



Craig Whittaker MP

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Horse Welfare Violations

Thank you for contacting me about the welfare of horses.

I am grateful to my colleague, Julian Sturdy MP, for introducing legislation to tackle fly-grazing, and I am delighted that the Control of Horses Act has been made a reality.

Enforcement of this law is the responsibility of local councils, which are also responsible for upholding the horse passport regulations more generally, mostly through their Trading Standards or Animal Health Officers.

I would of course expect these bodies to fulfil their obligations, but if you have concerns I would urge you to raise them with the responsible authority. If it appears that urgent action is required to protect a horse, reports can also be made to the RSPCA.

As you might be aware, all horse passports issued since July 2009 must include a microchip number. Recent reforms have included a new requirement for a central database. The Equine Sector Council described these efforts as "*a triumph for Britain's horse sector and Defra*", so I am confident that this will go a long way further towards helping protect these gentle, sensitive creatures.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me about this important issue.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP