animal welfare standards and expects everyone to reflect this by being responsible owners. The development of this licensing scheme reinforces our commitment to ensuring the highest welfare standards for all animals kept in Wales.

Examples of MAEs include travelling falconry and hawking displays, exotic pets taken into schools for educational purposes, reindeer at Christmas events and of course, travelling circuses.

A full consultation will be launched in 2018 and we will continue to work closely with stakeholders to ensure we develop a licensing scheme which delivers a lasting impact on animal welfare standards in Wales. We are aware similar schemes are being considered by other UK administrations and will monitor developments to ensure these schemes work together.

Although there are no circuses based in Wales, they do visit and it is important the welfare needs of their animals are not overlooked.  I am exploring opportunities to bring forward legislation to ban the use of wild animals in circuses in Wales.   I intend to learn from the recent scrutiny of the Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses (Scotland) Act 2018, particularly discussion of ethical and welfare arguments for a ban. We need to consider how to frame proposals for a similar ban in Wales so they do not impact on all MAEs within the scope of a licensing scheme. I have asked my officials to explore the options now available to Welsh Ministers.